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Jednota

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Fr. Stephen Furdek
Our Founder

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PEACE ON EARTH TO MEN OF GOOD WILL



CHRISTMAS 2006

My fellow members:

This will be my final Christmas greeting to you as your President. In all of my preceding twelve years I have never agonized so much as I have this year to write a comprehensible message. It is similar to trying to strain three pounds of noodles in a one-pound "drislak" (strainer).

As you all know the first Christmas was a special event for the Holy Family but throughout the centuries it has been a special event for all Christians. At this time of year there really is a hush all over the Christian world awaiting the celebration of Christ's Mass.

Some of my happiest years were growing up in a Slovak American home. Our mothers didn't have the conveniences of today but they made do. In our home we were clean bodily, our clothes were clean, and clean spiritually especially at Christmas. Mom would shave Octagon laundry or Fels Naptha laundry soap and boil our white clothes in a boiler on top of the coal stove. They were the first clothes in the Old Maytag. The Slovak women I knew really supported the Argo starch and Satina factories. Our shirts were cardboard stiff and Satina was used in the ironing process.



Thomas M. Hricik

The women always had an undeclared war on Monday mornings – who would put the whitest clothes on the clothes line first? At Christmas every man, woman and child was always well dressed because we were going to church and traveling by street car. At Christmas as well as on Sundays we took the West Penn street car to church. It came out of Latrobe to Points South. At Baggley and Whitney the Greek Catholics got on board first, then at Pleasant Unity (Jamison 20) the majority of folks got on, Slovaks, Hungarians, Poles and Germans.

The Slovaks were split between Greek Catholics and Roman Catholics. The first stop was at Trauger where the German Lutherans and Greek Catholics got off. The Germans walked up Dutch Hill, the Greek Catholics to St. Mary's. The next stop was at the top of the hill and the Hungarians got off to go to Forty Martyrs Roman Catholic Church. Next the Slovak Roman Catholics disembarked at St. Florians and finally a quarter of a mile away the Polish got off at Bafiks store to walk 2 miles to St. Stans.

Getting on that ritual ride to church was like a beauty parade. The women would primp and prime themselves with special care. The old fashioned ladies used "babushkas" and their hair was tied in a "chuba" on the back of their heads (a bun). The more modern women would set their hair in finger waves using Joker (a forerunner to hair spray) and some women had spit curls. All the women looked especially pretty. The men generally only had one suit (blue serge wool). They also wore a "Fedora Hat", either brown, gray or black. On special occasions they still smoked their pipes but they also splurged on tobies (Pollacks), Marsh Wheeling or Dutch Master cigars. The kids only went along for the ride.

There was always good-natured banter on those trips to and from church and we certainly didn't need to send Christmas cards. At that time we thought we were poor but didn't realize how wealthy we were spiritually and socially. All it cost was the price of the street car ticket.

Why am I telling you this? You folks my age should tell your children and grandchildren about your life and in time they will realize you gave them something that you can not buy in stores. Give them your time, which is your most precious possession.

There are things I miss dearly, but there are other things we do today which will be a legacy for our families. Tell your children of your and their Slovak and Catholic heritage. If you have our typical Slovak food on Christmas Eve such as "bobalky" (dough balls), "kozare" (mushroom soup), honey and garlic, tell them why. Do this as a Christmas gift – tell them a story about Grandma and Grandpa. They really want to know. You won't be sorry.

On behalf of our Board of Directors and from me we wish you the best in this Christmas season.

Merry Christmas
Narodil sa Kristus Pan, Veselme sa
Christos Razdajetsa Slavite Jeho
Thomas M. Hricik
National President

A Christmas Message From Our Chaplain

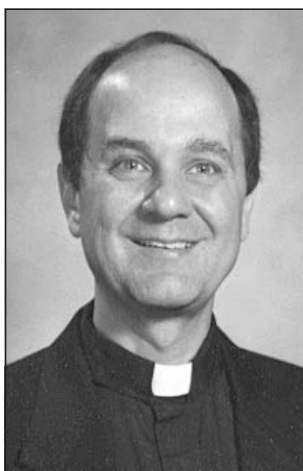
Dear Friends,

Luke the Evangelist wrote that a multitude of angels announced the birth of Jesus to the entire world. "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests," they sang.

Here we are, twenty centuries after these words were joyously proclaimed and wonder what happened to that promised peace. There are too many reminders of the threats of terror or violence. One cannot go into airports, government buildings or schools without passing through a metal detector. A person cannot gain entry at some sporting events without first being frisked. Security surveillance cameras seem to be everywhere.

Many people look forward to the day when there will be no more wars or hatred between peoples and nations, resulting in

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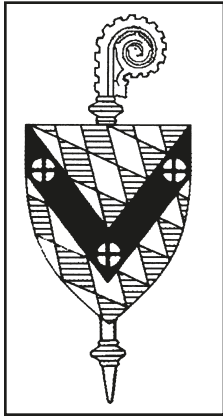


Fr. Thomas A. Nasta

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Insights and Viewpoints



St. Vincent Archabbey — Homilies Fr. Campion P. Gavaler, O.S.B. and Father Demetrius R. Dumm, O.S.B.

December 24, 2006

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Gospel Summary

The fourth Sunday of Advent is always dedicated to Mary, the mother of Jesus. This year, the gospel passage from Luke recounts the brief but beautiful story of the Visitation. We are not told how Mary came to know about the pregnancy of Elizabeth but her response is prompt and generous. She drops everything, as it were, and hurries to the home of her cousin who is about to bear a child in her old age.

The stirring of the babe in the womb of Elizabeth is a sign of the joy that will come to the world when that other babe in Mary's womb is born. In a sense, John the Baptist is anticipating his role as joyful precursor of the Messiah. Elizabeth also acknowledges the superiority of Mary's son when she calls her "the mother of my Lord."

This meeting of the two miraculously pregnant women thus signals a new era of God's intervention in human history. In fact, both of these pregnancies have required a special grace from God.

Life Implications

This scene of the meeting of two pregnant women who will be chosen agents of God's merciful purposes in our history is rich in symbolic significance. In a world where violence and oppression seem to dominate everything, we see that the course of history will change through the agency of two women intent on protective love and alert to divine inspiration. Their sons will be major actors in God's plans for

Israel and for the world but these same sons will be indelibly stamped with the imprint of two women who knew instinctively that the protective and nurturing love of mothers is an ideal to which we all must aspire.

There is also a lesson here about the importance of allowing one's plans and schedules to be modified by the needs of others. Mary must have had other things to do but she made room in her life for a long journey in order to be with someone who needed her presence, if only to share their common joy.

In this powerful and gracious meeting of women about to affirm life is also a wonderful model for us who are trying to be ready for the feast of Christmas. Indeed, Mary and Elizabeth are precious gifts to each other, even as they share God's gift to them. What better examples could we find of the kind of loving generosity that represents the true meaning of God's gift to us in the person of his beloved Son?

There is also a profound symbolism in the meeting of these two women who are about to bring forth new life and who are more than willing to protect and nurture their precious infants--so vulnerable and yet so full of promise. In an age when the "culture of death" is so prevalent, these women offer a splendid example of a resounding affirmation of life.



December 25, 2006

Christmas

Gospel Summary

In the gospel passage for Mass at midnight we hear the Christmas story from the Gospel of Luke. It is a story of faith so simple that even a child can grasp it. Yet, even after 2000 years, it is a mystery so profound that the richness of its meaning remains inexhaustible. We are reminded again of God's providential care that makes all history sacred history. The powerful rulers of the world, whether an Egyptian pharaoh or a Roman emperor, may have their armies and issue their decrees, but through the odd coincidences of history, God's own purposes are ultimately achieved. As foretold by the prophet, Mary gives birth to a savior, who is Christ and Lord, in Bethlehem, the city of David.

Caesar Augustus, regarded by Romans as a god who would bring peace and salvation to the world, is now only an unwitting instrument in the divine plan to bring God's peace and salvation through this child born of a young Jewish woman. Mary is the faithful, willing agent of God's loving purpose. After giving birth to her son, with love she wraps him in swaddling clothes and lays him in a manger.

In the gospel passage for Mass at dawn (Lk 2:15-20), Luke continues the love story of Christmas. Now Mary and Joseph share the divine gift of love that they have received by welcoming shepherds -- like tax collectors and prostitutes, members of a despised class in their society. The shepherds, like us who also have heard the good news, are now able to sing a new carol with the angels of the heavenly liturgy, glorifying and praising God for the gift of Jesus' presence among us.

The meaning of Luke's Christmas story is completed by the prologue of John's gospel, the passage for Mass during the day (Jn 1:1-18). Christ is born of Mary so that he might be born and live in us. Those who accept the Word-become-flesh through faith become children of God, not by natural generation, but as a divine gift. The meaning of Christmas and God's loving purpose will not be completely realized until the eternal fulfillment of Jesus' Last Supper prayer: "I pray...that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that

Luke 1: 39-45

they also may be in us..." (Jn 17:20-21).

Life Implications

Despite laments about the commercialism of the Christmas season, the universal instinct of people is correct: at the heart of the mystery of Christmas is giving and receiving gifts. We sense there is more to life than paying a wage or earning a wage. A gift is always a surprise and a joy because as a present of love, it is unearned. Our hearts indeed are restless until we receive love and give love. A gift is the sacramental, symbolic presence of a person. If my gift of love is accepted, it is I who am accepted; if my gift of love is rejected, it is I who am rejected.

One of the surprises of God's self-giving to us is that it seems to be so ordinary, and thus can easily be overlooked. The Word that is God's self-giving to us was to be found not in a royal palace, but in a manger as a helpless baby in need of a mother's love. Today at our Christ-Mass the Risen Lord gives himself to us as bread and wine. What could be more ordinary, and at the same moment so extraordinary a gift of love? It is through the most simple, ordinary means and in the most humble places that of the gift of love can be exchanged.

I am aware that at least one prison chaplain will be using these reflections to prepare his Christmas homily for those in our society who truly are the least of the brothers and sisters of Jesus. They too must hear the good news that no one has the power to take away our worth and dignity because our worth and our dignity are a gift of God's love for us. Those who are not able to buy expensive things -- prisoners, the sick, the poor, children -- remind us that what truly matters is the gift of our loving presence, however ordinary the means of its incarnation. We do have to become gifts of bread and wine for each other because the Lord loves us and becomes bread and wine for us.



December 31, 2006

Feast of the Holy Family

Gospel Summary

At the end of Luke's Infancy Narrative, we find a story that does not really pertain to his infancy, since he was already twelve years old when he visited the temple with his parents on the occasion of a Passover feast. He is there because he has now reached the age of "maturity" and must therefore partake in the pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the major feasts.

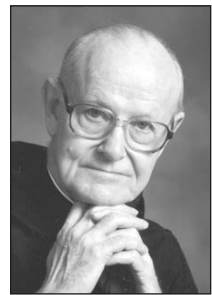
We must be careful not to be distracted by paintings of this scene of Jesus with the doctors of the law. In such cases, he is often pictured standing in the center of a circle of old men, with a halo on his head, and in a pose of one who is teaching. In the text, however, we read that he was "sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions" (Luke 2:46). This would be the normal situation of a bright and curious young person. There does seem to be some form of dialogue also, for the old men are "astounded at his understanding and his answers" (Luke 2:47),

In the context of Luke's gospel, where choice of vocation is of paramount importance, Jesus is here presented as one who is beginning to take charge of his life, which means that he is also beginning to establish his independence from parental guidance. Nonetheless, it is important to note that, at the end of this episode, Jesus returned to Nazareth with his parents and "was obedient to them" (Luke 2:51). This tension between parental control and personal freedom makes this an especially appropriate gospel for the feast of the Holy Family.

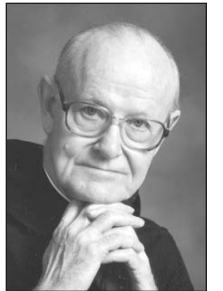
Life Implications

There is much in this gospel that is important for the delicate and critical task of responsible parenting. As teen-age children begin to test the boundaries of their freedom, parents are faced with the enormous responsibility of steering a middle course between a rigid and authoritarian solution and a lax and indulgent attitude. The authoritarian model

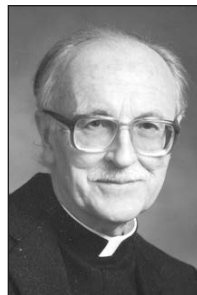
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Demetrius R. Dumm,
O.S.B.



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O.S.B.



Campion P. Gavaler,
O.S.B.

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As I See It Rudolph L. Gregus



Rudolph L. Gregus

Some Little Known and Fun Facts About Christmas

Christmas was not celebrated for almost 400 years after the birth of Jesus. ... The word "Merry" is an old English word that means "Blessed". So when we wish each other a Merry Christmas, we are wishing each other a Blessed Christmas. ... People put lighted candles in their windows at Christmas in order to help guide Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem. It's a tradition that began in Germany. ... The Twelve Days of Christmas began on Christmas Day and ended on January 6, the Feast of the Epiphany. ... In Spain they call Midnight Mass, "Missa del Gallo", which means the Mass of the Rooster. This is because there is a legend that says the only time the rooster crowed at midnight was

the night Jesus was born. ... Silent Night was first played on a guitar because the church organ was broken. ... In 1856, President Franklin Pierce decorated the first White House Christmas Tree. ... The poinsettia originated in Mexico where it was called the "Flower of the Holy Night". It was brought to America in 1829 by Joel Poinsett. ... The first American Christmas Carol was called "Jesus is Born". It was written by Jean de Brebeuf, a French Jesuit missionary to the Hurons. Brebeuf was later captured and tortured to death. He was canonized in 1939 and is honored as one of the "Martyrs of North America". He is the patron saint of Canada. ... In Australia, Father Christmas is transported by six white "boomers," male kangaroos. ... Jingle Bells was first written for Thanksgiving and was called A One Horse Open Sleigh.

Saint Francis of Assisi – A Christmas Saint!

One of the most beloved of all saints, Francis of Assisi, left his mark on our celebration of Christmas.

Francis was overwhelmed by the beauty and love found in the story of the Birth of Jesus. In 1223, he was living in a cave near the town of Greccio in Umbria. His following included many simple peasants who could not read the story of the Nativity themselves. Francis was so inspired by the story that he wanted all to know of the Birth of Jesus. He spread the word that the people of the village should meet him at midnight on Christmas Eve. When they got there, they were met by the first representation of a living nativity scene. Francis read the Gospel to them while they watched the re-enactment, complete with live animals and people and even a newborn baby. Tradition has it that the people were so overwhelmed that they left the site singing Christmas carols, a first in any sort of liturgical celebration. They went through the town singing the praises of the newborn Jesus, thereby beginning the tradition of Christmas caroling.

If you look closely enough, you can sometimes find the figure of Saint Francis of Assisi in a manger honoring him for his contribution to Christmas.

Light One Candle Dennis Heaney, President, The Christophers

It is better to light one candle than to curse the darkness. (Christopher Motto)



Dennis Heaney

THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT – TWELVE MONTHS A YEAR

Some years ago I came across a quote from Rev. Dr. Norman Vincent Peale that describes the Christmas time for me: "Christmas waves a magic wand over this world, and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful."

There is a special tranquility that seems to come each Christmas season. History tells us of wars that halted on Christmas day so the combatants could celebrate, often with prayers, singing and a meal. Even the vitriol that's so prevalent among world leaders seems to moderate during the Christmas season.

It's probably just my imagination but even the pressure and push of Christmas shopping seems to have a gentler edge to it as people work their way through crowds trying to finish their last-minute shopping. There are still irritated and impatient shoppers, but I hear more people in the crowd saying "Excuse me" or "You go first" as they reach for the same item or line up for the cashier.

Someone once wrote that it would be so nice if we could bottle that spirit and then "pour" a little of it out during the course of the year. Each year I tell myself that I like the feeling of the spirit – in me and others – and I should try to hold a bit of it in my heart and spread it as needed in the New Year. But inevitably once Christmas day is history so is that palpable Christmas spirit.

Why is it so hard to keep that Christmas spirit going throughout the year? It takes some effort and requires thinking a bit more of the other person and bit less of ourselves, but why should that be so difficult? Actually, it makes sense that it's easier to grow in peace and understanding when we focus less on ourselves and more on others.

It should not be difficult – or even anything less than habit – to be thoughtful to others in our words and deeds. Yet, we snap at family members who irritate us, or we honk the horn at drivers who do "dumb" things on the road. How much more effort would it take to just count to ten or simply say "I've got the Christmas spirit in January and I'm not going to lash out at that person"?

When the conversation turns to gossip about someone's perceived (or even real) failings it's all too easy to join in the discussion, but wouldn't it be truer to the Christmas spirit if

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Reflections on Our Christianity Msgr. Edward V. Rosack

Mother

The first hands to embrace a newborn infant are those of the baby's mother. The first word seeking protection in the baby's strange new world are "Mother," spoken in just two syllables. Whatever the reason, hunger, fear or injury, the baby calls "Mother" in words and sounds that the mother instantly recognizes.

The word "Mother" represents a vocation, as sacred as that of the priesthood because, like the priest, her calling is a selfless one dedicated in sacrifice to someone other than herself.

Mother not only makes a survivor of her offspring, she nurtures her child both physically and spiritually in the sense that she develops its intellect, forms its ethical and moral values and guides its emotions to that which are true and correct. Mother and all mothers are forming a new generation. This takes years and involves sacrifice, fatigue, patience and a caring involving everything, from a scratched knee to a life-threatening illness, from selfish pouting to first teenage love.

Mother provides her offspring with quality time, which she defines simply as 24/7.

Along the way, she thrills to the baby's first steps, to the daughter's efforts to help her set the table, to her son's first catching of the softball thrown by Dad, to the boy's insistence on shoveling snow alongside his father.

And, continuing in the bonding and in learning, mother's children learn to say Grace before meals, say "Please" when they want something and share each other's possessions with ease.

These children learn naturally and easily by the examples their parents demonstrate in their own adult lives. This is the vocation of motherhood and fatherhood, lived in the place they call "Home."

The benefits of this kind of living extend beyond the immediate family to the community, to society and later on to the nation and, too, civilization itself.

What happens when mother, the primary caregiver, rejects her vocation in unnecessary, selfish pursuit of career, wealth and luxurious living?

Their children grow like weeds in an unattended garden. They suffer from a lack of physical nutrition and experience no ethical or moral cultivation. Like weeds that produce nothing for harvest, these abandoned children grow quickly into cunning, selfish, tyrannical adults whom their own parents fear, who compel community members to live behind locked doors, whose only status is found in the prisons where only the cunning, selfish and tyrannical can boss their respective prison blocks.

Vocation mothers never lose their selfless and sacrificial status whatever the age they reach. Nor are they ever forgotten by their children. Mother is always the first person to whom the children turn when they struggle with the rocky paths in their lives. Mother is always first, be she the birth mother or the wife, when the offspring or spouse seek contact, friendly or necessary, from across the seas or wherever they may be. Mother's Day is a revered national day of recognition for mothers because they are always there, 24/7.

Tom Brokaw's Greatest Generation exists because of vocation mothers. Will the next have honest claim to the Greatest Generation? It will depend upon the mothers of that generation.

December 31 Homily

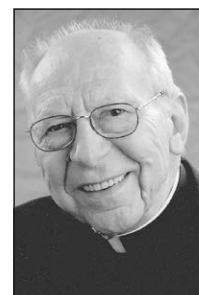
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prevents a child from developing in a normal, healthy way and can lead to later demands for freedom that are bitter and sometimes violent. But lax indulgence is not a good solution either, for it allows children to make decisions, and face consequences, for which they are unprepared. Granting too much freedom too soon can look like love, but it may be simply a form of abandonment.

I have never had to face the difficult problem of parenting, but I did have an analogous experience when I was rector of our seminary for seventeen years in the days following Vatican II. We all knew that the rigid regime that had prevailed in seminaries would have to be changed, but of course the students had a much more radical change in mind than the rector! The boundaries needed to be moved, but the desire of some students was to have no boundaries at all. I soon learned that governing by decree would not work and so we had endless discussions about what a reasonable compromise would be. In such circumstances, what is at issue is the concern one has for the long-term benefit of the students rather than for good order alone.

I think a parallel situation for parents would be the perennial struggle that occurs when a teenager is trying to choose a good college. It is not a very good idea to make that critical choice simply on the basis of where this teenager's boy friend or girl friend is going to college! This is especially true when we realize that this boy friend or girl friend will probably not turn out to be one's marriage partner after all. But this is only one of many choices where parents and children must dialogue with sincerity and trust. And the critical ingredient is a tough love that is in touch with reality and which engenders real trust.

