



# Jednota®

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NUMBER 6057



**Kenneth A. Arendt**  
President, CEO

## Message from the President

As we enter this beautiful season of gratitude, I extend my warmest Thanksgiving wishes to you and your families. This time of year invites us to pause, reflect on our blessings, and recognize the importance of faith, family, and community. I am deeply thankful for each of you and for the continued strength and growth of our Society. With November also comes Veterans Day, and I would like to offer our sincerest appreciation to the veterans among our membership and throughout our nation. Your courage and commitment are deeply respected and never forgotten.

Throughout this issue, you will see many examples of the vibrant and active spirit of FCSU. We are proud to introduce Andrej Droba, the new Ambassador of the Slovak Republic to the United States. He brings a wealth of experience and we look forward to working with him in the future. We were also pleased to serve as the Platinum Sponsor of the Slovak Pro Summit in New York City, where ideas and stories were exchanged with international Slovak professionals. These opportunities reinforce the meaningful role our Society plays in fostering community and collaboration.

This month's issue also highlights our ongoing efforts to support and preserve the Slovak Institute and Research Library in Cleveland, OH, ensuring that our heritage continues to be studied, celebrated, and passed on to future generations. We are also honored to share details about the memorial service for our founder, Father Stephen Furdek, held in his hometown of Trstená, Slovakia—a meaningful tribute to the man whose vision laid the foundation for all we are today.

We are proud to share that the National Czech & Slovak Museum in Iowa has recently received the prestigious Diploma for Preserving Slavic Heritage Worldwide, a recognition that reflects the ongoing commitment of organizations and individuals who work tirelessly to keep our shared culture alive. We were also honored to participate in the Slovak Heritage Festival at the University of Pittsburgh, where some of our members helped showcase our traditions with pride and enthusiasm.

As we look ahead, our cherished Vilija dinners will soon be upon us—beautiful celebrations of faith, family, and the customs handed down through generations. I encourage all of you to attend your local Vilija this December, so that together we may continue to honor and preserve the Slovak heritage that remains at the heart of our fraternal community.

The calendar of upcoming events is overflowing! It is wonderful to see so many branches active and engaged. Many have holiday gatherings, charity initiatives, and community events planned. As Branches and Districts meet this fall and early winter, many of you will also be electing officers and selecting delegates for our 53rd Quadrennial Convention. I encourage you to take part in these gatherings. Your voice, your leadership, and your presence make a difference and help guide our path forward.

Thank you for your continued support and trust. I am grateful for our dedicated Home Office staff, our committed volunteers, and the countless members who keep the spirit of fraternalism alive in so many ways—through service, fellowship, and faith.

May your Thanksgiving be filled with peace, joy, and the warmth of loved ones. May God bless you and your families during this special season.



## Happy Thanksgiving

*The officers and members of the Board of Directors extend their most sincere holiday greetings to you and your loved ones.*



## Home Office Staff Supports Breast Cancer Awareness Month

In honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the Home Office Staff came together to show their support for women facing the diagnosis. Staff members wore pink and brought in warm items, including blankets, fuzzy socks, hats, and more, to help those undergoing chemotherapy. These thoughtful donations will be shared between The Gathering Place and Seidman Cancer Center, both located in Cleveland, OH.

In addition, the Home Office is donating \$250 to the Breast Cancer Fund of Ohio, an organization that provides emergency funds for those fighting breast cancer who need help with housing, food, medical co-pays, and more. Through these efforts, the staff not only raised awareness but also offered comfort and practical support to those in need.

**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**

FCSU Corporate Center  
6611 Rockside Road, Suite 300  
Independence, OH 44131-2398  
**800.533.6682**

**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.

Send all articles (English AND Slovak) to:  
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## Message from the National Chaplain

It is interesting every so often to go back in time and wonder what was going on in the world 100 years ago.

Here in the USA, 1925 saw the first public demonstration of something called "radiovision" (now known as "television"). Alcoholic beverages were not available readily, at least legally. Permission was granted to begin a construction project in the Black Hills of South Dakota which we know today as Mount Rushmore National Memorial.

Overseas, things were very different. Parts of the world were distancing themselves further and further away from any notion of God. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, with atheistic communism as the basis of its government, was in its third year of existence. A fascist form of government was being established in Italy and the seeds for the same were being planted in Germany.

This helps us to understand why Pope Pius XI (1922-1939) declared a new liturgical feast for the universal church, the Feast of Christ the King, in December 1925.

Pius, as the Vicar of Christ, believed it was his duty and responsibility to teach and affirm that in a world scene that was doing its best to eliminate any reference to Jesus in public life, all creation, all human life, all human activity is under Christ's rule. No earthly authority can ever have authority over Christ.

As we mark the 100th anniversary of the Feast of Christ the King on November 23, we pray, we pledge, to keep forever the purpose Pope Pius XI had in mind in establishing the feast. Christ is to reign forever in our bodies, our minds, our hearts, our wills, and our souls.



**Rev. Thomas  
Nasta  
Chaplain**

## Introducing Andrej Droba, the New Ambassador of the Slovak Republic to the United States



The Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Washington, D.C. welcomes a familiar face to its leadership. Andrej Droba, a seasoned diplomat with more than twenty-five years of distinguished service, has been appointed Ambassador of the Slovak Republic to the United States of America, effective October 2025.

In a letter to President Ken Arendt, Ambassador Droba expressed his deep sense of honor in assuming this role and his enthusiasm for strengthening the longstanding partnership between Slovakia and the United States. "It is a great honor for me to assume this role and to build on the work of my predecessors in a country that is one of Slovakia's key partners," he wrote.

Throughout his distinguished career, Ambassador Droba has represented Slovakia with dedication and skill across the globe. He most recently served as Ambassador to Ireland (2022–2025), and previously as Ambassador to Poland (2020–2022) and Ambassador to Canada (2014–2018). His extensive diplomatic experience also includes key roles at the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, the Permanent Mission of Slovakia to the United Nations, and the Office of the Mayor of Bratislava.

Ambassador Droba holds a degree in Commercial Engineering from the University of Economics in Bratislava. His background reflects both a deep understanding of international diplomacy and a commitment to building bridges of cooperation and understanding.

In his message, Ambassador Droba also acknowledged the vital role of Slovak-American organizations in preserving heritage and strengthening ties between the two nations. He expressed his appreciation for the FCSU's efforts to unite the Slovak community in the U.S. and promote Slovakia's positive image abroad.

Looking ahead, Ambassador Droba noted the special significance of 2026, when the United States will celebrate the 250th anniversary of its independence—a milestone that underscores the shared values of freedom and democracy that unite both nations.

"I look forward to exploring opportunities to commemorate this historic occasion together," he wrote, extending his warm regards to all who work to support the Slovak Republic in the United States. FCSU congratulates Ambassador Droba on his appointment and looks forward to continued friendship and collaboration between Slovakia and the Slovak-American community.

**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**
**DECEMBER 2025 ISSUE**

**COPY DATE - MONDAY, DECEMBER 1**  
**ISSUE DATE - MONDAY, DECEMBER 10**

**JANUARY 2026 ISSUE**

**COPY DATE - MONDAY, JANUARY 5**  
**ISSUE DATE - MONDAY, JANUARY 14**

# Message from the Executive Secretary

Halloween is now over, and we are about to enter the busiest time of the year for families.

From planning and celebrating Thanksgiving dinner with the family to “Rolling” into the Christmas and New Year holidays.

What a better time to think about our heritage. Where did our family come from? How did we get here?

This is also a great time to think about our future and our family’s future.

What a better way to do this than to join the Virtual Call with President Ken Arendt on Tuesday, November 18th, at 12pm and 7pm EST to discuss how you can protect your family from any financial burden you might face in the future. We will explain our Life Insurance Products and Annuity Products including the 8 Year Flex Annuity that offers a 7% first year guarantee on new contracts. This limited-time special ends on December 31st.

At the October Virtual Call, I addressed 990 N filings. Each FCSU Branch is required by the IRS to fill out a 990 N form annually. This form is for any nonprofit Branch with less than \$50,000 per year in gross receipts. If you receive any mailings from the IRS, please send them to my attention at the Home Office.

As the year comes to a close, please remember to shop at the FCSU Gift Shop and spend your Branding Bucks promotional dollars. The Branch and District Dollars for 2025 will not carry over, so please use it and don’t lose it.

Finally, the December Virtual Call is scheduled for Tuesday, December 16th at 12pm EST. There will be just one call that day. We will be discussing identity theft, an important topic as many will be shopping in-stores and online for the holidays.

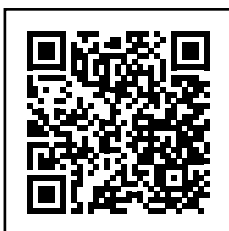
I wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.



**Kevin J. Collins**  
Executive Secretary, COO

**Join Us for our Next Virtual Call:**

- Tuesday, November 18 • 12pm (EST)**
- Tuesday, November 18 • 7pm (EST)**



Visit our website at [fcsu.com/about/newsroom/](https://fcsu.com/about/newsroom/) or scan the QR code to get the Zoom link.

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### NOVEMBER 2025

- 11/12** Branch 108 - Meeting (Election), Connellsville, PA
- 11/13** Branch 857 - Meeting (Zoom)
- 11/13** District 11 - Meeting (Election), Ford City, PA
- 11/15** Branch 166 - Meeting (Election), Binghamton, NY (RSVP)
- 11/16** Branch 23 - Meeting (Election), Richland, PA
- 11/16** Branch 199 - Meeting (Election), Latrobe, PA
- 11/16** Branch 276 - Meeting (Election), McKeesport, PA
- 11/16** Branch 731 - Meeting (Election), Poland, OH
- 11/16** District 5 - Meeting (Election), Sterling Heights, MI
- 11/18** Home Office - Virtual Call, 12pm and 7pm (EST)
- 11/22** Branch 5P - Meeting (Election), Pittston, PA (RSVP by 11/20)
- 11/22** Branch 450 - Meeting (Election), Brooklyn, OH
- 11/23** Branch 553 - Meeting (Election), Akron, OH
- 11/23** Branch 855 - Meeting (Election), North Royalton, OH (RSVP by 11/14)
- 11/23** District 6 - Meeting (Election), West Mifflin, PA (RSVP)

### NOVEMBER 2025 - CONTINUED

- 11/27** Thanksgiving - Home Office Closed
- 11/28** Thanksgiving - Home Office Closed
- 11/29** Branch 484 - Meeting (Election), Indiana, PA
- 11/29** Branch 844 - Meeting (Election), Fullerton, CA
- 11/29** District 15 - Meeting (Election), Fullerton, CA
- 11/30** Branch 45 - Meeting (Election), New York, NY
- 11/30** Branch 320 - Meeting (Election), Rostraver Twp, PA (RSVP by 11/20)
- 11/30** District 2 - Meeting (Election), Oak Forest, IL

### DECEMBER 2025

- 12/3** Branch 259 - Meeting (Election), Struthers, OH
- 12/3** Branch 290 - Meeting (Election), Middlesex, NJ (RSVP by 11/26)
- 12/4** Branch 200 - Meeting (Election), Ford City, PA
- 12/4** Branch 260 - Meeting (Election), Struthers, OH
- 12/4** Branch 410 - Meeting (Election), Uniontown, PA (RSVP by 12/1)
- 12/5** Branch 746 - Mass, Linden, NJ
- 12/6** Branch 6 - Meeting (Election), Streator, IL
- 12/6** Branch 89 - Christmas Party, Menomonee Falls, WI (RSVP by 11/28)
- 12/6** Branch 132 - Meeting, Whippany, NJ
- 12/6** Branch 553 - Children’s Christmas Party, Akron, OH (RSVP by 11/30)
- 12/7** Branch 35 - Meeting (Election) (Zoom)
- 12/7** Branch 173 - Meeting (Election), Mountain Top, PA (RSVP)
- 12/7** Branch 320 - Christmas Luncheon, Monessen, PA (RSVP by 11/23)
- 12/7** Branch 581 - Meeting (Election), Hobart, IN (RSVP)
- 12/7** Branch 587 - Christmas Meeting and Party (Election) (RSVP by 11/21)
- 12/7** Branch 721 - Meeting (Election), Bannister, MI
- 12/7** Branch 743 - Meeting (Election), Sterling Heights, MI
- 12/7** Branch 756 - Meeting (Election), Owosso, MI
- 12/7** District 3 - Štedrý Večer, Greensburg, PA (RSVP by 11/21)
- 12/7** St. Andrew Abbey - Vilija Dinner, Cleveland, OH
- 12/9** Branch 162 - Meeting (Election), Uniontown, PA (RSVP)
- 12/9** Branch 682 - Meeting (Election), Youngstown, OH (RSVP)
- 12/9** District 14 - Christmas Meeting and Party, Youngstown, OH (RSVP by 11/25)
- 12/13** Branch 764 - Meeting (Election), Warren, OH (RSVP by 12/8)
- 12/14** Branch 60 - Meeting (Election), West Homestead, PA
- 12/14** Branch 112 - Meeting (Election) (Zoom)
- 12/14** Branch 213 - Meeting (Election), Pittsburgh, PA
- 12/14** Branch 393 - Meeting (Election), Greensburg, PA (RSVP by 12/1)
- 12/14** Branch 553 - Vilija Dinner, Akron, OH (RSVP by 12/7)
- 12/14** Branch 785 - Meeting (Election), Mississauga, ON (RSVP)
- 12/14** Branch 857 - Meeting (Election), Pennel, PA
- 12/14** District 16 - Vilija, New York, NY
- 12/14** District 19 - Meeting (Election), Mississauga, ON (RSVP)
- 12/15** Branch 228 - Meeting (Election), Lorain, OH
- 12/16** Home Office - Virtual Call, 12pm
- 12/17** Branch 38 - Meeting (Election) (Zoom)
- 12/20** Branch 628 - Meeting (Election), Penn Hills, PA
- 12/21** Branch 746 - Meeting and Christmas Lunch (Election), Clark, NJ (RSVP by 12/14)
- 12/24** Christmas Eve - Home Office Closed
- 12/25** Christmas Day - Home Office Closed
- 12/28** Branch 55 - Meeting (Election) (Zoom)

*For more information, go to the Branch and District Announcement pages or visit our website at [fcsu.com](https://fcsu.com).*



*FCSU Executive Secretary Kevin Collins, District 16 President Julie Ann Gurega (Branch 45), and Region 1 Director Sabina Sabados (Branch 746)*



*NCSML Board member Joe Seliga (Branch 153), Region 1 Director Sabina Sabados (Branch 746) and Executive Secretary Kevin Collins at the Slovak PRO Summit*

## FCSU Financial Serves as Platinum Sponsor of the Slovak PRO Summit

*Submitted by Lucia Kapogiannopoulos, Branch 746 Member*

FCSU Financial was honored to serve as the Platinum Sponsor of the Slovak PRO Summit 2025, held in New York during UN Week. Our support for this landmark event reflects our long-standing mission to strengthen Slovak heritage, community, and leadership around the world.

As part of the program, FCSU Financial Executive Secretary Kevin Collins addressed attendees, offering inspiring remarks on the organization’s 135-year history of serving Slovak families through faith, fraternalism, and financial security. He emphasized the enduring importance of unity among Slovaks at home and abroad and highlighted FCSU’s commitment to helping future generations thrive through scholarships, community support, and sound financial planning.

The Slovak PRO Summit 2025 brought together a vibrant and diverse mix of Slovak professionals, entrepreneurs, academics, innovators, and community leaders from across the globe. More than 200 participants from the United States, Canada, and Slovakia came together with one shared goal: to connect, collaborate, and contribute to a stronger global Slovak presence.

Throughout the full-day program, attendees engaged in thought-provoking discussions, insightful presentations, and meaningful conversations that transcended borders and professions. Whether in formal panels or informal networking sessions, one message rang clear: the Slovak diaspora is not only active but also deeply invested in shaping the future of Slovakia and its role in the international community.

The Summit was further elevated by the participation of high-level Slovak government officials. The President of the Slovak Republic, Peter Pellegrini, honored the event with his presence, bringing with him a message of support and recognition for Slovaks living abroad. Minister of Education Tomáš Drucker also participated in the program, highlighting the importance of investing in knowledge, talent, and innovation. Later, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Juraj Blanár joined the gathering, reinforcing the role of the Slovak diaspora as a strategic partner in Slovakia’s global outreach and diplomacy. The Consulate General of the Slovak Republic and Slovak Embassy also proudly supported this visionary initiative, which unites the global Slovak PRO community and amplifies Slovakia’s voice on the international stage. Their presence sent a powerful signal: that the Slovak government values the voices and contributions of its citizens abroad and sees the diaspora as a vital extension of Slovakia’s diplomatic, cultural, and economic engagement with the world.

Yet beyond the presentations and speeches, it was the human element that truly made the Slovak PRO Summit exceptional. The energy in the room was one of solidarity, pride, and momentum. Many participants remarked on the unique atmosphere—one where collaboration felt natural, where experiences were shared openly, and where a shared sense of purpose was evident. In this spirit, the Summit wasn’t just an event; it was a launchpad for future cooperation, new friendships, and deeper community ties. If you’d like to learn more, go to [www.slovakpro.org/get-involved](http://www.slovakpro.org/get-involved).



