



REFLECTOR ...

Jotings from Sokol and Slovak life

35th New Jersey Slovak Heritage Festival set for Sunday, September 23

All is in readiness according to the co-chairpersons of this year's 35th New Jersey Slovak Heritage Festival, W. Nina Holy and John G. Duch. The annual celebration of our Slovak heritage in the Garden State will again be staged at the PNC Art Center in Holmdel, N.J. The huge outdoor complex is conveniently located off Exit 116 of the Garden State Parkway in central New Jersey. The festival is one of the largest Slovak festivals of its kind in the country and annually attracts thousands of visitors. With easy highway access along with free admission and plenty of free parking, the annual event is a wonderful opportunity to meet and greet members of the Slovak community who participate from all parts of the northeast.

The festivities open at 10:00 a.m. with colorful and interesting exhibits along with vendors offering an array of imported arts and crafts items from Slovakia, including crystal, majolica, the decorative arts, religious goods and more. Stands devoted to Slovak folklore and genealogy will assist those interested in learning more about their ancestral villages.

The formal program begins with a Slovak celebrated Mass at 11 a.m. in the huge outdoor tent. Music for the liturgy will be provided by the choir of Holy Family Slovak Parish in Linden, N.J. along with other area Slovak parishes. Following the liturgy, an array of traditional Slovak culinary favorites will be available to satisfy every appetite. Homemade Slovak pastries will also be available for sale. An enjoyable luncheon is assured. At 2 p.m. the cultural program begins. Featured this year will be the colorful and spirited artistry of the PAS - Pittsburgh Area Slovak Dance ensemble. The troupe will present the live music and dance traditions of the various regions of Slovakia. Another feature of the cultural program will be the Parade of Slovak Fashions in which adults and children don their colorful ancestral dress or "kroj". An explanation of the particular dress traditions of the regions and villages is explained. Many of these colorful outfits are more than a century old and were brought to America by the first generation of Slovak immigrants. Music for dancing and listening pleasure will be provided by the ever-popular Joseph



Maria Jurasi and her daughter, Renata Vasilova, attired in their traditional kroj, look forward to meeting and greeting many at this year's 35th New Jersey Slovak Heritage Festival on September 23. Renata serves as the mistress of ceremonies during the annual Parade of Slovak Fashions.

Jurasi Band which features the artistry of the Jurasi family who all enjoy membership in our Sokol Assembly 182 in New York City. Other soloists and entertainment will also be featured at this year's festival. Local soccer teams from across the northeast will compete in the traditional soccer tournament.

Garden State Sokols and Sokolky are serving on this year's festival and look forward to meeting and greeting many of our members from across the area. This year marks the 35th anniversary of the festival. It was in September 1977 that the first festival was held at what was then known as the Garden State Arts Center spearheaded by such Slovak stalwarts as the late Albin J. Stolarik, Attorney Joseph J. Talafous, John C. Sciranka, Pauline Gallos Jones, Mary Kozusko, George Zahorcak and many others. Brother Stolarik served as the chairperson of the first festival. For the next twenty festivals, Attorney Joseph J. Talafous served as chairperson and for the past fourteen years, the festival has been co-chaired by our well-known Slovak cultural and fraternal activists, W. Nina Holy and John G. Duch. Over the years, as many as 10,000 visitors have enjoyed the annual celebration of our Slovak heritage in the Garden State. This year's festival looks to be one of the best ever!

Slovak Catholic Federation plans Pilgrimage of Faith for 2013

The Rev. Philip A. Altavilla, V.G., national president of the Slovak Catholic Federation, announced that a special Pilgrimage of Faith is being organized for April 14-26, 2013, to celebrate a number of milestones in the history of the Catholic Church: the Year of Faith declared by Pope Benedict XVI in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the convening of the Second Vatican Council by Blessed Pope John XXIII and the 20th anniversary of the publication of The Catechism of the Catholic Church; the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Pontifical Slovak College of SS. Cyril and Methodius, Rome, Italy, due to the vision and efforts of Cardinal Jozef Tomko, assisted by the late Bishop Andrew G. Grutka and many committed Slovak Catholics from America and Canada; and the Jubilee Year in Slovakia, recalling the 1,150th anniversary of the arrival of Saints Cyril and Methodius to preach the Gospel to the Slavic peoples.

Those wishing to participate are reminded that this event is a Pilgrimage and not an ordinary tour. Given the places that are to be visited and dignitaries that are to be met, elements of the itinerary may change, even at the last minute. This pilgrimage is organized through Danube International Travel Agency, Nyack, N.Y., and is presented as an opportunity to celebrate both Catholic faith and Slovak heritage.

Pilgrims will depart from Philadelphia on Sunday, April 14, 2013, with arrival the following day in Rome. Five full days will be spent in Rome which will include visits to major religious and historic churches and sites. While in Rome, pilgrims will attend the weekly Wednesday papal audience with His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI, and will visit the Pontifical Slovak College of Saints Cyril and Methodius. Pilgrims will reside at the same hotel the entire time in Rome.

Following a visit to Rome, pilgrims will fly to Vienna, Austria, and then transfer to motor coach to spend the remainder of the pilgrimage in Slovakia. While in Slovakia, pilgrims will stay at a hotel in Bratislava for the five days and will visit places such as Trnava, Sastin and Nitra, the site of the oldest Christian church in Slovakia dedicated in 833 A.D. Nitra was the center of the evangelization mission of Saints Cyril and Methodius, which Saint Methodius as Archbishop in Nitra. The pilgrimage will also include a visit to Velehrad in the Czech Republic, where Saint Methodius is believed to have died in 885 A.D.

Pilgrims will depart from Vienna, Austria, to Philadelphia on Friday, April 26, 2013. The cost of the

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The Word of God ...

Gospel for the Twenty-First Sunday of the Year – August 26th

John 6:60-69

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

Many of Jesus' disciples who were listening said,

"This saying is hard; who can accept it?"

Since Jesus knew that his disciples were murmuring about this, he said to them,

"Does this shock you?

What if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?

It is the Spirit that gives life, while the flesh is of no avail.

The words I have spoken to you are Spirit and life.

But there are some of you who do not believe."

Jesus knew from the beginning the ones who would not believe and the one who would betray him. And he said,

"For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by my Father. As a result of this,

many of his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him. Jesus then said to the Twelve,

"Do you also want to leave?"

Simon Peter answered him,

"Master to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe

and are convinced

that you are the Holy One of God."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Gospel for the Twenty-Second Sunday of the Year – September 2nd

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

When the Pharisees with some scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus,

they observed that some of his disciples ate their meals with unclean, that is, unwashed, hands.

-For the Pharisees and, in fact, all Jews, do not eat without carefully washing their hands, keeping the tradition of the elders.

And on coming from the marketplace they do not eat without purifying themselves.

And there are many other things that they have traditionally observed, the purification of cups and jugs and kettles and beds.-

So the Pharisees and scribes questioned him,

"Why do your disciples not follow the tradition of the elders but instead eat a meal with unclean hands?"

He responded,

"Well did Isaiah prophesy

about you hypocrites, as it is written:

'This people honors me with their lips,

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