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FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK LADIES ASSOCIATION

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HAPPY
Valentine's
Day



ŽENSKÁ JEDNOTA

Fraternally Yours, ŽENSKÁ JEDNOTA®



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Life's Mysteries

When all the words have been written, and all the phrases have been spoken, the great mystery of life will still remain. And who among us would have it otherwise? Who would wish to take the mystery out of the experience of looking into a newborn infant's eyes; of viewing a beautiful sunrise and sunset; of holding the hand of a loved one as they pass away into the next life? These are the events that make us human, that define the distance between the stars and us. The answers to these mysteries await us when we one day come face to face with our God.

Still, this life is not easy. Much of its mystery is darkness. Tragedies occur, injustices exist. Bad things befall good people and sufferings are visited upon the innocent. At times it all seems too much, impossible to accept. We must stand against this. The world is a great mysterious place, and its possibilities are infinite, governed only by what our hearts can conceive. If we incline our hearts towards the darkness, we will see darkness. If we incline them toward the light, we will see the light.

Those of great heart have always known this. They have understood that, as honorable as it is to see the wrong and try to correct it, in and of itself, a life well lived is a celebration of the promise that life provides. The darkness at the limits of our knowledge; the darkness that sometimes seem to surround us is merely a way to make us stronger, to reach beyond certainty, to make our lives a witness to hope, a testimony to possibility, an urge toward the best and the most honorable impulses that our hearts can conceive.

It is not hard. There is in each of us, no matter how humble, a capacity for love. Even if our lives have not taken the course we had envisioned, even if we are less than the shape of our dreams, we are part of the human family, the family of God. Somewhere, in the most inconsequential corners of our lives, is always the opportunity for love. And love is the answer to the darkness.

If I am blind, I can run my hand across the back of a shell and celebrate beauty. If I have no legs, I can sit in quiet wonder before the restless murmurs of the sea. If I am wounded in spirit, I can reach out my hand to those who are hurting and in doing so help them and help myself. If I am lonely, I can go among those who are desperate for love. There is no tragedy or injustice so great, no life so small and inconsequential, that we cannot bear witness to the light in the quiet acts and hidden moments of our days.

And who can say which of these acts and moments will make a difference? The universe is vast and is a magical membrane of meaning, stretching across time and space, and it is not given to us to know her secrets and her ways. Perhaps we were placed here to meet the challenge of a single moment; a single defining event in our life; perhaps the touch we give to another will cause the touch that will one day change our world.

Dear Friends,

You cannot be grateful and bitter. You cannot be grateful and unhappy. You cannot be grateful and without hope. You cannot be grateful and unloving. So this month just be grateful and remember that your actions always speak louder than your words; your actions will forever become part of the imprint you leave upon this earth and are part of life's mysteries.

Until next month,
Warmly, Carolyn

CANONICAL ISSUES — IRREGULAR MARRIAGES

Very Reverend Monsignor Peter M. Polando, D. Min., J.C.L., National Chaplain

The annulment process is specifically for those persons whether Catholic or non-Catholic who have validly entered into the state of Marriage. What is an annulment? An annulment, or in Church language, a declaration of matrimonial invalidity, is a decision of the Tribunal of the Diocese (the Church Court) concerning the invalidity of a particular union. It means that in the eyes of the Catholic Church, an essential element was missing for the union in question from the very beginning, e.g., coming before God and the community without coercion, the intention of having a lifelong commitment to marriage, and being open to having

children, thus invalidating the marriage from the start. This declaration does not deny that a real relationship may have existed, nor does it always imply that the union was entered into with ill will or moral fault. Rather, an annulment states that the union lacked at least one of the elements seen as essential for a true, valid Christian marriage. An annulment does not seek to establish guilt or innocence but rather validity or invalidity.

In the United States, a Church annulment has absolutely no civil effect. The granting of an annulment will not affect anything that is determined by civil law such as alimony, child custody, visitations

rights, division of property, and the like. Church law itself ensures the legitimacy of children born of a marriage that has been declared invalid (canon 1137). While recognizing that divorce occurs, it is most important to realize that not every marriage can be declared invalid. In fact, the Catholic Church law protects the marriage bond and favors it.

The person seeking reconciliation with the Church will be asked to submit some public documents such as civil marriage application forms, divorce decrees, and baptismal certificates along with a case history. A case history may include a typed report drawn up according to an outline presented by the parish contact person that is a brief biography of the couple. Church law requires that the testimonies of both parties be corroborated by witnesses. These four to six witnesses are individuals who knew the parties before the marriage and can testify to the allegations concerning the union from its beginning. The witnesses will be sent questionnaires from the Tribunal staff. The answers given by the witnesses to the various questions concerning the couple seeking the annulment should be several statements long or more that will enable the Judge(s) of the case to make a fair and balanced decision. The more quickly the witnesses respond to the Tribunal, the quicker the case proceeds.

The Tribunal is unable to promise that a case will be completed within a specific time frame but it is usually within a year. Moreover, not every petition results in an affirmative decision. Many different factors may delay its conclusion, such as the ability to secure the testimonies of witnesses. The better prepared your case is and reviewed by the personnel at the parish level, the more efficiently it will proceed at the Tribunal. Inquiries regarding a case should be made through the parish contact person. It is the prayer of those who work in the Tribunal along with the Bishop and the Church that those in invalid marriages make an effort to reconcile your marriages within the Catholic Church.

(To be continued)



Slovak Honorary Consul Joe Senko has prepared a deluxe 15 day tour of Slovakia, Vienna, Poland and Hungary. The itinerary for Slovakia includes the historic towns of Bratislava, Svaty Jur, Devin, Bojnice, Tatras, Levoca, Kezmarok, Spisska Sobota, Spissky Hrhov, Zdiar, Stara Lubovna, Kosice, Bardejov, Jedlinka and Presov. Some of the highlights in Slovakia include six castles, a mock wedding, two wine tastings and rafting. This is the only tour that also includes welcome receptions by the U.S. Ambassador in Bratislava and by the Mayor of Presov.

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

At no extra cost, Joe has included two nights in Poland and two nights in Hungary. While in Poland, we will visit the shrines of Blessed Faustina and the Black Madonna. We will also tour Pope John Paul II's birthplace, the famous Wieliczka salt mine and Auschwitz. And of course, we will shop in Zakapane.

In Budapest, we will visit the ancient architectural sites including the Royal Palace, Citadella fortress and Parliament.

The total price for this fantastic tour is just \$4,300 per person (double occupancy). This includes round trip airfare from either Pittsburgh or New York, two delicious meals daily, four star hotels, free admission to all the sites, air conditioned bus, a professional guide and more. Compare this itinerary with other tour packages. For a detailed copy of the daily itinerary or more information, contact Joe Senko at jtsenko@aol.com or 412-956-6000.

Message from our National President

CYNTHIA M. MALESKI



We begin 2018 and our 126th year with the goals of reaching out to our members, both new and long time to work with them in fulfilling our mission across the nation; AND strengthening our staff, infrastructures, systems, processes and governance so that our association may continue to grow strongly, swiftly and with open arms to those around us in

need. We can now look back to our 125th anniversary celebrations with pride and renewed energy for many years to come!

We continue our leadership in providing hope and inspiration for individuals to move forward in building community, touching lives and helping form those around us so that they may also be models of strength, mercy and constancy in others' lives.

During our 125th anniversary year, in 2017, we began what will be an ongoing enhanced scholarship program, The Anna Hurban Scholarship Fund. Donations made to this fund can be made by individuals, branches or districts and will add to the current amount of \$250,000, which the association already allocates from annual operation funds for this program. Even though we publicly recognized all donations up until the time of our National Gala on July 29th, 2017, we will continue to publish and acknowledge donations in *Fraternally Yours* along with grateful thanks. On behalf of our well deserving students and their families, we are grateful for the generosity of our donors.

