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NUMBER 6061



Kenneth A. Arendt
President, CEO

Message from the President

As we prepare for our 53rd Quadrennial Convention, it is inspiring to reflect on our rich history.

Our very first convention was held on September 4, 1890, in Cleveland. In those early years, conventions were held more frequently. Over time, they transitioned to every two years, then every three years, and today we gather every four years in our quadrennial tradition.

Through 52 conventions spanning more than a century, our commitment to faith, fraternalism, and financial security has remained steadfast. Each convention builds upon the foundation laid by those who came before us.

Plans are well underway for our 53rd Quadrennial Convention. We will be staying at the beautiful Embassy Suites by Hilton Greenville Golf Resort & Conference Center, a property well appointed to meet all of our needs and offering many amenities for our delegates to enjoy.

We are honored to welcome His Excellency, the Most Reverend Larry J. Kulick, JCL, from Diocese of Greenburg and Allison Koppel, CEO of the American Fraternal Alliance. Both will offer meaningful insights drawn from their experiences and leadership during the Presidential Banquet

Convention is more than meetings and motions. It is fellowship. It is leadership. It is stewardship of a legacy that began in 1890 and continues through each of us today. I look forward to seeing you in Greenville. Safe travels, and thank you for your dedication to our Society.



GREENVILLE

— SOUTH CAROLINA —

FCSU 53rd Quadrennial Convention



Upcoming Deadlines

DELEGATE FORMS DUE

All forms are due by March 23

BOWLING TOURNAMENT

Choose your teams
and register by March 23

Sponsorship Forms Due by March 16

CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR IRA

There's still time to contribute to
your IRA or Roth Accounts for the
2025 and 2026 tax season.
The deadline is April 15.

FOR GOD AND NATION - ZA BOHA A NÁROD



Father Stephen Furdek and twelve other men formed the First Catholic Slovak Union in 1890. The Jednota branches were instrumental in the founding of hundreds of Catholic parishes in the United States and Canada. The first edition of its renowned bilingual newspaper was published

in 1891. Today, *Jednota* is still read by members and people interested in Catholic and Slovak life all over the world.



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

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VISION STATEMENT

Enhancing your financial future through fraternalism.

MISSION STATEMENT

Since 1890 the FCSU mission has been to provide financial security for our members through competitive investment products, while offering fraternal and cultural benefits through community-based member events.

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Chaplain's Easter Greeting

It was once thought physiologically impossible for any person to run the distance of one mile in under four minutes. Many tried and came close. Roger Bannister became the first person to do it on May 6, 1954. Since then, countless others have broken the once elusive four-minute mile.

Matthew tells us Mary Magdalene and the other Mary encountered an angel at the entrance of the Lord's empty tomb who told them the Lord has been raised. They ran to tell the apostles. John says Mary Magdalene discovered the stone covering the tomb was removed. She ran to tell the apostles. Peter and the Beloved Disciple ran to the tomb and found it empty.

We picture Mary Magdalene, Peter and the Beloved Disciple running as fast as they could. Mary Magdalene could not wait to tell. The two apostles had to see for themselves. You wonder if all three ran faster than the current record in the mile which is 3 minutes, 43 seconds.

We who believe in the Resurrection of Our Lord through these eyewitnesses are to have the same enthusiasm, joy, exuberance, and excitement when it comes to living and sharing our faith. For, as Saint Paul tells us, it is in him, the Risen Christ, that we live, and move, and have our being.

All my fraternal brothers and sisters will be remembered at my Easter Masses. God bless you always.



Rev. Thomas Nasta
Chaplain

President's Easter Greeting

As we move from the quiet reflection of Lent into the joy of Easter, I am reminded how deeply our faith, our families, and our Slovak heritage are woven together. This season calls us to pause, to count our blessings, and to appreciate the values passed down to us by our parents and grandparents: hard work, devotion, respect for tradition, and care for our community. These are the same principles on which First Catholic Slovak Union was built, and they continue to guide us today.

Easter is also a time when our customs come alive in special ways. Whether it is attending Mass, gathering around the table for a family meal, preparing traditional Easter breads, or sharing stories, these simple traditions connect generations. They remind us that we belong to something greater — a faith-filled and proud community that supports one another in good times and in challenging ones.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, the Home Office staff, and my wife Theresa, I wish each of you and your families a blessed and joyful Easter. May this season renew your spirit, strengthen our bonds as a fraternal family, and bring peace and happiness to your homes.



Kenneth A. Arendt
President, CEO

Vice President's Easter Greeting

Many years ago, I attended an Easter Vigil Mass at midnight; OK, it started at 11:30pm. By the time the Solemn Beginning of the Vigil and the Liturgy of the Word had concluded, it was past 12:15am, and I am sure the congregation was a little weary. As the priest was preparing to start his homily, a booming voice was heard coming from the choir loft announcing, "HE IS RISEN!!! HE IS RISEN!!!" Everyone was startled and jumped a little, but then we realized it was all part of the priest's homily. He wanted to convey to everyone in church the same shock that the original eyewitnesses to the resurrection must have felt when they first learned that Jesus had risen from the dead. The priest probably also wanted to wake everyone up.

As Catholics, we are not shocked by the Resurrection of Jesus; rather, we are comforted by it. While we celebrate the return of Spring and the Easter holiday, let us take time to thank God for the wonderful gifts and blessings he has given us.

On behalf of my family, I wish you all a Happy and Blessed Easter Season.



Damian D. Nasta
Vice President

NEWSPAPER GUIDELINES

All copy is due by 4:30pm, THE MONDAY THE WEEK BEFORE THE ISSUE DATE, unless otherwise stated because of special holiday scheduling. All articles are reviewed for possible publication. FCSU reserves the right to edit and format submitted articles and pictures. Remember that JEDNOTA is printed MONTHLY. Submit your articles in ample time for them to be received at the Home Office.

ISSUE DEADLINES

APRIL 2026 ISSUE

COPY DATE - MONDAY, MARCH 30
ISSUE DATE - MONDAY, APRIL 8

MAY 2026 ISSUE

COPY DATE - MONDAY, APRIL 27
ISSUE DATE - MONDAY, MAY 6

Executive Secretary's Message

As we are three months away from the convention, we have been actively planning a spectacular and educational 53rd Quadrennial Convention.

Many discussions have been held about how to get more engagement from youth and our "silent members". This upcoming convention will be rolling out a new map and vision to entice our delegates for future engagement.

I suggest that you rest before the convention since we will be rolling out new events and sessions to attend.

In order to grow, we need to change. The first exciting addition to the Convention is an orientation (parliamentary) session, that will be held late Saturday afternoon.

Not only is this a good opportunity for first timers to understand the process of the convention, but it will also be a great reminder for seasoned delegates.

Some of the other changes will include a welcome dinner with food and entertainment that captures the culture of the city that is hosting our 53rd Convention.

The official Convention will start Sunday morning followed by the Presidential Banquet with traditional Slovak entertainment.

Monday will continue with Convention session. Monday evening our delegates will have an opportunity to choose between two different options: in the evening we will offer two financial and fraternal sessions running at the same time discussing different topics relating to the Fraternal world.

We hope that branch members attending different sessions will share with other branch members the information they learned in the sessions.

It is always good to develop teamwork through sharing information.

We acquired distinguished representatives to lead these topics.

As a Fraternal Society, part of our mission is giving back to the community.

We have partnered with Blessings in a Backpack to host this wonderful opportunity to give back to the community that we visited for the convention. We will be packing 500 bags of food for local children. Please join us in helping others.

For the movie lovers we are extending the invitation to watch a Slovak movie on Monday night.

Finally, as a reminder, if you have not sent in your delegate credential form, it must arrive at the Home Office no later than 90 calendar days before opening of the convention.

The deadline date to arrive is Monday, March 23, 2026.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to the Home Office.



Kevin J. Collins
Executive Secretary, COO

UPCOMING EVENTS



MARCH 2026

- 3/14 Branch 112 - Meeting (Special Election) (Zoom)
- 3/16 Branch 162 - Meeting, Uniontown, PA (RSVP)
Date Changed
- 3/16 Branch 228 - Meeting, Lorain, OH
- 3/17 Branch 746 - Mass, Linden, NJ
- 3/19 Branch 410 - Meeting, Uniontown, PA (RSVP by 3/16)
- 3/19 Branch 731 - Mass, Youngstown, OH
- 3/21 Branch 746 - Easter Cake Baking, Linden, NJ
- 3/22 Branch 796 - Meeting, Egypt, PA
- 3/28 District 4 - Mass, Linden, NJ
- 3/28 District 10 - Cleveland Monsters Hockey Game, Cleveland, OH (RSVP)
- 3/29 Branch 743 - Mass and Meeting, Sterling Heights, MI
- 3/31 Branch 367 - Meeting, Smithfield, PA - **Date Changed**
- 3/31 Home Office - Virtual Call, 12pm and 6pm EST

APRIL 2026

- 4/2 Branch 200 - Meeting, Ford City, PA
- 4/3 Good Friday - Home Office Closed
- 4/11 Branch 450 - Meeting, Brooklyn, OH (RSVP by 4/7)
- 4/12 Branch 721 - Meeting, Bannister, MI
- 4/12 District 6 - Meeting, West Mifflin, PA (RSVP by 3/29)
- 4/12 District 12 - Meeting, Belle Vernon, PA
- 4/14 Branch 746 - Mass, Linden, NJ
- 4/19 District 2 - Meeting, Oak Forest, IL (RSVP) - **Date Changed**
- 4/19 District 8 - Meeting (Zoom)
- 4/26 Branch 1 - Meeting, Rocky River, OH (RSVP by 4/11)
- 4/28 Home Office - Virtual Call, 12pm and 6pm EST

For more information, go to the Branch and District Announcement pages or visit our website at fcsu.com.

Treasurer's Easter Greeting

Recently, I was called in for potential jury duty. While I was waiting in the assembly room, my mind wandered to how differently things might have unfolded if justice in ancient times looked anything like it does today. I found myself thinking about the trial of Jesus—how Pilate found no guilt in Him, yet the crowd pushed events in another direction.

I wasn't selected for the jury, but the experience brought me back to what Easter represents: innocence, sacrifice, and the victory of light over darkness.

As Easter approaches, we start seeing the familiar signs of the season—bunnies, chicks, eggs, crosses, palm leaves. Each one points to renewal and hope. For us, it's the time when we remember that life triumphs, and that Jesus offered Himself for the forgiveness of our sins.

It's also a good moment to appreciate the bonds we share as a fraternity. In our society, we try to live out brotherhood, compassion, and service—values that fit naturally with the spirit of Easter. This season encourages us to look out for one another and to bring a bit more light into the world around us.

With that spirit of renewal and unity, my family and I wish you and your loved ones a blessed Easter season. May peace, hope, and God's grace be with you now and always.

Veselé Veľkonočné sviatky



John V. Tokarsky
Treasurer

Executive Secretary's Easter Greeting

Brothers and Sisters, as Lent ends we now start to celebrate Christ rising.

Let's remember that those who knew Jesus best, spoke of his Humility, his Compassion, and his Unwavering Love. They portrayed him as one who stayed true to his word and remained faithful even when others faltered.

May his example inspire us to honor promises we make to one another each day, walking together in trust, loyalty, and unity.

My family and I wish you a Peaceful and Blessed Easter.

Christ Has Died / Christ Has Risen

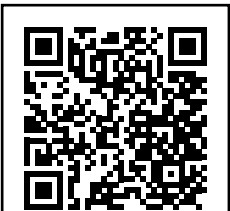
Kristus Zomrel / Kristus vstal z mŕtvych



Kevin J. Collins
Executive Secretary, COO

Join Us for our Next Virtual Calls:
Tuesday, March 31 • 12pm and 6pm (EST)
Tuesday, April 28 • 12pm and 6pm (EST)

Visit our website at
fcsu.com/about/newsroom/
or scan the QR code to get the Zoom link.





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N·E·W·S *from the Home Office*

A Message to Our Convention Delegates

By now, most delegate elections have taken place. Please remember that all delegate forms are due to the Home Office by March 23. Delegate packets will be mailed soon and will include important information such as hotel reservation details, the tentative schedule of events, local attractions, and additional materials necessary to prepare for the convention.

We look forward to welcoming both returning delegates and those attending for the first time.

To our returning members: thank you for your continued dedication and loyal service. Your commitment is truly the backbone of our organization.

To our first-time delegates: welcome, and congratulations on taking this important leadership step. For many of you, this will be your first opportunity to represent your branch or district in an official capacity. It is both an honor and a responsibility. You will gain valuable insight into the governance of our Society and lessons that will serve you well in your leadership journey.

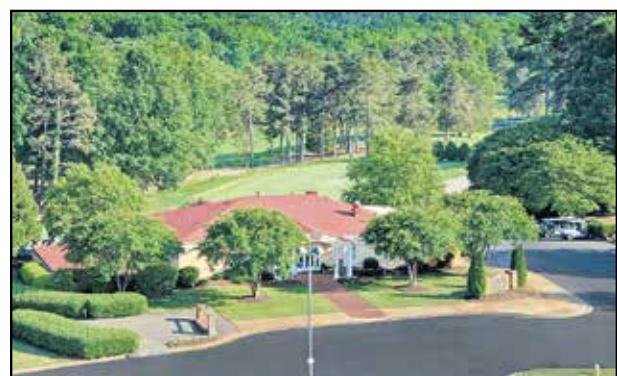
To assist our first-time delegates, we will host a brief orientation session reviewing convention procedures, including how to approach the microphone, ask questions, and use the voting equipment. Please feel free to ask questions during that time—we are here to support you.

All delegates are encouraged to review the bylaws carefully to understand the responsibilities entrusted to you. We are confident that each of you will carry out your duties with the utmost respect, diligence, and integrity.

We look forward to gathering together once again as we continue the important work entrusted to us.

CONVENTION NEWS

- Delegate forms must arrive in the Home Office by Monday, March 23, 2026.
- Watch for convention updates on FCSU website, under: Membership > 53rd Convention
- Block of rooms for Delegates is open. The hotel link has been emailed to all verified delegates. It will continue to be emailed once delegate forms arrive and have been verified.
- Please check your spam/junk folder, if you have not received the link in general mailbox.
- Delegate forms are being verified daily.
- Block of rooms will be held until May 19, 2026.



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

(Subject to Change)

Saturday, June 20, 2026

- Travel Day
- Registration
- Hotel Check In
- Committee Meetings
- Orientation (Parliamentary) Session (Highly Recommended for 1st Timers. Open to All)
- Welcome to the South Evening

Sunday, June 21, 2026

- Mass
- Convention
- Presidential Banquet
- Slovak Entertainment

Monday, June 22, 2026

- Mass
- Convention
- Dinner
- Breakout Sessions
- Giving Back to The Community Event
- Movie Night

Tuesday, June 23, 2026

- Travel Day



There's really no bad time to start investing, but the earlier you begin, the more you can benefit from the power of compound growth. By contributing sooner rather than later, your money has more time to grow and accumulate earnings, potentially leading to a much larger return in the long run. One smart step is to make your 2026 IRA contribution as early as possible to give your investment more time to grow throughout the year. Additionally, don't forget that you still have until April 15, 2026, to make contributions for the 2025 tax year, so you can take advantage of tax benefits before the deadline. Planning ahead and making those contributions sooner can have a significant impact on your financial future.

IRA Contribution Limits

Tax Year	Under Age 50	Age 50 or Older
2025	\$7,000	\$8,000
2026	\$7,500	\$8,600

NOTE: You may not contribute more than your taxable compensation for the year.

