



Jednota

THE UNION

USPA#273500 ISSN1087-3392



Fr. Stephen Furedek
Our Founder

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Volume 120

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2011

NUMBER 5854

The FCSU Board of Directors, Officers,
and Home Office Staff wish all of our members
a blessed Christmas Season.



"Adoration
of the
Shepherds"
by Gerard
van
Honthorst,
1622

PRESIDENT'S 2011 CHRISTMAS MESSAGE



Andrew M. Rajec

Veselé Vianoce a Šťastlivý Nový Rok !

Dear Members and Friends!

As I write this message I try to visualize the past year; the people I have met, the places I have visited and the new things I have learned.

Christmas will soon be upon us, with family gatherings, Christmas Mass, the winter season and for many of us that means snow.

Time passes so quickly and we are all so busy or so distant that we often don't take the time to contact family members or old friends. I urge you to take the time to do so, especially at this Christmas time.

The Catholic Church has recently implemented some "more accurate" translations to the current Mass.

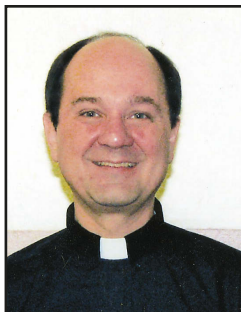
As many of you, I can still remember studying the prayers in Latin to serve as an altar boy at St. Stephen's Church in Milwaukee. I can still smell the incense. Unfortunately, St. Stephen's Church was closed and recently sold, as have most of our former Slovak Parishes. The changing demographics and changing culture produced the results that the close-knit Slovak communities in many areas are diminished. However, one of the purposes of the First Catholic Slovak Union is to try to preserve and continue the core values handed down from our predecessors.

We thank and encourage those Branches and Districts that hold, sponsor and support the traditional Slovak Christmas dinners (Vilija or Štedrý Večer) in their areas. The Jednota newspaper provides the information. My wife and I will be attending several this year.

I personally want to thank the many Branches and District Officers and Recommenders

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CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAPLAIN



Rev. Thomas Nasta

Dear Friends,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will."

The words the angels sang on the evening of Jesus' birth we sing, too, at Christmas Mass and at many other Masses during the year. But singing these words at Christmas takes on a little more meaning to us because, even for a short moment, we feel united with the shepherds who first heard these words two thousand years ago.

The second part of the acclamation is, for many people, a focal point of the Christmas season. There is renewed hope this time of year for all on earth to live in peace and many prayers are offered for this very special and worthwhile intention.

At the same time, it seems that the first part of the acclamation is relegated to the background. Maybe it is because the notion

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FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

FCSU LIFE ANNUITY & IRA INTEREST RATES EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 1, 2011

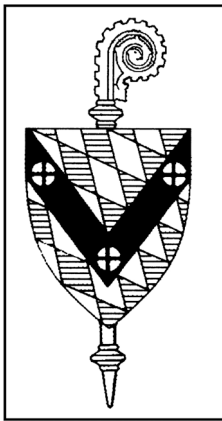
Eight Year Flexible Premium Deferred Annuity or IRA	3.75% APY
Six Year Flexible Premium Deferred Annuity or IRA's with the "Cash Interest" Option	3.50% APY 3.25% APY
New six-year fixed rate Deferred Annuity or IRA	3.25% APY
New "Park 2 Annuity"	2.50% APY
New Park Free Plus Annuity or IRA—1st yr guarantee (new Park Free Plus maximum deposit \$25,000.00 PER PERSON)	2.15% APY
New Settlement Options are based on an interest rate of	3.00% APY

If you have any questions about our annuities or IRA's,
Please contact your local branch officer or the Home Office at 1-800-533-6682

Email: fcsu@aol.com

Kenneth A. Arendt, Executive Secretary

Insights and Viewpoints



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

December 18, 2011
Fourth Sunday of Advent
Luke 1:26-38

Gospel Summary

On the carefully programmed Advent journey to Christmas, the Fourth Sunday belongs to Mary. This is so because Christmas, which celebrates the birth of Jesus, necessarily involves the motherhood of

Mary. However, the story of that birth is reserved for Midnight Mass, while today's gospel tells us how Mary prepared for that wonderful event by accepting the message of an angel, which meant allowing God to determine how she could be a mother and remain a virgin.

If through the centuries Mary has captured the imagination of the Catholic world, it is in large measure because she faced the mystery of God and said, "Let it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1,28), Even in her greatest privilege as mother of the Savior presupposes this radical trust and generosity on her part.

It is easy to ignore the mystery of God until the very end of life. It is also easy to live in fear of that mystery. However, human life will never be really successful until we learn to embrace God's mystery with trust and confidence. Mary shows us how to do that and what wonderful results will follow.

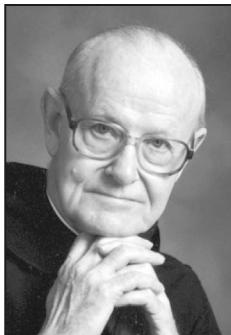
Life Implications

Although we know very little about the "historical" Mary, her symbolic presence is real and powerful. In her case, symbolic truth presupposes an historical person but it reveals the universal and perennial significance of that person. It is a truth that transcends such limitations as age, race and gender as it reveals the meaning of Mary, Virgin and Mother, for all human beings everywhere.

As a virgin, Mary represents hope. Indeed, there are few images that capture the meaning of hope and promise more effectively than that of a youthful young lady. All of us then, who strive to be positive and joyful and hopeful in a weary and despairing society, can look to virginal Mary as a model who is ready and willing to inspire and encourage us.

When considered specifically as the mother of our Savior, Mary is also the most perfect model of fruitfulness. She represents, therefore, both virginal, promising springtime and fruitful, bountiful summer. She conquers cold, barren winter in our hearts and leads us to a rich and meaningful harvest.

There is such a temptation on our part to live off of others and to complain rather than to contribute. Constant complaining and blaming others means an empty harvest. By contrast, Mary models for us a life that is wonderfully fruitful through loving concern for the welfare and happiness of others. There is no better way to prepare for and to celebrate the birth of Jesus!



Demetrius R. Dumm
O.S.B.

December 25, 2011
Christmas
Luke 2: 1-14

Gospel Summary

In the gospel passage for Mass at Midnight we hear the Christmas story from the Gospel of Luke. It is a story 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 which 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 the Romans as a god who would bring peace and salvation to the world, is now only the 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 care. After giving birth to her son, she wraps him in swaddling clothes and lays him in a manger. Jesus is cared for in the manger of the Lord (Is 1:3), not in an over-crowded lodging among strangers. Already in the Christmas story, we have an intimation that divine-human love (now as a child in a manger, in a few short years as a young man dying on a cross) offers itself to us in vulnerability. Who can be afraid of such a God? Love cannot force itself, and can suffer the pain of rejection or indifference.

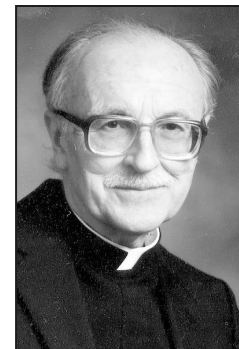
In the gospel passage for Mass at Dawn (Lk 2:15-20), Luke continues the Christmas story by having shepherds go to Bethlehem and relate the divine message they had received. Mary keeps and reflects upon all these things in her heart. Then the shepherds, like the faithful to this day, join the heavenly, angelic liturgy in glorifying God for all that has happened.

Life Implications

The meaning for us of Luke's Christmas story is completed by the prologue of John's gospel read at 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 who became flesh become the children of God, not by natural generation, but by divine grace. The good news of Christmas will not be fully realized until we can say with Saint Paul: "I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me" (Gal 2:20).

The Church constantly proclaims the truth, which may well be the hope and the challenge of the new millennium: the mystery of the Incarnation sanctifies all human life. The Lord, by accepting a share of our common humanity from his mother, has identified himself with all humanity, even the least of his brothers and sisters (Mt 25: 31-46). The good news of Christmas will not be fully realized until the dignity of every human being is respected and made secure in terms of the right to live, religious and political freedom, social and economic justice. Mary, in the loving care of her child, becomes the icon of the care that God wants us to extend to every human being, even the most vulnerable. In truth, it is care extended to Christ himself.

In a special way at Christmas we might treasure in our hearts the prayer said by the priest at every Mass in preparation for the Eucharistic Liturgy: "By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity."



Campion P. Gavaler,
O.S.B.

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	Copy Date
WEDNESDAY JANUARY 4	TUESDAY DECEMBER 27
WEDNESDAY JANUARY 18	MONDAY, JANUARY 9
WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 1	MONDAY, JANUARY 24

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:
 Teresa Ivanec, Editor; fcsulifeeditor@gmail.com
 First Catholic Slovak Union, Attention "JEDNOTA"
 6611 Rockside Road, Suite 300, Independence, OH 44131-2398
 FAX: 216-642-4310

JEDNOTA

(ISSN 1087-3392)

Catholic Bi-Weekly Issued 22 Times Annually

Publisher and Proprietor

FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION of the United States of America and Canada

FCSU Corporate Center

6611 Rockside Road, Suite 300

Independence OH 44131-2398

TERESA IVANEC, Editor; fcsulifeeditor@gmail.com

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: UNITED STATES - \$25.00 All other countries - \$30.00

PRINTED AT: SUSQUEHANNA PRINTING, 1 East Main Street, Ephrata, PA 17522

Telephone: 216/642-9406 Fax: 216/642-4310

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to:

Jednota, First Catholic Slovak Union, 6611 Rockside Road, Suite 300, Independence, OH 44131-2398

Periodical Postage paid at Cleveland, OH 44131 and additional mailing offices

Christmas Greetings from the Executive Secretary

The holiday season is fast approaching. Amid the hustle and bustle of this busy time of year, I encourage you to take time to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas, which is the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ. On behalf of my wife Theresa and my family, I extend from my household to yours all the peace and joy that comes with Christ's light during this very special and holy time of the year.

Merry Christmas, Veselé Vianoce.



Kenneth Arendt

Kenneth A. Arendt, Executive Secretary



Christmas Greetings from the Vice President

As we celebrate the birth of the Holy Christ Child, who brought new faith and hope to the world, there should be a spirit of kindness and generous giving, in keeping with the message of Jesus: "Glory to God in the Highest and on Earth – Peace, Good Will toward Men."

On behalf of my wife Maria, my family and myself, I will pray that the Infant Jesus grant His Peace and Happiness throughout this Holy season, and bring many graces and heavenly gifts to you and to all those who are dear to your heart.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas!
God Bless.



**Andrew Harcar
National Vice
President**

**Andrew R. Harcar, Sr.
National Vice President**



Message from our President

continued from page 1

for their dedicated service. Please encourage your younger members to get involved and serve as Officers.

On a very important note, we were founded and exist on the principle and ideal of fraternalism. That means we have a common bond i.e. Slovak, Catholic etc., but it also means that we respect and care for each other.

In past years some of these fraternal bonds were more obvious: most Members were fluent in the Slovak language and belonged to local churches that were founded by Slovaks, many with the support of the First Catholic Slovak Union.

One of the long-standing fraternal practices of the Society was the Funeral Vigil for the deceased. See Section 20.05 of the current FCSU Bylaws. Some of us can remember when the Branch Members assembled at the casket to say this special prayer for the deceased brother or sister in Slovak and gradually in English.

I would encourage our Members to again perform this fraternal task, or if you still do so, thank you.

In my 2010 Christmas Message I noted that we recorded a new surplus of over \$16 million. We now have reached \$18 million. However the investment market continues to be very challenging. A larger surplus means a stronger more viable Society. I will say more in 2012.

Wherever you are, North, South, East or West, I, my wife Idka, my family and everyone at our Home Office wishes you and yours a Blessed Christmas and we pray that you have a Christmas filled with peace, joy and the blessings of God our Saviour.

"Make your family a Jednota family" in 2012.

Have a Blessed Christmas and Happy New Year.

**Andrew M. Rajec
President**



If each member would sign up just one new member, we could double our Society immediately
THINK ABOUT IT!

LIGHT ONE CANDLE

Tony Rossi, Radio host/producer for The Christophers

The Heart of Christmas

I have a confession to make. I occasionally listen to Christmas music during the summer. If I'm stressed or feeling down, a little "Jingle Bells" or "Silent Night" is a perfect antidote regardless of the time of year. I used to think I was the only crazy person in the world who did this, but I discovered a kindred spirit after interviewing Grammy-nominated singer/songwriter Matthew West on Christopher Closeup.

West, who just released an outstanding CD called "The Heart of Christmas," has always had a year-round fascination with Christmas. It's not just the presents and decorations that attract him; it's the focus on the birth of Jesus Christ.

During our interview, West recalled that, when he was growing up, his parents always read the Christmas story in Luke's gospel before any presents could be opened Christmas morning. At the time, the waiting seemed like "punishment." Looking back now, it helped him realize, "There is no gift greater than the gift of the Savior."

That's a message West feels our society desperately needs. He said, "The chaos that has become Christmas is anything but Christ-focused these days. From the advertising to the shopping to everybody trying to take Christ out of this season, my wife and myself feel we have to make [Jesus] that much more of a priority if we want our kids to grow up knowing what Christmas is about and where true joy is found, not only at Christmas but all throughout the year."

One of the original songs on West's album is called, "Leaving Heaven," and it's sung from the perspective of Jesus as He's getting ready to leave heaven and enter human existence. There's a line in the song that the singer finds particularly important: "If you ever wonder how much you're worth, you should know you're the reason why I'm leaving heaven." The reason it resonates with him is because his last album, entitled "The Story of Your Life," was completely inspired by letters his fans sent him sharing their personal triumphs and challenges. A common theme in many of those stories was people's struggles with their sense of self-worth.

West recalled one fan who said her father always told her she was "just a mistake." As a father himself, West was appalled at this message. He said, "Whether it's a result of parents who didn't know how to love them or friends who bullied them, [many kids] are growing up with this skewed idea of how much they're worth and how God sees them...A lot of times, the message of self-worth in our world is skewed. There's a Lady Gaga song that says you were 'born this way.' It's supposed to be a self-empowering song. But I believe that our self-worth can only truly be discovered when we find who we really are in Christ—not in the mirror, not in other people's eyes or anything like that, but when we ask God to show us who we really are. And the first thing we can point to is that God loves us so much, He sent His Son down to earth. So that message of self-worth and the message of Christmas are really synonymous."

Matthew West's appreciation of God's gift of His son—and the resulting joy we should feel because of it—is reflected in his CD, "The Heart of Christmas." It's a message that's easy to forget during the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, but one that we need to keep the true meaning of Christmas alive in our hearts and minds.

To listen to the full interview with Matthew West, visit www.christophers.org/CloseupPodcast.

For a free copy of the Christopher News Note, *YOUR CAREER COUNTS*, write: *The Christophers*, 5 Hanover Square, New York, NY 10004; or e-mail: mail@christophers.org

Message from our Chaplain

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of giving God glory sounds like something reserved only to those who are deeply spiritual.

Since Jesus was born to bring salvation to all humanity, all can give glory to God. Here are some ways we can do that, not only at Christmas, but also throughout the year.

We give glory to God by lifting up our voices in song, singing hymns of praise to Him at Mass, especially at Christmas Day. Since we know many of these hymns by heart, we can and should sing them in a manner that fills our churches with praise to God.

We give glory to God by reflecting on the meaning of the Incarnation, leading us to become filled with reverential awe of what God has done for us. Jesus, the Son of God, became flesh and was born of the Virgin Mary. The divine became human. How frequently does this reality allow us to surrender ourselves to His presence, giving Him glory?

We give glory to God in living our faith. Through Baptism each of us is to become more like Christ. When we care for the least of our brothers and sisters, when we keep holy what is holy, when we forgive and love and pray as Jesus did and taught us to do, God is glorified.

We sing the song of the angels at Christmas Mass. Let the glory of God radiate in us so that His peace may come to rest on the face of the earth.

Merry Christmas.

**Fraternally,
Fr. Thomas A. Nasta
National Chaplain**



Check out the redesigned FCSU website @ www.fcsu.com.

Same great resource – now with a great new look!
Let us know what you think. We want to hear from you.

Statement as of September 30, 2011 of the **FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA & CANADA**
ASSETS

	Current Statement Date			4 December 31 Prior Year Net Admitted Assets
	1 Assets	2 Nonadmitted Assets	3 Net Admitted Assets (Cols. 1 - 2)	
1. Bonds.....	255,739,719		255,739,719	239,151,083
2. Stocks:				
2.1 Preferred stocks.....	3,088,389		3,088,389	5,834,427
2.2 Common stocks.....	2,486,936		2,486,936	2,899,496
3. Mortgage loans on real estate:				
3.1 First liens.....	1,774,673		1,774,673	1,883,937
3.2 Other than first liens.....			0	
4. Real estate:				
4.1 Properties occupied by the company (less \$.....0 encumbrances).....	1,087,684		1,087,684	1,127,831
4.2 Properties held for the production of income (less \$.....0 encumbrances).....	853,787		853,787	813,172
4.3 Properties held for sale (less \$.....0 encumbrances).....	562,675		562,675	633,223
5. Cash (\$....4,974,769), cash equivalents (\$.....0) and short-term investments (\$.....0).....	4,974,769		4,974,769	8,982,617
6. Contract loans (including \$.....0 premium notes).....	964,903		964,903	911,063
7. Derivatives.....			0	
8. Other invested assets.....	10,973,787		10,973,787	4,981,249
9. Receivables for securities.....	83,728		83,728	1,885,447
10. Securities lending reinvested collateral assets.....			0	
11. Aggregate write-ins for invested assets.....	0	0	0	0
12. Subtotals, cash and invested assets (Lines 1 to 11).....	282,591,050	0	282,591,050	269,103,545
13. Title plants less \$.....0 charged off (for Title insurers only).....			0	
14. Investment income due and accrued.....	3,354,077		3,354,077	3,171,829
15. Premiums and considerations:				
15.1 Uncollected premiums and agents' balances in the course of collection.....	16,188		16,188	14,601
15.2 Deferred premiums, agents' balances and installments booked but deferred and not yet due (including \$.....0 earned but unbilled premiums).....			0	
15.3 Accrued retrospective premiums.....			0	
16. Reinsurance:				
16.1 Amounts recoverable from reinsurers.....			0	
16.2 Funds held by or deposited with reinsured companies.....			0	
16.3 Other amounts receivable under reinsurance contracts.....			0	
17. Amounts receivable relating to uninsured plans.....			0	
18.1 Current federal and foreign income tax recoverable and interest thereon.....			0	
18.2 Net deferred tax asset.....			0	
19. Guaranty funds receivable or on deposit.....			0	
20. Electronic data processing equipment and software.....			0	
21. Furniture and equipment, including health care delivery assets (\$.....0).....	22,528	22,528	0	
22. Net adjustment in assets and liabilities due to foreign exchange rates.....			0	
23. Receivables from parent, subsidiaries and affiliates.....			0	
24. Health care (\$.....0) and other amounts receivable.....			0	
25. Aggregate write-ins for other than invested assets.....	29,210	29,210	0	0
26. Total assets excluding Separate Accounts, Segregated Accounts and Protected Cell Accounts (Lines 12 through 25).....	286,013,053	51,738	285,961,315	272,289,975
27. From Separate Accounts, Segregated Accounts and Protected Cell Accounts.....			0	
28. Total (Lines 26 and 27).....	286,013,053	51,738	285,961,315	272,289,975

