

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.byzcatchsem.edu • office@byzcatchsem.edu

Seminary Begins New Year



Left to right: Lewis Rabayda, Timothy Weber, Thomas Slosky, Musil Shihadeh, Deacon Diodoro Mendoza, Very Rev. Eugene Yackanich, Benjamin Crow, Joseph Hancharick, Kenneth Malley, Michael Bezruchka, Steven Galuschik.

The Byzantine Catholic Seminary has welcomed its seminarians back to campus for another year of theological study and pastoral and spiritual formation. Five new men entered the Seminary this year: Kenneth Malley from the Eparchy of Parma; Joseph Hancharick and Lewis Rabayda from the Eparchy of Passaic and Thomas Slosky and Timothy Weber from the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh.

Kenneth comes to the Seminary from St. John Chrysostom Church in Columbus, OH. A graduate of California University of PA, he majored in psychology and minored in philosophy for his B.A. degree. Ken then spent four years in the military where he perceived a calling towards the priesthood. After one month in the Seminary, Ken described his situation of being a seminarian: "The best part about being a seminarian at the BCS is that I can pursue my calling in a place that truly helps one to learn how to best serve God's people while growing as a person in a healthy, wholesome, and yet human way."

Lansdale, PA was the home of Joseph Hancharick prior to his coming to the Seminary. He is a member of Holy Trinity Byzantine Catholic Church in Philadelphia, PA. Joseph has a B.S. degree in Chemistry from the University of Pittsburgh, and after working for a few years, he attended a one-year program at Penn State University and obtained a Masters in Manufacturing Management in 2000. Joseph spent time in the workforce for a number of years in a variety of occupations prior to entering the Seminary. He was a lab technician in a steel mill, later a supervisor, and then a quality engineer at another steel mill. Merck Pharmaceuticals employed Joseph in 2002 as a certified quality engineer until his acceptance into the Seminary; while there, he completed courses in inventory management. Joseph said that after a few people asked if he ever considered a calling to priesthood, his discernment led to take a step in this direction. He is grateful for all those who have guided him on his journey.

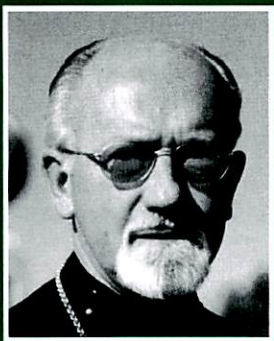
Lewis Rabayda, another seminarian from Passaic Eparchy, comes from Annandale, VA and attends Epiphany of Our Lord Church. Commenting on entering his first year of theology, Lewis says: "After taking the step of accepting my vocation from God, He led me to our Seminary, where, currently, I feel very much at home. I believe God himself has led me here, and through this program I will be able to lead others to his love." Lewis graduated from the Pennsylvania College of Technology-Penn State and received a B.S. degree in Graphic Design. Originally from Summit Hill, PA Lewis moved to Annandale in 2007 and began to work at a small company doing design and layout. Most recently, he worked with Eastern Christian Publications/Oriente Lumen TeleVision in graphic design which Lewis considered not merely a job, but an opportunity for education and apprenticeship for the Eastern Churches.

St. Gregory Nazianzus Church in Upper St. Clair is the home parish of Thomas Slosky, one of the seminarians from the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh. Thomas graduated from Duquesne University with a B.A. degree in Sociology and then went on to work in sales marketing, as a counselor specialist (drug and alcohol) and in sales. Tom is an accomplished runner and enjoys sports, but his interest to grow spiritually led him to the Seminary to discern his calling to the ministry of ordained priesthood which he believes is "to be a witness to the people of what God is doing for them and to be a witness of their own gifts."

Timothy Weber, a life-long parishioner of St. John Chrysostom Church in Pittsburgh, PA graduated from Duquesne University with a B.A. degree with a major in Multimedia Arts and a minor in Philosophy. He also earned an M.S. degree in Multimedia Technology. He was able to apply his education by participating in *The Alt Project* – a documentary film funded in part by departments at Duquesne University. Along with eleven others in the crew, they traveled

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Rector's Message



It has been another exciting beginning of the academic year! We are happy to welcome five new seminarians who joined the five who returned to continue their education and formation for the priesthood. In addition, there are another twelve students in the School of Theology, thus making a learning community of twenty-two students. The variety of backgrounds, experiences and personalities that they each bring makes classes enlivened and energetic.

This fall also brings the beginning of another dream for the Seminary. The first on-line class has been mounted by Dr. Sandra Collins. *The Introduction to Scripture* is an eight week course taught entirely on-line. It is part of a certificate program that you can read more about in this issue of *Joyful Light*. Additional on-line courses are already planned for the spring semester as well as next summer. You can learn more about this by checking the Seminary

website at: www.byzcathsem.edu.

As always, we are grateful to our generous and devoted benefactors who support us with your prayers and donations. The Seminary community remembers all of our benefactors in a Divine Liturgy each month. May the Lord continue to shower his blessings on all of you.

