

APRIL 2024

# GCU

MAGAZINE

## Annual Report Issue

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## Board of Directors

**Fr. Valerian M. Michlik**  
Spiritual Advisor

**Gregory N. Vladika**  
Chairman of the Board

**George Kofel**  
Vice-Chairman &  
Secretary to the Board

**George W. Batyko**

**Melanie Basl**

**Lisa Gulibon**

**Michael W. Karaffa**

**David A. Oleksa**

**John W. Oslick**

**Maria Silvestri**

**John J. Urban**

**George N. Juba,**  
Editor

**Basil M. Wahal,**  
Managing Editor

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George N. Juba  
President  
CEO

# Welcome to the GCU Annual Report Issue

**W**elcome to the GCU's 2024 Annual Report issue of the *GCU Magazine*. The year 2023 proved to be very challenging for all financial institutions under the current high interest rate environment coupled with investment market volatility, uncertain US & global economies and continued concerns over inflation. Despite the headwinds faced, GCU experienced continued growth in assets and surplus along with recording a net gain from operations. Assets increased \$63 million totaling \$2.7 billion, surplus increased \$1.8 million totaling \$221.3 million with net income from operations of \$10.7 million for year-end 2023. Despite the competitive annuity and life insurance marketplace GCU experienced \$359 million of annuity premium including exchanges, achieving 84.3% of our goal of \$425 million. Recorded life premium of \$9.4 million fell slightly short of our goal of \$10.4 million. Our sincere appreciation to our members and agents for the continued support and trust you have placed in GCU that enables us to present continued financial stability. We invite you to review our Chief Financial Officer Tim Demetres' full detailed report on the GCU's 2023 financial performance beginning on page 6.

Seven Oaks Country Club, Inc., a subsidiary of the GCU Holding Company, Inc., and the primary financial activity within the Holding Company recorded record total revenues of \$4.6 million, primarily fueled by membership dues, initiation fees and food & beverage sales. The continued improved revenues are attributed to the renovations to the entire facility over the last several years and the opening of the new Swimming Pool and Racquet Complex that opened in June 2023. The master renovation plan to Seven Oaks is now complete and is reflective of the GCU as a \$2.7 billion fraternal benefit society that will continue to improve the financial position of the Club!

The GCU Real Estate Company, Inc., another subsidiary of the Holding Company, had no sales activity in 2023. We experienced the sale of one lot thus far in 2024 as there are six remaining lots in the single-family development at Congressional Place. Pinehurst Village, a multi-family carriage home development within Seven Oaks under the ownership of Castlebrook Development, currently has five units under construction.



We invite you to visit the entire campus of the GCU that includes the Home Office, our St. Nicholas of Myra Chapel, Seven Oaks Country Club, the real estate development and the most spectacular landscape that nature has to offer. You will certainly be impressed and proud to be a GCU member!

Our St. Nicholas of Myra Chapel was constructed as a memorial to our Founders and to honor the many generations of GCU Members throughout our one hundred and thirty-two years of history. The Chapel was initially dedicated and opened in June of 1992. The basement of the Chapel houses a museum that contains various artifacts of GCU's history. The GCU Museum will be rededicated on Sunday, May 5, 2024 in conjunction with celebrating the "Spring St. Nicholas" Feast Day. More information on this event is presented on page 16. Our thank you to Spiritual Advisor Fr. Val Michlik for his leadership in organizing this event!

We concluded the first full year under the GCU's new Fraternal Metamorphosis Program. Once again, our gratitude and thank you to each of our Constellation and Byzantine Catholic Parish Coordinators. We certainly reached two of our major goals with this new format to expand the GCU's presence in many new communities and our Byzantine Catholic Parishes and in attracting new GCU faces to the various fraternal activities that were planned throughout

CONTINUED

the year. We invite you to participate in the many volunteer, fundraising and social events planned in 2024. Please visit the GCU's website – [www.GCUusa.com](http://www.GCUusa.com) – and “click” on **Events** to view the various activities scheduled.

Per the current Bylaws of the GCU, an election for members to the Board of Directors will be conducted amongst all GCU adult benefit members (*18 years of age and older*) this year. A timeline of the entire election process is presented on this page. The Board of Directors has once again contracted with Broadridge Financial Solutions, Inc., a leading provider of annual meeting and voting related services to conduct the entire election process from the mailing to the tabulation of the ballots.

Our sincere thank you to the Board of Directors for their faith and trust given to our Executive Officers, Department Directors and Supervisors and our entire Support Staff! Your guidance and recognition of all our conscientious efforts is greatly appreciated—that plays a most critical role in our continued success! We express our thank you to **YOU**, our members and to our **AGENTS** for the life and annuity business you have placed with the GCU!

In closing, my best wishes to you and your family that you are protected by the hand of God and may our Patron St. Nicholas also continue to provide the wisdom and guidance to the current leadership of the GCU to successfully navigate through current and future challenges.

As we are in the midst of spring, enjoy the beauty of nature as it revitalizes itself from its winter slumber. This transformation is such an astonishing feat only God could provide—ENJOY!

As always, please contact me with any questions or concerns!

GOODNESS IS GREAT!



## 2024 GCU Board Election Timeline

**December 2023**—Declaration of Candidacy Form available on GCU Website. Election announced in *GCU Magazine*.

**February 2024**—GCU Board Election announced in *GCU Magazine*.

**April 1, 2024**—Declaration of Candidacy and supporting documents must be postmarked and sent to GCU Home Office for consideration and approval of Nominating Committee.

**May 1, 2024**—All applications, upon approval by Nominating Committee, will be submitted to Broadridge Financial Solutions, Inc.

**June 3, 2024**—Ballots mailed to members.

**July 1, 2024**—Balloting closes online; mailed ballots must be postmarked and returned.



Jeff Long  
Sales Director

# Securing Your Retirement

## The Benefits of a GCU Single Premium Immediate Annuity for Guaranteed Income

In today's uncertain financial landscape, planning for retirement has become increasingly complex. With volatility in markets and uncertainty about the future of social security, many individuals are seeking ways to ensure a steady stream of income during their retirement years. One powerful tool that has gained popularity in recent years is the Single Premium Immediate Annuity (SPIA). Offering peace of mind and financial security, SPIAs provide a reliable source of guaranteed income throughout retirement. Let's explore the benefits of this investment vehicle and how it can help you achieve your retirement goals.

**What is a Single Premium Immediate Annuity?** SPIAs are a type of annuity contract where a lump sum of money is deposited with an insurance company in exchange for a guaranteed stream of income that starts immediately, typically within one year of purchase. Unlike other types of annuities that may offer deferred payments, SPIAs provide immediate income, making them an attractive option for individuals who are already retired or nearing retirement age and seeking to convert a lump sum of savings into guaranteed income.

### Benefits of a Single Premium Immediate Annuity

- **Guaranteed Income Stream.** One of the most compelling benefits of a single premium immediate annuity is the assurance of a steady income stream for life. Upon purchasing the annuity, payments begin immediately and continue for the rest of your life, regardless of market conditions or economic fluctuations. This guaranteed income can provide financial stability and peace of mind, allowing you to enjoy your retirement years without worrying about outliving your savings.
- **Protection Against Longevity Risk.** Outliving your retirement savings, also known as longevity risk, is a common concern for retirees. With a single premium immediate annuity, you can mitigate this risk by converting a portion of your savings into a lifelong income stream

that starts immediately. Regardless of how long you live, you will continue to receive payments, ensuring that you can maintain your standard of living and cover essential expenses throughout retirement.

- **Predictable Payments.** SPIAs offer predictable payments that are determined at the time of purchase based on factors such as your age, the amount of the initial investment, and prevailing interest rates. Unlike other investment vehicles that may fluctuate in value, SPIA payments remain stable and consistent, providing you with a reliable source of income to budget and plan for your retirement expenses.
- **Estate Planning Benefits.** In addition to providing lifetime income for the annuitant, single premium immediate annuities can offer estate planning benefits for beneficiaries. With certain annuity riders or contract features, you can ensure that any remaining funds are passed on to your heirs or designated beneficiaries after your death. This can provide a valuable legacy for your loved ones while also avoiding the probate process and potential estate taxes.

**Conclusion.** As individuals approach retirement, ensuring a reliable source of income becomes paramount. A GCU Single Premium Immediate Annuity offers a compelling solution, providing guaranteed income protection against longevity risk, predictable payments and estate planning benefits. By converting a lump sum of money into a stream of immediate payments, retirees can enjoy financial security and peace of mind throughout their golden years. However, it's essential to carefully evaluate your financial situation and consult with GCU to determine if a Single Premium Immediate Annuity aligns with your retirement goals and risk tolerance. With proper planning and consideration, a Single Premium Immediate Annuity can be a valuable tool in securing your financial future.



## Privacy Policy

We appreciate your Membership with the GCU. The GCU is a Fraternal Benefit Society that has always been and will be committed to protecting the privacy of your personal financial and medical information. This will continue to be a matter of top priority for us.

**We will not:**

- disclose personal, non-public information about you to anyone other than our affinity partners and always, only as permitted or required by law.
- disclose personal medical information about you except as permitted by law or as you may authorize.
- sell lists of our members to any vendor of goods or services.

**We will:**

- restrict access to non-public personal information about you to those employees who need to know that information to provide products to you.
- maintain physical, electronic and procedural safeguards that comply with the federal standards to guard your non-public personal information.
- Remove your name and contact information from all affinity mailings at your request. You should make your request in writing to the GCU or call us at 855-306-0607.

We collect non-public personal information about you from the following sources:

- Information we receive from you on applications or other forms.
- Information from medical tests requested by us or from your medical services providers (medical information collection applicable to some life and health insurance policies, not annuities).
- Information about your transactions with us (such as premium payments, loans, claims, etc.).
- Information we receive from consumer reporting agencies.

Our continued goal is to maintain complete, accurate and up-to-date records. You may contact us in writing at 5400 Tuscarawas Road, Beaver, PA 15009 or call 855-306-0607 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 your name, date of birth and Social Security Number.

Fraternally yours,

**George N. Juba**  
President/CEO



# GCU



## Investing in the Goodness of Community

We invest our time, effort and talent into creating strong, stable products that make **your family's future more secure**. We make sure our products bring **high returns and peace of mind**.

Not big bankers, **just people of faith**.  
Not motivated by profit, but by **protecting the assets of families**.  
Not tied to Wall Street, only **Main Street**.

In every moment, we invest our highest selves in **doing the right thing** for your family, your neighbors and the place we call home.



We are a not-for-profit life insurance and annuity company with a heart and more than \$2.7 billion in assets. We invest in our community with:

- ✦ **Over \$1 million** donated to charity in 2023
- ✦ **GCU volunteers** assisted in over 250 communities last year
- ✦ **\$124,250** awarded in College Scholarships in 2023
- ✦ **GCU** is proud of the impact it has on the lives of our members and the communities they call home

**Protecting families like yours since 1892.**

**Discover today how to personalize financial protection for your lifestyle!**



5400 Tuscarawas Rd, Beaver PA, 15009  
P 1.800.722.4428 E info@GCUusa.com





**Tim Demetres**  
Chief Financial Officer

# 2023 Financial Results

We began 2023 with the Federal Reserve implementing a series of interest rate increases to moderate growth and tame inflation rates not seen in 40 years. These increases resulted in significant volatility in financial results stemming from rising crediting rates, investment valuations and cash flows. Short-term yields were at the highest levels not seen in 10+ years. Notwithstanding, the U.S. economy remained resilient in a tight labor market. In the fourth quarter, the Fed announced it was pausing and rates began to levelize. We look ahead to 2024 being a year of stabilized market yields and adding new features to our life and annuity products. Our rating agencies have reaffirmed the A- (excellent) financial strength rating.

GCU's total assets increased \$63 million to \$2.7 billion and surplus surpassed \$221 million as of December 31, 2023. We are committed to serving our members and community as we have since 1892.

## Highlights of 2023

Income before net realized capital gains (losses) totaled \$10.7 million in 2023 compared to \$20.9 million reported in 2022. The gain from operations was lower in 2023 primarily due to increasing crediting rates on annuity contracts. Net income after realized capital gains (losses) was \$5.9 million in 2023 compared to \$18.1 million in 2022. We had \$4.6 million in net realized capital losses primarily from the disposal of a bond fund in 2023.

Total Assets increased \$63 million growing invested assets and increasing short-term liquidity. The increase in interest rates provided an opportunity to partially rebalance portfolio holdings achieving three key goals:

- a) increase credit quality;
- b) shorten duration risk; and
- c) improve investment returns.

We continue to employ a diversified asset allocation strategy to appropriately manage risk.

Liabilities grew \$61 million to \$2.483 billion in 2023 compared to \$2.422 billion at year-end 2022. Life and annuity reserves increased \$54.1 million along with a \$9 million increase in the asset valuation reserve (AVR - a reserve for future credit losses).

Total Income in 2023 was \$490.0 million, a decrease of \$17.5 million compared to \$507.5 million in 2022. Life and annuity sales, including conversions, decreased only \$19 million year over year.

Operating expenses, before the increase in reserves, totaled \$425.4 million in 2023 versus \$255.6 million in 2022.

In 2023, GCU disbursed \$113.8 million more in annuity benefits in death claims, full surrenders and partial withdrawals. Annuity exchanges increased \$56.6 million from members moving to new contracts offering higher crediting rates. Commissions paid agents decreased \$2.2 million commensurate with lower life and annuity sales. General insurance expenses were only \$649.7 thousand higher in 2023 when compared to 2022. Pension expenses decreased \$397 thousand due to lower retirement distributions.

The increase in reserves totaled \$53.9 million in 2023 compared to \$230.9 million in 2022. Reserves generally increase from premiums received and interest accumulation offset by decreases from death claims and annuity benefit payments.

Surplus grew to \$221.3 million in 2023 compared to \$219.5 million at year-end 2022. The \$1.8 million net increase in surplus reflects the additions of \$5.9 million of net income and a \$6.2 million increase in unrealized gains offset by a \$9 million increase to the AVR and \$1.0 million net loss of GCU Holding Company and Subsidiaries.

Total Adjusted Capital (TAC) was \$249.3 million at December 31, 2023. TAC starts with surplus of \$221.3 million and adds the asset valuation reserve of \$27.9 million and one-half the dividend liability of \$150,000. TAC is a financial strength measure closely monitored by rating agencies. The solvency ratios based on TAC were 110.2% and 109.9%, as of December 31, 2023 and 2022, respectively. These strong ratios reflect GCU's commitment to financial strength.

Spring returns, Enjoy! Tim

## GCU Balance Sheet Comparison

AS OF DECEMBER 31,

<b>Assets (000's omitted)</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Bonds	\$2,499,632	\$2,472,932	\$26,700
Preferred Stocks	17,144	18,626	(1,482)
Common Stocks	27,935	27,985	(50)
Cash//Short Term Investments	38,457	15,575	22,881
Mortgages	2,509	3,473	(964)
Certificate Loans	671	630	42
Derivatives	3,337	1,115	2,222
Real Estate	15,858	15,059	799
Investment Income Due & Accrued	29,716	29,829	(113)
Alternative Investments	68,213	55,912	12,300
Other	1,220	611	608
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$2,704,691</b>	<b>\$2,641,748</b>	<b>\$62,943</b>
<b>Percentage Total Change Year to Year</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>10.4%</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Life Reserves	\$ 94,568	\$ 89,472	\$ 5,096
Annuity Reserves	2,335,053	2,286,024	49,029
Accident & Health Reserves	126	120	6
Employee Pension Liability	6,880	6,595	285
Symposium Reserve	—	127	(127)
Advance Premium & Future Refund Reserves	350	356	(6)
Pending Investment Trades	559	—	559
Accounts Payable	1,269	1,211	58
Refund Accumulations	1,554	2,555	(1,000)
Asset Valuation Reserve-AVR	27,891	18,876	9,015
Interest Maintenance Reserve-IMR	15,134	16,929	(1,795)
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$2,483,384</b>	<b>\$2,422,267</b>	<b>\$ 61,117</b>
<b>Surplus Fund</b>	<b>221,307</b>	<b>219,484</b>	<b>1,823</b>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Surplus</b>	<b>\$ 2,704,691</b>	<b>\$ 2,641,751</b>	<b>\$62,940</b>
<b>Normal Solvency</b>	<b>110.2%</b>	<b>109.9%</b>	
<b>Solvency Ratio*</b>	<b>110.2%</b>	<b>109.9%</b>	

\*Adds AVR and one half dividend liability to surplus

Financial information is unaudited and is presented on the statutory basis of accounting.

