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All about IRAs

Kenneth A. Arendt, Executive Secretary



Kenneth Arendt

According to a recent survey, Americans are still struggling to save enough for the future: 22% have less than \$5,000 in savings for retirement; a startling 46% of respondents say they don't know how much they have saved for retirement.

While many baby boomers (i.e. - those ages 55 to 73) are in or nearing retirement, 17% say they have less than \$5,000 in retirement savings.

If you or someone you know is in this situation, think IRA. Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) were designed for just that purpose – to help Americans save money for retirement. There's still time if you are looking to open an IRA, or add money to your existing account for the 2019 tax year – but you shouldn't delay. The deadline for filing your 2019 taxes – April 15, 2020 – is right around the corner.

For help deciding on opening or adding to an IRA, we've included information on page 3 of this issue. It includes information based on the IRS website and other industry sources that cover IRA benefits in general as well as highlights of the similarities and differences between the two basic types of IRAs - traditional and Roth IRAs – to help you decide which is best for you.

Before making your final decision, always consult your tax advisor. For guidance on the FCSU annuity products that are IRAs, call the FCSU Home Office at 1-800-533-6682 or contact your local FCSU branch.

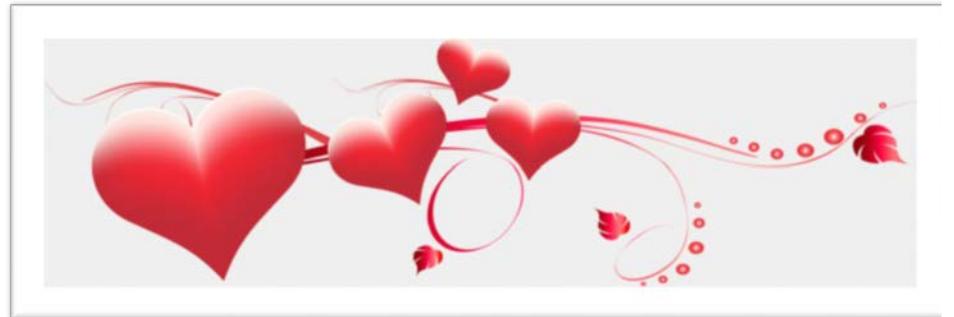
Fraternally,

Kenneth A. Arendt
Executive Secretary

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There's A Lot to Love with the FCSU:

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- Bowl with the Best, p 8
- Apply for Scholarship, p 24

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800.533.6682, annuity@fcsu.com, www.fcsu.com



2019 National Photo Contest Results – Part II

See pages 12-13

Insights and Viewpoints

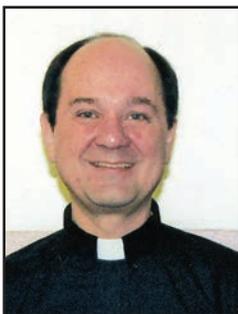
Message from the National Chaplain

The Season of Lent begins at the end of this month on February 26. To prepare ourselves for this annual period of spiritual renewal, let's look at Matthew 6 and reflect on the gospel to be read that day, Ash Wednesday.

Jesus is addressing his followers on prayer, fasting and almsgiving, the three traditional works of penance. Each section begins with "when." "When you fast...." "When you pray...." "When you give alms...." Notice that Jesus doesn't say "if." "If you fast...." "If you pray...." "If you give alms...."

"When" implies that fasting, prayer, and giving alms, the traditional acts of penance, are part of one's normal, regular routine.

Every year during Lent we focus on the spiritual disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Each of us, by performing these works, can be led to possess a mind, heart and soul converted to the Lord. But as the Lord tell us in the sixth chapter of Matthew, prayer, fasting and almsgiving are not to be confined to an annual six week block in late winter/early spring. They are to be an ongoing part of a life lived in Christ Jesus.



Rev. Thomas A. Nasta

Fr. Thomas A. Nasta
National Chaplain

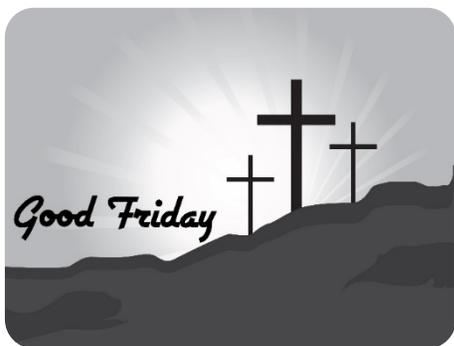
From the Desk of the Executive Secretary

– Holiday Hours

The Home Office and Jednota Estates Office will be closed on **Monday, February 17, 2020**, in observance of Presidents' Day



Friday, April 10, 2020,
in observance of Good Friday



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

NEWSPAPER DEADLINES

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

Issue Date	Copy Date
WEDNESDAY, MAR. 11	MONDAY, MAR. 2
WEDNESDAY, APR. 15	MONDAY, APR. 6
WEDNESDAY, MAY 13	MONDAY, MAY 4

Correspondents who are announcing events should allow ample time for them to be received by the readership, taking into account the publication schedule and the extra time in the postal system.

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First Catholic Slovak Union, Attention "JEDNOTA"
6611 Rockside Road, Suite 300, Independence, OH 44131-2398
FAX: 216-642-4310

LIGHT ONE CANDLE

Fr. Ed Dougherty, M.M., The Christophers' Board of Directors

The Gift of St. Valentine's Day

Many people associate this month with great happiness and joy due to the Feast of St. Valentine on February 14. It's appropriate to greet a day devoted to love with this kind of exuberance because it is such a profound gift of God to all of humanity.

Our knowledge of the facts of St. Valentine's life has largely been lost to history, but most people agree that this third century Roman saint was martyred and buried along the Flaminian Way just north of Rome. Today, he is the patron of love, young people, and happy marriages.

Some stories say he presided over marriages of many Christian couples in ceremonies done in secret due to religious persecution of the time. Another story about the final days of his life tells of how he was imprisoned and sentenced to death for refusing to renounce his faith. While in prison, he healed the jailer's blind daughter, then left her a note on the day of his execution, signed, "Your Valentine."

Regardless of the accuracy of these stories, they help to reveal the spirit of a saint of the Church and bring into focus a profound message about love for our times. Valentine valued the sacrament of marriage so much that he was willing to risk his life to facilitate these important ceremonies for young couples. The love that comes into focus through these stories about his life is marked by fidelity, sacrifice, and faith, and these are the hallmarks of true love that bring about the happiness and joy associated with Valentine's Day.

Fidelity is at the heart of the pledge made by couples in marriage, and St. Valentine understood the value of their pledge to each other in this way. The Church continues to call men and women who fall in love to form such bonds of permanence in matrimony today. In addition, Valentine's Day can also be about more than romantic love. One mother recalled giving chocolate hearts to her children on Valentine's Day every year to show how much she loved them.

The stories surrounding the life of St. Valentine teach us that sacrifice is the ultimate gift that love demands of us. Valentine payed the ultimate price for practicing his faith and helping others to do the same. He was a tireless evangelizer and one story even tells of how, after being arrested for practicing Christianity, he tried to convert the Emperor Claudius. It was this attempt to persuade the Emperor that led to his execution.

This kind of sacrificial love is a model for those who pledge themselves in marriage—and for families in general. Spouses need to be prepared to sacrifice for each other and for their children. The love we celebrate on Valentine's Day can lead people to be emotionally prepared to make profound sacrifices for each other, but it is faith that can sustain our commitment to do what is best for others even under the most trying circumstances.

We see such faith exercised by St. Valentine in the story of the first Valentine note given to the jailer's daughter after she regained her sight. Even facing death, St. Valentine showed blessings upon his persecutors. This kind of mercy is the fruit of forgiveness and it is the essence of the love of God. Let us share this love on Valentine's Day and throughout the year so that lasting relationships based on fidelity, sacrifice, and faith blossom in our lives and in the lives of all we encounter.

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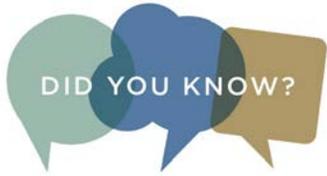
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All about IRAs

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IRA Considerations



- ... That retirement can last for 30 years or more?
-That a common rule to follow is that a retiree will need up to 80% of his/her annual income today to retire comfortably?
- ... That the average benefit amount paid monthly by the Social Security Administration is \$1,177?

Saints Cyril and Methodius Appeal Thanks 2019 Donors: The Appeal Continues

The 2019 Saints Cyril and Methodius Appeal concluded on November 30. On behalf of the Pontifical College of Saints Cyril in Methodius in Rome, the beneficiary of the Appeal, thank you to everyone who donated. The College is the residence of priests from Slovakia who are sent to Rome by their bishops for graduate studies. After receiving their degrees, these priests return to their dioceses to work as seminary teachers, Tribunal officials, and in other ministries. The 2019 Appeal received 183 donations amounting to \$32,709.73.

With fewer Slovak parishes, the Appeal relies upon individual donations. In fact, 59% (108 of 183) of the donations and nearly 24% of the amount collected (\$7,763 of \$32,709.73) came from individuals, including members of the clergy.

A special word of thanks is extended to the First Catholic Slovak Union, who donated a total of \$2,518 to the 2019 Appeal. Donations were received from the Home Office as well as from:

- Branch 3
- Branch 166
- District 14
- Branch 4
- Branch 173
- District 16
- Branch 19
- Branch 313
- Annual Bowling Tournament, Green Tree, PA
- Branch 35
- Branch 383
- Annual Golf Tournament, Belle Vernon, PA
- Branch 41
- Branch 716
- District 8
- Branch 45
- Branch 764

A direct mailing for the 2020 Appeal is being prepared and will be sent to leaders of fraternal branches and districts, clergy of Slovak heritage, members of the Slovak Catholic Federation, and others who have made donations to the Appeal in the past. Donations to this year's Appeal may be made by filling out the information in the box at the bottom of this article and mailing it along with your check payable to the Slovak Catholic Federation to the address provided. All donors receive an acknowledgement for their gift. Thank you for your goodness and generosity. Donations received after November 30, 2020 will be credited toward the 2021 Appeal.

The Slovak Catholic Federation, founded in 1911, brings together under one banner both individuals of Slovak heritage as well as Catholic Slovak Fraternal Organizations for cultural, religious and educational needs. Serving as Moderator is the Right Reverend Gary Hoover, O.S.B., Abbot of St. Andrew Svorad Abbey, Cleveland, OH. National President is Reverend Andrew S. Hvozdic, V.F., Supreme Chaplain of the Slovak Catholic Sokol and Pastor of Epiphany Parish, Sayre, PA. Reverend Thomas A. Nasta, National Chaplain of the First Catholic Slovak Union and Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, Swedesburg, PA, serves as First Vice President of the Federation and is the Appeal Coordinator.

Effects of the SECURE Act on IRA Accounts

On December 20, 2019, the SECURE (Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement) Act was signed into law. The passing of the Act will have three major effects on IRA account owners. The highlights of these law changes are highlighted below.

First, beginning in 2020 the age for mandatory Required Minimum Distributions (RMD) from IRA and other retirement plans that require an RMD will be increased to age 72 from the past 70 ½ rule. IRA account owners will not need to begin distributions until the year in which they reach age 72. Unfortunately, those that have or did reach age 70 ½ by 12/31/2019 are not affected by this new law and will still have to receive their RMD even though they have not reached age 72 in 2020.

The second major change to the law will allow contributions to traditional IRA accounts beyond the age of 70 ½. Prior to 2020 those that reached age 70 ½ were not allowed to continue contributions to their IRA accounts. Keep in mind the IRA owner must have earned income and meet the income limits for contributing to these plans.

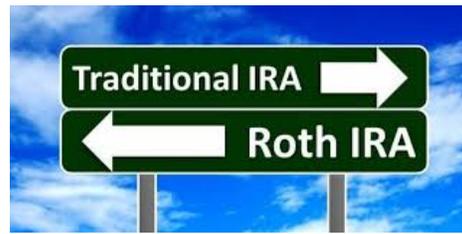
The final change made by the new law will affect beneficiaries receiving IRA accounts from deceased IRA owners. This changes also affects other defined contribution plans like 401K and SEP plans. Unless the beneficiary meets one of the five exceptions listed below they will need to draw down the inherited plan proceeds within 10 years. The lifetime distribution rule is no longer available. The five exceptions to the new law for beneficiaries are:

1. The surviving spouse
2. A child who has not reached the age of majority (NOTE! The 10 year rule begins when the child reaches the age of majority)
3. Disabled
4. Chronically ill
5. Not more than 10 years younger than the deceased IRA owner.

There are several other changes to law with regards to pension plans contained in the new legislation. We have only highlighted those that directly affect IRA accounts. The changes listed above are only general in nature and may change slightly when written into the Internal Revenue Code or other areas of tax law.

If you have any questions concerning the new law that went into effect December 20, 2019 we recommend you contact your tax consultant.

Traditional and Roth IRA Highlights



Both traditional and Roth IRAs allow you to save money for retirement. Which is right for you chart from the IRS highlights some of their similarities and differences.

Features	Traditional IRA	Roth IRA
Who can contribute?	You can contribute if you (or your spouse if filing jointly) have taxable compensation but not after you are age 70½ or older.	You can contribute at any age if you (or your spouse if filing jointly) have taxable compensation and your modified adjusted gross income is below certain amounts (see 2020 and 2019 limits).
Are my contributions deductible?	You can deduct your contributions if you qualify.	Your contributions aren't deductible.
How much can I contribute?	The most you can contribute to all of your traditional and Roth IRAs is the smaller of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For 2018: \$5,500, or \$6,500 if you're age 50 or older by the end of the year; or your taxable compensation for the year. • For 2019: \$6,000, or \$7,000 if you're age 50 or older by the end of the year; or your taxable compensation for the year. • For 2020: \$6,000, or \$7,000 if you're age 50 or older by the end of the year; or your taxable compensation for the year. 	
What is the deadline to make contributions?	Your tax return filing deadline (not including extensions). For example, you can make 2019 IRA contributions until April 15, 2020.	
When can I withdraw money?	You can withdraw money anytime*.	
Do I have to take required minimum distributions?	You must start taking distributions by April 1 following the year in which you turn age 70½ and by December 31 of later years. <i>For information on recently passed legislation on required minimum distributions, see Effects of the SECURE Act on IRA Accounts on this page</i>	Not required if you are the original owner.
Are my withdrawals and distributions taxable?	Any deductible contributions and earnings you withdraw or that are distributed from your traditional IRA are taxable. *Also, if you are under age 59 ½ you may have to pay an additional 10% tax for early withdrawals unless you qualify for an exception.	None if it's a qualified distribution (or a withdrawal that is a qualified distribution). Otherwise, part of the distribution or withdrawal may be taxable*. If you are under age 59 ½, you may also have to pay an additional 10% tax for early withdrawals unless you qualify for an exception.