In February, we celebrate many Feast Days, importantly the feast days of Saints Cyril and Methodius (on February 14th, Valentine's Day). Our Lady of Lourdes (February 11th) and St. Bernadette (February 18th).

Saints Cyril and Methodius were brothers who received the title "Apostles of the Slavs" for Christianizing the Danubian Slavs and for influencing the religious and cultural development of all Slavic people. Both were outstanding scholars, theologians and linguists and were honored by Saint (Pope) John Paul II in his 1985 encyclical *Slavorum Apostoli*.

For many, many years we have been friends of the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius whose Mother-

house is in Danville, Pennsylvania. Many of the Sisters are our members. My family and I have participated in a number of pilgrimages to the Basilica of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Danville; it is unique in the western hemisphere as it is dedicated to Saints Cyril and Methodius. The people whose donations paid for the Basilica were working class immigrants who worked in coal mines, steel mills, factories and farms. Many years ago First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association donated substantial funds for one of the exquisite stained glass windows in the Basilica. I encourage you to take the time to go on your own pilgrimage and visit the Basilica and sacred grounds soon.

Fraternally,
Cynthia M. Maleski
National President

FCSLA

Annuity Rates

Rates for our Elite Annuities:

SILVER ELITE (5 YEAR)
2.75% APY*
GOLD ELITE (7 YEAR)
3.00% APY*
PLATINUM ELITE (10 YEAR)
3.25% APY*

*This rate is in effect 1/1/2018 thru 3/31/2018.

The credited rate is reviewed quarterly by the Board of Directors and will never go below the minimum guaranteed rate. The guaranteed minimum rate for Elite Silver and Gold contracts issued in 2018 is 2% APY and for the Platinum Elite is 2.5% APY.



Albert Heiles

February is the month when we seem to settle down and perhaps relax a little more. The hectic pace we followed in December, along with the following catch up month of January, really put a strain on our normal living activities. Now, is the time to regroup and put our life back into an order and pace that is more normal. However, along with the new month, something new comes along for us to think about: LOVE.

That's right, February is Valentine's month. It's the one month a year we set aside to tell someone special we love them, perhaps in an extraordinary way. Valentine's Day celebrations began over one hundred years ago and it has become a favorite day for people taking time to display their thoughts, affections and love towards someone special in their lives.

Valentine's days are not meant just for people in love, but rather for people we consider special. It's a day we set aside to display how we feel and tell them what they mean to us. How about a unique idea to show your feelings? I would like to suggest you consider beginning a new life insurance policy on yourself or someone you love. What better way to say we love you than by giving them something that could possibly last a lifetime and have benefits far beyond the life of a dozen of roses, or a box of chocolate.

A FCSLA life insurance policy offers value not just for one day or for one month, but perhaps for a very long time. Our whole life policies have cash values that can accumulate over time which will offer additional benefits in later years. In the untimely death of an insured, the beneficiary may be comforted in the benefits of the policy. FCSLA offers several types of permanent whole life insurance policies. We offer a policy that can be paid on for only 10 or 20 years and be fully paid up. We also offer a policy that offers lower premiums in which premiums are paid over an individual's entire lifetime. And finally, for the individual who would like to make only one premium, with no renewing premiums, we offer single premium whole life policies.

Our policies are available for the very young to the more senior member; from age 0 to age 80 in some cases. Prices and values differ, but one thing remains the same. The policy is backed by one of the finest Fraternal Benefit Societies in the USA. FCSLA, with nearly a billion dollar of assets and a history of serving over 120,000 members in over 125 years, is here to help in your life insurance questions.

Our Recommenders and professional agents are available to meet with you to discuss a policy that will meet your objectives. Grandparents beginning a policy on a young one (grandson/daughter, niece or nephew), parent beginning a new policy on their children, husband or wife beginning a policy to protect their spouse, whatever the purpose, FCSLA is there to help.

A permanent cash value life policy on a young child can cost as little as \$120 a year. A policy on a young adult can be started for as little as \$15 a month. A husband or wife can begin a policy on each other with a face amount of over \$100,000 for the cost of a monthly meal out at a family restaurant.

It has been said a life insurance policy is a love letter. A few drops of ink and a promise to pay provide a true statement of love, caring and affection.

Please contact the FCSLA representative you are now working with or contact the home office and we will be happy to arrange a representative to meet with you.

We can be reached by calling: 800-464-4642, ask for the Life Insurance Department.

Annual Holiday Mailing to Jr. Branch 192 Members



Nancy Clausen, J192 Auditor, Youngstown, OH, displays the Christmas card that was sent, with a \$5 bill, to 151 Jr. Branch 192 members in twenty states. Nancy worked with the printer to design the cover of the card which states "Vesele Vianoce" (Merry Christmas). It should help members to remember their Slovak heritage.

WPSCA Beginner Slovak Language Classes

The WPSCA will once again offer Slovak language classes for beginners. The class will be every Tuesday from February 20 to April 10 at 6:30-8:00 p.m. The classes will be held at the Brashear Association, 2005 Sarah Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15203. The tuition is free and the instructor is Bozena Hilko. To reserve your spot please contact Joe Senko at jtseonko@aol.com or (412) 956-6000.

YOUNGSTOWN DISTRICT

CELEBRATES FCSLA'S 125TH ANNIVERSARY

The Youngstown District celebrated the 125th anniversary of the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association with a Mass and dinner on Sunday, October 29, at Our Lady of Sorrows Parish, Youngstown, OH. Monsignor Peter Polando, National Chaplain and member of Youngstown's Branch 169, celebrated the Mass. Millie Kust and Nancy Clausen, Branch 161, and Carol Dumez, Branch 169, served as greeters and distributed specially printed Mass booklets. As the entrance hymn began, the Branch Presidents and District Board members led the procession into church followed by lectors, Theresa and Jeff Leonard, Branch 161, and National President, Cynthia Maleski, and District Auditor, Shelly Zura, Branch 344, who presented the Offertory gifts, Youngtown District President, Bernadette Demechko, Branch 161, proceeded in before the servers and Monsignor Polando.

After Mass, Monsignor addressed the congregation and cited all the work that is done by the eight Branches in their own churches from their early beginnings over a hundred years ago and continuing today.

The 143 people who attended the affair walked to the school auditorium where they viewed a panorama of blue and white, in honor of the Blessed Mother, October being the month of the Queen of the Holy Rosary. The tables were set with blue and white napkins and centered with a glass globe of blue marbles and a lit vigil candle. Melanie Leonard, President of Branch 161, volunteered to plan the banquet decorations since it was held in her Branch parish.

Each setting had an FCSLA anniversary calendar, pen, gift from the National President, Cynthia Maleski, anniversary holy card and the program booklet which contained congratulatory letters sent to the group by Youngstown Diocese Bishop George V. Murray, S.J., and Youngstown Mayor, John McNally. A special feature in the booklet was the history of the Youngstown District from 1928 to the present. The secretaries' minutes in those journals (up until 1981) were written in Slovak and Agatha Fabiny, past District President, and Bernadette translated them and compiled an extensive history of the Youngstown District.

Bernadette welcomed the members and guests and noted that the major reason the FCSLA is so successful is



National President Cynthia Maleski addresses the members and guests gathered for the celebration.

because of its members who have worked diligently through the years on its behalf. She also asked Cynthia to thank the Board for their decision to assist the Districts financially for anniversary events.

Monsignor Polando gave the invocation and the group was asked to have wine or water in their glasses for the toast. Monsignor had generously donated the wine for each table. Dolores Sonoga, President of Branch 169 and District secretary gave the toast: "Thankful for the determined women who founded the FCSLA, grateful to those members who are involved in its work today, and excited about its bright future."

Just before the meal, Bernadette turned to Monsignor, and jokingly said, "Since this meal is being paid by the Home Office, why aren't we having steak and lobster? Instead we are eating haluski and halupkil!" But the food was excellent.