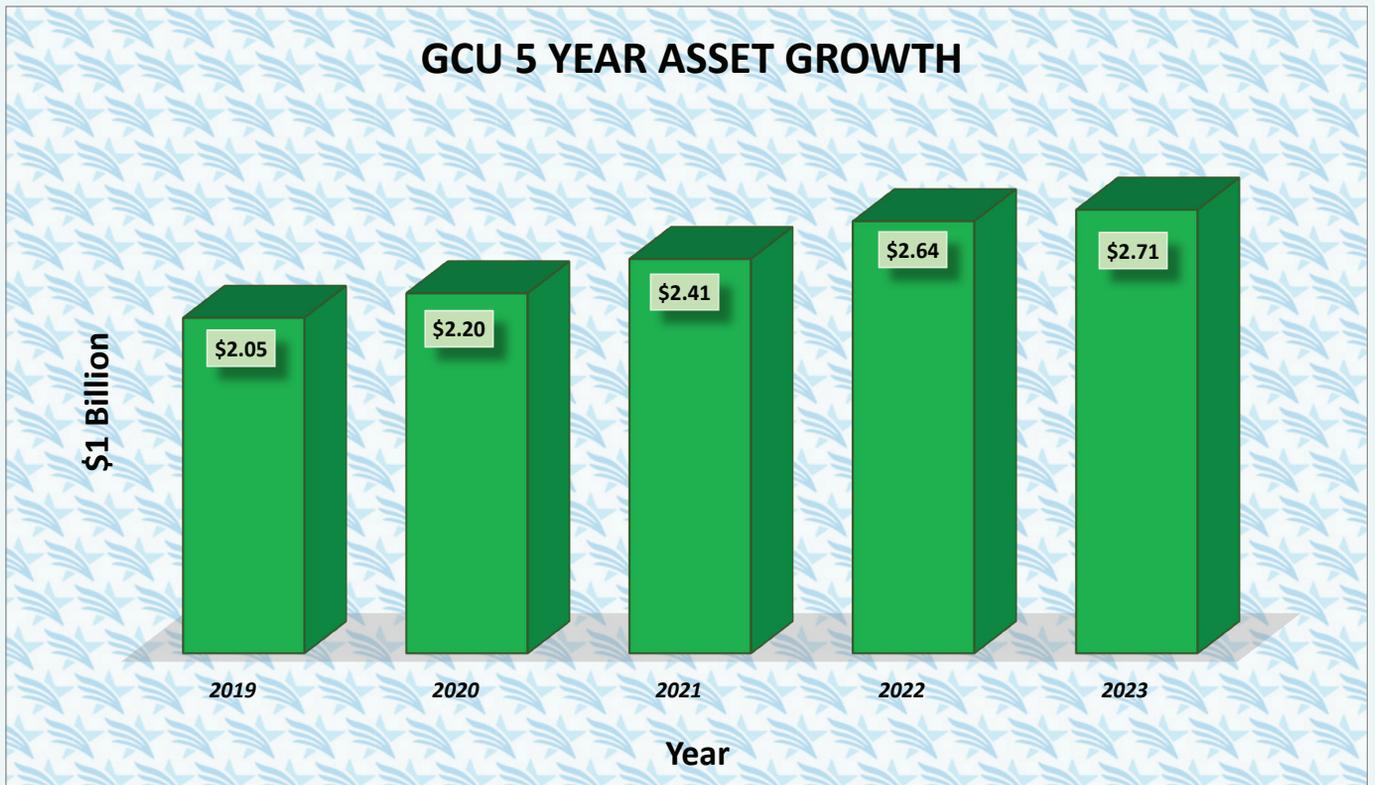
## GCU Income Statement Comparison

Income	YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31,		
	2023	2022	Difference
Life Premium	\$ 9,378,895	\$ 11,512,247	\$ (2,133,352)
Annuity Premium	284,412,591	357,606,944	(73,194,353)
Annuity Exchanges	74,362,618	17,812,639	56,549,979
Accident & Health	408,367	460,505	(52,138)
Total Premiums	368,562,471	387,392,335	(18,829,864)
Net Investment Income	119,081,819	116,950,591	2,131,228
Amortization of Interest Maintenance Reserve	1,527,639	1,903,220	(375,581)
Commission Allowance for Reinsurance	416,453	869,813	(453,360)
Other	347,706	398,499	(50,793)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$489,936,089</b>	<b>\$507,514,459</b>	<b>\$(17,578,370)</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Death Benefits	\$ 4,600,817	\$ 3,922,426	\$ 678,391
Annuity Benefits Paid	315,554,827	201,761,922	113,792,905
Annuity Exchanges	74,362,618	17,812,639	56,549,979
Surrender Benefits	1,111,530	480,729	630,801
Accident & Health Benefits Paid	392,106	393,864	(1,758)
Commissions	17,360,297	19,591,528	(2,231,231)
General Insurance Exp	10,850,427	10,221,708	628,719
Insurance, Taxes, Licenses and Fees	557,377	517,752	39,625
Pension Distributions and Expense	193,956	590,566	(396,610)
Interest on Contract and Deposit Type Accounts	354,176	322,823	31,353
Sub-Total	\$ 425,338,133	\$255,615,957	\$ 169,722,176
Increase in Reserves	53,852,430	230,915,150	(177,062,720)
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$479,190,563</b>	<b>\$486,531,107</b>	<b>\$(7,340,544)</b>
<b>Net Gain/Loss from Operations before Refunds</b>	<b>10,745,525</b>	<b>20,983,352</b>	<b>(10,237,827)</b>
<b>Refunds to Members</b>	<b>297,160</b>	<b>297,206</b>	<b>(46)</b>
<b>Net Gain/Loss from Operations after Refunds</b>	<b>10,448,366</b>	<b>20,686,146</b>	<b>(10,237,780)</b>
<b>Net Capital Gains (Losses)</b>	<b>(4,551,918)</b>	<b>(2,558,448)</b>	<b>(1,993,470)</b>
<b>Net Income/Loss</b>	<b>\$ 5,896,448</b>	<b>\$ 18,127,698</b>	<b>\$(12,231,250)</b>

# Financial Report

## Four Year Comparative Summary

	YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31,			
	2023	2022	2021	2020
Assets	\$ 2.71 Bil	\$ 2.64 Bil	\$ 2.41 Bil	\$ 2.20 Bil
Total Income	489.9 Mil	507.5 Mil	424 Mil	354 Mil
Total Operating Expense	479.2 Mil	486.5 Mil	390.7 Mil	325.0 Mil
Reserve Change - Life and Annuities	53.9 Mil	230.9 Mil	165.5 Mil	134.9 Mil
Income from Operations	10.5 Mil	20.7 Mil	32.8 Mil	29.7 Mil
Refunds to Members	(297)	(297,206)	(326,412)	(278,922)
Capital Gains (Losses)	(4,551,918)	(2,558,448)	180,168	(16,851,138)
Net Income	5,896,448	18,127,696	33,020,548	12,817,883
Reserve - Interest Maintenance	15,134,251	16,928,863	22,558,433	21,124,000
Reserve - Asset Valuation	27,891,009	18,876,443	23,831,449	8,316,048
<b>Surplus (Net Worth)</b>	<b>\$221,306,671</b>	<b>\$219,483,621</b>	<b>\$209,241,589</b>	<b>\$202,850,229</b>



## General Insurance Expenses

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31,

	2023	2022	Difference
Rent	\$ 94,000	\$ 94,000	\$ —
Salaries & Wages	4,812,770	4,521,527	291,243
Employee Benefits	698,664	703,497	(4,833)
Legal Fees & Expenses	60,843	22,149	38,694
Medical Examination Fees	141,529	104,527	37,002
Accounting, Actuarial and Banking Fees	567,390	560,368	7,022
Board Meetings, Travel and Other	188,477	151,863	36,614
Advertising	6,600	—	6,600
Postage & Phone	232,084	202,269	29,815
Printing & Stationary	134,749	152,564	(17,815)
Rental of Equipment	29,877	17,826	12,051
Books and Periodicals	17,300	1,643	15,657
Bureau and Association Dues	62,395	43,517	18,878
Cost and Depreciation of Furniture & Equipment	1,947,860	1,896,014	51,846
Insurance Fees	57,080	142,481	(85,401)
Sundry General Expenses	141,598	167,643	(26,045)
Official Publication	66,894	65,645	1,249
Fraternal Activities	1,246,603	1,165,149	81,454
Data Processing Supplies/Expenses	255,414	207,059	48,355
Marketing Consultant Fees and Expenses	88,300	1,967	86,333
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10,850,427</b>	<b>\$10,221,708</b>	<b>\$628,719</b>

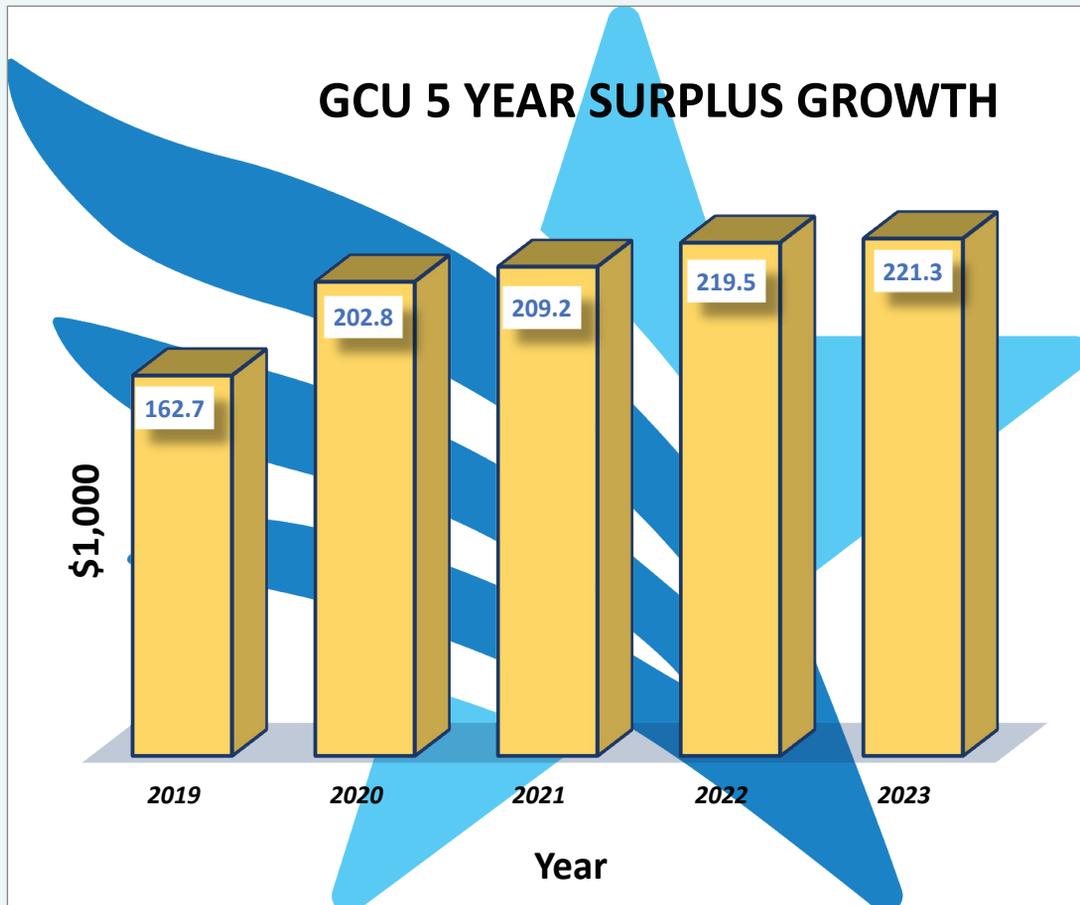
## GCU Subsidiary Operations - Year 2023\*

	GCU Holding & Subsidiaries	GCU Holding Co.	GCU Real Estate Co.	Seven Oaks Country Club	GCU Agency Inc.
Equity, Beginning of Year	\$ 22,445,414	\$68,408	\$1,146,324	\$ 21,171,500	\$59,182
Net Income (Loss)	(1,037,994)	(23,197)	(21,185)	(995,501)	1,889
Capital Contributions	4,178,941	—	—	4,178,941	—
Other	(212,389)	—	—	(212,389)	—
<b>Equity, End of Year</b>	<b>\$25,373,972</b>	<b>\$45,211</b>	<b>\$1,125,139</b>	<b>\$24,142,551</b>	<b>\$61,071</b>

\*Financial information is unaudited and is presented in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

## GCU Surplus Comparison

	YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31,		
	2023	2022	Change
Beginning Surplus	\$ 219,483,624	\$ 209,241,589	\$10,242,034
Net Income	5,896,449	18,127,697	(12,231,248)
Change in Unrealized Gain/(Loss)	7,232,407	(11,943,632)	19,176,039
GCU Holding Company	(1,042,493)	(552,194)	(490,299)
Changes in Pension Asset/Liability	(861,385)	-	(861,385)
Changes in Non-Admitted Assets	(387,364)	(344,842)	(42,522)
Changes in Asset Valuation Reserve	(9,014,566)	4,955,006	(13,969,572)
Net Change in Surplus	1,823,048	10,242,034	(8,418,986)
<b>Ending Surplus</b>	<b>\$221,306,672</b>	<b>\$219,483,624</b>	<b>\$ 1,823,048</b>



# GCU Executive & National Officers

## Executive Officers



**George N. Juba**  
President/CEO



**Tim Demetres**  
Chief Financial and  
Risk Officer



**Atty. Theodore  
Trbovich**  
General Counsel

## General Counsel

## Board of Directors



**Fr. Valerian M  
Michlik**  
National Spiritual  
Advisor



**Gregory N. Vladika**  
National Director  
Chairman of the Board



**George Kofel**  
National Director  
Vice Chair &  
Secretary of the Board



**Melanie Basl**  
National Director



**George W. Batyko**  
National Director



**Lisa Gulibon**  
National Director



**Michael W. Karaffa**  
National Director



**David A. Oleksa**  
National Director



**John W. Oslick**  
National Director



**Maria Silvestri**  
National Director



**Atty. John J. Urban**  
National Director

## Honorary Officers



**Catherine "Kitty" Cherevka**  
Honorary Officer



**Patricia Dietz**  
Honorary Officer



**Michael I. Roman**  
Honorary Officer



**Martha Seech**  
Honorary Officer

## GCU Home Office Management



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In-Force Policy  
Manager



**Stacy Culler**  
Operations Service  
Manager



**Marilyn Dyrwal**  
New Business &  
Producer Services  
Director



**John P. Harbist**  
Compliance Director



**Jeff Long**  
Sales Director



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Policy Disbursements,  
Commissions &  
Program Management  
Director



**Jeremy Nichols**  
Controller



**Bryan O'Shaughnessy**  
Technology Director



**Bill Schulok**  
Chief Life Underwriter



**Basil M. Wahal**  
Marketing/Fraternal  
Communications  
Director

## GCU Home Office Hours of Operation

The GCU Home Office (800.722.4428) is open Monday thru Friday 8:30 AM to 5 PM EDT.

The Call Center (855.306.0607) operates Monday thru Thursday from 8:30 AM to 7 PM EDT and Fridays 8:30 AM to 5 PM EDT.

The Home Office will be closed on Monday, May 27 in observance of Memorial Day. Regular business hours will resume on Tuesday, May 28.



## Are You Enjoying the GCU Magazine?

The *GCU Magazine* is published on a bi-monthly basis in February, April, June, August, October and December.

**All members receive the April—Annual Report issue.**

If you do not receive the magazine the other months and would like to, please email [bwahal@GCUusa.com](mailto:bwahal@GCUusa.com) or contact the GCU Fraternal-Communications Department at 1-800-722-4428 ext. 3810.



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**Tim Demetres**  
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**Beaver, PA Constellation**  
**Elizabeth Harbist**—Beaver, PA

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**Kim Kolesar**—West Mifflin, PA

**Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, PA Constellation**  
**Laure Marcin**—Shavertown, PA

## Elected National Officers

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National Spiritual Advisor & Director  
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833 Laurel Rd.  
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**Atty. John J. Urban**  
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Rocky River, OH 44116



Fr. Valerian M. Michlik

GCU Spiritual Advisor

# Christ is Risen!

Christ is Risen! Christos Voskrese!

**N**ow on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him."

Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. So, they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. (John 20:1-7)

As the apostle Peter arrived at the tomb, he went right in. He sees the linen clothes lying there, but there was something unusual. Something caught his eye: the napkin/handkerchief! The napkin, which was placed over the face of our Lord, was NOT thrown aside like the linen/burial cloths. The napkin was neatly folded together "in a place itself." Should this mean anything to us?

The folded napkin had to do with the notion of the Master and Servant according to Hebrew tradition. You see when the servant would set the dinner table for the master of the house, the servant made sure that all was furnished perfectly, including the placement of the napkin on the table.

During the course of the evening when the master of the house was done eating, he would rise from the table, use the napkin to wipe his fingers, his mouth, and afterwards he would toss the napkin onto the table. Tossing the napkin onto the table was a signal for the servant that the master is done eating and it is time to clean up the table.