In terms of today's gospel, we note that Jesus asserted his independence from parental constraints but nonetheless returned with them to Nazareth and "was obedient to them" (Luke 2:51). I think it is safe to say that his career was not endangered by such a wise sense of balance between parental concern and legitimate emerging responsibility.



Msgr. Edward V. Rosack

BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Branch 2— PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Michael the Archangel Society, Branch 2, will hold its Annual Meeting on Friday, January 5, 2007, at 7:30 p.m. at the Slovak Civic Federation, 1200 Hodgkiss Street, Northside, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The delegates who attended the convention in July will present their reports. The election of officers for the coming year will also take place.

We extend our congratulations to the following Branch 2 delegates who were elected to positions at the convention: Suzy Ondrejco, National Director of Fraternal Activities; Ray Lako, National Auditor; and Jerome Ferrance and Rudy Ondrejco, Members of the Supreme Court.

Hope to see many of you on Friday, January 5, at 7:30 p.m. at the Slovak Civic Club on the Northside.

Suzy Ondrejco, Secretary

Branch 3P— HAZLETON, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 3P, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, December 31, 2006, at 9:30 a.m. in Saint Joseph Church Cafeteria, North Laurel Street, Hazleton, Pennsylvania. The election of officers for 2007 will be conducted followed by a short update on local branch activities, new policy rates, and Jednota and benevolent foundation scholarships. New ideas for branch activities will be entertained and any address or beneficiary changes may be submitted at this meeting. All members are encouraged to attend and get involved.

Mike Koval, Financial Secretary

Branch 4— PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 4, will hold its Annual Meeting and Election of Officers on Sunday, December 17, 2006, at 3:00 p.m. at the home of Jim and Anna Marie Hanlon, 2338 Lucina Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Anna Marie Hanlon, Financial Secretary

Branch 5P— EXETER, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. John the Evangelist Society, Branch 5P, will hold its Semiannual Meeting on Sunday, December 17, 2006, at 1:30 p.m. at the home of Branch President Leonard J. Zavada, 141 Second Street, Wyoming, Pennsylvania. All members are invited to attend. The purpose of the meeting will be to elect officers for the coming year.

Leonard J. Zavada, President

Branch 6— STREATOR, ILLINOIS

The St. Stephen Society, Branch 6, will hold its Annual Meeting and Election of Officers on Sunday, December 17, 2006, at 12:00 noon at Chipper's Grill, Streator, Illinois. All members are invited to attend. A Mass will be offered for all living and deceased members. For more information please call Catherine Michlik at 815/672-3836.

Paul Chismar, Recording Secretary

Branch 10— OLYPHANT, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 10, held its Annual Meeting, Audit, and Election of Officers on Sunday, November 26, 2006, at the home of Recording Secretary

William A. Nalevanko, 405 North River Street, Olyphant, Pennsylvania.

The following were elected as officers for the year 2007: Daniel Spegar, President; Gaza Mika, Vice President; William Spegar, Secretary/Treasurer; William A. Nalevanko, Recording Secretary; and Michael Antonik, Auditor. Donations in the amount of \$8,000 were approved to the following in 2007: Michael Bosak Society, Slovakia; La Salle Academy, Jessup, PA; Holy Ghost Church and the Lackawanna County Health Care Center, Olyphant, PA; Sisters of SS. Cyril and Methodius Retirement Fund and the Jankola Library and Archives, Danville, PA; the Valley Community Library, Peckville, PA; and the St. Francis of Assisi Kitchen, Scranton, PA.

Arrangements are being made for the annual Communion Breakfast on Sunday, June 24, 2007, following the 8:00 a.m. Mass at Holy Ghost Church. The Mass will be celebrated for all living and deceased members of the Branch.

The officers and members of Branch 10 wish everyone a Happy and Holy Christmas and a Joyful New Year.

**William A. Nalevanko,
Recording Secretary**

Branch 35— BRADDOCK, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Michael the Archangel Society, Branch 35, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 7, 2007, at 1:30 p.m. at the residence of Joseph Yuros, 15 Sumner Avenue, Forest Hills, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. On the agenda will be the election of officers for 2007 and a report on the convention. All members are urged to attend.

Joseph Yuros, Financial Secretary

Branch 40— STREATOR, ILLINOIS

The St. Clement Society, Branch 40, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, December 17, 2006, at 1:30 p.m. at St. Stephen's Cafeteria, Streator, Illinois. The election of officers will take place. All members are invited to attend.

Andrew R. Harcar, Sr.

Branch 60— MCKEESPORT, PENNSYLVANIA

The Holy Trinity Society, Branch 60, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, December 17, 2006, at 1:00 p.m. at the home of President Ann Wargovich, 58 Lilmont Avenue, Swissvale, Pennsylvania. On the agenda will be the officers' reports, election of officers, and a discussion of the 48th Convention and branch activities. All members are urged to attend.

The officers of Branch 60 wish our members a Blessed Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year.

Margaret M. Perla, Secretary

Branch 95— MCKEES ROCKS, PENNSYLVANIA

The Holy Name of Jesus Society, Branch 95, will hold its Annual Meeting on Thursday, December 28, 2006, at 6:00 p.m. at the home of Joseph Kovach, 9 Juvet Street, McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the future of Branch 95. All members are urged to attend.

Margaret Kovach, Secretary

Branch 96— CARROLLTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 96, held a meeting on Sunday, December 3, 2006, at 2:00 p.m. at the residence of Stella Papson, 138 Sunset Road, Carrolltown, Pennsylvania.

Stella Papson, President

Branch 96— CARROLLTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 96, will hold a meeting on Tuesday, December 19, 2006, at 2:00 p.m. at the residence of Stella Papson, 138 Sunset Road, Carrolltown, Pennsylvania. The election of officers will take place.

Stella Papson, President

Branch 112— MAHANAY CITY, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 112, will hold an end of the year meeting and Holiday Party on Sunday, December 31, 2006, at 1:00 p.m. at 86 Spring Street, Pottsville, Pennsylvania. Please call Karen Sterling at 570/544-6694 for directions.

Karen Sterling

Branch 162— UNIONTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Wendelin Society, Branch 162, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, December 17, 2006, at 9:30 a.m. at the 3rd floor of the Meridan Point Apartments, Confer Vista Road, Uniontown, Pennsylvania. The election of officers will take place and plans for the coming year will be discussed.

William Lukach

Branch 169P— JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Michael Society, Branch 169P, will hold its Annual Meeting on Monday, December 18, 2006, at 6:30 p.m. at the home of Joseph Slivosky, 1510 Emmett Drive, Johnstown, Pennsylvania. On the agenda will be a discussion of branch business and past activities, a review of the National Convention, and a discussion of what we must do in order to remain an active branch. Many of the branches in the region are inactive. What we plan to accomplish for this branch in the future will depend on the cooperation of all our members.

Joseph Slivosky, President

Branch 199— HOSTETTER, PENNSYLVANIA

The Holy Trinity Society, Branch 199, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, December 17, 2006, at 1:00 p.m. at the home of Francis Pipak. The election of officers will take place. All members are urged to attend.

Sophie Pipak, Financial Secretary

Branch 228— LORAIN, OHIO

The St. John the Baptist/Holy Trinity Society, Branch 228, will hold its next meeting on Monday, December 18, 2006, at 7:00 p.m. at the American Slovak Club, 30th and Broadway, Lorain, Ohio. The branch will hold its annual election of officers and review of the bylaws as it is done each December meeting. At this time we will also elect representatives to serve on the American Slovak Club Board of Directors.

Meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of each month except for the months of

January, February, July and August when no meetings are held. All meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. and are held in the American Slovak Club. See you at the Club.

Thomas B. Zuffa, Recording Secretary

Branch 240P— TAYLOR, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 240P, will hold a meeting on Sunday, December 17, 2006, at 2:00 p.m. at the residence of Stephen J. Kavulich, 41 Hedge Row Run, Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania.

Stephen J. Kavulich, President

Branch 254— PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Wenceslaus Society, Branch 254, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 7, 2007, at 2:00 p.m. at the home of Joseph and Albina Senko, 218 Main Entrance Drive, Mount Lebanon, Pennsylvania. The election of officers and other Branch business will be on the agenda.

Albina Senko, Secretary

Branch 260— CAMPBELL, OHIO

The St. Matthew Society, Branch 260, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, December 17, 2006, at 1:30 p.m. at St. Elizabeth Church Msgr. Cyril A. Adamko Hall, Campbell, Ohio. On the agenda will be the election of officers, a discussion of plans for the year 2007, and other important fraternal business. Members are urged to attend.

Charles M. Terek, President

Branch 266— HAZLETON, PENNSYLVANIA

The SS. Peter and Paul Society, Branch 266, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, December 31, 2006, at 10:00 a.m. in Saint Joseph Church Cafeteria, 604 North Laurel Street, Hazleton, Pennsylvania. Officers will be elected for 2007, and suggestions for branch activities for next year will be discussed. There will also be a report on the new policy rates, Jednota and benevolent foundation scholarships, and any other business that might be brought up. Please plan to attend.

Richard Lazar, Financial Secretary

Branch 292— WINDBER, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 292, will hold its Annual Meeting and Christmas Party on Sunday, December 17, 2006, at 1:00 p.m. at the Slovak Club, 1300 Jackson Avenue, Windber, Pennsylvania. All members are asked to attend.

We wish all the members a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Edward T. Surkosky

Branch 313— CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 313, will hold its Annual Meeting on Saturday, December 30, 2006, at 12:00 noon at the Mother of Sorrows Convent, 5900 West 147th Street, Oak Forest, Illinois. On the agenda will be a discussion on new membership and the election of officers.

Merry Christmas and a safe and very Happy New Year to everyone!

**Joseph M. Bugel,
President/Financial Secretary**

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BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS continued from page 4

Branch 340— NORTH TARRYTOWN, NEW YORK

The Holy Cross Society, Branch 340, will hold its Annual Meeting of Officers on Sunday, December 17, 2006, at 2:00 p.m. in Holy Cross Church Parish Hall, North Tarrytown, New York.

John A. Biros Jr., President

Branch 362— BARTON, OHIO

The St. Michael the Archangel Society, Branch 362, will hold a meeting on Sunday, December 17, 2006, at 10:00 a.m. at the residence of John J. Wodarczyk, 70820 Crescent Road, St. Clairsville, Ohio. The election of officers will take place. All members are asked to attend.

John J. Wodarczyk, President

Branch 367— FAIRCHANCE, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 367, will hold its Annual Meeting on Monday, December 18, 2006, at the Flamingo Restaurant, Uniontown, Pennsylvania. Dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m. The election of officers will take place. All members are urged to attend. For reservations call Jane Kish at 724/245-9554.

Jane Kish, Secretary

Branch 421— NANTY GLO, PENNSYLVANIA

The Holy Name of Jesus Society, Branch 421, will hold its Semiannual Meeting on Tuesday, December 19, 2006, at 2:00 p.m. at the home of John Stager, 124 Circle Drive, Ebsburg, Pennsylvania.

Lillian R. Stager, Secretary

Branch 567— ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

The Sacred Heart of Jesus Society, Branch 567, will hold a meeting on Wednesday, December 20, 2006, at 1:00 p.m. at St. John's Church Social Hall, 924 North Front Street, Allentown, Pennsylvania. On the agenda will be the annual report and the swearing in of the new officers. Members are urged to attend.

The Officers of Branch 567 wish everyone a Blessed and Merry Christmas. May God bless all our members.

Helen Fiala, Recording Secretary

Branch 581— GARY, INDIANA

The St. Michael the Archangel Society, Branch 581, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, December 17, 2006, at 1:00 p.m. at Pruzin's Funeral Home, 6360 Broadway, Merrillville, Indiana. The election of officers will take place. Also on the agenda will be a discussion of our 6% Interest Annuity, our free 1st year \$10,000 JEP Policy for children, the 5% IRA for adults, and the two year Park Annuity at 4.75%. All members are urged to attend.

George Kelchak, Financial Secretary

Branch 628— HOMESTEAD, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Michael the Archangel Society, Branch 628, will hold a meeting on Wednesday, December 27, 2006, at 7:00 p.m. at 821 Laura Avenue, West Mifflin, Pennsylvania. On the agenda will be a review of the past year and a discussion of the possible merger of Branch 628 and Branch 311. The election of officers for 2007 will also be held.

Sylvia J. Vehec, Recording Secretary

Branch 644— MCKEES ROCKS, PENNSYLVANIA

The Holy Trinity Society, Branch 644, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, December 17, 2006, at 2:30 p.m. at the home of Michael R. Jablonsky, 1215 Foster Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. On the agenda will be the election of officers for the year 2007, a financial report for the year 2006, and a general discussion about future branch business and activities. You are asked to bring at least one new member application so we can increase Branch 644 membership.

The officers of Branch 644 wish all the members a very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Prosperous New Year.

Michael R. Jablonsky, President

Branch 721— BANNISTER, MICHIGAN

The SS. Cyril and Methodius Society, Branch 721, will hold a meeting on Sunday, December 17, 2006, at 1:00 p.m. at St. Cyril's Meeting Room. All members are urged to attend. The election of officers will take place.

Joseph Galecka, Recording Secretary

Branch 731— YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 731, will hold a meeting on Sunday, December 17, 2006, at 12:30 p.m. at Saint Matthias Rectory, Youngstown, Ohio. The election of officers for 2007 will take place. We look forward to seeing you at our meeting.

James Bobby, Secretary

Branch 784— MONTREAL, QUEBEC

The SS. Cyril and Methodius Society, Branch 784, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 21, 2007, at 12:30 p.m. at SS. Cyril and Methodius Parish Hall, Montreal, Quebec. On the agenda will be the election of officers for 2007 and a discussion of branch activities for the coming year. Members are urged to attend.

Marta Fuska, President

Branch 785— TORONTO, ONTARIO

The St. John Society, Branch 785, will hold a joint Annual Meeting with the Msgr. Michael Shuba District on Sunday, January 14, 2007, at 1:30 p.m. at SS. Cyril and Methodius Church Hall, Mississauga, Ontario. All members are welcome.

Michael Dobis

Branch 796— EGYPT, PENNSYLVANIA

The Holy Trinity Society, Branch 796, held its Annual Meeting on Sunday, November 12, 2006, at 1:00 p.m. at Holy Trinity Church Hall, Egypt, Pennsylvania. Members of the Slovak Catholic Sokol also took part in the meeting.

The meeting was opened by Bernard Hudak with a prayer for all living and deceased members. President Bernard Madeja called the meeting to order. There was a discussion on insurance and annuities. Next on the agenda was the election of officers. The following officers were elected: Bernard Madeja, President; Bernard G. Hudak, Vice President; Thomas Hudak, Treasurer; and Bernard G. Hudak, Recording Secretary.

All the officers and members offer their prayers for the new president. May God

bless him and lead us in the future. We also pray for Thomas Hricik and his lovely family. May we grow in God's grace and stay close to his Blessed Mother. May God bless all of our members.

Bernard G. Hudak, Recording Secretary

Branch 810— MONTREAL, QUEBEC

The St. Martin Society, Branch 810, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 21, 2007, at 12:30 p.m. at SS. Cyril and Methodius Parish Hall, Montreal, Quebec. On

the agenda will be the election of officers for 2007. Members are urged to attend.

Mary Jarabek, President

Branch 855— PARMA, OHIO

The Holy Name of Jesus Society, Branch 855, held its Annual Branch Officers Meeting on Sunday, November 12, 2006, at the home of President Mary A. Kolesar. At the meeting there was a discussion of the Annual Meeting held on Sunday, December 3, 2006.

Linda L. Kolesar, Secretary/Treasurer

DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRINCE PRIBINA DISTRICT—California

The Prince Pribina District will hold its Slovak Christmas Mass and Meeting on Sunday, December 17, 2006, at St. John Bosco High School, 13640 South Bellflower Boulevard, Bellflower, California. Mass will be celebrated at 11:00 a.m. in St. John Bosco Chapel followed by a gourmet lunch and distribution of Christmas gifts to the children by St. Mikulas in the cafeteria.

A District Meeting will be held in the cafeteria after the festivities. On the agenda will be a discussion of upcoming fraternal activities and FCSU insurance products.

The officers of the Prince Pribina District wish you joy in your home and peace at Christmas and throughout the year.

Paul Skuben, President

MSGR. MICHAEL SHUBA DISTRICT— Toronto, Ontario

The Msgr. Michael Shuba District will hold a joint Annual Meeting with Branch 785 on Sunday, January 14, 2007, at 1:30 p.m. at SS. Cyril and Methodius Church Hall, Mississauga, Ontario. All members are welcome.

Michael Dobis, Regional Director

MSGR. ANDREW HLINKA DISTRICT—

Monongahela Valley, Pennsylvania

President Dorothy Petrus and the other officers of the Msgr. Andrew Hlinka District of the Monongahela Valley wish their brothers and sisters of the First Catholic Slovak Union a Blessed Christmas and a New Year filled with good health, prosperity and much happiness.

Frances Tarquinio, Secretary

PRINCE RASTISLAV DISTRICT— Montreal, Canada

The Prince Rastislav District, Branch 784, and Branch 810, will hold a joint meeting on Sunday, January 21, 2007, at 12:30 p.m. at SS. Cyril and Methodius Parish Hall, Montreal, Quebec. On the agenda will be the election of officers for 2007. Members are urged to attend.

Anthony S. Makovsky, President

REV. JOHN MARTVON DISTRICT—

Blair, Cambria, Indiana, Somerset and Bedford Counties, Pennsylvania.

The Rev. John Martvon District held its Annual Meeting on Sunday, October 29, 2006, in St. Mary's Hall, Nanty Glo, Pennsylvania, beginning at 2:20 p.m. President Edward Surkosky opened the meeting with a prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all. Lillian Stager of host Branch 421 welcomed the delegates. The meeting was attended by 21 delegates representing six branches.

The roll call of the officers was taken. Auditor Stephen Gerko was absent and Vice President John Stager and the chaplain, Rev. Andrew Stanko, were excused. Recording Secretary Joseph Rura read the minutes of the semiannual meeting, and after a correction, were approved on a motion by Leonard Fenimore and seconded by Joseph Slivosky. Treasurer Lillian Stager gave her report, which was approved on a motion by Joseph Slivosky and seconded by Andrea Fenimore. Financial Secretary Stella Papon gave her report. It was approved on a motion by Shirley Kovach and seconded by Janet Mical. President Surkosky urged all the delegates to continue selling insurance and annuities and to promote our Slovak heritage.

Leonard Fenimore made a motion, seconded by Margaret Olsavsky, to retain the present officers for 2007. The motion was unanimously approved. The officers are: Rev. Andrew Stanko, Chaplain; John Stager, Honorary Vice President; Edward Surkosky, President; Lawrence Fenimore, Vice President; Stella Papon, Financial Secretary; Lillian Stager, Treasurer; Joseph E. Rura, Recording Secretary; Joseph Slivosky, Director of Fraternal Activities; and Stephen Gerko, Elaine Capriati and Janet Mical, Auditors.

The report on the convention was given by Joseph Slivosky and Joseph Rura. They spoke of the new requirements needed in order for the branches to receive the yearly compensation for each member. Andrea Fenimore reported that the Slovak Heritage Association of the Laurel Highlands is having a Slovak Christmas market on November 19 at St. Mary's Church Hall, Johnstown. A motion to pay the bills was made by Joseph Slivosky, seconded

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- Death Benefit-If you die prior to settlement, your beneficiary receives the full cash value of the annuity. If you die while receiving retirement benefits, the value of your remaining guaranteed benefits will be paid to your beneficiary.
- Withdrawal Privileges-Since annuities are meant to be long-term investments for providing retirement funds, funds withdrawn during the first six years of your contract are subject to an FCSU Early Withdrawal Charge. You may withdraw 10% of your 'beginning of the year balance' with no FCSU Early Withdrawal Charge.
- Your interest will be added to your account. You may, however, elect to have your interest paid directly to you on a monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, or annually basis. This is called an Interest Option and the interest rate is slightly lower than if you left your interest to accumulate.
- Even though you may not incur an FCSU Early Withdrawal Charge, withdrawals before age 59 ½ may be subject to a federal tax penalty.
- Tax on the interest earned is deferred until the annuity funds are drawn.
- Also available in a Traditional IRA or Roth IRA (subject to IRA Guidelines)

DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENTS

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by Rebecca Kirsch. The secretary was instructed to send a congratulatory card to President Hricik on his retirement as president of the First Catholic Slovak Union. The Semiannual Meeting will be held in April 2007 at St. Benedict's Church Hall, Carrolltown, Pennsylvania. Rebecca Kirsch won the 50/50.

