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Message from the President 2021

I had the need for various reasons to re-search the history of the former Slovak Club in Allentown, PA. The Allentown area was and is an area with a large number of people with Slovak heritage.

St. John the Baptist Slovak Church was and is located on Front Street close to the Lehigh River and Highway PA 22. The Slovak Club was located about 1/2 mile away.

St. John has a beautiful Church along with other buildings that included a school and beautiful cemetery. They also have an excellent website that contains numerous high-quality pictures of the past history and also current activities. Many of the pictures were taken by the pastor Fr. Robert Kosek.



Andrew M. Rajec

I have had the opportunity to visit St. John several times over the past dozen years. The parish is still active and proud of its Slovak roots. I encourage you to visit their website.

I am continuously impressed with people, like those at St. John the Baptist and other of our Jednota members, who continue to practice their Catholic Faith and also acknowledge and take pride in their Slovak ancestry.

The Slovak Club on Allen Street has long been closed and sold. However, as a sign of downtown revival in Allentown, the building has recently been extensively renovated and turned into apartments.

I urge all our Branches to record their his-

tory and send articles for our Jednota. If you and you do not record our Society's truly historic past, who will? That is why I am so insistent on expanding our Home Office Museum. We owe it to our ancestors and also our descendants. How many times have you or other family members said "I only wish I had talked with grandpa or grandma

or my parents about their lives and asked for and listened to their stories?" In this hurried world many times we do not take time to listen, thinking we can do it later. Later may be too late. Hope you agree and will participate in recording and preserving our historic past as well as our future by preserving it. If you wish, contact me at the Home Office to discuss items that your or your family may wish to donate.

I want to encourage branches to also send pictures of events for publication in our Jednota.

After all, we are not just a money machine, we are an active Catholic Slovak fraternal organization with a long history (over 130 years) that we want to preserve and commemorate.

Fraternally,

Andrew M. Rajec
National President



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Articles in Slovak/English



As we embark on a new year, the First Catholic Slovak Union Officers and Members of the Board of Directors extend their most sincere Fraternal Greetings and Best Wishes to all, with thanks for being loyal members.

- Rev. Thomas A. Nasta..... Chaplain
- Andrew M. Rajec..... President
- Andrew R. Harcar, S..... Vice-President
- Kenneth A. Arendt..... Executive Secretary
- George Matta II Treasurer

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Insights and Viewpoints



St. Vincent Archabbey — Homily, Father Killian Loch, O.S.B., Father Edward Mazich, O.S.B.

January 24, 2021 – Third Sunday of Ordinary Time

The readings today remind us of God's desire for us. God gives us free will and therefore does not impose his will on us. God invites us, encourages us and acts in powerful ways that will hopefully lead us to make his plan for us, our plan. God's desire is very simple; He wants us to be with Him in Heaven. One of the first things I



Fr. Killian Loch,
O.S.B.

learned from the Baltimore Catechism back in grade school was why God made me. The answer was simple and quite memorable; "God made me so that I may know him, love him, and serve him in this world, so as to be happy with him forever in the next."

In the Book of Genesis we hear of the intimate relationship between God and Adam and Eve. This ended with Original Sin when Adam and Eve turned away from God. After they sinned we are told they hid in the Garden – but God came looking for him. As Bishop Sheen pointed out, the very first question in the Bible is God calling out to Adam and Eve – "Where are you?" The rest of the Bible describes God calling out to us and searching for us. Once sin entered the world it separated us from God, but God did not give up his desire that we be united with him. God's desire for us is to make it to heaven, and God calls out to each of us when we sin, "where are you?"

To help us on our journey to God, he calls us to some vocation. Vocations are numerous but what they have in common is the call to use the gifts we have been blessed with to bring us closer to God and one another. It is a call to community whether a religious community, Diocesan Community, Parish Community, or other Christ Centered group. In the Gospel today Jesus didn't call just one Apostle, he called 12 – he formed a community. When Jesus taught about prayer he said; "Where 2 or 3 are gathered in my name, I am with you." We know, love and serve God by knowing, loving and serving one another in the name of the Lord. Our call is to live the Gospel – Whatever you do to the least of my brothers and sisters you do to me. The Beatitudes, The Corporal and Spiritual works of mercy, and the Church today call us give attention to those around us.

The corporal works of Mercy are: To feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, care for the sick, visit the imprisoned, bury the dead. These works of mercy are NOT – to support or advocate abortion, (Jesus came that we might have life – not death) to let the hungry and thirsty fend for themselves, to ignore the sick, to favor the death penalty rather than visit the imprisoned, to shelter the homeless by not keeping refugees and immigrants away from us. These are not the ways that we know, love and serve God in this world. And these are not God's call to us.

God's call is the personal invitation to follow him, that is to live according to his ways, and not our ways. His ways are not always popular with others and can be challenging to our way of thinking. Our personal views, the opinions of others, and the political agendas around us are not the way to Heaven. Jesus way is the way to Heaven and we are called to follow his way. It is Jesus who we should be molding our thoughts, beliefs and actions around.

71 – 4th Sunday of Ordinary Time – January 31, 2021

This Sunday's second reading is drawn from Saint Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, a document filled with both uplifting teachings and advice which can be baffling to modern sensibilities. The passage we hear at mass might well fall into the latter category, since in it Paul urges his readers to think carefully as to whether they should imitate him and refrain from marrying.

Paul explains himself: "I should like you to be free of anxieties. An unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord. But a married man is anxious about the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and he is divided" (1 Cor 7:32-34). He offers corresponding advice to Christian women who are not married, recommending that if they are able to remain independent, they should do so and not marry.

Given that Catholics were long associated with having large families and valuing the blessings of marriage it seems strange that a person no less than the Apostle Paul would counsel people not to marry. Paul's reasoning, however, begins to make sense if we study the larger context from which today's reading is taken.

Much of the seventh chapter of First Corinthians is occupied with matters of marriage and family life, areas where, to put it mildly, the Corinthians were struggling as they tried to reconcile their former ways of life with their new-found belief in Jesus. Paul's over-arching point is that each believer should live the life the Lord has assigned to him or her. We should not compete with each other in the extremity of our self-denial, nor should we act haughtily because we are either married or unmarried, circumcised or uncircumcised, slave or free-born—all are equally precious in God's eyes.

Going a step further and speaking practically, Paul found that his own celibate life made him more effective as a full-time missionary spreading the Christian Gospel across the breadth of the Roman Empire. At the same time, he realized that not everyone is called to that special vocation, and so most people will likely marry, as was the societal convention in his day. Provided that each believer was living the life to which the Lord called him or her, Paul was at peace.

Turning to the Gospel, we recall that Jesus himself lived a celibate life, one that enabled him to freely proclaim the coming of the Kingdom of God and to give of himself entirely to each person who came to belief in him. While few may be called to that sort of life today, many folks from different walks of life recognize that Jesus' detachment from any one particular person enabled him to welcome all people equally as sisters and brothers in the Lord.

Paul's correspondence with the Corinthian Christians took up subjects like celibacy which might strike modern readers, but which also cause us to reflect on how the Church in its earliest days wrestled with new questions and difficulties. Among these were the dual challenges of converting from former ways to Christian ways of living, and of placing all worldly concerns of social status, ethnic origins, wealth, and marriage in their proper place, subordinate to the believer's faith in Christ and the bonds of mutual justice and charity which that faith requires.

May we honor Paul's advice about being at peace with the life to which the Lord has called us, so that together with him we might serve as witnesses to Jesus who are united as sisters and brothers one and all in the living body of Christ.



Fr. Edward Mazich,
O.S.B.

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.

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WEDNESDAY, MAR. 10	MONDAY, MAR. 1
WEDNESDAY, APR. 14	MONDAY, APR. 5

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January 2021 Reflection – Human fraternity

Father Joe Laramie SJ



As we begin 2021, Pope Francis asks us to prepare our hearts for the days ahead. In the month of January, we pray for human fraternity. "May the Lord give us the grace to live in full fellowship with our brothers and sisters of other religions, praying for one another, open to all."

Jesus meets with people from many backgrounds in the Gospels: the Syro-Phoenician woman, Samaritans, and Roman soldiers. Jesus is drawn to others, and they are uniquely drawn to him. Like Christ, we are called to open our hearts to others in the world around us. We can look for ways to embrace them, pray for them, and work together—in particular, with those of other faiths.

In him, we can stand with those of other religions; with them, we can even love and serve those who are suffering from the cold, from poverty, or the effects of the pandemic. Together, let us prepare for, anticipate, and participate in this New Year with faith, hope, and love.

- From the Monthly Reflection posting on
Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network, Apostleship of Prayer

Slovakia gifted Pope with Covid-19 swab test kits, 4000 of which he made available to Rome's poor

Once again, the arm of Pope Francis has reached out to the last, the least and the lost. This time it is his own home turf – Rome. Four thousand of the Christmas gift of swab kits from Slovakia to Pope Francis have been destined for the homeless of Rome.

The initiative led by the Office of Papal Charities, in collaboration with the Institute of Solidarity Medicine (IMES) and IFO San Gallicano and in agreement with Rome municipality, will make Covid-19 tests available for the homeless in the Italian capital.

These swabs are a gift from Slovakia to the Pope.

- From a post by a Vatican News staff writer on
Vatican News at [vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-12](https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-12)

[Editor's Note: full coverage of this story is on page 8, in News From Slovakia]

From the Desk of the Executive Secretary – February Holiday Hours



The Home Office will be closed on Monday,
February 15, 2021,
in observance of Presidents' Day.

For news about Slovakia, Financial Tips, and more,
find us on:  Facebook.

Visit www.facebook.com/FirstCatholicSlovakUnion

Message from the National Chaplain

Happy New Year! May God bestow his blessings, protection, and peace upon us all throughout 2021.

January 6 this year is the 75th anniversary of an encyclical by Pope Pius XII titled *Quemadmodum*. Encyclicals are named after the first word or words from the Latin text. *Quemadmodum* is an adverb meaning simply "Just as" or "While". One must go to the third sentence to discover its theme -- the plight of countless children living in destitution all over the globe in the aftermath of the Second World War, which had concluded four months earlier.

Pius implores the world's bishops to do more than what was already being done by other individuals, organizations, and societies in coming to the aid of these children. He points out their sufferings. They lack proper food, clothing, and shelter. They suffer from cold, hunger, and disease. They do not know what it is or means to be loved.

The Holy Father asks for bishops to assign a day of prayer within their dioceses for this cause and, in union with their priests, to have this on the forefront of the minds of the faithful.

Since the children of today grow up to be what Pius calls the "pillars of the next generation," he insists upon the necessity of transforming children living a life of destitution to becoming children with healthy minds and bodies. This will help "to avoid a race infected with sickness and vice." Just as the faith community in Apostolic times offered their prayers and shared their material goods with those most in need, Pius calls upon the peoples of his day to do likewise. Those who do so imitate the words and actions of the Lord Jesus, who invited the children to come to him unimpeded.

Pius commends all who carry out the works of justice and mercy towards children – everyone from religious communities and faith-based organizations to secular efforts in both the civilized and uncivilized world. Special mention is given to the Pontifical Society of the Holy Childhood.

He concludes *Quemadmodum* by stating his purpose for writing it. Children who grow up deprived of the basic necessities of life are an easy prey for the snares of vice, sloth, and delinquency. Those who grow up with those necessities are attracted to a virtuous life, one which leads to becoming a productive contributor to family life and the common good.



Rev. Thomas A. Nasta

Fr. Thomas A. Nasta
National Chaplain

LIGHT ONE CANDLE

Tony Rossi, Director of Communications, The Christophers

Father Peyton's Legacy

Irish immigrant Father Patrick Peyton reached millions with his "the family that prays together stays together" call-to-action. But when Patrick came to the United States in 1927 with his brother Tom, his intention was to become a millionaire. So how did his path in life change so dramatically? That story is told in the new documentary "Pray: The Story of Patrick Peyton." Father David Guffey, one of the film's executive producers and the national director of Family Theater Productions, which Father Peyton founded, joined me recently on "Christopher Closeup" to discuss the project.

Father Guffey noted that Patrick's job as a janitor in St. Joseph Cathedral in Scranton, Pennsylvania "brought him close to God in an ever deeper way," eventually leading him to join the Congregation of Holy Cross order of priests. Years later, Father Patrick contracted tuberculosis, which was often a death sentence in the early 20th century because antibiotics had not yet been created. Doctors told him to make his peace with God and called in his family to say goodbye to him.

Father Guffey continued the story: "An old Holy Cross priest, who had been a philosophy professor of Father Peyton's at Notre Dame, came to visit him, prayed with him, and he said, 'Pat, we know that you have faith. We know that you're close to the Blessed Mother. Let her intercede for you. Turn to her. If you believe in her, she'll believe in you.' He believed in her, and he prayed like he'd never prayed before. The next day, he felt a physical healing. It took a while to convince the doctors to do another chest X-ray, but when they finally did a few weeks later, the tuberculosis was gone, and there was no medical explanation of what could have happened."

Humbled and grateful for his second chance at life, Father Peyton thought back to what a great gift it was to pray the rosary as a family when he was growing up. Believing that other families could benefit from this practice, he started holding rosary rallies to promote this message. Eventually, he used mass media to further spread the message. Hollywood's biggest stars, from Lucille Ball to Frank Sinatra, lined up to help him. And though Father Peyton appealed to Catholics, he also took an ecumenical approach to his message, encouraging different faiths and denominations to pray according to their own tradition. "The big thing was to be together with your family and point your family toward God by praying together," said Father Guffey.

One of the appeals of Father Peyton's approach was how positive it was. Much like the founder of The Christophers, Father James Keller, Father Peyton believed in lighting candles rather than cursing the darkness. When he was once asked what he is against, Father Peyton responded that he is so busy supporting the things he's for, he has no time to focus on what he is against. This approach has helped Father Peyton's message live on beyond his lifetime. The film includes interviews with numerous people about the ways that praying together as a family has bonded them more closely together. Former Kansas City Royal Mike Sweeney even credits the practice with saving his marriage.

In conclusion, Father Guffey hopes that viewers of "Pray" will be "entertained. I think it's a beautiful story beautifully told. But I hope it will encourage them in their own vocation to gather with the people that they love most, especially families, and consider praying together."

Immigrant Sisters of SS Cyril & Methodius

It is no secret that immigrants have provided our nation with a strong and blessed support. Our Sisters who emigrated from central Europe have contributed mightily not only by their spiritual presence but also by the works they have performed in convents, parishes, schools, hospitals, homes for the elderly and by their very presence which has brought joy and comfort to all with whom they came into contact.

If my calculations are correct, fifty-one Sisters have come to the U. S. to live fruitful lives and to minister to people who always proved to be thankful for their presence.

The next Sister in the series is Sister Stephanie who is a true-blue New Yorker. I have already received positive comments from those who knew the Sisters who came to the U. S., resided in NYC and attended St. John Nepomucene parish before entering the SSCM's.

• Sister Bernadette Marie Ondus, SSCM

Sister Stephanie



Sophie Matlak was born in Lozorno, Slovakia, to Vendel and Frances Matlak. She was baptized immediately because her parents feared she would die. They dedicated Sophie to Our Lady and during her entire life she has tried to live as Mary's faithful child. When Sophie was only 13 months old, her father immigrated to the U. S. When she was seven, Sophie and her mother and brother Stephen joined him. It was certainly an experience for the whole family to be reunited.

Many Slovak immigrants had already settled in New York City and the Matlak family joined them. They became parishioners of St. John Nepomucene Church and Sophie became a student at the parish school where she had the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius as her teachers. At that time she had no thought of becoming one of them. She even tried to

avoid encountering them, even walking many (long) city blocks to avoid them. When Sophie was in the fifth grade, however, she was won over by the Sisters' kindness, prayerfulness and joy and thought of also dedicating her life to God. Her mother was delighted because at one time she, too, had thought of becoming a Sister. Sophie admired the Sisters at St. John's who prepared her for the Sacraments. She especially remembers Sister Anacleta, her seventh grade teacher, who led her to a greater love of the Blessed Mother. She also admired the parish priests, Monsignor Stephen Krasula, the pastor, and Father John Necedo. Later when she was already a Sister, she was thankful to the retreat masters who encouraged her to achieve greater sanctity as a religious.

Because her mother was the cook at Msgr. Krasula's rectory, Sophie had many opportunities to meet great persons. In the late thirties, for instance, Msgr. Joseph Tiso and several bishops stayed at the rectory. At the time Sophie was fifteen and had the honor of giving them a tour of the school.

Sophie attended Slovak Girls Academy, as it was once called, graduating in 1943. Located in Danville, PA, it was a boarding school run by the SSCM's. Sophie had many fond memories of the Academy but one is especially significant—listening to the students singing Gregorian chant. "I was transported to the heavenly realms," said Sophie. Only those who have heard or sung chant can truly identify with her words.

When Sophie was in high school she had already demonstrated the qualities that would make her successful and diligent in her ministry to both the young and the old. The 1943 Fialky gives examples of the qualities she possessed and later demonstrated as an SSCM in the ministries of education and eldercare. For instance, Sophie exemplified the virtue of thoughtfulness and was also fond of lending a hand. She was Sodality Prefect, and as a member of the Little Flower Literary Circle, she took seriously her responsibility of preserving pertinent newspaper articles by including them in the "Scrap Book."