But if the master got up from the table, and folded his napkin, and laid it aside... that contained a message for the servant. That folded napkin meant "I'm not finished yet" or "I'm coming back!"

You see my friends, when the apostles Peter and John entered the empty tomb and saw that folded napkin/hand-



kerchief laying to the side they understood the meaning of that. The apostles Peter and John knew that their Master, Teacher, and Friend was coming back, because they saw that the napkin is still folded!

This napkin, when it is properly understood, is a message of hope and joy from our Risen Lord!

Since we are celebrating Easter - Pascha allow me to offer a funny story: A Sunday school teacher was asking her six-year-olds about the meaning of Easter. "Children," she said, "Do you know why we celebrate Easter?" A little girl raised her hand. "Yes Jenny," said the teacher. Jenny said, "Is Easter when we put on costumes and go trick-or-treating?" "No, Jenny. That's Halloween. Does anyone else know?"

A little boy yelled, "It's when we set off fireworks!" "No Jimmy, that's 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Anybody else?" A shy little girl in the back said, "Easter is when Jesus died." The teacher replied, "That's right Shauna. And what happened to Jesus that makes Easter special?" "Well, he died and got buried. And every Easter he comes out. And if he sees his shadow there's 6 more weeks of winter."

You've probably heard that joke before, but the sad part is that many in our world today do not know what the true meaning of Pascha - Easter is all about.

Since the napkin is still folded for you and for me it is our sacred duty to share and teach the world around us (starting at home) what the true meaning of Pascha - Easter is.

Pascha stands as the cornerstone of our Holy Faith, marking the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. It signifies the

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victory over death and sin, offering believers the promise of eternal life. The Resurrection is so central to us as Byzantine Catholics that all elements of the faith revolve around it, making Pascha - Easter the most important and joyous celebration of the ecclesiastical year. Pascha - Easter is not just a historical commemoration but a present reality. It is not just about the Easter basket, and the wonderful Easter food we enjoy every year, but it's seen as a chance to spiritually rebirth oneself, to shed the old ways and embrace the new life in Christ. And this renewal is not a private undertaking but a communal one in our parishes and families. We can demonstrate this as we gather together to break the Lenten fast, share the Paschal meal, and exchange greetings of "Christ is Risen-Christos Voskrese" to which we reply, "Indeed He is Risen-Voistinu Voskrese."

Friends, the napkin is still folded!

Therefore, as we celebrate Easter - Pascha, which stands as a beacon of hope and renewal in our lives, it is my humble wish that this will be a time when the breaking of bread, the sharing of dyed eggs, ham and other great foods become profound acts of faith and unity.

Singing the "Christos Voskrese - Christ is Risen" in front of the closed doors of our parish church and hearing our faithful sing this hymn of victory has always been a source of joy and spiritual rejuvenation for me. It's in these moments that we truly grasp the essence of our faith—celebrating the Resurrection and embracing the communal spirit that defines us. May this festive season renew our spirits, reminding us of the enduring power of our shared beliefs and the joyous celebration of life's triumph over death.

Christ is Risen! Christos Voskrese!

## Celebrating the "Spring St. Nicholas" Feast Day

*O who loves Nicholas the Saintly, O who serves Nicholas the Saintly, Him will Nicholas receive, And give help in time of need, Holy Father Nicholas!*

Since 1992, the St. Nicholas Chapel, which is a replica of the wooden Greek Catholic Churches in the Carpathian Mountain, has beautified the grounds of the GCU headquarters. Since the consecration in 1992 there has not been many opportunities sponsored by GCU for members to come and worship in this beautiful setting.

Spiritual Advisor Fr. Val Michlik is establishing a "Spring St. Nicholas Day" at the Chapel. Yes, "spring" you read that correct! We are all familiar with the December 6<sup>th</sup> feast day of St. Nicholas. The Sunday closest to this winter date each year we honor in a special way our holy father Nicholas the Wonderworker at St. John Cathedral in Muncy, PA followed by a festive banquet. However, May 9<sup>th</sup> is observed in our liturgical calendar as the "Translation of the Relics of Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker from Myra to Bari." This commemoration was established in the life of the church when on May 9, 1087, they solemnly transported the Relics of Saint Nicholas into the church of Saint Stephen, not far from the sea in Bari, Italy. The solemn bearing of the relics was accompanied by numerous healings of the sick, which inspired still greater reverence for God's saint. A year afterwards, a church was built in the name of Saint Nicholas and consecrated by Pope Urban II.

Since The GCU Chapel is dedicated to this wonderful saint, Fr. Val has proposed that the first Sunday in May be established for GCU members and all the faithful, as an opportunity to gather at St. Nicholas Chapel in Beaver, PA to honor its patron saint.

This initial celebration will be extra special with the blessing of the replica of the Krasny Brod (Красный Брод) Icon of Our Lady. Till this day, near the Rusyn village of Krasny Brod, there is one of the oldest and most important



monasteries of the Byzantine Catholic Church in Slovakia - Monastery of the Descent of the Holy Spirit. For centuries our faithful have gathered at this monastery to honor Our Lady of Krasny Brod. The replica icon will be blessed and enshrined on Sunday, May 5, 2024, at St. Nicholas Chapel.

St. Nicholas Chapel will have a Divine Liturgy with this special celebration taking place in the afternoon at 3 PM.

We will begin with the Blessing of the Icon, followed by a festive Divine Liturgy. At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy (weather permitting) there will be a procession around the Chapel with the Icon of Our Lady. This will conclude the Liturgical celebration.

The celebration will continue with the solemn reopening of the downstairs museum. The museum will be open until 5:30 PM for those who would like to visit.

A banquet at Seven Oaks Country Club will follow.

Due to the Chapel's size the event will be on a first come first served basis and will require registration—limited to the first 80 members who register on the GCU website. The banquet is open to all at a cost of \$40/person and must be registered and prepaid on the GCU website.



Atty. John J. Urban

# Lessons in the Law

## What About the Children?

**I** am often asked if my child needs any type of legal document or estate planning. The quick answer is yes, if your child is 18 years of age or older. Especially if your child is away at college, the parent needs to have the child's estate planning, financial planning and health documents.

Just like any of us, your child needs a will, a financial power of attorney and health advanced directives. Why?

I had a case where a 20-year-old child was killed in an accident. Mom raised this child and dad was not involved at all with raising his child. Since the child did not have a will, mom and dad had to split the insurance proceeds 50/50. Mom was beside herself and very upset her ex-husband received those funds.

If the child had a will, mom probably would have received 100% of the insurance proceeds.

If your child has a financial power of attorney, the designated parent can have access to the child's bank account, talk to and pay automotive insurance and actually get grade information from the college the child is attending.

Then there is the need for advanced directives – durable power of attorney for health care and living will. There is a misconception that because you are the child's parent you have the right to obtain their medical records and make medical decisions if the child was hospitalized

and unable to communicate with the doctors. Without the documents, you cannot get access to medical records or make any medical or end of life decisions.

Many years ago, a mom and dad were visiting my wife and I when they received a call that their son was injured in Colorado while skiing. The parents could not get any medical information by telephone. No one would talk with them or update them about their son's health status. The dad was on the next flight to Colorado to check on their son. If the son had a healthcare power of attorney, it could have been faxed or emailed and the parents could get the information.

A lot of your children will be coming home for the summer, now is the time to make sure your child executes these documents. We hope you never need to use them, but having them in place can be a lifesaver.

As I always say, see a qualified attorney who concentrates in this legal area.

Questions, comments or ideas about future articles contact me at [jurban.gcu@GCUusa.com](mailto:jurban.gcu@GCUusa.com).

## Community Matching Funds

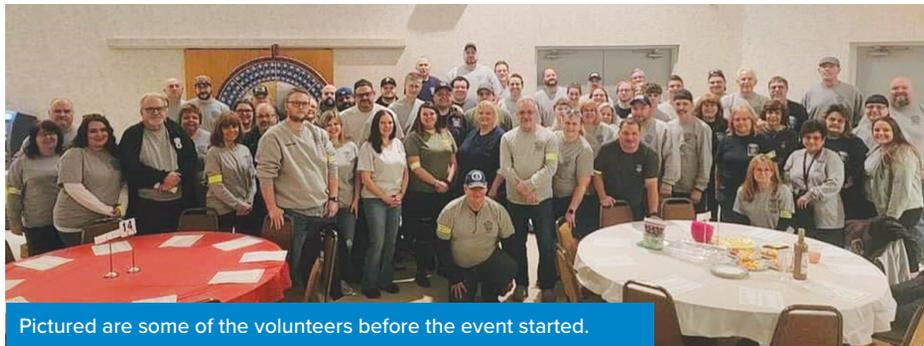
MUNHALL, PA

### Munhall Central Volunteer Fire Department Night at the Races

On Saturday, February 3, Munhall Central VFD hosted its annual night at the races at St. John Cathedral Center to raise funds to purchase much needed equipment. There were over 70 volunteers that spent over 630 man hours on the event. They sold all 400 tickets available and 159 horses, as well as basket auctions, 50/50 raffles, paint sticks, dice tables, a big 6 wheel and a duck pond.

The event's net income was supplemented by the GCU Community Matching Funds program.

Patricia Bovee



Pictured are some of the volunteers before the event started.



The large crowd of 400 supporting the VFD.



Attendees at the Craps table during the Casino Night fundraiser.

## Community Matching Funds

HERNANDO, FL

### Jessie's Place Casino Night Fundraiser

Jessie's Place held their 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Casino Night Fundraiser on Friday, September 15, 2024 at Citrus Hills Golf and Country Club! Sharpshooters and flappers were invited to attend sporting their best 1920's garb for an evening that included hors d'oeuvres, music, entertainment and real casino tables. It was a lucky night for some, with thousands of dollars in raffle and prize items. Those in attendance provided support, protection and services to the most vulnerable children in our community. Funds raised at this event will be used to support the provision of trauma-focused mental health and advocacy services to children who have experienced violence and abuse.

Thank you GCU for your support through the Community Matching Funds program.

Michelle Earp

## Community Matching Funds

HOMER GLEN, IL

### Fundraisers for Baby McManigal

The Annunciation Byzantine Catholic Church family held a “Souper Bowl” lunch event, a Super Bowl “Squares” event and a Super Bowl Watch Party on Sunday, February 11 to benefit Teddy McManigal and the McManigal family. Teddy McManigal was born with a rare incurable cancer. All the food, decorations and drinks were donated for the event. The turnout was unbelievable and the family would like to thank all who came to make this event a successful fundraiser.

GCU members presented a



(L to R): IL Constellation Coordinator Larry Lattuca, Parish Coordinator Ken Krown, Annunciation BC Church Pastor Fr. Thomas Loya, Mary Ventrella, Vicky Blidy, Sharon Dorencz, Karen Krown, Kelli Krown, Karly Krown and Debra Lattuca.

Matching Funds check for \$1,000.00 to Annunciation Pastor Fr. Thomas Loya, from the McManigal Family fund raising efforts.

It is with a heavy heart that we share the news that Teddy, a lively 1

year 6 month old, passed away during the Super Bowl. His courageous fight was admired by his Annunciation family and friends.

Larry Lattuca

## Community Matching Funds

PHOENIX, AZ

### Americare Hospice Dinner & Silent Auction

A steak dinner was prepared and served with all the trimmings on Saturday, March 2 to raise funds for the Americare Hospice in Phoenix. Raffle prizes, a 50/50 drawing and music & dancing were all part of this fundraising event. Thanks to the GCU for the Community Matching Funds adding to the financial success of the dinner.

Joanie Mahar



Silent Auction items.

## Community Matching Funds

CLINTON TWP., MI

### Least of My Brethren Soup & Chili Luncheon

The annual soup and chili luncheon was held at St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church on Sunday, January 21. Guests shared a light meal of soups and chili prepared by parishioners and contributed a free will monetary donation. All donations were given to St. Margaret of Scotland parish outreach programs that benefit less fortunate people in the Detroit area.

Thank you GCU for the Community Matching Funds that increased the success of the event.

John P. Minarish

## Community Matching Funds

ERNEST, PA

### Ernest Mine Memorial

On November 18, 2023, the murals painted by Phil Seth were unveiled. It marked the start of efforts to build a Coal Mine Memorial. Present for this special event was the Mayor of Ernest along with a nice gathering of people who attended. GCU has consistently contributed to the vision of a Miners Memorial with Community Matching Funds.

Katie Kowalski



Above is Katie Kowalski in front one of the paintings. Below is artist Phil Seth finishing up the other painting.



## Community Matching Funds

PHOENIX, AZ

### Rosary Sunday Dinner

A fundraising dinner took place on Saturday, March 9 to benefit Radio Family Rosary. Bishop Emeritus Thomas Olmsted spoke providing spiritual direction to all in attendance. A silent auction was also held to raise additional funds. The event received GCU Community Matching Funds.

Joanie Mahar



### Veterans Angel Tree Check Presentation

Ss. Peter and Paul BC Church, Endicott, NY and the Holy Spirit BC Church, Binghamton, NY held a Christmas Angel Tree Project to benefit the New York State Veterans Home, Oxford. A GCU Matching Fund check was presented by Daria Shierly (right) and Anne Marie Zevan (left), to Jennifer Scheuer (center) Nursing Home Administration/Director of Recreation Therapy, Volunteer Services & Community Relations.

## Community Matching Funds

BINGHAMTON, NY & ENDICOTT, NY

### Almsgiving-Collection for Mercy House

An almsgiving collection started on the first day of Lent, Monday, February 12 was held at both parishes-Holy Spirit & Ss. Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Churches. The community donation drive benefitted Mercy House with cash, gift cards, and "Wish List" items. The collection received GCU Community Matching Funds.



A few of the almsgiving collection items.

Daria Shierly | Byzantine Parish Coordinator for Endicott, NY

## Mittens for Memories

### Helping Alzheimer's Association & American Cancer Society

**Beaver Falls, PA.** GCU GoGive! seed money, aided in raising \$10,000.00 for the Alzheimer's Association and \$2,500.00 for the American Cancer Society in 2023. Over seven years we have donated a total of \$52,000.00 to the Alzheimer's Association and several more thousand to the American Cancer Society. We do this by making mittens from upcycled wool sweaters. Our family and friends meet throughout the year once a week to sew mittens. When the fall months arrive, we attend various craft shows to sell the mittens. It has become a successful outreach not only monetarily but therapeutically for our family and for many other families. Thanks to the GCU for the seed money—that \$250.00 was multiplied many times to benefit the Alzheimer's Assoc. and American Cancer Society. We donate to Alzheimer's in memory of our dear Gary, who battled this horrible disease for 12 years. Many family and friends have been afflicted by cancer, so we also donate to



Set up at the Mars High craft show on November 18, 2023.



Above: Set up at the Highland Meadows Barn the first weekend in November, 2023.  
Below: Set up at the Sewickley Fall Festival.



the American Cancer Society in honor and memory of them.

With our mission we not only give to charities close to our hearts, but enjoy our weekly gatherings of sewing and

eating pizza at lunch. Thank you GCU for your kindness and donation.

Rhonda Androlia



The large group of volunteers shown with some of the breakfast bundles and snack packs.



Donna Danchisko

## Nourish NC 2024

**Lakes Community of Brunswick Forest in Leland, NC.** On Monday, February 26, 2024, thirty members of the Ladies of the Lakes gathered together to assemble over 560 Breakfast Bundles and Snack Packs which were then donated to Nourish NC. The Breakfast Bundles included cereal, grits, oatmeal and milk or juice and the snack packs included either fruit or yogurt, a snack and a drink. Nourish NC provides healthy food to hungry children, empowering them to succeed in the classroom and in their community. The Ladies of the Lakes wish to thank the GCU for contributing to the success of this project through the GCU GoGive! program.



## Dress A Girl Around the World

Once again, GCU's *GoGive!* program has provided funding for the **Dress A Girl Around the World** charity. This year it is celebrating 15 years of providing dresses to little girls around the globe who live in extreme poverty. Founded in 2009 by Rachel Eggum Cinader, the organization has donated over 3 million dresses to girls in 90 countries. These nations extend from Afghanistan

to Zimbabwe, including the USA. Native American children in South Dakota and Arizona, Appalachian missions, hurricane survivors in Florida as well as Ukrainian refugees in Canada are all recipients. This GCU member has made 267 dresses to date.

A new dress can change a girl's future. Because of their gender, they are regarded as having little or no value and they can be bought and sold. A girl in rags is in more danger than a boy in rags. As the missionaries place the dresses over the girls' heads, they emphasize that God loves them and that someone else loves them, too, to have made a dress for them.

After drug smuggling and arms dealing, sex trafficking is the third most prevalent crime in the world. Every 30 seconds, a child is kidnapped, most being 12-14 years of age. Eighty percent of them are forced into sex trafficking with 19 percent becoming forced labor. Sadly, 1.2 million children are kidnapped into these criminal activities annually.