*President of the Slovak Republic, Peter Pellegrini in a discussion with Lucia Kapogiannopoulos, Slovak PRO Board member (Branch 746)*



*Secretary of Slovak-American Cultural Center Peter Krajnak, Region 1 Director Sabina Sabados (Branch 746), District 16 President Julie Ann Gurega (Branch 45) and Slovak PRO Board member Lucia Kapogiannopoulos (Branch 746)*



*FCSU was proud to support the Slovak PRO Summit with the sole Platinum Sponsorship.*



*Kevin Collins, FCSU Executive Secretary, addresses the audience at the Slovak PRO Summit.*

# N·E·W·S *from the Home Office*

## Branch End of Year Stipend Information

Branch Annual Report forms will be posted online soon. Please fill them out in their entirety and send in the reports to ensure you receive your stipend. All reports sent to the Home Office must be postmarked by February 15, 2026.

See below for the stipend checklist:

- Conduct at least two Branch meetings per year (one of the meetings must be announced as an Election of Officers)
- Send meeting announcements 30-days prior to meeting to be published online and in the newspaper
- Submit an Annual Report to the Executive Secretary by February 15, 2026 (Include Financial Report, Meeting Attendance Sheet, Branch Officer Directory with reported fraternal activities and minutes of the meetings)
- Send one Branch representative to attend at least one District meeting
- Be in good standing with your District by paying current fiscal and outstanding dues

## FCSU Celebrates the 35th Anniversary of the Slovak Heritage Festival

On Sunday, November 2nd, the Slovak Studies Program at the University of Pittsburgh hosted their 35th Slovak Heritage Festival. The University of Pittsburgh is home to the only Slovak Studies Program in the United States. The Slovak Studies Program was founded in the mid-1980s when five fraternal organizations came together to establish a major endowment in support of a full-time faculty position that would lead the program. FCSU was one of the original sponsors. The thriving program offers a range of popular courses in Slovak language, history, and culture, as well as the opportunity to pursue a Minor in Slovak Studies. The Slavic Languages and Literatures Department's goal is to encourage young people to learn more about Slovakia and the role of Slovaks in America, and to promote and preserve Slovak heritage, language, and culture.

Among the guests were His Excellency the Ambassador of the Slovak Republic to the United States Mr. Andrej Droba and Consul General Beatrice Szabóová. Also in attendance were guests representing partners based in Slovakia including colleagues from Comenius University's Center for Slovak as a foreign language the Studia Academica Slovaca; and partners at the Office for Slovaks Living Abroad. FCSU was represented by Executive Secretary Kevin Collins. FCSU's own Beata Begeniová-Fedoriouk with the Harmonia Band and the Pittsburgh Slovaks were among the entertainment.

FCSU is in the process of creating and sponsoring a new Scholarship Program with the University of Pittsburgh to help promote Slovak heritage, preserve culture and language and support Slovak studies at the University of Pittsburgh. We are looking forward to expanding our partnership through this important initiative.



Tom Ivanec (Region 6 Director), Fr. Michael Brunovsky, OSB, Milan Kobulsky (Director of Slovak Institute & Library), Ken Arendt (FCSU President), Roger Gries, OSB (Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus) and Kevin Collins (FCSU Executive Secretary) gather in front of the St. Andrew Abbey for the presentation ceremony.

## FCSU Leads the Way in Preserving the Slovak Institute

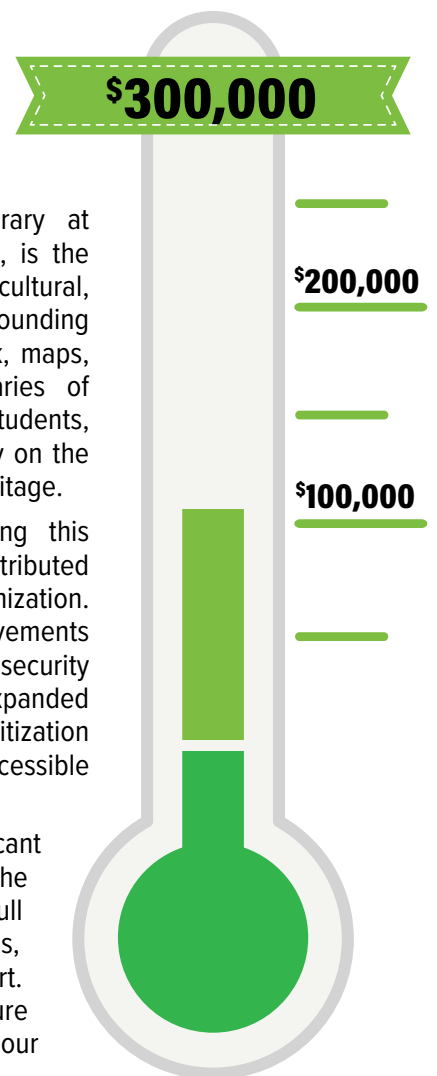
The Slovak Institute and Research Library at the St. Andrew Abbey in Cleveland, Ohio, is the world's largest repository of Slovak cultural, historical, and literary treasures. Since its founding 1952, it has preserved rare books, artwork, maps, correspondence, and the personal libraries of notable Slovak intellectuals. Scholars, students, and enthusiasts from around the world rely on the Institute to explore and celebrate Slovak heritage.

Recognizing the importance of preserving this vital institution, the FCSU has proudly contributed \$100,000 toward its renovation and modernization. Our donation supports critical improvements including upgraded climate control, new security systems, refurbished floors and lighting, expanded research and exhibition spaces, and digitization of fragile collections to make them accessible worldwide.

While we are proud to make this significant contribution, the renovation will require the support of the community to reach its full potential. We encourage individuals, families, and FCSU branches to join us in this effort. Every donation, no matter the size, helps ensure the Slovak Institute continues to preserve our shared heritage for generations to come.

If you'd like to read more about the history and significance of the Slovak Institute, the story is featured on our website and can also be found in the August 2025 Jednota archive online.

Let's work together to help the Slovak Institute reach its renovation goals. With your support, we can protect and promote Slovak history, culture, and scholarships for the future.



Use your 2025 Branding Bucks before December 31st. \$300 allowance funds do not roll over to the new year.

### Slovak Institute Renovation Fund

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to FCSU Financial with  
**Slovak Institute on the memo line.**  
 Mail donations to: FCSU Financial  
 Attn: Slovak Institute Fund  
 6611 Rockside Road, Suite 300 • Independence, OH 44131

## November Reflection

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

November, in our Catholic tradition, honors the Holy Souls in Purgatory. I believe this annual memorial is so vital since our prayers for them can greatly reduce the length of their purification for forgiven sin. This practice of prayer for Holy Souls can also be recalled as a Judaic belief. It is related in the Old Testament Second Book of Maccabees, 12:44,45: "To pray for the dead...is a holy and pious thought." This is the earliest statement of the doctrine that prayers for the dead are efficacious. This Old Testament belief is similar to, but not quite the same as, the Catholic doctrine of Purgatory.

Our Catholic Catechism explains how prayers we say acquire indulgences (1471): "The doctrine and practice of indulgences in the Church are closely linked to the effects of the sacrament of Penance. An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions through the action of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints."<sup>81</sup> "An indulgence is partial or plenary according as it removes either part or all of the temporal punishment due to sin."<sup>82</sup> Indulgences may be applied to the living or the dead.

The most beneficial of these means of indulgences is the Mass. This has been approved through the experience of saints, such as St. Padre Pio. He literally received visits from holy souls which had been allowed to come and request prayers and Masses. Now we can only imagine how desperate these souls are to get to heaven. The chosen hymn for November, which is often used as a prayer after death, is simple yet powerful. Let us remember our beloved deceased with this daily intercession, sung or recited soulfully.

1471 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. 2nd ed. Washington, D.C. United States Catholic Conference, 2000.

<sup>81</sup> "Sacred Scripture" is the speech of God as it is put down in writing under the breath of the Holy Spirit."

<sup>82</sup> "As a result the Church, to whom the transmission and interpretation of Revelation is entrusted, does not derive her certainty about all revealed truths from the holy Scriptures alone. Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence."

Grant e-ternal rest to them, Je-sus Lord we pray, and let per-pe-tual light shine u-pon them.

Grant eternal rest to them, Jesus Lord we pray,  
and let perpetual light shine upon them.  
Odpocinutie večne daj im, Pane, a svetlo večne nech im sviati

## Insights and Viewpoints

Written by Campion P. Gavalier, O.S.B.

### Gospel Summary - Matthew 24:37-44

Jesus tells his disciples that they cannot know the day their Lord is coming. They must be prepared because that coming will be at a moment they least expect. He observed that people were totally unconcerned at the time of the flood. As a result the unexpected flood destroyed them. In the same way, he warns, a thief can enter a house if the owner is not prepared to safeguard it.

### Life Implications

Jesus observed our human tendency to live in illusion, out of touch with what's really going on, and as a result we often suffer tragic consequences. Jesus warns us that if we succumb to this tendency we will not be prepared for the coming of the Son of Man, either at our death or at the end of time.

Today, as a consequence of the widespread anxiety induced by economic stress and terrorist attacks, we may become victims of yet a different kind of illusion. We can become so occupied with the "war on terrorism" that we will be unprepared for the Lord's coming, and suffer even more tragic consequences as a result. "If you are not watchful, I will come like a thief, and you will never know at what hour I will come upon you" (Rev 3:3). Jesus warns us that there are countless things of this world that can make us forget the one certain reality—the day of the Lord's coming.

Immediately following the passage of the Advent gospel, Matthew places three parables in which Jesus gives us examples of the kinds of people for whom the Lord's coming will not be a happy experience. A wicked servant says to himself, "My master is long delayed," (Matthew 24: 48) and begins to ill-treat his fellow servants and drink with drunkards. Five foolish virgins, awaiting the coming of the bridegroom, neglect to provide oil for their lamps, and are shut out. A servant out of fear buries the talent that has been entrusted to him instead of doing something creative with it.

As the climax of the three parables, Matthew gives us Jesus' graphic description of what will happen in the final judgment at his coming. The outcome—happy or tragic—depends on how we treat each other here and now, even the least of our brothers and sisters—the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the prisoner. "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me...what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me" (25:31-46).

In Catholic belief, the grace of the Eucharistic liturgy actualizes in us what the gospel proclaims. It would not be good news simply to hear the warning of Jesus about the danger of living in illusion. A warning alone brings more anxiety, not joyful hope. The good news is that today we may receive the gift of the Spirit who enables us to see what's really going on with the eyes of Jesus and to respond to that reality with the courage of Jesus—without illusion and without anxiety.

*As we celebrate Thanksgiving and enter Advent, we give thanks for faith, family, and the gift of community. The Church invites us to wait with hope and to welcome Christ more deeply into our lives. May this holy season be one of renewal, prayer, and gracious love for one another.*



## LIGHT ONE CANDLE

### Perspectives on Advent

Tony Rossi, The Christophers

As we light the first Advent candle soon, the real countdown to Christmas begins! Sure, the TV movies, Christmas songs on the radio, and decorating have already started, but the first Sunday of Advent makes the season official from a Christian perspective. And it's always interesting to read what insights different people bring to the days leading up to the celebration of Jesus' birth.

For instance, during Advent a couple of years ago, Christopher Award-winning author Amy Julia Becker took to her social media accounts to explore two Biblical figures' very different responses to the news of Jesus' coming. Becker wrote, "When Mary hears the message that she has been chosen by God to be the mother of Jesus, Luke tells us she was 'troubled.' When King Herod hears from the three magi that Jesus has been born, Matthew tells us he was 'troubled.' The news that Jesus is coming disrupts their lives."

"Herod responds with denial and violence," Becker continued. "Mary responds with surrender and acceptance and receptivity. The news of God's love entering our world disrupts our expectations. It challenges us. It proclaims our belovedness apart from our achievements or worth. It exposes injustice. The news of God's love entering the world invites us to healing and freedom. It threatens us with radical acceptance and grace. God's love is a holy disruption that might trouble us deeply. How will we respond?"

While we may think of Lent as a greater season of "holy disruption," Advent can play a similar role in taking us out of ourselves to think more about loving God and neighbor. In fact, if you search for one online, you might find "Advent of Kindness" calendars to help you do just that—or you could create one of your own. Some suggestions:

While waiting in line, allow someone to go in front of you. Get in touch with an old friend or relative whom you've lost contact with; if you had a disagreement with that person, try your best to make peace. Write a thank you note to someone, and express gratitude to anyone who helps you in the course of your day. Bake Christmas cookies for a neighbor or offer to help put up decorations if they're unable to do so themselves. Give a meal to someone who is hungry. Learn about another person whose life or beliefs are different from yours and see if you can find some commonality. Pray—and work—to be more like Jesus, serving others with love.

Advent is also the perfect time to take part in opportunities for joy and community. That's part of the reason Jen Sawyer has attended Fordham University's annual Festival of Lessons and Carols for the past 20 years. On [Jesuits.org](http://Jesuits.org), Sawyer describes a scene in which a female soloist, holding a single candle in the darkened church, begins singing, "Once in royal David's city." The choir then joins in, "as the flame from the single candle is passed from choir member to choir member until the once-dark church is fully illuminated by candlelight." This experience always resonates with Sawyer. She writes, "I listened attentively to the scriptural lessons and reflections, sang my heart out with my friends, and realized I was part of a community coming together in prayer and song to welcome Christ into our hearts."

This Advent, may each of us find our own way to make the season meaningful and fulfilling.

# MEMBER *Spotlight*

## DR. MICHAEL J. KOPANIC, JR.

### A Professor, Author, Traveler, Proud Slovak and FCSU District 7 President

Professor Kopanic has always had a keen interest in history and this translated into a wish to learn more about his ancestors while attending college. He wanted to communicate in Slovak with his baba (grandmother) and Slovak-born mother, who emigrated before World War II. This inspired his wish to learn the Slovak language and culture. When studying for a doctorate in history, he found that only the University of Pittsburgh continually offered courses in Slovak, so he transferred to Pitt from the University of Toronto. His quest to learn culminated in his first trip to his mother's ancestral home while backpacking for three months across Europe, and four years later, a year-long stay for doctoral research in communist Czechoslovakia. Since then, he has made over 20 trips to Slovakia, including attending three Slovak summer schools at Comenius University in Bratislava, Studia Academica Slovaca.

He has earned degrees from Youngstown State University (A.B.), the University of Notre Dame (M.A.), and the University of Pittsburgh (Ph.D.). He is an Adjunct Professor of History at the University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC). There, Professor Kopanic has served as Course Chair and Course Coordinator for European history courses. He received a Teaching Award in 2012 and an Outstanding Faculty Recognition Award in 2025. He administers three Facebook sites: Learning the Slovak Language and Culture, Slovak History, and the Slovak Studies Association. He also presents historical and cultural talks on "Slovak and Czech Notes", an online radio program which has podcasts available on the web to listen to any time: <https://slovakandczechnotes.com/listen-now>.

Dr. Kopanic has been involved with the FCSU since the early 1980s. He was first drawn to the organization by its fraternal newspaper, which features rich content about Slovaks, Slovak culture, and Slovak history. He started as a subscriber to Jednota and began contributing articles in the 1980s. Over the years, he has written hundreds of articles and served as Editor from January 2022 to September 2023. He currently serves as President of District 7 and Recording Secretary of Branch 23 and previously held other officer roles. In his leadership roles, he has helped members learn Slovak expressions and prayers, and he continues to promote Slovak traditions by introducing songs and cultural education into meetings.

Professor Kopanic has also contributed numerous articles to many academic publications, and edited the books *Slovaks in America* and *Illustrated Slovak History*. A former Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International board member, he serves on the Academic Committee of the Museum of Slovak Emigration to North America, is an academic consultant for Global Slovakia and is on the editorial board of the journal *Kultúrne dejiny* (Cultural History, Ružomberok, Slovakia). He is currently working on a book about Slovak traditional customs. He is working closely with Professor Martin Javor of Prešov University, the founder and Director of The Museum of Slovak Emigration to North America in the eastern Slovak village of Ťahyňa. Kopanic is editing the English translation of Javor's book, *A History of the First Catholic Slovak Union to 1945*. Beyond his writing, he also led three tour groups to Slovakia in 1995, 1998, and 2001, fostering deeper connections with Slovak heritage. He was a Pennsylvania Humanities Council Commonwealth Speaker from 2000-2004 and lectured on Slovaks in Penns across the state. He has regularly attended and supported Slovak cultural events, including the University of Pittsburgh Slovak Heritage Festival, the Johnstown and Youngstown Slavic festivals and various summer picnics.

Professor Kopanic has devoted his entire life to learning more about Slovaks and their culture. From their birth, he has spoken only in Slovak with his daughters, Milenka and Erika, and hoped they would carry on the culture and language with his grandchildren. His wife Rebecca and the entire extended family are FCSU members. Both of his daughters twice attended the Slovak Summer School in Bratislava and his oldest, Milenka Feighner, was a singer and dancer in PAS, the Pittsburgh Area Slovak Folk Ensemble. His daughter Erika is a captain in the U.S. Army and is currently stationed at Fort Hood, Texas. Furthermore, he decided that he wished to help others with the same yearning to advance their education. In consulting with the Slovak Studies Program and the Slavic Department, he was told that what the Program needed most was funding for those wishing to learn Slovak. Thus, he decided to fund an endowed scholarship for students studying advanced Slovak. It is his hope that the Slovak Studies Program will continue to flourish, and as an historian, he said that he wants it to be alive and thriving for hundreds of years into the future.



