



## 28th Annual Father Walter Cizek Day Mass



*Rev. Walter J. Cizek, S.J.*

### PRAYER FOR A FAVOR THROUGH THE INTERCESSION OF FATHER WALTER CISZEK, S.J.

Almighty God, we love, adore and praise You as our Creator and Loving Father. Look with compassion and mercy upon us. Hear our prayer in this time of special need and through the intercession of Father Walter Cizek, grant the following favor if it is Your Holy Will.

*(Mention the Request)*

Most loving God, accept our gratitude for hearing this prayer. May the knowledge of the virtues and holiness of Father Walter be recognized and known to provide a lasting example to draw sinners to reconciliation and to lead souls to sanctity.

For You are our God and we are Your people and we glorify You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

*Please inform the Prayer League of any special favors from Father Walter Cizek.*

Father Walter J. Cizek, S.J., has been adopted as the patron of the “Year of Faith” by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Allentown.

The Most Rev. John O. Barres, bishop of Allentown, made the announcement Sunday during the 28th annual Father Walter J. Cizek Day Mass at St. Casimir Roman Catholic Church.

More than 300 people attended the afternoon Mass in the home church of Father Cizek, whose cause for canonization is being investigated.

During his remarks as Mass began, Bishop Barres told the congregation, “As we stand up for our First Amendment rights as Americans and as Catholics, we stand up for our religious liberties following the footsteps of Father Walter Cizek. We remember that the Diocese of Allentown has adopted Father Cizek as our patron for the Year of Faith. As we study his life, as we study his spiritual teaching, let’s follow Father Walter’s example and allow the Holy Spirit to expand our minds, our hearts and our souls in the virtue of faith.”

The Year of Faith in the Catholic Church was announced last year by Pope Benedict XVI to begin Oct. 11 and end Nov. 24, 2013, and is a “summons to an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord, the One Savior of the world,” the pope said.

Bishop Barres was the main celebrant and homilist at the Mass. Concelebrants were Monsignor Ronald C. Bocian, St. Casimir pastor; the Rev. Johnson Kochuparambul, assistant pastor; the Monsignor Anthony Muntone



*The Most Rev. John O. Barres, Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Allentown*

and the Rev. Thomas Sable, S.J., co-postulators for the cause of canonization of Father Cizek; the Rev. Kevin Gallagher, pastor of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta Roman Catholic Church, Mahanoy City, and the Rev. Michael Paris, parochial vicar at St. Patrick Roman



## REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS JUNE 27, 2012 MEETING

The meeting opened with the prayer for the cause of canonization.

The motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Kathie Palubinsky, being seconded by Father Sable. Mary Lusavage, a newly appointed member of the Board, motioned to approve the report from the Board, and Elaine Cusat seconded that motion. All members present gave their "Aye" for approval of both.

Msgr. Bocian has inquired of the diocese whether the Prayer League is expected to raise funds toward Fr. Ciszek's beatification. He was told that our role is to promote the Cause.

Though newly-appointed Board member Kevin Rockensies could not be present because of a previously scheduled commitment to an assignment in Africa, Sister Doris explained something of his background, and work he is doing for Father Marc in Rome and for the Prayer League.

Some progress has been made in getting speakers to give talks on Father Ciszek. Several persons have agreed to help with requests for engagement in the near future.

Sister Doris shared with the Board members the latest communications from Rome: 1) regarding use of archival documents for research; 2) witnesses to be contacted for interviews and/ or permission to use previously given testimony; and 3) new cases of healings presented to Rome for consideration in relation to the Cause—no names or details were given for public knowledge.

Sister Doris proposed making pictures of Father Ciszek's crucifix for distribution on Father Ciszek Day—this idea will be used for next year's celebration of the 50th anniversary of Fr. Ciszek's release from Russia. Discussion followed about the date for celebration of Fr. Ciszek Day to be October 13 of 2013 to make it closer to the actual 50th anniversary on October 12, 2013.

Elaine Cusat presented the treasurer's report for the first half of 2012.

The meeting closed with a small celebration in honor of Sister Doris upon her departure from Shenandoah.

### **"For/From the Friends of Walter Ciszek, S.J."**

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### *By Rev. Thomas J. Sable, S.J.*

One of the things I remember most about Father Walter Ciszek was that he grew old gracefully. He suffered from a number of afflictions that he had acquired in the prison camps of Siberia and some new ones when he came back to the United States. He would not complain very much about them and would often chuckle at them. He knew well the difficulties and limitations of old age, and was aware that many people found these difficulties aggravating.