IRA Contribution Coupon

If you wish to make a deposit into an existing account with FCSU Financial, simply complete this coupon and return it to the Home Office. Please indicate which year for which you are making a contribution.

Name: _____

Certificate #: _____

Deposit Amount: _____

Traditional IRA for year:

2025 2026

Roth IRA for year:

2025 2026



YOU CAN ALSO MAKE CONTRIBUTIONS THROUGH OUR FCSU.COM MEMBER PORTAL.

Kevin Collins Elected 2nd Vice President of the Fraternal Societies of Greater Pittsburgh

We are proud to share that our Executive Secretary and Chief Operating Officer has been elected 2nd Vice President of the Fraternal Societies of Greater Pittsburgh (FSGP).

FSGP is made up of 14 fraternal benefit societies and seven business associated groups representing over one million members. FSGP has been serving the Western Pennsylvania area for more than 80 years.

The first effort to establish an organization uniting the various fraternal societies was started in 1943.



Kevin Collins, Executive Secretary/COO with Cassandra Holmes, FSGP President and Chief Administrative Officer at WPALife (William Penn Association).



Reflection - "O Holy Cross" By Sister Maria Theresa Hronec, SS.C.M.

"Then He (Jesus) said to all, 'If anyone wishes to come after me, he (she) must deny himself (herself) and take up his (her) cross daily and follow me.'" (Luke 9:23).

As Lent moves on we can find in re-reading and reflecting on gospel passion texts or on those inspired by others, such as are in this Jednota issue, or other media, that we can relive with Jesus the purpose that brought Him to become man and to live 33 years on earth. It was to teach us how to live our lives daily so as to prepare for life everlasting. As Son of God, Jesus knew well the price for the ransom of our souls. His love, however, superseded the cost of a full chalice of His blood.

During the remainder of these Lenten days, Jesus invites us to join Him in His mission of ransoming souls. Each of us knows "the cross" with which we are "gifted." We are also called to sustain others in carrying "their crosses"—like a Simon of Cyrene. As Jesus's presence is with us in all we encounter daily, this becomes an ongoing mutual sharing in His mission for souls. We pause and ask ourselves, "How can we share with others our love for Jesus as we hope and walk together to Easter joy and on to heavenly glory?"

O HOLY CROSS

1. Cross most holy, precious branches,
Blest, life-giving, choice fruit you give us:
Jesus Christ, Beloved One—Holy One,
Gracious mercy now is won.
2. Three and thirty years were counted,
Total life-gift—the price demanded;
Healed, restored our innocence—innocence,
Paid the ransom for our debt.
3. Jesus, taunted, scourged, and bleeding
Scorned, rejected with hateful scheming;
Bound with ropes of cruelty—cruelty,
Painful, gaping wounds I see.
4. Jesus Christ, O King most Sovereign,
Lord descended from glor'ous heaven,
Wears a woven crown of thorns—crown of thorns,
Patiently and humbly borne.

ACH KRÍŽ SVÄTÝ

1. Ach, kríž svätý, ty strom vzácny,
Sladký nesieš plod prekrásny:
Jezu Krista milého,
Pre mňa umučeného.
2. Tridsaťtri liet si pracoval,
Kým si život Svoj dokonal:
Mne nevinnosť navrátil, navrátil,
Otcovi dlh zaplatil.
3. Ó Ježišu bičovaný;
Pre mňa celý oplývajú;
Ukrutne si zviazaný,
Zviazaný a do krvi šľahaný.
4. Ježiš Kristus, Kráľ nad kráľmi.
Pán najvyššej večnej slávy,
Má korunu trňovu,
Plnú hlavu rán boľu.

Insights and Viewpoints

Demetrius R. Dumm, O.S.B.

Easter Sunday - John 20:1-9

GOSPEL SUMMARY - John's resurrection account is relatively brief and differs significantly from the Synoptic accounts. Mary Magdalene has a prominent role here and the mysterious "other disciple whom Jesus loved" appears again just as he did at the Last Supper. The special attention given to Mary Magdalene suggests that she is a person who embodies the ideal of love that is so evident in the fourth gospel.

After hearing about the empty tomb, Peter hurries there to see what this might mean. But the unnamed "other disciple" outruns him, and then defers to him, thus permitting Peter to be the first to enter the tomb. This gesture acknowledges the authority of Peter but it also reveals how deeply the beloved disciple has understood the teaching of Jesus about unselfish love. It has been noted that in John's gospel Peter is the unquestioned leader of the Church, thus guaranteeing good order. The "disciple whom Jesus loved" represents the prophetic and mystical dimension of the Church that prevents authority from becoming too authoritarian.

LIFE IMPLICATIONS - Easter is the feast of all feasts. The feast of Christmas did not even exist for the first two centuries of the church's life, but Christianity is inconceivable without Easter. This feast is the contact point between the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament for it occurred on the anniversary of the Exodus of Israel from Egyptian bondage and fulfills the promise in that central event in Israel's history. If we do not understand Easter, we do not have a clue about the meaning of Christianity or about its relationship to Israel.

To understand this central feast, we must realize that it is, as it were, the third act in a drama that begins already on Holy Thursday and continues through Good Friday. Missing the first two acts of the drama almost guarantees that one will miss the meaning of the drama. Therefore, to ignore Holy Thursday and Good Friday almost guarantees a misunderstanding of Easter Sunday.

On Holy Thursday, Jesus sums up the whole meaning and purpose of his mission on earth. This meaning is found in the Eucharist in which Jesus offers his Body and pours out his precious Blood for others. In other words, Jesus has come to tell us that the only path to real life and happiness is the path of unselfish love. We must begin our Easter celebration, therefore, with our acceptance of this ideal as the model for our own behavior.

Good Friday tells us that living unselfishly will be very difficult. Every act of unselfish love is a little dying. But in such dying there is also a hint of the happiness and life that are promised to those who are not afraid to walk the path of Jesus.

On Holy Saturday, the liturgy is muted and there is a quiet but powerful sense of expectation. It seems that the whole universe, here and in heaven, is holding its breath as it waits to see whether unselfish love, which often appears to be so foolish, really does make sense for us. The triumphant answer is given on Easter Sunday when the flowers and the bells and the alleluias attempt to capture the glory of this resounding victory of Jesus over sin and death. The celebration of Easter joy thus confirms the wisdom of believing what Jesus taught on Holy Thursday and of living this wisdom, patiently and trustingly, on the Good Fridays of our lives.

LIGHT ONE CANDLE

Reflections for Holy Week

Tony Rossi, Director of Communications, The Christophers

As we get closer to Holy Week and commemorate the days leading up to and including Jesus' crucifixion, here are a few reflections to ponder from some wise writers:

■ Each Palm Sunday, we recall the image of the crowds praising God and celebrating Jesus as he rode a donkey into Jerusalem. But why did He enter the holy city on an animal considered a "beast of burden" rather than a more regal creature, such as a horse? Writing in *The Tablet*, the newspaper of the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York, Rita Piro explained, "The horse was the animal of war and violence, adorned with grandeur, ready to do battle among warriors and kings. The lowly donkey...was considered the animal of peace, unity, and friendship. The steady, faithful friend of the common man. Any man, king, or peasant alike who came riding on a donkey was seen as a symbol of gentleness, humility, and service." Piro continued, "The master has need of us, too. Like the donkey of Palm Sunday, we are all called to carry Jesus to others. The way we act, speak, look, and even think must always reflect Jesus, His ways, and His teachings. Whether or not we consider it a burden to do so is up to us."

■ In Jesus' day, people wore sandals as they walked the dirt roads, so their feet quickly became filthy. Washing the feet of a guest in your home, therefore, qualified as a dirty job. Yet washing the feet of the apostles is exactly what Jesus did at the Last Supper, asking, "Do you realize what I have done for you?" So, why would the Savior of the world do such a thing? "What Jesus did stands before us as a defining example of humility and sacrifice, of service and love," observed Deacon Greg Kandra at *TheDeaconsBench.com*. "It tells us that to be an apostle of Christ means we must be willing to get down on our knees for another. In one sense, to wash the feet of someone else is to remove the dust and debris and the grit of life—to cleanse, to renew, to restore. But in a deeper sense, it challenges us to something more. It says the Christian life is not about standing above anyone. It is about bending. Giving. Serving. Restoring newness and hope."

■ Author and spiritual director Becky Eldredge got a phone call from a friend who had suffered greatly in her life. But on this particular day, this friend conveyed a spirit of hope, saying, "Becky, I had a huge 'aha' this morning. It matters to Jesus what I have gone through. Every bit of it. It matters to Jesus." Writing at *IgnatianSpirituality.com*, Becky recalled feeling joy for her friend. Becky also thought back to her own 'aha' moment while practicing the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius some time ago. She said, "As I hear and pray with the moments of Jesus' suffering during the Lenten season, my understanding of how much Jesus understands suffering widens. He not only gets physical pain, betrayal, and abandonment, but He also understands being misunderstood, what it feels like not to belong, and what it's like to forgive...There is something that changes in us when we let the wounds of our lives touch the wounds of Jesus. It is as if Jesus were gazing at us with eyes of love and understanding, inviting us to tell Him everything we are seeing and feeling."

Grow+Go+Reflect

Ez 37:12-14 / Rom 8:8-11 / Jn 11:1-45

GROW: The raising of Lazarus marks an irreversible turning point in Jesus' ministry. It's impossible to publicly raise someone from the dead and continue to fly beneath the radar. It's no surprise that the next time we meet Jesus, he'll be greeted with Hosannas and palm branches as the promised Son of David. But we also know that by raising Lazarus, Jesus attracts the attention of his enemies and sets himself on a course that ultimately leads to the cross. In our own life of discipleship, there may be times when we will have to step up and make a decisive and public choice for our faith or our values. Standing up for what's right may bring praise and admiration, or lead to misunderstanding or even persecution. We can draw strength in these decisive moments from the knowledge that the One we follow is the resurrection and the life. Any risk we take in following him is worth it in the end.

GO: The Gospel passage features the shortest and perhaps one of the most profound verses in all of Scripture: "And Jesus wept." This text reveals that before he restored his friend to life, we have a God who weeps with us over the losses and tragedies of our lives. Likewise, before we can announce the Good News of the Gospel, we must learn the "art of accompaniment," as Pope Francis reminded us in *Evangelii Gaudium*. (169) This requires that we offer "our closeness and our compassionate gaze" to all those we seek to evangelize. When our first action consists of compassion, empathy, and entering into the joys and sorrows of others, our efforts at evangelization will bear much fruit.

REFLECT: St. Paul tells us to "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep." (Rom 12:15) As we prepare for Holy Week, spend some time thinking about who in your life is experiencing a particular moment of joy or sorrow at this time. Consider one concrete action you can take to be present to them: it could be dropping off a meal to someone who recently had surgery, sitting with someone who lost a loved one and listening as they share stories of their lives together, or, bringing a special treat to celebrate a friend's recent accomplishment. Then – do it.

MEMBER *Spotlight*

BISHOP LARRY J. KULICK

As we gather this June for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention, it is fitting that our keynote speaker is a man who understands both our heritage and our future. His Excellency, the Most Reverend Larry J. Kulick, JCL, keynote speaker and Society Protector, brings a lifelong dedication to the faith and fraternal spirit that unite us.

When you speak with Bishop Kulick, it doesn't take long to recognize what fuels him. Woven through every story is something personal, an unmistakable enthusiasm for heritage, history, and the people and traditions that shaped him. A native of Leechburg, Pennsylvania, he became the first priest from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Greensburg to be appointed its bishop. Named by Pope Francis in December 2020 and ordained to the episcopacy in February 2021 at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral, Bishop Kulick now shepherds approximately 120,000 Catholics across four counties in western Pennsylvania. The diocese includes 78 parishes served by 72 active priests.

He describes the role of bishop in three simple but profound responsibilities: to teach, to sanctify, and to govern. He teaches through religious education and formation. He sanctifies through the sacraments and the liturgy, especially the Eucharist. He governs through pastoral leadership and the careful administration of diocesan life. Accountable to the Holy Father, he serves as chief shepherd, guiding both the spiritual welfare of the faithful and the practical needs of the local Church.

Formed by Faith and Slovak Roots

Bishop Kulick's own faith was formed in the former St. Martha Church in Leechburg, a Slovak parish established in 1911 by Jednota to serve Slovak immigrants. The parish was nearly 90% Slovak. It was there that he learned his prayers, absorbed the faith of immigrants and first-generation Slovak-Americans, and eventually offered his first Mass as a priest.

In many ways, he was born into the fraternal spirit. His parents purchased a Jednota life insurance policy for him before he was even born — a policy that once covered both expectant mother and child. He shares that he still has his original payment book. For more than 25 years, he has served the First Catholic Slovak Union as chaplain and now as Society Protector. In that role, he provides guidance to officers and members, helping ensure that Catholic identity remains at the heart of the organization. He offers advisement on matters of faith and morals and supports the fraternal mission pastorally and spiritually.

The 53rd Quadrennial Convention

The Convention holds special meaning for him. He attended for many years as a delegate and now returns as a keynote speaker. What does he love most about it? "Connectivity is often local," he explains. "But the convention brings us all together. I have many Jednota friends from Canada that I might never have met."

He delights in seeing multiple generations of families represented growing into leadership roles and continuing the same living tradition. Watching members mature, step forward, and take ownership of the society's future brings him great joy. He values the delegates who gather not only to represent their branches, but to strengthen and preserve the organization for generations to come. The Convention, he believes, is one of our greatest tools for remaining vibrant and relevant in a changing world.

A Man Who Loves History

Spend time with Bishop Kulick, and another theme emerges — his unmistakable enthusiasm for history. 2026 is a year rich in milestones for him: his 60th birthday, the fifth anniversary of his episcopal ordination (celebrated February 11), the 75th anniversary of the Diocese of Greensburg, the 250th anniversary of the United States, and the 100th anniversary of Pontiac.

Yes — Pontiac. If you've ever heard him speak about cars, you might think you were talking to a teenager. His lifelong love of Pontiac vehicles is well known. Many are familiar with his 1966 Pontiac LeMans — the car that brought him home from the hospital as a newborn and later became a cherished gift from his grandmother.

But his love of preservation led him further back in time. Two years ago, he fulfilled a long-held dream by purchasing a 1926 Pontiac — the first model year ever produced. For years, he admired it from afar. He was friends with the man who restored it and had a standing offer to purchase it when the time was right.



When that time came, he became its steward. He has since lent the 1926 model to the Pontiac Transportation Museum for the brand's 100th anniversary celebration. The museum also houses the final Pontiac model assembled in 2010 — bookends of a century of craftsmanship. Nearly 1,000 Pontiacs are expected to line up chronologically for a celebratory parade this summer. For Bishop Kulick, it is more than nostalgia. It is about honoring legacy — preserving something valuable so that others may appreciate it.

Bishop Kulick has long advocated for the establishment of a Slovak-American museum in the United States. While he is still pursuing that passion, Bishop Kulick has recently been able to help preserve Slovak-American culture by assisting Slovak historian Martin Javor in curating artifacts for his newly established Museum of Emigration from Slovakia to North America in Ľahyňa, Slovakia. In the past few months, Bishop Kulick has worked with Professor Javor to rescue stained-glass windows from closed Slovak-American churches which are being built into a beautiful shrine on the grounds of the museum.

He will also lead a pilgrimage to Slovakia this fall from August 23 - September 3, reconnecting descendants with the faith and culture of their ancestors. If anyone is interested in the pilgrimage, please contact Bishop Kulick.

