



Stronica Proboszcza



The Pastor's Page

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Solemnity of the Resurrection of the Lord, Easter Sunday, Wielkanoc

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Month of the Holy Eucharist

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Niech będzie pochwalony Jezus Chrystus!
Praised be Jesus Christ!

Zmartwychwstał Pan!

The Lord is Risen!

A Blessed and Happy Easter to All! Welcome to the many visitors and guests that will be worshipping with us this Sunday! We are certain that you will find our parish church not only beautiful, but also most hospitable and gracious in its congregation! Please feel welcome and invited to join us any Sunday morning for one of our three Masses!

Easter Sunday is, without a doubt, THE holiest and most important day of the entire year for Christians! The annual commemoration of the glorious resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, gives meaning and purpose to the entire year and in fact every day of our lives! To put it simply without the Resurrection of Christ there is nothing, no Catholic Faith or Church, no certainty of life after this world, no reason to practice any virtues at all in this life – JUST NOTHING! And so it is, with the greatest joy, that we enter this day into this most important Solemnity and into the Holy Season of Eastertide that will take us all the way to another extremely important Church Solemnity – Pentecost.

Easter Sunday is a day of new life and renewal for all of us. It is for this reason that we renew our baptismal vows at Mass today and are sprinkled once again with the holy water which recalls our own baptism. To all those who built and decorated the tomb, decorated the repository, cleaned the church, stuffed the bulletins, folded programs, learned new music, practiced songs, served at the altar, typed articles, called volunteers or did anything else I have forgotten here, I say GOD BLESS YOU! BÓG ZAPŁAĆ! MAY THE LORD REWARD YOU FOR EVERYTHING! Visitors here will learn quickly that this is a very active parish with devoted people.

A Blessed and Happy Easter to All!

Welcome to the many visitors and guests worshipping with us this Sunday!

Tuesday, April 23rd – Feast of St. Wojciech – Patron of Poland

April 23rd, is the feast of St. Wojciech/Adalbert, who is revered as one of Poland's oldest saints and in fact one of the great patron saints of the Polish nation. He is a saint also of great importance to us, Polish-Americans of the Archdiocese of Detroit, because the very first Polish parish in the city of Detroit was placed from its very beginning under the protection and patronage of St. Wojciech. Wojciech was born of a noble family in Bohemia in 956, ten years before Poland became a Christian nation with the baptism of King Mieszko the first in 966. At the time of his confirmation Wojciech received the name Adalbert from the bishop of Magdeburg. It should also be noted that Adalbert and Wojciech are two different names, not the Latin and Polish equivalents of the same name! The name Wojciech in Slavonic means "Help of the army." The English name of Detroit's first Polish parish, "Albertus," was the name mistakenly given to the church at the time of its dedication. Albertus is the Latin form of Albert. This mistake was never corrected in the 117 year history of the parish, which closed in 1989.

As a child, Wojciech was consecrated to the Blessed Virgin by his parents who feared losing him to sickness. They promised the Virgin that Wojciech would live under her patronage with the clergy. Wojciech received an excellent education at the cathedral school of Magdeburg. In 982 he was ordained a subdeacon by the bishop of Prague. Though only 27 years of age, he was elected bishop of Prague in 983, after the sudden death of the previous bishop. Wojciech entered the city of Prague barefoot as a symbol of his humility. He was received with enthusiasm by Boleslaus II, prince of Bohemia, and all the people of that city. He proceeded to reorganize the diocese but was saddened to learn of the religious state of his flock. Most were Christian in name only. He withdrew to Rome in 990 but returned to Prague in 994 at the insistence of Pope John XV. Again he encountered difficulties and a refusal to accept the true gospel in Prague, which caused him to withdraw from Prague to Rome. Once again the Pope, Gregory V at this time, ordered him back to Prague.

The people of Prague, however, refused to admit Wojciech to the diocese and so he turned his attention to the conversion of Poland (Pomerania) to Christianity as a missionary. He made converts at Gdańsk but later met with scorn as he and his companions were accused of being spies.

On April 23rd, 997, he and his companions were martyred near Krolewicz by being beaten to death with oars. After severing his head and fixing it on a pole which was carried throughout the village, his body was thrown into the Nogat River, a tributary of the Wistula, and washed up on the Polish coast. The body was held for ransom by heathens who received a small fortune, the weight of the body in gold, from Boleslaus, Duke of Poland, for its return. Later in 998 his body was enshrined in Gniezno; some of his relics, however, were returned by force to Prague in 1039. Adalbert was canonized a saint in the year 1000.

