



# Stronica Proboszcza



## The Pastor's Page

August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Month of the Immaculate Heart of Mary*

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Niech będzie pochwalony Jezus Chrystus!

Praised be Jesus Christ!

**H**appy day! It's FESTIVAL time again! Time for all of us here in the parish of Our Lady of the Scapular to graciously welcome the many guests present for this wonderful event. We all want to extend the greatest hospitality possible, in old Polish tradition, to all who have been kind enough to make the journey from East, West, North and South to our grand old church, so as to celebrate our annual Polish Festival. The annual festival is also a time for us to show off the old place at its very best and we have all been working very hard so that is just what you will see and experience!

We are all so very proud of our 102 year old church building and our 119 year old, but also brand new parish of Our Lady of the Scapular! In 2016 our church building turned 100! The cornerstone was laid on May 9<sup>th</sup>, 1915 and the church was dedicated on June 4<sup>th</sup>, 1916. Both of these important historic events were conducted by Bishop Edward D. Kelly, an auxiliary bishop of the diocese of Detroit. To celebrate the centennial of the church building the façade was restored and repaired. Ten new windows were made for the two bell towers. Also for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary a new altar of sacrifice was installed in our sanctuary. It is circa 1925 and in the same artistic style as our church. It came from the former St. Anthony of Padua Lithuanian Church in southwest Detroit, which closed in 2013. The remaining pieces of this altar have been crafted into a shrine altar for the Holy Eucharist for the adoration chapel that is located in the vestibule of the church and which opened on May 3<sup>rd</sup> of this year. It is open every day from 7:00 AM until 9:00 PM. You might also notice that the carpeting and platforms built in the sanctuary have been removed. The floor has been returned to its original terrazzo of 1916. This year a great deal of re-gilding was done in the church enhancing the architectural beauty. There is much, much more to be re-gilded but little by little it will be done. Please be certain to visit our parish hall located in the former high school building. There you will see the dazzling new chandelier donated to the parish and all the statues from the former St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish proudly displayed. Plans are being made to continue the restoration work needed in our historic church and to make many much needed improvements. An enormous repair that must be made this year is a new boiler for the church. This will cost in the neighborhood of \$100,000, but a church without heat in the winter months is unthinkable! Anyone wishing to donate to these worthy and historic projects, can do so by using the green colored church restoration envelopes found at the entrances of the church.

We hope your visit here will be an inspirational one and that you will return many times over!

*Thanks so much for spending the day with us!*

## **Sunday, August 26<sup>th</sup>** **the Feast of Our Lady of Częstochowa, the Black Madonna**

In Polish communities throughout the world like ours, this is a very important feast of the church year. For centuries Polish people have looked to the ancient icon of Our Lady enshrined in the Pauline Monastery at the top of the *Jasna Góra* (Bright Mountain) in the city of *Częstochowa* in southern Poland as their personal intercessor in heaven and even Queen of their nation. The image is also known as the Black or *Czarna* Madonna because of the dark complexion of Our Lady. The history of the icon is a fascinating one which every person who calls him or herself Polish should be aware of.

The painting was first brought to *Jasna Góra* in 1382 by Prince *Władysław Opolczyk*. A very old legend says that it was painted by the Evangelist St. Luke during Our Lady's lifetime. The image was said to have been painted on a wooden panel taken from a table used by the Holy Family of Nazareth. It was said that many early Christians wanted some sort of remembrance of Mary and prevailed on the evangelist, who was an artist in addition to being a physician, to execute a portrait of the Mother of Jesus for future generations.

When the Jews revolted against Roman rule in 66 A.D., the Christians, on fleeing Jerusalem, allegedly took this unique painting with them. The legend continues by relating that St. Helena (the mother of the Emperor Constantine the great who in 313 A.D., with the Edict of Milan, gave the official recognition of the Roman State to Christianity) in her search for the True Cross of Christ, came upon this painting. She learned that it was held in great veneration by the early Christians. Around the ninth century, the picture traveled northward, reaching Polish soil and finally resting in a castle at Belz, northeast of the City of *Lwów*, in what was called Ruthenia, i.e. part of the Western Ukraine.

In 1382, because of the invasions of that area by Tartar tribes, Prince *Władysław Opolczyk* (of Opole in Silesia), formerly a ruler in Ruthenia, intended to protect the picture by transferring it from Belz to Opole. Tradition relates that at one time the Tartars did, in fact, besiege the Belz castle, and that the picture was pierced by an arrow which left a scar on the neck of the Virgin. On his way to Silesia, *Władysław* stopped near *Częstochowa* near the small church on *Jasna Góra*. Here he discerned that Our Lady wished to have the picture on this spot. This reportedly happened on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August 1382. This is how it was that the great masterpiece of art, found its way to *Częstochowa's Jasna Góra!* Prince *Władysław* established the monastery on *Jasna Góra* in 1382 and invited the Pauline Fathers from Hungary to take charge of the shrine in which this holy icon of the Virgin Mary was to be venerated.

