

# Wilkes-Barre Deanery

## Report to the 2016 Diocesan Assembly

---

Fr Nicholas J. Solak, Dean                      Fr David Shewczyk, Assistant Dean  
Secretary: Father Paul Schellbach    Treasurer: Father George  
Volkovinsky

**Glory to Jesus Christ!**

### **WORSHIP:**

The parishes of the Wilkes-Barre Deanery experience the hard work of dedicated clergy and the good cooperation and good stewardship of the lay leadership. Throughout the year, Archbishop Mark and Father John Kowalczyk, former Chancellor of the Diocese, and Father Martin Browne, newly appointed Chancellor of the Diocese, have been attentive and helpful with the concerns and struggles of the Deanery parishes, clergy, and parish leadership. Our Diocesan leadership is aware of the strengths and challenges facing our Deanery clergy and parishes.

Of particular note this year was the celebration at **Holy Resurrection Cathedral** for Father Joseph Martin's 50 year anniversary of priesthood. Father Joseph and Matushka Gloria have faithfully served the Church and our Diocesan faithful for half a century.

Father Traian Stafiuc was assigned as Acting Rector of **Saint John's** Parish in Nanticoke.

**Saint John's Parish** in Dundaff continues to be vacant but consistently served on a weekly basis by available clergy.

**Saints Peter and Paul** Parish in Uniondale continues to be vacant but consistently served on a weekly basis by available clergy.

**Holy Resurrection Parish** in Alden Station continues to be vacant but consistently served on a weekly basis by available clergy.

**Saint Vladimir's Parish** in Lopez continues to be vacant but consistently served on a weekly basis by available clergy.

Father Benjamin Johnson from **Saint Basil's** Parish in Simpson was released from our Diocese and transferred to the Diocese of the Midwest.

Father John Nightengale was assigned as Acting Rector of **Saint Basil's** Parish in Simpson.

During the transition in pastoral leadership at **Saint Basil's** in Simpson, Father John Kowalczyk was assigned as parish administrator.

**Holy Trinity** in Wilkes-Barre, **Holy Cross** in Williamsport, **Holy Trinity** in Stroudsburg, **Saint Nicholas** in Olyphant, **Saint Michael's** in Jermyn, and **Holy Annunciation** in Berwick continue to be blessed by the diligent and faithful service and pastorship of their longstanding priests.

**Holy Resurrection Cathedral** in Wilkes-Barre, **Saint John the Baptist** in Edwardsville and **All Saints** in Olyphant have been blessed with good priestly and pastoral care by their priests. Their parish priests have matriculated from Acting Rector to Rector.

**Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church** continues to be a part of the Wilkes-Barre Deanery.

Our Deanery includes several retired clergy and 'unattached' clergy who enhance the clergy brotherhood and provide tremendous help in ministering at our many vacant parishes.

**Great Lent and Mission Vespers:**

Clergy and faithful gathered during the season of Great Lent for Lenten Mission Vespers and other Services. These services were held at:

- Holy Resurrection Cathedral in Wilkes-Barre .... Father John Jillions was the Guest Homilist.
- Saint Nicholas in Olyphant
- Holy Cross in Williamsport.
- Holy Annunciation in Berwick.
- Saint Michaels in Jermyn.
- Wilkes-Barre Cathedral.

The proposed 2016 Lenten Mission Services are scheduled to be:

- Sunday of Orthodoxy ... Wilkes-Barre Cathedral .... Father Chad Hatfield will be the Guest Homilist
- Saint Gregory ... All Saint's in Olyphant.
- Sunday of the Cross ... Holy Trinity in Wilkes-Barre.
- Saint John Climacus .... Saint John in Dundaff.
- A Wednesday Preseanctified Liturgy ... Saint John in Edwardsville
- Saint Mary of Egypt .... Holy Trinity in Stroudsburg.
- Palm Sunday ... Wilkes-Barre Cathedral.

**FELLOWSHIP:**

Fellowship accompanies most diocesan and deanery services and events.

Two Deanery meeting were held during the course of 2015.

1. A Deanery Meeting was held at Saint Nicholas parish in Olyphant on Thursday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>.
2. Mark Linnehan gave a workshop to the parish priests and parish council members at Saint Michael's parish on Saturday, October 10<sup>th</sup>. The workshop covered financial reporting and diocesan by laws.

**EDUCATION/OUTREACH:** Educational and outreach activities of the parishes in the deanery continues. Many parishes host Fall lectures and Lenten lectures. Some of the parishes in the Wilkes-Barre area join together for vacation bible schools. Concerts, icon exhibits, and ethnic festivals were also held.

Father Michael Demko of **Holy Annunciation** in Berwick organized a teen retreat in December for the Diocese with Dr. Al Rossi. The retreat took place over the Saint Nicholas Feast Day weekend at Christ the Savior in Harrisburg. About twenty teens participated.

The Clergy Continuing Education held throughout the year were attended my many, but not all, deanery clergy.

**MINISTRY:** Parishes of the deanery continue to perform the sacraments of the Church, visit the sick and infirm, feed the hungry and poor, minister to the imprisoned and preach the gospel in their communities.

Of significant concern in the life of the Wilkes-Barre Deanery is the decline in census from many of the parishes. It is anticipated the some parish will be facing closure in the coming years.

Respectfully submitted,

Fr Nicholas J Solak, Dean