### A New Scholarship for Students Studying Slovak at the University of Pittsburgh

The University of Pittsburgh is the only university in North America offering a minor in the Slovak language and culture. In order to help sustain the Slovak Program, FCSU member Professor Michael J. Kopanic, Jr. has funded a permanent scholarship for students who are studying advanced Slovak at the University of Pittsburgh.

### The Michael Kopanic, PhD Fund Scholarship

Beginning in the 2025-2026 academic year, students currently studying Slovak courses in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures are invited to apply for the Michael Kopanic, PhD Fund Scholarship. Eligible recipients must be in good academic standing, currently enrolled in a Slovak course, and have committed to taking Slovak course(s) within the next academic year.

The Slovak Program and Slavic Studies Program welcome donations to help sustain the study of these cultures and languages. For more information, see the following websites:

- Slovak at Pitt: <https://www.facebook.com/PittSlovak>
- Slavic Studies website: <https://www.slavic.pitt.edu/about/community-support>
- The scholarship: <https://www.slavic.pitt.edu/michael-kopanic-phd-fund-scholarship>

## District 7 Fall Meeting

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

The second meeting for District 7 was held on Sunday, October 6, 2025, at St. Bartholomew's Church Hall in Wilmore, PA. President Dr. Michael Kopanic opened the meeting with a prayer and a tribute to Jednota member Rev. Sylvester Bendzella, the District Chaplain who passed away on October 1st and member Frank Korchnak who died in June.

Attendees discussed the Johnstown Slavic Festival, Marian Hocycko's art exhibit, and future plans, including the upcoming 53rd Quadrennial Convention in South Carolina. Executive Secretary Kevin Collins visited to give a presentation about insurance and annuities, and also explained the opportunity to obtain FCSU branded materials from the FCSU gift shop. All current officers were re-elected for 2026. A sumptuous meal followed that included holubky and halušky.





## A Tribute to America's Military Branches

As we reflect on Veterans Day, we honor the men and women of the six branches of the United States military—each with its own proud mission and history. They have stood watch over our freedom with courage, commitment, and unwavering duty. Their sacrifice and devotion to our country remain a shining example of courage and patriotism. We also thank all members of our Society who have served for their bravery and dedication to the cause of freedom.

### Army – “This We’ll Defend”

The U.S. Army is the nation’s oldest and largest military branch, established on June 14, 1775, even before the Declaration of Independence was signed. Its mission is to deploy, fight, and win the nation’s wars through sustained land dominance. Soldiers protect and control territory, support national policies, and ensure the security of the nation at home and abroad. The Army’s vast capabilities include ground troops, armored divisions, aviation units, and elite forces like the Green Berets.

### Navy – “Non sibi sed patriae” (Not for self, but for country)

The U.S. Navy was officially established on October 13, 1775, to protect the young nation’s maritime interests. Today, it remains the world’s most powerful naval force, ensuring freedom of the seas and projecting American influence across the globe. The Navy’s fleet includes aircraft carriers, submarines, surface ships, and aircraft capable of responding anywhere in the world. Its elite Navy SEALs are trained for the most demanding missions.

### Marine Corps – “Semper Fidelis” (Always Faithful)

Founded on November 10, 1775, the U.S. Marine Corps is renowned for its rapid-response capabilities and fighting spirit. Marines serve as America’s expeditionary force in readiness—often the first “boots on the ground” in a crisis. They specialize in amphibious assaults and can project power from the sea to shore with precision. The Corps includes elite units such as Marine Raiders and Force Reconnaissance, as well as aviation wings that provide close air support.

### Coast Guard – “Semper Paratus” (Always Ready)

Founded on August 4, 1790, the U.S. Coast Guard is unique among the branches. It operates under the Department of Homeland Security in peacetime but can serve under the Department of the Navy during wartime. The Coast Guard protects America’s waterways, enforces maritime law, conducts search and rescue missions, and safeguards the marine environment. Its multi-mission teams carry out counter-smuggling, border security, and disaster response operations.

### Air Force – “Aim High...Fly-Fight-Win”

Originally part of the Army, the Air Force became an independent branch on September 18, 1947. Its mission is to deliver air and space power anytime, anywhere. The Air Force ensures air superiority, rapid mobility, and precision strike capabilities while also operating satellites and cyber systems vital to communication and intelligence. From stealth bombers to humanitarian airlifts, Airmen play a critical role in both conflict and peace.

### Space Force – “Semper Supra” (Always Above)

The newest branch of the military, the U.S. Space Force, was established on December 20, 2019. Its mission is to secure America’s interests in, from, and to space. The Space Force organizes, trains, and equips Guardians who operate satellites, manage launch systems, and defend U.S. and allied assets in orbit. Space capabilities—such as GPS, communications, and missile warning systems—are essential to national security and everyday life.

## Struggle for Freedom & Democracy Day



November 17th commemorates the courage of students who stood for freedom, human rights, and democracy in Czechoslovakia. The day remembers two key events: in 1939, Nazi forces executed student leaders and imprisoned thousands after protests against occupation; and in 1989, student-led demonstrations sparked the Velvet Revolution, peacefully ending Communist rule. Today, the holiday honors the bravery of those who fought for freedom and democracy, reminding us of the enduring importance of civil courage and the role of young people in shaping a free society.

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## National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library Receives Award for Preserving Slavic Heritage Worldwide

The National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library in Cedar Rapids, Iowa received international recognition for preserving cultural identity and heritage worldwide during a conference hosted in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Forum of Slavic Cultures, an international non-profit headquartered in Slovenia, promotes cultural dialog and cooperation among almost 250 museums and heritage sites across 13 Slavic countries. At the forum’s annual conference, several cultural organizations were recognized at the Živa Award ceremony, named after the Slavic goddess Živa who symbolizes life, vitality and fertility. A special highlight of this year’s Živa edition was the introduction of the Živa Award for Best in Preserving Slavic Heritage Worldwide. This new award recognizes initiatives that preserve Slavic cultural heritage and identity worldwide.

In May, the NCSML leadership team met with the Živa Award jury in a video conference and live-streamed tour of the galleries, library, and Museum Store. In the final portion of the competition, all 32 nominees presented at the international conference. Cecilia Rokusek, NCSML president and CEO, and Stefanie Kohn, curator, delivered a presentation detailing the mission, vision, history and accomplishments of NCSML. They were awarded the Diploma for Preserving Slavic Heritage Worldwide.

“These presentations showcased the vital roles these museums play in bringing cultural heritage to life,” the Forum of Slavic Cultures said in a press release. “They have become living, inclusive spaces of memory, dialogue and creativity. They are advocates of remembering the past in order to shape the future, time travelers who use technology, visual interpretation and storytelling to bring history to life, chroniclers who engage communities and record our present, and visionaries who embrace innovation and identify new trends to build a more resilient and responsible future.”

The National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library engages the global community with unique Czech, Slovak and American stories to inspire individuals with universal themes of culture, freedom, democracy and immigration. For more information, visit [NCSML.org](http://NCSML.org) or call 319-362-8500.



## Celebrating the 80th Birthdays of Viliam and Milka Choma

Longtime and dedicated members of Branch 746 (Linden, NJ), Viliam and Milka Choma joyfully celebrated their joint 80th birthdays this August in their native hometown near Michalovce, Slovakia. Married for almost 60 incredible years, the couple was honored with a warm and heartfelt family gathering. While visiting Slovakia for a family wedding of their nephew, relatives surprised them with this special celebration. Siblings, nieces, nephews, cousins, and loved ones from near and far came together to honor them and share in the joy of this milestone.

The celebration reflected a life filled with love, faith, and devotion, celebrating not only their birthdays but also the enduring bonds they have nurtured over the years. Even at 80, Viliam and Milka shine with youthful energy and spirit. Earlier this summer, they embarked on a memorable journey to Italy, visiting Rome during their jubilee year, proving that curiosity and adventure know no age. Full of energy and joy, they remain active in their parish and the Slovak community, cultivate their flower garden, and savor every moment with their children and grandchildren, especially during the summer at the family pool!

As we celebrate this milestone, we offer our heartfelt blessings: May God continue to grant you good health, peace, and joy. May He shower you both with His grace, protect you, and fill their hearts with hope, love, and serenity. We pray that the Lord blesses you with many more cherished moments with family, abundant laughter, and the continued joy of shared adventures.

Všetko najlepšie k 80. narodeninám, Viliam a Milka! Your faith, kindness, and zest for life inspire all who know you!



# The Family Fall Festival - Autumnal Fun for Everyone

Submitted by Joanne Fibbi, Fraternal Activities Director

A beautiful autumn day in southwestern Pennsylvania set the stage for another successful Family Fall Festival at Simmons Farm in McMurray. Blessed with ideal weather, FCSU members and guests enjoyed the fun-filled afternoon on the farm.

More than 150 FCSU members, representing Regions 4, 5, and 6, gathered to enjoy a wonderful day of fraternalism. Truly an event for all ages, our youngest guest was just 4-months old, while our most senior was 90-years young.

Kids of all ages could hardly contain their excitement and exuberance, as they took hayrides to the fields for an array of festive activities. Sounds of laughter filled the air as children tried to outrun their parents in the corn maze, only to squeal with delight when they were caught. Visits to the pumpkin patch found everyone searching for the perfect size and shape to transform into their Halloween jack-o-lanterns. Smiles were on full display as families captured photo memories amid the many vignettes of seasonal décor featuring haybales, gourds and scarecrows galore.

The greenhouse lunch buffet offered enough food for an army. Members indulged in traditional Slovak fare or enjoyed chicken tenders, applesauce, and mac n cheese, which proved to be just as popular with the adults as the children. Kids were cookie monsters all afternoon, as seen by the telltale signs of chocolate on their faces.

After lunch, bingo games took center stage with \$25 gift cards awarded to the many winners. The candy corn guessing game was a bit of competitive fun with several guesses coming close to the actual 1,208 pieces of candy in the jar. Our winner was 8-year-old Francine Lako, from Branch 2 in Pittsburgh, PA. Francine's guess was an amazing 1,205 pieces! Her prize was a \$50 gift card. Congratulations!

Many members also shopped for farm fresh produce and flowers in addition to our many festivities. Thanks to all who helped make the event a wonderful example of our fraternal activities, including our members, Home Office staff, and volunteers. Looking forward to seeing everyone next year! Best wishes for a happy and blessed Thanksgiving.



# District 16 Members Celebrate Labor Day at Slovak Country Club in New York

Submitted by Julie Ann Gurega, District 16 President

Members from Branches 45, 716, and 746 proudly joined the annual Labor Day celebration hosted by the Slovak Country Club in New York, affectionately known as the "Slovak Village." This much-loved event brought together the Slovak-American community for a weekend filled with camaraderie, culture, and joyful celebration.

This year's festivities were made even more special by the presence of the Slovak Consul General from New York, Beatrice Szabóová, who joined the celebration and opened the evening program with her warm and inspiring remarks. Her participation highlighted the enduring connection between Slovakia and the Slovak-American community, emphasizing the importance of preserving cultural traditions and unity across generations.

always-popular roasted pig, an event that drew an eager crowd.

As night fell, the celebration continued indoors, where the entire community gathered for a festive dinner featuring traditional Slovak dishes such as bryndzové halušky (potato dumplings with sheep cheese), kapustnica (sauerkraut soup), rezne (breaded pork cutlets), and a tempting assortment of homemade pastries, including koláče and štrúdl'a.

After dinner, guests filled the dance floor, singing and dancing to lively music provided by a local DJ. The joyful atmosphere, laughter, and fellowship made for a memorable evening that captured the spirit of Slovak hospitality and tradition.

Events like these, organized by the Slovak Country Club and supported by FCSU, continue to strengthen community bonds and preserve Slovak heritage for future generations. District 16 is proud to have been part of this beloved annual tradition.



One highlight was the annual soccer tournament, a long-standing Labor Day favorite. Members participated enthusiastically, both as players and as spirited supporters, showcasing the community's unity and energy. The friendly competition reflected the close-knit nature of the Slovak-American community and its commitment to preserving shared traditions. Beyond soccer, guests enjoyed volleyball matches and the



## Blessed Anna Kolesárová: A Slovak Witness of Purity and Faith

Submitted by Sabina Sabados, Region 1 Director



Inside the Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady of Sorrows (Kostol Sedembolestnej Panny Márie) in Vysoká nad Uhom serves as the local pilgrim church near the Domček Anny Kolesárovej. Within that church, a silver reliquary containing relics of Blessed Anna Kolesárová was solemnly placed on 30 September 2018, following her beatification. The reliquary, designed in the form of a heart with a pearl and daisies, is publicly venerated at the altar of that church and has become a focal point for pilgrims seeking intercession and prayer.

### FCSU and Branch 746 support the mission of Domček Anny Kolesárovej

It is with great pride and deep personal connection that we share the First Catholic Slovak Union, especially Branch 746, has proudly embraced and supported the mission of Domček Anny Kolesárovej in Vysoká nad Uhom, Slovakia. This spiritual center honors the legacy of Blessed Anna Kolesárová, a young Slovak girl whose unwavering faith and heroic martyrdom continue to inspire people across generations and continents.

Anna Kolesárová, a young Slovak girl from the village of Vysoká nad Uhom, is one of the most inspiring modern witnesses of Christian virtue and courage. Born in 1928, Anna was just 16 years old when she was tragically killed on November 22, 1944, during World War II. As Soviet troops entered her village, a soldier attempted to assault her. Anna bravely resisted, choosing to protect her purity even at the cost of her life. She was shot in front of her father and buried quickly in secret due to the dangerous circumstances.

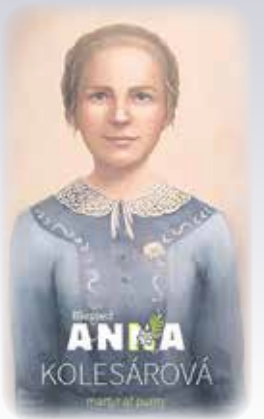
Anna's heroic virtue and martyrdom for chastity led to her beatification by the Catholic Church on September 1, 2018, in Košice. The beatification Mass, attended by over 30,000 people, was a deeply moving celebration of her unwavering faith, strength, and youthful holiness. She is now honored as Blessed Anna Kolesárová, a role model especially for young people navigating the challenges of modern life.

In her memory, the Domček Anny Kolesárovej was established in her hometown in eastern Slovakia. This pastoral center serves as a place of prayer, formation, and community for youth and families. Its mission is to inspire young people to live lives of purity, love, and purpose, following Anna's example of quiet strength and spiritual conviction.

Each year, thousands of pilgrims, especially youth, travel to Vysoká nad Uhom to pray at her grave, participate in spiritual retreats, and grow in their faith. These pilgrimages are a powerful reminder that holiness is not reserved for the few, but is possible for anyone who lives with courage and love, even in ordinary life. As

### A Prayer for the Canonization of Servant of God Anna Kolesárová

Heavenly Father,  
Blessed Anna Kolesárová,  
as a martyr of chastity, bore witness  
to the infinite worth of every human person,  
and became an inspiration for young people  
and families  
in fostering sincere and chaste relationships.  
Through her intercession, we humbly ask You  
to hear our prayers:  
(insert your personal intentions here)  
and grant that we may one day venerate her  
as a Saint on heaven's altar.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



the number of pilgrims and youth visiting the site continues to grow each year, the original Domček has become too small. In response a new Youth Center is being built adjacent to the original house. The project includes one two-story and one single-story building, designed to better accommodate the increasing number of visitors and the expanding scope of spiritual programs and community gatherings. A key feature of the new center will be a large community hall with a capacity for 240 people—ensuring that Anna's legacy continues to reach and inspire future generations.

Blessed Anna's life and legacy continue to inspire people across Slovakia and around the world, calling each of us to live with dignity, faith, and devotion to God. For members of Branch 746, her story holds a deeply personal meaning. Many of our members come from neighboring villages and first heard of Anna's martyrdom through the stories passed down by their parents and grandparents. Members Anna Javorová, Milan Javor, and Jarka Javorová Staš grew up in the same village where Blessed Anna lived. In fact, their family home stood next to Anna's—and it was later generously donated to support the development and expansion of the spiritual center dedicated to her legacy. Among others, members Viliam and Milka Choma as well as Dusan and Viera Kolesar visit the grave of Blessed Anna annually when they return to Slovakia for holidays. We encourage our Jednota community to read more about the devotion to Blessed Anna especially for our younger generation.

Region 1 Director, Sabina Sabados and her parents Emil and Emilia Filak toured all of the key sites connected to Blessed Anna's life and had the privilege of meeting with Fr. Pavol Hudák, Director of Domček Anny Kolesárovej Pastoral Center. During our meeting, we personally delivered a donation from Branch 746, which will support the completion of the Youth Center to expand outreach. Branch 746 felt strongly that this was a meaningful cause worthy of financial support—to help ensure that Anna Kolesárová's story continues to inspire future generations and that her martyrdom is remembered with dignity. We are also sincerely grateful to the Home Office for their generous contribution, which further strengthened this joint effort to support faith-based youth formation in Slovakia. For those interested in learning more or donating, visit [www.domcek.org](http://www.domcek.org).



