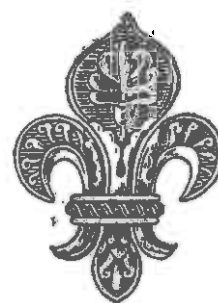


# Stronica Proboszcza



## The Pastor's Page

September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018

Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

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*Month of Our Lady of Sorrows*

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Niech będzie pochwalony Jezus Chrystus!  
Praised be Jesus Christ!

**B**ogu niech będą dzięki! To God be the thanks! For He has just granted us all the strength necessary, to very successfully, get through another festival. God granted us good weather and sent many people to our festival who were ready to stand in line to eat our delicious dinners and good Polish food. God sent many new first-timers to us who promised they would be back next year and that they would bring others with them. The wonderful Polish music is such a great part of the festival keeping everyone's spirits high even when it got hot and very busy. The Polka Mass by the Dyna Brass definitely was a high point of the weekend! It really is a fine festival we put on, and people told me just that. They said it was old-fashioned affordable family fun and remarked about the pride the parishioners here take in their annual Polish Festival. So many said they had been coming to the festival every year since its inception. And so once again I say to God be the thanks, for all He has done for our parish. And as your pastor I must say thank you, thank you, thank you! To every last person who worked on our festival this year. Your generosity will be rewarded! You showed yourself as good and faithful parishioners devoted to Our Lady of the Scapular. I want to express special thanks to those who worked "behind the scenes," those who were not seen by the many visitors at our festival, but without whose work the festival would come to a grinding halt! Also special thanks should go to the entire festival committee who did such a good job organizing, advertising and running the festival this year, especially, Mr. Steve Sajewicz the new festival chairman, and Mr. Al Adamski, former chairman and together with Mr. Steven Kędziński head of grounds set up. Of course thanks go also to the leaders who managed every booth or handled the details of every aspect of the festival. So much hard work goes into putting on a festival like ours. I am very proud of the spirit of co-operation and dedication that was exhibited during the festival by our workers. I cannot express how happy I am to be your pastor and to be able to work with you on such a noble project as the building up of our parish! The success we have experienced once again with our parish festival makes me confident that we are all up to the many challenges that lie before us.

*Dziękuję bardzo i Bóg Zapłać!*

**H**appy Labor Day Weekend! If you are reading this bulletin on Saturday evening or Sunday morning, before or after Mass, it probably means you are not going away for the last long holiday weekend of the summer. Labor Day marks the time when working people around the country come to the end of the summer vacation season and students return to school. We set aside this day to reflect on the work we do. Over the course of our lives, we spend more time working than we do at any other activity.

The whole point of the day is to rest from our labor and to give thanks for the employment we have that allows us to make a living. When people work to support themselves, it gives them a special dignity and the experiences we all have in the work place really do enrich our lives.

The first official Labor Day was celebrated in New York City in 1882. Peter J. McGuire, founder of the carpenters' union, suggested Labor Day at a union meeting. In its early years, it was a day when workers called attention to their grievances. Eventually this day became a national holiday.

In some way or another we all must work. It is part of the human condition and has been so since the day God threw Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Paradise. On that day God said, "From this day forward, by the sweat of your brow shall you bring forth your bread!" I am thankful for my work and my vocation. I hope you feel the same way.

## **Monday, September 3<sup>rd</sup> – Feast of St. Gregory the Great**

St. Gregory described himself humbly as "the servant of the servants of God," but in the centuries since he has come to be known another way – St. Gregory the Great. Pope Gregory earned that praise by a lifetime spent shepherding his flock. Gregory was born in Rome in 540 and was the son of a Roman senator and administrator of one of the seven regions of Rome. His family had already produced two popes. He studied law, and by age thirty he became prefect or mayor of Rome. But after only a year in his post, and the death of his father, he divided his fortune in half. He gave one part of the money to the poor and used the rest to begin monasteries on his Sicilian estate. He turned the family home in Rome into a monastery and there he hoped to live the simple life of a Benedictine monk.