Statement as of September 30, 2011 of the **FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND CANADA**
LIABILITIES, SURPLUS AND OTHER FUNDS

	1 Current Statement Date	2 December 31 Prior Year
1. Aggregate reserve for life contracts (including \$.....0 Modco Reserve).....	229,252,000	226,806,000
2. Aggregate reserve for accident and health contracts (including \$.....0 Modco Reserve).....		
3. Liability for deposit-type contracts (including \$.....0 Modco Reserve).....	26,101,177	15,213,178
4. Contract claims:		
4.1 Life.....	300,000	300,000
4.2 Accident and health.....		
5. Refunds due and unpaid.....		
6. Provisions for refunds payable in following calendar year - estimated amounts:		
6.1 Apportioned for payment.....	400,000	400,000
6.2 Not yet apportioned.....		
7. Premiums and annuity considerations for life and accident and health contracts received in advance less \$.....0 discount; including \$.....0 accident and health premiums.....	284,812	290,189
8. Certificate and contract liabilities not included elsewhere:		
8.1 Surrender values on canceled contracts.....		
8.2 Other amounts payable on reinsurance including \$.....0 assumed and \$.....0 ceded.....		
8.3 Interest maintenance reserve (IMR).....	1,748,517	1,578,788
9. Commissions to fieldworkers due or accrued - life and annuity contracts \$.....0, accident and health \$.....0 and deposit-type contract funds \$.....0.....	7,641	12,374
10. Commissions and expense allowances payable on reinsurance assumed.....		
11. General expenses due or accrued.....	294,618	204,528
12. Transfers to Separate Accounts due or accrued (net) (including \$.....0 accrued for expense allowances recognized in reserves).....		
13. Taxes, licenses and fees due or accrued.....	22,962	22,962
14. Unearned investment income.....		
15. Amounts withheld or retained by Society as agent or trustee.....	7,041,145	6,763,991
16. Amounts held for fieldworkers' account, including \$.....0 fieldworkers' credit balances.....		
17. Remittances and items not allocated.....		
18. Net adjustment in assets and liabilities due to foreign exchange rates.....	10,000	10,000
19. Liability for benefits for employees and fieldworkers if not included above.....		
20. Borrowed money \$.....0 and interest thereon \$.....0.....		
21. Miscellaneous liabilities:		
21.1 Asset valuation reserve.....	2,103,720	2,766,154
21.2 Reinsurance in unauthorized companies.....		
21.3 Funds held under reinsurance treaties with unauthorized reinsurers.....		
21.4 Payable to subsidiaries and affiliates.....		
21.5 Drafts outstanding.....		
21.6 Funds held under coinsurance.....		
21.7 Derivatives.....		
21.8 Payable for securities.....		
21.9 Payable for securities lending.....		
22. Aggregate write-ins for liabilities.....	375,966	401,947
23. Total liabilities excluding Separate Accounts business (Lines 1 to 22).....	267,942,558	254,770,111
24. From Separate Accounts Statement.....		
25. Total liabilities (Lines 23 to 24).....	267,942,558	254,770,111
26. Aggregate write-ins for other than liabilities and surplus funds.....	0	0
27. Surplus notes.....		
28. Aggregate write-ins for surplus funds.....	0	0
29. Unassigned funds.....	18,018,757	17,519,864
30. Total (Lines 26 through 29) (including \$.....0 in Separate Accounts Statement).....	18,018,757	17,519,864
31. Totals (Lines 25 + 30) (Page 2, Line 28, Col. 3).....	285,961,315	272,289,975

Statement as of September 30, 2011 of the **FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND CANADA**
SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

	1 Current Year To Date	2 Prior Year To Date	3 Prior Year Ended December 31
1. Premiums and annuity considerations for life and accident and health contracts.....	11,030,617	23,054,942	33,635,663
2. Considerations for supplementary contracts with life contingencies.....			
3. Net investment income.....	10,237,507	10,933,817	14,325,256
4. Amortization of Interest Maintenance Reserve (IMR).....	150,000	123,000	177,563
5. Separate Accounts net gain from operations excluding unrealized gains and losses.....			
6. Commissions and expense allowances on reinsurance ceded.....			
7. Reserve adjustments on reinsurance ceded.....			
8. Miscellaneous income:			
8.1 Income from fees associated with investment management, administration and contract guarantees from Separate Accounts.....			
8.2 Charges and fees for deposit-type contracts.....			
8.3 Aggregate write-ins for miscellaneous income.....	18,456	145,596	52,559
9. Totals (Lines 1 to 8.3).....	21,436,580	34,257,355	48,191,041
10. Death benefits.....	2,570,686	2,018,806	2,563,521
11. Matured endowments (excluding guaranteed annual pure endowments).....	1,085		
12. Annuity benefits.....	12,764,020	4,934,111	9,367,755
13. Disability benefits and benefits under accident and health contracts including premiums waived \$.....0.....			
14. Surrender benefits and withdrawals for life contracts.....	394,162	353,653	501,109
15. Interest and adjustments on contract or deposit-type contract funds.....	222,952	221,537	291,108
16. Payments on supplementary contracts with life contingencies.....			
17. Increase in aggregate reserve for life and accident and health contracts.....	2,446,000	22,379,000	29,951,000
18. Totals (Lines 10 to 17).....	18,398,905	29,907,107	42,674,493
19. Commissions on premiums, annuity considerations and deposit-type contract funds (direct business only).....	127,994	207,698	308,970
20. Commissions and expense allowances on reinsurance assumed.....			
21. General insurance expenses and fraternal expenses.....	2,354,389	2,249,588	2,699,457
22. Insurance taxes, licenses and fees.....	119,449	131,567	77,121
23. Increase in loading on deferred and uncollected premiums.....			
24. Net transfers to or (from) Separate Accounts net of reinsurance.....			
25. Aggregate write-ins for deductions.....	(264,901)	(36,220)	167,156
26. Totals (Lines 18 to 25).....	20,735,836	32,459,740	45,927,197
27. Net gain from operations before refunds to members (Line 9 minus Line 26).....	700,744	1,797,615	2,263,845
28. Refunds to members.....	283,761	291,110	402,047
29. Net gain from operations after refunds to members and before realized capital gains (losses) (Line 27 minus Line 28).....	416,983	1,506,505	1,861,798
30. Net realized capital gains (losses) less capital gains tax of0 (excluding \$.....0 transferred to the IMR).....	(851,500)	258,591	(855,477)
31. Net income (Lines 29 + 30).....	(434,517)	1,765,096	1,006,321
SURPLUS ACCOUNT			
32. Surplus, December 31, prior year.....	17,519,864	13,169,012	13,169,012
33. Net income from operations (Line 31).....	(434,517)	1,765,096	1,006,321
34. Change in net unrealized capital gains (losses) less capital gains tax of \$.....0.....	247,739	1,751,316	3,646,259
35. Change in net unrealized foreign exchange capital gain (loss).....			
36. Change in nonadmitted assets.....	7,784	(24,871)	(22,415)
37. Change in liability for reinsurance in unauthorized companies.....			
38. Change in reserve on account of change in valuation basis (increase) or decrease.....			
39. Change in asset valuation reserve.....	662,435	(635,223)	(252,033)
40. Surplus (contributed to) withdrawn from Separate Accounts during period.....			
41. Other changes in surplus in Separate Accounts Statement.....			
42. Change in surplus notes.....			
43. Cumulative effect of changes in accounting principles.....			
44. Change in surplus as a result of reinsurance.....			
45. Aggregate write-ins for gains and losses in surplus.....	15,452	(2,760)	(27,280)
46. Net change in surplus for the year (Lines 33 through 45).....	498,893	2,853,558	4,350,852
47. Surplus as of statement date (Lines 32 + 46).....	18,018,757	16,022,570	17,519,864

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

MONDAY OCTOBER 17, 2011

HOME OFFICE

INDEPENDENCE, OHIO

OPEN:

President Andrew M. Rajec called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and asked Vice President Andrew R. Harcar, Sr., to lead the prayer.

ROLL CALL:

Members attending: Andrew M. Rajec, President
Kenneth A. Arendt, Executive Secretary
Andrew R. Harcar, Sr., Vice President
George F. Matta, Treasurer
Karen Hunka (via teleconference by invitation of the President)

ACCEPTANCE OF THE SEPTEMBER MEETING MINUTES:

The Executive Secretary presented the Minutes of the September 2011 Executive Committee Meeting. A motion was made by George Matta and seconded by Andrew Harcar to accept the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S STOCK AND BOND REPORT:

The Treasurer presented a written report and answered all the Executive Committee's questions.

AQS MANAGEMENT, INC.:

Larry White, representing AQS Management, Inc., presented his monthly presentation by WebEx. Mr. White's report covered the following commentary:

- Briefed on the Investment Portfolio.
- Status of the EU continues to weigh on US fixed income.
- Legislation to limit Chinese currency valuation may have unintended consequences in the Chinese appetite for US fixed income.
- Although 10 year rates rose from 1.72% to 2.22% in 2 weeks, we do not expect the trend to continue unless US/Chinese politics weigh into the mix.
- Fundamentally, the economy shows sporadic signs of growth but often without support elsewhere. i.e., retail sales for September were up but income was not.

After he gave his report, Mr. White answered the Executive Committee's questions. The President led a discussion on our current annuity interest rates. It was decided to maintain the current interest rates and they will be reviewed at the next Executive Committee Meeting.

The Executive Committee reviewed the Annuity Rate Survey Report by Robert Kopco, Branch and Agent Coordinator, concerning the current interest rates being offered by the other fraternal and financial institutions.

MATLIN PATTERSON ASSET MANAGEMENT (MPAM):

Craig Ruch, Chief Executive Officer of MPAM, joined the meeting via teleconference to report and discuss the Matlin Patterson Asset Management Credit Fund. After his report Mr. Ruch answered the Executive Committee's questions.

SALES AND MARKETING:

The Vice President reviewed our sales production report in different Regions and answered the Executive Committee's questions. The Vice President also reviewed the sales production report of our independent agents, noting that we are continuing to add agents. Vice President Harcar reviewed the upcoming seminars for the remaining 2011 and encourages District and Branch officers to contact him if their District or Branch is interested in conducting a seminar in 2012.

Vice President Harcar updated the Executive Committee on the upcoming Membership Meet which will be a four day Eastern Caribbean Cruise held November 14-18, 2011. The Executive Secretary stated all final information will be sent to all those going one week before the cruise.

Executive Secretary discussed the possibility of offering a bonus rate on some annuity products. There will be further discussion at the next Executive Committee Meeting.

FRATERNAL ACTIVITIES:

The President reviewed plans for holding a joint golf tournament with the Slovak Catholic Sokol, National Slovak Society and the Ladies Pennsylvania Slovak Union in 2012 and will inform the Executive Committee as more information becomes available. The President further stated plans are being made and finalized to hold a joint bowling tournament in 2012 and as more information becomes available the Committee will be informed.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT:**FEDERAL HOME LOAN BANK**

Executive Secretary Kenneth Arendt submitted a written report to the Executive Committee which gave a complete update of the investments and transactions with the Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB).

PORTFOLIO CUSTODIAN

The Executive Secretary updated the Executive Committee on the report from our portfolio custodian, Key Bank, and found everything in order and answered the Committee's questions.

MORTGAGES AND OVERDUE MORTGAGES

The Executive Secretary presented the report for the month of September for the Committee's review and answered their questions.

MONTHLY DISBURSEMENTS

The Executive Secretary reported that the following disbursements were incurred and paid during the month of September:

Disbursements for the month of September 2011:	
Death Benefits & Accumulations	\$ 578,425.56
Cash Withdrawals & Accumulations	\$ 48,701.94
Matured Endowments & Accumulations	\$ 0.00
Trust Fund	\$ 0.00

The Executive Secretary also presented the Membership and Annuity Report. The Executive Committee reviewed the remainder of the disbursements and the Executive Secretary answered all questions.

MISCELLANEOUS:

The President led a discussion on adding an additional digital lighted sign to our existing sign on Rockside Road in front of the Home Office. The new sign would offer an opportunity for our Society to advertise our products and have the ability to keep the information current. The President said he is securing quotes and once he has all the information, he will inform the Executive Committee.

President Rajec reported that he along with Executive Secretary Arendt attended a meeting hosted by the American Fraternal Alliance presenting possible insurance regulation changes the State of Ohio Department of Insurance is seriously considering and the impact it would have on our Society.

President Rajec stated the Society is investigating facilities that offer training courses pertaining to state insurance licenses. He further stated they are working on a reimbursement incentive plan to encourage our members to become properly licensed in their states.

The President updated the Committee on the progress that Regis Brekosky, President of Jednota Properties, is having in currently working up a new lease for one of our tenants at Building #2 in Middletown, Pennsylvania.

REQUESTS FOR ADS AND DONATIONS:

The request for donations and ads were reviewed and acted upon.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Andrew Harcar and seconded by Kenneth Arendt to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

The President asked Vice President Andrew Harcar to close the meeting with prayer.

Andrew M. Rajec
President

Kenneth A. Arendt
Executive Secretary

❖❖❖ ❖❖❖ ❖❖❖

Order Christmas Oplatky and Slovak Christmas Cards

Oplatky, the traditional Slovak Christmas wafers and Slovak Christmas cards are available from Jankola Library. Orders will be accepted from October 24 until December 16, 2011.

The Oplatky, five per packet, thermal-sealed and securely packaged can be obtained for a donation of \$3.00. The price for one package of 9 Slovak Christmas cards is \$6.75. In addition, shipping and processing has a minimum cost of \$5.75 and upwards. Customized requests can be packaged to meet your needs.

For more information or to place an order contact

Sister Catherine Labouré, SS.C.M. at 570-275-5606 or
write to Jankola Library and Slovak Museum
580 Railroad Street, Villa Sacred Heart, Danville, PA 17821-1698.

**The First Catholic Slovak Union is now accepting
VISA, Mastercard and Discover credit cards
as newspaper subscription payments.
Contact the Home Office for details: 1-800-JEDNOTA or fcsu@aol.com.**

FCSU 2011 Christmas Coloring Contest

THE ADORATION OF THE WISE MEN

B

Saw you never in the twilight,
When the sun had left the skies,
Up in heaven the clear stars shining,
Through the gloom like silver eyes?
So of old the wise men watching,
Saw a little stranger star,
And they knew the King was given,
And they follow'd it from far.

Heard you never of the story,
How they cross'd the desert wild,
Journey'd on by plain and mountain,
Till they found the Holy Child?
How they open'd all their treasure,
Kneeling to that Infant King,
Gave the gold and fragrant incense,
Gave the myrrh in offering?

Know ye not that lowly Baby
Was the bright and morning star,
He who came to light the Gentiles,
And the darken'd isles afar?
And we too may seek his cradle,
There our heart's best treasures bring,
Love, and Faith, and true devotion,
For our Saviour, God, and King.

-- CECIL FRANCES ALEXANDER


A


dailycoloringpages.com

C


Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!
Veselé Vianoce a Šťastný Nový Rok!

RULES

1. Each age group is assigned a certain picture:
4 – 6 year olds – picture C
7 – 9 year olds – picture B
10 – 12 year olds – picture A
2. Enlarged reproductions of picture A, B, or C will be disqualified.
3. Pictures are allowed to be reproduced for families with more than one child in a particular age group.
4. Children **MUST** be members in good standing of the FCSU in order to be eligible for prizes.
5. Your child's completed entry form, colored picture, and a photo of your child must be postmarked by **December 31, 2011**.
6. Mail to:
 Susan Ondrejco
 Fraternal Activities Director
 234 Ilion St.
 Pittsburgh, PA 15207

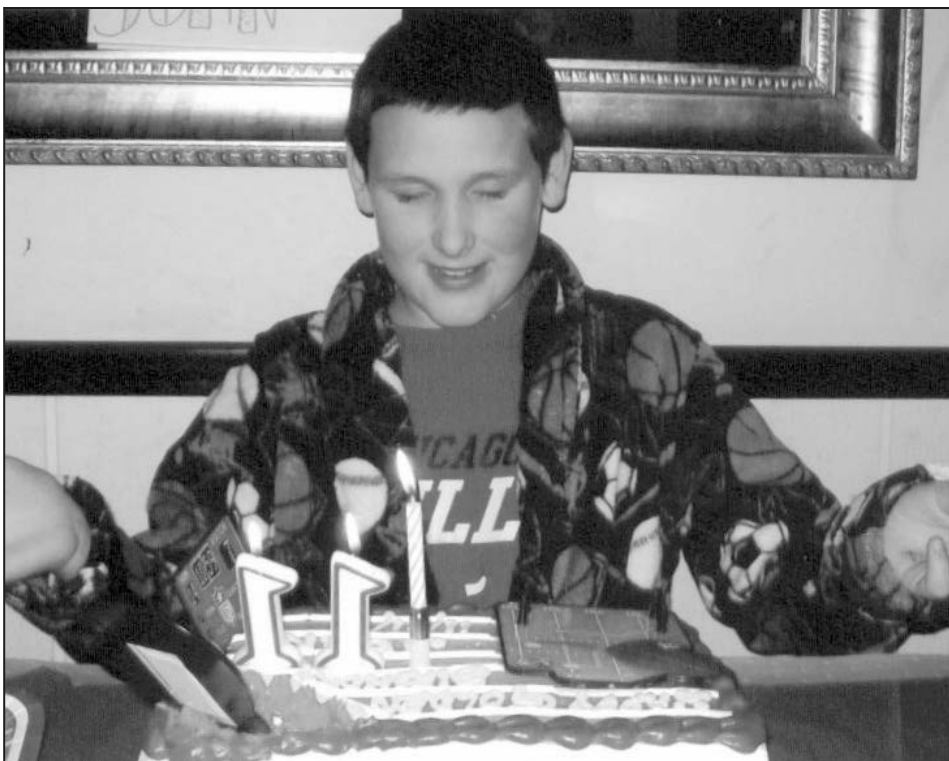
Please submit this form with your child's entry by December 31, 2011

Child's Name: _____ Age: _____
 Certificate Number: _____ Branch Number: _____
 (MUST be filled in)
 Street Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Email Address: _____
 Sweatshirt Size: Youth S M L XL Adult S M L

PRIZES

Winners in each Region and age group will receive the following:

- 1st Place – Jednota Sweatshirt and \$25.00**
- 2nd Place - Jednota Sweatshirt and \$15.00**
- 3rd Place - Jednota Sweatshirt and \$10.00**
- Honorable Mention - \$5 Gift Card**



27th Christmas Concert & Dinner at Yonkers, NY Parish on Dec. 11

Continuing in a time-honored and beloved tradition spanning more than a quarter of a century, Most Holy Trinity Parish in Yonkers, N.Y. will host its 27th annual Christmas concert and dinner on Sunday, December 11.

The concert, which will be presented in the church located at 18 Trinity Plaza, off Walnut Street in the historic Hollow section of Yonkers, begins at 3:30 p.m. will be under the direction of Stephen J. Knoblock, veteran Music Minister of the parish and a member of FCSU Branch 41. The concert will feature an array of seasonal works presented by the choir of the parish. The voices of the choir, one of the finest in the Archdiocese of New York, will be accompanied by a 12-piece orchestra.