The meeting closed with a prayer and the singing of Hej Slovaci. A delicious meal of traditional Slovak food cooked and served by Margaret Olsavsky, Patricia Jackson, Shirley Kovach and Lillian Stager was enjoyed by all.

Joseph E. Rura

REV. JOSEPH L. KOSTIK DISTRICT— Youngstown, Ohio

The Rev. Joseph L. Kostik District is sponsoring a bus trip to "Seneca Alleghany Casino" on Saturday, January 13, 2007. The cost of the trip is \$35.00 per person. Everyone will receive \$20.00 in coins and a \$5.00 food voucher upon arrival. The dollar amount is subject to change. The bus will leave at 7:00 a.m. from Fab Limousine's parking lot, 4326 New Road in Austintown, Ohio. The bus will leave the Seneca Casino at 7:00 p.m. returning to the Fab Limousine Lot at approximately 9:30 p.m.

For further information or to make your reservations please contact Nancy Scavina at 330/758-3536 or Carlie Peshek at 330/779-3927. Reservations are accepted until December 29, 2006.

Please join us for a fun filled trip. Refreshments, games and a raffle are included.

Carlie Peshek, President

Slovak Athletic Association New Year's Eve Party

The Slovak Athletic Association will again sponsor a New Year's Eve Party or Silvestrovska Zabava on Sunday, December 31, 2006, from 8:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. at 6215 West 26th Street, Berwyn, Illinois. Tickets are \$40.00 per person and include music, hors d'oeuvre, Swedish table, sweet table, coffee, champagne and goulash at midnight. Reservations are required before December 28. This is always a very popular event so early reservations are recommended. Make checks payable to "Slovak AA" and mail to Emil Galdun, 1017 S. Ashland Ave., La Grange, IL 60525.



Allentown Parish "Meat Bingo"

St. John the Baptist Slovak Catholic Church will hold a "Meat Bingo" on Sunday, December 17, 2006, at the church Social Hall, 924 North Front Street, Allentown, Pennsylvania. Doors open at 12:00 noon and bingo begins at 1:00 p.m. Donations are \$5.00 plus specials. Refreshments will be served. For information call Bill Drost at 610/432-3505 or Helen Fiala at 610/434-8614.

From the Desk of the Executive Secretary – Kenneth A. Arendt ATTENTION ALL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICANTS

The First Catholic Slovak Union is pleased to announce it is accepting applications for its 2006 Scholarship Program.

Seventy (70) **ONE-TIME SCHOLARSHIPS** in the amount of \$500.00 each will be awarded to the winners. In addition, a **ONE-TIME** "Philip Hrobak Scholarship" and "Stephanie Husek Scholarship" in the amount of \$750.00 each will be awarded to the highest-ranking male and female applicants respectively.

Three additional **ONE-TIME SCHOLARSHIPS** of \$500.00 each will be given from the "John A. Sabol Nursing Scholarship Fund" to applicants who have been accepted into either an approved three or four year hospital nursing program or a fully-accredited college of their choice.

In addition, upon proof of college graduation, each recipient will be issued a \$3,000 Single Premium Life Insurance Policy.

The rules and requirements are as follows:

1. Applicants must have a minimum of \$1,000 of reserve insurance with F.C.S.U. for at least four years prior to April 1st of the year of graduation from high school; or an applicant must have \$5,000 or more of term insurance with the F.C.S.U. for at least four years prior to April 1st of the year of graduation from high school. All scholarship winners must maintain this insurance in force during their college years. Applicants must be insured prior to April 1, 2002 to be eligible under the rules of this period.

2. Applicants must apply for grants in the Spring of their senior year of high school.

3. Applicants must have applied for the Fall term at a qualifying institution. Proof of college admission must be sent to the Home Office with application.

4. Applicants must apply on an official form which can be obtained from their branch or the Executive Secretary of the F.C.S.U., or download an application from www.fcsu.com.

5. Applicants will be chosen by the Scholarship Committee according to their individual merit in categories of high school cumulative grade point averages, extracurricular activities, talents, achievements, initiative, communication skills, transcripts and S.A.T. and/or A.C.T. test scores.

6. Applicants will send completed applications to: Scholarship Program, First Catholic Slovak Union, 6611 Rockside Road, Independence, OH 44131.

7. Final award checks will be made payable to the student.

8. Applications will be accepted only on the proper forms obtained and signed by the branch financial secretary. **INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS (THOSE WHICH ARE RECEIVED NOT FULLY COMPLETED OR DO NOT HAVE ALL ATTACHMENTS) WILL BE INVALID AND WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE.**

The scholarship application is being mailed to all members between the ages of 17 and 19. If you are interested and do not receive the application, please contact your branch officer or the Home Office at 1-800-JEDNOTA. **Applications must be postmarked by Midnight, February 28, 2007. All applications without the above stipulated postmark will be considered invalid.**

Light One Candle

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we defended the person being attacked?

During the recent elections two opposing candidates for Congress in Iowa ran a campaign that had no negative ads and no attacks on one another. They talked strictly about the issues. On one occasion, an outside group placed an ad sharply attacking one of the candidates. His opponent not only publicly apologized, but also went on to disown the ad and those who had ordered it.

The Christophers believe that every positive change in our world starts with one person. Carrying the Christmas spirit beyond the season and then "pouring" out that spirit during the year is not an insurmountable task. If we each did it in our own little world it wouldn't be long before it started rippling further and further into the bigger world. All it would take is one person to start the ripple and, in doing so, make this a "softer and more beautiful" world every day.



A Christmas Message

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"peace on earth." It would be wonderful if all humanity could live in unity and harmony with each other. These intentions should be in our daily prayers.

But peace is more than just the absence of conflict. It is also God's abiding presence, His favor. May all who celebrate the birth of the Prince of Peace find the favor of God resting upon them.

Vesele Vianoce!
Sincerely,
Fr. Thomas A. Nasta
National Chaplain

A notice to friends of **THE GOOD SHEPHERD** publication of the Slovak Catholic Federation

For many years, Sister Anne Kremenik, V.S.C., has faithfully served as National Publicity Officer for the Slovak Catholic Federation. Sister Anne has also used her wonderful God-given talents to serve as Editor of **The Good Shepherd**. This annual is instrumental in preserving our history, allows for commentary on our culture, affirms the achievements of outstanding Slovak men and women and celebrates the Catholic faith, which was introduced to our people by Saints Cyril and Methodius.

This past summer, Sister Anne suffered a massive stroke. Currently, she is rehabilitating in Pittsburgh with her beloved community, the Vincentian Sisters of Charity. Regretfully, and for obvious reasons, Sister Anne is no longer able to serve as National Publicity Officer or Editor of **The Good Shepherd**. Words could never fully express how grateful we are to Sister Anne for the many years of hard work and dedication given to the Slovak Catholic Federation, especially in her role as Editor. We will continue to pray for Sister Anne's good health and full recovery.

Thanks to the help of Sister Linda Marie Bolinski, SS.C.M., General Superior of the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius, we have acquired the talents of Sister Bernadette Marie, SS.C.M., who has recently agreed to take on the responsibility of Editor of **The Good Shepherd**. We are extremely grateful to Sister Bernadette Marie for accepting this position so that **The Good Shepherd** can continue to be published.

Since, for 2007, we are in a time of transition, in regard to the position of Editor of **The Good Shepherd**, we ask for your patience and understanding as we may experience a significant delay in the publication of this important annual. It will take some time for us to develop a new system in regard to acquiring articles, updating directories, etc. We will certainly strive to maintain the high standards set for us by Sister Anne and her fine editorial work but this will take time.

We are now accepting articles for the next edition of **The Good Shepherd**. In order to facilitate the editing and printing of **The Good Shepherd**, the following guidelines are established for submissions wishing to be considered for inclusion in the annual:

1. All articles must be type-written, double-spaced in Microsoft WORD format in 12 point, Times New Roman font. Articles should be e-mailed, as an attachment to me, and I will forward the attachment on to Sister Bernadette Marie. In this age of modern technology, it is easier and more economical to work from a text that is provided via the computer instead of having to retype a full article. E-mailed articles should be sent to the following address: frfrosty@verizon.net.

2. Kindly keep your article between three and ten typewritten pages. We cannot accept an article, which is fewer than three pages. Please try not to go beyond ten pages.

3. If at all possible, kindly send photos to accompany articles. Be sure to properly identify the persons, places and/or situations expressed in the photo(s). Please identify, within the text of your article, where the photo is to be placed.

4. The scope of our articles is broad. Any topic of interest to Slovak-American Catholics can be included in our annual. Articles solely political in nature will not be accepted.

5. As Editor, Sister Bernadette Marie, SS.C.M., retains the right to correct grammatical errors, delete repetitions, rearrange ideas to make them more clear, etc. However, she will not substantially change your ideas.

6. It is preferred that articles be written in English. If, however, articles in Slovak are submitted, they will be sent to another person for editing.

Once again, I sincerely thank all of the faithful contributors to **The Good Shepherd**. Your contributions, year after year, ensure the fact that we are able to provide a quality annual, which helps celebrate our Catholic faith, preserves our Slovak heritage and allows our readers to stay in touch with what's happening in the Catholic Church, in Slovakia and in the Slovak-American community. We are looking forward to your contributions again this year.

For those wishing to send greetings to Sister Anne, her address is:

Sister Anne Kremenik, V.S.C.
Vincentian Sisters of Charity
8200 McKnight Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

May God bless you and the Slovak Catholic Federation!

Rev. Philip A. Altavilla
National President
Slovak Catholic Federation



Members of the 2006 Consular Tour with Ambassador Rodolphe Vallee.

Some Highlights of the 7th Consular Tour

The 7th Annual Consular Tour of Slovakia, August 18 to September 1, 2006, was another huge success. Escorted by Slovak Honorary Consul Joseph Senko and his wife Albina, the participants spent 14 exciting days touring Slovakia. In addition to visits to Bratislava, Nitra, Trnava, Sastin, Trencin, Tatras, Kezmarok and Levoca, the group visited the Punkevní Cave and the Macocha abyss in Brno as well as many historic landmarks in Prague. They had private visits with the U.S. Ambassador Rodolphe Vallee in Bratislava and Archbishop Jan Sokol at his residence in Nitra. There was also a private visit with Mayor Benc in his office in Presov, the sister city of Pittsburgh, and a private tour of the U.S. Steel plant in Kosice.

Other highlights of the tour included mock weddings in Krakovany and Zdiar. While staying at the spa in Trencianske Teplice, everyone received six invigorating spa treatments. The rafting trip on the Dunajec ended with an outdoor picnic featuring halusky and goulash followed by live Goral folk music. During the tour, the group was entertained by seven different musical folk groups.

The 2006 tour was a memorable experience for all the participants. Joseph and Albina Senko are already planning several tours to Slovakia in 2007. For more information call 412/531-2990.

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CARPATHIAN COOKBOOK

The "Carpathian Cookery" cookbook, now in its 12th printing, is again available for sale. The 330-page cookbook now features a protective plastic cover and includes sections on Easter Customs and recipes (and Christmas customs and recipes), traditional Rusyn foods, other ethnic dishes, and many other tried and true recipes of Saint John's parishioners. Many paska and kolachi recipes, as well as meatless dishes and Lenten recipes, suitable for the Great Fast as well as the Pre-Christmas Fast. The cost of this cookbook is \$13.00 plus \$2.00 postage and handling. If ordering from Canada, please send a \$20.00 U.S. Postal money order payable in U.S. dollars to reflect the difference in the exchange rate and postage cost. To order, please send a check or money order to: Ethnic Craft Club, St. John Byzantine Catholic Church, 185 East Main Street, Uniontown, PA 15401, or call 724/438-6027 for more information.



Chicago Branch Hosts Semiannual Meeting and Fall Luncheon

The Assumption of the B.V.M. Society, Branch 493, held its Semiannual Meeting and Fall Luncheon on Saturday, September 30, 2006. College students Andy Coutu and Kelly Bobo, both FCSU Scholarship recipients, were each awarded a \$50.00 grant from the Branch. After the 2:00 p.m. meeting, the 22 attendees enjoyed a delicious family style dinner at Bohemian Crystal Restaurant in Westmont, Illinois. The dinner featured roast duck, breaded pork tenderloin, and roast beef.

Robert Tapak Magruder, Financial Secretary



L-R: Bernie Sovcik, Branch Financial Secretary Robert Tapak Magruder, Scholarship winner Andy Coutu, and Andrea Coutu.



Bob and Shirley Bruss.



Mr. and Mrs. Jozko Janusek



Branch President Ed Kedzuch with Vice President Emil Rusinak.



Scholarship winner Kelly Bobo and her mother Melody.



Branch Secretary Valerie Vesely (left) and Elaine LaPierre.



Amelia Rogalin and Gerry James.



L-R: Pete Turner, Don Cummings, and Bob Babb



L-R: Linda Becker, Jacki Becker, and Beverly Rusinak.



Christmas Greetings From National President-Elect Andrew M. Rajec

At this most special time of the year, filled with love, hope and memories of family and friends, both present and departed, I am writing my first message to you as President-Elect of the First Catholic Slovak Union.

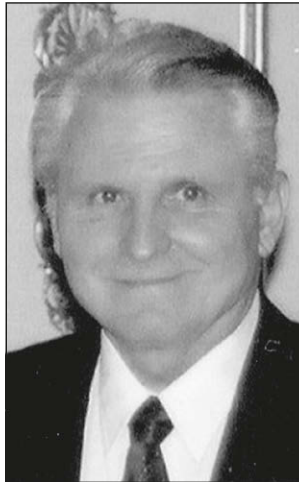
Our great society has endured and prospered for well over a century. We are strong both in membership and in assets. The upcoming years will present challenges and opportunities for the Jednota. Together we can thrive and prosper. I ask for your support and pledge my efforts to do the best for the society. Our goal is to be responsive and to meet the needs of our members while being faithful to our Catholic and Slovak heritage. I look forward to meeting many of you in the years ahead.

President Hricik had a special gift in writing his Christmas and Easter messages. He was able to blend his own life experiences of Slovak culture into words in a unique way. I am of a newer generation and can only hope in a small way to learn from his example.

For myself and my family we wish a blessed Christmas and New Year to each one of you and your family.

Vesele Vianoce a stastlivy Novy rok.

Andrew M. Rajec, National President-Elect



Andrew M. Rajec



Slovak Christmas

Slovak popular culture is rich in customs for the various seasons of the year. Those customs associated with Christmas occupy a special place in the hearts of Slovaks everywhere. These customs express the joy and hope Slovaks feel at the birth of Jesus Christ.

Christmas Eve (in Slovak, "stedry vecer" or "bountiful evening") is for Slovaks the most custom-filled day of the Christmas season. All sorts of special foods and activities are found at the evening meal. The head of the household begins the meal with prayer. After this, the father or mother takes some honey to make a small sign of the cross on the foreheads of everyone present. This gesture reminds them to have Jesus, the Divine Redeemer, always in their thoughts, and to live and work in such harmony and pleasant fellowship that will sweeten all their lives.

In some households, as the sign of the cross is made on the forehead, a wish is expressed. For instance, a husband or wife making the sign of the cross on the forehead of the other spouse: "May the love between us stay as sweet as this honey." Or a parent to a child: "May you always love your parents as sweetly as this honey and so be loved by others accordingly."

Usually, the meal begins with "oplatky," which are unleavened wafers on which are imprinted Nativity scenes. The father serves "oplatky" and honey to everyone at the table. Then a soup of sauerkraut brine and dried mushrooms is served. The next dish is "opekance—pupacky—bobalky." These are like tiny biscuits of yeast-leavened dough. After they are baked, they are buttered and sprinkled with poppyseed or, in some households, with sauerkraut. It is a longstanding custom that during the Christmas Eve supper, children recite some prepared expression of their devotion and

gratitude to their parents—some verses or even a brief song. After the grace ending the meal has been said, everyone, especially the children, goes to the room where the Christmas tree has been placed. There, presents are eagerly opened by all.

"Kolace" (pastries), "makovniky" (poppyseed rolls), "Orechovniky" (nut rolls), and other delicacies have been prepared, especially for guests and carolers. In many places still, carolers go about neighborhoods bringing Christmas joy through their singing. For their effort, they are called into homes and treated to all the various pastries and delicacies prepared for this season.

On Christmas Day, the "betlehemci" or "jaslickari" (Bethlehem strollers) begin their sacred drama. These strollers visit homes with a miniature Bethlehem scene made of wood with all the various Nativity characters — like little dolls set in the stable. One of the strollers represents an angel. He is dressed in white and wears a gold crown. He carries the Bethlehem scene. There are four other characters — Baca, Stacho, Fedor, and Kubo. They wear sandals or boots and have decorative hats in various shapes. Each bears a shepherd sack or knapsack on his shoulders and carries a stick or staff with pieces of jingling metal or bits of chain attached to one end. They use these sticks to beat the time of the music as they sing and dance.

After the Bethlehem strollers have entered a home, the "angel" sings an invitation to the people. Then Fedor introduces the group. The strollers then do a shepherd folk dance and perform a dramatization with song of the angel appearing to the shepherds at Bethlehem. After the dramatization, the group is given some offering for which they express their gratitude, with an appropriate song.



Co-editors Darina Tuhy (left) and Helen Savinski (right) present a copy of the book, **SLOVAK FOLK CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS** to Elaine Stefanko, Co-ordinator of Information Services at the Osterhout Library in Wilkes-Barre.

Book Presentation in Wilkes-Barre

Slovak Heritage Society of Northeastern Pennsylvania recently presented a copy of the book, **SLOVAK FOLK CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS** to the Osterhout Free Library, in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. The book, written by Martin and Rudolf Bosak of Slovakia, provides information to those who wish to learn more about Slovak heritage and traditions. In the book there is information on weddings, christenings, funerals and major feasts.

For more information or to order a book contact Elaine Palischak, 1340 West Mountain Road, Plymouth, PA 18651; Phone: 570/779-1694; Email: shsnepa@verizon.net.



Presentation Date for Immigration Documentary Scheduled for Spring 2007

The presentation date for the documentary film on Slovak immigration to Northeast Pennsylvania has been changed to the Spring of 2007, according to Philip R. Tuhy, Chairman of the Slovak Heritage Society of Northeast Pennsylvania.

The original documentary, "The Hunkies", was scheduled for presentation on December 16, on WVIA-TV, but the bulk of background material gathered merited making it into a three-part mini-series, station officials reported.

The film chronicles the emigration of over 1 million Eastern Europeans from 26 different homelands and their settlement in Northeast Pennsylvania between the years 1880 and 1940. Several board members of the Slovak Heritage Society of Northeast Pennsylvania were interviewed for the documentary and provided background information on their families who immigrated to the area from Slovakia.

Chairman Tuhy stated the Spring viewing date will be made known when available.

NEWSPAPER DEADLINES

All copy is due by 4:30 P.M., THE MONDAY BEFORE THE ISSUE DATE, unless otherwise stated below because of special holiday scheduling. Copy that is not received by this deadline will not necessarily appear in the following Wednesday's issue.

Issue Date

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24

Copy Deadline

MONDAY, DECEMBER 18
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29
MONDAY, JANUARY 15

Correspondents who are announcing upcoming events should remember that the JEDNOTA is printed EVERY OTHER WEDNESDAY, and should take into account the extra time lost in the postal system. Therefore, please plan to have your announcements to us in ample time for them to be printed and received by the readership.

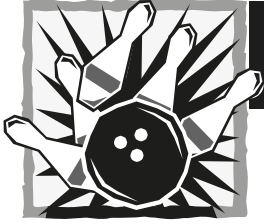
Send all copy (English AND Slovak) to:

Anthony Sutherland, Editor

"JEDNOTA"

1011 Rosedale Avenue, Middletown, PA 17057-4835

FAX: (717) 944-3107



JEDNOTA BOWLING RESULTS

AKRON MIXED RETIREES (BRANCH 553) September 28, 2006

Team	Won	Lost
Old Timers	5	2
Saints	5	2
Bits & Pieces	5	2
Strugglers	5	2
Revelers	5	2
Hot Shots	2	5
Cliff Hangers	2	5
Phantoms	2	5
Alley Cats	2	5
Mark'm	2	5

High single game team: Phantoms-840. High three games team: Old Timers-2364. High single game individual: (woman) Katie Corall-181; (man) Gary Kolb-218. High three games individual: (woman) Katie Corall-519; (man) Gary Kolb-584.

Next four high single games: (women) Joanne Head-178, Connie Pisciotto-177, Cecelia Petrusek-167, Kay Dishauzi-162; (men) George Kacsanek-200, Don Olenick-199, Art Berndt-194, Joe Simkanin-194, Hurland Parker-191.