However, Gregory's hope didn't last long. Soon he was named one of the seven deacons of Rome and was then in 579 sent to represent Pope Pelagius II in the court of the emperor in Constantinople. After seven years there, during which he managed to live the monastic life, he moved back to Rome to become the pope's secretary and the abbot of the monastery of St. Andrew. When the pope died in 590, Gregory at age 50 was elected to take his place. He was the first monk to become a pope. Pope Gregory served the people in many ways in his fourteen years as pope. He worked to improve the church's worship. Gregorian chant is named in his honor. Gregory taught a great deal through his writings and preaching. He tended lovingly to the poor and had ruined churches rebuilt. He sent forty Benedictine missionaries to England and he was a peacemaker between nations.

One of Gregory's last acts was to send a warm winter cloak to a bishop who needed one. He called the care of others "the art of arts." He died in Rome on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 604, afflicted not only with physical suffering but dismayed at witnessing the desolation and ruin inflicted on the city by the barbarian invaders. His feast is celebrated on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, the date of his Episcopal ordination in 590, to avoid having the feast fall during the Lenten season. The title "the Great" was bestowed on him by Pope Boniface VIII. He is also one of the four Fathers and Doctors of the Western Church, together with St. Ambrose, St. Augustine and St. Jerome.

## **Tuesday, September 4<sup>th</sup> – Feast of St. Rosalia of Palermo**

Rosalia was born in 1130 in Sicily. She was the daughter of Sinibald, Lord of Roses and Quisquina, a descendant of Charlemagne. When she was young, she left home to live in a cave near Bivona so as to sacrifice her life to God. She later moved to a cave on Mount Pellegrino near Palermo. On the walls of the cave were found these words, "I, Rosalia, daughter of Sinibald, Lord of Roses and Quisquina, have taken the resolution to live in this cave for the love of my Lord, Jesus Christ." She died in that cave in 1166.

A legend is told that in 1624, a terrible plague broke out in Palermo. St. Rosalia appeared to a very sick woman and then to a hunter. She told the hunter to go to the cave and bring her bones to Palermo and have them carried in a procession through the streets. The hunter climbed to the cave and found the remains just as St. Rosalia had revealed to her. He arranged a procession to carry her relics through the city and three days later, the plague ceased. A sanctuary was built in the cave where the hunter found her remains and every year on July 15<sup>th</sup> a celebration is held in Palermo called the festino. On her feast day, September 4<sup>th</sup>, the tradition of walking barefoot from Palermo up to Mount Pellegrino honors St. Rosalia.

Rosalia is sometimes referred to as "The Little Saint" and is pictured as a young woman wearing a crown of roses and holding flowers or a book or a cross. Her statue can be found in our church on the side wall by the Blessed Virgin's Altar. She came to our church by way of the Downriver Santa Rosalia Club. Throughout the year this group organizes Italian Masses in our Church. Saint Rosalia is known as the patron of Palermo, Sicily and El Hatillo, Venezuela. A Mass honoring St. Rosalia will be offered in the Italian language in our church on Sunday, September 16<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 PM. A procession with her statue will precede the Mass at 3:00 PM.

## **Tuesday, September 4<sup>th</sup> – St. Moses**

Moses was the great patriarch and lawgiver of the Old Testament who wrote the first five books of the Bible. He is not called Saint Moses when referred to scripturally, but only on September 4<sup>th</sup>, his feast day. The life of Moses was divided into three periods of forty years. He was forty years in Egypt, a little child picked up near a river bank and educated and trained in the court of Pharaoh. He was then forty years in the Midianite country, south of the Holy Land. And then he was forty years with the Hebrews, in the desert on their way to the Promised Land. Moses died before the Israelites reached the Promised Land. He died on Mount Nebo at the age of one hundred and twenty. His sister Miriam is a great and noble woman of the Old Testament. His brother Aaron, whose feast day is July 1<sup>st</sup>, was the first high priest of the Jews.

## **Friday September 7<sup>th</sup> – First Friday of the Month**

Once again we come to the First Friday of the month, which is dedicated in a special way to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Our Savior. Please keep in mind the blessings that come to those who devoutly receive Holy Communion on First Fridays. In our parish On the first Friday of the month Mass is offered at 6:30 AM, 8 AM and in Polish at 7 PM. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place in the church from 8:30 AM until 10 AM, and from 5PM until 6:30 PM, when Benediction is offered. Please consider putting some of your precious time aside to adore Christ, Our Eucharistic King. The Most Blessed Sacrament is the Church's most precious treasure and God's greatest gift to His people.