A Shepherd Who Honors the Past and Inspires the Future

As we gather this June for our Convention, we will hear from our Protector who understands that faith is not merely preserved in books or buildings — it is carried in people. It is renewed in every generation. It is strengthened when we come together. Perhaps no image captures him better this year than this: concluding our Convention with the Jednota family he loves, then heading straight to Pontiac's 100th anniversary celebration, where his 1926 model stands proudly on display.

In both places, he is doing the same thing. Honoring the past. Celebrating community. And ensuring that what we have inherited is preserved, strengthened, and passed on for generations to come.

Bishop Kulick's Lenten Message

As we celebrate Easter, Bishop Kulick's Lenten message continues to resonate. In this 75th anniversary year of the Diocese of Greensburg, he reminded the faithful that Lent is not merely a set of devotions, but a gift — an invitation to be conformed more closely to Christ.

Inspired by the message of Pope Leo XIV, he emphasized that fasting is not only external, but interior. It creates space for God's Word, for charity, and for mercy to flourish. He encouraged the faithful to fast not only from food, but from rash judgments, unkind words, quick criticism, gossip, and the impulse to speak before listening.

In a world filled with distraction, he suggested we also fast from unnecessary noise and technology, learning to become more attentive to God and to one another. But he cautioned that removing distractions is not enough — the space created must be filled with Christ through the Eucharist, confession, Scripture, and prayer.

That is the journey from Lent to Easter: the desert gives way to resurrection, and hearts renewed in Christ become witnesses to joy.



2026 FCSU INTERNATIONAL BOWLING TOURNAMENT



Important New Entry Rules for 2026

Please review and follow these updated participation guidelines:

1. Entry is open to all qualified FCSU Members. Qualified members are those with a minimum Annuity/IRA investment of \$500 or a life insurance policy in good standing prior to March 20, 2026.
2. To become a qualifying member contact FCSU at 800-533-6682 ext 122.
3. Member benefits include free meals and drinks valued at \$200.
4. Each member may invite one Non-Member Bowler, as space allows. Non-member bowlers may not participate in the 2026 tournament if they bowled at a previous FCSU bowling tournament.
5. The Tournament Raffle is open to bowlers only.

QUESTIONS? Contact Joanne Fibbi at jfibbi@fcsu.com, call 412-953-4721, or email events@fcsu.com

APRIL 25-26

Exclusively for FCSU Members and Their Guests*

Bowling Alley: Eastway Lanes
4110 Buffalo Road • Erie, PA • 814-899-9855

Headquarters Hotel: Sheraton Bayfront Hotel
55 W Bay Road • Erie, PA • 814-454-2005

You must book your room directly on the hotel's reservation system
book.passkey.com/e/51076416

Enjoy your stay at this property with a discounted rate of \$159+tax/night.
Valid April 24th and 25th. **Reservation Deadline is March 23, 2026!**

OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

Complete a separate entry for each bowler • Official rules are available on our website

IMPORTANT ENTRANT INFORMATION

- Non-USBC Bowlers: Men must enter 175 as highest average. Women must enter 150 as highest average.
- Non-Members must be invited guests of current FCSU member bowlers.
- Bowler and Team Captain agree to relinquish their rights to prize money, should any information provided herein be found to be false.

- All tournament information, rules and regulations, etc. will be disseminated by email and available online at www.fcsu.com/community/events. Please advise if you do not have an email address. The tournament will be conducted under USBC Rules and Regulations.

Deadline March 23, 2026

Entry Forms Are Also Available at
www.FCSU.com/community/events

Personal Information

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

FCSU MEMBER? YES NO FCSU BRANCH #: _____ LAST 4 DIGITS SS#: _____

IF NO, FCSU MEMBER SPONSOR & BRANCH #: _____

METHOD OF PAYMENT: Check enclosed payable to FCSU Credit Card payments may be made by phone. Call 800.533.6682, ext. 122.

Tournament Information

Please select your events* Teams Doubles Singles-Men Singles-Women All Events-Men All Events-Women

NAME OF TEAM: _____ TEAM CAPTAIN: _____

MY ORDER IN THE TEAM LINE-UP IS BOWLER #: 1 2 3 4

MY ORDER IN THE DOUBLES LINE-UP IS BOWLER #: 1 2 MY DOUBLES PARTNER IS: _____

USBC HIGHEST AVERAGE: _____ USBC #: _____ NON USBC BOWLER

LOCAL USBC & CONTACT: _____

*Teams and Doubles are open to men, women or mixed teams. To compete in All Events you must bowl Teams, Doubles & Singles.

FCSU MEMBER BOWLER FEES	
Check All That Apply	
<input type="checkbox"/> Teams.....	\$30.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Doubles.....	\$30.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Singles.....	\$30.00
<input type="checkbox"/> All Events.....	\$5.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Breakfast.....	No Cost
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Drink Tickets (2).....	No Cost
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Dinner & Raffle.....	No Cost
<input type="checkbox"/> Sunday Breakfast.....	No Cost
Total Enclosed: \$	_____

NON-MEMBER BOWLER FEES	
Check All That Apply	
<input type="checkbox"/> Teams.....	\$35.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Doubles.....	\$35.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Singles.....	\$35.00
<input type="checkbox"/> All Events.....	\$5.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Breakfast.....	\$15.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Drink Tickets (2).....	\$12.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Dinner & Raffle.....	\$40.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Sunday Breakfast.....	\$15.00
Total Enclosed: \$	_____

FCSU MEMBER GUEST FEES	
Check All That Apply	
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Breakfast.....	\$15.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Drink Tickets (2).....	\$12.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Dinner.....	\$40.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Sunday Breakfast.....	\$15.00
Total Enclosed: \$	_____
Guests receive substantial discounts on food and beverage costs	
* Seating is limited, with preference given to bowlers.	

Mail entry & payment by March 16th to:
FCSU Bowling Tournament,
6611 Rockside Rd, Suite 300
Independence, OH 44131

Payment must accompany entry form.
Make check payable to FCSU
(with Bowling on the memo line).



From Jakubany to the Stars: Meeting Astronaut Thomas David Jones

Submitted by Greg Maurer, Chairman of Auditors, Branch 181

In March 2025, I had the rare honor of meeting Thomas David Jones, former NASA astronaut, at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. What made this encounter especially meaningful was not only his remarkable career in space exploration, but the shared Slovak heritage that unexpectedly connected our personal histories.

Astronaut Jones, a veteran of four space shuttle missions, is of Slovak-American descent. During our conversation, he spoke proudly of his family roots, which trace back to the village of Jakubany in the Prešov Region of Slovakia. This revelation was deeply personal for me, as my own ancestors also come from Jakubany. My family names from the village of are Ribovics / Rebovich, Bucsko-Skolyák, Romanecz, Kopcsak and Czompely. In that moment, thousands of miles and generations of history seemed to collapse into a single shared story.

Our meeting took place as part of NASA's Astronaut of the Day program, an intimate and informal setting where visitors can engage directly with an astronaut. Participants are invited to ask questions and hear firsthand what it is like to live and work in space. The relaxed atmosphere allowed for genuine conversation, reflection, and exchange of information.

I was accompanied by Viera Marecová during the visit to Kennedy Space Center. For many years, Ms. Marecová has served as a guide for the Youngstown–Spišská Nová Ves tours organized by Jim and Kay Bench, Branch 181 members. Although those tours are no longer active, our longstanding friendships and shared heritage continue to bring people together to reflect on their Slovak history, culture, and heritage. While visiting Jim and Kay in Florida, we learned that Astronaut Jones would be appearing at the Kennedy Space Center that week and immediately signed up for the program.

During our discussion, Viera shared with him that she had traveled all the way from Slovakia and that he had long been one of her personal heroes. The moment was clearly moving. Without any prior notice or prompting, Astronaut Jones immediately identified Jakubany as the ancestral home of his family—an impressive and heartfelt acknowledgment that left a lasting impression on Viera and myself.

Mr. Jones spoke warmly about Slovak culture and cuisine, mentioning his fondness for traditional foods. Among his favorites are lokše, the beloved Slovak potato flatbreads traditionally served with savory dishes or enjoyed on their own. Hearing a NASA astronaut speak so knowledgeably and affectionately about Slovak traditions was both touching and affirming. Former astronaut Jones indicated that his family name is Marflak.

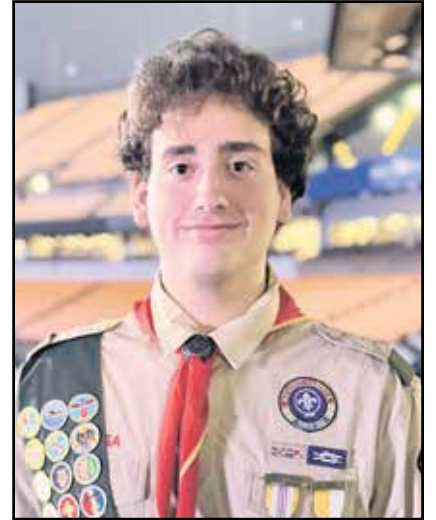
Ms. Marecová lives in the High Tatras (Vysoké Tatry) region of Slovakia, an area known for its natural beauty and strong cultural traditions. Standing at the Kennedy Space Center beside an American astronaut was a powerful reminder of how deeply interconnected our Slovak communities are—whether on Earth or in Outer Space.

This meeting was more than a chance encounter with a public figure. It was a moment of shared heritage, mutual respect, and pride in our Slovak roots. From the village of Jakubany to the vastness of space, our stories continue to travel far, reminding us that no matter how distant our journeys may seem, our origins still unite us.

Bruce Higginbotham Earns Eagle Scout

*Submitted by Mary Anne Higginbotham,
Branch 320 President*

Bruce Edward Higginbotham II from Troop 1313 in McMurray, PA proudly earned the rank of Eagle Scout — an achievement that represents years of dedication, perseverance, and service. Becoming an Eagle Scout requires a significant commitment of time and effort, spanning many years of active participation, leadership development, community service, and personal growth.



Bruce's journey began in first grade as a Cub Scout and reflects countless hours spent learning skills, serving others, and growing into a leader. During his years in Cub Scouts, Bruce has many fond memories of camping with his friends. One of his most memorable achievements was placing first in his pack for the Pinewood Derby.

As a Boy Scout, Bruce earned an impressive 39 merit badges and held several leadership positions, including Chaplain Aide, Troop Instructor, and Assistant Senior Patrol Leader. He also earned numerous awards and recognitions, including Parvuli Dei, Ad Altare Dei, the Catholic Emblem, Order of the Arrow (Ordeal and Brotherhood), Snorkeling BSA Award, Paul Bunyan Woodsman, Totin' Chip, Sea Base High Adventure Captains Club, and Honor Camper.

Among Bruce's most memorable scouting experiences are saying the opening prayer at the United States Senate, sailing around St. John in the U.S. Virgin Islands during his Sea Base trip, and attending summer camp with his friends.

Bruce's Eagle Scout project was one of the most meaningful experiences of his scouting journey. He expanded the garden space at the St. John XXIII Community Garden, resulting in a greater yield of produce this year and for years to come. His project included building two new elevated (standing) beds with lids, constructing two new lids for existing elevated beds, and adding two new raised beds. The new lids help protect produce from deer and other animals.

The additional produce grown in the new garden beds supports the parish's interfaith food pantry as well as other food programs in Washington County, including Meals on Wheels and local food banks.

Through his scouting experience, Bruce realized his passion for helping others and plans to pursue an education in psychology. Scouting has helped him become more confident, responsible, and service-minded. The values Bruce has gained through Scouting will continue to guide him as he works to make a difference in the lives of others and live his life as a true Eagle.

Bruce would like to thank his parents, friends, family, and members of FCSU Branch 320 and District 12 for their assistance and support throughout the years.



American Slovak Club

LENTEN FISH FRY

Perch, Walleye, Shrimp & Cod
2915 Broadway Ave, Lorain, OH

AmericanSlovakClub.com/Fish-Fry

Please call ahead for reservations for parties of six or more at 440-245-5146

Voted the BEST Fish Fry in NE Ohio!



Jednota members at The Slovak Ball 2026



Branch 746 young Jednota members

The Slovak Ball 2025: A Celebration of Heritage, Music, and Community in NJ

Submitted by Sabina Sabados, Region 1 Director

The Slovak-American Cultural Center was honored to host the 32nd Annual Slovak Ball for a night celebrating Slovak culture, traditions, and our shared heritage.

More than 400 guests stepped into an enchanted forest, inspired by the ancient woodlands of Slovakia full of story, strength, beauty, and deep roots. The stunning décor transformed the ballroom into a place of quiet magic, connection, and celebration, and we hope it truly enchanted (očarilo) every one of you!

The star of the evening was the incredible Mária Čírová, who arrived from Slovakia for her U.S. premiere concert. Her powerful, emotional performance captured the spirit of the night and left the room spellbound. The dance floor stayed alive all evening with thanks to Express Band keeping the energy flowing all night long.

The evening commenced with a welcome by Slovak-American Cultural Center President and FCSU Region 1 Director, Sabina Sabados (Branch 746) and an exhilarating performance of professional dancers Alex Lavrov and Slovak-American Vanesa Falisova who performed a waltz and touching tribute to Slovak artist Miro Zbirka!

In attendance were distinguished members of the diplomatic community including: H.E. Andrej Droba, Ambassador of Slovakia to the USA; H.E. Peter Hulényi, Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the UN; and Ms. Beatrice Szabóová, Consul General of the Slovak Republic in New York.

Members of Branches 45, 716, and 746 were in attendance including FCSU Executive Secretary, COO Kevin Collins, Region 1 Director Sabina Sabados, Supreme Court member Jozef Jurasi, Fr. Peter Bujdos (Branch 746 Chaplain), Fr. Francis Conka (Branch 746) who gave the benediction, and Fr. Tadeusz Mierzwa (Branch 746).

The evening ended with The Slovak Ball Raffle with incredible prizes including an opportunity to win a \$1,000 flight voucher from Košice International Airport, spa getaways to Thermal Sirava Spa Resort, Hotel Vinnay, and Hotel Roklina in Eastern Slovakia, 7-nights trip to Mexico, Metropolitan Opera tickets and many more including private dinners at the residences of the Ambassador to the US and Ambassador to the United Nations.

A big thank you to FCSU Financial and to all the donors and raffle supporters whose generosity supports our S-ACC Scholarship Fund that offers scholarships for the Slovak language studies at the University of Pittsburgh.



Slovak superstar Maria Cirova.

Thank you to FCSU Financial for your support and all the Jednota members that make this event truly special!

Finally a huge thank you to the incredible Board of Directors and volunteers of the Slovak-American Cultural Center many of whom are also active members and hold leadership roles in Region 1 Branches 45, 716, and 746. These dedicated volunteers worked tirelessly all year to make this enchanted evening possible!

Until next year...The Slovak Ball 2027 Saturday, January 31st!

Photographer: Maynard Wallace (Progfoto)



The Slovak Ball 2026 welcome distinguished diplomatic guests.

Pictured L-R: H.E. Peter Hulényi, Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations; Mrs. Tatiana Hulényi; Mr. Peter Krajnak, Secretary, Slovak-American Cultural Center; Miss. Sabina Sabados, President Slovak-American Cultural Center and Chairwoman of The Slovak Ball; Ms. Beatrice Szabóová, Consul General of the Slovak Republic in New York; Mrs. Daniela Drobová; H.E. Andrej Droba, Ambassador of Slovakia to the USA; Miss. Sara Drobová; Miss. Karolina Gogolakova; and Mr. Marcus Gurega, Cultural Officer, Consulate of the Slovak Republic in New York.



Pictured L-R: Fr. Peter Bujdos (District 4 and Branch 746 Chaplain), Kevin Collins (Executive Secretary, COO), Sabina Sabados (Region 1 Director), Maria Jurasi (Branch 45 President), and Jozef Jurasi (Supreme Court).