To help protect these girls, the dresses have to be carefully made and restrictions apply. After all, they will be washed

in rivers and streams and beaten on rocks. They must be at least knee-length or longer, have no buttons, zippers, snaps or Velcro. They must be secured with fabric ties only. If something breaks, the families are unable to repair it. Also, they must be pulled over the head to wear. Some fabric no-no's include cartoons, patriotic designs, religious and holiday designs or writing. Instead, volunteers choose cheery florals, animals, batiks or hearts, etc. Most importantly, the fabric must not be see-through. Finally, a label is sewn on the front of the dress telling would-be traffickers that she is protected by and loved by an organization.

What if you can't even sew a button on? You can still help! If you go to the website, and click on SHOP, you can purchase items like t-shirts, hoodies, greeting cards, mugs, etc. You can even participate in their Buy a Dress... Give A Dress. You purchase one dress and its look-alike is sent to a girl in need. There are many styles, sizes and lengths to choose from.

One of the **Dress A Girl Around the World's** goals is to: "Imagine a world where every little girl owns at least one dress! What if that dress was made by you?"

For more information, please visit [dressagirlaroundtheworld.com](http://dressagirlaroundtheworld.com) for more information and learn how you can get involved!

Anonymous GCU GoGive! Participant



A few of the beautiful dresses.



A few of the many donated baskets.

## House Fire Benefit Dinner

**Endwell, NY.** On March 23, a spaghetti and meatball dinner with basket raffle, 50/50 raffle and a bake sale was held to benefit the Haught/Calusell family who lost their home in a house fire. The GCU GoGive program assisted with seed money for multiple baskets for the raffle. This event helped make a difference for the family who remains displaced.

Janet Kumpon

## Jack Andrew Kutzfara Baptized

Dr. John & Angela Kutzfara of Buffalo, NY welcomed their second son, Jack Andrew on Thursday, January 4, 2024. Jack was baptized at St. Stephen Roman Catholic Church in Grand Island, NY on Saturday, March 4, 2024. His baptism outfit was previously worn by his brother Owen, his father and many other family members over the past 60 years. His godparents are friends Joe & Amanda Britt of Buffalo. He is the grandson of John & Patricia Kutzfara and Ross & Flo Giglio. He is the great grandson of Barbara Wahal and Donna Kutzfara. The Kutzfara's will be returning home to the Pittsburgh, PA area this summer. May God grant Jack and his family many happy and blessed years!



Angela holding Jack and Dr. John Kutzfara.

## Epiphany Parishioners Visit Site of the First Epiphany



During a pilgrimage to Constantinople (Istanbul) and the Holy Land, members of Epiphany of the Lord Byzantine Catholic Church in Annandale, VA stopped at the

site of the baptism of Christ, (the patronal feast of the parish) in the Jordan River. The group of 22 pilgrims, many of them GCU members, included: (L to R) Lec-

tor Jack Figel, Deacon Tyler Wisniewski, Holly & Kevin Hogan, Jeff & Vicki Nashwinter, Marlene McCrachen and Lt. Joseph Hughes. Besides Christian places in Constantinople, the group also visited biblical sites in Galilee and Jerusalem led by Bishop John Michael Boteau, Romanian Greek Catholic Bishop of America, who celebrated the Divine Liturgy in Nazareth and Jerusalem and a special Akathist at the Tomb of Christ in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in a Franciscan chapel only 50 feet from the actual Tomb of Christ.

**Lector Jack Figel  
Holly & Kevin Hogan**

# Corporate Community Events Coordinators



**Casey Bush**  
Corporate Community  
Events Coordinator  
Western PA



**Monster Jam.** GCU members experienced Monster Jam on Friday, February 10, 2024, at PPG Paints Arena in Pittsburgh, PA! They saw competitions between some of their favorite monster trucks such as Grave Digger and Avenger live in action.

**Avalanche Xpress.** The GCU snow tubing outing was Saturday, February 24 at Avalanche Xpress in Meadville PA. Avalanche Xpress is Northwestern PA's longest and steepest snow tubing park. Over 30 GCU members attend the event. The group enjoyed the heated igloos and pizza. It was a fun filled late winter day on the hill.

**Disney on Ice.** GCU members attended Disney on Ice on Saturday, March 2 at PPG Paints Arena in Pittsburgh, PA. They experienced the magic of seeing their favorite Disney

characters live on ice. The audience danced and sang along the entire performance. Memories made and fun was had by all.



**YMCA Check Donation.** The Beaver County YMCA every year does a wonderful job at giving back to the community. The YMCA helps families in need during the holidays, provides countless meals, free activities for youth and families. On March 4, a check was presented to John Merola on behalf of the GCU.



GCU Home Office staff member Ryan Kislock giving blood on March 25 at the American Red Cross blood drive.

## Upcoming Events

**Footloose the Musical**  
Saturday, April 27 7:30 PM  
Lincoln Park PA Center, Monaca, PA

**GCU Spring Golf Classic**  
Monday, June 3 9:30 Shotgun Start  
Seven Oaks Country Club, Beaver, PA

**Pittsburgh Pirate Game (Kids Day)**  
Pirates vs Twins (section 125)  
Sunday, June 9 1:35 PM  
PNC Park, Pittsburgh, PA

**Byzantine Family Day at Kennywood Park**  
Thursday, July 25 Park opens at 11 AM  
West Mifflin, PA

**American Red Cross Blood Drive**  
Monday, July 29  
Seven Oaks Country Club, Beaver, PA

**Pittsburgh Pirate Game  
Firework Extravaganza Night**  
Pirates vs Reds (section 125)  
Saturday, August 24 6:40 PM  
PNC Park, Pittsburgh, PA

**Charity Golf Scramble**  
Monday, September 23  
Seven Oaks Country Club, Beaver, PA

**Pittsburgh Steelers Game**  
November DTBA  
Acrisure Stadium, Pittsburgh, PA

**"Daniel" Sight & Sound Theatre Bus Trip**  
Saturday, November 9  
(Lancaster) Ronks, PA  
Bus pick up at Home Office, Beaver, PA

*Dates and times are subject to change.  
Visit [GCUusa.com](http://GCUusa.com) for more information  
on these events  
or contact Casey Bush at  
[cbush@GCUusa.com](mailto:cbush@GCUusa.com) or call 724-683-3927.*



**Special Olympics Volunteer Day.** Casey and Mitch spent their day on Thursday, March 7 volunteering for the Special Olympics Geneva College Bocce Championship. We had the privilege of recording scores and cheering the athletes on! A donation was also made on behalf of the GCU to the Special Olympics to continue the wonderful work they do.



**Melissa Jaggars**  
Corporate Community  
Events Coordinator  
Eastern PA,  
NY, NJ, MD, MA, CT, DE, VA, NC, SC, GA, FL



Father Roman Vasylynka, pastor vicar of St. Mary and St. John Churches in Scranton, his wife, Viktoriya and their two sons, Liubomyr & Nazar Vasylynka, Paul Komishock, Mary & Mike Komishock and Melissa. Viktoriya & Melissa with homemade macaroons.

**Snow Tubing at Blue Mountain Resort, Palmerton, PA.**

It's the largest snow tubing park in the country! A group of GCU members and guests enjoyed the day snow tubing on Saturday, February 10, 2024. Father Vaslynka's wife, Viktoriya made me homemade macaroons. It was so nice of her and they were delicious. A great day was had by all who attended.



Founders' Day lunch at Maggiano's Restaurant.

**Founders' Day Celebration.** GCU members and friends from the NY, NJ area enjoyed a fantastic family-style lunch at Maggiano's in Garden City, NY on Wednesday, February 14, which was Founders' Day, Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day. St. Andrew BCC Parish Coordinator Marge Russell would like to extend a special thank you to Melissa Jaggars for making all the arrangements. The food was delicious and the camaraderie was great.

**Sky Zone Outing.** Some of our young GCU members jumped for joy at Sky Zone in Pittston, PA on Friday, February 16. Members got to enjoy the trampoline park along with pizza and soda for a great way to start the holiday weekend.



**Florida Happenings—Fort Pierce, FL.** Eileen Frank, Jackie Perhach (cantor) and Andy Perhach were hard at work running the Slavic Kitchen at Ss. Cyril & Methodius Byzantine Catholic Church in Fort Pierce, FL. The kitchen is open Tuesday & Saturday 9 AM - 1 PM (*during Easter & Christmas*) with a variety of delicious hand-made Eastern European food to support the church. Items include: pirohi, stuffed cabbage,



**Upcoming Events**

**Sight & Sound Trips: "Daniel"**  
Scranton/Wilkes-Barre/Hazleton, PA

**Bus Pickups**

Saturday, August 10  
(Lancaster) Ronks, PA

**Westbury, NY/Robbinsville Twp., NJ/King of Prussia, PA**

**Bus Pickups**

Saturday, August 24  
(Lancaster) Ronks, PA

**Early-Bird Savings on Golf Registration**

**Holupki Open**

Saturday, July 13 10 AM  
White Birch Golf Course

**End of Summer Golf Tournament**

Sunday, September 8 1:30 PM Shotgun  
Blue Ridge Trail Golf Club, Mountain Top, PA

**Overnight Travel Trips**

**Kalahari Poconos Indoor Waterpark**

Friday & Saturday, August 2 & 3

**Atlantic City, NJ Airshow**

Tuesday & Wednesday, August 13 & 14  
Overnight hotel block available-Contact Melissa

**Northeast, PA**

**Brunch at The Pines in Hazleton**

Saturday, April 27

**Rustic Kitchen Private Cooking Show**

Sunday, May 5 2 PM  
Mohegan Sun Casino, Wilkes-Barre, PA

**Pretty Woman the Musical**

Saturday, May 18 2 PM  
Scranton Cultural Center, Scranton, PA

**Highway Cleanup-All are Welcome**

Saturday, May 25 10 AM  
Meet at Mizu Sushi parking lot, Wilkes-Barre, PA

**Spring Helping Hands Day**

Saturday, June 8  
Holy Annunciation Monastery, Sugarloaf, PA

**Byzantine Family Day at Knoebels Park**

Tickets available at [www.GCUusa.com](http://www.GCUusa.com)  
Sunday, June 9 11 AM  
Elysburg, PA

**Member Social at Scranton Trolley Museum**

Sunday, June 23 10 AM  
Scranton, PA

**Scranton RailRiders vs Worcester Red Sox**

GCU Community Night  
Friday, July 26 6:35 PM  
PNC Field, Wilkes-Barre, PA

**Allentown, PA**

**Iron Pigs Faith Night**

Friday, June 7 7:05 PM  
Coca-Cola Park, Allentown, PA

CONTINUED

along with nut and poppy seed rolls. If you're in the area drop in for a treat! The events are held at 1002 Bahama Avenue, Fort Pierce, FL 34982. Email: cmchurchoffice@gmail.com; Church: 772-595-1021 and Kitchen: 772-595-1081.

**Miami, FL.** Bishop Kurt Burnette has appointed Rev. Martin Vavrak as pastor to Our Lady of the Sign BCC in Coconut Creek, FL and administrator to St. Basil the Great BC Church in Miami, FL.

It was wonderful to meet Fr. Martin, his wife, Anna and Fred Wilson the parish manager. Fr. Vavrak and his wife relocated just one month ago from Perth Amboy, NJ and are very excited to bring new and exciting GCU activities to the South Florida area!

**St. Petersburg, FL.** It was wonderful joining in the coffee social hour on Sunday, February 25, 2024 at St. Therese BCC in St. Petersburg, FL. We discussed ideas for new GCU events in the St. Petersburg area and met with several families. GCU members Andrea Harhai and Drew & Anita Cipa were traveling through as well from the Pittsburgh, PA & Detroit, MI areas and attended the Liturgy. For anyone traveling through the Florida area on vacation, be sure to stop by one of the Byzantine Catholic Churches if you are looking to attend church while visiting the Sunshine State! Our Lady of the Sign, Coconut Creek, FL; Ss. Cyril & Methodius, Fort Pierce, FL; St. Basil, Miami, FL; St. Anne, New Port Richey, FL; All Saints, North Fort Myers, FL; St. Nicholas of Myra, Orlando, FL; Holy Dormition, Ormond Beach, FL; St. Therese, Saint Petersburg, FL and Byzantine Catholic Outreach, Summerfield (The Villages), FL.



Melissa Jaggars with Cantor Jackie Perhach at the Slavic Kitchen.



(From Left) Parish Manager Fred Wilson, GCU CCEC Melissa Jaggars and Anna & Fr. Martin Vavrak at St. Basil the Great Byzantine Catholic Church in Miami, FL.



GCU CCEC Melissa Jaggars with members of St. Therese BCC in St. Petersburg, FL.

## Upcoming Events continued

### Philadelphia, PA Monster Jam

Saturday, May 4 1 PM  
Lincoln Financial Field, Philadelphia, PA

### Binghamton, NY Turning Stone Casino Bus Trip

Wednesday, June 19  
Verona, NY

### New Jersey Trenton Thunder vs West Virginia Black Bears Faith & Family Night

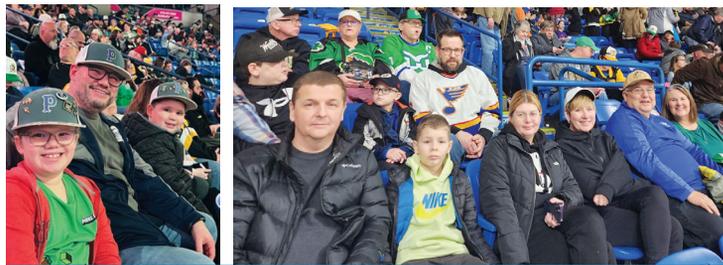
Saturday, July 20 6 PM

### Long Island Barbra Streisand Tribute

Sunday, June 30 Time TBA  
Elmont Memorial Library Theatre, Elmont, NY

**Tickets to ALL events must be purchased in advance.**

Visit [GCUusa.com](http://GCUusa.com) for more information on all these events or contact Melissa Jaggars at [mjaggars@GCUusa.com](mailto:mjaggars@GCUusa.com) or call 878-207-2327.



GCU members and guests attending the Wilkes-Barre Scranton Penguins game on Saturday, March 9.

**Wilkes-Barre Scranton Penguins Hockey Game.** Heavy downpours couldn't keep Wilkes-Barre Scranton Penguins fans away from attending the game on Saturday, March 9, 2024. GCU members gathered for a packed house to take on the Lehigh Valley Phantoms. The Penguins may have lost, but it was great to get together to watch a good game.

**GCU Early-Bird Golf Tournament Registration.** Register by April 30, 2024 for excellent member savings.

**Sight & Sound Trips are Expected to Sell-Out.** Reserve your tickets now.

**2024 Atlantic City Airshow.** We had a great time last year and I look forward to expanding this event for 2024!

**Constellation Coordinator Openings.** Want to assist in putting together fun GCU events and activities in your hometown? Reach out to Basil Wahal [bwahal@GCUusa.com](mailto:bwahal@GCUusa.com) or Melissa Jaggars [mjaggars@GCUusa.com](mailto:mjaggars@GCUusa.com) to learn more! (Approx 1-2 hrs. per week flexible time commitment.)

# Constellations

## Beaver Constellation

Beaver Constellation held its Annual Adult No-Tap on Saturday, March 23 at Center Lanes in Aliquippa, PA. Among the 30 bowlers were several members of the GCU Beaver (District 15) Bowling League. Although their season is coming to an end, anyone interested in joining the GCU Beaver League next year should contact Kathy Kapaldo 412-951-8331.

We also welcomed many new bowlers to the event. Katie Frederick and John Niskach took home 1<sup>st</sup> place actual women and men, respectively, bragging rights again this year! Thank you to everyone who participated, and many thanks to Jackie at Center Lanes and to the staff at Seven Oaks who prepared a delicious buffet meal following bowling.

Elizabeth Harbist | Beaver Constellation  
Coordinator



Susan Kosis, Judy Kotula, Martha Seech and Patty Bovee.



John Niskach, Mike Grohal, John Miller and Mike Mantsch.



John Kutzfara, John Harbist, Tony Cortopassi and Bob Boyd.



Kathy Kapaldo, Pam Kapaldo, Joyce Cortopassi and Beth Gulyasy.



Mark Stafura, Nick Fejka, Nate Heidengran & Mike Kruppa. Michael Stafura is in front.



Beth Boyd, Katie Frederick, Pat Kutzfara and Barb Wahal.