At times, at a certain age, one turns to the past with regret for the loss of youth, its energy and plans for the future. At times our perspective is veiled with sadness, as we consider this phase as the twilight of life. The twinkle in Father Walter Ciszek's eyes would say: it is good to be elderly! At every age it is necessary to know how to discover the presence and the blessing of the Lord, and the richness that this brings. We must not allow ourselves to be imprisoned by sadness! We have received the gift of long life. To live is beautiful, even at old age and despite infirmities or limitations. Let us remember the example of Father Ciszek and let our faces, young or old, always reflect the joy of being loved by God, and never sadness.

In the Bible, longevity is considered as a blessing from God; today this blessing is widespread due to the wonders of modern science and must be seen as a gift to appreciate and value. Yet often society, dominated by the logic of efficiency and profit, does not welcome it as such; on the contrary, it often rejects it, considering the elderly as unproductive and useless. The elderly are a source of wisdom and a great resource. The quality of a society, of a civilization, may also be judged by how it treats its elderly and by the place reserved for them in communal life. To give space to the elderly is to give space to life.

We should affirm that the elderly are of value to society, above all for the young. There can be no true human education and growth without fruitful contact with the elderly, because their very existence is like an open book in which younger generations may find valuable guidance for their own journey through life.

Even in the experience of the need for the assistance of others, this too a gift from the Lord. It is a grace to be supported and accompanied, to receive the affection of others. This is important in every phase of life: no one can live alone and without help; humans are relational beings. ... Never be discouraged: you are valuable to society, even in suffering and sickness. And this phase of life is a gift that also allows us to deepen our relationship with God. The example of Father Walter Ciszek and of Blessed Pope John Paul II were and remain illuminating to all. Do not forget that, among the valuable resources you have, there is the essential gift of prayer.

The prayer of the elderly can protect the world, helping it perhaps in a more incisive way than is achieved by the efforts of many. Let us, young and old, today entrust to prayer the good of the Church and peace in the world.



Catholic Church, Rockville, Maryland. Deacon Dennis Meyer of St. Ann Roman Catholic Church, Emmaus, read the Gospel and assisted. Cynthia Nowak was the lay reader.

During his homily, Barres explained the background for the Year of Faith and connected its purpose to the life of Father Ciszek.

“The Year of Faith is a very intimate and personal call to each of us ... to examine where we are and where we need to go. The more lively and real our Catholic faith is, the more we are open to God entering our lives at the deepest level. In coordination with our efforts to advance the cause of canonization in Rome, I have announced that Father Walter Ciszek is the patron of the Diocese of Allentown in our celebration of the Year of Faith.”

Bishop Barres’ words prompted a round of applause from the congregation.

“What was Father Walter’s life in the end but the expression of a deep Catholic faith and missionary spirit that led him to God in Russia,” Bishop Barres said, “His witness is extremely relevant right now. He experienced in communist Russia gross violations of religious liberty. His biography, his sanctity and missionary spirit, his spiritual teaching is a reminder to all of us to defend and promote our precious gift of religious liberty - a gift that Americans can no longer take for granted.”

At those words, Bishop Barres was again interrupted by a louder round of applause.

In his remarks at the closing of Mass, Msgr. Bocian said that the chalice used by Bishop Barres at Mass had been used by Blessed Pope John Paul II, and the wooden crucifix held by the bishop and used in the final blessing was brought back from Russia by Father Ciszek.

After Mass, a reception was held in the church hall with food and refreshments. Books, prayer cards, videos and other items about Father Ciszek were available for purchase.

The prayer league is donating \$5,000 to the diocese to help defray the expenses associated with the promotion of Father Ciszek’s cause for canonization.

## Annual Raffle Winners

**Sister Rose Maxine**  
**\$500.00**  
Colonia, NJ



*Msgr. Bocian calling the raffle winners.*



**Anne Worton**  
**\$250.00**  
Bear, DE

**Joseph Worton \$100.00**  
*Mr. & Mrs Worton asked that Prayer League keeps the funds*  
Bear, DE



*Mary Luscavage and Patricia Palubinsky selling raffle tickets*

**Loretta Gressens \$50.00**  
Shenandoah, PA

**A. Bzdyra \$25.00**  
New Haven, CT

**Door Prize Winners**  
Jericho Grimm & Jules Stremba





## — Homily —

*Bishop John O. Barres  
Father Walter Ciszek Day Mass  
Saint Casimir Church, Shenandoah  
Sunday, October 21, 2012*

On October 11, 2011 in an Apostolic Letter entitled *The Door of Faith*, Pope Benedict XVI announced a Year of Faith which began on October 11, 2012 (the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council and the twentieth anniversary of the publication of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*) and will end on the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Universal King on November 24, 2013. The beginning of this Year of Faith in October 2012 is coinciding with a Synod of Bishops focused on “The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith.”

