

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Your Diocese

Alive in Christ

The Magazine of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, Orthodox Church in America Volume XII, No. 3 Winter, 1996



***St. Tikhon's Seminary Press
Proudly Announces
The Publication of a New Title***

***The Apostol
Epistle Readings, Prokeimena, Alleluia Verses,
and Antiphons
for the Entire Liturgical Year***

From the Foreword:

This book provides the texts of the Epistle readings, Prokeimena, Alleluia verses, Communion hymns, and the Antiphons which are used during the Divine Services throughout the liturgical year. Indexes based on the liturgical cycles prescribed by the Holy Orthodox Church and several sections outlining both daily and occasional forms are also provided.

This work is based on both the King James and the New King James versions of the Holy Bible and is a faithful and accurate English language recension of the standard Church Slavonic Epistolary used by the Russian Church known as the *Apostol* (Gr. *Apostolos*). The sections comprising the second half of this volume serve as supplements to the Typikon, Triodion, and Rubrics, which actually determine the order of Divine Services in the Holy Orthodox Church. As such, they are not intended to be exhaustive (especially in regard to the order of services or the commemoration of the Saints) but rather to serve as guides, albeit explicit ones.

623 ppg. Hardbound 8 1/2 x 11 Due Date February 1997

Special Pre-Publication Offer Until January 31, 1997 !!

Order your copy of the "Apostol" Now for only \$50.00 (Reg. \$55.00) and Save!

Please Send Me _____ Copy(ies) of the "Apostol"

Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Enclosed is a check in the Amount of \$ _____ (Please add \$4.50 for Shipping)

or

Please charge this order to my Visa or Mastercard:

Card # _____ Expiration ____/____/____

Signature _____

Send completed form to: St Tikhon's Bookstore, P O Box B, South Canaan, PA 18459

Archpastoral Letter of His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN Proclaiming “A Year of Renewed Devotion”

Dearly beloved Members of our Diocesan Family,

As we continue our five-year spiritual journey to the coming celebration of the two thousandth anniversary of the Nativity of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I have proclaimed 1997 as “The Year of Renewed Devotion” in our Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania.

I call upon all our dedicated clergy and pious faithful to join with me in making this coming year truly spiritual and meaningful in our personal struggle towards holiness, in the growth of each of our local parishes and in the well-being of our diocese and the Orthodox Church in America. The focus of our efforts will be our liturgical life — our worship of the Triune God in the full complement of the divine services prescribed by our Holy Church.

Scriptural Basis

The first instance in the New Testament of the worship of our Lord is recorded in the Gospel of Saint Luke. The occasion is the very event that our Millennium Celebration commemorates. In Luke’s account we read that after the angel of the Lord announced to the shepherds, “For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour who is Christ the Lord . . . suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, goodwill toward men’” (Luke 2:11-14).

So profound is this example of angelic praise that not only do we use it as a basis for our Church’s hymns for the Feast of the Nativity and for our traditional

Christmas cards, but more importantly these words are sung at the beginning of the Great Doxology of every Matins Service and are spoken by the celebrant before he starts the Divine Liturgy.

Saint John the Theologian gives us further illustration of divine worship in his Book of Revelation, beginning with the fourth chapter. Our very liturgical worship is patterned after the description of the vision “of things which must take place after this” (Rev. 4:1) in the glorious praise of God in the Heavenly Kingdom, which the Beloved Disciple of the Lord was privileged to witness.

The beginning of the story of our Lord’s earthly life . . . the conclusion of the testimony of the Scripture . . . testify to the importance of worship. Our theology, in fact, identifies the human being as *homo adorans* (worshipping man) — the only creature on this planet privileged to give glory to the Triune God. In this year of Renewed Devotion, we should all seek to live up to that sacred status and enrich our spiritual lives through our worship.

The Sunday Liturgy

The obvious place for us to begin our quest for Renewed Devotion this year is the Divine Liturgy, which is the center of our Orthodox Christian worship. From our childhood catechism, we know our personal responsibility to participate in the Divine Liturgy on the Lord’s Day. The Fourth Commandment dictates that we are to “keep holy the Sabbath day.” And we know from our reading of the Scripture that Jesus Himself attended services in the synagogue each week and made pilgrimages to the Temple for the great Jewish feast of Passover.

The Divine Liturgy is, by definition, the worship of the People of God. It is our opportunity to give praise to Him in personal prayer and corporate song. It is the special occasion given to each of us by Christ Himself to meet Him intimately in the Holy Eucharist, which He gave to the Church on the night before He surrendered His Life for our salvation. Such awesome truth!

Yet statistics show that less than half of the American population attends Church on a regular basis. Our society has even identified for us “C & E” Christians — those who only come for the Feast of the Nativity and for Pascha. I wonder what a census of our diocese would reveal about faithful attendance at the Sunday Divine Liturgy? How true are we to our sacred calling as *homo adorans*? How obedient are we to the Fourth Commandment given on Mount Sinai? How faithful are we to the precious example given us by Our Saviour Himself?

I call upon each of my spiritual children to make every effort in this holy year to attend the Divine Liturgy each and every Sunday of 1997. It should be our personal goal not to miss a single time. And, of course, we are not only to attend but also to participate in this pinnacle of all liturgical worship — by singing the hymns with the choir, listening to the Word of God in the Scripture readings and the sermon and receiving the Precious Body and Blood of our Lord and Saviour.

Saturday Vespers

In this Year of Renewed Devotion we should go an extra step beyond what we are expected. Not only should we attend the Sunday Liturgy, but we should properly and fully prepare ourselves for its

Continued on the next page.



Pastoral Epistle

Continued from page 1.

celebration. This means that we should attend the Vesper Service on Saturday evening, where the Church's prayers and hymnology introduce us to Sunday's service, much like St. John the Baptist prepared his hearers for the coming Messiah.

All too often attendance at Vespers is a fraction of that of the Holy Liturgy, a small percentage of the faithful of our parishes. Since we know from the book of Genesis, the liturgical "day" begins the evening before, the Church calls upon us to participate in the Vespers (and the Matins or Hours as well), in order to make the Liturgy truly the climax of our worship.

Once again, we need to receive the greatest of benefits from this evening service of preparation. This means we should make Saturday Vespers an occasion to come to Holy Confession and purify our souls from our sins for the reception of the Holy Eucharist at the Liturgy the next morning.

The Liturgical Cycle

Our liturgical year, of course, is much richer than one day a week. While every Sunday is a "little Pascha," a celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord, there are other events in His life that the Church celebrates liturgically, in which we also need to participate. The liturgical calendar is frequently dotted with feastdays of our Lord and His Virgin Mother and His Saints. Indeed, we are also called upon to join in the liturgical festivities of these holydays.

I fear that in all too many of our parishes feastday celebrations have been reduced to record poor attendance. When I was a boy, holyday services found churches nearly as filled as they were on Sunday. Such is not the case today. Because Christ did more for us than be born and die and rise again, the Church beckons us to celebrate His Meeting in the Temple, His Baptism and Transfiguration, and the other feasts of the Lord, and the Nativity, Presentation in the Temple, Annunciation and Dormition of the Theotokos, as well as the days on which

the holy ones of God entered His Kingdom.

I am well aware that most of our parishioners either work or are in school on these weekday celebrations. However, there are many retirees and a few younger adults who are not. They ought to be in Church; the younger, not only coming but also providing transportation for the elderly as well. And as for those who cannot participate in the feastday Liturgy, the Vesper or Vigil service the night before should be marked on their calendar so that evening is set aside for giving due glory to God. In this Year of Renewed Devotion I call upon all of you to make it so.

The Lenten Season

The same holds true for the moveable portion of the church calendar, particularly the Great Fast — the preparation for Pascha. During the sacred weeks of the Lenten Season, our Church calls upon us to multiply our spiritual efforts — to pray ever more intensely, come to services more frequently, fast more strictly, repent of our sins more sincerely, receive the Holy Mysteries more often, read the Holy Scriptures more faithfully, do works of mercy more substantially, and the like.

The Church presents us with a rich array of worship services in this holy season. Besides the normal complement of Vespers, Matins and Liturgy on the weekend, we find the humbling Forgiveness Vespers and Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete for our spiritual renewal the very first week of the Great Fast. So many miss this first opportunity to begin the journey to Pascha on the right foot.

Then each week there is the Presanctified Liturgy, which leads us so beautifully by the Scriptures and Church hymnography to spiritual heights unknown any other time of the year. The service affords us a special and unique opportunity to receive the Lamb of God, consecrated at a previous Liturgy, on an evening during the week. It challenges us to a test of fasting even more stringent because it entails working hours. What else could bring us closer to the Lord, than so faithful an imitation of His own

forty days in the wilderness?

There is also the beautiful Akathist Service to the Lord, which is celebrated during the Lenten Season. Every verse of every hymn is so rich in its praise of the Saviour, so meaningful in its content and so perfectly adapted to our Church music. Why do so many ignore these services? Such must not be the case in this coming year.

Holy Week Services

And of course, finally, there is the incomparable richness of the services of Passion Week. Each morning and evening, from Lazarus Saturday to the Vigil of Pascha, the Church unfolds anew from her ancient Tradition the story of our salvation as she relives the last days of Christ's life. One fourth of the Gospel texts are dedicated to Holy Week, not to mention the appropriate passages of prophecy from the Old Testament that accompany them. To this Scriptural testimony, the Church adds her theology composed to stirring music. Add to all this liturgical customs which are found no other time of the year!

Our churches are filled on Palm Sunday and Holy Friday, but few have attended the Bridegroom Matins, Presanctified Liturgies and Vespers of St. Basil the Great during Holy Week. What percentage actually come to be anointed on Holy Wednesday evening, or to hear the Passion Gospels read on Holy Thursday night, or keep vigil at the Tomb after the Crucifixion or come to hear the numerous Old Testament readings foretelling the Resurrection at the Holy Saturday morning service? How many children march in the processions around the church? How many younger fathers carry banners or candles? I can assure you that in Russia these figures are staggering, and ours are paltry by comparison!

Now, months in advance, make a spiritual resolution to yourself that you will in fact attend every evening service this Lent as well as every Holy Week service! Dedicate this pledge to the Saviour Who offered His Life upon the wood of the Cross for our salvation! Make every ef-

fort to fulfill this pledge . . . make no excuses!

Worship as a Family

In this Year of Renewed Devotion, I call upon everyone in each household to make the same commitment to attend the Sunday Liturgy, Saturday evening Vespers, holyday celebrations and the services of Great Lent and Holy Week. *We must worship as a family!* After all, the Son of God Himself gives us the example. The Gospel records that the Child Jesus went with His Mother and Joseph to the Temple to worship there (Luke 2:41-50).

The Scripture tells us, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is older he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). Too many parents today do not properly implement this God-given direction in their family life, and will one day wonder why their children will not be attending church. There are three examples which substantiate this, all of which, I feel, are cogent.

"Train up a child" means spiritual upbringing. It does not mean a choice. Too many parents today, all too familiar with modern child psychology, give their children a choice — to go to Church or not to go; to attend Sunday School or not to. Two things are important to remember here. First, whenever we give anyone a choice, we must realize we are giving them the option to choose wrong. Secondly, in the Greek language, the word "choice" is the root base of the word for "heresy" (wrong teaching). Parents have been given the gift of their children by God Himself, and are to raise them on His behalf and for His glory. The only choice that ought to be made is found in the words of Joshua: "Choose today whom you will serve . . . as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

"Train up a child" does not mean by force. A parent who says "I can't force my son/daughter to go to Church" speaks the truth. However, the truth is there is no reason to have to do this. Going to church should be a normal, realized, accepted practice of family life each week without discussion. Just as we go to the

grocery store each week, clean the house each week, eat supper every evening, breathe the very air every day—so we go to church together as a family.

Indeed, "Train up a child" means setting an example. What signals are we sending a child if we drop him off for Sunday School and/or Church and don't come in ourselves? Should we be surprised if he wonders why does he have to go on Sunday morning? After all, Dad doesn't. I cannot reiterate this strongly enough: *We must worship as a family!* And the parents must set the example.

Receiving the Sacraments

Not only do we need to come to the Liturgy and other services as a family, but we also need to receive the Holy Mysteries together as a family. What a beautiful, meaningful experience it is to see a couple, who were joined in Holy Matrimony by the Lord Himself, come in line together to receive Christ intimately in the Holy Eucharist! How better to show their gratitude to God for the gift of their children than to bring them with them in that line to Holy Communion?

As parents are "training up" their children to come to the Liturgy and Vespers and the other services of the Church, it is so important to teach them to participate in those celebrations. Only in this way will they experience the full meaning of such worship. We need to sing together, affirm our faith together, preserve our customs and traditions together.

Together we must also acknowledge our mistakes before the Lord and His Church and each other. Each family should set aside Saturday evenings to come to Holy Confession, united in seeking the forgiveness of Christ . . . together inspired to proclaim one's repentance individually. Talks together about wrongs that were done, mutual forgiveness that is needed and healing love that must be expressed, should be part of the family life. And making use of the Church's gift of forgiveness through Holy Confession should be the final step the family takes together.

Then the next day they can truly "become one" with Christ Himself at the Last

Supper, with the Apostles who were present with Him, with all the Saints who have ever lived, with the entire Church worshipping today, and most importantly with each other as a family. This is what makes the family "members" of the Body of Christ, His Holy Church — not the payment of "dues" but the partaking and nourishing of the Most Precious Body and Blood of our Lord and Saviour. And, yes, this should be done often — as a matter of fact. May this be the case in 1997.

Worshipping At Home

If our very nature is to be *homo adorans*, then it is not enough for us to be Orthodox Christians one day (or two days) a week. Every single day we should be giving glory to God, together as a family. For this to happen in the parish church is simply not feasible, but it can be the case in the home — which ought to be a "miniature church." Here together we should pray and read the Scriptures and sing hymns to God.

There has been much talk recently lamenting the ban on school prayer and overturning that ruling. True, children should be allowed to pray privately at the beginning of the school day. But the school is no substitute for the home! We as Orthodox Christians should not want our children to be learning Muslim or Jewish, Buddhist or Hindu prayers! And given today's school enrollments of various religious backgrounds, that would be a very real possibility.

The home is the place that a child is "trained up" in the faith. And that is primarily the parents' job. Together each morning and evening, in times of crisis, danger and fear, and on days when the family is unable to attend church, parents and children should pray. In truth, the family that prays together, stays together. Our prayer-books all have the order of morning and evening prayers. The Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards has published a leaflet with the same. Why not make this a priority in your home this year, if it already isn't?

Continued on the next page.

Pastoral Epistle

Continued from page 3.

The Icon Corner

In the same vein, it is a venerable Orthodox tradition that in every home there is an icon corner. Here one finds Christ, the Holy Mother and the saints depicted in time-honored art. Icons are truly “windows to heaven” through which we see those who are in the Kingdom and by which in turn we are watched over by them.

It must be stressed that this is not a section of the house that is uniquely decorated. It is also not a base for “magic” to take place. Rather it is a place where through prayer we are in contact with the Lord and those who reign with Him in glory. It is precisely here that the child learns to pray the Lord’s Prayer and to make the Sign of the Cross. It is precisely here that a family gathers every morning and evening in the Name of the Lord. It is precisely here that doubts and fears are made present in times of crisis and danger, and that words of mutual forgiveness and healing love are spoken before the God Who creates miracles. It is here that prayers of supplication are made to the Divine Physician on behalf of the sick and suffering. It is here that we thank the Lord for His goodness and all His benefits. It is here, in our very home, that we give glory to the All-Holy Trinity!

How elaborate or extensive does the icon corner need to be? That is up to the individual family. Just so that there is such a place, an “altar” for prayer in every home. Too many houses today are without one. If you do not have such an icon corner, may this Year of Renewed Devotion inspire you to provide one for your family. And all of us need to reaffirm our rule of prayer before our icon corner each and every day during this holy year.

Scripture Reading

In every home one can easily find a collection of books — many from high school and college; some, the classics; others, the works of modern authors. So many of our homes are decorated with current magazines, newspapers and even

tabloids. Yet, how many religious books do we have in our library? How many of them have we read recently ourselves or to our children? And most importantly, how much prominence does the Holy Bible play, displayed on our book shelf, reflected in our daily life?

A schedule of reading the Scripture needs to be part and parcel of the Renewed Devotion of this coming year. The Word of God is a blueprint, a map, to guide us to salvation. If we don’t read it and put it into practice, it should not surprise anyone if we find ourselves lost on the long and weary road of this life.

Every day of the year we adults ought to read from the Bible. On the church calendar are the readings, chapter and verse, prescribed by our Tradition. Or perhaps, desiring to read both Testaments within one year, we would prefer to read three chapters a day beginning with Genesis. Or maybe we would just like to begin with a single chapter a day, perhaps starting with Matthew or one of the other Gospels.

And certainly every Sunday, if not more often, we should take the time to read from the Scripture together as a family. Once again, perhaps the prescribed readings on the calendar, or a section from one of the Gospels may be our starting-point. Bible stories, with accompanying pictures, should be shared with youngsters from the earliest of ages. We know the formula: “Train up a child . . .” We need only to do it.

Special Projects

There are so many special things that a family does together. Hobbies, household projects, athletics or other games so often find an important role in home life. What about dedicating such time to a religious endeavor? Decorating the home for the Christmas season or preparing for house blessing should be an annual family ritual. The art of pysanky-making might also top the list of Lenten season activities shared by the entire household.

Some less common practices would include the adopting of a shut-in in the Name of the Lord. Visiting the person frequently, helping the person with errands and chores, providing for personal

needs, would be a lived expression of the Gospel read on Meat-Fare Sunday (Matthew 25:31-46). How about giving each person in the family five or ten dollars, and then having them use their talents to increase that amount by selling a handmade item or some service they provided — a lived expression of the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30)? The income could be the family’s special donation to the Church for each year! Or how about living the words of our Lord regarding sacrifice by each member maintaining a self-denial bank during the Lenten season?

The possibilities are numerous. Father Anthony Coniaris’ book, *Making God Real in the Orthodox Christian Home*, should be read by all parents and will surely provide you with even more practical ideas. Just as in the Book of Romans where we read about “the church that meets in their house” (Romans 16: 5), so too our homes must become bases of operation for the apostolates of the Church in this Year of Renewed Devotion. Together as a family, we must work for “the building up of the Body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12).

A Matter Of Priorities

When and how can we find the time to do all these things in this coming year? It is, my spiritual children, simply a matter of priorities. How much time do we spend now in front of the television, either watching prime-time programs or football and baseball games? How much time is spent on the golf course or on the dance floor? How much time do we spend listening to modern rock or rap, or reading the gossip columns or popular magazines?

Or how much time do we spend concerning ourselves with plans for material improvements on our houses, adjustments in our financial budgets, or other similar concerns and worries? What does the Lord tell us in the Scripture? “Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you” (Matt. 6:35).

Indeed, the challenge of this Year of Renewed Devotion is precisely to follow in our lives the first and greatest com-

mandment as our chief priority: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind . . ." (Luke 10:27). All our efforts this coming year should be designed to express this first line of the Creed of the Old Testament which Jesus renews in His teaching. We will be reminded of this very thing time and again in the Liturgy when we hear the words concluding so many a Litany: ". . . let us commend ourselves and our whole life to Christ our God." Living this — doing this — is simply a matter of priorities!

Parish Gatherings

In order to promote this Renewed Devotion in the lives of all our faithful, I am encouraging local parishes to set up a program dedicated to this holy work. We have already inaugurated this as the new Church Year began, with this October's four-part Seminary lecture series, the theme of which was precisely Renewed Devotion. Now, on the local level, beginning with Great Lent, a parish retreat or combined parish effort should be conducted, with focus on the proper priorities of spiritual growth, the love of the liturgical life of the Church and ways to give greater glory to God through Orthodox Christian worship, not only during the Great Fast but throughout the whole year.

This should be followed by an educational conference or seminar in the summer months to strengthen the initial effort made in Lent. Perhaps this could be held in conjunction with a parish family picnic gathering or on a Deanery basis. Whatever the format, the important thing is that we continue to guide our efforts of spiritual growth and renewal through our worship of the Lord and our commitment to give glory to Him in every possible way — together as an Orthodox Christian family, as well as on the parish and diocesan levels.

Finally, as the summer fades and a new school year is about to begin in September 1997, we should once again come together for a parish retreat or similar gathering to refocus and "fine tune" the efforts we have already made. Bringing

in a guest retreat-master or speaker will add new perspectives for everyone involved. It will be a fresh start for a new liturgical year (which commences September 1), one that will be dedicated to "Continuing Education" in 1998.

Diocesan Visitations

As your Archbishop, I pledge to do my part in this effort to effect Renewed Devotion throughout our diocese. I will make it my priority to visit each of our parishes and share with our clergy and faithful an entire weekend of giving praise to Almighty God in the full complement of liturgical services prescribed by the Church.

Everyone — children and adults — will be encouraged to actively participate in these services.

I will also chair a diocesan-wide pro-

As your Archbishop, I pledge to do my part in this effort to effect Renewed Devotion throughout our diocese. I will make it my priority to visit each of our parishes and share with our clergy and faithful an entire weekend of giving praise to Almighty God in the full complement of liturgical services prescribed by the Church.

gram of seminars and workshops that will be held at St. Tikhon's Seminary or in one of the local parishes, to examine our Church services, our choral music, our sacred art and architecture, and the history of our forms of Orthodox worship. To understand more fully the entire deposit of our liturgical tradition will be the goal of such a program of studies, available to clergy, theologians, cantors and laity as well.

An of course, we will host the annual Pilgrimage to St. Tikhon's Monastery, where our hierarchs and scores of clergy and thousands of faithful will gather to celebrate together our common devotion to the Lord through Orthodox worship. For one great weekend together, representatives from throughout the national Church in America will again come to pray at the holy shrines at our Monastery. The highlight of this year's gathering will be a celebration of the life of Saint Innocent, the Apostle to America, who so typified in his episcopacy, his pastoral work and his whole life the de-

vation we seek to renew in this holy year. Please plan now to come over the Memorial Day weekend!

The Spirit's Guidance

As we embark on this Year of Renewed Devotion together — bishop, priests and faithful — I invoke the guidance of the Most Holy Spirit upon Whom we call to begin our every task. May He help us to more faithfully attend the divine services of our Church and more joyfully love and participate in them. May He help us to transform our homes into a "miniature church" wherein the worship of the Lord continues from Monday through Saturday. May He enable us to be faithful in our commitment to fervent daily prayer, regular reading of the Scriptures and extending our efforts to labor for the building up of the Body of

Christ.

With His help, may our diocese, its parishes and our own individual lives draw ever closer to the Lord of heaven and earth through our worship of His great and exalted Name, our devotion to the things of the Spirit and our service to His Holy Church. May His mercy enable us, in the words of St. Paul, "not to be conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2).

Indeed may He help us, now and throughout this coming year! To Him be the glory, unto ages of ages! Amen.

With the bestowal of my archpastoral blessings upon all of you, and with paternal love, I remain

Your spiritual father in Christ,
+HERMAN,
Archbishop of Philadelphia and
Eastern Pennsylvania

Your Diocese

Alive in Christ

Volume XII Number 3 Winter 1996
The Official Magazine of the
Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania
Orthodox Church in America

In this issue:

Archpastoral Letter for the Year of Renewed Devotion	1
Christmas Message of His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN	7
Thirty-Third Diocesan Assembly	8
Consecration of St. Michael's Church, Wilmington	12
Archbishop HERMAN Visits Moscow	15
An Orthodox Approach to the Ecological Question	17
Orthodox Vision of Death and Resurrection	23
Living the Liturgy in Spiritual Joy	27
Healing Through Confession and Holy Communion	32
Developing the Discipline of Prayer	39
Lives of Saints Rictrude and Adalbald	42
Holy Trinity Eastern Orthodox Church in Stroudsburg	44
Commentary on 1 John by Saint Justin (Part V)	48
How to Respond to Pro-Abortion Slogans and Propaganda	53
Music and the Resurgence of Orthodoxy in Russia	56
A Friendly Letter to a Candidate for the Priesthood - St. Nicholas . .	59
St. Innocent Bicentennial: Faithfulness to the Master	60

Departments:

Official	22
Education Bulletin	51
Christmas Patron Listings	65
All in the Diocesan Family	72



Consecration of St. Michael's Church, Wilmington—see page 12



Holy Trinity Eastern Orthodox Church in Stroudsburg—see page 44

Your Diocese Alive

Produced by the Publications Department of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, Orthodox Church in America, Diocesan Center, South Canaan, Pennsylvania 18459 (717) 937-4686, under the direction of His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN.

Editor Fr. John Kowalczyk
Photography Martin Paluch

Editorial and Subscription Office: *Alive in Christ*, Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, South Canaan, Pennsylvania 18459. (Home) (717) 876-1241.

Alive in Christ is distributed free of charge within the Diocese. Those living in other areas may subscribe for \$12 per year.

Deadline for the next issue of *Your Diocese Alive in Christ* is March 11, 1997. Please submit all articles (typed) pictures, parish news, etc. . . . to *Alive in Christ*, Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, South Canaan, PA 18459.

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Dearly Beloved in Christ:

Today our hearts are filled with joy over the Nativity in the flesh of the Son of God "Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven."

The Nativity of Christ constituted and still constitutes a mystery incomprehensible to the mind of man, and not only to men but to Angels too. We must accept this mystery of faith. This is also mentioned in the festal canticles of the Church: "We cannot fathom this mystery: but by faith alone we all glorify it."

Divinity and humanity united in the Lord Jesus Christ—that is why He is True God and True Man. The Holy Church confesses Him the God-Man, for in Him is one person and two natures.

In His Divinity He is the Son of God; in His humanity He is the Son of Man. Begotten of the Father in Divinity and of the Mother in humanity; begotten of His Father before all worlds, as Light of Light, and temporally of His Mother like the flame of the bush that burned but was not consumed.

Beloved in the Lord our God and Savior: Venerable Pastors, God-loving Monks and all devout Children of our Diocesan Family, let us thank the Lord, Who descended to us, for His ineffable love. Let us glorify Him with the lofty and solemn hymn: "Christ is born, glorify Him. Christ from heaven, go to meet Him. Christ on earth, be ye lifted up."

Create in your souls a special spiritual state of Christian peace and love through unsloughful and pure prayer: through the observance of all God's commandments and ecclesiastical statutes, and through obedience to God's will and humility.

May the Son of God shed His radiant light on all of you, and may the peace that only Christ can give be fully yours at this time of Christmas and throughout the year.



With love in Christ,

+ *Herman*

+HERMAN

Archbishop of Philadelphia
and Eastern Pennsylvania

The 33rd Diocesan Assembly of the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania was convened at St. Michael's Orthodox Church, Old Forge on Saturday, October 19, 1996. The day began with the Divine Liturgy and Molioben concelebrated by His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN, Fr. Vladimir Fetcho, Diocesan Secretary/Treasurer Fr. John Kowalczyk, host pastor Fr. David Mahaffey, and Fr. Michael Lepa. The responses were sung by St. Michael's church choir and several delegates who joined them under the direction of Mr. Jon Black. A continental breakfast was served following the divine services. The Assembly participants then proceeded to St. Michael's auditorium for registration and the sessions.

The Assembly was opened with prayer and the blessing of Archbishop HERMAN at 11:30 a.m. Fr. John Kowalczyk presented the agenda to the



The Assembly begins with Divine Liturgy

delegates, and it was accepted as presented. In addition to His Eminence, the

Diocesan Council member, two alternates and two observers. Mr. Stanley Stoy, CPA, was a guest during the morning session. Fr. Daniel Ressetar was elected Clergy Vice-Chairman and Mr. Edward Hojnicky was elected Lay Vice-Chairman for the Assembly. Fr. David Shewczyk and Mrs. Marie Proch were elected Secretaries.

Thirty-Third Diocesan Assembly

Archbishop Herman's Report

Following the acceptance of the minutes of the previous Diocesan Assembly, Archbishop Herman presented

Assembly was comprised of thirty-one clergy, twenty-six lay delegates, one Di-



Fr. Emil Hutnyan makes a point



Nancy Pashchuk



Fr. Eugene Vansuch addresses Assembly

his report on the life of the diocese. He noted the various pastoral assignment changes and the consecration of churches in Stroudsburg and Wilmington as well as the possibility of new missions in other parts of the diocese. Financial assistance was given to January flood victims totaling \$7,000. Three scholarships will be awarded to seminarians from our diocese in the Spring Semester.