As an SSCM, she served in several parish schools and religious education pro-

grams in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and the dioceses of Bridgeport, Greensburg, Metuchen, Scranton and Syracuse. Sister Stephanie taught in Grades 1-6 and often served as principal and convent superior. Sister was also superior at two significant SSCM ministries, Maria Joseph Manor and St. Methodius Convent.

Another of the SSCM missions is eldercare and Sister Stephanie spent time as a nursing assistant at the congregation's Villa St. Cyril in Highland Park, IL. She also cared for the sick and the elderly at St. Ann's Home, Columbia, PA, a ministry of the Adorers of the Precious Blood. She experienced much joy when she ministered to the dying. For instance, Sister encouraged an elderly gentleman to return to the Lord before his death. She also reached out to the employees with whom she worked. She assisted a nursing assistant to enter the Catholic church and rejoiced when she became a religious. Other employees returned to the sacraments with Sister Stephanie's example and guidance. It seems reaching out to employees was a particular hallmark of her ministry. She even won third prize for an essay "How I Would Welcome a New Employee" that she wrote for the 18th Employee Recognition Day at St. Ann's Home.

Sister Stephanie encapsulates her mission in these words, "I have been able to witness, proclaim and build the Kingdom in small ways, wiping the tears of a child hurt on the playground and enabling the elderly to feel important."

When she retired to Maria Hall, Sister took care of the Religious Article Shop. Because of her dedication to her ministries and her interest in others, we have no doubt that her reward is very great in heaven. Sister Stephanie entered the Kingdom on September 11, 2011. It is important to note that September 11 is the birthday of the congregation. On September 17, Sister's funeral liturgy was celebrated by Father Gerard Heintzelman with Father Albert Oldfield as concelebrant. Her obituary in the SOKOL refers to her family as "an active Sokol family, mirroring our Cyrilo-Methodian heritage of faith."



Sister Seton Marie Connolly, SS.C.M. (C) received the Lifetime Servant Leadership Award for Ecumenism from Sister Michael Ann Orlik, SS.C.M. (L) General Superior of the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius, and Sister Barbara Sable, SS.C.M. (R),



Sister Peg Spindler, CSA, (R) received the Lifetime Servant Leadership Award for Evangelism from the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius, presented by Sister Joanne Maria Schutz, SS.C.M. (L).

2020 Servant Leadership Awards from Sisters of Saints Cyril & Methodius

On October 25, 2020, the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Danville, PA awarded the Servant Leadership Award to 27 outstanding high school seniors from the Diocese of Harrisburg PA. The virtual ceremony took place at the Basilica of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Danville. Over the past 18 years, the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius have honored nearly 1,300 teens in the Dioceses of Bridgeport (CT), Charleston (SC), Chicago (IL), Gary (IN), Harrisburg (PA), Milwaukee (WI), Pittsburgh (PA), St. Louis (MO), Scranton (PA), Syracuse (NY), and Trenton (NJ) with the Servant Leadership Award.

The Servant Leadership Award recognizes distinguished high school juniors and seniors who are joyful witnesses, compassionate proclaimers, and enthusiastic builders of the Kingdom of God. The focus of the award is on teens who remain active in their faith and parish beyond Confirmation, and who actively serve in their parish, school and community.

Receiving the award in the virtual ceremony were: Lauren Ayres, Ralph Chip Baker, Matthew John Bowman, Nicholas William Dorkoski, Olivia Erickson, Hanna Farzin, Santina Rosa Fazio, Caroline Feese, Riley Patrick Hammond, Laura Hilbert, Miranda Keller, Paul Michael Killinger, Isabella Kubasek, Sarah Rose Mahoney, Johnathan Robert Manning, Andrew Jacob Marulanda-Rea, Kyra McKinnon, Ann Metrocavage, Julianne Mieckley, Dominic Morano, Thomas Rydzewski, Steven Sauer, Robert Lawrence Scalia, Claudia Marie Seidel, Andrew Thomas Snyder, Anna Marie Starvaggi, and Gavin John Yoder.

Each teen was given the opportunity to select one person as a mentor who has encouraged them to generously use their time and talents as a follower of Jesus. The mentors selected were parents, grandparents, teachers, coaches, youth ministers, scout leaders, Deacons, Sisters and Priests, who have been role models for the teens. Mentors recognized by the teens have made a difference in their lives by modeling servant leadership as a way of life in their family, parish, and community.

At the virtual ceremony the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius also honored four adults who received the Father Matthew Jankola Lifetime Servant Leadership Award in the ministries of evangelization, education, elder care and ecumenism. Father Jankola was a priest from the Diocese of Scranton who was instrumental in recognizing the need for Religious Sisters to educate children, and founded the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius in 1909.

- Submitted by Sister Barbara Sable, SS.C.M.

FCSU's Monsignor Larry Kulick

Appointed Bishop of Greensburg Diocese

It is with great joy and honor that the George Onda District of the First Catholic Slovak Union announces the appointment on December 18, 2020 of our Chaplain, Monsignor Larry J. Kulick by Our Holy Father Pope Francis as the sixth Bishop of the Diocese of Greensburg, PA. Bishop-elect Kulick will be formally installed on February 11, 2021 in Blessed Sacrament Cathedral in Greensburg, PA. Born and raised in Western Pennsylvania, he is of Slovak descent and a longtime member of Branch 199. As Master of Ceremonies at our annual Stedry Vecer, he is irreplaceable.

Congratulations Bishop-elect Kulick, and may God Bless you in your new position.

Submitted by
Linda L. Gonta, District Secretary



Greensburg, PA Bishop-elect Larry J. Kulick

FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY 2020 Jednota Benevolent Winners Announced

On behalf of the Officers and Board of Trustees of the Jednota Benevolent Foundation, Inc., congratulations to the 2020 Jednota Benevolent Foundation, Inc. Scholarship Award recipients. Each student will receive a one-time check for \$500.00. The following is the list of the students selected:



Monica Boryczewski
Andrew Briarcheck
Johanna Diehl
Megan Gallagher
Emily Griebel
Joseph Hawes
Emily Januck
Anna Nosek
Claire Shemon
Alaina Stipcak

We want to thank all the applicants who participated in the program and most especially the scholarship committee for their efforts and support in making the difficult decision of selecting the winners. We wish each and every participating applicant the best of luck in their future endeavors.



Branch 746 Gives Thanks!

On Friday, November 27th, 2020, the day after Thanksgiving, Jednota Branch 746 members gathered for Slovak Mass at Holy Family Church in Linden, NJ. Thanksgiving is a time of gratitude to God, whose guidance and care go before us, and whose love is with us forever. Thanksgiving is also a time of changing seasons, when leaves turn golden in autumn's wake and apples are crisp in the first chill breezes of fall. As we see the beauty of autumn, let us acknowledge the many blessings which are ours. Let us think of our families and friends, and let us give thanks in our hearts.

- Submitted by Sabina Sabados, Region 1 Director



Jednota Branch 746 Scholarship

Deadline to apply: April 30th

- ✓ Are you a member of Branch 746?
- ✓ Are you currently accepted and/or enrolled in full-time college, post-secondary educational institution, or vocational school?
- ✓ Are you active in Branch 746?

**If you answered YES to the above,
you may be eligible for a \$1,000 scholarship!**

For more information on the application criteria and requirements go to:
<https://www.fcsu.com/membership-benefits/scholarships/>



Father Gill, celebrant, flanked by Helena Gaydos and Erik Payne.



Members of Branch 55 (L - R): Auditor Laurie Payne, her daughters Laura and Lily, President Eric Payne, and Secretary Helena Gaydos.

Branch 55 Attended Rosary and Mass Celebrated by Father Gerald Denis Gill at the Cathedral Basilica of SS. Peter & Paul

On Sunday, October 11, 2020, members of Branch 055K attended the Rosary and Mass celebrated by Father Gill, Rector and Pastor of the Cathedral Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul, Philadelphia, PA. The Mass included the "Act of Consecration of the United States to the Immaculate Heart of Mary" and our own individual promises that by "...acting always according to the Will of her divine Son, we may live and die pleasing to God." In his homily Father Gill extolled the power of the graces that our Blessed Mother offers to us in all our needs.

Due to the onslaught of a peak in Covid-19 Cases that was announced by the PA Department of Health a few days prior to the event, the remainder of our anticipated members that signed up to attend decided that for safety reasons it would be best not to make the trip. Even though we knew that attendance at the Basilica is limited because of COVID-19, we were still sadly made aware of how much this virus has changed all of our lives. Normally full to capacity for these special devotions with mostly seniors, this time, we thanked God for the many young people (the least vulnerable) who were able to be there, as well as those who prayed with us at home.

We were doubly blessed by our warm visit with Father Gill after the Mass. Father Gill is currently assigned as Administrator of our Slovak Parish of St. Agnes - St John Nep. Church in Philadelphia, PA, having been assigned upon the retirement of Rev. Edward J. Kuczynski who was a friend from the Seminary of our beloved Pastor, Rev. Francis Lendacky. Coincidentally, Father Gill was the Alter Master of Ceremonies for Father Lendacky's Funeral Mass.

Father Gill credentials are quite extraordinary. To mention a few highlights: while he is both Rector and Pastor of the parishioners of the Catholic Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul, and the Director of Divine Worship, he also has recently published the book, Music in Catholic Liturgy: Ars Celebrandi: An Artful and Careful Celebration of the Eucharist, for Hillenbrand Books. He served a five-year term as Director of Liturgy at the Pontifical North American College in Vatican Seminary, and lectures on Sacred Liturgy throughout the country.

We are indeed both fortunate and grateful to have him as our very own Administrator of our Slovak Church.

- Submitted by Helena T. Gaydos, Branch 055K Secretary-Treasurer

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



(L – R) Johanna Oros (Branch 24), Joseph Elias (Branch 1), and Donna Oros (Branch 24)



This year's Christmas Vilija even though different was still a success, with some 200+ takeouts sold.



(L – R) Branch 24 Fraternal Activities Director Tom Ivanec picks up 12 Vilija meals for members from Radio Club workers Branch 1's Tomas Varchola and Tim Scally.

(L – R) The Radio Club's Karin Scally (Branch 855 Vice President) and Johanna Oros (Branch 24) also helped sell poppyseed and nutrolls



2020 Vilija Celebration at St. Andrew Abbey of Cleveland

The Benedictine monks of St. Andrew Svorad Abbey in Cleveland, OH, in conjunction with the Cleveland Slovak Radio Club, hosted their annual Christmas Vilija on Sunday, December 6, 2020. This long-standing tradition of recreating a typical Slovak Christmas Eve dinner (in Slovak, Vilija) once again featured a meatless "feast" of mushroom soup, fish, bobalky, pierogi, and poppy seed and nutrolls. In keeping with COVID-19 protocols and for the safety of all involved, the 2020 Vilija meal was offered on a take-out basis only. The food was carefully prepared by members of the Radio Club, many of whom also are members of the First Catholic Slovak Union, and of which Henry Horvath (Branch 855) is president.

The Abbey hopes to resume holding Mass directly before the Vilija and an entertainment program during the meal next year.

- Photos courtesy of Joseph Oros, Branch 24 Treasure

Branch 670 Announces 2021 Scholarship Program



Branch 670 of Donora, PA, is excited to announce that it is accepting applications for its 2021 Scholarship Program. The committee will award, to the candidates who best satisfy the criteria up to three, 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 31, 2021.

- Submitted by Joseph Matinko, President and Financial Secretary



Branch 716 President Jan Skrkon with members and children.

Branch 716's Mikulas Celebration

On Sunday December 6th, Branch 716 celebrated Mikulas in St Catherine Park near St. John Nepomucene Church in New York City with members and parishioners. Branch 716 provided refreshments for all participants.

- Submitted by Joan Skrkon, Branch 716 Recording Secretary

Your Phone Call Is Important to Us!



At the First Catholic Slovak Union, we take every phone call very seriously. Our goal is to deliver the best customer service possible – even in these challenging times.

Per current COVID-19 government guidelines and mandates, we remain closed to in-person visits with restricted hours for our Home Office employees that allow them to practice social distancing and other methods for ensuring their wellbeing.

Please take the following steps when you get our voice mail so that we can provide you with the level of service and attention you deserve.

1. Leave a brief reason for your call.
2. Be sure to state your full name, and spell your last name.
3. Along with your phone number, let us know the best time to contact you between the hours of 8:00AM and 4:30PM, M- F.
4. Remember that we can only discuss a contract or certificate with the owner or with permission from the owner.

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

THINK ABOUT IT!



Vianoce at Holy Family Church in Linden

Members of Branch 746 and students of Lipka Academy sang Slovak Christmas carols and recited traditional Slovak greetings (Vianočné prania a vinše) during the Christmas Day liturgy at Holy Family Church in Linden, NJ. The liturgy was in Slovak. The new organist, Michael Vira, took up his recent role. Branch 746 also presented Marianna Fecova, Lipka Academy Director and Branch 746 member, a donation check for the school. Lipka Academy, founded more than 15 years ago, is a Slovak language school which is based at Holy Family Parish for children from pre-K (as little as age 3) through high school. Traditionally, the first Sunday of each month the students of the program sing and read at the Holy Mass. They also hold an annual Christmas and Mother's Day program in addition to hosting several poetic and recitation competitions throughout the year. These events, which Branch 746 supports, were cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic but classes are being held online.

Branch 746 would like to wish all the members of Jednota many blessings and good health in 2021!

Na Vianoce, keď svet stíchne, nech Vám Božie dieťa vdýchne, pokoj, radosť, dobrú voľu a nielen v túto svätú chvíľu, ale každú deň v roku, nech Vám stojí popri boku.

-želajú členovia spolku č. 746

At Christmas, when the world is quiet, may God's child breathe into you, peace, joy, good will, and not only in this holy moment, but every day of the year, let him stand by your side.

- the collective wish of Branch 746 members

Virtually Viewed District 2 Slovak Christmas Tree at Chicago's Museum of Science & Industry 2020 Christmas Around the World

Despite the pandemic, District 2, the Rev John J. Spitkovsky District still prepared a Slovak Christmas tree for Chicago's Museum of Science & Industry Christmas Around the World Exhibit early in November last year. Normally, the exhibit would run from mid-November through the beginning of January. For 2020, however, in keeping with COVID-19 safety protocols, the Museum of Science & Industry shut its doors to the public. According to its website, the Museum then live-streamed tours weekly through December 24th, 2020.

A tradition since 1942, the Museum's exhibit has featured Christmas trees from around the world. To partner with the museum's overall theme of highlighting invention, the FCSU Decorating Committee used many items and ornaments to pay tribute to famous Slovak inventors and engineers such as:

Ján Bahýľ, invented and patented the helicopter in 1895 which flew 14' high in 1905. He also had 16 additional patents.

Štefan Banič, patented the parachute in 1913 and successfully demonstrated the parachute in Washington DC. He donated his patent to the US Army.

Ivan A Getting, was a Physicist & Engineer who helped develop GPS. Ivan was also head of Radar R & D for the US Dept. of Defense and the founder of the Aerospace Corp.

Jozef Murgaš, helped develop mobile communications and wireless transmission of the human voice. He had 15 radio patents and was nicknamed "The Radio Priest".

In addition to ornaments that pay tribute to our Slovak Inventors, the District 2 tree features Slovak traditional candy ornaments, and ornaments depicting the famous castles of Slovakia.

- submitted by Mark Fayta, Branch 706 President



Pictured (L – R) are members of the District 2 Tree Decorating Committee : Andy Harcar, Chelsea Mahoney, Grace Kitterman, Kris Kitterman. Back row: Mark Fayta, Judy Fayta, and Ryan Mahoney.

Ornaments on the Slovak Christmas Tree designed for viewing at the Chicago Museum of Science & Innovation feature Slovak notable inventors, places and traditions. The nativity scene at its base was handmade in Slovakia.



District 8's Successful Virtual Meeting

District 8, the Reverend Stephen Furdek District, held its last meeting of 2020 virtually, via Zoom. It took place on Sunday, December 6th. Those attending on the computer or by phone included: Bottom Row (dialed in): Steve Roman, Tom Hogan, and Christopher Hogan 2nd Row (L - R): Damian Nasta, Peggy Nasta, Nicole Nasta, Rev. Thomas Nasta, Bernard Nowatkoski, and Katherine Nowatkoski. 3rd Row (L-R): Kevin Collins, Cathie Litwinowicz, Marion Mistrik, Monica Fabian, Margaret Hogan, and Peggy Hogan

Upper Row (from left): Steve Engle, Jo Austin, Erik Payne, Karen Sterling, Henry Sterling, and Andrew Nasta.

- Submitted by Jo Austin, District 8 Recording Secretary



Branch 60's Welcomes New Member – Just in Time for Christmas 2020!

Branch 60 would like to welcome our newest and youngest member. Sienna Krohmaly, daughter of Bradley and Danielle Krohmaly.

- Submitted by Julie Perla, Branch 60 Secretary

News From Slovakia

Čaputová prijatá pápežom Františkom, prináša 10 000 testov PCR

Vatikán 14. decembra (TASR) - Slovenskú prezidentku Zuzanu Čaputovú prijal pápež František, ktorý jej povedal, aby odovzdala odkaz ľuďom na Slovensku, že majú bojovať a čeliť koronavírusu.

Čaputová po stretnutí pre médiá uviedla, že pozvala pápeža na Slovensko a on pozvanie prijal, poznamenal však, že veľa bude závisieť od situácie vo svete, vrátane pandémie a jeho vlastného zdravia.