Branch 746 members, Emilia Filak (Supreme Court) and Region 1 Director Sabina Sabados with Fr. Pavol Hudák, Director of Domček Anny Kolesárovej Pastoral Center.



Relic of Blessed Anna Kolesárová which was blessed by Pope Francis when he beatified her in Košice on September 1, 2018 during his official visit to Slovakia.



Branch 746 members Mr. and Mrs. Viliam & Milka Choma at the grave of Blessed Anna Kolesárová in eastern Slovakia in the village of Vysoká nad Uhom.



**Show your impact—share your Fraternalism in Action event and inspire others to do the same!**  
 Contact the Home Office at [branch@fcsu.com](mailto:branch@fcsu.com) or [district@fcsu.com](mailto:district@fcsu.com) for eligibility forms and guidelines.

### District 10 and Branch 24 Show their School Spirit

Branch 24, led by President John Moynihan, organized a Shoes and Clothes for Kids Foundation drive at their September meeting. Members donated school supplies for students in the Cleveland school district. District 10 members from Branches 1, 24, 228, 450, 553 and 855 made this fundraiser a joint effort by collecting items at their meetings too.

Thanks to the generosity of all involved the donations included pencils, markers, notebooks, index cards, rulers, scissors, crayons and more to pass on to students to give them some tools to make learning fun! Branch 24 member and Cleveland school teacher, Sandy Capuano (pictured), was kind enough to deliver the donations to the Resource Center.



### Branch 746 Donates to St. John the Apostle Church Food Pantry

Members of Branch 746 generously brought pantry donations to support the St. John the Apostle Church Food Pantry in Clark, NJ. Donations were collected at the branch meeting as part of the Union's ongoing commitment to serving the community through its "Fraternalism in Action" program. Pictured are Region 1 Director Sabina Sabados with the Harvis family, and Rev. Mauro Primavera, Pastor of St. John the Apostle, with Emilia Filak, Supreme Court member, accepting a \$250 donation from the FCSU Home Office to further support the pantry's mission.

The Fraternalism in Action program continues to exemplify our fraternal spirit of compassion and service helping local churches and nonprofits that work tirelessly to assist those in need. As Scripture reminds us, "Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and He will repay him for his deed" (Proverbs 19:17).

### District 4's Annual Food Drive

As part of the Msgr. John E. Rura District 4 (NJ) Annual Meeting, it has become a long time tradition for members to bring non-perishable food items for the Food Bank Network of Somerset County which is always in need of donations especially during the Thanksgiving season.

Pictured are members of Branches 290 and 746 proudly displaying some of the 54 pounds of food donations they gathered.



*Fraternalism is based on the idea that people have a responsibility to help each other. FCSU Financial has a passion for helping our members help others. We encourage our branches and districts to find community projects that will enhance the lives of those who are less fortunate.*

## District 4 Members Gather for Friendship, Fraternalism, and Fun!

*Submitted by Sabina Sabados, Region 1 Director*

Members of the Msgr. John E. Rura District 4 gathered for their semi-annual meeting on Sunday, October 26, 2025, at Carpaccio Ristorante in Middlesex, NJ. Branch 290 was the host with members from Branch 746 also joining in.

It was a wonderful afternoon filled with laughter, good food, and great company as everyone caught up since our last get-together in July at the Somerset Patriots baseball game. Over lunch, members discussed plans for upcoming activities including our third annual baseball outing (back by popular demand!) and an exciting district hockey game now in the works.

Mary Kapitan, District 4 Secretary, joined the meeting virtually and although she missed the delicious Italian cuisine, she didn't miss a moment of the discussions and deliberations! To keep meetings running smoothly, Sabina Sabados, Region 1 Director, was presented with two gavels, a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Choma, to be sure the meetings stay in order and that everyone listens!

We also shared some happy family news with a huge congratulations to the Ranahan family on the arrival of baby Eloise and to the Peppe family on the birth of baby Nora. Two new members were added to our FCSU family! Adding to the fun, a 50/50 raffle was held with lucky winners Mr. Milan Kohany, Liliana Minarovich, and Jo Anne Peppe, District Fraternal Activities Director.

In the spirit of Fraternalism in Action, members brought non-perishable food items to benefit the Food Bank Network of Somerset County. It was truly a day that captured the essence of FCSU fellowship — friendship, faith, and fun — all in one afternoon!



Pictured are Board Members of the Slovak Heritage Society of Northeastern Pennsylvania along with their Chaplain. Seated (L-R): Helen Bacumpas, Anna Hudock (Branch 173), and Elaine Palischak. Standing (L-R): Rev. Andrew S. Hvozdovic (Branch 173), Anthony Palischak, Robert Zavada (Branch 5P), and Michael Stretanski.

**2026 FCSU International**

**GOLF TOURNAMENT**

**Save the Date!**

**JULY 24-26**

**Sawmill Creek Golf Club & Resort**

**Huron, OH**

**SEE THE ENTRY FORM ON PAGE 16 OF THIS ISSUE.**

Coloring Pages may be printed  
from [www.fcsu.com/event/coloring-contest](http://www.fcsu.com/event/coloring-contest)

## Have Yourself a Merry & Colorful Christmas

We hope you will include the 2025 FCSU Christmas Coloring Contest among your family's holiday traditions this season. It is a wonderful, creative activity that lets you take a pause from the hustle and bustle of Christmas shopping, baking, and decorating. As in the past, we have four age groups for our children/youth members, with three age categories for adults. In keeping with the season of giving, we are generously awarding more prizes in the adult categories. This year, a first-place winner will be selected in each adult age group within the eight FCSU Regions.

### CATEGORIES AND PRIZES

- **Children and Youth Ages: 4-6, 7-9, 10-12, & 13-17.** Three winners will be chosen per age group within each Region. Prizes for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place are \$50, \$35, and \$25 respectively, with the possibility of 12 winners per region. (96 winners.)
- **Adult Ages: 18-39, 40-64, & 65+.** One winner will be chosen from each adult age group per region, with the possibility of three winners per region. (24 winners.) Each winner will receive a \$100 prize.

### OFFICIAL RULES

1. Contest entry is limited to current FCSU members, with one entry per member.
2. Complete all information on the entry form. **Entries without age and branch number will be disqualified.**
3. Cut out and color the Christmas picture for your age.
4. Copies may be made for additional entries for your family. Pictures may also be printed from the FCSU website. Please print/copy at the original picture size, as enlarging or reducing the image is not allowed.
5. Color your entry using **crayons or colored pencils only.** The use of markers or glitter is not allowed. Do not add any type of embellishments to the pictures such as borders, stickers or craft items.
6. Mail your colored picture with the **entry form taped to the back of the picture** to:  
Joanne Fibbi, 1741 Hempstead Lane, Pittsburgh, PA 15241
7. **Deadline: Entries must be received before January 10, 2026.**  
Please mail early to ensure timely delivery.
8. Decisions from the independent judges will be final. Winners will be announced in the March 2026 issue of the Jednota.



**SANTA'S HELPER - AGES 4-6**



**GUARDING THE GIFTS - AGES 7-9**



**CAROLING IN THE SNOW - AGES 10-12**



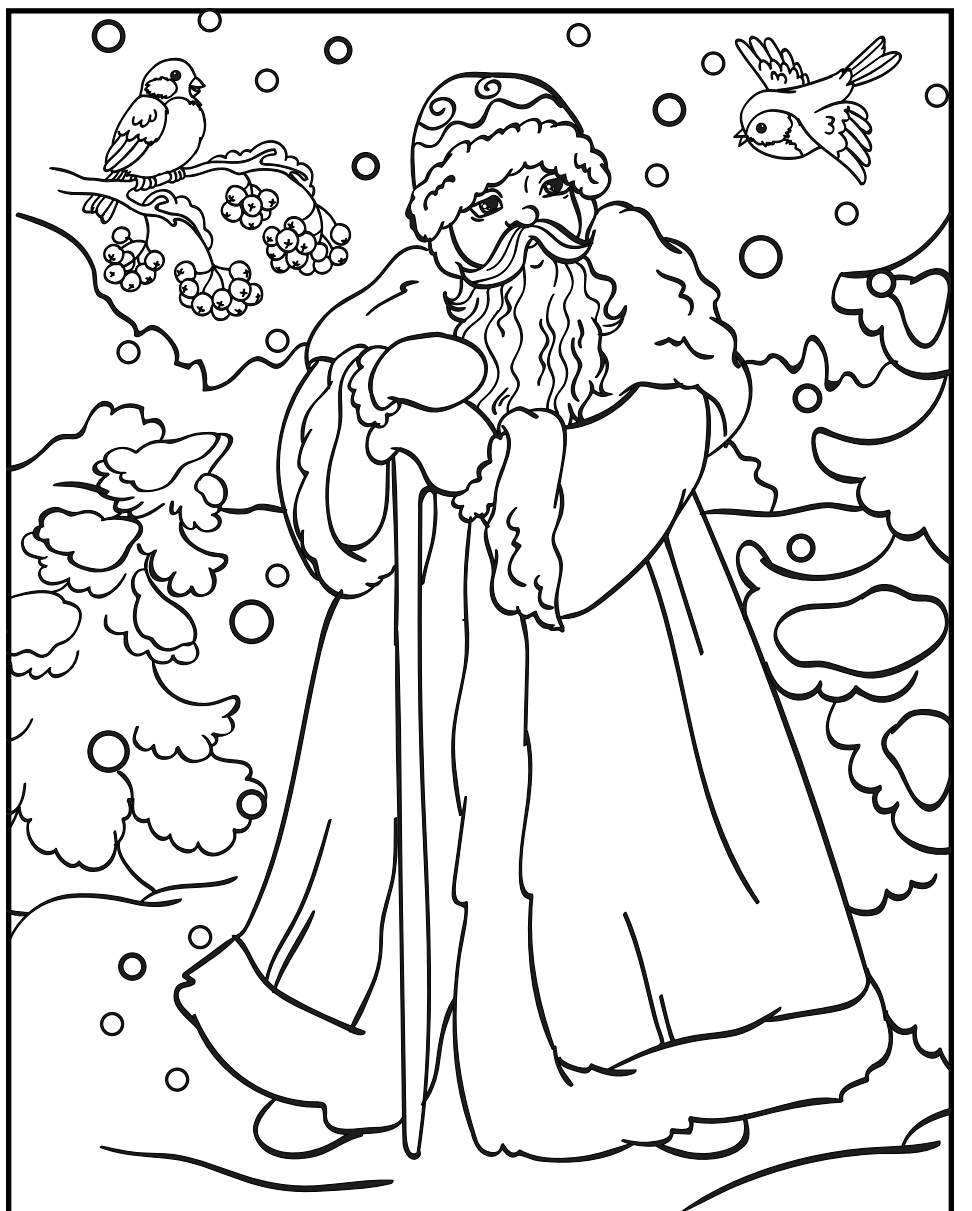
**SANTA'S MISTLETOE KISS - AGES 13-17**



**CHRISTMAS ANGEL - AGES 18-39**



**TWO TURTLE DOVES - AGES 40-64**



**GOOD KING WENCESLAS - AGES 65+**



### Former Ambassador Javorčík Visits Slovak J Club

*Submitted by Debra Speck, Branch 553 President*

On September 7, 2025, the Slovak J Club welcomed a very special guest. The former Ambassador of the Slovak Republic, Radovan Javorčík, his wife, Michelle, and their son, Nathael, visited our facility for a memorable afternoon of fellowship and fun.

The visit was arranged through Henry Horvath of the Slovak Radio Club, who joined the group for a tour of our building. Ambassador Javorčík and Nathael were impressed to discover our bowling lanes located on the top floor. They each enjoyed bowling a few frames before departing for their next engagement.

Ambassador Javorčík presented the Club with a thoughtful and beautiful gift: six crystal goblets crafted in Slovakia. We are grateful to Ambassador Javorčík and his family for taking the time to visit.

### Branch 853 Members Enjoy the County Fair

*Submitted by Monica Boone, Branch 853 President*

Every year, members of Branch 853 enjoy the county fairs in Pennsylvania. Each member enjoys a different section. This year Michael Bertovich shared his farming knowledge. Charles Boone surprised everyone with his artistic ability in winning second place with his acrylic painting. Ron Boone's fly fishing flies continue to earn blue ribbons. Susan Painter won first place in the major Crock Pot Contest. Marianne Rodacy's gardening expertise won the major contest of the Largest Flower Class.

Monica Boone placed in the statewide America250PA apron contest. Monica's expertise in needlework doesn't stop there. She participates in the emotionally rewarding Loose Ends Project in which she volunteers and finishes and then returns the project of people who have either passed on, or who are unable to finish the project due to an illness or disability. Monica's kindness also supports Purina's Purple Leash Project with donating items she designs, sews and crochets, to local women's shelters who support domestic abuse survivors and their pets for she, along with other members of the branch, believes there is no place for either physical or emotional abuse in this world. Congratulations to all Branch 853 members.



### District 17 Members Attend 60th Anniversary of Slovak Chapel

*Submitted by Martha Zavada, Region 3 Director*

Members of District 17, Branches 5P, 166, and 172, recently attended the 60th Anniversary of The Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.

Participants toured the Basilica, attended a special Slovak/English mass, and visited the Slovak Chapel. The bus trip was sponsored by the Slovak Catholic Federation and supported by the FCSU. A dinner buffet was held in Thurmont, MD for those making the trip. Our attendees enjoyed a wonderful visit to the Basilica to commemorate their Slovak heritage.



*Pictured (L-R): Mary Babcock, Mary Jo Rubino, Robert Zavada, Martha Zavada, Margaret Kunec, Melissa Hummel, Dr. Michelle Sudo, and Helene Maszeroski*

### Branch 682 Joins Forces for Food Bank Donation

*Submitted by Drew Hirt, Branch 682 President*

St. George Society (Branch 682) joined with the Struthers Rotary Club, CASTLO Community Improvement Corp., and AQUA Ohio water company to each donate \$1000 to Second Harvest Food Bank of the Mahoning Valley for the Christ Our Savior Parish food pantry. They serve Ohio families in Youngstown, Struthers, Campbell, Poland Village and Lowellville. This commitment to service and community will provide 20,000 meals to the food pantry, along with hope and help to local families in need. Together we're proving that when neighbors care, communities thrive! The donation was made at a regular meeting of the Struthers Rotary Club where a brief overview of the activities of the Second Harvest Food bank was presented.



*Branch 682 President Drew Hirt is pictured far right as he presents a \$1,000 check to Second Harvest Food Bank.*



### District 16 Fall Meeting Well Attended

*Submitted by Renata Jurasiova-Vasil, District 16 Secretary*

Msgr. Stephen Krasula District in NYC held their annual meeting after the Slovak mass on Sunday, October 19, 2025 at the rectory of St. John Nepomucene Church in New York City. Present at the meeting were members of St. Matthew's Society, Branch 45 and St. Stephen the Martyr Society, Branch 716. An Election of District 16 Officers was held.

Pictured (L): Julie Ann Gurega; Sitting (L-R): Emily Lysáková, Jozef Korcak, Jozef Jurasí, Joseph Jurasí, Maria Jurasí, Eva Lysáková, Anton Kucharovic, and Zelmira Beckova-Kucharovic. Standing (L-R): Maria Bozekova, Jan Lisak, Peter Gaspar, Anna Bilikova, Father Stefan Chanas, Renata Jurasiova-Vasil, Maria Zakovic, and Anna Korcak.

<b>SLOVAK J CLUB</b> 485 MORGAN AVE AKRON, OH	Nov. 30 Breakfast Buffet 9-11:45am \$12 - All You Can Eat!
	Nov. 30 Browns vs. 49ers - 1pm
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	<b>DECEMBER</b>
Nov. 16 Browns vs. Ravens - 4:25pm	Dec. 3 Spaghetti Dinner 4:30-7pm
Nov. 19 Pork Chop Dinner 4:30-6:30pm *RSVP	Dec. 6 Children's Christmas Party & Bowling with Santa - 12-3pm
Nov. 22 OSU vs. Rutgers - TBD	Dec. 7 Browns vs. Titans - 1pm
Nov. 23 Browns vs. Raiders - 4:05pm	Dec. 14 Vilija Dinner - 4pm
Nov. 26 Scotch Doubles - 6pm	Dec. 17 Chicken Paprikash Dinner 4:30-6:30pm *RSVP
Nov. 29 OSU vs. Michigan - NOON Tailgating begins @ 9am	<b>*RSVP to 330-786-9972</b>

# BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

**All BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS  
should be emailed to [branch@fcsu.com](mailto: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](http://www.fcsu.com).

## CALIFORNIA

### BRANCH 844 – LOS ANGELES, CA

*Milan Konkol, Secretary*

The St. Joseph the Guardian Society will hold an annual meeting on Saturday, November 29, 2025. It will be held at the Slovak American Center, 1690 Placentia Ave. in Fullerton starting at 11am with an agenda of officers' reports and financial report. We will hold an Election of Branch Officers for 2026. In addition, we will hold the Election of Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) to the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. We will also prepare for the Slovak Christmas mass, and plan activities for next year. Lunch will be at the Olive Garden after the meeting.

