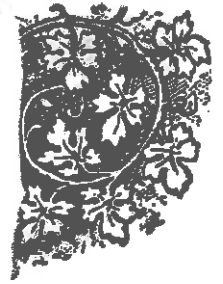




# Stronica Proboszcza



## The Pastor's Page

April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Fifth Sunday of Easter

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*Month of the Holy Eucharist*

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Niech będzie pochwalony Jezus Chrystus!

Praised be Jesus Christ!

### Sunday, April 29<sup>th</sup> – Feast of St. Catherine of Siena

St. Catherine of Siena could barely read, but by the time she died she had written 400 letters and a book. She has been honored with the title “doctor (teacher) of the church.” St. Catherine of Siena was the 23<sup>rd</sup> child in her family. She was born in 1347. In those times, girls were told by their parents whom they would marry and where they would live. But St. Catherine convinced her parents that she must not marry. She willingly took on the duties of a maid within her own home. She became a member of the Third Order of St. Dominic. While still living at home, she prayed, cared for the sick and visited people in prison.

Although she was young, she developed a reputation for being wise. Priests, politicians and nobles came to her for guidance. She called them all her family and built them into a group of spiritual and social workers who influenced the whole region. Italy was loaded with quarreling families. The church itself was badly divided. More than one person claimed to be pope. St. Catherine and her spiritual companions worked to restore peace. St. Catherine spent two years in Rome working to make peace in the church. The stressful situation affected her health. She suffered two strokes and died in 1380. St. Catherine's deepest love was for reflective prayer. Yet she also achieved much good in the world. In her brief lifetime of 33 years, she counseled popes, healed divisions within her country, and shaped the church of her time.

### Monday, April 30<sup>th</sup> – Feast of St. Pope Pius V

Early in the sixteenth century, Martin Luther had raised serious concerns about wrongs within the church. Many people agreed with Luther, and the Protestant Reformation began. Gradually the leaders of the Roman Church came to realize that the concerns raised by Luther and other reformers had to be dealt with. The Council of Trent was called to design a plan for reform in the Catholic Church. In 1563 the Council ended after 18 years of work. Two years later, a former shepherd boy from the Piedmont region of Italy was elected pope. He chose the name Pius. It would be his task to put the reforms recommended by the Council into practice. St. Pius was a gifted man who came to the papacy from the Dominican Order. He was not gentle or flexible. In fact, he was stubborn, but he was known for his humility. In processions through the streets of Rome, St. Pius walked barefoot with no hat. He often fasted. He built hospitals, and he personally tended the sick.

He spent many hours in prayer. St. Pius insisted that church finances be accounted for and that clergy lead simple lives. He began seminaries to train priests properly. He established the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine to teach the faith to young people. St. Pius died after only six years in office.

## **Tuesday, May 1<sup>st</sup> – Feast of St. Joseph the Worker**

Apparently in response to the “May Day” celebrations for workers sponsored by Communists, Pope Pius XII instituted the feast of St. Joseph the Worker in 1955. But the relationship between St. Joseph and the cause of workers has a longer history. In a constantly necessary effort to keep Jesus from being removed from ordinary human life, the Church has from the beginning proudly emphasized that Jesus was a carpenter, obviously trained by St. Joseph in both the satisfactions and the drudgery of that vocation. Humanity is like God not only in thinking and loving, but also in creating. Whether we make a table or a cathedral, we are called to bear fruit with our hands and mind, ultimately for the building up of the Body of Christ.

## **Thursday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> – Feast of Mary Queen of Poland and Polish Constitution Day**

Many times in its history, the Polish nation has experienced the protection of the Mother of God. Her strength as its defender especially was seen at the time of the Turkish invasion. After the miraculous defense of Jasna Góra from the Swedes, King Jan Casimir on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1656 in a solemn act placed the country under the protection of the Mother of God, making her the Queen of Poland. The feast of Mary Queen of Poland was established by Saint Pope Pius X for the Archdiocese of Lwów, and in 1924 at the request of the bishops of Poland, Pope Pius XI extended the feast to all of Poland assigning it to be observed on the memorable day of May 3<sup>rd</sup>, Polish Constitution Day. On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1962 the Holy Father, Pope John XIII proclaimed the most holy virgin, Mary Queen of Poland, the primary patron of the nation together with the saintly bishops and martyrs, Wojciech and Stanislaus.