Podľa Čaputovej pontifik uviedol, že „po akejkoľvek kríze nič nezostáva rovnaké, takže je dôležité, aby sme všetci spolupracovali na zjednotení sveta, aby sme dokázali čeliť výzvam“.

Pápež údajne hovoril o konkrétnej úlohe žien v krízach. „Doslova povedal, že ženy majú bližšie k životu prostredníctvom materstva, takže môžu hrať dôležitejšiu úlohu pri upokojení situácie a zjednotení sveta a krajín,“ uviedla Čaputová.

Slovenská prezidentka priniesla pápežovi Františkovi štyri veľké adventné vence vyrobené v chránenej dielni ľuďmi zo znevýhodneného prostredia. Sviečky boli vyrobené z recyklovaných materiálov, pretože otázkou zmeny podnebia sa zaoberá aj pápež. Čaputová mu dala aj obraz Panny Márie. Okrem toho priniesla 10 000 PCR testov na koronavírus.

„Pápež a Svätá stolica sa tiež starajú o ľudí bez domova a vedú nemocnicu, kde ich liečia. To bol pre nich prínos v týchto zložitých časoch,“ uviedla Čaputová.



Pápež František prijíma slovenskú prezidentku Zuzanu Čaputovú vo Vatikáne 14. decembra 2020.
(Foto: Kancelária prezidenta SR)

Pope Francis receives Slovak President Zuzana Caputova in the Vatican on December 14, 2020.
(Photo: Slovak President's Office)

Caputova Received by Pope Francis, Brings 10,000 PCR Tests

Vatican, December 14 (TASR) – Slovak President Zuzana Caputova was received by Pope Francis, who told her to convey a message to people in Slovakia that they should fight and hold out in the face of coronavirus.

Caputova told the media after the meeting that she invited the Pope to Slovakia and he accepted the invitation, but noted that much will depend on the situation in the world, including the pandemic and his own health.

According to Caputova, the pontiff said that “nothing remains the same after any crisis ... so it's important that we all work together on uniting the world, in order to be able to face challenges”.

The Pope allegedly spoke about a specific role of women in crises. “He literally said that women are closer to life through motherhood, so they may be able to play a more significant role in calming the situation down and uniting the world and countries,“ said Caputova.

The Slovak president brought to Francis four big Advent wreaths produced in a sheltered workshop by people from a disadvantaged environment. The candles were made from recycled materials, as the issue of climate change is also pursued by the Pope. Caputova also gave him an image of Our Lady. Apart from that, she brought 10,000 PCR tests for coronavirus.

“The Pope and the Holy See also care for the homeless people and they run a hospital where they treat them. So, this was a contribution for them in these difficult times,“ said Caputova.

Očkovanie COVID-19 Bolo spustené v Bratislave, prezidentka ako prvá dostala vakcínu.

Bratislava 27. decembra (TASR) - Prezidentka Zuzana Čaputová bola prvou osobou, ktorá dostala vakcínu proti koronavírusu, pretože v Bratislave sa v tento deň začalo očkovať.

Medzi ďalších ľudí, ktorí boli očkovaní, patrili aj niektorí členovia kabinetu a parlamentu. Bratislavská Univerzitná nemocnica tiež plánuje očkovať popredných zdravotníckych pra-

covníkov a niektorých ľudí z kritickej infraštruktúry.

Pred očkovaním Čaputová uviedla, že vakcína je najlepší spôsob, ako sa dostať zo situácie spôsobenej novým koronavírusom. Povedala, že chápe obavy verejnosti, ale povzbudila ju, aby dôverovali odborníkom. Svoju prítomnosť a prítomnosť ďalších politikov na začiatku očkovania označila za odkaz pre verejnosť, že týmto spôsobom je možné vrátiť život v krajine do normálu.

“Verím, že sa jedná o dych slobody,“ povedala krátko po očkovaní.

Rovnako prítomný podpredseda parlamentu Gabor Grendel uviedol, že očkovanie je kľúčovým nástrojom na zastavenie pandémie.

„Očkovanie je čin zodpovednosti voči sebe, ale hlavne voči ostatným. Je to prejav ohľaduplnosti k našim rodičom a starým rodičom, ktorí sú vystavení najvyššiemu riziku ochorenia a jeho účinkov,“ uviedol Grendel.

Minister práce Milan Krajniak uviedol, že očkovanie prináša nádej na pozitívnu zmenu na jar a návrat do normálneho života v lete.



Prezidentka Zuzana Čaputová bola prvou osobou, ktorá dostala v Bratislave vakcínu proti COVID-19.
(Foto TASR)

President Zuzana Caputova was the first person to be given a vaccine against COVID-19 in Bratislava.
(Photo by TASR)

COVID-19 Inoculation Launched in Bratislava, President First to Get Shot

Bratislava, December 27 (TASR) – President Zuzana Caputova was the first person to be given a vaccine against coronavirus, as inoculation was launched in Bratislava on this date.

Other people who received their shot included some members of the Cabinet and Parliament. Bratislava University Hospital also plans to vaccinate frontline health-care professionals and some people from critical infrastructure.

Before getting the jab, Caputova said that vaccine is the best way to get out of the situation caused by novel coronavirus. She said that she understands concerns of the public, but encouraged it to trust experts. She described her presence and that of other politicians at the beginning of vaccination as a message to the public that this is a way how life in the country could be returned to normality.

“I believe that this is a breath of freedom,“ she said shortly after being given the shot.

Parliamentary Vice-chairman Gabor Grendel, also present, said that vaccination is a key instrument in stopping the pandemic.

“Vaccination is an act of responsibility towards oneself, but mainly towards others. It's an expression of consideration for our parents and grandparents, who're at the highest risk of the disease and its effects,“ said Grendel.

Labor Minister Milan Krajniak said that vaccination brings hope for a positive change in the spring and a return to normal life in the summer.

Parlament prijal ústavný zákon, ktorý umožňuje predĺžiť stav núdze na viac ako 90 dní

Bratislava 28. decembra (TASR) - Slovenský parlament v pondelok prijal ústavný zákon, ktorý umožňuje vláde predĺžiť výnimočný stav opakovane po 90 dňoch o 40 dní.

Ústavný návrh zákona, o ktorom sa rokovalo v zrýchlenom režime, bol schválený hlasmi 91 poslancov z 94 prítomných.

Každé predĺženie výnimočného stavu bude musieť byť schválené parlamentom do 20 dní od nadobudnutia účinnosti.

Ústavný zákon tiež umožňuje vláde ukladať verejnosti neobmedzený nútený pobyt v jej obydliach. Vláda okrem toho bude môcť uložiť pracovné povinnosti členom verejnosti a prinútiť ich, aby ubytovali evakuovaných ľudí.

continued on page 9

News From Slovakia

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Výsledky hlasovania o ústavnom zákone, ktorý umožňuje vláde predĺžiť výnimočný stav na viac ako 90 dní. Prítomní poslanci: 94. Za: 91. Proti: 1. Zdržali sa: 1. Nehlasovalo: 1. (foto TASR)

Results of the vote on a constitutional bill allowing the Government to extend the state of emergency beyond 90 days. Present MPs: 94. For: 91. Against: 1. Abstained: 1. Non-voting: 1. (Photo by TASR)

House Passes Bill Allowing Gov't to Extend State of Emergency Beyond 90 Days

Bratislava, December 28 (TASR) – Slovakia's Parliament on Monday passed a constitutional law allowing the Government to extend the state of emergency beyond 90 days repeatedly by 40 days.

The constitutional bill, which was discussed in a fast-tracked mode, was approved with the votes of 91 MPs out of 94 present.

Each extension of the state of emergency will need approval by Parliament within 20 days of it coming into force.

The constitutional bill also allows the Government to impose on the public unlimited forced stays in their dwellings. Apart from that, the Government will also be allowed to impose work duty on members of the public and force them to accommodate evacuated people.

Slovensko zasiahlo mierne zemetrasenie

Bratislava 29. decembra (TASR) - Niekoľkými slovenskými regiónmi otriaslo zemetrasenie, ktoré malo epicentrum v Chorvátsku, potvrdil v utorok pre TASR Kristian Csicsay z Ústavu vied o Zemi.

Otrasy, ktoré pocítili ľudia v lokalitách ako Bratislava, Trnava, Samorin a Nitra, sprevádzali zemetrasenie v chorvátskom meste Záhreb, ku ktorému došlo okolo obeda v tento deň.

Podľa Csicsaya bolo 50 správ o zemetrasení z Bratislavy, Nitra, Trnavy, Trenčína, Sereďu, Topoľčian, Veľkého Krtíša, Komárna, Nových Zámok a Samorína. "Správy pochádzajú z vyšších poschodí," poznamenal.

Mnoho obyvateľov Bratislavy sprostredkovalo svoje skúsenosti na sociálnych sieťach. „O 12.21 sa celý náš 12-poschodový bytový dom v [Bratislavskej mestskej časti] Petržalka otriasol. Celkom nepríjemná skúsenosť,“ zverejnila Katarína. Ľudia v postihnutých mestských častiach si hlavne všimli, že sa trasú kľúče v zámkoch, lampy, rolety a ozdoby na vianočných stromčekoch.

"Voda z nádrže na ryby trochu vytekla," napísala Barbora.

Hasiči však v Bratislavskom kraji nezaznamenali žiadne zranenia ani škody na majetku.

Polícia prijala niekoľko správ o zemetrasení na pohotovostnej linke 158 v Bratislavskom, Trnavskom a Nitrianskom kraji, aj keď bez hlásenia zranenia alebo poškodenia.



fotka od TASR
stock photo by TASR

Slovakia Hit by Mild Earthquake

Bratislava, December 29 (TASR) –

Several Slovak regions have been shaken by an earthquake that had its epicenter in Croatia, Kristian Csicsay of the Earth Sciences Institute confirmed for TASR on Tuesday.

The tremors felt by people in locations such as Bratislava, Trnava, Samorin and Nitra accompanied the earthquake in the Croatian city of Zagreb that occurred around noon on this date.

According to Csicsay, there were 50 reports regarding the earthquake from Bratislava, Nitra, Trnava, Trenčín, Sereď, Topoľčany, Veľký Krtíš, Komárno, Nove Zámky and Samorin. "The reports come from higher floors," he noted.

Many inhabitants of Bratislava conveyed their experiences on social networks. "At 12.21 p.m., our whole 12-floor apartment block in [the Bratislava borough of] Petržalka was shaking. Quite an unpleasant experience," posted Katarína. People in the affected boroughs mainly noticed that keys in locks, lamps, window blinds and Christmas tree decorations were shaking.

"Water from the fish tank spilled out a little," wrote Barbora.

Firefighters recorded no injuries or property damage in Bratislava region, however.

Police received several earthquake reports on emergency line 158 in Bratislava, Trnava and Nitra regions, albeit with no injuries or damage reported.



Scenes from Branch 24's Successful Virtual Meeting

Branch 24 held a virtual meeting on Saturday, December 5, 2020, at 11:00AM. Thirty-three members participated by computer or on phone.

Branch 743's Victoria Kovac Awarded Prestigious Scholarship in 2020



FCSU's Victoria Kovac, left, who attended the Warren Consolidated Schools' Macomb Mathematics Science and Technology Center, is a Stamps Scholar. Photo provided by Victoria Kovac

Branch 743's Victoria Kovac was one of two students from Warren Consolidated Schools' Macomb Mathematics Science and Technology Center (MMSTC) named a 2020 Stamps Scholar.

Victoria, who graduated in 2020 from MMSTC, is currently attending the University of Michigan tuition-free because of the Stamps Scholarship. [It] covers up to the total estimated cost of attendance for four years of undergraduate study, plus the students' essentials, including room and board, and books. It also includes enrichment funds scholar recipients can use for academic and professional development, ranging from studying abroad to internships.

Stamps Scholars is based in Atlanta, GA. According to a Stamps Scholars press release, in 2006, Penny and Roe Stamps created merit scholarship programs for undergraduates at their alma maters: Penny, the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and Roe, Georgia Tech in Atlanta. The recipients must attend either university. Penny Stamps died in December 2018.

The MMSTC, located in Warren, MI, was designed to offer students courses in mathematics, science and technology. Classes cover several subjects, including geometry, biology, interdisciplinary studies, calculus and physics. Students attend the program half of their school day and their home school for the other half. Victoria attended while still enrolled in Fraser High School, Fraser, MI.

At Michigan, Kovac is studying business administration in the Ross School of Business. Because of COVID-19, her classes have been online.

"I'm kind of bummed out because there's a lot of stuff we can't really do," she said. But she is making the most of it. "I like my classes. They're pretty interesting."

As far as pursuing business administration, "there's a broad range of what I can pick from," she said. "I might go into marketing. Honestly, I'm not sure. I'm just really grateful for the school. I really like (Michigan)."

Kovac always wanted to attend the MMSTC after her brother, one year older, began attending the program.

"He really liked his teachers," she said.

Kovac studied hard while in the program. She also liked the smaller class sizes.

"It was rigorous. I wanted to challenge myself and get into a good college," she said. "It was very science and math heavy."

While there, she enrolled in geometry, trigonometry, pre-calculus, calculus I and II, biology, chemistry and physics.

"I always liked science, but I was more of a math person," Kovac said. "Math always clicked for me better. Science kind of shows how the world works."

When Kovac learned she was a Stamps Scholar, she couldn't hold back her emotions.

"I started crying," she said. "I was really excited. It was the highlight of my year."

- Submitted by Branch 743 President Joseph Rimarcik.
Based on "MMSTC students receive Stamps Scholarships,"
by Maria Allard, C&G Newspapers, October 23, 2020. Reprinted with permission.

Šťastný nový rok praje Matica slovenská

2021: Rok Alexandra Dubčeka

Drahé matičiarky, vážení matičiari, milí priatelia a priaznivci Matice slovenskej.

Rok národnej identity sa priblížil k svojmu záveru a my Vám želáme pokojné prežitie a šťastný nový rok 2021. Matica slovenská vyhlásila rok 2021 za Rok Alexandra Dubčeka. Tento Slovák a vrcholný predstaviteľ obrodného procesu v Československu patrí k čestným členom Matice slovenskej, viac sa o jeho vzťahoch s našou ustanovizňou dozviete v článku.

<https://matica.sk/matica-slovenska-vyhlasila-rok-2021-za-rok-alexandra-dubceka/>

Počas budúceho roka si pripomenieme viaceré významné výročia slovenských dejín, neopomeníme ani sté výročie narodenia Štefana Boleslava Romana, kanadského priemyselníka a prvého predsedu Svetového kongresu Slovákov, či 175. výročie vzniku a 140. výročie obnovenia Slovenských pohľadov.

Naším matičiarom a matičiarkam prajeme, aby ste si udržali pevného ducha a odhodlanie šíriť národnú kultúru, históriu a povedomie v slovenskom národe doma i v zahraničí. Doba je síce ťažká, no nech sú pre nás životy a dielo našich predkov inšpiráciou i povzbudením do matičnej práce pre slovenský národ. Aby naše deti a mládež mohli aj naďalej spoznávať a uvedomovať si nádheru slovenskosti po všetkých jej stránkach, o čo sa každý rok zo všetkých síl spoločne snažíme.

Nech nám v tom Pán Boh pomáha!

Matica slovenská 2021



2021 ROK
ALEXANDRA
DUBČEKA

Happy New Year from Matica slovenská

2021: the Year of Alexander Dubček

Dear Countrymen, friends and supporters of Matica slovenská.

The Year of National Identity has come to an end and we wish you a peaceful and a Happy New Year 2021. Matica slovenská has declared 2021 the Year of Alexander Dubček. This Slovak and the top representative of the revival in Czechoslovakia belongs to the honorary members of Matica slovenská, you can learn more about his relations with our institution in the article. <https://matica.sk/matica-slovenska-vyhlasila-rok-2021-za-rok-alexandra-dubceka/>

Over the next year, we will commemorate several important anniversaries of Slovak history, we will not forget the 100th anniversary of the birth of Štefan Boleslav Roman, a Canadian industrialist and the first president of the World Congress of Slovaks, or the 175th anniversary of the establishment and 140th anniversary of the renewal of Slovak views.

We wish our countrymen to maintain a strong spirit and determination to spread national culture, history and awareness in the Slovak nation at home and abroad. The time is difficult, but let the lives and work of our ancestors be an inspiration and encouragement for us to work for the Slovak nation – so that our children and young people can continue to get to know and realize the splendor of Slovakism in all its aspects, which we strive for together every year.

May the Lord God help us in this!

Matica slovenská 2021

Oh, what fun! Region 1's Virtual Christmas Party

On Sunday, December 13th, 2020 Region 1 members gathered in an unorthodox fashion for a Christmas party! Branch 45, 290 and 746 members joined by Zoom video and some members dialed-in by telephone. The online festivities began with a special Christmas prayer in both English and Slovak followed by a "Vianočný vins" by Milan Olexa and Ludmila (Milka) Choma. Participants showed off their "Christmas attire" sporting angel pins, Christmas sweaters, holiday bows, tropically Christmas inspired garments, and Christmas ties. Maria Budis took home the prize for her ensemble.

Each participant shared a Christmas memory or tradition. Some remembered their favorite Christmas Vigilia dinner dishes: "Kapustnica" (Slovak Christmas sauerkraut and mushroom soup), "oplatky" with honey, making pierogies or Vianočné bobáľky s kapustou alebo makom. Many shared memories of growing up in Slovakia such as feeding the farm animals before everyone sat down to Christmas Eve dinner or the laying of straw under the table. After reminiscing, the online attendees were serenaded by soloist Andrew Pulver, who was accompanied on the piano by his mother Tanya Pulver. Their musical selection was Gesù Bambino "The Infant Jesus" by Pietro A. Yon.