## ILLINOIS

### BRANCH 6 – STREATER, IL

*Paul Chismar, Recording Secretary*

The St. Stephen's Society will hold its annual meeting on Saturday, December 6, 2025 at 11:30am at Good Morning restaurant, 419 E. Main St., Streator. We will hold the Election of Branch Officers. We will also hold the Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention.

### BRANCH 40 – STREATER, IL

*Theresa Graves, Financial Secretary*

St. Clement Society will hold its semi-annual meeting on Sunday, January 4, 2026, at Chipper's Grill, 1733 N. Bloomington St., Streator at 2pm. We will hold the Election of Branch Officers. We will also hold the Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. Lunch will follow and all members are urged to attend this important meeting. Please RSVP to 815-257-6142 (leave a message) or email [ttegraves@mchsi.com](mailto:ttegraves@mchsi.com) by January 2, 2026.

## INDIANA

### BRANCH 581 – PORTER, IN

*Ann Buczek, President*

The Branch will hold their meeting December 7, 2025, at noon at the Paragon Restaurant, 1701 E. 37th Ave., Hobart. The agenda will include the Election of Branch Officers for 2026. In addition, we will hold the Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. Upcoming year business plans will also be discussed. RSVP to Ann Buczek at 219-947-2793.

## MICHIGAN

### BRANCH 721 – BANNISTER, MI

*Joseph Beno, Recording Secretary*

Our lodge will have their fall meeting on Sunday, December 7, 2025 at 2pm at the Remenar home located at 8977 S. Mason Rd. in Bannister. We will hold the Election of Branch Officers. We will also hold the Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. All members are encouraged to attend.

### BRANCH 743 – STERLING HEIGHTS, MI

*Joseph C. Rimarcik, President*

The St. Joseph Society will hold its annual meeting on Sunday, December 7, 2025 at 1:30pm. Members are urged to attend the celebration of the Slovak Mass before the meeting at 11:30am at SS. Cyril and Methodius Church, 41233 Ryan Rd., Sterling Heights. The meeting will follow the mass in the Church Social Hall. On the agenda will be Officer's Report, 2025 Financial Report, approval of the 2026 budget, discussion of branch activities, and other business pertaining to the Branch and FCSU. An Election of Branch Officers will be held. There will also be an Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. Please come enjoy our annual Christmas meeting with your fellow branch members.

Members who need policy assistance in regards to a change of address or beneficiary should contact the Financial Secretary of Branch 743, Joseph C. Rimarcik, 4945 Wavewood Dr., Commerce Township, MI 48382. Phone 248-714-9620. I can also provide you a no obligation quote for insurance coverage for any family member including grandchildren with just a birth date and gender.

### BRANCH 756 – OWOSSO, MI

*Gary Gregoricka, President*

The St. Joseph the Guardian Society will hold a meeting on Sunday, December 7, 2025 at Tim Hortons, 323 W. Main St., Owosso at 1pm. We will hold the Election of Branch Officers.

## NEW JERSEY

### BRANCH 132 – BOONTON, NJ

*Susan Salko, Secretary*

We will hold a meeting on Saturday, December 6, 2025. The meeting will start at 7:30pm at my house at 56 Lefke Lane in Whippany. We will discuss our summer trips and ideas for winter 2025-26.

### BRANCH 290 – BRIDGEWATER, NJ

*Steve Minarovich, Recording Secretary*

The branch will hold a dinner meeting on Wednesday, December 3, 2025 starting at 6pm for all members. The location is Carpaccio Ristorante at 651 Bound Brook Rd., Middlesex. The agenda will include the Election of Branch Officers, membership, and branch activities. We will also hold the Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. RSVP is required, so call or text me at 908-507-0505 by Wednesday, November 26th.

## BRANCH 746 – LINDEN, NJ

*Mary Kapitan, Secretary*

Our last meeting of the year will be held on Sunday, December 21, 2025 at Bistro 1051 at 1051 Raritan Rd., Clark. The meeting will start promptly at 1pm. We will hold the Election of Branch Officers and discuss next year's activities. A Christmas luncheon will follow the meeting (\$50 for non-members). RSVP to Mary Ann Ranahan at 732-589-1608 by Dec. 14th.

FRATERNALISM IN ACTION: Please bring non-perishable food items for donation to the St. John the Apostle Church Food Pantry. The FCSU will generously donate \$250 to the food bank on our behalf.

SAVE THE DATE: The Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention will take place at our March 1, 2026 meeting.

Thanksgiving Baking at Holy Family Church (210 Monroe St., Linden) will be on November 15th. Please volunteer to help with the baking. Each nut, poppy seed, prune, or cheese roll costs \$20. All proceeds go to the church.

Members are encouraged to attend Friday Holy Masses at 7pm (in Slovak) at Holy Family Church. There will be a Mass for the intention of all Branch members living and deceased on December 5th.

## NEW YORK

### BRANCH 45 – NEW YORK, NY

*Maria Jurasi, Financial Secretary*

The St. Matthew the Evangelist Society will hold our annual meeting on Sunday, November 30, 2025 at 1pm after the Slovak mass at St. John Nepomucene Church, 66th Street and 1st Avenue, New York City. On the agenda will be a financial report, officers' reports, a report on last year's activities, Election of Branch Officers, and a discussion on events for the upcoming year. We urge all members to attend this meeting.

Oznamujeme našim členom, že ročná schôdza sv. Matúša Č. 45 1KSJ v New York bude v nedeľu 30. novembra 2025 o 13:00 hodine (po slovenskej svätej omši) v osadnej hale slovenského kostola sv. Jána Nepomuckého na 1st. Avenue a 66th Street. Na programe budú podané správy úradníkov, finančnej správy, zhodnotenie činnosti za uplynulé obdobie. Potom budú nasledovať voľby do nového výboru, ktorý vypracuje program činnosti na ďalšie obdobie. Úctivo Vás žiadame o účasť na tejto výročnej členskej schôdzi.

### BRANCH 166 – BINGHAMTON, NY

*Judie Dendler, Secretary*

Greetings! It's hard to believe that it's almost Thanksgiving! I hope you are all doing well. We have a lot to be thankful for. Remember our semi-annual meeting with the Election of Branch Officers on November 15, 2025, at Denny's, 1250 Front St., Binghamton at 10:30am. Members are free. We will also discuss having a Christmas party so bring your ideas with you. Any questions, contact Morgan Dendler at 607-206-7243. Hope to see you at the meeting!

### BRANCH 716 – NEW YORK, NY

*Emily Lysáková, Recording Secretary*

The branch held a meeting on October 25, 2025. Members reviewed the year's activities, financial report, and confirmed the re-election of the current branch officers for the 2026 term.

As we move into the holiday season, District 16 invites you to join us for a

traditional Slovak Vilija dinner on Sunday, December 14th at St. John Nepomucene Church, 411 E. 66th St., New York. Enjoy classic Slovak holiday dishes, warm drinks, and a festive community atmosphere as we celebrate the spirit of the season. Admission is \$25 for adults; children attend free. For more information, please contact Emily Lysáková. Thank you all for your continued support.

Our first meeting of 2026 will be held on Sunday, February 22, at St. John Nepomucene Church, 411 E. 66th St., New York, following a Slovak Mass at approximately 1pm. We will hold the Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention.

## OHIO

### BRANCH 1 – LAKEWOOD, OH

*Barbara J. Golias, Secretary*

VILIJIA: Members are invited to attend the St. Andrew Abbey Vilija Dinner on Sunday, December 7, 2025 at Benedictine High School, 10501 Buckeye Rd., Cleveland. Mass is at noon with dinner following in the cafeteria. Branch 1 members are free if you attend the dinner but cannot be used for carryout orders. The regular cost is \$25 per dinner and may be purchased at this price for non-members. RSVP to Rochelle Popovich at 216-789-6390. This is a popular event and seating is limited, so get your tickets early.

### BRANCH 228 – LORAIN, OH

*Thomas B. Zuffa, Recording Secretary*

The St. John the Baptist/Holy Trinity Lodge will hold their next meeting on Monday, December 15, 2025 at 7pm in-person at the American Slovak Club on the northeast corner of 30th and Broadway in Lorain. Food and refreshments will be served.

This is a very important meeting as two elections will take place! We will hold the Election of Branch Officers; we will also hold the Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. Our branch currently has an estimated number of seven Delegates permitted to be seated at the convention. The Convention Delegates will work with the officers to help plan the future of the First Catholic Slovak Union. Please plan on attending this very important meeting and follow the Jednota newspaper for up-to-date convention details.

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

### BRANCH 259 – STRUTHERS, OH

*Vivian Sedlacko, Secretary*

The St. Michael the Archangel Society will hold their Annual Meeting at DonaVito's Restaurant, 139 S. Bridge St., Struthers, on Wednesday, December 3, 2025 at 1pm. We will have an Election of Officers for the coming year 2026. We will also have an Election of Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention followed by a luncheon. We hope as many members will attend as possible. Please make reservations by calling 330-755-8316.

### BRANCH 260 – COITSVILLE, OH

*Carlie Peshek, Vice President*

Our next meeting is Thursday, December 4, 2025 at 5pm at Belleria Restaurant, 1010 Youngstown-Poland Rd. in Struthers. We will hold the Election of Branch Officers and the Election of Branch

Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. Additionally, we will enjoy our holiday celebration. Hope to see you all and God Bless!

**BRANCH 450 – CLEVELAND, OH**  
*Frank Woyma, President*

St. Joseph the Guardian Society will hold its semi-annual meeting at 11am on Saturday, November 22, 2025. It will be held in the Community Room at the Panera restaurant located at 5090 Tiedeman Rd., Brooklyn. The agenda will include the officers' and financial reports and any correspondence received. We will hold the Election of Branch Officers for the coming year. We will also hold the Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. Lunch will be served after the meeting. Please call me with questions at 216-225-5688. All members are encouraged to attend.

We are offering Branch 450 members discounted tickets for the St. Andrew Abbey Vilija Dinner on Sunday, December 7, 2025 at Benedictine High School in Cleveland. Branch 450 members may purchase tickets for just \$4 (the branch will pay \$21). Tickets for non-members may be purchased for \$25. Call Frank Woyma at 216-225-5688 to RSVP. Make checks payable to St. Joseph Society BR450 FCSU. The deadline to order tickets through our branch is Tuesday, November 18th.

**BRANCH 553 – AKRON, OH**  
*Debbie Speck, President*

All meetings are held at the Slovak J Club, 485 Morgan, Ave., in Akron. If you plan to run for an office, please submit your letter of intent by November 16th. Deliver the letters to the Office. Our next meeting is Sunday, November 23, 2025 at 1pm. Join us for the Election of Branch Officers. RSVP at the bar; luncheon will be served.

Our Children's Christmas Party and Bowling with Santa will be held on Saturday, December 6th from 12-3pm. RSVP at the bar by November 30th.

Our Annual Christmas Vilija Dinner will be held on Sunday, December 14th at 4pm. Reservations are required by December 7th. The Lucina Slovak Dancers will perform after dinner.

Mark your calendars for Sunday, February 15, 2026 at 1pm. During that meeting, we will hold the Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention.

**BRANCH 682 – YOUNGSTOWN, OH**  
*Drew Hirt, President*

The District 14 Annual Christmas Dinner will be held on Tuesday, December 9, 2025 at 6pm. The location is Cassese's MVR, 410 North Walnut St., in Youngstown. The cost is \$33 for adults and \$20 for children 6 and under. Make checks payable to Rev. Joseph Kostik District and mail to Tom Krispinsky, 1300 St. Andrews Place NE, Warren, OH 44484. Include our branch number and number of people attending. Branch 682 will reimburse the cost for all its members in attendance. We look forward to an enjoyable evening with our members and guests.

Additionally, our Branch meeting will take place at 6pm at the beginning of the District Annual Christmas Dinner. Because this event draws our highest attendance, the Election of Branch Officers for 2026 will be held. If you are interested in serving as a Branch officer, please contact me at drew@hirt.com or 330-565-2466.

**BRANCH 731 – YOUNGSTOWN, OH**  
*Anna Schwanitz, Recording Secretary*

Our next branch meeting will be Sunday, November 16, 2025 at 5pm at Coaches, 3032 Center Rd, Poland. This meeting will include the Election of Branch Officers for 2026. We will also hold an Election of Branch Delegate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention.

**BRANCH 764 – WARREN, OH**  
*Bill Hrusovsky, Recording Secretary*

We will be meeting on December 13, 2025 at 12pm at Salvatore's Italian Grill, 8720 East Market St., Warren to hold the Election of Branch Officers for 2026. A review of our recent fundraising soup sale will be addressed. The cost of lunch will be subsidized by \$20 per member or guest. RSVP by Dec. 8th to 330-372-1948 or hrusovskiyw@embarqmail.com.

**BRANCH 855 – CLEVELAND, OH**  
*Stephanie Sutilla, Activities Director*

The branch will hold a meeting on Sunday, November 23, 2025, at 12pm. The meeting will be held at Ruma's Restaurant at 12841 State Rd. in North Royalton. On the agenda will be the Election of Officers for 2026, a wrap-up of the year's events and making plans for next year. The meeting will be followed by a Thanksgiving party that you won't want to miss! All members are invited to attend. Text Barbara Sutilla at 440-864-4744 or email fcsu855@gmail.com to RSVP by November 14th. Guests are invited to join us at a cost of \$25 payable to FCSU Branch 855.

FRATERNALISM IN ACTION: We are fortunate to gather for food with our fraternal friends but there are those who have trouble putting a meal on the table. Our FIA project for this meeting will be collecting non-perishable food for the Parma Hunger Center. Please be generous in the spirit of the holidays. "Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord."

**PENNSYLVANIA**

**BRANCH 5P – EXETER, PA**  
*Mary Jo Rubino, Recording Secretary*

The St. John the Evangelist Society will hold a meeting on Saturday, November 22, 2025, at 12:15pm at Tony's Pizzeria, 1117 Main St, Pittston. Pizza luncheon will be provided. On the agenda will be a discussion of branch business, activities and the Election of Branch Officers. We will also hold the Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. Members are invited and encouraged to attend. Please RSVP to Marion Rubino, President, by November 20th at 570-693-0399.

**BRANCH 23 – JOHNSTOWN, PA**  
*Theresa Cassat, Financial Secretary*

The branch will hold a meeting on Sunday, November 16, 2025 at 1pm at the Greystone Family Restaurant on Theater Drive in Richland. Lunch will be included. Please arrive 15 minutes early to order your meal. We will hold the Election of Branch Officers. All members are encouraged to attend. Contact Theresa with questions at 814-254-2532.

**BRANCH 35 – PITTSBURGH, PA**  
*Janet Sullivan, Recording Secretary*

St. Michael the Archangel will hold its annual meeting virtually on Sunday, December 7, 2025 at 7pm. The agenda will include officers' reports, branch business, and the Election of Branch



**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 2025 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.

**2025 Coloring Contest  
Entry Form**

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

Officers. Contact FCSU35@gmail.com with questions.

Zoom link: [tinyurl.com/Branch35](https://tinyurl.com/Branch35)  
Meeting ID: 791 3891 4877  
Passcode: xFp8hE

**BRANCH 38 – WHITE OAK, PA**  
*Logan Haselhoff, President*

Holy Trinity Society will hold a virtual meeting on Wednesday, December 17, 2025, at 7pm. Attendees will discuss current and future Branch activities and charitable donations. We will also hold the Election of Branch Officers. Our goal is to create a more unified environment and members are urged to attend.

Zoom Link: [tinyurl.com/Branch38Mtg](https://tinyurl.com/Branch38Mtg)  
Meeting ID: 366 261 1231  
Passcode: k3LC7W

**BRANCH 55 – PHILADELPHIA, PA**  
*Helena T. Gaydos, Recording Secretary*

The St. Joseph Society will hold our Annual Meeting on Sunday, December 28, 2025, via Zoom at 2pm. We will hold the Election of Branch Officers. We will also hold the Election of Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. The agenda includes officer and branch reports, discussion of 2026 activities, and charitable donations. RSVP to helenagaydos@outlook.com or 215-613-8987. Contact George Hardiman at george@hardiman.org or text Branch President Erik Payne at 215-280-1554 with questions about the link.

Zoom Link: [tinyurl.com/Branch55Dec](https://tinyurl.com/Branch55Dec)  
Meeting ID: 232 690 9039

Please note that our first Branch activity

for 2026 will be held on January 4, 2026, at the residence of Helena Gaydos, 8401 Roosevelt Blvd., Philadelphia, to celebrate the Epiphany and Vilija.

May everyone enjoy a Most Blessed Advent Christmas Season with the Blessings of good health and good fortune in the New Year. Veselé Vianoce a Šťastný Nový Rok! Ďakujem s pozdravom.

**BRANCH 60 – MCKEESPORT, PA**  
*Julie Perla, Secretary*

Our next meeting will be held on Sunday, December 14th at BRAVO! Cucina Italiana at 250 W. Bridge St., West Homestead at 1pm. On the agenda will be officers' reports, upcoming events and the Election of Branch Officers. We will also hold an Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. All members are urged to attend.

