



BYZANTINE CATHOLIC SEMINARY  
OF SAINTS CYRIL AND METHODIUS  
FORMING LEADERS FOR THE CHURCH

# JOYFUL LIGHT

Spring 2025

*Joyful Light* is a semi-annual publication of the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Ss. Cyril and Methodius  
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## Bishop of Mukachevo visits B.C.S.!

His Grace, Bishop Teodor Matsapula, of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Mukachevo in present-day Ukraine, paid a visit to the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Ss. Cyril and Methodius on Thursday, 23 January, as he has been on a nationwide tour of the Byzantine Ruthenian Catholic eparchies and parishes. He was greeted by the seminarians with the singing of “Mnohaja L’ita” as he imparted his episcopal blessing upon the Seminary community. Bishop Teodor was impressed by the beauty of the chapel, the modern technology in the classrooms and library, and even the design of the Seminary kitchen! He promised his continued prayerful support and invited the community to come visit him and the Seminary in Mukachevo.



*In the B.C.S. refectory: Metropolitan William, Bishop Teodor, Fr. Ron and some of the seminarians*

## B.C.S. joins in celebrating with a new Bishop!

On 8 November 2024, Fr. Artur Olexandrovyeh Bubnevych (born 22 June 1975) was appointed Bishop of the (Ruthenian) Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of the Holy Protection of Mary of Phoenix, AZ. He was consecrated Bishop and enthroned on 28 January, 2025 at Annunciation Byzantine Catholic Church in Anaheim, CA. Our Rector, Fr. Ron, together with five seminarians of our B.C.S. Priestly Formation Program who are in their Configurancy stage, were very pleased to witness this historic event. Especially rejoicing was Fr. Deacon Joshua Johnson, for his Eparchy now has its very own ruling bishop. Many thanks to His Grace Bishop Kurt Burnette of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic, formerly Rector of B.C.S. (October 2012 - December 2013), who served as Apostolic Administrator of the Eparchy of Phoenix from 23 January 2023.



Fr. Deacon Joshua with Bishop Artur



**Former Rector of B.C.S.  
was born to eternal life!**

Rev. Msgr. Raymond Balta, recently retired priest of the Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh, unexpectedly fell asleep in the Lord on 1 December, 2024. He served as vice-rector from 1979-1980, and rector from 1980-1990 at the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Ss. Cyril and Methodius. Msgr. Balta also served as pastor of many Byzantine Catholic Churches in Western Pennsylvania, as well as holding many offices for the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh, before retiring several months before his passing. In Blessed repose, O Lord, grant eternal rest to your priestly servant, Msgr. Raymond Balta, and remember him forever! Eternal Memory! Vichnaja pamjat!



**Seminary group photo  
for the 2024-2025 Academic Year**

### MATCHING GIFTS

Do you work for (or are you retired from) a company with a matching gift program? If so, your gift can, in most cases, be doubled, even tripled! Please check with the company's Human Resources Department and see if this benefit is available.

**ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER**  
If you would like to receive the *Joyful Light* newsletter electronically, please email your request to: [development@bcs.edu](mailto:development@bcs.edu).

## From our Rector

*Glory to Jesus Christ!*

Dear friends and benefactors:

Happy and Blessed New Year to all! I wish to convey my prayerful best wishes to you and your family for a happy and healthy 2025 filled with faith, hope and God's continued blessings in your life.

As I indicated to you already through our special eblast in January, we missed an opportunity to share with you some of our most spiritually rewarding events this past fall. We have indeed missed you all, so please consider this newsletter as our way of catching up with you. Blessed events in 2024, such as ordinations in September, and the "Come and See" Weekend of Discovery Retreat in November, and, in 2025, the Blessing of the Water and the Seminary for Theophany in January, have reinvigorated our mission and efforts in providing the best possible formation and education for our seminarians and our lay men and women students.

I ask you all now, *especially those whom we have missed this past Fall*, to so generously provide for us with prayer and financial support to continue this important work in forming those who prepare to serve our Lord Jesus Christ and His Church. Your gifts of prayer and financial support play a significant part in the Seminary's journey, and I am humble and grateful to greet the New Year by extending this sincere message of our blessings and progress with you.