A virtual Christmas party isn't complete without games and Christmas carol sing-alongs! The highly motivated group competed for prizes courtesy of Msgr. Rura District 4 of New Jersey. The Christmas trivia game was won by Tanya Pulver though several members gained bonus points for naming all of Santa's reindeer. Michele MacMath



and Jo'Ann Peppe were strong contenders. Mary Ann Ranahan proved to be the quickest at the "12 Days of Christmas Scavenger hunt" though she had some sturdy competi-

tion with Dana Banas and Nancy Krall with a few points behind! Surprise guest Buddy the Elf led the "Guess the Gift" game which was won by Mary Kapitan. The game was

especially hard as Buddy the Elf didn't want to break his silence! A Christmas party would not be complete without the "Big Guy"

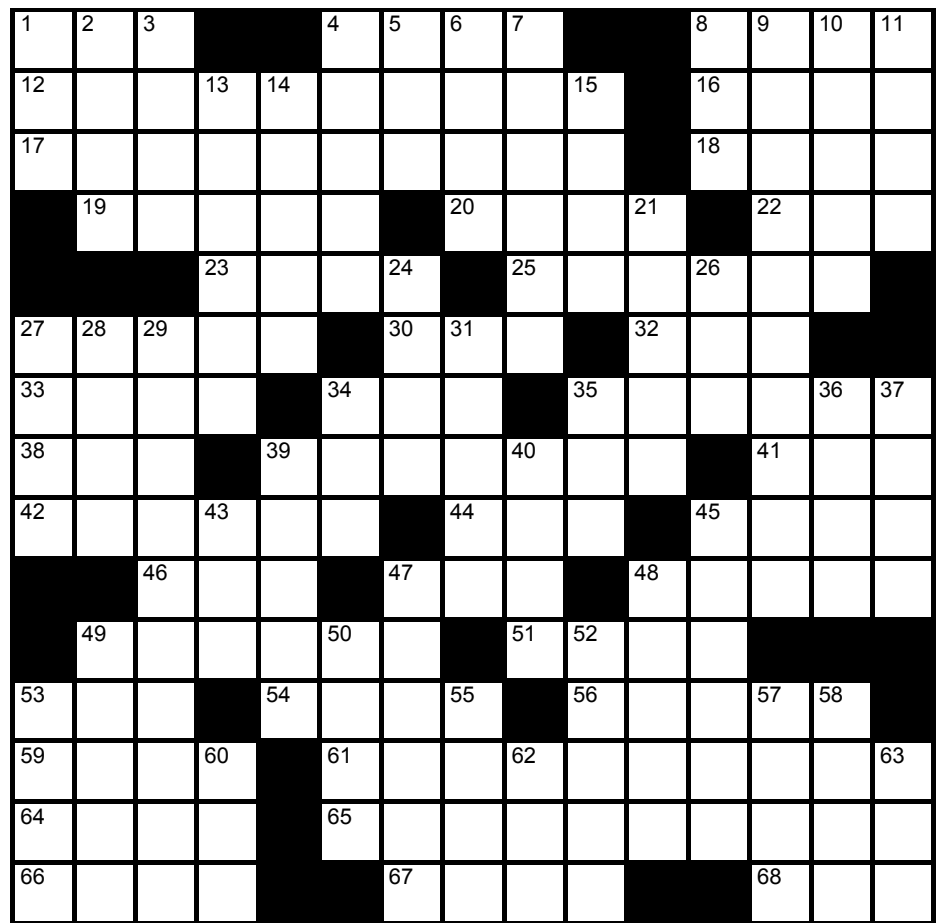
continued on page 18



Snowy Owl

Golden eyes, except the center,
Where they're dark and round as ever.
Snow-white feathers, snow-white wings;
Powerful claws for catching things.
With its bended beak and all,
Lovely, lovely snowy owl!
© George Kossik, Branch 584

Jednota Crossword Puzzle



Get FCSU In Your Inbox – Never More Important than Now



Today when we are all facing rapidly changing challenges, it's more important than ever to stay up-to-date with information from the First Catholic Slovak Union. Provide/update your email address at the link below – and receive the FCSU latest info right in your inbox. It's free, easy and safe. We'll never share your email address! Please go to: <https://www.fcsu.com/contact/>

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>

2021 JEDNOTA Publication Schedule

Issue Date	Deadline to Receive Information
February 10	February 1
March 10	March 1
April 14	April 5
May 12	May 3
June 9	June 1 (Memorial Day, May 31)
July 14	July 6 (Observed Independence Day, July 5)
August 11	August 2
Sept 8	August 30
October 13	October 4
November 10	November 1
December 8	November 29

Across

- 1 Nabokov novel
- 4 Part of a process
- 8 Winston Churchill's "___ Country"
- 12 Wall socket
- 16 La Scala area
- 17 Tympani
- 18 Vitamin additive
- 19 Grandma's word
- 20 Condo division
- 22 Cricket wicket
- 23 Present month
- 25 Certain print
- 27 Mace, e.g.
- 30 Get behind
- 32 Advanced degree?
- 33 Rotates a camera
- 34 Palme ___ (Cannes award)
- 35 Large lizard
- 38 Phenom
- 39 Roman goddess of wisdom
- 41 Apply gently
- 42 Church officer
- 44 Thumbs down
- 45 Relocate
- 46 CIA forerunner
- 47 Web allocator (Abbr.)
- 48 *Wheel of Fortune* purchase
- 49 Coats of arms
- 51 Romulus or Remus
- 53 Chinese tea
- 54 Festive time
- 56 True heath
- 59 Barbecue fare
- 61 *Maine*, for one
- 64 Guisado cooker
- 65 BC follower

- 66 Fleabane
- 67 Aswan and others
- 68 Filbert

Down

- 1 Deluge refuge
- 2 Insightful
- 3 Makes a scene?
- 4 Frets
- 5 Soupçon
- 6 Like raw silk
- 7 Crash-dive
- 8 "Mârrouf" baritone
- 9 Auspicate
- 10 Ecstasy's opposite
- 11 Cleave
- 13 Morality
- 14 Carpenter's tool
- 15 Expressionist Nolde
- 21 South Seas kingdom
- 24 *Silly Symphonies* output, briefly
- 26 Comic Gilliam
- 27 Pool sites
- 28 Worry on foot
- 29 Set in stone
- 31 Small songbirds
- 34 Cacophony
- 35 Wrigley Field flora
- 36 Place to pray
- 37 Explorer Tasman
- 39 Like some trees
- 40 Wholly absorbed
- 43 Half a fly?
- 45 "One" philosophy
- 47 Cuba, e.g.
- 48 Red-eyed bird
- 49 Guallatiri locale
- 50 Marching band member
- 52 Joins
- 53 Noisy bird
- 55 Vulcan's Chimney
- 57 Goatee site
- 58 Hokkaido people
- 60 Kind of story
- 62 Barnyard male
- 63 Colliery

See Solution on Page 21



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 2021, Selection Sunday is March 14th. 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 on line.

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. ALSO CHECK YOUR JUNK EMAIL.**
7. **Once you receive the email, follow the instructions to sign up on the game site.**
8. **Once you sign up on the game site, your account will automatically become FROZEN until start of competition. Your account will REOPEN on Sunday March 14th, 2021.**
9. **You must have your account set up by 5:00PM Thursday March 11th, 2021.**
10. **All pool rules will be listed on the Official Contest Site.**

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).

11. Mail to:
Kevin Collins, FCSU Fraternal Activities Director
628 Heather Brite Cr.
Apopka, Fl. 32712
(More than 1 entry form maybe mailed in an envelope).

MUST BE POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN Tuesday March 2nd, 2021
And arrive in Office by 5:00pm Wednesday March 10th, 2021
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



First Catholic Slovak Union

Estate Planning Booklet



Your Personal Record Keeper

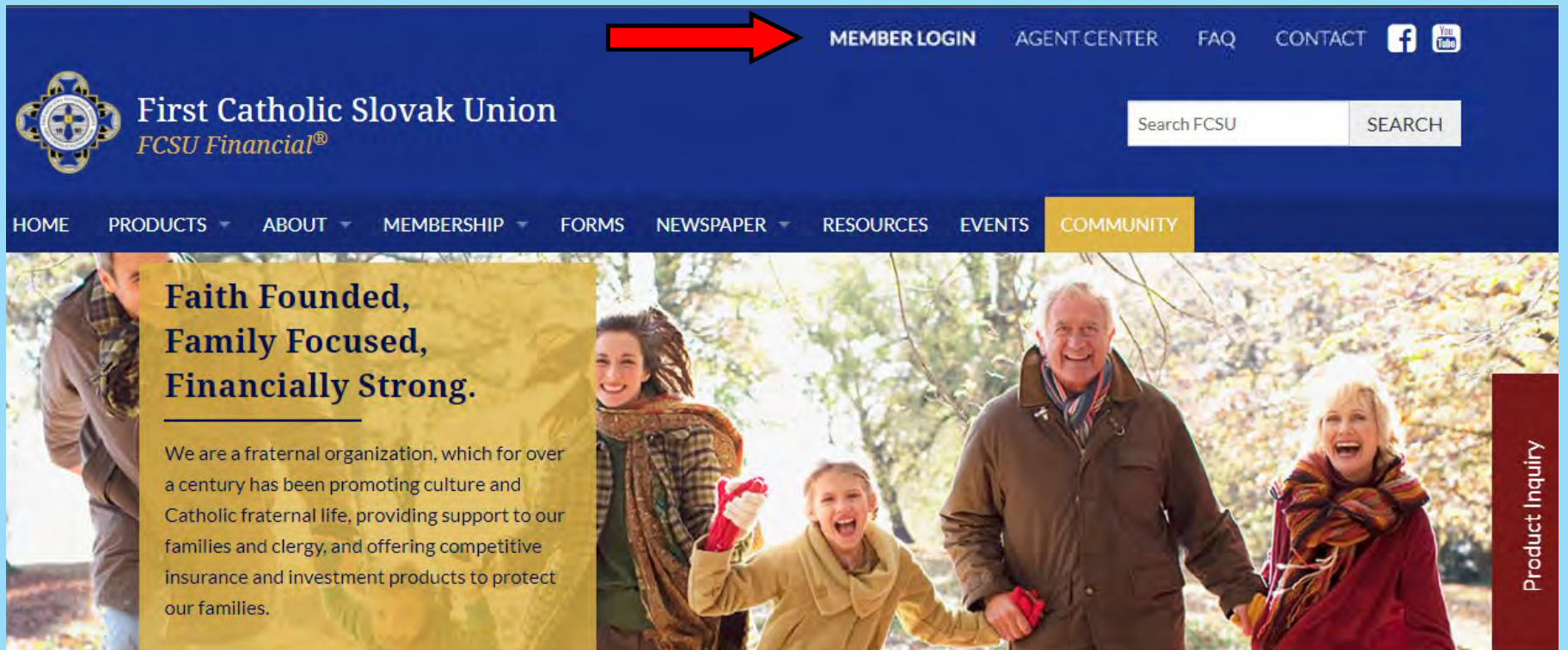
FREE

Estate Planning Booklet from the First Catholic Slovak Union

As National President Andrew M. Rajec and Executive Secretary Kenneth A. Arendt state in the beginning of the Estate Planning Booklet from the First Catholic Slovak Union (FCSU) - the very foundations of our Society have been built on values that honor and protect our loved ones. The FCSU portfolio of insurance and annuity products itself, they point out, is designed with the financial protection of loved ones in mind, as well.

Now, as a member of the FCSU, you can receive a valuable tool for free that allows you to help your loved ones once again. Inside the pages of this personal record keeper are easy ways to record and centralize all the pertinent information for processing your estate – from personal, medical and financial information to life insurance policies, real estate holdings and other assets to final wishes for your family.

To request your free copy of the First Catholic Slovak Union Estate Planning Booklet, please call at 1-800-JEDNOTA (533-6682).



NEW FEATURE on the FCSU WEBSITE

Would you like to check on your FCSU life insurance or annuity policy information at any time? At a click of the button you can access your policy online at your convenience.

Visit our homepage www.fcsu.com, go to MEMBER LOGIN and CREATE your new account.

Next time you log in into your account, you will need to use the username and password you created to review your:

- life insurance policies
- annuity policies
- beneficiaries
- summary
- your transactions for last 12 months

MORE features coming in the future ... STAY TUNED



Dear Officers and Board of Directors of the First Catholic Slovak Union:

My name is Luke Smercheck. I am from Uniontown, PA. I was chosen as a 2020 First Catholic Slovak Union Scholarship Award recipient.

I am writing to thank you for selecting me as an award recipient.

I am currently enrolled at Penn State University The Eberly Campus. I will complete my first two years at the local PSU branch campus, and then transfer to Penn State University Park to complete my degree in Mechanical Engineering. I also hope to minor in Environmental Engineering.

Receiving your scholarship will alleviate some of the stress I feel with regards to the cost of pursuing a post-secondary education.

I am the youngest of three children and my parents' third child to pursue a college education. Needless to say, it is a financial burden for my parents who are entering their seventh continuous year of trying to help their children navigate the financial costs of pursuing a college degree.

My sister Emily was also chosen as a scholarship recipient. I would like to share with you that she is now in her second year of graduate school at Cal U for her Masters in Speech & Language Pathology. She was one of six out over 600 graduates at Cal U to graduate with a 4.0 GPA.

I also am driven to achieve a respectable graduating GPA. My goal is to graduate with a 3.75 or higher GPA. Being the recipient of your scholarship will help make this possible.

I am grateful to your organization for sponsoring this scholarship and for believing in ME!

Thank you,

Luke Smercheck



ATTENTION
College-bound FCSU Members



**THE FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION
IS NOW ACCEPTING 2021 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS**

From the desk of the Executive Secretary Kenneth A. Arendt

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, 2021**

BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

BRANCH 24 – CLEVELAND, OHIO

In keeping with continuing restrictions due COVID-19 and per directives from the FCSU Board of Directors discouraging in-person meetings to protect our members, Branch 24 will once again hold a virtual meeting on Saturday, February 13, 2021. The meeting will begin at 11:00AM. At this meeting, a financial report for 2020 will be given. Members can access the meeting by phone, smartphone, or computer. Please call Fraternal Activities Director Tom Ivanec at (440) 668-7797 by Friday, February 12, 2021, for instructions on how to participate in the meeting.

Bob Kopco, President

BRANCH 40 – STREATOR, ILLINOIS

Branch 40 will hold its annual meeting on January 17, 2021 at Chipper's Grill 1733 N. Bloomington St. Streator, IL, at 2:00PM. Please wear a mask and maintain social distancing. Election of officers will take place. Lunch will follow the meeting. In the event that state guidelines change and interfere with these plans we will schedule a Zoom meeting. Please contact Theresa Graves at (815) 672-6142 (leave a message) if you are able to attend by January 14, 2021.

Theresa Graves, Financial Secretary

BRANCH 45 – NEW YORK, NEW YORK

The St. Matthew's the Evangelist Society, Branch 45, will hold a virtual meeting on the Zoom app on Sunday January 17, 2021, at 1:00 PM. We urge all members to attend this virtual meeting.

Maria Jurasi, Financial Secretary

ČLENSKÁ SCHŔDZA SPOLKU SV. MATÚŠA Č. 45 V NEW YORK CITY

Oznamujeme členom nášho spolku, že sa uskutoční polročná virtuálna schôdza cez aplikáciu Zoom sv. Matúša č. 45 1KSJ v New Yorku v nedeľu 17. Januára 2021 o 13:00. Láskaivo žiadame našich členov o aktívnu účasť na tejto virtualnej schôdzi.

Mária Juráši - pokladníčka

BRANCH 89 – MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Dear Members: Please join us for our meeting at 11:00AM on Saturday, February 6, 2021. Topics of discussion will be: ELECTION OF 2021 OFFICERS, and 2021 donations and activities. The meeting will be held at Allio's Restaurant, 3041 North Mayfair Road, Wauwatosa, WI, 53222. Social time: 11:30AM - 11:45AM. Meeting time: 11:45AM – 12:30PM (approximately). Lunch to be served directly after the meeting at 12:30PM. Lunch for members is complimentary. Guest cost is \$20.00. Reservations are required by the restaurant in order to follow COVID-19 protocols concerning attendance. Reservations must be received by 2/1/2021 by calling Mike Novak @ 414.445.5382. Make checks payable to: Knights of St. Mary & Joseph BR 89. Mail checks to: Mike Novak, 3237 N. 93rd Street, Milwaukee, WI, 53222.

Thank you,

Mike Novak, President

BRANCH 89 – MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

As an incentive to grow Branch 89, members who refer new branch members or add a new

contract of their own are now eligible to receive a Branch award. Specifically, Branch 89 members who successfully refer new members can receive an award of up to \$100. Members that add a new contract of their own can receive an award of up to \$50. To be eligible for an award, new policies must be issued during the calendar year in which Branch 89 otherwise qualifies for an FCSU stipend under bylaw section 4.05. Award amounts will depend on the amount of the FCSU stipend for the year and the number of members qualifying for an award. Awards cannot be combined or multiplied and members are limited to one award per calendar year.

