

# 2016 Lenten Retreat of the Northeast Seniorate of the Western Diocese of the PNCC

Saturday, February 27, 2016

The Annual Lenten Retreat of the Northeast Seniorate of the Western Diocese of the Polish National Catholic Church took place at Resurrection Parish in Temperance, MI.

Resurrection Parish has been the host for a number of years now. It serves as the most-central location of the Seniorate, about 2 hours from the Parma Parish and a little more than an hour from the Detroit-area parishes.

The 2014 General Synod of the Polish National Catholic Church recommended that Seniorates



in every diocese host at least a yearly Lenten Retreat. This Seniorate has been fortunate to have had that practice established long before then.

The theme of this year's retreat was The Year of Reverence. Each of our topics to be discussed by our Seniorate clergy would revolve around The Year of Reverence, assigned by the Church to be our focus throughout 2016.

The retreat began with what Resurrection Parish is famous for— food and hospitality. All the retreat attendees were greeted with hot cups of coffee, pastry, bagels, and more. The welcome by the parishioners for each attendee was quick and heart-felt...the delicious spread helped as well.



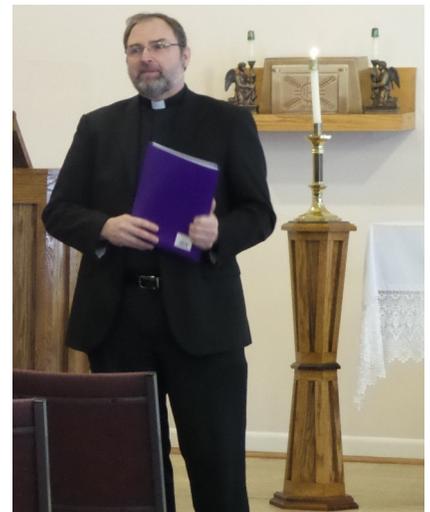
Unfortunately, we were a bit short-handed in our clerical representation. Father Ray Drada is

still recovering from a tremendously painful, complicated, and slow-healing operation. Our prayers were with him throughout the day. Also, Fr. Sr. Nowak announced at the beginning of the retreat the Father John Cramer couldn't be with us, as his mother had taken ill the night before. We were asked to keep Mrs. Cramer in our prayers as well. Since then, Father John has given a positive update on her condition via Facebook.



God is good!

Fr. Sr. Nowak was tasked with not only introducing the retreat as host pastor, but taking on the first two sessions. The first was "God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit." After a short break, he spoke on "Neighbors: Who is my neighbor?" It was safe to say that we



all empathized with Fr. Sr.'s story about picking out a different lane every day so he didn't have to face the same beggar or the same window-washer. It was also safe to say we all cringed when he likened himself to that same priest in the story of the Good Samaritan who went to the other side of the road to avoid having to help.



After a break, Fr. Sr. began the next topic on "The Holy

Eucharist: My understanding and reverence of Christ's sacrifice for us." As Fr. Sr. spoke of his personal and Catholic understanding of the Eucharist, he teased a "big surprise" in a few minutes. Unfortunately, that surprise was only Father Jason speaking further on reverence of the Eucharist. He touched on how the Eternal Light, tabernacle, sanctuary, and even how some priests keep their fingers "pinched together" all serve as points of reverence within our celebration.

After a short break, Father Jason continued with his topic "Sin: The separation from God." In building up towards sin, he read through scriptural references to Satan in the Old and New Testament as well

as going through those hidden times when we do sin in thought, word, and deed (or what I've done or failed to do). Somehow, he even worked in saying some bad words in church, asking people to meditate over the times the heard, said, or had said to them these terrible words. Finally, he closed with what "separated from God" means, and how Hell may be...or might not be defined.

After a song, the retreat went right into the Sacrament of Penance. Father Jason had prepared a long examination of conscience, examining how we have violated our Savior's Commandments of Love. After the Penance and Absolu-

tion, Fr. Sr. offered the benediction and welcomed all to our closing meal...which, of course, being at Resurrection Parish, was delicious.

Many thanks to Father Senior Nowak for preparing our retreat slate & presenting multiple sessions, to Fr. Jason for his session and penance service, to Mrs. Cathy



Bilinski for playing our music, to Mrs. Kathy Chockley for all photo credits, and to Resurrection Parish for hosting, cooking, and everything else a parish does to take care of Christ's People.

May your Lent be a journey of spirituality and triumph in the Resurrection of our Victorious Lord, Jesus Christ.

*Written by Fr. Jason Soltysiak*

## Clergy of the Northeast Seniorate of the Western Diocese of the PNCC

Rt. Rev. Stanley M. Bilinski Jr.  
Bishop Ordinary of the Western Diocese  
Pastor of All Saints Cathedral Parish  
Park Ridge, IL

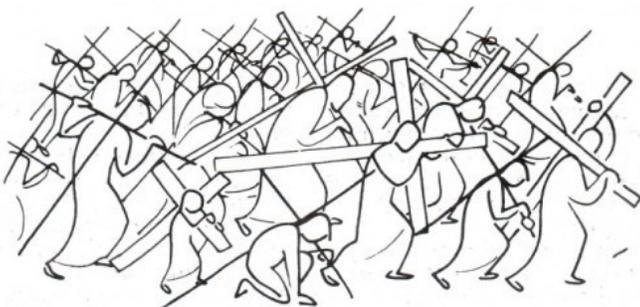
Very Rev. Jarosław Nowak  
Administrative Senior of the Northeast Seniorate  
Pastor of Holy Cross Parish, Hamtramck, MI  
Administrator of Resurrection of our Lord Parish,  
Temperance, MI

Rev. Raymond Drada  
Pastor of All Saints Parish  
Sterling Heights, MI

Rev. John Cramer  
Pastor of Our Savior Parish  
Dearborn Heights, MI

Rev. Jason Soltysiak  
Pastor of St. Mary's Parish  
Parma, OH

Rev. Gregory Gronn  
Retired  
North Olmsted, OH



*"... he must forget himself, carry his cross, and follow me." (8.34)*