Slovak-American Cultural Center Board and The Slovak Ball organizing team many of whom are also active members and hold leadership roles in Region 1 Branches: 45, 716, and 746. These dedicated volunteers worked tirelessly all year to make The Slovak Ball 2026 a success.



**FRATERNALISM
IN ACTION**
GIVING BACK

\$250 For Your Favorite Charity

**Branches and Districts Can Receive \$250
for Their Favorite Charities Up to 4 Times Per Year.**

Contact the Home Office at branch@fcsu.com or district@fcsu.com
for Eligibility Forms and Guidelines.

**Branch 855 Supports
Local Down Syndrome
Program**

Branch 855 officers Barbara Sutilla, Ann Sutilla and Karen Habian welcomed guests Christie and Tony Anzalone along with their son, Rocco to their semi-annual meeting. Members enjoyed a luncheon at Santo's Restaurant and listened to a presentation by Tony and Christie who shared Rocco's journey with Down syndrome. They spoke about the meaningful impact GiGi's Playhouse Down Syndrome Achievement Center has had on their family. They explained that GiGi's Playhouse offers FREE therapeutic, educational and research programs to individuals of all ages with Down syndrome. Rocco especially likes the athletic program they provide. A "cash for the cause" fundraiser was held as an FIA project for the branch. With the support and generosity of members, officers and guests, the branch collected \$600! All of the funds were used to purchase sensory toys, books, art supplies and musical instruments to help the mission of this terrific organization.



**Branch 670 Donates
to local Food Bank**

Branch 670 collected food for St. Andrew Parish Food Bank at their bowling event. Among the donated items were beans, canned goods, baby food, peanut butter and paper towels. They hope the donation will help their neighbors and give real relief for families facing tight budgets and unexpected hardships.



**Branch 24 Collects
Coats and Toiletries
for the Homeless**

Branch 24 members showed their generosity by collecting new and gently used coats, hats, gloves, socks and shoes and new toiletries for the Cleveland Kindness Collection's "Street Support Drive". This local charity provides direct assistance to the homeless in the greater Cleveland and Akron areas. The organization collects different items quarterly to help meet the needs of many.



District 4 Food Drive

Living their commitment to Fraternalism in Action, District 4 members took donations to their first semi-annual meeting of the year. Continuing their tradition of giving back to the community, donations will be given to St. John the Apostle Food Pantry.

**Strikes, Smiles, and Strong Fellowship:
Branch 670 Bowling Event**

Submitted by Maureen Massafra, Recording Secretary

On March 1, 2026, Branch 670 hosted a bowling event at Charleroi Lanes, bringing together members from Branches 670, 853 and 320 for an afternoon of fun and fellowship. Participants enjoyed two hours of bowling, along with shoes and food provided for everyone.

Many members took to the lanes, celebrating strikes and spares, while others preferred to relax, share a meal, and catch up with friends. Whether bowling or socializing, everyone appreciated the chance to spend time together.

The event was a great success and a wonderful reminder of the strong camaraderie shared among our branches.



Isaac Hall



Larry Healey, Darla Hubert, John Curcio,
and Maureen Massafra



Kathy and Bella Jakela



Isaac Hall III

NEED EXTRA COPIES??
**Bowling Registration/Sponsorship Forms,
Coloring Contest Entries and Monthly Puzzles
Are Available at FCSU.com/community/events**

**Branch 855 Kicks Off the Year with
Delegate Elections and Fellowship**

Submitted by Barbara Sutilla, President

Branch 855 held its first meeting of the year at Santo's Restaurant. Members heard from those seeking Delegate positions, who shared their interest in serving at the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. The branch elected seven Delegates and four Alternates. Plans for upcoming activities were discussed, followed by lunch and games of chance. Lucky winners took home gift cards and FCSU logo items purchased through the branch's Branding Bucks allowance.



Christian Scally and Stephanie Sutilla draw winning raffle tickets.

THINK SPRING WITH OUR NEW EASTER COLORING CONTEST

For many of us, January brought bitterly cold temperatures, icy conditions and an abundance of snowfall. To help chase away the winter blues and usher in an early spring, we're launching a new coloring contest with traditional Easter themes. So, before you get ready to color your Easter eggs, gather your crayons or pencils for a different kind of coloring fun! May you have a joyful and blessed Easter Season.

CATEGORIES AND PRIZES

There are seven categories of competition--four age groups for our children/youth members, and three age groups for adult members.

- Children and Youth Ages: 4-6, 7-9, 10-12, and 13-17. Three winners will be chosen per age group within each Region. Prizes for first, second, and third place are \$50, \$35, and \$25 respectively, with the possibility of 12 winners per region. (96 total winners.)
- Adult Ages: 18-34, 35-69, and 70+. One winner will be chosen from each adult age group per region, with the possibility of three winners per region. (24 total winners.) Each winner will receive a \$100 prize. (Note we adjusted the age ranges of the adult groups from previous contests.)

OFFICIAL RULES - Please read to avoid disqualification

1. Contest entry is limited to current FCSU members, with one entry per member. Each participant must be in our membership records, and not simply related to a member.
2. Complete all information on the entry form. Entries without age and branch # will be disqualified.
3. Cut out and color the Easter picture for your age. Pictures are printed in the February and March 2026 issues of the Jednota.
4. Copies may be made for additional entries for your family. Pictures may also be printed from the FCSU website -- fscu.com/community/events. Please print/copy at the original picture size, as enlarging or reducing the image is not permitted.
5. **COLOR YOUR ENTRY USING CRAYONS OR COLORED PENCILS ONLY.** Use of markers gel pens or will result in disqualification. Please do not add any type of embellishments to the pictures such as glitter, borders, stickers, or craft items.
6. Mail your colored picture with the entry form taped to the back of the picture to: Joanne Fibbi, Fraternal Activities Director, 1741 Hempstead Ln, Pittsburgh, PA 15241.
7. **DEADLINE: ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY APRIL 10, 2026.** (This is not a postmark date.) We recommend mailing entries a minimum of one week prior to the deadline.
8. Decisions from the independent judges will be final. Winners will be announced in the June 2026 Jednota.

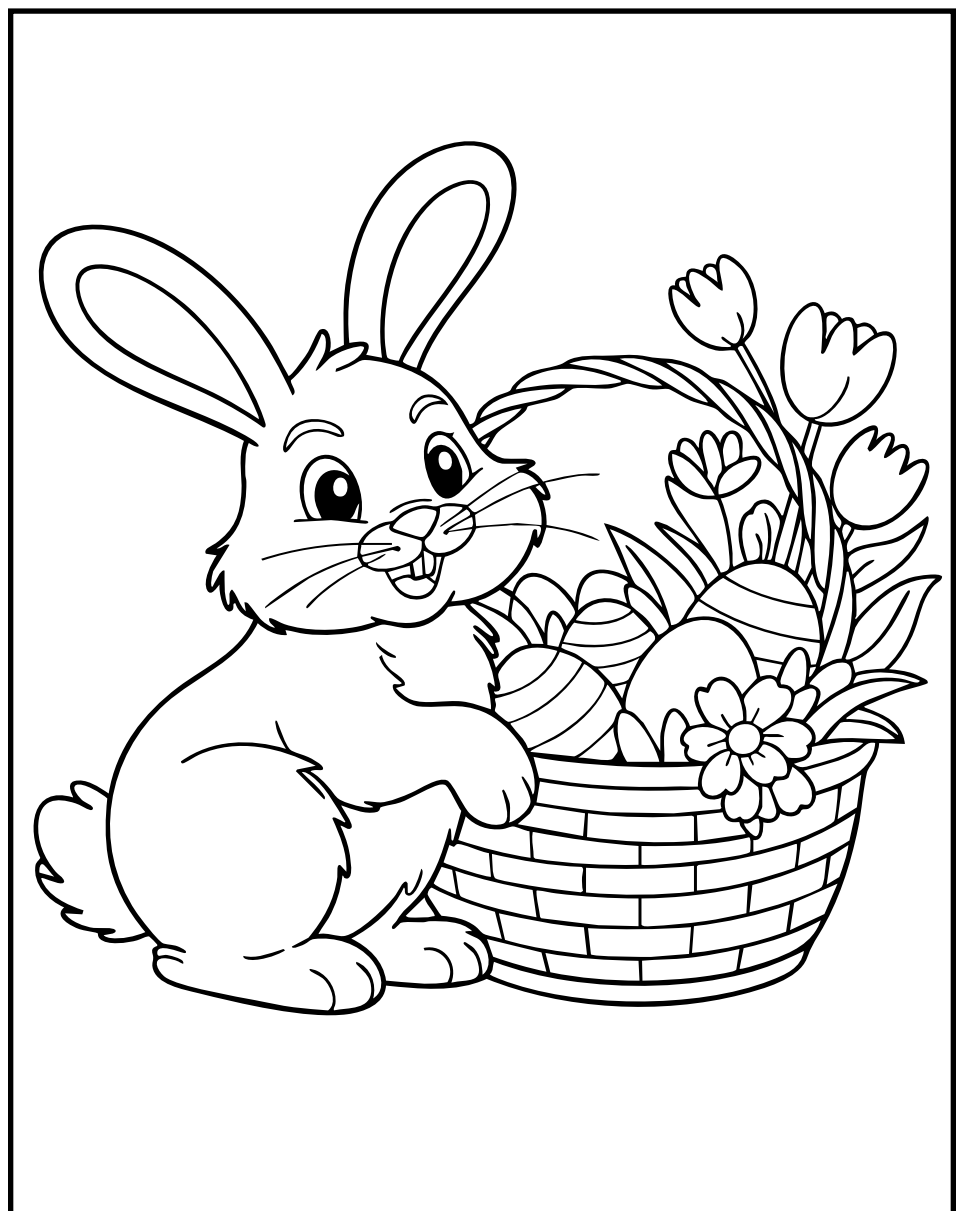
SEE THE ENTRY FORM ON PAGE 16 OF THIS ISSUE.