Following the concert, a buffet supper will be served in the parish social hall. The dinner begins with the sharing of the traditional Oplatky - Christmas wafers and honey. The menu will include some traditional Slovak culinary specialties, including pirohy, halusky and kolbasy and kapusta. A cash bar will be available. Tickets for the concert and dinner are \$35.00 per person with children ages 12 and younger \$17.50. Tickets for the concert alone are \$10.00. For reservations, call the rectory at (914)963-0720. Tickets will be available following the weekend liturgies in church.

Father George Onnoony, pastor of the parish, extends a cordial invitation to area Jednota members to join the parish on December 11 for an enjoyable afternoon and evening of seasonal merriment and dinner fare.

Branch 153's John Yurik Celebrates 11 On 11-11-11

John A. Yurik celebrated his birthday in rare style this year. He turned 11 on November 11, 2011. John plays sports at Our Lady of Perpetual Help School and is a member of Branch 153, as are his grandparents Liz and Rudy Bernath.

- Submitted by Rudy Bernath, Region 7 Director

FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY ~ HOLIDAY HOURS

The Home Office and Jednota Estates Office will be closed on the following days during the holidays:

In observance of
Christmas Eve and Christmas Day
 December 23 & 26, 2011



In observance of
New Years Day
 January 2, 2011

The First Catholic Slovak Union is now accepting VISA, Mastercard and Discover credit cards as newspaper subscription payments.

**Contact the Home Office for details:
 1-800-JEDNOTA or fcsu@aol.com.**



OUR FAVORITE RECIPES

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
- Poppyseed Rolls
- Pirohy

PIROHY

- 1 cup flour
- About 4 tablespoons water
- 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 salt
- Mix together
- Potato Filling
- 1 large potato cooked and mashed
- 1 tablespoon butter
- (Optional-grated cheese to taste)

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 1/8 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 degrees for 1 hour.

Note: The second part of this dough will be use 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 degrees 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 poppyseed 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. Sautee 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 oleo or crisco
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla

Dissolve yeast in 1 cup lukewarm milk. Stir well. Add sugar, shortening and salt to rest of the milk and cool. Beat egg slightly and add to mixtures, 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 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 place on greased baking sheet and let rise about 1 hour and bake in 350 degrees over 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 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 or 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 filling 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 AND 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 - blend well.

Divide dough in four parts. Let rise 30 minutes. Roll each part thin 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 degrees.

NUT FILLING

- 1/2 pound chopped nuts
- 1/2 cup 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.

POPPYSEED FILLING

- 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 2/3 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 2 round loaves; let rise again until it doubles.

Brush with beaten eggs. Bake in hot oven for 10 minutes at 450 degrees then turn to 350 degrees and continue baking for 45 minutes or until golden brown.

MUSHROOM 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 oleo
- 1 medium onion
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- For Sauce and Brown Gravy
- 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 oleo until soft, add to mushrooms, rice. Season to taste. 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 the remaining kraut. Fill pot with water, to top off the rolls. Cook slowly for about 2 hours.

Sauce: Brown flour in shortening. Add about a cup of water. Bring to 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.

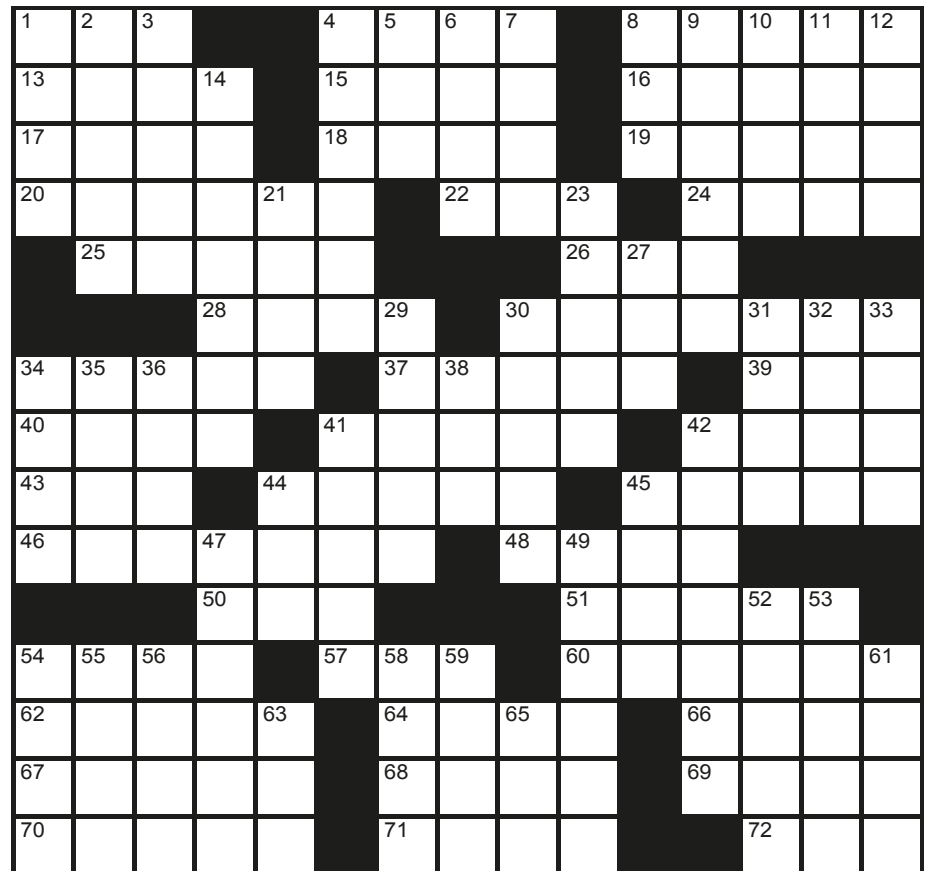
Brown butter onion; add flour and brown well. Add sauerkraut juice and boil this for 5 minutes. Add to soup and boil 1/2 hour longer.

CARAWAY SOUP

- 3 tablespoons oleo
- 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 and cook over low heat until lightly golden. Add salt, flour and caraway seeds. Blend and cook, stirring constantly, until mixture is slightly thickened. Serve at once.

Jednota Crossword Puzzle



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SS Cyril & Methodius Brkfst 1 - Door prizes

SS Cyril & Methodius Brkfst 2 - Dining Hall waiting arrival of guests



SS Cyril & Methodius Brkfst 3 - Early arrivals for breakfast

Branch 764 Hosts Successful Breakfast in October

During the Mass on October 30, 2011 at SS Cyril & Methodius, in Warren, OH, intentions were offered for the living and deceased members of FCSU for the combined parishes of SS Cyril & Methodius and St James. Directly afterward, a free breakfast was hosted by Branch 764 at the Social Hall. In addition to a great menu – including cheese strata, sausage, potatoes, pastry and fruit cup served with coffee or milk - door prizes were awarded. A short business meeting followed. The event was a great success with breakfast served to 100 people. District members were special guests.

Submitted by Joy Brunetti, Branch 764 Recording Secretary

Across

- 1 Day times (Abbr.)
- 4 Imbibes, slowly
- 8 Effect's partner
- 13 Secret look
- 15 Forest member
- 16 Ohio city
- 17 Great Lakes lake
- 18 Garner
- 19 Buffalo
- 20 Meal
- 22 French season
- 24 Spouse
- 25 Mortise joint
- 26 Tease
- 28 Dwarf buffalo
- 30 Terse
- 34 School dances
- 37 Without restraint
- 39 Period of time
- 40 Italian capital
- 41 Grayish brown
- 42 Den
- 43 Oriental sash
- 44 Mother-of-pearl
- 45 Palomino
- 46 Reversal of fortune
- 48 Goulash
- 50 Past
- 51 Sainly toppers
- 54 Coiffure
- 57 Doleful
- 60 Fiats
- 62 Clay
- 64 Bug
- 66 Exploit
- 67 Minute arachnids
- 68 ___ vera
- 69 Roof overhang
- 70 Headliners
- 71 Cleanses

Down

Down

- 1 Mocked
- 2 Deserve
- 3 French river
- 4 Camp cooker
- 5 A Gershwin
- 6 Pop, in Paris
- 7 Mailed
- 8 Hack
- 9 Splayed
- 10 Bear dipper
- 11 Lampblack
- 12 Fem. suffix
- 14 Pseudonym
- 21 Two or more of 39 Across
- 23 Delete
- 27 Hockey foundation
- 29 Alas and ___
- 30 Canters
- 31 Close
- 32 Sword lily
- 33 Concern
- 34 Those for
- 35 Dressing gown
- 36 Exclude
- 38 Pers. pronoun
- 41 Mexican dish
- 42 Despicable person
- 44 Hen-peck
- 45 Body part
- 47 Hairstylist
- 49 Motifs
- 52 Body of water
- 53 Barrel part
- 54 Some actors
- 55 Mine passage
- 56 Tiny amount
- 58 Gelling agent
- 59 Food shop
- 61 Printing directio
- 63 Sharp curve
- 65 Fishing pole

FCSU LIFE

Single Premium Insurance Winter Special!

Newborn Male
\$5000 for \$290
\$10000 for \$580

Newborn Female
\$5000 for \$250
\$10000 for \$500

Male - age 5
\$5000 for \$340
\$10000 for \$680

Female - age 5
\$5000 for \$290
\$10000 for \$580

Male - age 10
\$5000 for \$400
\$10000 for \$800

Female - age 10
\$5000 for \$340
\$10000 for \$680

Male - age 15
\$5000 for \$480
\$10000 for \$960

Female - age 15
\$5000 for \$405
\$10000 for \$810

Male - age 20
\$5000 for \$545.00
\$10000 for \$1090.00

Female - age 20
\$5000 for \$470.00
\$10000 for \$940.00

Purchase Single Premium Whole Life Insurance coverage for your children or grandchildren and receive a **FREE \$10.00 GIFT CARD** to present with the certificate!

Features:

- Pay one premium and have fully paid-up Insurance
- Issued in any amount (\$5000 or more) subject to current FCSU LIFE non-medical limits
- Excellent gift for children or grandchildren



See Solution on Page 19

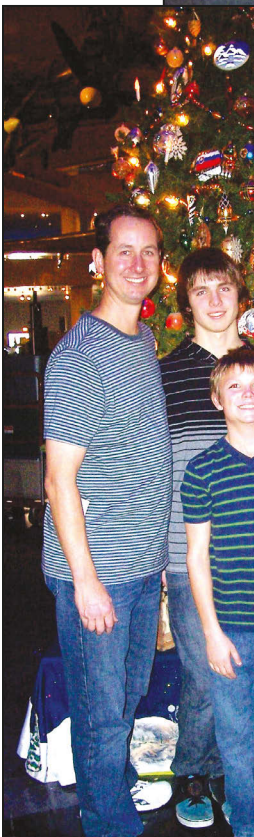
Spitkovsky District Sponsors Republic of Slovakia Christmas

Celebrate "Christmas Around the World and Holidays of Light", November 17, 2011 through January 8, 2012 at the Museum of Science and Industry, located at:
57th Street and Lake Shore Drive in Chicago, Illinois.
For further information call the Museum at 773-684-1414.

Among the more than 55 Christmas trees decorated by ethnic groups is the "Republic of Slovakia Christmas Tree" sponsored by the Rev. John J. Spitkovsky District Two of the First Catholic Slovak Union. This is the sixteenth year of participation. The tree is decorated with imported Slovak ornaments and many handmade ornaments, tree skirt and Slovak Village train set made by the committee and family members. Placed under the 12-foot tall tree

is a traditional handmade "crèche" from Slovakia. Pictured (below) are Committee Members Mark, Judy & Ayden Fayta, Noreen & Amara Fayta, Michael Fayta & Alexandria, Ed Uram, Andy & Maria Harcar, Matthew Emma Graves, Lynda Tanis, Larry, Lori, A.J. & Julian Seidman, and Jackson Vlik.

Republic of Slovakia Christmas



ors as Tree

vakia.

and their families:
ber Miller, Art & Bar-

& Jennifer Manzella,

la, and Marge, Bob &

Mark Fayta
stmas Tree Chairman



Christmas Season Lights

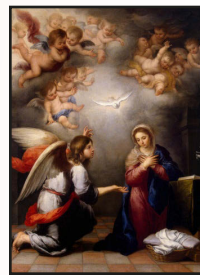
By Sister Maria Theresa Hronec, SS.C.M.

As we close November, we were impacted by the imagery of darkness – darkness of morning and evening, the very bleakness of nature itself. Even spiritually, as we remember the loss of our deceased loved ones, we ask for the eternal light of hope to shine in their isolation. Our traditional song of hope and prayer is; *Odpočinitie večné daj im Pane.*

Grant Eternal rest to (her/him/them),
Jesus, Lord we pray,
And let perpetual light shine upon (her/him, them).
Odpočinitie večné daj im Pane
A svetlo večné nech (jej/mu/im) svieti.

We burst in December with spontaneous exuberance. With glowing, twinkling lights, we dissipate the darkness and eagerly await the birth of Jesus, the true Light of the World. With the familiar, favorite hymn – *Poslaný je Anjel (God has sent Angel)* we are welcomed into this season of light. Let us be enlightened by its message.

God Has Sent An Angel



God has sent an
angel,
Messenger of
high regard,
Trusted angel
Gabriel

Speaking out the
word of God.
Nazareth is
where he came,
Sought the mother God had claimed,
Mary is the chosen one,
Called to mother God's own son.

Hail to you, O Mary,
Virgin pure, so filled with grace;
Lovely lily, fairest white,
God enfolds you with His might.
Holy Mary, do not fear,
God empowers you, mother dear,
His Son to conceive and bear,
Yet remain a virgin fair.

Mary marveled at this word
God's own will is what she heard:
Servant of the Lord I am,
Let my life be in His plan!
She responds and simply speaks,
As the Mother that He seeks,
O'er the angels high domain,
Humble handmaid I remain.

Poslaný Je Anjel

Poslaný Je Anjel
od Otca najvyššieho,
nazvaný Gabriel,
posol Boha večného
k Nazaretu mestu,
by tam Jeho nevestu
Máriu pozdravil,
Jeho vôľu jej zjavil.

Zdravas' buď, Mária,
Panna plan milosti,
Krásna si ľalia,
S tebou je Boh z výsosti.
Neboj sa, óMária, ty nebeská ľalia,
Počneš i porodiš
a panenstvo nestratiš.

Na tie Jeho slová
Mária sa divila:
Nech je vôľa Božia!
Anjelovi vravila
Deva som Najvyššieho,
Matkous stamen sa Jeho,
Nad anjelov vyššia,
dcéra Evy najnižšia.

How glorious! On Christmas Day, the birth of Christ is enveloped with the brilliance of joyous song, starlight and the warmth of generous, glowing love. The unique arrival of God's radiant goodness is an inspiration and incentive which stimulates the joy of thoughtfulness and sharing on all levels. Happily we celebrate and sing: *Dnešý deň sa radujme (Christmas Day! Be glad! Rejoice!)*



On This Day

Christmas Day! Be glad! Rejoice!
Praise and sing with happy voice.
Mary's child, our Jesus dear,
In this manger – God is here.

Sleep, sleep, little one.
Precious infant, God's own Son.

Virgin Mary, Jesus' mother
Bore God's Son to be our Brother;
Wrapped in love, embraced with awe,
Placed him on the manger's straw.
Mary sings with praise, delight;
Joseph watches through the night,
Sleep my Son, sleep on and rest,
Cherished treasure, Heaven's best.

Dnešný Deň

Dnešný Deň sa radume
A vesele spievajame
Ježiškovi malému,
V jaslíach uloženému:
Spi, spi, Ježišku,
milý Synáčku.

Mária, Panna čistá,
porodila nám Krista,
v jaslíčky Ho vložila,
plienkami obložila.
Spi, spi, Ježišku,
milý Synáčku.

Matka Mu vyspevuje,
svätý Jozef pestuje:
Spi, Synáčku premilý,
Ty kvet krásny, spanilý.
Spi, spi, Ježišku,
milý Synáčku.

BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

BRANCH 1 – CLEVELAND, OHIO

The Saint Joseph Society Branch 1 will hold its next meeting on Tuesday December 20, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the Sts. Cyril & Methodius School Hall, 12608 Madison Avenue, Lakewood, Ohio. We will hold our elections at this time. It is also our Christmas party and all members are encouraged to attend.

Marie A. Golias, Secretary

BRANCH 2 – PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Michael the Archangel Society, Branch 2, will hold its Annual Meeting on Saturday, December 10, 2011, at 1 PM at Kretzler's Tavern, 2240 Babcock Blvd, Pittsburgh, PA. The election of officers for the new year will take place.

If you are planning to attend the meeting, call (412) 421-1204 or (412) 766-3222 to make a reservation. Hope to see many of you on December 10, 2011, at 1 PM at Kretzler's Tavern.

Anna Ondrejco, Treasurer

BRANCH 3P – HAZLETON, PENNSYLVANIA

The 2011 annual meeting of Saint Joseph Society, Branch 003P, will be held at 9:15 am on Sunday December 11, 2011 in Saint Joseph's Church cafeteria at North Laurel Street in Hazleton, PA. Election of officers for 2012 will be conducted followed by a short update on local branch activities. New ideas for branch activities will be entertained and any changes of address or beneficiaries can be submitted at this meeting. All members are encouraged to attend and get involved.

Mike Koval, Financial Secretary

BRANCH 5 – EXETER, PENNSYLVANIA

The Saint John the Evangelist Society, Branch 05P, will hold a meeting to finalize election of officers on Tuesday, December 27th, 2011 at 1:00 pm.

The meeting will be held at the home of Marion Rubino, Vice President, 67 9th St. Wyoming, PA.

Members are encouraged to attend.

Marion Rubino, Vice President

BRANCH 6 – STREATOR, ILLINOIS

The St. Stephen Society, Branch 06KJ, Annual Meeting and Election of Officers will take place on Sunday, December 11, 2011, at Chip-pers Grill, 1733 N. Bloomington Street, Streator, IL. The meeting will be held first with lunch and fraternal fellowship to follow. All members of Branch 06 are welcome to attend. If you plan to attend, please call Secretary Paul Chismar at 815-822-8851.

Paul Chismar, Secretary

BRANCH 7 – HOUTZDALE, PENNSYLVANIA

The Sacred Heart of Jesus Society, Branch 7, will hold its next meeting on Sunday, December 11, 2011, at 9:00AM at Christ the King Parish Center, 100 Brisbin Street, Houtzdale, PA. Election of officers will take place. Members are urged to attend.

Marie Sedlak, Recording Secretary

BRANCH 19 – BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 19, will hold its annual meeting on Sunday, December 11, 2011, at 9:30AM in Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church Hall, 79 Church Street, Bridgeport, CT. The election of officers will take place at this meeting. We cordially invite our members to attend these

meetings and enjoy seeing their friends.

Henry Zack, Recording Secretary

BRANCH 19 – BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT

The annual meeting will be held on Sunday, December 11, 2011, at 9:30AM in Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church Hall, 79 Church Street, Bridgeport, CT. The election of officers will take place at this meeting. We cordially invite our members to attend these meetings and enjoy seeing their friends.

Henry Zack, Recording Secretary

BRANCH 23 – JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

St. Joseph Society, Branch 23 will hold a semi-annual meeting at Our Son's Family Restaurant, Broad Street, Johnstown.

The meeting will commence at 2:00 PM SHARP, Sunday, December 11, 2011.

All members are encouraged to attend since election of officers is on the agenda.