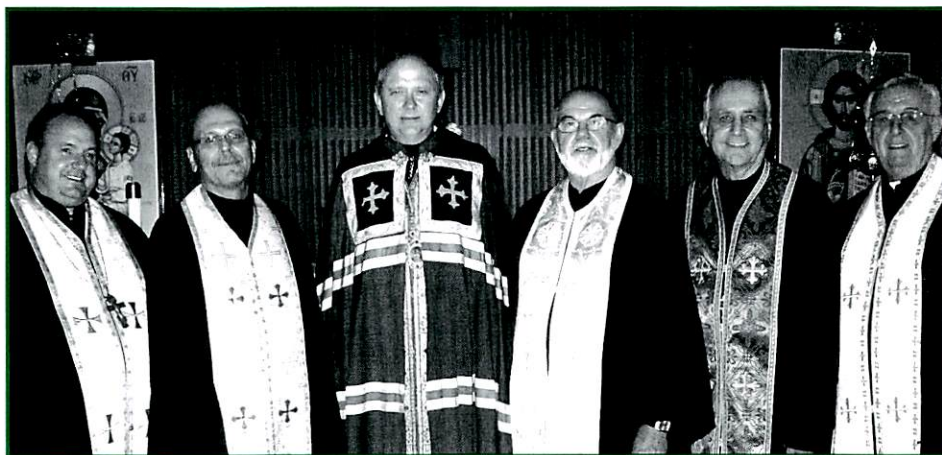
Father John G. Petro, Rector

Seminary Alumni Gather in Florida

At the invitation of Fr. Bob Evancho, pastor at St. Therese Church in St. Petersburg, FL, Byzantine Catholic Seminary development consultant, Jack Miller, had an opportunity to meet with a number of alumni from the Eparchy of Passaic in early October prior to a pilgrimage sponsored by the Eparchy at Our Lady of La Leche Shrine in St. Augustine, FL.

Mr. Miller used the opportunity to update Florida alumni Fr. Peter Lickman, pastor of St. Basil Church in Miami, Fr. Michael Krulak, pastor of St. Anne Church in New Port Richey, Fr. Michael Kane, pastor of Our Lady of the Sign Church in Coconut Creek and Fr. Michael J. Sopoliga of SS Cyril and Methodius Church in Fort Pierce on Seminary developments.

Bishop William C. Skurla, Bishop of the Eparchy of Passaic, presided at the meeting and was supportive of promoting the new distance-learning program of the Byzantine



Left to right: Fr. Vincent Brady, Fr. Michael Kane, Bishop William Skurla, Fr. Peter Lickman, Fr. Michael Sopoliga, Fr. Bob Evancho.

Catholic Seminary. Jack shared how the seminary's gift annuity program could be used to support parish capital campaign efforts as well as the Seminary and provided promotional information and the offer to answer parish-related development questions as well.

Fr. Bob's invitation resulted from the

recent alumni survey where he offered to help connect the Seminary with alumni in his territory. If you are planning an event in your area where Byzantine Catholic Seminary alumni may be gathered, please let us know in the event that someone from the Seminary can attend to provide a personal account of the many new programs occurring at the Seminary.

BE A PART OF OUR FUTURE

If you would like to remember us in your will, our official title is: Byzantine Catholic Seminary of SS. Cyril and Methodius

Launch of Byzantine Online

On Wednesday, October 20th, the Byzantine Catholic Seminary officially launched Byzantine Online, our online distance learning component, with ten registered online students from as far away as Texas and Canada. Through Byzantine Online, interested individuals – laity as well as clergy – can learn about dogma, doctrine, liturgy and scripture from an Eastern Christian perspective in eight-week sessions from the comfort of their own homes.

Each week, students are presented with a written lecture and links to various websites and readings. They then are offered a discussion question and given a week to post an answer. Through this process, the class participants carry on a virtual conversation with one another as these responses are emailed to each course participant as well as the instructor.

Interested students can take all eight classes as a certificate student in order to complete a *Certificate in Eastern Christian Studies*. They are required to do all the course readings, post at least one response to the discussion forum every week and complete a project as assigned by the instructor for the class. The cost to register as a certificate student is \$500 per class. Those who might not want the rigor of completing all the readings or doing outside



coursework but simply want to do this for personal enrichment can register as an audit at a reduced rate of \$350 per class. In addition, Byzantine Online offers group discounts for parish groups.

Our first course – Introduction to Sacred Scripture – covers topics such as diverse interpretations of Scripture as well as a walk through the various books of the Bible in eight weeks. In Spring 2011, Fr. Steylios Muksuris, Ph.D. will be offering Introduction to Liturgy and in late Spring 2011, Fr. George D. Gallaro, STL, JCOD, will offer Patristic Reading. Next fall, we hope to offer Introduction to Divine Liturgy as well as a non-certificate class on Women in the Bible.

For more information about Byzantine Online, see our website at online.byzcatchsem.edu or contact Dr. Sandra Collins, Director of Online Learning, at scollins@byzcatchsem.edu.