Next four high three games: (women) Connie Pisciotto-476, Kay Dishauzi-439, Joanne Head-439, Ruth Perich-421; (men) Hurland Parker-534, Walt Nolan-525, George Kacsanek-519, Art Berndt-517, Joe Simkanin-517.

October 5, 2006

Team	Won	Lost
Saints	10	4
Old Timers	10	4
Hot Shots	9	5
Phantoms	9	5
Alley Cats	9	5
Bits & Pieces	5	9
Strugglers	5	9
Revelers	5	9
Cliff Hangers	4	10
Mark'm	4	10

High single game team: Saints-834. High three games team: Phantoms-2420. High single game individual: (woman) Joyce Walsh-223; (man) Joe Simkanin-246. High three games individual: (woman) Joyce Walsh-538; (man) Art Berndt-638.

Next four high single games: (women) Connie Pisciotto-166, Katie Corall-160, Ruth Perich-159, Vera Thomas-154; (men) Art Berndt-240, George Kacsanek-225, Gary Kolb-214, Hurland Parker-213.

Next four high three games: (women) Betty Nolan-459, Katie Corall-441, Vera Thomas-428, Connie Pisciotto-424; (men) Joe Simkanin-609, George Kacsanek-593, Mick Vegh-565, Tom Walsh-550.

October 12, 2006

Team	Won	Lost
Old Timers	17	4
Phantoms	14	7
Hot Shots	11	10
Alley Cats	11	10
Strugglers	10	11
Saints	10	11
Mark'm	9	12
Cliff Hangers	9	12
Bits & Pieces	7	14
Revelers	7	14

High single game team: Phantoms-841. High three games team: Phantoms-2437. High single game individual: (woman) Joyce Walsh-174; (man) Joe Simkanin-263. High three games individual: (woman) Marge Simkanin-463; (man) Hurland Parker-600.

Next four high single games: (women) Betty Reed-163, Marge Simkanin-162, Katie Corall-156, Connie Pisciotto-154; (men) George Kacsanek-225, Gary Kolb-220, Hurland Parker-213, Tom Walsh-212, Walt Nolan-212.

Next four high three games: (women) Katie Corall-448, Connie Pisciotto-439, Betty Reed-430, Joyce Walsh-430; (men) George Kacsanek-590, Tom Walsh-583, Mick Vegh-571, Joe Simkanin-539.

October 19, 2006

Team	Won	Lost
Old Timers	22	6
Phantoms	21	7
Hot Shots	18	10
Cliff Hangers	14	14
Alley Cats	13	15
Strugglers	12	16
Revelers	12	16
Saints	10	18
Bits & Pieces	9	19
Mark'm	9	19

High single game team: Phantoms-868. High three games team: Phantoms-2520. High single game individual: (woman) Kay Dishauzi-182; (man) Steve Dishauzi-254. High three games individual: (woman) Marge Simkanin-492; (man) George Kacsanek-605.

Next four high single games: (women) Marge Simkanin-170, Betty Nolan-162, Vera Thomas-159, Betty Reed-158; (men) Mike Lionetti-242, George Kacsanek-241, Walt Nolan-214, Art Berndt-207.

Next four high three games: (women) Vera Thomas-445, Kay Dishauzi-444, Betty Nolan-436, Betty Reed-419; (men) Walt Nolan-575, Steve Dishauzi-561, Mike Lionetti-558, Art Berndt-545.

October 26, 2006

Team	Won	Lost
Old Timers	23	12
Phantoms	21	14
Hot Shots	20	15
Alley Cats	18	17
Revelers	18	17
Strugglers	17	18
Cliff Hangers	16	19
Mark'm	16	19
Bits & Pieces	14	21
Saints	12	23

High single game team: Phantoms-797. High three games team: Phantoms-2374. High single game individual: (woman) Marge Simkanin-185; (man) Art Berndt-225. High three games individual: (woman) Vera Thomas-457; (man) Lenny Gmerek-549.

Next four high single games: (women) Marge Simkanin-185, Rose Moskos-165, Vera Thomas-158, Marge Simkanin-158, Joanne Head-155; (men) Lenny Gmerek-215, Joe Simkanin-207, Walt Blateric-188, Tom Walsh-186.

Next four high three games: (women) Marge Simkanin-456, Joyce Walsh-427, Clara Vegh-425, Rose Moskos-421; (men) Art Berndt-558, Joe Simkanin-538, Gary Kolb-512, Tom Walsh-503.

November 2, 2006

Team	Won	Lost
Old Timers	28	14
Hot Shots	25	17
Phantoms	23	19
Revelers	22	20
Strugglers	20	22
Alley Cats	20	22
Cliff Hangers	19	23
Mark'm	18	24
Saints	17	25
Bits & Pieces	16	26

High single game team: Old Timers-835. High three games team: Old Timers-2419. High single game individual: (woman) Joyce Walsh-184, Clara Vegh-184; (man) Tom Walsh-236. High three games individual: (woman) Clara Vegh-425; (man) Tom Walsh-635.

Next four high single games: (women) Marge Simkanin-169, Katie Corall-164, Betty Nolan-162, Connie Pisciotto-145; (men) Hurland Parker-225, Gary Kolb-209, Art Berndt-207, Joe Simkanin-198.

Next four high three games: (women) Joyce Walsh-418, Connie Pisciotto-405, Katie Corall-402, Betty Nolan-400; (men) Art Berndt-580, Hurland Parker-579, Joe Simkanin-563, Gary Kolb-539.

November 9, 2006

Team	Won	Lost
Old Timers	30	19
Hot Shots	27	22
Revelers	27	22
Cliff Hangers	26	23
Strugglers	25	24
Alley Cats	25	24
Bits & Pieces	23	26
Phantoms	23	26
Mark'm	20	29
Saints	19	30

High single game team: Revelers-816. High three games team: Phantoms-2222. High single game individual: (woman) Betty Nolan-177; (man) Joe Simkanin-236. High three games individual: (woman) Cecelia Petrusek-475; (man) Joe Simkanin-593.

Next four high single games: (women) Cecelia Petrusek-173, Marge Simkanin-164, Katie Corall-157, Joanne Head-156; (men) Art Berndt-215, Jim Misanko-211, Gary Kolb-205, Walt Nolan-201.

Next four high three games: (women) Marge Simkanin-441, Betty Nolan-434, Joanne Head-425, Katie Corall-420; (men) Art Berndt-586, Jim Misanko-540, Steve Dishauzi-506, Tom Walsh-505.

Vera Thomas, Secretary

YOUNGSTOWN JEDNOTA MIXED REV. JOSEPH L. KOSTIK DISTRICT

November 11, 2006

Team	Won	Lost
Br. 682/Florand	35.5	14.5
Br. 731/Catullo's/		
Kubina-Yuhasz	28.5	21.5
Rev Kostik Dist/Ferenchak's	28	22
Br. 260/Komara's	8	42

High single game individual: (men) Tom Morella-218, Bob Franko-209, Rich Kollar-201; (women) Michelle High-248, Irene Makovec-176, Judy Nuth-157. High three games individual: (men) Tom Morella-596, Bob Franko-538, Joe Scavina-497; (women) Michelle High-630, Judy Nuth-455, Irene Makovec-437.

November 26, 2006

Team	Won	Lost
Br. 682/Florand	39.5	15.5
Br. 731/Catullo's/		
Kubina-Yuhasz	29.5	25.5
Rev. Kostik Dist/		
Ferenchak's	29	26
Br. 260/Komara's	12	43

High single game individual: (men) Jeff Peshek-251, Tom Morella-215, Bob Franko-191; (women) Michelle High-279, Theresa Zouck-175, Irene Makovec-163. High three games individual: (men) Jeff Peshek-597, Tom Morella-524, Bob Franko-522; (women) Michelle High-637, Theresa Zouck-435, Barb Hosa-432.

Paul Ritz, Secretary

MONTREAL JEDNOTA MIXED November 7, 2006

Team	Points
Gerry Madejchuk	38
John Gaydos	38
James Verrillo	38
John Jasko	36
Domenic Pugliese	35
Mary Makovsky	35
Emil Ondrechak	34
Tony Makovsky	34
Steve Szubiak	34
Paul Dvorsky	28

High single game team: Steve Szubiak-659. High three games team: Paul Dvorsky-1777. High single game individual: (woman) Mary Jurkanin-199; (man) Gerry Madejchuk-218. High three games individual: (woman) Mary Jurkanin-495; (man) Gerry Madejchuk-567. Next four high single games: (women) Mary Makovsky-193, Marta Fuska-170, Rosa Pugliese-139, Valerie Demendy-138; (men) John Chandik-204, Steve Szubiak-202, Tony Makovsky-197, Mike Szubiak-193.

Next four high three games: Mary Makovsky-486, Rosa Pugliese-403, Ann Ondrechak-403, Olga Slodichak-397; (man) Tony Makovsky-553, Steve Szubiak-508, Emil Ondrechak-503, John Chandik-502.

November 14, 2006

Team	Points
John Gaydos	43
James Verrillo	41
Gerry Madejchuk	40
Mary Makovsky	39
Tony Makovsky	39
Domenic Pugliese	38
John Jasko	38
Emil Ondrechak	36
Steve Szubiak	36
Paul Dvorsky	33

High single game team: Paul Dvorsky-676. High three games team: Paul Dvorsky-1857. High single game individual: (woman) Mary Jurkanin-231; (man) John Chandik-226. High three games individual: (woman) Mary Jurkanin-558; (man) James Verrillo-619.

Next four high single games: (women) Mary Makovsky-181, Olga Slodichak-174, Anne Szubiak-170, Pauline Dvorsky-159; (men) James Verrillo-217, Paul Dvorsky-198, Joe Corej-193, Domenic Pugliese-189.

Next four high three games: (women) Mary Makovsky-472, Pauline Dvorsky-426, Olga Slodichak-419, Ann Ondrechak-418; (men) John Chandik-588, Domenic Pugliese-535, Paul Dvorsky-527, Steve Szubiak-511.

Mary Makovsky, Secretary

continued on page 11

Christmas Greetings from the Executive Secretary



Kenneth A. Arendt

During this very busy season of the year, please take the time to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas – the birth of our Savior.

On behalf of my family and myself, I would like to extend to you the peace and joy that is Christmas.

Kenneth A. Arendt
Executive Secretary



JEDNOTA BOWLING RESULTS

continued from page 10

TORONTO SLOVAK MIXED (BRANCH #785)

September 6, 2006

Pos	Tm#	Team	Won	Lost
1	8	Jim Szabo	7.0	0.0
2	1	Sharon Tomas	7.0	0.0
3	13	Anne Mitro	5.0	2.0
4	11	Jason Ubeika	5.0	2.0
5	10	Denise Ricciuti	5.0	2.0
6	5	Joe Jursa	5.0	2.0
7	3	Rose Pikul	5.0	2.0
8	9	Greg Gry	2.0	5.0
9	12	Ed Jursa	2.0	5.0
10	6	Jerry Siman	2.0	5.0
11	14	John Jursa	2.0	5.0
12	4	Emil Jursa	2.0	5.0
13	7	Hank Gry	0.0	7.0
14	2	Stan Pella	0.0	7.0

This Week's Individual High Scores

HI-SERIES-FLAT: Jim Szabo-643; Marie Renaud-477.
HI-SERIES-HCP: Jim Szabo-721; Mary Kovalik-675.
HI-GAME-FLAT: Jim Szabo-255; Marie Renaud-191.
HI-GAME-HCP: Jim Szabo-281; Marie Renaud-244.

September 13, 2006

Pos	Tm#	Team	Won	Lost
1	3	Rose Pikul	12.0	2.0
2	5	Joe Jursa	10.0	4.0
3	8	Jim Szabo	9.0	5.0
4	12	Ed Jursa	9.0	5.0
5	6	Jerry Siman	9.0	5.0
6	11	Jason Ubeika	7.0	7.0
7	1	Sharon Tomas	7.0	7.0
8	4	Emil Jursa	7.0	7.0
9	7	Hank Gry	6.0	8.0
10	10	Denise Ricciuti	6.0	8.0
11	13	Anne Mitro	5.0	9.0
12	2	Stan Pella	5.0	9.0
13	14	John Jursa	4.0	10.0
14	9	Greg Gry	2.0	12.0

This Week's Individual High Scores

HI-SERIES-FLAT: Jason Ubeika-566; Marie Renaud-494.
HI-SERIES-HCP: Frank Bokor-675; Slavo Kovac-675; Helen Kochuta-707.
HI-GAME-FLAT: Danny Zrobok-234; Marie Renaud-191.
HI-GAME-HCP: Mike Grnak-253; Helen Kochuta-272.

September 20, 2006

Pos	Tm#	Team	Won	Lost
1	3	Rose Pikul	17.0	4.0
2	6	Jerry Siman	14.0	7.0
3	12	Ed Jursa	14.0	7.0
4	5	Joe Jursa	12.0	9.0
5	15	Michael Kapitan	12.0	2.0
6	14	John Jursa	11.0	10.0
7	13	Anne Mitro	10.0	11.0
8	9	Greg Gry	10.0	11.0
9	2	Stan Pella	10.0	11.0
10	11	Jason Ubeika	9.0	12.0
11	8	Jim Szabo	9.0	12.0
12	4	Emil Jursa	9.0	12.0
13	1	Sharon Tomas	9.0	12.0
14	7	Hank Gry	8.0	13.0
15	10	Denise Ricciuti	7.0	14.0

This Week's Individual High Scores

HI-SERIES-FLAT: Greg Gry-673; Helen Gry-502.
HI-SERIES-HCP: George Banas-741; Helen Gry-671.
HI-GAME-FLAT: Greg Gry-234; Chris Tokarsky-201.
HI-GAME-HCP: George Banas-270; Chris Tokarsky-277.
NOTE: New team added, Michael Kapitan, and team was given 7 points to start.

September 27, 2006

Pos	Tm#	Team	Won	Lost
1	3	Rose Pikul	22.0	6.0
2	6	Jerry Siman	21.0	7.0
3	5	Joe Jursa	19.0	9.0
4	15	Michael Kapitan	17.0	4.0
5	8	Jim Szabo	16.0	12.0
6	14	John Jursa	16.0	12.0
7	12	Ed Jursa	14.0	14.0
8	4	Emil Jursa	14.0	14.0
9	13	Anne Mitro	12.0	16.0
10	10	Denise Ricciuti	12.0	16.0
11	2	Stan Pella	12.0	16.0
12	11	Jason Ubeika	11.0	17.0
13	1	Sharon Tomas	11.0	17.0
14	9	Greg Gry	10.0	18.0
15	7	Hank Gry	10.0	18.0

This Week's Individual High Scores

HI-SERIES-FLAT: Greg Gry-679; Anne Forma-468.
HI-SERIES-HCP: Slavo Kovac-698; Mary McKenna-687.
HI-GAME-FLAT: Greg Gry-238; Denise Ricciuti-177.
HI-GAME-HCP: Ed Forma-248; Denise Ricciuti-249.

Sharon Tomas, Secretary

the Book Corner

With Christmas fast approaching, our thoughts turn towards finding that unique gift for that special person. Why not consider a book as a gift. It is something that will be appreciated way beyond Christmas and throughout the year. Here are a few books reviewed in our paper this past year and some mentioned in previous years.

A History of Binghamton Slovaks by Imrich Mazar, is a recent translation of the book *Dejiny Binghamtonskych Slovakov 1879-1919* published in 1919. To order a copy send a check or money order for \$34.95 plus \$5.00 for postage to: Wilhelmina J. Satina, 912 West Verde Lane, Phoenix, AZ 85013.

Slovaks on the Hudson by Thomas J. Shelley, is a detailed book about the history of the Slovak community in Yonkers, New York. To order, send \$34.95 plus \$5.00 for postage to: The Catholic University of American Press, Hopkins Fulfillment Service, P.O. Box 50370, Baltimore, MD 21211.

Why God Has Gray Hair by Sophia Zufa, is a collection of stories about growing up and attending Catholic schools. To order send \$10.95 plus \$3.00 for postage to: Echelon Press, P.O. Box 1084, Crowley, TX 76036.

MY SLOVAKIA: AN AMERICAN'S VIEW by Lil Junas, is a 56-page, hard cover book with 80 of the author's photographs. The book is an introspective view of history, tradition and culture, with anecdotal prose, reflecting on her childhood in Pennsylvania and experiences with lifestyles and customs in Slovakia during the 1990s. The book is now being sold as a special offer for \$15.00 including postage. To order, send \$15.00 to Lil Junas, Wartburg College, Waverly, IA 50677. E-mail: junas@wartburg.edu. Junas is also the author of *GOING TO SLOVAKIA?*, a 24-page pocket-size guide (\$3) for visitors to Slovakia. As a special offer, the book and guide are offered for \$20 (includes shipping).

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS by Anne Lucas Ryba, is the story of a Slovak American family from its ancestral home in Slovakia to life in the coal mining town of Grassflat, Pennsylvania. The book includes information about life in Grassflat, Slovak customs, and numerous stories and anecdotes. The 242-page paperback sells for \$22.00 including postage. Make checks payable to Anne H. Ryba and mail to: Anne Lucas Ryba, 7436 Willow Woods Dr., North Olmsted OH 44070, 440/427-8871 or e-mail to: Rybaanne@aol.com.

The classic history of the Cleveland Slovaks by Jan Pankuch, has been translated into English and is available for sale. This book, **HISTORY OF THE SLOVAKS OF CLEVELAND AND LAKEWOOD** is offered for sale by Joseph Hornack for \$26.00 (includes postage). Send your checks payable to Joseph Hornack to Joseph J. Hornack, P.O. Box 31831, Cleveland, OH 44131-0831.

THREE SLOVAK WOMEN is a nonfiction account of the lives of three Slovak women in Duquesne, Pennsylvania, and the love and sense of family binding them together. The author spent six years researching her family's history for the book, which also offers a glimpse into the social and cultural aspects of the lives of Slovaks in the Pittsburgh area.

The book sells for \$16.95 plus \$2.75 for shipping and 8% sales tax in New York. The book can be ordered by mail, with check or money order payable to "Createc" and send to P.O. Box 4744, Ithaca, NY 14852; or by phone at 412/848-1394, or e-mail: tswbook@hotmail.com.

PATCHES OF HISTORY – THE 1920's AND 1930's: HEYDAY OF FAYETTE COUNTY COAL AND COKE IN PENNSYLVANIA by Dr. Regis Maher, is a nostalgic glance at not only the coal industry but life in the region in general. The 212-page book contains over 75 illustrations. It sells for \$25.00 (includes postage) and may be ordered by writing to Barbara Ventura, 6 Sylvanus Avenue, Uniontown, PA 15401.

Here are a few books offered by Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers:

OSEM STOROCI SLOVENSKEJ HERALDIKY by Ladislav Vrtel' is a beautifully illustrated book that traces the development of heraldry in the territory of Slovakia from the sixth century to the twentieth century. It has over 200 color illustrations and English summaries. The book sells for \$34.95.

SLOVAK BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY provides a condensed survey of over 850 prominent personalities of Slovakia from ancient times to the present. The hardbound book has 420 pages and sells for \$34.00.

The Night of the Barbarians by Jan Chryzostom Korec, S.J., is an expose of communist persecution of religion in Slovakia.

For these books, send your check to Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 1000 Brown Street, Unit 101, Wauconda, IL 60084. Postage and handling is \$6.00 for one item and \$1.00 for each additional item.

Coming Events

DECEMBER

17 – A Meeting of the Prince Pribina District at St. John Bosco High School, 13640 South Bellflower Boulevard, Bellflower, California. Mass at 11:00 a.m. in the Chapel, followed by lunch and meeting in the cafeteria.

JANUARY

14 – The Msgr. Michael Shuba District's Annual Meeting at 1:30 p.m. at SS. Cyril and Methodius Church Hall, Mississauga, Ontario.

21 – A Meeting of the Prince Rastislav District at 12:30 p.m. at SS. Cyril and Methodius, Parish Hall, Montreal, Quebec



Andrew R. Harcar, Sr.

Christmas Greetings from the Vice President

Since Halloween, I've noticed that our daily newspaper has been crammed full of circulars from various stores. This year, it seems like Thanksgiving was ignored by the merchants. They went from Halloween to Christmas.

The circulars are all colorful and eye appealing. Every store is trying to outdo the other in hopes of enticing you to buy merchandise from them.

With all the commercialism, we are losing sight of the true meaning of Christmas, which is the birth of the Holy Christ Child, who brought new faith and hope to all the world.

Several years ago, I ran across an article called, "Softly, Christmas" written by Margaret Bundy Moss. Read it over several times to get the full impact of Christmas.

Walk softly...

As you go through Christmas,
That each step may bring you
Down the starlit path
To the mangerbed.