## UPCOMING BEAVER CONSTELLATION EVENT

### Seneca Niagara Casino Bus Trip (Combined event with Pittsburgh Constellation)

**Monday, June 17 thru Tuesday, June 18**

**Pickup & drop off locations: St. John  
Chrysostom BCC, Greenfield, PA at 6 AM  
GCU Home Office, Beaver, PA at 7 AM**

**GCU Members (per person)**  
\$294 Single Room / \$202 Double Room  
\$198 Triple Room (only 2 beds)

**Non-Members (per person)**  
\$369 Single Room / \$277 Double Room  
\$273 Triple Room (only 2 beds)

Cost includes transportation, overnight accommodations, \$50 free slot play and \$20 dining dollars.

Travel by Lenzner Coach  
Overnight accommodations at Seneca Niagara Casino

**Reserve your spot ASAP-expected to fill up quickly!**

Contact: Elizabeth Harbist at 412-913-1446 or etharbist@yahoo.com for more information.



Chris Barco, Russ Kosis, Ken Holleran and Dave Oleksa.

# UPCOMING LAUREL HIGHLANDS CONSTELLATION EVENTS

## Altoona Curve Baseball Game

Saturday, June 29, 2024

4:30 PM

\$15 GCU Members

\$20 Non-Member Guests

\$10 Kids

2 hour Buffet and Game

Registration Deadline is June 9 / Only 30 seats available

Peoples Natural Gas Field  
1000 Park Avenue, Altoona, PA 16602

## "The Gambler" Kenny Rogers Tribute

Saturday, August 24, 2024

7 PM

\$22 GCU Members

\$32 Non-Member Guests

\$12 Kids

Registration Deadline is August 2 / Only 25 seats available

Arcadia Theater  
1418 Graham Avenue, Windber, PA 15963

## Bus Trip to See Daniel

Saturday, October 19, 2024

8 AM Leave from Holy Trinity Church

12:30 PM Lunch at Hershey Farms

3 PM Show

10:30 PM Return to Holy Trinity Church

\$135 GCU Members \$100 Child Members

\$155 Non-Member Guests \$120 Child Non-Members

Registration Deadline is September 6 / Only 33 seats available

Sight & Sound Theatre  
(Lancaster) Ronks, PA

**Contact: Georgia Lehman at 814-242-2083 or email her at [gjlehman56@gmail.com](mailto:gjlehman56@gmail.com) for additional information on any of the events listed.**

## Laurel Highlands Constellation

### Mix & Mingle Event

For the first official activity in 2024, a Mix & Mingle event was held on March 23, 2024 at The Fifth Restaurant. Twenty-two GCU members and guests attended and enjoyed a buffet of pizza, salad, chicken bites, wraps and cupcakes for dessert. Constellation Coordinator Georgia Lehman welcomed everyone (some familiar faces and several new ones) and informed them of the upcoming events planned for the year. Georgia asked that deadlines be adhered to as several events are limited space.



Annette & Tom Ferchalk, Mary Dubay and Tom Lehman.

### Backpack Project

The Constellation had a volunteer opportunity for the Cambria County Backpack Project on April 1, 2024, to pack weekend meals for over 400 students. A full report and photos will be in the June GCU Magazine.



Fr. Bob Oravetz and Mike Yewcic.

### Upcoming Events

Cookie decorating class on April 20, 2024 at Lambcakes, Franklin Street in Johnstown, PA. A Picnic at the Park—Altoona Curve Game is scheduled for June 29, 2024.

If any GCU members would like to participate in these events, feel free to contact me at 814-242-2083.

Georgia Lehman | Laurel Highlands Constellation Coordinator

# Philadelphia Constellation

## Founders' Day

The Philadelphia Constellation enjoyed a Founders' Day celebration luncheon at Randi's Restaurant. NEPA CCEC Melissa Jaggars and GCU's newest Constellation Coordinator Stephen Bachovin, both had a chance to chat with some area members about future events in the area.



Members and guests at Founders' Day.



# UPCOMING PHILADELPHIA CONSTELLATION EVENT

## Topgolf Outing

Sunday, May 19, 2024

More information to come.

Topgolf

2140 Byberry Road, Philadelphia, PA 19116

Contact: Stephen Bachovin at 215-370-1757 or sbachovin@comcast.net for more information.



The volunteer cleaning crew.

## Neighborhood Cleanup

The Philadelphia Constellation had a great turnout for their neighborhood cleanup day on Saturday, March 23. Many of the families returned for Palm Sunday Liturgy and a social after church.

Melissa Jaggars |

Corporate Community Events Coordinator

Stephen Bachovin |

Philadelphia Constellation Coordinator



Happy faces at the Palm Sunday Social.



## Pittsburgh Constellation

### Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank Market

Pittsburgh Constellation members and friends volunteered at the Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank Market on Saturday, February 17. Members assisted as shopping buddies, stocking shelves, greeting customers, check-out and cleaning the store. It was a rewarding experience and thank you to all who came.



Kim Kolesar and Food Bank Community Engagement and Fundraising Assistant Morgan Klauscher.



Food Bank Volunteers. Back row: Nick Fedorak, Trish Roberts, Helen Moran, Brent Kolesar, Tom Moran, Andy & Connie Buydasz, Don Ribarchak and Lou Towchik. Front row: Sarah & Karen Pavlick, Gretchen Bartz and Kim Kolesar. Food Bank Market employee Darnell Clark is in front.

## UPCOMING PITTSBURGH CONSTELLATION EVENTS

### Seneca Niagara Casino Bus Trip (Combined event with Beaver Constellation)

**Monday, June 17 thru Tuesday June 18, 2024**  
**2 Pickup & drop off locations: St. John Chrysostom BCC, Greenfield, PA at 6 AM**  
**GCU Home Office, Beaver, PA at 7 AM**

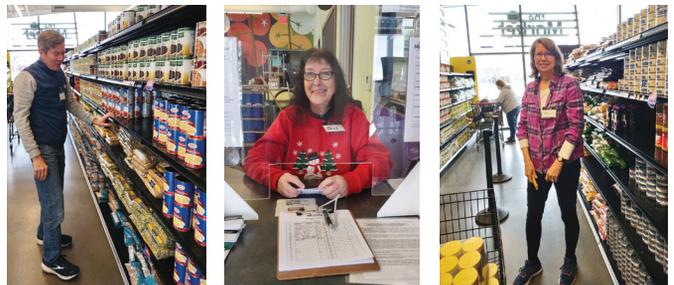
- GCU Members (per person)**  
**\$294 Single Room**  
**\$202 Double Room**  
**\$198 Triple Room (only 2 beds)**
- Non-Members (per person)**  
**\$369 Single Room**  
**\$277 Double Room**  
**\$273 Triple Room (only 2 beds)**

Cost includes transportation, overnight accommodations, \$50 free slot play and \$20 dining dollars.

Travel by Lenzner Coach  
 Overnight accommodations at Seneca Niagara Casino

**Reserve your spot ASAP-expected to fill up quickly!**

Contact: Kim Kolesar at 412-999-5714 or kak210@comcast.net for more information.



Tom Moran stocking shelves. Trish Roberts at the desk checking shoppers in and out. Helen Moran stocking shelves.

### Mean Girls the Musical

Members from the Pittsburgh Constellation attended the performance of "Mean Girls the Musical" performed by the West Mifflin High School students on Saturday, March 2. The view was from front row seats. The performance was very entertaining.

Kim Kolesar | Pittsburgh Constellation Coordinator



Some of the members who attended the show.

### Christmas Story House & Castle Noel Bus Trip

**Saturday, November 16, 2024**  
**More information to come.**

## Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Constellation



Members and guests at the Founders' Day event.

### Founders' Day Breakfast 2024

The Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Constellation along with some Binghamton, NY friends celebrated Founders' Day at the Radisson Lackawanna Station in Scranton, PA on Sunday, February 18, 2024. A delicious breakfast was enjoyed by all in attendance and was followed by a raffle and engaging conversation. GCU National Director George Kofel thanked members for supporting GCU and showed excitement for both previous and upcoming events. Ideas for new events were welcomed

and discussed by Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Constellation Coordinator, Laure Marcin and NEPA Corporate Community Events Coordinator Melissa Jaggars. A pleasurable time was had by all.

**Laure Marcin** | Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Constellation Coordinator



GCU National Director George Kofel speaking to the crowd.

# Parish Matching Funds



Fr. Don Bolls and members of Resurrection Church were presented a Matching Funds check by GCU Parish Coordinator Thomas E. Oslick Sr. for the great work that was done at the fish fries.

## Church of the Resurrection Byzantine Catholic Church

MONROEVILLE, PA

### Lenten Fish Fry

Resurrection BC Church held fish fries the first two Fridays of Lent (February 16 & 23). Parishioners of Resurrection



Church and Holy Trinity Parish, Wall, PA their sister church, along with students from local high schools volunteered to make the events a success. Pastor Fr. Don Bolls was pleased with the success and teamwork. Thanks to GCU for the Parish Matching Funds.

**Thomas E. Oslick Sr.** | Byzantine Parish Coordinator

## Ss. Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church

PUNXSUTAWNEY, PA



Pirohi Sale-many volunteers helped to making the pirohi sale a big success.

Julie Brocius | Byzantine Parish Coordinator

## St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church

BROWNSVILLE, PA

### Easter Pirohi Sale

An Easter Pirohi fundraiser was held to benefit St. Nicholas BCC. Homemade noodles and potato-cheese, sweet cabbage and lekvar pirohi were sold to the public. Thank you GCU for the Parish Matching Funds to add to the success of the sale.

Melody L. Yeardie | Byzantine Parish Coordinator

## Holy Spirit & Ss. Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Churches

BINGHAMTON, NY & ENDICOTT, NY

### Parish Matching Funds Checks Presented

Just before the start of 2023, more than 600 lottery calendars were sold as a fundraiser to benefit the General Funds of the Holy Spirit Byzantine Catholic Church in Binghamton, NY, and Ss. Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church in Endicott, NY.

The net proceeds resulted in each parish qualifying for Parish Matching Funds from GCU. Parish Coordinators Janet Kumpon and Daria Shierly made check presentations on February 11, 2024. Janet Kumpon presented the check to Holy Spirit Church Trustees David Orlovsky and Margaret Micha.

Since Ss. Peter and Paul Church had fun and success with the multiple can and bottle drives held in 2023, Daria Shierly presented their check with a bag of cans and bottles to Anne Marie Zevan. They are hoping to build on their success with an upcoming can and bottle drive scheduled in April. We look forward to once again supporting these parishes in 2024!

Daria Shierly | Byzantine Parish Coordinator (Ss. Peter & Paul Church)



Anne Marie Zevan, BPC Daria Shierly, BPC Janet Kumpon, David Orlovsky and Margaret Micha.

## St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church

HERMINIE, PA

### St. Mary's Potato Pancake Brunch

On Saturday, January 20 the St. Mary BC Church held a brunch open to the public selling homemade potato pancakes. The sale was such a success that a second one is planned.



Melissa Pochan serving up some good food.

### Lent Haluski and Pirohy Sale

Sunday, February 11 was the kickoff of the Lenten season at St. Mary Church. The sale of pirohi, potato soup, palacinka and pizzelles along with brunch was held in the parish hall for parishioners and guests. Both events qualified for GCU Parish Matching Funds.

Michael J. Pochan | Byzantine Parish Coordinator

## Nativity Byzantine Catholic Church

DUBOIS, PA

### Check Presentation

Parish Coordinator Grace Marshall presented a GCU Parish Matching Funds check to Father Vasyl Banyk. The funds were matched from the church's weekly bingo. Thank you so much GCU for your support!



Grace Marshall | Byzantine Parish Coordinator

## St. John Byzantine Catholic Church

MINNEAPOLIS, MN

### Lenten Potato Pancake & Soup Dinner

Friday, March 8 was the annual Lenten Potato Pancake and Homemade Soup Dinner. The parish and community members

came together for a wonderful, meatless dinner. A bake sale, raffle and church tours were included. Over 230 people were served—quite a feat for this small parish! Thank you GCU for your support.



Pancake flippers extraordinaires:  
Andrew, Gary and Ron.



The soup  
lady Tracy  
Rusinyak.



Fr. Cyril Farmer and Nancy Dun-  
ivin attending the Bake Sale.



L-R: Cantor Dominic Alteri, Fr. Cyril Farmer and Cantor  
Nancy Dunivin.

### Check Presentation

Thanks to the GCU Parish Matching Funds program a check was received by St. John Byzantine Catholic Church. The parish has several projects planned for 2024, that this will be applied toward.

Marjorie Spiering | Byzantine Parish Coordinator

## Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church

KINGSTON, PA

### Check Presentation

A GCU Parish Matching Funds check from the Christmas Basket Raffle at Saint Mary Church was presented to Father Mykhaylo Prodanets. A huge thank you to the GCU for their continued support of our Byzantine parishes.

Laure Marcin | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



L-R: Marlene Williams, Mary Ann Evans, Fr. Mykhaylo Prodanets, Parish  
Coordinator Laure Marcin and Dr. John G. & Colleen Evans.

## St. Pius X Byzantine Catholic Church

CARRICK, PA



### Lenten Pirohi Sale

For six weeks during Lent, each Tuesday dedicated St. Pius X BCC parishioners made many varieties of pirohi to sell every Friday. Thank you to all who purchased in the pirohi project and to the GCU for the Parish Matching Funds.

Kim Kolesar | Byzantine Parish Coordinator

## St. John Byzantine Catholic Church

LANSFORD, PA



Father Gregory Hosler accepting a GCU Parish Matching Funds check from Parish Coordinator Susan Seaver from the parish's December 2023 pirohi and haluski sale.

## St. Gregory Byzantine Catholic Church

UPPER ST. CLAIR, PA

### ECF Haluski Sale

The Fourth Sunday of the Great Fast, March 10, was a cold but busy day at St. Gregory Parish. St. Gregory's ByzanTeens were quite busy preparing the ECF Haluski Sale to support the following Summer ECF Programs: Byzanteen Youth Rally 2024 in San Diego, CA and St. Gregory's Vacation Church School and All Saints Summer Church School Camp. In addition to income from the sale the parish also received GCU Parish Matching Funds.

Dorothy Mayernik | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



Matching Funds check presentation to Fr. Val by Parish Coordinator Dorothy Mayernik.



The youth of the parish working hard to fill orders for very happy customers.

## Sacred Heart Byzantine Catholic Church

LIVONIA, MI

### Check Presentation

On Sunday, February 4, 2024, the Ladies of Sacred Heart presented a \$3,000.00 GCU Parish Matching Funds check to Father Joseph Marquis, pastor of Sacred Heart BC Church. The Ladies held their fund-raising Luncheon last November and appreciate the GCU Matching Funds grant.

Marianne Nagrant | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



## St. John Chrysostom Byzantine Catholic Church

PITTSBURGH PA

### Super Bowl Pool Assists with Snow Removal

On Sunday, February 11, St. John BC Church held a Super Bowl pool to help with the cost of snow removal for the church's parking lot. The event received GCU Parish Matching Funds.

John Niskach | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



Volunteers shown with Fr. Vladyslav Budash.

## Dormition (formerly St. Mary) Byzantine Catholic Church

CLEVELAND, OH

### We Give Catholic

"We Give Catholic" is a donor campaign of alum, parents, parishioners and community supporters. Funds raised are used for educational programming in the school. This campaign also benefited from GCU Matching Funds.

Rita Basalla

## Resurrection Byzantine Catholic Church

SMITHTOWN, NY

### Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser

The Joe's Famous Meatballs & Spaghetti Dinner was held as a Resurrection Parish fundraiser on Sunday, February 4. All supplies for the dinner were fully donated! Attendees enjoyed a three-course dinner and were able to participate in multiple basket raffles. The event qualified for GCU Parish Matching Funds.

Joanne Marcus | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



Parish Coordinator Michael Komishock presenting the \$3,000.00 Matching Funds check to pastor Fr. Vasyl Chepelskyk with some of the pirohi workers in the background. At right are pirohi volunteers busy at work.

## Ss. Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church

BEAVER MEADOWS, PA

### Pirohi Sale

SS. Peter & Paul BC Church held a very successful sale of cooked and frozen potato, cabbage and prune pirohi. Thanks to the GCU for the Parish Matching Funds and thanks to all who purchased these delicious items.

Michael Komishock |  
Byzantine Parish Coordinator



## St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church MARBLEHEAD, OH

### A Mid-Winter Feast

On Saturday, February 10, St. Mary BCC parishioners and guests enjoyed a plated candlelight dinner with live music. Vocalist/guitarist Steven Jadwisiak and vocalist Jonathan Loya entertained the large crowd. We thank Chef J. John Bou-Sliman for the delicious meal. This fundraiser will benefit the replacement of roofs on the rectory, church and hall. The event also received GCU Parish Matching Funds.

Joan Washburn | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



Parishioners and guests enjoying the food and entertainment.



A GCU Matching Funds check of \$640.00 was presented from the mini Piggie/Holupki sale. From left: Deacon Lawrence Worlinsky, Fr. Andrii Dumnych and Parish Coordinator John Barilla.

