
Annual Pastor's Report - A year in Review for 2016

January

Renovating Project Goal was set in 2015 at \$25,000 for the repair and replacement necessary at the Church Rectory and the Choir Director's Rectory.

The Annual Blessing of Homes occurred from Wednesday, January 6 through the afternoon of Sunday, January 10. A special thank you to Joseph Krenitsky for helping to organize the annual blessing of homes and for singing the responses. We visited 98% of the official membership of our Church.

Perogi Project work sessions for our Ethnic Food Sales occurred on January 10 - 11 and January 26 at St. Michael's Center to prepare for our Lenten Ethnic Food Sales.

A Home-Made Cabbage Roll Dinner was held on Saturday, January 23, at St. Michael's Center.

St. Tikhon's Seminary FOCA Dinner was held Sunday afternoon, January 24, at St. Michael's Center with an opening Moleben at 4:00 p.m. at our Church. A Concert followed at St. Michael's Center by the Seminary Mission Choir.

The 53rd Diocesan Assembly was hosted this year by St. Michael's Orthodox Church in Jermyn on Thursday, January 28, beginning with registration held at the Church at 3:00 p.m. and Vespers at 4:00 pm. This was followed by Dinner at St. Michael's Center and presentations by Archbishop Mark and guest speaker Abbot Tryphon of All Merciful Savior Monastery, Vashon Island, Washington. Divine Liturgy was celebrated on Friday, January 29 at 8:30 a.m. which was followed by the formal Assembly at St. Michael's Center. Archbishop Mark and all the Clergy and delegates from our Diocese were present. This was a historical event for our Church. We are especially grateful to the crew at St. Michael's Center and for all our choir members in Church who made this Assembly very successful.

We congratulate John Lasichak in receiving the blessing from Archbishop Mark to be a Sub-Deacon in our Church.

February

Ethnic Food Sales were held on Wednesday, February 10 and Friday, February 26 at St. Michael's Center.

Sunday Breakfast was held on February 21 following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy sponsored by St. Mary's Altar Society.

Funeral Service for the departed servant of God, Dorothy Yurchak, was held on February 23..

March

Blini Breakfast was held on Sunday, March 13 following the Divine Liturgy on the eve of the Great Lent sponsored by St. Mary's Altar Society.

An Ethnic Food Sale at St. Michael's Center was held on Friday, March 18.

Fr. John Kowalczyk gave the first lecture of the Alaskan Native Spiritual Legacy and Icon Exhibition Lecture Series sponsored by Villanova University on Sunday, March 20 at the Connelly Center. He spoke on the "Miraculous Icon of our Lady of Sitka." This lecture was delivered on the "Sunday of Orthodoxy" and also focused on the meaning of Holy Icons in the Orthodox Church.

Pascha Bread was made Monday, March 21 for Western Easter at St. Michael's Center.

Saturday, March 26, Divine Liturgy was celebrated in the morning for the Feast of Archangel Gabriel and the Baptism/Chrismation of Helena Mae Lanfranca took place in the afternoon.

April

Saturday, April 2, the Baptism and Chrismation of Dorcas Soroka.

The Annual Parish Meeting was held on Sunday, April 3 following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

Saturday, April 9 the Funeral Service was held for the departed Irene Swirdovich.

Monday, April 11 the Funeral Service was held for the departed Stephen Malec.

The Ethnic Food Sale at St. Michael's Center, held on April 15 was a tremendous success.

Church School Sponsored Breakfast was held on Lazarus Saturday morning, April 23rd, following the celebration of Divine Liturgy. Easter Baskets were presented to the Church School Children.

Palm Sunday, April 24, began with Blessing of Palms & Willows. His Eminence, Archbishop Mark was with us at the Divine Liturgy.

The Pascha foods sale (Holiday rolls, kielbasa, horseradish etc.) on Tuesday, April 26 at St. Michael's Center, was a huge success.

A Special Thank You to Steve and Martha Myshak for donating the three remaining stained glass windows on the first level of our Church addition. Baut Studios was commissioned to complete this project.

May

Mother's Day Celebration was held Sunday, May 8. Mother's Day flowers were given to all the women of our Parish, donated by St. Mary's Altar Society. Pennsylvanians for Human Life (Scranton Chapter) sold Mother's Day Carnations.