NEWBORN CHICK - AGES 4-6



SNACKTIME BUNNY- AGES 7-9



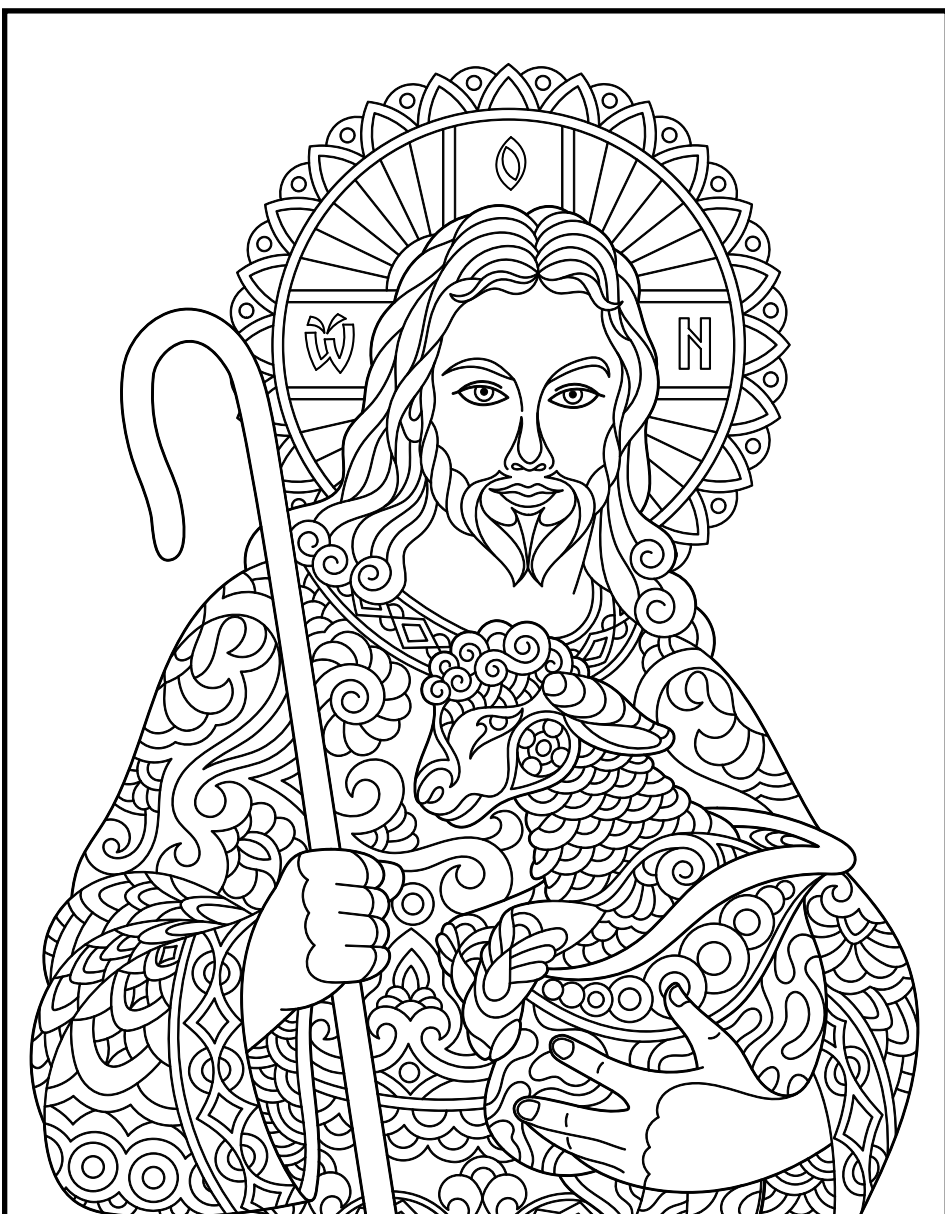
BASKET DELIVERY - AGES 10-12



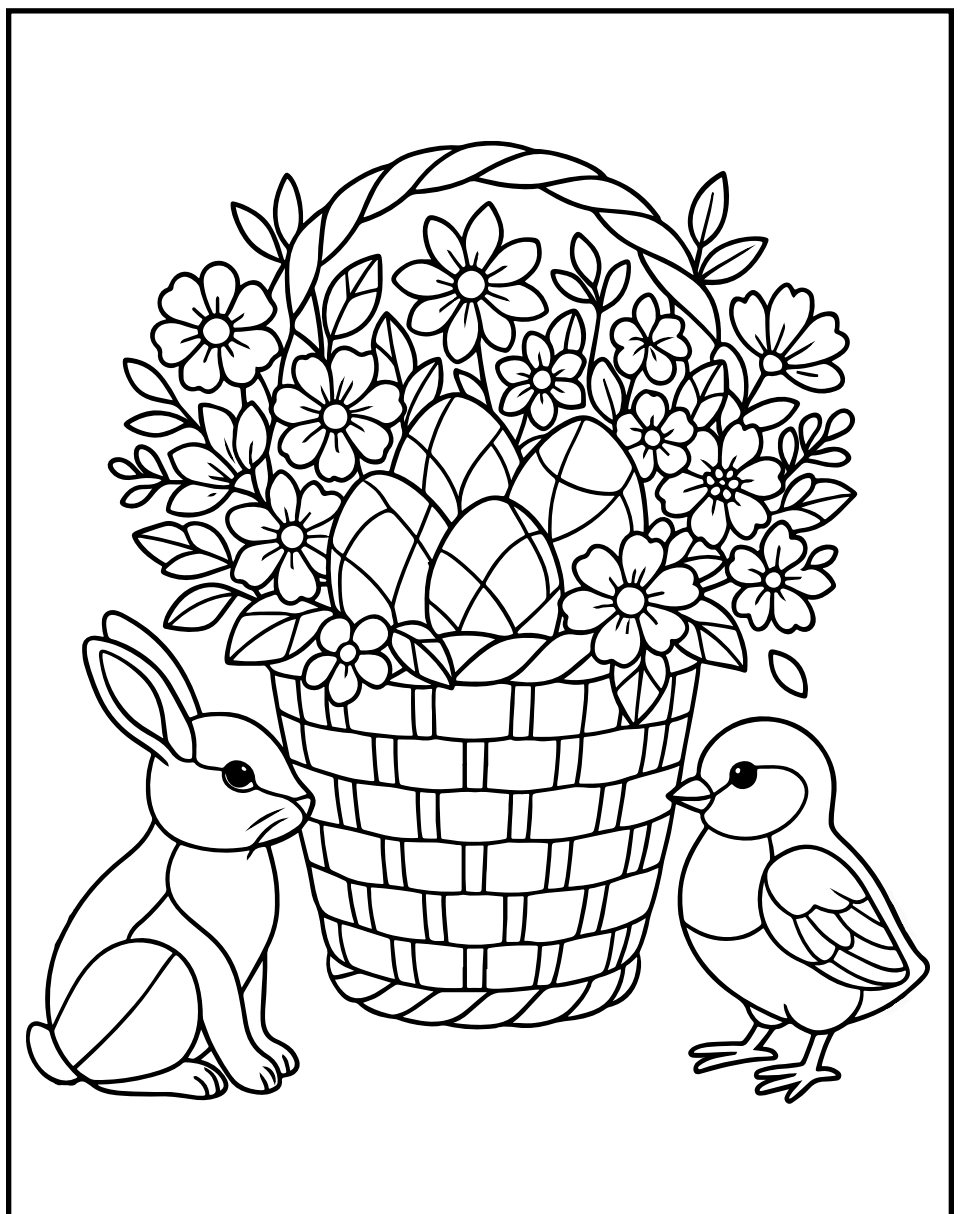
SPRING IN BLOOM - AGES 13-17



EASTER MOSAIC - AGES 18-34



LAMB OF GOD - AGES 35-69



EASTER GREETINGS - AGES 70+

Christmas Coloring Contest Winners

We are pleased to announce the finalists of the 2025 Christmas Coloring Contest, where FCSU members of all ages displayed their artistic talents. With nearly 300 entries, participation in this annual holiday tradition continues to grow. It was wonderful to see multi-generational entries from many families. Once again, the children's submissions were a delight, as our youngest members colored elves, nutcrackers, and caroling mice. Members aged 4-17 competed within their FCSU Regions, resulting in a maximum of 12 finalists per Region. You will note that some Regions did not fill all the top spots in each age group -- while other Regions had heavy competition.

The three adult categories, for ages 18+, were also judged within their FCSU Regions this year, resulting in 24 total adult winners. The skill level shown in the three Young at Heart groupings continues to impress our judges.

This year we received quite a few entries from individuals who were not FCSU members. While we appreciate adult members encouraging their children to participate, the child must be the FCSU member, not the parent or grandparent. Please consider an FCSU membership for your young ones. Member benefits include eligibility for contests, activities, events, and educational scholarships.

Thanks to all who took the time to color, with congratulations to this year's finalists. Checks or gift cards will be mailed to all finalists this month.



1ST PLACE
Ages 7-9

Benjamin Ranahan
Region 1 / Branch 746



2ND PLACE
Ages 7-9

Jan Vasil
Region 1 / Branch 45



3RD PLACE
Ages 7-9

Claire Adamczyk
Region 1 / Branch 290



1ST PLACE
Ages 10-12

Jack Ranahan
Region 1 / Branch 746



1ST PLACE
Ages 13-17

Kaitlyn Shenloogian
Region 1 / Branch 716



1ST PLACE
Ages 4-6

Zoey King
Region 2 / Branch 796



2ND PLACE
Ages 4-6

Claire Herman
Region 2 / Branch 857



1ST PLACE
Ages 7-9

Benjamin Herman
Region 2 / Branch 857



2ND PLACE
Ages 7-9

Drexel Keller
Region 2 / Branch 796



3RD PLACE
Ages 7-9

Harper Mihalcik
Region 2 / Branch 796



1ST PLACE
Ages 10-12

Jonah Sterling
Region 2 / Branch 112



2ND PLACE
Ages 10-12

Olive Keller
Region 2 / Branch 796



3RD PLACE
Ages 10-12

Charleigh Gross
Region 2 / Branch 857



1ST PLACE
Ages 13-17

Kaitlyn Mihalcik
Region 2 / Branch 796



1ST PLACE
Ages 4-6

Helen Pechmann
Region 3 / Branch 166



2ND PLACE
Ages 4-6

Madeline Koval
Region 3 / Branch 5P



1ST PLACE
Ages 7-9

Jack Hammes
Region 3 / Branch 166



2ND PLACE
Ages 7-9

Nora Hammes
Region 3 / Branch 166



3RD PLACE
Ages 7-9

William Hammes
Region 3 / Branch 166



1ST PLACE
Ages 10-12

Stella Costantino
Region 3 / Branch 173



2ND PLACE
Ages 10-12

Sofia Costantino
Region 3 / Branch 173



3RD PLACE
Ages 10-12

Adelaide Carone
Region 3 / Branch 173



1ST PLACE
Ages 13-17

Caden Jacobson
Region 3 / Branch 5P



2ND PLACE
Ages 13-17

Leila Pluto
Region 3 / Branch 173



1ST PLACE
Ages 4-6

Chloe Wittman
Region 4 / Branch 670



2ND PLACE
Ages 4-6

Brady Creak
Region 4 / Branch 484



3RD PLACE
Ages 4-6

Lily Harr
Region 4 / Branch 181



1ST PLACE
Ages 7-9

Avelyn Kardoheley
Region 4 / Branch 456



2ND PLACE
Ages 7-9

Blake Ann Kavlick
Region 4 / Branch 367



3RD PLACE
Ages 7-9

Joseph Stas
Region 4 / Branch 199



1ST PLACE
Ages 10-12

Cash Gordon
Region 4 / Branch 181



2ND PLACE
Ages 10-12

Eliot Adams
Region 4 / Branch 181



3RD PLACE
Ages 10-12

Luke Petrus
Region 4 / Branch 670



1ST PLACE
Ages 13-17

Max Dlugos
Region 4 / Branch 181



1ST PLACE
Ages 4-6

Macy Skoloda
Region 5 / Branch 254



2ND PLACE
Ages 4-6

Sophia Vecchio
Region 5 / Branch 35



3RD PLACE
Ages 4-6

Harper Hodge
Region 5 / Branch 35



1ST PLACE
Ages 7-9

Harper Pelikan
Region 5 / Branch 38



2ND PLACE
Ages 7-9

Natalie Kroniser
Region 5 / Branch 38



3RD PLACE
Ages 7-9

Francine Lako
Region 5 / Branch 2



1ST PLACE
Ages 10-12
Isabella Nixon
Region 5 / Branch 213



2ND PLACE
Ages 10-12
Josephine Berglund
Region 5 / Branch 254



3RD PLACE
Ages 10-12
Eli Hodge
Region 5 / Branch 35



1ST PLACE
Ages 13-17
Owen Hodge
Region 5 / Branch 35



2ND PLACE
Ages 13-17
Zachary Skoloda
Region 5 / Branch 254



3RD PLACE
Ages 13-17
Lauralei Kroniser
Region 5 / Branch 38



1ST PLACE
Ages 4-6
Walter Instone
Region 6 / Branch 24



2ND PLACE
Ages 4-6
Josephine Instone
Region 6 / Branch 24



3RD PLACE
Ages 4-6
Wyatt Lingenfield
Region 6 / Branch 855



1ST PLACE
Ages 7-9
Hailey Cisco
Region 6 / Branch 24



2ND PLACE
Ages 7-9
Thomas Miller
Region 6 / Branch 855



3RD PLACE
Ages 7-9
Sophia Miller
Region 6 / Branch 855



1ST PLACE
Ages 10-12
Valerie Kandra
Region 6 / Branch 1



2ND PLACE
Ages 10-12
Ava Scally
Region 6 / Branch 450



3RD PLACE
Ages 10-12
Joseph Miller
Region 6 / Branch 855



1ST PLACE
Ages 13-17
Artem Fedoriouk
Region 6 / Branch 24



2ND PLACE
Ages 13-17
Reagan Fennell
Region 6 / Branch 228



3RD PLACE
Ages 13-17
Anne Miller
Region 6 / Branch 855



1ST PLACE
Ages 4-6
Oliver Whittington
Region 7 / Branch 40



2ND PLACE
Ages 4-6
Callie Krzan
Region 7 / Branch 40



3RD PLACE
Ages 4-6
Willow Mission
Region 7 / Branch 756



1ST PLACE
Ages 7-9
Atticus Whittington
Region 7 / Branch 40



2ND PLACE
Ages 7-9
Emma Harding
Region 7 / Branch 153



3RD PLACE
Ages 7-9
Michael Tisak
Region 7 / Branch 313



1ST PLACE
Ages 10-12
Emmett Whittington
Region 7 / Branch 40



2ND PLACE
Ages 10-12
Rylin Bobo
Region 7 / Branch 313



3RD PLACE
Ages 10-12
James Tisak
Region 7 / Branch 313



1ST PLACE
Ages 13-17
Margot Mokosaik
Region 7 / Branch 153



1ST PLACE
Ages 4-6
Julian Fazzolari
Region 8 / Branch 785



1ST PLACE
Ages 7-9
Oscar Fazzolari
Region 8 / Branch 785



1ST PLACE
Ages 7-9
Grace Oakes
Region 8 / Branch 785



1ST PLACE
Ages 10-12
Maxim Kapitan
Region 8 / Branch 785



1ST PLACE
Ages 13-17
Landon Kapitan
Region 8 / Branch 785

YOUNG AT HEART WINNERS!

ADULT 18-39	ADULT 40-64	ADULT 65+
(R1) Elise SchwerBranch 290	(R1) Theresa Rinko.....Branch 746	(R1) Constance WidmerBranch 746
(R2) Danielle NastaBranch 875	(R2) Mary S. EstrightBranch 55	(R2) Mary Jo ZimaBranch 796
(R3) Eileen B. NestorBranch 419	(R3) Mary Ellen NestorBranch 419	(R3) Michael KunecBranch 173
(R4) Caitlyn Handel.....Branch 372	(R4) Chris Petrus.....Branch 670	(R4) Fred KardohelyBranch 456
(R5) Patrick Sullivan.....Branch 35	(R5) Theresa Zemelman.....Branch 2	(R5) Janet SullivanBranch 35
(R6) Anna L. Taylor.....Branch 764	(R6) Caroline Ferenchak	(R6) Margaret FerenchakBranch 731
(R7) Evan JurcenkoBranch 153	FlemmingBranch 731	(R7) Celine M. Fitzgerald.....Branch 23
(R8) Ty MitroBranch 785	(R7) Rachel RemenarBranch 721	(R8) Anne Mitro.....Branch 785
	(R8) Nadia MitroBranch 785	

2026 FCSU International Golf TOURNAMENT

Save the Date!

JULY 24-26

Sawmill Creek Golf Club & Resort
Huron, OH

FCSU INTERNATIONAL BOWLING TOURNAMENT APRIL 25-26

LANE SPONSORS AND PATRON DONOR SPOTS STILL AVAILABLE

Contact Joanne Fibbi at jfibbi@fcsu.com or 412-953-4721 by March 16 to sign up!

District 4 Holds First Semi-Annual Meeting

Submitted by Sabina Sabados, Region 1 Director

Msgr. Rura District 4 started the new year with fellowship and forward-planning as members of Branch 290 and Branch 746 gathered at Holy Family Church in Linden, New Jersey, for their first semi-annual meeting on Sunday, March 1, 2026. It was an afternoon filled with energy, laughter, and plenty of planning for the exciting months ahead.

Members reconnected after the busy holiday season and quickly got down to business, including the election of officers and the District delegate to the upcoming convention. The group also recapped January's hockey outing — a great day of cheering, camaraderie, and team spirit — and looked ahead to more fun on the calendar. The annual baseball outing will take place on May 2, and all District 4 branch members are invited to attend free of charge (registration required; see District 4 announcements for details). A Fall apple picking and wine-tasting trip is also in the works.

Of course, no District 4 gathering would be complete without delicious food and celebration! Members enjoyed a traditional Slovak lunch featuring stuffed cabbage, segedínsky guláš with knedľa, and halušky — a true feast!

We also celebrated February, March, and April birthdays, singing in several languages and sharing not one, but two beautiful cakes. Special birthday wishes were extended to Mr. Jan Mikulasko of Branch 746 on his milestone 70th birthday and to Lillian Minarovich of Branch 290 on her 88th birthday. Happy birthday to all celebrants!

With faith, fraternalism, and family at the center of it all, District 4 is off to a wonderful start for the year ahead.



Branch 290 Year End Meeting

Submitted by Jo Anne Minarovich Peppe, President

Branch 290 held its year-end meeting with dedicated members in attendance. The session included the annual election of officers and productive discussions regarding the upcoming convention. Following the business portion of the meeting, attendees enjoyed a delicious meal and continued engaging in excellent conversation.



Welcome New Member

On July 28, 2025, Branch 24 joyfully welcomed a precious bundle of joy, Charlotte Ann Gibson, born to proud parents Anna and Robert Gibson. Big sister Beatrice is thrilled to welcome her new baby sister. Charlotte is the beloved granddaughter of Region 6 Director Tom Ivanec and his wife Terry Ivanec. She is warmly welcomed by her loving family, including Aunt Rose Ivanec, Uncle John Ivanec, Aunt Leslie Adelman, Aunt Fran Strekal and Uncle Justin Strekal, along with three excited cousins.



Charlotte Ann Gibson

Rediscover Your Family's Roots on the Slovakia Heritage Tour



Travel home in 2026 to your ancestral land and culture on our September small-group Slovakia Heritage Tour, and rediscover your roots in this beautiful small country with a vibrant history and folk life traditions. This September 11-20, 2026, the Slovakia Heritage Tour will traverse the ever-changing Slovak countryside from the Danube plains to the Tatra mountains to the rolling, open hill country of Eastern Slovakia.

Relax and enjoy local music and folk arts as we travel comfortably around this small but diverse country to explore picturesque villages, spectacular castles, outdoor folk-life museums, mountain resort towns, pastoral landscapes and the small cities with well-preserved medieval buildings, Soviet-era remnants, and the vibrant life of Slovakia today.

You'll have time to visit and learn about your ancestral villages, as well as possibly reconnect with family who stayed behind. You'll learn more about Slovakia's history and why so many of our families left this beautiful country to settle in America.

"Slovak Americans love this chance to experience Slovakia up close and personal, and rekindle the customs many remember from childhood," said Heritage tour founder, Judy Northup-Bennett who is happy to talk with Slovak-Americans about their personal travel goals. "If the September date doesn't work for you, I'll be happy to work with you to find another way to visit Slovakia, either on another tour or on a private tour designed for your family and friends."

For more information on the September Heritage Tour (Sept. 11-20, 2026) and to discuss your personal family travel plans, please contact Judy Northup-Bennett at Slovakia Heritage Tours, 978-544-5144, slovakiaheritagetours@gmail.com or text 978-894-6622. For a day-by-day itinerary and photos of past tours, visit www.slovakiaheritage.com



Branch 853 members Michael Bertovich, Charles Boone, Monica Boone, Marianne Rodacy, and Ron Boone enjoyed an afternoon of fun at Off the Wall Arts in Charleroi, PA.