Check out the **First Catholic Slovak Union** website at www.fcsu.com



Book Corner

História československého komunizmu

Nová kniha je pohľadom mladej generácie, ktorá sa síce narodila za železnou oponou, ale vyrastala v slobodnom svete, na komunistický experiment v Československu.

Czechoslovakia: Behind the Iron Curtain je posledným a najambicióznym projektom medzinárodného spisovateľského duu Zuzany Palovic, PhD. a Gabriely Bereghazyovej, PhD. Vo predchádzajúcich dvoch knihách sa venovali rôznym aspektom súčasnosti a minulosti v srdci Európy a v tej tretej sa púšťajú do fascinujúceho, často nepochopeného a citlivého príbehu československého komunizmu.

Ako sa demokratická krajina mohla obrátiť na komunistickú takmer cez noc? Prečo bola taká dôležitá pre Sovietsky zväz, že ju zubami nechtami držal vo svojej moci viac ako štyri desaťročia?

Czechoslovakia: Behind the Iron Curtain skúma, ako sa žilo za čias diktátu kladiva a kosáka. Je to skutočne jedinečná kniha, ktorá vykresľuje nielen geopolitickú situáciu Studenej vojny, ale i osobné príbehy ľudí, ktorí sa ocitli za železnou oponou. Na viac ako 600 stranách, ktoré obsahujú vyše 200 unikátnych fotografií a originálnych ilustrácií, prináša nadčasový odkaz pre nás všetkých.

Sloboda je nádherná, ale krehká. Táto kniha odhaľuje nebezpečenstvá podľahnutia lákavej ponuke výmeny nezávislosti za pohodlie. Systematicky a jednoducho zachytáva, ako ľahko je možné strachom manipulovať milióny ľudí.

Česi a Slováci sa museli poučiť na vlastnej koži. Ich príbeh je zápasom ľudí, ktorí sa museli naučiť rozpoznať pravdu od lži, skutočnú statočnosť od falošnej hry mocných a slobodu od neslobody.

Czechoslovakia: Behind the Iron Curtain vyšla pri príležitosti 30-teho výročia nežnej revolúcie. Oslavuje a vzdáva hold tým, ktorí sa odvážili prekonať svoj strach a bojovať za to, čomu verili.

Táto kniha má ďaleko of pochmúrneho výletu do minulosti. Naopak, je farebným a živým vyobrazením neuveriteľnej doby. Vnáša lúč nádeje, statočnosti a humoru do tmavých kútov dejín ľudstva.

A history of Czechoslovak communism

A brand new enigmatic book that looks at the communist experiment in Czechoslovakia through the eyes of the younger generation. Those born at the tail end of the Iron Curtain but raised in the free world.

Czechoslovakia: Behind the Iron Curtain is the latest and the most ambitious project of the international writing duo Dr. Zuzana Palovic and Dr. Gabriela Bereghazyova. Having explored the many facets of the heart of Europe in their previous two books, the two young academics tackle the fascinating, demonized, misunderstood and timely story of Czechoslovak communism.

How could a democratic country turn communist overnight? Why was this country so important to the Soviet Union that it would not let go of it for over 4 decades? And what was it like to live in communist Czechoslovakia?

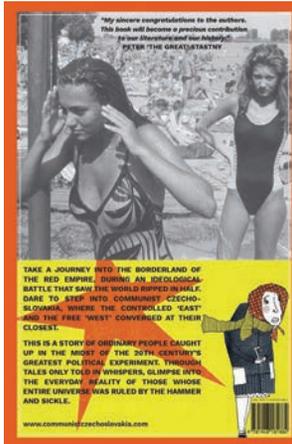
Czechoslovakia: Behind the Iron Curtain looks at the good, the bad and the ugly side of life under the hammer and the sickle. It offers a truly unique perspective, one that taps into the geopolitical tapestry of the Cold War while also diving deeply into the emotional and personal stories of those trapped behind the Iron Curtain. The 600+ pages, which include 200 authentic photographs and original illustrations, share a timeless message with us all.

Freedom is a beautiful, but fragile, thing. The book reveals the dangers of taking liberty for granted. It shows us what happens when we succumb to the temptation of acquiescing our sovereignty in exchange for convenience. It systematically exposes how easily millions of people can become manipulated by fear.

The Czechs and Slovaks had to learn this lesson the hard way. Their story is a universal tale of the struggle of a people learning to discern truth from lies, courage from cowardice, and freedom from unfreedom.

Czechoslovakia: Behind the Iron Curtain was published on the 30th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution. It celebrates the ascent of two countries and honors those who had the audacity to rise above their fear and fight for what was right.

Far from a grim portrayal of the past, this book is a colourful and vivid rendering of an extraordinary era. It seeks to shine a ray of hope, courage and humor into the dark crevices of humanity.



To order Czechoslovakia: Behind the Iron Curtain from Amazon, please go to the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/rkcqyox>



Traditions of Lent in Slovakia

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

For Christians in Slovakia, the holy season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, known as Popolcová streda in Slovak. In Slovak traditions, it was also known as Škaredá streda, or Ugly Wednesday. The holy day marked the solemn beginning of an extended period of fasting, prayer, and abstinence. The lively celebrations of fašiangy (Carnival - Slovak Mardi Gras) had ended on Fat Tuesday night (Tučný utorok). Ash Wednesday commenced with an extended period of spiritual reflection that remembers Christ's forty days of fasting in the desert.

Originally, ancient Slavic pagans celebrated their New Year around the time that Lent would start. The early Slavic peoples adopted and integrated Christian customs with these former practices, as the acceptance of Christ as their Savior the beginning of a new life of faith. Practicing the faith in Lent meant following the example of Christ to enable them with His assistance to overcome sin through their own daily sacrifices during the holy season.

The Triumph of Life over Death

Ash Wednesday reminds the faithful of their own mortality. Christ's death and triumphal resurrection at the end of Lent offers the grace for every Christian to attain eternal salvation.

Ash Wednesday, known in Latin as Dies Cinerum (Day of Ashes), evolved into a regular custom in Christian Europe as early as the 8th century. Even though attendance at Holy Mass was and is not obligatory, it has become one of the holiest days on the Christian calendar. After the Gospel readings and the sermon, the priest sprinkled the faithful with holy water and purified the congregations with incense. The receiving of ashes recognized that one is a sinner in dire need of Christ's redemptive powers. While the body would turn to ashes, the soul would live on.

The faithful in Slovakia flocked in huge numbers to church to receive blessed ashes from the previous year's Palm Sunday (Kvetná Nedel'a). As the priest made the sign of the cross on the forehead of the penitent at Mass, he would recite the well-known words, "Remember man, that you are dust, and unto dust you will return" ("Pamätaj človeče, že prach si a na prach sa obrátiš").

The Lenten season ranked among the most sacred and holy times in Slovakia. In Slovak and Christian culture, Lent (pôst – pronounced "pwost") represented a time which commemorated Christ's forty days of fasting and contemplation in the desert.

In imitation of Christ's example, Slovaks denied themselves all sweets and animal products during Lent. This included full abstention from all meats and any dairy products such as milk, cheese, eggs, etc. Typically, they refrained as well from using any animal fats in cooking. A customary Slovak meal on Ash Wednesday consisted of some type of Lenten soup and some pasta mixed with poppy seeds, known as válčeky or šúľance, dough formed into truncated cone roll. On Sundays in Lent, Slovaks typically ate a dish made with cestoviny (noodles). Other common foods eaten during Pôst included potatoes, cabbage, beets, barley groats, various ground meals from grains, and sometimes rice when we get to it. For breakfast, a cornmeal mush (kukurličnú kašu or kukurydzanku) was common in some villages.

Slovaks also abstained from eating any very large meals for the entire period of Lent. Parties, weddings, loud music, and any forms of merriment were forbidden. Any music played had to be sacred and somber, stressing one's sinfulness and repentance.

In previous centuries, after attending Holy Mass on Ash Wednesday, the people of a village marched in a procession of penance. But that custom has since disappeared in most places. Lent was a time of prayer, repentance (pokánie), and self-examination. This meant that going to Confession to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation was an obligation.

Denying the body physical pleasures was supposed to liberate the flesh so that people could contemplate the real meaning of life and their relationship with God. Slovak devotions became far more zealous than that of most European peoples, and some historians cite the Counter-Reformation spirit of the 16th and 17th centuries as embedding this very intense religious temperament among Slovaks.

The Slovak interpretation of Lent became most solemn and very somber. Until Easter arrived, a household remained in a virtual state of continual mourning for their own sins, and for the terrible price Jesus Christ had to pay for redeeming man's sins. As a sign of this grieving, all women dressed only in black for the entire Lenten season. People generally wore darker colors such as black and purple, with very little decoration or adornment. Ash Wednesday marked a prolonged period of mourning for Christ.

Although some of these customs have modified over the years, Lent remains an intensely spiritual time for practicing Catholics as well as Lutherans and other Christians throughout Slovakia. When one visits Slovakia, one has a sense of the sacredness that has diminished in many American parishes since Vatican II.

But there is one very real result of the intense Lenten period sacrifice – the joy of Easter is that much greater. For the faithful, Christ's Resurrection represented and still today, signifies the triumph of good over evil, and the promise of eternal life in heavenly paradise.

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Chewy goes to Spišská Nová Ves

After a restful nights' sleep in the Tatra Mountains and enjoying a great Slovak breakfast, it was time to head for our sister city Spišská Nová Ves. Chewy, looking out the bus window sighed as if being sad to leave the mountains, but if he knew what was in store for him, he would be dancing around the bus.

Arriving in Spišská Nová Ves, our sister city, we were greeted by members of the mayor's reception committee, including Maria Dutkova who heads the office of public relations. Maria was surprised to see Chewy, however there was an immediate bond as she petted him.

The reception with the mayor is a highlight of the tour and tour participants are always delighted with the performance of the singers and musicians. The formal portion of the welcome ceremony concluded with each tour member being called by name to sign the official city registry where their names will be forever memorialized in the beautiful city of Spišská Nová Ves. Unfortunately, Chewy was not able to participate in the signing. As in past years, a delicious lunch was enjoyed in the Reduta which is a beautiful historic building a short distance from city hall. The building is commonly reserved for governmental functions and special occasions. The Reduta was lavishly decorated with flowers and crystal ornaments reflecting the care and preparation which demonstrates the importance placed on the occasion. Chewy enjoyed the food, especially the chicken, however the wine and borovička were not available to him because of his young age and genetic breed. It was also at this time that everyone was able to informally talk with the former mayor, Dr. Jan Volny and meet the new mayor, Pavol Becarik. The singers and musicians were also available to socialize and speak with tour members. A most enjoy-



Greg Maurer with Chewy and his cousin Stevko



(L - R) Vice Mayor Jan Volny and Tour Guide Viera



Greg Maurer's cousin Stevko with Chewy

able time was spent with them. Sadly, good things must come to an end and although we parted with heavy hearts, the hospitality and graciousness of the Slovak people will remain forever in our memories.

It was in Levoča that Chewy decided to join Greg Maurer when he visited his Slovak relatives. Chewy met the newest addition to the family (Stevko) and took a little time to take a nap with the baby. Greg and Chewy decided to take a walk around the village and it was at this time that Chewy met relatives Dunco and Rex. From these two Čuvač canines he was saddened to hear that he had a relative in New Orleans named Tancui who had recently passed away. Tancui had been fortunate to have lived his life with Jerry Gibel who had been on several tours and is a good friend of the Slovak people. During his lifetime Tancui and Jerry had visited numerous nursing homes, airports and other facilities helping people deal with stress and

anxiety. His visits prompted many questions relative to his breed in as much as there are only a few dozen of his kind in the entire USA. RIP Tancui! After romping around with Dunco and Rex it was time for Chewy to return to Levoča, where he was able to enjoy running around the nearby park.

The following morning prior to going to Košice we visited the Mariánska Hora (Mary's Mountain) where there had been apparitions of the Blessed Mother. The Mariánska Hora has been the site of an annual pilgrimage for centuries. Chewy's little legs were worn out from running around on the mountain and he was very happy when carried to the bus where he promptly fell asleep.

Stay tuned for Chewy in Košice.

* Articles written by Kay and Jim Bench and Photos by Greg Maurer. They are all

Chewy in "The Place of Wishes and Church Bell" - a memorial tribute to the first Gothic bell-foundry workshop in the Spiš region (and also the most important in Slovakia) founded in Spišská Nová Ves by Master Konrád in 1357.



members of United Branch 181. Jim is President of the Youngstown/Spišská Nová Ves Sister Cities Organization and a Member of the Supreme Court of the Jednota. Kay is the Tour Director of the Youngstown/ Spišská Nová Ves Sister Cities and Greg Maurer is a National Internal Auditor of the Jednota.



Tony Lonardo with Chewy in Levoča



Dunco and Rex - fine examples of the Slovak Čuvač, a dog originally bred to help herd sheep and cattle in the mountains of Slovakia.



Branch 45's Annual Meeting

Attendees at the December 1, 2019, annual meeting for St. Matthews Society Branch 45 at St. John Nepomucene Church in NYC (L-R) : Maria Zakovic, Antonia Krajkovic, Jan Zeman, Maria Jurasi, Rev. Richard D. Baker, Joseph Jurasi, Anton Kucharovic and Zelmira Beckova-Kucharovic.

- Submitted by Joseph Jurasi, Branch 45 President

Polka with your Valentine



2nd Annual Polka party sponsored by First Catholic Slovak Union District 11
 Sunday, February 16, 2020 2-6 pm
 Featuring Jack and the Tady Bears
 CU Club (Slovak Club)
 914 6th Avenue Ford City, PA
 Admission is free!

Kitchen will be open and featuring Slovak specialties
 Cash bar open

Last year's dance was a huge success come join in the fun!
 For more information contact Vicki Schaub 724-691-9252

or
 Patrick Froncek 724-236-4226

2020 Youngstown/ Spišská Nová Ves Sister Cities Heritage Tour of Slovakia



Come join us as once again as we tour our beautiful homeland of Slovakia. Walk the streets of your ancestors. Do a little research on your family, visit your ancestral village and perhaps find long lost relatives. Talk with your oldest living relatives, they have much to offer. This past year we had a reporter from Slovak radio who interviewed the tour participants and recorded them for Slovak International Radio and Slovak radio. Reserve your slot now. We have a 49 passenger bus, air conditioned, with rest room. Our tour is first class. We have the best guide in all of Slovakia and the best bus driver. We can give you names of tour participants that will tell you about our tour. Space is limited. The tour will be in July, 2020. Dates to be determined once festival dates are established. Approximate cost \$4000 depending on air fares. The cost includes first class hotels, 2 meals a day, entertainment, and admissions. Lunch on your own. For additional information call Jim Bench at 724-858-5843 e-mail jimbench@yahoo.com or Kay Bench at 724-771-7900 e-mail skbench@gmail.com Our tour cannot be topped for sightseeing, entertainment, fun, memories, and lasting friendships.

