



Parish Tidings



**Polish National
Catholic Church**
"through the years..."

Our Lord's Ascension Parish

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Cornerstones



WANDA POPOSKI

I came into this world as Wanda Koczan, child of Joseph and Anna Koczan on September 15, 1928. Both of my parents were born in Poland, but arrived in this country under different circumstances. On my mother's side, my grandmother Marianna Hajewski, got tired of waiting for her husband Nickodom to get things started to bring the rest of the family to join him and his oldest daughter, Victoria, in Pennsylvania. Both of them were employed. The remaining family in Poland consisted of two girls and two boys, one just a baby. They decided to escape through the Russian check points in the dead of night with the baby tightly wrapped on my grandmother's back. Also wrapped to the back of my Uncle John was a samovar (tea urn). They met in New York and came to Allentown and joined other Polish émigrés who located here. My father Joseph came with his older brother Alexander to see what opportunities were available. During their visit the clouds of war were forming and word arrived from Poland that they should come back as conscription was being put into effect. My father did not want to go back to Poland, so as a teenager, he joined the US Army. He fought in France and took part in a number of bitter battles as a member of a machine gun battalion. Upon the cease of hostilities he was given the opportunity of becoming an American citizen for an additional week's stay to get all the paperwork completed. He came to Allentown and later married my mother in Sts Peter and Paul Church. He became a member of the church committee because he spoke both English and Polish.

My Aunt Victoria Juchnik was already a member of the PNC in Allentown, but joined the Bethlehem parish when the local parish closed. There was disappointment in Sts Peter and Paul when they got no answers from the bishop in Philadelphia. It was like the people here never existed. My parents dropped their membership. My aunt invited them to join the Bethlehem group which they did. Meantime, I graduated from high school and started working for the Atlantic Refinery Co. It was at this time that I came to the church. I was amazed at the number of girls and young women in the parish who could be a valuable addition to the life of the parish. A society was formed and the biggest event we took on was a "WYSTAWA" (DISPLAY) and sale of arts and crafts. It was a financial success. In 1955 the Reading parish was observing an anniversary and many pastors and churches came to the festivities. Since the Rev. E. Louis Czechowski was our local pastor he introduced us to Fr. Walter Poposki of Edwardsville, Pa and Fr. Edward Tomczyk of Frackville who were his fellow students in the seminary. Fr. Poposki and I started a relationship which culminated in our May 1956 marriage in the old church. Our son Walter was born in June of 1958. While we were in Edwardsville we received a call from the bishop to ask if Father would be interested in going to Schenectady, N.Y. to help out a struggling parish. We moved and found a problem that wasn't too difficult to solve. From upper New York to East Meadow, Long Island wasn't too far a trip to take for our next assignment. They too had a heavy financial burden of a mortgage on a rectory. Walter started kindergarten there and finished sixth grade when we left to come to Bethlehem. The bank was paid and all else was in good order. We came to Our Lord's Ascension in 1971 to help build a new house of worship. The rest is history.



Christmas Eve Performance by the Youth

Jewish New Year

On Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashanah, there is a ceremony called Tashlich. Jews traditionally go to the ocean, river or stream to pray and throw bread crumbs into the water. Symbolically, the fish devour their sins. Here are some suggestions for breads which may be most appropriate for specific sins and misbehaviors.

- For ordinary sins..... White bread
- For complex sins Multigrain
- For twisted sin..... Pretzels
- For sin of indecision Waffles
- For committing auto theft ... Caraway
- For timidity/cowardice Milk toast
- For ill-tempereness Sourdough
- For silliness, eccentricity .. Nut bread
- For excessive irony Rye bread
- For dark sins Pumpernickel
- For dressing immodesty..... Tarts
- For causing injury to others..... Tortes
- For being holier than thou..... Bagels
- For abrasiveness..... Grits
- For dropping in without notice..
- Popovers
- For overeating..... Stuffing
- For pride and egotism..... Puff pastry
- For trashing the environment
- Dumplings
- For telling bad jokes..... Corn bread

January at a Glance

- Sunday Mass at 9 AM**
- Coffee Social after Mass
- Bingo every Wednesday at 7 PM**
- January 13 – ANS & Society of Friends meeting
- January 27 - YMS of R meeting**
- January 29 – Committee meeting

New Year Traditions



Traditional New Year's Day foods are thought to bring luck. Many cultures believe that anything in the shape of a ring is good luck, because it symbolizes "coming full circle" completing a year's cycle. For that reason, the Dutch believe that eating doughnuts on New Year's Day will bring good fortune. Many parts of the United States celebrate the new year by consuming black-eyed peas for the

same reason. These beans are typically accompanied by either hog jowls or ham. The hog and therefore its meat is considered lucky because it symbolizes prosperity. Cabbage is a "good luck" vegetable that is eaten on New Year's Day by many. Cabbage leaves are also considered a sign of prosperity being representative of paper money. Locally, we traditionally eat both when we have our pork and sauerkraut. We are told never to eat chicken because we don't want to "scratch" during the year.