After the meal, Bernadette introduced the Branch Presidents and District Officers. She made special mention of Mary Lou DiPillo, Shelly and Shirley Zura, Patricia Granchay, and Dolores Sonoga whose mothers and grandmothers had been District Officers. She told an anecdote about each one which brought back many smiles and happy memories. Members from the audience also came to the microphone to share their stories of past officers and events.

The President introduced special guests including Frank Fabiny who was celebrating his 98th birthday that very day. A special gift was a surprise visit and attendance at the dinner of his daughters Barbara Monitto from South Carolina and



District Officers and Branch Presidents — L-R: Shelley Zura, Dolores Sonoga, Mary Lou DiPillo, Patricia Granchay, Shirley Zura, Frances Chervinko, Bernadette Demechko, National President Cynthia Maleski, Sandi Saluga, Emma Burin, Melanie Leonard.



Readers at Mass — L-R: Theresa Leonard, Shelly Zura, Cynthia Maleski, Monsignor Polando and Jeff Leonard.

Marian McCreery from Florida. She mentioned that Frank along with Leafy Huey who is 92 and Katherine Kovalchik who is 102 never miss District meetings. "Happy Birthday" was sung to him.

Monsignor Polando introduced the guest speaker, President Maleski, who gave a dynamic talk on the importance of Branches and Districts in the structure of the FCSLA.

Monsignor thanked the attendees and gave special religious gifts blessed by Pope Francis to Frank Fabiny, the oldest person in attendance, Rose Elise Clausen at eighteen months the youngest person present and Cynthia and Bernadette, the two Presidents. Cynthia also presented gifts to Agatha and Bernadette.

The dinner ended with Loretta Ekoniak, Branch 161, leading the singing of the Slovak National anthem "Nad Tatrou Sa Blyska" and "Hej Slovaci."

Epilogue: When Bernadette had paid the bills for the event, she had a balance of \$200 that was not spent. Many couples had left a calendar and program book on the table and there were almost 50 of them. She used the money to send a calendar, program book and pen to 41 members who were "shut-ins", members who live out of town but "keep in touch", and new adult members. The remainders were placed on a table at the Vilija dinner and all were taken. True fraternalism.



Theresa and Melanie Leonard, (S162) in charge of dinner arrangements.



Past District President Agatha Fabiny and National President Cynthia Maleski .



Members raise their glasses to honor the 125th anniversary of the FCSLA.



L-R: Marian McCleery, Frank and Agatha Fabiny and Barbara Monitto.



Graduation Announcement

Anne Catherine Setter Sheard graduated from St. Joseph High School in Kenosha, WI.

During her high school years Annie was a member of the National Honor Society, Retreat Team, played on the school's volleyball, basketball, and softball team, and went to Washington D.C. for the annual March For Life rally. Annie was team captain her junior and senior year for softball and was in the annual spring musical production of Working.

Last May, Annie went on a mission trip to Chinandega, Nicaragua with members of her senior class. She is a recipient of the FCSLA scholarship which she is very grateful for. Annie also received a scholarship from the Wisconsin Slovak Historical Society. Annie is now a freshman at UW-Milwaukee studying architecture.

Annie is a member of St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church in Kenosha where she has been an altar server for many years. She and her brother, Anthony are members of Branch 196. Annie's parents are Craig and Susan Setter Sheard. Her mother and grandmother, Helen (Bruchaty) Setter, are members of Branch 273. Anne's great grandmother, Anna (Secansky) Bruchaty was also a member of Branch 273.



Jr. Branch 157 Annual Christmas Party in Monessen, PA

On December 2, 2017, the Epiphany Chapel Hall was transformed into Winter Wonderland. Awesome, beautiful and amazing were just some of the comments made by the children, their parents, grandparents and guests as they entered the Church Hall. Greetings were extended by President Dorothy Urbanowicz and Rosemary Betza, Jr. Branch secretary. Each child received a craft and glow stick and proceeded to assemble their Christmas ornament. Pictures of all the beautiful decorations were being taken by the parents with the children posing in front of the various scenes consisting of decorated Christmas trees, a fireplace, Santa's sleigh and a talking Santa. Giant snowflakes were hung from the ceiling along with balloons which were to be released later. Throughout the afternoon, the games were led by Cindy Pawelec, and created much excitement as the children had so much fun by participating.

Tristan Todd gave the invocation followed by lunch which consisted of salad, pizza and hot dogs, with a fudge brownie for dessert. The children found their way to the candy table

where they filled their bags with various candy. Next came the New Year celebration with the release of the balloons and a champagne glass filled with apple juice.

Upon Santa's arrival, each child waited to give Santa their wish list and received a treat bag. They left with smiles as they anxiously went through their gift bag.

The committee consisted of Cindy Pawelec, Chair-person, Ruth Todd, Co-chairperson, Rachael Funtal and Officers Dorothy Urbanowicz, Flora Funtal and Rosemary Betza.



Children with Santa in the Church Hall.



Officers of Jr. Branch 157 posing with Santa.



Celebrating New Years Eve with the release of balloons.

FCSLA MEMBERS RING IN THE NEW YEAR

FCSLA members enjoying a memorable evening celebrating New Year's Eve at the Silvester Steak Fry at the American Slovak Club in Lorain hosted by United Slovak Societies.



Sitting from L-R: Michele Mager of Sr. Branch 114, Joyce Lechman of Sr. Branch 119, Johanna Oros of Sr. Branch 557. Standing from L-R: Dr. Debbie Brindza, Sr. Branch 176 and Donna Oros of Sr. Branch 557.

McKEESPORT SR. BRANCH 77 CHRISTMAS PARTY

On Sunday, December 3, 2017 McKeesport Sr. Branch 77 hosted its December Meeting and annual Christmas Party at Antonelli's Event Center in Irwin, PA.

President Jerry Holmes opened the meeting with prayer and the pledge of allegiance to the flag. Roll was called and all officers were present. The minutes of the November meeting and the Treasurer's report were read and approved.

Virginia Holmes, Branch Treasurer and National Trustee, reported on the branch activities for 2017 and the Pittsburgh District's celebration for the 125th anniversary, a dinner and ride on the Gateway Clipper on a beautiful sunny day in September. She also informed the membership that our National President, Cynthia Maleski, was presented the very prestigious Pope Francis Charity and Leadership Award from Caritas in Veritate International.

A memorial service was conducted for all of the members Sr. Branch 77 who passed away in 2017. The Auditors

report was given by Auditors Carol Yurechko and Mary Ann O'Neil. The Convalescent Committee report was given by Carol Yurechko.

Retiring officers, Vice President Audrey Podlesny and Auditor Carol Yurechko thanked the members for their support over the last 19 years.

President Jerry announced that the Home Office was recommending branch officers serve a two-year term. This was discussed at the November meeting and it was agreed that this practice would commence with this election. The following officers were elected for the next two years: President, Jerry Holmes; Vice President, Mary Jo Matta; Treasurer, Virginia Holmes; Financial Secretary, Marian Greenland; Jr. Secretary/Recording Secretary, Judy Fedor; Auditor, Mary Ann O'Neil; Auditor Kathleen Cicak. Judy Hornfeck administered the oath of office.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer and dinner was served. Entertainment was provided by George Batyi and the International Gypsies, a Branch favorite. President Jerry thanked George for the great entertainment and Antonelli's for the wonderful food and service. Drawings were held and prizes were awarded.



Jerry Holmes, Virginia Holmes and Mary Ann O'Neil preparing the memorial table.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

- Did your children, grandchildren receive special awards or achievements in school?
- Baptisms? Confirmations? New Members?
- Participated in Volunteer and Community Projects?

If they are members of the FCSLA please send us a photo and short article about their special achievements!

E-mail: zjbazik@comcast.net



Newly elected officers — L-R: President Jerry Holmes, Treasurer Virginia Holmes, Vice President Mary Jo Matta, Auditor Mary Ann O'Neil, Jr. Secretary/Recording Secretary Judy Fedor, Auditor Kathleen Cicak, and Financial Secretary Marian Greenland.