Talk quietly...

As you speak of Christmas,
That you shall not drown out
The glorious song of angels
With idle talk and merriment.

Kneel reverently...

As you pause for Christmas,
That you may feel again
The spirit of the Nativity
Rekindled in your soul.

Rise eagerly...

After you have trod
The Christmas path,
That you may serve more fully
The one whose birth we hail.



Remember this Christmas season to Walk softly...Talk quietly...Kneel reverently...Rise eagerly.

On behalf of my wife Maria, my family and myself, I will pray that the peace of Christ and His holy love be with you and your loved ones this Christmas Season.

Andrew R. Harcar, Sr.
National Vice President

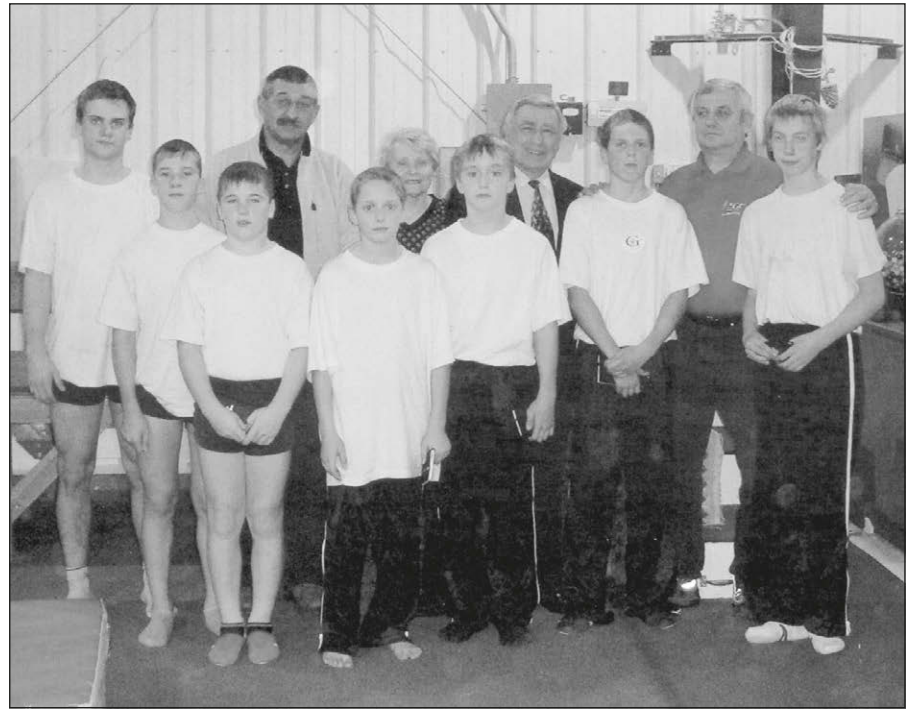
"PARK 2 ANNUITY" – NOW PAYING 4.75%

Under the "Park 2 Annuity", you make a one-time deposit of at least \$1,000.00 into an annuity fund that accumulates interest at a guaranteed rate for two years. Additional deposits are not allowed.

Features of the "Park 2 Annuity" include:

- The FCSU guarantees your initial interest rate for two years. After two years, your funds will continue to accumulate interest at no less than 3.0%.
- The "Park 2 Annuity" can be converted to any of the FCSU Annuity Plans at any time.
- The "Park 2 Annuity" is not applicable to any settlement option or interest option.
- Withdrawal Privileges-Funds withdrawn during the first two years are subject to an FCSU Early Withdrawal Charge. The charge is 6% the first year and 5% the second year. You may, however, withdraw up to 10% of your 'beginning of the year balance' with no FCSU Early Withdrawal Charge.
- Even though you may not incur an FCSU Early Withdrawal Charge, withdrawals before age 59 ½ may be subject to a federal tax penalty.
- Tax on the interest earned is deferred until the annuity funds are drawn.
- The minimum deposit is \$1,000.00.

Please contact your Branch Officer or the Home Office for applications.



Honorary Slovak Consul Joseph Senko (center) and his wife, Albina, welcomed the young gymnasts to Pennsylvania.

Slovak Gymnasts Visit Pennsylvania

Seven gymnasts from Kosice, Slovak Republic, visited Butler, Pennsylvania recently, where they competed against local gymnasts at the Butler Gymnastics Arena. The boys, accompanied by two coaches, were 11 to 13 years old, plus one 17 year old. It was their first visit to the United States. The spectators said that the Slovak boys had an excellent performance and were exciting to watch. Their flawless performance made the Slovak-American viewers proud to be there.

Binghamton Radio Program Features Ethnic Christmas Music

You will discover the true meaning of Christmas on non-commercial radio when you listen to a special six-week presentation of the European Melodies Show entitled "A Holiday Tradition with Daniel Jan." The program may be heard for six weeks beginning on December 5, 2006, from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. on WHRW at 90.5 on the local FM dial in Binghamton, New York and simulcast worldwide on the internet at www.whrwfm.org.

Along with the widest range of multi-ethnic Christmas music for celebration of both the Gregorian and Orthodox calendars, including the finest in traditional carols, hymns and holiday songs, the entire family will enjoy the beautiful traditions and customs from Europe, which have been preserved over the many centuries by our immigrant ancestors. These customs and traditions will be woven into the musical mosaic of all the programs during the six-week presentation. In addition, you will learn to say "Merry Christmas and Happy New Year" in more than 30 languages. The program will also feature rare and vintage recordings of holiday and Christmas music from the past century as well as traditional Christmas music played on national instruments such as the bandura, balalaika, brac, gajduk, zither, harmonike, kankelis, and tambura.

The program will get you in the holiday spirit with music that will put a smile on your face and a song in your heart. For further information, contact Daniel Jan Walikis, 115 Crary Ave., Binghamton, NY 13905, Phone: 607/729-2808, Email: DanielJanW@aol.org.



Slovak Institute Offers Slovak Christmas Cards and Books

The Slovak Institute in Cleveland, Ohio, is once again offering Slovak Christmas cards and books. Slovak and English Christmas cards are available at \$10.00 for a box of ten cards (\$12.00 in Canada). The price includes postage and handling. One may order Christmas Oplatky (3 for \$1.00).

The Institute also has some books for sale. Among the books available for sale are: Philip Hrobak, LET'S LEARN SLOVAK (\$5.00); Jan Pankuch, HISTORY OF SLOVAKS IN CLEVELAND AND LAKEWOOD (\$24.00); Andrew F. Hudak, Jr., SLOVAKS IN FLORIDA (\$10.00); Michael Sinchak, SLOVAK SONGS AND DANCES (\$7.00) and Charles Murin, REMEMBRANCES AND TESTIMONY: DR. JOSEF TISO AND THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC 1939-1945 (\$18.00).

Send your check and order to: Slovak Institute, St. Andrew Abbey, 10510 Buckeye Rd., Cleveland, OH 44104. Please add \$2.00 for postage and handling for the books.

St. Florian Cookbook



St. Florian Church of United, Pennsylvania, is selling a cookbook featuring 450 recipes for main dishes, desserts, soups, salads, breads, appetizers, vegetables, etc. Included in the cookbook is a special ethnic section featuring the recipes for many Slovak dishes along with the menu for the traditional Christmas Eve (Vilija) dinner. Also included is the menu for the traditional blessed Easter Basket. Cookbooks are available for \$10.00 each by mail (\$12.00 from Canada).

Please send all orders to St. Florian Church, P.O. Box 187, United, PA 15689. Make checks payable to St. Florian Church. For additional information, please call the parish office at 724/423-4431.

the Book Corner

TALES FROM SLOVAK CASTLES

A newly published book, TALES FROM SLOVAK CASTLES, has just been released in time for the Christmas Holidays.

In this book, Sylvia M. Lorinc and Lucille P. King give their interpretation of stories surrounding 15 castles in Slovakia. The tales are based on Dr. Ludovit Janota's work, SLOVENSKE HRADY. Dr. Janota gathered oral stories from villagers living near the castles. He collected well over 100 stories about 80 castles. SLOVENSKE HRADY, a four volume set, was published in 1935 and is currently out of print.

Sylvia knew Dr. Janota when she was a little girl in Bratislava, Slovakia. He entertained the family by telling these stories. So rapturously did she listen to the stories that Dr. Janota, who had no heirs, willed her his books.

Sylvia's dream was to interpret these stories into English so that others could enjoy them as much as she did as a child and still does. Her student, Lucille, and she took great pleasure in this project and at the end of the stories explained the historic significance of the people in the tales.

Sylvia Lorinc has co-written several books: SLOVAK PHRASE BOOK, BEST OF SLOVAK COOKING, and BEGINNING SLOVAK, A COURSE FOR THE INDIVIDUAL OR CLASSROOM LEARNER. Lucille, who owns a store called La Boheme, imports Bohemian glass, crystal and jewelry. She was a student of Sylvia and has studied Slovak at the University of Pittsburgh and Comenius University in Bratislava.

The book is currently sold at La Boheme in Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania, for \$15.00. Call 412/561-3717 or 877/892-8900 for further information.

Slovak Prime Minister Visits United Nations

Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico visited New York City recently to attend the 61st opening session of the United Nations General Assembly. In his address to the General Assembly, Prime Minister Fico said he supported efforts to reform the United Nations and the UN Security Council of which Slovakia is a nonpermanent member. Fico also met with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

During his visit in New York, Fico also met with local Slovak cultural, fraternal, and business leaders at a reception at the home of Slovak UN Ambassador Peter Burian.



Prime Minister Robert Fico (center) meets with Slovak Honorary Consul Joseph Senko and his wife Albina.

Lisa Marie Neslusan Weds Steven Patrick Easler

Lisa Marie Neslusan and Steven Patrick Easler were married in Corpus Christi Parish, St. James Catholic Church, in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, on August 12, 2006.

Lisa Marie incorporated her Slovak heritage into her wedding day in various ways. During the Rite of Marriage and Celebration of the Eucharist, the wedding song, "Laska Je Trpezliva", which is based on Corinthians 13:4, was sung in Slovak. The sheet music was provided by her cousin, Juraj Skorvanek from Zastranie, Slovakia, who himself plays that song on the church organ for weddings.

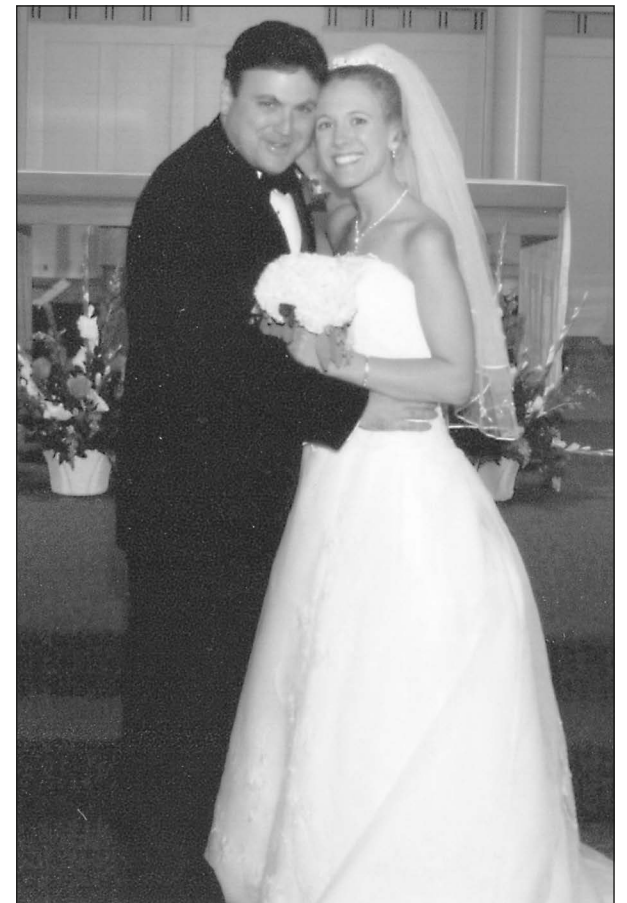
The wedding reception was held at the Portsmouth Country Club. During the wedding toast, Lisa's sister, Lori Nugent, presented Lisa and Steve with a Slovak wedding food tray for the couples first dinner together in the tradition of an old Slovak custom. The food tray consisted of bread, which symbolizes the body of Christ, wine which symbolizes the precious blood of Christ, salt which symbolizes the bitterness that sometimes is experienced in life, and honey which symbolizes the sweetness of life.

For the Father and Daughter dance, Lisa chose "Pod Tym Nasim Okieneckom", which her father always sang to her as she was growing up, and concluded with "Si Moja Mila" polka. This dance music was from a CD entitled "Na Slovenskom Sobasi" which was also sent by her cousin Juraj Skorvanek.

The wedding couple honeymooned in Montreal, Canada.

Lisa is an educator at Santa Teresita School, Los Angeles, California. Steve is employed at Morgan Stanley, Beverly Hills, California. The married couple resides in South Pasadena, California.

Lisa Marie's maternal great-grandfather was Adam Zabka, a member of Branch 859 of Webster, Massachusetts and emigrated from the village of Kotrcina Lucka. Lisa's paternal grandparents, Zofia and Martin Neslusan, also of Branch 859, emigrated from the village of Zastranie. Both neighboring villages are northeast of the city of Zilina. Lisa is the daughter of Joseph and Carol Neslusan, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. All are members of Branch 859, Webster, Massachusetts.



Mr. and Mrs. Steven Easler

Presenting the Traditional Slovak Wedding Day Tray to Lisa and Steve August 12, 2006

I present this tray of food,
to our bride and groom,
for their first meal together,
in the tradition of an
old Slovak custom:

Bread – which symbolizes the body of Christ, is offered so that you will never go hungry.

Wine – which symbolizes the precious blood of Christ, is offered so that you may enjoy much happiness.

Salt – which symbolizes the bitterness that sometimes is experienced in life, is offered so that you may enjoy the full flavor and spice of life.

Honey – which symbolizes the sweetness of life, is offered so that your love for each other will always remain sweet.

FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY ~ HOLIDAY HOURS

Home Office will be closed on the following days during the holidays:

Christmas – December 25 and 26, 2006
New Years Day – January 1, 2007

Vinsovania – Christmas Wishes in Slovakia

Michael J. Kopanic, Jr., Ph.D.

One of the wonderful customs common across Slovakia during Christmas (*Vianoce*) time is the traditional wish, or in Slovak, *vinsovanie* [which is pronounced veenshoh-vawneea]. Whenever one visits someone during the Christmas holidays, the first thing one does is to begin a long wish list of good fortune and God's blessings for the household.

When I grew up in Youngstown, Ohio, this wish would be faithfully pronounced at the door of all our Slovak relatives and friends. But we children had no idea of what was going on, since our parents never bothered to explain it to us, and we did not know many Slovak words apart from foods and a few warnings when we were misbehaving. Our family spoke the Spis dialect from eastern Slovakia, and we heard mainly Spis, since a large number of Spis immigrants settled in Youngstown in order to work in the steel mills there. Youngstown boasted large Slovak communities and parishes on both the Southside and Westside, and in Campbell on the east end of the city, and in Struthers just south of the city.

My wife Rebecca has shared similar stories about the Slovak Christmas wishes. She noted how her Uncle Steve Gavulik would come over, jolly as can be, and he and her father, Joe Kocurek, would exchange hearty greetings with one another in Slovak. She had no idea of what was said, and why they got so worked up about it. She thought they were just being silly. Again, it was never explained. But this was the tradition of the Slovak Christmas wishes – *vinsovanie*.

Having lived in Slovakia at Christmas time when I was doing research there in 1982-83, I found that the same custom persisted in a few Slovak villages there, but has gradually faded as modernization has set in.

The original Christmas custom of wishing had its roots in the Bethlehem strollers, the so-called *jaslickari*. Generally these men imitated the shepherds of Jesus' time and were going around wishing everyone a Merry Christmas (*Vesele Vianoce*) and blessing the households of all whom they visited. Often they would receive some tasty treats like *kolace* as a reward for their fond wishes, and accompanying songs. They were the equivalent of what we call Christmas Carolers in English. But the extended greetings became an integral part of visiting, and the male member of the household always pronounced the Christmas greeting.

Here is a *vins* [veench] commonly used at St. John the Baptist Church in Campbell, Ohio.

*Vinsujem Vam Bozke pozehnanie na kazdy krok,
u praci zdravicka, a na stole chliebicka,
do srdcia radosti, do dusia milosti.*

*Anjel pokoja, nech u Vas prebyva,
laska Krista Pana, nech u Vas spociva.*

*Nech novonarodeny Kristus Pan
Vas pozehna na kazdy krok, az do
Vaseho skonania.*

*A matka Bozia, nech Vas opatruje kazdy
den, tomto slazavom udolie.*

*Svaty Jozef, nech kazdeho sprovadza, a
do vecnosti, nech im spomaha.*

Translation:
We wish you God's blessing in every step
you take,

May you be healthy at work, have bread
on your table,
Joy in your hearts, and mercy in your
souls.

May the Angel of peace be with you
always,

May the love of Christ the Lord comfort
you.

May the newborn Christ the Lord
Bless you in every step you take, until
your final one.

And may the Mother of God she watch
over you, in this valley of tears.

May St. Joseph look after each and every
one of you,

and may he help you on the way to the
eternal goal.

Here is a shorter *vins* from Topolcany in
central Slovakia, which was immediately
spoken when entering a household.

*Vinsujem vam na tieto slavne sviatky
Krista Pana narodenie,
Aby vam dal Pan Boh zdravie, st'astie,
Hojne bozske pozehnanie a po smrti
Kral'ovsto nebeske obsiahnu'.*

Translation:

I wish you on these glorious holy days
Of the birth of Christ the Lord,
That the Lord God grants you health,
happiness,
Lots of blessings from God, and after
your death,
May you attain the heavenly kingdom.

Another common greeting was the fol-
lowing:

*Na tieto slavne sviatky narodenia Krista
Pana,
Vinsujem vam, aby vam dal Pan Boh
zdravie, st'astie,
hojne pozehnanie.
Nech vam potesia deti,
Spasenie pre dusu,
a po smrti kral'ovsto nebeske,
a pre rodinu,
nech Pan Boh dava vsetko co ziadate.*

Translation:

"On this glorious feast of the birthday
of Christ our Lord,
I wish you from God,
good health, happiness
and abundant blessings.
May it be yours to enjoy comfort
from your children,
salvation for your soul.
The kingdom of heaven after death,
and for the family's welfare, may you
have
whatever you ask of God."

Finally, here is the *vins*, which my father
always recited early on early Christmas
morning before they would go to Mass at
Saints Cyril and Methodius in Youngstown,

Ohio. His mother, Julia Kovalcik Kopanicak,
taught him this *vins*, and she was from the
village Harichovce, just north of Spisska Nova
Ves. So we can safely assume that this is a
traditional greeting from the central region
of the Spis district.

For about an hour, he and his brother
Paul used to greet their Slovak neighbors,
the Fulko's, Ruby's, and other Slovaks on
the East Side of Youngstown. For Eastern
Rite Christians like Annie and Mike Demetro,
they would present their wishes on Janu-
ary 7th. Here are the words they used for
vinsovanie.

*Ja vam tu vinsujem na toto Bozieho
narodenia,
zeby Pan Boh dal vam dobre zdravie i
l'ubos do druhej Bozieho narodenia.
Mensie hriechami, vacsšie radosti,
Bozke milosti,
Pokojnejši, spokojnejši, rok jak zili a
prezili.
Pochvaleny bud' Pan Jezis Kristus!*

Translation:

I wish you on this birthday of God,
That the Lord God will grant you good
health and
Love that last until God's next birthday.
May you have fewer sins, greater joys,
God's grace,
A more peaceful and more satisfying year
than what you lived and survived.
Praise be to the Lord Jesus Christ!

The visited household would then answer:
Na veku Amen. (Forever, Amen.)

A little boy, Joey Hruby, used to come to
my father's house and *vinsovat'*.

*Ja vam tu vinsujem na pecku visky
cujem!*

Translation: I wish that I will smell whis-
key on your stove!

Obviously, Joey was wishing for good
fortune with the whiskey, for this was during
Prohibition when my grandfather and many
other immigrants made their own stills hard
liquor and wine.

The households used to give the young-
ster some oranges, candy or a piece of *kolac*.
Back then, that was a BIG DEAL!

How beautiful were the customs of the
Slovak people and the Slovak immigrants
who came to America. We can honor them
and Our Lord by helping to continue to
preserve in our memories these wonderful
Slovak religious customs which were an
integral part of their undying faith.