**BRANCH 108 – CONNELLSVILLE, PA**  
*Dolores Kocis, President*

St. John the Apostle Society will hold a meeting on November 12, 2025 at Double Dragon, 142 N. Pittsburgh St., in Conneltsville at 1pm. Members are asked to bring ideas and a monetary donation toward a future branch fraternal activity. We will hold the Election of Branch Officers as well as the Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. RSVP to Branch.Oneoeight@mail.com.

**Send story ideas to editor@fcsu.com**

**BRANCH 112 – MAHANoy CITY, PA**

*Matthew Sterling, Secretary*

St. John the Baptist will hold its annual meeting via Zoom on Sunday, December 14, 2025 at noon. The agenda will include officers' reports and new business. We will hold the Election of Branch Officers for 2026. In addition, we will hold the Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. Contact Karen Sterling at 570-640-1796 for more information.

Zoom Link: [tinyurl.com/Branch112](https://tinyurl.com/Branch112)  
Meeting ID: 858 2166 3663  
Passcode: 735052

**BRANCH 162 – UNIONTOWN, PA**

*Dolores Marmol, Secretary*

The St. Wendelin Society will hold a meeting on Tuesday, December 9, 2025 at 5:30pm at Bogey's Restaurant, 374 Duck Hollow Road, Uniontown. Officers' reports, branch activities, charitable donations and upcoming FCSU events will be discussed. The Election of Branch Officers will take place at this meeting. Members and guests are invited to attend. Call me to RSVP at 724-437-4983.

**FRATERNALISM IN ACTION:** We are participating in an FIA initiative to collect diapers and wipes at our next branch meeting. These items will be given to the Ladies of Charity Children's Closet in Uniontown. This organization provides support for local families giving new or gently used clothing, baby items and toys. Our branch contributions, as well as a generous donation of \$250 from the Home Office, will aid the Ladies of Charity USA assist more people in our community.

**FRATERNALISM IN ACTION:** Our branch community project for 2025 is to decorate a seven-foot Christmas tree at the WVM Uniontown Hospital in support of their annual fundraiser with proceeds going to the volunteer patient projects program. The tree, along with many others, will be on display in the lobby of the hospital and raffled off on December 16th. If you'd like to volunteer to decorate our Branch 162 tree with us, please join us in the hospital lobby on Tuesday, November 25th at 5:30pm. The Home Office will support our volunteerism with a donation of \$250.

**Send Branch Announcements  
to [branch@fcsu.com](mailto:branch@fcsu.com)**

**BRANCH 173 – MOUNTAIN TOP, PA**

*Matthew Ungvarsky, Rec. Secretary*

The St. John the Baptist Society will hold its last meeting on Sunday, December 7th at La Napoli, 427 South Mountain Blvd., Mountain Top starting at 1pm.

General business and a review of 2025 branch activities will be discussed, as well as insurance, annuities, and FCSU fraternal activities. We will hold the Election of Branch Officers. We will also hold the Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention.

Please make every effort to attend and RSVP to Dorothy Ungvarsky at 570-403-2067.

**BRANCH 199 – HOSTETTER, PA**

*Barb Patula, Secretary*

Our next meeting will be held Sunday, November 16, 2025 at 1pm at Sharkey's Café, 3960 Lincoln Highway, Latrobe.

The Election of Branch Officers will be held and lunch will be provided by the branch.

**BRANCH 200 – FORD CITY, PA**

*Vicki Schaub, Secretary*

Please join us at our regular Board Meetings on the 1st Thursday of each month. Our next meeting is December 4, 2025. The meeting will be held at the Slovak CU at 910 6th Ave., Ford City, PA. The Board meeting starts at 7pm. All other members will be called in at approximately 7:20pm. We will hold the Election of Officers. We look forward to seeing you there!

**BRANCH 213 – PITTSBURGH, PA**

*Anita Nixon, President*

St. Michael the Archangel will hold its semi-annual meeting on Sunday, December 14, 2025 at 1pm. It will be held at 306 Barclay Ave., Pittsburgh. The meeting may also be accessed via phone.

The agenda will include Election of Branch Officers for 2026, Officer's Reports, fraternal activities, general branch business, and an overview of this year's activities and charitable donations. We will also discuss any new business, upcoming branch and FCSU activities, and ways to increase our membership. Meeting dates for the upcoming year will also be selected. Contact Anita Nixon at weaz1958@aol.com.

**BRANCH 254 – PITTSBURGH, PA**

*Joseph Senko, Financial Secretary*

St. Wenceslaus Society will hold its annual meeting on Sunday, January 11, 2026, at 12:30pm at Panera located at 1500 Washington Rd., Mount Lebanon. The meeting will include a report of activities, year-end financial report and Election of Branch Officers. We will also hold the Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention followed by a lunch. RSVP to [jtsenko@aol.com](mailto:jtsenko@aol.com) or 412-956-6000.

**BRANCH 276 – MCKEESPORT, PA**

*Margaret A. Nasta, President*

Our next meeting will be held Sunday, November 16, 2025 at 1pm at Tillie's Restaurant, 308 36th St., McKeesport. We will hear reports from the Treasurer and Financial Secretary. An Election of Branch Officers for 2026 will be held. In addition, an Election of Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention will be held. Meeting dates for 2026 will be approved.

**BRANCH 320  
ROSTRAVER TOWNSHIP, PA**

*Mary Anne Higginbotham, President*

Welcome to Fall! Branch 320 will be having their next meeting on November 30, 2025, at 1pm at the home of Frances Tarquinio, 209 Sylvan Dr. in Rostraver Twp. There will be an Election of Officers for the 2026 term. We will discuss the 53rd Quadrennial Convention and delegate duties. RSVP to Frances Tarquinio at 724-929-9788 by November 20th.

It's time to think about Christmas. Our annual Christmas luncheon will be held on Sunday, December 7th at 1pm. It will be held at LaEdas at 1723 Grand Blvd. in Monessen. There will be no charge for members. Non-members may attend for \$20 each. RSVP to Frances Tarquinio at 724-929-9788 by November 23rd.

**FRATERNALISM IN ACTION:** At our Christmas luncheon, Bruce Higginbotham will be coordinating a canned food drive for the St. John XXIII Interfaith Food Pantry at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church (Finleyville). Each donor will receive a chance to win a special gift. The Home Office will also generously send a \$250 donation to the food bank.

Congratulations to Joseph Tarquinio, Spiritual Director of Maria House, who was

recognized at the Catholic Charities Gala as the Helping Hands of Justice honoree. A heartfelt thank you as well to President Ken Arendt for the Home Office's generous support of Catholic Charities.

Frances and Joseph were excited to attend Branch 200's Anniversary where they happily found Pres. Arendt and his wife. Thank you, Vicki, for your gracious invitation and the great Slovak food.

Mary Anne Higginbotham, President of Branch 320, would like to thank the Home Office for sponsoring the Simmons Farms event. Frances Tarquinio, Secretary/Treasurer of Branch 320, also sends special thanks to Joanne Fibbi, FCSU Activities Director, for her part in making this a great day. Two world travelers from Branch 320, Bob and Kim Bury traveled from Alabama to attend.

**BRANCH 393 – GREENSBURG, PA**

*Kirstin Meyer, President*

A Christmas dinner and meeting will be held on December 14, 2025, at Gianelli's II at 4816 SR 30 East Charter Oak, Greensburg at 5:30pm. We will hold the Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention, discuss delegate duties, potential proposed changes to the bylaws, and general updates. Members are encouraged to bring their family to this Christmas gathering. RSVP to Eileen Myers at 724-539-2764 by December 1st.

**BRANCH 410 – UNIONTOWN, PA**

*Geraldine Buchheit, Rec. Secretary*

The SS. Peter and Paul Society will hold a meeting on Thursday, December 4, 2025, at 1:30pm at the Highland House, 92 West Main St., Uniontown. We will hold the Election of Branch Officers. We will also hold the Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. RSVP by December 1st at 724-425-2576.

**BRANCH 484 – CORAL, PA**

*Monica Rura, Financial Secretary*

St. Joseph Society will hold its annual meeting on Saturday, November 29, 2025 at 1:30pm at the Eat 'n Park Restaurant at 2301 Rt. 286 South in Indiana. The agenda will include the Election of Branch Officers, reports, payment of bills, donations, membership, and general branch and business issues. We will also discuss the

**JEDNOTA CROSSWORD PUZZLE**

**Across**

- 1 Group of eight
- 6 Free ticket
- 10 Seaweed substance
- 14 Jeweler's glass
- 15 Dead against
- 16 Down in the dumps
- 17 Stardust actress  
Claire
- 18 Film genre
- 19 Yearn
- 20 Subway alternative
- 21 Indian dish made  
with stewed legumes
- 22 Colorful salamander
- 23 Mudbath locale
- 25 Stocking stuffers
- 27 Parcels of land
- 31 Bear witness
- 35 Sainly glow
- 36 Not yours, not mine
- 40 La Brea goo
- 41 Eye part
- 42 Samovar

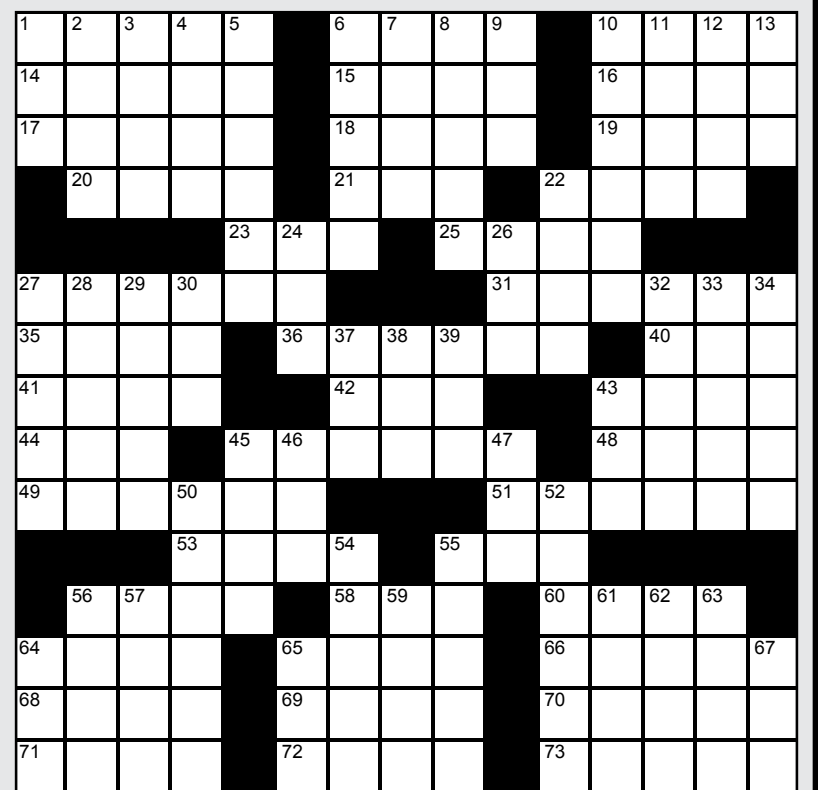
- 43 Store sign
- 44 Comics cry
- 45 Within reach
- 48 Stratford-\_\_\_-Avon
- 49 California city
- 51 Start
- 53 Phobos, to Mars
- 55 Chapel vow
- 56 Fiber source
- 58 Raggedy doll
- 60 Highland toppers
- 64 Hit the road
- 65 Passionate
- 66 Make happy
- 68 Final notice
- 69 Himalayan legend
- 70 Calf roping site
- 71 Coloratura soprano  
Lily
- 72 Choice word
- 73 Appears

**Down**

- 1 Hackneyed
- 2 Checked item
- 3 Sushi staple
- 4 Summit
- 5 Refrain
- 6 Bamboo forest  
denizen
- 7 Dwarf buffalo
- 8 Pink-legged bird
- 9 Round Table title
- 10 Most capable
- 11 Radiate
- 12 Em, to Dorothy
- 13 Gas station abbr.
- 22 Fishing aids
- 24 LAX setting
- 26 Sculler's need
- 27 Bandit
- 28 Less common
- 29 Similar
- 30 Romaine lettuce
- 32 Stage or leg (Fr.)
- 33 Place for a perm

- 34 1545 council site
- 37 "Say what?"
- 38 Historical period
- 39 Roadhouse
- 43 Ford Explorer, e.g.
- 45 Auth. unknown
- 46 Also
- 47 Family man
- 50 Common sense
- 52 Grandparents,  
usually
- 54 Belly button
- 55 Film company
- 56 Good name for a  
clown
- 57 Destroy
- 59 Pesky insects
- 61 Lotion additive
- 62 Fabricated
- 63 Flower part
- 64 Defeat
- 65 Sailor's assent
- 67 Dawn deity

Answers on Page 23



53rd Quadrennial Convention.

We wish our members, families and friends a beautiful Fall Season, a Blessed Christmas and a Healthy and Happy New Year!

### BRANCH 587 – ALIQUIPPA, PA

*Joanne Fibbi, President*

Branch 587 will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, December 7, 2025 at 2pm at the home of President Joanne Fibbi at 1741 Hempstead Lane, Pittsburgh. We will hold the Election of Branch Officers for 2026. We will also hold the Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. If you are interested in representing our branch as a delegate to the 2026 convention, please email Joanne Fibbi at [jfibbi@gmail.com](mailto:jfibbi@gmail.com). New FIA projects and activities will also be discussed. We encourage all members to attend.

Following the annual meeting, please join us for our branch Christmas Party, which is free to members and \$40 for guests. We will share a holiday buffet, games, music, door prizes and gifts for the kids. This year, we will have a Cookie Exchange. Members are asked to bring three dozen of their favorite homemade Christmas treats to share. If you are unable to bake, let us know and we will assist you. Kindly RSVP for the Annual Meeting and Christmas Party to [jfibbi@gmail.com](mailto:jfibbi@gmail.com) or 412-953-4721 by November 21st.

**FRATERNALISM IN ACTION:** Thanks to our members for their donations in support of the St. Vincent DePaul Society Winter Coat Drive at Our Lady of Fatima Church. Our next FIA project will benefit the Ringgold Middle School Care Closet in Monongahela. Please bring donations to our December 7th meeting. Requested items include personal hygiene products (deodorant, shampoo), school supplies, and new clothing (hoodies, sweatshirts, sweatpants, and leggings) for middle school aged students. Wishing all members a Happy and Blessed Thanksgiving.

### BRANCH 628 – W HOMESTEAD, PA

*Sylvia Vehec, Recording Secretary*

A meeting of St. Michael the Archangel Society will take place on Saturday, December 20, 2025, at 3pm at the Penn

Hebron Garden Club, 237 Jefferson Rd., Penn Hills. The agenda includes the Election of Branch Officers, summary of branch business, and possible delegates for the convention.

### BRANCH 857 – LEVITTOWN, PA

*Anthony Nasta, Recording Secretary*

The St. Michael the Archangel Society will hold its next meeting on Thursday, November 13, 2025 at 7pm via Zoom. The link is [tinyurl.com/Branch857-1125](https://tinyurl.com/Branch857-1125).

Due to a change in plans, our annual meeting will now be held on Sunday, December 14, 2025 at 1:15pm at The IHM Center - Our Lady of Grace Parish, 338 Hulmeville Rd. in Pennel. We will hold the Election of Officers for 2026. We will also hold the Election of Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention.

## WISCONSIN

### BRANCH 89 – MILWAUKEE, WI

*Mike Novak, President*

Please join us for our Christmas Party on December 6, 2025 at 4pm. Members are free. Guests are welcome but will pay for their own meal and beverages. The meeting location is Bander County Wood Grill, N96W16865, Cumberland Court, Menomonee Falls. (Highway 41 North and County Q Exit). Please call me at 414-445-5382 to RSVP by November 28th. You MUST CONFIRM.

## CANADA

### BRANCH 785 – MISSISSAUGA, ON

*Anne Mitro, Recording Secretary*

The annual meeting will be held on Sunday, December 14, 2025 at 2pm. It will be at Sts. Cyril and Methodius Slovak Church Hall, 5255 Thornwood Dr., Mississauga. We will hold the Election of Branch Officers and review the past year. We will also hold the Election of Branch Delegate(s) and Alternate(s) for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. Please RSVP to Milan Zoldak at 416-565-3960.

# DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Send **DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENTS** to [district@fcsu.com](mailto:district@fcsu.com)

### DISTRICT 1 – REV. MATTHEW JANKOLA DISTRICT – CT

*Deborah M. Nelson, Secretary*

The District will conduct its first meeting of the year via Zoom on Sunday, January 25, 2026, at 10am. We will hold the Election of District Delegate and Alternate for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention.

Zoom Link: [tinyurl.com/DistOneJan26](https://tinyurl.com/DistOneJan26)  
Meeting ID: 834 7090 1343  
Passcode: 291009

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

*Paul Chismar, President*

The annual meeting will be held on Sunday, November 30, 2025 at the Missionary Sister of St. Benedict, 5900 West 147th St., Oak Forest, IL. There will be socializing and refreshments at 1:30pm with the meeting beginning at 2pm. We will hold the Election of District Officers as well as the Election of District Delegate and Alternate for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. Please bring a gift for the raffle. RSVP to Dorothy Jurcenko at 708-995-7378.

