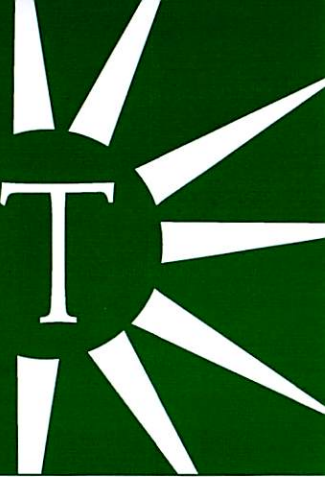


# JOYFUL LIGHT

*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.bcs.edu • office@bcs.edu*



## *Degrees Conferred at Seminary*



*Joining Metropolitan William at the conclusion of the graduation are Fr. Robert Pipta, Rector, Subdeacon Lewis Rabayda and Thaddeus Osuagwu.*

Following a compline service, Metropolitan William, Archbishop of Pittsburgh, conferred diplomas upon two graduates of the Seminary's School of Theology on December 18, 2014. Board members, staff, faculty, students, family and friends were in attendance as diplomas were conferred upon Lewis Rabayda and Thaddeus Osuagwu. Bishop Kurt Burnette of Passaic was also in attendance and addressed those gathered.

**Subdeacon Lewis Rabayda** graduated with a Master of Divinity degree. Lewis calls two parishes his home parish. He grew up in central-eastern PA at St. John the Baptist in Lansford. Later on, he accepted his vocation and entered the Seminary from Epiphany of Our Lord in Annandale, VA. When Lewis was asked how his Seminary training would help him in ministry, he said "Seminary laid the basis of knowledge for everything I need to know for ministry. From Scripture to

Dogmatics to Pastoral Theology, I have been well taught the basics of what I need to function well as a pastor." Lewis feels that the process of learning sparked in him a desire to continue with more in-depth study throughout his life.

Lewis enjoyed studying about the spirituality of the Eastern Fathers and the early Church Fathers. Lewis stated, "These authors have such an influence in their voice that comes from lives dedicated to God and to his Church. Sometimes just reading their words can transport their experience of God through the ages of time to the present and helps to strengthen my faith and spirituality."

Lewis' summer assignments enhanced his program at the Seminary because, Lewis shared, they helped to fill in the gap between academics and one's personal prayer life. He stated, "Being in a parish is helpful to

transition from being a parishioner yourself, to being the pastor." Lewis understands that this transition does take some time, and each summer the seminarian sees a different aspect of parish administration while spiritually ministering to the needs of the faithful.

Subdeacon Lewis summed up everything well by stating, "Seminary is one step of formation in the Christian life, and that process continues as God challenges us and strengthens us to be better ministers of His Word."

**Thaddeus Osuagwu** graduated with a Master of Arts in Theology degree. Thaddeus said "The program at BCS is a priceless treasure. It has widened my understanding of the apostolic tradition. All the courses that I have taken have been relevant to my future."

When Thaddeus first entered the Byzantine Catholic Seminary, he was thrilled by the peaceful and welcoming atmosphere which, he said, was perfect for class activities: "It is a small-sized learning environment conducive for research and theological reflections." Thaddeus appreciated that the classrooms were accessible and equipped to meet the challenges of the contemporary technologies. Thaddeus said, "Professors are from various walks of life and faith groups, making it more integrated for me to identify with various faith traditions." He continued, "My years at Byzantine Catholic Seminary enabled me to appreciate diversities that exist in various faith groups in keeping with the spirit of ecumenism."

During his time at the Seminary, Thaddeus appreciated that the professors at BCS were easily approachable. He said, "They are totally devoted to the integral growth of students. They are available for questions and clarifications from students."

The Seminary extends a joyous word of congratulations to these recent graduates. *Thanks be to God!*

## Rector's Message

These days of adjusting to my new life as a Seminary rector find me grateful to God for those special people He has given to assist in such a positive transition. As must be expected when moving to a colder climate, "How do you like our winter weather?" comes often to my ears. From my days as a seminarian here, I'm recalling how very beautiful snowy winters can be, always grateful that it is quite rare that I need to be driving on icy roads. Our Seminary is kept warm not only from a highly efficient boiler but from the fervor of those who grace these halls.

Compared to my twenty years serving in parishes, a busy day is now no longer based on how many services, how many homilies, or how many visitations to the sick, but on people who approach me with various matters. The students are wonderful, and the board of directors, staff, and faculty quite supportive and encouraging. The good will and energy of the staff, however, require my reciprocation to allow for the best stewardship of all the time, talent, and treasure that emerge from both inside and outside our Seminary walls. The Seminary really is a special treasure, and I remain grateful for all our friends and benefactors who make it such.