Sincerely

Lawrence Fenimore, President

BRANCH 35 – BRADDOCK, PENNSYLVANIA

The annual meeting of Branch 35 will be held on Saturday, December 17, 2011, at 1:30PM. The meeting will be held at the residence of Joseph Yuros, 15 Sumner Avenue, Forest Hills, PA. Agenda items include election of officers and discussion of branch activities. All members are invited to attend.

Fraternally,

Janet M. Sullivan, Secretary

BRANCH 55 – BROOMHALL, PENNSYLVANIA

St. Joseph Society, Branch 55, will hold its annual meeting on Friday, December 30, 2011 at 2:00PM at the home of Vice President Steven J. Gerba, 188 DiMarco Drive, Philadelphia, PA, 19154 (telephone: 215-637-6530). Election of officers and other branch activities will be discussed.

Helena T. Gaydos, Presiden

BRANCH 75 – SHAMOKIN, PENNSYLVANIA

The Assumption of the BVM Society, Branch 75, will hold its semi-annual meeting on Sunday, December 11, 2011. At 10:00AM at the residence of President and Financial Secretary Ronald M. Anderson, 8 South Shamokin Street, Shamokin, PA.

The fiscal end of the year reports and financial statements will be presented. The auditors' report will be submitted, and the nominations of officers for the coming year will take place. Any additional branch business will be entertained. All members are requested to attend this semi-annual meeting.

**Ronald M. Anderson, President and
Financial Secretary**

BRANCH 90 – OLYPHANT, PENNSYLVANIA

Holy Trinity Society Branch 90, Olyphant, PA will hold an Annual meeting on Dec. 28, 2011 at 2:00pm at the home of Mr. Michael P. Glinsky, 129 Grant Street, Olyphant, PA.

Sincerely,

Barbara Sochovka, Financial Secretary

BRANCH 96 – CARROLLTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

The annual meeting of Branch 96, St John the Baptist Society, Carrolltown PA will be held on December 18th at 1:00pm at the residence of the President, Albert Penksa. Please call for directions and if you are planning on attending the meeting. All business including elections will be handled. Please call 814-288-2754.

**Albert Penksa, President BRANCH 132 –
WHIPPANY, NEW JERSEY**

The annual meeting of Branch 132K will be held on Sunday, December 18, 2011 at 1:30PM at the home of President Susan Salko. Election of officers and coming activities for the year 2012 will be on the agenda. Please phone Susan

Salko at 973-906-1145 if you plan on attending. A light lunch will be served.

Fraternally,

Susan Salko, President

P.S. – MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE: All meetings will be held the second Sunday of the month at 1:30PM on every second month throughout the year.

BRANCH 157 – SLATINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA

Branch 157 will be holding a meeting beginning at noon on Sunday, December 11, 2011, in the upstairs Jednota hall. On the agenda: election of officers. A Christmas party will be held for children, newborn to 10 years old at 1:30PM. Snow date for the meeting is December 18th.

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,

Gregory Haraka, Financial Secretary

BRANCH 162 – UNIONTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Wedelin Society, Branch 162, will hold its quarterly meeting on Sunday, December 18, 2011 at 9:00AM at K2 Engineering Conference Room, 234 Pittsburgh Street, Uniontown, PA. Branch activities will be discussed, officers' reports will be given, and election of officers will take place. All members of Branch 162 are cordially invited to attend the meeting. Those present will be treated to breakfast at a local restaurant. Call for directions if needed. Any inquiries and updating information should be directed to Dolores Marmol at 724-437-4983.

Dolores Marmol, Secretary

BRANCH 173 – WILKES-BARRE, PENNSYLVANIA

The Saint John Baptist Society, Branch 173, located in the greater Wilkes-Barre – Wyoming Valley Area, will hold its annual meeting on December 11, 2011 at Norms, North Sherman Street, Wilkes-Barre, beginning at 12:30 pm. General business and activities of Branch 173 will be discussed, and the insurance, annuities and fraternal activities of the First Catholic Slovak Union. Please make every effort to attend and notify Dorothy A. Ungvarsky at 570-403-2067 so arrangements can be made.

Fraternally,

Dorothy A. Ungvarsky, President

BRANCH 228 – LORAIN, OHIO

The St. John the Baptist/Holy Trinity Lodge, Branch 228 of the First Catholic Slovak Union, will begin holding their monthly meetings again at the American Slovak Club on 30th and Broadway in Lorain, Ohio. Our meetings begin at 7 P.M. and are held on the 3rd Monday of each month except for the months of January, February, July and August when no meetings are held.

The branch will hold its annual election of officers and bylaw review during each December meeting. At that time, we will also elect two (2) representatives to serve on the American Slovak Club Board of Directors.

This is an opportune time to get into office and help manage our branch as well as become involved with the Slovak Club. Anyone interested in running for branch office and/or ASC board representative should contact the branch officers and attend the December 19, 2011 meeting. Visit the websites for the FCSU at fcsu.com and the Slovak Club at americanslovakclub.com for an update on current and future activities.

See you at the Club!

**Thomas B. Zuffa,
Recording Secretary**

BRANCH 254 – PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Wenceslaus Society will hold its annual meeting on Sunday, January 8, 2012, at noon at Panera's restaurant in the Galleria mall located at the corner of Washington and Gilkeson Roads, Mt. Lebanon, PA. Lunch will be provided. The agenda will include election of officers and

DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISTRICT 2 – REV JOHN J. SPITKOVSKY DISTRICT

The Officers of the Rev. John J. Spitkovsky District, which covers Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin, wish all of our members and their families a "Vesele Vianoce a Stastlivy Novy Rok!" (Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year!)

Sincerely,

Spiritual Advisor Dorothy Jurcenko, President John Jurcenko, Vice President Rudy Bernath, Financial Secretary/Treasurer Barbara Fayta, Recording Secretary Robert Tapak Magruder, Chairman of Auditors Joe Bugel, Auditor Bob Elias, Auditor Shirley Uram, Sgt. at Arms Pete Turner, Director of Fraternal Activities George Kelchak, and Region 7 Director Bernath.

DISTRICT 15 - PRINCE PRIBINA DISTRICT - LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Prince Pribina District will hold traditional Christmas time Meeting on Sunday December 18, 2011. Celebration begins by Holy Mass at 11:00 AM at St. John Bosco Chapel at St. John Bosco High School, 13640 S. Bellflower Boulevard, BELLFLOWER, CA 90706. Slovak mass will be celebrated by Fr. Al Pestun from San Francisco and Fr. Pavol Sochulak from San Bernardino. After Mass will be a period of fraternal fellowship. Delicious Christmas lunch, coffee and desert will be served. St. Nicolas will be distributing presents to children and Scholarship contest winners will be awarded with cash prizes. All members are invited and all branches in our area are encouraged to send delegates to the Christmas meeting.

Sincerely, **Paul Skuben** President Prince Pribina District

DISTRICT 19 - MONSIGNOR MICHAEL SHUBA DISTRICT

A joint meeting with Branch 785 is to be held on Sunday Dec 11, 2011 at 1:30pm at Sts Cyril's and Methodius Slovak Church Hall. Please contact Anne Mitro 905-279-8154, if you are attending the luncheon and meeting.

Anne Mitro, Secretary

Reminder For All Branches

Among the requirements to complete in order to qualify for your branch stipend, under Bylaw Section 14. RULES GOVERNING LOCAL BRANCHES, is the following:

14.01 General Rules

a) Branch and district meetings must be held in the close proximity of the hub of its members. The meetings shall be held at least semiannually, one of which must be for the elections of officers, who shall assume their duties upon election. **Notice of each of these meetings shall be published in the Official Organ at least thirty (30) days in advance of such meeting.**

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BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

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other branch activities. For reservations, contact Albina Senko at 412-343-5031.

Albina Senko, Financial Secretary

BRANCH 259 – STRUTHERS, OHIO

The St. Michael the Archangel Society, Branch 259, will have a Mass offered for all members, both living and deceased, on Sunday, December 11, 2011, at 8:00AM in Christ Our Savior – Holy Trinity Church, Struthers, OH. The Annual Meeting will be held after the liturgy at the Bedford trails Golf Course in Coitsville, OH. The election of officers will take place along with the discussion of plans for the coming year. All members are urged to attend.

**Vivian Sedlacko,
Recording Secretary**

BRANCH 260 – CAMPBELL, OHIO

St. Matthews Branch 260 will have their annual meeting Sunday December 11, 2011, at Bedford Trails at 1:00PM. There will be election of officers plus other issues for the coming year. We hope to have a good turnout of members.

Charles M. Terek, President

BRANCH 266 – HAZLETON, PENNSYLVANIA

The annual meeting of Saint Peter and Paul Society, Branch 266, will be held on Sunday December 11, 2011 at 9:15 am in Saint Joseph's Church cafeteria at 604 North Laurel Street in Hazleton, PA. Officers will be elected for 2012, and suggestions for branch activities for next year will be discussed. Please spread the word so more of our members will attend and become involved in branch activities. 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 on Sunday, December 18, 2011, 12:30 p.m. at the Slovak Club, 1300 Jackson Avenue, Windber, PA. A Christmas Party will follow the meeting. All members are asked to attend.

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

Edward T. Surkosky, F.I.C., President

BRANCH 293 – LANSFORD, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 293KJ, will hold its annual meeting at the home of Robert Lakata, 527 E. Bertsch Street, Lansford, PA, on Thursday, December 15, 2011, at 6:00PM.

On the agenda: election of officers.

Fraternally,

Robert Lakata, Financial Secretary

BRANCH 313 – CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

The St. John the Baptist Branch 313 will hold an annual meeting on Saturday, January 14, 2012, at 11:15AM. The location is Mother of Sorrows Convent, 5900 West 147th St, Oak Forrest IL. We will have a discussion about insurance products and annuities as well as getting new membership for our Society. We will have election of officers also.

Branch 313 extends good wishes for a Prosperous and Healthy Season.

Thank you,

Joseph M. Bugel, President

BRANCH 320 – BELLE VERNON, PENNSYLVANIA

On Saturday, December 10, 2011, at 1:00PM, Branch 320 will hold its Christmas luncheon and election of officers at Rego's Restaurant, Charleroi, PA. Reservations must be made by calling Frances Tarquinio at (724) 929-9788. All members are encouraged to attend.

Fraternally,

Frances Tarquinio, Secretary

BRANCH 327 – POTTSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Michael the Archangel Branch 327 will hold its annual meeting for election of officers for 2012 on Sunday, December 18, 2011 at 9:00AM in the Holy Trinity Social Hall, 370 South Street, Pottstown, PA. All members are urged to attend.

Elmer C. Pollock, President

BRANCH 362 – SAINT CLAIRSVILLE, OHIO

Our Lady of Angels Branch 362 will hold a meeting on Dec. 18 12:00 noon at 70820 Crescent rd. St Clairsville, Oh. Election of officers will be held.

Thank You,

John J. Wodarczyk

BRANCH 372 - BEAVERDALE, PENNSYLVANIA

St. Joseph's Branch 372 will hold its annual meeting Sunday, December 11, 2011 at 2:00PM. The meeting will be held at 829 Cameron Ave. in Beaverdale, which is the residence of President Michael P. Hudak, Sr. The agenda will include the election of officers for calendar year 2012. All members are urged to attend.

Thank you.

Michael E. Hudak, President

BRANCH 401 – FORD CITY, PENNSYLVANIA

Due to a medical emergency, the annual meeting of Branch 401, St. Anthony of Padua, scheduled for November 20, 2011, was cancelled. I wish to apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused any member or guest. This meeting is rescheduled for December 18, 2011 at 11:00 AM to be held at King's Restaurant, Hyde Park Road, Leechburg, PA. On the agenda will be election of 2012 officers.

Spanom Bohom,

**Patrick Froncek, President
Rose Froncek, Secretary**

BRANCH 430 – SIMPSON, PENNSYLVANIA

St. Stephen's Branch 430 will hold a meeting on Sunday, December 11, 2011 at 2:00 PM at the home of President Elizabeth Pisarcik, 448 Main Street, Simpson, PA.

Elizabeth Pisarcik, President

BRANCH 484 - CORAL, PENNSYLVANIA

The Annual Meeting of St. Joseph's Society, Branch 484, Coral, PA, will be held Sunday, December 11, 2011 at the home of President Rose Ann Rura, Power Plant Road, Coral, PA. The meeting will begin at 2:00 PM, all members are welcome. On the agenda will be financial reports and election of officers.

Joseph E. Rura, Financial Secretary

BRANCH 493 – CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Society, Branch #493 in Chicago, IL, will send \$5.00 McDonalds gift cards to all our junior members (age 18 or younger) as Christmas gifts.

**Robert Tapak Magruder,
Financial Secretary**

BRANCH 553 – AKRON, OHIO

St. John's the Baptist, Branch 553, will be holding lodge meetings in 2011 on the following dates at the Slovak J Club, 485 Morgan Avenue, Akron, Ohio 44311.

Save this date:

- Sunday, December 11, 2011 at 2:00PM (please note this is a time change from the previously published 1:00PM time)

Mark your calendars now so that you can hold the date and attend your lodge meeting. Your participation is what makes our society a success.

Respectfully submitted,

**Linda M. Hanko,
Financial Secretary**

BRANCH 567 – ALLEN TOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Branch 567 KJ will have their Annual meeting on Wednesday, December 14, 2011 at 1:00pm at 419 East Hamilton St., Allentown, PA.

The election of officers for the year 2012 will take place at this time.

The annual report will also be given at this time. We will also discuss plans for our upcoming fundraisers for the year 2012.

Thank you and Blessed Holidays to all!

**Loretta Dashner,
Recording Secretary**

BRANCH 581 – GARY, INDIANA

The St. Michael the Archangel, Branch 581, of Gary, IN will hold its regular luncheon-meeting at 1 p.m. Sunday, December 11, at the Lake Park Restaurant, 7 East Old Ridge Rd., Hobart, In. The agenda will be -- Election of Officers, possible merger of Branch 762 to Branch 581 and discussion of upcoming play in Munster, IN. Please RSVP to Ann Buczek, 219-947-2793 or George Kelchak, 219-926-2410.

Ann Buczek, President

BRANCH 595 – MUSKEGON, MICHIGAN

Monthly meetings are held at Tatra Hall, Sixth Street and Sherman Blvd., on the third Sunday of each month at 2 p.m. (September through May).

The election of officers for the 2012 year, will be held at the Sunday, December 16, 2011, meeting.

As always, you can call 231 733 7525 for additional information of current events.

Donna Stone, Recording Secretary

BRANCH 628 - MUNHALL, PENNSYLVANIA

A meeting of Branch 628, St. Michael Archangel, will be held on Sunday, December 18, 2011, at 4:00PM at the Penn Hebron Garden Club, 237 Jefferson Road, Penn Hills, PA (Phone: 412-241-9779).

The agenda will include the election of new officers for 2012 and a summary of events and issues during 2011.

Sylvia J. Vehec, Recording Secretary

BRANCH 633 - FLINT, MICHIGAN

The Sacred Heart of Jesus Society, Branch 633, will hold its annual meeting on Saturday, December 10, 2011, at 1:00PM at the Empire Wok Restaurant, Burton, MI. The restaurant is across from Courtland Mall. All members are invited to attend. Election of officers will be held.

Eva Craine, Secretary

BRANCH 686 – NORTH CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

The Annual Meeting of Branch 686 will be held on Sunday, December 11, 2011, at 1:30PM at the home of President Mark Davis in Genoa City, WI. Election of officers and coming FCSU activities for District 2 for the year 2012 also will be on the agenda. Mark Davis' address is 505 Walworth Avenue, just off Hwy 12 on the Illinois-Wisconsin border. Please phone Mark Davis if you plan on attending at 262-279-9648.

Fraternally,

**Rudolph D. Glogovsky,
Financial Secretary**

BRANCH 731- YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

Members of Branch 731, Youngstown, OH, will participate in the celebration of Mass for our deceased members on December 18, 2011 at Noon. Liturgy will be at Saint Matthias Church, 915 Cornell Street, Youngstown, Ohio. We will have our annual meeting with election of officers immediately following at the Saint Matthias rectory. Your attendance is welcome.

Jim Bobby, Recording Secretary

BRANCH 746 - LINDEN, NEW JERSEY

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 746,

will hold its next meeting on Sunday, December 18, 2011 at 12:30 PM in the upstairs meeting room of the Msgr. Komar Hall of Holy Family Church in Linden, NJ. The agenda will include election of officers for 2012, as well as discussion of activities for the next year. A holiday get together will follow the meeting. Please call Mary Karch @ 732-572-2331 if you plan on attending. From our branch to yours, best wishes for a blessed Christmas season, and a happy and healthy New Year,

Mary J. Kapitan, Secretary

BRANCH 764 WARREN, OHIO

Branch 764 will celebrate at a delayed Christmas Party on Saturday, January 14, 2012 at 3:00 PM at Alberini's Restaurant, 1201 Youngstown Road, Niles, OH. Members planning to attend must contact Fred Brunetti at 330-240-4142 so that you may be included in the reservation. The Branch will pay \$10 toward attendee dinners. A short business meeting will be held immediately following dinner.

Officers elected for 2012 are: Bill Hrusovsky, President; Fred Brunetti, Vice President; George Yuricek, Treasurer; Joy Brunetti, Recording Secretary; and Rosemary Heald, Auditor.

Joy Brunetti, Recording Secretary

BRANCH 769 – ENDICOTT, NEW YORK

The St. Anthony of Padua Society, Branch 769, will hold its semi-annual meeting on January 9, 2012, at the residence of Henry J. Pochily at 2809 Smith Drive, Endwell, NY. The meeting will provide information on annuities and their value as investments in this current financial climate. All members are encouraged to attend to become more aware of their branch activities.

Henry J. Pochily, President

BRANCH 780 - SAGINAW, MICHIGAN

The Saints Peter & Paul Society, Branch 780, will hold its annual meeting on Tuesday January 24, 2012, at 7:00 pm at the home of Financial Secretary Catherine Karlsen, 2280 Taft Street, Saginaw, Michigan. Election of officers will be held. Members are invited to attend.

Fraternally,

Catherine Karlsen, Secretary

BRANCH 785 – MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO

A joint meeting with the Msgr. Michael Shuba District is to be held on Sunday Dec 11, 2011 at 1:30pm at Sts Cyril's and Methodius Slovak Church Hall. Please contact Anne Mitro 905-279-8154, if you are attending the luncheon and meeting.

Fraternally,

Anne Mitro, Secretary

BRANCH 844 – LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Branch 844, Los Angeles, CA, will hold its Annual Slovak Christmas Mass on Sunday, December 18, 2011, at St. John Bosco High School located on 13640 Bellflower Blvd., Bellflower, CA, 90706. Mass will begin at 11:00AM. A delicious, authentic Slovak lunch will be served after Mass, along with the presentation of gifts for the children. Come and join us in celebrating the Slovak Spirit of Christmas.

Also, following the festivities, Branch 844 members will hold a meeting to review officer reports, hold election of new officers, and discuss branch activities.

We hope to see you all there and would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a very special New Year.

Fraternally yours,

Milan Konkol, Secretary

BRANCH 853 – CHARLEROI, PENNSYLVANIA

Branch 853 will hold its annual Christmas dinner meeting for all members at Regos Restaurant in Charleroi, Pennsylvania on Friday, December 9, 2011.