## St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church SWOYERSVILLE, PA

### Piggie/Holupki Sale

At first, Deacon Lawrence Worlinsky was a one man show for this fundraiser, not asking for any help. That soon came to an end when some of the parishioners showed up to help. They trimmed, boiled, stuffed, baked and packaged the piggies. Deacon Worlinsky was happy that help arrived. With GCU Parish Matching Funds this quickly put together fundraiser benefited the parish with nearly \$1,300.00 of income.

John Barilla | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



Deacon Lawrence Worlinsky welcomed all the help from the many volunteers.

# St. Therese Byzantine Catholic Church

ST. PETERSBURG, FL



Our winners (L-R): Deacon Mark Taylor, Chris Koscho, Kristen Moss & Cindy Taylor.

## Chili Cook Off

St. Therese held its annual chili cookoff fundraiser on Sunday, February 4, 2024. Everyone had a great time and the parish benefited with additional funding through the GCU Parish Matching Funds program.

Charles Allan Hunt | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



# St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church

POTTSTOWN, PA

## Annual Easter Bake 2024

St. John the Baptist Church had its Annual Easter Bake of nut and raspberry rolls. With the help of volunteers over the 3 days of baking 700+ rolls were baked. It is good to get together as a community to serve the parish and get to know one another. Enjoying each other's company helps us to serve God more. We thank the GCU for their additional support through the Parish Matching Funds program.

Alex Riebe | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



## St. John Byzantine Catholic Church SCRANTON, PA

### Lenten Pierogi Project

The Auxiliary of St. John BC Church in Scranton held their Lenten pierogi project making 408 dozen potato & cheese pierogi. With helping hands from neighboring parishes, the project was a great success. Thank you GCU for the Parish Matching Funds program.



Karen Duricko | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



## St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church SHEPPTON, PA

### Victoria's Easter Candy Fund Raiser

St. Mary BC Church enjoyed another successful Victoria's Easter Candy Fundraiser Sale. Pictured are Paul Esposito, president of Victoria's Candies, George Andrews, trustee at St. Mary, Andrea Andrews, trustee and GCU Parish Coordinator at St. Mary and David Petrone, Victoria's Chocolate Master.

Andrea Andrews | Byzantine Parish Coordinator

## St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church WINDBER, PA

### Easter Bake Sale

On Saturday, March 16, St. Mary BC Church in Windber held its annual Easter Bake Sale. With the help of volunteers from the parish, nut, poppyseed & apricot rolls and pascha were distributed to those who purchased them. We would like to thank the GCU Matching Funds program for the additional boost to the parish's profits.

Thresa Valko | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



Volunteers busy making rolls and pascha.

# GCU Supported Parish Events

## Cathedral of St. Michael

PASSAIC, NJ

### Eastern Catholic Lenten Mission

A Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts was held on Wednesday, February 28 followed by a Lenten buffet, hosting faithful of the Melkite, Armenian, and Syriac Catholic parishes in the area. The GCU Parish Social Grant provided the funding for this event.

V. Rev. John S. Custer | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



## St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church

CLINTON TWP., MI

### St. Nicholas Dinner

On Sunday, December 3, 2023 the church held a dinner celebrating St. Nicholas Day, the parish's patron Saint. St. Nicholas also appeared bringing small gifts to the children in attendance.

### ECF Christmas Party

A combined Carpatho-Rusyn/ECF Christmas party for the families of the parish and surrounding parishes was held on Sunday, January 7, 2024. Food and beverages were served and music provided by parishioners singing old Carpatho-Rusyn traditional songs. The GCU Parish Social Grant provided funding for both events.

John P. Minarish | Byzantine Parish Coordinator

## St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church

SCRANTON, PA

### Parish Breakfast Meeting

St. Mary Parish held a breakfast meeting on Sunday, March 3 to welcome new administrator, Fr. Robert Lozinski, CSC. We wish him much success and thank the GCU Parish Social Grant program for providing funding for the breakfast.

Barbara Shimkus | Byzantine Parish Coordinator

## St. Pius X Byzantine Catholic Church

CARRICK, PA

### Love Carrick Free Community Meal

On Wednesday, February 14, St. Pius X Church welcomed "Love Carrick" to the parish for their first dinner in the parish hall. Love Carrick offers free meals the second Wednesday of every month to the community. There is no charge. Freewill donations are accepted and everyone is invited to attend. Reservations



Volunteers at the Love Carrick free community meal.

are recommended but not required (to ensure enough food is prepared). Please call 412.571.1433 if you would be interested in attending a dinner or donating your time to volunteer. St. Pius X Parish looks forward to working together with this very worthwhile organization.



Active shooter training.

### Active Shooter Training

On Saturday, February 17, St. Pius X Church had the pleasure of having Steve Mescan SWAT team officer for the City of Pittsburgh speak about active shooter training. Representatives from a number of organizations in the community were invited and 20 people attended.

He brought to light a lot of useful information that should be incorporated to help prevent a serious event. Some of his important points were: Notice suspicious activity and have a plan of escape in mind, since most places of worship try to be welcoming and doors are open for people to join in worship.

After his talk all were invited for light refreshments in the church hall. It was nice to spend some time with our community neighbors. We hope all in attendance took home useful information to share with their family & organizations. Thanks to the GCU Parish Social Grant for assisting.

Beth Gulyasy

## Ss. Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church

BEAVER MEADOWS, PA

### Stations of the Cross Reception

Ss. Peter & Paul Parish hosted the area Byzantine churches for a Lenten Stations of the Cross and a Vesper Service on Sunday, February 18. Thanks to the GCU Social Grant Program for sponsoring the refreshments that were served to everyone following the service.

Michael Komishock |  
Byzantine Parish  
Coordinator



# St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church

LYNDORA, PA

## Easter Crosses & Egg Hunt

The ECF students at St. John the Baptist Church in Lyndora wish to thank the GCU Parish Social Grant program for the gift of chocolate crosses for Easter. They also enjoyed an egg hunt on Palm Sunday after the Divine Liturgy.



The ECF students were thankful and full of smiles after receiving their Easter chocolate crosses.



John Pocchiari | Byzantine Parish Coordinator

# St. Pius X Byzantine Catholic Church

PITTSBURGH, PA

## Pre-Lenten Pancake Social & GCU's 132<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary

Following Liturgy on Sunday, February 11, members enjoyed a delicious pancake breakfast, anniversary cake celebrating the 132<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of GCU's founding and great conversation. What a great celebration! Thanks to the GCU Parish Social Grant for assisting with this event.



Skip & Pat Martin making pancakes.

Kim Kolesar | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



Mark & Karen Pavlick with Brent Kolesar.



Anniversary cake.

# St. John Byzantine Catholic Church

TRUMBULL, CT

## Social Events

Parishioners of St. John the Baptist Church along with Pastor Fr. Gregory Lozinsky would like to thank the GCU for the Parish Social Grant program that was used to host social events at the church. Pictured are a few of the recent social events that took place at the parish.

Lillian Baron | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



Father Gregory blesses Long Island Sound to commemorate Jesus' baptism.



Adult Faith Formation (Corinthians 1).

## Ss. Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church

BRADDOCK, PA

### Annual Fashengy Celebration

Ss. Peter & Paul Braddock extends heartfelt gratitude to GCU for their continued support as the parish celebrated its annual Fashengy on Sunday, February 11. The event, held in anticipation of The Great Fast (Lent), brought together the

parishioners in a joyous gathering after the Liturgy. The enticing aromas of haluski and kielbasa filled the air, guiding parishioners to the basement hall where warmth and fellowship awaited.

Fashengy is a cherished tradition, serves as a prelude to the solemn season of Lent. It offers a moment of communal joy and connection before the contemplative journey of fasting and reflection begins. This year, as we collectively prepared for the upcoming Lenten season, Ss. Peter & Paul introduced the “Give Up and Donate” Lenten project. Recognizing the significance of



Wanda Hodoba, Sue Kennedy, Rich Trankocy and sitting is Ronald Hodoba.

sacrifice and charity during this holy period, the project encourages parishioners to not only abstain from certain luxuries, but to contribute to those in need from the savings they realize from the luxuries they have given up.

Arleen Jama | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



Walter Gada with Fr. Vitalii Stashkevych.

## St. Michael Byzantine Catholic Church

PITTSTON, PA

### Pysanky Egg Workshop

St. Michael Parish used the GCU Parish Social Grant to host a pysanky egg workshop for parishioners on Sunday, March 17. Those who attended learned the art of pysanky and created an egg to take home.

Nancy Stout | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



Pysanky egg workshop.

## St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church

HAZLETON, PA

### Stations of the Cross and Parish Social

Stations of the Cross with benediction were held on Sunday March 10, 2024 at St. Mary BC Church in Hazleton. All in attendance were invited to the church hall afterwards for refreshments. Thanks to the GCU Parish Social Grant for providing the funds needed for this event.

Rick Hoppey | Byzantine Parish Coordinator

# St. Michael Byzantine Catholic Church

HERMITAGE, PA

## GCU Founders' Day—Happy 132<sup>nd</sup> Birthday

GCU still has a local presence in the Hermitage area even though Lodge 258 no longer “officially exists.” The GCU has re-organized its fraternal outreach and is still involved in the parish and community. The Byzantine Parish Coordinator for St. Michael parish is Bill Dzuricko. The new GCU programming provides a \$1,000.00 donation to the parish. The

GCU also makes an annual donation to the Community Food Warehouse. In addition, the BPC receives a \$500.00 grant, in the form of a debit card, to support parish social events during the year. Last year the card provided: 1) individually wrapped, heart shaped cookies for the parishioners to celebrate

Founders' Day; 2) US & Papal Flags for our annual Flag Day program and 3) Cards (from the Sisters of St. Basil in Uniontown, PA) and stamps for our weekly “Sign-A-Card” program. Last year a very

successful October Auction and Raffle qualified for \$3,000.00 in Parish Matching Funds from the GCU!

St. Michael Church began 2024 celebrating GCU Founders' Day on Sunday, February 11, with individually wrapped heart shaped cookies for all parish members to take. Happy 132<sup>nd</sup> Birthday!

GCU offers excellent insurance and investment products. If you have any questions, ask Bill Dzuricko or visit their website at [GCUusa.com](http://GCUusa.com).

**Bill Dzuricko** | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



Pastor Fr. Bob Evancho and Lori Magulick at the buffet table.

# St. Therese Byzantine Catholic Church

ST. PETERSBURG, FL

## Pre-Lenten Fashengy Celebration

On Sunday, February 11, the church gathered to celebrate a Pre-Lenten Fashengy. The GCU Parish Social Grant provided funding for the event.

**Charles Allan Hunt** | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



Father Bob Evancho with the youngest children.



L-R: Omar Ramos & Matt Jones at the bar.

## Ss. Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church

PORTAGE, PA



Kids with St. Nicholas.

### St. Nicholas Day Program and Refreshments

On Sunday, December 17, parishioners met after Liturgy for a brief program highlighting St. Nicholas and enjoyed refreshments & fellowship. It was a nice break before the holidays.



Members enjoying breakfast.

### Pre-Lenten Breakfast

After the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, January 28, parishioners gathered for a delicious breakfast, prepared by several fellow parishioners. Thanks to the GCU Parish Social Grant everyone was able to enjoy both of these events.

Deacon Daniel F. Perich | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



### Nut and Apricot Roll Fundraiser Social

GCU members, Ss. Peter & Paul parishioners along with a few friends had an enjoyable day of making nut and apricot rolls on Saturday, March 9 to benefit the church. Volunteers enjoyed donuts to start the workday and pizza for lunch along with enjoying each other's company and holding a successful sale to benefit the church. Thank you GCU for providing the refreshments and lunch through the GCU Parish Social Grant.

## Ss. Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church

PUNXSUTAWNEY, PA



### Donut Social

The first Sunday of every month our parish has a donut social for parishioners after Liturgy. Parishioners and visitors enjoy the time talking and laughing. These socials are also funded by the GCU Parish Social Grant.

Julie Brocious | Byzantine Parish Coordinator

# St. Andrew Byzantine Catholic Church

WESTBURY, NY

## Special Liturgy

On March 3, nine seminarians along with the head of Saint Joseph Seminary in Mount Vernon, NY Fr. Joseph, visited Saint Andrew Church to celebrate a special Liturgy. Father Deacon David, from Washington DC was also visiting and participated at the Liturgy.

A special luncheon was held so the parishioners and seminarians could socialize. It was a very special occasion. We wish them a lot of luck and happiness as they pursue their vocations.

Marge Russell | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



Seminarians from St. Joseph Seminary in Westchester visit St. Andrew Church.



Bishop Robert Pipta, clergy & servers.

# St. Athanasius Byzantine Catholic Church

INDIANAPOLIS, IN

## Bishop Robert Hierarchical Liturgy and Visit

The parish family of St. Athanasius was honored to welcome Bishop Robert Pipta on February 4, 2024. A Hierarchical Liturgy was celebrated followed by a reception and luncheon in the parish hall.

Thanks to the GCU Parish Social Grant for providing funding for this event.

Olga Vaughn | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



Bishop Robert blessing the parish.



Bishop Liturgy luncheon.

# St. Mary and Ss. Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Churches

BEAVERDALE, PA & DUNLO, PA

## Pre-Lenten Dinner

Parishioners from both Beaverdale and Dunlo came together on Thursday, January 18 for an evening of fine dining at Rizzo's Restaurant in Windber, PA. Everyone was treated to Rizzo's "Italian Feast" and had a wonderful evening to remember the good old days. Thanks to the GCU Parish Social Grant program for assisting with this event.



Members & guests enjoyed good food and fellowship.

Deacon Daniel F. Perich |  
Byzantine Parish Coordinator

Deacon Daniel F. Perich |  
Byzantine Parish Coordinator

# St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church

LORAIN, OH

## Annual Super Bowl/Valentine Bake Sale

GCU members at St. Nicholas Parish sponsored the annual Super Bowl/ Valentine Bake Sale on February 11, 2024. GCU Members donated baked goods for sale and the children were able to submit a cake for the cake decorating contest. A parish social was held following the Divine Liturgy. Everyone was able to purchase bake goods, buy tickets for the Super

Bowl 50/50 raffle, vote on the cakes entered for the cake contest and enjoy refreshments and fellowship. Proceeds from the raffle and bake sale benefit St. Nicholas Parish.

Anne Dillon |  
Byzantine Parish Coordinator



A few of the youth cake decorating participants are Mary & James Nagrant and Stephen Dillon. Winner Luke Nagrant is missing from photo.



Mary Jane Engel, Kathy Knick with her daughters, Laverne Mackin and Bruce Skibo.



Bake sale and cake decorating contest.

# Holy Spirit & Ss. Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Churches

BINGHAMTON, NY & ENDICOTT, NY

## Parishes Receive First Aid Kits

Medical emergencies can strike at any time. Having a first aid kit on hand provides peace of mind. To ensure the safety and well-being of parishioners, family, and visitors, Parish Coordinators Janet Kumpon and Daria Shierly presented basic first aid kits to both Holy Spirit Byzantine Catholic Church in Binghamton, NY, and Ss. Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church in Endicott, NY on February 11, 2024, to help provide immediate care for injuries or any illnesses until medical professionals arrive.

Daria Shierly | Byzantine Parish Coordinator (Ss. Peter & Paul Church)



John Butchko, Mary Ann Goida, Janet Kumpon and David Orlovsky.



Easter Egg participants and helpers.

# St. John Byzantine Catholic Church

POTTSTOWN, PA

## Easter Egg Hunt

The students of the ECF/School of Religion program at St. John BC Church in Pottstown participated in an Easter Egg Hunt on Palm Sunday. The GCU Parish Social Grant program supplied special treats for the students and parents supplied wrapped candy for eggs. A group of 21 students and 16 catechists are in the ECF/SOR program. Rev. Nicholas de Prospero is pastor at St. John. Photos show one class during Easter Egg Hunt and everyone at the Palm Sunday event. GCU Members Fran Petro and Alex Riebe are ECF/SOR co-coordinators.

Alex Riebe | Byzantine Parish Coordinator



# For Your Information

## Events

### Helping Hands Day at Mt. Saint Macrina

Saturday, June 1, 2024  
9 AM

Uniontown, PA

Contact Basil Wahal at the GCU Home Office 724-495-3400 Ext. 3924 or email: bwahal@GCUusa.com

### GCU Golf Classic

Monday, June 3, 2024  
9:30 AM Shotgun Start  
\$80 GCU & Seven Oaks Members  
\$105 Non-Members  
\$30 Dinner Only Adults

Seven Oaks Country Club  
132 Lisbon Road, Beaver, PA 15009

Applications were mailed to previous participants and are available in the Events Section of the GCU Website

Contact GCU Frat.-Comm. Department at 1-800-722-4428 ext. 3810.