Sr. Branch 409 Hosts Annual Christmas Festivities

On a beautiful sunny Sunday, December 3, 2017, the Sr. Branch 409 of East Chicago, IN hosted their Annual Christmas party with Jr. Branch 317 as their primary guests at the Our Lady of Consolation Father Vamos Hall in Merrillville, IN. Members and all guests were greeted by Agnes Chervenak, President, Jeanette Bramer, Financial Secretary and Janice Vasquez, Jr. Branch Financial Secretary. The afternoon began with guests having time to socialize with family and friends.

Prior to dinner, Agnes asked Joann Skvarek Banvich, National Director to provide a brief discussion on an upcoming Matching Fund project that Sr. Branch 409 is sponsoring for the Diocese of Gary. The Tabor House is a project begun by Bishop Hying to meet a need in the community. This project is the construction of a home that is across the street from the Cathedral in Gary for a needy family. This matching fund project which will conclude on December 14 will assist in the purchase of furnishings for this home that is scheduled to be completed in the end of January. The members were advised

that a cash raffle held at this party would also benefit the Tabor House.

John Zaborske, an Agent for the Helen Kocan District spoke to the members and guests regarding the benefits of belonging to the First Catholic Ladies Association. John made himself available to speak privately with anyone needing additional information. Andrew Yurechko, a member of the Gary Jr. Branch 289 led the members in saying the grace prior to the luncheon. The menu

consisted of chicken, sausage and sauerkraut, tossed salad, veggie tray, green beans, corn, potato salad, and jello. Following the luncheon buffet a sweet table appeared consisting of cake, cookies, breads, and homemade apple slices and pumpkin rolls

made by Jim Wagner, father of junior members Olivia and Sophia.

The junior members led by Sherry Anderson sang a variety of Christmas carols along with a ukulele accompaniment by Ellie, Sherry's daughter. Everyone was excited by the talent of these young people and enjoyed the entertainment. Finally, the main event for the young members was the arrival of Santa

Claus (Mike DeRolf), who handed out presents donated by the Sr. Branch 409 leadership. The presents ranged from dolls, Legos, super heroes, Disney princess dolls, to Slinkys. Coloring books and puzzles from the Home Office were also given to these children. Senior members and guests were presented with gifts from the officers and the Home Office. Everyone was grateful for the festive party and gifts.



Polish Union USA Holds Children's Christmas Party in Illinois

The Chicago Groups Children's Christmas Party of the Polish Union USA was held on Sunday, December 3, 2017 at the Mayfield Banquets in Westchester, IL.

Enjoyed by all who attended was a Pizza Buffet and Sweet Table followed by a visit from Santa Claus and face painting and balloon making by Mrs. Claus.

The children received gifts from Santa and pictures to take home of their Santa experience. A big "thank you" to all who made this event an enjoyable afternoon. Toni Storts and Joan Wisinski, Illinois District Directors and Group Secretaries, Helen Leja, Barbara Kowalski, Greg Fetro, Robyn Carpenter and helpers Karl Leja, Joanna Leja, Tom Wisinski and all who brought Sweet Table items.



L-R; Toni Storts, Robyn Carpenter, Barbara Kowalski, Helen Leja, Joan Wisinski, and Greg Fetro.



The 23rd Edition of Our **SLOVAK-AMERICAN COOK BOOK**

No books are sold
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ALL ARE SOLD FOR CASH



The cost of each book is \$9.00. A carton of 18 books is \$144 (\$8.00 per book). Canada residents \$11.00 U.S. money order per book. *Send only money order or check payable to:* First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association, Attention: Cook Book Department, 24950 Chagrin Boulevard, Beachwood, OH 44122.

(Please Print)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Enclosed find \$ _____ ☐ (Money Order)

☐ (Check) for _____ copies of the Cook Book.

Jr. Branch 138 Celebrates the Holidays

Jr. Branch 138 of Natrona Heights, PA held their Christmas Party on Sunday, December 10th. The event was held in conjunction with Our Lady of Most Blessed Sacrament School Breakfast with Santa. The festivities were enjoyed by all who attended.



A table of Jr. Branch 138 members with officers at top of photo.



National President Cynthia Maleski with some of our young members.



Officer Suzy Rapp with some young members.



Wisconsin Branch 376 Christmas Party

The Wisconsin member of Branch S376 & J334 were greeted by Vic President Mary Jo Noyes who along with many members were decked out in their Holiday finery, to share a wonder lunch at Meyers Restaurant on December 9th, 2017. Mary Jo had review the past years events and future events to be set with the member. Member had been informed that President Kathy Dorfner would be stepping down as president but would like to continue the board during her recovery process. Ron Brown proceeded over the elections, and a new board is in place with Mary Jo Noyes – President, Kathy Dorfner- Vic President, Daniel Loudah-Secretary, Kathy Valent – Treasure, Betty Novak – Auditor, and bring on board new Auditor Mary Peterson.

After the meeting portion concluded member dined on a meal fit for a king of roasted chicken, pork tenderloin, and sausage with sour kraut, along with sides of mashed potatoes, veggies, and a wonderful chocolate cake from Simma's bakery.

After which the Junior order member received a visit from non-other than Santa and received small gifts. They sent him on his Christmas journey with singing we wish you a Merry Christmas.

Fun was had by all the Senior order member received door prizes of the table center pieces.



**HAVE YOU SIGNED UP
A NEW MEMBER RECENTLY?**

Branch W001 Awards Five Scholarships

Branch W001 of New Prague, MN recently awarded scholarships to the following members Jade Fumo, Riverland Community College; Daniel Kroeger, Nashville State Community College; Alex Brezina, University of North Dakota; Chloe Coldagelli, Iowa State University; Megan Rynda, College of St. Benedict.



Jade Fumo



Daniel Kroeger



Alex Brezina



Chloe Coldagelli



Megan Rynda

Slovak Heritage Program

The Western Pennsylvania Slovak Cultural Association will once again present the Slovak Heritage Programs on the first Monday evening of each month, starting at 7 p.m. at the Mount Lebanon Public Library, 16 Castle Shannon Blvd., Mt. Lebanon, PA 15228 (412-531-1912). It is free to both members and nonmmbers. Here is the agenda for 2018:

February 5, 2018 — *Interesting Sights in Slovakia*

Emma Moser, President of the Pitt Student Slovak Club will once again share her insights of her life in Slovakia.

March 5, 2018 — *Decorating Slovak honey cookies (Medovniki)*

Larry Kozlowski, a perennial presenter, will demonstrate and talk about the history of the popular decorated honey cookies of Slovakia. Decorate your own cookie to take home.

April 2, 2018 — *Slovak Castles and Castle Ruins*

Otilia Golias will show and discuss the famous Castles in Slovakia.

May 7, 2018 — *Weddings in Slovakia*

Back by numerous requests, Otilia Golis will repeat her presentation of a wedding in Slovakia.

MATCHING FUNDS ACTIVITIES

Jr. Branch 14

Christmas Gift-Giving Program

Jr. Branch 14, Cleveland, OH, together with St. Leo the Great Parish had a very successful matching funds activity during December 2017. More than 500 gifts and \$2,910 were donated by parishioners and other lodge members to the "Adopt a Child for Christmas" gift-giving program for needy children in the Cleveland area. Junior branch members would like to thank the FCSLA for the \$600 matching funds contribution.



Jr. Branch 14 members (left to right) Louisa, Emily, Sammy, Andrew and Evan Sabol, grandchildren of Jeanne Sabol, Sr. Branch 141, program coordinator.



Adopt a Child for Christmas program volunteers helped to wrap, sort and deliver gifts.