A special collection for the Memorial Day Pilgrimage to St. Tikhon's Monastery, to help offset the expenses, was held Sunday, May 15 and May 22.

Hospitality a la Russe featuring Traditional Russian Cuisine with the Kauriga Balalaika Orchestra was held on Sunday, May 15 at St. John's Russian Orthodox Cathedral in Mayfield.

May 21st, Baptism/Chrismation of Carson & Cooper Anuszewski.

The 112th Memorial Day Pilgrimage collection was taken by the men of our parish and coordinated by Joseph Krenitsky.

The stained glass door of Christ the Teacher was installed in the confessional entrance way to the sanctuary. A special Thank You to Steve and Martha Myshak.

A Special Church Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday, May 31 with Fr. John Parsells, Director of Orthodox Web Solutions for developing a new Parish Web-Page.

June

On Sunday, June 5, the Baptism/Chrismation of Xenia Soroka.

A Special Parish Meeting was held on Sunday, June 5th, following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. "The purpose of the meeting was to authorize and ratify the sale of a vacant parcel of property owned by the Parish, commonly known as 534 Gravity St., Archbald, Lackawanna County, and Tax Parcel Identification # 07417030011 as described in Deed dated January 14, 1983. The proposed sale was to Salvatore A. Nestico, Jr., Diane M. Nestico and Anthony J. Nestico for the sum of \$10,000.00."

Tamara Fisher and Michael Blondell were united in the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony on Saturday, June 11.

Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry Sunday was held on June 12th and a special offering was taken..

Father's Day was Sunday, June 19. Deceased Fathers were remembered in the Divine Liturgy and St. Mary's Altar Society presented a Special Father's Day Gift to all fathers present.

Special Donation of \$700.00 for a solid oak hand carved liturgical table for the Sanctuary was offered by Zina and Kenneth ODowd.

July

Chicken & Rib (Kundlas) BBQ, held on Saturday, July 2.

Protodeacon Gabriel Petorak had planned to travel to St. Mary's Orthodox Church in Dubranich, Western Ukraine to visit our Sister Church at the end of July. A special collection was held on Sunday, July 17 to provide aid in the refurbishing of the Church. Protodeacon Gabriel had to cancel his trip, because of the untimely death of his traveling companion Bill Malos who passed away Sunday, July 24. The money collected, in the amount of \$700.00, was wired to St. Mary's Church in Dubranich.

Our new Parish Website was completed in July by Orthodox Web Solutions, coordinated by Fr. John Parsells, The log in is at www.stmichaeljermyn.org

The New Stained Glass Windows – Lower-Level of the new addition were installed on the third and fourth week of July. They included: St. Stephen the Protomartyr, SS. Martha & Mary the sisters of Lazarus, and the Protomartyr George. A Special Thank you to our donors: Steve and Martha Myshak.

August

On Saturday, August 6, the Funeral Service for Millie Wanas.

Saturday, August 20, Nathan Muchal & Elizabeth Ann von Storch were united in the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony.

The 19th Annual St. Tikhon's Golf Tournament was held on Saturday, August 20th at the Jack Frost National Golf Course in Blakeslee, Pa.

The Wilkes-Barre Deanery Picnic was held Thursday, August 25 at Aylesworth Park Pavilion.

(Kundlas) BBQ Chicken, Ribs, & Pork Chops Dinner was held on Saturday, August 27 at St. Michael's Center.

Ken and Zina ODowd gave \$15,000 to our Church renovating fund for the purchase of 4 stained glass windows on the second floor of our new-addition.

September

Our Annual Parish Festival was held on September 23, 24, and 25 with the Classic Car Show.

October

The Christmas in September Parish Festival wrap-up Dinner Meeting was held on Thursday, October 27. **Please note: the proceeds and profit generated to the Church from the Festival came to \$27,188.87**

Amy Bochnovich and Keith Noll were united in the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony on Saturday, October 29.

Congratulations to John Lasichak elected President of St. Tikhon's Century Association.

November

The Blessing of our New Stained Glass Windows was held on Sunday, November 13. The first 4 windows in the lower level of our new addition were offered by Steve and Martha Myshak and the 4 windows in the upper level were offered by Zinada and Ken ODowd.

The St. Michael's Annual Parish Dinner was held on Sunday, November 13.

Thanksgiving Day Bread Sale was held on Wednesday, November 23.