When St. Albertus parish in Detroit was organized by the St. Stanislaus Kostka Society (a group of Polish immigrants attending the nearby German St. Joseph Church) they chose the Bohemian born St. Adalbert/Wojciech as their patron. The date of the meeting of organization of the new parish was April 23rd, 1870, the feast of St. Wojciech. He was a fitting choice for patron as many of the early parishioners of the Church had come from that area of Poland known as Pomerania and Poznania where St. Wojciech had ministered. They were known as Kaszubs and spoke a dialect of Polish heavily influenced by the German language.

Wojciech was the first great adopted patron of the Christian Polish nation. He had been venerated for over eight centuries as Protector of the Poles when he was selected to be the patron of Detroit's first Polish parish which was primarily composed of Kaszubs.

When the first St. Albertus Church was dedicated on Sunday, July 14th, 1872, the name of the patron was inadequately translated from the Latin Adalbertus to the English Albertus, thus forever identifying Detroit's first Polish parish by the misnomer Albertus. Such is life! For better or worse, the Mother Church of the Detroit Polonia is known, at least in English, as St. Albertus.

An image of St. Wojciech can be seen in our church in the fourth stained glass window from the vestibule on the south/Superior side of the church. St. Wojciech is depicted preaching to a seated king presumably of Poland while his wife, a daughter, a religious and a soldier look on. The window was offered by the St. Wojciech Society of the parish in 1916.

Tuesday, April 23rd – the Feast of St. George, Martyr

Born in Cappadocia in Asia Minor, in what is now Turkey, St. George may have been a soldier in the Roman army. He died a martyr's death, probably at Lydda in Palestine, after confronting Diocletian, the cruel persecutor of Christians. He was much admired by other Christians of his time.

There are many myths about St. George. The best-known tale tells of a dragon that was terrorizing a town because it wanted meat. When the townspeople ran out of animals to feed it, it demanded to be fed children. The king's brave daughter dressed herself in a wedding gown and went to the dragon's cave to offer herself as its dinner. But George killed the dragon before it could harm her. Then he married the princess and together they barbecued the dragon to serve at their wedding feast.

In the Middle Ages, theatre guilds put on plays about the lives of the saints. The life of St. George became a favorite. The play had a happy ending, even for the dragon, who came back to life. The princess would lead it through the streets with a ribbon tied around its neck, and everyone followed behind singing "alleluia." People loved the play because they knew it was really about the good news of Easter. St. George represents Christ. The princess is the Church, Christ's bride. Whenever we are willing to lay down our lives for one another, death itself dies. In Greece, where today is a holy day, St. George is called the "Great Martyr." St. George is a patron saint not only of Greece but also of England, Portugal, and the Italian cities of Venice and Genoa. He was named patron of England in 1222 during the reign of King Henry III and was proclaimed protector of the English kingdom by Pope Benedict XIV.

Thursday, April 25th – Feast of St. Mark the Evangelist

The Gospel of St. Mark records a strange detail not told in the other three gospels. In the garden of Gethsemane, when the crowd arrested Jesus, an unnamed young man followed at a distance. The crowd tried to catch the man, but all they could grab was the linen cloth he was wearing. He ran away naked. Some people think the young man was Mark.

St. Mark was not an apostle. He was probably a member of one of the first Christian communities. His mother's house in Jerusalem is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles as a center where Christians gathered. St. Mark was baptized by St. Peter. Then they both moved to Rome, where St. Mark served as St. Peter's secretary. St. Mark also traveled with St. Paul and St. Barnabas on their first missionary journey. Later, during St. Paul's two prison terms in Rome, St. Mark helped him to continue his work.

St. Mark's gospel is the shortest gospel and is simple and direct. It was probably written for Gentile converts in Rome, after the death of Saints Peter and Paul. It challenges the reader to share

in Jesus' sufferings. It is filled with details that help us to understand the human side of Jesus.

St. Mark's symbol is a winged lion. The lion is a desert animal, and St. Mark's gospel begins with the story of St. John the Baptist in the desert. St. John the Baptist is described by St. Mark as a "voice of one crying out in the desert", which artists compared to a roaring lion. The wings come from the application of Ezekiel's vision of four winged creatures to the evangelists.

Traditions say that St. Mark went to Alexandria in Egypt. He worked there for ten years before he was martyred. The city of Venice in Italy has St. Mark for its patron saint. His bones are said to rest in the great basilica cathedral there.