Again, my best wishes to you and your family now and throughout the civil New Year. May the Lord bless you and I will continue to keep you in my prayers.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

**Fr. Ron Barusefski**  
Rector



## Faculty Doings

**Fr. Ronald C. Barusefski, JCD, Professor of Homiletics and Canon Law**, *Rector of the B.C.S., Director of the Aspirancy Program*, attended the annual convention of the Canon Law Society of America (CLSA) from October 14-17 in Albuquerque, New Mexico, participating in seminars including the "Organization of Churches *sui iuris* in Canada and the United States," "Sacramental Issues Concerning Transgender Persons," and "Nobody's Perfect: Can. 279 and the Right-Duty of Clerics to Ongoing Formation." He continues to serve on the Eastern Canon Law Committee. His 2022 doctoral dissertation, "The Role of the Council of Hierarchs with special reference to the Byzantine Ruthenian Metropolitan Church *sui iuris* in the United States," is in publication and available through the Byzantine Seminary Press.

**Sandra A. Collins, PhD, Professor of Sacred Scripture**, *Director of Information Services*, presented at the joint meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion / Religious Research Association Annual Meeting held in Pittsburgh in October 2024. Her paper was entitled, "The Significance of Denominational Diversity in Faculty and Its Relationship to Theological Education." In January 2025, she served as a faculty member for the Washington Theological Consortium's week-long intensive class on the Abrahamic faiths, held at the United Lutheran Seminary in Philadelphia, PA.

**Fr. Christiaan Kappes, PhD, SLD, Professor of Liturgical and Dogmatic Theology**, *Academic Dean, Director of Intellectual Formation*, has recently submitted for publication in *The Bible Today*, an academic journal of St. Vincent Seminary, Latrobe, PA, his study: "The Bible as a Source for the Nicene Creed: A New Connection?" in which he seeks to show the connection between the phrase: "Light from Light, True God from True God" to the ancient Fathers of the Church.

**Fr. Hryhoriy (Gregory) Lozinsky, SSD, Adjunct Professor of Sacred Scripture**, has given an online talk "War Accounts in the Old Testament" to the clergy of the Eparchy of Mukachevo within the context of the continuous formation for clergy on October 30, 2024. He has also published "Old Testament Motifs in the Office of Vespers for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in the Byzantine Liturgical Tradition" in *Eastern Churches Journal* 27 (2020): 127-144.

**Matthew Miner, PhD, Professor of Philosophy and Moral Theology**, is the translator of Jean-Hervé Nicolas, *Catholic Dogmatic Theology: A Synthesis*, vol. 4 (On Creation and the Creator) (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2025); and, the editor of and translator for the updated edition of Charles Journet, *The Church of the Word Incarnate*, vol. 1 (*The Apostolic Hierarchy*) (Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Academic, 2025). Among his recent academic papers, which he was invited to give, there were: "Reorienting Discussions regarding 'Knowledge of the Natural Law through Connaturality'" in *Natural Law and Moral Norms* (Chicago, IL: Mundelein Seminary Center for Scriptural Exegesis, Philosophy and Doctrine); and, "Benoît Henri Merkelbach (1871-1942): Transition and Renewal in Latin Catholic Moral Theology" in *The Dominican Order, Leuven, and its University*. (Leuven University, Belgium). He was the invited online course lecturer for "Thomas Aquinas and Arabic-Islamic Philosophy" in "Contemporary Issues in Muslim & Christian Dialogue" at the *Center for Muslim-Christian Studies*, Houston and Oxford. Meanwhile, he was also invited to give a talk entitled "Beyond Non-Being: On the Being of Human Culture" at *St. Patrick's Pontifical University, Maynooth Ireland*. He presented spiritual talks such as "For Me to Live is Christ" at the *Pax Christi Youth Day Retreat* in St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Parish, York, PA, and "On the Importance of Distinctions and an Articulated Theological Lexicon for Moral Theology" during the Intellectual Formation Weekend for St. Joseph College Seminary in Mt. Holly, NC. He gave a series of intellectual-spiritual talks on Christology and Moral Theology for the Trappist community at Mepkin Abbey in South Carolina.