His Eminence called for more participation in the several diocesan functions scheduled throughout the year. The annual Parish Council Conference held in Bethlehem was a success. The children's Summer Camp experienced the largest enrollment ever. Other functions such as the Women's Retreat, the annual lecture series at St. Tikhon's Seminary and various deanery lectures were also deemed successful. His Eminence thanked all who participated in these events and the several volunteers who helped. The diocesan publication *Alive in Christ* continues to be a fine publication. Many subscriptions have been received from non-Orthodox readers. He thanked Fr. John Kowalczyk for his work on the magazine and offered his thanks to all who support the publication with the Christmas and Paschal Greetings. Work is now being done to compile a diocesan calendar to facilitate better advertisement of parish functions. The deans have been given the responsibility to collect the dates. Work is also underway to put the diocese on-line with a computer system.

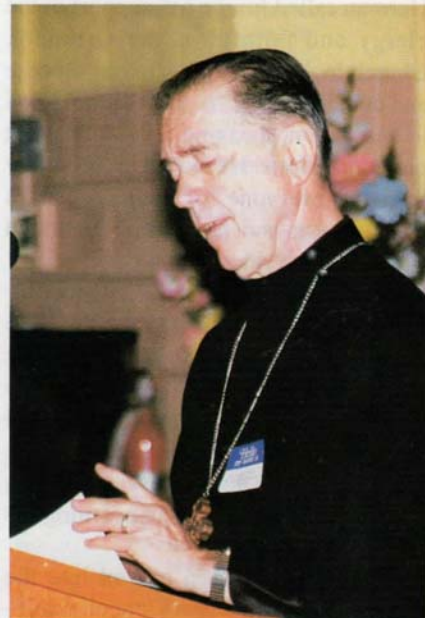
Archbishop Herman talked about several building and maintenance projects. The Monastery welcomes many visitors to the Icon Repository. Many of the visitors are non-Orthodox. He encouraged the parishes to arrange special trips to

the visit the Repository. He thanked Mr. John Guzey and Fr. John Perich for their continued support of this project. The cupolas on the Monastery Church need to be replaced and hopefully the needed repairs will be accomplished by Memorial Day. The Diocesan Bell Tower is still without a cupola although some money is available for the project. The Mausoleum is under construction and may be ready for use in approximately three months.

His Eminence turned his attention to the upcoming annual parish meetings. He said that a review of clergy compensation should automatically be placed on the agenda and appropriate action taken. Discussions should be held about the spiritual life of the parish and not solely about the material things. The diocese is developing a form that will be completed by both the pastor and the council president concerning parish life and growth. This will be a confidential report given to the Bishop. The purpose of the report will be to determine what can be done to assist the pastor and the parish to encourage growth as we move toward the year 2000. He encouraged the scheduling of the divine services, working with the parish choirs and the development of educational classes for all ages. He expressed his willingness to visit parishes at a time that would be most convenient for the faithful to attend.

Speaking on the subject of the Orthodox Church in America, Archbishop Herman stated that the site for the All-American Council in 1998 was not yet chosen. He reminded the delegates to be sure that parishes are setting aside the funds now that would ensure participation in the council.

The Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards (FOS) is greatly used to support the Church's work. Parishes are encouraged to place FOS on the agenda and in the parish budgets. The dwindling diocesan membership rolls affect the whole Church. Many Church departments cannot meet because of the lack of funding. The bishop's stipend has been stopped beginning September 1, again due to the lack of funds. Every department has been reexamined to be sure there is no waste.



Fr. Daniel Ressetar

The Holy Synod is scheduled to meet in October for four days. Church growth and finances will be main issues. Our representation church in Russia, St. Catherine's located in Moscow, is in great need of repair. The church is being remodeled and a consecration date will be set. Other topics to be discussed will include the two hundredth anniversary of St. Innocent's birth, to be celebrated in our Orthodox Church in America. Celebrations are scheduled for both Alaska and St. Tikhon's (August 26). There will be a pilgrimage in July to venerate the relics of St. Innocent. More information on the pilgrimage will be available in the future. A formal committee for the year 2000 celebration will be formed. Also, there is a possibility of bringing the relics of St. Seraphim of Sarov here for the Memorial Day Pilgrimage. The Department of Religious



Assembly expresses its will

Continued on the next page.

Thirty-Third Diocesan Assembly

Continued from page 9.

Education (DRE) is hoping to hold a national conference at St. Tikhon's Seminary / Monastery in 1997. His Eminence also announced the installation of the new Archbishop for the Greek Archdiocese, Archbishop Spyridon.

After speaking about all of these events in the Church's life, Archbishop Herman called for the full support of the clergy and faithful as the Orthodox Church in America looks to our diocese and our leadership. He said that it is good to hear others speaking favorably about our good efforts. He closed his report by thanking everyone for their support in the last year and hoped for continued support in the year to come.

Fr. Resselar thanked His Eminence for his report. He expressed his gratitude on behalf of the diocese to His Eminence for his tireless effort in working for the growth of the diocese and the National Church. Archbishop Herman then took the opportunity to address questions, concerns and comments concerning his report.

The Assembly then moved into the reports of the Diocesan Council Secretary, Diocesan Treasurer, Auditors and the proposed budget for 1997 of \$132,025. Fr. Kowalczyk reported that there will not be an increase in the budget. He noted the painting of the Diocesan Center during the last year. He thanked the parishes for their timely dispersal of assessments and their support of the Diocesan United Fund. The budget was passed after a brief discussion.

After a break for lunch, the remainder of the Assembly was devoted to the reports of the deaneries and diocesan departments. All of these reports were sent to the delegates well in advance of the Assembly. The Assembly accepted all reports with gratitude. There were no resolutions proposed.

Other Matters

The final part of the agenda was dominated by a lively discussion about the use of computers in the diocese. Fr. John Udics, Dean of Philadelphia, spoke



Delegates dine together

about the project of the Philadelphia deanery to put St. Tikhon's Seminary on the World Wide Web and to produce a home page for the Seminary on the Internet. The deanery is presently collect-

network that will link St. Tikhon's Seminary, Monastery, the Diocesan Center and parishes in an Orthodox computer network. He is also working on sources to produce CD-ROM programs for par-

Archbishop Herman called for the full support of the clergy and faithful as the Orthodox Church in America looks to our diocese and our leadership.

ing used computers that will be given to the Seminary for student use. He also made a strong recommendation that the parishes provide the priest with a computer system to accomplish his office work in the same way that they provide for typewriters, copy machines and other office needs. The computer can be used not only to prepare documents but as a tool to link with other priests and a diocesan system. This would enhance communication within the diocese and provide a witness to the rest of the world as to what happens in our diocese and the Orthodox Church.

Fr. John Bohush also spoke on the topic of computers in parish work. He showed how computers can be used for continuing education for parish clergy, religious education for children and late vocations. Meetings can be held by computer to save on travel costs. He is currently working to provide a computer

ish use. The Orthodox Church in America has a home page on the Internet which contains a directory for all parishes as well as many other items of information about Orthodoxy and the Church. Archbishop Herman accepted Fr. Bohush's offering with gratitude. The Diocesan Council will further the discussion and make the best possible use of this new tool. Other delegates added that our presence on the Internet combined with personal contact could help us to attract new people to the Church.

Another topic of discussion was the parish census. Delegates asked if there could be a way to determine why people may decide to leave the Church and then do something about those reasons. Archbishop Herman added that probably 90% of the decrease is due to deaths within the parish. Some transfer to parishes outside the diocese when they move. Others may leave because of "mixed mar-

riages.” On this subject, it was strongly recommended that the proper procedure be used when parishioners transfer membership so that the parish records can be properly maintained.

Before adjourning, His Eminence thanked all who gathered at the Assembly. He asked the delegates to work on the Deanery level to discuss the life of the Church. He said that we must make sure that our strengthened commitment is shown in our devotion. Parishes should have as many divine services as possible and sermons must be preached throughout the year. Many parishes schedule akathists often to strengthen liturgical life. He encouraged more working relationships with the parish choirs. Parishes should see what they can do to increase attendance at services. He reminded those present that we are a praying Church. The faithful should be encouraged to spend more time in services and daily devotions in the home. The Arch-



bishop concluded by thanking the host pastor, Fr. David Mahaffey and the parishioners of St. Michael’s for the gracious manner in which they hosted the

Assembly. The Assembly was then closed with prayer and the blessing of Archbishop Herman.

—Archpriest David Shewczyk

Area Seminarians Receive Diocesan Scholarships



Scholarship recipients Hasenecz, Vansuch, Evanina

Three seminarians of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania were recipients of scholarships this year. They are: Timothy Hasenecz, of St. Nicholas Church, Bethlehem, a senior in the Master of Divinity Program; Stephen Evanina, a freshman from the St. Nicholas Church, Olyphant; and Jason Vansuch, a freshman from St. Nicholas Church, Bethlehem, and son of Archpriest Eugene Vansuch. In let-

ters of gratitude, all three young men expressed a feeling of great humility and thankfulness at the generosity of the diocese and felt it a great honor to be chosen for their scholarships. “I am most grateful,” said Timothy Hasenecz, “particularly in view of the fact that . . . the diocese has a great deal of pressure placed on its financial resources.” “I will work real hard,” said Jason Vansuch, “to

achieve my dream — to serve at the Altar of our Lord.” “It really means a lot to me,” wrote Stephen Evanina in his letter of thanks. We can all be thankful that it is young men like these who are today entering our seminary, and we all need to work “real hard” to make sure that their biggest worry is how to pass the exams and not how to pay for their education.

Consecration of St. Michael the Archangel Orthodox Church



Before the doors of the new church

St. Michael the Archangel Orthodox Church in Wilmington, Del., has passed another milestone as it draws near to its eighty-fifth anniversary, coming up in November, 2000. At last the dream of many parishioners has come true. After much prayer and hard work, the faithful parishioners of St. Michael's witnessed the solemn consecration of their church. On the weekend of October 19 and 20, this temple of God was consecrated by His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN, assisted by Rev. Andrew Diehl, Rector; V. Rev. Thomas Succarotte and V. Rev. John Zabinko, sons of St. Michael's, and Rev. Protodeacon Stephen Howanetz of St. Nicholas Church, Olyphant. Assisting in the Divine Services were Subdeacons Gregory Hatrak, Alexei Klimitchev and Roman Shestakov, along with the altar servers of St. Michael's.

The Beginnings

The beginnings of St. Michael's were in January, 1913, when a small group of Russian immigrants met in the city of Wilmington to ascertain whether there was enough interest and support to form a parish church. After two years of preparatory labors, a larger group, gathered under the guidance of Fr. John Zloben, purchased a home at 431 S. Claymont Street, and it was there that the Orthodox community began to put down its roots. Working together for the next three months, they converted the home into a Church edifice, and regular religious life began in earnest. The parish continued to develop over the years. In 1921, icons and religious articles were acquired from the Russian Orthodox community in Pennsgrove, N.J. when it was closed. By 1930, the parish had grown to the point where it needed to acquire facilities for a Church school and living quarters for a priest. Over the next twenty years, the routine of church life continued until demands on the original facilities were



Parish watches as church is blessed

such as to require replacing the original church with a new one, and the new church was built on the same property on South Claymont Street.

In 1962, the present property, located on Kirkwood Highway, was acquired. In 1978, the old church property on South Claymont Street was sold and the groundbreaking took place at the site of the present location. Two years later, the present six-acre site was dedicated. In 1985, the rectory, which had been located in Newark, Del., was sold, and the present one located in the Pinecrest development adjoining the church property was purchased.

St. Michael's celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary in 1990, and, through the efforts of the faithful parishioners, a traditional cupola, topped by a gleaming gold, budded cross, inset with a three-bar cross, was added to the top of the

church. New icons were written, and a partial iconostasis was added. The parish was doubly blessed to have His Beatitude, Metropolitan THEODOSIUS, join His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN, for the anniversary celebration in November, 1990.

In October, 1995, the parishioners decided to add royal doors, deacon doors, and icons of the twelve great feasts. Then in March, 1996, His Eminence made an Archpastoral visit to St. Michael's. At this time he informed the parish that to have the church consecrated we would need a new altar table. Then in April a special meeting was called to get the parish approval for the new altar table. Once again, the faithful parishioners approved this project to beautify God's house. The total cost of these two projects came to \$25,000. Within, one year the parish raised approximately

\$23,000 towards these projects. The sisterhood, under the leadership of Alexandra Dryden, purchased a new tabernacle, sick call kit and baptismal kit for the consecration of St. Michael's.

The Consecration

The liturgical services commenced on Saturday evening, October 19, with a Vespers service attended by His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN. The new unconsecrated altar was in place in the sanctuary and clear of all ecclesiastical articles. The entire Vesper service was served at a table in front of the closed Royal Doors. Prior to the service, upon the Archbishop's arrival, the relics of St. Herman of Alaska and a martyr of Palestine were placed on a paten before the icon of Christ at the iconostasis.

A dinner of beef stroganoff was served in the church hall, giving us the opportunity to converse informally with our Diocesan Archbishop. Over eighty parishioners made use of this opportunity to meet with His Eminence.

October 20, 1996 was, without doubt, a test of faith. The rain was falling until His Eminence arrived. Then the rain stopped, and we knew that the procession during the Rite of Consecration would be able to take place outside. Archbishop HERMAN was greeted by the church school children who were strewing rose petals. He was greeted at the church doors by Parish President Edward Hojnicki, Jr. Suzanna Carey, the youngest girl of the parish, presented His Eminence with a bouquet of roses on behalf of the children. Fr. Andrew Diehl, offering the hand cross, invited His Eminence to lead the celebration in dedicating St. Michael's to the glory of God.

After the vesting prayers, His Eminence provided some 140 in attendance with an overview of the rite of consecration, tracing its ancient prayers and actions as well as citing scriptural references detailing the various movements. Everyone followed and participated in the service using the booklets provided. The angelic singing was led by choir director Jason Kutch, a senior in high school.

A church consecration takes place

Continued on the next page.



Placing the relics in the Altar table



Vesting the Altar table

Consecration of St. Michael's Church

Continued from page 13.

through a series of meaningful liturgical actions accompanied by prayers. After the Archbishop is vested in the center of the Church, he enters the sanctuary, being joined by the other celebrants. He and three priests are clothed with an apron-like white garment over their vestments. The altar is blessed with holy water on all sides. Then four wooden pegs are hammered with stones into holes prepared for them at the four corners of the altar and are sealed in with wax mastic, a mixture of beeswax and fragrant spices such as those used to prepare the body of our Lord's burial. The hammering of the pegs commemorates the nailing of Christ to the Cross. In the next action, the Archbishop pours hot water upon the altar three times. The three assisting priests help wipe dry the entire altar with white towels. Following a prayer and a litany which occur before each action, the Archbishop pours a mixture of red wine and rose water onto the altar three times. This mixture is likewise washed over the altar and wiped with sponges.

At this point, the celebrants remove the white aprons and walk in procession out of the sanctuary to the front of the iconostasis, where the relics rest before the icon of Christ. The Archbishop takes up the paten with the relics and goes in solemn procession with the whole parish, circling the exterior of the church. During this procession, each priest takes part in blessing the four exterior walls of the Church with holy water. The relics are brought into the Church and up to the altar. They are then anointed with Holy Chrism and placed in the compartment cut out on the top of the altar table. The relics are sealed into the altar with wax mastic.

The altar table is also anointed with Holy Chrism three times, once at the center and on either side upon the spots which, when the Divine Liturgy is offered, will be placed the Holy Gospel, the Paten and Chalice. The rite of consecration resembles the mysteries of baptism and chrismation that are experienced by the faithful when entering the Church.



Receiving Holy Communion



Archbishop Herman addresses Banquet



Community rejoices in the occasion

The holy relics placed inside the altar bear witness to the special presence of God communicated to us in the lives of the Saints. Through their presence we are reminded that Christ's Holy Church is built upon the foundation of the Saints, Christ Himself being the cornerstone. The relics' anointment with chrism is a sign of burial and of the bond of unity between Christ and His Saints.

A double vesting of the altar occurs after the relics are sealed in. One indicates the burial shroud of Christ and the other, the heavenly throne of God. The first underlying cover is white. The second, top altar covering, which changes with the liturgical seasons, is called the "inditia" and typifies the glory of God's throne on earth and heaven.

All the liturgical actions that occurred at St. Michael's took place in good or-

der, peace, and solemnity as befitting Christ's Holy Church. The Hierarchical Divine Liturgy followed the rite of consecration, with the joy of the day fulfilled in the partaking of the Holy Eucharist. Then, before the final prayer, His Eminence read the prayer installing Fr. Andrew as the parish rector.

A consecration banquet was held at the Holiday Inn in Newark, Del. with over one hundred in attendance. In addition to the previously mention guests, greetings were extended by V. Rev. John Udics, Dean of the Philadelphia Deanery. His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN, challenged all of us to grow in the love of the Lord. We could do this by increasing our prayer life, and adding additional services to our liturgical cycle. He challenged us also with the need to encourage our young men to

serve the Church, to give them for this service. He acknowledged that two sons of St. Michael's are now priests in the Church. His Eminence complimented the faithful on their attendance at Vespers and how well the children behaved in church. He also noted how reverently the altar boys conducted themselves while serving in the sanctuary.

The newly consecrated church now serves as a foundation as we approach the year 2000. Truly we all have been blessed! Now may St. Michael's be the light in Delaware to show others the Holy Orthodox faith: the faith that has nurtured us with the love of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was truly a most spiritual weekend that no one will forget in their lifetime.

Glory to God for all things!

—Priest Andrew Diehl

Archbishop HERMAN Visits Moscow

His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN traveled to Moscow, Russia and represented our Primate, His Beatitude, Metropolitan THEODOSIUS for the Patronal Feast celebration of the representation church of the Orthodox Church in America dedicated to St. Catherine the Great.

Accompanying His Eminence was our Diocesan Secretary/Treasurer, Archpriest John Kowalczyk, who successfully defended his dissertation, *An Orthodox View of the Problem of Abortion* at the Moscow Theological Academy and was awarded the Candidate of

Theology Degree by the Rector of the Academy, Bishop Evgeny.

During his stay in Moscow, Archbishop Herman concelebrated the Vigil with His Holiness, Patriarch ALEXEY II at Christ the Savior Cathedral (lower church) on the Feast of St. Alexander Hotovitsky who labored in America and was subsequently martyred in Russia. His Eminence and His Holiness concelebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Dormition Cathedral in the Kremlin on

December 5, which was the 79th anniversary of enthronement of St. Patriarch Tikhon which took place in this Cathedral. Following the Divine Liturgy, they went to Donskoy Monastery where a service of intercession was sung before the holy relics of St. Patriarch Tikhon.

On the eve of the Feast of St. Catherine, His Eminence celebrated the Vigil and at the conclusion greeted

Continued on the next page.



Fr. John Kowalczyk receives degree from Bp. Evgeny



Abp. Herman celebrates Liturgy at OCA representation church in Moscow

Archbishop HERMAN Visits Moscow

Continued from page 15.

Archpriest Daniel Hubiak, our representative at the Podvorye for the past five years, and offered words of encouragement to the clergy and faithful of the parish.

The Divine Liturgy was concelebrated by His Holiness, Patriarch Alexey, Archbishop Herman, Bishop Niphon (Antiochian Church), Bishop Arseny and eight priests. The church was filled to capacity and the responses were beautifully sung by the parish choir. Participating in the luncheon that was held following the Divine Liturgy were diplomats from America, Canada and Mexico.

Just days prior to the Patronal Feast, the civil authorities officially turned over sections of the church complex. Father Daniel and the faithful will now begin the extensive and costly restoration project. It is anticipated that in the near future more of the complex will be returned and that perhaps the church would be consecrated next year.

While in Russia, Archbishop Herman was interviewed by the newspaper *Orthodox Moscow* and also met with representatives of the newly established pro-life center.

*The deadline for
the next issue of . . .*

Your Diocese

Alive in Christ

Is March 11, 1997

Please submit all
articles typed, or on disc,
pictures, Parish news,
etc . . . to

Alive in Christ

Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania
South Canaan, PA 18459



Abp. Herman interviewed by newspaper *Orthodox Moscow*



Faithful at the lower church of the newly reconstructed Christ the Savior Cathedral

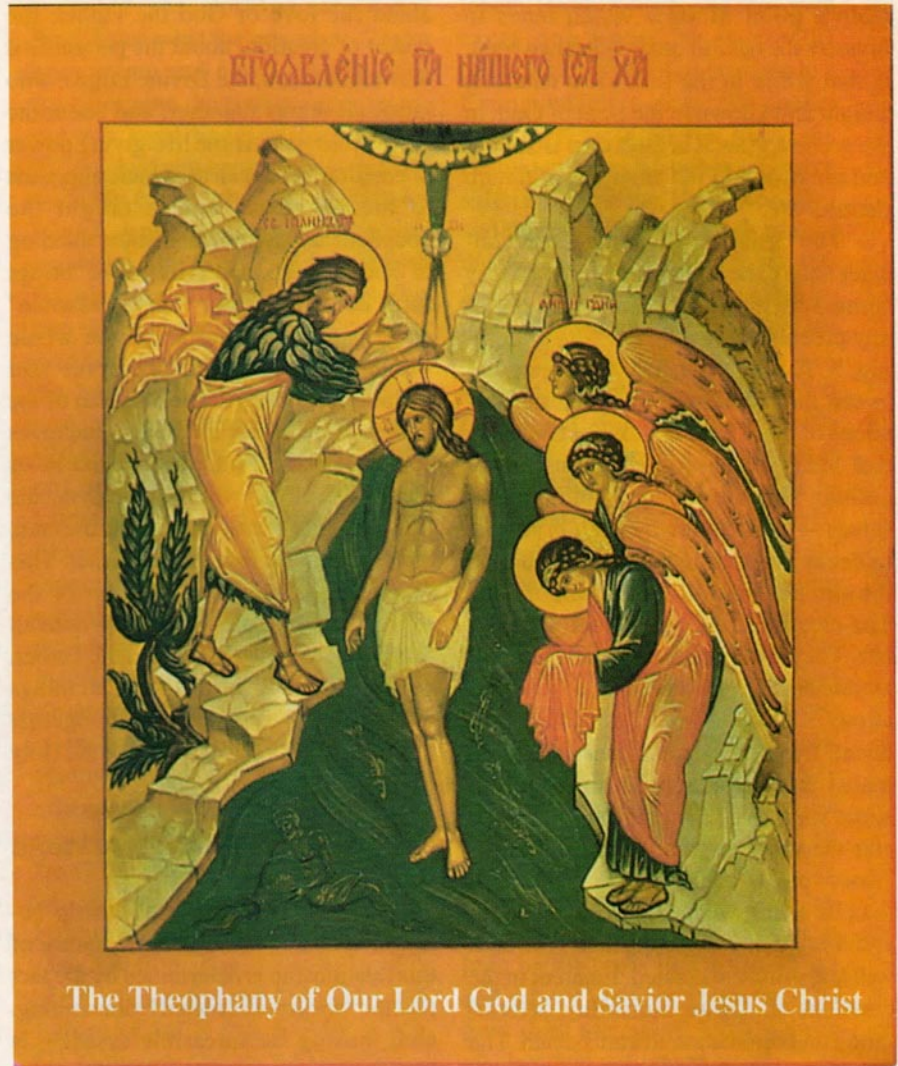


Abp. Herman concelebrates with Patriarch Aleksey and other Church officials at Dormition Cathedral

An Orthodox Approach to the Ecological Question

It has become fashionable in our day to talk about the ecological crisis. Although the ecological movement itself is often looked upon with mistrust, as it is seen to serve other purposes and interests, the ecological crisis of our times is a reality that must be faced by the Church and her theology. Several years ago the Orthodox Church took up the issue in a number of publications¹ and more recently in connection with the nineteen hundredth anniversary of the writing of the Book of Revelation — a book significant for the proper understanding of the issue of ecology — the Church took the initiative of organizing a conference on ecology on the island of Patmos in Greece.

First of all, we think that it is quite necessary to underline how our understanding of man is intimately related to our understanding of nature. Indeed, our failure to perceive the divine in man has gone hand in hand with a failure to perceive the divine in nature. As we have dehumanized man, so we have de-sanctified nature. In short, it has led us to see the world as secularized or desecralized material, with the consequence that we have ruptured the organic links and spiritual equilibrium between man and nature. We have restricted religion more and more to the privacy of the individual conscience, or to a concern for the “beyond” of a transcendent God, or of an individual salvation after earthly existence has ended. These themes are inex-



trically interconnected, and although this has already been indicated, the theme of the desanctification of nature is itself so important that it deserves independent consideration.

We should also note, by way of introduction, that the early Christian reaction against paganism, and against the “cosmic” religion and the naturalism of the Hellenistic world, with its tendency to divinize the natural and human orders in their own right, was expressed in St.

Paul’s letter to the Colossians.² The entire cosmos is here described as controlled by “the elemental spirits of the universe” which are opposed to Christ, even though “created through Him and for Him.” It has even been said that one of the most characteristic novelties of Christianity was that it demystified or, if you wish, secularized the cosmos: the idea that God abides in the elements, in

² Colossians 1, 16; 2, 8.

¹ See the *Statement of the Heads of the Orthodox Church*, September 26, 1995.

Continued on the next page.

Ecological Question

Continued from page 17.

water, in springs, in stars, in the emperor, was from the beginning totally rejected by the Apostolic Church.³ And a legacy of this attitude is still evident in the horrified cry of “pantheism” which tends to greet every suggestion that God does live in His creation. In this connection, it is relevant to point out that what distinguishes the sacramental view of nature from a point of view which tends to divinize the natural order in its own right, is that while in the first view nature is sought and known in the light of God, in the second view it is God who is sought and identified in the elements of nature themselves.⁴

The Orthodox Church Fathers consider nature the highest mystery sacredly formed by the Holy Trinity,⁵ not out of any preexistent reality, but “out of nothing.”⁶ This is the basic difference between the creation of God and the creations of man. The creations of God have real being because as creations out of nothing they are founded not on themselves — their nature by itself is subject to decay and ontological ruin — but on the almighty and all-loving will of God. The creations of God are real and eternal. They exist on account of the unalterable and eternal will of God.⁷ The creations of man, however, are always produced from preexistent material and in reality they are simply constructions. In some ways even the greatest inventions and the most original works of art are “discoveries.” Behind the creations of man lie a will which is subject to change and a mind of limited capacity, for both will and mind are created. Inherent in the creations of man are mutability, deterioration and orientation towards death. The fall of great civilizations witnesses to this throughout history. Whereas the creations of man of themselves, with no reference to God, have no real life, the cre-

ations of God are orientated towards life and eternity.

According to the teaching of the Church Fathers, when we behold creation — which is the work of the three persons of the Holy Trinity — we are not only led to believe that God exists, but we approach an understanding of *how* God exists. From the order, the harmony and also the difference that exists among created things, we are informed about the love of God the Father, the maker of creation; about the personified Wisdom of God, the Divine Logos, who holds all things together; and about the Holy Spirit, who is the life-giving power of creation.⁸ From an apophatic approach to the universe, one is taught the apophatic conception and understanding of God. The One and Triune God “brings forth out of nothing,” “gives essence” and “establishes ineffably” the whole world. His command preserves and maintains all things. The Wisdom of the Father provides for all things, perceives “before all ages” and desires and loves the things of the world. Moreover, the true beauty of the world reveals the care, the will and the love of the Father. This revelation is the manifestation of the energies of the Son, “through Whom all things were made.” And God the Father, who creates and “brings forth all things through the Word” holds them together through the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit.⁹

God, Man, and the Created World

There is a direct relationship between creation and God. The nature of this relationship is determined by the fact that the world was created from nothing. God, having inexpressible essence, is both within the world and at the same time outside of the world. On the other hand, all created things are found within God “as Creator and the One who holds all things together,” but simultaneously they are also apart from God, because as created beings they are separated from

the uncreated God. This separation of the Creator from creation *and* their simultaneous interrelation is explained by the existence of God as the cause of all things. The love of God, moreover, while neither originating from the world nor having anything in common with it, is the light which enlightens the entire world.

Beholding the beauty of creation, man is prompted to glorify the Creator of all because his place is in the realm of earthly reality. Nevertheless, in order for the world to be revealed to man as the inseparable “place” of divine energy, man must remain “within the proper limits of his own being.” Only in this way can man transcend his individuality, which makes possible a personal approach to the personal existence of God. In the context of this personal relationship of man with the Maker of all — a relationship which is founded on faith — the world ceases to be autonomous as a neutral object, which is measured and vindicated by expedience. When this is the case, the world “is the place,” that is to say the place where the relationship between God and man occurs. The man who has the mind of Christ and desires to know the outward beauty of creation, discovers the accessibility of God within the reality of the creation of the world without refuting the physical distance between God and the world, which is as distant as uncreated nature is from created nature. Therefore man is able to admire the Creator through created things. However, he is not to confuse uncreated and created nature or to identify the creation with the Creator, which would lead to worship of created things in ignorance of Him who made them. From the greatness and beauty of created things, man is able to perceive and to acquire a better understanding of the Creator. He then becomes conscious of the fact that his nearness to God in the world is not physical but “local,” that is to say, it is a nearness that is created by his personal relationship with God. Therefore, he understands that it is not this world that “contains” God, but it is the will and divine energy of God that “contains” the world. To deny this apophaticism regarding the created and the uncreated — the interrelationship,

³ J. Meyendorff, “Orthodox Theology Today,” *Sobornost*, series 6, 1, London 1970, p. 16.