District 4 Hockey Game

Submitted by Jo Anne Minarovich Peppe, Activities Director

District 4, with members from Branches 290 and 746, enjoyed an exciting day at the Prudential Center on Saturday, January 3, 2026. Members cheered on the New Jersey Devils as they faced off against the Utah Mammoths. The atmosphere was electric as the Devils secured a dominant 4-1 victory. Despite being seated in the very last row of the arena, the bird's-eye view didn't dampen the spirits of the group—a wonderful time was had by all!

District 7 Around Town



Jednota District 7 held its first semi-annual meeting at Denny's in Richland, PA, on February 21, 2026. Members elected their President, Dr. Michael Kopanic, Jr. to represent them at the 53rd Quadrennial Convention in Greenville, SC.



Tomáš Hudák with Dr. Michael Kopanic, Jr. at a University of Pittsburgh lecture.

The Somerset Patriots Welcome District 4 (NJ)



BALLPARK BBQ GROUP EVENT Saturday, May 2, 2026 @ 6:05pm

Members are FREE

Guests cost \$38 each

TD Bank Ballpark
860 E Main Street
Bridgewater, NJ

Saturday, May 2
Gates open at 5:00pm
First Pitch is 6:05pm

RSVP to Jo Anne Peppe
at gsmgjap@aol.com
by Friday, April 17

Send her an email to coordinate guest payments.



Guests will have access to the Ballpark BBQ, with a 90 minute Buffet, Cash Bar and designated picnic style seating.

Buffet runs from 5:00pm - 6:30pm

JEDNOTA CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

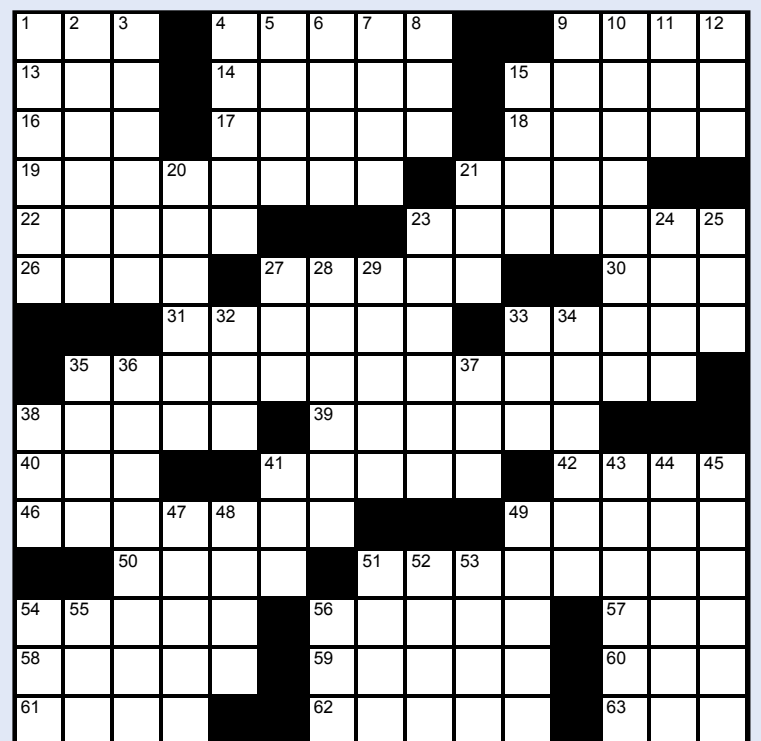
- 1 Psychic power
- 4 Fragrant oil
- 9 Tom Cruise flick, ___ Good Men
- 13 Tarnish
- 14 Oar pin
- 15 Musical mark-up
- 16 Sorority letter
- 17 Enticed
- 18 Hesitate
- 19 Berate
- 21 Make, as a CD
- 22 Sandwiches for dessert
- 23 17th century English Protestant
- 26 Kitten's plaything
- 27 Romeo's rival
- 30 Bio bit
- 31 Reddish brown horse
- 33 Bonehead
- 35 Olive branch

Down

- 38 Eyelashes
- 39 More docile
- 40 Draft pick
- 41 Wilkes-___, Pa.
- 42 Duds
- 46 Formulates
- 49 Home of the brave
- 50 In the center of
- 51 Dreadful
- 54 ___ point
- 56 Bay of Naples isle
- 57 Elephant grp.
- 58 Oafs
- 59 Bay window
- 60 Fr. summer
- 61 Father
- 62 Stick-on
- 63 Poetic adverb

Down

- 1 Wield
- 2 1943 Bogart film
- 3 Undercoat
- 4 Rand McNally product
- 5 As a result
- 6 Suit material?
- 7 Downwind
- 8 Like roses
- 9 Mites
- 10 ___ of youth
- 11 Hosp. units
- 12 Diminutive
- 15 Egg on
- 20 A dwarfed ornamental tree
- 21 Greyhound vehicle
- 23 Lift, so to speak
- 24 Bug-eyed
- 25 Butterfly catcher
- 27 Historic beginning
- 28 Scents
- 29 Direct elsewhere
- 32 Wood sorrel
- 33 Dander
- 34 Laments
- 35 Stack
- 36 Lifting device
- 37 ___ out a living
- 38 Real heel
- 41 Fourposter, e.g.
- 43 Highest point
- 44 Way off
- 45 Pager
- 47 Ammonia derivative
- 48 Poses
- 49 Warble
- 51 Meter reading
- 52 Kind of proportions
- 53 Bailiwick
- 54 Mac rivals
- 55 Yale student
- 56 Atlantic food fish



Answers on Page 21

BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

**All BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS
should be emailed to branch@fcsu.com**

FCSU 53RD QUADRENNIAL CONVENTION

June 20-23, 2026

Embassy Suites by Hilton
Golf Resort & Conference Center
Greenville, South Carolina

Visit the 53rd Convention Page on
our website for the latest updates.
Look under the Membership tab
at www.fcsu.com.

MICHIGAN

BRANCH 721 – BANNISTER, MI

Joseph Beno, Recording Secretary

Jednota Lodge Branch 721 will hold their Spring meeting on Sunday, April 12, 2026, at 2pm at the Remenar home, 8977 S. Mason Rd., Bannister.

FRATERNALISM IN ACTION: Because our branch only meets twice a year, we are blessed to support two local organizations at this meeting. While we'll be collecting for both at the same time, we encourage members to be as generous as they are able to each of these worthwhile causes. For the Elsie Baby Pantry, please bring baby shampoo, soap, and wipes. For the Elsie Area Food Pantry, please bring non-perishable food items. The Home Office will make a generous donation to both of these organizations. Thank you for living out the spirit of fraternalism and helping us make a difference for families in our community.

BRANCH 743 – STERLING HEIGHTS, MI

Joseph C. Rimarcik, President

The St. Joseph Society will celebrate the feast day of St. Joseph on Sunday, March 29, 2026, with a Slovak Mass at 11:30am for all living and deceased members at Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church, 41233 Ryan Rd., Sterling Heights. All members and their families are invited to attend this annual celebration of St. Joseph's Day. A branch meeting will take place at 1:30pm in the Slovak Heritage Room.

Any member who has recently moved or requires a beneficiary update should contact Branch Secretary Joseph C. Rimarcik at 4945 Wavewood Dr., Commerce Twp., MI 48382, call 248-714-9620 or email josephrimarcik@gmail.com.

NEW JERSEY

BRANCH 746 – LINDEN, NJ

Mary Kapitan, Recording Secretary

FRATERNALISM IN ACTION: Jednota Branch 746 members are asked to volunteer for baking on Saturday, March 21, 2026, throughout the day in the basement of the Holy Family Church. We will be baking Easter cakes for the Holy Family Roman Catholic Church. The Home Office will support our volunteerism with a donation for \$250.

Please call Mary Lou at 908-862-0379 from 9am to 8pm to place orders for nut, poppy seed, prune and cheese rolls for \$20 each. All proceeds go to the church.

Members are encouraged to attend Friday Holy Masses at 7pm (in Slovak) at

Holy Family Church in Linden, NJ. Masses are offered for the intention of all branch members living and deceased as follows: Tuesday, March 17; Tuesday, April 14; Friday, May 1; Tuesday, June 2; Friday, July 3; Friday, August 7; Friday, September 4; Monday, October 5; Friday, November 13; Friday, December 4; and Tuesday, December 22.

NEW YORK

BRANCH 166 – BINGHAMTON, NY

Diane Wallick, Recording Secretary

St. Joseph the Guardian Society will hold a spring meeting on Saturday, May 2, 2026, at 10:30am at Denny's, 1250 Upper Front St., Binghamton. Brunch will be available. All members are encouraged to attend. Hope to see you there!

OHIO

BRANCH 1 – LAKEWOOD, OH

Barbara J. Golias, Secretary

The next meeting of the Saint Joseph Society will be held on Sunday, April 26, 2026, at 1pm at Panera Bread, 19705 Center Ridge Rd., Rocky River. RSVP to Rochelle Popovich at 216-789-6390 by April 11. All members are welcome to attend.

BRANCH 228 – LORAIN, OH

Kevin Arendt, Recording Secretary

The St. John the Baptist/Holy Trinity Lodge will hold their next meeting on Monday, March 16, 2026, at 7pm IN-PERSON at the American Slovak Club located on the northeast corner of 30th and Broadway in Lorain. Food and refreshments will be served. We will collect completed Delegate Credential forms and discuss the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. Please plan on attending this very important meeting and follow the Jednota newspaper for up-to-date Convention details.

Anyone interested in bowling at the FCSU International Bowling Tournament in Erie, PA on April 24-25 should contact Lisa at 440-960-2112. Our branch will pay the entry fees for any of our members. See tournament details on page 8.

We respectfully ask our Branch 228 members to attend our meetings and please pray to our Lord for a calm environment and Peace on Earth.

BRANCH 260 – COITSVILLE, OH

Carlie M. Peshek, Vice President

SAVE THE DATE! These are the list of meetings for 2026:

- Thursday, May 7
- Thursday, October 1
- Thursday, December 3

We will hold the Election of Branch Officers at the December meeting as well as the holiday celebration.

All meetings begin at 5pm at La Terraza Restaurant, 5495 Clarkins Dr., Austintown. Looking forward to seeing all of you and God Bless!

BRANCH 450 – CLEVELAND, OH

Frank Woyma, President

St. Joseph the Guardian Society will hold our first semi-annual meeting at 11am



Coloring Contest Images Featured on Pages 12-13

How to Print Coloring Pages from the Website

- Go to fcsu.com/community/events.
- Click on the 2026 Easter Coloring Contest.
- Choose your age group.
- When you print the .pdf, scroll down to "Page Size and Handling".
- Choose "Actual Size" or "Custom - 100%" to ensure you print the correct size.
- Cut off the entry form and tape it to the back of the picture before submission.

Coloring Contest Entry Form

**COLOR YOUR ENTRY USING CRAYONS OR COLORED PENCILS ONLY.
ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY APRIL 10, 2026.**

Branch #: _____ Age: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Please print clearly using ink. Thank you!

TAPE YOUR ENTRY FORM TO THE BACK OF THE PICTURE

Mail your colored picture to: Joanne Fibbi, Fraternal Activities Director
1741 Hempstead Lane, Pittsburgh, PA 15241

on Saturday, April 11, 2026. It will be held in the Community Room at Panera located at 5090 Tiedeman Rd., Brooklyn. The agenda will include the officers' financial reports, correspondence received, and discussion of District 10 and branch activities for the summer. All members are encouraged to attend. Refreshments will be served after the meeting. Please RSVP to Frank Woyma at 216-225-5688 by Wednesday, April 7th.

BRANCH 553 – AKRON, OH

Debbie Speck, President

Spring is just around the corner. Get your teams together for the 2026 FCSU International Bowling Tournament to be held at Eastway Lanes in Erie, PA on April 25-26. See tournament details on page 8.

BRANCH 731 – YOUNGSTOWN, OH

Anna Schwanitz, Recording Secretary

SAVE THE DATE:

- Patron Saint Mass: March 19 at 12:10pm at St. Columba Cathedral (159 W. Rayen Ave., Youngstown)
- Branch Meetings: May 17, September 6, November 29 (meeting + Election of Officers) - all meetings at 5pm at Coaches (3032 Center Rd., Poland)
- Mass for Deceased Members: November 11 at 12:10pm at St. Columba Cathedral (159 W. Rayen Ave., Youngstown)

BRANCH 855 – CLEVELAND, OH

Stephanie Sutilla, Activities Director

Get your bowling team together to strike up some fun and let the good times roll at the FCSU International Bowling Tournament April 25-26, 2026, in Erie, PA. We will pay the bowling entry fees (up to

\$95) for our members. See tournament details on page 8.

The Tamburitzans Folk Ensemble from Pittsburgh are returning for a performance at the Independence High School on Sunday, April 26 at 5pm. We highly recommend this season's production "The Shared Song: Uniting Cultures Through Music & Dance." We will reserve a FREE ticket for any member who would like to attend. More information will be available in the next issue.

Please contact branch president, Barbara Sutilla, at 440-864-4744 if you would like to attend either of these upcoming events.

PENNSYLVANIA

BRANCH 60 – MCKEESPORT, PA

Julie Perla, Recording Secretary

The branch will hold its semi-annual meeting on Sunday, May 3, 2026, at Rodney's Restaurant at 557 Wendel Rd., Irwin at 1pm. On the agenda will be Officers' reports, discussion of the upcoming 53rd Quadrennial Convention, and future events. All members are urged to attend.

BRANCH 112 – MAHANAY CITY, PA

Karen Sterling, Recording Secretary

Due to the illness of our newly elected President, a special election will be held to select a new President.

The meeting will take place on Saturday, March 14, 2026, at noon over Zoom. For Zoom information please contact Karen Sterling at 570-640-1796.

We also ask that you keep our former President in your thoughts and prayers as they go through this difficult time.

BRANCH 162 – UNIONTOWN, PA

Dolores Marmol, Recording Secretary

IMPORTANT NOTICE

MEETING DATE NOW MARCH 16, 2026

The St. Wendelin Society meeting has been changed from Tuesday, March 3 to Monday, March 16, 2026, at 5:30pm. The meeting location is Bogey's Restaurant, 374 Duck Hollow Rd., Uniontown. The change occurred due to the restaurant's seasonal closing on our original meeting date. We will hold the Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. Call me to RSVP at 724-437-4983.

BRANCH 181 – UNITED, PA

Vicki Hricik, Recording Secretary

The 2026 Branch 181 Youth Member Scholastic Assistance program is now open. Winners can earn a one-time award of \$500. Contact Vicki at 724-433-8469 or vicki15@zoominternet.net to receive an application or download one from fcsu.com/scholarships. Look under the branch tab. See our flyer on page 24.

BRANCH 200 – FORD CITY, PA

Vicki Schaub, Recording Secretary

The branch will hold a meeting on Thursday, April 2, 2026. Our meetings are held at 7pm on the first Thursday of each month except June and July. All members are invited to attend at the Slovak CU, 910 6th Ave., Ford City. Contact Vicki Schaub with questions at vschaub123@gmail.com or 724-763-9229.

May ALL our members have a blessed Easter. It seems this Winter is never going to end but remember that Spring is around the corner. The daffodils and tulips have broken ground and my horseradish is ready to dig and grind.

BRANCH 276 – MCKEESPORT, PA

Margaret A. Nasta, President

The branch will hold a meeting on May 17, 2026, at Tillie's, 308 36th St., McKeesport starting at 1pm.