The Year of Faith is a time for Catholics to open the door of Faith wider and more boldly by sharing it with others. The Year of Faith cannot be separated from the New Evangelization and our call to bring the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

Blessed Pope John Paul II is quoted in the preparatory document for the Synod on the New



*Bishop John O. Barres*

Evangelization: “The Church today ought to take a giant step forward in her evangelization effort, and enter into a new stage of history in her missionary dynamism. In a world where the lessening of distance makes the world increasingly smaller, the Church community ought to strengthen the bonds among its members, exchange vital energies and means, and commit itself as a group to a unique and common mission of proclaiming and living the Gospel.”

The Year of Faith is a very intimate and personal call to each of us here today in the heart of the Church to examine where we are and where we need to go. The more lively and real our Catholic faith is the more we are open to God entering our lives at a deep level.

In coordination with our efforts to advance the cause of canonization in Rome, I have announced that Fr. Ciszek is the Patron of the Diocese of Allentown in our celebration of the Year of Faith.

What was Fr. Walter’s life in the end but the expression of a deep Catholic faith and missionary spirit that led him to “God in Russia”?

His witness is extremely relevant right now. He experienced in communist Russia gross violations of religious liberty. His biography, his sanctity and missionary spirit, his spiritual teaching is a reminder to all of us to defend and promote our precious gift of religious liberty, a



*Bishop Barres greeting those in attendance after the liturgy*

gift that Americans can no longer take for granted.

Fr. Walter makes the connection between deep faith and deep prayer in *He Leadeth Me*: “We cannot pray as if we were talking to the empty air; so in the very act of praying we unconsciously remind ourselves of the reality and the presence of God, thereby strengthening our belief in him.”

He learned a very painful lesson after he had broken down when the KGB interrogated him. He had prided himself on his strong and indefatigable will but at the moment of pressure he had broken. It was as if the Lord was asking Fr. Walter the same question that he asks James and John in the Gospel of Mark today: “Can you drink of the cup I drink?”

But this failure, shame and humiliation became a great grace in his life which helped him “to approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help.”

As Fr. Walter says, “God must sometimes allow us to act on our own so we can learn humility, so we can learn the truth of our total dependence on him, so we can learn that all our actions are sustained by *his grace and that without him we can do nothing.*”

So often we fear the Cross, avoid it, dodge it and reject it in life. It makes us feel insecure. But Fr. Walter realized one of the great paradoxes of life. The power of the Cross of Jesus Christ is one of our greatest securities in life. And that sense of security in, on and around the Cross is a great expression of Catholic faith.

Each of us in the Year of Faith, inspired by the heroic faith of Fr. Cizek, is called to a new and bold act of faith. The Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church describes the characteristics of faith: “Faith is the supernatural virtue which is necessary for salvation. It is a free gift of God and is accessible to all who humbly seek it. The act of faith is a human act, that is, an act of the intellect of a person – prompted by the will moved by God – who freely assents to divine truth. Faith is also certain because it is founded on the Word of God; it works ‘through charity’ (Galatians 5:6) and it continually grows through listening to the Word of God and through prayer. It is, even now, a foretaste of the joys of heaven.”

A vibrant faith is key to salvation and eternal life. We all know that life in this world is short and that the generations come and go with the blink of an eye. Our salvation and the salvation of all those around us and all people is the constant focus of a balanced faith. Fr. Walter says: “A man of faith is always conscious of God, not only in his own life but in the lives of others. This is the basis of true charity, of that great commandment by which we are instructed to ‘love God with our whole mind and our whole heart and our whole soul, and our neighbor as ourselves.’ Faith, then, is the basis for love; it is in the insight of faith that we understand the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of all men...But prior to love, and bolstering it at the core, is faith; we must have faith before we can love, or we will surely end up loving the wrong thing -- loving ourselves more than God, or loving creatures for themselves – and this is the meaning of sin. To increase our love, to love properly, we must strive always to increase our faith, and we do this by means of prayer and the sacraments.”

Faith is a gift. It is the pearl of great price and the treasure buried in the field. It is our most precious gift and inspires a spirit of adoration and thanksgiving. Fr. Walter says: “Without faith, our lives are just so many empty and boring routines, hollow at the core, as day succeeds day with little sense of meaning or feeling of accomplishment. With faith, however, even the most boring and routine action of every day has merit and significance for us – and for the kingdom of God.”

Faith is a human act that is, it involves every dimension of our being: mind, heart, body, soul and will. The gift of faith floods every dimension of our being and determines our destiny. Fr. Walter says: “We must make faith the unspoken principle that guides our every action, the center of our being and of all that we do each day. It must become as real for us, as necessary to our lives, as the air we breathe – for without it our lives have no meaning and our soul may die. We must constantly work to strengthen it and make it operative in all we do.”