### DISTRICT 3 – GEORGE ONDA DISTRICT – PA

*Kirstin Meyer, Recording Secretary*

District 3 will be sponsoring a Štedrý Večer, a traditional Slovak Christmas Eve Dinner, on Sunday, December 7, 2025 at Christ Our Shepherd Center in Greensburg, PA.

Schedule: 2pm Mass  
3:30pm Advent & Christmas Pageant  
provided by the Pittsburgh Slovaks  
4:30pm Dinner

Cost: \$35 (ages 12+) / \$10 (ages 6-11) / Free (Children under 6)

A limited number of tickets available. Do not delay ordering your tickets as this event routinely sells out. Reservations are taken on a first come, first served basis and MUST be made by November 21st by calling Darlene Patty at 724-493-8712.

### DISTRICT 5 – MICHIGAN DISTRICT – MI

*Joseph C. Rimarcik, District Secretary*

The District will hold its annual meeting on Sunday, November 16, 2025, at SS. Cyril & Methodius Slovak Catholic Church at 41233 Ryan Rd., Sterling Heights at 1:30pm. No lunch will be served. On the agenda will be officers' reports and new business which includes the 2026 financial budget. We will hold the Election of District Officers. We will also hold the Election of District Delegate and Alternate for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. Please remember, a Branch Delegate must attend at least one District meeting in order to qualify for their stipend.

### DISTRICT 6 – PITTSBURGH DISTRICT – PA

*Margaret A. Nasta, Recording Secretary*

Branch 276 will host the Fall Business Meeting on Sunday, November 23, 2025 at 1pm at Holy Trinity Church Hall of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, 529 Grant Street Ext., West Mifflin. Please RSVP to [manasta@verizon.net](mailto:manasta@verizon.net). The agenda will include a discussion of proposed changes to the district dues policy, nomination and Election of Officers for 2026 and nominations and Election of District Delegate and Alternate for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention.

Other announcements of local interest:

- WPSCA: Meets at 7pm on first Mondays at the Mount Lebanon Public Library. November: Slovak Pastries; December: Show & Tell. WPSCA sponsors scholarships and hosts other events. Become a member to get the newsletter [wpscapgh@gmail.com](mailto:wpscapgh@gmail.com).
- NSS - Christmas Around the World: Saturday, November 29th from 11 to 4pm. Food, crafts, photo with St. Nick - free admission. Really folks, if you haven't seen the animated Nativity display at the museum, you should come on down.
- 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. Tune in to the very informative Virtual Calls hosted by the Home Office. Keep your beneficiaries up to date. FCSU insurance information and forms are available at [www.FCSU.com](http://www.FCSU.com).

### DISTRICT 10 – REV STEPHEN FURDEK DISTRICT – OH

*Gregory Petrasek, President*

All members of District 10 in Branches 1, 24, 228, 450, 553 and 855 are invited to our first meeting of the year on March 8, 2026. The meeting will take place at 2pm at St. Leo the Great Church Community Center, 4940 Broadview Rd., Cleveland. We will discuss news from the Home Office including convention details, participate in a Fraternalism in Action project (to be announced in the next issue) and hold the Election of our District Delegate and Alternate to the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. The meeting will be hosted by Branch 855 – bring your appetite for soup, soup and more soup! Please RSVP to Barbara Sutilla by February 22, 2026 by emailing [Ohiodistrict10@yahoo.com](mailto:Ohiodistrict10@yahoo.com) or texting or calling 440-864-4744.

#### QUARTERLY BUSINESS MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

FCSU HOME OFFICE  
6611 ROCKSIDE RD, STE 300  
INDEPENDENCE, OHIO 44131  
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2025

The **QUARTERLY BUSINESS MEETING** of the Board of Directors of the First Catholic Slovak Union of the United States and Canada will be held on:

**Saturday, December 13, 2025 at 9:00am**  
*Virtual Meeting*

All Officers are requested to consult Section 6.03(b) of our Bylaws for further information concerning officer participation and the conduct of this meeting.

Officers who are required to give reports at the Quarterly Meeting should send them to the attention of the Executive Secretary, COO, Kevin J. Collins, and should be sent for receipt at the Home Office on or before Friday, December 5, 2025.

All correspondence relative to the Quarterly Business Meeting of the Board of Directors should be directed to the attention of the Executive Secretary, COO, Kevin J. Collins and should be mailed for receipt at the Home Office prior to December 5, 2025.

The Executive Committee Meeting will be held following the Board of Directors Meeting on Friday, December 13, 2025.

For any additional information contact the Home Office at 800.533.6682.

Kenneth A. Arendt  
National President, CEO

Kevin J. Collins  
Executive Secretary, COO

**DISTRICT 11 – MSGR. JOSEPH TISO DISTRICT – PA**

*Karen Greggs, Recording Secretary*

The annual meeting of Msgr. Joseph Tiso District will be held on Thursday, November 13, 2025 at 6:30pm. The meeting will be held at the CU Club, 914 6th Ave., Ford City, PA. We will hold the Election of District Officers. We will also discuss upcoming events and making initial plans for 2026. A light supper will follow. We hope to see all of you there!

**DISTRICT 14 – REV. JOSEPH L KOSTIK DISTRICT – OH, PA**

*Jacqueline Bobby, Recording Secretary*

The district will hold a short meeting on Tuesday, December 9, 2025 at 6pm. It will be followed by our annual Christmas party on at Cassese’s MVR located at 410 North Walnut St. in Youngstown, OH. The cost is \$33 for adults and \$20 for children 6 and under. Reservations are required and must be paid by November 25th. Make checks payable to Rev. Joseph Kostik District and mail to Tom Krispinsky, 1300 St. Andrews Place NE, Warren, OH 44484. Include your branch number and amount of people attending. We look forward to an enjoyable evening with our members and guests.

**DISTRICT 15 – PRINCE PRIBINA DISTRICT – AR, CA, KS, MN, OR, WA**

*Paul Skuben, President*

Our Annual Meeting is on Saturday, November 29, 2025 at the Slovak American Center, 1690 Placentia Ave., Fullerton, CA. The meeting will start at 11am with an agenda of officers’ reports and financial report. We will have the Election of Officers for 2026. We will also hold the Election of our District Delegate and Alternate to the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. We will prepare for the Slovak Christmas mass, and plan activities for next year. All branches in our area are encouraged to participate and have their concurrent annual meeting. Lunch will be at the Olive Garden after the meeting.

**DISTRICT 16 – MSGR. STEPHEN KRASULA DISTRICT – NYC**

*Renata Jurasiova-Vasil, Financial Secretary*

Join us at our Vilija Dinner on Sunday, December 14, 2025 at 1pm. It takes place after mass at St. John Nepomucene Church hall on 411 E. 66th St., New York City. Looking forward to seeing everyone there. See the ad on page 21.

The semi-annual meeting will be held on Sunday, March 8, 2026, at 1pm at the rectory of the St. John Nepomucene Church at 411 E. 66th St., New York City. We will hold the Election of District Delegate and Alternate for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. We will also discuss upcoming activities. Refreshments will be served after the meeting. We kindly ask all officers and members to attend.

**DISTRICT 19 – MSGR. MICHAEL SHUBA DISTRICT – CANADA**

*Anne Mitro, Recording Secretary*

The annual meeting will be held on Sunday, December 14, 2025 at 2pm at Sts. Cyril and Methodius Slovak Church Hall, 5255 Thornwood Dr., Mississauga. We will hold the Election of District Officers and review the past year. We will also hold the Election of District Delegate and Alternate for the 53rd Quadrennial Convention. Please RSVP to Mike Kapitan at 416-543-4111.



**Branch 746 Fall Meeting Blends Faith and Fellowship**

*Submitted by Sabina Sabados, Region 1 Director*

Members of Branch 746, St. John the Baptist Society in Linden, NJ, gathered on Sunday, October 5, 2025, at Holy Family Roman Catholic Church for their annual fall meeting with a day rooted in faith and community spirit.

The day began with Slovak Mass, celebrated by Fr. Tadeusz Mierzwa, a fellow Jednota member. The liturgy was made especially meaningful by the participation of parish children who led the readings in Slovak and sang with enthusiasm. After Mass, parishioners were invited to a light breakfast in the parish hall offering a chance for fellowship before the meeting began.

During the fall branch meeting, members discussed upcoming plans, including a plethora of events, community outreach, and ways to support the Slovak-American community. Members brought non-perishable food donations to benefit the St. John the Apostle Church Food Pantry, a small but meaningful gesture of support for local families in need.

Following the meeting, members enjoyed a lunch of traditional Slovak dishes catered by Julie and Steve Rada. Before concluding, the group celebrated October birthdays for Magda, Jozefina, and Emil with a round of “Happy Birthday,” and acknowledged those that recently celebrated their name day!

Branch 746 remains committed to fostering faith, preserving Slovak heritage, and supporting community through service one gathering at a time.

**Annual Toronto Slovak Open Golf Day**

*Submitted by John Tokarsky, Fraternal Activities Director of the Toronto Area District and Branch Jednota*

Jednota members and guests enjoyed a beautiful day at Centennial Park Golf Course in Toronto on Sunday, September 21, 2025. Twenty people participated with prizes to John Janoff Jr. and Bill Goodyear in the men’s member division, Nicole Zoldak in the ladies member division and Ron Grieve in the guest division. Closest To the Hole prizes were won by Milan Zoldak and Jennifer Lindsay. Afterwards members and guests enjoyed a complimentary meal and beverage of their choice and comradery at a local restaurant. Special thanks to Helen von Friedl for the picture taking. Stay tuned for details about next year’s Toronto Slovak Open Golf Day!



**ELECTIONS ARE COMING!**  
Send in group photos of your newly elected officers!

**District 19 and Branch 785 Annual Communion Breakfast**

*Submitted by Anne Mitro, District and Branch Recording Secretary*

To celebrate the Feast of “Our Lady Of Sorrows”, who is Patroness of Slovakia, District 19 and Branch 785 co-sponsored with other Spolky of the Toronto area. They are Sts. Cyril and Methodius Slovak Parish in Mississauga’s Rosary Society, local branch of Catholic Sokol, and the local Kanadsky Slovak League. The Annual Communion Breakfast was held on Sunday, September 21, 2025 after each mass. Everyone enjoyed the bagels and cream cheese, donuts, coffee, tea, and juices. This event historically has been held at Sts. Cyril and Methodius parish for over 50 years with all the same Spolky participating. It was a great event !



*Anne Mitro, Secretary for both District 19 and Branch 785, Christine Tokarsky and Marilyn Jursa*



*Mike Kapitan, (President of District 19), Ruzena Kapitan, (VP of Branch 785), and Mary Zoldak*



# 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

BRANCH	NAME	BRANCH	NAME
002K	Michael Mato	367K	George W. Lengjak
004K	Ann M. Fischer	382K	Gregg Budziszewski
005P	Lena Marie Seman	393K	Patricia A. Debich
006K	Edward Cebulko	429K	Patricia Tarcha
019K	Dorothy Tutko	450K	Joseph Profancik
019K	Rita O'Hare	456K	Marcella Wood
023K	Dennis Leech	484K	John J. Gnibus
024K	Joelyn L. Thur	543K	Arthur Bistyak
055K	Michelle E. Velas	553K	David E. Binns
060K	Alan R. Perun	553K	James L. Kolton
075K	Ann Suchanek	553K	Jerome Pecko
075K	Edward Conjura	595K	Edward Kandalec
089K	Jeanette C. Kensler	670K	Kathy J. Delso
153K	Robert Pkelnicky	682K	Jean A. Korhely
157K	Annette Regec	731K	Joseph J. Maxin
157K	Margaret Ann Hogan-Brock	743K	Agnes Eland
166K	Gail W. Zirpolo	746K	Eleanore Pry
173K	Annette Soltysiak	796K	Bernard Stanley Marhefka
173K	Bernard Walko	831K	Mark Magoc
173K	Jerome James Piazza	831K	Robert F. Pavlik
173K	Mike Stretanski	857K	Alice V. Herman
173K	Patricia Kneiss	857K	Carol Gerardi
173K	Sr. Mary Iskra	857K	Helen J. Crouse
181K	Helen Deflorio	890K	Jerome Malcovsky
181K	Stephen G. Viazanko	900K	Joseph P. Brinza
199K	Anna M. Wallace	900K	Christopher D. Hunter
200K	John Louis Popolis	900K	Lloyd H. Jones
200K	Michael W. Nimerosky	904K	Du Wayne Doty
215K	Christopher R. Walck	919K	Bradley J. Smith Sr.
228K	John Joseph Gluvna Jr.	921K	James Peltier
259K	Laura Schenker	926K	Ruth Gamerdinger
276K	Thomas V. Morrissey	926K	Lucy E. Crook
290K	Gerald Kovac		
313K	Lynne Barry-Allen		
367K	Frank P. Student		

\* Processed in the month of October 2025

## Henry G. Hassay, Sr., Regional Director Emeritus, Passed into Eternal Life on September 27, 2025

Henry G. Hassay, Sr., 91, passed away peacefully on Saturday, September 27, 2025, at Aventura at Assumption Village, surrounded by his loving family.



In retirement, Henry was an avid golfer who savored time spent on the course. He and his beloved wife, Betty, enjoyed escaping Ohio winters to relax at their home in Florida, where they especially cherished visits from family.

Henry was born on January 20, 1934, in Youngstown, OH, a son of the late John and Susan (Hlafcak) Hassay. He was a 1952 graduate of East High School.

A skilled and dedicated craftsman, Henry acted as the longtime President of Haselton Motors on Wilson Avenue, where he took great pride in his work and always stood by the automobiles he sold to customers.

Henry was a resident of Poland Township for more than 60 years. A former Vice Chairman of the Mahoning County Democratic Party, Henry took an active role in community and civic life: He served as the Regional Director for the First Catholic Slovak Union and later became Regional Director Emeritus. Henry was also Court Administrator for the late Judge John Leskovyansky and a longtime member of St. Matthias Church, Our Lady of Sorrows Parish. Indeed, Henry always freely offered a helping hand to friends and neighbors.

He is survived by his devoted wife of 70 years, the former Betty Jane Auld; their three children, Cynthia L. Hassay of Struthers, OH, Henry G. (Jane) Hassay, Jr. of Canfield, OH, and Stacey H. (Dan) Clevenger of Rocky River, OH; seven grandchildren, Jessica (Rob) Schlueter, Dylan (Sara) Jones, Alex Fidram, Sr., H. Cole (Sophia) Hassay, Taylor (Adam Barnhizer) Hassay, Jamie Clevenger, and Morgan Clevenger; and six great-grandchildren, Alex Fidram, Jr., Ava Schlueter, Claire Schlueter, Layla Fidram, Max Jones, and Jake Jones.

Henry's family finds solace in that he has joined his parents in Heaven, meeting his father—who passed away before Henry's birth—for the first time. He also rejoins his brothers, John, Paul, Stanley, Edward, and Ted Hassay; his sister, Alice Dudik; and his brother-in-law and business partner, James Auld.

### Father Sylvester Bendzell Branch 23 Johnstown, PA



The Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown is mourning the passing of its oldest living priest. Reverend Sylvester J. Bendzella, passed on October 1, 2025, at Mountain Top Rehabilitation Center in Mountain Top, PA.

Father Bendzella was active in the FCSU and served as Jednota's chaplain for District 7 and Branch 23. Until the last couple years, he regularly attended meetings and led members in prayer. He showed a deep love for his Catholic Slovak heritage and enjoyed singing "Hej Slováci."

Father Bendzella was an avid reader, and had an extensive collection of non-fiction books, having read every one. In addition, Father was also a true outdoorsman and loved to be in nature. He enjoyed fishing, hunting and hiking. He knew every creek, field, hill and woods within a large radius of his

home in Northern Cambria. At 90 years old, he still enjoyed kayaking on Lake Naomi and long adventurous walks. Father Sylvester also enjoyed traveling to Slovakia to visit relatives where he compiled an extensive genealogy study dating back to the 18th century.

Born on November 25, 1932, in Barnesboro, PA, the son of the late Joseph and Mary (Tomechko) Bendzella, he attended Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary in Catonsville, MD, and Saint Mary Seminary, in Baltimore, MD. He was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown at St. Francis Chapel in Loretto, PA on May 23, 1959.

Father Sylvester went on to serve God in many parishes located in the Johnstown and Altoona Dioceses. Among his early assignments were Saint Michael Parish in Clarence and Saint Stephen Parish in Johnstown. He was a part-time instructor at Bishop McCort Catholic High School.

Father Bendzella served as Pastor of Saint John the Baptist Parish in Central City from 1968-1983 and Saints Cyril and Methodius Parish in Windber from 1983-1988. He was appointed Pastor of Saint

Michael Parish in Clarence in 1988 and then Pastor of Saint Mary Parish in Snow Shoe in 1991, concluding his tenure at both parishes in 2003.

In his later years, he served as a hospital chaplain in Johnstown while residing at Saint Andrew Parish, and he was a chaplain at the Veterans Home in Hollidaysburg while in residence at Saint Rose of Lima Parish in Altoona. Father Bendzella retired in 2008.