The Seminary is special in no small way due to the presence of our dear Director of Human Formation. With a wealth of ministerial, academic, and professional expertise, Fr. George Gallaro began as a member of our adjunct faculty in 1997. By 2005 he was serving as a core professor and as a member of our in-house staff. Twice he served as Rector pro tem. Most often our students approach him under the title of "Coordinator of Seminarian Life," but to all those who have been blessed to know him he is father, gracious host, professor, writer, lecturer, chef, guide, ... joy personified. Where do I stop?

At the end of this semester Fr. George is to take leave of us. God is calling him to a new ministerial landscape. On behalf of all our Seminary community, I offer a word of sincerest gratitude for the gift that Fr. George has been to us. He has helped make our Seminary come alive. While our hearts are heavy as this beloved mentor prepares to take leave of his life in the Seminary, we wish him only the best, and pray that God grant him many blessed years.



Father Robert M. Pipta



Father George Gallaro

## Pastoral Field Education

Sr. Marion Dobos, OSB



"The whole formation imparted to candidates for the priesthood aims at preparing them to enter into communion with the charity of Christ the Good Shepherd. Hence, their formation in its different aspects must have a fundamentally pastoral character." (Pastores dabo vobis, no.57)

One of the pillars of formation at the Seminary is Pastoral. Pastoral field education opportunities are real life experiences of day-to-day ministry. The seminarians encounter opportunities which will both enhance their gifts and challenge them in areas of needed growth.

This objective is achieved by means of a four-year program that includes observation, evaluation and the following essential elements of ministry:

- *First Theology – Catechetics and Teaching Ministry*
- *Second Theology – Health Care Ministry*
- *Third Theology – Social Service Ministry and Evangelization*
- *Fourth Theology – Parish Ministry*

Seminarians' visits to Pittsburgh-area parishes on Sundays are assigned with a view to experiencing these elements. Seminarians are occasionally called to non-parochial Sunday experiences as well. The students find it a great joy on those Sundays when they can visit nearby parish communities.

In the summer seminarians are assigned by their bishop to parishes where they can put into practice pastorally the material learned in the classroom.

## You're Invited to the

*15th Annual Saints Cyril and Methodius Lecture  
sponsored by the  
Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Ss. Cyril and Methodius  
Pittsburgh, PA  
Hosted by Saint John Byzantine Catholic Cathedral*

**Our Guest Speaker, Dr. Scott Hahn**

**TOPIC: The Our Father as a Synthesis of the Pattern of Scripture**

Dr. Scott Hahn is the author/editor of over forty books. An exceptional speaker and teacher, Dr. Scott Hahn has delivered thousands of popular talks and academic lectures, nationally and internationally, on a wide range of topics related to Scripture, Theology, and the Catholic faith.

For a more detailed biography of Dr. Hahn, please visit our website at [www.bcs.edu](http://www.bcs.edu).



**When**  
**Thursday, May 7, 2015**  
Lecture at 7:00 pm  
Reception to follow

**Where**  
**Saint John Cathedral Center**  
210 Greentree Road  
Munhall, PA 15120

This event is FREE but due to space limitations registration is required by April 30th. Please complete the form below and mail it to the Seminary or call 412-321-8383 or email [office@bcs.edu](mailto:office@bcs.edu).

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## BE 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.

## From Our Director of Spiritual Formation

Father James Hess, O. Carm.

As the Church developed in the East, an important role came to be. The role of "Abba" ("Spiritual Father", whom the Greeks call "Geron" and the Russians "Starets" which means "old man" or "elder"). The "elder" provided guidance to those who aspired to be spiritual athletes.

Bishop Kallistos Ware writes, "The spiritual father or starets is essentially a 'charismatic' and prophetic figure, accredited for his task by the direct action of the Holy Spirit. He is ordained, not by the hand of man, but by the hand of God. He is an expression of the Church as 'event' or 'happening', rather than of the Church as 'institution.'"

The bishops of the United States embraced this practice in their Program for Priestly Formation. They believed that experienced and trusted priests should mentor seminarians in their formation and discernment. The bishops believe that these mentoring experiences should be at least once a month during the academic year. The Director of Spiritual Formation and the Rector suggest names of priests to the Metropolitan who then appoints priests to serve as an individual Spiritual Director for each man preparing for priestly service in the Church.



Very Rev.  
Ronald Larko



Hieromonk  
Paul-Alexander Shutt, OSB



Rev. Ivan  
Chirovsky

The following priests have been appointed by Archbishop William to spiritually mentor the seminary students at the Byzantine Catholic Seminary: Very Rev. Ronald Larko, Hieromonk Paul-Alexander Shutt, OSB and Rev. Ivan Chirovsky (Married Priest). The seminary community is most grateful for the dedicated and selfless service of these priests to the human and spiritual well-being of our seminarians.