May 3<sup>rd</sup>, Constitution Day is a legal holiday in Poland. It commemorates the Polish Constitution that was ratified on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1791, just before the final partition of Poland and the country's removal from the map of Europe. It is the first such constitution to be formed in Europe and the second in the entire world following the American Constitution. The document proclaims independence from outside forces for the Polish nation and calls for a just society where noblemen and the common man are considered equals by the state, a very radical idea in 1791!

## **Thursday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> – Feast of the Finding of the True Cross**

Saint Helena, the mother of the Emperor Constantine, made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the year 326, when she was seventy-six years old. A Roman emperor, Hadrian, about two hundred years before, in order to stop Christians from venerating the mount of Calvary where Jesus was crucified, had raised a large mound of earth over it and dedicated a temple there to the goddess Venus. When Saint Helena arrived in Jerusalem, with the help of Saint Macarius, Bishop of that city, she had the Temple of Venus destroyed. She hired two hundred workmen and one hundred soldiers to dig into the ground, and they found the Holy Cross on which Our Lord was crucified. It was identified miraculously by the instantaneous cure of a little boy with a crippled arm and of a

woman who was dying when it touched her. Part of the True Cross was put in a small church on Mount Calvary. Part of it was kept in Constantinople. And part of it was sent to Rome to the Basilica of the Holy Cross, where it is kept and venerated to this day.

Along with the finding of the True Cross, Saint Helena also found the four nails which were in Jesus' hands and in His feet when He was on the Cross, the spear which the centurion drove into the side of Jesus when He died and the inscription placed above the head of Jesus on the Cross, which proclaimed Him in Hebrew, in Greek and in Latin: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." One of the nails Saint Helena found under the hill of Calvary she later threw into the sea to stop a storm. The other three nails are kept in churches in Europe. One of them is in the Iron Crown of Lombardy. The spear that pierced Our Lord's side is kept in one of the pillars of the Vatican, in Rome. The inscription over Our Lord's sacred head is kept in the Church of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem, in Rome. There is a special feast dedicated to the nails and the spear that wounded Our Lord on the Cross, on the second Friday of every Lent.

## **Friday, May 4th – Feast of St. Florian – Patron of Poland**

This Friday is the feast of the patron saint of the Polish-American parish in Hamtramck, St. Florian. St. Florian was a Roman soldier who was born about 280 A.D. in Austria. Surrounded by the military might of Rome, he was attracted to the army and chose it for his career. He advanced rapidly to a position of trust. His loyalty, faithfulness and bravery reflected his sincere and intense dedication to the service of Jesus Christ; he was a model Christian practicing his faith to an heroic degree.

He lived during the time of persecutions under the Roman Emperors Diocletian and Maximian. While he was on furlough, news came to him that forty of his men were arrested as Christians and cruelly tortured. As their leader he could not be outdone by those serving under him. He himself was arrested and suffered cruel tortures and indignities. All this failed to shake his faith and firm resolve.

A stone was tied around his neck and he was thrown into the river Enns near Lorch in Upper Austria. The body of St. Florian was recovered and buried by a pious woman. An Augustinian monastery was built over the site of his tomb. He was buried in Sankt Florian near Austria and was later transferred to Rome. In 1183 King Casimir the Just and the Church leaders of Poland petitioned Pope Lucian III to send the relics of a Christian martyr to rest in their country. The Pope gave his permission that the relics of St. Florian be transferred to Poland. His remains were brought to Kraków in 1184. At this time, Poland was in constant danger from attacks from without by the Tartars and other barbarians and from within from many quarrels, disputes and even civil strife. These "fires" threatened the very existence of Kraków. During a great fire that threatened to destroy the city, the people prayed to St. Florian and they credited the saving of the city to his intercession. He thus became known as the Patron of Firefighters. He is also one of the Patrons of Poland as well as Upper Austria and the city of Linz.