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BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

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BRANCH 855

PARMA, OHIO

The Holy Name of Jesus Society, Branch 855, will hold its annual meeting on Sunday, December 11, 2011. The meeting will be held at 1:00PM, at Carrie Cerino's Restaurant, 8922 Ridge Road, North Royalton, Ohio 44133. We will have an election of officers for 2012.

All members are invited to attend. Please contact Linda Kolesar at 440-886-0206 by December 1, 2011, if you plan to attend.

Linda L. Kolesar, Secretary/Treasurer

The spaghetti dinner will begin at 6:00pm with a meeting immediately following.

There is no cost to branch members for the dinner. Cost for non-branch members will be \$19.

Due to seating arrangements, please call and leave a message with one of Branch 853 youngest active members Charles Boone at 412-341-1577 if you are planning on attending.

Any member attending should bring a list of their fraternal and altruistic activities for the year.

Branch 853 extends to all, wishes for a Blessed Christmas season and a happy, prosperous 2012.

Monica Rodacy Boone, President



Branch 200 Members: We Need Your Help!

I am currently updating our beneficial membership list. I need information for any member that has a change of address, name, and/or phone number. I also would like to obtain email addresses and cell phone numbers. There may be policy holders that are deceased and the beneficiaries are entitled to life insurance proceeds. You may want to make beneficiary changes to existing policies or purchase additional insurance.

You can contact me by mail, email or phone. My mailing address is: Vicki L. Schaub, Financial Secretary/Treasurer, 910 6th Avenue, Ford City, PA, 16226. My email is vshaub123@gmail.com. The phone is 724-763-9229 (Monday-Friday, between noon and 5PM).

Your assistance is greatly appreciated!

Fraternally,

Vicki Schaub, Branch Financial Secretary/Treasurer

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Upcoming Event at American Slovak Club in Lorain, OH

The United Slovak Societies is comprised of members of many of the leading Slovak organizations in Northeastern Ohio, including the First Catholic Slovak Union (FCSU) Branch 228; the Slovak Catholic Society (SCS), wreath 111 and assembly 77; the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association (FCSLA), Branch 114; the National Slovak Society (NSS), Branch 160; and the Ladies Pennsylvania Slovak Catholic Union, LPSCU, Branch 77.

The United Slovak Societies – together with the American Slovak Club in Lorain, OH – are proud to announce for the remainder of 2011.

Sunday December 11, 2011

United Slovak Societies Vilija Dinner • Cocktails 5:30 p.m., Dinner 6:00p.m.

Menu includes ASC Ladies Auxiliary Perch with homemade sauerkraut soup, pierohi, bobalki, oplatky, wine toast and more. Slovak Entertainment.

Advanced ticket sales, \$20.00 per person
Contact Len Zilko at 440/988-3236

- Submitted by Michele Mager, Branch 228

Publication Schedule for 2012

Issue Date	Deadline to Receive Information
January 4	December 27 (Tuesday for Christmas holiday hours)
January 18	January 9
February 1	January 23
February 15	February 6
February 29	February 20
March 14	March 5
March 28	March 19
April 25	April 16
May 9	April 30
May 23	May 14
June 6	May 28
July 11	July 2
August 8	July 30
August 22	August 13
September 5	August 27
September 26	September 17
October 10	October 1
October 24	October 15
November 7	October 29
November 21	November 12
December 5	November 26

Address Changes?

Readers are reminded that all address changes for the JEDNOTA newspaper must be done at the Home Office in Independence, Ohio. If you have an address change, cancellation, or wish to receive the paper, write to: First Catholic Slovak Union, FCSU Corporate Center, 6611 Rockside Road, Suite 300, Independence, OH 44131-2398; Phone: 1/800-JEDNOTA (1/800-533-6682); Fax: 1-216-642-4310; or E-mail: FCSU@aol.com.



Rest in Peace, Our Departed Members



The First Catholic Slovak Union has a Mass said for each of our deceased members at St. Andrew Abbey in Cleveland, Ohio.

Branch	Name	Branch	Name	Branch	Name	Branch	Name
016P	Ann E Brinola	085K	Gertrude C Oravec	233K	Irene Mary Halko	567K	Julia Cressman
023K	Sister Theresa Podlucky	096K	Edward L Galovich	238K	Stephen R Tomko1	567K	Jean M Eames
024K	Alexander L Slafkosky	098K	Dawn M Erwin	259K	Sophie M Yash	595K	Marguerite A Gerst
040K	Joseph F Burns	098K	Margaret M Grinvalsky	260K	Mary T Sabatka	628K	Stephen J Baran
040K	Patricia J Kovalik	110K	Mamie Larue Bosak	278K	George Wahal	703K	Rudolph Joseph Kubica
040K	Louis J Palochko	128K	Norman A Ulakey	333K	Bernadine Humenik	731K	Gerald A Bobby
040K	Dora Lee Voytko	162K	Mary Margaret Suchevis	425K	Mary Agnes Sabol	743K	John Joseph Kolesar Jr
041K	Stephen John Blaha	166K	George A Anthony Sr	425K	Michael Steven Sabol	888K	Theresa D Hatalski
045K	Frank G Kasny	166K	George J Harendza	497K	Michael Eugene Koval		
060K	George J Palyo	166K	Edward C Pardus	512K	Tracy S Edwards		
085K	Ledavina Betacchini	224K	Henry A Kosinar	553K	John Mehalko		

* Processed in the month of Oct. 2011

Sister Dorothy Dolak Celebrates 50 Years in Religious Life

On September 8, 2011, Sister Dorothy Dolak celebrated 50 years as a Religious. She renewed her vows at a private Mass with her sister Cynthia Mauris of Adelphi, MD, and her religious sisters. A festive dinner was enjoyed at Rico's Restaurant.



Sister entered the Vincentian Sisters of Charity on September 8, 1961 from her home parish of St. Dominic's in Donora, PA. She is the daughter of the late Stephen and Margaret Dolak. They were lifetime members of Jednota Branch 670 in Donora where Stephen was the financial secretary for 40 years.

Sister Dorothy graduated from Monongahela Valley Catholic High School. In her religious life she earned a BA from La Roche College in Allison Park, PA, and a Masters in Education with Administrative Certification from Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA. Sister Dorothy served the church for many years as a teacher in various grade schools in the Diocese of Pittsburgh and also taught at Vincentian High School. She then served as a Principal for 17 years again in various schools. Sister also obtained a Pennsylvania Nursing Home license at the University of Scranton and was the Administrator of Vincentian Regency Nursing Home in Allison Park for 11 years. At the present time, Sister is the principal of Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy in Aspinwall, PA.

Sister Dorothy continues to be proud of her Slovak heritage and still remains a member of the First Catholic Slovak Union(Jednota), Branch 670.

Branch 153, Chicago, IL Needs Your Help

St. Stephen Society, Branch 153, welcomes all former members of Branch 718. We do not have addresses for the following members:

- James Carbonneau
- Peter Cortez
- Patrick Creed
- Shelia Creed
- Dennis Dean
- Susan Doyle
- Margaret Hand
- Mildred Janik
- Philip Kloster
- Sandra Kloster
- Michael Lentini
- Joseph Makurat
- Mary McGibbon
- Sandra Paulov
- John Pirok
- Louis Reitmeier
- Barbara Seng
- James Stepuncik

If anyone can provide addresses for the above members, please contact Dorothy Jurcenko, 7113 West Talcott Avenue, Chicago, IL, 60631 or at 773-763-0810.

Dorothy Jurcenko, Financial Secretary



(L - R) Front row: Carol Ladue, Mary Kuruc, John Golias, Eileen Wilson. Back row: Kevin Sabovik, Judy Salamon, Nelson Ladue, Gene Kuruc

(L-R) Eileen Wilson, Coordinator, presents checks in the amount of \$600 to Kathy Barone, Kitchen Coordinator, and Janet Barker, Office Manager, for meals for Center guests



Branch 19 Helps "Makes A Difference" in October

"The Staff and Guests wish to thank you for donating to the Thomas Merton Center (for both your donations) – Monetary and Time. We wish you God's peace for your generosity." So wrote Mark W. Grasso, Director of the Thomas Merton Center in recognition of the participation and sponsorship of several local Slovak organizations in honor of this year's "You Can Make A Difference Day." On October 27, 2011, representatives of the various organizations presented a generous check for meals for Center guests, thanks to the generous monetary contributions from FCSU's Rev Matthew Jankola District, Branch 19; the First Plavecky Society of the Holy Trinity, Inc.; the National Slovak Society – Region 15,

CT, and Assembly 28, Stratford, CT; the Slovak Alliance of Greater Bridgeport, CT; the Slovak Catholic Sokol Group 2, CT – Assembly No 9, Inc., Assemblies 33 and 308, Wreaths 1 and 39; and Slovak Gymnastic Union Sokol USA Lodge 2.

Following the presentation of the checks to Mark W. Grasso, Vice President of Catholic

Charities and Director of the Thomas Merton Center, the representatives assisted in the preparation and serving of a delicious lunch to the guests.

The Thomas Merton Center is a program of Catholic Charities of Fairfield County. The Center serves men, women and children of Greater Bridgeport, CT.

- Submitted by Eileen S. Wilson, Branch 19

Christmas in our Slovak-American Home during the 1960s

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

When I was a very young child, I already knew that Christmas Eve was very, very special. My Slovak-born mother worked very hard to prepare the home for that wonderful day. Mom would make one of the most unique and memorable meals of the year. But she never really explained the meaning of many of the details behind all the fuss.

Traditionally, Christmas Eve is the biggest annual event in a home in Slovakia. The same also holds true for many Slovak-Americans who endeavor to keep some of the customs of their forefathers. The entire family gathers for the traditional Slovak meal, prays together, and solidifies the bonds that make them one. The birth of Jesus is the occasion that prompts this occasion, a celebration of the family that Christ himself was born into.

Known as Štedrý Večer (shtedree vecher) in Slovak, Christmas Eve finds some of its traditions in the traditional Jewish celebration of Passover. It is a sacred time, and one filled with ritual and symbolism.

Another common name for Christmas Eve is vilija (vee-lee-yah), which derives from the Latin "vigilia" or "night watch." The name implies the joyful anticipation in waiting for the arrival of the Christ Child.

When we were children during the 1960s, our house underwent a thorough preparation for the holy days. We rejoiced when Christmas vacation from school started, and our father usually took off work for a couple days before Christmas. So it was a special time that our family could spend together.

The male children helped our father decorate the outside of the house with those great big Christmas lights that the stores used to sell. Regardless of the weather, Dad was out on a ladder hanging those lights, and hoping they all worked after a year of sitting in the attic. On the door we placed a Santa, and inside our home, we decorated the windows and hung a mistletoe (imelo in Slovak) in the hallway.

A couple days before Christmas, Dad typically shopped for a tree for a dollar or two, for the tree sellers were trying to get rid their last few left before Christmas. He always seemed to find just the right tree. We all assisted in decorating the tree with Christmas lights and bulbs, and its beauty radiated our living room. And we always had a beautiful Christmas crib, which my father had made out of wood in his workshop.

One of the things that my brother Jim and I looked forward to was the electric choo-choo train that circled our Christmas tree. We painstakingly put together the tracks for the train, and sometimes made the pattern a challenge for our locomotive to run on. The train got its juice from a transformer, and it was always a trick to get it working right, plus we had to be sure the transformer did not get too hot from overuse. We spent many joyful hours playing with that train, including a lot of harrowing wrecks when the train ran too fast around the curves around the tree.

Our mother busied herself cleaning the house and obtaining the necessary ingredients for the vilija meal and bought a big juicy ham for Christmas. With so much to do, we dare not get in her way, except to offer some occasional help. The several days before Christmas, we could smell the tantalizing aroma of fresh-baked kolače (nut and poppyseed rolls). While in Slovakia gingerbread cookies were more customary, our mother baked Christmas sugar cookies, and we children helped form some of the shapes – angels, Santa Clauses, stars, snowmen, etc. We always tried to sneak a few cookies, but usually could only get away with eating the ones that were slightly burned or partially disfigured. They still tasted great!

On Christmas Eve itself, preparations began early, and mother was always very busy in the kitchen from very early in the morning. The aroma of sour mushroom soup (kyslá hubová polievka) permeated the house, and closer to evening, our noses would catch the scent of pirohy, sušené slivky (prunes), and other goodies. We ate very little that day, knowing that the great evening meal lay ahead. But traditionally, Christmas Eve was a fast day for Slovak Catholics, at least until the evening meal.

The table was always set very carefully, and very formally, with our Father sitting at the head of the table. A Christmas tablecloth provided color, and a candle symbolizing Christ as the Light of the world, glowed brightly. Traditionally, Slovaks would also put a piece of straw under the tablecloth in order to remind us of the reason for the season.

There was also a bottle of Mogen David wine on the table. Christmas Eve was the only time that we children were allowed to have an alcoholic beverage, and we liked that particular brand of wine because it had a sweet, fruity taste.

According to Slovak custom, the evening meal begins once the first star is sighted at dusk, symbolizing the star that hovered over the scene of the Nativity of Jesus. We usually started the meal around 5 p.m.

Everyone took at seat at the table, and our father always led us with an opening prayer. We always said the sign of the cross in Slovak, and then recited an Our Father, Hail Mary, and a Glory Be in English. Then our Father would thank the Lord for his goodness and our being together as a family. No one was supposed to leave the table until the meal ended, and since then, I have found out that a Slovak custom holds that leaving early can forebode an early death.

Slovak families typically share oplatky (unleavened wafers) at the Christmas Eve meal. Originally, our family did not do this, but then carried on the tradition once we were able to obtain oplatky from a local Slovak church. Slovak custom has it that the father blesses the oplatky and then all partake of it with a little med (honey), and sometimes some garlic, to remind us of the sweet and bitter aspects of life.

Then we ate our mushroom soup, the best soup one could ever hope for. It contained lots of big fresh mushrooms, potatoes, and was a little sour from the sauerkraut juice my mother added – a sign of the bitter parts of life. Mom added halušky noodles (dumplings) to the soup, and so that was special too. Words cannot begin to describe how great it tasted, and most everyone always had several helpings.

Traditionally, Slovaks have fish (usually carp) as their main course, but for some reason,



our mother baked a ham for Christmas Eve. In pre-Vatican II days in Slovakia, Christmas Eve was a day of abstinence from meat. But today our family always has fish, in keeping with the Slovak custom.

Our Mom also made the best pirohy, and I have never tasted cheese pirohy like hers. They were larger than most people make them, but the taste was exquisite! Between the soup and the pirohy perfectly smothered with onions and butter, one could easily eat one's fill.

We always had nuts on the table, and stewed prunes were a mainstay, even though we did not like them as much until we grew a little older. Our mother never made bobalky or opekance (baked balls of bread dough in poppyseeds (mak), milk, and honey). But there was always fresh baked bread and lots of fruit and koláče for dessert.

Unlike most American families, we did not open gifts on Christmas morning, but on Christmas Eve. We were sent to bed, and told if we were good and quiet, and tried to sleep, Santa Claus would come. We would listen carefully to hear if we could hear the old man coming down the chimney. Then we would be roused from our slumber and open our presents.

Slovak custom has it that Ježíško (Little Jesus) brings gifts for children, but the more Americanized model of Santa was part of our family tradition. Mother said that when she lived in Slovakia she would get just an orange or an apple for Christmas, and some koláče. There were no toys for them to enjoy. Times were tough in that poor country during the Depression.

We finished our Christmas Eve playing with our gifts and talking, sometimes singing with my sister, Bernadine, who played the accordion. We always took an annual family picture with everybody present. My parents often played Slovak Christmas songs, particularly from the Red Album, which St. Matthias Choir had produced during the 1960s. Though we did not know much Slovak, all of us children were familiar with the Slovak music, and so when I learned Slovak as a young man, I already knew many of the tunes before I learned the words.

When we were little, we would go to Holy Mass on Christmas morning, but when we became a little older, we started sometimes going to Midnight Mass. Our church was St. Edward, not a Slovak parish, so we did not have Slovak singing at Mass.

During the afternoon of Christmas Day, we always went to Baba's (grandmother) house. Upon arrival we would give her and Dzeda (grandfather) a big kiss. Dzeda always received bottles of whiskey and a carton of Camel cigarettes for Christmas. Our grandparents never knew much English, and living in a Slovak neighborhood near Holy Name of Jesus Church on the Westside of Youngstown, Baba never needed to learn much English.

My father would always greet other Slovak-American adults with a vinš (an extensive Christmas wish) in Slovak, but we could not understand it. My aunts and uncles and cousins were all there, and Baba always had her chicken soup with homemade noodles for us to enjoy. Baba always had pagač (pastry with potato and cheese) for us to eat and there was plenty of koláč. And she had ginger ale too, for we did not get soda pop very often when we were children.

Our parents and their siblings babbled on in Slovak while we children played with our cousins and shared information about what we got for Christmas. In the background, we could hear the victrola (the word used for a record player back then) from the next room playing Slovak Christmas Carols.

By late afternoon, we typically left Baba's, all said our s Bohom's (God be with you!) in Slovak, and then visited a couple of our aunts and uncles. There the language switched to English, unless the adults did not want us to know something about a touchy subject. But the hospitality was Slovak, as were many of the pastries.

We took it all for granted, but those were wonderful times. They flew by so quickly, and now they are just a distant memory -- but very dear ones.

"Christmas in Slovakia," retrieved on 4 December 4, 2007, <http://christmasspirit.wordpress.com/2006/12/02/christmas-in-slovakia-traditions-songs-and-other-great-stuff/>

Martin Bosak and Rudolf Bosak *Slovak Folk Customs and Traditions*, eds. Helen Savinski and Darina Tuhy (Prešov: Slovak Heritage Society of N.E. Pa., U.S.A. and Michael Bosak Society, Slovak Republic, 2005), p. 79.

News From Slovakia

Dzurinda Determined to Make Visit to South Sudan and Kenya

Bratislava, November 13 (TASR) - Foreign Affairs Minister Mikulas Dzurinda (SDKU-DS) has told TASR that he is determined to make his previously planned visit to South Sudan and Kenya that he had to cancel in October, as the Government fell one week before the scheduled departure.

The new date has been set for December 11-14, while only its formalities are still to be worked out.

The visit was well prepared, with Slovak businessmen and educational and health-care organisations expressing considerable interest in taking part, said the minister.

"We've also managed to drum up a significant volume of humanitarian and health-care aid," said Dzurinda, adding that this includes several tonnes of clothing, food and milk for newborns, for example.

Dzurinda isn't afraid that President Ivan Gasparovic - who enjoys considerable powers since the Government lost the confidence vote in Parliament in October - may not agree with the trip. "I'll explain to him the aim of the trip and I believe that we'll come to an agreement," added Dzurinda.

EU Commission Less Optimistic vis-a-vis Slovak GDP Growth in 2011-13

Brussels, November 10 (TASR) - The European Commission has significantly cut its prognoses for Slovakia's economic growth in 2011 and 2012, TASR learnt from the Commission's European Economic Forecast for the 2011-13 period drawn up in autumn 2011 and released on Thursday.

Slovakia's GDP ought to grow by 2.9 percent this year, only to slow down to 1.1 percent in 2012. The Commission was far more optimistic in its spring forecast issued in May, expecting 3.5- and 4.4-percent growth in 2011 and 2012, respectively.

Conversely, a kind of revival is projected for 2013, with the Commission expecting the Slovak economy to gather pace again and grow by 2.9 percent.