## Under The Dome

**Fr. Stelyios Muksuris, Ph.D.**, Professor of Liturgical Theology and Biblical Greek, was appointed to serve as a regular columnist/blogger on the international Orthodox Christian Network website, which reaches over 5 million readers weekly. He typically writes pieces on Orthodox liturgy, theology, and spirituality. In addition, Fr. Stelyios is publishing three papers he delivered at conferences in 2013 & 2014: (1) "Why the Last Should Be First: The Primacy of Eucharistic Eschatology in the Byzantine Prothesis Rite – Toward a Theology of Ecclesial Unity" (ROAA Symposium at Duquesne University, March 2014, to be published in the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese of America Yearbook/Almanac and "St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly"); (2) "E Duobus Unum in America: Rethinking the Mutual Influence Between Monastic and Cathedral Liturgy" (OTS Meeting at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, September 2013, to be published in "Worship"); and (3) "Revisiting the Orthodox Funeral Service: Resurrecting a Positive Thematology in the Rite for the Dead" (International Conference on Liturgical Renewal at Hellenic College and Holy Cross in Boston, March 2013, to be published in the "Greek Orthodox Theological Review").

**Dr. Sandra A. Collins**, Director of Media and Outreach, presented "A Wandering Aramean: ATLA Database and the Eastern Christian Scholar" at the Catholic Library Association meeting in Pittsburgh in spring 2014. A revised version of this presentation was accepted for publication in *Catholic Library World* and was published as the cover article in September 2014. In the fall, she spoke to Mt. Lebanon Evangelical Presbyterian's "Theology on Tap" group as well as two environmental studies classes at the University of Pittsburgh. In October, Dr. Collins offered a day-long seminar in Minneapolis addressing the School of Formation for the Episcopal Church in Minnesota.

## Update on Library Appeal

Thanks to the incredibly generous contributions from our Seminary friends, almost \$85,000 was raised to help us purchase and install badly needed equipment to preserve the Seminary's library collection and to make needed renovations. Renovations have already begun on the rare book room. We are grateful that the library and our students – current and future, near and far – can continue to be filled with the knowledge and truth of our faith and with the grace and loving kindness of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Look for more updates as we prepare to work on the updates to the Library.

## Serra Club and The Seminary

Thanks to a generous contribution from the Byzantine Serra Club of Pittsburgh, the *Photo Icon of Our Community* was dedicated at ceremonies on November 1, 2014 beginning with a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy in the Seminary Chapel with Metropolitan William. Following the Liturgy, participants proceeded to the Seminary foyer for the unveiling and dedication.

The *Photo Icon of Our Community* is a framed collage of photographs of seminarians, Master of Arts in Theology students, seminary faculty and staff members.

## PATLA Meeting

A group of local librarians met recently at the Byzantine Catholic Seminary to begin the process of establishing a Western Pennsylvania theological library consortium. Tentatively titled the Pittsburgh Area Theological Library Association or PATLA, this group seeks to develop cooperative borrowing and lending agreements as well as possibly establish a shared catalog site and interlibrary loan functions between the seven schools/organizations. The initial meeting in December 2014 provided an opportunity for the various local librarians to take a tour of the Seminary as well as have a face-to-face meeting where we could get to know one another better. Many stayed to enjoy a Seminary lunch as well.

Work has already begun by several members. For example, Ted Bergfelt of Duquesne University offered to begin working on a possible website where all this information can be mounted and shared among the various libraries.

All in attendance at our December meeting were enthusiastic about continuing this consortium with Christ the Savior Seminary in Johnstown asking to be added to our group. We look forward to more meetings in 2015 where we hope to create by-laws and policies for sharing information.

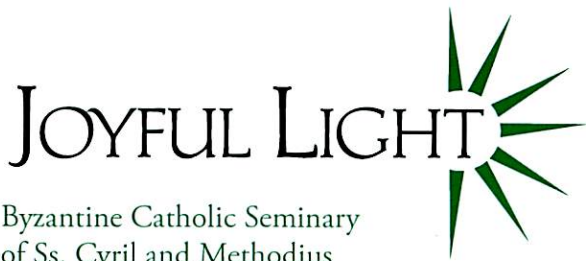
The consortium at this point includes:

- Antiochian Village Library and Museum, Bolivar, PA
- Byzantine Catholic Seminary Library, Pittsburgh, PA
- Christ the Savior Seminary Library, Johnstown, PA
- Duquesne University Library, Pittsburgh, PA
- Pittsburgh Theological Seminary Library, Pittsburgh, PA
- Reformed Presbyterian Seminary Library, Pittsburgh, PA
- Trinity School for Ministry Library, Ambridge, PA

## BCS Online Courses

Visit [www.bcsonline.edu](http://www.bcsonline.edu)

for information about summer classes.



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75/75	5.0%	75	5.8%
80/80	5.7%	80	6.8%
85/85	6.7%	85	7.8%

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