⁴ See Philip Sherrard, *The Rape of Man and Nature. An Enquiry into the Origins and Consequences of Modern Science*. Ipswich, Suffolk 1987, pp. 90-91.

⁵ See Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*, 2, 3 PG25, 100A.

⁶ Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 44, SC196, p. 70. For a detailed account of Symeon’s cosmology, see my work *Man and Environment: A Study on St. Symeon the New Theologian* (in Greek), Thessaloniki 1987.

⁷ Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Inscription of Psalms* 3, PG 44, 441C. See also Dim. Staniloae, “The world as gift and sacrament of God’s love,” *Sobornost* 59 (1969), pp. 671-674.

⁸ Maximus the Confessor, *Questions ad Thalassium*, PG 90, 296B. For a full account of Maximus’ cosmology and anthropology see Lars Thunberg, *Microcosm and Mediator: The Theological Anthropology of Maximus the Confessor*, London 1965; and N. Matsoukas, *World, Man and Communion according to St. Maximus the Confessor* (in Greek), Athens 1980.

⁹ Basil, *On the Holy Spirit* 16, 38, PG32, 136AB; and Gregory the Theologian, *Homilies* 45, 5, PG 36, 629A.

that is, between God and the world and their simultaneous distinction one from the other — is to risk falling into the heresy of idealistic or materialistic humanism.

Man's material dimension, however, unites him closely with the rest of the natural world, with those creatures with which he has much in common both biologically and physiologically. Although of a superior form and quality to that of the plants and animals, man's materiality constitutes a basic element of his being. Moreover, the unity and common origin of all creation bear witness to the unique and dynamic character of the relationship between cosmology and anthropology. It is not possible for the one to be considered separately and independently from its relationship to the other. Indeed, as it is presented by the Church Fathers,¹⁰ Orthodox cosmology is closely connected with man's physiology, as all levels of existence from the various forms of creation are to be found in man.

Man was greatly honored by being created in the image of the personal God. As the true "microcosm," man contains within his being all the created realities, and he is called upon by God to maintain the correct orientation of this natural dynamism and to lead it to its completion. Only when man correctly uses the faculties, gifts and natural powers bestowed upon him by his creation in God's image will he be equal to this calling. And if man is the "microcosm" of the world, then the world can be described as the "macrocosm" of man, for man and the world are proportionately related. The soul of the world is the intelligible creation, while its body is the sensible. Likewise in man, intelligible creation is the soul, and the sensible is the body. The world exists as the icon and image of that which occurs with man. However, the Holy Fathers, while likening man to the heavenly bodies, using imagery taken from astronomy, point out that the world as the image of man was fashioned in that way by God himself¹¹ and not by

any contrivance of man.

Stewards of Creation

Interpreting the relevant passage from Genesis, the Fathers point out that man receives from the hand of God not only paradise but the whole earth. The entire material creation is given to man by God as a blessing and a free gift. Also, the Fathers teach that the meaning of the terms in the phrase of Genesis "to labor and to keep" implies a mutual correspondence and refers not only to man's "rights," but equally to his obligations with respect to the environment he dwells in.¹² "To labor" refers to the proper use of creation, and this necessarily implies a duty to protect and to conserve it — "to keep." The proper use of the environment without its simultaneous protection is not possible. Man is called to work responsibly and to carry out his productive and creative efforts not only as God's representative and steward, but also as caretaker and guardian of the physical environment. Likewise, God's command "to cultivate the earth" does not constitute permission for man to misuse and destroy the natural environment. And if man has been, so to speak, "overestimated" by God in relation to the rest of creation, and if he "rules and lords over it," it does not mean that man's relation to the environment should fall into a relationship of "oppressor toward the oppressed." Man's dominion over nature implies certain corresponding responsibilities because it constitutes an authority that is at the same time both liable and sovereign. Thus, the meaning of man's dominion over creation is not without its restrictions. It relates to man's capacity to use the potentialities of nature in a correct and proper way that helps and serves mankind. Ultimately, it is not a matter of who will prevail over whom in the problem of man's relationship with nature, but of how man can live in harmonious coexistence with the rest of the created world.¹³

¹² See Symeon the New Theologian, *Catéchèses* 25, SC 113, pp. 56-58; Anastasius of Sinai, PG 89, 540-541 and 961-970.

¹³ For the contemporary thought on this point see: T.S. Derr, *Ecology and Human Need*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia 1975; P. Land, *Theology Meets Progress*, Gregorian University Press 1971; and D. Dubarle, *Approches d'une théologie de la science*, Du Cerf 1967.

As the natural intermediary between God and the world, it is man who achieves the "rationalization" of nature, and it is not nature that leads man to God. The result of this is the restoration of the world to its original beauty, and the deification of man which was not realized by Adam on account of the Fall. It was man himself who upset the harmony of relation with creation. As a result of the Fall, and because of his disobedience to God's commandment, man has altered his position relative to the rest of creation. God's commandment was directly related to the use of the world.¹⁴ Since man did not keep the commandment and he did not conduct himself properly within the environment in which he was placed, he received the consequences of his behavior. Thus, man was unwillingly brought into the subjection of his fallen condition. It is particularly emphasized by the Fathers that the enslaved condition of creation is not a result of its natural development. Deprived by man of its original beauty, brilliance and harmony, the creation is presented as a *victim* which explains nature's refusal to yield to transgressive man.¹⁵

The consequences of the Fall for all of creation indicate that the origin of creation is found in God, and man's violation of the creation is carried out in part by his separation from God. The transgression of the commandment of God — and above all the lack of repentance by man — is that which removed him from paradise, since the estrangement of his fallen condition directly influences and is extended to the whole of creation. For this reason the world in its fallen condition loses its original meaning as an ornament and creation of God and takes on a negative significance. A sinful and impassioned relationship arises between man and the other created things, which are found to be under the influence of the devil who is the "ruler of this world." Nevertheless, God as Creator of the universe "rules naturally and authoritatively" over all things. The devil acts within creation as a parasitic power. It is misleading then to speak of the "natural

¹⁴ Genesis 2, 17.

¹⁵ For the consequences of man's transgression on the world, a characteristic passage is found in Symeon the New Theologian, *Traité des Ethiques A*, chapter 2, SC 122, p. 190. See also Romans 8.20.

Continued on the next page.

Ecological Question

Continued from page 19.

world" since it is estranged from its original "natural" condition, and it is now fallen, rebellious and tending towards death.

Man and Nature after the Fall

After the Fall, it is not responsibility to God that characterizes man's dealings with nature, but self-interest. When man governs creation and material goods for himself, that is to say in a "selfish" way, apart from the Creator, he lives in an impassioned condition. He is found enslaved to the material world not because he desires it and loves it correctly, but because he has distorted his will and has distanced the world from the lifegiving energy of God. In reality, man does not impose his own will upon matter because he feels that he shares something in common with it, but rather he does so because he has been mistakenly placed *against* it. When the world is governed in a selfish way, and when it is cut off from its original cause — which is God — it essentially ceases to exist; it is reduced to a non-ontological condition. St. Symeon the New Theologian goes further when he says that the condition of the world — more precisely, man's *attitude* to it — is not "permanent, perpetual and everlasting," but is rather something that is "transient, ephemeral and momentary."¹⁶ This attitude of man towards nature, on which is clearly based the entire phenomenon of contemporary technology, regards the world as if it created itself. It follows that man then begins to idolize created matter.

Abuse of the environment presupposes a narcissistic attitude towards matter, an attitude that comes from man's regarding the world as self-created. Thus, the world is transformed into an impersonal object that is shamelessly forced into complete subjection to man's greed. The Holy Fathers emphasize that according to man's relation with and use of the things of the world, whether reasonable or unreasonable, he is correspondingly characterized as being either virtuous or perverse. St. Symeon the New Theologian adds that men who do not have a

correct relationship with the things of the world live a life *contrary* to nature.¹⁷ It follows that the cosmology of St. Symeon would reject this form of abuse of the environment. Man's self-centered imposition upon the world and his consumptive disposition constitute the practical application of a cosmology that is diametrically opposed to the cosmology of the Church Fathers, since it regards nature as an impersonal and neutral object which is at the disposal of the desires and the needless "necessities" of man. The extent of man's abuse of the environment is related to his misapplication of technology and all-consuming greed for material wealth.

The Proper Place of Nature

In direct contrast with the abuse of the environment is the eucharistic approach which is founded on a respect for the original purpose of all created things. Created things, at the root of their being, possess the will of God, which is revealed through the "acts" of God. The Church Fathers, in many of their writings, often refer to the purposes of created beings and they emphasize the importance of their discovery and understanding by man.¹⁸ Man is led to a deeper faith and a higher love for God by means of the consideration of the motives for the creation. One cannot acquire complete love for God without spiritual knowledge of the purpose of created things, through which "is seen" their Creator and Maker. By our examining the motive of creation, we come to live in liturgical harmony with nature, which also implies the possibility of a personal relationship with the Creator. Therefore the question of why creation and man exist is one that the Fathers of the Church address prior to anything else.

In itself, the fact that the world exists affords neither a true conception of the nature of created things, nor the answer to the question of the ultimate purpose of creation. This is all the more obscure because of man's enslavement to the passions. It is first necessary for man to live a life of true repentance and

¹⁷ See *Traité des Ethiques*, chapter 2, SC 122, p. 192-194.

¹⁸ Gregory of Nyssa, *In Hexaemeron*, PG 44, 73A and 73C. Maximus the Confessor, *Theological Chapters* 3, PG 90, 1261D.

to change his way of thinking, in order to be continually given the possibility of being correctly oriented to creation and to develop a relationship of love with the things of the world. The cause of the creation has as its source, as its foundation and as its end, the Divine Word, from whom the "reasonableness" of the world springs forth. So an awareness of the presence of the Word of God is what allows man to know the reason for his being.

From the correct use of the world — according to nature — man comes to know the reason of beings. Man's abuse of the environment reveals a relationship contrary to nature that borders on the absurd. If, however, absurdity and a life contrary to nature are manifested in the misuse and abuse of the world, respect and regard for the purpose of creation and a life in accordance with nature are expressed in the ascetic, efficient and eucharistic use of the world. In the first case, the hedonistic demands of the senses rule over the life of man, creating in him an improper view of creation that does not at all correspond to the true nature of things. These hedonistic demands distort and corrupt the true beauty of nature, forcing it to submit and to serve the self-centeredness of man. In the second case, we have man's self-renunciation before the demands of his senses, which characterizes the ascetic-eucharistic use of the world, which is the only way of true life and knowledge. The writings of the Holy Fathers particularly emphasize the ascetic use of the world, which saves not only the environment but also mankind. This correct approach to the environment sees it as providing only for man's indispensable needs and serves the cause of social justice.¹⁹

The ethos of moderation and efficiency proposed by the Fathers is especially gratifying in this age of indiscriminate exploitation and rape of the environment. It calls for a more substantial and harmonious coexistence of man and nature, more in keeping with the original order of things, and thus calls for man to turn away from viewing nature in terms of how much he can gain by it.

¹⁹ See J. Petrou, *Social Justice: The Problem of Social Justice in the Orthodox Tradition* (in Greek), Thessaloniki 1986. See also J. Moltmann, "Theologische Begründung der Menschenrechte," in *Politische Theologie Politische Ethik*, München 1984, pp. 166-179.

¹⁶ *Catéchèses* 2, SC 96, pp. 274-276.

The monk is the embodiment of this ethos — without, certainly, being its only manifestation. The life of the monk is one that protects and preserves the truth, the purity and the respect of his relationship with nature which surrounds him. His asceticism is not interpreted as abhorrence of matter and of the natural environment, but rather as transcendence of human selfishness. By respecting and caring for material things, the monk — true to his calling — restores the material environment surrounding him to its original beauty.²⁰

Only in Christ is Man Truly Human

The first Adam failed to fulfill his duty as the mediator between God and the world. Nevertheless, its fulfilment was found in the person of the second Adam, Jesus Christ, who became the “firstborn” of the new creation. The Incarnation of the Word was realized because of man’s desecration of nature, which has the character not only of its misuse but also its idolization. With the renewal of man in Christ, all of creation is renewed as well. New creation means re-creation in a dynamic relationship, that is to say a relationship not only with God, but also with nature as His creation. Within orthodox theology, cosmology and anthropology are christologically based and are seen in light of the re-creation in Christ. This leads to an awareness of the mystery of divine economy for the salvation of man and the transfiguration of the world. The relationship between man and the creation cannot be considered independently of Christology and soteriology.

The great paradox of the Incarnation is that it implies that only God is truly and fully human in the person of Jesus Christ. In Jesus Christ we find “humanity at its best” and we realize that the fullness of mankind is found only in God. Moreover, when man neglects to realize and respond to the divinity in which he participates, he remains, ontologically speaking, in a subhuman state. As ironic as it may seem, all of his attempts to improve the quality of his condition, in the context of the atheistically oriented secular humanism of today, drive man further away from the fullness of his on-

tological being. It is obvious that there is a cooperation of the divine and the human, the uncreated and the created. Christ is the perfect man, the complete man, the whole man. But Christ is also God. This is to say that, as paradoxical as it may sound, it is God alone who is the perfect man. Only God is completely and utterly human. In so far as man fails to realize the divine in himself, he falls short of being completely human. He remains less than human. His human nature is truncated. It comes as no surprise that the dehumanization of both man and society is the end result of man’s endeavor to be simply human by conforming to the atheistic humanism of the last centuries.²¹

To deny the event of the Incarnation is to deny one’s true humanity. Divine and human natures are united in the person of Jesus Christ. When man insists on separating the two, by either placing God outside the realm of man’s daily life, or by viewing himself as the basic source of his own being, he leaves mankind in a less than truly human condition. Man is a mystery, and to deprive him of the divine reality of his nature, which is his through the Incarnation of Christ, is to deprive him of his “truly human” rights. The idea of man existing apart from God, or of God as existing apart from man, is a false idea. If we think of God as totally and absolutely transcending man, and of man as without any inner affinity with God, we fail to recognize that it is man’s divinity that constitutes the essence of his humanity, and consequently we dehumanize our idea of man. But at the same time, if we think of this divinity as belonging to man in his own right, so to say, and not as deriving from God who is altogether “other” than man, we end up by thinking that God is unnecessary, and thus by denying Him we deify ourselves in His place. Both the attitude which sees God as irrevocably outside and beyond man, and the attitude which attributes to man the principle of his own existence or regards him as a self-subsistent splinter of divinity, result in a dehumanization of man. Only when God and man are seen as indivisible but distinct elements in a divine-human reality

²⁰ Symeon the New Theologian, *Chapters* 1, 81, SC 51, p. 88.

in which the presence of the transcendent God constitutes the core of man’s being, is it possible to envisage God and man in a way which does justice to the mystery and majesty of both.

The Incarnation of Christ presents us with the reality that to be human, that is to say to participate in human nature, is to participate in the divine. The Fathers of the Eastern Church explicitly teach that man has the capacity to attain the divine nature, which is his in Christ. This is what it means to be human. And to live in Christ is to live within His Holy Church, where the spirit of man is nurtured and nourished, as he grows into the image and likeness of God. Irrespective of whether man fails to realize or even denies the divine potential inherent in his nature, the fact remains that the life in Christ and in His Holy Church is the only means of attaining salvation and the fullness of the mystery of being human.

When the Fathers speak of the Eucharist, which is the image of the Incarnation — and it must be remembered that for them the only difference between image and archetype is that the image as such is not the archetype as such — they insist that the material sign of the sacrament is not simply something to which the Spirit is attached, as if the Spirit were an extraneous element added to the matter, or one that “transubstantiates” the matter through His presence. On the contrary, they insist that there is a total integration of the material and the spiritual, so that the elements of bread and wine are an actual mode of existence of the divine and there is a complete union between them. In other words, the sacrament presupposes an actual incarnation of divine power and life; and what is communicated to man in the sacrament is this divine power and life. As St. Cyril of Alexandria puts it: “For the Son is in us on the one hand bodily, as man, united and mixed by means of the Eucharist (mystical blessing); and also spiritually, as God, by the energy and grace of His own Spirit renewing the Spirit that is in us for the renewal of life and making us participants in this divinity.”²²

²¹ See Ph. Sherrard, *The Rape of Man and Nature: An Enquiry into the Origins and Consequences of Modern Science*, Ipswich, Suffolk 1987, p. 32.

²² PG 74, 564.

Continued on the next page.

Ecological Question

Continued from page 21.

Man: Mediator Between God and the World

Man finds himself in the unique and responsible position of mediator between the material and the divine, being attached to both by virtue of the Incarnation and his participation in the person of Christ. This stands in contradiction to the contemporary approach which tends to alienate mankind from the material world, and which views nature as something separate from the reality of his own being. In contrast with his initial natural relationship of concord and harmony with the rest of creation, modern man, having lost sight of his divine mission as the custodian and caretaker of the natural world, now has a depraved relationship, less significant and more self-indulgent.

Today, the event of the Incarnation takes place for contemporary man in the Eucharist. And it is the Eucharist which embodies the intimate involvement of man within the act of salvation, as Christ renews, regenerates and resurrects the whole of creation. When this sacramental involvement of man with the rest of creation is removed, he deprives himself of the essential quality of his human nature. When man neglects his priestly calling, and fails to realize the divine nature which is inherently his in the person of Christ, he leaves himself susceptible to self-interested greed and overindulgence. Rejecting deification, man becomes even less human than he was before, since he prides himself on his humanity as something separate from God.

Created World and the Eucharist

The gathering together of the elements of the entire world is made possible by the existence of the Church as the Body of the Incarnate Christ. If the Church did not exist, which is the communion of rational and intellectual beings, creation would not be able to have a personal relationship with — and conscious participation in — the divine and uncreated energies of God. The entire universe forms an organic unity which

has as its heart the Church of Christ. The presence of the Church in the world is the presence of God Himself. Consequently, there does not exist a single part of the intelligible and sensible creation from which divine energy, as the cohesive and promotive power of the entire universe, is absent. Therefore, we have the *ecclesiastismos* of the material creation and its participation in the glory of God. The world cannot exist apart from and independent of the Church. This is why man has the blessing and the honor of being its priest, who leads creation into communion with the Holy Trinity. After the Fall, the world became estranged and was brought under the influence of the power of evil, and now the grafting of the world into the Church depends upon renewed man. The dynamic quality of God's creation is manifested in this possibility for the *ecclesiastismos* or "churchification" of the world.²³

Whatever the measures taken to protect the environment, they are without lasting significance as long as there remains no genuine love for created matter and for the world. This genuine and original love and respect for the environment is beyond any kind of ecological movement, and it is above the limitations of childish sentimentality and barren worship of nature. If man does not rediscover this original love for the world and for creation, he will be condemned to a life contrary to his nature. This genuine love makes us realize that with every tree that is cut or burnt down, a part

²³ See Paulos Gregorios, *The Human Presence: An Orthodox View of Nature*, Geneva 1978, p. 32.

of life is lost. This is directly connected with the issue of man's over-exploitation of the environment. Therefore, the ultimate question that lies before us is whether or not it is possible for the Christian ethos to be one of over-exploitation and ill-use. And it is the Divine Eucharist that constitutes the most substantial and spiritual relationship of man with God. It is fulfilled with the material and sensible Body and Blood of Christ, which are offered to the faithful, making them participants in the life of God. The bread and the wine, as the representative elements of the material world, become the Body and Blood of the Incarnate Word of God, the Creator of the world. In this way, man is called to be nature's officiate priest, eucharistically rendering creation back to the Creator. In Orthodox theology, it is of great importance that man's relationship with the environment is considered in the light of the Eucharist. It is this eucharistic dimension which provides him with a new approach toward creation, and may indeed be the final solution to the ecological problems facing contemporary man.²⁴

—Professor Anestis Keselopoulos

Professor Keselopoulos, of the School of Theology at the University of Thessaloniki in Greece, was a visiting professor at St. Tikhon's Seminary in the fall of 1994.

²⁴ For the Eucharistic approach to the world see my work *Man and Environment: A Study on St. Symeon the New Theologian*, Thessaloniki 1987, pp. 195-217 and also my article, "The Rape of Creation and the Other Solution" in the volume *Diakonia* (devoted to the memory of Basil Stogiannos), (in Greek), Thessaloniki 1988, pp. 495-503.

Official

Parish Council Confirmations

Holy Annunciation Church - Berwick
St. Nicholas Church - Bethlehem
Christ the Saviour Church - Harrisburg
Holy Trinity Church - McAdoo
St. Michael Church - Mount Carmel
St. John the Baptist Church - Nanticoke
St. Nicholas Church - Philadelphia
St. Stephen Cathedral - Philadelphia

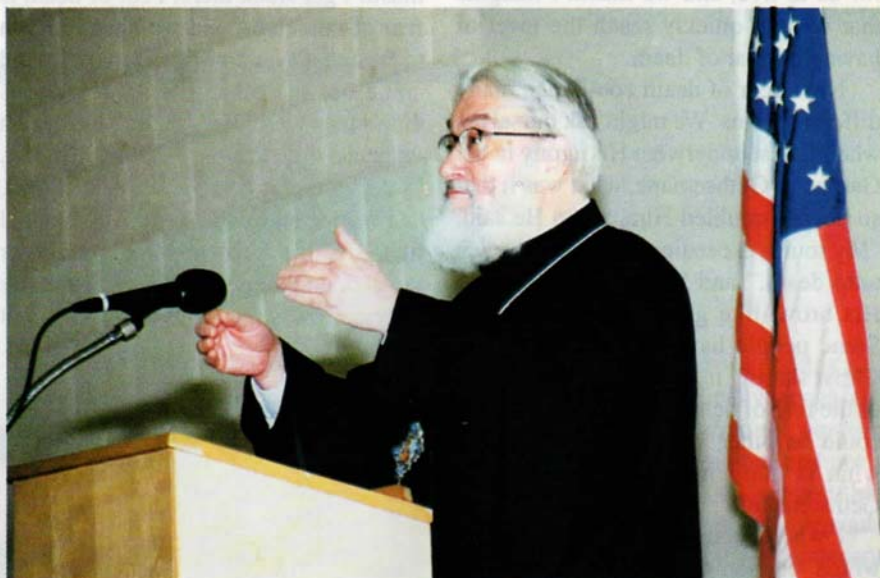
Released from Diocese

Priest Peter Dubinin released as Rector of All Saints Church in Olyphant and from the Diocese of Eastern Pa. and transferred to the Diocese of Washington for assignment as U.S. Army Chaplain

Transfer

Priest Nicholas Wyslutsky released as Acting Rector of Holy Ascension Church in Lykens and assigned as Rector of All Saints Church in Olyphant

Bishop Kallistos Fields Questions on the Orthodox Vision of Death and Resurrection



Bishop Kallistos

Editor's note: A question-and-answer period followed Bishop Kallistos's lecture on this topic, delivered March 6, 1996 at Saint Tikhon's Seminary. The exchange is presented here, edited by Christopher Veniamin. The text of the lecture appeared in these pages in the spring 1995 issue.

Q. Your Grace. There was a debate that took place a couple of years ago between one group that was saying that the toll houses are Gnostic and this type of thing, and then another group that was saying no, they are traditional and patristic. I would like to know what your response to that is.

A. Yes, I was aware that I was walking on thin ice when I mentioned the toll houses. My own view is somewhere between those two. I consider that toll houses are not a dogma — no Ecumenical Council made any definition about the toll houses. Nor do the service books speak at all explicitly about them, though there are hints in some liturgical texts.

But on the other hand, I certainly do not regard the toll houses merely as a pious opinion or a legend. I would put the teaching about the toll houses on the level of *theologoumena*, and *theologoumena* are less than dogmas but more than private opinions. And in fact it is not true to say the toll houses are Gnostic, because you can find in a number of writers references to them. Yes, it is true that the doctrine of the toll houses is found particularly in Alexandria, and

Alexandria in the early centuries was a great center of Gnosticism. I think the first person who speaks explicitly about the toll houses is Origen, and Origen got into trouble for some of his views, but Origen was certainly not a Gnostic, he was very definitely anti-Gnostic, and a great Christian theologian, even if not all of his views were endorsed. Then you will find references to the toll houses in Athanasius's *Life of Anthony*; in writings attributed to Saint Cyril of Alexandria; you find that in the homilies of Saint Macarius (not that they are from Alexandria, they are probably from Syria), there are hints of the toll houses. So, it is found in quite a number of early Patristic texts, though the fully developed teaching is in the *Life of Saint Basil the New*, which is a tenth century text.

As I see it, the toll houses are an attempt, in picture language, to describe something which lies beyond our present understanding of space and time. We cannot, therefore, form a direct image of how it is going to be in the next life, but the toll houses are using symbolical language. I do not think this language should be interpreted with a naive literalism. But I do see the toll houses as in-

volving important truths as I suggested: that after death there is a growth in self-knowledge, and we understand many aspects of our life, which during the period before our death were perhaps largely hidden from us. That's the way I would interpret it. So I do think that there is an important truth in the tradition of the toll houses, even though I wouldn't wish to overemphasize it. So I come down on one side rather than the other.

Q. You spoke about fear of death and I was just wondering, is it proper for a Christian to really have any fear of anything that is adverse? Thinking of what John said, in his letter, that "perfect love casts out fear," that when we were baptized we joined Jesus in His death and now share in the likeness of His resurrection, "in newness of life." As we grow in love and life and in union with the one Holy Spirit through Jesus, should that not eliminate any fear of anything that is adverse?

A. When Saint John says "perfect love casts out fear," he is speaking, surely, of the level of sanctity, and the
Continued on the next page.

Bishop Kallistos

Continued from page 23.

truth is that very many of us are a long way short of that. Saint John is setting before us something very high and wonderful, but something which is quite hard for us to live, and we mustn't imagine that we can quickly reach the level of having no fear of death.

Now, fear of death could take many different forms. We might ask ourselves when Christ underwent His agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, what was it that so deeply troubled Him, when He said, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death," and "The sweat fell from His brow, like great drops of blood." Some people have understood that as Christ sharing in our human experience of the fear of death, though I think there could be other ways of understanding what is happening in the Garden of Gethsemane.

I wish I could remember the exact words, but somebody here in this room may do so better than me, Saint John Climacus, John of the Ladder, mentions Gethsemane in his work, and he makes a distinction. If I remember rightly he says, Christ "feared death, but was not terrified of it, thus revealing His two natures." Saint John Climacus means that as human Christ shared in all our human experiences, and fear of death is a human experience, but He didn't experience that fear in such a way as to be totally overwhelmed by it and swallowed up by it. I think that is what is meant by the words in Holy Scripture referring to Christ, that "we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tested in everything just as we are, only without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). If Jesus our Savior was tested or tempted in every way as we are, if He was touched with the feeling of our infirmity, then I think there is a sense in which Jesus did experience the fear of death. Because He shared in our brokenness, willingly and voluntarily, He put Himself in the place where we are. Certainly I would think that part of what is happening in Gethsemane is Jesus sharing in the experience that we have as humans, the fear that overwhelms us in the

face of death. Perhaps there were many other things happening too.

So I would accept what you say about perfect love, but I would also say we have a very long way to go before we reach perfect love, and fear of death is a stage we have to pass through, but we mustn't get stuck there. Fear of death is fear of ourselves, and we have to learn to face that fear and live through it and come out the other side. But if Jesus didn't fear death, He wouldn't have been touched with the feeling of our infirmity. To feel temptation is not in itself sinful, and we do believe that Jesus was tempted in everything as we are. He never yielded, and therefore He was perfectly sinless. That's the way I would look at it.



Q. Your Grace, there are those who claim they have had out-of-body experiences. Does the Orthodox Church ever describe such experiences? What is the Church's position on out-of-body experiences?

A. Yes: there are cases, in the Bible, in the saints and other sources, of people who had near-death experiences. And both that experience inwardly of dying and of seeing the realm beyond death, and then being sent back to this world. And exactly the source which speaks of the Toll Houses, the *Life of Saint Basil the New*, describes how he sees about the Toll Houses in a near-death experience. But that is not an isolated incident, there are certainly other sources, and there have been Orthodox in much more recent times who have had these kind of experiences and have recounted them.