*Vinsujem Vam, nasim citatel'om a brats-
kym clenom, aby ste mali Vesele Vianoce a
stastlivy a pozehnaný nový rok!*

Translation: I wish you, our readers and
fraternal members, a very Merry Christmas
and a Happy and Blessed New Year!

Dr. Michael J. Kopanic, Jr.

FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY – KENNETH A. ARENDT

ATTENTION ALL BRANCH OFFICERS!

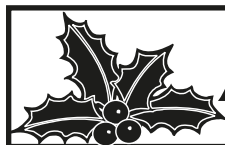
The end of the year is fast approaching. Now is the time to make sure that your branch will qualify for the \$3.00 per member stipend. As you know at the 46th Convention in Toronto, Canada, the delegates amended the bylaws regarding the requirements branches must meet in order to receive the stipend. Bylaws Section 4.05 states:

"By the end of February of each year, the Home Office shall pay each local branch \$3.00 per member, active and non-active, on record as of December 31 of the prior year, provided the following requirements have been fulfilled:

- Published, announced, and conducted two(2) semi-annual meetings, one of which shall be an annual meeting held for the election of officers.
- Submitted an annual report to the Executive Secretary on a form provided, by February 15th of the following year.
- Submitted a financial report to the Executive Secretary on a form provided, by February 15th of the following year.
- Hosted, sponsored, promoted, or attended at least one fraternal activity in the past year.
- Produced at least one (1) new contract in the previous calendar year.
- Provided the Home Office, on a continuing basis, current addresses of members and completed change of beneficiary forms, death reports, and such other documents as required by the Home Office."

Your branch meeting announcement for publication in the Jednota Newspaper should be sent directly to Jednota Estates, Att: Anthony Sutherland, Editor, 1011 Rosedale Avenue, Middletown, Pennsylvania 17057; Fax (717) 944-3107. Announcements may also be sent directly to the Home Office to be placed on the Branch and District Web Page. All copies are due by 4:30 p.m. the Monday before the issue date.

**IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO, PLEASE BE SURE YOU PRODUCE
ONE NEW CONTRACT FOR THE YEAR.**



A TYPICAL SLOVAK CHRISTMAS EVE MENU



Oplatky • Wine • Honey • Garlic • Dried Peas • Mushroom Soup • Pagach
 • Bobalky • Stewed Prunes • Mushroom Soup (Machanka) • Caraway Soup
 • Mushroom Stuffed Cabbage • Bread for Christmas Eve • Christmas Bread
 • (Figs, Dates, Oranges, Apples, Tangerines) • Mixed Nuts • Nut Rolls
 • Poppy Seed Rolls • Pirohy

PIROHY

1 cup flour
 4 tablespoons water (approximately)
 1 egg

Mix flour and egg with enough water to make a soft dough; knead well. Roll out on floured board until thin. Cut into squares. Place 1 teaspoon filling on each square. Fold in half, making a triangle. Pinch edges well to keep filling inside. Drop into boiling salted water and cook until they rise to surface. Cook 5 minutes longer. Rinse in colander with hot water. Drain. Pour melted butter over pirohy and serve.

Cheese Filling:

1/2 cup dry cottage cheese
 1 egg yolk
 1 teaspoon butter
 Pinch of salt
 Mix together.

Potato Filling:

1 large potato cooked and mashed
 1 tablespoon butter
 Grated cheese to taste (optional)

Lekvar may be used as filling. Cooked sauerkraut may also be used as filling. Drain and rinse sauerkraut in cold water. Brown diced onion in shortening, add sauerkraut. Cook for a few minutes.

BREAD FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

1 package dry yeast
 1/2 cup lukewarm water
 1/8 teaspoon salt
 1 tablespoon sugar
 4 tablespoons sugar
 6 cups flour
 1 teaspoon salt
 4 tablespoons salad oil

Dissolve yeast in warm water with 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1 tablespoon sugar. Set in warm place to rise. Sift 6 cups flour in deep bowl, add 2 cups warm water, 4 tablespoons sugar, 1 teaspoon salt, 4 tablespoons salad oil. Knead well and set aside to rise. When double in bulk, punch down, let rise second time until double. Punch down. Divide dough in two. Shape one part into round bread, cover and let stand 20 minutes. Punch down and reshape. Place in greased pan. Allow to rise until double in bulk. Bake at 350° for 1 hour. *Note:* The second part of this dough will be used for Bobalky.

CHRISTMAS EVE BOBALKY

Use other half of above dough for bobalky. Knead and roll on floured board into rope. Cut and roll into balls about 1 inch in diameter. Place on floured pan, let rise 15 minutes. Bake at 350° for 10 minutes or until just slightly brown. Cook, then place in deep bowl, pour boiling water over just to soak a little. Drain in colander. Then place in serving dish, heat honey with a little water, pour over bobalky. Mix 1/2 cup ground poppy seed and 1/4 cup sugar and then add to bobalky. Let stand several hours in cool place (or refrigerator) for several hours before serving. *Note:* Some bobalky are served with sweet cabbage or sauerkraut. Sautée cabbage or sauerkraut with onion in salad oil, then mix with bobalky.

NUT ROLLS

8 cups flour
 2 cups milk (scalded)
 4 egg yolks
 1 cup sugar
 1 large yeast or 3 envelopes dry yeast
 1/2 pound butter
 1/2 pound shortening
 1 tablespoon salt
 1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla

Dissolve yeast in 1 cup lukewarm milk. Stir well. Add sugar, shortening and salt to the rest of the milk and cool. Beat egg slightly and add to mixture, then add the yeast mixture to the rest of the lukewarm mixture. Put half of the flour in a bowl and add the above mixture a little at a time. Mix well. Add remainder of flour to make soft dough using just enough flour to knead without sticking. Cover. Let rise to double in bulk.

Keep in warm place. Takes about 2 hours to rise. Knead down a little to get out puffiness. Divide into 6 parts and let stand 10 minutes. Roll out and spread with nut mixture. Roll tightly and placed on greased baking sheet and let rise about 1 hour and bake in 350° oven for 35 to 40 minutes. Brush each roll with slightly beaten egg before baking. Brush with melted butter after baked.

Nut Mixture:

4 pounds nuts (ground)
 4 cups sugar
 1 stick butter (melted)
 1/4 cup milk (enough to moisten nut mixture)

PAGACH

10 cups flour
 2 yeast cakes (or 2 packages dry yeast)
 2 sticks margarine
 2 eggs, beaten
 2 tablespoons salt
 1/4 cup sugar
 2-1/2 cups milk (or more if necessary)

Knead all together until well blended as for bread dough. Let rise double in bulk in warm place. Punch down, let rise once again. Turn out on floured board, separate into 8 to 10 portions. Let rise until light. With rolling pin flatten enough to place about 1 cup of filling in center of each mound of dough. Bring dough up over mound and pinch together to shape a round ball. Let rest about 1/2 hour with filing then carefully roll out as thin as you want it. Place on cookie sheet. Bake until golden brown then butter on both sides. Rounds should be about 14 inches in diameter or as thin as you like them.

Filling:

Fried cabbage or potato and cheese

TWO HOUR NUT & POPPYSEED ROLLS

6 cups sifted flour
 1 teaspoon salt
 3 tablespoons sugar
 2 packages dry yeast
 1/2 cup warm milk
 1/4 pound butter
 1/2 cup vegetable shortening
 3 eggs (beaten)
 1 cup sour cream

Dissolve yeast in warm milk. Sift together flour, salt and sugar. Add shortening and butter.

Mix as for pie crust. Add beaten eggs and sour cream. Add yeast and blend well.

Divide dough in four parts. Let rise 30 minutes. Roll each part then as for jelly roll. Spread with one of the following fillings. Roll and place on greased pan and allow to rise for one hour or until double in bulk. Bake 35 to 40 minutes at 350°.

Nut Filing

1/2 pound chopped nuts
 1/2cup sugar
 1 teaspoon vanilla
 1/4 cup scalded milk
 1 teaspoon melted butter
 Melt butter. Add walnuts, sugar and vanilla. Add scalded milk. Mix well.
 1/2 pound ground poppyseed
 3/4 cup sugar
 1/2 cup scalded milk
 1 tablespoon melted butter
 Combine all ingredients, mix well.

CHRISTMAS BREAD

1 cup sugar
 1/2 cup shortening
 2 teaspoons salt
 2 cups scalded milk
 1 cup warm water (NOT HOT)
 2 packages dry or compressed yeast
 2 eggs, beaten
 8 cups flour
 1 cup seedless raisins

Put sugar, shortening, salt and scalded milk in a large bowl; stir until shortening melts. Cool to lukewarm. Pour warm water into small bowl; sprinkle or crumble in yeast, stir until dissolved. Add eggs and yeast to lukewarm milk mixture and blend. Add 1/3 of flour and beat until smooth. Gradually add remaining flour, mixing well after each addition. Add raisins and turn out on floured board and knead until smooth and elastic; place in greased bowl. Brush with melted shortening, cover, and let rise in warm place until it doubles (about 1-1/2 hours). Punch down; divide into 3 equal portions. Shape into 3 round loaves; let rise again until it doubles. Brush with beaten eggs. Bake in hot oven for 10 minutes at 450° then turn to 350° and continue baking for 45 minutes or until golden brown.

MUSHROOM STUFFED CABBAGE

1 head cabbage (about 3 pounds)
 1 large can sauerkraut
 1 cup ground mushrooms
 (either canned, dry or frozen)
 1 cup rice (uncooked)
 2 tablespoons shortening
 1 medium onion
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Brown Gravy Sauce:

1 tablespoon shortening
 1 tablespoon flour

Cut core out of cabbage to loosen leaves. Place cabbage into boiling water for a few minutes. Remove leaves, cut away the thick rib from cabbage leaves. Fry the onions in the shortening until soft, add to mushrooms, rice. Season to a test. Place about 1 teaspoon in each cabbage leaf and roll. Drain sauerkraut, use about half the kraut in the bottom of the pot. Arrange rolls over the kraut, cover with remaining kraut. Fill pot with water, to top the rolls. Cook slowly for about 2 hours.

Sauce: Brown flour in shortening. Add about a cup of water. Bring to a boil, then pour over the cabbage rolls. Cook for just about 5 more minutes.

MUSHROOM SOUP (MACHANKA)

Wash dried mushrooms. Soak overnight. In morning cook mushrooms in the water. Add salt and pepper to taste. Cook slowly for 2 hours or more.

Zaprashka (Soup thickening)

Brown 1 chopped onion in 2 tablespoons salad oil, add browned onion to mushroom soup. To remaining oil add 2 tablespoons flour slowly, brown and then add to mushroom soup to thicken. Cook for a few minutes and serve hot.

MUSHROOM SOUP

7 cups fresh mushrooms (chopped)
 3 quarts water
 1 quart sauerkraut juice
 Salt and pepper (to taste)
 1 small onion
 3 tablespoons butter
 3 tablespoons flour

Cook mushrooms in water about 1 hour. Brown butter and onion; add flour and brown well. Add sauerkraut juice and boil this for 5 minutes. Add to soup and boil 1/2 hour longer.

CARAWAY SOUP

3 tablespoons shortening
 1/2 cup chopped onion
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1 teaspoon caraway seeds
 3 cups boiling water
 3 tablespoons flour

Melt shortening in heavy saucepan. Add chopped onion cook over low heat until lightly golden. Add salt, flour and caraway seeds. Blend a cook, stirring constantly, until mixture is slightly thickened. Serve at once.

'The King'

Over two thousand years ago
 a king was born.

He wasn't born in a mansion
 with a big fancy bed.

He was born in a manger
 where the animals were fed.

A halo took the place of
 a crown for his little head.

The angels were rejoicing
 a star was shining bright

it lit up the sky and led the
 shepherds and the wise men to

where the little king Jesus lie.

This great king still lives today.

We celebrate His birth every
 year with happiness and love.

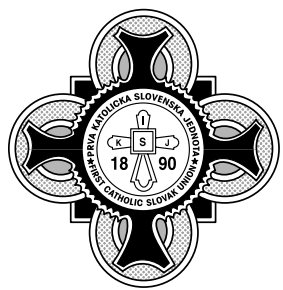
We thank this great king and
 we know that He is watching

as He sends us blessings and
 grace from His home above.

Have a Blessed Christmas

LuLu Ann Bernardich





Katolícky fraternalistický dvojtýždenník

Jednota



ÚRADNÝ ORGÁN PRVEJ KATOLÍCKEJ SLOVENSKEJ JEDNOTY V SPOJENÝCH ŠTÁTOCH A V KANADE

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Vincent Hložník

Vianoce 2006

Sklonení pred velením všemohúceho Boha, od ktorého sme dostali všetko, čo sme s vďačným srdcom prijali, tešíme sa najväčšiemu daru, keď svojho jediného Syna poslal medzi nás, aby ako Boh Človek, náš Učiteľ, Vodca, Brat a Vykupiteľ vyviedol nás z tmy bezútešnosti do svetla večnej istoty. Nech nás betlehemske Dieťa svojimi milosťami a láskou pretvorí na neohrozených synov a dcéry Božie a pripúta nás navždy k sebe zväzkom nerozlúčného spojenectva. Lebo Boh je všetka múdrosť, všetko šťastie, všetká radosť a celá pravda a jediná Pravda, v ktorú sme uverili. Nech nás žehná betlehemske Dieťa dnes i v budúcich časoch. Jemu česť a sláva naveky.

Vianočný a novoročný vinš krajanom

Vážení zahraniční krajanovia, milí priatelia, je tu opäť čas nádherných Vianočných sviatkov. Uplynul rok naplnený činnosťou a obetavou prácou na prospech našich najbližších, priateľov i Vašej slovenskej komunity. V týchto chvíľach bilancujeme svoje osobné i spoločné úspechy a dosiahnuté výsledky, cestu, ktorú sme doposiaľ prešli. Bol to aj rok existencie samostatného Úradu pre Slovákov žijúcich v zahraničí, o zriadenie ktorého ste sa veľkou mierou zaslúžili. Teší nás, že vďaka Vášmu inovenčnému a tvorivému prístupu, desiatkam a stovkám úsilia, slovenské menšiny a komunity vo svete naberajú nový dych, silu a rozvíjajú svoj tvorivý potenciál. Posilňuje sa naša vzájomná spolupráca a v slovenskom svete sa prehlbuje vedomie o pôvode, vzťah ku krajine predkov, k Slovensku, k materinskému jazyku i úcta k vlastným koreňom. Všetkým Vám, ktorí ste počas ostatného roka priložili ruku k nášmu spoločnému národnému dielu, patrí úprimná vďaka.

Milí Slováci, v atmosfére lásky, porozumenia a spolupatričnosti sa lúčime so starým rokom a s nádejou a očakávaním vítame rok budúci. Želajme si navzájom, aby v ňom dominovali vzájomné poznanie, úcta, dôvera a spolupráca. Na ceste k nášmu spoločnému cieľu nech sa Vám všetkým dostáva dostatok pevného zdravia, spohľadného a chápaného rodinného zázemia, spokojnosti a osobných úspechov.

Vilma Prívarová
predsedníčka
Úradu pre Slovákov v zahraničí

Odovzdávajme Vianočné posolstvo v rodine

V júli 2006 sme boli svedkami V. Svetového stretnutia rodín so Svätým Otcem Benediktom XVI. V španielskej Valencii. Hlavnou témou stretnutia bolo "Odovzdávanie viery v rodine." V tejto súvislosti Sv. Otec odkázal rodinám celého sveta: "Kresťanská rodina sa volá preto domácou cirkvou, lebo v rodine sa prejavuje a uskutočňuje spoločenstvo (...) Rodičia sú prví zodpovední za výchovu svojich detí a sú im prvými hlásateľmi viery".

Prežívame vianočné obdobie, kedy si každá kresťanská rodina viac než inokedy uvedomuje, že je domácou cirkvou - spoločenstvom, ktoré by malo byť súdržné a plné viery, nádeje a lásky. Ako sa nám darí v tomto krásnom čase odovzdávať deťom radosť vianočného posolstva o narodení Ježiša Krista, o jeho láske, ktorú by sme aj my kresťania mali darovať svojim bratom a sestrám? Hovoríme o tom a svedčíme pred deťmi tak, aby porozumeli, nadchli sa za

Ježišovu lásku a samé ju odovzdávali primeraným detským spôsobom ďalej. Existuje veľa spôsobov, ako deťom v tejto oblasti pomáhať - príležitostná katechéza a spoločná modlitba v rodine, vianočná pomoc núdnym, spev vianočných kolied, čítanie obrázkovej Biblie, sledovanie filmov s vianočnou tematikou, nacvičovanie vianočných programov a pod.

V tejto súvislosti chcem však zvlášť zdôrazniť vianočnú biblickú katechézu. Spomeňme si na slová Božieho sluhu Jána Pavla II., ktorý pri svojich návštevách Slovenska viackrát hovoril o dôležitosti katechézy. "Osobitnú pozornosť treba venovať katechéze dospelých, ktorá je ústredným problémom súčasnej pastorácie a hlavnou formou katechézy, lebo sa obracia na osoby, ktoré majú najväčšiu zodpovednosť a schopnosť žiť kresťanské posolstvo v jeho naplno rozvinutej podobe. Nemá sa zabúdať, že prvým a najdôležitejším

Pokračovanie na str. 18

VIANOCE

Rudo L. Greguš

Niet sviatkov, ktoré by zapôsobili na ľudské srdce takým hlbokým dojmom ako Vianoce.

Keď sa blížia Vianoce, vstúpi do nás akási tajomná radosť, tajomné očakávanie. Kristus je symbolom pokoja, mieru a ľudstvo sveta vždy obrátilo zrak a srdce k prameňu našej viery, k Bohu a Jeho zrodenia sa v druhej Božskej osobe - Ježišovi.

V človekovi žije túžba po mieri, po pokoji, lebo vždy boli vojny, nenávisť, zloba. Trpiace ľudstvo obracalo svoju myseľ a zrak na Krista. Preto vieme prežiť narodenie Božieho Dieťaťa - čas rozjímania, čas Božského vtelenia sa v nás a v naše precítenie.

Vo vianočnom čase počujeme hlas zvonov, ktorý sa nám zdá ako ozvena Božieho odkazu v sladkom refréne. Vianočné piesne naplňujú zimné ovzdušie a prinášajú radosť do našich srdc. Diamantové cencúle na strechách domov sa kolísajú v kvetnatých vencoch sršiac svätožiaru. Vôňa cedaru a jedličky pripomína, že Novonarodený Ježiško prináša veľký dar svetu.

Vianoce sú sezónou darov, ktoré zohrievajú naše srdcia. Je to čas ukázať ako sa skutočne staráme o tých, s ktorými žijeme a za ktorými smútime keď sa pomínú. Je to doba, kedy máme ukázať viac súcitu, lásky, pomôcť cudzincovi v núdzi a vidieť úsmev na jeho tvári. Cez Vianoce spája nás Idea Boha v akejsi mystickej radosť, že náš život podľa Zákona bude trvať večne. Tento prísľub sa obnovuje, ako sviatok Božieho Narodenia každý rok. Túto pravdu poznávame pri Jasliach a jeden druhému si ju radosť zvestujeme. Je to mystická radosť, lebo majestátno Vianoc zahŕňa tajomstvo zblíženia Boha s ľuďmi.

Pokračovanie zo str. 18



Krátke správy zo Slovenska

Počet občanov nových členských štátov EÚ z východnej Európy, ktorí prišli od rozšírenia únie v roku 2004 pracovať do Británie, prekročil pol milióna. Desiat percent z nich pochádza zo Slovenska. Informovala o tom britská vláda. Ministerstvo vnútra eviduje od 1. mája 2004 do konca septembra približne 510,000 žiadostí o registráciu pracovníkov z ôsmich nových členských krajín EÚ. Takmer dve tretiny z nich (63percent) tvoria Poliáci, nasleduje 11 percent Litovčanov a 10 percent Slovákov. Minister vnútra Liam Byrne uviedol, že pracovníci z nových štátov EÚ prinášajú osov Británii, keďže obsadzujú pracovné miesta, ktoré nemôže zaplniť domáca populácia.

Slávnostným rozsvietením vianočného stromčeka sa 24. novembra začali na Hlavnom a Františkánskom námestí v Bratislave tradičné Vianočné trhy. Atmosféru ich 14. ročníka skvalitnila nová svetelná výzdoba. Navštevníci majú k dispozícii vyše 100 predajných stánkov s pestrým výberom darčiekov, suvenírov a iných ľudovo-umeleckých výrobkov. Nechýbajú ani desiatky stánkov s husacími a kapustnými lokšami, cigánskou pečenkou, vareným punčom, vínom alebo grogom. Trhovým priestorom dominuje 32-ročná vyše 20-metrová jedľa obrovská. Hneď vedľa vianočného stromčeka je pódium, na ktorom sa až do 23. decembra vystrieda celá plejáda umelcov rôznych žánrov. Okrem detských a folklórnych súborov aj Diabolské husle Jána Berkyho-Mrenicu, Zlaté husle s hosťujúcim Jánom Babjakom a ďalšími. Vianočné trhy budú tento rok netradične dopĺňať aj slovenskí spisovatelia. Stánok vydavateľstva LCA pripravil pre čitateľov špeciálnu akciu Čaj o piatej. Každý deň bude vydavateľstvo predávať svoje knihy.