Contact Financial Secretary Nancy Carol Novak at 262-305-4041 or email "novakncp@charter.net" for more information or to request an award application.

Paul Novak, Secretary/Treasurer

BRANCH 162 – UNIONTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Wendelin Society, Branch 162, will hold its branch meeting on Sunday, February 28, 2021, at 9:00AM, with a virtual/Zoom meeting. We will advise those who want to attend with access by phone or computer with details.

Officers' reports will be given, and upcoming branch activities and donations will be discussed. Regional Director James Marmol will advise us of developments from the Home Office. Call Dolores Marmol at 724-437-4983 before February 22nd if you wish to be connected to the meeting.

We pray for an end to COVID-19 and for your safety.

Dolores Marmol, Secretary

BRANCH 181 – UNITED, PENNSYLVANIA

A combined meeting with the St. John the Baptist Society - Branch 181 and the George Onda District - District 3 members is planned for Saturday, March 27, 2021 at 6PM after Mass in the St. Florian's Social Hall in United, PA. Refreshments will be ordered. Due to attendance limits, members planning to be present must RSVP by March 20. Face masks and social distancing guidelines will be followed. Please call Vicki Hricik at 724-547-0803 or Darlene Patty at 724-493-8712 to reserve your place. Any changes for the meeting, including Pennsylvania and COVID-19 guideline changes, will be printed in the Jednota and posted at www.fcsu.com as soon as possible.

- Submitted by Vicki Hricik, Recording Secretary

BRANCH 228 – LORAIN, OHIO

The St. John the Baptist/Holy Trinity Lodge, Branch 228 will hold their next meeting on Monday, March 15, 2021, at 7 PM on the virtual platform FreeConferenceCall.com, the same service method as used for our 2020 meetings. 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 PM, and will be held VIRTUALLY until further notice. Contact Lisa at 440-773-1442 for specific instructions to attend virtually.

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 20, 2021. At that time, we will also elect two (2) representatives to serve on the American Slovak Club Board of Directors.

This past December's election results for Branch 228 officers were as follows: President - Luis Palos, Vice-President - Ryan Trifiletti, Financial Secretary - Lisa Trifiletti-Palos, Activities Director/Auditor - Theresa Arendt and Recording Secretary - Thomas Zuffa. Their terms expire December 31, 2021.

For representatives to the American Slovak Club Board of Directors, Luis Palos and Lisa Trifiletti-Palos were each elected to a 3-year term expiring December 31, 2023. Ryan Trifiletti was elected to serve the remainder of deceased Leonard Zilko's term which expires December 31, 2022. Rest in peace Len. We miss you.

Please continue to pray to our Lord God for a cure to all the problems of our world. And remember to give thanks to God for all His blessings.

Thomas B. Zuffa, Recording Secretary

BRANCH 259 – STRUTHERS, OHIO

The St. Michael the Archangel Society, Branch 259, will hold a meeting on February 28, 2021, at 2:00PM at 175 Harvey Street, Struthers, OH. We will conduct an audit and discuss the activities for 2021. The members are invited and encouraged to attend. We would like to extend to all our wishes for a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Vivian Sedlacko, Secretary

BRANCH 312 – BAGGALEY, PENNSYLVANIA

Branch 312K will hold its annual meeting on Sunday, February 7, 2021, at 1:00PM, at the home of Branch President Mark Smolleck, 1121 Monastery Drive, Latrobe, PA, 15650. On the agenda: election of 2021 officers. For more information, contact Branch Secretary Micki Smolleck at 724-537-8326.

We wish all a blessed and happy New Year and pray the pandemic will be over soon.

Michealene Smolleck, Secretary

BRANCH 410 – UNIONTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

The SS. Peter and Paul, Branch 410, will hold a meeting on Thursday, March 18, 2021, at 1:30 at the Highland House, 92 West Main Street, Uniontown, PA. Call for reservations by Thursday, March 11, 2021, at 724-425-2576.

All members are invited to attend.

Geraldine Buchheit, Secretary

BRANCH 670 – DONORA, PENNSYLVANIA

Branch 670 of the Msgr Andrew Hlinka District will hold the first meeting in 2021 on Sunday March 7 at 12:00PM. The meeting will be held via Zoom. Instructions for attending the meeting will be emailed to all attendees of the Dec 2020 meeting. Any branch member can

call Branch Treasurer, Cheryl Hyatt (724-622-1982) for attendance instructions after Feb 21, 2021. We wish everyone a happy, healthy and safe 2021.

Joseph Matinko, President

BRANCH 682 – YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

The next regular meeting for Branch 682 is scheduled for Noon on Friday, January 22, 2021, at Materials Research Laboratories, 290 N Bridge St. in Struthers, OH 44471. The meeting will include the assembly of the branch annual report and discussion of sponsored projects/programs for the upcoming year.

Drew Hirt, President

BRANCH 746 – LINDEN, NEW JERSEY

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 746, will hold its next meeting on Sunday, March 14, 2021, at 2:00 PM, virtually. We encourage all Branch 746 members to participate from the comfort of their homes using the Zoom platform or calling using their home phone. Kindly RSVP to Sabina at 908-486-2921 by March 10th or via email. For security purposes, once you RSVP you will be provided the necessary information on how to connect. We also encourage members who have been inactive to take this opportunity to reconnect with our branch. For those able, you can participate by video or via telephone (dialing-in is an easy option). The agenda will include discussion of potential 2021 events.

Jednota Branch 746 Scholarship deadline is April 30th. If you are currently accepted and/or enrolled in full-time college, post-secondary educational institution, or vocational school and active in Branch 746 or want to become active, you may be eligible for a \$1,000 scholarship. For more information on the application criteria and requirements go to: <https://www.fcsu.com/membership-benefits/scholarships/>.

[Editor's Note: please see page 5 for Branch 746 Scholarship notice]

Mary Kapitan, Secretary

BRANCH 855 – PARMA, OHIO

Branch 855, Holy Name of Jesus Society, will hold its first meeting of the year on February 20, 2021, starting at 10AM. For the continued safety of our members and in keeping with the recommendations from the FCSU Board of Directors, this will be a virtual meeting. We encourage all members to attend. To get information on joining the meeting by computer or phone, please email fcsu855@gmail.com or call/text 440-864-4744 before February 20, 2021.

May God Bless all of our members with a happy and healthy New Year!

Barbara Sutila, President

Address Changes?

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

DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

The George Onda District plans to hold its Annual Meeting on Saturday, March 27, 2021. We will meet in the Social Hall of St. Florian Church in United, PA. The meeting will begin following the 5 PM Mass. We will be following the CDC guidelines as required. If you plan on attending, you are asked to RSVP to Vice President Darlene Patty at 724-493-8712 by March 20, 2021.

Linda L. Gonta, Secretary

DISTRICT 4 – THE MSGR RURA DISTRICT

Msgr. Rura District 4 of New Jersey will hold its next semi-annual meeting on Sunday, March 14, 2021, at 3:00PM virtually. We encourage all District 4 branch members to participate from the comfort of their homes using the Zoom platform or dialing-in (easy option). Kindly RSVP to Sabina at 908-486-2921 by March 10th. For security purposes, once you RSVP you will be provided the necessary information on how to connect to the meeting. The agenda will include planning of 2021 events.

- Mary Kapitan, District Secretary

DISTRICT 5 – THE MICHIGAN DISTRICT

Due to the current pandemic and in keeping with the requirements of the Home Office, the Michigan District will conduct a Virtual Meeting (its annual meeting) on Sunday, January 17, 2021, at 1:15PM. On the agenda will be Officer's Report, a 2020 financial report, approval of the 2021 budget, discussion of District activities, and other business pertaining to the District and the First Catholic Slovak Union. The election of 2021 District Officers will also take place.

All Members planning to participate in the virtual meeting MUST contact Robert Kristofik, District President, @ rjk810@aol.com no later than Tuesday January 12, 2021, to receive information regarding the Zoom call procedures.

Current District Officers: Robert Kristofik, President; Joseph C. Rimarcik, Treasurer; Vice President, Vacant; Secretary, Vacant; Auditor, Catherine Karlsen; Auditor, Vacant; Chaplin Vacant.

If you are interested in a District Officer position please contact Robert Kristofik.

****Please remember, a branch delegate must attend at least one District meeting in order to be eligible for compensation from the Home Office

Joseph C. Rimarcik, Treasurer

DISTRICT 6 - THE PITTSBURGH DISTRICT

The Pittsburgh District extends its condolences to the family and friends of Ann Pavlan who served for many years as our district sergeant-at-arms. Ann passed away on November 28, 2020. She was 94. Ann was originally from Braddock, PA, but she was living in Fort Myers, FL, at the time of her passing.

Plans for 2021 activities are on hold due to the on-going Covid-19 situation. If and when we are permitted to hold a Spring business meeting, we will post a notice in the Jednota and send emails where we have contact info. Forward any suggestions to the district officers.

As always, members are urged to check the Jednota for updates on FCSU business matters as well as contests and tournaments. Please be sure your beneficiaries are up to date. FCSU insurance information and forms can be found at www.fcsu.com. Many interesting Slovak-related links may be found at fcsu.com/resources.

We hope all of you are safe and well for the new year.

Fraternally,

Margaret A. Nasta, District Secretary; 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 7, 2021, at 1:00 PM at Caporella's Italian Ristorante at 90 Pittsburgh Street, Uniontown, PA.

Election of officers will be on the agenda. Regional Director Marmol will be informing the members of Jednota upcoming events. Members who attend will be asked to contribute \$5.00 toward their meal. Reservations need to be made by Wednesday, March 3, 2021, by contacting President James Marmol at 724-970-7642. All members are urged to attend. The Frank T. Holly, Jr. District would like to wish everyone a "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year-2021."

Barbara A. Holly, Secretary

DISTRICT 12 - THE MSGR ANDREW HLINKA DISTRICT

The Msgr Andrew Hlinka District will hold the first meeting in 2021 on Sunday, March 7, 2021, at 1PM. The meeting will be via Zoom. Instructions for attending the meeting will be emailed/mailed to all attendees of the Dec 2020 meeting. Any district member can call District Secretary Monica Rodacy Boone at 412-341-1577 for attendance instructions after February 21, 2021. Happy and Healthy 2021 to All.

Monica Rodacy Boone, District Secretary

DISTRICT 14 – THE REVEREND JOSEPH L. KOSTIK DISTRICT – YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

The Reverend Joseph L. Kostik District - District 14, Youngstown, Ohio will hold a meeting on Tuesday, March 16, 2021 at 6:00 P.M. at The Fireplace 2075 E. Western Reserve Rd. Poland, OH 44514. General topics and fund raising for 2021 will be discussed.

Appropriate social distancing masks and protocols will be followed as long as the Covid-19 issue remains. Dates and locations may change for the same reason.

John J. Leskovyansky, Jr., President

DISTRICT 14 - CALENDAR YEAR MEETING SCHEDULE

Following are the currently scheduled District Meetings for Calendar Year 2021:

1. Tuesday, March 16, 2021 at 6:00 P.M.; Fireplace.
2. Tuesday, May 18, 2021 at 6:00 P.M. (Semi-Annual Meeting); Fireplace
3. Tuesday, September 21, 2021 at 6:00 P.M.; Fireplace.
4. Tuesday, November 16, 2021 at 6:00 P.M. (Annual Meeting for Election and Installation of Officers for 2021); Fireplace.
5. Tuesday, December 14, 2021 at 6:00 P.M. (Short Meeting and Christmas Dinner); Location TBD

Appropriate social distancing masks and protocols will be followed as long as the Covid-19 issue remains. Dates and locations may change for the same reason. An additional meeting might be scheduled in July or August.

Meetings will be held at The Fireplace 2075 E. Western Reserve Rd. Poland, OH 44514; unless otherwise specified, indicated, or announced. Alternate location will be The Falcon Grille; 39 N. Canfield-Niles Rd., Austintown, OH 44515.

John J. Leskovyansky, Jr., President

Fraternalism in Action

Branch 853 Continues Helping Others

When our long fight against the COVID-19 pandemic began in 2020, Jednota asked members to think about how to put our fraternalism into action and offered some suggestions, including helping others.



Branches around our Society answered the call. **Now, Branch 853 is proud to report that they are continued to help others during what was a challenging Christmas season and into the new year.**

For the past few months, Michael Bertovich of Bentleyville, PA, has continued to volunteer at least weekly at the Greater Washington County Food Bank, in Browns-ville, PA while another branch member Charles Boone, stayed closer to home.

During the Christmas Day record snow fall in Pittsburgh, PA, as some people were waking up unwrapping gifts from under the tree, Charles' morning consisted of giving neighbors a special gift. After he cleared the snow from his own driveway so his dad, and fellow branch member Ronald Boone who is an "essential worker" ICU

nurse can go to work, Charles helped many of his neighbors. He walked from neighbor to neighbor, some who are elderly and other who are "first responders", using his snowblower to clear the snow from driveways and sidewalks showing his true altruistic character and sense of fraternalism.

Congrats to these Branch 853 members, along with any other non-mentioned branch member, who are making Fraternalism In Action part of their daily life.

- Submitted by Monica Rodacy Boone, Branch 853 President

2021 Call out to All FCSU Members, Branches & Districts

What are you doing in the new year? Email Jednota at fcsulifeeditor@gmail.com and share what your branch, district or family is doing to help others as we continue our vigilance against the pandemic



FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE UNITED STATES & CANADA

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

PRIVACY – PERSONAL FINANCIAL AND MEDICAL INFORMATION

Protecting the privacy of your personal financial and medical information has always been and will continue to be a matter of top priority for us. When used in this notice, the following terms have the meaning shown.

Public Information means information that is lawfully available to the general public from: Federal State or local government records; widely distributed media; or, disclosures to the general public that are required to be made by Federal, State or local law.

Non-Public Information means personally identifiable financial and medical information. It also means any list, description or other grouping of individuals, and publicly available information pertaining to them, that is derived from any personally identifiable information that is not publicly available.

Consumer Reporting Agency means an entity, which regularly provides reports (Consumer Reports) including information regarding an individual's: general reputation, character, personal characteristics or mode of living and financial status. The information may be obtained through interviews with the individual or third parties such as the individual's: business associates, family members, friends, neighbors, acquaintances or financial sources.

We obtain information about you from the following sources:

- information you provide to us in an application or other form;
- information about your transactions with us (such as premium payments, loans, claims, etc.), or others; and
- information that we may receive from a Consumer Reporting Agency.

We do not disclose any personal, Non-Public Information about you to anyone, except as permitted or required by law. We will not disclose personal medical information about you, except as permitted by law or as you may authorize.

We restrict access to your personal, insurance and medical information to those of our employees who need to know that information in order to provide insurance or service to you. We are, and will continue to be, vigilant in the safeguarding of your personal, financial, and medical information. We maintain physical, electronic and procedural safeguards to comply with Federal and State regulations regarding the safeguarding of Non-Public Information.

It is our sincere desire to maintain complete, accurate and up-to-date records. You may contact us to access, as provided by law, information included in your file. We will promptly correct any error in our information. To protect your privacy, you will need to identify yourself by providing us with your name, date of birth and social security number.

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
001P	Eleanor Sue Petchel	086K	James J Kocis	315K	Catherine Ann Lawson	743K	Pauline E Maas
002K	Anna K Burda	086K	Susan A Kurimcak	320K	Agnes D Molnar	746K	Mary V Franov
002K	Shirley J Hafen	112K	Agnes A Zelnosky	322K	Steven L Hanzely	746K	James M Sack
002K	Lydia Kisko	122K	Mary B Lalic	330K	Joan Calkins	764K	Ella M Lohaney
005P	Arlene Spak	153K	Steven E Soncek	333K	Rosemary Rudella Ross	796K	John F Minarovic
019K	Sharon Lewis Devellis	157K	John R Domsicz	382K	Irene C Golden	796K	Nicholas Yarosevich
019K	Donna A Worby	157K	Andrew A Figura	401K	John William Marhefka	831K	Albert Chislo
024K	Jerome J Grega	157K	Margaret M Skears	410K	Grendel L Williams	831K	Marcella Chislo
024K	Robert A Timko	162K	Jennifer L Karpency	450K	Eugene V Slane	855K	Anne Hassett
035K	Irmgard M Lopata	162K	Steven L Smith	484K	Martha E Pape	856K	Victor Sebo
038K	Catherine G Bialobok	162K	Stephen Vegoda	493K	Imrich Sprocha	857K	Patricia McDowell
038K	Alfred Cadena	165K	Ann Marie Coletta	553K	Lillis Mae Proudfoot	857K	Dorothy K Mitro
038K	Vincent C Decker	173K	Mary Ann Toole	553K	Kristen Sobek	888K	Thomas M Kusnir Sr
038K	Pauline E Glenn	181K	Steve J Grega	667K	Thomas Hirschak	900K	Dolores Glass
038K	John Smalley	181K	Karl John Kochis	670K	Lillian Baird	904K	Edwina M Forward
038K	Edward Soltis Sr	181K	Allyson Puskar	670K	Olan W Sterback	916K	Lyuba Belkin
040K	Michelle Davis	199K	Anna Marie Jogun	682K	Thomas Stephen Kriech	926K	Rose M Paiser
040K	Eugene F Tutoky	200K	Janice Lee Wagner	706K	Mary Joyce Marks	917K	Barbara E Newkirk
055K	Irene Novak	228K	Eleanor I Ambro	721K	Stephen L Gulis		*Processed through the month of December
064K	Patricia O Evancho	228K	Joseph Patrick Krall Jr	731K	Dorothy Kello		
064K	Frank P Slovensky Jr	238K	Edward J Kolatis	731K	Thomas J Serenko		
083K	John James Valek	259K	Joseph M Stanko	733K	Andy G Lopata Jr		

OBITUARIES

THOMAS JOHN MONKS

BRANCH 19 – BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT

Servant of God, Thomas John Monks, 59, beloved husband of Susan Stuban Monks of Trumbull, entered peacefully into eternal rest at his home on July 3, 2020. Thomas' unexpected death occurred on the Feast of St. Thomas the Apostle and on a First Friday. He received the Latin prayers of the departed from Father Brian Gannon and Canon Andrew Todd. Born in Bridgeport, CT, on December 15, 1960, he was the son of Grace Tvardzik Monks of Easton and the late Thomas David Monks. Thomas was raised in Bridgeport, attended St. Emery Catholic School, Fairfield and was a 1978 graduate of Notre Dame High School, Fairfield. He then graduated from Central Connecticut State University in 1982 with a BS in Accounting and achieved his Certified Public Accountant in 1983. He later pursued his Juris Doctorate and an LLM in Taxation at the University of Bridgeport School of Law in 1989, where he met his wife Susan, the love of his life.