But: there is a but — a double-but, perhaps. First, there is obviously need for sobriety and discernment here, and we are not simply to accept every story at its face value. We have to be extremely careful. And secondly, linked to this, we would also in any account of a near-death experience, need to distinguish between the actual experience as the person describes it, on the one hand, and then on the other, the interpretation which they give of that experience. An experience might be authentic, but the interpretation might be open to question. Let me just give an example. I read one or two of the books that were published about twenty years ago about this, when the whole subject was quite fashionable, and the accounts were usually by proxy. And

often they took the form that after death they were confronted with a figure of whom they were in awe, but who seemed to be, and was indeed, definitely benign, definitely on their side, not hostile. Most of the documents assume that this was Jesus Christ. An Orthodox, I think, would not make that assumption. We are not taught to expect that immediately after death we shall come face to face with Christ. In so far as we are told anything, the suggestion is that after death we are likely to meet our guardian angel. And I would have thought it much more likely that this benign person was in fact their guardian angel; only since as Protestants they probably haven't been taught anything about guardian angels, they didn't expect to see him. And he, perhaps, didn't immediately explain who he was. So that would be just an example of the interpretation put on the experi-

ence. Actually in these near-death experiences one very interesting thing was that people said that they suddenly became aware of the whole course of their life. Suddenly, in a flash, they say it all very clearly. Well isn't that somehow a little similar to the Toll Houses? There could be something in common there. But we have to be quite discreet.



Q. Your Grace. The pleasure of the saints, I am sure, is to serve as intermediaries for us in their intercessory prayers, and we do need help in our times of difficulties, and our prayers are answered and we hope that the saints to whom we have prayed are partly, if not greatly, responsible for the success of what it is we have been praying for. To what extent is it appropriate to pray for those who have not been declared saints, but who have passed on, our loved ones, and those who we know to be good and faithful servants of our Lord in their lifetimes? To what extent is it appropriate to ask for their prayers?

A. Yes. There is a distinction here, to make between the public worship of the Church, and our personal prayers, in our own home, before our icons. In the public worship of the Church we only invoke the intercessions of those whom the Church has glorified. Needless to say, the process of glorification can be gradual, there is usually a stage when a saint is honored locally, within a particular diocese, or a particular monastery, before there has been a full and formal glorification. And then, naturally there is the full glorification, through (usually) the local church — though it's interesting in the Church of Greece, still, they honour their mother Church and the glorification of the saints are referred to the Pa-

triarchate of Constantinople before they become final. So the process of glorification is gradual. But having accepted that it is gradual, this distinction does apply: that we do not publicly invoke the prayers of any except those whom the Church has officially glorified. But in our private prayers, we can certainly ask for the prayers of anyone who died in the

faith and the communion of the Church. And let me just give you some examples from the catacombs in Rome — this would be from the second and third centuries A.D. — where clearly, people are asking for the prayers of the departed. Here is the parents asking for the prayers of their dead child: "Pray for your par-

We have no right to say of any person that they are in hell. Only God knows the secrets of people's hearts; God is the Judge, and we are not to judge.

ents, Matronata Matrona, who lived one year, fifty-two days" — a very beautiful inscription. Here's another one: "Anatolius, ours for a little while, our firstborn, pray for us." So I think it's perfectly acceptable, in personal prayers, for us to ask the prayers of anyone who was close to us. And I think the idea of a dead child, praying for her or his parents, is a very beautiful and reassuring one. We ask the living to pray for us, surely we may ask the departed to do the same — but in our private prayers.

Q. Your Grace. You mentioned about Saint Gregory and Trajan, how he prayed for Trajan when he was in hell. I didn't quite understand that. I took it to mean

that there is hope for those souls that are in hell. Could you expound on that and clarify it for me?

A. Yes. The way I would understand this story is that, until the Second Coming of Christ, until the Final Judgment, we are not to say that anything is irrevocably fixed, so far as hell is concerned. The Gates of Hell are in some sense open. We are not to imagine that the saints in heaven descend and lose their sanctity after death — it doesn't apply that way round — but we are to consider that those in hell might be released through the prayers of the living. I think there is considerable support in Tradition for that, but we have to be extremely careful because we understand very little about this. But, I feel a little hesitant about one aspect of that story, which says, "Trajan was in hell." Surely we do not in fact know who is in hell. We have no right to say of any person that they are in hell. Only God knows the secrets of people's hearts; God is the Judge, and we are not to judge. Therefore, when we pray for people, we do not know where they are exactly, and that is why we pray for all. But we have the Church's authority on the day of Pentecost to pray for those in Hell. Are there different levels of hell, others more irrevocable than the first levels? We don't know, there is a great mystery here. But since we do not know who is in hell, we pray for all.

Q. Your Grace. As a follow-up to that answer, how would you interpret, in the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, the chasm that exists between the Rich Man and Lazarus, based on your study of the Church Fathers?

A. Yes, that's a difficult one. Certainly there, there is the suggestion that there is an irrevocable gulf, and that we cannot pass to and fro. On the other hand, when we read the parables, we have to be careful not to assume that every parable is a compendium of Christian doctrine; not to assume that every detail of every parable is expressing a dogma. I think we have to look at the parables in their context, in the Gospels, and ask ourselves: What is the context, and what

Continued on the next page.

Bishop Kallistos

Continued from page 25.

is the point that Jesus is making in the parable? Because if we overlook the main point of the parable, we may be attaching undue importance to certain details. Now, the point in the parable of Dives, the Rich Man and Lazarus, is certainly this: that we must make our decisions in this life. We mustn't put it off for the future life. That is the main point.

I'm not sure how far we can go beyond that in saying we are to take literally the details of the parable as a description of the situation beyond death. But that parable does tell against what I said about the Gates of Hell being open, I agree, but I think that people like Saint John of Damascus, who were well aware of that text, yet felt that does not exhaust the subject. And there may be a mystery in God's love that we do not know about now. And so I would certainly read that parable as saying now is the time of salvation, but I wouldn't read it negatively as saying there could not possibly be any chance of change after death.

Perhaps the departed cannot pass over the chasm by their own power, but perhaps through the prayers of the Church, through the prayers of the living, through the offering of the Divine Liturgy, we can help.

Q. Your Grace. Along the lines of saying that the Gates of Hell are open, concerning funeral services for those outside the canonical parts of the Church, and especially for people who have been murdered, is there a particular way that we can perform them? And secondly, is it possible for us to pray for people who have committed suicide?

A. Firstly, prayer for suicides. The Church teaches that such people cannot be given a Christian burial and cannot be publicly commemorated in memorial services. That certainly is the teaching of the Church. But we may indeed pray for them privately. However the Church is merciful, and if there is a possibility that the balance of a person's mind was disturbed at the moment that they committed suicide, and that they did not understand what they were doing, then we exercise economy and we allow burial

and prayer for them. Who knows, perhaps between the moment that the person took the decision, irrevocably, to kill themselves, and the moment when they lost consciousness, they may suddenly have understood what they were doing and repented. We don't know, so we commend them to the mercy of God.

As for the prayers for the departed,

As for the prayers for the departed, certainly I myself would willingly remember in memorial services persons who were not Orthodox when I am asked to do so by Orthodox brethren. It would seem to me inhuman, in the case of a mixed marriage, when the husband has lost his non-Orthodox wife, for me to refuse to pray for her.

certainly I myself would willingly remember in memorial services persons who were not Orthodox when I am asked to do so by Orthodox brethren. It would seem to me inhuman, in the case of a mixed marriage, when the husband has lost his non-Orthodox wife, for me to refuse to pray for her. So I certainly would be willing to mention their names in the *proskomedia* and to perform a memorial service for them. I would not expect to perform their funeral, I would say the funeral should be performed by the clergy of the religious community in which they die — though I would be willing perhaps to go to the funeral and say some words and offer a prayer, because I believe, particularly in the case of mixed marriages, there is a sharing of grace across Church boundaries. We do bless mixed marriages in the Orthodox Church, and so by the same token I would feel it right that we could have memorial services for non-Orthodox when asked to do so by Orthodox.

That is an exercise of economy, but this is because I believe, some of you may not believe this, but I believe most sincerely that the grace of the Holy Spirit is present outside the visible boundaries of the Orthodox Church. The Orthodox Church is the one true Church of Christ on earth, the Orthodox Church, not by our merits, but by Divine Grace, has the fullness. But we are not to say the other Christians have nothing, indeed they are often as Christians a great deal more sin-

cere than we are. And so I do believe that there is true faith, though perhaps incomplete, outside the Orthodox Church, and true grace of the Holy Spirit. And by that same token, I am willing to pray, when it is a question of families who belong to different religious traditions, for the non-Orthodox members.

As long ago as 1870, long before

Ecumenism had come in, the Ecumenical Patriarchate blessed a form of service whereby Orthodox could bury non-Orthodox, in cases where there was no member of a non-Orthodox clergy available, and that happened quite often in the near-East in the last century, that an Anglican would die, there would be no Anglican clergyman available, the Orthodox priest then would perform a burial service. The service was extremely brief that the Ecumenical Patriarchate provides, but I think more recently fuller services have been allowed; but at least the principle was accepted, that we could say prayers when asked to do so, by economy, in the absence of a priest.

Let me end with a story from the life of Saint Silouan of Mount Athos, and this is recounted in Father Sophrony's biography. Father Sophrony says it was particularly characteristic of Staretz Silouan to pray for those suffering in the hell of separation from God. One day in the refectory, a hermit who had come in for the day said with evident satisfaction, "God will punish all atheists, they will burn forever in hell." Father Silouan was obviously upset by this, and he said, "Father, suppose you were in heaven, and you looked down and saw them suffering in hell. Wouldn't you feel upset?" "No," said the hermit, "it would be their own fault, it can't be helped." And Father Silouan answered, in a sorrowful voice, "Love could not bear that, we must pray for all."

Living the Liturgy in Spiritual Joy

Editor's note: The following is the text of a lecture delivered at St. Tikhon's Seminary on Sept. 24, 1996 as part of the annual lecture series.

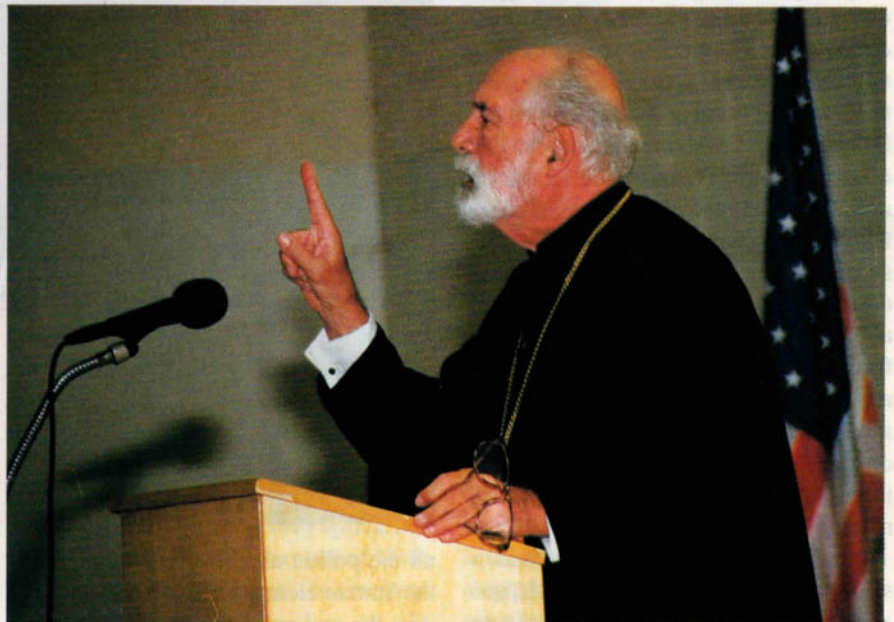
In the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen. Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Well, I'm going to begin with a personal witness myself. When I was given this wonderful topic of "Living the Liturgy in Spiritual Joy," it just reaches the absolute heart, the absolute basic element of where I come from and who I am. I remember as a child, I was in a different type of Christianity at that time, I was in a different dimension of Christianity at the time and they only celebrated the Holy Communion four times a year when I was a boy coming up in the Lutheran Church. But I remember as a child looking forward to what my parents were preparing themselves for, to receive that Holy Eucharist four times a year — Christmas, Easter, Pentecost and one time on the World Communion Sunday. We would attend a preparation confession service on a Thursday or a Friday and I would go with my parents and I could hardly wait until I was twelve years old and got confirmed so that I also could participate in this real presence of the True Body and Blood of Christ, as the Catechism said, "under the forms of bread and wine" in that Holy Communion. So when I am giving a topic like "Living the Liturgy in Spiritual Joy" even long before my conversion to Holy Orthodoxy I have to remember that as a child it was the most special point of my life when I finally could go and participate in the Body and Blood of Christ. It is the essence of the Church.

And before I understood it at all in the context of Orthodox theology, in my inner kind of inner conviction, my inner

pleasant place of knowing the presence of Christ, the real presence of Christ, I always loved the idea that I'm going to feed on this incredible caring, incredible love of God that comes in His Body in His Blood at the heart of the Liturgy.

But didn't Christ gather them in the upper room and say "Take, eat, this is My Body given for you . . . Take, drink, this is the Blood of the New Testament. Do this in remembrance of Me"? Didn't Jesus also say, "Where two or three are gathered in My Name I am there"? And the Greek is particular: "This is My



Fr. Basil Summer

Body." Not a representation, not a symbol, truly He is there. And as a kid I took that seriously; I believed the word of Holy Scripture and therefore when later on I read in the Book of Acts that when those first Christians, the Apostolic Church, gathered — you read it there in the second chapter of Acts — they said they gathered for the reading of the letters of the apostles, for the prayers, the Breaking of Bread, the Eucharist, and the feeding of the fatherless children and the widows. When it comes to Living the Liturgy, when it comes to the Holy Di-

vine Liturgy we in the Church are only doing exactly what Jesus Christ expected the Church to do and be, you see. So, ultimately the liturgy of course is our union with Christ in the Eucharist and it is so important that we Orthodox Christians take seriously our life in the liturgy.

You are lucky most of you, you were born and raised in the Orthodox Tradition. Those of us who did not have that privilege and opportunity — we were frustrated, frustrated spiritually and sacramentally because liturgy, at least in Lutheranism, is an option not of the es-

sence of what the Church is, but for you, all your lives the fullness of that Liturgy was offered to you, and your clergy, from the hierarchs to the lowest of clergy, concelebrate the reality of this wonderful thing that is our union. Because of that upper room, because of the teaching of the Church, the liturgy is not an option but of the essence of what the Church does and what the Church is. Life in Christ is the sacrament of the Eucharist, Saint Nicholas Cabasilas wrote in the fourteenth century (and you ought to

Continued on the next page.

Living the Liturgy in Joy

Continued from page 27.

read his book *The Life in Christ*). His thesis is and was exactly apostolic and true. We are committed, you and I, if we are Christians we are committed to a liturgical sacramental life. There is no other Christian life. Spiritual Joy is living in this Christ and therefore living in the Liturgy. Now of course you know there are some keys which open up the door for us to living the Liturgy, which means a meaningful participation in this divine life.

First Key: a Basic Liturgical and Sacramental Understanding

The first key, maybe, of *Living the Liturgy in Spiritual Joy*, therefore participating meaningfully in the Liturgy, is that you and I have to have a basic understanding of liturgical and sacramental life. So many theologians have written about the liturgy, that ancient Nicholas Cabasilas, Fr. Alexander Schmemmann of recent times; Fr. Lev Gillet, a French monk, Orthodox; Fr. Stanley Harakas at Holy Cross in Brooklyn. I would not presume to meet all their insights and understandings of living the liturgy. They are for your further studying and for your further reading, you and me. But there are some simple things we can understand and appreciate about our Holy Tradition which will make our participation in this utter *joy* in the Liturgy rich and meaningful.

The first thing about this basic understanding of Liturgy and sacrament is, you and I have to have a personal acceptance of salvation and redemption from God through Christ who is His only Son. Of course this is essential, it is a personal commitment. When you are dealing with truth, when you are dealing with Orthodox truth you are dealing with a person and the person is Jesus and you and I. For any meaningful understanding of Liturgy and any meaningful understanding of Liturgy as life in any kind of joy depends upon you and me having a personal commitment and a personal understanding of the meaning of Christ in your life. God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son. You look at the

Holy Cross which you make over your body and you come to understand what it cost God to love you and to save you, to redeem you from death, from sin, from evil, and these are appropriate for our time.

We still want freedom from death, freedom from sin, freedom from evil which consumes our life. Life in Christ is a personal life in God Who came in Him and that God Who came in Him comes in the Liturgy. The means by which this saving and loving Christ God comes to us and by which we can respond to Him are in the Mysteries, the Sacraments of the Church, and the only real purpose for the Church in spite of

rist, and the caring for fatherless children and widows. See, there was no missionary Church outside the celebration of the Liturgy, for in the Liturgy one personally touched the Life in Christ. Okay, growth and grace in *the joy of Christ* is living in the refreshing beauty of all the sacraments. Baptism, confession, chrismation, communion, ordination, marriage, the anointing with oil, and so on — they all have significant meaning, but the one that comes most often to us after one baptism, one chrismation, hopefully one marriage, is of course the eucharist, communion with the Lord. The Liturgy of the Eucharist because it's the central and primary act of worship



all the politic and all the ethnic and all the human element and all the whatever it is, the real purpose of the Church and its real function is to celebrate the Liturgy. People get the idea that Saint Paul, you know the big preacher, went out into Athens and stood on the Acropolis and preached and saved all those people. Do you think for a moment that Saint Paul did not also celebrate the Liturgy? The Apostolic Liturgy is spelled out clearly. They gathered to hear the letters of the apostles, the epistle, the gospel, they gathered to hear the prayers — not extemporaneous, “the prayers,” consult the Greek, but they did it in the temple. The Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, the Breaking of Bread, the Eucha-

for us is the one thing we always do in the Orthodox Church.

This is why all those theologians wrote so wonderfully about the liturgical and sacramental life. Cabasilas would say *Life in Christ* is *Life in the Liturgy* for at the heart of the Divine Liturgy is the heart of God in Christ, His Body, His Blood. There is no *Life in Christ* outside this *Life in the Liturgy!* And I quote, “Those who become participants in the sacraments are reborn and recreated spiritually and in a unique and exceptional way are joined and united with the Savior,” or as Saint Paul said “It is no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me.” The sacramental life is thus at the heart of what it means to be a Christian at all.

My conversion to Orthodox Christianity, believe me, involved my conviction and contemplation on this very subject that I am addressing to you in all humility tonight. Communion, Liturgy is not option, it is essence. It is essence of what we are in the Church. The Liturgy is the place where the most intense experience of the presence of Christ is made in our lives. Taking His Body, His Blood into ourselves, living the Liturgy is Spiritual Joy is therefore the *joy of our union with Christ Jesus and His union with us, an awesome moment in our life every week, every Sunday, every feast day, to be sure!*

I used to say to my parishioners who always had some reason not to be at the Divine Liturgy, I would say well you can go out on the golf course, yes, but you can't get the Body and Blood of Christ in the oak tree as you make a ball go the wrong way on the green. You can go out and fish on Sunday and you can catch all the fish in the world, but you cannot get the Body and Blood of Christ from the water or from the fish that come up from the sea. The Body and Blood, God's union with His people is only at the altar in your temple, where He says "Take, eat, this is My Body. I give it to you because I love you." The key of liturgical and sacramental understanding is that we must know *why* the Liturgy, what the Liturgy is, *where* the Liturgy takes place.

Second Key: the Structure of the Liturgy of Saint John

The second key to a meaningful participation or to find joy in living the Liturgy of course is to understand something about its structure. You take the Liturgy of Saint John, the one we celebrate the most, very quickly — and I don't want to bore you with these details because these are all things we need to rediscover. We can never take it for granted that we know everything.

There should be something kind of recreative and something exciting about every time you hear the priest as he lifts up the gospel book and he makes the sign of the cross over the altar table and he says, "Blessed is the Kingdom" for at that moment we are laying all cares aside and our representative, in the person of our priest, is announcing that heaven and

earth are going to meet in this place at this Holy Table — announcing the Kingdom. How many people are already looking at their watches saying, "Well, let's see, it is going to take us about an hour and a half maybe by the time we get through, what a waste of energy." With that announcement of the Kingdom is the announcement that God is coming. In a very real, a very personal, a very individual way for you and for me. There is a special moment for us and for our Spiritual Joy in the Liturgy all earthly cares are put aside, as he announces the coming of the Lord and His kingdom on earth again. This sets the stage for us, you know — we who come from busy lives, busy homes, marriages, careers, problems, cares, disappointments, pain, whatever we come from. Out of the noises of the world all of a sudden we are in a sacred place and there is announced the Kingdom is coming *now*.



The very next thing that happens, you know, is peace. Remember when Jesus came through the closed doors of the upper room to the twelve and the ladies and the friends of Christ after Pascha? The very first thing He said when He came through the closed doors "Peace be unto you!" And we pray, don't we, "In peace let us pray to the Lord," in peace for the world, for the church, for the hierarchy, for the priest, for the laity, for the professions, for the natural resources — that whole Great Litany is a

moment in peace when we pray our petitions, for all of life, for joy in all of life. Don't you see? Then, only then, after an announcement of the Kingdom do we utter and enter and utter actually as we enter this moment of great peace in the Great Litany. Then is the Little Entrance where the Gospel Book is brought out into the middle of the church and around through the Great Holy Doors. Then is the moment after this Little Entrance where the Word becomes present with us.

Then is our chance to listen, carefully and quietly to listen. So many noises in the world. The first part of our liturgy is the part where we really, after that entrance, listen. We have to listen to the voice of God, we have to listen to the voice of the words of His apostles, we have to listen to the voice of His only-begotten Son in the Holy Gospels, we have to listen to the sermon which is supposed to be the Word of God. Not the word of a priest. We listen, our world is noisy, our world is busy, our world is confused, our world is troubled, our world is filled with the glitter and the beauty and some of the splendor of the world. But at these moments, good or bad, in the middle we need to listen. What does God have to say? This is all understanding the structure now. And so we listen — epistle, gospel, sermon — and you priests and you preachers, it is not your word. It is to be God's Word that you give.

Then comes the Great Entrance and the Liturgy of the Faithful with the Creed and the Peace and the prayers of the Church, the sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ, the Communion, and the final dismissal. Now we enter into the upper room again with Christ Himself and we are the faithful. In the very early Church, of course you know the catechumens and the visitors were to leave the presence; the believers, the faithful remain. And the faithful do what? Confess their belief in the Creed. The Faithful are those who have peace with one another. When the priests exchanged the Kiss of Peace so did the laity with one another. "Peace be unto all" — a very high point in the liturgy. When that peace is given it is like Christ coming through that

Continued on the next page.

Living the Liturgy in Joy

Continued from page 29.

closed door in the upper room. The Faithful are those who also seek joyful life in Christ, union with Him. They preserve and they prepare themselves to receive union with Christ. The Faithful believe that the Body and Blood are given to them personally and individually. And each name, baptized name is given. "It is no longer I that live, but Christ that lives in me." The Faithful are dismissed to live the liturgy in their lives by loving and caring for their world. The world where the live, work, play, build. This is the structure of the liturgy.

Third Key: Participation in the Divine Liturgy

The last key that we need to think about in "living the liturgy in spiritual joy" and participating meaningfully in what it is, is, of course, our participation. Yours in this divine service. Our understanding of the universal priesthood of the laity, lay participation in the liturgy is vital to living the liturgy. The liturgy is not a stage, you know, for priestly exhibition only for those ordained by certain apostolic hands or wearing vestments of splendor and gold. These are terrible misunderstandings and interpretations of the role of the sacramental priesthood.

The sacrament of Holy Chrismation ordained all of us into a priesthood of the laity, and the *laos*, the people of God, are by baptism members of the faithful. Priests do not celebrate the Divine Liturgy without the people. And there are no dry masses in the Orthodox Church. Laity in a way concelebrate the liturgy with their priests according to the roles and functions of their position in the life of the Church. It is a terrible thing, you know, to think that a priest can stand by himself and celebrate the Holy Liturgy. We concelebrate with our priests and our bishops. And how do we do that? This is so simple, but it is so profound, by making the sign of the cross. I will never forget one of the first times I entered an Orthodox Church I was amazed by the young men and women who came into the doors of the church. They blessed themselves as they entered. We never did

that where I came from. And I said to myself and I asked the priest then "Why are they blessing themselves?" And the priest said, "Well, Pastor Summer, we in our church bless ourselves for several reasons. Entering the church we remind ourselves of our baptism when first the cross was put over us, we bless ourselves because we have entered into a holy place, we bless ourselves because on the altar will be and is the true Body and Blood of Christ."

Upon that sign, I say it so simple, how profound it is when you make the sign of the cross. You know I used to sneak when I was still a Lutheran and my parents would put me to bed. I would sneak and make a sign of the cross over myself because my family they did not do

tion, but it is. It is part of your concelebration that you make the cross over yourself.

Being in the church, just being present is concelebrating. The importance of the building, set aside as sacred space, set aside for an altar table, set aside with the images of all the saints, you're surrounded with the company of heaven, you're surrounded by the company of the saints on earth, your brothers and sisters in Christ. Just being there is living the liturgy, being part of the joy of that fellowship — so great is the importance of being present.

Also — and I should have put this first, I suppose — obviously you're receiving faithfully and often His Body and Blood in the Eucharist after good prepara-

"The means by which this saving and loving Christ God comes to us and by which we can respond to Him are in the Mysteries, the Sacraments of the Church, and the only real purpose for the Church in spite of all the politic and all the ethnic and all the human element and all the whatever it is, the real purpose of the Church and its real function is to celebrate the Liturgy."

that. Openly you make that Holy Cross. It is one of your first participations in the liturgy. It brings you such joy, doesn't it? I love to do it. I had a Greek priest watching how we in sort of Slavic tradition make the cross at all petitions — I was celebrating in his church, you know, and he was watching me celebrate, I was a new priest at the time. And of course at every petition I'm making the sign of the cross and he said, "Father, you don't have to make the sign of the cross so many times." I wanted to tell him I was so hungry to make the sign of the cross when I was brought up I could hardly stand it. I could hardly say the Word of Christ, and I would want to bless His image over my body, don't you see. But you take all of this for granted, you don't even think that it is part of the participa-

tion with your life and your lifestyle. By confession with your spiritual father you participate fully in that union by going to communion, understanding that the Liturgy is really an incredible banquet and it is being spread for the world, but it is being spread for you who are the faithful. It is sharing with the choir, the responses and the biddings, the great hymns of *tropari*. It is participating in those songs when it is possible, singing quietly along if not openly with a massive and impressive choir. That's how you do it. It is reciting, intoning aloud "I believe in God the Father," "Amen," "I believe in Jesus Christ," or "Our Father who art in heaven." The Our Father, The Father, God, you see. It is using our bodies, you see, it's even using our bodies — this is one of the things I loved about

the Orthodox Church when I was making my journey and pilgrimage toward it, the very fact that it was a religion, a Christianity of incredible touch. Using your bodies, putting your lips to a holy image. Not only blessing yourself with the cross, but it's body language of bowing and then prostrations and kissing with one's lips. Not only the kiss of peace at Pascha, but the images of Christ and His mother, and of all the saints who are with you in this Liturgy — all significant moments of joy and then listening and praying; you have your Liturgy book there.

Then you are ready to be dismissed and go into the world filled with Christ. And with His joy we reach out into the world. Living the Liturgy only begins in the temple. It is our life, our lifestyle, the way we project our joy in Christ to others. This is the measure of "Living the Liturgy in Spiritual Joy." Don't you see, we take it seriously, Christ is present in the Divine Liturgy. We are there, if we are going to live in the joy of Pascha, in the joy of life after death, in the joy of



forgiveness of sins, the joy of meaningful love and meaningful life, caring and loving God and loving one another. To live that Liturgy begins with celebrating it with our lives. We leave the temple, we go into the world and we project that

joy to everyone we know. That's how the Church conquered the ancient apostolic world and I believe that's how the Church is going to conquer our time and world, don't you think? Amen.

—Archpriest Basil Summer

*The Most Reverend Archbishop Herman
and
Orthodox Christians for Life
Request the honour of your presence for
The Orthodox Witness on the Sanctity of Human Life
at the*

1997 March for Life

Wednesday, January 22, 1997, 11:30 A.M.

Dignitaries on the Podium at 11:45 A.M. / Program Activities Start at 12:00 noon

The Ellipse, Washington, D.C.