Branches 630 and 534

Annual Golf Tournament and Mini-Golf Outing

Officers from the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association (FCSLA), Sr. Branch 630 and Jr. Branch 534, Buffalo, NY, present a check for \$1,532.98 to Mrs. Ann Suchyna, Headmaster at the Chesterton Academy of Buffalo. The funds were raised this summer at FCSLA's annual golf tournament and a mini-golf outing. The local amount raised was \$932.98 and the National Office contributed matching

funds of \$600.00. Chesterton Academy is an independent high school in the Catholic tradition, located on the campus of Fourteen Holy Helpers Parish in West Seneca, New York. Pictured above, from left to right, are: FCSLA Regional Sales Manager John Gonsiorek, FCSLA President Lynn Zakowicz, Chesterton Headmaster Mrs. Ann Suchyna, and FCSLA Recording Secretary Tom Franczyk.



Jr. Branch 170

Soup and Bake Sale

J170, Charleroi, PA and Confraternity of Christian Mothers of Mary Mother of the Church, also in Charleroi, PA recently held a very successful homemade soup and bake sale, raising \$1,000.80. They thank all who participated in all aspects.



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**FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK
LADIES ASSOCIATION**

Branch W016

Brunch Benefit

Branch W016 held an Autumn Brunch for the benefit of the Brainard Community Club on October 29, 2017.

Community Club and branch members worked together to serve about 120 people souffle, hash brown potatoes, a fruit cup and homemade bakery at the "matching grant" event. A "split the pot" raffle was also held.



Branch W016 officers Joyce Rezac, Carolyn Dvorak, Community Club President Deb Behne, and W016 President Mary Lou Meister preparing for the Autumn Brunch.



Guests enjoy the Autumn Brunch sponsored for the benefit of the Brainard Community Club.

PLEASE NOTE!

Annual Branch Christmas Party articles and photos will be in this issue or March 2018 issues. Any articles and photos received after February 10th, 2018 will be held for use only if space allows in futures issues of *Fraternally Yours*.

60th Wedding Anniversary Observed



Edwin and Helen (Bruchaty) Setter, of Kenosha, WI, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary this past summer. The couple was married on June 22, 1957 at St. Anthony of Padua Church in Kenosha, by the Rev. Michael S. Dutko.



Edwin served in the U.S. Army with the 24th Infantry Division in the occupation of Japan. After graduating from the Wisconsin State College at Whitewater he taught at the American Boy Choir School in Princeton, NJ, the Milwaukee University School and in

Puente, CA. Ed retired from the Kenosha Unified School District in 1990. During his teaching career, Edwin received the Teacher of the Year Award and the Distinguished Service Award. In recognition of Ed's military service, Edwin went on the Honor Flight to Washington, D.C. in 2015.

Helen, a homemaker, worked at Snap-on-Tools in Kenosha until 1958. Over the years Helen has been involved in her parish as a lector, Eucharistic minister, choir member, CCD teacher, scout leader, and coordinator of Women's Mornings of Reflection. She is a member of the Wisconsin Slovak Historical Society and the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association Branch 273.

Edwin and Helen are current members of St. Mary Catholic Church in Kenosha. The Setters have three children, all of Kenosha: Theresa, Susan (Craig) Sheard and John (Theresa) and five grandchildren. All of Edwin and Helen's children and grandchildren are members of the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association.

Edwin and Helen attribute the success of their marriage to faith, trusts in God, love and respect for each other, and being blessed with a wonderful, caring, family.

SECRETARIAT

March 30, 1970-October 4, 1989

Words may be found up and down,
side to side, diagonally or words
may share letters.



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

BELMONT STAKES
CHESTNUT
EDDIE SWEAT *groomer*
KENTUCKY DERBY
MAGAZINE COVERS
PREAKNESS STAKES
SECRETARIAT
THIRTY ONE LENGTHS
TREMENDOUS MACHINE

BIG RED
CLAIBORNE FARMS *place of death*
ELIZABETH HAM *secretary*
LEGACY
PARIS KENTUCKY *Claiborne farms*
RACEHORSE
SOMETHING ROYAL *mother*
THOROUGHBRED
TRIPLE CROWN 1973

BOLD RULER *father*
DOSWELL VIRGINIA *the meadow*
HORSE OF THE YEAR
LUCIEN LAURIN *trainer*
PENNY CHENERY *owner*
RON TURCOTTE *jockey*
THE MEADOW *birthplace*
TRACK RECORDS

Name: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Branch: _____ Phone # _____

PUZZLES MUST BE IN THE HOME OFFICE FRIDAY, MARCH 9, 2018!

YOU MUST BE A FCSLA MEMBER TO QUALIFY.

200 WINNERS WILL BE RANDOMLY DRAWN FROM ALL THE ENTRIES RECEIVED.

Mail to: FCSLA Fraternal Department

24950 Chagrin Blvd., Beachwood, OH 44122

FCSLA 2018-19 ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

More than \$248,250 in Scholarship Awards!

The First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association (FCSLA) is pleased to announce its **2018-19 Scholarship Program**, which is in fulfillment of one of the objectives of the organization. An eligible candidate for an FCSLA Fraternal Scholarship Award shall be a member of good standing for at least three years prior to date of application and hold a \$1,000 permanent life insurance certificate, a \$5,000 term certificate or an annuity certificate (no minimum amount required). If applying for a Seminary or Deacon Scholarship, it is necessary to complete all documents.

Winners will be chosen by a committee of impartial judges from the educational field, based on the following: Academic Standing – 40%; Church/Community Service Value – 30%; and School Involvement/Essay – 30%.

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS - \$1,250 EACH

59 Freshmen • 28 Sophomores • 17 Juniors • 17 Seniors

GRADUATE AWARDS - \$1,750 EACH

19 Full-Time Graduate Awards

36 HIGH SCHOOL AWARDS - \$1,000 EACH

9 Freshmen • 9 Sophomores • 9 Juniors • 9 Seniors

32 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AWARDS - \$750 EACH

8 for Grade 5 • 8 for Grade 6 • 8 for Grade 7 • 8 for Grade 8

32 EARLY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AWARDS - \$750 EACH

8 for Grade 1 • 8 for Grade 2 • 8 for Grade 3 • 8 for Grade 4

Applications and supporting documents must be completed and submitted to the Home Office and received no later than 4:30 p.m. EST on Tuesday, February 27, 2018. Applications received after that date and time will not be considered. Electronic copies (preferably PDF file) and faxed copies of application and supporting materials will be accepted.

Applications and further details for this program may be obtained by:

- Visit our website at www.fcscla.org
- E-mail us at Scholarship@FCSLA.org
- Call the National Headquarters at **800-464-4642, ext. 1054**
- Complete the form on this page and mail it to:

FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK LADIES ASSOCIATION

Scholarship Department • 24950 Chagrin Blvd • Beachwood, OH 44122-5634

2018-2019 FCSLA SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION REQUEST

Please send a scholarship application form by: ____ US Postal Mail ____ Email
(PLEASE PRINT)

Branch No. _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

☐ College ☐ Graduate ☐ High School ☐ Seminary or Deacon ☐ Grades 1-4 ☐ Grades 5-8

Branch W033 Holds Annual Christmas Celebration

Branch W033, Spillville, IA held their annual Christmas Party for members and their families on Sunday, December 3, 2017, from 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

There were over 60 adults and children present. Attendees enjoyed refreshments and visiting until the pot luck dinner was served with Fr. Robert Gross leading the group in prayer before meals.

After dinner a meeting was held with the adults while the children made crafts in the lunch room. Branch scholarships were awarded — three College awards at \$250 each and two elementary awards at \$100 each. Santa Claus arrived and handed out bags of treats to everyone present. Candy guessing games, one for children and

one for adults were played with the winners receiving the container full of candy. Door prizes, monetary and wrapped gifts were also given out to adults and children in attendance. The day ended with games of Bingo and the prizes for the winners were both on and under the Christmas tree. Everyone had a wonderful time and left looking forward to next year's festivities.