Slovenskú hudbu si v newyorskem Carnegie Hall vypočuli stovky hostí



V New Yorku sa v nedeľu 26. januára 2020 uskutočnil výnimočný koncert slovenských hudobníkov na svetoznámej hudobnej adrese. Na koncerte pomenovanom Slováci v Carnegie Hall, ktorý usporiadal veľvyslanec Slovenskej republiky v USA Ivan Korčok, hrali známy bubeník Martin Valihora so svojím kvartetom a saxofonistom Radovanom Tariškom, skupina Jána Berkyho Mrenicu ml., a ako hostia klavirista Peter Breiner a spevák Peter Lipa.

„Naším cieľom bolo poskytnúť newyorskému publiku kvalitné slovenské umenie a šíriť tak dobré meno našej krajiny v tomto dôležitom politickom a obchodnom priestore, ale tiež vytvoriť príležitosť pre stretnutie slovenskej komunity a podporiť jej pozitívnu väzbu na domovskú krajinu,“ povedal v súvislosti s podujatím I. Korčok. Dodal, že „úspešná diplomacia dnes musí byť otvorená publiku z najrôznejších oblastí, komunikovať aj formou kultúrnych zážitkov a pozitívnej emócie, čo sa nám týmto koncertom, pevne verím, aj podarilo.“

Hlavným hudobným motívom bolo spájanie jazzu s prvkami folklóru, populárnej a klasickej hudby. V dramaturgii Martina Valihoru zazneli jazzové aranžmány slov-



enských ľudových piesní, akou je aj známa skladba Červené jablčko, ktorú po prvýkrát s Radovanom Tariškom odohrali aj americkí hudobníci Markus Strickland a Ron Affif, či Slovenské tance Petra Breinera a jeho skladba Manhattan v podaní Petra Lipu. Súčasťou pestrej hudobnej zmesi boli tiež rómske motívy v podaní Jána Berkyho Mrenicu ml., ktorého kvartet spolu s ostatnými umelcami odprezentoval aj klasické jazzové štandardy.

Cieľom koncertu bolo okrem prezentácie Slovenska v tom najlepšom svetle zdôrazniť aj väzbu so Spojenými štátmi, ktorá v priebehu posledných sto rokov umožnila a podporila našu demokratickú emancipáciu,

kultúrny, spoločenský a hospodársky rozvoj. Táto symbolika slovensko-amerického prepojenia sa odzrkadlila na zaradení špičkových amerických jazzmanov Rona Affifa a Marcusa Stricklanda do programu,

účasti mnohých Slovákov, profesionálov žijúcich pôsobiacich v New Yorku a Spojených štátoch, a nakoniec aj názve podujatia.

- Submitted the Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Washington, DC

Hundreds of Guests Heard Slovak Music at Carnegie Hall, New York

An exceptional concert of Slovak musicians took place in New York on Sunday, January 26, 2020 at a world-famous musical address. Performing at the concert Slovaks at Carnegie Hall organized by the Slovak Ambassador to the United States Ivan Korčok, was well-known drummer Martin Valihora, along with his quartet, saxophonist Radovan Tarišk, and the Jan Berky-Mrenica, Jr. Band with guest artists pianist Peter Breiner and jazz singer Peter Lipa.

"Our goal was to showcase exceptional Slovak art to the New York audience and to spread the good name of our country in this important political and business area, as well as to create an opportunity for the local Slovak community to meet and promote this positive connection to our homeland," Korčok said. He added that "successful diplomacy today must speak to audiences from a wide variety of areas, including communicating in the form of cultural experiences that create positive emotions, which I believe we have succeeded in doing this evening."

The main musical theme combined jazz with elements of folklore, popular and classical music. Martin Valihor's dramaturgy featured jazz arrangements of Slovak folk songs, such as the well-known composition Red Apple, played for the first time with by American musicians Markus Strickland and Ron Affif who joined Radovan Tarišk and the musical composition Slovak Dances by Petr Breiner as well as his piece Manhattan featuring Peter Lipa. Part of the colorful musical mix included Roma motifs performed by Ján Berky-Mrenica, Jr., whose quartet together with other artists also presented classical jazz standards.

The goal of the concert, besides presenting Slovakia in the best light, was to highlight the link that exists between Slovakia and the United States, a link which has enabled and supported our democratic emancipation, cultural, social and economic development over the last hundred years. This symbolism of the Slovak-American connection was reflected not only in the concert title – Slovaks in Carnegie Hall – but also in the inclusion of top American jazzmen Ron Affif and Marcus Strickland in the program, as well as the participation of many Slovaks and Slovak-American professionals living in New York and the United States in the event.

BRANCH 181 YOUTH MEMBER SCHOLASTIC ASSISTANCE

For the Fall 2020 school year, St. John the Baptist Society - Branch 181 of United, PA, will be offering scholarships to eligible youth members planning to attend college or career/technical school. These will be one-time scholarships selected by an independent panel that will evaluate each applicant. The number of scholarships awarded is dependent on the number of eligible applicants.

Scholarships of \$500.00 will be available on a one-time basis to be used for a college or trade school.



THESE SCHOLARSHIPS ARE SOLELY FUNDED BY YOUR LOCAL BRANCH 181 AND ARE INDEPENDENT OF THE FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION NATIONAL OFFICE.

To obtain an application and more information, please contact Vicki Hricik phone 724-547-0803 or email vickihricik@gmail.com.

***Applications must be postmarked by April 3, 2020 to be eligible.**

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST SOCIETY - BRANCH 181 YOUTH MEMBERS

You may be eligible to qualify for a scholarship if you meet the following requirements:

- You are a member in good standing of The First Catholic Slovak Union, St. John the Baptist Society - Branch 181.
- You have been a member of Branch 181 for four years prior to applying with a minimum \$5,000 insurance policy.
- You are high school senior preparing to graduate in 2020 and have applied for the 2020/21 fall term at a qualifying educational institution.



Happy Birthday Serafina Sulak

On Sunday, January 5, 2020, Branch 716 celebrated the birthday of its long-time member Serafina Sulak at St. John Nepomucene Church in New York City. Happy Birthday, Serafina!
- Submitted by Branch 716 Secretary Joan Skrkon. Photo courtesy of Eva Lysakova

Join Branch 853 for an Afternoon of Painting



Branch 853 will sponsor a painting event on Saturday March 14, 2020. The event will start at 1:00 in Charleroi, PA. At this event we will share fun friendship and fraternalism as each person attending will paint an individual masterpiece in two hours. At the end of the event, each person will take home completed work. The event is open to all FCSU members, with a minimum age of 12 as a strongly recommended minimum age. The cost for a non-FCSU person is \$30 per person. The cost for FCSU non-Branch 853 members is \$25. There is no cost to Branch 853 members.

Reservations are required and must be made by March 7, 2020. To make your reservation, email your request to FCSUBRANCH853@gmail.com. You can also make your reservation by phone (at 412-341-1577) by leaving your name, phone number and how many people will attend. You will receive a return phone call about the event. Payment will be required at the door. Please contact Monica Rodacy Boone to reserve your space.

Join Branch 853 for an afternoon of fun and fraternalism. Region 4 Director James Mar-mol, encourages all interested members to attend and have a fun and memorable time.

Attention Branch 670 Members: 2020 Scholarship Program Now Open for Applications



Branch 670 of Donora, PA is excited to announce that it is accepting applications for its 2020 Scholarship Program. The committee will award, to the candidates who best satisfy the criteria up to two, onetime \$1000.00 scholarships. Any individual of Branch 670 that has had a policy for at least 4 years, is current in their premiums, is a high school senior and will attend an approved educational institution is eligible to apply. For applications, you may email your request or send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

Joe Matinko, 85 Crestline Ave., Charleroi, PA 15022 (email: matinko305@comcast.net)

ALL APPLICATION REQUESTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY MARCH 30, 2020

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

Reflections on Christmas in Ghana

Karen Hunka, Branch 181

I missed my family this Holiday Season. I also missed the Slovak traditions observed every year since my grandparents, George and Anna Sprock, arrived in the United States decades ago. Here in Ghana, Africa, there was no Christmas Eve dinner with pagach, pierogies, peas, garlic, oplatki, honey and kolači. There was no Stedry Vecer organized by the George Onda District and FCSU Branch 181, United, PA. The Slovaks did not perform at St. Anne's, my new parish here in Damongo.

I also missed American customs I have come to expect during the Christmas Season. Here in Ghana there were no evergreen trees decorated with colorful lights, or wrapped presents underneath waiting to be opened Christmas morning. There were no lights lining the city's streets or enchanting displays in store windows. I missed receiving numerous Christmas cards.

I wanted a Christmas tree. There are no evergreen trees or trees that resemble an evergreen here. With stems from bushes that grow near my bungalow and two containers of dental floss I made my own Christmas tree. I had no clue how my crazy idea of making a tree would end up, or that I could actually do it at all, but as you can see from the picture I did it! In my living room sits my tree.

I did not realize the reaction I would get from those who saw my creation. It was so fulfilling to see the faces of those seeing a tree with lights for the first time. Something as simple as this is an amazement to people here.

Although I missed the American traditions and more so my Slovak traditions, there is one aspect of Christmas I did not and would not miss. As a parishioner at St. Anne's Cathedral here in Damongo, Ghana, Africa, I was blessed to be able to attend Mass throughout the Advent Season as well as on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Ghanaian Catholics as well as devout Catholics around the world truly believe "JESUS IS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON."

God Bless.



**JOIN US FOR THE
2020 CONSULAR
TOUR
OF SLOVAKIA AND
ITS NEIGHBORS**

Prague - Krakow - Vienna August 21- September 5, 2020

Slovak Honorary Consul Joe Senko has announced his 15th tour of Slovakia! Visit the historic sites of Košice, Prešov, Bardejov, Levoča, Tatras, Trenčín, and Bratislava, including a river cruise, several castles, famous churches, wine tasting, a mock wedding, rafting excursion, and spa treatments in Trencianske Teplice.

In Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic, we will enjoy a river cruise, cross the famous Charles Bridge, and visit many historic sites.

In Poland, we will visit the famous salt mine, tour Auschwitz, visit the site of the Black Madonna, and shop in Zakopane.

Our full-day tour of Vienna includes a visit to Schunbrunn Palace.

ALSO

- A private reception with the U.S. Ambassador to Slovakia, Bridget Brink*
- A private reception with the Mayor of Prešov (sister city of Pittsburgh), Andrea Turcanova*

As we travel through various regions of Slovakia, arrangements can be made for you to visit your ancestral villages and families.

The total price for this fantastic tour is just \$4,250 per person (double occupancy). This includes round trip airfare from Pittsburgh, two delicious meals daily, four star hotels, free admission to all the sites, air conditioned bus, a professional guide and more. Compare this itinerary with other tour packages. For a detailed copy of the daily itinerary or more information, contact Joe Senko at jtsenko@aol.com or 412-956-6000.

*Subject to unanticipated change in their official schedule.



March Madness Starts Again at the FCSU

March Madness – one of the biggest, most exciting and most fun events in all of sports – has once again come to the FCSU!

General March Madness Rules

The NCAA Division I men's basketball tournament is a single-elimination tournament comprised of 68 teams that compete in seven rounds for the national championship. The final round is known as the Final Four, when only four teams are left.

The NCAA Men's Division I Basketball Committee selects, seeds and brackets the field for the NCAA Tournament. Then on Selection Sunday, a Selection Committee reveals the full NCAA tournament bracket, including all teams and all seeds.

In 2020, Selection Sunday is March 15th. The official bracket game of the NCAA will open immediately after the committee announces the field on Selection Sunday.

FCSU March Madness Rules

(This year the contest will take place online)

1. Each entrant in the FCSU March Madness Contest must have an active policy and be a member in good standing with the FCSU.
2. 1 Entry per person ONLY.
3. Each Player must HAVE AND USE THEIR OWN EMAIL ADDRESS.
4. Each Player MUST FILL OUT AN ENTRY FORM.
5. After the office reviews your entry and you are ruled in good standing, an email will be sent to you to enter the pool. (The email will be sent to the email address you provide. Print Clearly).
(One email address may only be used once for the contest).
6. Please CHECK YOUR EMAIL OFTEN THE WEEK OF MONDAY MARCH 9th, 2020. ALSO CHECK YOUR JUNK EMAIL.
7. All pool rules will be listed on the Official Contest Site.
8. Mail entry form to:
Kevin Collins, FCSU Fraternal Activities Director
628 Heather Brite Cr.
Apopka, Fl. 32712
(More than 1 entry form may be mailed in an envelope).

POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN Monday March 2nd, 2020

And arrive in Office by 5:00pm Thursday March 12th, 2020. PLEASE PLAN AHEAD.

FCSU March Madness Prizes

1ST PLACE:	\$1000.00
2ND PLACE:	\$750.00
3RD PLACE:	\$500.00
4TH PLACE:	\$250.00
5TH PLACE:	\$50.00

Entry Form: (All Information Must Be Filled IN)

(MISSING INFORMATION WILL CAUSE DISQUALIFICATION TO CONTEST). PRINT OR TYPE CLEARLY

NAME: _____

BRANCH: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL: _____

(EMAIL CAN ONLY BE USED ONCE. No exceptions).

Did you play in the following events:

2019 March Madness:	Yes	No
2019 Loser's Pool	Yes	No

27. SLOVENSKÝ PLES V "THE ROYAL MANOR" - GARFIELD, NJ

Slovensko-americké Kultúrne Stredisko usporiada 27. Slovenský ples v sobotu 22. februára 2020 v The Royal Manor v Garfield, NJ. Koktail s bohatým výberom predjedál začne o 7.00 hodine večer. Nasledovať bude niekoľkohodová večera spolu s "premium open bar" po celý čas. Súčasťou bohatého programu s tombolou bude aj hudba, o ktorú sa tradične postará skupina EXPRESS. Vstupné je \$140.00 na osobu za vstupenky zakúpené do 31. januára 2020, a od 1. do 10. februára bude cena vstupeniek \$160.00.

Vstupenky sú k dispozícii na eventbrite.com (The Slovak Ball 2020). Bližšie informácie vrátane platby: SlovakAmericanCC.org.



The Slovak-American Cultural Center cordially invites you to the 27th annual Slovak Ball on Saturday, February 22, 2020!

The evening will commence with a cocktail hour at 7pm followed by a served dinner, program, music by Express Band until 2am, and entertainment.

A full premium open bar all night!

For tickets please visit the website, SlovakAmericanCC.org or call Tanya at 908-377-2446.



District 14's Christmas Celebration



The Reverend Joseph L. Kostik District 14, Region 6, celebrated the Christmas holiday season on December 17, 2019, at The Magic Tree Pub & Eatery in Boardman, OH. Planning and organization was enabled by Sue Carney of Branch 682. The celebration allowed the opportunity for the attendees to share fellowship and information among the branches. A raffle was conducted at the event and included several gifts for the attendees. Special thanks to Sue Carney, Barb Hosa, Selma Bolash, Carlie Peshek and Grace Kavulic for their efforts in making the evening a huge success. Also, special thanks to Tom and Terri Ivanec and to Andy Rajec who all traveled from Cleveland to attend our event.