(across the street from the White House)

RSVP by January 14, 1997
Orthodox Christians for Life
P.O. Box 805, Melville, NY 11747
(516) 271-4408

Healing Through Confession and Holy Communion

The following is the text of a lecture presented October 1, 1996 at the annual St. Tikhon's lecture series.

In my lifetime, I have not been a very frequent watcher of television or viewer of movies. But as I was thinking about tonight's topic images flashed in my mind. I remember seeing a movie many years ago called "Terms of Endearment." It was a study of a mother-daughter relationship where the daughter eventually struggled painfully to die of a terminal illness. I can remember wondering why there was no attempt in that picture, as deep as it went and as serious a look as it took at life, to allow for the grace of the Lord or the presence of the Church or for the healing that comes from heaven.

Another image that appeared in my thinking was a program called "All in the Family." That shows you how often I watch television. There was a discussion between Archie Bunker and his neighbor. He said to her, "Do you Catholics believe in God knowing everything there is?" She said, "Of course, we believe God knows everything there is." He said, "How comes you run to confession and tell Him stuff?"

Last spring, I was in a hospital one night with someone who was undergoing emergency surgery. In that waiting



Fr. Michael Dahulich

room they had a television, and there was a show called "Law and Order." A woman in that script had just murdered her infant. And to make a long story short, the revelation of that script was that she killed her baby because her priest had said from the pulpit how beautiful it is for a child who dies and has been baptized to go to heaven and to behold the glory of God. She wanted that eternal life instead of the misery and poverty of her life for her child, so she suffocated that baby, and then burned him and said he had been stolen. All because of what her priest said.

My point is this, in the war between good and evil, between the Lord and Satan, between the Church and the kingdom of Hades, it is very clear to me that in the media we are not given a fair shake as to what the Church or the grace of God or the love of Christ or the ministry of the priesthood are all about. You know yourself that recent events have shown us that a Church that has a presence in this country of two hundred years, gets a little tiny box in the *New York Times* to celebrate that anniversary. When an unfortunate circumstance takes place, it makes headlines in the lower half of the

front page of that same widely read and respected publication.

To Educate the World

It is not our purpose or attempt tonight to educate the world about the healing that the Church has been blessed by the Lord to effect. It is our purpose to examine as a family in Christ the riches that we have been given by the Lord known as the Holy Mysteries that keep us healthy, make us whole and hopefully make us holy. If the world doesn't know it, it might be its fault. But it also might be our own because we need to know it, we need to teach it, we need to live it and then perhaps others will be moved enough to take a look and even gives us a fair shake against the way of the world.

I have acquaintance whose son announced that he believed he needed to embrace an alternate lifestyle. This woman was so distraught that she immediately went to the bank and withdrew a large sum of money and enrolled him in therapy sessions with a prominent psychologist. After six weeks of expensive consults, he came and announced to her that the doctor had said that all he really needed to do was to live his choice in the most meaningful and fulfilling way possible for himself. I know someone else who was involved in a tumultuous love triangle with a married woman and somehow survived what many people don't survive. He went into therapy and was told the next time have a quiet affair discretely with an unknown mistress.

On the other hand, I have a parishio-

ner who for thirty years has battled cancer — cervical, stomach and now colon. She has been pumped full of poison for years and suffered in pain. One day she simply said to the doctor, “Enough is enough.” The doctor said, “There’s a new drug, let’s try it.” She said no. She is living on her faith.

Breakdown of Relationships

The world is thought to be in control of men’s destiny. The devil has convinced us that’s possible. This is not the way of the Church. We are in a relationship — each of us — with the God whom the world says does not exist, with our brothers and sisters in the faith whom the world regards as strangers, and with our own self whom the world regards as a god. Many times, the diseases we find ourselves afflicted with are the cause and result, both the cause and result, of the breakdown of relationships: the I-Thou relationship between a person and his creator, the relationship of brother and brother, and the breakdown in one’s own relationship with one’s self.

The Church teaches us all of us make mistakes. All of us break relationships, sometimes knowingly, sometimes accidentally. But the Church teaches us that out there, in the real world, we can call it what we want to, but there is sin. And sin is a relational act, a break. At least a break between I and Thou, between man and God.

An Act of Responsibility

We see repentance as a dynamic act of responsibility to God and to other men to say, after self examination, “I have missed the mark.” If we pretend we don’t sin, we fill ourselves with delusion, we allow ourselves to be saturated by evil, we invite the sickness and disease that come from anger and greed, from laziness, from overindulgence and from the guilt that comes with a myriad of other breakdowns of relationships.

We Orthodox are very well familiar with the parable of the prodigal son. It is the story of the healing of a relationship. When the prodigal son came to himself in the Gospel of Luke, he did so in relation to his father. “I will go to my father

and say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you’” (Luke 15:18). That’s a metaphor. We’re all the prodigal. We repent before God, we repent in communion with others and we repent in the Church. And the method that Christ has given us and the method that the Church preserves for us to do that very thing is Holy Confession. And tonight I just want to help us look at it from perhaps a different, if not different, then deeper meaning than many of us might see it.

The Reality of Sin

Confession is not something we have to do because the Church says so. It’s something that we need to want to do because the Lord loves us and has given us the opportunity to make ourselves right in our relationship with Him and with others and even with ourself. Make no mistake about it Holy Confession presupposes the reality of sin. It’s not, Live the way you want to live — the best way possible. It’s not, We’ll do it a little more carefully so we don’t get caught. It is calling a spade a spade. It is calling a wrong a sin, and it is repenting, saying: I’ve made a mistake; I’m not going to do it any more; I’m going to turn around and come back to my Father. Just like the prodigal son did.

I tell students in my New Testament class all the time that from my limited perspective, in a comparative study of world religions, the greatest gift that the Church offers the world, the greatest gift that Christ brings to us all, is forgiveness. He not only brought it, but he paid for it. He died for it. For centuries the world sought the forgiveness of sins. They sacrificed to pagan gods. They offered incense and burnt offerings, and yes animals, and even in the most extreme of bizarre cases, they offered infants to secure the forgiveness of their sins.

The Gift of Forgiveness

In the Gospel of Mark, the very first miracle that Jesus performs is the story of the paralytic who was brought by four men to be healed by Jesus. The cure that they were looking for was that he could

walk. The healing that they were looking for was physical. The miracle that they wanted was very practical. Jesus had something else in mind. The miracle would be spiritual. The miracle would heal the soul and then the body. The miracle would be the occasion for the very first time in the history of the world to substantively, objectively and without a doubt prove that the forgiveness of sins is here and now.

You know the story. Jesus said, “My son, your sins are forgiven you.” To this the Pharisees responded, “This man blasphemes. Who can forgive sins but God alone?” This is a tremendous question because it revealed the truth. The Jews believed God alone could forgive sins. But Jesus said, “So that you can know that the Son of Man has the power on earth to forgive sins, what is easier for me to say: ‘Your sins are forgiven, or Stand up and walk’?” Well, it’s easier to say your sins are forgiven. So I’ll do the harder thing: Stand up and walk. Arise, take up your bed and go to your own house with your sins forgiven.

That is the Church’s role — to forgive sins. Now what that means though is that we have to identify sin. We have to say very strongly, very firmly, very unchangeably that abortion is sin. That sex outside of marriage is always a sin. That cheating in school or in the workplace is always a sin. And then we have to bring ourselves and others to repent of those sins and then the Church opens the treasury of its riches and offers forgiveness.

The Church at Work

I marvel at how well that happens with someone entrusted with these riches by God. In the four years that I have been privileged to work here, I have watched Archbishop Herman extend himself to condemn the murder of innocent children — and then, reach out and forgive a young girl who has done that very grave crime. I have seen in his face the pain of losing people who are disobedient to the laws of the Church, sometimes in large numbers. And then I have heard him say, The door is always open for them to come back and be welcomed back in

Continued on the next page.

Healing Through Confession and Communion

Continued from page 33.

love. I have seen him discipline his seminarians, chastise his children, and then I watched on that glorious day, when, having molded them, he dispenses the grace of ordination and make them priests.

That is the Church at work. That is the Church doing what it does best. For a bishop, that is his life's responsibility. For all of us, that is a personal challenge. Parents have to do that for their children. Spouses have to do that for each other. And yes, priests have to do it for their flock. It is a little more complicated than Archie Bunker realized.

Two Components of Forgiveness

Forgiveness is brought to us in a complex way. It has evolved into that, because it is so encompassing. It involves the absolution of our sins. Jesus said to the apostles who gave that power to the bishops who in turn give it to the priests, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you. Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained" (John 20:21-23). Forgiveness is about absolving sins. The story of the woman caught in the act of adultery is an example. Everybody was ready to stone her; that is what the Law prescribed. Against that great force of the Old Testament with its heavy legalism came the liberating power of the Lord of Life who said, "Let whoever has never sinned cast the first stone." And they left her. "Is there no one to condemn you? No. Then I don't either. Go in peace and sin no more" (John 8:3-11). It is more than absolution. It is healing. Forgiveness is healing. Forgiveness is making something right that was wrong.

St. James writes, "Is anyone sick? Let him call for the priests of the Church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord — and the prayer of faith will save the sick person and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he shall be forgiven. Confess your sins one to another

and pray for one another that you may be healed" (Jas. 5:13-16).

Pray for Christ to give you that healing — the healing of soul and body. We are mindful of the story of the woman with the hemorrhage. She came to Christ and she knew that if we could only touch the hem of His garment, she would be healed. Her faith saved her. Her faith made her whole because Christ gave her not just the absolution of her sins but healing (Matt. 9:20-22).

These two elements of forgiveness are combined into one sacrament now. Today the spiritual father has the authority to absolve and the ministry of dispensing spiritual medicine. St. John Chrysostom tells us, "Let us apply to ourselves the saving medicine of repentance and accept from God the repentance that heals us. For it is not we who offer it to Him but He Who bestows it upon us" (*De Poenitentia* 7,3). We don't realize, so many of us don't realize, the richness of the history of confession. We tend to think that it is just an obstacle that we have to go through. That thinking has got to stop. We have to realize that with confession comes a link to the Lord of Life, the Lord of Forgiveness, the Lord of Heaven and Earth. The Lord who gave us baptism and opened to us with that key, the door to heaven, gave a second baptism. That's what Tertullian calls repentance, the "second baptism." After we mess up again, and again, and again.

In the early Church, confession was public. Just like we are gathered here right now, the Archbishop would pronounce absolution, but after each of us would get up and say this is what I did and I am sorry. We would not only be confessing to the Lord that we are sorry, we would be confessing to everyone. Everyone! That's how it was. Public. Vocal. Objective. Open.

There were abuses. After three centuries of the Church that was converting the world, there were abuses. And so the Spiritual Father stood in for the Church. Genuine confessions became the source of public discussion and judgement and gossip. And so the Holy Fathers made confession private, they adjusted confession, fine-tuned it for all the membership of the Church.

From the fourth century on, confession was private to a priest. The great historian, the late Father Meyendorff writes in his *Byzantine Theology*, "Originally a public act required from sinners who either have been officially excommunicated or had performed acts liable, penance gradually and especially after the fourth century, took the form of private confession followed by a prayer of absolution pronounced by the priest." Confession then identified itself almost completely with the practice of private spiritual direction especially widespread in monastic communities. But it always was the expression of sin, publicly, openly, saying we are sorry, repenting honestly and truthfully. As it says in the Acts of the Apostles, "Many of those who were believers came, confessing and divulging their practices" (Acts 19:18).

Confession is not telepathy. It is not making an excuse or justifying why I did what I did. It is honestly and openly and truthfully saying this is wrong, and I need to be healed. This is eating inside of me, and I need to have it removed. This is growing inside of me, and I need to have it operated on. The darkness needs to be brought to light (John 1:5). The sin needs to be exposed. In Matthew's Gospel the Lord prophesied that in the end, there would be "nothing in secret that would not be known or anything hidden that would not be revealed" (Matt. 10:26), so we might as well save ourselves the punishment that would await our sins and tap into the forgiveness of the Lord has given to us through the Church.

Confession is not a negative thing. It is a beautiful positive thing. It is being thankful to the Lord for His great gift of forgiveness. Like the Psalmist writes, "I will confess, I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart, and tell of His wonders" (Psalm 9:1). How many of you actually leave the Church and thank God that your sins are gone, thank God that your soul is healed, thank God that you are back on track? I hope all of you do that. I hope that all of you share that story of the healing of the Lord, of the forgiveness that Christ brings and died for and makes available to you and to all of us to those people who have to spend thousands of dollars on a therapy couch those people who rely on some-

one who is trusting in the ways of the world to solve the problem for which Christ has already died.

An Effective Confession

When you go to confession, make it effective. Be aware of your sins. Don't ever fool yourself. We cannot say that we have no sins; as St. John writes, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins then He the Lord is faithful and just to forgive our sins and cleanse us of all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:8-9). All of us miss the mark. All of us fall short of the glory of God.

And we need to be sorry for our sins. We need to repent of those sins. The great spiritual fathers of Holy Russia all speak about repenting with tears. Saints Isaac the Syrian, Symeon the New Theologian and Ignatii Brianchaninov all concur with Chrysostom who writes, "Greater than baptism itself is the fountain of tears after baptism, even though it is somewhat audacious to say; for baptism is the washing away of evil that was in us before. But sins committed after baptism are washed away by tears."

Because baptism is received in infancy we have all defiled it. We cleanse it anew with tears and if God in His love for mankind had not given us tears, then few indeed would be saved. We cry because we don't get our way. We cry because our feelings are hurt. We cry because we don't win the lottery. We need to cry like the woman at the feet of Jesus and receive something greater than all those other earthly possessions our earthly mind could imagine.

We also need to resolve to do better and not to sin again. True repentance means giving it up. Lent calls us to that very thing to give up the ways of the world, to give up thinking that we are greater or as great as God — that we can fool Him — that we can play deceit with the devil. We need to be honest. We need to repent and we need to turn away from sin.

And finally, we need to confess those sins. We need to tell the spiritual father who stands as a witness for Christ, hiding nothing, as the prayer in the service of confession, the "Institution of the

penitent," says: "Do not hide anything, lest you come to the Physician and depart unhealed."

The priest is not a judge. The priest is a witness to your sorrow, to your repentance for the Lord. He is an instrument of healing. Grace does not depend on Him. It depends upon the power of the Lord that comes through him. "Have you committed a sin?" Chrysostom asks, "Then enter the Church and repent of your sins . . . For here is the Physician, not the Judge; here one is not investi-

tion he pronounces. He can bind as well as loose . . . Here, as always, we should think primarily in therapeutic healing rather than juridical terms."

Sacrament of Healing

The Church gives us Holy Confession as a sacrament of healing. It is truly a great gift that God bestows on us through His Son, paid for lock, stock and barrel by the Lord. I submit to you to use it prayerfully and piously and spiritually

In certain circumstances, general confession can well serve as a living model of repentance, as a communal act of the Church, and it would in that instance manifest the very essence of confession. But it is not a substitute for personal confession which involves the intimate self-evaluation of the soul of the penitent and the expression openly of those sins and the guidance on the part of the spiritual father.

gated but receives the remission of sins" (*De Peonitentia*, 3).

Need for Personal Confession

I would like to just say a quick word about general confession and its institution. In certain circumstances, general confession can well serve as a living model of repentance, as a communal act of the Church, and it would in that instance manifest the very essence of confession. But it is not a substitute for personal confession which involves the intimate self-evaluation of the soul of the penitent and the expression openly of those sins and the guidance on the part of the spiritual father. St. Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain tells us that very thing in his *Exomologetarion*.

Last fall we were graced to have with us Bishop Kallistos Ware. This is what he writes: "All who have experienced the blessing of having as their father confessor one imbued with the grace of true spiritual fatherhood, will testify to the importance of the priest's role. His function is not simply to give advice. There is nothing automatic about the absolu-

as an antidote to the therapy of this world. Through the forgiveness of sins and confession, the past is no longer an intolerable burden, but rather an encouragement for what lies ahead. You know yourself if you are a husband or a wife, if you are a mother or a father, when someone in your family does something wrong, you say, I forgive you. You will forgive, but you can't forget. The Lord forgives, and the Lord forgets. It is an encouragement for what lies ahead, which is the Kingdom.

Life requires an attitude of expectation, not despondency, and confession becomes the way out of the impasse caused by sin. In this respect, repentance is an eschatological act. Realizing in our very midst, here and now, the promise of the age to come. Looking backwards would simply imply the fate of Lot's wife (Genesis 19:26). Jesus said, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62). God Himself is revealed before us. God Himself walks in front of us. As St. Paul says, "The one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining for-

Continued on the next page.

Healing Through Confession and Communion

Continued from page 35.

ward to what lies ahead, is to focus on the Lord" (Philippians 3:13).

Perhaps my friend's son, perhaps that person involved in the love triangle, perhaps so many people really need the healing power of Christ. St. Diadochus of Photike tells us: "Just as bodily wounds that are not cared for are hardened and do not feel the bitterness of the medicine used by doctors, yet when they are cleansed they begin to feel the effect of medicine and consequently are healed rapidly, so also with the soul . . . when it begins to be purified with great care, then it feels the fear of God burning in it like a lifegiving medicine and it is judged while its passions are burned" (*Gnostic chapters*, 17). And if we need that healing power Saturday night this week is the time to make use of God's gift of forgiveness in Christ Jesus by coming to holy confession before or after Vespers.

What the Eucharist Is

The second Mystery that is for healing is the Holy Eucharist. I am appalled, truly appalled after twenty-four years in the priesthood to know that there are people that still think that I *have* to go to communion once a else or I can't vote at a meeting, or I can't run for office in the parish. I'm appalled that after twenty-four years of being a part of a team that has been working with Christian souls for two thousand years, this notion could still in any way, shape, matter or form exist. This notion that the Eucharist is a regulation, something that has to be done, something that is an obstacle.

The Lord said when He created that Eucharist, "Take and eat, this is My Body. Drink of this, all of you, this is My Blood. Do this in remembrance of Me" (Luke 22:19-22). Do we love the Lord? He doesn't ask us to bless Easter food. He doesn't ask us to wear a cross around our neck. He doesn't ask us to ward off the evil eye when a baby is born. He asks us to take and eat and to drink of this. And St. Paul reiterates when he says, "As often as you eat this Bread and drink this Cup, you proclaim the Lord's

death until he comes again" (1 Cor. 11:26). You proclaim that He died for you and for me.

His Real Presence

That Eucharist is the actual Body and Blood of the Lord. How? It's a mystery. Why? Because he said so. "This is My Body. This is My Blood." The Scripture doesn't say this symbolizes My Body, this symbolizes My Blood. It says, *This is*. Jesus said, "I am the living Bread which came down from Heaven. If anyone eats of this Bread he will live forever; and the Bread that I shall give is My Flesh for the life of the world . . . Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My Flesh and drinks My Blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day" (John 6:51-54). That's the promise of Christ. Those are the words of the Lord spoken by the Son of God. "My Flesh is food indeed and My Blood is drink indeed" (John 6:55). St. John Chrysostom tells us, "What is in the chalice is the same as that which flowed from Christ's side. What is the Bread? Christ's Body."

At every Liturgy we represent, make anew, the Holy Spirit makes anew in the midst of the Church what Christ spoke, what Christ did at the Mystical Supper. We commemorate His Death and His Resurrection, His Ascension, His Sitting at the Right Hand, His second and glorious Coming Again — in short, everything He has ever done and is doing and will do for us. We commemorate all of that in the Holy Eucharist. That's what it is. It's not a long service. It's not an obstacle to go over. It's not something that we have to meet once a year. It is the very presence of Christ.

The Right Relationship

Earlier we spoke about healing and a breakdown of healing in terms of our relationship with the Lord. The right relationship is unity with the Lord and the Church, and it happens quintessentially in the most perfect form in the Eucharist. Christ doesn't come personally, substantively to us in anointing or in mar-

riage, but He does in the Eucharist. We meet Him and invite Him into our soul at that sacrament and that mystery. We become married to Him — a soul and her Lord, the Divine Physician and the penitent. Cyril of Jerusalem writes, "Christ has given to the children of the bridal chamber the enjoyment of His Body and His Blood."

Once a year at least someone asks me, Why can't I go to the sacraments in another Church? We're married to the Eucharist, to Christ in the intimacy of the sacraments of our own Church. It is like a marriage. When you are out of town, because every woman is a woman, can you be intimate with another woman besides your wife? We're married to Christ in this Church. He gives us His Life in this Church. He feeds us His Body and Blood in this Church. That's our relationship.

We also become one with the apostles who were given the first Holy Eucharist. And the saints of every age who stood as hierarchs or priests and lifted the chalice or stood humbly and received it with arms folded as lay people, giving their life for the Christ they received, living their life for the Christ they received in the Holy Eucharist.

We become one with each other. In his famous tract on *The Unity of the Church*, Alexei Khomiakov writes that we become one with the living and the dead. When you lose someone to the Lord, and I have lost someone to the Lord, there is no sense in standing over the grave and crying, trying to become somehow one with that person in a place where we remember their loss. We should become one with them in the place where there gain is remembered, where they have gained the Christ Whom we will see at the great banquet when we join them in the kingdom. We should become one with them in the Eucharist. That is why the Church has the All Souls Saturday to unite us through prayer and the Eucharist to those people we have lost to the Lord.

Members of the Church

It is by the Eucharist that we become members of the Body of Christ. We are all related. All of us in the Orthodox

Church are related — not by the blood that flows through our veins, but by the Blood that Christ shed on the Cross for us and for our salvation — by the Blood that we partake of in Holy Communion.

The Eucharist invites us to the Banquet of the Messiah. If you got an invitation to the White House, would you turn it down? Christ is greater than President Clinton. If you were invited to a State Dinner, would you eat whatever was served? And yet we turn down the Holy Eucharist. Remember the Gospel story of the king who threw a banquet, a wedding banquet for his son and people made excuses. I can't go, I've got . . . I bought a new ox, I got married, I have a lot of work at the farm, I can't go. What did the king say? What did the king do?

Our Life in Christ

The Eucharist is our strength and commitment to Christ: not to the world, not to the ways of the world, not to the doctors and the science of the world — but to Christ and His Way and His Truth and His Life. In his *Mystic Treatises*, St. Isaac writes, “Blessed is he who has eaten the Bread of love which is Jesus. While still in the world, he breathes the air of the Resurrection, in which the righteous will delight after they rise from the dead.” The bread of love which is Jesus . . .

In *The Life in Christ*, St. Nicholas Cabasilas tells us, “The Eucharist is the completion of all the sacraments and not simply one of them . . . [In it] all human striving reaches its ultimate goal. For in this sacrament we attain God Himself, and God Himself is made one with us in the most perfect of all unions. This is the final mystery. Beyond this it is not possible to go, nor can anything be added to it.”

What more could you ask than the gift of Christ's own life? What else could you trade for the very presence of the Son of God? St. Nilus writes, “It is impossible for the believer to be saved, to receive the remission of sins and be admitted into the kingdom of heaven, unless in fear, faith and love he receives communion of the pure Mysteries of the Body and Blood of Christ” (*Philokalia*, I).

Because the Eucharist is Christ, it is

healing power. It is healing power, indeed. How many miracles have you read of in the lives of the saints, articles run by your diocese's *Alive in Christ* publication about people who were healed by the Lord? People whose sins were forgiven and whose lives were turned around by the Lord — whose medicine was the Holy Eucharist?

Quotes from the Fathers

I have included here some prayers from the Fathers. All of them are so beautiful you need to read them yourself:

“I know, O Lord, that I have communion unworthily of Thine undefiled Body and Thy most precious Blood, that I am guilty and eat and drink condemnation to myself not discerning the Body and Blood of my Christ and God. But daring upon Thy generous lovingkindness I come to Thee who hast said, ‘He who eats my Flesh and drinks my Blood abides in Me and I in him’ (John 6:56). Be merciful, therefore, O Lord, and do not rebuke me a sinner, but deal with me according to Thy mercy, and let Thy holy things be for my healing and cleansing, for enlightenment and protection and salvation and sanctification of both soul and body, and for the averting of every fantasy, evil conduct and diabolic activity, which, conforming to my thought, is carried out by my members . . .” (St. Basil, *A prayer before communion*).

“May the communion of Thy holy Mysteries be neither to my judgment, nor to my condemnation, O Lord, but to the healing of soul and body. Amen” (St. John Chrysostom, *Communion prayer of the Liturgy*).

“Count me worthy to partake without condemnation of Thine undefiled, immortal, life-creating and awesome Mysteries; for the remission of sins and unto life everlasting; for sanctification, enlightenment, strength, healing and health of both soul and body; for the erasure and complete removal of my evil thoughts and reasonings and intentions, fantasies by night, brought by dark and evil spirits . . .” (St. John Chrysostom, *Third prayer before communion*).

“Before the doors of Thy temple I stand and I do not forsake my wicked thoughts. But, O Christ my God, as Thou

hast justified the tax-collector (Luke 18:11), and hast had mercy on the woman of Canaan (Matt. 15:22) and opened the gates of Paradise to the thief (Luke 22:39ff.), open to me the inner depths of Thy love for man and receive me as I come and touch Thee, even as Thou didst receive the sinful woman (Luke 7:36) and the woman with the flow of blood (Matt. 9:29). For the first embraced Thine undefiled feet and received the forgiveness of her sins, and the second just touched the hem of Thy garment and received healing. But may I, in my pitiful state daring to receive Thy whole Body, not be burned; but receive me like them . . .” St. John of Damascus, *Second prayer before communion*).

“Freely Thou hast given me Thy Body for my food, O Thou who art a fire consuming the unworthy. Consume me not, O my Fashioner, but rather penetrate my whole substance, all my joints, my reins, my heart. Consume the thorns of all my transgressions. Cleanse my soul and sanctify my reasonings. Make firm my knees and bones. Illumine the simplicity of my five senses. Nail me wholly to the fear of you. Always protect, guard, and keep me from every soul-destroying word and deed. Cleanse me, purify me, and attune me. Adorn me, and give me understanding and illumination. Show me to be the abode of Thy one Spirit, and no more the abode of sin . . .” (St. Symeon the Translator, *Prayer after Holy Communion*).

Those are wonderful, beautiful words, and there were so many to choose from among the prayers regarding Holy Communion. “Let these holy gifts be unto like healing” . . . healing of soul and body . . . strength and healing. Mindful of the story that we began with from the Scripture of those two women, the harlot who committed adultery and the woman with the issue of blood. “The one touched the hem of Thy garment and straightaway received healing; the other, by embracing Thy immaculate feet obtained the release of her sins. Receive me even as Thou receive one of those and let me receive the precious Body and Blood, the very presence, the very Life of the Lord and God and Savior, Jesus Christ.” Consume me not but rather per-

Continued on the next page.

Healing Through Confession and Communion

Continued from page 33.

meate the structure of my members, all my joints, my reins, my heart." The Eucharist fills all of us — the total person, not just the soul but the body as well.

How Often Should We Come?

Read those prayers and then ask yourself, what is Communion to me? What does it really mean and how often should I come? Once a year? The opportunity presents itself at every Liturgy. Once a week? St. Basil writes four times a week. That's the rule of the Great Fast: Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Four times a week. St. Nicodemus wrote a tract *On Frequent Communion* in 1783, that has become part of the Canon of the Church at least in Constantinople: the Synod of Constantinople (August 1819) accepted Nicodemus's principle that the faithful should receive Communion at every Liturgy.

But don't come not understanding and not respecting the Lord of Heaven and Earth. St. Paul says, Don't come without repentance, don't come without confession. "Let a man examine himself and so eat the Bread and drink the Cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the Body eats and drinks judgment upon himself" (1 Cor. 11:28).

Listen to this phrase, this sentence from First Corinthians: "That is why many of you are weak and ill and why some have died" (1 Cor. 11:29-30). There are people who have become ill, become weak and have died because they have come without repentance. They have come without confession. They have come somehow taking advantage of the good, great grace of God and abused it. We need to do what we need to do to make ourselves right with God and then come. The Didache from the very beginning of our Church history says, "If someone is holy, let him come; if he is not, let him repent and then come."

A Hard Saying

There are some of you here, and there

are some people out in the world, who will never be convinced that this is the case. There are some people who have preferred to believe the Eucharist is a regulation to meet, and confession is an obstacle to overcome. This is nothing new. Many of you who have read the Scripture know this. Some of you who may not have remembered, and we do well to close with this quote from the Gospel of St. John, the words of Jesus: "Many of His disciples when they heard this teaching of Jesus [about the Eucharist] said: 'This is a hard saying, who can

single night for the medicine she calls "the medicine from heaven."