Euro potečie cez obchody. V materiáli sa ďalej uvádza, že nie banky, ale obchody a hypermarkety sa o dva roky stanú najväčšími zmenárňami pri nahradení koruny eurom. Prvých 16 dní januára 2009 bude možné platiť korunami, aj eurom. Nakupovať sa bude za slovenské peniaze, vraciať im budú európske. Zatiaľ sa dá rátať so zmenou korún na eura v januári 2009, lebo vláda premiéra Roberta Fica sa v stredu 29. novembra znova zaviazala, že dodrží tento termín.

V Košiciach vzniklo múzeum, v ktorom sa nachádza 24 voskových figurín osobnosti spojených s metropolou východného Slovenska. Múzeum sa nachádza v Urbanovej veži, v samostnom srdci historického jadra Košíc. Navštevníci tu môžu vidieť takmer živého cisára Žigmunda Luxemburského, kráľa Mateja Korvina, Františka II. Rákociho, bývalého slovenského prezidenta a tiež primátora Košíc Rudolfa Schustera a ďalších. Všetky sochy pre múzeum odlial sochár Miklós Kolle. Výroba jednej sochy stála milión korún.

Približne 60 miliónov korún stála doteraz výstavba westernového mestiečka Siklív mlyn v Liptovskom Mikuláši, ktorý otvorili začiatkom vlaňajšej letnej turistickej sezóny. Počas tohto leta tam zavítalo takmer 100 tisíc navštevníkov, o 50 percent viac ako pred rokom. V zimnej sezóne 2005/2006 do mestiečka prišlo asi 20 tisíc turistov, počas nastávajúcej zimy predpokladajú, že bude dvojnásobok. Zvýšiť návštevnosť vo westernovom mestiečku by v budúcnosti mal pomôcť aj hotel s kapacitou asi 700 lôžok a kongresovou sálou.

Slovensko by malo dostať od Švajčiarska pomoc vo výške 67 miliónov švajčiarskych frankov, čo je asi 1.5 miliardy Sk. Táto suma pochádza z celkovej čiastky jednej miliardy frankov, ktorú Švajčiarsko poskytne novým krajinám Európskej únie v priebehu najbližších piatich rokov. Uviedol to slovenský minister zahraničných vecí Ján Kubiš, ktorý 1. decembra rokoval v Berne so švajčiarskou rezortnou kolegynou Micheline Calmy-Reyovou.

Aj v tomto roku budú slovenskí skauti roznášať po Slovensku betlehemske svetlo. Doručia ho vlakmi do 350 miest a obcí. Už po sedemnásty raz budú odovzdávať štafetu betlehemskeho svetla poľským kolegom, aby toto svetlo putovalo ďalej do východných krajín. V tomto roku prinesie betlehemske Svetlo pokoja a mieru do Európy jedenásťročná Judith Pitzner z hornorakúskeho Ried im Innkreis. Plamienok odpalí vo Svätej zemi z Baziliky Narodenia Pána a letecky ho bude sprevádzať do Európy.

Básnikovi Milanovi Rúfusovi a opernému spevákovi Petrovi Dvorskému udelila Kultúrologická spoločnosť Univerzity Konštantína Filozofa v Nitre Cenu Pavla Straussa za trvalý prínos k rozvoju kultúry a umenia za rok 2006. Operný spevák Peter Dvorský si cenu prevzal na slávnostnom stretnutí, ktoré sa 3. decembra konalo v Divadle Andreja Bagara v Nitre. Milanovi Rúfusovi, ktorý sa kultúrnej slávnosti nemohol zúčastniť, odovzdajú ocenenie v najbližších dňoch.

Bratislavský chlapčenský zbor bude Slovensko reprezentovať na Vianočnom koncerte Európy vo francúzskom Štrasburgu. Na pozvanie francúzskych organizátorov sa na koncerte stretne 25 speváckych zborov z 25 krajín Európskej únie (EÚ), aby spoločným spevom demonštrovali jednotu Európy. Umelecké telesá strávia jeden deň v parlamente, uskutočnia sa dva veľké katedrálne koncerty a znieť budú koledy a vianočné piesne všetkých zúčastnených krajín. Zbory našťudujú a predvedú európsku hymnu. Dirigovať bude francúzsky dirigent z parížskeho rozhlasu.

V Detskom kardiocentre Slovenskej republiky zachránila život 19-ročnému dievčaťu transplantácia srdca. Uskutočnila sa 30. novembra a bola druhá v tomto roku. Transplantáciu vykonal tím lekárov pod vedením primára Mateja Nosáľa. Pacientka sa úspešne zotavuje a jej stav je v súčasnosti dobrý. Vianoce s najväčšou pravdepodobnosťou strávila doma.

TASR a slovenské časopisy



FOTO TASR - Radovan Stoklasa

Nový slovenský rekord o najväčší adventný veniec získal 3. decembra 2006 veniec, ktorý s priemerom 12,3 metra vytvorili v Ilave. Veniec vytvorila počas tohto týždňa desiatka aranžérov z výlučne z prírodných materiálov. Komisar Slovenských rekordov Igor Svitok vykonal meranie a potvrdil jeho slovenské prvenstvo. Do Guinnessovej knihy rekordov sa však veniec nezapíše, v Holandsku majú veniec s priemerom 70 metrov.

Zvýšený záujem občanov o komunálne voľby na Slovensku

Bratislava (TASR) – Na komunálnych voľbách, ktoré sa na Slovensku konali v sobotu 2. decembra 2006 sa zúčastnilo 47,65 percenta oprávnených voličov. Volebná účasť bola nižšia v mestách a mestských častiach, kde dosiahla 36,76 percenta, v obciach prišli k volebným urnám 61,93 percenta voličov. Vo voličských zoznamoch na celom Slovensku bolo zapísaných 4,306,280 občanov. Okrskové volebné komisie vydali 2,052,003 voličských obálok. Počet obcí, miest a mestských častí, v ktorých bolo zvolené obecné mestské a miestne zastupiteľstvo bol 2,906. V porovnaní s komunálnymi voľbami pred štyrmi rokmi bola účasť o 1,86% nižšia. V mestách sa pritom účasť zvýšila, a to o 0,43%, v obciach poklesla o 5,01%.

Štyria kandidáti na primátora v krajských mestách obhájili svoje posty a staronového šéfa radnice na najbližšie štyri roky budú mať Bratislava, Košice, Trnava a Trenčín. V ďalších štyroch krajských mestách podľa neoficiálnych výsledkov komunálnych volieb prišlo k zmenám. Najväčšie prekvapenie sa konalo v Žiline, kde šéfa SNS Jána Slotu po 16 rokoch vystriedal kandidát prave Ivan Harman.

Primátorom Bratislavy sa opäť stal Andrej Ďurkovský, ktorého podporovala koalícia KDĽ a SDKÚ-DS. Podľa

neoficiálnych údajov získal 67,097 hlasov. Staronovým primátorom Košíc sa s počtom hlasov 21,242 stal František Knapík, ktorý v komunálnych voľbách kandidoval za koalíciu KDĽ, SDKÚ-SD a SMK. Na primátorskú stoličku v Trenčíne si opäť zasadne Branislav Celler z koalície SDKÚ-DS a KDĽ, ktorý získal 5,890 hlasov. Ani v Trnave neprišlo k žiadnej zmene. Primátorský post už štvrté volebné obdobie obhájil Štefan Bošnjak za koalíciu KDĽ, SDKÚ-DS. Získal spolu 10,053 hlasov. Novým primátorom Banskej Bystrice sa stal nominant Smeru-SD, SNS a SZS Ivan Saktor, bývalý šéf Konfederácie odborových zväzov. Vo funkcii vystriedal Jána Kráľika, ktorý vládol dve volebné obdobia. Saktor získal 8,133 hlasov. V Žiline po 16 rokoch vlády Jána Slotu nastala zmena a na čele mesta bude Ivan Harman (SDKÚ-DS, KDĽ, OKS a SF). Harman získal 13,050 hlasov. Striedanie vo funkcii primátora nastalo aj v Prešove. Tu bude mestský úrad viesť nezávislý kandidát právnik Pavel Hagyari, ktorý vystriedal svojho predchodcu Milana Benča. Víťaz získal 15,116 hlasov. Svoj post v Nitre neobhájil súčasný primátor Ferdinand Vítek, ktorý kandidoval ako nezávislý. S počtom hlasov 8,033 ho predbehol nominant koalície Smer-SD, KDĽ, SNS a HZDS Jozef Dvonč.

Do USA možno Slováci budú cestovať bez víz

Na tlačovej konferencii v estónskom Talline, kde sa zastavil americký prezident George Bush cestou do Rigy, oznámil, že má v úmysle s Kongresom spolupracovať na úpravách programu, ktorý občanom vybraných zemí umožňuje cestovať do USA bez víz.

“S potešením oznamujem, že budem spolupracovať s našim Kongresom a našimi medzinárodnými partnermi na úprave nášho bezvízového programu,” oznámil Bush na tlačovej konferencii počas návštevy Estónska.

“Je to cesta, ako zabezpečiť, aby národy ako Estónsko sa rýchlejšie kvalifikovali pre program a súčasne ako posilniť bezpečnostné zložky programu,” povedal Bush pred začiatkom summitu NATO v susednom Lotyšsku. Zvažovať by sa mohla doterajšia podmienka, že pre zaradenie do programu musí byť počet zamietnutých žiadostí o vízum z daného štátu nižší než tri percentá. Tým sa teda začína črtiť možnosť pre zrušenie víz pre obyvateľov viacerých stredoeurópskych krajín. Osem bývalých komunistických krajín, ktoré vstúpili do Európskej únie v roku 2004, naliehala na Washington, aby zahrnul ich občanov do svojho programu zrušenia víz, ktorému sa tešia západoeurópske krajiny. Poľskí diplomati vyhlásili, že je nespravodlivé, ak USA prísne trvajú na vízovej povinnosti pre Poliakov potom, ako poľskí vojaci pomohli USA zvrhnúť irackého diktátora Saddáma Husajna a pomáhajú Američanom obnoviť v Iraku mier. Vojakov do Iraku poslali aj Slovensko, Česká republika, Maďarsko, Estónsko a Lotyšsko.

USA nepožadujú víza od občanov pôvodnej pätnástky EÚ a Slovinska, avšak ich bezvízový program vylučuje z účasti na ňom Grécko a väčšinu nových členských krajín EÚ. V súlade so súčasným zákonom USA môžu krajine zrušiť vízovú povinnosť iba ak splní prísne požiadavky, napríklad nesmie prekročiť trojpercentnú hranicu zamietnutých žiadostí o víza.

Podľa Bushových slov sa legislatívny proces na uľahčenie vízových opatrení začne čoskoro a bude zrejme obsahovať úpravu trojpercentnej hranice, súčasne však bude garantovať, že uľahčenie neohrozí americkú bezpečnosť.

Európska komisia navrhla v októbri, aby členské krajiny EÚ prinútili amerických diplomatov žiadať o víza odvetou za odmietnutie Washingtonu zrušiť vízovú povinnosť novým členským krajinám EÚ. Podľa súčasného bezvízového programu občania z 27 zväčša európskych krajín môžu cestovať do USA v rámci turistiky alebo obchodne do 90 dní pobytu bez víza. Približne 15 miliónov ľudí navštívi takto USA každý rok bez potreby žiadať o víza.

TASR

VIANOCE

Pokračovanie zo str. 20

Vianoce sú viac ako trblietajúce ozdoby v obytných domoch a obchodoch. Vianoce sú viac ako dary s ktorými sa delíme. Vianoce sú viac ako vence a zeleň alebo tancujúce snehové vločky. Sú omnoho viac ako radosti detí a svetlá ozdôb na vianočnom stromčeku. Vianoce sú vierou a nádejou. Sú zázrakom - večným pokojom. Vianoce nám prinášajú večnosť a osviecujú chodníky pre každého. Tajomstvo života sa nám roztvorí plnou láskou Novonarodeného Ježiška.

Ale v dnešnom čase len ukradomky sa dostávame k modlitbám zameraným na príchod Ježiška. Advent nám už ukradol materiálny svet a denný zhon po časných záujmoch. Hlboké precítenie Vianoc je v pozadí ako dym bez ohňa. Mnohí nemajú doma spoločnú štedrú vianočnú večeru. Vyhľadávajú reštaurácie, zábavy a tance. Ostáva nám len priateľská vzájomnosť ako širšia rodina, kde uplatníme našu prajnosť a teplo.

Keď počujeme ozvenu anjelských piesní polnočnou oblohou, potom musíme dať nádej kde ona patrí do smutných osamelých očí. A keď zacítíme radosť, ktorá naplní túto požehnanú sezónu v roku, naša láska musí byť tak veľká, že sa rozleje pre všetkých, ktorí ju potrebujú. A ak sa kedy dúfame naučiť odkaz Ježišovho Narodenia, potom každý z nás by sa mal pričiniť zlepšiť život na zemi. Nie je dosť len žiť, ak sa nenaučíme žiť správne. A to so srdcami, ktoré sú plné lásky. Tie horia ako vianočné sviečky v noci!

Cez Vianoce mysl' zaletí do minulosti na rodné Slovensko. Tak radi by sme strávilí kúzlo vianočných sviatkov v učupených slovenských chalupkách. Stôl je prikrytý bielym obrusom, sviatočné príbory, poháre a taniere. Sviečky v oknách a modlitba otca rodiny. Potom oblátky s medom, hríbová polievka, makové, orechové a tvarohové buchty, opekance s makom, ovocie a varené víno so škoricom. Celý dom rozvoniava pečivom i hriatým. Pod oknami susedové deti spievajú vianočné koledy. Pomaly prichádza čas na polnočnú sv. omšu. Rodina sa teplo oblečie a ponáhľa sa do kostola. Kostol je osvietený, sú v ňom jasličky s Ježiškom. Organ znie veselo, slávnostne. Po omši priatelia a známi sa pozdravujú a želajú si radostné a Bohom požehnané Vianoce.

Toto sú spomienky na slovenské Vianoce, ktoré si Slováci v širom svete uchovávajú ako vzácny klenot.

Na Vianoce dostávame vianočné karty - pozdravy. Chcel by som sa podeliť s čitateľmi Jednoty aspoň s jedným vianočným pozdravom:

*Tichá noc, taká tichá,
že aj to srdce zamlká, mlčky sníva,
a taká svätá taká dobrotivá,
že i ten hriešny, od zármutku slepý,
potrať na kolená!*

*Tichá noc, taká pokorná
a taká v čnosti veselá,
že počuť pieseň anjela:
"Buď Bohu sláva!
A na zemi pokoj každej duši,
ktorá ho očakáva!"*

Všetkým Slovákom vo svete úprimne želáme radostné a milostiplné Vianoce a Bohom požehnaný Nový rok 2007.

Rudo L. Greguš



FOTO TASR/AP - Cedric Joubert

Nové členské krajiny Európskej únie sa stanú súčasťou schengenského priestoru od decembra 2007. Najneskôr k 31. decembru budúceho roku sa zrušia kontroly na pozemných hraničných priechodoch i v morských prístavoch, zatiaľ čo na letiskách prestanú existovať najneskôr koncom marca 2008. Podmienkou je však, že budú krajiny na to pripravené. Dohodli sa na tom 5. decembra 2006 ministri vnútra EÚ. Na archívnej snímke z 20. júla 2004 vlajka EÚ a vlajky 25 členských krajín vejú pred budovou Európskeho parlamentu v Štrasburgu.

Schengenský priestor rozšíria na Silvestra 2007

Brusel (TASR) – Ministri vnútra a spravodlivosti EÚ na stretnutí v Bruseli v 5. decembra 2006 rozhodli, že schengenský priestor voľného pohybu osôb sa rozšíri o desať nových členských krajín vrátane Slovenska 31. decembra 2007. Dosiahnutá dohoda predpokladá postupné odstránenie hraničných kontrol do konca budúceho roku za predpokladu, že nové členské štáty splnia prísne bezpečnostné štandardy. Dohoda hovorí, že pozemné a námorné hranice sa plne otvoria na Silvestra 2007, pričom kontroly na letiskách sa zrušia v marci 2008.

Veľká Británia sa odmietala podieľať finančne na rozšírení terajšej schengenskej informačnej databázy o nové členské krajiny Európskej únie. Vzhľadom na meškanie spustenia novej centrálnej informačnej databázy SIS II - čo by pre nové krajiny znamenalo odstránenie kontrol na hraniciach až v

roku 2009 namiesto pôvodne plánovaného októbra 2007 - navrhlo Portugal-sko zapojenie nových členských štátov EÚ do súčasného systému. Kontroly na pozemných hraničných priechodoch i v morských prístavoch by sa tak mohli zrušiť v januári 2008, zatiaľ čo na letiskách by prestali existovať o dva mesiace neskôr. Náklady na zapojenie do terajšej databázy v celkovej výške takmer šesť miliónov eur by znášali všetky členské štáty Schengenu.

Londýn sa obáva, že toto dočasné riešenie povedie k ďalšiemu oneskoreniu spustenia systému SIS II, ktorý britské úrady považujú za nevyhnutný pre boj proti terorizmu. Británia, ktorá nie je súčasťou Schengenu, sa chce finančne podieľať len na vybudovaní databázy SIS II. Tá bude na rozdiel od súčasného systému obsahovať tiež biometrické údaje, ku ktorým bude mať prístup aj Londýn.

Odovzdávajme Vianočné posolstvo v rodine

Pokračovanie zo str. 20

miestom katechézy je rodina a že jej treba dať privilegované miesto v pastoračnej starostlivosti." Ján Pavol II. vedel, akým deficitom náboženského poznania trpia súčasné rodiny a najmä deti a mládež.

Katechéza detí a mládeže kladie na rodičov a ostatných vychovávateľov veľké nároky. Predpokladá solídny duchovný život a určité náboženské poznanie, ktoré by sa malo stále prehľbovať. Bez takéhoto základu nie je možné presvedčivo a účinne katechizovať.

Biblická katechéza v uplynulých desaťročiach bola zanedbávaná a tým sa zanedbával aj vzťah k Svätému písmu.

Verím, že počas týchto sviatočných dní si v rodine nájdeme priestor a čas predovšetkým na vianočnú biblickú

katechézu, pomocou ktorej hlbšie prežijeme narodenie Ježiša Krista a upevníme náboženský život v našich rodinách.

Nezabúdajme však, že nielen na Vianoce sa máme tešiť z narodenia Ježiša Krista a ďakovať Bohu za tento najväčší dar. Každý deň môžeme prejať svoju vďačnosť tým, že otvoríme dvere svojho srdca, prijmeť a poslúžime tomu, kto hľadá a potrebuje našu pomoc, akoby prichádzala Svätá nazaretská rodina. Lebo kto chce prijať Pána Ježiša vo Sviatosti Oltárnej, potrebuje sa Ho naučiť prijímať v trpiacich ľuďoch, odkázaných na službu.