- Submitted by Drew Hirt, Branch 682 President



Scenes from the Jednota Luncheon at Slovak Sts. Cyril & Methodius Church, Montreal

Members and invited guest of District 20 – Prince Rastislav District – attended a farewell to Montreal Banquet. The event was hosted by Branch 784 and held on Sunday, Oct 27, 2019, in the Parish Hall of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church in Montreal, Quebec.

Submitted by Alice Dobrik, Past President of Branch 784



Milos Mitro , Region 8 Director, First Catholic Slovak Union.



Alex Dobrik welcoming members and guests.



Milan Zoldak, President of Branch 785 Toronto



Vladimir Cincik ,Assistant Chairman of Sts.Cyril & Methodius Parish



Alice Dobrik, Past President of Branch 784



Father Gabriel Jurus, Pastor



Alex Dobrik proposing toast



Father reciting prayer before the meal



Members and guests



Members and guests



President of Branch 785 mingling with John & Marta Fuska, Members of Branch 784



Milos Mitro reading letter from National President Andrew M Rajec, First Catholic Slovak Union.



Acceptance speech from Milan Zoldak Branch 785



Alice Dobrik greeting members and guests



Donation to Sts. Cyril & Methodius Parish from District 20



Enjoying Slovak songs



Enjoying singing Slovak songs



Passing gavel to Milan Zoldak from Branch 784 to Branch 785



Jednota Crossword Puzzle

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14						15					16			
17						18					19			
20				21	22					23				
			24					25	26					
	27	28			29		30				31	32	33	
34							35				36			
37				38	39	40					41			
42				43							44			
45			46					47	48		49			
			50					51		52				
53	54	55					56				57	58	59	
60						61	62				63	64		
65						66					67			
68						69					70			

Third Place Winner, Travel: And the Real Winner Is

This photo was inadvertently titled Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and attributed to Shane Simpson in the January issue of Jednota, p 15. The correct title is "the Great Smokey Mountains" and it was taken by the 3rd place winner in the Travel category, Joseph Matinko, Branch 670. Our apologies, Joseph, for the error, and congratulations on a beautiful shot!

Across

- 1 Title-holder
- 6 Percolate
- 10 Highway hauler
- 14 Eagle's home
- 15 High point
- 16 Aid in crime
- 17 Billiards shot
- 18 Hoodlum
- 19 Sharpen
- 20 Distress letters
- 21 Mishmash
- 23 They can be magic
- 24 Kind of admiral
- 25 Billow
- 27 Casual attire
- 29 Court figures
- 34 Temperate
- 35 Shoestring
- 36 "... ___ he drove out of sight"
- 37 Capt.'s guess
- 38 Delighted
- 41 Panel truck
- 42 A Bobbsey twin
- 43 Pull down
- 44 Faction
- 45 Bier gardener?
- 49 Rub the wrong way
- 50 Stocking stuffers
- 51 St. Louis team
- 53 TV offering
- 56 As a result
- 57 Young newt
- 60 Kind of car
- 61 One of the Muppets
- 63 Pancho, for one
- 65 Lion's pride
- 66 Low dam
- 67 Sink
- 68 Places

Down

- 69 Diner sign
- 70 Foil relatives
- 1 Street fleet
- 2 Achilles, e.g.
- 3 War god
- 4 Soccer star Hamm
- 5 Black tea
- 6 Type of play
- 7 Audio effect
- 8 Easily tamed bird
- 9 Dowel
- 10 1943 Bogart film
- 11 Black, to poets
- 12 Repair
- 13 Residents (Suffix)
- 22 Terhune novel, ___: *A Dog*
- 23 Walked into the water
- 24 Wine choice
- 25 Neptune's realm
- 26 Story starter
- 27 Colossus
- 28 Spiral-horned antelope
- 30 Meat cut
- 31 At no time
- 32 Field's partner
- 33 Dispatched
- 34 Waiter's offering
- 38 Big name in Argentina
- 39 After curfew
- 40 Historic times
- 44 Close relative, briefly
- 46 Short compositions
- 47 Miscues
- 48 Maid's cloth
- 52 Date place
- 53 Haunch
- 54 Isaac's eldest
- 55 It's overhead
- 56 Spew out
- 57 Dresden's river
- 58 Skeddadle
- 59 Tiny bits
- 61 Female sheep
- 62 Grazing ground
- 64 Rascal

JEDNOTA Publication Schedule for 2020

Issue Date	Deadline to Receive Information
March 11	March 2
April 15	April 6
May 13	May 4
June 10	June 1
July 8	June 29
August 12	August 3
Sept 9	August 31
October 14	October 5
November 11	November 2
December 9	November 30

See Solution on Page 19

2019 National Photo Contest Results - Part 2

Youth - 18 and under

Nature



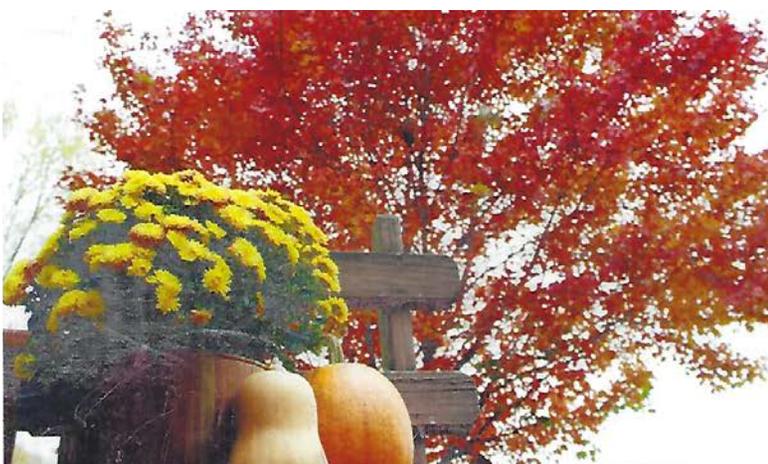
First Place

"Beach," Venice, FL
Julia Glogovsky, Age 14, Branch 686



Second Place

"Dragon Fly in Front Yard," Point Pleasant, NJ
Violet McNamara, Age 12, Branch 290



Third Place

"Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania"
Katelyn Griebel, Age 16, Branch 484

People



First Place

"Little Cousin at my House," Columbia Station, OH
Allison Lake, Age 16, Branch 228



Second Place

"Camden, Maine"
Erich Diehl, Age 17, Branch 290



Third Place

"Maasai Village, Tanzania"
Ethan Joiner, Age 17, Branch 855

2019 National Photo Contest Results - Part 2

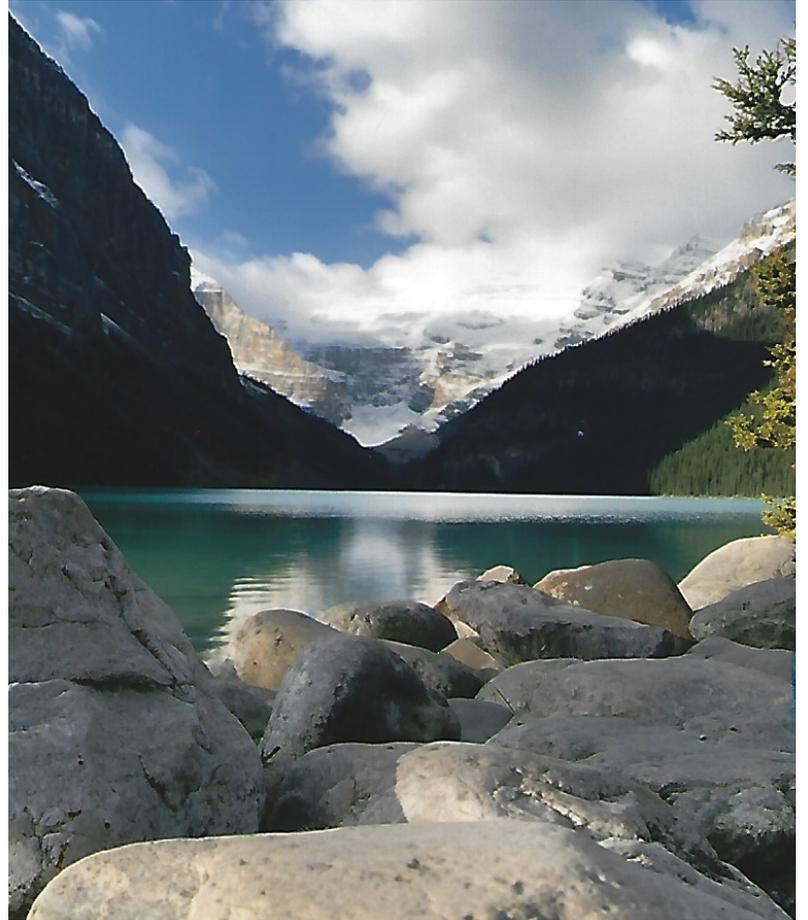
Youth - 18 and under

Travel



First Place

"Washington Monument"
Jane Windsheimer, Age 14, Branch 2



Second Place

"Lake Louise, Canada"
Mayva Hergel, Age 17, Branch 785

Overall Winner



Third Place - "Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania"
Shane Simpson, Age 18, Branch 670



Overall Winner
"Portland Head Lighthouse," Portland, ME
Janet Ball, Branch 320

BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

BRANCH 1 – LAKEWOOD, OHIO

The Saint Joseph Society-Branch 1 will hold its next meeting on April 26, 2020, at 1:00PM at Burntwood Tavern located at 19304 Detroit Road, Rocky River, OH. The meeting will be held before the luncheon. Those interested in attending, please call 216-338-8179 by April 14, 2020, so that the restaurant can properly accommodate our branch. All members are invited to attend.

Marie Golias, Secretary

BRANCH 2 – PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

Branch 2 will be holding their semi-annual meeting on February 25, 2020, at Eat n' park on Ohio River Blvd. The meeting will start at 7PM. We will discuss upcoming activities. Please RSVP to Joanne at 412-715-5577.

Joanne Lako, Recording Secretary

BRANCH 19 – BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT

The St. Joseph Society Branch 19 will offer a mass in celebration of the feast day of our patron saint, St. Joseph for the living members of our branch on March 8, 2020 at 8:30 in St. Cyril & Methodius Church, 79 Church Street, Bridgeport, Ct.

The first meeting of the year will be held on April 26, 2020 at the home of Jacqueline Zack, 15 Brookhedge Rd., Trumbull, CT at 9:30 a.m. Officers' reports will be given and plans for activities during the year will be discussed. All members are cordially invited to attend.

Deborah M. Nelson, Secretary

BRANCH 24 – CLEVELAND, OHIO

Branch 24 will hold a meeting on Sunday, May 17, 2020, at 1:00PM in the Activity Center of St. Joseph Byzantine Catholic Church, 8111 Brecksville Rd, Brecksville, OH 44141. On the agenda: a discussion of general branch business and upcoming activities for the year. A catered luncheon will be served directly after the meeting; for reservations, please call Fraternal Activities Director Tom Ivanec at (440) 668-7797.

Bob Kopco, President

BRANCH 24 – CLEVELAND, OHIO

Branch 24, St Andrew Svorad Society, is providing special Branch 24 members-only pricing for the Saturday evening (7PM), March 28, 2020, Monsters hockey game at Rocket Mortgage Field House in downtown Cleveland, OH. A non-branch member ticket is \$24. A Branch 24 member ticket is \$5. Reservations are required and available by calling Branch 24 Fraternal Activities Director Tom Ivanec at 440-668-7797. Please make checks payable to Branch 24 FCSU. The deadline is February 24, 2020. These are lower goal end tickets and the Monsters are selling out games, so seating is limited. Don't delay. Order now, and join other FCSU members and guests – from Branch 24 and other branches in our Ohio District 10 – for a family-friendly evening of fun and fraternalism [Editor's note: please see page 17 of this issue for details].

Bob Kopco, President

BRANCH 45 – NEW YORK, NEW YORK

The St. Matthew's the Evangelist Society, Branch 45, will hold a semi-annual meeting on Sunday, March 29, 2020, at 1:00 PM after the Slovak mass at St. John Nepomucene Church, 66th Street and 1th Avenue, New York City. We urge all members to attend this meeting.

Maria Jurasi, Financial Secretary

Oznamujeme členom nášho spolku, že sa uskutoční polročná schôdza sv. Matúša č. 45 1KSJ v New Yorku po slovenskej svätej omši v nedeľu 29. Marca 2020 o 13:00 hodine v osadnej hale slovenského kostola sv. Jána Nepomuckého na Prvej Avenue a 66-tej ulici. Láska

žadame našich členov o aktívnu účasť na tejto schôdzi.

Mária Juráši, pokladníčka

BRANCH 55 – PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

The Annual Meeting of Branch 55 K.J. is scheduled to be held on Sunday, February 23, 2020 at 2:00 P.M. at the residence of the Secretary-Treasurer in the Dining Room at the Wesley Enhanced Living complex, 8401 Roosevelt Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA. Mass will be held at Wesley Hall at 11:00 A.M. followed by brunch.

Elections will be held for Branch Officers, Delegates and their Alternates to the District 8 meetings. Please call the President at 215.613.8987. We will celebrate the Feast of SS. Cyril and Methodius, Patron Saints of Slovakia. These two Monks from Greece successfully evangelized Slovakia and all of Eastern Europe as well with the message of the Love of Jesus Christ after the French failed because their efforts were based on using the sword and the Slovaks didn't buy it.

We will recognize all the school-age who submitted an essay by the end of the year about the contribution of SS. Cyril and Methodius to our Catholic Faith with a prize of \$10 in accordance with the Resolution made at the last Semi-Annual meeting.

Regular business will also be conducted. Please bring non-perishable food for Aid for Friends in Need. All members are cordially invited to attend.

Attention! Any high school or college student that attends this meeting will receive a copy of Joseph Trojcek's recently published book, FOCUS ON YOUR LIGHT. Joe, a multi-faceted entrepreneur, is a member of the FCSU, who shares his insights and experience in building a successful career centered in the field of music. In his book, Joe presents helpful ideas for anyone interested in starting a business or furthering his/her career.

Branch will be catered; therefore, we request that you RSVP by Thursday, February 20, 2020 in order to make reservations at Wesley. For directions to the meeting, please call the Secretary-Treasurer at (215) 613-8987. In the event of severe weather, any other emergency, we will conduct a telephone conference meeting, if feasible, with those who cannot attend. Otherwise, we will postpone the meeting to the following Sunday, March 1, 2020.

Helena T. Gaydos, Secretary-Treasurer

BRANCH 162 – UNIONTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Wendelin Society, Branch 162, will hold its quarterly meeting on Sunday, March 8, 2020, at 11:00 a.m. at Eastern Buffet Sushi & Grill, 129 Matthew Drive, Uniontown, PA, 15401.