Nearly twenty-four years ago when I lost my wife in an accident and struggled in the hospital about the meaning of life and my unworthiness to be a priest and why she died and I lived, I went back to the altar because I knew that the Lord that I could be in touch with at that altar was in touch with her and was caring for her. I knew I had to work through Him to someday join her in His kingdom. There are so many of you who have wonderful stories to tell, wonderful sto-



Read those prayers and then ask yourself, what is Communion to me? What does it really mean and how often should I come? Once a year? The opportunity presents itself at every Liturgy. Once a week? St. Basil writes four times a week. That's the rule of the Great Fast: Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Four times a week.

accept it?" From that time many of His disciples went away and walked with Him no more. Jesus turned to the Twelve and said, "Do you also want to go away?" Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. We know we have come to believe and know that Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God" (John 6:60-68).

Jesus lost followers because of His preaching on the Eucharist. They preferred not to accept the gifts of healing offered to the Church two thousand years ago. The ultimate choice for us today is still Christ and the ultimate act of healing still comes as His gift. Earlier this evening, I spoke about a woman who has chosen to refuse chemotherapy. Margaret has chosen to put her trust in the divine Physician. And every night, except Tuesdays, sometime right around now, I go and I give her the Body and Blood of the Son of God. And sometimes she cries tears of repentance and sometimes she cries tears of fear. But mostly she cries tears of joy. And yes, she waits every

ries to read, wonderful stories to share about what God has done for all of us. We can speak in the dark recesses of secret sins. We can do it on the couch of a therapist. Or we can do it before the altar of Christ.

The first class of this year, my students and I were discussing that dramatic call that so many preachers to the altar call that so many preachers to the altar to commit one's life to Christ. Every time we choose to unite ourselves with Him and the apostles and the saints and all those of our families who have gone to the kingdom, every time, every time that we receive the Holy Eucharist properly prepared through holy repentance we receive more than a call, more than a commitment. We in fact receive the very Body and Blood of Jesus Christ Himself. This is the gift of the Church. This is the gift of the Son of God. This is the gift of the mysteries of healing. My prayer for you is that you come to know them better and love them more fully and receive them more often to the greater glory of God. Thank you.

—Archpriest Michael G. Dahulich

Developing the Discipline of Prayer

Lecture delivered October 15, 1996 at St. Tikhon's Seminary as part of the annual lecture series.



he disciples were with Jesus in a certain place where Jesus was praying. When He finished,

one of His disciples said to Him "Lord, teach us to pray" (Lk 11:1). "So He said to them, "When you pray, say Our Father . . ." (Lk. 11:2).

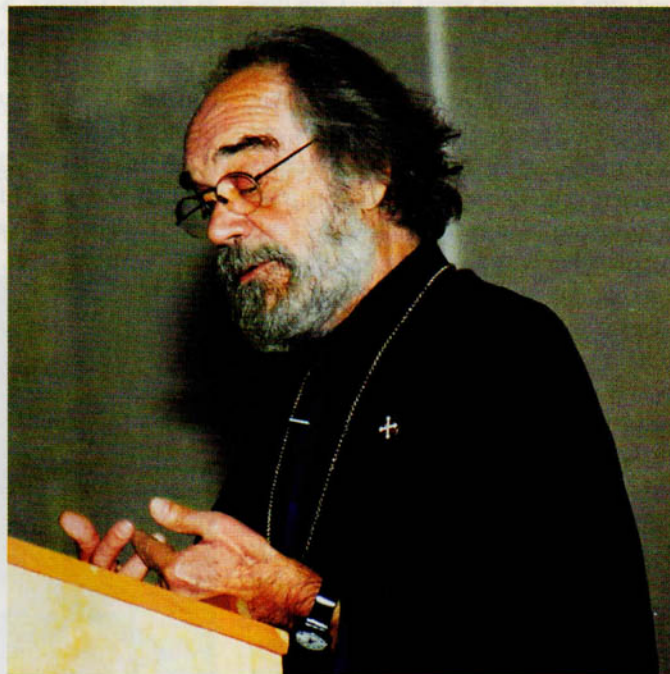
Our Lord was responding to a universal spiritual need to pray, without which we are less than human. The desire for a closer communion with God most assuredly leads to prayer. And even if this desire is too short-lived, at least there is in most of us that gnawing regret for having once again failed to sustain some semblance of a life of prayer. At times like that, let us turn to our Master as did His disciples, saying, "Lord, direct my will and teach me to pray. Pray Thou Thyself in me."

Let us begin by realizing that, above all, prayer is a relationship. This relationship begins and ends in Jesus Christ, first with His disciples who were the eyewitnesses of His Resurrection (Acts 10:40-41), thus chosen by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to gather the peoples from the face of this earth into the Body of Christ, His Holy Church.

This relationship that is prayer is at once intensely personal, especially in "the deep silence of real communion

with God" (to use the phrase of Metropolitan Anthony Bloom); and yet this personal relationship is at the same time dynamically communal (Jesus saying to His disciples, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there I am in the midst of them" (Mt. 18:20). These two aspects of prayer are like the two feet God gives us for walking: one without the other will get us nowhere.

I remember Archbishop John (Shahovskoy) of San Francisco saying years ago that a closer communion with God begins by finding some place that is quiet—no small feat in this modern world of endless demands on our attention and more and more sneaky ways to intrude electronically on our privacy. Nevertheless, who among us has not tasted a love or a friendship where the relationship is deep enough to say nothing? To be silent with a wife of forty-five years, taking a long evening walk, holding hands, saying nothing . . . to sit quietly with an old trusted friend: it is enough to be together; there is no need for talk. "I catch the pattern of your silence before you speak . . . I need not hear a word. In your silence, every tone



Fr. Sergei Glagolev

I seek is heard" (Langston Hughes). Metropolitan Anthony Bloom says the need to talk likely proves the relationship is still superficial.

So it is in our relationship with God. Archbishop John's favorite "quiet place" was an empty church—to be quiet in God's House in the silent company of His Saints. He recalled once standing quietly in front of the icon of our Saviour on the iconostasis when he was overwhelmed with the personal intimacy our Lord not only permitted, but invited in their relationship; but at the same time—and this is important—he was awestruck with fear and trembling at the terrifying realization that the Existing One calling him to friendship is the Awesome God that no mind can comprehend. Such are the two natures of the Perfect God and Perfect Man Who calls us into a relationship as "friends."

It is particularly important for us who are "busy" in church—serving in the altar, singing in the choir—to come back to church when it's empty, simply to be quiet. I know that for years I've been saying, "to pray is to sing," and of course

Continued on the next page.

Developing the Discipline of Prayer

Continued from page 39.

that is true in liturgical worship. But as I progress in my elder, retirement years and sing less, and speak less, I am discovering the quieting joy of just shutting up and listening. Recently we were reminded of an old African proverb that says, "God created us with two ears and one mouth so that we listen twice as much as talk." This is true of every relationship we are in; it is certainly true of our relationship with God.

That we begin and end prayer with quiet is the prescription of all the Holy Fathers. The Fathers also agree that prayer is always both personal and communal. I remember Father Florovsky making this point in class way back in my seminary years. Father George illustrated that the most "personal" commitment we make individually in fact is the Church's Creed which is communal, but always expressed as "I believe," not "we." On the other hand, the most communal "Our Father" is in fact the most personal. Such is the mystery and depth of our relationship with God. Ultimately, "personal" and "communal" is understood as "my life personally in the life of the Church."

Metropolitan Anthony writes that the "Our Father," the Prayer of Prayers—the only one which our Lord gave to teach us to pray—in fact is not only a prayer but a whole way of life expressed in the form of a prayer. (By the way, do read Bloom's *Living Prayer*, Templegate, Springfield, Ill. 1966. This little book holds up beautifully. Begin with the Epilogue in the back entitled "Prayer for Beginners" and then work your way through the book. You will find it spiritually rewarding.)

The "Our Father" is a way of life. Interestingly, before the Saints of the Church were called "Christians" (Acts 11:26), first they were simply called followers of "The Way." Christians gathered together as "Church" to follow "The Way" (*Didache*). Father Florovsky pointed out that our Lord used very little "original" material in the "Our Father"; most of it can be found in the Septuagint. The point is Who gave us this Prayer as His very own, and to whom did He give

it, as only He could, as the Son of God.

What is outstandingly original in the "Our Father" is precisely the words, "Our Father." Prior to our Lord's coming in the flesh, worshippers could pray to God as Master, Creator, King of the Universe, Just Judge, Almighty, and so forth; only Jesus Christ can call God "Father"; we can call God "Our Father" in Him, through Him by the Holy Spirit's adoption, in His Flesh—His Body the Church—as the children of God. The "Our Father" is not a "universal prayer"

Posad in 1915. Just prior to the terrible Revolution, Archbishop Ilarion was showing grave concern over the Russian intelligentsia's inclination towards the secular Christianity of Western Europe—a Christianity without a notion of "Church," a seeking of new social structures in which the Church is not necessary, only the "teachings of Christ." The Archbishop pleads for all to understand: "studying Christ's teachings" is one thing, but to live these teachings in communion with the Holy Spirit is something



universally given. As intensely personal as it is to each and every Christian, it is, in the end, the Prayer of the Church, the culminating prayer of Holy Eucharist of the People of God.

I am leading us to the second part of this lecture, namely, the theme of prayer as a way of life, and the way of life as the life of the Church. There is in America today a rash of "spiritualities," from "New Age" of the yuppies to "Give me that old-time religion" of the neo-fundamentalists. There is a lot of talk about angels, and visions, and what the Bible says, and family values, and so on. But no talk about the Church. It's as though the first fifteen hundred years of Christianity never existed. It's scary: a "christianity" without Church.

I've just re-read *Pravoslavnoye Tchteniyе* ("Russian Orthodox Readings") of the Moscow Patriarchate 1991—#1, entitled "There is no Christianity without the Church" by Archbishop Ilarion, delivered at Sergiev-

else. Christ calls us not simply to be "better people" but a new creation (Gal. 6:15). Christ came not to build a "new society" but His Church (Mt. 16:18). It is the Church that is "the new creation." It is in the unity of her members as living members of the Body of Christ that we can say "Our Father." Archbishop Ilarion concludes by quoting St. Cyprian on the Church being the authentic source of the Christian life: "No one can call God 'Father' who has not the Church as his Mother." It is pointless to talk about prayer outside the life of the Church.

For me, "the disciple of prayer" begins by being attuned to the Church's life of prayer: her seasons of worship, the Paschal and Festal cycles, her daily and weekly cycles, her saints days and commemorations, her fasts and feasts, her preparations and celebrations—living within her "sacred memory" and her joyous expectation, living within the foretaste of Christ's Coming Again. This is the context in which we Orthodox Chris-

tians pray. This is what shapes our prayer and breathes life into it. Within the Church dwells the Spirit of God. To acquire the Holy Spirit one must breathe the life of the Church and respond to the rhythms of her holy worship.

The next step is to make the prayers of the Church your very own. Of course there are times when you can commune with God with your very own words. But Father Florovsky used to say that people fail to pray because they have no “vocabulary of prayer.” We learn “how” to relate to God by using the words of holy men and women who are closest to God, who speak to God all the time. These words are “prayed-through”—steeped with the prayers of countless saints over thousands of years (the Psalms, for example, the “Prayerbook of the Church”)—words made so holy that often God Himself uses these words to speak to us.

Now, having made the life of the Church our life and the Prayer of the Church our prayer, we must invite the Church to intrude upon our private lives. The Church is incessantly in prayer (even where are “no services”—go into an



empty Church and see for yourself!). We, on the other hand, are often too busy to pray. You can’t “make time” to pray. You must regularly intrude, literally taking time “away” in some consistent way to sanctify that time through sweet converse with God.

Consistency is the secret to any discipline. Better a little with regularity than a lot once in a while. Most of us fail because we try to do too much. As with any “ascetic” (be it physical or spiritual ex-

ercise) you have to build up strength over time. In the end, your best work is **habit**—even in the practice of prayer. Habit is your best discipline. A prayer-life is the fruit of repetition, the harvest of practice.

Begin your rule of prayer thus: stand with reverence before your holy icon as before the All-seeing God. Quiet yourself. Make the sign of the Cross and say:



Sharing views

“In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Having invoked the Holy Trinity, keep silence for a little, until all your senses are calmed, until all your thoughts and feelings are freed from distractions. When calm and collected, go on with your rule.

All the prayerbooks agree with the above paragraph. First quiet yourself, standing silently in the Presence of God. If that takes all the time allotted, so be it; at least you have accomplished the first step. Say the prayer of Father Kirik the Elder of Mount Athos: “O Lord, forgive me, and help me do better the next time, for the glory of Your Holy Name and for the salvation of my soul.” And depart in peace.

Even in our private lives we can benefit from a Fellowship of Prayer—knowing that with us, others have committed themselves to pray for the Church, and for one another. Such is the Prayer Network of the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards initiated by Metropolitan Theodosius. His Beatitude is very much aware that a rule of prayer is essential to any stewardship of time, talent and treasure. It’s all too easy to write a check and feel good about it. It’s another thing to commit to a regular rule of prayer—even as simple as this one is—knowing that prayer is at the source of any good

we can do.

Look at how sin disunites us! Everywhere there is cynicism, distrust and mean-spiritedness. Father Kishkovsky correctly observes in his editorial in *The Orthodox Church* this month, entitled “Orthodoxy or ideology!”—that Orthodox theology and spirituality is not the same as the ideologies of either the secular left or the religious right, either in or

outside the Orthodox community. Father Mevendorff used to love to say that theology is the life of prayer, “the search for words adequate for God”; and a theologian necessarily must be one who prays (a praying Babushka is more of a theologian than the idealogues who inflame passions with the demagoguery of their power-agendas).

Like the balm of Gilead let fervent prayer heal the vicious viruses that seek to invade us and turn our hearts to stone. Christian “ideologies” (not unlike the “christian ideologies without the Church” that Archbishop Ilarion warned about eighty years ago) seek to “divide and conquer” in the spirit of this world. The life of the Church, on the other hand, is a docility to the Holy Spirit Who never yells and shouts, but rather “Himself makes intercessions for us with groanings which cannot be uttered . . . for we know not what we should pray for as we ought” (Rom. 8:26).

It is neither “confrontational evangelicalism” nor ecstatic “speaking in tongues” that “leads me on a level path” (Pentecost Koinonikon, Ps. 143). It is the Breath of God that is the Holy Spirit in the Church that leads us to the quiet life of prayer, that action which both unifies and empowers us to do God’s Will.

—Archpriest Sergei Glagolev

Saints Rictrude and Adalbald

Whom the Holy Church Commemorates on May 12 and February 2



Editor's note: Saints Rictrude and Adalbald lived in France and Belgium in the 7th century.



Rictrude (or Rictrudis) was born in Gascony, a region in what is today southwestern France. Her parents were pious Christians of the aristocratic class, named Ernold and Lichia. A Life of her compiled in 907 by the Monk Hucbald offers a description of her: "Gentle and modest in her conduct, with the innocence of her soul as a seal on her brow, full of charity and thought for others, the young Rictrudis grew up in favor with the Lord, and in the first dawn

of life shone like a pure star of righteousness and discretion."¹

Adalbald was also a child of a Christian aristocratic family, but from the neighboring region of the Franks. His grandmother was Saint Gertrude of Halmage (December 6). He has been described as "an ideal Christian noble."² Because of his goodness, he was a fa-

vorite among the courtiers in the courts of Kings Dagobert I and Clovis II in France.

Once when he was travelling in Gascony on a mission from King Dagobert, Adalbald was befriended by Ernold, who took him to his home. When Adalbald saw Ernold's daughter, Rictrude, he loved her, and soon married her with her parents' consent.

Adalbald and Rictrude had a very grand wedding, but some of her relatives were not pleased with this marriage.

¹ Quoted by S. Baring-Gould, *Lives of the Saints* (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1914), vol. 5, p. 170.

² Joan Carroll Cruz, *Secular Saints: 250 Canonized and Beatified Lay Men, Women and Children* (Rockford, Ill.: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1989), p. 1.

They were critical of Adalbald, and predicted that the marriage would be a disaster.

Despite the disapproval of her relatives, and their dire predictions, this marriage was in fact a very happy one. The couple made their home in Flanders (part of modern Belgium), in the region of Ostrevant, where Adalbald had sizable estates.

Both Adalbald and Rictrude were very pious, and early in their married life began devoting themselves to good works — visiting the sick, helping the poor, feeding the hungry, and ministering to prisoners, attempting to convert them. As the ancient chronicler states,

“They assisted the poor, and softened their labours and fatigue; they were ever ready to relieve the hungry and the thirsty, to find clothes for the naked, and to give shelter to the traveller. Sometimes Rictrudis and her husband might be seen going out surrounded by their little children, who played their innocent games around them, and it was with their children that Adalbald and Rictrudis entered the houses of the sick and needy to bring consolation and assistance. Their hands were ready to shroud the dead, and often did their words bring repentance and peace to hearts that had been hardened by crime, or ulcerated by hatred.”³

This godly couple had four children, all of whom came to be recognized as Saints: one son, Saint Maurontus (May 5); and three daughters — Blessed Clotsendis (June 30), Saint Eusebia (March 16), and Blessed Adalsendis (December 24).

In the year 650, in their sixteenth year of marriage, Adalbald was travelling in Gascony on business, when he was murdered by some of his wife’s vindictive relatives. Rictrude was stricken with grief, but managed to obtain his body, and gave him an honorable burial, in a monastery in Elnon, France. Some time later, his head was taken to a Church in Douai, where there was a magnificent chapel dedicated to him, his pious wife, and their son.

After her husband’s death, “Rictrudis turned to the sole source of consolation, and resolved to dedicate the rest of her days to the undivided service of God. But

with the true prudence of unselfish piety, she deferred taking the veil [of monasticism] till her son Maurontus was of a sufficient age to be admitted into the court of the king. When she had sent him forth, and had ascertained that he was living uprightly, purely, and modestly, beloved by all, the ties that attached her to the world parted of their own accord, and she prepared to retire to Marchiennes [a monastery which she had founded], when she was surprised and pained by a message from the king requesting her to marry one of his nobles.”⁴

Rictrude then sought the advice of Saint Amandus (February 6), the Apostle



*S*aint Rictrude lived the rest of her life in the monastery at Marchiennes, eventually becoming the abbess there. She died peacefully at the age of seventy-six, and was succeeded as abbess by her daughter, Saint Clotsindis.

to Flanders. He agreed to plead her cause with the king, Clovis II. Then she held a great banquet in her castle for Clovis and his attendants. “During the banquet Rictrudis rose from her place, and bending her knee before the king, asked his permission to fulfill her duty and desire.” Clovis supposed she meant that she was ready to offer the traditional toast to his health at the close of the meal, so he gave his assent. “ ‘Sire!’ said Rictrudis, suddenly producing a black veil, and throwing it over her head, ‘To this, duty and inclination call me.’ ”⁵

At this, King Clovis stormed out of the banquet in anger. But Saint Amandus, who was also present, “then hastened after the king, and pleaded the cause of the saint so persuasively that Clovis gave his consent and withdrew all opposition to her retirement into the cloister.”⁶

Rictrude’s oldest daughter, Saint Eusebia, had already been pursuing a monastic way of life under the care of Adalbald’s grandmother, Saint Gertrude of Halmage. Now Rictrude entered the

double monastery for men and women at Marchiennes which she had founded earlier, taking with her her two other daughters, Adalsindis and Clotsindis, who were still young.

Soon thereafter, Adalsindis became very ill, and died on Christmas Day. Then, “For three days the mother restrained her tears. But on the Feast of the Holy Innocents [December 29],⁷ when she heard the Gospel read, in which that prophecy [Jer. 31:15] is rehearsed which tells of Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, her tears burst forth, and her sobs convulsed her frame. When the service was concluded, and the nuns were going to the refectory, Rictrudis turned to them weeping and said, ‘Go, dear sisters, without me, I must be like Rachel this day at least.’ ”⁸

Some time later, Rictrude heard that her son, Maurontus, wanted to leave the glamor of the Frankish court and become a monk. At first she was troubled by this, fearing that the king would be angry if her son left his court. She also was concerned that perhaps her son did not really have a calling for the monastic life. But she was able to consult Saint Amandus, who had been in contact with Maurontus, and he relieved her fears. Then Maurontus came himself to his mother’s monastery and assured her of the sincerity of his intention. In his mother’s presence, in the abbey church, he took off his armor and was tonsured a monk by Saint Amandus.

Saint Rictrude lived the rest of her life in the monastery at Marchiennes, eventually becoming the abbess there. She died peacefully at the age of seventy-six, and was succeeded as abbess by her daughter, Saint Clotsindis.

Saint Rictrude is honored by the Church on May 12, and Saint Adalbald on February 2.

—David and Mary Ford

The preceding life is taken from the Fords’ book Marriage as a Path to Holiness: Lives of Married Saints. This book is available from St. Tikhon’s Bookstore.

⁷ This day the Church commemorates the 14,000 Jewish baby boys whom King Herod ordered to be killed in his attempt to murder the Christ-child (Matt. 2:16-18).

⁸ Baring-Gould, vol. 5, pp. 172-173.

³ Baring-Gould, vol. 5, p. 171.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 171-172.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

⁶ *Ibid.*



Holy Trinity Eastern Orthodox Church in Stroudsburg

Consecrated September 28

On September 28, 1996, an occasion of great joy, His Eminence Archbishop HERMAN formally consecrated the new Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in Stroudsburg, and the new church hall.

At the consecration service a large number of priests from the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania concelebrated with His Eminence. The occasion was made more glorious by the love, prayers, and attendance of several hundred faithful and friends of Holy Trinity Eastern Orthodox Church. Father



Neal Carrigan, pastor of Holy Trinity, reflected, "I will never forget the tears of joy and thanksgiving I saw in the eyes of so many people on that remarkable day; for I saw them through my own tears."

Of the day, Archbishop HERMAN says in his letter to Father Neal and the faithful of Holy Trinity, "The dedication of your new parish church is but the beginning of your work. As Orthodox Christians we worship the Lord our God and proclaim the Gospel of His Incarnate Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ, to all men. It is our duty, therefore, to spread the inextinguishable light of the Orthodox Faith to all with whom we come in contact, to witness by our right living that Truth which we confess in church."

As part of the consecration, the new iconostasis, designed and built by Nicholas and Laura Kessler, members of the parish, was also blessed.

His Beatitude Metropolitan Theodosius wrote to Father Neal and the parishioners these words on the consecration of their new church: "As the space of the Christian temple becomes an extension of God's Kingdom, so to is the community which gathers in the sacred space. For not only is a specific space being offered back to God, but, by virtue of what is celebrated within the walls of the Christian temple, an entire community offers itself to God. Consequently, the Kingdom of God extends to the consecrated space where the faithful live under the protection and reign of the Holy Trinity."

Story of Holy Trinity Church

On December 6, 1976 a group of Orthodox Christians met at East Stroudsburg State College to celebrate vespers with His Grace, (then) Bishop Herman and Father Daniel Donlick. Mr. Nicholas Lezinsky, of Allentown, served as lay coordinator. From January 1977 through June of the same year, Liturgy was celebrated by Father Sebastian (Gyza), of Saint Tikhon's Monastery, in the conference rooms of the Howard Johnson Motel in Delaware Water Gap and at the Pocono Hilton Hotel in

Stroudsburg.

On July 17, 1977, through the efforts of Bishop Herman, the mission parish moved to the Saint Mark's summer chapel in Delaware Water Gap; Father Sebastian serving the spiritual needs of the parishioners. The building was rented for five years from the Roman Catholic diocese of Scranton. The parishioners were responsible for the payment of the utility costs. The building had no running water and no meeting rooms for church activities.

Father Joseph Toroney served pastoral responsibilities at the parish from January to July, 1978. Jacob Fremenko and David Lezinsky served as choir directors for the first Divine Liturgy.

In July, 1978, Father Daniel Donlick was assigned duties as pastor of the fledgling parish. Seminarian John Onofrey, who came to the parish in June, 1980, did a masterful job as choir director. When John Onofrey was ordained to the priesthood, Mrs. Dorothy Strzelczyk

accepted the responsibilities of choir director. She has performed masterfully in this position and the parish choir contributes beautifully to the services.

Under the capable and spiritual direction of Father Donlick, a Land and Building Search Committee was formed consisting of parishioners, Spas Raikin, Ruby Raikin, Helen Kessler and Sonya James. For four years, these individuals searched the central area of Monroe County, PA for affordable land and buildings.

Under the leadership of parishioner Leopold (Paul) Bonisese, parishioners conducted various fund raising activities, such as concerts and flea markets. A pledge drive was conducted to purchase needed land. Saint Anne's Guild, the parish women's group, held bake sales and flea markets and did craft projects, with all parishioners working diligently.

On November 4, 1982, the mission parish purchased an existing church structure, centrally located in the

Continued on the next page.



Choir sings the liturgy of consecration



Washing and preparing the Holy Table

Holy Trinity Church

Continued from page 45.

Stroudsburg-Pocono area. Father Donlick and the parishioners celebrated Divine Liturgy in the new church building on December 5, 1982, the sixth anniversary of the founding parish.

In November, 1986, Father Donlick was assigned full-time responsibilities at Saint Tikhon's Seminary, as the Dean of the Seminary and as the Secretary-Treasurer of the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania. At that time, Father Neal Carrigan was assigned pastorship of Holy Trinity Parish. He is also President/CEO of Meals on Wheels in Scranton, Pa.

Over the years, the parish membership increased substantially, to our joy. However, as a consequence of that growth, a great strain was placed on the limited space of the small church. With the encouragement of Father Carrigan, a nearby 5' acre parcel of land was purchased in 1990 and an aggressive building fund drive was initiated. Before long, a four thousand square foot post-and-beam church structure and a beautiful new church hall were constructed. Many thousands of needed dollars were donated by parishioners and friends of the parish, and additional work and fund raising activities were engaged in to insure that the new debt would be met. Pierogy-making became a way of life for most of the parishioners. Many hours of laborious work were donated by scores of people in an effort to reduce the cost of construction and landscaping. One parishioner regularly donates his time and requisite materials in making and selling delicious homemade clam chowder, donating the proceeds to the parish.

Although progress, thus far, has been remarkable, a great deal of work remains to be done and a lot of money will be needed to accomplish that work. Several stained glass windows are needed; three beautiful cupolas have been donated, but require repairs and refinishing prior to their installation; carpeting or tile is required in the vestry and sacristy; the ceiling remains unfinished in the church hall; the parking lot must be further cleared and paved; these are among the remaining tasks; they are tasks which the parishioners are pleased to accept, but their



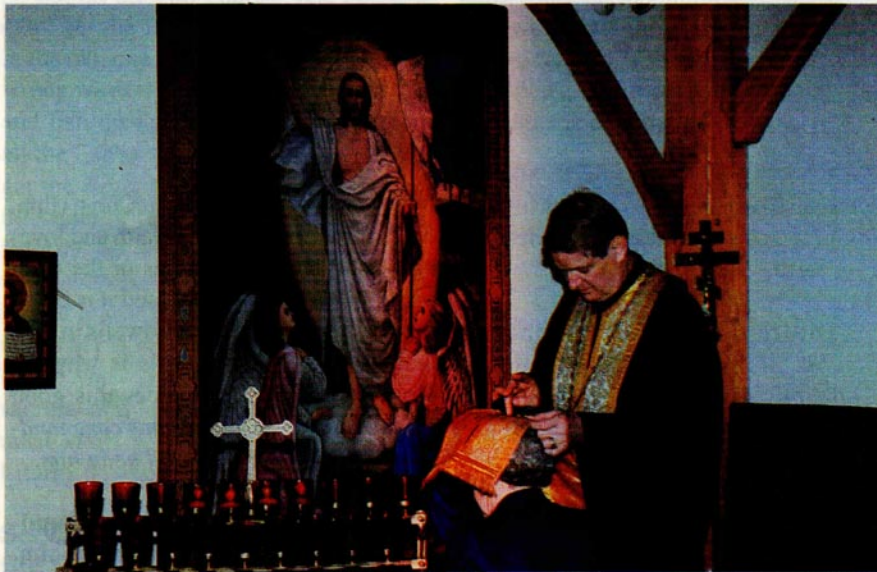
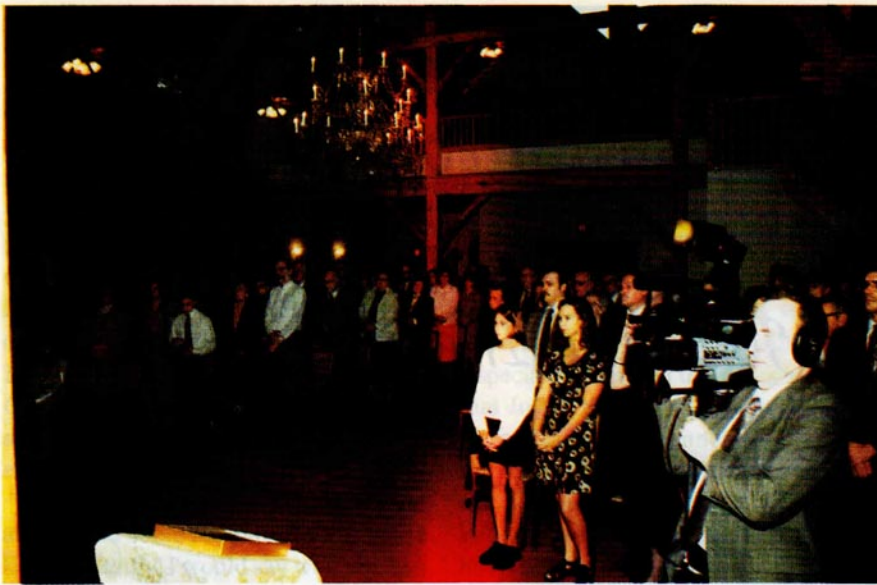
Blessing the iconostasis



Fr. Neil awarded palitza during the Liturgy



Archbishop presents synodal grammota to the flock



Fr. Neil Carrigan

*May the Blessing of Christmas
Bring Peace and Joy to the clergy
and faithful of our Diocese
and to the patrons
of our publication
throughout the New Year.*

The Editorial Staff of Your Diocese Alive in Christ

accomplishment can only become a reality with continued support from friends of Orthodoxy and of Holy Trinity Parish.

