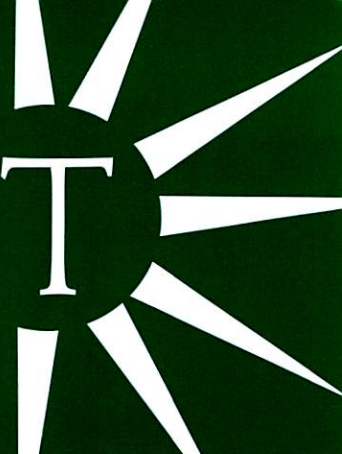


JOYFUL LIGHT

Joyful Light is a semi-annual publication of the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of SS. Cyril and Methodius, 3605 Perrysville Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15214 • (412) 321-8383 • www.byzcathsem.org • byzcathsem@verizon.net



Dr. Paul McPartlan Discussed

*“The Promise and Challenge of Catholic-Orthodox Dialogue”
at SS. Cyril and Methodius Lecture*



Fr. Paul McPartlan Ph.D.

Over 100 people attended the 7th annual SS. Cyril and Methodius Lecture, at which Dr. Paul McPartlan Ph.D., Carl J. Peter Professor of Systematic Theology and Ecumenism at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C addressed the various issues that still separate the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Churches. In identifying the role of the Roman pontiff as the primary divisive matter standing in the way of re-unification, he raised the possibility of using Eucharistic ecclesiology to solve the problem of primacy in a re-united Church.

“The papacy,” he said, “is the most thorny issue in Catholic-Orthodox dialogue. But the Eucharist is the center of the Church and of church life... it’s the common theological matrix within which the problems besetting Roman Catholic and Orthodox relations can most profitably be addressed.” He went on to explain the possibilities of such a dialogue.

Fr. David Sedor
*Instructor, Moral Theology
Byzantine Catholic Seminary*

A CD of this lecture and previous ones can be ordered through the seminary office (\$10 each, prepaid).

Retreats: Important Ingredient in Seminary Life

The academic year at the Byzantine Catholic Seminary can be very busy. Liturgical services, classes, ministries, catechetical assignments and other duties tend to fill up the seminarian’s weekly calendar. Ever present is the danger of losing sight of the real reason for everything that we do at the seminary: to grow into a strong relationship with Jesus Christ through a healthy and active participation in the life and Tradition of the Church. When this goal is not central, the various activities in the life of a seminarian can lose their meaning.

In an effort to nurture ourselves into a life rooted in the love of Christ, periodic retreats are built into the academic year. In particular, we participate in two types of retreats during the year: a guided retreat prior to the beginning of the second semester and a weekend long *poustinia* retreat during the Great Fast.

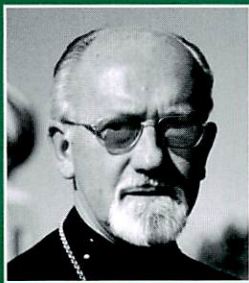
Near the Feast of the Theophany of Our Lord, the seminarians and the Director of Spiritual Formation of the seminary, Fr. David Petras, spend four days at a local retreat house. A retreat director is invited



Daniel Forsythe

Continued on page 4

Rector's Message

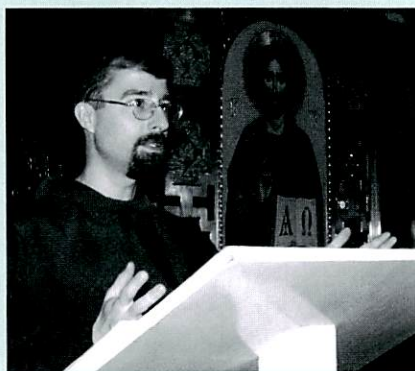


As part of the process of receiving accreditation from The Association of Theological Schools, the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of SS. Cyril and Methodius will welcome the visit of an accreditation evaluation committee on September 23-26, 2007. With the Self-Study report, this visitation will further evaluate the Seminary in terms of ATS standards, and will determine whether our theological school is recommended for accreditation to the ATS Board.

Should you care to comment on the Seminary's qualifications for ATS accreditation, we invite you to submit any remarks in writing to 3605 Perrysville Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15214.