Officers' reports will be given and upcoming branch activities will be discussed. Regional Director, James Marmol, will advise us of developments from the home office.

All members and guests of Branch 162 are cordially invited to attend the luncheon meeting. Call for reservations by March 1, 2020, to Dolores Marmol at 724-437-4983 as well as for any changes to policies or address changes.

Dolores Marmol, Secretary

BRANCH 166 – BINGHAMTON, CAPITAL AREA, PEEKSKILL, POUGHKEEPSIE, AND SYRACUSE, NEW YORK

The St. Joseph the Guardian Society, Branch 166, will hold its Semi-Annual Meeting and Dinner on Sunday, March 29, 2019, at 2:15 P.M., at Buffet Star, 4089 Old Vestal Road, Vestal, New York. On the agenda will be information from the District Meeting and Branch business. Please bring any questions about life insurance or annuities for discussion at the meeting. All members are encouraged to attend.

Please call Arlo Meeker at 607-775-4896 by March 26, 2019, to make a reservation if you

plan to attend. We hope to see you at the meeting.

Arlo Meeker, President

BRANCH 200 – FORD CITY, PENNSYLVANIA

Meetings for Branch 200 are held upstairs in the Banquet Hall, 910 6th Avenue, Ford City. Officers meet @ 7PM with the Members meeting directly following. We meet the first Thursday of each month except June and July. Meeting dates for this year (2020) are as follows: March 5th, April 2nd, May 7th, August 6th, September 3rd, October 1st, Nomination of Officers November 5, and Election of Officers December 3rd. We look forward to you attending.

Plans are going well in preparation of our 125th Anniversary celebrating October 1st – October 3rd. I would appreciate any history of the Slovak Club. It started in 1895 in a home next door to the current building. The Sokol and the Slovak Club were once affiliated with each other. If anyone has pictures or the names of the Men's baseball or Women's softball teams members pre WWII, please contact me at vschgaub123@gmail.com or leave a message @ 724-763-9229. Also contact me if anyone would like to put an ad in the program. So far confirmed we are having a band on Friday evening Oct 2nd. Saturday Mass will be held at the Christ Prince of Peace Church on 4th Avenue, Ford City, PA, at 1PM with Bishop Malesic and Father Nasta. Cocktail social @ 2:30PM with dinner following @ 3PM. Johnny Murphy Big Band to literally "play" for their supper (free of charge). So "Save these Dates" and look for more information to come. Invitations will be going out to neighboring Districts and Officers of the FCSU.

Fraternally,

Vicki Schaub, Financial Secretary

BRANCH 228 – LORAIN, OHIO

The St. John the Baptist/Holy Trinity Lodge, Branch 228 will hold their next meeting on Monday, March 16, 2020 at 7 P.M. at the American Slovak Club on 30th and Broadway in Lorain, Ohio. Our meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of each month except for the months of January, February, July and August when no meetings are held. All meetings begin at 7 P.M. and are held at the American Slovak Club. Delicious food is served by Theresa Arendt at the last meeting of each calendar quarter. The branch will hold its annual election of officers and bylaw review during each December meeting. The exact date for this year's election meeting is December 21, 2020. At that time, we will also elect two (2) representatives to serve on the American Slovak Club Board of Directors. This past December, incumbent branch officers President Leonard Zilko, Vice-President Luis Palos, Financial Secretary Lisa Trifiletti-Palos, Activities Director/Auditor Theresa Arendt and Recording Secretary Thomas Zuffa were re-elected to their respective 1-year term of office. Leonard Zilko and Kathleen Trifiletti were re-elected to a 3-year term on the American Slovak Club Board of Directors representing our local Branch 228.

Once again, I ask that our members plan to attend our meetings whenever possible. FCSU Executive Secretary Kenneth A. Arendt attends each of our meetings. In addition, our Region 6 Director, Thomas J. Ivanec is a frequent attendee. Their reports not only give us current information about the ongoing concern of our organization, it provides a relaxed forum to ask a particular question you may have. The FCSU would like to see the fraternal activities of all districts and branches increase. Attendance at our Branch 228 meetings can give you first-hand knowledge of items and events being discussed as well as an opportunity for personal input. The meetings are fun and help to promote comradery so give us a try!

Thomas B. Zuffa, Recording Secretary

BRANCH 259 – STRUTHERS, OHIO

The St. Michael the Archangel Society, Branch 259, will hold a meeting on February 23, 2020, at 2:00 p.m. at 175 Harvey Street, Struthers, Ohio.

We will conduct an audit and discuss the activities for 2020. The members are invited and encouraged to attend.

On behalf of all the officers, we would like to extend our wishes for a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Vivian Sedlacko, Secretary

BRANCH 276 – MCKEESPORT, PENNSYLVANIA

Branch 276 will hold its 2020 Spring meetings at 1 PM on Sunday, March 15, 2020, and Sunday, May 17, 2020. A Fall meeting is planned for November 15, 2020. The meeting on March 15 will be held at Twin Oaks Restaurant in the Rainbow Shopping Center on Lincoln Way, White Oak, PA. We will be collecting information to RSVP for both the district meeting and the Father's Day Brunch.

Fraternally,

Margaret Nasta, President

BRANCH 358K – SUPERIOR, WISCONSIN

There has been a merger between Branch 358K Superior, WI and Branch 926K Wisconsin, WI.

All members of Branch 358K will now hold membership in Branch 926K. This merger has taken place as of January 21, 2020. If you should need any service on your policy, or new or additional insurance, please contact:

FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION
6611 ROCKSIDE RD
STE#300
INDEPENDENCE, OH 44131
(800) 533-6682

We wish to thank all the past officers for their dedication and efforts through the years performed in the spirit of fraternalism.

Kenneth A. Arendt, Executive Secretary

BRANCH 367 – FAIRCHANCE, PENNSYLVANIA

St. Joseph Branch 367, Fairchance, PA will hold its next meeting on Wednesday, March 25th, 2020 at noon. We will meet at the Mountain View Café, 1618 Georges Fairchance Road, Smithfield, PA. All members are invited to attend. Please call Audrey Balazik, President 724-438-3887 or Kathryn Baranek, Secretary 724-569-1006 for reservations.

Kathryn Baranek, Secretary

BRANCH 382 – SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA

Saints Cyril & Methodius Society, Branch 382K, will conduct its Annual March Meeting on Sunday, March 29, 2020, in the VFW, 110 Chestnut Street, Dunmore, PA.

Auditors will meet at 12:30PM to check the books.

Officers and members will gather for the business session at 1:00PM.

The agenda will include reports of the executive officers and auditors. Members will also discuss future branch activities. Information from the Home Office will be disseminated.

A copy of the Annual Report to the Home Office will be presented.

Refreshments and socializing will follow. All members are urged to attend.

Frank M. Slovenkai, Jr. is branch president. Other officers include: Elizabeth M. Slovenkai, vice president; Michael J. Slovenkai, Sr., treasurer; Michael J. Czankner, recording secretary; and John J. Slovenkai, Sr., financial secretary.

Elizabeth M. Slovenkai, Vice President

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BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

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BRANCH 401 - EAST VANDERGRIFT, PENNSYLVANIA

St. Anthony of Padua, Branch 401, invites all branch members to attend the 2020 Semi Annual meeting to be held at 1:30PM July 19, 2020, at China Lobster Restaurant, 3215 Leechburg Road, New Kensington, PA, 15068. Members are encouraged to attend; your input and involvement are important to the branch. The Branch 401 focus for 2020 will be on our local Slovak Heritage (the idea birthed from the JEDNOTA article titled Focus on Heritage). Branch 401 wants to collect biographical member's family histories both electronic and hard copy for future generations. It is the branch's hope to create an electronic archive. Members interested in contributing to this archive, please contact Recording Secretary, Kathy Froncek at 724-689-3369 or kmfroncek@yahoo.com. District 11 will be hosting the second annual "Polka Away the Pounds" on February 16, 2020 2PM -6PM featuring Jack & the Tady Bears. This dance was well attended last year, please plan to come and enjoy the music. Admission is free!! The kitchen will be open and featuring Slovak specialties! Address is: CU Club (Slovak Club) - Ford City 914 6th Avenue Ford City, PA, 16226. Be watching for summer activity of Pittsburgh Pirates ball game!

Fraternally submitted,

Patrick Froncek, Financial Secretary

BRANCH 410 - UNIONTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

The SS. Peter and Paul, Branch 410, will hold a meeting on Monday, March 23, 2020, at 2:30 at the Highland House, 92 West Main Street, Uniontown, PA. Call for reservations by Thursday, March 19 2020, at 724-425-2576. All members are invited to attend.

Geraldine Buchheit, Secretary

BRANCH 450 - CLEVELAND, OHIO

St. Joseph the Guardian Society, Branch 450, will hold its Semi-Annual Meeting on Saturday, April 18, 2020, at 11:00 AM. Meeting will be held at Holy Spirit Byzantine Catholic Church Hall, 5500 West 54th Street, Parma, OH. 44129. On the agenda will be discussions of branch business and the summer activities for members. We look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Fraternally,

George P. Carny, Recording Secretary.

PS: *Hockey Night in Cleveland is scheduled for this year on Saturday, March 28, 2020. 7:00pm. [Editor's note: please see page 17 of this issue for Hockey Night details] Branch 450 is providing special Branch 450 members-only pricing. A non-branch member ticket is \$ 24.00. A Branch 450 member ticket is \$ 7.00. For more info call George C. at (440) - 885 - 5702. The deadline is Feb. 24, 2020.*

BRANCH 553 - AKRON, OHIO

Attention all members! Starting in January 2020, we are issuing new Key Cards. If you haven't filled out a card at the club to receive a new card, please do so at your earliest convenience. The mailing list for the Slovak J Club newsletter is compiled from card holder information. Don't miss out on what's happening at your club.

Coming events:

Feb 19 Wednesday Dinner - Beef Tip and Noodles. \$10.00. Served from 4:30-7:00 pm; requires advance purchase of tickets

Feb 28 Friday Fish Fry 1st of the Lenten Season. Served from 4:30 -7:00 pm

Mar 4 Wednesday Spaghetti Night Served from 4:30pm-7:00pm

Mar 6 Friday Night Fish Fry - Served from 4:30 pm - 7:00 pm

Mar 18 Wednesday Dinner - Lasagna - Served from 4:30-7:00 pm; requires advance

purchase of tickets

Mar 13th, 20th and 27th Friday Fish Fry. Served from 4:30-7:00 pm

Mar 29 FCSU District 10 Meeting - The American Slovak Club, Lorain, Ohio 2:30 pm

April 26 Branch 553 Lodge Meeting - 3:00 pm

July 25 Kielbasa Open - Mayfair Country Club Hope to see everyone at the Club supporting your Branch.

Linda M Hanko, Financial Secretary

BRANCH 721 - BANNISTER, MICHIGAN

Jednota Branch 721 will have their spring meeting on Sunday, April 26, 2020, at 2:00PM. It will be held at the home of Julius Remenar, Financial Secretary, located at 8977 S. Mason Road, Bannister, MI. All members are welcome to attend.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Beno, Recording Secretary

BRANCH 731 - YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

Members are invited to celebrate Mass commemorating of the feast day of Saint Joseph, Patron Saint of our Branch 731. Mass will be on March 15, 2020 at 11 am at Our Lady of Sorrows Parish, Saint Matthias Church, 915 Cornell Street, Youngstown, Ohio. Our December 2019 meeting included the election of officers for 2020. Elected were President Irene Makovec, Vice President John Leskovyansky, Recording Secretary Jim Bobby, and Financial Secretary Jackie Bobby. We would like to wish everyone a healthy and happy 2020.

Jim Bobby, Secretary

BRANCH 743 - STERLING HEIGHTS, MICHIGAN

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 743, will celebrate the feast day of St Joseph on Sunday, March 29, 2020, with a Slovak Mass for all living and deceased members at 11:30AM at St. Cyril and Methodius Church, 41233 Ryan Road, Sterling Heights, MI.

All members and their families are invited to attend this annual celebration of St. Joseph's Day.

A Branch meeting will take place at 1:15 pm. in the Slovak Heritage Room.

Any member who has recently moved or requires Branch services should contact the Branch Secretary Joseph C. Rimarcik, 4945 Wavewood Dr, Commerce Twp., MI 48382 or phone 248-714-9620.

No obligation insurance quotes are free and simple, all that is required is date of birth and gender.

Joseph C. Rimarcik, President/Financial Secretary

BRANCH 743 - STERLING HEIGHTS, MI

The Home Office and Branch 743 are unable to contact the following members because we do not have their current address:

John Bacha, Michael J Bires, Kimberly Ann Bobinski, Lynette M Brink, Louise M Cassar, Patricia Fahner, Stephen Forish, Charles Furchak, Natalia Greslikova, Christine Harman, Elizabeth Harman, Sharon Langlois, Judith Likavec, Judith Madar, Ann Moss, Valerie Moss, Diane F Rench, Daniel M Reszka, Paul Skwarko, and Emily Turcol.

If you have information, or know of someone who might, please contact me @ 248-714-9620.

Joseph Rimarcik, President & Financial Secretary Branch 743

BRANCH 746 - LINDEN, NEW JERSEY

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 746, will hold its next meeting on Sunday, March 29, 2020 at 11:00 AM in the downstairs meeting

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DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISTRICT 3 - THE GEORGE ONDA DISTRICT - WESTMORELAND COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

The George Onda District of the First Catholic Slovak Union will hold our Semi-Annual meeting on Saturday, March 21, 2020. We will meet following the 5PM Mass at St. Florian Roman Catholic Church in United, Pa. in the Formation Room. On the agenda will be discussion of district and branch news and our successful Stedry Vecer. Food and beverages will be served. We look forward to a great attendance.

Secretary, Linda L. Gonta

DISTRICT 6 - PITTSBURGH DISTRICT

The Pittsburgh District extends its condolences to all family and friends of Father Joseph Grosko, who passed away on January 6. He served as our district chaplain among his many other offices. He will be missed.

Branch 35 will host the Spring Business Meeting on Sunday, April 26 at 1 PM at Holy Trinity Social Hall, 529 Grant Street Extn, West Mifflin 15122. You must RSVP. Please contact Janet Sullivan at 412-824-4185 by Sunday, April 19 (a week prior to the meeting).

Brad Matta is the new District Activities Director. He is considering a Pirates baseball game and raffle. We are open to other suggestions; bring them to the April meeting.

Branch 38 will host the Fathers' Day Luncheon on Sunday, June 21. Details will be finalized at the April meeting. Branch 628 will host the Fall Business Meeting at a date to be determined.

As always, members are urged to check the Jednota for updates on FCSU business matters as well as contests and tournaments.