A House Built by God

Fr. Neil offered these words of encouragement to the people of Holy Trinity: "It has been our joy, and that of our children, Sean and Colleen, to share with you, the parishioners and friends of Holy Trinity Parish, the many joys and sorrows experienced over the years in our mutual struggle to spread the living word of our Lord Jesus throughout the Pocono Mountains.

"By our words and actions we have demonstrated, to those who would hear and see, just what it is to be Orthodox Christians. And now, after years of dedicated labor to that cause, by the construction and blessed consecration of our new church building we humbly, but significantly declare to all, that our labors have been blessed by God.

"We are proud of everyone who has done their part, great or small, in bringing into reality our dream of a permanent home for Holy Trinity Parish.

"May our heavenly Father bless this beautiful and loving parish richly for generations to come; and for all who journey to the Pocono Mountains to visit or to live, may it stand as an evident symbol of the inclusive and pan-Orthodox Christian spirit that was in the hearts of our forbears as they left their homelands to make a new home in America.

"This house surely has been built by God. We love you all."

The deadline for our
Easter issue of *Your
Diocese Alive in Christ*
is
March 11, 1997.

Please send all
submissions to:

Alive in Christ
Diocesan Center,
South Canaan, Pa. 18459

Commentary of Saint Justin Popovich on the First Epistle of the Holy Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian

Part V



... In divine evangelic love, everything depends on the prayer of those who love: it is for the sake of this love that the Holy Theologian announces the good news:

Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then we have confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. (3:21-22)

When man keeps His commandments, God fulfills the prayers of man: "Listen to God in His commandments," says Saint Chrysostom, "so that He will hear you in your prayers." The man who keeps the commandments of God is always wise, persevering, and sincere in his prayers: he knows that which he must ask, when he must ask and how he must ask God — and he always asks only for that which is useful for the salvation of the soul, that is, that which is evangelic, divine, immortal, eternal. The Holy Theologian has just told us and now we know the secret of prayer: it lies in the observance of the commandments of God. This is the evangelic rule: he who observes the commandments of God, God hears each of his prayers. For example: the Saints observe the command-

ments of God; this is why God fulfills their prayers, whether they be in heaven or on earth.

And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. (3:23)

This, in brief, is the Gospel of salvation: faith in Christ and the love of God. These two are in truth a single commandment, for they constitute a unique sentiment and disposition: whosoever believes in Christ believes because he *loves*; through faith, love grows larger and through love faith grows larger, because one grows larger and fulfills itself by the other. They are spiritual twins: love grows larger through faith, but faith also grows larger through love: whosoever loves the Lord believes also in Him, in everything that is from Him, because he has trust in Him, a trust that wells up in him on account of love. Faith shows man the secret of the God-man: the more man knows the Lord Christ by faith, the more he loves Him, and the more he loves Him, the more he discovers the mysteries of Christ. The witness of this is the experience of the Gospel: Christ establishes Himself by faith in man, and

by love man roots himself in Christ (Eph. 3:17). This double virtue (faith and love) causes all the other virtues of the Gospel to be born in the soul, and it is by all these virtues that the Lord dwells in man and man in the Lord. This is why the Holy Theologian announces this good news: *And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him.*

And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. By this know we that he dwelleth in us: by the Spirit which He hath given us. (3:24)

By the power of grace, He is present in every one of His commandments ("the Lord is hidden in His commandments," writes Saint Mark the Ascetic) and He helps all those force themselves to fulfill the commandments. And the evangelic principle of Divine-human synergy remains valid: the man-God collaborates with man, and man remains an autonomous person — even though he be in the Lord Christ with all his being and even though he *dwells in Him*. Likewise the Lord Jesus Christ dwells in man without losing anything of the fullness of His Person, but this dwelling of man in Christ and of Christ in man, this Divine-human symbiosis, exists only

through the Holy Spirit and in the Holy Spirit. It is also the Holy Spirit Who grants unto man the powers of grace for this life; the Lord Christ is present in man through the Holy Spirit — and this is why the Holy Theologian announces: *By this know we that he dwelleth in us: by the Spirit which He hath given us.*

This means that the Christian is never alone, that he is the dwelling and the workshop of the thrice-holy Trinity. We ever return to this: the observance of the commandments gives man entry into the Trinity because it makes him live-in-Christ and live-in-the Spirit. The entire life of Christians is a permanent and indivisible exploit of becoming-Christ and becoming-Spirit, that is to say, of becoming-Trinitarian.

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. (4:1-3)

What is *the spirit*? We do not know the essence of the spirit, but we know its manifestations, and on this basis we can conclude that the spirit is a bodiless being, a person which possesses reason and freedom. It is as a person that he acts and is manifest. The essence of the spirit is as little known as the essence of matter. They are enveloped in an impenetrable veil of mystery. There is no doubt that the essence of the spirit and the essence of matter are revealed partially, and in a certain manner, in their expressions: man is a being composed of body and spirit; but if the spirit composes what is essential in man, nevertheless, man himself does not know the essential of his spirit. It is through the spirit that he thinks, that he feels, lives, sees or hears — but he does not know the essence of his spirit; he does not know what composes it, nor from whence it comes. Through the spirit, he is conscious of himself and of

the world which surrounds him — but he does not know the essence of conscience, he knows neither from whence it comes, nor what composes it: this is the constituent mystery of the human being. Man concludes that other *spirits* exist on the basis of his spirit and on the basis of their expressions. There are different *spirits*, for their manifestations also are different. Since the descent of the Holy Spirit, the day of Holy Pentecost, the Spirit of God has concretely shown men how He is and what He is, and it is thus that He has given them, for the first time, both the possibility to truly orient themselves in the world of the spirit and the criterion that permits them to do so. From the time of Holy Pentecost, we know what the Spirit of God is, and knowing this, we know at the same time what the Spirit of God is not. Every spirit which is not like Him, every spirit which does not resemble Him but which possesses opposing characteristics, this spirit is not of God — this is the most sure criterion. Now, the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, testifies fully that Jesus is the Son of God, God and Lord, the Savior of the world. All His activity in this world bears upon this testimony that Jesus is the God-man. The Holy Spirit testifies of this by all His manifestations, by all His actions, by all His miracles and by His powers of grace — and that within the Church, through spirit-bearing men, and especially through the holiness of their life.

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. (4:1)

Our earthly world is inhabited by many and different spirits. For the Christian conscience, this is simply a place of discernment and testing of those spirits. It is very difficult to find one's way in this, for the discernment of spirits is both a gift of the Holy Spirit and an achievement of man — it is a science to itself. It is the Holy Spirit Who grants to man the gift of *discerning the spirits* (I Cor. 12:10), and He grants it to the faith and to the other virtues that constitute an indivisible evangelical feat; this feat is at the same time an action of divine grace and

of the free labor of man. Time is needed for man to accustom himself to and exercise himself at the discernment of spirits: it is gradually that this is achieved, and only the perfect receive the gift of discerning spirits, the gift to orient themselves in all clarity, to recognize and observe in all clarity the good and the evil in their essence. This is what the Spirit-bearing Apostle likewise announces to us: *Solid food is for the perfect, for those whose senses have been long exercised by the practice of the discernment of good and evil* (Heb. 5:14). This means that competence in the discernment of good and of evil, of good and evil spirits, is obtained by spiritual exercise, by spiritual “gymnastics,” by ascetical feats. It is a practice which is given above all by grace, a practice by which one attains that grace of wisdom which alone knows how to orient itself correctly in the human world of spirits, and to discern with accuracy whether those spirits are of God or not. This is why the Holy Theologian, with much love and solicitude, recommends to Christians: *Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.* Their exterior and interior senses — exercised by grace-given feats — can safely determine if a spirit is from God or not. These senses are exercised by means of all the evangelical virtues granted by grace: through prayer, so that the senses might become prayer (gaze of prayer); through love, so that all things might become love; through mercy, so that all things might become mercy, and so on. But the sensations that are not exercised, that have not been granted by grace, lead easily to the illusions of the false prophets.

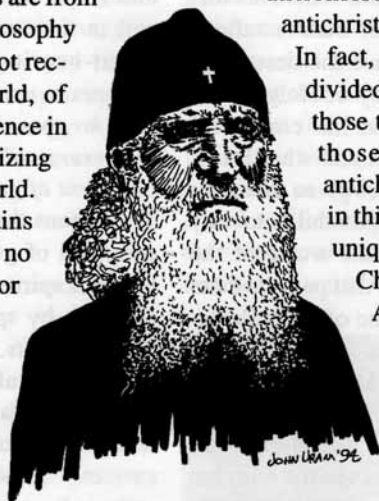
Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. (4:2-3)

In reality, the assembly of spirits is
Continued on the next page.

St. Justin Popovich

Continued from page 49.

divided into two categories: those that are of God and those that are of the devil. Those who recognize and who confess that Jesus is God, the Word incarnate, Lord and Savior are from God; those who do not recognize this are from the devil. The entire philosophy of the devil consists in not recognizing God in the world, of not recognizing His presence in the world, of not recognizing His incarnation in the world. This philosophy maintains and teaches that there is no God either in the world or in man — and that there is none in the God-man either. It asserts that it is absurd to believe that God was incarnate in man, or that He might live in man. The philosophy of the devil consists in maintaining that man is totally without God, a being in whom God is neither something from God nor something divine, immortal or eternal; it also maintains that man is a totally transitory being, that he belongs in all things to the world of animals, from whom he differs in almost nothing, and for this reason also, it is natural for him to live like animals, his only legitimate precursors, his primitive ancestors, but also his natural brothers — such, in reality, is the philosophy of the Antichrist, the one who wants at all cost to replace Christ so as to take His place both in the world and in man. The Holy Theologian clearly expresses this truth by these words: *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Every spirit:* This could be a person, or a teaching, an idea, or a thought. Every teaching, every idea, every thought which does not recognize that Jesus is God and Savior, God incarnate, God-man, finds its origin in the *antichrist* is “antichristic.” Such persons, such teachings, such ideas,



have existed from the very appearance of Christ in the world. This is why the holy Initiator into the mysteries says of the antichrist that *he is already in the world*. Every man and every idea that denies the Church of Christ is of the antichrist — the founder of every antichristian ideology is antichrist, directly or indirectly.

In fact, all ideologies can be divided into two categories: those that are for Christ and those that are for the antichrist. In reality, man is in this world to resolve one unique problem: is he for Christ or against Christ?

And each man, whether he wills it or not, must find a solution: he is either a friend of Christ or else an enemy of Christ — there is no

third possibility: he loves Christ, or he hates Him.

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. (4:4)

This world is the enclosed field on which the struggle for and against Christ is constantly being fought; it is the field of battle on which one is constantly fighting for or against Christ. Those that are *of God* fight for Christ and *overcome* those who are against Christ; they gain the victory through Christ God who is found in them. For in all of our human realms, whether it be science, culture, religion or art, philosophy or any other human activity, it is Christ who is the sole Victor over sin, over death, over the devil, over all that comes from them and works for them. The army of slaves to antichristian ideas (which are always ideas that are *of antichrist*) is numerous and varied — it fights by all possible means against Christ. *For it is not against flesh and blood that we fight, but against the principalities, against the dominions, against the sovereigns of this world of darkness, against the spirits of wickedness which are under heaven* (Eph. 6:12). In this battle, our weapons

are the Gospel virtues: patience, love for our enemies, prayer, fasting, truth, righteousness, riches, humility, peace, and the rest (cf. Eph. 6:13-18). It is by fighting with these weapons that we will always be able to gain the victory with the help of Christ the Lord who loves us (Romans 8:37). This is why the Holy Theologian announces to us these glad tidings: *Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*

They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. (4:5)

We therefore know their origin: they are of the world, in spirit and in their teaching, with all their being and with all their activity. All that is from them smacks of the world and of the earth; all that lives in the world and, they infer from the world; all that exists in the world, they infer from the elements of the world: vegetation, animals, men, spirits, bodies, thoughts, feelings, desires. From whence comes man? *from the world*, from the elements of the world, “from nature.” And the other beings? — all are “of nature,” *of the world*. And what of man’s spirit and his thought, his conscience and his knowledge? — these are likewise “of nature,” of the earth, of matter: all is secreted by the diverse elements of the earth, by their combinations, by their relations, by their associations. In all that they say, *they speak of the world*, they are plunged in the world and subjected to the world; everything for them has an odor of clay, of earth, of the earthly, of the transitory — *and the world heareth them*, for they tell the world what pleases it, what does not tire it out; they do not cause the world fear, neither with height, nor depth, nor with infinity. Their thoughts are narrow like the world, flat like the world, short like the world, limited like the world and this is why they can be grasped. In all this, the world is thought of as something foreign to God, without God, as something where God does not exist, where God is useless — as something that is against God.

To be continued.

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Conference on Youth Discusses Opportunities, Problems, and Solutions 1996 North American Pan-Orthodox Youth Workers Conference

The most common questions asked at the Youth Workers Conference were: Are you "on-line"? Do you have a friend or relative with a drug or alcohol addiction? Are you faced with a son or a daughter who is dealing with a life-crisis situation? Do you need tips on running an Orthodox camp, or starting an O.C.F. in your area? These questions reflected the topics presented for discussion at the fourth Pan-Orthodox Youth Workers Conference.

This year's Conference, held November 15-17 in Minneapolis, Minn., was sponsored by the Orthodox Church in America, the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America, and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North America.

The fifty clergy and lay participants were not intimidated by the inclement weather (a Minnesota ice storm greeted us on Friday!), but continued to arrive at the Holiday Inn via auto, air, or by whatever means they were able to get through. The Conference participants journeyed from Oregon, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Washington D.C., California, and Canada. Martin Paluch and I were the Youth Ministry and Department of Religious Education Representative from our diocese.

A gracious welcome was presented by Michael Anderson, Director of the O.C.A. Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries. This was followed by an informal gathering, a chance to introduce ourselves to one another, make new friends and rekindle friendships from previous conferences. Saturday began with morning prayers, which was followed by breakfast and the first session.

The Conference time provided for workshops, with the participants able to select which ones they wished to attend. The schedule included five workshops, permitting the individual to participate in a maximum of four sessions. The workshops I attended were: "Youth Ministry and the Internet," "Teens, Families, and Materialism," "Helping Kids in Crisis" and "Organizing Orthodox Campus Fellowships (OCFs)." Other topics included

"Adolescence is not a Disease" and "Orthodox Camping Programs." I will present here some items of interest emanating from the group sessions.

Youth and the Internet

The use of a home computer and the Internet is not just for games! They can be used as a learning tool. Cyberspace is the medium of today as it is the living world of our children and youth. Our children are being raised in a computer world and it is becoming necessary for parents to be familiar with computers and the vast opportunities offered through this technological medium. Parents need to familiarize themselves with "safe surfing" to identify and screen programs offered through the Internet. It is important for parents to learn how to adapt "Browser Security" which will restrict what children may view on the Internet.

The world of the Internet offers many educational opportunities, such as information resources available from libraries to assist children with their schoolwork. While you are "browsing" through the Internet, you may want to check out the home page of the Orthodox Church in America: www.oca.org, as well as home pages of individual parishes of the O.C.A. or of other jurisdictions. You will be pleasantly surprised to see what is happening in the Orthodox world, both here in America and abroad. For those who have a special talent in computers and programming, it is possible to set up one's own "home page."

As wonderful a world as the computer can offer, we must not allow it to tear down the fabric of the family unit. Use the computer as an aid to life, not as a replacement for life. The computer opens the doors to a vast, wonderful world. Be careful how you use it.

Helping Kids in Crisis

Youth Ministry workers have a serious responsibility when children or teenagers are entrusted to their care, whether at a camp or at a retreat. One does not plan for a crisis situation to occur at such

a gathering; however, the leader needs to be prepared to deal properly with a child experiencing a crisis situation in case this should happen. This workshop offered help and guidance to the Youth Ministry worker who is counseling just such a child. The world for our young children and teenagers is very challenging, and at times very uncertain. The following statistics presented at the workshop illustrate a frightening world for our youth:

As an example, lay this article aside for just *one minute*. In that sixty second time period,

- A teenager will commit suicide;
- 2 teenagers will become pregnant;
- 1-2 teenagers will take drugs for the first time;
- 1-2 teenagers will run away from home.

Applying these statistics to a twenty-four hour time period, the figures become even more fearful:

- 1430 will commit suicide;
- 2795 will become pregnant;
- 2500 will take drugs for the first time;
- 2506 will run away from home.

Orthodox children and teens are not immune to any crisis-in-life situation and our youth ministers need to be prepared to offer understanding and a compassionate ear to a child facing a crisis situation in his young life.

An area of concern for parents is that of eating disorders. The two most common disorders are *anorexia* and *bulimia*. Countless TV talk shows, network news stories and prime-time specials have dealt with these two common disorders. I share with you some information which may be helpful to parents regarding the warning signs that accompany these disorders:

Anorexia:

- Intense fear of becoming fat that does not diminish as weight is lost.
- Disturbance of body image (claiming to look "just right" or "feel fat" even when emaciated).
- Extreme self-induced weight loss (25% or more of original body weight)
- Denial that anything is wrong.

Continued on the next page.

Conference on Youth

Continued from page 51.

- Anorexia requires immediate medical attention.

Bulimia:

- Recurrent episodes of binge eating.
- Fear of not being able to stop eating during binges.
- Regular use of self-induced vomiting, rigorous diets, or fasting to counteract the effects of binges.
- Like anorexia, bulimia requires immediate medical attention.

Teens, Families, and Materialism

"Tell me what your daydreams are and I'll tell you who your God is!" What a profound opening statement by the group leader! Our children grow up believing material things bring happiness. What do you think? Do you agree with this statement? According to a recent survey, values the teens voted the highest were *jobs*, *money*, and *reputation*. Results of a 1990 teen survey showed that:

- 22% saved money
- 34% owned their own vehicle
- 50% have their own television
- 28% have their own telephone

Material things are important to all of us, but they must not be allowed to dominate our life, to be our focus of attention. They provide temporary satisfaction, but will never provide the happiness in our life that God offers us. Parents are the best example for their children; their life must reflect the true definition of success, and that is to be a *good steward* of God's gifts to us. A little advice to parents: offer your children the *best life*, and not the "good life" of material things.

Orthodox Campus Fellowships

Do you have a child or children, grandchild or grandchildren living away from home on a college campus? Is there an Orthodox Campus Fellowship present at the college? Very good questions to ask. Perhaps we will be able to provide some direction to help you with this particular ministry.

The Orthodox Campus Fellowship (O.C.F.) has as its goal to create opportunities for fellow Orthodox Christians on college campuses to share and live

their Faith through worship and life.

How does one go about establishing an O.C.F. on a local campus? This was the center of discussion at the workshop. Each of the three sponsoring Orthodox jurisdictions offers printed manuals and resource materials to help with the founding of an O.C.F. chapter on a college campus.

A joint project of the three Orthodox jurisdictions is the publication of the North American Directory of Orthodox Campus Fellowships. This booklet provides information that will be helpful to graduating high school students who are choosing a college or university, and to college students who wish to locate and become involved in an O.C.F. in their area.

• • •

The workshops continued throughout the day, ending with Vespers and dinner at St. George's Antiochian Orthodox Church. The day's program concluded with a general discussion, followed by evaluations of all the workshops, and planning for next year's conference, which will be held at Antiochian Village, Ligonier, Pa., in mid-November 1997.

Each jurisdiction had its own wrap-up session to plan for regional workshops in their respective dioceses during the coming year. The twenty-five OCA conferees met in session with Michael Anderson to discuss the OCA planned programs.

On Sunday morning, St. Mary's Cathedral (OCA) hosted the Conference participants following the Divine Liturgy and prior to their departure.

Attending the Conference enables one to gain much information and experience in planning, developing, and sponsoring programs for the youth of our Church. An additional benefit is the opportunity to meet fellow Orthodox Christians from other jurisdictions who share the same vision and who desire to provide the best programs for our Orthodox youth. Exchanging ideas, developing programs, and making friendships all in the spirit of Orthodoxy is a wonderful and exciting experience. No matter what the ethnic identity, we are one in Christ, one in our Orthodox Faith and one in focusing on the **Youth**, the future of our Orthodox Church. The Youth are our responsibility and no one else's. We need to take time to acknowledge them, to listen to them, to love, laugh and cry with them, and above all, to pray with and for them.

I would be happy to provide further information on the conference topics if contacted. Please feel free to inquire about any aspect of the Conference.

May you have a blessed Nativity season!

Christ is born! Glorify Him!

—Matushka Fran Vansuch
DRE Chairperson

FLASH! FLASH! FLASH!

Upcoming Events of the DRE

February 7, 8, 9, 1997

TEEN RETREAT -- ST. TIKHON'S SEMINARY
"What does love have to do with it?.....Everything!"

August 9, 1997

3rd Annual Women's Retreat -- St. Tikhon's Seminary

How to Respond to Pro-Abortion Slogans and Propaganda

It has been said that those who define an issue, *own* that issue. Nowhere is this more evident than in the critical issue of abortion. Abortion propaganda has been presented as fact by, among others, the media and the medical and legal professions, for so many years that the public, including many of those who support life, have come to believe this rhetoric and consider these premises as fundamental realities in the abortion situation. Let us examine the most important and prevalent of these premises.

A woman has the right to control her own body.

This is *the* primary feminist premise for abortion rights. It presents the contention by radical feminists that abortion is an essential part of their struggle for power, that power being equated with the ability to control in the most basic way, a woman's reproductive functions. Feminists recognize that *the* most obvious and telling difference between men and women is a woman's ability to bear life. In order to efface that difference, they believe that women should have the political and legal power to decide whether or not they want to be pregnant at any given time. However, a critical analysis of their argument reveals several inconsistencies:

To begin with, the very fact that a woman has a "crisis pregnancy" demonstrates that she, for whatever reason, lost "control" over her body. There are those



who have said that, had she exercised "control" in the first place, she would not be pregnant. However, those in the pro-life movement make no moral judgments in this matter since there always exists the possibility that the pregnancy was due to an external force over which she had no control. The supporters of life believe that a woman's "right to control her body" exists *before* she becomes pregnant. In other words, she has the admitted constitutional right *not* to become pregnant by whatever means she chooses whether it be abstinence, the use of contraception or sterilization. However, once a woman *is* pregnant, the undeniable fact is that she is going to have a baby. The abortion movement has only provided her with the option of having a dead rather than a live baby and this cannot and must not be equated with providing her an "alternative" to pregnancy. Once a woman is pregnant, *another human being is involved* and "her body" can no longer be the primary con-

sideration. The unborn child is scientifically and medically recognized as a *unique and distinct person*; separate from his mother and not a part of "her body." To suggest that he is so simply because he depends upon her for shelter and nourishment is to suggest that newborn and even older children who need maternal care also fall under the category of being a part of their mother's physical body, a suggestion which is patently ridiculous.

Finally, if a woman's absolute control over her physical body is a constitutionally recognized "right," then the laws against prostitution, drug use, and other crimes involving the body must be removed from the books. However, as of this date, all such laws have been deemed constitutional. The premise that a woman has the right to absolute and unfettered control of her body is applicable, judicially, only in the case of abortion.

"Who chooses: the woman or the government?" The so-called "pro-choice" argument.

When abortion is seen in terms of the "right to choose," it is supported by the majority of Americans who look no further than the idea that some individual may be deprived of her "rights." Yet, this analogy is false. If the sentiment were cast in another way, such as, "*Who chooses, the rapist (bank robber, mugger, child molester),*" the argument of

Continued on the next page.

How to Respond

Continued from page 53.

“choice” would have no appeal. For the public recognizes that such acts as rape, robbery, and the sexual molestation of children are contrary to the good of both the individual and the society and cannot be condoned, much less promoted. Whenever the term “pro-choice” is used to present abortion as being simply the right of a woman to “choose,” the question must be asked, *what choice is being made?* In the case of abortion, the “choice” is to kill an innocent human being, which is morally and ethically unacceptable.

We all recognize that not all choices are valid. Serial killer Ted Bundy made “choices,” but no one argues that the government had no business getting involved, as they brought death to countless young women. The “choice” of an abortion has resulted in the death of over thirty million babies in the United States since 1974. To suggest that “government”—the moral force of the state representing all its people—has no part in a woman’s “choice” to kill her unborn child is to propose that it has no part in the “choice” to commit any other type of murder—which, of course, is nonsense.

If abortion were made illegal, women could be arrested for having or attempting to have one.

A Planned Parenthood ad shows a woman behind bars who has just had a miscarriage. The ad states that this could conceivably be the fate of every woman who has a miscarriage and certainly would be the fate of every woman who has or attempts to have an abortion. No pro-lifer has ever encouraged or supported criminal prosecution for women who have abortions. The call for such prosecution is limited to the abortionist and those who aid, abet, and profit from the crime. Indeed, women are considered by the pro-life movement as the “second victim” since they are often coerced, bullied, and deceived in the effort to force them to choose abortion over all other options. The cry of most women who have an abortion is, “*I had no choice!*”

Most of those in the pro-life movement are men. The pro-life movement is anti-woman.

Over 80% of those in the pro-life movement are women! On the other hand, many of those who support abortion are men. After all, men have the most to gain from abortion. The vast majority of abortionists are men. Abortion removes from men the burden of child support and allows them to escape the commitment which comes with fatherhood. One young woman standing outside an abortuary carried a sign which read: “A woman’s ‘right’ to choose has become a man’s right to abuse.”

Polls show that a vast majority of Americans favor abortion rights.

This is another half-truth. Most polls show that almost 70% of Americans favor abortion *only* in cases of rape, incest, and threat to the physical life of the mother. Done for reasons of birth control, sex selection, convenience, or economics, abortion is repudiated by the public in virtually the same numbers, almost 70%. Further, those who study them know that polls *reflect the opinions of those who take them*. For instance, the above statement—that almost 70% of the public favors abortion—was made when the question: “Would you favor denying an abortion to a woman whose life was in danger or who had been raped?” brought the understandable answer of “no” from most of those being polled. This most specific answer to a most specific question was then extrapolated to the statement: *most Americans favor abortion on demand*. However, if one asks the question, “Do you support abortion for social and economic convenience,” the reason for over 97% of all the abortions performed since *Roe*, the majority of Americans will answer with a resounding *No!*

If abortion is limited or banned, who will care for the 1.5 million unwanted children who are now being aborted? It will be a tremendous burden on the welfare system and the taxpayers.

Ignoring the equating of children’s lives with money, this argument has also

been proven patently false. When and where access to abortion is limited, *the pregnancy rate drops precipitously!* In one state where parental notification is necessary for minors, it was found that the teenage pregnancy rate dropped almost 75%. In adult situations where there is (supposedly) more mature judgment, it can be expected that the “unwanted pregnancy” rate will decline even more when abortion is no longer available as a backup method of birth control.

However, whether or not that should occur, we cannot murder children on the off chance that the taxpayers may have to shoulder some part of the cost of their upbringing. Given that there are *millions of couples waiting to adopt children*, this is not a true consideration in the elimination of legalized abortion.