### Spring Helping Hands Day at Holy Annunciation Monastery

Saturday, June 8, 2024  
9 AM

Sugarloaf, PA

Contact Melissa Jaggars at 878-207-2327 or mjaggars@GCUusa.com

### Byzantine Family Day at Knoebels Park

Sunday, June 9, 2024  
11 AM Divine Liturgy  
12:30 PM Catered Lunch  
\$16 each Ticket Booklet  
\$10 Members Lunch Ticket  
\$16.50 Non-Member Lunch Ticket  
FREE for kids age 2 and under

Elysburg, PA

Contact Melissa Jaggars at 878-207-2327 or visit the Events Section of the GCU Website

### Byzantine Family Day at Kennywood Park

Thursday, July 25, 2024  
11 AM Divine Liturgy  
12:30 PM Catered Lunch  
\$27 Ride All Day Ticket  
FREE ages 3 & under  
\$20 Kids Lunch Ticket (ages 3-10)  
\$25 Adult Lunch Ticket (ages 11+)  
FREE for kids age 2 and under

West Mifflin, PA

Contact Casey at 724-683-3927 or visit the Events Section of the GCU Website

### GCU/SCS Golf Tournament

Friday, August 9-Sunday, August 11  
Friday is a practice round  
Saturday & Sunday Tournament Play  
8 AM Shotgun Start

Entry deadline is July, 12

Treasure Lake Golf Resort  
DuBois, PA 15801

Applications will be available soon on the Events Section of the GCU Website.

Contact GCU Frat.-Comm. Department at 1-800-722-4428 ext. 3810.

### Charity Golf Scramble

Monday, September 23, 2024  
9:30 AM Shotgun Start

Seven Oaks Country Club  
Beaver, PA 15009

Benefits the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank

Applications will be available soon on the Events Section of the GCU Website.

Contact GCU Frat.-Comm. Department at 1-800-722-4428 ext. 3810.

## Earn your Master's Degree in Theology at the Byzantine Catholic Seminary's School of Theology

*Degree options are offered both online and on campus.*

Catholic • Ecumenical • Flexible  
Affordable • Prestigious • Spiritually Enriching  
Rooted in ancient Christianity

*To begin M.A.T. program in upcoming fall semester, application deadline is July 20.*

*Students have a choice of four different M.A.T. focus areas:*

- Chaplaincy
- Dogmatics
- Liturgy
- Sacred Scripture

[www.bcs.edu](http://www.bcs.edu)





## Available

### Carpathian Cookery Cookbook

Having sold over 20,500 copies, the cookbook has entered its 22<sup>nd</sup> printing and was requested by the Library of Congress to be in their ethnic cooking collection. The

330-page cookbook has a new look and features a protective plastic cover. The book includes sections on Christmas and Easter customs and recipes, traditional Rusyn and Slavic foods, other ethnic dishes, and many other tried-and-true recipes of St. John's parishioners. There is a variety of paska bread and kolachi (filled roll) recipes, as well as meatless dishes and Lenten recipes, suitable for the Great Fast, as well as the Pre-Christmas Fast. The cost of the cookbook is \$14.<sup>00</sup> plus \$6.<sup>00</sup> postage and handling (\$20.<sup>00</sup>). If ordering from Canada, please send a \$38.<sup>00</sup> (\$14 + \$24 postage) U.S. Postal money order payable in U.S. dollars to reflect the difference in the exchange rate and postage cost. To order please send a check or money order to: Ethnic Craft Club, St. John BC Church, 201 E. Main Street, Uniontown, PA 15401, call 724-438-1382 (M-F 9 AM-3 PM leave message) or email [carpathiancookery@gmail.com](mailto:carpathiancookery@gmail.com).

### GCU Culinary Chronicle Cookbook

The GCU Culinary Chronicle Cookbook was first published in 1985 as a fund raising tool for the proposed construction of a wooden church on the GCU property in Beaver, PA. The dream was realized with the completion



of the GCU St. Nicholas Chapel in 1992. The cookbook, over 270 pages of favorite family and ethnic recipes, has continued to be very popular. The proceeds from sales now benefit the GCU Foundation with \$1 from each book sold going directly to the GCU Cause of the Quarter. The cookbook

is available in its original printed version for a cost of \$20 (\$10 plus \$10 for shipping) or in a downloadable version (PDF) for the cost of \$8. Order and pay with a credit card at [GCUusa.com/Giving Back/Cookbook](http://GCUusa.com/Giving Back/Cookbook).

### St. Mary Marblehead Cookbook Fundraiser

St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Marblehead, OH has compiled a cookbook as a fundraiser to benefit the church's building fund for roof replacement at the church, hall and rectory. The ethnic cookbook is a compilation of three previous church cookbooks -- the Centennial Cookbook (1997), St. Mary Dedication Cookbook (1977) and "The Best in Cooking" in Marblehead.

If you are interested in purchasing a cookbook (or several), please contact Diane Glovinsky at [glovinskydma@gmail.com](mailto:glovinskydma@gmail.com). Your response will help determine the approximate number of cookbooks to print. The cookbook will be reasonably priced and is expected to be available in early summer. The entire purchase price will benefit the church.

St. Mary Church is located adjacent to the historic Marblehead Lighthouse. Services are held Saturdays at 4 PM and Sundays at 10 AM. All are welcome! For more information visit [stmarymarblehead.com](http://stmarymarblehead.com).

### Discount Amusement Park Tickets for 2024

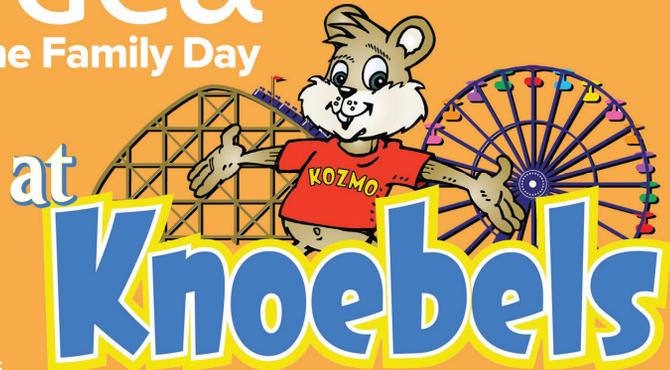


Discounted Amusement Park tickets for the 2024 season are available to GCU members for online purchase. The parks include Kenywood Park, West Mifflin, PA; Knoebels Park, Elysburg, PA; Hershey Park, Hershey, PA. Visit the GCU website at [GCUusa.com](http://GCUusa.com).

**GCU**  
Byzantine Family Day

**12<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
SUNDAY, JUNE 9, 2024**

Ticket Booklets - \$16 each (\$4 Value)  
KIDS LUNCH (ages 2 & under)—FREE  
LUNCH (ages 3 & up) - \$10 GCU Members  
LUNCH (ages 3 & up) - \$16.50 Non-GCU Members  
Information and order forms available  
on the GCU Website



Each \$16 ticket booklet is valid for \$20 worth of rides, pool, food, & games inside park!

11AM Divine Liturgy with Fr. Paul Varchola West  
"Joining together as one before the fun!"



**GCU & Kennywood...**

a partnership of family fun over a century in the making!

**THURSDAY  
JULY 25**

**RIDE ALL DAY!**  
\$27 (ages 4 and up)  
FREE (ages 3 and under)  
\$20 KIDS LUNCH (ages 3-10)  
\$25 ADULT LUNCH (ages 11+)



**ORDER TICKETS**



or  
**800-722-4428**

Additional info to follow in June GCU Magazine or available on GCU Website

## GCU Pittsburgh Penguins Outing Tuesday, February 6, 2024



Beth Gulyasy, Board member Maria Silvestri and Joe Mills with Nicole & Kevin Watenpool in the row in front of them.



Patty Niskach, Board member Melanie Basl and Chris Milligan.



GCU Fraternal Communications Director Basil Wahal caught a hot dog during the game.



Home Office staff member Nicole Gailey is all smiles (center) at the game.



Joe Senko (center) with some of his friends enjoying the game.



Emily Smith, Ella Wahal, Tyler Smith, Zack and Athena Wahal enjoying some good food and some good hockey.

### GCU Spring Golf Classic



A Handicap Tournament  
Non-Members Welcome

**Monday, June 3, 2024**  
**9:30 am Shotgun Start**

CASH prizes for ALL Flights  
Skill prize winners will receive a  
Golf Shop gift certificate

\$80 GCU & Seven Oaks Members  
\$105 Non-Members  
\$30 Dinner Only (Adults)

Seven Oaks Country Club  
132 Lisbon Road, Beaver, PA 15009

Golfers can make up their own  
foursomes or we will place you in one.

◆

Register and Pay at  
[GCUusa.com](http://GCUusa.com) under Events

**GCU PIRATES Double Play**

ADMIT ONE

P

**MINNESOTA TWINS**

22 SEAT    F ROW    22 SEAT

**VS. TWINS**  
**SUNDAY, JUNE 9, 2024**  
**KIDS DAY**  
**1:35 PM - SEC. 125**

ADMIT ONE

P

**REDS**

22 SEAT    F ROW    22 SEAT

**VS. REDS**  
**SATURDAY, AUGUST 24, 2024**  
**FIREWORKS**  
**6:40 PM - SEC. 125**

[Order Tickets](http://GCUusa.com)    [GCUusa.com](http://GCUusa.com)    [More Info](#)

# Deceased Members

(State Lodge-Member-City-State)

- 8358 Barbara A. Abhold, Neenah, WI  
8344 Patricia Adams, Home, PA  
8329 Bernice F. Allen, Carthage, MO  
8344 Paula J. Allison, Imperial, PA  
8344 Hazel Andrews, Reading, PA  
8344 Fredrica M. Ashbaugh, Indiana, PA  
8344 Helen Bader, Zelenople, PA  
8341 Ann M. Banyots-Vanyo, Mineral Ridge, OH  
8359 Jonell Beatty, Gastonia, NC  
8341 Martha E. Benjamin, Parma, OH  
8341 Charlotte Ann Bobik, Junction City, OH  
8344 Frank G. Boboige, Punxsutawney, PA  
8344 John Bodisch, Center Valley, PA  
8344 George P. Bodnar, N. Huntingdon, PA  
8313 Virginia L. Borrowdale, Tinley Park, IL  
8344 Agnes Boshka, Wilkes-Barre, PA  
8327 Tammy Brateng, Roseau, MN  
8358 Joan T. Breski, Kenosha, WI  
8344 Jo Ann Breslin, Birdsboro, PA  
8344 Anna J. Britner, North Versailles, PA  
8344 Marie Brooks, Beaver Falls, PA  
8344 Patricia A. Bruner, Lansdale, PA  
8341 Elsie E. Bruno, East Liverpool, OH  
8344 Dwight Caldwell, West Mifflin, PA  
8344 Susan L. Caldwell, Harleysville, PA  
8344 Sandra L. Cammisa, Butler, PA  
8344 Paul Capcara, Lancaster, PA  
8344 Michael Cardone, Dunmore, PA  
8313 Benjamin W. Carter, New Berlin, IL  
8349 Margaret Cavacini, South Lake, TX  
8337 Robert T. Charnisky, Syracuse, NY  
8358 Sanford Cohen, Milwaukee, WI  
8344 James E. Coleman, Beaver, PA  
8344 Floyd Collins, N. Huntingdon, PA  
8359 William P. Collins, Rockingham, NC  
8309 Ruth L. Cook Oshinsky, Pomona Park, FL  
8344 Jeanne M. Corbett, Newton, PA  
8326 Emmett M. Coshatt, Commerce Twp., MI  
8344 William Cramer, Indiana, PA  
8344 Ethel A. Cunningham, St. Benedict, PA  
8344 Mary Dapra, Oakmont, PA  
8344 George R. David, Aliquippa, PA  
8326 Ronald T. Davies, Presque Isle, MI  
8309 Elias Joseph Deeb, Naples, FL  
8344 Nancy Ann Donalies, Pittsburgh, PA  
8344 Alice Drass, Altoona, PA  
8344 Janet Ducar, Whitaker, PA  
8344 Georgina A. Estok, Aliquippa, PA  
8341 Patricia L. Evans, Columbiana, OH  
8360 Rosa N. Evans, Fort Mill, SC  
8344 Ethel Fatandas, White Oak, PA  
8344 Mazie Fec, Pittsburgh, PA  
8344 Lorraine H. Fischer, Hatboro, PA  
8344 Jacqueline Flynn, East Stroudsburg, PA  
8302 Ann S. Fonte, Surprise, AZ  
8344 Ronald Friebe, Murrysville, PA  
8358 Mary F. Gagag, Stevens Point, WI  
8344 Barbara Gailey, Moon Twp., PA  
8344 John J. Gallagher, White Oak, PA  
8344 Edward Genes, Greensburg, PA  
8344 Helen Goida, Dallas, PA  
8359 Frances C. Goodman, Connelly Spring, NC  
8341 John Gorski, Boardman, OH  
8309 Joseph Gregos, Ormond Beach, FL  
8344 Richard R. Guerrieri, Fair Oaks, PA  
8337 Christina Guzi, Wappingers Falls, NY  
8313 Helen Hakun, Chicago, IL  
8344 Catherine L. Hangey, East Greenville, PA  
8336 Patricia Hansen, Clovis, NM  
8324 George Michael Haris, Silver Spring, MD  
8344 Genevieve Harvan, Southwest, PA  
8326 Janet J. Harvey, Shepherd, MI  
8302 Ruth C. Held, Yuma, AZ  
8344 William J. Hetrick, Oakmont, PA  
8304 Sylvia Hicks, San Diego, CA  
8344 Larry L. Hill, Delmont, PA  
8344 Richard Himes, Beaver Falls, PA  
8341 Jean M. Hochevar, Euclid, OH  
8340 Jean C. Hoverson, Grand Forks, ND  
8344 Carol Huchko, Baden, PA  
8359 Edward Hyduchak, Watertown, CT  
8360 Theodis Ingram, Lancaster, SC  
8344 Katherine James, Peckville, PA  
8344 Nancy C. Jenkins, Lansdale, PA  
8327 Leone Johnson, Randall, MN  
8341 Eugene Juba, Westlake, OH  
8337 Anthony Jurenko, Olean, NY  
8344 Edward A. Kaczmarek, Pittsburgh, PA  
8344 John Karnoski, W. Hazleton, PA  
8344 Patricia Kasprzak, Easton, PA  
8341 John Keblesh, Kent, OH  
8344 Doris Kelly, Beaver Falls, PA  
8341 Katherine Keshock, Avon Lake, OH  
8344 Esther G. Kleckner, Palo Alto, PA  
8344 Joan Konzal, Erie, PA  
8344 Irma Marie Kotun, Aliquippa, PA  
8344 Frances J. Kovalcheck, Greensboro, PA  
8344 Donald E. Kramer, Fayetteville, PA  
8341 John Krenisky, Cleveland, OH  
8344 Shirley E. Kristoff, Verona, PA  
8344 Joseph Kroker, Coraopolis, PA  
8344 Mary Krumenacker, Portage, PA  
8315 Mark J. Krupinski, Merrillville, IN  
8337 Joseph P. Kubert, Highland, NY  
8344 Robert R. Kuzma, Coraopolis, PA  
8344 Marilyn Labash, Donora, PA  
8357 William Larch, New Cumberland, WV  
8309 Michael Laylock, Ormond Beach, FL  
8358 Rita M. Lester, Menomonee Falls, WI  
8344 Charles Letosky, Bradenville, PA  
8309 Thomas Lisnock, Tampa, FL  
8313 Scott Lowtwait, Northbrook, IL