While we look forward to seeing everyone at the FCSU district meetings, remember there are many other local Slovak events that also merit your attention:

** WPCSA monthly meetings are held on the 1st Monday of the month at 7 PM at the Mt Lebanon Public Library, 16 Castle Shannon Blvd, Mt Lebanon PA. March 2: Folklore in Slovakia; April 6: Summer School in Slovakia #2; May 4: Current Issues in Slovakia; June 8: Immigrant Experience. Become a member of the WPCSA to get the newsletter listing all of their events and other newsworthy items.

** Slovak Language Classes are held Tuesdays in spring and fall. Contact Bozena Hilko at bozi@comcast.net. February 19: Intermediate/Advanced classes begin. July 18: Kids Language Camp starts. September 8: Beginner classes start.

** Annual Czech and Slovak Studies Program at Pitt - March 19-21

** Slovak Wine Tasting - April

** Slovakia Boys Choir - April 26-28

** Bus tour to EU Embassies in Washington DC - May 10

** Slovak Day at Kennywood Park - Sunday, July 16. You can get discount tickets at the Fathers' Day Lunch.

** Tour to Slovakia, Poland, Vienna & Prague - August 21 to September 5 - Contact Joe Senko for itinerary.

** SeptemberFest at NSS Heritage Museum - Saturday, September 26

** "Notes of Slovakia" has programs in English and Slovak. You can find them on Facebook or at notesofslovakia.com.

** Don't forget the Western Pennsylvania Slovak Radio Hour - 3-4 PM, Sunday's - WPIT-AM 730. The program is also streamed live at www.wpitam.com.

** You can follow the Pittsburgh Slovaks and the Western PA Slovak Cultural Association on Facebook. The National Czech & Slovak Museum and Library in Cedar Rapids also has a Facebook page. Check out your family's hometown in Slovakia. Even a small village may have a Facebook page.

** The Carpatho-Rusyn Society maintains a web page at www.c-rs.org.

** Various Slovak programs and courses are available through the University of Pittsburgh Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. See www.slavic.pitt.edu

** If you're interested in study abroad, Slovakia has a number of major universities; some have programs taught in English. Check out www.slovakia.com/study-in-slovakia/

** The National Slovak Society Museum in McMurray PA is available to visitors Monday-Thursday from 9-3. Contact Sue Ondrejco for information and reservations. See www.nsslife.org/Museum.php. Plan a trip to see the hand-carved Bethlehem scene with 80 animated figures.

** The next conference of the CzechoSlovak Genealogical Society International will be in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in October, 2021. "Nasa Rodina," their quarterly publication, has many interesting articles on Slovak history and genealogy. See www.cgsi.org. The Foundation for Eastern European Family History Studies holds annual conferences in Salt Lake City. The next conference is August 5-7, 2020. See feefhs.org.

** FCSU insurance information and forms can be found at www.fcsu.com. Many interesting Slovak-related links may be found at fcsu.com/resources.

If anyone knows of additional Slovak events in Western Pennsylvania that they wish to be included in our district notice, they should email information to the secretary.

Fraternally,

Margaret A. Nasta, Secretary Pittsburgh District
manasta@verizon.net

DISTRICT 9- THE FRANK T. HOLLY JR. DISTRICT

The Frank T. Holly Jr. District of Uniontown, PA will hold a meeting on Sunday, March 15, 2020, at 1:00 PM at Caporella's Italian Ristorante at 90 Pittsburgh Street, Uniontown, PA. Election of officers for the year 2020 will be on the agenda. Regional Director Marmol will be informing the members of Jednota events for the upcoming year. All branches are invited to attend. Members who attend will be asked to contribute \$5.00 toward their meal. Reservations need to be made by Wednesday, March 11, 2020, by contacting President James Marmol at 724-437-0892. All members are urged to attend.

Barbara A. Holly, Secretary

DISTRICT 10 - THE REV. STEPHEN FURDEK DISTRICT

Mark your Calendars - the first District 10 meeting of the new year will be held on Sunday, March 29, 2020 at The American Slovak Club, 2915 Broadway Avenue, Lorain, OH 44055 at 2:30 pm

Linda M Hanko, Secretary/Treasurer

DISTRICT 11 - THE MGRS JOSEF TISO DISTRICT

District 11 - the MSGR Josef Tiso District - invites all members of the district to the next meeting scheduled March 15, 2020, at Kings Restaurant, 191 New Castle Road, Butler, PA, 16001. The District is planning the second annual Night at the Ball game this summer (date to be announced) and

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Rest in Peace, Our Departed Members

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

Branch:	Name	Branch:	Name	Branch:	Name	Branch:	Name
001K	Jacqueline Nerad	132K	Eleanor Dworak	313K	Anna T Kangas	746K	John Budis
002K	Judith A Chamberlain	152K	Christina A Bargella	373K	Jay R Mcvann	746K	Emelia Dudsak
005P	Marie H Premich	153K	Frank R Bronkala Jr	393K	Dorothy E Phillips	746K	Anne Grace Gomola
010K	Florence Nalevanko	157K	Margaret F Hodge	393K	Lillian M Uhrinek	746K	John Andrew Kazimir
019K	Francis J Lauf	157K	Margaret Matika	419K	Edward Ziobro	746K	Carmen Martini
023K	Helen Kutchma	166K	Robert E Mccllements Jr	472K	Margaret Chicwak	746K	Carol A Melia
023K	Helen Teresa Venglarchik	181K	John E Gera	484K	Joseph J Funyak	756K	Joseph Klco Jr
024K	Ann H Dubois	181K	George Meholic	484K	George Stephen Long	756K	Pauline Webb
024K	Jack J Lacey	181K	Frank G Novak Sr	493K	Robert M Magruder	769K	Deborah M Cousino
035K	Ellen Misko	199K	George A Marcinko	493K	John A Matejcek	780K	Peter P Radosa
038K	John V Mrazik	199K	Joseph A Meslovich	553K	John M Macak	796K	Francis M Krakowski
040K	Lucille Churney	200K	Paul Humenik	553K	Alexander P Pustinger	831K	Rosemary Anuszek
040K	Eugene E Redd	228K	Clara Mcdonough	581K	Frank Moses	844K	Carol J Haurert
060K	John S Pasternak	228K	Dorothy A Mihalik	584K	Marcella F Demiter	855K	Joseph John Lucas Sr
075K	Dolores Mary Moyer	238K	Bernice L Yarosh	587K	Dane Mathesius Patsiga	855K	Elizabeth Purta
085K	Josephine T Maceyko	259K	Linda M Houde	628K	James Francis Huber	856K	Patricia A Pawk
085K	Doris A Thompson	260K	Ludmilla Mcdonough	628K	Donna M Kochis	890K	Peter Gryszkiewicz
096K	Helen B Slansky	260K	John J Rozum Sr	731K	John P Bobby Jr	916K	Helen Naiser
112K	James Bowman	292K	John Matey Jr	731K	Eileen M Slanina		
112K	Blanche Sabol	292K	William J Matey	746K	John Michael Bayus		

*Processed through the month of January

OBITUARIES

**SOPHIA (SOPHIE) M. HUDAK
BRANCH 1 –
LAKEWOOD, OHIO**



Sophia (Sophie) M. Hudak (nee Beno), age 87. Preceded in death by her husband of 64 years, Andrew F. Hudak, Jr. Dear mother of Andrew III (Maureen), Paul (Terri), and Stephen (Amy). Dearest grandmother of Christina, Andrew IV, Thomas, Patricia, Matthew, Valerie, Christopher, and Nicole. Beloved great-grandmother of 10. Daughter of Stefan Beno and Julia (nee Zbin)(both deceased). Sister of Matilda Tehorik, and deceased siblings Mary, Stephen, Julia, Margaret, Joseph, Emil, Edward, and Theresa. Sophia was an active, prayerful Catholic. Her church, delicious food, close and extended family, as well as the Slovak community were all of great importance to her.

of St. Vincent College and Seminary. In his 58 years as a priest he served the following parishes; 1959-1964 Saint Albert the Great Parish, Pittsburgh, 1964-1966 Saint Ursula Parish, Allison Park, 1966-1978 Archdioceses for Military Services, Washington D.C., 1978-1981 Our Lady of Loreto Parish, Pittsburgh, 1981-1989 Dioceses of Dumaguete, Philippines, 1989-1992 Children's Hospital of UPMC, Pittsburgh, 1989-1992 Saint Michael Parish, Munhall, 1992-1996 Holy Martyrs Parish, Tarentum, 1996-2002 Resurrection Parish, Pittsburgh, 2002-2017 Holy Trinity Parish, West Mifflin, 2002-2017 Saint Agnes Parish, West Mifflin. A member of many Catholic and Slovak fraternals, including the First Catholic Slovak Union, he was also the Chaplain for the Knights of Columbus, Serra Club, Slovak Catholic Sokol, and was the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association.

**RICHARD J. SKOVIRA
BRANCH 313 –
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS**



On September 24, 2019, Richard J. Skovira, age 96, died peacefully surrounded by loved ones.

Richard is survived by his five children, Richard (Katherine), William (Susanne), Annemarie (Philip), Jeanne (Gene) and Susan (Shaun); nine grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Rosemarie.

Born in Jessup, PA on July 13, 1923, he was the beloved son of John and Mary Skovira. Following service in the Navy as a radioman during WWII, Richard and family moved to Parkville, MD for his career with Westinghouse. Richard was a devout Catholic and served St. Ursula Church as a sacristan for many years. Richard enjoyed music, woodworking, volunteering through Boy Scouts and the VFW, and spending time with his family.

- Submitted by Pamela Waters

**JOSEPH KLCO JR.
BRANCH 756 –
OWOSSO, MICHIGAN**



Joseph Klco Jr., age 86 of Owosso, MI, passed away Wednesday, October 30, 2019, at Brookdale Meridian Assisted Living in Haslett, MI.

Joseph was born on January 9, 1933, in Owosso to the late Joseph and Frances (Slahunek) Klco, Sr. He attended elementary at St. Joseph Catholic School and later graduated high school from St. Paul's in 1951. Following graduation, Joseph enlisted into the Navy and served his country faithfully during the Korean War. He was honorably discharged in 1956. That same year on October 6th, Joseph would marry Mary Ellen Morrissey at St. Paul Catholic Church in Owosso.

Prior to his retirement in 1996, Mr. Klco had worked over 30 years for General

Motors as an electrician at their Oldsmobile Plant in Lansing, MI, where he was a member of the UAW Local 652 Union. Mr. Klco liked to travel and had spent the last 20 winters down in Texas. He enjoyed being outdoors, fishing and camping. He was a fan of baseball, NASCAR, and watching both the University of Michigan and Notre Dame during football season. Mr. Klco loved being with family and friends, playing cards and listening to his favorite polkas.

Mr. Klco is survived by his daughter, Mary Rodabaugh of Owosso; granddaughter, Heather (Adam) Boone of Bath, MI; 2 great grandsons: Justyn and Tyler Boone; siblings: Betty (Jerry) Strauss, Mary Jane (Harold) Stephans, Frank (Delly) Klco; in-laws: Joann Klco, Rita (Clifton) McFarland, and his brother-in-law and best friend, Ed Klapko.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife, Mary (on July 23, 2013); brother, Robert; and son-in-law, Jim Rodabaugh Jr.

The 2020 Lenten season begins on Ash Wednesday, February 26, for Latin-rite Catholics with Easter Sunday on April 12



During Lent, we are asked to devote ourselves to seeking the Lord in prayer and reading Scripture, to service by giving alms, and to practice self-control through fasting. Many know of the tradition of abstaining from meat on Fridays during Lent, but we are also called to practice self-discipline and fast in other ways throughout the season. Contemplate the meaning and origins of the Lenten fasting tradition in this reflection. In addition, the giving of alms is

one way to share God's gifts—not only through the distribution of money, but through the sharing of our time and talents. As St. John Chrysostom reminds us: "Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours, but theirs." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2446).

- As posted on usccb.org

Congratulations

To the Winners of the FCSU 2019 Gingerbread Contest:



First Place:
Mary Tkach,
Branch 746



Second Place:
Owan Argoso,
Branch 1



Third Place:
Liam Joiner,
Branch 785



136 Entries

			LOSER'S POOL 2019		
FIRST	LAST	PLAYER NAME	REGION	DISTRICT	BRANCH
Henry	Sterling	PapPap	2	8	112 1st Place
Nicole	Nasta		2	8	857 2nd Place
David	Ball	D Ball	4	12	320 3rd Place
Janet	Ball	Pink Sweatshirt	4	12	320 3rd Place
Mary Jane	Charitan	Mom 41	4	12	320 3rd Place
Rusty	Groner		6	10	228 3rd Place
Tom	Guban	Tommy g	6	10	553 3rd Place
Mary	Hradesky		6	10	900 3rd Place
Delores	M Kocis	DMK0301	4	9	108 3rd Place
Andrew	Kotlar		4	12	670 3rd Place
John	Kristoff-Kichka	Jaxskk	6	10	1 3rd Place
Damian	Nasta		2	8	857 3rd Place
Loretta	E Nypaver	Loretta E. Nypaver	4	9	162 3rd Place
James	Saul		4		760 3rd Place
Mary	Tranchine	Mary T	4	7	484 3rd Place
Josephine	Valcho		5	6	628 3rd Place
Steve	Van Horn	SVH	2	8	157 3rd Place



ATTENTION CLEVELAND-AREA JEDNOTA MEMBERS & FRIENDS

Hockey Night in Cleveland

Saturday, March 28, 2020

7:00pm

Monsters vs. Phantoms

Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse -Cleveland, OH



Special Offer Includes:

- Discounted Lower Goal End Tickets!!
- \$24 group rate per seat, with possible deeper discounts for MEMBERS ONLY through your branch
- The Purple Game Benefiting the American Cancer Society: Special Jersey Auction
- GIVEAWAY - Light-up Cheer Sticks courtesy of Anthem

To get your branch discount and order tickets, please contact the representative in your branch:

- Branch 1: Marie Golias, 216-338-8179
- Branch 24: Tom Ivanec, 440-668-7797
- Branch 228: Len Zilko, 440-988-3236
- Branch 450: George Carny, 440-885-5702
- Branch 553: Linda Hanko, 330-706-0151
- Branch 855: Stephanie Sutilla, 440-409-9405



Special FCSU member rates, courtesy of your FCSU branch. Contact your branch officer for details!!

Deadline to order: Monday, February 24, 2020

Seating is Limited: First Come, First Serve, So Don't Delay

TICKET DELIVERY:

From your branch officer or Ohio Regional Director Tom Ivanec

All orders are subject to availability. No ticket required for children under the age of two. Video cameras are not allowed in the arena. Offer and discounts not available at arena box office. No refunds or exchanges.

31st Treasures of Slovakia Tour Booking Now

Helene Cincebeaux, Branch 75

Our 31st Treasures of Slovakia Tour will take place July 9 - 19, 2020. The land cost is \$2,399 per person. It will be led again by Helene Cincebeaux and Jozef Kaufmann.

The trip offers the Best of Slovakia! East to West and North to South! A chance to experience castles, culture, folklore, folk art, museums, local food, wine tasting, village parties, festivals, music, song, museums, visit ancestral villages and find long-lost family!