BRANCH 367 – FAIRCHANCE, PA

Rose Roskovensky, Secretary

IMPORTANT NOTICE

MEETING DATE NOW MARCH 31, 2026

St. Joseph Society's meeting has changed from Thursday, March 19 to Tuesday, March 31, 2026, at 11am at Jamie Lynn's Café, 1618 Georges Fairchance

Rd., Smithfield. We will discuss the 53rd Quadrennial Convention and make plans for the 125th Lodge Celebration Mass.

The Celebration Mass will be held on Sunday, July 12 at 9am at SS. Cyril and Methodius Church, 50 North Morgantown St., Fairchance. Anyone wishing to help with this special celebration, please contact Patty Speshock at 724-564-5764 or Kathryn Baranek at 724-569-1006 or Rose Roskovensky (cell phone) at 304-266-8921.

BRANCH 410 – UNIONTOWN, PA

Geri Buchheit, Recording Secretary

The SS. Peter and Paul Society will hold a meeting on Thursday, March 19, 2026, at 1:30pm at the Highland House, 92 West Main St., Uniontown. All members are encouraged to attend this meeting. RSVP by Monday, March 16th to 724-425-2576.

BRANCH 796 – EGYPT, PA

Monica Fabian, Recording Secretary

The branch will hold their semi-annual meeting on March 22, 2026, at Holy Trinity Church, 4456 Main St., Egypt at 1pm. The meeting will be held in the Altar Sacristy. We will discuss the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. Everyone interested should attend this meeting.

BRANCH 853 – CHARLEROI, PA

Monica R. Boone, President

Join Branch 853 for the Hlinka District 12 meeting on April 12, 2026, at 1pm at Bills Golfand, 210 Bills Lane, Belle Vernon. The 53rd Quadrennial Convention will be a main topic discussed. Members are urged to attend. For seat count, please make your reservation at FCSUBranch853@gmail.com.

WISCONSIN

BRANCH 89 – MILWAUKEE, WI

Susan Scaife, Event Coordinator

We are planning an outing to a Milkmen Baseball game at Franklin Field, 7035 S. Ballpark Dr., Franklin on Sunday, June 7, 2026, at 1pm. We will be in the "Hop Yard" area which has unlimited food, drinks, and general seating. All members of Branch 89 will have their ticket cost covered by the branch. Tickets for guests are \$46.40.

Please RSVP to Susan Scaife at suzie.scaife@gmail.com or 414-690-0687 by May 18.

DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Send **DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENTS** to district@fcsu.com

DISTRICT 2 – REV. JOHN J. SPITKOVSKY – IL, IN, WI

Paul Chismar, Vice President

IMPORTANT NOTICE – MEETING DATE NOW APRIL 19, 2026

District 2 will hold its semi-annual meeting on Sunday, April 19, 2026, at the Missionary Sisters of St. Benedict, 5900 West 147 St., Oak Forest, IL. This meeting, previously announced for April 12, has been rescheduled due to a venue conflict. There will be socializing and refreshments at 1:30pm with the meeting beginning at 2pm. A discussion of the 53rd Quadrennial Convention will be on the agenda. Please bring a gift for the raffle. RSVP to Dorothy Jurcenko at 708-995-7378.

DISTRICT 4 – MSGR. JOHN E. RURA DISTRICT, NJ

Jo Anne Minarovich Peppe, District 4 Activities Director

District 4 is organizing an outing to the Somerset Patriots Baseball game and BBQ on Saturday, May 2, 2026. Tickets are free for all members of District 4 (Branches 102, 132, 290, 652, 746). Non-members are welcome to join for \$38 per person/child. The price includes entrance to the ballpark, a 90-minute buffet, and designated picnic style seating. Come join us for a fun evening of fraternalism and baseball! Contact Jo Anne Minarovich Peppe at gsmgjp@aol.com to RSVP before April 17. See the ad on page 17.

Members are encouraged to attend mass on Saturday, March 28, 2026 at 4pm at Holy Family Church (210 Monroe Street, Linden, NJ). Mass is being offered for the intention of District 4 members, living and deceased.

DISTRICT 6 – PITTSBURGH DISTRICT – PA

Margaret A. Nasta, Recording Secretary

Branch 2 will host the Spring Business Meeting on Sunday, April 12, 2026, at 1pm at Holy Trinity Church Hall of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, 529 Grant Ave. Ext., West Mifflin. Please RSVP to Annie Mann at aondrejco@gmail.com or 412-973-6064 by March 29th. We will discuss spring and summer activities. A Fraternalism in Action project is being planned. A meeting for convention Delegates and Alternates will follow.

Other announcements of local interest:

- WPCSA meets first Mondays 7pm at the Mt Lebanon Public Library.
Topics: April - Exploring the Extremes.
- WPCSA sponsors scholarships and hosts various events such as wine tastings. Join the organization and get the newsletter.
- Slovak Language Classes: March 12 to April 30 at the Brentwood Public Library. Contact Bozena Hilko at Bozi@comcast.net.
- Slovak Day at Kennywood: Thursday, July 16, 2026.
- Slovak Heritage Day at Pitt: Sunday, November 1, 2026.
- Western PA Slovak Radio Hour: WPIT 96.5 FM/730 AM.

As always, members are urged to check the Jednota for updates on FCSU business matters as well as social events and contests. Be sure your beneficiaries are up to date. FCSU insurance information and forms can be found at FCSU.com.

DISTRICT 8 – REV. STEPHEN FURDEK DISTRICT – PA, NC

Jo Austin, Recording Secretary

Please join us for our spring Zoom call on Sunday, April 19, 2026, at 1pm. We will discuss the previous meeting minutes and items of note for the upcoming 53rd Quadrennial Convention. For questions, please contact me at jeaustin89@gmail.com or 315-391-0526.

Link: tinyurl.com/D8SpringMtg

DISTRICT 12 – MSGR. ANDREW HLINKA DISTRICT – PA

Monica Boone, Recording Secretary

The Monsignor Hlinka District will hold its first meeting of the year on Sunday, April 12, 2026, at 1pm at Bills Golfand, 210 Bills Lane, Belle Vernon, PA. Some of the topics on the agenda will be discussions of the 53rd Quadrennial Convention being held in Greenville, SC on June 20 - 23, 2026, plus planning the activities for 2026.

Any non-district FCSU member who is running for office who wants to attend the meeting, please contact the district secretary at hlinkadistrictsecretary@gmail.com for an arrival time so as to not interfere with the business agenda of the meeting. Those running for office, please wait outside of the meeting room until called to enter. We are asking all candidates to please be courteous and adhere to the District request.

FRATERNALISM IN ACTION: The District will collect shelf stable food items for the St. Katharine Drexel Food Bank which is for the district's communities of Bentleyville, Ellsworth and the Washington, Pennsylvania area. As the members are being asked to be as generous as their situation allows, the Home Office will match the district's donations with a \$250 donation.

Hlinka District members are urged to attend the April meeting. Questions on the meeting can be directed to District Secretary, Monica Boone at hlinkadistrictsecretary@gmail.com.

DISTRICT 14 – REVEREND JOSEPH L. KOSTIK DISTRICT – OH, PA

Jacquelyn Bobby, Recording Secretary

SAVE THE DATE: All meetings will be at 6pm at the Fireplace Restaurant, 2075 E. Western Reserve Rd., Poland. Meeting dates are May 19, August 18, November 17, 2026.

Open to the Public SLOVAK J CLUB 485 MORGAN AVE • AKRON, OH		*Call 330-786-9972 to RSVP To RSVP for dinner, contact us by the MONDAY PRIOR to the dinner.	
MARCH 2026		APRIL 2026	
March 13	Fish Fry Buffet - 4:30-7pm *RSVP for Cod Dinner by 3-11	April 1	Spaghetti Dinner 4:30-7pm
March 18	Pork Chop Dinner 4:30-6:30pm *RSVP by 3-16	April 3	Final Fish Fry Buffet 4:30-7pm *RSVP for Cod Dinner by 4-1
March 20	Fish Fry Buffet - 4:30-7pm *RSVP for Cod Dinner by 3-18	April 7	Casino Trip to Meadows Contact Joan Lewis at 330-730-8285 to secure a spot
March 21	5th Annual Casino Night 6:15-10pm \$15 Entry & Food; Game Chips Extra Food @ 6:15, Gambling @ 7pm *RSVP - Sign up at the Bar	April 15	Baked Chicken Dinner 4:30-6:30pm *RSVP by 4-13
March 27	Fish Fry Buffet - 4:30-7pm *RSVP for Cod Dinner by 3-25	April 18	Rock & Roll with the Big Johnson Band; 7-11pm \$20 for music & food; \$10 for music; cash bar
March 29	Breakfast Buffet 9am-11:45am All you can eat		



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.

Eternal rest, grant unto them O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.
 Odpočinutie večné daj im, Pane, a svetlo večné, nech im svieti. Duše všetkých verných zomrelých, pre milosrdenstvo Božie, nech odpočívajú v pokoji. Amen

Hope Beyond Loss

Death is not the end, but a passage from faith to fulfillment, from hope to promise, from love on earth to peace eternal.

BRANCH	NAME
001P	Dolores Armbruster
019K	Suzanne Murphy
024K	Eleanore Turner
045K	George S. Pehush
085K	Gary Edwards
112K	Robert Frantz
144P	Rose M. Jubay
152K	Joseph Vanyo
157K	Joseph M. Gombar
166K	Beck Krajcir
166K	Michael Stephen Hovancik
259K	Elizabeth Javorsky
367K	John Juracko
393K	Thomas Nalevanko
401K	Amelia Mazak Sharp
595K	John M. Nic
731K	Mary Jean Yohman
764K	Garry M. Krempasky
796K	Elsie H. Huber

** Processed in the month of February 2026*

John Martin Nic Sr. Branch 595 Muskegon Heights, MI



John Martin Nic Sr., age 89, passed away on Saturday, December 27, 2025 at his home in Muskegon, Michigan. He was born in Muskegon Heights on March 17, 1936 to Michael J. and Bernadine (Hutta) Nic. John was a talented woodworker who turned his craft into a successful career. He worked for E.H. Sheldon, Structural Concepts, and Amstore before retiring in 2005. An avid fisherman, he also found great enjoyment in gardening and was a lifetime fan of the Detroit Lions and Muskegon Catholic Central Crusader Football. John was a longtime member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church and, following its closing, transferred his membership to St. Thomas Catholic Church. On June 20, 1969, John married the former Judy Ann Tibbits and she survives him along with five children, Laurena Nic, John (Peggy) Nic Jr., Randall Nic, Richard (Cindy) Nic, and Joanne (Robert) Stoneburner; 11

grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; brother, Martin (Diane) Nic; and many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents; parents-in-law, James and Rosezella Tibbits; and siblings, Sr. Michael Anne Nic, Michael J. Nic Jr., and Dorothy (Sam) Lakos.

Garry M. Krempasky Branch 764 Warren, OH



Garry M. Krempasky, 71, of Warren passed away on Wednesday afternoon, October 15, 2025 surrounded by his loving family. Garry was born on February 22, 1954 in Warren, OH, a son of the late Edward J. and Mildred "Millie" (Haller) Krempasky and was a lifelong area resident. He was a 1973 graduate of Howland High School and went on to work at the Warren Coke Plant for 32 years, retiring in 2010. Outside of work, Garry enjoyed fishing and boating. In his younger years,

he enjoyed doing auto bodywork and painting cars. Garry took pride in maintaining his home and yard. He was active and enjoyed bowling and golfing with family and friends. Garry enjoyed riding motorcycles, having owned various Hondas and Harleys over the years. Most of all, he took great pride in his family. Garry was honored to have had the opportunity to take care of his parents during their final years. He cherished the time he spent with his children and grandchildren, and he will be deeply missed. Garry will always be remembered by his children, Mark Krempasky of Youngstown and Crystal (Dustin) Garlock of Girard; his beloved grandchildren, Kendall, Genevieve and Garrett Krempasky; siblings, Karen (William) Toda Caldwell of Hilton Head, SC and David (Donna) Krempasky of Lockhaven, PA. He will also be missed by numerous cousins, nieces and nephews. Besides his parents, Garry was preceded in death by his loyal German Shepherd, Cassy, whom he cherished.

District 3 Hosts Holiday Gathering

Submitted by Darlene Patty, District 3 Vice President

District 3 hosted a holiday gathering late last year, welcoming members and guests for an evening of fellowship and camaraderie. Among those attending were several national officers who joined District leadership for the celebration. This annual event is special for the district members and has become a family tradition to attend.



Pictured L-R: Gary Matta (General Counsel), Larissa Matta, Christine Tokarsky, John Tokarsky (Treasurer), Jim Bench (Supreme Court Member), James Marmol (Region 4 Director), Damian Nasta (Vice President), Father Thomas Nasta (Chaplain), Greg Maurer (Chairman of Auditors), Kevin Collins (Executive Secretary, COO) and Bishop Larry Kulick, JCL (Protector)



George Onda District 4 officers William Patty (President), Darlene Patty (Vice President), Kirsten Meyer (Secretary), and Bernard Vadas (Treasurer)



Carrie Hult with Bishop Kulick, JCL (Protector)

Branch 24 Hosts Election Meeting

Submitted by Fran Strekal, Fraternal Activities Director

Branch 24 held their election of delegates meeting on February 8, 2026, at Rumas Restaurant in North Royalton, OH. Over 40 members attended including several Home Office staff and special guests FCSU President, CEO Kenneth Arendt, Executive Secretary, COO Kevin Collins and District 10 President Greg Petrasek. After the election, members enjoyed a delicious hot lunch. Members participated generously in our Fraternalism in Action event. Winter coats, hats, gloves, socks, and toiletries were collected for the Cleveland Kindness Collection, a nonprofit organization serving the homeless in the Cleveland and Akron area.



Served Every Friday during Lent

4:30 - 7:00pm

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FCSU Search-A-Word

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

March Word List



- RESURRECTION
- LAMB
- CLOVER
- RAINBOWS
- SPRING
- KITE
- VTÁCI (Birds)
- DÁŽĎ (Rain)
- TULIPÁN (Tulip)
- ŠTASTIE (Luck)
- VAJCIA (Eggs)
- ZLATO (Gold)

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____
 Email: _____
 Branch #: _____ Phone: _____

Search-A-Word Rules

Five monthly winners will receive \$50!

All FCSU members are eligible to enter. One entry per member! Complete the puzzle and email it along with your name, address, email and branch number to contest@fcsu.com. Or mail puzzle and form to:

FCSU PUZZLE

6611 Rockside Road • Independence, OH 44131
Entries must be received by April 23, 2026.
 Five winners will be drawn from all correct entries.

January Puzzle Winners

- Frank Chovanec Branch 23
- Karen Habian Branch 855
- Janice Kijowski..... Branch 746
- Virginia Oplinger Branch 199
- Marianne Rodacy..... Branch 853

Congratulations and Keep Puzzling!

FRANtastic Cuisine

BY FRAN STREKAL



KOLACKY

- Dough
- 1 stick (½ cup) salted butter, softened
 - 4 oz cream cheese, softened
 - 1¼ cups all-purpose flour, sifted
- Filling
- 1 cup jam or pastry filling of your choice
- Optional
- 1 egg, beaten (for egg wash)
 - Powdered sugar, for dusting

Make the dough - In a bowl, mix the flour, cream cheese, and butter until fully combined. The dough may be crumbly at first; knead gently with your hands until smooth.

Chill the dough - Wrap the dough in plastic wrap and place it in the freezer for 10–15 minutes to firm up.

Roll the dough - On a lightly floured surface, roll the dough into a rectangle about ⅛ inch thick.

Cut the dough - Cut the dough into squares about 2½ inches each.

