

2023 Annual Report of the FCSU Fraternal Activities Director – March 2024

Dear Father Nasta, President Arendt, Executive Officers, Board of Directors, and Members of the First Catholic Slovak Union,

I am pleased to present my annual report as the National Fraternal Activities Director of the First Catholic Slovak Union. My first year in this position has been a rewarding experience, from meeting members at events, to working with the home office staff, and developing relationships with the Board.

Here is a recap of our activities from 2023.

2023 March Madness

144 members entered the annual collegiate hoops competition. \$2,550 in prize money was awarded as follows: first \$1000, second \$750, third, \$500, fourth \$250, fifth \$50.

2023 Bowling Tournament

Thirty-seven members of the FCSU participated in the 2024 Joint Fraternal Bowling Tournament in May 2023 in Buffalo, New York. FCSU contribution was \$3,508. Opting out of the combined event with the GCU, NSS and SCS, the FCSU is hosting our own tournament in 2024.

2023 Kentucky Derby Contest

This was the 5th Derby Hat contest. We awarded prizes to twenty members in seven categories, including male, female, and family competitions. Prizes were \$250, \$150, and \$75 for first, second and third place, respectively. Participation was light. As a result, the contest will be on hiatus in 2024. Total expenditure for prizes was \$3,250.

2023 Golf Tournament

In August, 50 FCSU members joined with members of the Sokols to enjoy a weekend of golf in Canfield OH. Of that number an impressive 21 FCSU golfers finished in the prize money, sharing \$2,145 in total. I wrote and designed the Tournament announcements and entry forms to promote the tournament in the Jednota and online. I also wrote an event recap and designed the page layout for the Jednota. Details were also on the FCSU website. 2023's tournament became our last joint fraternal event, as the FCSU will host our own Golf Tournament in 2024. FCSU share of expenses was \$4,180 includes a \$50 per golfer contribution and cost of FCSU banquet attendees.

2023 Losers Pool

The popular contest awarded first, second and third place prizes of \$700, \$500, and \$250 for selecting losing NFL teams throughout the season. Nine members shared the third-place prize. The total prize money awarded was \$1,450.

2023 Spooktacular Pumpkin Carving Contest

We conducted our first ever pumpkin carving contest in October. It offered members of all ages an opportunity to win \$100 for the best entry in each of four categories, scary, funny, artistic, and realistic. Age groups ranged from 8 to 50+, and a family division. I developed the contest rules and designed the announcements of the contest and the winners for the Jednota.

Forty-seven members participated in the inaugural contest. Most entries were in the 20-49 age group, successfully engaging this hard-to-reach demographic. Eleven winners received \$100 cash prizes for a total expenditure of \$1,100. In 2024, I suggest we reduce the number of categories to three, and award first, second and third place prizes within each category.

2023 Coloring Contest

The 2023 coloring contest continues to have strong participation from members of all ages, with 182 entries. This year we included youth (13-16) and young adult (17-39) categories. Age groups 4-6, 7-9, 10-12 and 13-16 could win prizes of \$50, \$35, and \$25, at the regional level. Age groups 17-39 and 40+ prize levels were \$100, \$75, and

\$50, overall. I sourced the pictures to color and designed the layout of the pages for the Jednota. I also designed the pages to announce the winning entrants. Seventy-three total winners claimed \$3,055 in prize money, as cash or gift cards.

2024 FCSU Bowling Tournament

The FCSU Bowling Tournament returns this year on April 26-27, 2024, at the AMF Lanes in Mt. Lebanon, PA (a south suburb of Pittsburgh, PA). We have reserved thirty lanes, a block of 50 rooms at the nearby Crowne Plaza Hotel South Pittsburgh. Friday will include a dinner buffet as you bowl. Saturday will feature Mass, a cocktail hour and dinner buffet with raffles. Each member bowler may invite a non-member to bowl in the tournament. We have asked for lane sponsors and event sponsors to increase the amount of the bowling and raffle prizes.

2024 FCSU Golf Tournament

The FCSU will once again host our own Golf Tournament, beginning in July 2024. The tournament will be on July 12-14, 2024, at Oglebay Resort in Wheeling WV. Each FCSU member may register one non-member guest. The courses can accommodate up to one hundred golfers. Events include a welcome cookout on Friday evening, two days of tournament play on courses designed by Robert Trent Jones and Arnold Palmer. Mass, cocktails, and dinner buffet on Saturday.

2024 Family Fall Festival

We are in the planning stages for the FCSU to host a Fall Festival for families in Southwestern PA, as the area does not have an FCSU sponsored summer picnic. With travel to Slovakia and other summer events, a fall activity will be a desirable alternative. Ideally, we will book a working farm for the afternoon and offer food, music, hayrides, pumpkin patch, corn maze, flower picking, apple picking, farm tours. The tentative date is October 5th.

2024 FCSU National Day of Giving

I am looking forward to the FCSU sponsoring an International Day of Giving, with members participating across the US and Canada on the same day. Ideally, we would partner with a national charitable organization with representation on local levels. One example would be Catholic Charities, which is active in most dioceses. Projects could include sock drives for the homeless, diaper drives for mothers in need, food bank collections. This would require support from branches/districts.

My participation in other fraternal activities

Represented the FCSU during Slovak Day at Kennywood Park, West Mifflin, PA, July 2023

Attended the rainy FCSU National Picnic at Wigeland Lake Park, Novelty OH, July 2023

Attended and spoke at the Pittsburgh District Annual Meeting in West Mifflin, PA, April and November 2023

Attended the George Onda District Christmas Viliya in Greensburg, PA December 2023

Attended/participated in all FCSU 2023 Board Meetings

2024 Fraternal Activities Calendar/Survey

I did not create a 2024 activities calendar as planned. I am waiting for feedback on the member survey to publish it in the Jednota and post online. It included an expansive list of potential activities, which could be on a national, regional or district level. I would like to work ahead and create this for 2025.

I am happy to respond to any questions or suggestions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joanne Fibbi

National Fraternal Activities Director

First Catholic Slovak Union