Highlights of the trip include Orava and Spiš Castles, guided tours of Banská Bystrica (where the history museum in the shape of a shepherd's hat is a big hit!), Košice with its colorful old town and gorgeous St. Elizabeth's Cathedral and the famed Singing Fountain; Prešov with its famed Greek Catholic and Catholic cathedrals, and Bratislava, the only capital in the world that abuts two other countries. The city's fame is spreading as people discover the charming byways, the craft vendors, museums, cafes, colorful statues, and incredibly ornate cathedrals.

Two festivals are included: the famed Detva Folk Festival with thousands in folk dress, incomparable cimbal and violin music, and my new fav, the Dolny Zem section which features Slovaks in diaspora from Croatia, Serbia, Romania, etc. The second festival is the international crafts one in historic Kežmarok with more than 100 vendors and craft demonstrators, continuous music and folk dance performances on two stages, fab local food and a medieval parade.

We will experience village weddings in the east and the west - sampling traditional foods, dancing the dances and taking part in the customs.

Both of Slovakia's walled medieval towns are on the itinerary - Levoča's famed St Jakub's cathedral as well as glorious Bardejov, the Pearl of Saris, with magnificent St Giles Cathedral and a unique icon museum highlighting the Rusyn and Catholic treasures in the region. A very special visit to an ancient wooden church filled with icons and procession banners and stories and legends... a highlight!

Time to visit superb Stará Ľubovňa's out-



Treasures tour goers greeted with bread and salt, the necessities of life



Stella Bangs loved the raft ride on the Dunajec!



(L - R) Ben Kempinen and Steve Stumpp took part in the Goral "milking competition" to a great deal of laughter from all.



Most of the villagers of Harichovce in Spiš came to display customs and dance with us.



Wonderful crafts people displayed at Detva.



Christine Krsko was thrilled when some 20 relatives gathered to meet her in Beluša in the Trenčín region of Slovakia with genealogy info.



The custom of dancing around the bottle.



Kelly from Costa Rica became the bride in a Spiš wedding and led in with lighted candles.



Košice's St Elizabeth's was magical on a night lights tour.



Guided tours of Košice and Bratislava brought the past to life

door Skansen museum and learn the beliefs and customs of our ancestors and take the thrilling raft ride on the Dunajec between Poland and Slovakia in pristine and glorious Pieniny National Park.

Many other highlights including Rajecká Lesná with its remarkable mechanical Nativity, unique Čičmany and homes decorated with ancient motifs, plus wine and kolač tastings!

Our specialty is arranging visits to ancestral villages and finding long lost family - we

have a 98% success rate.

We also have a popular add on for Golden Prague, the Czech Republic's historic and gorgeous capital.

Questions or more info contact Helene Cincebeaux, 585 342-9383, helenezx@aol.com or write her at 7 Walt Place, Palm Coast FL.

Scenes from the 100th Treasures of Slovakia Tour in 2019

It is not uncommon for Treasures Tour-goers to enjoy the experience so much, they

decide to take the tour again. Two former travelers have already signed on to the 2020 Treasures Tour, one has been on 13 of our Treasures Tours and the other on 10!

Why do people go again and again? Check out this scenes from the group that celebrated our 2019 Treasures of Slovakia. We immersed in Slovak culture and found living family for all participants which led to some very joyful reunions.

January Meeting of District 19 & Branch 785 in Mississauga, Ontario

On January 5, 2020, District 19 and Branch 785 held their annual meeting and election of officers at SS Cyril & Methodius Church hall in Mississauga, Ontario. Ruzena Kapitan was elected as a new Vice President, replacing Jimmy Szabo. Congratulations, Ruzena. We also welcomed visitors from Montreal Branch 784, Alex and Alice Dobrik.

Milan Zoldak was recognized for his long term support of the Christian values of Sts Cyril and Methodius Parish and the fraternal goals of Jednota Branch 785. Thank you, Milan.

- Submitted by Helen von Friedl, Branch 785



The Passing of Rev. George M. Franko in Youngstown, Ohio

Michael J. Kopanic, Jr.
The University of
Maryland Global Campus

The Slovak-American community of Youngstown, Ohio just lost one of its finest clergy. The Right Reverend George M. Franko went to his eternal resting place on January 31, 2020. He died at Hospice of the Valley with his close family by his side. He was 95 years-old.

Father Franko was born Dec. 8, 1924, in the Briar Hill section of Youngstown, the youngest of nine children born to Joseph J. and Susanna Ferenčák Franko. His father emigrated from Slovakia and hailed from the village of Odorín in Spiš County. His father surely had a challenging time raising the family, for he was listed as a widower in the 1940 census. The young George Franko attended parochial school at SS. Cyril and Methodius, and completed his secondary education at Ursuline High School. His religious studies continued at Sacred Heart Seminary in Detroit, MI and St. Mary's Seminary in Cleveland. He received the sacrament of Holy Orders when he was ordained a priest for the Youngstown Diocese on April 29, 1950 at St. Columba Cathedral. He would go on to faithfully serve the diocese for many years, and in the months before his death, there were already plans being made to celebrate the 70th anniversary of his ordination.

Father Franko celebrated his first Holy Mass at SS. Cyril and Methodius Roman Catholic Church, the first Slovak parish in the Youngstown Diocese. The Bishop then appointed him in 1950 to assist the parish of St. John the Baptist Parish in Campbell. Starting in June 1951, he became the assistant pastor at Holy Name of Jesus Slovak Parish on Youngstown's west-side. Then in 1963, he was pastor at St. Ambrose Parish in Garrettsville for three years, and later served as pastor for two years at St. Joseph Slovak Church in Newton Falls. He returned to Holy Name of Jesus in 1968, where he remained its shepherd until his retirement in 1989.

During his active ministry, Father Franko devoted himself selflessly to the Catholic Church. He served as notary and defender of the bond for the Diocesan Tribunal, was a member of the Central Committee of the First Synod of the Diocese of Youngstown, a member of the Priests' Senate, and a member of the Diocesan Financial Advisory Board. He also taught ethics at St. Elizabeth's School of Nursing. Even after retiring in 1989, Father Franko remained active in assisting parishes when pastors were ill or had other duties. He served as an administrator of St. Matthias and St. Elizabeth in Youngstown, and Holy Trinity in Struthers. In addition, he wrote homilies for the Homiletic and Pastoral Review.

Until his health failed him, Father Franko remained quite active in the Slovak-American community. He showed his love for the Slovak people and language, shared his talents and skills with others, and encouraged all to treasure their Slovak heritage. Frequently, he had traveled to Slovakia to visit his ancestral homeland. Locally, he served as chaplain of Group 17 for the Slovak Catholic Sokol. He presented many talks on Slovak language, culture, customs,



history, and Catholic traditions on the Slovak Radio Program, which airs from Struthers on WKTL-FM from 9-11pm Saturdays (Listen online at <http://wktl.caster.fm/>).

In addition, he regularly composed many articles on Slovak topics for the Newsletter of The American Slovak Cultural Association of the Mahoning Valley, and served as chaplain of the organization since 1996. The Association plans to publish more of his writings posthumously both in its newsletter and in the Slovak Catholic Federation's annual Good Shepherd (Dobrý pastier), to which he had regularly contributed articles.

In recent years, despite his failing health, he concelebrated Holy Mass in Slovak at the annual September pilgrimage in honor of Our Mother of Sorrows at Our Lady of Lebanon Shrine in North Jackson, Ohio. He also wrote homilies for the Homiletic and Pastoral Review.

Father Franko "is survived by his nieces and nephews, Dr. Steven (Carol) Kalavsky of Boardman, Kathleen (Ken) Murr of Stow, Susan Franko of Girard and Joseph (Marilyn) Franko of Niles; 14 great-nieces and great-nephews; and 24 great-great-nieces and great-great-nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents; four brothers, Joseph, Stephen, Michael and John; and four sisters, Mary Dutko, Catherine Donnelly, Veronica Kalavsky and Elizabeth Franko; as well as two nieces, Suzanne Kalavsky Doumitt and Joni Kalavsky Phelps" (Youngstown Vindicator).

A Mass of the rite of Christian burial was scheduled to be celebrated at 10 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 5, at Our Lady of Sorrows Parish at Holy Name Church, 613 N. Lakeview Ave., Youngstown, Ohio.

At Fr. Franko's request, instead of flowers, he wished that Masses may be offered for the repose of his soul and/or to make donations to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Trumbull County, 2431 Niles Rd, SE, Warren, Ohio 44484.

On a personal note, Fr. Franko spoke with me on several occasions and knew my grandparents well, as they were parishioners at Holy Name of Jesus. He spoke with me after a Slovak Mass in 2013 and told me he remembered well my baba and dzedo (grandmother and grandfather), as they attended weekday Masses at 6 am every day. When my own dear father was nearing his final months of life, Father sent me information about Slovak funeral cus-

toms and hymns that assisted me in writing my articles. And I am sure, he prayed for him and my ancestors, as he remains in my prayers. Pán Boh zaplat! (The Lord God will repay you!)

Sources

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30th ANNUAL SLOVAK MASS & EASTER CUSTOMS BREAKFAST

Saturday, April 4, 2020

St. Adalbert Church, So. 15th Street

10:45 a.m. -- Recitation of Rosary (in Slovak)

11:00 a.m. -- Slovak Mass

**12:15 p.m. -- SAMPLE SLOVAK EASTER FOODS
Prince of Peace Parish Center**

81 South 13th Street, South Side

paska (sweet bread)
kolace (baked goods)
syrek (egg cheese)

kolbasy (sausage)
hrin (beets & horseradish)
sunka (ham)

- * Cultural Displays
- * Craft Demonstrations
- * Imported & Handmade gifts
- * Homemade Baked Goods
- * Raffles

FREE FREE FREE FREE

FREE ADMISSION

For more information call (412) 657-6364

News From Slovakia



Slovak President Zuzana Čaputová, centre, visiting the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem on January 24, 2020

(photo by TASR/Presidential Office)

Okrem stretnutia s Rivlinom navštívila v piatok prezidentka SR v Jeruzaleme aj posvätné miesta judaizmu a kresťanstva

Bratislava 24. januára (TASR) - Prezidentka SR Zuzana Čaputová pozvala izraelského prezidenta Reuvena Rivlina na oficiálnu návštevu Slovenska. Čaputová zároveň prijala jeho oficiálne pozvanie na štátnu návštevu. Hlava štátu to uviedla po piatkovom neformálnom stretnutí s Rivlinom v Jeruzaleme. Prezidentka bola na dvojkoľnovej návšteve Izraela v rámci 75. výročia oslobodenia koncentračného tábora Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Slovenská prezidentka sa na stretnutí s Rivlinom rozprávala predovšetkým o dôležitosti pamätať si históriu a o hodnotách. "Rozprávali sme sa zároveň aj o tom, že registrujeme u nás aj v ich krajine nové prejavy nenávisť a ako je potrebné sa venovať aj tejto téme a tejto oblasti," priblížila slovenským novinárom.

Hlavy štátov podľa Čaputovej tiež skonštatovali, že spolupráca medzi Izraelom a Slovenskom je veľmi dobrá, a to v ekonomickej, politickej aj kultúrnej oblasti.

Okrem stretnutia s Rivlinom navštívila v piatok prezidentka SR v Jeruzaleme aj posvätné miesta judaizmu a kresťanstva. Čaputová tiež zastúpila Slovensko na piatom Svetovom fóre o Holokauste. Zúčastnili sa na ňom delegácie zo 49 štátov sveta, pričom 41 z nich vedie hlava štátu. Medzi najprominentnejších hostí patrili americký viceprezident Mike Pence, ruský prezident Vladimir Putin, britský princ Charles a francúzsky prezident Emmanuel Macron.

Caputova Visits Sites Sacred to Christianity & Judaism in Jerusalem

Bratislava, January 24 (TASR) – Slovak President Zuzana Čaputová visited some of the holy places in Jerusalem and met Israeli President Reuven Rivlin.

"I've had the opportunity to visit two of the most important sites of the Christian and Jewish religions," Čaputová told journalists after visiting the Wailing Wall and some of the Stations of the Cross. She also visited Golgotha Hill and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. "It really impressed me. These are powerful experiences and impressions because it isn't only a piece of history but also the beginning of a cultural and religious influence that has determined who we are in Europe," said the head of state.

The president commemorated the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp at Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum on Thursday. On Friday, she's representing Slovakia at the World Holocaust Forum, which is being attended by delegations from 49 countries. Among the most prominent guests are US Vice-president Mike Pence, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Britain's Prince Charles and French President Emmanuel Macron.

DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENTS

continued from page 15

also the second annual "Polka Away the Pounds" on February 16, 2020 2PM-6PM featuring Jack & the Tady Bears. This dance was well attended last year, please plan to come and enjoy the music. Admission is free!! The kitchen will be open and featuring Slovak specialties! Address is: CU Club (Slovak Club)- Ford City, 914 6th Avenue Ford City, PA, 16226. A Christmas Eve Slovak dinner is also being discussed and hopefully will be organized for December 2020! This dinner was a tradition in District 11 for many years; the District hopes to bring this special occasion back to life! If you have attended in the past, if you are familiar with the specialty foods served, or you have other knowledge of the event please come to the meetings and share your experience, knowledge and memories!

Fraternally submitted,

Karen Greggs, District Recording Secretary

DISTRICT 14 – THE REVEREND JOSEPH L. KOSTIK DISTRICT

Reverend Joseph L. Kostik, Region 6, District 14 will hold its first meeting of the New Year, 2020, on Tuesday, February 18 at 6PM at the Falcon Grille, 29 N. Canfield-Niles Rd. (Rt.46) in Austintown, We will be discussing possible events for this year. We encourage all Branches to send representation to the meeting, please try to attend. We will be alternating meeting places and need your input. Hope to see you then.

Grace Kavulic, Secretary

DISTRICT 16 - THE MSGR KRASULA DISTRICT

The semi-annual meeting of the Msgr Krasula District 16 will be held on Sunday, March 1st, 2020 in the rectory of St. John Nepomucene Church immediately following the 10:15 AM Slovak Mass. The agenda will be a continuing discussion and planning on future activities for District 16 in 2020 and a financial report. All members from District 16 are cordially invited to attend this meeting. Refreshments will be served immediately after the meeting finishes.

Joan Mary Skrkon, Secretary

DISTRICT 2 Annual 2020 Brunch and Play

On Sunday, March 22, 2020, a Brunch and Play event is scheduled at the Center for Performing and Arts, Theatre at the Center, located at 1040 Ridge Road in Munster, Indiana. Brunch starts at 1:00 pm, the show follows brunch at 2:30 pm. The show this year is called "Almost Heaven - John Denver's America." This musical tribute is an intimate celebration of John Denver's life and career. John Denver's story is brought to life in this Chicago-area premiere through his countless hits including "Country Roads," "Rocky Mountain High," "Annie's Song," and "Sunshine on My Shoulders." The show pays tribute to an artist who is always great at making people feel good.