Santa Claus visits and gives a bag of treats to Bristol Lowery. She is sure taking it all in!



Branch VP Jerry Kuhn presents a \$250 college scholarship to Sharon Kessler for her son Trace Kessler and her niece Marissa Macken who could not attend the party.



Members and their families enjoying dinner at St. Wenceslaus Gym.



L-R: Lincoln Kuhn, Rory Kuennen, Shayla Kuennen, Alayna Kuennen and Makenzie Kuhn are junior members who helped to set-up and clean-up after the party.



Branch Treasurer Rita Fjelstul presenting Reverend Robert Gross and \$100 check for Christmas from the officers and members of W033.



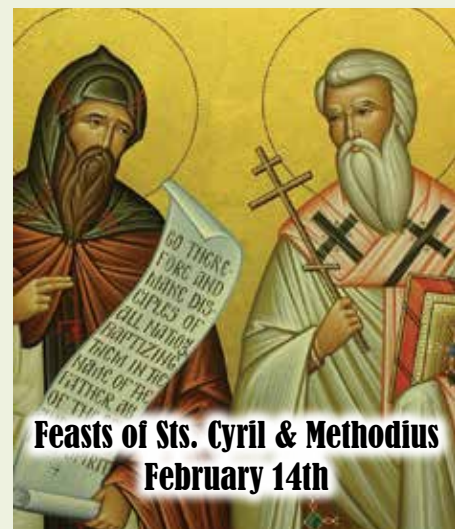
Branch VP Jerry Kuhn presents Elizabeth Bohr her \$100 elementary scholarship; she also accepted a \$100 award for her brother Jacob Bohr who could not attend the party.



Branch W033 President Dan Silhacek and his wife Gwen at the annual Christmas Party.



Branch VP Jerry Kuhn presents a \$250 college scholarship to Kade Klimesh.



**Feasts of Sts. Cyril & Methodius
February 14th**



IN MEMORIAM

Mary LaVerne Wacho, S376



Mary LaVerne (Nee Bartos) passed away peacefully on March 3, 2017, at the age of 100. Loving wife of the late Edward Paul Wacho. Caring mother of GERALYN Marie West and her late infant son, James Allen Wacho. Grandmother of Muhajir "Jer" Olsen, Lua (Eric) Carlson, Lindsay Ruhiyyih (Philip) Olsen-Bradley, and Dorothy "Dorey" Jamie Olsen. Sister of Rudolph (Carol), Robert (Carol), Donald (Joanne). Sister-in-law of Caroline Bartos. Also survived by nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends. Mary was a parishioner of St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church and a former parishioner of St. Stephen's Catholic Church. She was a member of the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association, the National Slovak Society and worked at Square D. Mary will be remembered for her generous and selfless soul, this was especially evident with her gifts of hand-sewn items. Memorials appreciated to the Lupus Foundation of America.

Richard Tieskotter, W33



Richard H. Tieskotter, age 70, of Fredericksburg, IA died March 13, 2017. He was born on August 25, 1946. He attended grade school through high school at Trinity Catholic School in Protivin, graduating in May of 1964. Richard then attended Iowa Teacher's College (now University of Northern Iowa) in Cedar Falls before being drafted in the U.S. Army in 1965. While in the Army, he was stationed in Germany working in Communications and received an honorable discharge in 1969. On April 28, 1969 he met the soul mate and love of his life, Marlene Novak. Richard and Marlene were united in marriage on August 25, 1973 at Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Protivin. Richard purchased the farm and started farming five miles north of Lawler in 1973, owned and operated Tieskotter TV & Repair and worked at Featherlite in Cresco for 15 years before he retired in 2009. While Richard enjoyed farming, and tinkering with just about anything, his pride and joy was spending time with his children and grandchildren! The couple moved to Fredericksburg, IA in July 2012. Richard is survived by his loving wife Marlene; his daughter, Karen (Christian) from Nashua; son Charles (Andrea) from Rochester, MN; his six grandchildren; his siblings: Dennis (Kathy) Tieskotter, Lawler, Mark (Diane) Tieskotter, Lime Springs, Mary (Joe) Roybal, Platteville, CO, Marti (Marv) Andera, Cresco, Roy Tieskotter, New Hampton, Daniel Tieskotter, Guttenberg, Maxine (Robert) Friedman, St. Ansgar, Jerry Tieskotter, Lawler; sisters-in-law, Charlene Zweibohmer of Ossian, Arlene (Bob) Scott of Wilton; along with aunts, uncles and many nieces and nephews.

Lawrence W. Dzurilla "Larry", S177



Lawrence W. "Larry" Dzurilla, 74, of Uniontown, PA passed away March 29, 2017. He was born August 11, 1942 in Uniontown. Larry was a graduate of North Union High School Class of 1961 and a member of St. Mary Nativity RC Church. He was a member of the Secular Franciscan Order and a devout Catholic and member of FCSLA. Larry was a Trustee of the

South Union Volunteer Fire Company for over 40 years. Despite his physical challenges he led a productive life filled with hope and faith. He enjoyed classic car shows and especially muscle cars. Larry was the proud owner of a classic green GTO which was his pride and joy. He enjoyed watching Steeler games with his good friend Marty Reagan and having breakfast each morning at Eat N Park with another good friend Joseph Kukan. Surviving are two sisters, Mary Torrey of Poland, ME and Frances V. Prah of Uniontown and many nieces and nephews and good friends.

Pamela Ann (Maky) Boyarsky, S522



On May 14, 2017 Pamela Ann (Maky) Boyarsky left us. She graduated from Denison University at age 21 and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Pi Beta Phi. Pam married Ron Boyarsky in 1965 and they stayed married for the next 52 years; they were best friends. She spent 32 years as a teacher of High School Spanish in South Euclid and in Maple Heights, OH and of Preschoolers in Solon, OH. She spent 17 years as an insurance underwriter with First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association. She watched her 3 boys grow up to be teachers, in one form or another, then move away to Alaska. Pam visited them 20 summers and loved her Alaskan Adventures with her "young men." She reveled in her 2 grandchildren's smiles. She (Mom) was the smartest woman in any room she entered, and she will be missed by everyone who knew her.

Blanche A. Tomecek, W133



Blanche A. Tomecek, 87, Timken, Kansas, January 11, 2017, in La Crosse, Kansas. Mrs. Tomecek was born June 29, 1929, in rural Rush Center, Kansas, the daughter of Joseph and Anna (Oborny) Jecha. She was a lifelong resident of Rush County, Kansas. A 1947 graduate of La Crosse High School, La Crosse, Kansas, she was a homemaker and farm wife. Later, she was employed as a cook at the Rush County Nursing Home, La Crosse, Kansas, and Great Bend Manor, Great Bend, Kansas. She was a member of Holy Trinity Catholic Church, St. Ann's Altar Society, Holy Trinity Parish Council, and was a trustee for the Bohemian National Cemetery, all of Timken, Kansas. On April 23, 1952, she married James E. Tomecek at Holy Trinity Catholic Church, Timken, Kansas. He preceded her in death October 24, 1992. Survivors include: two sons, Edward Tomecek, Timken, Kansas, and Frank Tomecek, Raytown, Missouri; four daughters, Julie Huber (Randy), La Crosse, Kansas, Martha Tomecek (Michel Cavigelli), Greenbelt, Maryland, Loretta Verhaeghe (Mel), Baldwin City, Kansas, and JoAnn Tomecek, Timken, Kansas; eight grandchildren; three great grandchildren; one brother in law, Edward Schwindt, La Crosse, Kansas; and one sister in law, Rosarie Jecha, La Crosse, Kansas. In lieu of flowers, memorials are suggested to the Bohemian National Cemetery, Timken, Kansas, or Holy Cross Cemetery, Timken, Kansas.