**Fr. Stelyios Muksuris, PhD, Professor of Liturgical and Sacramental Theology and Languages**, was the keynote speaker and retreat master, together with His Eminence Metropolitan Savas of Pittsburgh, during the annual clergy fall retreat of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh, held from 12-14 November, 2024, at the Holy Protection Monastery in White Haven, PA. His topic, which he explored in four extensive sessions, followed by Q & A, was: *Liturgy and Rubrics of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America in the 21st Century*. Fr. Stelyios remains a chief consultant on liturgical matters for both his Metropolis and Archdiocese. The Spring of 2025 marks the expected release date of his forthcoming Book: *The Patriarchal Archieratikon — A Critical English Translation*.

## Ordinations in September 2024

On Sunday, 22 September, at Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church in McKees Rocks, PA, three seminarians from the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Ss. Cyril and Methodius received orders from the hands of Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla. Subdeacon Luke Iyengar (who had graduated from the Seminary the year before) was ordained to the Diaconate, and Nicholas Krivacs and Mark Le Roy were ordained to the minor orders of Reader and Subdiaconate. My God grant them peace, health, and happiness as they continue their journey towards the priesthood!



Subdeacon Luke Iyengar was ordained to the Diaconate



Subdeacon Mark Le Roy, Fr. Deacon Luke Iyengar, and Subdeacon Nicholas Krivacs



Nicholas Krivacs was ordained Reader and Subdeacon



Subdeacon Mark Le Roy was ordained Reader and Subdeacon

## 8-10 November, 2024: “Come and See” Weekend of Discovery Retreat at B.C.S.!

Every young man eventually has to make some hard decisions – college, career, marriage, family, religious life. He might ask: How do I know what’s right? Does God care what I decide? Such men, ages 18 to 35, single or married, are invited every fall to our annual “Come and See” Weekend of Discovery Retreat as an aid to discerning a vocation to the priesthood in the Byzantine Catholic Church. Last fall, a total of 13 candidates representing the four Ruthenian (arch)eparchies and the Melkite Eparchy came together for a weekend of learning, worshipping, and sharing in community life with the seminarians in a “no pressure, no hard-sell” environment. The atmosphere was prayerful, positive, and fraternal, with the offering of seminarians reflecting the four dimensions of priestly formation – human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral – containing specialized topics including the married and celibate priesthood, liturgical and individual prayer and spirituality, and intellectual requirements for priesthood. For more on what took place, please refer to: <https://bcs.edu/come-and-see-2024/>. If you are discerning a call to the priesthood or the diaconate, please contact your Father Pastor, along with your Eparchial Vocations Director at our Seminary website at <https://bcs.edu/contact-vocation-director/>.



Clergy, Seminarians and Retreatants of the Fall 2024 “Come and See” Weekend of Discovery Retreat



Presentation on Formation



Discerning Married Priesthood



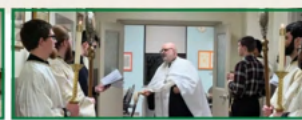
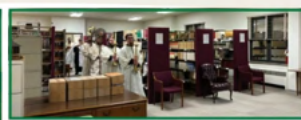
Discerning Celibate Priesthood



Celebrating the Divine Liturgy

## The Great Blessing of Water

Due to the Feast of Theophany occurring during the seminarians’ canonical Annual Retreat (2-6 January) which was held outside the Seminary premises, the Great Blessing of Water and of the Seminary took place on Saturday evening, 11 January, at the conclusion of Great Vespers. Once the waters were blessed, a procession went throughout the Seminary building, from the chapel to the kitchen to the library to the classrooms.



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## Annual Saints Cyril and Methodius Lecture Series to be Livestreamed!

The Byzantine Catholic Seminary in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania is pleased to announce its annual academic lecture. All are welcome to attend virtually on Tuesday, 6 May at 7:00 PM E.D.T. via the Seminary website ([www.bcs.edu](http://www.bcs.edu)). The lecture can also be accessed live, or at a later time from archives, on the B.C.S. YouTube channel.

## ONLINE DONATIONS

The Byzantine Catholic Seminary welcomes online donations. Those who wish may go to [www.bcs.edu](http://www.bcs.edu) and click on "Giving."



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Founded in 1950, the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Ss. Cyril and Methodius is a free-standing, English speaking theological seminary, welcoming all those seeking the knowledge possessed by the Eastern ecclesial traditions.

We are authorized to grant graduate degrees by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and accredited by the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools.

We offer the following degree programs approved by the Commission on Accrediting:

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