### George William Lengjak Branch 367 Fairchance, PA



George William Lengjak, age 89, of Roscoe, Illinois passed away on Wednesday, July 30, 2025. He was born December 2, 1935 in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, the son of Michael and Elizabeth (Hromluk) Lengjak. George was the youngest of 10 children. He graduated from North Union Township High School, Class of 1953. George

belonged to the Outdoor Club, Historian Club, Model Airplane Club, the Rifle Club and the Civics Club while attending school. He also played basketball in high school. George proudly served his country in the United States Army during the Korean War. George was very proud to attend Vets Roll in 2014. He married the love of his life, Laura Molzahn, on September 29, 1962 at St. Peter's Catholic Church in South Beloit, IL. George spent 25 years in Laborers Local 1440, and another 25 years as the Business Agent for the same Local, which he enjoyed tremendously, retiring in 2000. He attended St. Peter's Catholic Church in South Beloit. In his younger years, he enjoyed hunting, any outdoor activity and playing baseball. In his later years, he enjoyed spending time outside mowing his lawn. George was a sport nut, especially cheering on the Pittsburgh Pirates and the Steelers. He enjoyed watching his children and grandchildren play sports. Most of all, George loved spending time with his family.

## FCSU Search-A-Word

## NOVEMBER Word List

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

**YAMS**                      **RODINA (Family)**  
**TURKEY**                 **VEČERA (Dinner)**  
**PILGRIMS**              **KOLÁČE (Cakes)**  
**STUFFING**              **VĎAČNÝ (Grateful)**  
**MAYFLOWER**         **PRIATELIA (Friends)**  
**THANKSGIVING**      **ZEMIAKY (Potatoes)**



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 December 29, 2025.**

Five winners will be drawn from all correct entries.

### September Puzzle Winners

Jennifer Dobbins (Branch 24)  
 Marion Fayta (Branch 153)  
 Eileen Holt (Branch 746)  
 Thomas Pecuch (Branch 157)  
 Erich Schwer (Branch 290)

**Congratulations and Keep Puzzling!**

We invite you to  
 District 16's  
*Christmas*  
**Vilija Dinner**

JOIN US FOR A HOLIDAY CELEBRATION  
 WITH TRADITIONAL FOOD & DRINK

**DEC 14TH**  
 Following the Slovak  
 Mass at 12:00pm

Admission: \$25 for  
 adults, children are free

St. John Nepomucene  
 Church  
 411 E 66th St.  
 New York, NY 10065

## FRANTastic Cuisine

BY FRAN STREKAL

**POTATO LATKES (PANCAKES)**  
 Crispy on the outside, soft and savory inside – perfect as a side dish or snack!

**INGREDIENTS:**  
 4 large potatoes, peeled and finely grated  
 1 small onion, finely grated  
 2 cloves garlic, finely grated  
 1 egg  
 1 tsp salt  
 ½ tsp black pepper  
 All-purpose flour (roughly ½ of a cup-  
 enough to form a thick batter)  
 Oil for frying (Avocado oil recommended)

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. In a large bowl, combine grated potatoes, onion, and garlic.
2. Add egg, salt, and pepper; mix well.
3. Stir in flour gradually until the mixture is thick and gooey.
4. Heat oil in a frying pan over medium-high heat.
5. Spoon batter into the pan, flattening slightly to form pancakes.
6. Fry until golden brown and crisp on both sides.
7. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate to drain excess oil.
8. Serve hot—enjoy plain, or with sour cream or applesauce!

Tip: For extra crispiness, squeeze excess liquid from the grated potatoes before mixing.

# News from Slovakia - Správy zo Slovenska

## Memorial To Our Founder Reverend Stefan Furdek In Slovakia

Letter submitted by Marián Stolarik, Ph.D.



The official installation of a memorial to the Rev. Štefan Furdek (1855-1915), the founder of Jednota, took place in his hometown of Trstena, Slovakia on September 25, 2025.

The granite monument stands on the grounds of the house in which Furdek was born. It was sponsored by the local branch of the Matica slovenská as well as by the city of Trstena. A special program about Furdek was organized in the local "Cultural Hall", which included a slide-show of his former house, a short play about Furdek, and a question-and-answer session between the organizers and students from the local high school.

FCSU member Marian Stolarik, Ph.D., Emeritus Professor of Slovak History, University of Ottawa, Canada sent them an appreciation letter which was read at the opening ceremony.

We would like to share an excerpt from his letter with our members.

"I am very glad that Matica slovenská and the citizens of Trstena have not forgotten the "Father of American Slovaks," who came from your town, and that you wish to honor him again at the place where his family home once stood. He truly deserves it.

Father Furdek studied theology in Prague and was ordained a priest in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1882. The following year, he took charge of the Czech parish of Our Lady of Lourdes, where he served both the Czech and Slovak communities in Cleveland until his death in 1915.

Rev. Furdek was very active among Slovaks in America. In 1890, he helped them establish the First Catholic Slovak Union (men's organization), and in 1892, the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association."

In his letter Mr. Stolarik continues:

"In 1891, Furdek also founded and originally edited the magazine Jednota for the men's organization. That magazine still exists today, with a circulation of 40,000 copies, making it the largest Slovak—now bilingual—publication in the Western world.

In 1893, Furdek helped found Matica slovenská in America and became its first president; in 1907, he helped establish the Slovak League of America and also served as its first president. He participated as well in the founding of the Slovak Catholic Congress in 1911.

Incidentally, Furdek financially supported persecuted Slovak leaders in Hungary, such as Andrej Hlinka and Svetozár Hurban Vajanský; he founded the fund "For Our Slovak Language" (Za tú našu slovenčinu) and published many books and calendars for Slovaks in America. He even composed the Hymn of American Slovaks! He truly earned the title "Father of American Slovaks."

Therefore, on behalf of American and Canadian Slovaks, I thank Matica slovenská and the citizens of Trstena for not forgetting your very distinguished native son, Štefan Furdek, who accomplished so much for Slovaks in America in the national cause. Honor to his memory!"

## Pamätník Našeho Zakladateľa, Reverenda Štefana Furdeka Na Slovensku

List predložil Marián Stolarik, Ph.D.

Oficiálne odhalenie pamätníka reverenda Štefana Furdeka (1855 – 1915), zakladateľa Jednoty, sa konalo v jeho rodnom meste Trstena na Slovensku 25. septembra 2025.

Žulový pamätník stojí na pozemku domu, v ktorom sa Furdek narodil. Jeho sponzormi boli miestna pobočka Matice slovenskej, ako aj mesto Trstena. V miestnej „Kultúrnej sále“ bol zorganizovaný špeciálny program o Furdekovi, ktorý zahŕňal premietanie diapozitívov z jeho bývalého domu, krátku hru o Furdekovi a diskusiu medzi organizátormi a študentmi z miestnej strednej školy.

Člen FCSU Marian Stolarik, emeritný profesor slovenských dejín na Univerzite v Ottawe v Kanade, im poslal ďakovný list, ktorý bol prečítaný na slávnostnom otvorení.

Radi by sme sa s našimi členmi podelili o úryvok z jeho listu.

„Som veľmi rád, že Matica slovenská a obyvatelia Trstenej nezabudli na „otca amerických Slovákov“, ktorý pochádzal z vášho mesta, a že si ho chcete opäť uctiť na mieste, kde kedysi stál jeho rodinný dom. Naozaj si to zaslúži.“

Farar Furdek študoval teológiu v Prahe a v roku 1882 bol v Clevelande v štáte Ohio vysvätený za kňaza. Nasledujúci rok prevzal vedenie českej farnosti Panny Márie Lurdskej, kde slúžil českej aj slovenskej komunite v Clevelande až do svojej smrti v roku 1915.

Reverend Furdek bol veľmi aktívny medzi Slovákami v Amerike. V roku 1890 im pomohol založiť Prvú Katolícku Slovenskú Úniu (mužskú organizáciu) a v roku 1892 Prvú Katolícku Slovenskú Ženskú Organizáciu."

Vo svojom liste pán Stolarik pokračuje:

„V roku 1891 Furdek tiež založil a pôvodne redigoval časopis Jednota pre mužskú organizáciu. Tento časopis existuje dodnes s nákladom 40 000 výtlačkov, čo z neho robí najväčšiu slovenskú – teraz dvojjazyčnú – publikáciu v západnom svete.“

V roku 1893 Furdek pomohol založiť Maticu slovenskú v Amerike a stal sa jej prvým prezidentom; v roku 1907 pomohol založiť Slovenskú ligu Ameriky a bol tiež jej prvým prezidentom. V roku 1911 sa tiež podieľal na založení Slovenského katolíckeho kongresu.

Mimochodom, Furdek finančne podporoval prenasledovaných slovenských vodcov v Maďarsku, ako boli Andrej Hlinka a Svetozár Hurban Vajanský; založil fond „Za tú našu slovenčinu“ a vydal mnoho kníh a kalendárov pre Slovákov v Amerike. Dokonca zložil Hymnu amerických Slovákov! Naozaj si zaslúžil titul „Otec amerických Slovákov“.

Preto v mene amerických a kanadských Slovákov ďakujem Matici slovenskej a obyvateľom Trstenej za to, že nezabudli na vášho veľmi významného rodáka Štefana Furdeka, ktorý pre Slovákov v Amerike v národnej veci dosiahol toľko. Česť jeho pamiatke!"

*For God and Nation  
„Za Boha a národ“*



# Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting

## Saturday, September 13, 2025 • Hyattsville, MD

**OPEN MEETING:**

President Kenneth A. Arendt opened the meeting at 8pm and asked Damian Nasta to lead the prayer.

**ROLL CALL:**

Members Attending:

- Kenneth A. Arendt ..... National President
- Damian Nasta ..... National Vice President
- Kevin J. Collins ..... Executive Secretary
- John Tokarsky..... Treasurer (Excused)
- Timothy Graves..... Regional Director (by invitation of the President)

**ACCEPTANCE OF THE MEETING MINUTES:**

The Executive Secretary presented the minutes of the August 15, 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 Board of Directors. Each member of the Board received a copy of the presentation in advance for his or her review. Following the report, he answered the Board's questions.

**ECONOMIC OVERVIEW:**

President reviewed the second quarter financial statement and answered the Board's questions. The financial statement will be published in the newspaper.

*Annuity Rates:*

The President reviewed the new annuity rate change that will be in effect September 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025. These new rates will be published in the newspaper, on the website, and emailed to all members.

**TREASURERS REPORT:**

Treasurer John Tokarsky submitted his monthly written Treasurer's report to the Board of Directors. Following the report, he answered the Board's questions.

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT:**

*Investment Updates*

The President and the Executive Secretary submitted a written report to the Board of Directors 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 presented a detailed summary of the Financial Report for Quarter 2 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 August for 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 August

Death Benefits & Accumulations.....	\$211,512.00
Cash Withdrawals & Accumulations.....	\$61,572.40
Matured Endowments & Accumulations .....	\$0.00
Trust Fund.....	\$0.00

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 stated to the Board of Directors he will continue the monthly Virtual Call program with the Districts and Branches, the past topics discussed have been current insurance and annuity products. 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.

**FRATERNAL ACTIVITIES REPORT:**

The details for the Family Fall Festival are being finalized. The Family Fall Festival National Picnic will be held on October 4, 2025 at Simmons Farm in McMurray, PA. All upcoming fraternal activities will be published in the Jednota newspaper and posted on our website.

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

The President stated to the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee that preliminary information about the upcoming 2026 Convention is being prepared and will be sent to Districts and Branches over the first two weeks of September 2025. The 2026 Convention will be held June 20-23, 2026 at Embassy Suites by Hilton Golf Resort & Conference Center in Greenville, South Carolina. The call for the convention was published in the Jednota newspaper and posted on our 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 Kevin Collins to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Damian Nasta closed the meeting with prayer.

Kenneth A. Arendt  
President, CEO

Kevin J. Collins  
Executive Secretary, COO

*Crossword Puzzle Solution from Page 17*

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



Did you hear about the turkey that plays baseball?  
*He covers first base*

---

What kind of music do Pilgrims listen to?  
*Plymouth rock*

### Home Office Contacts

800.533.6682 • fcsu@fcsu.com

**LIFE INSURANCE**

**SUZANNE** .....Ext. 115 ..... [suzanneb@fcsu.com](mailto:suzanneb@fcsu.com)  
Life Insurance Department Services, Beneficiary Changes, Cash Value / Surrenders and Medical Assistance Information

**FRAN**.....Ext. 116 ..... [frans@fcsu.com](mailto:frans@fcsu.com)  
Claims Department, Life Insurance Claims

**JULIE**.....Ext. 125 ..... [juliec@fcsu.com](mailto:juliec@fcsu.com)  
Life Insurance Department Services, Address Changes, Policy Payments

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**KELLY** .....Ext. 127 ..... [kellys@fcsu.com](mailto:kellys@fcsu.com)  
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**DOROTA** .....Ext. 129..... [dorotap@fcsu.com](mailto:dorotap@fcsu.com)  
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**AGENT SUPPORT**

**ANDREA** .....Ext. 112..... [andream@fcsu.com](mailto:andream@fcsu.com)  
Agent Coordinator, Commissions

**ACCOUNTS PAYABLE**

**AMBER** .....Ext. 128..... [amberg@fcsu.com](mailto:amberg@fcsu.com)  
Accounts Payable, Life Insurance Policy Loans, Mortgages

**BRANCH SUPPORT**

**BARBARA** .....Ext. 122..... [branch@fcsu.com](mailto:branch@fcsu.com)  
[district@fcsu.com](mailto:district@fcsu.com)

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**PAM** .....Ext. 119 ..... [pamk@fcsu.com](mailto:pamk@fcsu.com)  
Office Assistant, Branch and District Coordinator

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**SHANNON** .....Ext. 123..... [editor@fcsu.com](mailto:editor@fcsu.com)  
Jednota Editor, Newspaper Subscription Requests and/or Changes




**WE WANT TO HEAR FROM PREVIOUS FCSU SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS!**

The cherished Slovak Christmas tradition of Vilija continues to bring families and communities together in celebration of faith and heritage. Here and inside this issue, you'll find information about four upcoming Vilija dinners taking place in Akron and Cleveland, OH, Greensburg, PA and New York, NY. These gatherings feature customary foods, prayers, and practices that have been passed down through generations. Hurry to purchase your tickets, as many of these events will sell out. For those outside these areas, many parishes and Slovak organizations host their own Vilija as well, so check with your local church or community group.



**Annual Slovak Vilija Dinner**

**Sunday, December 14 at 4:00pm**

**Slovak J Club**

485 Morgan Avenue • Akron, OH

**\$25 Per Person**

For Reservations Call 330-786-9972  
After 3pm or Sign up at the Bar

*The Lucina Slovak Dancers will be performing*

Sauerkraut / Mushroom Soup • Baked Cod • Peas  
Perohi • Mashed Potatoes • Oplatky & Honey  
Bobalky • Kolaci • Apples & Nuts • Bread & Butter



Sponsored by District 3

*Štedrý Večer*

*A traditional Slovak Christmas Eve Dinner*

**Sunday, December 7, 2025  
Christ Our Shepherd Center  
Greensburg, PA**

**Schedule:**

2:00pm - Mass  
3:30pm - Advent & Christmas Pageant provided by the Pittsburgh Slovaks  
4:30pm - Dinner

**Cost:**

\$35 ages 12 and up  
\$10 ages 6 to 11  
Children 5 and under free

A limited number of tickets are available. Do not delay ordering your tickets. Reservations are taken on a first come first served basis and MUST be made by November 21, 2025 by calling Darlene Patty at 724-493-8712.

Sponsored by: Benedictine Monks of Saint Andrew Abbey, the Slovak Institute and Library of Cleveland and Cleveland Slovak Radio and Cultural Club



*Slovenská Viliya  
Slovak Christmas Eve Supper  
Sunday, December 7, 2025*

**Abbey Church and  
Benedictine High School  
10510 Buckeye Road • Cleveland, OH  
12pm (Noon) Mass with Dinner Following**

**\$25 - Advance sales only**

Tickets WILL NOT be available at the door  
Orders must be received by November 25th

**Call 216-721-5300  
ext. 100 for details**

FCSU Sponsored Slovak Raffle  
Ralph Szubski, Accordion Man  
Lučina Slovak Folk Ensemble  
Slovak Christmas Cards and Oplatky available for purchase.

**LIMITED TIME**

9/1-12/31  
2025

**Your Financial Future Begins Today**

**7.00%**

**8 Year Flex Annuity or IRA**

*(1st year Guaranteed on New Contracts)*

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<b>Coverdell-Education Savings Account</b> <small>(1st year Guaranteed on New Contracts)</small>	<b>7.00%</b>
<b>6 Year Flex Annuity or IRA</b> <small>(1st year Guaranteed on New Contracts)</small>	<b>6.00%</b>
<b>Park 2 Annuity</b> <small>(2 years Guaranteed, not available in the state of NY)</small>	<b>4.00%</b>
<b>Single Premium Immediate Annuity (SPIA)</b>	<b>4.00%</b>
<b>Park Free Plus</b> <small>(1 year term Annuity or IRA, max deposit \$25,000 per person)</small>	<b>3.00%</b>

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- Solvency Ratio 110%

- Governed and Regulated by the Ohio Department of Insurance

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