The tradition of a Champaign toast at midnight to ring in the new year dates back to the ancient Romans and Greeks who would pour wine from a common pitcher. The host would drink first, to assure his guests that the wine was not poisoned. Poisoning the wine was a fairly common practice designed to do away with one's enemies. In those days the wine was not as refined as it is today so a square of burned bread (toast) would be floated in the wine bowl to absorb the extra acidity of the wine in order to make it more palatable. Eventually, the act of drinking in unison came to be called a toast, from the act of "toasting" or putting toast into the wine. Another tradition of the season is the making of New Year's resolutions. That tradition dates back to the early Babylonians. The early Babylonian's most popular resolution was to return borrowed farm equipment. We asked several of our parish family what their resolutions are for 2013.

Father Bogdan intends to give shorter sermons.

Joe Bartone hopes to improve his golf game.

Jerry Gritman is going to keep active.

John Wunderler intends to work less and enjoy retirement.

Andrea Gritman is going to exercise more.

Nancy Puposki hopes to find a job.

Karen Amate intends to be more patient with her students.

Kira Mohr would like to make her bank account fatter and her waist line thinner.

Cindy Weller wants to have a more positive outlook.

Jenna DeVivo will build strength through therapy so she can dance again.

John Sydorak will not regain the weight he lost.

Dan Broczkowski, Joe Jurnock, Brian Passaro, Walter Puposki, Jo Ann Schaffer, Gerry Matla and Lynn Wunderler intend to enjoy a healthier lifestyle.

Christmas Dinner



The traditional parish Christmas dinner sponsored by the ANS was held after 10:30 mass on the first Sunday in Advent. The tables were set with festive Christmas tablecloths and beautiful red poinsettias. Father Bogdan shared the Oplatek with everyone present. After a delicious ham dinner and scrumptious desserts, the diners enjoyed the musical stylings of Jennifer Anderson on the guitar and Tara Broczkowski on the keyboard. They accompanied the singing of Christmas songs and Gerry Matla led the group in a few Polish Christmas carols. The lucky raffle winners were Father Bogdan, Fran Anthony, Ernie Stavrovsky, and Raneek Kudzik.

Polish Star Paper Ornaments



The School of Christian Living students, under the guidance of Tara Broczkowski and Jennifer Anderson made Polish Star Ornaments in order to raise money to purchase items for a family in need. Thank you to all who helped our students help others at Christmas.

Christmas Covered Dish Social



The Society of Friends and ANS held their second annual Christmas Covered Dish Luncheon Saturday, December 8 at Jo Ann Schaffer's home. The ladies enjoyed good food, entertainment including Jennifer Anderson singing and playing her guitar, and fun with games and prizes. Jackie Bayak surprised everyone with a gift of homemade garlic oil.

Bits and Pieces

* Ernie Stavrovsky Jr celebrated his 19th birthday on December 16. His parents provided a cake for all to enjoy.

* For ten plus years Karen Amate has performed as a party parent in the party scene of Nutcracker presented by the Ballet Guild of the Lehigh Valley - Pennsylvania Youth Ballet. There are six performances each year--4 for the school children (over 3000 children attend) and 2 public performances. During the school performances, party parents go into the audience during intermission, in full costume, to talk to the students. The expressions on their faces make all of the long rehearsals and costume mishaps worth it.

As a teenager, Karen performed the Spanish dance and the role of the Snow Queen for Ballet Theatre of Scranton.

* Bernard and Marie Bankowski donated \$50.00 in memory of Stanley and Agnes Bankowski.

* In January Nick and Janina Martucci will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary.

* When the Society of Friends and the ANS meet after mass on the second Sunday of January they will be welcoming new members, and electing officers for the new year. Ladies, please consider serving your parish by joining one or both of these worthy societies.

Pinwheels

3 cups flour
1/2 lb. butter
3 egg yolks
3 tsp. baking powder
Pinch of salt
1/2 tsp. vanilla
1/2 cup light cream or milk



Mix all ingredients together. Roll on sugar. Make 3 inch squares and cut the square diagonally from each corner to within 1/2 inch of center of each square. Fill the cookie with apricot, lekvar, raspberry or nuts. Fold alternate corners of the square to the center to form pinwheel, overlapping the dough at the center pushing down gently to seal in center. Bake 25-30 minutes at 350 degrees.

A favorite at our bake sale, this delicious cookie recipe was submitted by Wanda Puposki.

If you have something to share, a story, anecdote, recipe, or up-coming event in your life, please submit it to Jo Ann Schaffer, Lynn Wunderler or Andrea Gritman.