In our church a statue of St. Mark along with the other three evangelists can be found above the high altar on brackets between the five stained glass windows of the joyful mysteries of the rosary. St. Mark is second from the left as you face the altar. He holds in his hand a scroll representing the gospel he wrote and at his left foot, obscured by the kneeling angel holding the canopy over the tabernacle, is St. Mark's symbol, the lion.

Friday, April 26th – the Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel

MATER BONI CONSILLI

Our Lady of Good Counsel is a title that describes one of Mary's motherly attributes, for she is to all people a mother who is able and willing to give good advice in times of difficulty. She is also always able to direct people toward God, providing the good counsel that removes doubt and confusion and makes the way to holiness and wholeness stand out clearly. At the same time, and more importantly, the title refers to Mary's motherhood of the Christ, who as the Way, the Truth and the Life is *the* Good Counsel leading people directly to God.

This title of the Virgin Mary was established early in Christian history, but a Renaissance legend served to spread devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel. The Albanian people venerated the Blessed Mother for many centuries, but they were particularly devoted to an ancient icon of the "Virgin of Tenderness," that hung over the main altar in a church built beneath the fortress of Shkodra. This icon was famous for its sweetness and for the protection it affords its devotees.

According to the legend, when Turks invaded Albania in the fifteenth century, two of the defenders sought refuge in Shkodra to beseech the Lady for deliverance. During the prayers they noticed that the icon was moving through the air. They followed it – all the way to Rome! There it disappeared. But the two men soon heard that a miraculous image had appeared suddenly in Genazzano, a small town thirty miles southeast of Rome. They went there immediately and upon seeing the miraculous painting recognized their Blessed Lady!

Previously in Genazzano, a widow named Petruccia de Geneo had contributed money to renovate the fifth-century Church of Our Lady of Good Counsel, which had fallen into disrepair. Her funds fell far short of what was required, and the legend recounts how the Lord made up the difference. On April 25th, 1467, the entire city was enjoying the yearly festival in honor of St. Mark. At about four o'clock, a mysterious cloud descended upon the decrepit church. When the cloud evaporated, a fragile portrait of the Madonna and Child was found to be suspended in midair above an unfinished wall. The portrait was on paper-thin plaster, and the legend relates that a thread could be passed entirely around the painting without disturbing it.

The painting became an immediate sensation. From April 27th to August 14th of that year, no less than 171 miracles were attributed to the image, which became known as *Madonna del Buon Consiglio*, or the Madonna of Good Counsel. The number of pilgrims was so great that their donations completely funded the renovation of the church.

Though much of the church was destroyed in World War II, the painting was undamaged. Reportedly, it is still suspended in the air, as it has been for more than five hundred years. The church has been rebuilt and is now a vibrant center of pilgrimage. Because of her great love, Our Lady of Good Counsel has a large following. Many churches and institutions throughout the world are named after her, and Pope Leo XIII authorized the insertion of Mater Boni Consilli/Mother of Good Counsel, into the Litany of Loreto in 1903. She continues to favor those who appeal to her, giving counsel about God and obtaining the light of truth for all those who ask in her name.

AN APPEAL FROM THE PASTOR

Now that Easter has arrived and we are filled with paschal, and good will, it might be just the right time to exercise those spiritual muscles we have been building during Lent and make a decision to something good and helpful for your parish. How about making a decision to do something to improve the life of your parish? How about deciding to become more active in your parish? There are 768 households in our parish which is roughly 2000 persons. And even though we would be considered a small parish we have a lot going on here. Take the Mass schedule for example. With the size of our church building, it has a seating capacity of at least 700 persons, two Masses per weekend could be plenty, but we have four and that's fine with me. But in order to have four Masses on Sunday, it is necessary to have not only the priest, but also an organist, lectors, servers and ushers. At present we are rather understaffed in so far as servers and ushers are concerned. While it is true that the priest can and does say Mass without servers, a Mass without ushers is a disaster, and not helpful to the parish. Obviously one of the very important tasks of the ushers is to take up the collection. The priest cannot come down from the altar and do this, although I have seen in Poland that the assistant pastor(s) in the parish do usually perform this task. Well, we have no assistant pastor.

Recently, on a major holy day, there was only one usher for the noon Mass. He had quite a task trying to get others to help him perform his duties. We have four Masses every weekend, and each one of them needs sufficient ushers. The able bodied members of the ushers club are decreasing, creating a shortage. Still there are at least 100 persons at every Mass on the weekend. At some Masses there are enough ushers, at others a noticeable lack, and when we have extra Masses at the holidays we can be very shorthanded.