According to the report, the expected developments are "chiefly on account of signs of a slowdown in external demand in the second half of the year, the short-term impact of fiscal consolidation and sluggish private consumption recorded in the first half of 2011."

"As the economic outlook for 2012 among the main trading partners has recently significantly worsened, external demand and trade are likely to decelerate markedly. This is expected to put on hold private investment decisions, reducing inflationary pressures and exerting a drag on GDP growth, which in turn is expected to drop to about 1 percent," adds the report.

Meanwhile, inflation is projected to speed up significantly after standing at 0.9 percent in 2009 and 0.7 percent in 2010. The figure for 2011 is predicted to reach 4 percent, although inflation should slow down to 1.7 percent next year.

The public finance deficit should drop from last year's 7.7 percent to 5.8 percent in 2011, well above what the Slovak Government expects - 4.9 percent. Next year's deficit is set to reach 4.9 percent, only to go up slightly to 5 percent in 2013 - again considerably more pessimistic than the drop to below 3 percent in 2013 that the Slovak Government was originally predicting.

Slovakia's public debt is expected to go up - from 41 percent of GDP in 2010 to 44.5 percent this year and 47.5 percent in 2012. The Commission expects the trend to continue in 2013, when the debt should reach 51.1 percent, which is far higher than the debt before the crisis broke out in 2008 - 27.8 percent.

Amount of Savings with Banks Represent €4,200 per Capita

Bratislava, November 10 (TASR) - For most Slovaks it is now commonplace to have their savings deposited in banks instead of hiding them under the mattress as they did in the past, TASR has been told by Postova Banka representatives.

At the end of the third quarter of 2011, Slovaks had a total of €23.1 billion deposited in banks, which represents €4,200 per capita.

The amount of savings saw a 7-percent year-on-year growth. Furthermore, it was 2.5-times more than at the beginning of the millennium.

There is a great variety of investment products on the market, but Slovaks apparently tend to be more conservative, preferring bank deposits to other investment products. Term deposits dominate, with 58 percent of all savings (€13.3 billion in total). Many clients also like to have their money at hand, however, so current accounts cover about one third of all the financial means of Slovaks in banks (€7.2 billion). Special-purpose passbooks make up the rest of the savings (€2 billion).

Analysts: GDP Growth in 3Q11 Mainly Down to Exports and Investments

Bratislava, November 15 (TASR) - The deceleration in the growth of the Slovak economy to 2.9 percent in the third quarter of 2011 was to be expected, Postova Banka analyst Eva Sadovska told TASR on Tuesday.

"The structure of growth hasn't been worked out in the preliminary estimate as yet, but we expect that net exports and partly also investments were the main driving forces behind economic growth in the third quarter," said UniCredit Banka chief economist Vladimir Zlacky.

VUB bank economist Andrej Arady concurred, adding that foreign demand exerted a great deal of influence on growth. "Public expenditures are being curbed by ongoing fiscal consolidation, while consumers' concerns vis-a-vis unemployment are putting a brake on household consumption," said Arady.

According to Sadovska, the increase in industrial production was surprisingly high year-on-year - at over 7 percent, albeit slowing down on quarterly terms.

Zlacky asserted that economic growth in the eurozone, which accounts for roughly half of Slovakia's exports, will continue to slow down in the fourth quarter. He predicted that Slovakia's GDP will grow by around 2 percent year-on-year between October-December.

Slovak Documentary about Nicholas Winton Premieres in Britain

London, November 11 (TASR-correspondent) - Prime Minister Iveta Radicova on Thursday evening attended the London premiere of Nicky's Family (Nickyho rodina), a documentary that tells the story of 102-year-old Sir Nicholas Winton - a man who rescued hundreds of Czech and Slovak Jewish children from a bleak fate in the run-up to WWII.

The premiere took place at the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA). The documentary, directed and produced by Slovaks Matej Minac and Patrik Pass, has won critical acclaim, taking home prestigious awards at international film festivals in Karlovy Vary (Czech Republic), Jerusalem and Montreal.

Twelve of the total of 699 children that Winston helped to escape throughout 1939 attended the premiere. Also part of the programme was Jana Kirschner's performance of Wiegala, a song that Ilse Weber - the mother of one of the rescued children - composed while in Terezin concentration camp.

Radicova, under whose auspices the premiere took place, told TASR that the documentary conveys an extraordinary story. According to her, the most remarkable aspect is that Winton never spoke about his praiseworthy actions. He didn't seek fame or recognition, and all he really wanted to do was to help the children survive. Had it not been for a coincidence, the children and the world would never have found out who rescued them. "The very essence of ethics is to help others, unselfishly and altruistically," said Radicova.

Pass admitted to TASR that he felt nervous prior to the big premiere, but quickly relaxed when he saw the positive reactions of the British audience.

"Balance is important in life. When I get something, I have to be able to give back in return," said Pass, adding that the film-making process changed him and inspired him to put his ego aside and serve others.

The premiere in London will be followed by others in New York and Washington, before the film is launched in cinemas across the U.S.A.

Answer to Puzzle

Solution to Puzzle from page 11

A	M	S			S	I	P	S		C	A	U	S	E		
P	E	E	P		T	R	E	E		A	K	R	O	N		
E	R	I	E		E	A	R	N		B	I	S	O	N		
D	I	N	N	E	R		E	T	E		M	A	T	E		
		T	E	N	O	N				R	I	B				
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R	O	M	E			T	A	U	P	E			L	A	I	R
O	B	I			N	A	C	R	E			H	O	R	S	E
S	E	T	B	A	C	K			S	T	E	W				
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H	A	I	R			S	A	D		E	D	I	C	T	S	
A	D	O	B	E			G	E	R	M			F	E	A	T
M	I	T	E	S			A	L	O	E			E	A	V	E
S	T	A	R	S			R	I	D	S				N	E	T

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 2012 Scholarship Program.

Seventy (70) ONE-TIME SCHOLARSHIPS in the amount of \$750.00 each will be awarded to the winners. In addition, a ONE-TIME "Philip Hrobak Scholarship" and "Stephanie Husek Scholarship" in the amount of \$1,000.00 each will be awarded to the highest ranking male and female applicants respectively.

Three additional ONE-TIME SCHOLARSHIPS of \$750.00 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 sent to the Home Office**, 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 \$5,000.00 reserve insurance (Ordinary Whole Life, Twenty Pay Whole Life, or Single Premium Whole Life) 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 \$10,000.00 or more of JEP 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, 2008 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, between the ages of 17 and 19.

3. Applicants must have applied for the Fall term of 2012 at a qualifying institution. Proof of college admission must be sent to the Home Office with the application.

4. Applicants must submit an official Scholarship application that can be obtained from a branch officer, the scholarship department of the F.C.S.U.; or download an application from www.fcsu.com.

5. Applicants must submit a completed application to: **Scholarship Program, First Catholic Slovak Union, 6611 Rockside Road, Suite 300, Independence, OH 44131 not later than February 28, 2012.**

6. Applications will be accepted only on the proper forms. 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.

7. Winners will be chosen by the Scholarship Committee (an independent group of educators) 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.

8. Final award checks will be made payable to the winners upon submitting a **proof of college enrollment not later than the fall term of the following year** (fall semester of 2013).

Applications must be postmarked by midnight, February 28, 2012. All applications without the above stipulated postmark will be considered invalid.



Christmas Sales at Slovak Institute



Oplatki sales and traditional Slovak and English Christmas cards – as well as various Slovak and English books – are for sale.

Orders will be accepted until December 17, 2011.

The following is a list of available items, with prices:

- Oplatki – 3/pk - \$1.00
- Slovak or English Christmas Cards – 10 cards with envelopes - \$10.00
- To Canada – Christmas Cards – 10 cards with envelopes - \$12.00

- Large map of Slovakia (black & white) - \$10.00
- Large Slovak Flag - \$20.00
- Small Slovak Flag - \$4.00

Please add an additional \$4.00 for shipping and handling.

For additional information, you may contact Andrew F. Hudak, Jr., at the Slovak Institute, 10510 Buckeye Road, Cleveland, OH, 44101. Telephone: 216-721-5300, ext. 294.

St. Mathias Celebrates Štedrý Večer Dec 11 in Youngstown, OH



It will soon be time to celebrate one of our most beloved Slovak traditions, Štedrý Večer, or Vilja...the traditional Christmas Eve dinner. The family would gather for a special meal before going to celebrate midnight Mass. This dinner is filled with tradition and memories of our Slovak heritage. In eastern Slovakia it is a meatless meal but by no means a meager one. The American Slovak Cultural Association of the Mahoning Valley will be hosting their annual Christmas Vilija Dinner at 4:00 pm on December 11, 2011. It will be held at the Father Snock Hall of St. Matthias Church at 2800 Shady Run Road in Youngstown,

OH.

This traditional Christmas Eve dinner has been being held for nearly 30 years at St. Matthias Parish. It was put on by the parish members for a number of years and is now sponsored by the ASCA.

The dinner will have all of the traditional Slovak menu items: the oplatky with honey, bobalky with poppyseed, mushroom soup or mačanka, baked fish and peas and potato pirohy. There will also be kolač for desert and the traditional apples which were cut open to reveal the fortune of the coming year. Wine or coffee will be served with the dinner, but Slovak beer will be available for purchase along with domestic beer and soda.

His Excellency, George Murry, Bishop of the Diocese of Youngstown will be attending. The authors of Slovaks of the Greater Mahoning Valley will also be there and their book will be available. There will be music provided by the John Lapinsky band.

All are welcome to join us for an evening of good food, good music, warmth and friendship as we remember our Slovak heritage during this holiday season.

The cost for the evening is \$20/person and seats are reserved as payment is received. The program begins at 4:00pm and should be finished by approximately 8:00pm. Tickets may be obtained by sending a check made out to ASCA for \$20/ticket to:

Ron Garchar
6917 Slippery Rock Dr.
Canfield OH 44406

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Veselé Vianoce!

Annual Slovak Vilija & Jaslickare Program

*(Authentic Slovak Christmas Eve Dinner
& Traditional Folk Entertainment)*



**5:00 p.m., Saturday,
December 17, 2011**

Prince of Peace Parish Center

81 So. 13th Street, South Side – Across from 12th Street Park

- Traditional meatless meal of baked fish, vegetables
- Pirohi, bobalky, mushroom soup
- Homemade nut and poppyseed rolls for sale following program

Featuring the Tri-State's favorite folk ensemble --

The Pittsburgh Slovaks

Performing

Songs and dances depicting winter traditions practiced in the Slovakia of our ancestors

"Jaslickare" re-telling the story of the shepherds at Christ's birth

Donation: \$20 adults / \$10 Children under 12

Advance Tickets Only: 412-431-0168

Handicap Accessible

Doors Open 4 p.m.

Kto nemá rád Vianoce?

Vianoce nemiluje každý. V našich zemepisných šírkach ľudom lezu na nervy najmä pre vianočné reklamné kampane, ktoré otravujú už od októbra. V USA, Kanade, či vo Veľkej Británii sa zase na čierny zoznam dostáva samotný výraz Vianoc. Vraj príliš spätý s jedným z náboženstiev, a teda politicky nekorektný.

Keď sa na Slovensku hovorí o Vianociach negatívne, zväčša to má dva dôvody. Už niekoľko rokov je v móde rozprávať o tom, že sa kdesi vytratil „pravý duch Vianoc“. Skrátka, že sa v záplave darčiek stratila jednoduchosť „starých“ Vianoc. Druhý útok na obľúbený sviatok má na svedomí reklama. Mnohé spoločnosti totiž propagujú svoje výrobky vianočnou tematikou už v októbri. Za tri mesiace tak z vianočných ozdôb spravia okukané rekvizity a z kolied nežiaduce odtrhovačky. Prvý argument proti Vianociam je badateľný, keď si človek prelistuje v predvianočnom období blogy. Alebo keď si vystojí rady počas vianočných nákupov. Ľudia držiace plné tašky so slzou v oku spomínajú, aké to bolo pekné, keď všetkým stačilo aj málo. Druhý argument, teda antipatia voči vianočným reklamám, má väčšie opodstatnenie. Výzdoba, ktorá na uliciach svieti tri mesiace, naozaj marí čaro Vianoc. A tiež otravná reklama. Proti samotným Vianociam a ich symbolom sa však v srdci Európy neozývajú protestné hlasy. Možno aj preto, že si ešte veľká časť spoločnosti pamätá časy, keď bol na indexe Ježiško a do domácností takmer povinne vstupoval dedo Mráz. Kto by si vtedy pomyslel, že niečo podobné sa bude diať aj na druhej strane železnej opony? A veru, v posledných rokoch sa v západných krajinách, kde vedľa seba nažívajú rôzne kultúry, snažia samosprávy i veľké spoločnosti mazať kresťanské symboly Vianoc. Vráťane Ježiška. Slovák, ktorý smúti za zašlým duchom Vianoc, by určite hneď vedel ukázať na vinníka. Santa Clausa by však obviňoval krivo. Ježiško sa na čierny zoznam nedostáva preto, že by bolo treba zvyrazňovať silu Santa Clausa, ako sa kedysi zdôrazňovala dominancia deda Mráza. Ježiško spolu so všetkými symbolmi Vianoc, ktoré sú silno nadviazané na kresťanstvo, sa pomaly vytráca z verejných priestranstiev v rámci prehnannej politickej korektnosti. Vedľa po uliciach chodia aj príslušníci náboženstiev, ktoré Vianoce neslávia. Čo by tí povedali...

Z vianočného stromčeka je sviatočný

Vraví sa, že cesta do pekla je dláždzená dobrými úmyslami. Mazanie kresťanských symbolov možno nedláždi priamo cestu k Luciferovi, rozhodne to však nie je rajská aleja. Svedčí o tom aj množstvo sporov a kontroverzných rozhodnutí, ktoré „antivianočné hnutie“ sprevádza. Začalo to pritom nenápadne. Rušením vianočných právlastkov. V angličtine totiž tento sviatok evokuje kresťanstvo viac ako pri slovenskom výraze. Ježiš sa skrýva priamo v slove Vianoce (Christ = Kristus, Christmas = Vianoce). Už v decembri 2005 si novinári z amerického denníka USA Today všimli jednu zvláštnosť. „Po celej krajine sa stavajú a zdobia stromčeky. Vyzerajú a voňajú ako vianočné stromčeky, ale pozor! Nedajte sa nachytať. Niekde sú to len sviatočné stromčeky, inde dokonca nemajú žiadne meno,“ upozorňovali na postupné mazanie prívlastku vianočný. Už od začiatku si takéto počinanie všimli kresťanské organizácie, ktoré nielen protestovali, ale, ako to už v USA býva zvykom, dokonca sa vyhrážali súdom za náboženskú diskrimináciu. Neúspech si na svoje konto pripísali napríklad v meste New York. Newyorská školská rada totiž zakázala na všetkých školách vystavovať jasličky s Ježiškom. Súd dal vtedy za pravdu školskej rade, keď uznal, že scéna je čisto náboženským symbolom. Aj pri ďalšom súdnom spore v meste Philadelphia boli kresťanskí puritáni neúspešní. Škola na jednej strane zakázala betlehem, no zároveň povolila židovskú chanukovú menoru. Riaditeľ školy svoje rozhodnutie komentoval tým, že judaizmus nie je len náboženstvo, ale aj kultúra. Protestovali však aj obyčajní ľudia. Jeden z najzaujímavejších sa odohral v americkom meste Boston, keď sa v ňom objavili plagáty, ktoré pozývali obyvateľov i návštevníkov metropoly na slávnostné zapnutie sviatočného stromu. Radníci sa vtedy ozval drevorubač, ktorý obrovitý strom mestu doviezol. „Radšej by som ten vianočný strom nechal rozpíliť na triesky, než ho volal sviatočný,“ vyhlásil. Starosta Bostonu Thomas Menino okamžite hasil situáciu, keď stromček znova nazval vianočným.

Žiadne Vianoce, žiadne nákupy

Podobná situácia sa opakovala aj v sieťach supermarketov a nákupných reťazcov. Veľké obchody pozývali na zimné nákupy, nie vianočné. Ich výzdoba sa sústredila na symboly, ktoré sa nedajú zaradiť medzi náboženské. Výsledok? Kresťanské a iné neziskové organizácie začali vo veľkom vyhlasovať bojkot takýchto obchodov.

Nuž a keďže v predvianočnom čase je veľmi mrzuté prísť o zákazníka, firmy začali ustupovať. Aj také giganty ako Wall-Mart, Sears či K-Mart. Používanie či vynechávanie slova Vianoce sa stalo akousi marketingovou stratégiou. Nie všetci obchodníci totiž podľahli nátlaku kresťanských združení. „Budeme aj naďalej používať výraz sviatky, pretože v tomto období sa slávi viacero sviatkov a my chceme vyjadriť rešpekt všetkým,“ reagovala na kritiku Dawn Bryantová, hovorkyňa siete s elektronikou Best Buy. Aj tento rok sa na ich letádoch objavuje slogan „horúce zľavy počas zimných sviatkov“. Marketingoví stratégovia zrejme vypočítali, že absencia Vianoc prinesie viac nekresťanských zákazníkov ako odradí puritánov. Komu prišlo bojkotovanie obchodných reťazcov prítiahnuté za vlasy, ten bude prekvapený, že v USA išli v téme Vianoce sviatky ešte ďalej. Zaoberali sa ňou totiž aj politickí komentátori. Keď Los Angeles Times a New York Times publikovali názor zastávajúci sa „sviatkov“, konzervatívny komentátor Bill O'Reilly rozhorčene reagoval: Okrem vojny s terorom je táto kultúrna vojna najdôležitejšou vecou, ktorá sa deje v našej krajine. V stávke je to, či sa z USA stane sekulárna krajina kopírujúca západnú Európu, alebo či si zachováme naše kresťanské tradície,“ povedal. Mazanie Vianoc však nie je len americkou špecialitou. V posledných rokoch sa nekresťanské ponímanie zimných sviatkov presadzuje napríklad aj vo Veľkej Británii. Starosta škótskeho mesta Dundee musel vlani vysvetľovať predstaviteľom cirkvi, prečo premenoval tradičné mestské vianočné oslavy na „Zimný nočný festival svetla“. Z decembrových osláv totiž vypadli všetky kresťanské symboly vrátane obľúbených jasličiek s Ježiškom. Po vlne nevole však v Dundee našla cirkev s mestom spoločnú reč a na festivale sa objavili zástupcovia oboch strán.

Politická korektnosť

V našich končinách sa politická korektnosť ešte do Vianoc nezahryzla. To všetko neznamená, že sa tak v najbližších rokoch nestane. Človek bude musieť rozmýšľať, či je spoločensky prijateľné, aby niekde vystavil betlehem. V práci sa od neho bude zase požadovať, aby sa kolegov nepýtal, čo budú robiť na Vianoce, ale cez sviatky.

Neurčitý obdarúvatel'

Slovenský rodič má pred vianočnými sviatkami naozaj neľahkú úlohu. Isteže, vymyslieť uverejniteľnú lož a prekryť tak fakt, že darčeky kupujú vlastne príbuzní, musia rodičia na celom svete. V strednej Európe však treba deťom vysvetliť aj to, prečo jednému spolužiakovi doniesol lyže Ježiško, druhému Santa Claus a tretiemu večne živý dedo Mráz.