District 2 members pay \$36.00 per person. Non-members pay full price (\$59.00, not including tax or gratuity). District 2 members, take advantage of this \$23 discount.

For more brunch or play information, call Lynda Tanis at: 1-630-247-7521. Make checks payable to: Rev. John J. Spitkovsky District 2 and mail to Pat Laporte at: 9842 Terrace Ct.W. E2, Palos Park, IL 60464. The deadline is February 29, 2020. Hope to see you there!



PLEASE MAIL THE BELOW PORTION ONLY

District 2 Annual 2020 Brunch and Play

District 2 Members \$36.00 x _____ = \$ _____ total

Non-members \$59.00 x _____ = \$ _____ total

Member's Name: _____ Branch #: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

List names of all those attending on the back of this form or included on a separate sheet.
Make checks payable to Rev. John J. Spitkovsky District 2
and mail together with check to: Pat LaPorte at 9842 Terrace Ct.W. E2, Palos Park, IL 60464.

BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

continued from page 15

room of Holy Family Church in Linden, NJ. This will be a planning meeting for upcoming events, namely the Kentucky Derby Party Meeting (Saturday, May 2nd) and our annual summer picnic. Refreshments will be served. Kindly RSVP to Mary Ann Ranahan @732-251-6035 by March 21st if you plan on attending. Please bring non-perishable food items for donation to a local pantry.

Mary Kapitan, Secretary

BRANCH 764 – WARREN, OHIO

Branch 764 will hold a meeting on March 11, 2020, at 10:00AM, Kozy Kitchen Family Restaurant, 2723 Elm Rd., Warren, OH. On the agenda: discussion and planning of soup sales to assist parish finances and examination of summer activity for branch members. For more information, contact William Hrusovsky: 330-372-1948 or hrusovskyy@embarqmail.com.

Willaim Hrusovsky, Secretary/Treasurer

BRANCH 796 – EGYPT, PENNSYLVANIA

Branch 796 will hold their semi-annual meeting on Feb. 23, 2020. Meeting will convene at 1:00 pm at Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church, in the alter server room. Location is 4456 Main St., Egypt, PA.

We would enjoy seeing some new faces at our meetings.

God Bless,

Monica Fabian, Recording Secretary

BRANCH 853 – CHARLEROI, PENNSYLVANIA

Branch 853 will hold a branch meeting on March 14, 2020, beginning promptly at 11:30AM. The meeting will be held at Armando's in Charleroi, PA. On the agenda will be to discuss activities for the year.

Members are urged to attend.

Monica Rodacy Boone, President

BRANCH 855 – PARMA, OHIO

Branch 855 – Holy Name of Jesus Society – Happy New Year to all of our members.

We will be having a breakfast meeting on Saturday February 22nd at L.A. Pete's 6080 Brecks-ville Rd. in Independence at 10:00a.m. This year we will be supporting Womankind; an organization that provides free support to pregnant women. At this meeting we will be collecting diapers. If you would like to participate in our diaper driver please bring diapers of any brand any size.

See page 17 of this issue regarding a District event Saturday March 28th at Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse to see the Monsters hockey team take on the Lehigh Valley Phantoms. Our branch will support this event with members-only pricing. A Branch 855 member ticket is \$5.00. A non-branch member ticket is \$24.00. Reservations are required by February 22nd. Please call or text Branch 855 Fraternal Activities Coordinator Stephanie Sutilla at 440-409-9405 to reserve a seat as soon as possible. This is a sell-out event!

Barbara Sutilla, President

Discovering Family Roots and Traditional Folk Traditions on the September Slovakia Heritage Tour

**Judith Northup-Bennett,
Branch 19**

Accordions, colorful swirling skirts, violins, stomping feet and haunting mountain harmonies...Slovakia's beautiful cities, village and country side came alive with traditional music and folk-art for the 14 travelers on this September's small-group Slovakia Heritage Tour in 2019. As we crossed the country's breath-taking landscapes, we were delighted to see Slovaks, young and old, once again embracing their traditional culture and bringing folk art designs and music into everyday life.

As we entered Bardejov's stunning medieval town square, we were surprised to see a young folk-dance troupe in elaborate folk dress filming and dancing their hearts out just for us as their audience. In Central Slovakia, two fujara players serenaded us with the music of the region's shepherding culture. In Orava, a family of local musicians introduced us to traditional dance music including songs of the loss of lovers and family who left for America. At the 400-year-old Jarmok (Fall Harvest Festival) in Banska Bystrica, delegations from hundreds of Slovak villages took to the stage in their regional folk dress (from 10 am to 8 pm) describing their folk dress and sharing a song or dance from their villages.

As we traveled around Slovakia in our small Mercedes-Benz bus, there seemed to be a surprise around every valley... locals improvising folk melodies in a café in Levoča, a tenor gathering a crowd on a Bratislava street corner with his renditions of Slovakia's most beloved songs, and young people taking to the stage in traditional embroidered folk outfits at the Wine and Harvest Festivals.

Reconnecting with Family Roots Is Front and Center for the Tour

"This was our 7th Heritage Tour and we were surprised by the recent revival in interest in Slovakia's folk art and music by young and old, and in all parts of the country," said tour organizer Judith Northup-Bennett. "As a small group tour, we provide a home base and lots of historical, language and cultural background for our travelers who often branch out to explore a little on their own. As we travel the county, I love to see people remember some of the forgotten memories they have from their childhood spent with



After a traditional local meal, a talented musical family from the Zuberec Out-door Folk Museum entertained us with traditional Orava dance and folk tunes.



Four family members on a Banska Bystrica street don their traditional kroj (folk dress).



Barbara and Art Burnap share family



The Sandorf sisters, Marilyn, Susan, and Karen, enjoy Slovak food at the Pezinok Wine Festival.

their Slovak grandparents and parents as the trip helps them recall the language, food and customs of their heritage."

Working with our genealogical research, almost all of this year's travelers were successful in finding and reconnecting with lost relatives, or at least identifying and exploring their family villages. Tina Cosgrove was warmly welcomed back to her grandfather's family in Zavod. Jane Spiedel returned to her parents' birth places in Levoca and Dobrinka Masa to meet cousins. Barbara Burnap learned for the first time that she was of Rusyn heritage. She began the journey of learning about her Rusyn grandparents by visiting their small villages in the Carpathian Mountains and sharing family information with cousins. She's sure she will return to learn more.

The three Sandorf sisters, Marilyn, Susan and Karen, had the biggest surprise as they searched to uncover some of the mysteries of their four Slovak great-grandparents from three different regions. Our researcher couldn't find much additional information going back to the mid-1800s, so the three wrote to families with their surnames in the

ancestral villages. The family in Smilno welcomed them to their homes as family, and shared the family history both in person and in a recently published history of the village. It turns out they are from one of the founding families of the village. They also reconnected with family in the Spis region through their outreach.

Susan wrote this fall, "Our 2019 Trip to Slovakia: A Trip of a Life-time" is what Marilyn entitled the photo book she created for Karen and me, and it is so true. That amazing trip has dominated our conversation and family visits ever since our

return home."

For more information on exploring your heritage by joining the small group, 2020 Slovakia Heritage Tour, or planning your own personal family tour, please contact Judith Northup-Bennett, Slovakia Heritage Tours, 978-544-5144, slovakiaheritagetours@gmail.com For a day-by-day itinerary and photos of past tours, visit www.slovakiaheritage.com

How magical to come upon a lively group of young dancers and musicians practicing in Bardejov's exquisite medieval square.



Young teenagers are embracing the renewed interest in Slovakia's traditional dance, music and clothing. Boys as well as girls are joining regional dance groups that perform at festivals and celebrations.



The Banska Bystrica Harvest Festival featured a big stage where villages from all over Slovakia presented their traditional dress, dance and music from morning to evening.

Answer to Puzzle

Solution to Puzzle from page 11

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

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2019

HOLLYWOOD, FLORIDA

OPEN MEETING:

President Andrew Rajec opened the meeting at 4:00 PM and asked Andrew R. Harcar, Sr., to lead the prayer. The Executive Committee Meeting is being held in conjunction with the Quarterly Board of Directors Meeting at the Hollywood Beach Marriott in Hollywood, Florida.

ROLL CALL:

Members attending: Andrew M. Rajec, President
Kenneth A. Arendt, Executive Secretary
Andrew R. Harcar, Sr., Vice President
George F. Matta II, Treasurer
Timothy Graves, Regional Director (by invitation of the President)

ACCEPTANCE OF THE NOVEMBER MEETING MINUTES:

The Executive Secretary presented the minutes of the November 2019 Executive Committee Meeting. A motion was made by Kenneth A. Arendt and seconded by George F. Matta II to accept the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT:Investment Updates

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

Portfolio Review

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

Mortgages and Overdue Mortgages

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

Monthly Disbursements

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

Disbursements for the month of November 2019:		
Death Benefits & Accumulations	\$	149,509.97
Cash Withdrawals & Accumulations	\$	24,682.54
Matured Endowments & Accumulations	\$	0.00
Trust Fund	\$	0.00

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

AQS MANAGEMENT, INC.:

Larry White, representing AQS Management, Inc., provided an extensive Investment Portfolio Transaction and Review Report to the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee at the Board of Directors Meeting. Each board member received a copy of the report before the meeting for review.

The Executive Committee reviewed the possibility of adding new investments to the FCSU portfolio.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Treasurer and the Executive Secretary gave a full written report on the investment update to the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee at the Board of Directors Meeting. Following the report, they answered the Committee's questions.

The Executive Committee will review the recommendations presented in Mr. White's report to figure out the best way to invest the money earned from the sale of the property in Middletown, Pennsylvania.

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW:Annuity Rates:

The President led a review of the current annuity rates. It was decided the rates remain the same and be reviewed at the next Executive Committee meeting in January.

SALES AND MARKETING:

The Vice President gave a production report on our agents to the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee at the Board of Directors Meeting. He stated we are still recruiting and adding new agents, and at present have over 325 agents. The Home Office is sending the independent agents monthly updates on our products. The independent agents are also in frequent contact with Andrew P. Rajec, Director of Independent Agents. The Home Office continues an extensive Facebook ad recruiting campaign to recruit agents in the states we are licensed in.

The Executive Secretary gave an update on converting the 2010 CSO's over to the new 2017 CSO's to the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee at the Board of Directors Meeting. It is on schedule to be completed by January 1, 2020.

The Executive Secretary stated that the forms for the branches to complete for the branch stipend have been mailed out several times. Branches having any questions on completing these forms, can contact the Home Office.

There was a discussion regarding the pending branch mergers.

RATING AGENCY:

The President stated that all information requested by Kroll Bond Rating Agency has been provided to them. After they review all the material, a meeting will be scheduled after the first of the year.

MISCELLANEOUS:Middletown

The President stated that the auction to sell the remaining equipment that was used to maintain the property has been completed. We are waiting for a final breakdown of the auction.

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 Kenneth A. Arendt and seconded by George F. Matta II, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Andrew R. Harcar, Sr., closed the meeting with prayer.

Andrew M. Rajec
President

Kenneth A. Arendt
Executive Secretary

**ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION
OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA**

**FCSU HOME OFFICE
INDEPENDENCE, OHIO
FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 2020 & SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 2020**

The ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING of the Board of Directors of the First Catholic Slovak Union of the United States and Canada will be held on *Friday, March 20, 2020 & Saturday, March 21, 2020*.

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

Officers who are required to give reports at the Annual Meeting should send them to the attention of the Executive Secretary, Kenneth A. Arendt, and should be sent for receipt at the Home Office on or before Friday, March 13, 2020.

All correspondence relative to the Annual Business Meeting of the Board of Directors should be directed to the attention of the Executive Secretary, Kenneth Arendt, and should be mailed for receipt at the Home Office prior to March 13, 2020.

For any additional information contact the Home Office at (216) 642-9406 or (800) JEDNOTA.

Andrew M. Rajec
National President

Kenneth A. Arendt
Executive Secretary

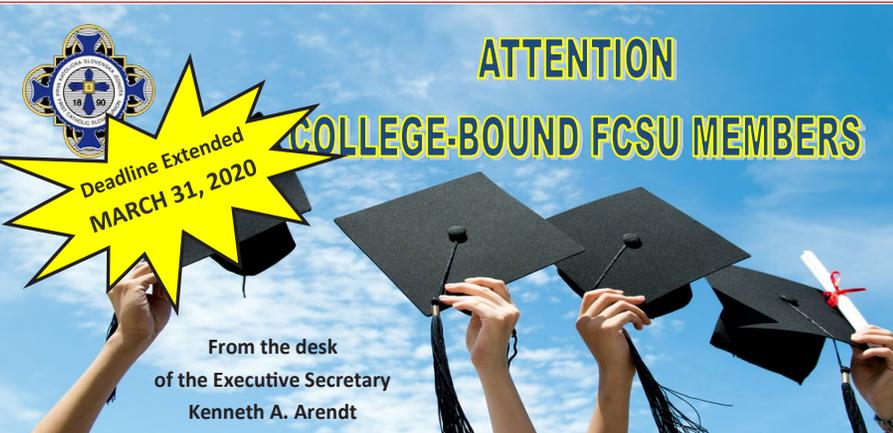


Is your FCSU profile up to date?

Help us serve you by making sure we have all your latest information on file – address, phone, email, beneficiary

Call the Home Office and Update Your Profile Today at:
1-800-533-6682 (JEDNOTA)

Or go to <http://www.fcsu.com/update-profile>



ATTENTION
COLLEGE-BOUND FCSU MEMBERS

Deadline Extended
MARCH 31, 2020

From the desk
of the Executive Secretary
Kenneth A. Arendt

**THE FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION
IS NOW ACCEPTING 2020 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS**

Ninety (90) ONE-TIME SCHOLARSHIPS will be awarded to the winners.

- 85 scholarships in the amount of \$1000.00.
- A "Philip Hrobak Scholarship" and "Stephanie Husek Scholarship" in the amount of \$1,250.00 each will be awarded to the highest ranking male and female applicants respectively.
- Three Scholarships of \$1000.00 each will be given from the "John A. Sabol Nursing Scholarship Fund" to applicants who have been accepted into either an approved three or four year hospital nursing program or a fully-accredited college of their choice.

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

For rules, requirements and applications go to
www.fcsu.com/membership-benefits/scholarships
or call the Home Office at 800.533.6682

**Applications must be postmarked by midnight,
March 31, 2020**

Plan ahead and leave a positive legacy behind

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According to a recent article in TIME magazine the cost of a funeral is between \$6,000 and \$15,000 with an average of \$7,775?

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	AGE 5 \$5,000 for \$475	AGE 5 \$5,000 for \$410
	AGE 10 \$5,000 for \$565	AGE 10 \$5,000 for \$485
	AGE 15 \$5,000 for \$670	AGE 15 \$5,000 for \$570

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