Faith is certain. It is solid ground. It is the rock that the house is built on. As Fr. Walter says: “Faith is the fulcrum of our moral and spiritual balance.”

*continued on page 6*

Faith continually grows, and it continually grows when we consciously and constantly share it with others. If we are not charitably “scheming” in the best sense of how we will share our faith with those around us, the gift of faith is not all that strong in us. Fr. Walter says: “Yet the Church is more than a sacramental system, it is a community of believers, a Mystical Body, the kingdom of God here on earth. As members of that body, we cannot remain aloof or indifferent to others or to the good of the whole. Each of us must do his part to strengthen this body and extend this kingdom. Our personal lives, then, cannot be developed apart from the Church.”

Faith is a foretaste of the joys of heaven. It gives us the perspective to understand that the most burning and lasting desire in the human heart and soul is the burning desire for heaven, the burning desire for eternal life. Fr. Walter says: “Only by a lively faith can a man learn to live in peace among the tensions of this world, secure in his ability (with God’s help) to weather the crises of life, whenever they come and whatever they may be, for he knows that God is with him. In the midst of suffering or failure or even sin, when he feels lost or overwhelmed by danger or temptation, his faith still reminds him of God. By faith he has learned to lift himself above the circumstances of this life and to keep his eyes fixed upon God, from whom he expects the grace and the help he needs, no matter how unworthy he may feel.”

What expanded vision, what joy real Catholic faith brings to every situation, circumstance and challenge of life. That was the lesson of Fr. Walter Ciszek’s life and spiritual teaching. And that is the reason why we are all praying for his canonization.

And as our patron for the Year of Faith in the Diocese of Allentown, we pray that Fr. Walter’s example may inspire all of us to an even deeper level of courage and vitality in the everyday living of our Catholic faith.



*Elaine Cusat, Marie Siriani, Sister Doris and Carl Sirian holding crucifix Father Walter brought back from Russia*



*Sister Doris handing out ticket for door prize*



*Michele Day, Sister Jean Marie, Sister Edna and Sister Maria Rose selling books and materials*

## Presentation on the life of Father Walter Ciszek, SJ

The Ignatian Volunteer Corps sponsored a presentation on the life of Father Walter Ciszek, SJ on October 1, 2012 at St. Ignatius Church in Baltimore, MD. Sister Rosemary Stets, OSF, Bernardine Franciscan Sister and friend of Father Walter, spoke to members of the parish and surrounding Baltimore/Washington area using photos, anecdotes, and quotes from *With God in Russia* and *He Leadeth Me* to illustrate his life journey. Pictured below: (L-R): Marilyn Dunphy, Regional Director and Chip Cooke, Regional Council Chairperson of the Ignatian Volunteer Corps in Baltimore with a poster of the presentation advertising the event. There were approximately 50 people in attendance for the personal and informative portrayal of Father Walter Ciszek. A reception followed the presentation.



Marilyn Dunphy and  
Chip Cooke



Sister Rosemary Stets and Chip Cooke



Sister Rosemary speaking about Father Ciszek

prayer hotline

**DECEASED** – Mario La Forgia, Anthony Ciardullo, Eileen Poslosky, Joseph Karnish, Leona Edmundsen

**HEALTH** – Howey Family, Carol Cusat, Janet Fritz, Carolyn Nicholas, Michael Zakresky, Vincent Capadocci, Rev. Richard Czachor, Francesca Marinaro, Maria Cusumano

**SPECIAL INTENTIONS** – Bishop John Barres, Msgr. Ronald Bocian, Ryan Charniak

*For all whose names were previously on our list, but who are still in need of our prayers; for all those who have requested prayers of the League; for all prayer league members, for all those who are praying through the intercession of Fr. Walter Ciszek; and for all who need our prayers.*

**MEMORIALS:** In memory of Rose Kaleda req. by Barbara and Bob Adzema.  
In memory of Rose Kaleda req. by Gloria and Fred Kruczek.  
In memory of Rose Kaleda req. by Anne Marie and Joe Kilcomms.  
In memory of Rose Kaleda req. by Dr. John Pelligrino.  
In memory of Eileen Poslosky req. by Anonymous.  
In memory of Eileen Poslosky req. by Alicia Kyle.  
In memory of Eileen Poslosky req. by Henry and Helen Weachock.  
In memory of Eileen Poslosky req. by Maryann Weachock.  
In memory of Eileen Poslosky req. by Genevieve Kelly.  
In memory of Eileen Poslosky req. by Virginia Rauer.  
In memory of Eileen Poslosky req. by Charlene and Andrew Makara.