FCSLA Members Explore Family Roots on Slovakia Heritage Tour

Marian Bruce, Lorraine Trapp, and Irene Morse grew up as sisters, and long-term FCSLA members (S289) in the Dreyovich family in Gary, IN. Their cousin Betty Yurechko is the Financial Secretary of S289 and proudly served as a National Auditor for FCSLA for many years. As children they learned about their Slovak heritage from their parents Joseph and Anna, and their maternal grandmother Anna Varga Sohovic who lived in Southern Illinois. While their parents insisted that everyone speak English, they heard a lot of Slovak during summer visits with their grandmother who never learned to speak English.

Over the years, they thought about visiting Slo-



Joining in the Bryndzove Halusky cooking lesson. L-R Irene, Lorraine & Marian.

vakia, but this past year they put their plan in action, stepping back in time to explore their family roots together on September's 10-day Slovakia Heritage Tour. The three had always been close, raising their children together in Indiana, until life took them to Georgia, Florida

and California. Now in their 80's and 70's, they decided it was time to find the villages where their parents had spent their childhoods, and get to know their ancestral land better. And, what better way to do it than to share it and relive their childhood memories.

When asked to pick a highlight of the Heritage Tour, Lorraine responded very quickly, "Everything!" She said she was surprised how beautiful the countryside is and that she loved meeting the people as they traveled. The Slovakia Heritage Tour provided lots of opportunities to meet Slovaks, young and old, and they did. The sisters sang, danced, and

listened to Slovak music; admired Slovak folk crafts as well as the new wine at the festivals; marveled over the ancient, but very livable cities; as well as crossed dramatic and ever-changing landscapes.

The sisters worked with a Heritage Tour genealogical researcher before the trip to clarify some of the mysteries around their father's heritage. Their father, Joseph, focused on being American and hardly ever spoke of his interesting childhood. They didn't even know what village his family was from or why his parents took him back to Slovakia as a child. Both of the sisters' parents were born in Pennsylvania and taken to Slovakia as children.

Since Dreyovich (Drejovic in Slovak) is not a common name in Slovakia, the researcher searched for family ties over Eastern Slovakia and turned up a couple of false leads. Finally, it looked like Udavske near Humenne was his likely village. Accompanied by a guide/translator, the sisters set out on a free day in Kosice to find both their mother and father's roots. They confirmed their father's family first-hand with a visit to the small town's (350 people) registry office. Here they were surprised to find that their father had three more siblings born in Slovakia who remained there with their parents. They found their uncles' grave sites in the cemetery. Their father and his other two American-born brothers returned to the United States as soon as they could at the end



Selecting rugs at the weaver's house.



At the weaver's house. Front row (l to r) Irene, Lorraine, and Anna, the weaver. Back Row (l to r) Marian and Anna's granddaughters.



A break at the top of the Tatry Mountains. L-R Lorraine, Irene and Marian.

of World War I.

Although they knew more of their mother's family history, it was impressive to walk the streets of Drienov (between Presov and Kosice) that their mother walked as an elementary school student, and visit the cemetery of their ancestors. They were surprised to stop in the small local grocery to buy a snack and find the same cookies that their mother preferred as they grew up. After seeing the beauty of Slovakia and its culture, they better understood why their grandmother, missing her family and life in Slovakia, made the long trip back.

Their grandmother, Anna Varga Sohovic who was born in Lubovec, had come to the United States at age 17 and married a coal miner in Pennsylvania. She returned to Slovakia pregnant with her two young daughters, hoping that her husband would soon follow her. She put all the money he sent her into building a house for the family, but he insisted on staying in the States. Seven years later she returned to her husband and their new life with 5 more children in the coal mines of Southern Illinois, where Marian, Lorraine and Irene fondly remembering visiting her.

The tour had an added bonus for Irene, the baby of the family. Marian and Lorraine were already in high school when Irene entered kindergarten, so she loved to hear the stories they told about their Slovak family and visits to their grandmother's house. As the much younger sibling, Irene said she was "just there" so she missed a lot of the family culture that her five older siblings experienced. She was delighted to learn more about her Dad who died young when Irene was twelve.

She loved sharing this important look into their family



Marian and Irene learn about lace making on a small village walk.

and her own past with her older sisters on the tour. "The Slovakia Heritage Tour was first-class all the way...beautiful country, great food, wonderful hotels, as well as fascinating and historical sites," she said when asked what she liked about the tour. "It also had a taste of true Slovak culture, awesome people, and the most well-versed, top-rated, interesting and funny two tour guides and driver that one tour could possibly have."

If you would like to explore your family's Slovak history and ties on the 2018 Slovakia Heritage Tour, September 7-16, 2018, contact Judith Northup-Bennett, 978-544-5144 or slovakiaheritagetours@gmail.com; and check out our website at www.slovakiaheritagetours.com.

USE THIS FORM FOR CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND MAGAZINE CANCELLATIONS

CHANGE THE ADDRESS ON ALL FCSLA POLICIES AND COMMUNICATIONS FOR:

☐ INDIVIDUAL — NAME

☐ ENTIRE FAMILY — LIST NAMES

Old Mailing Address

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

New Mailing Address

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone # _____

Signature Required (Insured, Annuitant, Owner)

Date of Birth _____

(for ID purposes)

Today's Date

☐ CANCEL MAGAZINE

MAIL OR FAX TO:

First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association
24950 Chagrin Blvd., Beachwood, OH 44122
FAX: (216) 464-9260



A morning break for music and kolace at the weaver's house.

2018 Saints Cyril and Methodius Appeal

Thank you to all who made a donation to the 2018 Saints Cyril and Methodius Appeal. As many of you know, the funds raised in this annual Appeal are sent to the Pontifical Slovak College of Saints Cyril and Methodius to assist with its day to day operations. The College is the residence of priests from Slovakia who are sent to Rome by their bishops for graduate studies. After receiving their degrees, these priests return to their dioceses to work as seminary teachers, Tribunal officials, and in other ministries.

Donations to the Appeal are received from leadership gifts from the four Slovak Catholic fraternal benefit societies (First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association, First Catholic Slovak Union, Slovak Catholic Sokol, and Ladies Pennsylvania Slovak Catholic Union), their districts and branches, clergy of Slovak heritage, collections from Slovak parishes, and individual gifts. Donations to the 2017 Appeal amounted to \$36,553.39. On behalf of the Pontifical College, thank you for your generosity and continued support.

Those who received a direct mailing for the 2017 Appeal should have received their letters for the 2018 Appeal by the end of January.

Donations in any amount to the 2018 Appeal are deeply appreciated and can also be made by filling out the information in the box at the bottom of this article and mailing it along with your check payable to the **Slovak Catholic Federation** to the address provided. Once again, thank you for your goodness and generosity to the Annual Saints Cyril and Methodius Appeal. Donations received after November 30, 2018 will be credited toward the 2019 Appeal.