First and foremost, Thomas put God first, close behind were family, country, and friends. He began his legal career as a tax attorney at Deloitte and Touche, Stamford. After years of practicing various forms of law, he accepted a position as a professor at Western Connecticut State University (WCSU) in 1994. Professor Monks was the current chair of the accounting department for several years. He was honored post humorously as Professor Emeritus at WCSU. He was appointed a Connecticut Superior Court Magistrate in Fairfield and New Haven Counties in 2011, presiding over small claims and motor vehicle trials. His employment as a magistrate and professor allowed him to bear witness to the love of Christ in the classroom and court rooms. He was a published author of numerous law and religious articles including a prayer book for the sick.

A devout Catholic, Thomas was a parishioner of St. Theresa Roman Catholic

Church, Trumbull, CT; St. Peter and St. Paul Greek Byzantine Catholic Church, Ansonia and St. Cyril and St. Methodius (Slovak) Church, Bridgeport. He shared the love of his faith as a Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) teacher preparing students for the sacrament of confirmation.

He was a 4th Degree Knight of Columbus, Council 8013, St. Theresa's Parish in Trumbull, and actively and lovingly belonged to the Sons of St. Joseph Catholic Men's Group. He led a prayer ministry at the Bridgeport Correctional Facility. This ministry was renamed in his honor post humorously. One of the last and proud accomplishments was his spiritual consecration to St. Joseph and with his sons, brother, and son in law.

Post 9/11, Thomas joined the Trumbull Fire Department to contribute to his community. He came onboard at Station 1 Long Hill in 2002. He was appointed to the Board of Directors and served as secretary for many years. Recently, he took command as a Fire District Commissioner. Thomas' greatest accomplishment in life was his unfathomable devotion to God. He loved America, his family, and was unquestionably blessed from heaven.

Thomas was especially proud of his Irish and Slovak ancestry. Thomas was a lifelong and third-generation member of the First Catholic Slovak Union (Jednota) and a member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Bridgeport Chapter. Thomas was a member of the Irish Club of Fairfield.

In addition to his wife Susan of nearly 30 years, he is survived by his cherished children, Lydia (LT John, USCG) De Castra of NJ, Paul, Bridget, Patrick, and Peter Monks, all of Trumbull; brothers, John (Patricia) Monks, of Terryville and Darrell Monks of Bridgeport; adoring grandchildren, Augustus Pio, and Mary Claire DeCastra; his mother-in-law, Helen Stuban of Seymour. In addition to his father, Thomas David, he was predeceased by a brother, Jeffrey Monks and Father-in-law, Frank Stuban.

- Submitted by Susan Monks

ANNA MARIE SIMENSKY

BRANCH 200 – FORD CITY, PENNSYLVANIA

Anna Marie Simensky, 82, of Ford City, PA, passed away on December 6, 2020, in Heritage Meadows.

She passed away after a series of illnesses.

She was born December 24, 1937, in Ford City, to Michael E. and Pauline A. Kudelka Butko.

Mrs. Simensky was a retired teller from Armstrong County Building & Loan. A former member of Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church, she was a member of St. Mary, Our Lady of Guadalupe Roman Catholic Church, Kittanning, PA. She liked crossword puzzles, watching Dr. Jan Pol on the Nat Geo WILD Channel. She enjoyed going out to eat with her family, family vacations to Knoebels Grove and Ocean City, MD, scratchoff tickets, attending her class reunion luncheons and she really missed her husband. She was a lifelong resident of her community.

Survivors include daughter, Susan Simensky, of Ford City; sons: Michael and Nancy Simensky, of Dormont, PA; and John Simensky, of Columbia, MD; granddaughter, Mariah Simensky, of Dormont; only surviving uncle, Lou Strazzer, of Holiday Park, PA; niece, Paula and Paul Skolnick and daughter, Aubrey, of New Jersey; nephew, C.P. and Debbie Patchin and son, Aaron, of Williamsport, PA; and great niece, Sara Beth Spunt of Manhattan.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Robert G. Simensky, who passed away January 12, 2017; sister, Rosemary Patchin, who died in 2016 and her husband, Lynn Patchin, who died in 2014; and niece, Christy Patchin Spunt, who died in 2012.

- Submitted by Vicki Shaub,
Branch 200 Secretary

EUGENE V. SLANE BRANCH 450 – CLEVELAND, OHIO

Eugene V. Slane (Slaninka) age 99, a resident of Westlake, OH, passed away peacefully on September 26, 2020.

Eugene was born on January 15, 1921, and is survived by his beloved wife of 76 years, Pauline. Together they raised four children: Judi (Scott) Payne; Gene; James; and Janice (Don) Perry. He was also the caring grandfather of seven: David (Pauline); Jason (Chanisa); Michael (Christine); Lysa (Randy); Eric, Phillip and Ethan. He will be lovingly remembered by thirteen great-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

Eugene attended St. Wendolyn's Elementary School, and was a graduate of Benedictine HS and briefly attended St. Benedict's College in Atchison, KS, until the war intervened. He enlisted in the Coast Guard Reserves during WWII and joined the Cleveland Fire Department after the war. In addition to firefighting duties, Eugene was enlisted to perform maintenance duties for the Convent of the Vincentian Sisters of Charity in Bedford, OH, by his sister, Sister M. Vincent. When the nuns built Lumen Cordium High School in Bedford, his duties extended to helping maintain the school and its grounds.

He and Pauline retired to Vero Beach, FL, and became active members of St. Helen's Catholic Church. Eugene was especially involved in the Knights of Columbus, spearheading many events and becoming a Grand Knight.

Eugene was often described by many as a true gentleman. He was a man of service to God, his fellow man, and Country.

- Submitted by Judith Payne
continued on page 17





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2021 Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International to Be Held Virtually

The Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International (CGSI) 18th Genealogical and Cultural Conference is planned as an all-virtual online event for 2021. Save these dates for the 2021 virtual Conference: October 12-16, 2021. More information on how to participate to follow.

OBITUARIES

**EDWARD B. KOLLAR
BRANCH 595 –
MUSKEGON, MICHIGAN**

Edward B. Kollar, 59, met his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on December 4, 2020. He was born on February 11, 1961, to Louis and Doris (Fuhrmann) Kollar in Muskegon, MI, and lived in the area most of his life.

Ed was a servant to the Lord and was a faithful member of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Muskegon. He graduated from Muskegon Catholic Central High School and earned his bachelor's degree in business and finance at Albion College.

He was a dedicated employee of Roadway Express, now YRC, for nearly 30 years where he worked until he retired from his job as a transportation supervisor in 2010.

On October 10, 1987, he married Jo Ann "Joie" Winicki. Together, they cherished many years of love and friendship and built their family.

Ed was known to be an avid outdoorsman and enjoyed hunting, camping and long walks in the woods. He also loved to travel and enjoyed trips with his family. A football fanatic, he took pride in playing on the offensive line at both Muskegon Catholic Central and Albion College in his early years.

A hardworking man of many talents, Ed could fix and build just about anything he set his mind to. He was sweet and thoughtful-natured man who truly loved his family deeply. His soft-spoken and tender soul will be missed by all who knew him.

Ed is survived by his three loving children, Edward Kollar, Justin Kollar and Jessica Kollar; his former wife, Joie Kollar; brothers Louis (Christy) Kollar, Thomas (Tracy) Kollar, John Kollar and his sister Debra Kollar. His siblings affectionately knew him as their "#1 Bro." He is also survived by four nieces: Katie, Kristin, Rebecca and Sarah.

- Submitted by Justin Kollar

**ELLA MARY
LUHANEY
BRANCH 764 –
WARREN, OHIO**

Ella Mary Luhaney, 102, formerly of Niles, OH, passed away on June 24, 2020, at Armstrong Memory Care Assisted Living. She may be gone from sight but Ella will never be gone from our hearts. She was born in Greenville, PA, on April 25, 1918, the daughter of Frank and Julia (Kadlec) Danihel. She was a devoted member of St. Stephen Church. Ella is survived by a son, Rudy M. (Kathy) Luhaney of Warren, OH; daughter, Joanne Luhaney of Warren; and several nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her husband Rudy J. Luhaney whom she married on September 14, 1940 and who passed away on July 31, 1992; brother, Michael Danihel and two sisters, Frances Bayuk and Cecilia Daloisio.

- Submitted by Joanne Luhaney



BRANCH 181 YOUTH MEMBER SCHOLASTIC ASSISTANCE

For the Fall 2021 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 9, 2021 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 2021 and have applied for the 2021/22 fall term at a qualifying educational institution.

Oh, what fun! Region 1's Virtual Christmas Party



continued from page 10

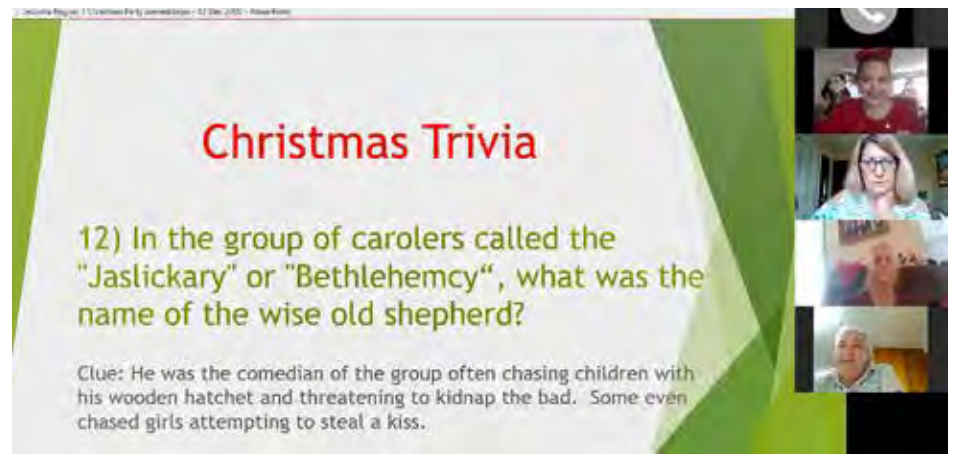
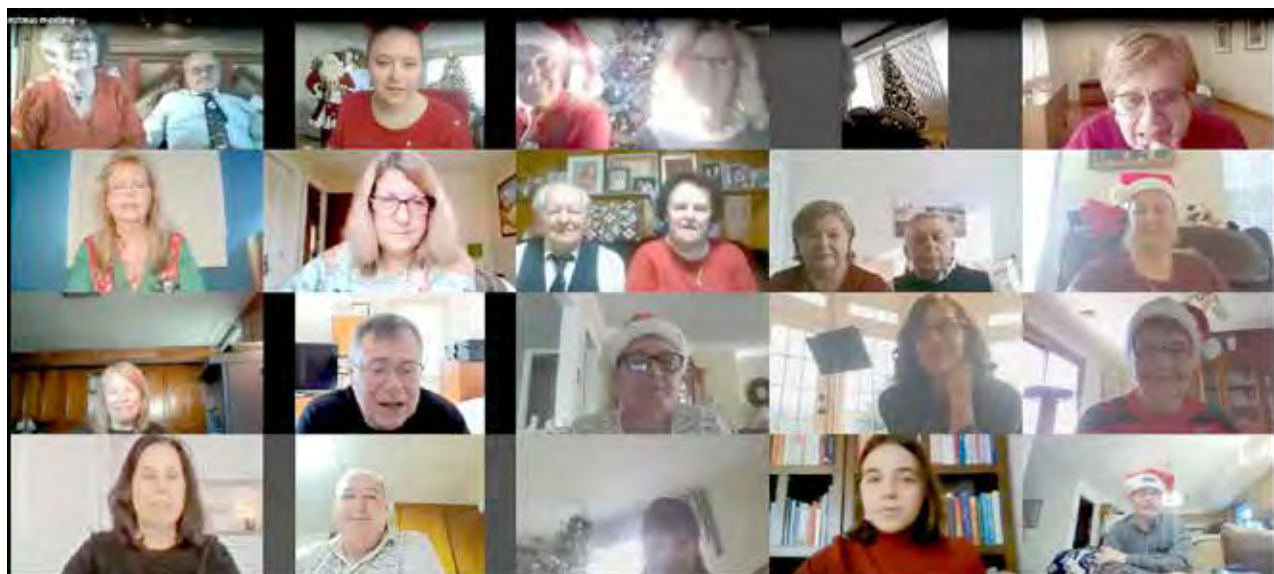
himself who rushed from the North Pole forgetting his hat! He was quickly presented with a Jednota cap and led the group in the singing of "Jingle Bells"!

This year's Jednota Christmas 2020 party was certainly unique, but despite the circumstances we laughed, we toasted, we shared, we wished each other Veselé Vianoce, and most importantly, we were together (virtually)!

A great big thank you to all the members that participated especially our young members -- Elisabeth Banas and Kristina Mlynarova! Special thanks go to Andrew Pulver (Branch 45) and Tanya Pulver (Branch 45) for their live performance and surprise guests Buddy the Elf, Kevin Collins (FCSU Fraternal Activities Director), and Jednota Santa, Damian Nasta (Region 2 Director). The virtual get together was organized by Region 1 Director, Sabina Sabados.

Wishing all Region 1 members a very healthy, happy and peaceful 2021! Prajeme Vám požehnané a pokojne strávené sviatky v blízkosti tých najbližších, veľa zdravia, ktoré v týchto časoch potrebujeme asi najviac, a šťastný nový rok 2021!

-Submitted by Sabina Sabados, Region 1 Director



In Memoriam



REV. GERALD J. SABO, S.J., entered Eternal Life on October 24, 2020, at the age 75. Fr. Sabo was a member of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) for 51 years and was an instructor of languages and literature at John Carroll University for 40 years.

Slovak Remembrance of the Rev. Gerald J. Sabo, S.J.

Ada Böhmerová

In late October of 2020, the sad news that the Rev. Gerald J. Sabo, S.J. passed away reached also Slovakia to which, its language and culture, Father Sabo as a Jesuit, Associate Professor at John Carroll University (JCU), priest, and prominent scholar in Slavic studies, dedicated most of his professional life and scholarly research. He was always vibrant with energy, good will, kindness, wit and brilliance of intellect, and his sudden death came as an unbelievable and painful shock to all of us who had the privilege of knowing him.

My first encounter with Father Sabo goes back to the summer of 1992. After his having supported my application for Fulbright lectureship and the same year, during one of his visits to the Slovak Jesuit community, he graciously came to meet me at Comenius University in Bratislava, offering welcome information and encouragement for my teaching at the Department of Classical and Modern Languages at JCU. It was thanks to his dedication and zeal that the Fulbright lectureship of the Slovak language and culture was established in 1983 at John Carroll, only two years after his joining the university. Thus, JCU became one of the only two such academic institutions in the United States, with the Slovak studies at this academic institution continuing for 10 years.

During my lectureship at JCU Father Sabo extended overall guidance, support and help to me and my family. He was like our guardian angel. He even arranged for our housing in the vicinity, as he also did for all the other preceding and following Slovak lecturers throughout the years. With regard to my teaching at JCU, I owe him much gratitude for all his advice and assistance that made it much easier for me to get accustomed to my new academic situation, and for his always being ready to help and share his time and expertise. Just like the rest of his colleagues, I very much enjoyed listening to his stories and chatting with him, which was always enriching. Actually, it is also thanks to him and his technical instructions that when after the two years of lectureship I returned to Slovakia, at my Department of British and American Studies I found myself being the first person using a computer and email, as he had patiently initiated me into their functioning. When in March 2017 I was to come to Cleveland again as a Fulbrighter to carry out research at the Benedictine Abbey Slovak Institute Library, he not only expressed his support for my application by his recommendation, but he even initiated and arranged for my Status of Scholar in Residence at JCU. That provided me with most convenient conditions for carrying out the research, and, while being part of the faculty, also with having the chance of profiting from the broad erudition in discussions with him.

My last encounter with Father Sabo was in early July 2017 at JCU before my leaving for Slovakia. It hurts to realize that there will not be any "again" for enjoying his enlightened, encouraging, kind and caring presence.