## **Saturday, September 8<sup>th</sup> – Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary!**

Do we have any passages in the bible that confirm September 8<sup>th</sup>, as the birth date of Mary, the Mother of God? Absolutely not! Do we know for certain what her parents' names were? Nope! Do we know how old she was when she married St. Joseph or when she gave birth to Jesus? Sorry, no data available. So how is it we have feast days on our liturgical calendar for Mary's birthday, and a feast day for her parents, Joachim and Anne, July 26<sup>th</sup>, and even on the really old calendars a feast day for Mary's espousal to Joseph

on January 23<sup>rd</sup>.

As I have said many times in my sermons, the Catholic faith is a very logical religion. The facts are that we know that Mary was human, flesh and blood, like you and me. She was not divine! And every human person is born in time, into this world. So there had to be a birthday. No, we don't know exactly which day, just as we do not know exactly which day Mary's Son, Jesus was born for sure.

What we are celebrating is the fact that this important event DID take place. Observing Mary's birthday confirms our faith that she really did live on this old earth like us and that she became a mother and that she is still a mother to us all, only a cry or prayer away! The Immaculate Conception of Mary is celebrated on December 8<sup>th</sup>, which is nine months before this day. And it is fitting that we honor her birth in the harvest season, because Mary is the model for all who wish to bring forth Christ in their lives.

In some parts of Europe, the summer harvest and the seed for the winter crops are blessed today. For centuries, Catholic wine growers have used this day to bring the grape harvest to church to be blessed. Alpine farmers drive their cattle and sheep down from summer pastures today.

## **Also, Saturday, September 8<sup>th</sup> – Feast of Our Lady of Gietrzwałd**

About 120 miles north of Warsaw lies Gietrzwałd, one of Poland's best-kept religious secrets. In this village is found the sanctuary of Our Lady of Gietrzwałd, which houses both a miraculous icon of the Madonna and a statue of the Immaculate Conception commissioned in honor of the Blessed Mother's apparitions there.

The icon of Our Lady of Gietrzwałd dates from the fourteenth century. Over the course of their turbulent history, the people of Poland have consistently appealed to Our Lady of Gietrzwałd for assistance and have filled the church with precious gifts in thanksgiving for the healings received from her. The painting received a singular honor in 1967 when the primate of Poland bestowed a golden papal crown upon our Lady.

But it was the Blessed Virgin Mary's appearance at Gietrzwałd that really made the village a pilgrimage destination. On June 27<sup>th</sup>, 1877, thirteen-year-old Justina Szafryńska, who was preparing for her first Holy Communion, and her mother knelt down to pray when they heard the angelus bell. Suddenly, Justina saw a dazzling light in a tree nearby. She became enraptured and in her state of ecstasy told her mother that she could see the Blessed Mother sitting on a brilliant chair surrounded by angels. The apparition lasted only a few moments, during which the lady asked Justina to return the next day.

She did, bringing along her friend twelve-year-old Barbara Samulowska. They began reciting the rosary when the lady appeared, both children seeing angels place a child on the lady's lap. The lady appeared again on June 30<sup>th</sup>, telling the girls to pray the rosary every day.

The next time, when Justina asked the lady to identify herself, the apparition replied, "I am the Blessed Virgin Mary."

The apparitions continued daily for the next two months, and the growing crowds of onlookers told the girls to ask our Lady specific questions about people they knew. Our Lady's answer was always the same: "You must pray the rosary." She also requested that a shrine be built to enclose a statue of the Immaculate Conception. Once she instructed the girls to wash in a nearby spring, which she blessed for healings.

Church authorities quickly began an investigation, interrogating the girls separately after each apparition and testing them medically and psychologically during their ecstasies. The reports were positive, but it was not until 1977, on the hundredth anniversary of the events, that the local bishop declared the apparitions authentic.

Now that Communism has fallen in Poland, the fame of Our Lady of Gietrzwałd is finally spreading, and she calls out to all the world, inviting pilgrims to come to her sanctuary and pray the rosary for healings both physical and spiritual.