Only four ushers are needed per Mass, though six make it even easier to carry out the necessary tasks. I am appealing here and now for more ushers. It is a very easy way to serve your parish. You are at Mass. The collection part of the Mass takes ten minutes maximum. Why not offer your service? Are there other duties of an usher? Well, it is nice when ushers arrive at least ten minutes before Mass begins and they themselves are ready, and to be of assistance to anyone who might need it. Ushers are considered ministers of hospitality, so they should be friendly especially to strangers. Directing the procession to Holy Communion is an important task of the ushers. Passing out bulletins at the end of Mass is a fine thing for ushers to do and after Mass checking to make sure the church is left tidy is very helpful. Of Course not all ushers do all this, but many do and it is appreciated.

Although the ushers consider their group to be a club, it is not necessary to actually be a member per se of this club nor to attend meetings or anything other than to be of service in church. Of course anyone serving as an usher is welcome to take part in the activities of the ushers outside of Mass. The most important thing is to be present faithfully at Mass and to make the commitment to serve during Mass. Allowing oneself to be scheduled to usher is making a commitment to serve

God and his Church, and that is what I am looking for! So I ask those attending Mass regularly in our church to consider becoming an usher. The contact person for volunteering yourself for this service is Mr. Al Adamski and he can be reached at 734-284-9135.

Pisanki, Kraszanki, Malowanki, Drapanki, Wylejanki, Nalepianki, Easter Eggs!

Beautifully decorated Polish style Easter eggs are very well known. Most people are very familiar with the painted wooden variety – malowanki. Eggs are also decorated with wax and dyes, by scratching designs on them or by pasting straw and paper decorations on them. From the beginning of the nation's history, the egg has had special symbolism among the Polish people. Decorating techniques, patterns and folktales about the decorated eggs origin are passed on from generation to generation.

One interesting tale, taking place about two thousand years ago, involves a good man who was to be put to death. This man was made to carry a heavy wooden cross. While carrying the heavy timber through the city many people mocked him and laughed at him except for a merchant selling eggs in the market. When he saw the poor man struggling, he took pity on him. He covered his baskets and helped the man carry the cross to the place of his execution. The man thanked the merchant for his help, and the merchant returned to the market to take the covered baskets home. When he uncovered the baskets they contained not ordinary eggs, but beautifully decorated eggs of multi-colors. The merchant's name was Simon and the man he helped was Christ.

Fulfilling your “Easter Duty”

Catholics must receive the Holy Eucharist at least once during the Easter season, which for U.S. Catholics is from Ash Wednesday to Trinity Sunday (this year June 16th). This is known as fulfilling your Easter Duty.

In the Middle Ages, many Catholics, feeling personally unworthy, received the Eucharist only rarely even though the Church never endorsed that they only go occasionally. Pope Saint Pius X (1903-1914), however, felt that Catholics should receive Christ every time that they went to Mass as long as they were without the blemish of mortal sin. This was very unusual at this time in Church history. So Catholics were encouraged and prepared for more frequent reception, which is why this precept was created. This often meant going to confession before receiving Holy Communion and unfortunately the going to confession during the Easter season was often mistaken as being the Easter Duty and not the going to Holy Communion.

The Church also still requires that Catholics fast for an hour before receiving the Eucharist. This means that Catholics can't eat or drink anything besides water or necessary medication for at least an hour before receiving the Holy Eucharist.

Receiving the Holy Eucharist once a year during the Easter season is the minimum requirement for Catholics, and receiving it twice a day – if you attend two Masses – is the maximum allowed.



Czas ucieka, wieczność czeka!

Time flies, eternity waits!



EASTER MONDAY, MOKRY/LANY PONIEDZIALEK, ŚMIGUS DYNGUS!

The day after Easter is considered a holiday in many countries. Officially for Roman Catholics it is the second day of the Easter Octave. An octave is the eight days, beginning with a solemn feast in the Church like Easter and ending with the following Sunday. Each day is meant to be a continuation of the joyful Solemnity of Easter.

In Poland this Easter Monday is known as *Śmigus Dygus* or *mokry* or *lany poniedziałek*, which means wet Monday or dipping or dousing Monday. These names come from the ancient Polish custom of splashing water on each other this day. In some villages it is also a day of gently whipping or striking each other with switches made from the green branches from willow or birch trees. The word *smigus* comes from the Polish verb *śmigać* – to whirl or swish or whisk and the word *dyngus* probably comes from the German word *dingen* – to come to an agreement.