8344 Marjorie L. Lucas, Philadelphia, PA  
8344 Ronald Lutka, Munhall, PA  
8344 Michael V. Mahall, Minersville, PA  
8344 Ann Maisano, Monessen, PA  
8344 Helen Manganelli, Hazleton, PA  
8344 Mary Louise Marchase, Pittsburgh, PA  
8335 Edmond F. Martin, Ocala, FL  
8344 Lois M. Martin, Rostraver Twp., PA  
8344 Patricia A. Matus, Whitaker, PA  
8313 Sherman Mayerak, Lynwood, IL  
8315 Barbara J. Mayersky, Crown Point, IN  
8344 Gerald L. McFarland, New Castle, PA  
8358 Dennis McKee, Fort Atkinson, WI  
8326 Judith Meyers, North Muskegon, MI  
8344 Lorraine Mihalcin, Munhall, PA  
8344 Joyce A. Mihalic, Beaver Falls, PA  
8344 Mary Jo Modzelewski, Butler, PA  
8344 Catherine Molinich, Nanty Glo, PA  
8344 Robert Monzi, Baden, PA  
8344 Kathryn E. Moon, Erie, PA  
8344 Dolores Nowakowski, South Park, PA  
8344 Beatrice K. Nyce, Lansdale, PA  
8313 Patrick M. O'Dowd, Chicago, IL  
8341 Mary Oleyar, Youngstown, OH  
8344 Edith A. O'Neill, East Stroudsburg, PA  
8344 Ana Rosa Oquendo, Philadelphia, PA  
8313 Dale Palmer, Plainfield, IL  
8302 Lawrence Palmer, Chandler, AZ  
8344 Evelyn Petro-Homer, Dunbar, PA  
8352 Valetta Petterborg, St. George, UT  
8358 Donald Pfeifer, Fort Atkinson, WI  
8344 Deborah D. Platt, Media, PA  
8344 Roy Potersnak, Port Vue, PA  
8344 Maxine L. Prugh, Shelocta, PA  
8344 Madeline Puyda, Dubois, PA  
8344 Michael Rady, Warwick, RI  
8358 Norman J. Raeder, Plymouth, WI  
8344 Paula Rambo-Tinney, Darlington, PA  
8304 Helen L. Ramos, Azusa, CA  
8302 Ulla M. Rasilainen, Green Valley, AZ  
8326 Irene Raybaud, St. Clair Shores, MI  
8344 John Regalla, Latrobe, PA  
8344 Elmer Reis, Pittsburgh, PA  
8344 Kathleen Ann Reposky, New Salem, PA  
8344 Adele Rinker, Stroudsburg, PA  
8344 Harold W. Rising, Indiana, PA  
8344 Thomas E. Risinger, Blairsville, PA  
8302 Raymond Rondeau, Chandler, AZ  
8316 Cynthia K. Ross, Reinbeck, IA  
8344 Gerald M. Rovinsky, Archbald, PA  
8358 Paul M. Rutter, Wauwatosa, WI  
8344 Eugene V. Salvino, Monessen, PA  
8304 Russell D. Sanderson, Menifee, CA  
8344 Felix C. Santos, Stroudsburg, PA  
8349 Albert Satriano, Rosharon, TX  
8344 Barbara E. Satter, Stroudsburg, PA  
8354 Helen Schmidt, Vienna, VA  
8313 Klaus Schmidt, Hawthorn Woods, IL  
8327 Lois J. Schmidt, Eyota, MN  
8304 Millard Schwartz, San Diego, CA  
8344 Kathryn Semenko, New Castle, PA  
8344 Richard Serafin, Monaca, PA  
8344 Gwendolyn Simmons, Monongahela, PA  
8344 Jean L. Slepian, Pittsburgh, PA  
8344 John Slipko, Coraopolis, PA  
8344 Judy Slonac, Portage, PA  
8344 Rosemary Smith, Stroudsburg, PA  
8344 Anna J. Sostek, Johnstown, PA  
8344 Meredith D. Speicher, Manns Choice, PA  
8344 Regina S. Steeber, Hazle Township, PA  
8344 Paul A. Stefura, Elwood City, PA  
8344 Jennifer J. Strunak, Oakdale, PA  
8335 Francis Sutter, Moorestown, NJ  
8358 Bernice M. Sutton, Lake Geneva, WI  
8344 Eleanore Tarcha, Butler, PA  
8357 Helen J. Tate, Weirton, WV  
8344 Nancy S. Tinkham, Elizabethtown, PA  
8344 Dolores M. Tiraboschi, Pittsburgh, PA  
8341 Paul Trudics, Toronto, OH  
8344 Mary Turanchik, Bethlehem, PA  
8326 William T. Van Til, Pierson, MI  
8335 Helen Vanhorn, Raritan, NJ  
8304 E M Vetterli, Laquinta, CA  
8344 John Votovich, Coal Center, PA  
8344 Harry Walker, Indiana, PA  
8344 James A. Weaver, McDonald, PA  
8344 David J. Weber, Pittsburgh, PA  
8344 Richard L. Weimer, Latrobe, PA  
8344 Harry West, Apollo, PA  
8335 Ann Wilkins, Phillipsburg, NJ  
8344 Patricia Woy, Somerset, PA  
8320 Ralph W. Wright, Russellville, KY  
8313 Agnes Yaros, Palos Hills, IL  
8337 Linda J. Yonkin, Binghamton, NY  
8341 John Zubal, Rocky River, OH  
8344 Paul R. Zurynski, Koppel, PA

# Remembrances

## Reverend Monsignor Russell Andrew Duker, SEOD

Reverend Monsignor Russell Andrew Duker, SEOD, a retired priest of the Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh, fell asleep in the Lord on January 22, 2024, at Mt. Macrina Manor, Uniontown, PA.

He was born on August 24, 1943, in West Aliquippa, PA, the youngest of the children of Stephen D. Duker and Mary A. Varhola. He received his elementary education at Washington School and in 1961 graduated from Aliquippa High School. He attended Geneva College in Beaver Falls, PA where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree and was graduated "Summa Cum Laude" in 1964. He also did graduate work at the University of Pittsburgh. He then entered Ss. Cyril & Methodius Seminary and attended Duquesne University.

In the fall of 1967, Monsignor Russell was assigned to complete his seminary studies in Rome, at the Pontifical North American College. While there he attended the Gregorian University and the Pontifical Institute for Eastern Studies and was awarded the Baccalaureate Degree in Sacred Theology.

Returning to the United States in 1970, he was ordained to the priesthood in his home parish of St. George in Aliquippa on September 20, 1970, by Archbishop Stephen J. Kocisko.

Monsignor Russell's first priestly assignment was assistant at St. John Cathedral in Munhall, PA., and he was also appointed assistant chancellor and secretary to Archbishop Stephen. His next parochial assignments were: St. Stephen in North Huntingdon, PA. where he was the founding pastor of the new parish and St. Nicholas, Youngstown, OH.

In the Autumn of 1979, Monsignor Russell again returned to Rome for further study at the Gregorian University's Pontifical Institute for Eastern Studies. Here he first earned the Bac-

calaureate and Licentiate Degrees in the area of Eastern Church Studies and then on June 9, 1982, he publicly defended his doctoral dissertation entitled *The Byzantine Catholic Synod of Vienna of 1773* and he was awarded with "High Honors," the Degree of Doctor of the Theological Sciences of the Eastern Churches.

Returning from Rome, Monsignor Russell was appointed pastor of Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church in McKees Rocks, PA and director of the Archieparchial Office of Religious Education.

Holy Father St. John Paul II named him Prelate of Honor with the title of Monsignor on September 21, 1984.

In 1990 Monsignor Russell was appointed rector of Ss. Cyril & Methodius Seminary where he also served as Professor of Dogmatic Theology and Homiletics. On June 15, 1995, he assumed the pastorates of Holy Spirit Church in the Oakland section of Pittsburgh and St. Pius X Church in Carrick, PA, where he remained until retirement after 26 years as the pastor and administrator.

From September 14, 1994 until February 7, 1995, he served as Administrator of the Archeparchy, having been elected by the College of Consulters to fill the vacancy created by the death of Bishop John M. Bilock. Under Archbishops Judson M. Procyk and Basil M. Schott, Monsignor Russell served as Protosyncellus and Chancellor.

His other Archieparchial responsibilities included: Liturgical Commission, associate editor of the *Byzantine Catholic World*, secretary of the Priests' Pension Board, member of the Matrimonial Tribunal, and Consul-tor. He also represented the Archeparchy at the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference, serving in executive positions; and he was on the Board of Delegates of the Christian Associates

of Southwestern Pennsylvania. He likewise participated in many ecclesiastical societies, ecumenical forums and civic organizations.

Monsignor Russell was the author of numerous articles and publications that deal with the history, liturgy, and theological tradition of the Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Church. He was well known as a speaker who lectured extensively on these same topics at many academic and ecclesiastical institutions throughout the country and abroad.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brothers: Igor, Dr. Daniel and Raymond (Mary Jane), and Michael; and sisters, Juliann (Paul) Smerigan and Olga (Joseph) Mackin and brother-in-law John Chabala. Surviving him are his sister, Peggy Duker Chabala; sister-in-law, Janet Shema Duker; and numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, parishioners and friends.

Friends were received at St. John Cathedral on January 30 and on January 31, with the Parastas celebrated both evenings, by Very Reverend Andrew J. Deskevich.

Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla presided at the Funeral Divine Liturgy on Thursday, morning February 1. Most Reverend Robert M. Pipta Bishop of Parma, was the celebrant and concelebrating were: Very Reverends Thomas J. Loya, Ronald C. Barusefski, Frank A. Firko and David A. Bosnich; Reverend Father Kevin E. Marks and Monsignor Lawrence Dominik. Very Reverend Loya was the homilist and Deacon Kyprian A. Wojciechowski assisted as deacon. Reverend Fathers Valerian Michlik and Will Rupp led the congregational singing.

Interment followed at Mount Macrina Cemetery, Uniontown, PA.

In blessed repose, grant O Lord eternal rest to your departed servant Monsignor Russell and remember him forever!

## Reverend John Zeyack May 16, 1939 – March 11, 2024

Father John Zeyack, 84, a retired priest of the Eparchy of Passaic, fell asleep in the Lord on Monday, March 11, 2024, at Hackensack Meridian Medical Center in Brick, NJ.

The son of Michael Zeyack and Mary Soltis, Fr. John was born on May 16, 1939, in Trenton, NJ. He was baptized and chrismated at St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church, Trenton, NJ on May 28, 1939 by Fr. Desederius Simcoe.

Discerning a vocation to the priesthood, he entered Ss. Cyril & Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary in Pittsburgh, PA and later attended the Theological College in Washington, DC. He received a Licentiate Degree in Sacred Theology (STL) and a Masters Degree (MA) in Eastern Catholic Theology from the John Zard Center.

He was ordained to the Diaconate on August 30, 1964 by Bishop Stephen J. Kocisko at St. Mary BC Church in Trenton. On March 19, 1965 he was ordained to the Priesthood of Jesus Christ at the Cathedral of St. Michael the Archangel, Passaic, NJ, by Bishop Stephen J. Kocisko.

During the course of his years of priestly ministry, Fr. John served the faithful at St. Michael Cathedral in Passaic; Holy Spirit Byzantine Catholic Church in Binghamton, NY; St. Basil Byzantine Catholic Church in Miami, FL; St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church in Danbury, CT; St. Thomas the Apostle Byzantine Catholic Church in Rahway, NJ; St. Ann Byzantine Catholic Church in Harrisburg, PA and St. George Byzantine Catholic Church in Linden, NJ.

Over the years, and in addition to his parochial assignments, Fr. John also served as Professor at the Blessed Theodore Romzha Seminary in Uzhorod, Ukraine; he was also the Eparchial Representative of the Byzantine Catholic Church at the National Catechetical Directory; an Eparchial Consultor; the Director of Continued Education for Clergy; the Eparchial Director of Religious Education and Executive Director of the Office of Religious Education; and director of the Eparchial Presbyteral Council.

Fr. John was predeceased by his brother George, his sister Bertha, his brother Michael, his brother Thomas (and Ruth), his sister Martha (and Dan-

iel Opielski) and brother-in-law Jack Chumar. He is survived by his sisters Irene Chumar and Bernice (and William) Terwillinger, his brother Albert (and Awatif) Zeyack, sister-in-law Mary Zeyack and many nieces and nephews, including Susan Terwillinger.

Funeral Services was held on Sunday, March 17, 2024, at St. Thomas the Apostle Byzantine Catholic Church, Rahway, NJ. The celebration of the Divine Liturgy for Sunday, followed by Last Farewell with Kissing of Cross, Panachida, Prayer of Absolution and Pouring of Oil. A dinner followed immediately afterward in the parish hall.

Interment was at St. Mary Cemetery, Trenton, NJ.

“Well done, my good and faithful servant ...Come, share your master’s joy!” (Mt 23)

# Remembrances

## Sister Agnes Herbenick Enters into the Fullness of Life

Eager to complete her life's journey, Sister Agnes Herbenick (formerly Sister Stephen) was welcomed home by the Lord on Saturday afternoon, March 2, 2024, at Mt. Macrina Manor. The Manor was the last place of Sister's active ministry, and it was from there that she took the final steps into God's Kingdom. Her passing is felt deeply by all staff and residents alike, to whom she ministered as the pastoral care director for several years with great love and fidelity.

Sister Agnes was born in Lyndora, PA, the daughter of the late John & Mary (Katana) Herbenick. She entered the Sisters of St. Basil from St. John Byzantine Catholic Church in Lyndora on October 1, 1958, and made her Final Profession of Vows on August 22, 1964.

Sister Agnes devoted 50 years of her life to the ministry of education. It was a ministry that she enjoyed, and this was evident in the energy and good humor she brought to her students. She ministered in the parishes of Pittsburgh, Parma, and Pas-saic with a joy and bright spirit.

As it became apparent that the Lord would soon call her home, she had the opportunity to speak with a few family members. To one in particular, whose tears were apparent, she said, "Please don't cry. This is what I've

been waiting for my whole life." Even through the journey of death, Sister Agnes continues to teach all of us and model the grace and gentle spirit that were characteristics of her life.

Sister Agnes loved to laugh and found humor in the most mundane things. She had a love of life, her community and her family. As one of fourteen children, she had many nieces & nephews and grandnieces & nephews. She faithfully acknowledged birthdays, holidays, and celebrations throughout the year. She kept in touch with so many, even as she became weaker, she desired to stay in touch via a greeting card or text.

In his homily at the Divine Liturgy, Fr. Andrew Summer-son drew on the following Troparion for a woman-martyr: "O Jesus, your lamb ... cries out to you with great love. O my Bridegroom, I long for you in great pain. I long for you, and in baptism, I am buried with you. I suffer for your sake in order to reign with you. I die for you in order to live in you. Accept me as an immaculate victim since I am immolated for your love."

How appropriate that Sister's parents chose to name their youngest child Agnes, since this name became a fitting description for her life as expressed in this Troparion. We can place Sister Agnes' name before each phrase, which rings true for everyone who shared her life. Now, it

remains for us to pray the last phrase, "Through her intercession, O Merciful One, save our souls."

Sister Agnes was preceded in death by her parents and many siblings: John, Michael, Stephen, William, Joseph, George, Paul, Frank, Mary Stan-ko, Margaret, Ann, Helen Villani, and Andrew. In addition to the members of her community, she is survived by many devoted nieces, nephews, and their children.

Relatives and friends were received at the Monastery on Monday, March 4. Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla celebrated the Funeral Divine Liturgy on Tuesday, March 5, in the Monastery Chapel. Concelebrants were Very Rev. Andrew Deskevich, Rev. Jerome Botsko, the Monastery Chaplain, and Rev. Andrew Summer-son, a former student of Sister Agnes at St. Mary's School in Cleveland, OH. Very Rev. James A. Spontak was in attendance.

Interment followed in the Dormition Section of Mount Macrina Cemetery.



## Elizabeth A. Stanko

Supreme Tribunal 2001-2004

Elizabeth A. Stanko, 94, passed away on Monday, February 19, 2024, surrounded by family, at Briarfield Place, following a brief illness.

Betty was born July 19, 1929, in Youngstown, OH a daughter of Michael & Marie (Butchko) Mrofczak. She was a lifelong Youngstown area resident. Betty was a long time GCU lodge and district officer and served a four-year term on the GCU Supreme Tribunal.

Betty and her husband Michael raised their family of four children and found room in their hearts to care for thirteen foster children. Together, Betty and Mike founded Gem's Pottery & Gifts. She was a hard worker and very involved with day-to-day operations of the store. Betty was a member of the American Businesswomen for more than forty years.

She was a parishioner at St. Michael Byzantine Catholic Church, in Campbell, OH where she was very active in the church. She was a member, and former president, of the Infant Jesus of Prague Guild and former president of the Diocesan Infant Guild.

Betty was involved with the Democratic Party, a poll worker and belonged to the Federated Democratic Women Club of Ohio.

Betty leaves behind to cherish her memory children Gary (Margaret) Stanko of Canfield, OH; Michael (Linda) Stanko of Poland, OH; Ed Stanko of Boardman, OH and Susan (Rob) Fritch of Poland; grandchildren Greg and Nicholas (Elise) Stanko, Renee English, Gary (Ashley) Stanko, Jennifer (Eric) Anticola and Anthony (Hillary) Harding; and great grandchildren Preston & Gavin English, Layla & Logan Stanko, Vera & Ava Anticola and Otto Harding.

The Stanko family received family and friends on February 26 & 27, 2024 at St. Michael Byzantine Catholic Church. A Funeral Divine Liturgy, concelebrated by Father Kevin Marks and Father Mykhaylo Farynets was held on Tuesday, February 27.

The family would like to extend a special thanks to those who cared for Betty at Briarfield Place and Sanctuary Hospice during her time of need. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the St. Michael Byzantine Catholic Church Raise the Roof Fund in Betty's honor.

The logo features a bald eagle's head on the left, a stylized white eagle in flight in the center, and the text 'GCU AQUILA SERIES' in white and blue. The background is a starry night sky with a nebula.

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