Komerčné sviatky

Ako vyzerali Vianoce pred sto rokmi? Darčekom boli najčastejšie pletené ponožky či šály. Čižmy a stužky do vlasov boli luxus. Mnoho ľudí dnes tvrdí, že také Vianoce mali napriek tomu čaro. To je možné. Je naivné si však myslieť, že keby ľudia mali pred sto rokmi na viac, nenadeli by si pod stromček rovnako ako my dnes.

Bulletin Život Cirkvi 50/2010

Biskup Imrich posvätil v Námestove sochu bl. sestry Zdenky



Bl. sestra Zdenka

Predposlednú novembrovú nedeľu zavítal do námestovskej farnosti spišský pomocný biskup Mons. Andrej Imrich. V poobedňajších hodinách odslúžil slávnostnú svätú omšu v rímskokatolíckom kostole sv. Šimona a Júdu. Dôvodom jeho návštevy bolo posvätenie novej sochy blahoslavenej sestry Zdenky. Pri tejto príležitosti odovzdali sestričky sv. kríža z Trnavy relikviu blahoslavenej Zdenky. Dekan Blažej Dibdiak si od nich prevzal časť kosti.

Rozhodnutie uctiť si touto formou rodáčku z Oravy vzišlo s iniciatívy veriacich a dekana. „Sochu sme sa rozhodli umiestniť na takom mieste, kde prechádza najviac ľudí, v blízkosti hlavnej vchodu do kostola. Nech každá návšteva kostola pripomína veriacim aj túto vzácnu blahosladenú z Oravy,“ vysvetlil dôvody umiestnenia dekan Blažej Dibdiak. „Chceme, aby táto blahosladená, pochádzajúca z Oravy, sa aj takýmto spôsobom dostala viac do povedomia našich veriacich a aby jej príklad úžasnej lásky k Bohu a Cirkvi a jej orodovanie u Boha bolo posilou vo viere pre nás všetkých,“ dodal dekan Dibdiak.

Zhotoviteľom sochy je Juraj Brišák, mladý sochár zo Zákamenného, ktorý urobil návrh a zabezpečil aj jej odlatie z bronzu. Realizácia tohto diela je financovaná z vlastných zdrojov.

Blahosladená Zdenka rodáčka z oravskej dediny Krivá odišla ako 15-ročná do rehole. Život jej zasvätila až do svojej smrti v roku 1955. Svätý otec Ján Pavol II. ju počas návštevy Slovenska v roku 2003 v Bratislave vyhlásil za blahosladenú.

TK KBS

Zvonením zvončeka sa začína Štedrý večer v mnohých slovenských domácnostiach

Vianočný večer sa začína v mnohých slovenských domácnostiach zvonením zvončeka. Nasleduje oblátka s medom a cesnakom, okrem iných jedál často opekance a nakoniec už možno siahnuť po maškarte, ktorou môže byť čokoládová figúrka.

Zvonkárstvo na Slovensku prekvitalo najmä pred prvou svetovou vojnou. Bolo úzko spojené s chovom oviec a dobytky a rozšírené na Orave, Pohroní, v Turci, Liptove, na Gemeri či na Spiši. Patrilo medzi domáce remeslá, kde sa vyžadovalo mať aj hudobný sluch. Na Slovensku sa vyrábali dva druhy zvoncov. Liate zvonce, nazývané liatovce, spiežovce, sa zhotovovali zo zvonoviny – spieže (zliatina medi a cinu). V súčasnosti sa vyrábajú z mosadze totožným kovolejarským spôsobom ako veľké kostolné zvony, ktoré sú tvarovo podobné. Liate zvonce vážili od 0,25 kg, podľa veľkosti. Plechové zvonce (klopáre) sa vyrábajú z plechu, ktorý sa vystrihne podľa šablóny a zaoblí kladivom. Boky sa spájajú nitovaním a letovaním. Hotové zvonce sa ladia podľa sluchu vykúvaním. Plechové zvonce vážia od 0,5 do 3-6 kg a bývali tvarovo i funkčne rozdielne. Zvonce pre ovce (šuliare) sú zväčša valcovitého tvaru. Kravské zvonce (klopáre) majú kužeľovitý tvar. Rozličné druhy zvoncov sa používali v rozmanitej signalizačnej funkcii podľa druhu zvierat (ovce, kozy, kravy, jalovina, svine atď.) a podľa ich povahy a správania pri pasení. Pastieri v horskom teréne, kde boli viaceré salaše vedľa seba, uprednostňovali zvonce naladené na jeden hlas, tzv. jednohlasovú partiu (Spiš, Šariš), pričom každý salaš používal zvuk inej výšky.

Oblátky nájdeme takmer na každom slovenskom štedrovečernom stole. V minulosti ich pre celú dedinu piekol učiteľ a do domácností ich roznášali žiaci, ako to poznáme z televízneho filmu Vianočné oblátky (1977) podľa poviedky slovenského klasika Martina Kukučina o zvykoch a obyčajach našich predkov v období od Ondreja po Vianoce. Oblátky z jednoduchého liateho cesta s medom a škoricou môžu byť ploché alebo stočené do trubičiek. Dnes sa pečú aj v domácnostiach na elektrických pekáčoch. Majster musí preukázať obratnosť, pretože oblátky sa skrúcajú na paličku ešte na rozhorúčenej platni.

Opekance sa pečú z kysnutého hustejšieho cesta. Gazdinky v časovom deficite našľujú z cesta tyčinky cez celý plech a šikovne ruky detí ich potom pokrájajú na malé kúsky. Svedomitejšie gazdinky dajú na plechy už nakrájané cesto a veru sa im tie kúpené nevyrovňajú.

Vianočná čokoládová figúrka získa svoju podobu vo formičke, ktorá sa po naplnení tekutou čokoládou uzavrie a krúti ako na kolotoči. Čokoláda prenikne do všetkých častí a onedlho možno z foriem vylúpnuť šušku, guľku alebo snehuličika. Zabalené do farebného staniolu putujú na stôl potešiť hodujúcich.

TASR

Pápežské slovenské kolégium v Ríme si pripomenulo návštevu blahosladeného Jána Pavla II.

Pokračovanie zo str. 22

Tomáš Galis, žilinský biskup a Jozef Dravecký, veľvyslanec SR pri Svätej Stolici.

Významnou bola nepochybne prítomnosť J. Em. kardinála Jozefa Tomka, ktorý má v živej pamäti jednotlivé momenty návštevy Jána Pavla II. Otec kardinál vo svojej homilii počas eucharistickej slávnosti spomínal na krásne chvíle prežité pred tridsiatimi rokmi, no zároveň podčiarkoval, že to najdôležitejšie, čo si máme všimnúť je odkaz, ktorý Svätý Otec nechal Slovákom, keď im pripomínal duchovné dedičstvo sv. Cyrila a Metoda. V čom je toto dedičstvo zakorenené? Sám Ján Pavol II. ozrejmil prítomným, že „korene slovenskej kultúry sú v kresťanstve, v Bohu. Viera v Boha je jej predpokladom a zárukou plnosti. Platí to o každom prejave kultúrneho života a diania. Nech je to i pre Vás, najmilejší, pravidlom života a činnosti!“

Touto výzvou a povzbudením k vernosti cyrilometodskému dedičstvu sa Svätý Otec Ján Pavol II. pred tridsiatimi obrátil na Slovákov žijúcich po celom svete. No jeho odkaz a výzva platia aj pre našu súčasnú generáciu ako aj pre tie, ktoré prídu, aby sa cyrilometodská tradícia, ktorá sa už celé storočia tiahne ako červená niť históriou Slovákov, uchovala v ich srdciach i v budúcnosti.

Mons. Vladimír Stahovec

Rektor Pápežského slovenského kolégia sv. Cyrila a Metoda v Ríme

Oznámenia spolkov a okresov

Schôdza Okresu Princa Pribinu v Los Angeles, Kalifornia

Okres Princa Pribinu bude mať svoju predvianočnú schôdzu v nedeľu 18. decembra 2011. Oslava začne o 11.00 hodine so svätou omšou v kaplnke sv. Jána Bosku pri St. John Bosco High School, 13640 S. Bellflower Boulevard, Bellflower, CA. 90706. Slovenskú svätú omšu bude koncelebrovať otec Al Pestun zo San Francisca a otec Pavol Sochuľak, ktorý príde zo San Bernardina. Po svätej omši bude spoločné posedenie s priateľmi pri vianočnom obede a sv. Mikuláš bude rozdávať darčeky deťom.

Taktiež bude vyhodnotenie súťaže o štipendium s udelením finančných cien. Všetky obvoody v okolí sú pozvané na Vianočné stretnutie Okresu.

Pavol Skubeň, predseda

Vianočné posedenia a zábavy

Štedrovečerná večera – Vigília v New York City

Farská rada pri Slovenskom kostole sv. Jána Nepomuckého, NYC a Spoločnosť sv. Štefana č. 716 Prvej Katolíckej Slovenskej Jednoty pozývajú slovenskú verejnosť na Štedrovečernú večeru – Vigíliu, ktorá sa bude konať v nedeľu dňa 11. decembra 2011 o 1:00 hodine odopoludnia v osadnej hale Slovenského kostola sv. Jána Nepomuckého 411 East 66th Street, NYC. Vstupné za osobu je 20.00 dolárov, v čom je započítaná aj večera.

Lístky na toto podujatie si môžete objednať na Farskom úrade Slovenského kostola sv. Jána Nepomuckého, telefón (212) 734-4613; Jozef Bilik: (718) 463-2084; Henrieta Daitová (201) 6412-8922.

Vianočný koncert a večera v Yonkers, NY

Farnosť Najsvätejšej Trojice v Yonkerst, NY usporiada v nedeľu 11. decembra 2011 27. vianočný koncert, po ktorom bude nasledovať večera. Bude sa konať v kostole Najsvätejšej Trojice, 18 Trinity Plaza v Yonkers, NY. Koncert začne o 3.30 hodine. Po koncerte bude v spoločenskej hale tradičná Štedrá večera. Vstupenky na podujatie sú \$ 35 za osobu, za deti do 12 rokov je vstupné \$ 17.50. Vstupenky len na koncert sú \$ 10.00. Bližšie informácie a rezervácie na tel. číslo: (914) 963-0720.

Vianočné karty a oblatky u sestričiek sv. Cyrila a Metoda

Slovenské sestričky sv. Cyrila a Metoda z Danville ponúkajú Vianočné karty (pozdravy) k tohtoročným Vianociam. Objednávky začnú od 24. októbra do 16. decembra. Balíček oblatiek (5 kusov) 3 doláre, a Vianočné karty balíček (9 kusov) 6.75 dolárov, plus poštovné a balenie 5.75.

Pre bližšie informácie a objednávky kontaktujte: Sister Catherine Labouré S.S.C.M. na číslo 570-275-5606, alebo píšete na adresu: Jankola Library and Slovak Museum, 580 Railroad St. Villa Sacred Heart, Danville, PA 17821.

Dr. Ján Šimko vo večnosti

Dňa 23. septembra 2011, vo veku 90 rokov na zlyhanie srdca sa odobral do večnosti známy v slovensko-americkéj komunite vo Washingtone, DC, Dr. Ján Šimko. Nebohý sa narodil 30. októbra 1920 na Slovensku v Zlatých Moravciach a do Spojených štátov pricestoval v roku 1967. Najprv sa zamestnal ako profesor angličtiny na Rio Grande College, Ohio a následne vyučoval na niekoľkých prestížnych univerzitách v Spojených štátoch. Dr. Šimko okrem svojej praxe sa zapájal do spoločenského života a bol horlivým podporovateľom slovenskej menšiny v Amerike.

Vyznamenal sa zvlášť v oblasti lingvistiky, je autorom vynikajúceho anglicko-slovenského slovníka, mnohých štúdií a odborníkom na Shakespeara. Svoju vášeň pre vážnu hudbu naplnil návštevami koncertov a operných predstavení z ktorých písal pravidelné recenzie do Katolíckeho fraternalistického dvojtýždenníka JEDNOTA. Obdržal niekoľko univerzitných ocenení, ale za jednu z najväčších úspechov pokladal v roku 2002 udelenie medaily Prezidenta Slovenskej republiky, ktorú si prevzal na Veľvyslanectve Slovenskej republiky vo Washingtone, DC. Nebohý zanecháva za sebou staršieho syna Jána Šimka a vnuka v Bratislave.

Odpočinutie večné daj mu Pane a večné svetlo nech mu svieti! Česť jeho pamiatke!

Láska Božia, nádej naša ...

Zdvihni rúčku, Jezuliatko,
a požehnaj celý svet!
Bo bez Tvojho požehnanja
lásky, šťastia na ňom niet.

Žehnaj všetkých mojich milých,
ktorých dnes pozdravujem,
keď im na Tvoje Narodenie
všetko dobré vinšujem.

Moc Božia nech Vás
stále posilňuje;
ruka Božia nech Vás
všade ochraňuje.

Slovo Božie vo všetkom
riadi a spravuje;
láska Božia nech Vás
stále potešuje.

Anna Trojčáková

Americký veľvyslanec otvoril výstavu fotografií Reagana

Výstavu fotografií 40. prezidenta Spojených štátov amerických Ronalda Reagana (1911-2004) si môžu od 5. decembra pozrieť návštevníci Starého divadla Karola Spišáka v Nitre. Fotografie zo súkromného života exprezidenta, zo stretnutí so svetovými lídrami, z rokov strávených v Bielom dome či z návštev Európy, kde bývalý prezident hľadal možnosť ukončenia studenej vojny doplnia kolekcia kníh o Reaganovi, publikovaných v posledných rokoch. Ich súčasťou je aj kniha My father at 100, ktorej autorom je prezidentov syn Ron Reagan.

Výstavu, ktorá potrvá do konca tohto roka, pripravilo pri príležitosti stého výročia narodenia exprezidenta Veľvyslanectvo Spojených štátov amerických na Slovensku. Nitrianske Staré divadlo je poslednou zastávkou tejto výstavy, ktorú otvoril americký veľvyslanec Theodore Sedgwick.

TASR

Vianoce 2011

Vianočný pozdrav od spišského emeritného biskupa

Vážená redakcia, drahí bratia a sestry v Amerike!

Zasa stojíme pred slávením veľkých a radostných sviatkov Narodenia nášho Pána Ježiša Krista. Každé dieťa, ktoré prišlo na svet prináša radosť rodičom, ale aj ostatným členom spoločenstva. Každé dieťa je pozdravom nebeského Otca nám ľudom: Mám vás rád! Ja som darca života, Stvoriteľ života, a vám, rodičia, dávam podiel na svojom darovstve života. Pozrite sa do tých nevinných očičiek, vezmite do náručia toto útle tielko, ktoré som vám daroval, aby ste sa tešili tak, ako sa tešia deti. Vnímajte tajomstvo, ktoré je naplnené obdivom.

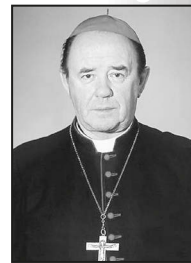
O koľko viac stojíme v údive nad Božím tajomstvom, keď na Vianoce pozeráme na jasličky a v duchu vidíme to živé Dieťa, ktoré sa pred dvoma tisícročiami narodilo v Betleheme. Bol to prejav a dôkaz, že nás Boh miluje, že jeho vtelená Láska chce zachrániť našu pozemskú i večnú existenciu.

Milí bratia a sestry, ako každoročne, aj teraz prichádzam, k vám s milým vianočným pozdravom, aby som vám aspoň trochu priblížil tie naše, slovenské Vianoce v ich plnej kráse, ale aj v ich obsahu, ktorý je rovnaký tu i u vás: narodil sa nám Spasiteľ, ktorý prináša záchranu človeka. Obsah Vianoc je hlboko náboženský, ktorý nás vyzýva žiť s Kristom v súkromnom i verejnom živote.

Ďakujem za posielanie vašich novín, ktoré ma informujú o vašom živote.

Všetkým vám prajem a vyprosujem veľa zdravia a Božieho požehnanja k Vianociam i do nového roka 2012.

S úctivým pozdravom



Mons. František Tondra

Mons. František Tondra
spišský emeritný biskup

Pápežské slovenské kolégium v Ríme si pripomenulo návštevu blahoslaveného Jána Pavla II.

V nedeľu 6. novembra 2011 sa Slováci žijúci v Ríme zišli v Pápežskom slovenskom kolégiu sv. Cyrila a Metoda, aby si pripomenuli jednu z najvýznamnejších udalostí v histórii života Slovákov v Ríme. Pred tridsiatimi rokmi – 8. novembra 1981 – navštívil vtedajší Slovenský ústav sv. Cyrila a Metoda hosť najväčšej: pápež Ján Pavol II., ktorý po atentáte (13. mája 1981) prvýkrát opúšťa hradby Vatikánu, aby pozdravil svojich milovaných bratov a sestry.

Svätý Otec - spolu so štyrmi biskupmi (Mons. Jozefom Tomkom, Mons. Andrejom Grutkom, Mons. Andrejom Rusnákom, Mons. Pavlom Hnilicom), s rektorom Ústavu Mons. Dominikom Hrušovským a mnohými kňazmi - slávil v kaplnke Ústavu Eucharistiu po slovensky. V homílii, ktorú počas nej predniesol, uviedol aj dôvody, ktoré ho priviedli do slovenskej cirilometodskej rodiny: „láska viedla moje kroky do Ústavu svätého Cyrila a Metoda: láska k dvom svätým bratom a láska k Vám.“

Ján Pavol II. veľmi dobre poznal náboženskú a politickú situáciu na Slovensku, ktoré mu bolo tak drahé. Komunistický režim všemožne bránil bližšiemu kontaktu Slovákov s rímskym biskupom. Preto keď pozdravuje tých, ktorých má pred sebou v kaplnke Ústavu, jeho „pohľad sa duchovne nesie ešte ďalej, k tým ktorých všetkých Vy tu akosi zastupujete: pozdravujem Vás, drahí Slováci, vo vlasti i za jej hranicami, všetkých Vás z celého srdca a s otcovskou láskou pozdravujem.“

Do atmosféry tejto významnej udalosti sa v nedeľu podvečer snažili ponoriť prítomní kňazi, rehoľníci, rehoľné sestry ako aj početní laici. Svojou účasťou ju umocnili Mons.



Pokračovanie na str. 21

Krátke správy zo Slovenska

• **Monitorovacia** skupina Európskej komisie pre projekt Európske hlavné mesto kultúry opúšťala nedávno Košice, po krátkej pracovnej návšteve, spokojná. Vedúci skupiny Manfred Gauhoffer, pripustil, že aj keď v mnohých krokoch pri naplnení zámerov projektov vidno istý pokrok, bude treba v mnohom ešte pridať a zrýchliť. „Videli sme miesta, kde sa majú realizovať investičné zámery, navštívili sme aj oba body SPOT's (výmenníkové stanice, ktoré slúžia ako kultúrne centrá na sídliskách) a máme z toho dobrý pocit. Najdôležitejšie je, že sa našiel spôsob, ako sa finančné zdroje potrebné pre realizáciu týchto aktivít presunuli z Bruselu na Slovensko,“ dodal Gauhoffer.