Father John G. Petro, Rector

For Seminarians, Practice Makes Perfect



Br. Jerome Wolbert (IV Theology)

Practice makes perfect. Well, let's amend that. Practice makes perfect *if* you are practicing and someone who knows how to execute is pointing out your strengths and weaknesses.

As part of their education, seminarians at the Byzantine Catholic Seminary, in addition to serving pastoral assignments in community agencies, practice hearing confessions, and delivering homilies. Weekly, when the Homiletics course is being offered, seminarians "deliver homilies" to live congregations, usually members of Byzantine Catholic churches in Pittsburgh.

According to Fr. Jack Custer, professor of the Homiletics course since 1996, "Our goal is to practice composing and delivering homilies for a variety of pastoral situations—Sundays, feast days, Lent, Pascha, Christmas,

weddings, funerals and baptisms. This class builds on a one-semester theory and theology of homiletics class."

Fr. Jack's course meets two hours per week for one semester and is comprised of students in their third year of theology. Effectively, each student gets about eight to ten chances to preach.

"I had the barest minimum of homiletic training in my own seminary experience," Fr. Jack said. "I have developed this course based on what I wish I had had, what it appears to me beginning homilists need, and what congregants tell me is effective or not effective in the homilies they hear."

Fr. Jack has used a live congregation since the outset, an innovation of his, stemming from his belief that it is vitally important that the seminarians have the feeling of looking into a variety of faces as they preach.

"Preaching to one or two other students is not nearly as engaging," Fr. Jack said, "as standing before congregants. The quality of the feedback from lay people is rather different from what another seminarians give to peers."

For live congregations, Fr. Jack originally looked to cantors and members of the Byzantine Serra Club for his audiences.

"As I have come to know more local

parishioners," he said, "I have made personal invitations or asked local pastors to suggest people. The current congregation came at the suggestion of their pastors."

Andrew Staursky of St. Andrew the Apostle parish in Gibsonia, PA, began to attend homiletics classes at the suggestion of his pastor, Fr. George Gallaro.

"The experience is a highly enlightening one," Andrew said. "I have derived much more from the experience than I have contributed. Fr. Custer brings much knowledge, intelligence, experience, compassion, and, especially, he exudes an ever-present, passionate enthusiasm to his teaching. It became apparent that substantive progress was being achieved by the students."

"Our goal is to practice composing and delivering homilies for a variety of pastoral situations."

Congregants, like Andrew, offer verbal feedback immediately after each homily and give their written notes to Fr. Jack, who takes account of their feedback in assigning a grade and making suggestions for improvement. The homilies are also taped and seminarians must review and critique their own work in writing three times each semester.

Carol and Sue: *Two Neighbors Close to the Seminary*

"I truly value Carol and the variety of ways that she helps in the office."
Sr. Margaret Ann Andrako, Administrative Assistant

"Sue's work in the Self-Study office has been a blessing."
Fr. John G. Petro, Rector

Carol Przyborski and Sue Carlino, two Observatory Hill neighbors and good friends, have been providing valuable services to the seminary for nearly ten years, both in their roles as volunteers and, more recently, as paid assistants.

"I learned of the seminary through my association with the Acorn Hill Garden Club," said Carol Przyborski, assistant to Sr. Margaret Ann. "We began to have our monthly meetings here in the 90's."

"I guess I always knew the seminary was there," said Sue, "mysterious, but there. We used to set our clocks to their bells. The seminary was attempting to become part of our community, and it was one of the best things they ever did."

Interestingly both women began their volunteer lives at the seminary by working on "Joyful Light," putting on address labels and preparing for mailing.

"I started volunteering soon after the Garden Club began meeting there," said Sue. "Carol told me about it. Then, in March 2005, I was hired to help Betty Shovlin with The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) Self-Study. I began as a secretary for the Self-Study then morphed into the report's editor. Now that the Self-Study has been safely delivered to the ATS, when I return to the office it will be to clean up and get things ready for their visit in September."

Both women are greatly valued by the faculty, administration, staff, and students of the seminary.