Na zamyslenie a odkaz, váš brat v Kristu

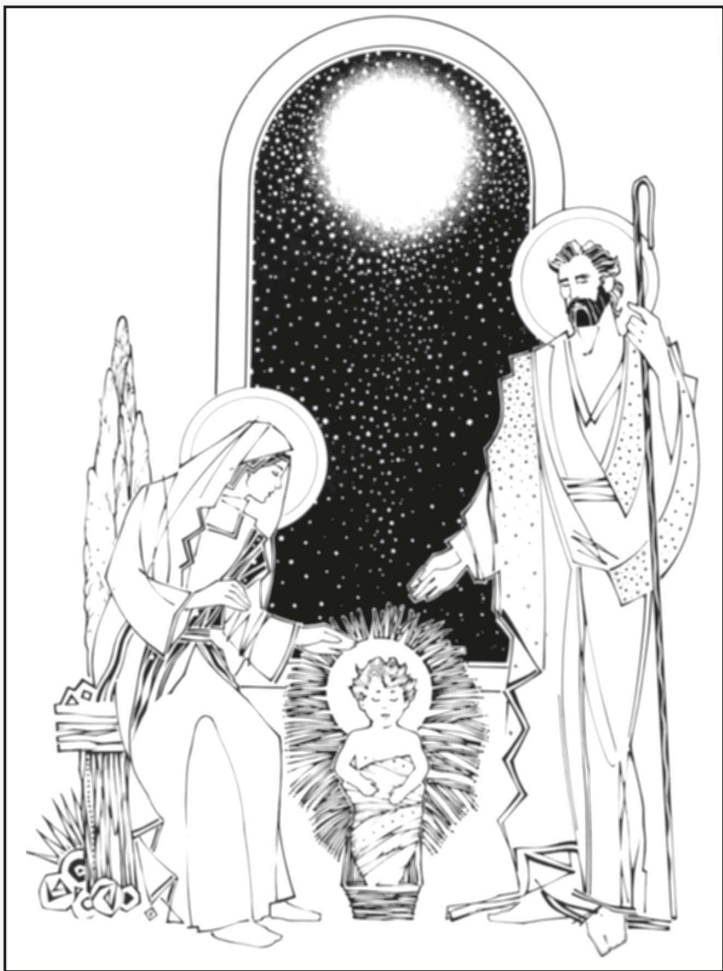
**Doc.ThDr. Stanislav Vojtko, PhD.
Riaditeľ Inštitútu rodiny v Bratislave**

"Človek nemôže vyčkávať so založenými rukami. Božie kráľovstvo je ako šíre more - treba nám rozprestrieť sieť. Je ako vzácna perla - ale túto perlu musíme nájsť my. Božie kráľovstvo je ako skrytý poklad - no my ho máme vykopať."

SV. TOMÁŠ AKVINSKÝ

Vianočné pozdravenie

Hadri-Drevenický



*A znova zvesti čakáme
od betlehetských strání,
svätejšie, krajšie, ľudskejšie
stretnutie v milovaní.*

*Boh znova ide v chudobe
do betlehemskej biedy,
aby nám túžby nasýtil,
uhasil duše smády,*

*aby nás dvíhol do výšav
a učil znať Ho hore,
a aby ľudstvo uzdravil,
to ľudstvo ťažko choré,*

*aby nám cesty zahmlené
uvoľnil lásky svitom
a veľkosť poznať naučil
v živote tichom, skrytom,*

*aby sme došli k Hostine
kde sa za pokrm dáva,
kde chudobný sa boháčom
a slabý mocným stáva,*

*aby nás zmenil v hviezdy svet,
čo Bohu úctu vzdáva,
aby zbiedená ľudská zem
spievala: Bohu sláva!*

*Aby sme všetci s' a jeden
len Tebe, Boh môj žili,
aby sme na púť za Tebou
mali dosť svetla, sily.*

*Tie zvesti znova čakáme
od betlehetských strání.
Ježiško tu je, prišiel zas,
nech bude navždy s nami.*

Prezident Gašparovič na summite NATO v Rige

Riga (TASR) – Prezident SR Ivan Gašparovič ukončil 28. novembra prvý deň dvojdného summitu Severoatlantickej aliancie v Lotyšskej Rige pracovnou večerou pre lídrov členských štátov NATO. Prezidenta Gašparoviča, ako aj ďalšie hlavy štátov, vlád a delegácií, privítali po prilete v Lotyšskej národnej opere prezidentka krajiny Vaira Vīķe-Freibergova, jej manžel Imants Freibergs a generálny tajomník NATO Jaap de Hoop Scheffer. Na večernom kultúrnom programe sa v Lotyšskej národnej opere zúčastnili aj minister zahraničných vecí SR Ján Kubiš, minister obrany SR František Kašícký a vedúci Stálej delegácie SR pri NATO Igor Slobodník.

Prezident Gašparovič sa na druhý

deň summitu zúčastnil na ceremonii na počesť vojenského personálu NATO slúžiaceho v operáciách aliancie. Vystúpil s prejavom na plenárnom zasadnutí Severoatlantickej rady (NAC) a prezrel si výstavu Transformácia v akcii a prostredníctvom akcie. Prezident Gašparovič na summite prezentoval postoje Slovenskej republiky, ktorá podporuje transatlantické spojenectvo a dialóg medzi Európou a USA i Kanadou. Slovensko sa zasadzuje za transformáciu obranného a vojenského potenciálu, plánovacích štruktúr a mechanizmov NATO. Otázka vyslania slovenskej ženijnej jednotky na juh Afganistanu však zostáva otvorená, uviedol hovorca prezidenta SR Marek Trubač.

Oznámenia spolkov a okresov

Schôdze spolku sv. Antona č. 638 IKSJ v Thunder Bay, ON, Kanada

Spolok sv. Antona č. 638 IKSJ v Thunder Bay, Ontario oznamuje svojim členom, že, budúce schôdze budeme mať v nasledovné mesiace: 14. januára 2007; 11. februára 2007; Schôdze sa uskutočnia v osadnej hale kostola sv. Petra hneď po svätej omši. Prosíme všetkých našich členov, ako aj vašich priateľov, aby sa týchto schôdz všetci zúčastnili.

S pozdravom ostávajú

Corey Humenaj, predseda
Peter Šuffák, tajomník

Štedrovečerná večera - Vigília v kostole sv. J. Nepomuckého v N.Y.C.

Farská rada pri Slovenskom kostole sv. Jána Nepomuckého v New York City pozýva slovenskú verejnosť na Štedrovečernú večeru - Vigíliu, ktorá sa bude konať v nedeľu dňa 17. decembra 2006 o 1:00 hodine odpoľudnia v osadnej hale Slovenského kostola sv. Jána Nepomuckého 411 East a 66th Street v N. Y. C. Vstupné za osobu je \$20.00 v čom je započítaná aj večera. Lístky na Štedrovečernú večeru si môžete objednať na Farskom úrade Slovenského kostola sv. Jána Nepomuckého, telefón: 1-212-734-4613; Jozef Bilik: 1-718-463-2084.

Vianočná ponuka z Jankolovej knížnice

Jankolova knižnica a Slovenský archív, ktoré sa nachádzajú v Materskom dome sestier sv. Cyrila a Metoda v Danville, PA ponúka vianočné obľátky. Cena je 50 centov za jednu obľátku. Okrem toho má Jankolova knižnica na predaj aj spevník slovenských ľudových piesní s anglickým prekladom. Cena jedného výtlačku je \$6.00 plus \$1.00 poštovné.

V ponuke je bohatý výber slovenských kníh, slovníkov a magnetofónových pásiiek. Bližšie informácie: Jankola Library, tel. č. (570) 275-5606.

Pri objednávke obľátok pripočítajte \$4.00 za poštovné prvej triedy. Objednávky so šekom vystaveným na Jankola Library odošlite na adresu: Jankola Library, Sister M. Mercedes Vojtko, SS.C.M., director; Villa Sacred Heart, Danville, PA 17821-1698.

Silvestrovská zábava v Linden, N. J.

Ako po iné roky aj toho roku Slovenský ružencový spolok usporiada Silvestrovskú zábavu v nedeľu 31. decembra 2006 v Msgr. Komar Hall, 2806 Parkway Ave (Tremley Point) v Linden, New Jersey. Večera bude podávaná od 8:30 do 9:30 hodiny, preto prosíme záujemcov o včasný príchod. Vstupné za osobu je \$55.00 v čom je započítaná večera aj bar. Do tanca a na počúvanie bude hrať skupina KONTAKTY. Lístky pri dverách sa nebudú predávať! O rezervácie a zakúpenie lístkov volajte na tieto telefónne čísla: Mary Karch (732) 572-2331; Mary Tkach: (908) 862-2782.

Za Slovenský ružencový spolok

Mary Karch

Silvestrovská zábava v Berwyn, IL

Slovak Athletic Association usporiada Silvestrovskú zábavu v nedeľu 31. decembra 2006 na 6215 West 26th Street, Berwyn, IL. Začiatok je od 8.00 p.m. do 3.00 a.m. O hudbu sa postará populárny DJ Lubo: oldies, country, rock. Vstupenky je možné dostať v klube. Cena vstupenky je \$40.00 za osobu, v čom je započítaná hudba, švédsky stôl, stôl so sladkosťami, káva, tombola; šampanské a guláš o polnoci. Cash bar.

Rezervácie do 28. decembra - Šeky vyplňte na "Slovak AA" a pošlite na adresu: Emil Galdun, 1017 S. Ashland Ave, LaGrange, IL 60525. Bližšie informácie: Tony Valent: (708) 562-8090; Julia (847) 973-0605 (po 5.p.m.); Emil Galdun: (708) 352-4581; Slovak AA (708) 749-9825.

ADVENT



Advent je bránou k Vianociam, ktoré prichádzajú každý rok, aby pripomenuli ľudom ten istý sľub lásky. Za štyrmi adventnými nedeľami je Betlehem, očakávaný nocou vekov, najstaršími veštcami, stále prichádzajúcimi prorokmi. Anjel, ktorý bude zvestovať blahozvesť pastierom v Judei, je celý zahalený svetlom adventu. Pokora je vždy najbližšia opravdivej veľkosti.

Advent každým rokom otvára zlaté brány kresťanského života, ktorý je večnou mladosťou, ožiarený slnkom pravdy, spravodlivosti a lásky. I keď sme už možno ďaleko pokročili v rokoch, môžeme znovu prežívať poéziu dávneho detstva. I keď sa nám zdá, že naše slnko pomaly zapadá, môžeme sa ešte znovuzrodiť v nás samých.

Naše prvé Vianoce a Nový rok v Kanade



Spomienky, ktoré tu sprítomňujem, udiali sa vo vianočnej dobe, presne pred 70 rokmi, ktoré súbežne reprezentujú aj prežité roky môjho života a mojej pôsobnosti v Kanade.

Písal sa rok 1936. V tom roku, v nedeľu 6. decembra, na predvianočný sviatok sv. Mikuláša, matka a moji dvaja mladší bratia, Arpád a Gejza, opustili sme naše rodné Čemerné a odišli k otcovi do Kanady, hlavne aby sme sa vyhli pohrome novej vojny, ktorá hrozila Európe. (Vojne sme sa nevyhli. V kanadskej armáde slúžil som skoro štyri roky a brat Gejza (Jimmy) pri letectve tri roky. Brat Arpád (Albert) zamestnal sa vo vojnovnej výrobe.) Po vojne - podľa plánov našej matky - celá rodina mali sme sa vrátiť naspäť domov, kde sme mali pekný, pohodlný a vkusne zariadený dom, postavený za kanadské doláre. Matka totiž bola tej mienky, že Čemerné, dnes súčasť Vranova nad Topľou, bolo najkrajším valalom v celej krajine. V jej očiach Čemerné - to nebol valal. (Domov sa nevrátila. Zomrela tu v Kanade (13. 8. 1955) v pomerne mladom veku. Otec zomrel doma (21. 1. 1957) počas návštevy svojho rodného kraja, kde je aj pochovaný.)

V ten deň, neskoro popoludní, z motorky so zaslzenými očami, rukou zakývali sme naše posledné z bohom ľudom, ktorí nás prišli vypravadiť na stanicu nastúpiť dlhú a únavnú cestu do novej zeme, za novým životom, do máloznámej Kanady.

Cesta do Kanady po suchej zemi a na mori trvala desať úmorných dní. V prístave Le Havre čakala na nás loď Ausonia. Aké neobyčajné videnie. Loď zdala sa nám byť neuveriteľne veľiká. Pred nami a zo všetkých strán neprehľadné more, ktoré v nedohľadnej diaľave akoby sa bolo spolu zlúčilo s belasým horizontom. V jedálni na lodi stál pekne dekorovaný a osvetlený vianočný stromček. Reku, Vianoce sa blížila a my sme o toľko bližšie k našemu cieľu. Po sedemdnovej plavbe konečne sme pristáli v Halifaxe. Tam nás obslúžili slovensky hovoriace rehoľné sestričky a vypravili na ďalšiu cestu do Montrealu, ktorá trvala celú noc a celý deň.

Z okien uhaňajúceho vlaku pred našimi očami pri blízkyh i vzdialených domoch mihali vysoké vianočné stromčeky, ovešané množstvom pestrofarebných svetiel, ktoré v tmavej noci trblietali ako hviezdy na nebi. Hľa, kanadská novota. Vianočné stromčeky vonku pred domami.

V Montreale na už najestvujúcej železničnej stanici Bonaventure otec prišiel privítať nás do vagóna. Keď sme pozháňali kufre a batožinu, dali veci dohromady, povedal: "Chvála Bohu, že už ste tu, v najlepšej zemi na svete." Zo stanice taxíkom odišli sme do nášeho nového domova na De Bullion ulici blízko ulice Ontario v centre starého mesta, kde na nás čakala dobrá večera pripravená otcovou domácou gazdinou (Mrs. Šaľa). Boli sme vyhladnutí ako vlci. Na lodi máločo sme jedli. Všetci sme trpeli na morskú nemoc. To, čo nám dali sestričky po vylodení v Halifaxe, rýchlo sa minulo.

Cestou zo stanice do nášeho nového domova obdivovali sme pestro osvetlené reklamy kín a vianočne ozdobené obchodné výklady. V novom domove v prednej izbe pred oknom privítal nás od dlážky po plafón, pekne ozdobený vianočný stromček. Stál tam ako majestát ožiarený svetlami rôznej farby, nie sviečkami, ako naše doma.

Pár dni neskôršie prišiel pre nás chlapcov, syn slovenského obchodníka, kde otec nakupoval grocériu, aby nám ukázal blízke okolie veľkého mesta. Cestou sme sa zastavili pred budovou z hnedočervenej tehly s nápisom "Saint Patrick Boys School". Po Vianociach tam sme začali školu, priučať sa novému jazyku po boku školákov rôznych etnických národností a skoro každej rasy, ako nariadil otec: "Najprv škola, potom robota." Nie však bez trvalých následkov. Moji bratia, Arpád a Gejza, narazili na problém. Náš tlmočník nevedel preložiť ich mená. Pre principála tejto multinárodnej školy nebol to nijaký problém. Pohotovo dal im nové mená. Arpádovi Albert a Gejzovi Jimmy. Mená, ktoré si privlastnili za svoje vlastné. Hľa, ďalšia kanadská novota.

Na ďalšej zástavke na železničnej stanici Windsor, vchod do priestrannej konkurznej miestnosti vyvolal dojem, akoby jej prievitná klemba dotýkala sa oblohy. Dookola rozložené vianočné stromčeky. Ľudí ako na odpuste. Cestujúcich, zvedavcov i návštevníkov ako my, ktorí prišli obdivovať umelecky ozdobené vianočné stromčeky, každý inofarebne osvetlený.

Cestou domov po St. Catherine ulici sme sa zastavili vo veľkých obchodných domoch Simpson's a Eaton's (už nejestvujúce) a Morgan (dnes the Bay) zvonka i vo vnútri nádherne vianočne ozdobené. Blížšie k St. Lawrence ulici, tiež nazvanej Main, deliacej mesto na východnú a západnú časť, zastavili sme sa pred impozantným vchodom uprostred podlhovastej budovy. "Tu je slovenský kostol", povedal nám náš sprievodca (John Vyboh).

Poslednú predvianočnú nedeľu išli sme na omšu do slovenského kostola. Matka ostala v kostole a my, chlapci, odišli na chór. Otec v nedeľu robil. Na chóre moju pozornosť upútal mladý, 17-ročný organista (Michal Sinčák) obklopený mladými speváčkami. Omšová latinčina znela poangličtene, kázeň - pre moje citlivé slovenské uši - v zamerikanizovanej slovenčine a oferu na tej omši vyberal sám kňaz (Rev.

Felix Feličko). Novota aká doma neexistovala. Večer, keď otec prišiel domov z roboty, povedal som mu, že "Slováci v Montreale musia sa mať veľmi dobre, keď majú taký pekný kostol." Otec sa mierne zasmial a povedal: "Synu, Slováci kostol nevlastnia. Oni ho len rentujú." (Kostol a budova patrili sirotincu pod správou Grey Nuns. Dnes je tam rozložený veľký teatrálny komplex Place des Arts.)

Za pár dni boli Vianoce. Otec sa postaral, aby naše prvé Vianoce v Kanade, po dlhej deväťročnej odluke, boli radostné a pamätne po každej stránke. Ako tamtie doma i tieto tu boli tradičné s rozdielom, že na štedrovečernom stole mimo domáceho ovocia bolo aj tropické, aké v starom kraji sme nemali. Ako doma i tu matka každému urobila medový krížik na čelo, vraviac: "Chvála Bohu, že už sme spolu." Boli však aj zakalené smútkom, spomienkou na naše babušky, matkinu a otcovu matku, ktoré sme pred krátkymi tromi týždňami nechali doma.

Počas večeri otec nám ponúkal klobásky dvojakej sorty s poznámkou, že "tu môžeme mať Vianoce každý deň" majúc na mysli fakt, že doma klobásky neboli každodennou pochúťkou ako tu, len na Vianoce, počas domácej zakáľacky.

Po Vianociach otec nás vzal na silvestrovskú zábavu, najprv do Spolkovej haly, neďaleko domu, kde sme bývali, spoznávať sa s našimi krajanmi. Odtiaľ potom sme odišli do "farárskej", ako vtedy volali Osadnú halu na St. Lawrence ulici, blízko ulice Ontario. Otcovi totiž záležalo oboznámiť nás s tunajším slovenským spoločenským životom. V tých časoch slovenský Montreal bol úlom slovenskej tvorivosti v Kanade.

Obidve haly boli naplnené ľuďmi, mládežou a bezstarostným džavotom malých detí. Vtedy tak bolo, že kde išli rodičia, tam išla celá rodina. Z každého pohovoru znel iný rečový dialekt. Boli tu zastúpené všetky regióny celého Slovenska. Všetko mladé tváre. Muzika do tanca vyhrávala domáce i tunajšie tanečné piesne. Chlapci zväčša hemžili sa okolo baru s tuhým v poháriku, lebo kde sa leje, tam sa pije. Počas prestávky ženy s gustom mladosti pustili sa do karičky, spievajúc na plné hrdlá karičkové špivanky. Dievčatá na silvestrovskú prišli vyštramandené vo večernom úbore. A len čo pravda, jedno od druhého krajšie. Keď ich do tanca nepozvali mládenci, alebo slobodní parobci, tancovali samé. Ďalšia kanadská novota.

Náš prvý Nový rok 1937 v Kanade privítali sme v Osadnej hale. Keď utíchnuť hluk a výsk na privítanie Nového roku, nastalo vzájomné blahodarenie - prevažne už v novej reči - obligátne Happy New Year - s dodatkom dobré zdravie, trvalú robotu, v hojnej miere Božie požehnanie, spokojný a úspešný Nový rok, teda všetko najlepšie. Patrí sa dodať, že mladí medzi sebou vyprávali už len anglicky, kde-tu francúzsky a s rodičmi v ich rodnej reči.

Naše druhé Vianoce už sme prežívali podstatne v radostnejšej atmosfére. Jednak preto, že už sme si čiastočne osvojili kanadský spôsob života, nadviazali nové priateľstvá a známosti a potom pár mesiacov pred Vianocami v rodine sme privítali nový prírastok - dievčatko. Matka mu dala pekné slovenské meno - Kvetuška. My, chlapci, viac svetské - Stella (Mrs. Dr. Weisnagel).

Pri spomienke na naše prvé Vianoce v Kanade, prvé vďaka idú k nebeským výšinám, k Pánu Bohu, za všetko Jeho dobrodenie a dlhé roky prežité v Kanade. Hlboká poklona našemu starostlivému otcovi, že nás tu vzal a neskonala úcta našej dobrej a Bohabojnej matke za jej materinskú starostlivosť o nás doma i tu.

Sláva Bohu na výsosti!

Vianoce, 2006

Štefan Hreha
Montréal, QC

NECHAJTE INÝCH VEDIETŤ O JEDNOTE



FOTO TASR - Jozef Poliak 29. novembra 2006

Ešte asi 100 tisíc korún chýba rezbárovi Dušanovi Šarkanovi z obce Vrbovce v okrese Rimavská Sobota, aby vo dvore svojho rodinného domu dokončil najväčší drevený betlehem na Slovensku. Niekoľko postáv z biblickeho výjavu Narodenie pána už Šarkan vytvoril v minulom roku. Sochy Panny Márie, svätého Jozefa a kráľov so zlatom a kadidlom, ktoré sú vysoké takmer 2.5 metra, už aj osadil na dvore, hneď pri hlavnej ceste. "Ak získam peniaze, zvyšok, viem spolu s tunajšími tesármi vytvoriť za niekoľko dní," povedal TASR. Tieto Vianoce to však ešte nebude. Betlehem chce samozrejme zastrešiť šindlovou strechou tak, aby vplyvy počasia na topolové drevo boli čo najmenšie.