In 1430 the icon was permanently damaged with scars on the face by vandals attempting to steal it. It was robbed of its jewel decorations but later officially crowned by Pope Clement XI in 1717 and by Saint Pius X in 1910. In 1656 the King of Poland Jan Kazimierz laid his crown before the image of Our Lady and proclaimed her Queen of Poland. This title has remained with the Black Madonna to this very day. When the final partition of Poland was drawn in 1792 and the Polish nation was erased from the map of Europe, Mary's role as queen of the Polish nation was intensified.

In our church a large icon of Our Lady of *Częstochowa* takes pride of place just to the left of the high altar. It is a fine copy of the icon as found in the monastery at *Jasna Góra* but without any of the ornamental jewels that adorn the "dresses" that cover the original. This piece came from the church of St. Stanislaus *Kostka* and we are proud and delighted to have it in our sanctuary!

***Maryjo Królowo Polski! Jestem przy Tobie, pamiętam! Czuwam!***

## **Monday, August 27<sup>th</sup> – Feast of St. Monica**

St. Monica was born at Tagaste in northern Africa, in 332, in what is now the country of Algeria. Her parents were Christian, and she took her faith seriously. But she had one grave problem growing up. In the world where Monica lived, pagans and Christians lived side by side. Her parents arranged for her to marry a pagan man named Patricius. He had a hot temper and his idea of marriage didn't include being

faithful to his wife. After many years of patience and love on Monica's part, Patricius became a Christian and was baptized in 372 on his deathbed.

St. Monica had much less success with her son Augustine. Though brought up as a Christian, he stole, cut classes, lied, and engaged in casual sex. Monica tried to interest her son in a Christian way of life. But with her attempts to control him, she probably drove him even further from a peaceful and holy life. She asked a wise bishop to convince Augustine that his ways were wrong, but the bishop replied that only prayer could help. Monica prayed, and in time she was able to give Augustine's future completely over to God.

At the age of 28, Augustine was baptized, after having been greatly influenced by the preaching of the Bishop of Milan, St. Ambrose. He would go on to become a great voice within the church. Mother and son began a joyful spiritual friendship. But only a few years later, St. Monica became ill unexpectedly and died far from home at Ostia, outside of Rome in 387. Augustine, who was traveling with her at the time, was struck by the trust in God she had gained through her struggles. He later said that she had shown no fear of dying in a strange place. St. Monica was sure that God, who is always near, would know where to find her body on judgment day. Her last request of her son was, "One thing only I ask you, that you remember me at the altar of the Lord wherever you may be."

## **Tuesday, August 28<sup>th</sup> – Feast of St. Augustine**

St. Augustine was also born in the town of Tagaste in North Africa like his mother St. Monica. He was born in 354. His Christian mother gave her son a basic Christian upbringing, but from childhood he seemed to take after his father, a selfish man who had nothing to do with the church. Augustine stole, lied and cheated.

But he was also brilliant, and in time he became a teacher. He had decided that Christianity was not for him. He believed in a pagan philosophy that allowed him to do whatever he wanted in his personal life without guilt. When his mother tried to convince him to return to Christianity, he only became more determined to avoid the religion of his childhood.

Things began to change for Augustine when he moved to a new teaching position in Milan in Italy. St. Ambrose, who was the bishop of the city, helped Augustine by his preaching to think in new ways. After a long inner struggle, Augustine decided to be baptized. By this time he had a fifteen year old son, Adeodatus, who was baptized with him. They were baptized by Bishop Ambrose at Easter in 387 when Augustine was 32 years old.

For the next several years Augustine lived with friends, doing works of charity and studying the scriptures. At age 36 he was ordained a priest. Then in 395 at age 41 he was called to be the bishop of the town of Hippo not far from Tagaste. As bishop, Augustine insisted that the priests of the diocese live simply. He himself lived in community and served the poor with kindness. He preached powerfully every day in the cathedral for 35 years. He found time to write many books. One famous book that is still read is his *Confessions*, which is the story of his life.

St. Augustine is honored as a doctor (a teacher) of the Church. Here is a quote from one of his works: "What does love look like? Love has hands to help others. It has feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see misery and want. It has ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of others. That's what love looks like." St. Augustine died at the age of 76 on August 28<sup>th</sup>, 430, when the Vandals were at the gates of the city of Hippo. St. Bede states that St. Augustine's body was transferred to Sardinia to protect it from the Vandals. From there it was moved to Pavia in Italy where it is venerated today.