December

On Sunday, December 4, following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and Parastas for the departed Pearl Harbor Veterans from our Church: Anna Danyo RN, Daniel Kitchura, Cdr. Wayne Willgrube, MSC, Lt. Anna Urda Busby RN., a special Pearl Harbor Memorial Service (75th Anniversary).

Christmas out-reach for the low-income and homeless families, in partnership with Sue Schlasta was held Sunday, December 11.

Fr. John and Matushka Kathy were invited on December 17 and 18 to St. George's Antiochian Orthodox Church in St. Paul, Minnesota. Fr. John spoke on the afternoon of December 18th at the 25th Anniversary of Archimandrite Duane Pederson to the Holy Priesthood.

St. Michael's Christmas Food Sale was held on Wednesday, December 21.

"A Special Thank You"

George Petorak (Manager), Protodeacon Gabriel (Custodian), Marilyn Petorak (Treasurer) for all their hard work for St. Michael's Center. Liuzzo Catering offers catering services for all your needs.

Our Choir and its director Oleg Beljaeff for good order and beauty found in our services and the effort involved in making our liturgical celebrations inspiring.

Danny Kitchura and Vladimir Kitchura for their commitment to the Annual Car Show.

Diana Brotschul for maintaining the up-dated mailing list of our Church.

Our committed and dedicated Church School teachers Matushka Kathy and Matushka Dolores.

To the Klapatch brothers for maintaining the general upkeep of our parish cemetery.

Rachel Vaverchak, and family in cleaning the Church, and for Joseph in cutting grass and snow plowing during the year. A job well done!

Mary Mathena for her assistance in selling tickets to ensure the success of our parish celebrations.

Ruthann Lasichak for their help in advertising our special events.

St. Mary's Altar Society and all its members for the love and support given to the Church this past year.

Protodeacon Gabriel Petorak in maintaining our gift shop. St. Michael's Gift Shop continues to generate funds for St. Michael's Scholarship Fund.

Alexander's Restaurant in helping in the success of our fund-raising activities. Without the support and personal care from the Wanas family our chicken barbeques ethnic food sales and other activities would not be as successful.

Protodeacon Gabriel Petorak for his commitment and concern to his liturgical ministry in the Church, for his leadership role and for his hard work at our center. We thank him for his artistic work in organizing the Christmas decorations in and around the Church and together with his faithful crew setting up the Good Friday Grave.

Sub-Deacon Vladimir Kitchura, Sub-deacon John Lasichak and Sub-Deacon Vasily Gardecki and the Altar Boys for their weekly liturgical commitment.

Our readers, Gregory Bertholf, William Dubee and Vladimir Kitchura.

Sub-Deacon Vladimir Kitchura, Sub-deacon John Lasichak and Sub-Deacon Vasily Gardecki and the Altar Boys for their weekly liturgical commitment.

To Joseph Krenitsky for the many years of Service as the President of our Church. We continue to be blessed by his personal example in Christian charity and of living the Orthodox faith, by word, deed and great concern for those who are hospitalized.

To George Petorak Vice-President of our Church, for assisting in many of our Church Committee Projects and in the capacity of St. Michael's Center, managing and coordinating many of our fund-raising activities and for reviving the work of the Cemetery,

To the Vets of our church for their contributions in maintaining the Veteran's Memorial.

All the members of the Church Council for being faithful, reliable, and constant this past year; Ruthann Lasichak, Anne Narcoonis, Barbara Palubniak, Vladimir Kitchura, Steve Franchak, Joseph Krenitsky, To the auditors Julie Spiecher and Susan Schlasta. To the candle men of our Church and the dedication they offer on a weekly basis. To Gloria Shaw & Eva Demchak for organizing the Church envelope system.

Gloria Shaw, Eva Demchak, Sam Mosely, Maryann Serafini, Steve and Jean Malec, Dorothy Allen and Mary & Robert Mathena, in helping prepare the Prosphori Bread for the church services.

Steve Franchak, Peter Frenchko and Edward Narcoonis for all their work around the church, center and parish homes.

John Pash Sr. for grass cutting around St. Michael's Center.

Ruth Lasichak for printing the weekly bulletin.

This past February, I celebrated 32 years as your parish priest.

I remain,

With love in Christ and Holy Orthodoxy,

Very Rev. John Kowalczyk

Very Rev. John Kowalczyk (Rector)