• **Veľvyslankyňa** Nórska na Slovensku Trine Skymoénová ocenila v polovici novembra na stretnutí s ministrom kultúry Danielom Krajcerom plodnú spoluprácu v oblasti kultúry medzi Slovenskom a Nórskom v uplynulých dvoch rokoch. Veľvyslankyňa sa zmienila aj o blížiacom sa otvorení rekonštruovanej Reduty v Bratislave. Zároveň podľa jej slov vyjadril potešenie nad tým, že 10. mája 2012 bude v Redute slávnostne odhalená busta Björnstjerna Björnsona, nórskeho spisovateľa a politického aktivistu, ktorý bol silným zástancom práv menšín a bojoval za práva detí na Slovensku používať ich materinský jazyk. Nórska veľvyslankyňa informovala aj o záujme participovať na projekte Európske hlavné mesto kultúry Košice 2013, kde sa už uskutočnili prvé kontakty.

• **V internetovom hlasovaní** na portáli slovakregion.sk v súťaži o Najkrajšie mesto a obec Slovenska 2011 zvíťazil v kategórii mesto Bardejov. Od ľudí dostal 35,491 hlasov. Najkrajšou obcou sa stala Sedliacka Dubová, ktorá získala 31,278 hlasov. V poradí tretí ročník súťaže sa konal od apríla do konca októbra tohto roka. V rámci miest sa na druhej priečke umiestnilo Štúrovo a za ním nasledoval Trenčín. Medzi obcami obsadila druhé miesto Vydrná a tretí bol Kamenín. Po prvý raz sa v rámci súťaže volil aj primátor a starosta Slovenska 2011.

• **Kamzíkom** sa v Tatrách v posledných rokoch darí, dokazuje to aj ich tohtoročné jesenné spočítanie. V národnom parku vrátane poľskej časti žije celkom 929 kamzíkov, pričom na slovenskej strane ich napočítali niečo cez 700 a takmer 100 bolo mláďat. V tomto období začína kamzičia ruja, počas ktorej sú kamzíky vo väčšom pohybe a je teda aj väčšia pravdepodobnosť, že sa podarí spočítať všetkých jedincov. Kamzíky v čase potravinovej núdze počas tuhých zím prikrmujú aj sušenou jarabinou, lesníci ju vynášajú do vysokohorských polôh v ochranných obvodoch Podbanské, Štrbské Pleso, Vysné Hágy, Tatranské Matliare, Podspády a Tatranská Javorina. Tatry sú najsevernejšou oblasťou výskytu kamzíkov na svete. Kamzík vrchovský tatranský patrí do zoznamu chránených živočíchov a jeho spoločenská hodnota je približne 5,000 eur.

• **Po tom, čo sa môže do USA cestovať bez vybavovania víz,** využíva možnosť navštíviť túto krajinu čoraz viac Slovákov. Ročne je to približne o 10,000 ľudí viac. 17. novembra uplynulo tri roky od spustenia bezvízového styku s USA. Informoval o tom Matt Miller z americkej ambasády. Pre porovnanie, v roku 2007, keď ešte bolo do USA potrebné vybavovať víza, vycestovalo do tejto krajiny 28,049 Slovákov. Počas minulého roka sa ich počet zvýšil už na 39,776. Od 17. novembra 2008 stačí občanom SR na vycestovanie do USA cestovná autorizácia ESTA namiesto víz. Na vycestovanie teda potrebujú len biometrický pas, schválenú autorizáciu ESTA a ich cesta nesmie trvať dlhšie ako 90 dní.

• **Tri tisícky nových pracovných miest a biznis za miliardu eur.** Presne toto môže získať východ Slovenska. Priemyselný park v Kechneci je podľa zistení opäť v hre o veľkú investíciu španielskeho konzorcia Mazel Group, ktoré podniká v leteckom biznise. Španieli sa po Slovensku obzerajú už dlhšie. V čase vrcholiacej krízy svoju ponuku dali na stôl prvý raz, avšak s významnou podmienkou. Spoluinvestorom tu mal byť štát a za svoj podiel by zaplatil pol miliardy eur. To sa nepozdávalo vtedajšiemu ministru hospodárstva Ľubomirovi Jahnátkovi (Smer-SD). Aj súčasné vedenie ministerstva hospodárstva má k projektu výhrady. „Projekt však je živý a dúfam, že s investorom nájdeme nakoniec spoločnú reč“, povedal starosta Kechneci Jozef Konkoly.

• **Firma Samsung zostáva na Slovensku.** Výrobu LCD panelov neprenesie do lacnejšej krajiny. Cenou za to je získanie dotácie od štátu v podobe daňovej úľavy vo výške 28 miliónov eur. Slovensko už pritom v uplynulých piatich rokoch schválilo Samsungu desiatky miliónov eur. Zahraniční investori sú povinní v krajine, od ktorej dostali dotácie, podnikat' päť rokov. Inak by peniaze museli vrátiť a hrozili by im aj značné sankcie od Európskej únie. V päťročných intervaloch však neváhajú žiadať o nové a nové peniaze a zastrájať sa odchodom. Podobné praktiky však ženú Slovensko do začarovaného kruhu, keď sa štát v podstate rozhoduje, či peniaze radšej minie v podobe úľavy pre investorov, alebo formou dávok pre nezamestnaných.

• **Na medzinárodnom Vianočnom bazáre** 20. novembra 2011 v bratislavskej Starej tržnici sa podarilo na charitatívne účely získať "rekordných" 88,000 eur. Celkovo sa tu rôznymi výrobkami a špeciálnymi prezentovalo 38 krajín, charitatívne organizácie a ďalší účastníci. Podujatie, ktoré pravidelne organizuje Medzinárodný klub žien v Bratislave pre širokú verejnosť, otvorila manželka prezidenta SR Silvia Gašparovičová. Na tohtoročnom bazáre nechýbali exotické štáty ako Kórea či Brazília, ale aj tradiční vystavovatelia ako stredoeurópske krajiny, Izrael, Francúzsko, Španielsko, Kanada, Chorvátsko, Rusko či Srbsko. Slovenskú republiku zastupoval oficiálne stánok Ministerstva zahraničných vecí SR.

• **V Kostole sv. Ladislava pokračovalo** nonstop čítanie a počúvanie Svätého písma, ktoré sa konalo od 20. novembra večer do piatka 25. novembra. Prvým čítajúcim bol bratislavský arcibiskup a metropolita Mons. Stanislav Zvolenský, ktorý nad podujatím s názvom Biblia dňom i nocou prevzal záštitu. Toto jedinečné podujatie, súvislé čítanie a počúvanie Svätého písma, sa v Bratislave koná už po druhý raz z iniciatívy veriacich bratislavských farností. Tentoraz sa pri čítaní v 15-minútových intervaloch vystriedalo viac ako 400 čítajúcich, ktorí bez prestávky prečítali celé Sväté písmo. Podujatie Biblia dňom i nocou je súčasťou duchovnej prípravy na oslavy jubilea príchodu vierozvestov svätých Cyrila a Metoda na územie Slovenska.

• **V Skalici koncom novembra slávnostne otvorili** zrekonštruovaný Jezuitský kostol. Práce sa začali vlni v septembri po tom, ako sa mestu podarilo po opakovaných pokusoch získať grant vo výške 2.36 milióna eur z európskych fondov. Ďalšie financie vyčlenil magistrát z vlastnej kasy. Celkové náklady na rekonštrukciu kostola dosiahli 2,689,309.51 eura. Objekt kostola bol tiež plynofikovaný a nainštalovali v ňom nové vykurovanie, aby bol priestor využiteľný aj počas zimných mesiacov. V rámci projektu sa zrealizovali aj nové rozvody elektroinštalácie s osvetlením a ozvučením.

TASR a slovenské časopisy

❖❖❖ Bdiť a očakávať

Pokračovanie zo str. 24

nepatrí sama sebe, a z tohto poznania pramení jej sloboda. Pán Boh chce našimi očami vidieť trpiacich a nešťastných, ktorých nám poslať do cesty prostredníctvom nás im poskytuje pomoc. Naše telo a duša sa stávajú Božím nástrojom, pomocou ktorého prichádza pomoc pre blízkych v núdzi. Preto pri Poslednom súde zaznejú slová: „Cokolvek ste urobili jednému z mojich najmenších bratov, mne ste urobili.“

Bdiť znamená aj očakávať a túžiť. Pre kresťanov má veľký význam svätá túžba. Sme stvorení ako bytosti túžiace po Bohu. V predvianočnom období sa naša túžba prehlbuje a sústreďuje, aby sa Spasiteľ mohol narodiť aj v našom srdci.

Stanislav Meliš, Katolícke noviny

Návšteva delegácie parlamentného zahraničného výboru v USA

Predseda Zahraničného výboru Národnej rady Slovenskej republiky František Šebeb a členovia delegácie Juraj Droba a Iveta Lišková boli od 15. do 20. novembra na pracovnej ceste Washingtonu. V rámci ktorej absolvovali celý rad stretnutí s partnermi v Kongrese USA, ako aj na ministerstvách zahraničných vecí a obrany. V rámci programu v Kongrese sa delegácia stretla so senátorom Benom Cardinom (Demokrat, Maryland), predsedníčkou Zahraničného výboru Snemovne reprezentantov Ileanou Ros-Lehtinen (Republikánka, Florida), predsedom výboru pre dopravu Johnom Micom (Republikán, Florida), predsedom podvýboru pre Európu a Euroáziu Danom Burtonom (Republikán, Indiana), kongresmanom Michaelom Grimmom (Republikán, New York) a delegátom Portorika Pedrom Pierluisim. Delegácia mala možnosť zúčastniť sa na zasadnutí Slovenského kongresového výboru, ktorý pri tejto príležitosti zvolali kongresmani Joe Wilson (Republikán, Južná Karolína) a Pete Visclosky (Demokrat, Indiana).

Predseda Šebeb vystúpil 17. novembra s hlavným posolstvom na slávnostnej výročnej galavečeri, ktorú spoluorganizovali slovenské veľvyslanectvo vo Washingtonu a združenie Friends of Slovakia, kde mu udelili cenu za rozvoj americko-slovenských vzťahov. V rámci bohatého programu sa delegácia stretla aj s predstaviteľmi amerických židovských organizácií a think-tankov Atlantic Council, SAIS a Heritage Foundation. Okrem toho sa delegácia zúčastnila na premietaní česko-slovenského filmu Nickyho rodina.

MZV SR



Bethlehem Strollers walk from house to house singing carols during Christmas 1966 in the village of Zdiar.

FOTO TASR

Krojované skupiny chlapcov chodia po domoch spievať koledy 25. decembra 1966 v rázovitej obci Zdiar.

Vianočné vinše

Zase prišiel čas vianočný,
všetko šťastím plesá,
s jedličkou sa v každom dome
vznáša vôňa lesa.

Ludské srdcia vystlané sú
dneska láskou samou,
jak jasličky Ježišove
bolí niekedy slamou.

Tváre zdobí samý úsmev,
radosť všetko krásli,
lebo ľudia dneska zasa
trochu lásky našli.

A tú lásku ukazujú
po spôsobe starom
pekným vinšom a keď môžu,
nuž aj pekným darom.

Pretože náš Kocúr nemá
na tom svete inšie,
nuž poslať čitateľom
tie najkrajšie vinše.

Zdravia, šťastia, požehnanie,
dobrych vecí veľa,
nech dostane každý všetko,
čo si len sám želá.

Nech priateľstvo ako reťaz
dobrych ľudí spojí,
nech sú cudzí aspoň slušní,
ako bratia svoji.

Nech pominie ľudská záviť,
klebety a zvady
a nech všetci ľudia vidia,
že sa máme radi.

Nech sa v každej chvíli ku vám
bliži bratská ruka ...
už nikdy viac nie na úder,
lež nech pomoc núka.

Nech sa ku vám vaše dietky
vždy len s láskou vinú
a vždy pomoc nájdú u vás
tí čo v biede hynú.

Ak vám tečie, nuž nech z toho
iným aspoň kvapka,
k vašej šunke nech sa iným
ujde aspoň labka.

Aj národu dajte z toho,
čo vám bolo dané
a nech sa vás šťastie drží,
obchádza vás plané.

Nech váš domov nikdy viacej
nenavštívia smútky
a pred svetom vaše meno
krásli dobré skutky.

Nech nad žiaľom zarmútených
vaša slza skanie
a nech Dieťa Betlehemské
dá Vám požehnanie.

Ján Okál



Saint Catherine Labouré Church Harrisburg, PA

Vianoce sviatky lásky a radosti

Vianoce začínajú v našich srdciach. Najväčšie a najdôležitejšie dary – láska, súciti a delenie Božích darov s chudobnými a trpiacimi, to sú Vianoce a takto by sme ich mali oslavovať. Tieto dary nemajú pripnutú finančnú hodnotu, pretože sú neoceniteľné. Ale sú na dosah každého z nás, ak si len nájdeme pre ne čas.

Mnohí ľudia v dnešnom čase budú zápasit' aby oslávili Vianoce. Stratili zamestnanie, príbytok a nemajú ani dostatok výživy pre svoje rodiny. Potrebujú pomoc či už od príbuzných, charitatívnych inštitúcií, farností a od dobrých ľudí. Budú snívať o Štedrej večeri, ktorá by pre nich mala byť čosi „špeciálneho“, ale budú šťastní, ak budú len spaghetti. Ich deti možno dostanú malé darčeky, ktoré boli pohodené kdesi na strane a mali cenu hádam dolár – dva pred niekoľkými rokmi. Iné deti nečakajú ani to. Budú zavreté doma aby nevideli darčeky, ktoré dostali deti v susedstve.

Spoločnosti, ktoré majú súciti, organizujú partie pre chudobné deti. Pripravujú stromček, chutné jedlá a sladkosti. Deti zámožnejších rodičov vybalia svoje darčeky a podelia sa s chudobnými deťmi. A čo je dôležitejšie, pýtajú sa, ako by mohli pomôcť iným rodinám.

Posledné dni, ba hodiny pred Vianocami, ľudia budú šialeno robiť posledné nákupy. Ešte jedno video, ešte jednu modernejšiu bábičku, len aby to bol väčší kopec pod stromčekom.

Pre tých, ktorí si to môžu dovoliť, dobre. Ale postojme a zamyslime sa. Upríme myseľ na deti, ktoré nedostanú žiadne darčeky. Myslíme na rodičov, ktorí budú plakať, že nemohli kúpiť darčeky svojim deťom. Myslíme na tých, ktorí nemajú domova, žijú v mrazivej zime a sú hladní. Myslíme na starších ľudí, ktorí žijú v samote a sú zabudnutí.

Spoločnosti a občania môžu zmeniť tento smutný stav. Môžu organizovať zbierku šatstva, prikrývk a hračiek. Každý môže prispieť niečím. Nemusia to byť cenné veci. Ale aj tie majú veľkú hodnotu pre tých, ktorí trpia.

A možno urobiť aj viac. Vieme o niekom, čo žije sám? Môžeme ho zavolať? Môžeme si spomenúť na staršieho suseda, ktorý nemá rodinu? Môžeme takým ľuďom upiecť koláč, poslať vianočnú kartu, alebo len zaklopať na dvere a zapriať „Radostné Vianoce“?

To je viac ako vytiahnuť „Charge kartu“! To je vytiahnuť čosi z našich srdiec. To je súciti, delenie a láska. To sú Vianoce, aké majú byť.

Každý rok mnohí z nás si želajú užiť Vianoce v pokoji a radosť, aby Advent bol časom prípravy a duchovnej obnovy. Zdá sa, že namiesto toho dnešný svet si žiada nákup všetkých darčiekov, napísať mnoho vianočných karát, zúčastniť sa všetkých partií, zábav, starať sa o dekoráciu a iné aktivity. Skutočnosťou je, že tieto aktivity sú príčinou, že strácame skutočný Advent a Vianoce aké majú byť.

Vianoce, to je ako žiarivé svetlo v studenej zimnej noci. Svet jasá, šťastné chvíle nastávajú, najkrajší čas v celom roku. Ide o Lásku, ktorou je Boh sám a Vianoce sú narodeninami Jeho Lásky k nám. Vianoce sú povzbudením nádeje, že sa nám narodil Spasiteľ – Božie Dieťa. Radujeme sa tejto jedinej istote v našom živote. Prosíme Novonarodeného, aby nám pomohol tu na zemi správne žiť tešiť sa z Jeho darov.

Čitateľom Prvej Katolíckej Slovenskej Jednoty a Slovákom roztrateným po celom svete želáme požehnané vianočné sviatky, radosť v srdci, zdravie a lásku v rodine. Nech teplo vianočných sviečok a radosťná hudba, ktorú počúvame udrží Vianoce u všetkých po celý Nový rok 2012

Rudo L. Greguš

Bdiieť a očakávať

Liturgický rok sa začína pekným, poetickým obdobím - časom príprav na Vianoce. Do adventných týždňov sa premietajú dlhé stáročia starozákonného očakávania príchodu Mesiáša. Vyprahnuté srdcia prosia o rosu záchrany z nebies. Lebo Boh, ktorý je všade - na výšiniach a v hĺbkach všetkých dimenzií - nemusí byť v priestoroch našej duše. Stále je aktuálna výzva pripraviť cestu Pánovi, bdiieť a očakávať jeho príchod. Je potrebné odstrániť kamene hmotárstva, pýchy, egoizmu, ľahostajnosti a uvoľniť cestu pre vieru, nádej, slobodu a lásku. Je naliehavo potrebné z'aleka obísť priepasti vášni a znova sa prihlásiť k zodpovednosti, pokore a k usporiadanej láske.

Stvoriteľ nám dal slobodu zvoliť si život „za jeho chrbtom“, ale očakáva, že sa takéhoto života zriekneme. Spasiteľ stojí pred dverami našej duše a klope. Čaká na pozvanie. Stvoril čas aj preto, aby mohol čakať na našu lásku. Takto je pravda nášho osudu spojená so zodpovednosťou. Sme zodpovední za svoje rozhodnutie a z tejto zodpovednosti niet úniku.

Taktiež aktuálne pre nás zaznievajú slová Pavlovo Prvého listu Solúnčanom: Veď vy všetci ste synovia svetla a synovia dňa. Nepatríme noci ani tme. Nespíme teda ako ostatní, ale bdejme a budme triezvi (1 Sol 5, 5-6).

Bdenie srdca a mysle má natrvalo poznamenať náš život. Máme byť k dispozícii Bohu a bližnému. Byť bdelym znamená stále vnútorné pulzovanie pripravenosti a ochoty plniť vôľu Božiu a v rámci svojho povolania a možnosti pomáhať bližným. Máme byť opravdivo prítomní a otvorení pre druhých. Zdôraznená je tu otvorenosť a vnútorná sloboda. Opravdivo prítomní pre druhého môže byť iba ten, kto je nezaujatý, nie je preplnený sám sebou ani väznený vlastným cítením, túžbami a úzkosťami. Bdely je ten, kto je pripravený záväzne ponúknuť svoje schopnosti všetkému pozitívnemu a premeniť životné okolnosti na príležitosti vytvoriť niečo nové a dobré.

Prítomná a otvorená je tá duša, ktorá je Bohu vnútorne najoddanejšia, ktorá vie, že

Pokračovanie na str. 23

Zapálenie prvej symbolickej sviečky adventného venca

Zapálením prvej symbolickej sviečky adventného venca v bratislavskom Ružinove pred Domom kultúry si v nedeľu 27. novembra pripomenuli organizátori miestneho zastupiteľstva spolu s obyvateľmi začiatok adventu.

The lighting of the first candle of the Advent Wreath in Bratislava.



FOTO TASR-Štefan Puškás