In addition to Father Sabo's unique and precious personality, his academic focus on Slavic, and in particular Slovak studies, cannot be overestimated. As to his education, he was holder of a Bachelor Degree in Russian Language and Literature from Fairfield University, then graduated in Theological Studies in Cambridge, MA, and gained a Yale University doctoral degree in Eastern European Languages. With these credentials, for 40 years he became a highly respected and inspiring teacher of Slovak and Russian languages and literatures, and an esteemed and loved member of the JCU faculty and Jesuit community. As pointed out in The John Carroll News Remembrance (October 28, 2020), he modestly played down his Yale connection, preferring to be called "Father" over "Doctor". The reason explaining his joining JCU was presented in an interview: "I was very interested in teaching at John Carroll because it was a Jesuit school and was located in an area where there was a significant Slovak population, my ethnic background and part of my graduate Slavic languages and literatures specialization. I got my wish and came to John Carroll in August, 1981, and as they say, 'the rest is history.'" (John Carroll News Center posting, October 26, 2020).

Father Sabo was a tireless scholar par excellence, who authored numerous articles on Slovak history, language, literature and culture that were published in the USA, in Slovakia and in other countries. He was the author of reviews of books and collections of papers, as well as presenter of his own research at panel presentations and dozens of conferences focusing mostly on Slovak prose and poetry of the 18th and 19th centuries on which he was a noted expert. [Editor's note: a list of these references by Fr. Sabo can be found at:

<https://www.fcsu.com/community/culture>] He was very active in Slavic professional organizations in America, and for several years he also served as chair of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies. In addition, he is internationally noted as the author of two books based on many years of his linguistic, historical and literary research. The year 1988 saw the publication of his extensive 730-page Diplomatic (facsimile) and commented edition of Hugolín Gavlovič's Valaská škola mravův stodola. For the monumental research of this 18th century Slovak baroque poetical work, in 1990 he was honoured with an award of the Slovak Studies Association. His book is one of the most valuable scholarly works ever published dealing with Slovak literature and literary history. His tireless focus on scholarly research resulted in 2016 in the publication of another major and priceless academic tome having more than 300 pages, namely A History of Slovak Literature to

the 1840's.

Thanks to his invaluable input into Slovak studies in an international context, Father Sabo will always remain one of the most prominent American-Slovak and Slovak scholars. We in Slovakia owe him a lot for his insight, dedication, and for his magnificent contribution to Slovak culture in Slovakia and abroad.

Father Sabo will be greatly missed and dearly remembered in Slovakia – in the small and charming country of his ancestors in the heart of Europe that he undoubtedly carried also in his own heart.

Rest in peace, dear Father Sabo. Zbohom

About the author

Assoc. Prof. PhDr. Ada Böhmerová, M.A., PhD. during the whole of her professional career, was a member of the Department of British and American Studies, Faculty of Arts, Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia. After completing her studies at her alma mater and, based on the award of scholarship by the American Association of University Women (AAUW), she studied linguistics at University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, MI, where in this field she was awarded an MA degree. In the years 1992-1994 she was a Fulbright Lecturer of Slovak Language and Culture at John Carroll University, and in 2017 for 3 months a Fulbright researcher. She is the author of the internationally acclaimed textbook Slovak for You – Slovak for the Speakers of English for Beginners and Intermediate Students (1996), published in several editions, and co-authored the book Legal English and its lexical and grammatical characteristics (2018). She translated from English more than 30 books of fiction, as well as non-fiction, and is the author of numerous linguistic studies and articles. Presently she is member of the Scholarly Board of the L. Štúr Institute of Linguistics of the Slovak Academy of Sciences.

Slovenská spomienka na Rev. Geralda J. Saba, S.J.

Ada Böhmerová

Koncom októbra 2020 smutná správa, že Rev. Gerald J. Sabo, S.J. odišiel na večnosť, prišla aj na Slovensko, ktorého jazyku a kultúre páter Sabo ako Jezuit, docent na Univerzite Johna Carrola (JCU), kňaz a popredný vedec špecializujúci sa na slovanské štúdiá, zasvätil väčšinu svojho profesionálneho života a vedeckého výskumu. Vždy prekypoval energiou, dobrou vôľou, láskavosťou, vtipom a bystrosťou intelektu, a pre nás všetkých, ktorí sme mali tú česť ho poznať, jeho náhle úmrtie predstavovalo neuveriteľný a bolestný šok.

Po prvý raz som sa s pátrom Sabom stretla v lete 1992. Po tom, čo odporúčaním podporil moju žiadosť o štipendium Fulbrightovej komisie, v to isté leto počas jednej zo svojich návštev slovenskej Jezuitskej komunity láskavo prišiel na Univerzitu Komenského, aby sa so mnou zoznámil a poskytol mi vítané informácie a povzbudenie pre moje pedagogické pôsobenie na Katedre klasických a moderných jazykov na JCU. Bol to práve on, vďaka ktorého osobnej dedikácii a nadšeniu, len dva roky po jeho príchode na JCU, bol v roku 1983 na Univerzite Johna Carrola založený lektorát slovenského jazyka a kultúry – jeden z dvoch na území USA, a na tejto akademickej inštitúcii sa vyučovanie v rámci neho konalo 10 rokov.

Počas môjho lektorátu na JCU páter Sabo usmerneniami a odporúčaniami všestranne poskytoval pomoc a podporu mne aj mojej rodine. Bol ako náš strážny anjel. Podobne ako predchádzajúcim i nasledujúcim lektorom, tiež nám v blízkosti JCU dokonca zabezpečil aj ubytovanie. Pokiaľ ide o moje pedagogické pôsobenie na JCU, vďačím mu veľa za jeho rady a podporu, ktoré mi značne uľahčili aklimatizovať sa v mojej novej akademickej situácii, aj za jeho neustálu ochotu pomôcť a zdieľať jeho čas a expertízu. Podobne ako ostatní jeho kolegovia, aj ja som rada počúvala jeho príbehy a bola súčasťou debát s ním, ktoré vždy boli obohacujúce. Keď som sa po dvoch rokoch lektorátu vrátila na Slovensko, bolo to vďaka otcovi Jerryemu, ako ho oslovovali kolegovia a priatelia, a vďaka jeho technickým inštrukciám, že na mojej materskej Katedre anglistiky a amerikanistiky som ako prvá vedela používať počítač a e-mail, do tajov ktorých ma trpezlivo zasvätil. Pred tým, než som v marci 2017 mala opäť prísť do Clevelandu v rámci Fulbrightovej nadácie na vedecký výskum v knižnici Slovenského Inštitútu v Benediktínskom kláštore, moju žiadosť opäť nielen podporil svojim odporúčaním, ale dokonca inicioval a vybavil pre mňa štatút vedeckého rezidenta na JCU. Ten mi poskytol veľmi priaznivé podmienky na realizáciu výskumu, a keďže vďaka tomu som sa stala súčasťou akademickej obce, poskytol mi aj príležitosti v diskusiách profitovať z bohatej erudície otca Jerryho.

Posledný raz som ho videla začiatkom júla 2017 pred mojím odchodom na Slovensko. Bolestné je poznanie, že už nepríde žiadne „opäť“, aby sme sa mohli tešiť z jeho osvietenej, povzbudivej, láskavej a starostlivej prítomnosti.

Okrem toho, že sa otec Sabo vyznačoval výnimočnou a vzácnou osobnosťou, mimoriadne cenné je jeho akademicke pôsobenie a zameranie na slovanské a v rámci nich najmä slovenské štúdiá. Bol absolventom bakalárskeho štúdia ruského jazyka a literatúry na Fairfield University, magisterského teologického štúdia na univerzite v Cambridge v Massachusetts, a na Yaleskej univerzite získal doktorát z východoeurópskych jazykov. Aj vďaka takejto kvalifikácii potom 40 rokov pôsobil ako vysoko uznávaný a inšpirujúci učiteľ slovenského a ruského jazyka a literatúry a vážený a milovaný člen akademickej a jezuitskej komunity na JCU. Ako sa to uvádza v The John Carroll News Remembrance (28. október 2020), skromne zľahčoval význam skutočnosti, že má z Yale tento titul a uprednostňoval, aby ho volali „páter“ a nie „doktor“. Dôvod, prečo nastúpil práve na JCU, je uvedený v jeho interview: „Veľmi som sa zaujímal o vyučovanie na John Carroll, keďže to bola Jezuitská škola a nachádzala sa v lokalite s početnou Slovenskou populáciou, s ktorou súvisí môj pôvod a časť mojej študijnej špecializácie na slovanské jazyky a literatúru. Pranie sa mi splnilo v auguste 1981 a ako sa hovorí, 'ostatné je už len história.'“ (John Carroll News Center posting, October 26, 2020).

Otec Sabo bol neúnavný vedec par excellence, ktorý bol autorom početných článkov o slovenských dejinách, jazyku, literatúre a kultúre publikovaných v USA, na Slovensku

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My First Visit to Slovakia, 1978 (part 5)

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

Sunday, August 6, 1978

Having rested a day in Spišské Vlachy, we were ready for our Sunday day trip to the High Tatra Mountains (Vysoké Tatry)! We rose early at 5:45 am and were fired up for a full day of travel, and we had rested well on Saturday.

But first we were in for a shock because we thought we would start the day going to Holy Mass (Svätá omša); we had really been looking forward to going to church. My wife's cousin, Ján Filip, said we were going straight to the mountains and we would not see anything if we went to Mass first. We had never missed Mass on our entire European trip of over two months to this point, and we always enjoyed the different ways that various countries celebrated the same Catholic liturgy with their own language and unique songs and varied customs.

This was a real disappointment. And I had never been to Mass in Slovakia, and also wanted to compare the Slovak liturgy to that which Slovak-Americans celebrated. We wondered what kind of effect the communists had exerted on people and our own relatives who thought it was permissible to miss Mass for a trip. If we had known this would happen, we would have tried to attend a Saturday Mass if it was available. We just did not know about Mass times and his plans, and we were somewhat at the mercy of our hosts. So we went along.

After a quick breakfast, we packed up, made our beds, and by 7 am, departed with Ján and his son Jaro for the mountains; Ján's wife stayed home cooking. Within an hour, we could see the towering peaks of the High Tatras. It was about 75 km from Spišské Vlachy to Štrbské Pleso, our goal. E50 was the main highway, which was still a two lane road at that time; as a European highway, it was still much wider than most Slovak roads. I asked a host of questions about the countryside, and Ján pointed out various villages along the road there, and we steadily drove higher through a dense forest into the mountains. We arrived at the mountain resort around 8:30 am.

Ján stated that one of the reasons we needed to get there early was because of the crowds. He pointed out the difficulty of getting a good parking spot and noted how many cars get towed away if they do park in restricted areas along the road. Attendants stood by and charged for tickets and he parked in a pay lot with hundreds of other vehicles already there. It was noticeably colder in the mountains and it was good that we had taken our jackets, which we would need at the mountain top. Still I was wearing shorts, which was not a common site in Slovakia at the time, so I did get some stares, and people knew I was a foreign visitor.

Štrbské pleso is a lake and ski resort and the number one destination of tourists in the High Tatra Mountains. As we started walking, I heard Germans speaking, and Ján told us that many Germans (East Germans mainly) visit there and call it the Tschirmer See. Of course, East Germans could not go west past the Iron Curtain to the Alps, and did not have their own high mountains as in Slovakia and southern Poland, which bordered on the northern tier of the mountains. We passed many souvenir stands with postcards and tourist trinkets to sell. In 1978, the souvenirs were all made in Czechoslovakia, whereas today, most souvenirs are produced in China, even for the High Tatras, as I found out on a later visit in 2012.

Štrbské pleso is a picturesque mountain lake formed from glaciers and a popular vacation spot for hiking, spas, and breathtaking scenery in Slovakia. It had already become a tourist destination by the late 19th century in Austria-Hungary. The mountain lake of Štrbské pleso ranks as the second-largest glacial lake in Slovakia's High Tatras and has a depth of 20 meters (66 feet). By making it part of a National Park, Slovakia helped to preserve the forests surrounding the lake, with the rthe triangular-shaped Patria Hotel on the northern shore reflecting marvelously into the lake. Flora and wildlife abound in the mountains, with everything from alpine marmots to mountain goats (kamzík, pl. kamziči), lynx, wolves, and bears.

One of the first scenes we could see was the giant white ski lift that Ján told us was used for Olympic game trials. For most of the 1980s, Štrbské Pleso would host most of the FIS Ski Jumping World Cup competition, the world's highest level of ski jumping, and after the Revolution of 1989, several Junior World Championships took place here.

Rather than hike around the lake, Ján had decided that it would be best if we took a ski lift to the top of the mountain before the crowds grew bigger that day. It cost a mere 12 crowns per person, or \$1.20 at the official exchange rate. We took the ski lift at Štrbské Pleso which rose 1840 meters at a distance of about 8.3 km, or slightly over 5 miles. The view was truly breathtaking as we climbed the mountain and ascended into the clouds. Though foggier as we rose, we could still see the surrounding mountains and a somewhat obscured panorama of the valleys below and the glaciers above us. Once off the lift, we hiked by foot to the top of the peak and posed for a few photos.

Then we headed back down on the ski lift and around 11 am. Ján bought us some ice cream with peaches (zmrzlina s broskynami) for a snack. I bought a few souvenir hats (čiapky) for 66 crowns and Ján bought my wife a postcard. We walked to the lake, snapped a few pictures, and searched for a toilet. As in many other places in Europe, we had to pay to use a toilet (1 crown), something we never got accustomed to. Then we headed back to the car around noon.

Before returning to Spišské Vlachy, we drove to a camp restaurant where Ján's daughter Zdenka worked. We had seen quite a few of these camps on the way to the Tatras, and they usually had restaurants for visitors. Apparently, she had studied cooking and arranging food at restaurants. And wow! Could she make a meal look appealing. She took off the rest of the day, and we drove back to Ján's home for lunch (obed), which in Slovakia is the main meal. We enjoyed some breaded pork chops (vyprážené bravčové rezne), which were a common Sunday meal in Slovakia. Side dishes included potatoes and vegetables from Ján's big garden, and pastries (koláče) for dessert. Above all we remember being thoroughly stuffed after this large meal!



Tatra Mountains - Štrbské Pleso



Velbachy - Elizabeth Filip Kocurek's girlhood home

After eating, we continued with a day of visiting people, and Ján told us that Sunday was a good day to do so because everyone was home and not at work. First we went to Bystrany (formerly Velbachy), just 3 km west from Spišské Vlachy. We visited the home of his deceased grandparents, which had also been the home of my wife's baba, Elizabeth before she emigrated to the United States. My wife's father and Ján were first cousins. Her great grandparents, Juraj and Zofia Filip, had lived in a humble two room house like many other poor Slovaks, and the home passed down in Ján's family; his father had died in 1935 when he was just a young child, and his mother had passed away in 1957. After some brief conversation and refreshment, we visited the cemetery and church where my wife's great grandparents and great uncle were buried. We prayed.

We did not stay long because we needed to go to Poľanovce, the ancestral village of my wife's grandfather, Joseph Anton Kocurek. Just 13 km from Spišské Vlachy, Poľanovce is located on a side road just off the main highway heading toward Prešov before one reaches Branisko, a 20 km long and 5 km wide mountain range. Its 1200 meter peaks (nearly 4000 feet) separate the Spiš and Šariš regions. After Slovak independence, the EU helped fund a nearly 3 mile tunnel which now makes traveling to Prešov much quicker on the new interstate highway.

The going joke about Poľanovce was that it was at the end of the world. When one turned off to the left before Branisko, the road ended at the village. It only has a population of about 182 people, but it was the home of my wife's paternal family in Slovakia.

In Poľanovce, Ján asked someone on the street where the Kocureks lived, and he pointed out that it was the last house up on a hill. When we knocked on the door, a lady named Veronika appeared; it turned out she was the first cousin of my wife's father. Ján explained who we were and they welcomed us with open arms. Apparently, there had been a wedding in the family the day before and the house was packed with relatives. Veronika introduced us to other Kocurek cousins: Katka, Anton, Anna, and Mária. The talk was all about family and how they were related to my wife. They were very kind and hospitable, and we got stuffed again with food, pastries, and liquor. We had learned that Anton was a teacher with a high position in Košice and belonged to the communist party in order to move up the career ladder; so we were a little wary of him. But we realized that anyone who wished to hold a professional position in a communist country had to join the party, even if he or she only paid lip service to party membership. Regardless, blood relations were thicker than party affiliation.

After our bout of socializing, Veronika took us to the cemetery to visit the graves of her deceased relatives: her brother Ondrej, her parents (Ján and Mária), and her grandfather (my wife's great grandfather). Since she also served as the village sacristan (kostolníčka), she had the keys to the small church on a hill and opened it to show us where my wife's grandfather had worshipped. After this, we went back to her house, where we said our

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Spišské Podhradie - Spis Castle



Polanovce - Village church



Jaro, Anna, Jan, and Filip outside their home in Spišské Vlchy

My First Visit to Slovakia, 1978 (part 5) continued from page 20

goodbyes. The family gave us a box of koláče for our coming trip to Prague.

We returned to Spišské Vlchy before 7 pm and passed Spiš Castle on our way back. One of the largest castles in Central Europe, it could not fail to impress anyone. I would only be able to visit the castle at a later date, when future renovations after 1989 would make it a more worthwhile tourist destination. Regardless, the castle is a photographer's dream come true and takes one back to the Middle Ages.