## **Wednesday, August 29<sup>th</sup> – The Beheading of St. John the Baptist**

Herod Antipas was a weak and immoral king, who had married Herodias, the wife of his own brother. John the Baptist was a prophet and a person of integrity, so he spoke out against this wrong. Herod was awed and puzzled by John, but Herodias was furious. John was a threat. At Herod's birthday celebration Herodias saw her chance to get John out of the way for good. Her young daughter Salome danced at the party, and Herod was so delighted that he foolishly promised her anything she wished as a reward, even half his kingdom. The daughter consulted her mother – and then she asked for the head of John the Baptist on a platter! Herod had been outsmarted. He was afraid to kill John but saw no way out. So, for the sake of a

dance at a birthday party, the great prophet John was murdered. Legend says that after the head was given to Salome it was served on a dish to Herodias and her guests at table. Herodias is said to have picked up a sharp spike and stabbed again and again the tongue that had rebuked her for her viciousness and impurity. This was the same tongue that had greeted Our Lord with the salutation, "Behold the Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world." Some of John's disciples buried his body at Sebaste, a town some miles from Jerusalem. Tradition says that John the Baptist was six months older than his cousin Jesus, and that he died one year before Jesus.

## **Thursday, August 30<sup>th</sup> – Feast of St. Fiacre**

This rather unknown saint was born in Ireland in the the sixth century. He grew up in County Kilkenny and his name, Fiacre, is from the pre-Christian era in Ireand, and means the battle king. Eventually he left Ireland and travelled to France. There he requested of the Bishop of Meaux, St. Faro, permission to begin a monastery and a parcel of land. This he was granted in Breuil which is in Brie, France. There he built an oratory in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary and a hospice for travelers. For himself, the only resident of this monastery, he built a cell. Brother Fiacre practiced great personal mortification and spent his days doing manual labor in the large monastery garden. He was extremely skilled in growing vegetables and herbs, many of which were used medicinally. Eventually he became famous for his remedies made from the variety of plants in his monastery garden. He died in August of 670. He has become the patron saint of gardeners and is usually portrayed with a shovel in his hands.

## **Friday, September 1<sup>st</sup> – Feast of Blessed Bronisława**

Blessed Bronisława, a relative of Saint Hyacinth and Blessed Czesław, was born at Kamień in Śląsk around the year 1200 and was a member of the noble Odrowąż family. At the age of sixteen she entered the Norbertine cloister at Zwierzyniec near Kraków. The Norbertine or Praemonstatension Order is the oldest religious order of women in Poland dating back to 1126. Blessed Bronisława is very often depicted in art with the soul of St. Hyacinth in heaven hovering over her, because according to legend, when he died, she was the first to know of it through a "heavenly communication." She was a religious filled with great zeal and very quickly became the superior of the convent she lived in. During the plague she would serve the poor and distribute medicine among them. Very often she would withdraw from the convent and go to a deserted placed called Sikornik hill. There in silence she would contemplate and express her love for God. Eventually she became a hermit. She died on August 29<sup>th</sup>, 1259. Her relics rest in the church of the Norbertine Sisters in Kraków. Although she is a relatively obscure saint, someone in this parish must have had a devotion to her as she enjoys a prominent place in the painting on the ceiling of the church over main aisle. St. Bronisława is in the medallion closest to the Superior Street side of the church. Other obscure saints up there are: St. Ladislaus, St. Hedwig and St. Andrew Bobola.

## **Friday, September 1<sup>st</sup> – Feast of St. Anna the Prophetess**

St. Anna the Prophetess was the daughter of a man named Phanuel who was of the tribe of Asher, one of the 12 Tribes of Israel. She was one of the very few faithful Jewish girls who believed with all her heart in the revelations of God in the Old Testament, and who awaited their fulfillment in the New Testament. Tradition says that Anna was married when she was 14 years old. She became a widow at 21. Further legend has it that she was the one given charge of the Blessed Virgin Mary from the time Mary was presented in the Temple until she was betrothed at around the age of 14 to St. Joseph. St. Anna was already elderly when she first met Our Lady. She was even older when Mary presented Jesus in the Temple. All other Jewish women in the Temple at that time were indifferent to the Holy Family. Only Anna greeted them. All the Jewish priests ignored the infant Jesus. Only Simeon greeted Him and held Him in his arms, and declared while Anna was listening, "Now Thou dost dismiss Thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy word in peace." Anna was the name of Mary's mother. Anna was the name of Mary's teacher in the Temple. The name Anna means *grace*. Mary was not only full of grace, but was companioned by grace during her childhood.