



Orange County News

By: **Lila Ciecek (714) 544-2458**

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The month of March, named by ancient Romans after the god of war: Mars - is winding down, and the spring is here with the nature around us bursting with a new life, growth and energy. As we come to the end of the long Lenten season - time of reflection, penance and mortification - we are looking forward and anxiously awaiting the solemn celebration of Easter, the promise of new life, hope and joy of this most holy Christian Holyday.

At the Pope John Paul II Polish Center in Yorba Linda many special Lenten practices are spiritually preparing the community for Easter. Special Liturgies, Stations of the Cross and Days of Recollection were among these. Retreats in English and in Polish were given by Fr. O'Connor and by Fr. Robert Ratajczak, the Missionaries of the Divine Word.

After the observances of the Holy Week, Triduum: Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday, as well as blessing of the food on Holy Saturday, the Polish Center's community will rejoice in celebrating Easter. There will be a Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday, the Rezurekcja at 7am, and three Sunday Masses. On Palm Sunday children will color eggs and there will be a Pancake Breakfast sponsored by the Knights of Columbus.

On Sunday, April 19th. the celebration of the Feast of Divine Mercy, will take place at the Polish Center. It will begin with the 10:30 am Mass and continue throughout the afternoon, concluding around 4pm. There will be: 12 - 3pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, private and group adoration, Chaplet of Divine Mercy, prayers, singing, procession with flowers, Veneration of the Relics of St. Faustina, and the Benediction. The devotions will be in both Polish and English. Preceding Divine Mercy Sunday, the Novena will start at the Polish Center on Good Friday and continue every day at 3pm until April 19th. For more info. please call Center's office at (714) 996-8161.

The Community of Pope John Paul II Polish Center wishes the Editors and Readers of the "News of Polonia" a very Blessed, Happy Easter! Chrystus Zmartwychwstał! Prawdziwie Zmartwychwstał! Alleluja! Alleluja!

As the tradition dictated, the annual "Saint Joseph's Table" took place at the Center on March 22. The event was sponsored by the Ladies Guild and the Christian Service Committee. The community generously provided "the best from their kitchens", and the proceeds from the sale enriched the fund for the poor.

Who Is Who...

By: **Lila Ciecek**

Congratulations! to Daniel Dolewski, recipient of the First Place, Gold Medal In the 2009 Junior High Academic Decathlon. He was awarded Gold Medal for his knowledge and presentation in the category selected by himself: "Religion - Vatican Council II."

Daniel is a student at St. Joachim Catholic School in Costa Mesa, California. He was one of the ten best 8th grade students, who were selected to represent his School in the Decathlon. Nineteen Catholic Schools from Southern California participated in this inter-scholar competition, which took place on March 7th 2009 at the Santa Margarita Catholic High School in Rancho Santa Margarita, California.

Daniel is the son of Zdzisław and Anna Dolewski, long time, active members of the Pope John Paul II Polish Center in Yorba Linda. Daniel also attends the Center's Polish School, and is an Altar Server. Bravo! Job well done! □



St. Joseph's Day (Dzień Świętego Józefa)

Feast Day: March 19 / 19. Marca

In Poland, it is customary to celebrate "Imienien" or Namesday, the feast day of one's patron saint. To allow the many Josephs to celebrate their namesday, the Church would grant a dispensation from the rigors of Lent on March 19. Because St. Joseph's Day is a Lenten solemnity, the tradition has been to serve meatless foods so that the meal becomes a "festive fast." St. Joseph, patron of the universal Church, patron of families, patron of workers, patron of social justice, patron of the dying, patron of pastry makers, and patron of fathers, is a very important and beloved saint.

Iconography of St. Joseph

Images of St. Joseph most often depict him with the child Jesus in his arms, with the Holy Family, at a work table, with carpenter's tools, or with a lily.

St. Joseph's Day in Chicago Polonia: A Polish-American Hybrid

While Poles most certainly honor and revere St. Joseph, in American Polonia these values have flourished in interesting and hybrid ways. Especially in the earlier waves of immigration (1890s - 1930s), Polish and Italian immigrants were faced with an American Catholic church hierarchy controlled largely by Irish clergy, most often unsympathetic to the newcomers whom they often regarded as inferior, primitive, overly demonstrative, and superstitious. In the face of this disdain for Southern and Eastern European Catholicism, Poles responded by forming their own Polish language parishes (i.e. St. Stanislaus Kostka in Chicago) while Italians responded by preserving their religious traditions in the form of "Feasts" (Festa) run by patronage societies from their home villages and cities. This tension found curious expression in Chicago, America's largest Catholic Archdiocese.

Run by a largely Irish political and church elite, the city visibly celebrated the Feast of St. Patrick on March 17. In Chicago, this included a prominent parade and turning the Chicago River green. In multi-ethnic parochial schools this found expression in "the wearing of the green" visually marking those of Irish heritage. As is often the case in diasporic immigrant culture, the importance of St. Joseph's Day escalated and found new significance in a new context. In immigrant Polish and Italian communities, this provided an alternative form of cultural identification and expression of loyalty.