Fill and shape - Place 1 teaspoon of filling in the center of each square. Fold opposite corners of the dough toward the center and press together to seal. Brush lightly with egg wash if needed to help them stick.

Prepare for baking - Place the kolacky on a parchment-lined baking sheet.

Bake - Preheat the oven to 340°F (170°C). Bake for 12–15 minutes, or until lightly golden. Let the cookies cool slightly, then sprinkle with powdered sugar before serving.

The Blessing of Easter Baskets

Traditional Easter foods are gathered in “blessing baskets” comprising of cooked eggs, bread, preserved meat, beetroot and horse-radish, along with dairy products like syrek (a cheese dish) and hrudka (a loaf made from eggs and milk), as well as paska sweetbread.

FCSU National Chaplain Fr. Thomas Nasta will be blessing Easter baskets via live-stream on Holy Saturday, April 4 at 12:00pm (EST).

The blessing will be live streamed from Our Lady of Grace Church, Penndel, PA. You can watch the blessing on-line at www.olgparishpenndel.org.



Crossword Puzzle Solution from Page 17

How does a leprechaun say goodbye?
Irish you well!

What does the Easter Bunny do in his free time?
Play Eggs-box.

What did the dirt say to the rain?
Cut it out, or my name will be mud!

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

News from Slovakia - Správy zo Slovenska



Slovakia fans gathered at the Consulate of the Slovak Republic in New York, NY with thanks to Consul General Beatrice Szabóová and Branch 45 member Marcus Gurega.

Branch 746 Cheers a Golden Weekend: Slovak Pride and Team USA Glory

Submitted by Sabina Sabados, Region 1 Director

At the 2026 Winter Olympics in Italy, the Slovakia men's national ice hockey team once again made the hockey world take notice. After capturing historic bronze at the 2022 Winter Olympics, Slovakia came into 2026 determined to defend its medal and delivered another thrilling run.



Branch 746 members cheer on their team!

With fast, fearless play and big wins in the early rounds, the Slovaks garnered international respect and powered their way to the semifinals. A hard-fought match-up with the United States men's national ice hockey team ended their medal hopes, and they ultimately finished an impressive fourth overall. But our boys played amazing hockey every step of the way.

Slovakia may have just missed a medal, but their passion, grit, and unforgettable run at the 2026 Olympics earned the admiration of the hockey world and left fans all around cheering long after the final whistle!

Branch 746 members were wildly enthusiastic, cheering on our boys throughout their amazing rise all the way to the semifinals which took place on Friday, February 20, 2026! Our members participated in watch parties including at the premises of the Consulate General of Slovakia in New York City waving flags and chanting with pride.

We gathered again to savor the victory of Team USA as they skated away with their third Olympic gold medal in men's hockey and what a game it was! An unforgettable weekend for hockey fans everywhere.

Pobočka 746 oslavuje zlatý víkend: Slovenská hrdosť a sláva tímu USA

Na Zimných olympijských hrách 2026 v Taliansku mužská hokejová reprezentácia Slovenska opäť prinútila hokejový svet spozornieť. Po historickom zisku bronzu na ZOH 2022 vstupovalo Slovensko do roku 2026 odhodlané obhájiť svoju medailu a predviedlo ďalšiu napínavú jazdu turnajom.

Rýchlou, nebojácnu hrou a veľkými víťazstvami v úvodných kolách si Slováci získali medzinárodný rešpekt a prebojovali sa až do semifinále. Ťažký súboj s mužskou hokejovou reprezentáciou Spojených štátov ukončil ich medailové nádeje a napokon obsadili výborné štvrté miesto. Naši chlapci však počas celého turnaja predvádzali úžasný hokej.

Slovensku síce medaila tesne ušla, no ich vášeň, odhodlanie a nezabudnuteľná jazda na olympiáde 2026 si vyslúžili obdiv hokejového sveta a zanechali fanúšikov

povzbudzujúcich ešte dlho po záverečnom hvizde.

Členovia Pobočky 746 boli plní nadšenia a povzbudzovali našich chlapcov počas ich úžasnej cesty až do semifinále, ktoré sa konalo v piatok 20. februára 2026! Naši členovia sa zúčastnili spoločných sledovaní zápasov, vrátane podujatia v priestoroch Generálneho konzulátu Slovenskej republiky v New Yorku, kde s hrdosťou mávali vlajkami a skandovali.

V nedeľu sme sa opäť stretli, aby sme si vychutnali víťazstvo tímu USA, ktorý si odniesol svoju tretiu olympijskú zlatú medailu v mužskom hokeji – a bol to skutočne nezabudnuteľný zápas! Nezabudnuteľný víkend pre hokejových fanúšikov všade na svete.

Hudák Highlights Slovak Heritage at University of Pittsburgh Lecture

Submitted by Dr. Michael Kopanic, Jr., District 7 President

Photo credit: Dr. Michael Kopanic, Jr.

On March 1, 2026, at the University of Pittsburgh, Tomáš Hudák presented a vivacious talk about his book "Amerikáni" which concerned the fate of Slovak immigrants in Pittsburgh at the beginning of the 20th century. His grandfather's stories inspired him to write this novel about Slovak life in America and those who returned to Slovakia. The Thomas Kukucka Memorial Lecture honors the memory of the journalist who wished to share his love of his Slovak ethnic heritage.

Hudák priblížil slovenské dedičstvo na prednáške na University of Pittsburgh

1. marca 2026 na Pittsburskej univerzite predniesol Tomáš Hudák živú prednášku o svojej knihe „Amerikáni“, ktorá sa zaoberala osudom slovenských prisťahovalcov v Pittsburghu na začiatku 20. storočia. Príbehy jeho starého otca ho inšpirovali k napísaniu tohto románu o slovenskom živote v Amerike a o tých, ktorí sa vrátili na Slovensko. Spomienková prednáška Thomasa Kukucku si uctí pamiatku novinára, ktorý sa chcel podeliť o lásku k svojmu slovenskému etnickému pôvodu.



Joe Senko (Slovak Honorary Consul for Pennsylvania), Tomáš Hudák (Author and Comedian), Kevin Collins (FCSU Executive Secretary), and Dr. Renáta Kamenárová (Director of Slovak Studies Program at Pittsburgh University).

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting Friday, January 16, 2026 • Teleconference

OPEN MEETING:

President Kenneth A. Arendt opened the meeting at 9am and asked Damian Nasta to lead the prayer.

ROLL CALL:

Members Attending:

Kenneth A. ArendtNational President, Present
Damian NastaNational Vice President, Present
Kevin J. CollinsExecutive Secretary, Present
John Tokarsky.....Treasurer, Absent
Joanne Fibbi.....Fraternal Activities Director (by invitation of the President), Present

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MEETING MINUTES:

The Executive Secretary presented the minutes of the December 13, 2025 Executive Committee Meeting. A motion was made by Damian Nasta and seconded by Kevin Collins to accept the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

AQS MANAGEMENT, INC.:

Larry White, representing AQS Management, Inc., presented an extensive Investment Portfolio Transaction and Review Report to the Executive Committee. Each member of the Executive Committee received a copy of the presentation in advance for their review. Following the report, he answered the Committee's questions. During this report, Larry stated there are potential write-downs in investments due to the present economic condition.

Larry White gave an extensive review of investment options to the Executive Committee that we can take advantage of. Following the report, he answered the Committee's questions.

TREASURERS REPORT:

Treasurer's Report was not submitted at the time of this meeting.

ANNUITY RATES:

After extensive review of the current annuity rates, it was decided that we will continue to offer the current rates. The Executive Committee will review the rates at the February Executive Committee Meeting.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Investment Updates

The President and the Executive Secretary submitted a written report to the Executive Committee on the investments and transactions with the Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB), UBS, MAI Fund, and Clutterbuck Fund. The Committee discussed the report, and the Executive Secretary answered the Committee's questions.

Financial Report

The President and the Executive Secretary reviewed the financial statement for Quarter 3 of 2025 and answered the Committee's questions.

Portfolio Review

The President and the Executive Secretary updated the Committee on the report from our portfolio custodian, Key Bank. Everything was found in order, and they answered the Committee's questions. The President stated he will invite representatives from MAI, UBS and Clutterbuck to attend a future Executive Meeting to review our investment portfolios.

Mortgages and Overdue Mortgages

The President and the Executive Secretary presented the report for the month of December the Committee's review and answered their questions. The President led a discussion regarding new mortgage investments and answered the Committee's questions.

Monthly Disbursements

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

Death Benefits & Accumulations.....\$186,442.00
Cash Withdrawals & Accumulations.....\$34,667.40
Matured Endowments & Accumulations \$0.00
Trust Fund.....\$13,820.48

The Executive Secretary also presented the Membership and Annuity Report.

The Committee reviewed the remainder of the disbursements,

and the Executive Secretary answered all questions.

The President led a review of our FHLB advances and their current rates for possible future advancements.

SALES AND MARKETING:

The Executive Secretary updated the Executive Committee on all incentive options that are available for the Branches and Districts to participate in. These programs include Fraternalism in Action, Branding Bucks, and Branch/District Reimbursement Program. He is encouraging all Branches and Districts to participate in these programs as tools to get more youth involvement. If a District or Branch has any questions, they can reach out to the Home Office.

The Executive Secretary will continue the Virtual Calls. He is encouraging everyone to participate in these educational calls. Further details and topics will be on the website and published in the newspaper.

The Executive Secretary will be sending an email to Districts and Branches outlining talking points for their meetings.

The Executive Secretary stated we are amidst a major campaign to recruit agents for all 38 states in which we are licensed.

BUDGET REVIEW:

The President presented a proposed 2026 Budget to the Executive Committee. The President worked with our actuary to review the budget and who made recommendations about our potential reserves. A motion was made by Damian Nasta and seconded by Kevin Collins to accept the budget as presented. Motion carried. The budget will be presented to the Board of Directors at the March 2026 meeting and all the Board's questions will be answered at that meeting.

FRATERNAL ACTIVITIES REPORT:

The Fraternal Activities Director, Joanne Fibbi, gave a detailed report on all the activities that have occurred in 2025 to the Executive Committee. The Easter Coloring Contest will be published in the February issue of the Jednota, the pictures will also be available on the Events page of the website. She stated the Annual Bowling Tournament will be held in Erie, PA, April 25 – 26, 2026. She stated the Annual Golf Tournament to be held at Sawmill Creek Resort in Huron, Ohio July 24 – 26, 2026. In addition to the Bowling Tournament and the Golf Tournament, all Fraternal Activities will be published on the website and in the newspaper.

MISCELLANEOUS:

The President stated the Home Office has begun to receive Delegate Credentials for the upcoming Convention. The Home Office has started to certify the Delegates as they come in. Information about the upcoming 2026 Convention will be posted on the Convention page of the website. The 2026 Convention will be held June 20-23, 2026, at Embassy Suites by Hilton Golf Resort & Conference Center in Greenville, South Carolina. The additional information for the convention will be published in the Jednota newspaper and posted on our Convention page of the website.

REQUESTS FOR ADS AND DONATIONS:

Requests for donations and ads were reviewed and acted upon.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Damian Nasta and seconded by John Tokarsky to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Damian Nasta closed the meeting with prayer.

Kenneth A. Arendt
President, CEO

Kevin J. Collins
Executive Secretary, COO

Home Office Contacts

800.533.6682 • fcsu@fcsu.com

LIFE INSURANCE

SUZANNEExt. 115 suzanneb@fcsu.com
Insurance Department Director
Life Insurance Department Services, Beneficiary Changes, Cash Value / Surrenders and Medical Assistance Information

FRAN.....Ext. 116 frans@fcsu.com
Claims Department, Life Insurance Claims

JULIE.....Ext. 125 juliec@fcsu.com
Life Insurance Department Services, Address Changes, Policy Payments

ANNUITY DEPARTMENT

TEREZIAExt. 118..... tereziar@fcsu.com
Annuity Department Director
Deposit Agreements / Settlement Options, RMD, Scheduled Payments and Deposits

SHERIExt. 126..... sherir@fcsu.com
Annuity/IRA Department, New Contracts, Deposits from-to Existing Policies

KELLYExt. 127 kellys@fcsu.com
Annuity/IRA Department, New Contracts, Transfers, Withdrawals, Full Surrenders

DOROTAExt. 129..... dorotap@fcsu.com
Annuity Claims Department, Member Portal, Customer Service, Beneficiary & Address Changes

AGENT SUPPORT

ANDREAExt. 112..... andream@fcsu.com
Agent Coordinator, Commissions

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

AMBERExt. 128 amberg@fcsu.com
Accounts Payable, Life Insurance Policy Loans, Mortgages

BRANCH SUPPORT

BARBARAExt. 122 branch@fcsu.com
district@fcsu.com
Branch & District Liaison, Activities, Transfers, Mergers, Deposit Agreements, Fraternal Activities & Events

PAMExt. 119 branch@fcsu.com
district@fcsu.com
Branch & District Coordinator, Announcements

COMMUNICATION

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SARA.....Ext. 110 saras@fcsu.com
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SHANNONExt. 123 editor@fcsu.com
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Spotlight

email editor@fcsu.com

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Branch 181 Youth Member Scholastic Assistance



\$500 Scholarships

Applications must be postmarked by May 4, 2026

For the Fall 2026 start of the academic year, the St. John the Baptist Society — Branch 181 of United, PA, will be offering \$500 scholarships to eligible high school senior members planning to attend college or career/technical school. These will be one-time scholarships selected by an independent panel that will evaluate each application. The number of scholarships awarded is dependent on the number of eligible applicants. Qualifications below:

- You are a member in good Standing of the First Catholic Slovak Union, St. John the Baptist Society — Branch 181.
- You have been a member of Branch 181 for 4 years prior to applying with a minimum \$5000 insurance policy.
- You are a high school senior preparing to graduate in 2026 and have applied for the 2026 Fall term at a qualifying Educational institution.

Contact Vicki at 724-433-8469 or vicki15@zoominternet.net for an application

These scholarships are solely funded by your local Branch 181 and are independent of the First Catholic Slovak Union Home Office.

ANNOUNCING Jednota Branch 746 Scholarship



- ✓ Are you a member of Branch 746 with a paid-up life insurance premium of \$5,000 or more?
- ✓ Are you currently accepted and/or enrolled in full-time college, another post-secondary educational institution, or vocational institution?
- ✓ Are you active in Branch 746 or want to become active?

If you answered **YES** to the above, you may be eligible for a **\$1,500 Scholarship!**

For guidelines on how to apply go to: fcsu.com/membership-benefits/scholarships/
Email: JednotaBranch746@gmail.com for more information.

Deadline to Apply: June 30, 2026

Branch 670 2026 Scholarship Program

Three \$1000 Scholarships Available

Branch 670 of Donora, PA is excited to announce it is now accepting applications for its 2026 Scholarship Program. The committee will award up to three one-time \$1000 scholarships to the candidates who best satisfy the criteria. Any individual of Branch 670 that has had a policy for at least 4 years, is current in their premiums, is a high school senior and will attend any post education institution is eligible to apply.

For applications, you may email your request or send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:
Nicole Hyatt, 410 Sunset Hills Drive Freedom, PA 15042
branch670activities@gmail.com



ALL APPLICATION REQUESTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY APRIL 30, 2026



SCHOLARSHIP Awards

We have awarded **Over \$1,000,000** in National Scholarships since 2020!

Congratulations to Branches 181, 670 and 746 for your scholarship programs. We encourage more branches to establish scholarships for their local or regional members.

On a national level, we are building our Endowment Fund—a lasting source of support that ensures our scholarship program will thrive for generations to come.

Contact us at scholarships@fcsu.com for more information.