We spent the evening consuming some more pastries and preparing our backpacks for our train trip to Prague that evening. The family loaded us up with bread, meats, and garnishes for the journey so we would not go hungry. They also gave us more gifts to take with us! Once at the train station in Spišská Nova Ves, Ján reserved a place for us in a sleeping coach on the 10:20 express train (rýchlik) to Prague. It would be an all night trip of nearly 600 km (about 475 miles). Hurriedly, we hugged each other and said our final goodbyes as the train pulled into the station, and we hopped aboard. We waved and shed a few tears as we departed.

Visiting our ancestral homeland of Slovakia was the experience of a lifetime. The trip generated more questions about our roots, and prompted us to ask more about what our parents and relatives in America knew about our families' past. Seeing the actual sites where our families lived and worked left us with some lasting memories. Seeing the graves of our great grandparents prompted the desire for further research into our extended families' genealogy.

I have visited many times since 1978, but none of them proved as inspiring and impressive as that first visit.

To be continued.

In Memoriam

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a v ďalších krajinách. Bol autorom recenzií kníh a zborníkov štúdií, ako aj prezentátorom vlastných výskumov na vedeckých podujatiach a desiatkach konferencií zameraných predovšetkým na slovenskú prózu a poéziu 18-eho a 19-eho storočia, teda na oblasti, v ktorých bol všeobecne uznávaným odborníkom. [Editorská poznámka: príslušný zoznam jeho bibliografie je uvedený na linku:

<https://www.fcsu.com/community/culture>] Otec Sabo bol veľmi aktívny v slovanských profesijných organizáciách a niekoľko rokov bol predsedom Americkej asociácie na podporu slovanských štúdií. Stal sa medzinárodne uznávaným aj ako autor dvoch monografií, ktorých príprave venoval mnohé roky lingvistického, historického a literárneho výskumu. V roku 1988 bola publikovaná jeho rozsiahla Diplomatická (facsimile) a komentovaná edícia diela Valaská škola mravúv stodola Hugolína Gavloviča. Za grandiózny výskum tohto slovenského poetického barokového diela mu v roku 1990 bola udelená prvá cena Asociácie pre slovenské štúdie. Táto jeho kniha je jednou z najhodnotnejších vedeckých prác o slovenskej literatúre a literárnej histórii, aké kedy boli vydané. Výsledkom jeho neúnavného sústreďovania na vedecký výskum bolo v roku 2016 aj vydanie ďalšieho mimoriadne významného a cenného akademického diela, a to vyše tristostranových Dejín slovenskej literatúry do roku 1840.

Vďaka jeho vzácnemu prínosu k slovanským štúdiám v medzinárodnom kontexte, páter Sabo navždy zostane jedným z najpoprednejších americko-slovenských a slovenských vedcov. My na Slovensku sme mu zaviazaní veľkou vďakou za jeho prenikavé poznanie, dedikáciu a monumentálny príspevok k slovenskej kultúre na Slovensku a v zahraničí.

Páter Sabo nám bude veľmi chýbať a s úctou naňho budeme spomínať aj na Slovensku – v malej a čarovnej krajine jeho predkov v srdci Európy, ktorú aj on nesporne nosil vo svojom srdci.

O autorke

Doc. PhDr. Ada Böhmerová, M.A., PhD. počas celej svojej profesionálnej kariéry pôsobila ako členka Katedry anglistiky a amerikanistiky na Filozofickej fakulte Univerzity Komenského v Bratislave na Slovensku. Po skončení štúdia na svojej alma mater a vďaka udeleniu štipendia Americkej asociácie univerzitných žien (AAUW) študovala lingvistiku na University of Michigan v Ann Arbor, kde z tohto odboru získala titul M.A. V rokoch 1992-1994 na základe udelenia Fulbrightovho štipendia pôsobila ako lektorka slovenského jazyka a kultúry na Univerzite Johna Carolla, kde o tri roky neskôr, tiež ako Fulbrightistka, bola na trojmesačnom výskumnom pobyte. Je autorkou uznávanej a medzinárodne použíwanej učebnice Slovak for You – Slovak for the Speakers of English for Beginners and Intermediate Students (1996), ktorá vyšla vo viacerých vydaniach. Je spoluautorkou publikácie Legal English and its lexical and grammatical characteristics (2018), ako aj množstva vedeckých štúdií a článkov. Z angličtiny preložila vyše 30 titulov beletrie a vecnej literatúry a je autorkou početných lingvistických štúdií a článkov. V súčasnosti je členkou Vedeckej rady Jazykovedného ústavu Slovenskej akadémie vied.

Answer to Puzzle

Solution to Puzzle from page 11

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

Reminder...

All English and Slovak articles should be sent directly to the editor Teresa Ivanec, First Catholic Slovak Union, 6611 Rockside Road, Suite 300, Independence, OH 44131-2398. The email address for articles is fcsulifeeditor@gmail.com. Articles may also be sent by Fax at 216/642-4310. Teresa Ivanec can be reached by phone at 216/642-9406 or 1/800-533-6682. Her extension is 123.

Readers are reminded that all address changes for the JEDNOTA newspaper must be done at the Home Office in Independence, Ohio. If you have an address change, a cancellation or wish to receive the paper, write to: First Catholic Slovak Union, FCSU Home Office, 6611 Rockside Rd., Independence, OH 44131-2398. Phone 1/800-JEDNOTA; fax at 216/642-4310 E-mail: fcsu@fcsu.com

MINUTES OF THE QUARTERLY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE USA AND CANADA SEPTEMBER 19, 2020 INDEPENDENCE, OHIO (TELECONFERENCE)

OPEN MEETING:

President Andrew Rajec called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and asked Reverend Thomas Nasta, National Chaplain, to offer the opening prayer. The President asked Regional Director Sabina Sabados to lead the Board in singing the Anthems of the United States, Canada and Slovakia, and the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Board of Directors Meeting is being held as a teleconference due to the current coronavirus pandemic.

ROLL CALL:

Kenneth Arendt, Executive Secretary, read the roll call with the following members present:
Rev. Thomas Nasta, National Chaplain – present via telephone;
Andrew M. Rajec, National President – present;
Andrew R. Harcar, Sr., National Vice President – present via telephone;
Kenneth A. Arendt, Executive Secretary - present;
George F. Matta II, National Treasurer – present via telephone;
Joseph Senko, Temporary Chairman of Auditors – present via telephone;
Kevin Collins, Fraternal Activities Director – excused
Sabina Sabados, Regional Director, Region 1 –present via telephone;
Damian Nasta, Regional Director, Region 2 – present via telephone;
Martha Zavada-Wojcik, Regional Director, Region 3 – present via telephone;
James Marmol, Regional Director, Region 4 – present via telephone;
Michael Lako, Regional Director, Region 5 – present via telephone;
Thomas Ivanec, Regional Director, Region 6 – present via telephone;
Timothy Graves, Regional Director, Region 7 – present via telephone;
Milos Mitro, Regional Director, Regions 8 – present via telephone;
Gary J. Matta, General Counsel - present via telephone.

READING OF THE CALL:

The Executive Secretary then read the Call to the Quarterly Meeting of the Board of Directors of the First Catholic Slovak Union.

PRESENTATION OF THE AGENDA:

President Rajec presented the agenda for the Quarterly Meeting and asked for its acceptance. A motion was made by Damian Nasta and seconded by Sabina Sabados to accept the agenda and to allow the President to change the order of the agenda, if necessary, as he presents each item on the agenda with appropriate comments or recommendations. Motion carried.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES OF THE QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING JUNE 20, 2020:

A motion was made by Timothy Graves and seconded by James Marmol to accept the minutes of the Quarterly Board of Directors Meeting held June 20, 2020, as presented. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Executive Secretary's Report

The Executive Secretary and Treasurer presented a detailed summary of the Financial Report for the second quarter of 2020. After the Executive Secretary's report, he answered the Board's questions. The Executive Secretary stated that the 2020 second quarter Financial Report will be published in the Jednota newspaper. He also stated we are in the process of completing the third quarter financial report and once completed, it will be sent to all Directors.

Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati

The Executive Secretary submitted a written report to the Board of Directors giving a complete update of the investments and all current transactions with the Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati.

Portfolio Custodian

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

Investment Updates

The President, Executive Secretary, and Treasurer led a review on the investments and transactions with the UBS Fund, MAI Fund, and the Clutterbuck Fund. Following the report, they answered the Board's questions.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

The Vice President gave a production report on our agents to the Board of Directors. He stated we are still recruiting and adding new agents, and at present have 349 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 Home Office is currently targeting agents in Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Annuity sales are well ahead of plan.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Treasurer and the Executive Secretary gave a full written report on the investment update and answered the Board's questions.

PRESENTATION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee

The Executive Secretary gave a report on the Executive Committee Meetings. He stated that in accordance with the Bylaws of the First Catholic Slovak Union, the Executive Committee meets monthly and whenever else it is necessary to take care of the business of the Society.

Investments

The Executive Secretary stated all investments were made in accordance with the laws of the State of Ohio and with the investment policy adopted by the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee members work very closely with AQS Asset Management Company, and all investments are approved by a vote of at least three members of the Executive Committee.

Scholarship Committee

The Executive Secretary gave a report on the Scholarship Committee, which is comprised of three independent professional educators. Applications for the Jednota Benevolent scholarships are being received and they will be sent to the Scholarship Committee. The Executive Secretary also gave a report on the Jednota Benevolent Foundation and answered the Board's questions.

SUBSIDIARIES REPORT:

Joseph Senko gave an update on Jednota, Inc., and the closing of Jednota Properties, Inc. The reports of Jednota, Inc., and Jednota Properties, Inc., are informational in nature to the parent FCSU Board.

AQS REPORT:

Larry White, representing AQS Asset Management, presented an extensive Investment Portfolio Transaction Report to the Board of Directors by teleconference. Each member of the Board of Directors received a copy of the presentation in advance for his or her review. During and after the presentation, Larry White answered questions from the Board.

Due to current economic conditions, Mr. White recommends that the FCSU review its Investment Policy. The Treasurer recommends that the Executive Committee review the recommendations from Larry White regarding our allocation percentage. The President stated that the Executive Committee will review Mr. White's proposal and make a recommendation to the Board at its December meeting.

HOME OFFICE STATUS:

The Home Office is open with a limited rotating staff and limited hours to maintain day to day operations. The Home Office will remain on limited hours with no walk-in business until further notice. The Home Office is following all the necessary state guidelines to protect its Home Office employees including daily temperature checks, wearing masks and sanitizing. The Home Office is still servicing its members and processing new applications, deposits, and claims with limited delays.

RATING AGENCY:

The President stated that a teleconference meeting was held with Kroll Bond Rating Agency. All the necessary information has been submitted and we anticipate a report in the next 8-12 weeks.

STATE AUDIT:

The Executive Secretary stated that the State of Ohio is conducting its 3-year audit of the FCSU. The audit is being performed remotely with all information uploaded to the state's portal. The audit should take about 3 months.

SCHOLARSHIP:

The President, after discussion with the Scholarship Committee Chair intends to recommend changes in the scholarship programs to the Board of Directors. The President stated that this will be discussed at the next Executive Committee meeting and make a recommendation to the Board at the meeting in December.

BRANCH MEETINGS:

The President stated that the Board is discouraging all District and Branch officers from holding in-person meetings. Instead, for the safety of our members during the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, the Board strongly recommends Districts and Branches hold virtual meetings by telephone conference or by using the latest technology such as Zoom, Google Meet or Startmeeting.com. A virtual meeting will be considered as a regular meeting toward District/Branch fraternal obligations. Some of our Districts and Branches are already doing this.

The Executive Secretary stated that the options to hold a virtual or hybrid meeting were sent out to Branches and put on our website. Regardless of how a meeting is held, meeting requirements to qualify for stipend have not changed. The requirements remain the same for a virtual or hybrid meeting as they do for a regular, in-person meeting. These requirements are stipulated under our current FCSU Bylaws adopted at the 2018 Convention, specifically Bylaws 4.05 and 4.06. The FCSU Bylaws are available online at <https://www.fcsu.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/bylaws-2019-print.pdf>. The 30-day rule applies from the date the meeting announcement is posted on the FCSU website.

DIRECTOR OF FRATERNAL ACTIVITIES REPORT:

An email was received from the Director of Fraternal Activities Kevin Collins regarding the report on fraternal activities. The NFL Loser's Pool Contest and the Kentucky Derby Hat Contest will be held. Mr. Collins is also working on an ugly sweater contest. He will update the Board as more information becomes available.

CONVENTION:

The President stated that due to the coronavirus pandemic, the convention site has not yet been chosen and has been delayed. Hotels cannot commit to room cost and food at this time and some may go out of business. The Convention site will not be determined until 2021 with approval by the Board of Directors.

ACCEPTANCE OF ALL REPORTS:

A motion was made by Damian Nasta and seconded by Timothy Graves to accept all the additional reports presented. Motion carried.

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MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2020 HOME OFFICE, INDEPENDENCE, OHIO (TELECONFERENCE)

OPEN MEETING:

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

The Executive Committee Meeting is being held as a teleconference due to the current coronavirus pandemic. The Home Office is open with a limited rotating staff and limited hours to maintain day to day operations. The Home Office will remain on limited hours with no walk-in business until further notice.

ROLL CALL:

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

ACCEPTANCE OF THE OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES:

The President presented the minutes of the October 16, 2020 Executive Committee Meeting. A motion was made by Andrew R. Harcar, Sr., and seconded by Kenneth A. Arendt 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 Executive Committee on the investments and transactions with the Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB), UBS, MAI Fund, and Clutterbuck Fund. The Executive Committee discussed the report and the Executive Secretary answered the Committee's questions.

Portfolio Review

The Executive Secretary updated the Executive Committee 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 October for the Committee's review and answered their questions.

Monthly Disbursements

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

Disbursements for the month of October 2020:

Death Benefits & Accumulations	\$ 170,065.86
Cash Withdrawals & Accumulations	\$ 27,107.60
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.

The Executive Secretary led a review of the 3rd quarter financial statement and highlighted the following: assets are up to \$442,806,537, premium income is \$42,889,166, net income is \$4,948,406, and surplus increased by \$2,747,843 and is currently at \$44,895,849. The financial statement will be published in the Jednota newspaper.

HOME OFFICE UPDATE:

The President and the Executive Secretary gave an update on the Home Office operations. The Executive Secretary stated that the Home Office is open with a limited rotating staff and limited hours to maintain day to day operations. The Home Office will remain on limited hours with no walk-in business until further notice.

Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting

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REQUESTS FOR ADS AND DONATIONS:

Requests for donations and ads were reviewed and acted upon.

PAYMENT OF BILLS ASSOCIATED WITH THE QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING:

A motion was made by Michael Lako and seconded by Milos Mitro to pay all the bills associated with the meeting. Motion carried.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to conduct, a motion was made by Damian Nasta and seconded by Timothy Graves to adjourn. Motion carried.

Reverend Thomas Nasta closed the meeting with prayer.

Andrew M. Rajec
President

Kenneth A. Arendt
Executive Secretary

FORM 990 FILING:

The Executive Secretary stated that the Form 990 for 2019 was sent to the Board of Directors for review. After all questions were answered, the Form 990 was filed accordingly.

UBS:

Sean Hardy, representing UBS, joined the meeting via teleconference and led a review of our current portfolio. Mr. Hardy presented several new investment opportunities for our portfolio. After his presentation he answered the Committee's questions.

The President stated that representatives from MAI and Clutterbuck will attend the next Executive Committee meeting to review our investment portfolio.

AQS MANAGEMENT, INC.:

Larry White, representing AQS Management, Inc., presented an extensive Investment Portfolio Transaction and Review Report via teleconference to the Executive Committee. Each member of the Committee received a copy of the presentation in advance for his review. Following the report, he answered the Committee's questions.

The President asked Mr. White to review our investment policy and make recommendations to the Board of Directors at the December meeting.

Larry White presented an extensive review of potential new investment opportunities that may be available. The President stated that we will take Mr. White's recommendations under advisement.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The President asked that the Treasurer and the Executive Secretary give a full written report on the investment update to the Executive Committee. Following the report, they answered the Committee's questions.

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 December.

SALES AND MARKETING:

The Vice President gave a production report on our recommenders and agents to the Executive Committee. Following the report, he answered the Committee's questions. The President stated that the annuity sales are well above projected sales for 2020.

The Executive Secretary stated that the premium quote system is on our website at fcsu.com and has been updated with the new insurance rates. You can enter information about a person and a quote will be generated for all the insurance products available for that individual. The updated insurance applications are also available on our website.

The Executive Secretary stated that we are still recruiting agents thru a marketing campaign and an email campaign. The Home Office marketing team is still working with Visia, our outside marketing firm, to develop new marketing material.

The Vice President stated that he hopes to hold a membership meet in 2021.

BRANCH/DISTRICT MEETINGS:

The President and the Executive Secretary stated that the Board of Directors strongly recommends that all Branch and District meetings for the rest of 2020 be held virtually. The Executive Secretary stated that a letter has been sent out to all Branches, Districts and Board Members to outline options for virtual meetings and if they have any questions to contact the Home Office.

The Executive Secretary stated that we have received a good response to Branches/Districts holding virtual meetings and they are taking the proper precautions when meetings are held.

KROLL BOND AGENCY:

The President stated that he does not have an update on a Kroll rating at this time but hopes to have one before the end of the year.

CONVENTION:

The Executive Secretary stated that they are unable to visit sites for the upcoming convention in 2022 due to the coronavirus pandemic. He hopes to have a recommendation on a site location by the March Board of Directors Meeting.

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

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