Under the Dome

While the Seminary is in the midst of the five years of its first accreditation (2007-2012), the Self Study for the second accreditation has officially begun. In September, **Fr. John G. Petro**, Rector, **Fr. Joseph Raptosh**, Dean and **Dr. Betty Radvak-Shovlin**, Self Study Director, met as the Steering Committee to start the Self Study for re-accreditation. New Standards and expectations were explained at a two-day workshop that **Dr. Shovlin** and **Fr. Raptosh** attended at the head office of ATS, The Association of Theological Schools, the accrediting institution. Since then, the faculty has had a brief orientation concerning their essential role in curricular and instructional improvement to continue the growth of the Seminary program. Soon, other committees will be formed to study, assess and make recommendations to advance all other areas of the Seminary.

Fr. Julian Anthony, Adjunct Professor of Scripture, presented a paper "Mystical Experience in the Bible and in Eastern Spirituality" at an International Conference in India in June, 2010. He recently published a book in Tamil emphasizing the value and importance of Christian family, which is the source of priestly and religious vocations. The content of the book is the fruit of long years of teaching the Bible and years of experience in the formation of seminarians. **Fr. Julian** also has written an article "Vocation of Jeremiah" for publication in *Seminary Journal*, a quarterly review published by the National Catholic Educational Association Seminary Department, Washington, D.C.

Fr. Stelyios Muksuris, Ph.D., adjunct Professor of Liturgy, delivered two lectures, entitled: "The Small Supplicatory Canon - What, Where, and Why?" and "Praying the Liturgy for Church Musicians: Challenges and Solutions," during the annual meeting of the Mid Eastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Choirs and Musicians (MEFGOX), in July at the All Saints Greek Orthodox Church of Canonsburg, PA.

Volos, Greece was the city where **Fr. David M. Petras** attended the Bi-annual Convention of the Society of Eastern Liturgists in May. In June, **Fr. David**, Professor of Liturgy, attended the St. Serge Institute in Paris for the Week of Liturgical Studies at which he presented a paper, "The Witness of the Liturgy of the Ruthenian Church in the New World."

Sr. Margaret Ann Andrako, OSBM, Administrative Assistant and Registrar, and **Fr. Joseph Raptosh**, Dean, attended the Profiles in Ministry Workshop at ATS (The Association of Theological Schools) in Pittsburgh, PA. in October and November. The Profiles in Ministry program (POM) assesses a wide range of personal characteristics that are particularly relevant for those entering seminary and those about to enter pastoral ministry. The POM instruments are now an integral part of our theology program to assess the competencies of the students.

Rev. Joseph Raptosh, Dean, has successfully completed eight years of study, post doctoral, with the Pittsburgh Psychoanalytic Institute. He graduated on November 2, 2010.

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to Oregon and back, following back roads and alternative routes, stopping at a number of lesser known parks and reserves and points of interest. Their task was to document their travels as well as the facts, people and landscapes they encountered. Recently, Tim worked as a webmaster at the Chancery Office for the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh. As he enters the Seminary, Tim is eager to use his gifts (of technology) for building up the Church in today's society. In addition, he wants to learn better how to serve God by serving others, which he considers the heart of ministry for a priest.

In addition to the new seminarians, five men are returning from last year's classes as well. These include: Deacon Diodoro Mendoza (IV Theology), Michael Bezruchka and Benjamin Crow (both II Theology) from the Eparchy of Phoenix; Musil Shihadeh (III Theology) from the Melkite Eparchy of Newton; and Steven Galuschik (II Theology) from the Eparchy of Passaic. They returned with stories of their pastoral experiences this past summer in various parishes in their particular eparchies.

With their great variety of backgrounds, with their wealth of experiences and with their intense desire to embrace the life of education and formation in the Seminary, this group of men brings much hope for the future of our Byzantine Catholic Church. Let us all offer them our prayerful support as they continue their journey towards the priesthood.

Very Rev. Eugene P. Yackanich, Administrator of the Archeparchy, celebrated a Divine Liturgy early in September to open the academic year. In his homily, commenting on the day's epistle, I Cor. 2:6-9, in which St. Paul speaks of true wisdom, Father Eugene reminded the seminarians that their task as students of theology is to seek out this Wisdom in their studies, in Scripture, the writings of the Fathers and Mothers of the Church, in the Divine Liturgy and ideas and insights of contemporary theologians. "Wisdom is intimate and personal, for it is Jesus Christ; your journey is to look upon the face of Wisdom that will always bring you back to this Holy Table...and from this seat at Wisdom's Banquet, you will see that secret revealed in everyone that you meet and everyone that you serve."

Mark Your Calendar...

for the SS. Cyril and Methodius Lecture. On Monday, May 2, 2011, Robin Darling Young, Associate Professor of Theology at the University of Notre Dame will present her address: "Evagrius the Monk and the Cure of Souls."

Matching Gifts

If you or someone you know works for a company with a matching gift program, your gift to the Byzantine Catholic Seminary can be doubled or tripled. Please check with your company's Human Resources Department for this option.