Just two short days later on March 19, Polish and Italian Americans dressed in red, celebrating their patron and publicly showing their ethnic identity. (Both national flags include this color as opposed to the Irish green). Especially in those of school age, this created a curious linking of the two ethnic groups, who identified against the traditions of the Irish. (The author is indebted to Mrs. D'Matteo who created a St. Joseph's Day table in her childhood parish for half a century.) Thousands of parochial school children in Chicago donned red as a sign of their pride and resistance.

Along with this new festive significance came a blending of ethnic traditions. The ancient Sicilian custom of tavole di San Giuseppe [St. Joseph's tables: an elaborate feast complete with home altar to St. Joseph and emphasis on feeding the poor] was celebrated in Italian parishes and homes, multi-ethnic parishes with Italians and Poles, and eventually throughout the city of Chicago's Catholic community. In keeping with the Italian tavole tradition, the meal is meatless because it is a feast that takes place during Lent, a time of fasting and almsgiving.

The traditional Italian Giuseppe cake (zeppole) (often called s'fingi on the East

St. Joseph Day to page 11

Polish food blessing at your parish?

By: **Robert Strybel**

Our Polish/Polonian Affairs Writer

It is worth driving across town or even to a neighboring community to cultivate the beautiful Holy Saturday custom of blessing Easter baskets in church. This will be all the more meaningful if you are able to expose your youngsters to it as well. Young children will be eager to help arrange the Easter basket and take it to church, so capitalize on their enthusiasm and explain this tradition to them.

In case your parish still does not hold the Holy Saturday food blessing, why not suggest that it be introduced. You may encounter resistance from a pastor unfamiliar with this tradition: "It isn't done around here... It's not our tradition... Nobody is interested, etc., etc." It might help to first get together a few other families interested in reviving the custom, especially members of the parish in good standing. Or your pastor may even be receptive to the idea without coaxing but could come back that he doesn't really know how to go about it. That's when you can produce an appropriate prayer, based on "Wieniec Modlitw", a collection of prayers compiled by the late Orchard Lake theology professor, Monsignor Zdzisław Peszkowski. (Its English translation follows.)

Modlitwa na poświęcenie pokarmów wielkanocnych

Panie Jezu Chryste, daj nam z wiarą przeżywać Twoją obecność między nami podczas świątecznego posiłku, w dzień Twojego zwycięstwa, abyśmy mogli się radować z udziału w Twoim życiu i Zmartwychwstaniu.

Chlebie żywy, który zstąpiłeś z nieba i w Komunii świętej dajesz życie światu, pobłogosław ten chleb i wszelkie świąteczne pieczywo na pamiątkę chleba, którym nakarmiłeś lud słuchający Ciebie na pustyni.

Baranku Boży, który zwyciężyłeś zło i obmyłeś świat z grzechów, pobłogosław to mięso, wędliny i wszelkie pokarmy, które spożywać będziemy na pamiątkę Baranka paschalnego oraz świątecznych potraw, które Ty spożywałeś z Apostołami na ostatniej wieczerzy. Pobłogosław także naszą sól, aby chroniła nas od zepsucia.

Chryste, życie i Zmartwychwstanie nasze, pobłogosław te jajka, znak nowego życia, abyśmy dzieląc się nimi z naszymi rodzinami mogli się także dzielić wzajemnie radością tego, że jesteś z nami. Daj nam wszystkim dojść do wiecznej uczy Twojej tam, gdzie Ty żyjesz i królujesz na wieki wieków. Amen.

Prayer for the blessing of Easter food

Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to let us in faith experience your presence amongst us during the festive repast on the day of Your victory, that we might rejoice at taking part in Your life and Resurrection.

Living Bread, who came down from heaven and in Holy Communion gives life to the world, please bless this bread and all holiday baked goods in memory of the bread with which You fed the people intently listening to You in the desert.

Lamb of God, who conquered evil and cleansed the world of its sins, bless this meat and sausage and all the holiday dishes we shall be eating in memory of the Paschal Lamb and the festive foods you consumed with your Apostles at the Last Supper. Bless also our salt that it may protect us from corruption.

Lord Jesus Christ, our life and Resurrection, bless these eggs, the sign of new life, so while sharing them with our families, we might also share the joy of Your presence in our midst. And may we all attain Your eternal feast there, where you live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

The priest now sprinkles the food with holy water, while the faithful make the Sign of the Cross when their baskets get sprinkled. □

Pope John Paul II Polish Center

3999 Rose Drive,
Yorba Linda, CA 92886

Mass Schedule:

Saturday 4:00 PM ENG
Sunday 7:00 AM Tridentine
9:00 AM ENG 10:30 AM PL
Tuesday - Friday 8:30AM ENG.
First Friday of the month
8:30 AM Eng 7:30 PM. PL
First Saturday of month
8:30 a.m. ENG

Director: Rev. Henry Noga, SVD

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