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

40th Annual Saints Cyril and Methodius Appeal

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Amount \$ _____

Please make check payable to
Slovak Catholic Federation and mail to:

Rev. Thomas A. Nasta
First Vice President, Slovak Catholic Federation
Sacred Heart Catholic Church
120 Jefferson Street
Swedesburg, PA 19405

REPORT OF THE FCSLA NATIONAL TREASURER

BALANCE SHEET AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2017

ASSETS

Cash & Short Term Investments	\$ 30,980,767
Bonds	885,308,659
Preferred Stock	2,534,873
Common Stock	7,441,505
Investment Income Due & Accrued	12,986,552
Property Plant & Equipment, Net	5,244,947
Certificate Loans & Accrued Interest	2,719,175
Other Assets	7,278,029

TOTAL ASSETS

\$ 954,494,506

LIABILITIES

Life Reserves	\$ 297,602,101
Annuity Reserves	532,901,455
Death Claims Payable	2,433,402
Unearned Premiums	476,596
Matured Endowments	340,750
Provision for Dividends Payable	1,400,000
Accumulated Dividends & Interest	4,570,985
Accrued Convention Donations	483,000
Provision for Future Conventions	366,053
Asset Valuation Reserve	8,816,144
Interest Maintenance Reserve	1,593,005
Other Liabilities	1,735,547

TOTAL LIABILITIES

\$ 852,719,038

Surplus

\$ 101,775,469

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND SURPLUS

\$ 954,494,506

INCOME STATEMENT

For the Nine Months Ending September 30, 2017

REVENUE

Insurance Premiums	\$ 3,151,560
Annuity Premiums	29,837,528
Investment Income	34,733,617
Amortization of Interest Maintenance Reserve	215,133
Rental Income	440,597
Other Revenue	23,887
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 68,402,322

EXPENSE

Increase in Reserves — Life	\$ 1,583,063
Increase in Reserves — Annuity	23,915,437
Insurance Benefits	5,097,475
Annuity Benefits	21,539,997
Commission Expense	886,862
Surrender Benefits	2,932,052
Post Mortem Benefits	984,519
Miscellaneous Member Benefits	67,219
Matured Endowments	20,131
Donation Expenses	97,324
Change in Accrued Convention Donations	189,000
Convention Expenses	267,942
Bank Service Charges	74,939
Data Processing Service Fees	191,531
Accounting Fees	65,618
Actuarial Fees	228,964
Legal Fees	100,446
Consulting Fees	96,762
Bonus to Branches	620,950
Fraternal Activities	113,413
Official Publications	339,659
Scholarship Awards	243,047
Miscellaneous Employee Benefits	350,791
Fees — Directors	129,615
Salaries — Employees	1,522,203
Salaries — Officers	422,697
Interest Expense	222,697
Tax Expense	263,104
Depreciation Expense	199,164
Utility Expense	97,548
Postage and Printing	182,731
Advertising	85,585
Travel Expense	98,330
Insurance Department Fees	216,078
Sales Promotion	168,590
Rental Expense	486,166
Other Expense	515,559
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 64,617,208

Income (Loss) from Operations

\$ 3,785,114

Dividends to Members 1,038,132

Subtotal Income (Loss) \$ 2,746,983

Capital Gains (Loss) (89,861)

NET INCOME (Loss) \$ 2,657,122



Game Night

OREO STUFFED CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

- 1 cup (2 sticks) softened butter
- ¾ cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 3½ cups flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1 package Double Stuff Oreo cookies

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, cream butter, brown sugar, and granulated sugar together with a mixer until well combined. Beat in eggs and vanilla.

In medium bowl mix the flour, salt, and baking soda. Slowly add to wet ingredients along with chocolate chips until just combined.

With a cookie scoop, form balls with the dough. Place one ball on top of an Oreo cookie, and another ball on the bottom. Seal edges together by pressing and cupping in hand until a large ball is formed and Oreo cookie is fully enclosed with dough.

Place onto parchment lined baking sheets and bake cookies for approximately 13 minutes or until golden brown. Let cool for 5 minutes before transferring to cooling rack.

TURKEY TACOS

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ¾ cup thinly sliced onion
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic (2 cloves)
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1½ cups shredded cooked turkey
- ¼ cup spicy red or green salsa, plus more for serving
- 8 (6-inch) corn tortillas
- ¾ cup mashed sweet potatoes, heated

Sour cream, grated extra-sharp cheddar, fried eggs (optional), and lime wedges, for serving.

Heat oil in a medium skillet over medium-high. Add onion and garlic; season with salt and pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, until onion is translucent, about 5 minutes. Add turkey and cook, stirring, until heated through, about 2 minutes. Stir in salsa and heat through, about 1 minute more.

Place a tortilla directly on a gas flame or in a heavy skillet over high heat. When edges begin to char, about 15 seconds, turn; cook second side until bubbles form all over surface, about 15 seconds more. Wrap in a clean kitchen towel. Repeat with remaining tortillas. Layer each tortilla with mashed sweet potatoes, then turkey mixture. Top with salsa, sour cream, cheese, and eggs. Serve, with lime wedges.

BUFFALO CHICKEN & BLUE CHEESE PASTA BAKE WITH CAMPANELLE

- 1 box Campanelle pasta
- 1 jar (15 oz.) Creamy Alfredo sauce
- Nonstick cooking spray
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 3 cups shredded rotisserie chicken
- ½ cup buffalo wing sauce
- 1½ cups shredded mozzarella cheese, divided
- 2 ounces crumbled blue cheese

Heat oven to 350 degrees; spray a 13x9-inch baking dish with cooking spray; set aside.

In a large pot, bring 4 to 6 quarts of water to a rolling boil; add salt to taste and the pasta. Stir gently, then cook pasta according to directions on box; remove from heat. Drain well, and toss with olive oil.

In a large mixing bowl, combine the pasta, chicken, Alfredo sauce, ½ cup buffalo wing sauce, and 1 cup of the mozzarella cheese. Stir until well combined and transfer to baking dish. Top with the remaining ½ cup shredded mozzarella and the blue cheese. Bake 15 to 20 minutes, uncovered, or until mixture is hot and cheese is melted.

Before serving, top with sliced green onions, chopped fresh parsley, minced carrot, minced celery, and/or additional buffalo wing sauce, if desired.

ZUCCHINI-PARMESAN BREAD WITH POPPY SEEDS

- 1 stick unsalted butter, melted, plus more for pan
- 2¼ cups unbleached all-purpose flour, plus more for pan
- 3 cups shredded zucchini
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

- 1¼ teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 tablespoon poppy seeds
- 3½ oz. Parmesan, shredded (1½ cups)
- 3 large eggs, room temperature
- ⅓ cup sour cream

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Brush a standard 9-by-5-inch loaf pan with butter and dust with flour, tapping out excess.

Place zucchini in the center of a clean kitchen towel or a few layers of cheesecloth. Gather into a tight bundle and squeeze out as much excess liquid as possible; set aside. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, salt, pepper, baking powder, baking soda, and poppy seeds, 30 seconds. Add 1 cup cheese; toss to evenly coat in flour mixture. In another bowl, whisk together butter, eggs, sour cream, and zucchini until smooth. Make a well in flour mixture and pour zucchini mixture into it. Stir together just until combined and no dry flour remains (do not over-mix). Transfer to prepared pan. Top evenly with remaining ½ cup cheese.

Bake until a tester inserted into center comes out clean, 1 hour to 1 hour, 10 minutes. Let cool in pan 10 minutes, then transfer loaf to a wire rack and let cool completely. Bread can be stored at room temperature, wrapped in parchment-lined foil, up to 3 days.

CHOCOLATE 'CRACK'

- 51 saltine crackers (approximately)
- 1 cup unsalted butter
- 1 cup dark brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 12 oz. high quality dark chocolate (70% or greater)
- Flaky sea salt

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a 12" x 17" inch jelly roll pan with foil. Place saltine crackers salt side up and side-by-side in the pan as tightly as possible without overlapping. Use saltine pieces to fill any gaps at the bottom of the pan. Set aside. Chop chocolate so pieces are about the size of standard chocolate chips and set aside.

In a medium saucepan melt butter over medium heat stirring frequently with a spatula. Once butter has melted, add brown sugar and vanilla, stirring to combine. Cook for about 5 minutes or until mixture is an even dark brown color and has begun to bubble. Remove from heat and pour over saltines using spatula to spread sauce.

Bake crackers for 5 minutes or until butter mixture begins to bubble. Remove from oven and sprinkle evenly with chocolate allowing the heat to melt the chocolate. Spread chocolate evenly with the spatula so all of the crackers are completely covered. Sprinkle with sea salt. Refrigerate until chocolate sets and hardens. Break apart and serve.

The FCSLA Mission Statement

We provide financial security to our members while embracing our Catholic values and Slavic traditions.

The FCSLA Vision is to:

Be a Premier Fraternal Benefit Society that offers quality financial products and benefits.