St. Florian Parish in Hamtramck was founded in 1908. Its first pastor was Fr. Bernard Zmijewski, who was also the founding pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Wyandotte! Bishop Joseph Plagens was the second pastor of St. Florian Parish from 1912 until 1919 when he became pastor of Sweetest Heart of Mary. The church was built from 1914 to 1928 in a late English Gothic style. It was designed by the prominent architect Ralph Adams Cram and is the most prominent landmark in the city of Hamtramck.

# Madonna della Strada

## The Madonna of the Streets

The image of the Madonna of the Streets is familiar to many people. Seeming very modern, she has become a favorite illustration for Christmas cards. But few people know that there are at least two Madonna's of the Street and that together they have inspired Christians for centuries.

The first Madonna of the Streets, known as Santa Maria della Strada, or Saint Mary of the Wayside, is an icon dating from the fourteenth century. It was originally placed in the Astalli family's small Church of Our Lady of the Wayside. In 1541 Pope Paul III gave this neighborhood chapel to Saint Ignatius of Loyola to use as the headquarters for the newly formed Society of Jesus. Though conveniently located in Rome, it was much too small for the expanding order. So a larger church was commissioned, to be called Il Gesu; it was finally consecrated in 1584, after Ignatius's death. Within Il Gesu was constructed an intimate chapel for the Santa Maria della Strada, which is still its main altarpiece.

The icon is located between an altar dedicated to Saint Ignatius and one dedicated to the Holy Name of Jesus. This location symbolizes the Blessed Mother's characteristically intercessory role. Il Gesu itself is dedicated to God, the Virgin and Jesus – again emphasizing Mary's important relationship with the Divine.

The icon depicts our Lady holding the child Jesus. Both are crowned with gold, with other decorations in gold and precious gems. She wears a golden sunburst on her right shoulder, and Jesus makes a gesture of blessing with his right hand. Although extremely ornate, the icon was considered a representation of poverty, symbolizing the humble origins of our Lord and the simple life of the Holy Family.

The second Madonna of the Streets is a contemporary depiction and is, to the modern eye, more evocative of our Lord's love of the poor. This is the image with which most people are familiar. It was actually titled La Madonnina, or Little Madonna, and was first exhibited in Venice in 1897. It is believed that the artist, Robert Ferruzzi, used as models a peasant girl, Angelina Cian, age eleven, and her baby brother. The painting came to be known as the Madonna of the Streets because the image suggests hardship and poverty, and the little Madonna seems to be standing on a doorstep, pleading for food and shelter for herself and her sleeping, trusting baby. The painting offers observers a direct and personal challenge, and modern sensibilities, easily imaging Mary and Jesus in such a scene, feel compelled to reach out and offer help to those in need.

The concept of the Madonna of the Streets goes beyond the details of poverty or physical need. Certainly, there are many street people who lack the necessities of food, clothing, shelter, a job. But other people lack necessities, too: kind words, friendly gestures, loving acceptance. In a sense, all people are street people – all are on their way from the here and now to an unknown time and place. All need guideposts, and all need someone to reach out in charity to help them along. That is the Madonna della Strada's enduring message.

### A Prayer to Our Lady of the Streets

O cara Madonna, when I feel myself hungry or thirsty, remind me of those who are hungrier and thirstier. When I think I need a fancy new jacket or a pair of designer sneakers, remind me of those who have no coat or shoes. When I begin to make plans to buy a bigger house, remind me of those who have no house or apartment. When I despair of ever paying off my credit cards, remind me of those who have no job. And when I begin to drown in all my anxieties, lift me out of my funk and push me out into the streets among those whose needs are life threatening, and show me what I can do to help them. Then let them guide me to what's important. Amen.

**First Friday, May 4<sup>th</sup> - Masses at 6:30 AM, 8 AM & 7 PM in Polish –  
Eucharistic Adoration 8:30 AM – 10 AM & 5 PM – 6:30 PM**