"Carol's joy for life is evident in the way she works and the way she lives," said Sr. Margaret Ann. "Her capable assistance goes beyond everyday duties, and her willingness to tackle something new is admirable."



"Sue's calm and unruffled demeanor shrinks mammoth tasks into manageable pieces," said Fr. John, "and she does it with an assurance and confidence that is both professional and relaxed."

Betty Radvak Shovlin, former chair of the seminary Advisory Council and volunteer head of the ATS Self-Study, said of Sue, "Sue's dual role in the Seminary's accreditation Self-Study has made the process flow with speed, ease and accuracy. She not only performed all secretarial responsibilities capably, with insight, efficiency and great humor, but also became the chief editor, condensing volumes of work by the committees into a final cohesive report to ATS. Imagine finding one person with all of these special skills and additionally one who would be supportive, deeply involved and caring for the good of the project and the seminary. Sue is that person and I consider it a privilege to know her and work with her."

Carol Przyborski and Sue Carlino have been providing valuable services to the seminary for nearly ten years.

Both Sue and Carol have grown to become vital parts of the seminary.

"The seminary is very important," Carol said. "It needs the support of everyone to continue its vital mission."

"It's a wonderful place to work," Sue said, "The people there couldn't be nicer and they really do important work. It's a unique institution and a treasure for the Byzantine Catholic Church. Who else would let Lucie, my dog, come to work on Thursdays when the seminarians are not there?"

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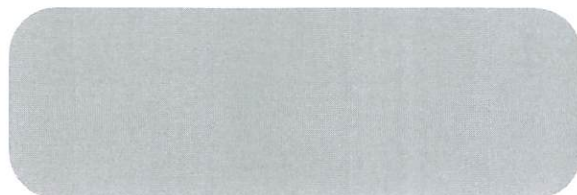
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Retreats from page 1

to speak with us about certain aspects of the spiritual life. This year, Fr. Thomas Acklin, OSB, from St. Vincent Seminary in Latrobe PA, directed our retreat, challenging us to more firmly root our entire life in a very personal, loving relationship with Jesus Christ. We had plenty of opportunities to speak with Fr. Acklin, Fr. David, and one another about the challenges, struggles and joys of the life we lead – sometimes learning from one another more than we could have imagined. Most importantly, we have a very full liturgical schedule during the retreat. Gathered in the small chapel at the retreat house for Vespers, Matins, the Divine Liturgy and other services, we are privileged to celebrate that festive period in a very intimate and moving way. It is generally the consensus among the seminarians that those liturgical services are some of the most prayerful liturgical experiences that our year has to offer.

In the midst of the Great Fast, we journey to Mt. St. Macrina House of Prayer in Uniontown, PA, for a weekend of prayer. Just as it is vitally important to enter into the liturgical life of the Church, it is also important at times to retreat to a quiet place in order to cultivate the silence necessary to hear God's voice. So, we attend a *poustinia* retreat. *Poustinia* comes from the Slavic word for 'desert'. For centuries in Eastern Christian lands, men and women have sought to live a life of solitude in the wilderness. For many, this experience became a means of sanctification and helped them on the path toward theosis (deification). While we seminarians only participate in this 'desert of silence' for a weekend, the experience helps to quiet some of the noise that tends to fill our lives throughout the semester. After the weekend long retreat, we step back into the quick-paced schedule of services and classes, bringing with us a little of that desert silence, so that we can be more attentive to God's voice.

So often, our lives are filled with the types of distractions and obstacles which prevent us from being attentive to God's voice and presence. At the Byzantine Catholic Seminary, we are no different from anyone else. It is all too easy to neglect one's relationship with God as our schedules fill up with classes, appointments, and deadlines. Our retreats remind us that the Church provides opportunities for a different experience of life. **The liturgical services of the Church and the *poustinia* – a simple tradition of the East – can usher us into a life-changing experience of the Divine.** Whether it is in the beautiful chanting of the hymns at Vespers and Matins or the solitude of the *poustinia* room, we realize that God most often speaks only when we are interiorly quiet enough to pay attention. As the Holy Prophet Elijah found out, God's voice is a still, small voice.

Daniel Forsythe (II Theology)