Traditionally, (in villages) early in the morning boys awaken girls by pouring a bucket of water on their head and striking them on the ankles or legs with long thin twigs or switches. In modern times, folks simply splash small amounts of water on each other rather unexpectedly or perhaps even use squirt guns to startle each other on this very popular Polish holiday. Of course in order to get a fervent douser to stop the splashing, Easter delicacies, especially festive eggs, are offered so as to “*come to an agreement.*”

There also developed a courting aspect of this playful ritual. Boys who are interested in a particular girl will target her on this day. But today girls and boys, men and women alike all seem to take delight in this custom.

The origin of this custom may very well be connected to the Christianization of Poland. On Easter Monday of 966 Prince or Duke Mieszko I was baptized together with his entire household and court. He can be understood to be the first royal leader of the country that would eventually become the Polish nation. The tradition says that on that day, after the royal baptism, the whole country became Catholic as bishops performed ceremonies of baptism *en masse* by splashing buckets of baptismal water on the crowds of people that had assembled. From this first dousing the *Śmigus Dyngus* day customs may have been born.

In the United States Easter Monday is the day when children are invited to the White House by the President and the First Lady for the annual Easter Egg Roll. This custom was first practiced in Washington in 1814 by Dolly Madison, wife of James Madison, the fourth president of our country.

At first the roll which is really more of a race, took place on the west lawn of the capitol building. Children push an egg through the grass with a long handled spoon. This went on for many years until in 1877, when a new landscaped lawn was planted at the capitol and congress passed a law forbidding children to play there. It was at this time that Lucy Hayes, wife of President Rutherford Hayes invited the children of Washington to the south lawn of the White House. The Annual White House Easter Egg Roll has taken place there ever since with the first family always in attendance.

This custom of rolling eggs goes back to re-Christian times in the United Kingdom. The important thing to remember is that the joy and celebration of Easter, the resurrection of our Lord is something to be experience not only on Easter Sunday but throughout the entire octave of Easter!

The best things in life aren't things.

Calvary

Jesus Christ, 33 of Nazareth, died Friday on Mount Calvary, also known as Golgotha, the place of the skull. Betrayed by the apostle Judas, Jesus was crucified by the Romans, by order of the Ruler Pontius Pilate. The causes of death were crucifixion, extreme exhaustion, severe torture, and loss of blood.

Jesus Christ, a descendant of Abraham, was a member of the house of David. He was the Son of the late Joseph, a carpenter of Nazareth, and Mary, His devoted Mother. Jesus was born in a stable in the city of Bethlehem, Judea. He is survived by His mother Mary, His faithful Apostles, numerous disciples, and many other followers.

Jesus was self educated and spent most of his adult life working as a Teacher. Jesus also occasionally worked as a Medical Doctor and it is reported that he healed many patients. Up until the time of His death, Jesus was teaching and sharing the Good News, feeding the hungry, and helping the poor.

Jesus was most noted for telling parables about His Father's Kingdom and performing miracles, such as feeding over 5,000 people with only five loaves of bread and two fish, and healing a man who was born blind. On the day before His death, He held a Last Supper celebrating the Passover Feast, at which He foretold His death.

The body was quickly buried in a stone grave, which was donated by Joseph of Arimathea, a loyal friend of the family. By order of Pontius Pilate, a boulder was rolled in front of the tomb. Roman soldiers were put on guard.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that everyone try to live as Jesus did. Donations may be sent to anyone in need.

Thank You Fish Fry Volunteers!

I think everyone who attended our fish fry this year would agree that it was marvelous! The organization and cooperation of those who worked on it was really fantastic! Such great success could never have been achieved without the help of so many generous volunteers. And so, as the pastor and "proprietor" of our little seasonal "fish restaurant", I want to express my personal thanks to all those who worked on the fish fry this year. Everyone involved should be very proud of themselves. This money raised for the church will make it possible for us to continue our parish projects and there are so many of them to be undertaken in an historic church with old buildings like ours! I would like to express my own personal pride in the way the parishioners and friends of Our Lady of the Scapular were able to come together and work hard for the good of the parish with a never wavering commitment. The work was exhausting. We all got a real insight into who some of the hardest workers in this parish are and we also saw who the supporters and patrons of parish events are. Thank you to all who attended our fish fry! I am certain that our parish will remain strong and vibrant for many, many years and there are many "bigger" parishes that could take a lesson from the way we do things here! Bóg Zapłać!