There are those who ask, “What about the ‘unadoptables,’ that is, minority, multiracial, and handicapped children? Should we not provide abortion in such cases?” The adoption situation has changed radically in recent years and, although healthy white infants are still the preference, many couples are willing and even eager to adopt children who are designated as “hard to place.” During the time the “natural parents” allowed a Down’s Syndrome infant to starve to death in a hospital in Bloomington, Indiana, there were six couples waiting to adopt him.

“Every Child A Wanted Child” [Planned Parenthood slogan]

Sounds great, doesn’t it! Wouldn’t we want every child born to be “wanted”? Yet think of the implication of this statement! What we are saying is, *If you aren’t wanted you have no value as a human being!* How far is it then to such slogans as, *Every Senior a Wanted Senior*, or *Every Jew a Wanted Jew*. Human beings cannot be killed simply because, at some point in their lives, somebody perceives them as “unwanted,” even if that person is their mother. Almost everyone, sometime in his life may be “unwanted” by his family, his boss, his peers, and even himself . . . *but he is never unwanted by God*. Being “unwanted” is not a capital crime in the United States!

—Valerie Protopoulos

To be continued.

MONASTERIES AND CHURCHES OF RUSSIA

Escorted by: **ARCHBISHOP HERMAN**

July 11-22, 1997



July 11, Friday: New York/Moscow

Check-in at John F. Kennedy International Airport for your transatlantic flight to Moscow on board Finnair's jumbo jet. Complimentary meals and beverages served aloft.

July 12, Saturday: Welcome to Moscow

Arrival in Moscow, and after customs and passport formalities, you will be met and then transferred to the **Intourist Hotel**. This afternoon begins your panorama sightseeing tour of Moscow—where you will see the most famous landmarks of Moscow—Red Square, the Cathedral of St. Basil, Lenin's Mausoleum, and GUM, Russia's largest department store. Continue to Lenin Hills, where Moscow University is located, for an overview of the city. Enroute you will see a segment of the old Katai Gorod Town Wall, and finally the world famous Bolshoi Theater. **D Evening: Vigil**

July 13, Sunday

Divine Liturgy. Prior to returning to the hotel, a stop will be made at the site of Christ the Savior Cathedral. After dinner, attend the Moscow Circus. **B-D**

July 14, Monday

Tour the Kremlin and its many treasures: the Cathedrals of the Assumption, of St. Michael, and of the Annunciation; the Bell Tower of Ivan the Great; the great bronze Czar Bell and Cannon; and the Armory Museum with its fabulous collection of Fabergé eggs, jewels, and royal thrones. A short walk away from the Kremlin is Red Square, the site of St. Basil's Cathedral. In the afternoon, visit Novodivechy Monastery. **B-L-D**

July 15, Tuesday: Optina Monastery

Day excursion to Optina Monastery. Evening return to Moscow. (A stop at the Women's Convent for lunch will be requested.) **B-L-D**

July 16, Wednesday: Moscow/Sergiev Posad/Rostov/Yaroslavl

After breakfast depart by motorcoach to Sergiev Posad, an ancient town renowned for its Trinity St. Sergius Monastery, one of the oldest and most prominent in Russia. Discover the monastery's thirteen churches, the Tomb of Boris Godunov, the relics of St. Sergius of Radonezh, and the relics of St. Innocent, Apostle to America. Early afternoon continue to Yaroslavl with stops in *Pereslavl-Zalessky* and *Rostov* prior to arriving in Yaroslavl for dinner and overnight. (*Pereslavl-Zalessky* founded in 1152 by Yuri Dolgoruky, the founder of Moscow. Here we will visit the two monasteries—Nikitsky and Gorisky, which stand opposite each other on low hills. In the center of town, you will see the stone tent roof Church of Peter the Metropolitan, and the Cathedral of the Transfiguration of the Savior. *Rostov*, one of the oldest centers of Russian statehood. Overlooking Lake Nerl stands the impressive Rostov Kremlin, an architectural masterpiece dominating the town with its white towers and cathedrals, shingled roofs, and gilded domes. A great source of pride for the town is its Cathedral of the Assumption and its belfry—in the clear and gentle peal of its bells when set to music.) **B-L-D**

July 17, Thursday

Yaroslavl, founded almost one thousand years ago on the banks of the mighty Volga River, is an absolute treasure chest for art lovers. Called the "Florence of Russia," Yaroslavl is full of histori-

cal and cultural monuments. Today will be spent exploring many of these monuments, including the Spaso-Preobrazhensky Monastery, and St. Iliah the Prophet Church. Dinner and overnight. **B-L-D**

July 18, Friday: Yaroslavl/St. Petersburg

Continue sightseeing in Yaroslavl. After dinner, you will be transferred to the rail station for your overnight sleeper train to St. Petersburg. **B-L-D**

July 19, Saturday

Check-in at *Hotel Pribalatiiskaya*. During your **panorama city sightseeing tour** you will see such famous sights as Kazan Cathedral, before stopping at Isaac's Square, where you will see the famous "Bronze Horseman" statue of Peter the Great, in the background, St. Isaac's Cathedral, built of granite and marble in the shape of a cross. Other landmarks will include the Fortress of Peter and Paul, Palace Square, and Mariinsky Theater. In the afternoon tour, Peter-and-Paul Fortress, an outstanding architectural monument and the burial place of Russian Romanov czars. **B-L-D Evening: Vigil**

July 20, Sunday

Attend Divine Liturgy at St. Alexander Nevsky Monastery or St. Nicholas Cathedral. Late afternoon tour of Peter & Paul Fortress, the burial place of Russian Romanov czars. **B-L-D**

July 21, Monday

This morning visit the famous **Hermitage Museum** located in the Imperial Winter Palace, home of the Romanovs to the days of the last Czar, now the treasure house of fine and applied arts. Balance of the day at leisure for shopping or further exploring this wonderful city. In the afternoon, tour St. Isaac's Cathedral. Following dinner, attend a ballet or opera performance. **B-L-D**

July 22, Tuesday: St. Petersburg/New York

Transfer to airport for your homeward bound flight to New York. **B**

TOUR INCLUDES: 10 nights

- Round-trip air transportation from New York to Moscow via Finnair
- Overnight train transportation between Yaroslavl and St. Petersburg
- Meeting and assistance at airports by your Russian guide
- 10 nights accommodations based on double occupancy with private bath
- 10 breakfasts, 10 lunches, and 10 dinners
- Ground transportation by motorcoach
- Comprehensive sightseeing per itinerary
- Excursions, museum and attraction admission fees
- English-speaking National guide throughout the tour in Russia
- 2 cultural performances (Moscow & St. Petersburg)
- Transfers, hotel taxes, service charges, and baggage handling within Russia
- Russian visa fee
- F.O.S. travel bag and helpful hints booklet

Based on twin room:	\$ 2289.00	per person
Single room supplement:	\$ 245.00	
U.S. Departure Taxes:	\$ 23.00	

Music and the Resurgence of Orthodoxy in Former Communist Lands

Resisting the Protestant "Gospel"

Some time ago, *Christianity Today* featured a headline such as the above, but it said, "Why is South America becoming Protestant?" One's first reaction was to say, "Are you kidding? Everybody knows that South America is predominantly Roman Catholic!" But facts and figures show that in certain areas in South America, such as Brazil, Protestants are making enormous inroads, and even becoming a majority religion, in what has been thought of as a largely Roman Catholic area of the world.

In Central America, the story is the same. So when Orthodox say, "Evangelicalism is dying in America," one wants to be sure

to qualify *which* America they mean, because in some of the Latin American countries it is not only healthy but growing at what seems an exponential rate. Guatemala, where Protestant churches are fast climbing toward a majority status, gives plenty of evidence of the effect of fervent and tireless evangelization on the part of Protestant missionaries.

The gains of Protestant churches in the Latin American countries are somewhat paralleled by their growth in the Eastern European nations—somewhat, because it is too early to quote figures, and because the Orthodox countries of Eastern Europe are very different from the Latin American countries.

Nevertheless, the largest church building in Romania, for example, is not Orthodox, but Baptist. At the Salut Hotel in Moscow, of a Sunday morning, the lobby television is tuned to Robert Schuller's "Hour of Power." One Protestant pastor has brought thousands of tourist evangelists with several million New Testament bibles to pass out at no cost to the Russian people, at "crusades," schools, and military bases. Although many of these "crusaders" are completely ignorant about Russia's Christian past and present, their goodwill and fervor have made a significant impression in that country—even reflecting on all of us as Americans—for better or for worse.

Of course, the many non-Orthodox Russian Christians who, like the faithful Orthodox, were persecuted and embarrassed by the Communist regime for more than seventy years, are working frantically to "evangelize" Russia from within. Although there are outstanding examples of foreign Protestant denominations and individuals whose purpose is to build the existing churches of Russia, not excluding the Orthodox, and to

join hands with Orthodox people in rendering humanitarian aid, many of the popularly-called "evangelical" churches are under the impression that they must save Russia even from Orthodox Christianity, which they regard as a "dead" religion whose main feature is "vain repetition" and "meaningless ritual."

One response that one sees in Russia to this phenomenon of non-Orthodox evangelicalization (as opposed to evangelism, which is certainly not an unorthodox term) is fear and confusion, and an attempt to ban the spread of this form of Christian teaching because Russia is his-

torically and very deeply Orthodox. To be sure, many missionaries have no idea what Or-

thodoxy is, what it is that they are fighting. One American priest was serving at an Orthodox altar in St. Petersburg when the church was leafletted with pamphlets by an American Protestant group which asserted that the Orthodox were worshipping the devil. Some evangelists also re-administer the sacrament of baptism in the belief that the Orthodox sacrament was somehow "invalid." They emphasize, when they offer baptism, that there is no charge for the service whatsoever, having been informed that Russians "must pay to be baptized" in the Orthodox Church. Some individuals are probably attracted to the opportunity of receiving baptism at no cost, and others at gifts which may be proffered in connection with their church attendance.

Persecution, however, tends to awaken resistance in the minds of the persecuted. The Russian people were forbidden so much for so long by the Soviet regime that for the Orthodox Church, or any other authority, to vilify Protestantism, or even the more dangerous cults of Mormonism or the Jehovah's Witnesses, has backfired in some cases.

To use the fact that Russia was "historically Orthodox" to justify persecution of Protestants is equivalent to excuse the persecution of Orthodox in America on the grounds that America has been predominantly historically Protestant. When Protestants have been banned and persecuted in "traditionally" Roman Catholic countries, their denominations have flourished underground and finally burst into the spotlight as significant religious populations. Without wanting to draw too close a parallel, we should probably be cautioned by those examples.

There are some now who suggest that in fifty years or less Russia will be a Protestant country. The future of Russia is in God's hands, of course, and the poll-takers

and opinion-makers have seldom had regard for His overriding will. But to overlook the serious challenge facing the Orthodox Church of Eastern Europe is to say that we in America do not care, that Orthodox Christianity is not important enough to preserve as a precious heritage. It has been observed that the present generation may be lost to the Church. But generations have already been lost under Communism.

Those of us who suppose that the practice of Orthodoxy is widespread in Russia at the present time overlook the dismal fact of comparatively minor *regular* church attendance, and the bleak moral trends that have not yet reversed themselves in the lives of the Russian youth. For example, in Moscow, in an interview given to the *New York Times*, sixty percent of the high-school age women stated that prostitution seemed like an attractive job option. That, also, is the result of the new-found "freedom"; such a job "opportunity" was highly discouraged under Communism, at least officially.

The growing evidence that Russia's love affair with the West is over is not good news for the Protestant churches or for televangelists, who have so quickly taken advantage of the recent open-door policy to bring their several versions of the Gospel to Russia. It may not, however, be much better news for the Orthodox. What "Orthodox" countries do is also watched by the world. If Russia becomes only nominally Orthodox, and the unhealthy trends in nationalism continue, then Orthodoxy will have gained very little respect worldwide (i.e., the kind of respect that draws people to Christ, not the miserable "respect" of the world, for which we should have not a care).

There is a belief among some in Russia that Orthodoxy is well able to hold its own in competition with other religious faiths and that having such competition is actually healthy rather than dangerous. But Orthodox Christianity is not in much of a position to make its claims felt amid the clamorous voices of what are rightly called other "persuasions." Short of priests and trained workers, short of time, and short of funds, with an incredible task on her hands, the Russian Orthodox Church has, so to

speak, stepped up to bat with two strikes against her, *humanly speaking*, in this important contest for the soul of Russia. It is no wonder there is so much tension between rival religious factions, and a backlash in both Russia and this country to anything that smacks of "liberalism" or "ecumenism" on the part of Orthodox believers. It is not what one could call an age of ecumenism. Perhaps that is for the best.

While this is but a small suggestion, and one from our point of view as Orthodox musicians and frequent visitors to Eastern Europe, we suggest that a key to the continuing resurgence of Orthodoxy within the Eastern European countries might be closer to our reach than we suppose. We Orthodox cannot compete with the Protestants and cultists using all their methods, nor would it be right for us to do so. But we can learn from some historical trends.

The beginnings of Orthodox hymnology, by St. Ephraim the Syrian, were provoked into life by a certain Arius, whom we know now to have been in serious error with regard to the nature of Jesus Christ. Arius had his followers sing a simple but persuasive song: "There was a time when He [meaning Christ] was not." This song must have had a highly persuasive melody and rhythm, for it was credited with attracting hundreds of thousands throughout the Byzantine Empire to his point of view. In response to this error, St. Ephraim fought fire with fire: He composed over 350 songs and set the Orthodox Christians singing and imparted the truth through his Spirit-anointed melodies. And in the end, since the battle was the Lord's, as it is today, Orthodoxy was victorious.

Russia and Eastern Europe are singing countries. The melodies of the Russian Orthodox Church are some of the most beautiful of any Orthodox jurisdiction. In one Eastern European country we visited, Albania, the Orthodox youth are taught Byzantine chant, which they sing to themselves during the day in a reverent but lively manner, and Russian Orthodox music, which they love, together with extra-liturgical Scripture choruses. Some of these "choruses" are not Orthodox in origin, but are simply melodic and Orthodox in content, using

liturgical words such as "Alleluia." The youth groups in Albania are flourishing, and they are very committed to Orthodox Christianity. They seem to be meeting the challenge of a minority church in a predominantly Moslem country.

In one Albanian city we witnessed a group which was predominantly Moslem so caught up in Christopher Kypros's beautiful setting of "Agios o Theos" (Holy God) that even the Moslem mayor began singing, and soon the city council with him. Striking evidence to the stirring power of the words of truth set to a simple but beautiful melody! Fortunately, the short-handed but great-hearted Orthodox missionaries (all nine of them!) in Albania have encouraged and followed up on every opportunity such as this one to expand upon and continue the thought and spirit of the music.

Orthodox have a tremendous advantage in Russia and the Eastern European countries, as far as culture and music are concerned. There is still respect for art and music there, and the composers of the nineteenth century so treasured church music that they set it in classical forms (both Tone 1, "O Lord, Save Thy People" and "Let God Arise" are unmistakably identifiable in the *1812 Overture* and *Russian Easter*). That is, these tunes are unmistakably identifiable to those who know their meaning! If the Orthodox youth in Russia are taught the Church tones and the great hymns, and their meaning (for the big complaint from the youth is that they cannot understand Slavonic), they will certainly comprehend Russia's sacred musical heritage and may sing the words of truth in their hearts, just as we all sing to ourselves the wonderful hymns of Pascha, Tone 1, and so on. One might think that they would recognize the tunes of hymns already. Evidently this is not the case. It is difficult for us in the West to comprehend the depth of ignorance and misunderstanding which Communism fostered. In Albania, where all church music was burned by Enver Hoxha, it is particularly abysmal.

At this point, the Russian Orthodox Church does not wish to change the liturgy into the Russian language. Probably it would be hasty to do so, resulting in

Continued on the next page.

Music and Resurgent Orthodoxy

Continued from page 57.

slipshod translations which might not fully rebaptize a language that has, in fact, been demonstrably and purposefully distorted. (For example, the letter which looks to us like a crossed “b” represented in Old Russian the “Cross over the world,” and actually was removed from the language by Lenin for that reason.) Perhaps in the future, the Bishops of Russia will commend to the Church a completed and satisfactory Russian-language liturgy for the use of the people. Until that decision is made, however—if it is—the truths of Orthodoxy can be understood through “songs, hymns, and spiritual songs” which are made compre-

hensible to the people of Russia. The value of this is seen in the fact that many visit the English-language parish of Fr. Daniel Hubiak and hear the Liturgy for the first time in a language that they understand—English. They do not wish the Liturgy to be served in their Russian churches in English, but they do appreciate this learning experience and come away with a fuller understanding of the meaning of the Divine service. We have seen this happen to our own young translators who have visited the parish. One, a Baptist minister, immediately made his confession and made plans to return to the Orthodox Faith, so blessed was he by the beauty and truth of the Liturgy.



hensible to the people of Russia. The value of this is seen in the fact that many visit the English-language parish of Fr. Daniel Hubiak and hear the Liturgy for the first time in a language that they understand—English. They do not wish the Liturgy to be served in their Russian churches in English, but they do appreciate this learning experience and come away with a fuller understanding of the meaning of the Divine service. We have seen this happen to our own young translators who have visited the parish. One, a Baptist minister, immediately made his confession and made plans to return to the Orthodox Faith, so blessed was he by the beauty and truth of the Liturgy.

The music of the Church is a wholesome antidote for the influences of the world’s music which so penetrate even the Eastern European countries, and which characterize some of the more ex-

trend is counterproductive to their own spiritual growth.

So one suggestion that we have, one key to helping Russian people to understand their Faith, is that we help them to understand and to sing the music of the Liturgy, as well as, perhaps, music that is complementary to it. Perhaps small groups of us could share our translated music, explaining that it is a translation from the Slavonic text. (Even in America, in one parish in the West, when the Cherubic Hymn was sung in English, the choir was interrupted by shouts of “Protestant hymn! Protestant hymn!”—so easy is it to attend Liturgy in another language without understanding a shred of its meaning.)

We can show (by doing) the the Church’s wisdom has been to be sure that the Liturgy is, at all events, understood by the Faithful. Perhaps by sharing how

much it means to us by singing the familiar Russian tones in our language, we will even let the Russian people know how much we respect their culture and what it has done for us. The way of reverence and gratitude for what Russia has given us seems to please the Russian people very much. In that way even our beloved St. Herman of Alaska lovingly confirmed the many beauties of the Alaskan native culture, and shared with them the “more excellent way” of Orthodox fulness.

Protestant people like to point out that the first thing they did at the Reformation was to get the entire church *singing their music*—not just the choir, but all the people. We all know, or know of, the effectiveness of the former drinking-



song that Martin Luther set to the words “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God.” It is said that that song, along with “Now Thank We All Our God” brought about a Protestant revolution in Europe. Similarly, recent religious movements have been characterized by a great deal of singing. If the great Orthodox melodists and hymnographers in times past could recognize the importance of song, and used it even to counter the influence of heretical music, could we not use it to help encourage the Church we love, and to have a positive and beneficial influence upon our non-Orthodox Christian neighbors who might visit our parishes as well?

—Dana and Sue Talley

The Talleys, well-known musical performers, are members of St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church in New York.

St. Nicholas of Zhicha

A Friendly Letter to a Candidate for the Priesthood

Editor's note: In this Year of Vocations, St. Nicholas offers a timely message to young men regarding the priestly vocation. St. Nicholas, who lived and labored in Europe and America, reposed in 1956 at St. Tikhon's Monastery.

You are young, and as such exposed to many worldly temptations. But be steadfast, and know that the Lord has chosen you "from the womb of thy mother" and dedicated to His service.

What are the chief temptations of our time, which may disturb your mind?

Lucrativeness. Some of your high school colleagues will have lucrative positions, either as the high state officials or prosperous businessmen, journalists or army generals, with a big income or salaries. Your salary, however, never will be more than modest, perhaps less than that of a great number of your parishioners. But think, who of them can forgive sins in the name of God, who but you alone? And when those wealthy ones lie on death beds, what then? Both mutually despise each other: the man and his wealth; the dying man despising his unnecessary wealth, and his wealth, as it were, despising its owner—cynical and helpless to each other. In this hour of agony none of your colleagues of lucrative and world-famous position will ask any banker or diplomat to help him, but you. Seeing that everything has left him and that he is leaving everything, like a drowning man looking for a rope, he looks only to you to save his soul. Now, compare all the temporal lucrateness and world glory with the God-given authority to forgive sins and save the souls for the life eternal, the authority which God delegated only to you. Therefore, be superior to this temptation of lucrateness.

Fear for tomorrow. But you have a

wife—matushka—and children. What about their sustenance, education, insurance? The world is merciless? Well, listen what the seer says: "I have been young and now I am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (Ps. 37:25). And you know what your Lord said (Mt. 6:31). What salary did Jesus have? And what insurance his apostles? The history of the Church for nineteen hundred years testifies that never has one of Christ's priests died of hunger nor his children begged for bread (of course, excepting the time of persecution and martyrdom, where not only the priests but all kind of Christian people were tortured for Christ's sake). And I can assure you from my long experience, that I saw several millionaires broken and begging their friends for bread and shelter, but never a priest. God is protecting His faithful servants. Don't worry about means and insurances.

Insignificance. But the Orthodox Church nowadays is playing an insignificant part in the world's drama and in Christendom. Who told you that? Don't be ashamed of the chains in which nearly 200 million of your brethren are now held for Christ's sake, nor of their poverty, their suffocated silence and their apostolic sufferings (Read II Cor. 6:3-10). Look, our Orthodox Church is apostolic not only in doctrine but in suffering too. The Orthodox people are highly honored "not only to believe Him (Christ) but also to suffer for His sake" (Philip 1:29). Flee the inferiority complex, beholding how St. Paul proudly and jubilantly speaks of the persecution of the church under Emperor Nero (a suicide), and compare it with the present persecution of your Orthodox

Church. The persecuted Church is the true Church. "Whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth, and scourgeth every one whom He receiveth" (Heb. 12:6). The Lord rejoices in a Church which in peacetime makes for a civilization in His glory, but He rejoices much more in a Church suffering for Him. Remember this and think of this. And think also of the world-resonant effect of the suffering of the Church of your forefathers. The erstwhile empty churches in America and elsewhere are now filled to capacity. There is a revival of religion all over the world because of your suffering church at home. When the free peoples in peace and abundance are not satisfied with Christ, then the Lord God shows to them how it is without Christ. Confusion, horrors, crimes, darkness and hell. The world never believes before it sees. Therefore once again the Son of man has been lifted up as Moses lifted up the **healing** serpent in the wilderness. And this time, as always before, when He is being lifted up, He is drawing all men unto Him (John 3:14-12, 32). Don't you see how nations are being drawn unto Him by looking at Him on the cross in Russia, Serbia and other Orthodox countries, and how they are being **healed** from atheism and anti-christianism? The suffering of an innocent person arouses always in human hearts great sympathy. How much more the suffering of the innocent Son of God in the body of His Church! Therefore, rejoice, for the whole world is becoming better on account of your suffering Church. Suffering at home, she is now the greatest missionary of Christ abroad.

Faithfulness to the Master

Nurturing Apostolic Mission in Our Time

Editor's note: 1997 will mark the bicentennial of St. Innocent's birth. The present article, a talk delivered before the Anthracite District FROC in Holy Resurrection Cathedral, Wilkes-Barre on the occasion of the recent feast of St. Andrew, is here presented in St. Innocent's honor.

We are gathered to honor the memory of the first-called of the Apostles of Christ, St. Andrew, and to spend some time together in prayer, in fellowship, and in reflection on issues of common spiritual concern. It was only a few years ago that we prayerfully celebrated two centuries of Orthodox Christianity on the North American continent. Next year, in 1997, we will again commemorate a bicentennial — the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of the man who perhaps more than any other was responsible for planting the Orthodox faith deeply and firmly upon this continent: St. Innocent Veniaminov, Metropolitan of Moscow, Enlightener of the Aleuts, and Apostle to America. It seems appropriate, therefore, that this evening we reflect together on the theme of apostolic mission, not only as it touches on St. Andrew and St. Innocent, but more importantly, perhaps, as it impacts on our own lives here in America, on the threshold of the twenty-first century.

As descendants of the valiant Slavs and of Ancient Rus', we boldly lay claim to St. Andrew as "our own." As recounted by the Russian *Primary Chronicle*, which was written in the Kievan Caves monastery in approximately the eleventh century, among all the apostles of Christ who went out to all the ends of the earth to preach the Gospel, it was St. Andrew who first blessed the lands of the Slavs. "When Andrew was teaching in Sinope and came to Kherson," so the account reads,



"he observed that the mouth of the Dnieper was nearby. Conceiving a desire to go to Rome, he thus went to the mouth of the Dnieper. Thence he ascended the river, and by chance he halted beneath the hills upon the shore. Upon arising in the morning, he observed to the disciples who were with him: 'See ye these hills? So shall the favor of God shine upon them that on this spot a great city shall arise, and God shall erect many churches here.' He drew near the hills, and having blessed them, he set up a cross. After offering his prayer to God, he descended from the hill on which

Kiev was subsequently built, and continued his journey up the Dnieper. He then reached the Slavs at the point where Novgorod is now situated. He saw these people existing according to their customs, and on observing how they bathed and drenched themselves, he wondered at them. He went thence among the Varangians and came to Rome, where he recounted what he had learned and observed . . ."

It is almost irrelevant to us today to discover that the legend of St. Andrew is hardly based on solid historical evidence, and thus cannot be held to be "true" in a scientific sense. For despite its very probable historical inaccuracy, the legend does, in fact, convey a deep and abiding spiritual truth: the Orthodox Christian faith that we confess today is, indeed, the true faith proclaimed by the Apostles, including also St. Andrew. It is indeed the blessed fruit of prophetic vision and apostolic mission to all peoples and nations of the earth, including also the Slavs in Kiev and Novgorod, and, by the same token, including also us, their faraway descendants in America. We might also venture to say that it is also probably true that Russian history in time became *Orthodox* history precisely because at the very dawn of Russian spirituality, at its very roots, the inspired vision of St. Andrew's apostolic mission was defined as being central to this history, as something fundamental and definitive.

In contemporary American history there is yet no counterpart of the legend of St. Andrew to inspire us, or to teach us deep spiritual truths about where we "fit in," about our place in the Christian commonwealth. This, perhaps, speaks to certain spiritual realities about American

"The Russian Primary Chronicle," in *Medieval Russia's Epics, Chronicles, and Tales*, ed. and trans. Serge A. Zenkovsky, rev. and enlarged edn. New York: E. P. Dutton [1974], p. 47.

life such as we experience it. For indeed, American history has not included the story of St. Innocent and the Russians in Alaska in the larger story of America in the same way that it has included, for example, the story of the Pilgrims in Massachusetts, the French in Louisiana, or the Spanish in California; and this despite the fact that Orthodox history in America is almost perfectly contiguous with American political history. We should remember, after all, that the arrival of the Russian Orthodox mission in 1794 was only four years after the first American census in 1790, and only a year after the signing of the Constitution in 1793. The arrival of St. Innocent — Fr. John Veniaminov — in Alaska in 1823, however, precedes the arrival of Brigham Young in Utah in 1847 by twenty-five years — a full quarter of a century.

There may be many reasons why Orthodox history in America remains obscure to the vast majority of Americans. One is forced to wonder, however, if a significant portion of the blame for this state of affairs should not, perhaps, be attributed to our own spiritual insolvency and immobility, our own inarticulate witness to the Orthodox faith, our own lack of apostolic zeal and commitment.

Forty-eight years ago, upon his arrival in America in 1948, Fr. Georges Florovsky, at that time Dean of St. Vladimir's Seminary, was invited to address the Federated Russian Orthodox Clubs in Philadelphia. In a speech later published in the *Russian Orthodox Journal*, Florovsky challenged the members of the FROC to take a hard look at themselves, both as Orthodox Christians and as Americans.

"Is there any man on earth who can state in full sincerity and with a clear conscience that he is substantially and essentially, to the very depths of his being, an Orthodox Christian, that he really knows what the message of Christ was, that he is really worthy of this message?" Indeed, he observed, "it is a tremendous privilege, a high prerogative, to belong to the true Church . . . Yet this means precisely that we have a very heavy responsibility. It is not enough to *call* ourselves Orthodox Christians, we must *be* Orthodox." But apart from *being Ortho-*

dox "substantially and essentially," Florovsky declared, those who came to this country to stay, who belong to this country, those for whom it is home, have yet another, special responsibility, because America is unlike other countries. "America was built up by people who came from different lands and who brought with them their own heritage, their own traditions. They have stored the traditions they brought into the common treasury as their distinctive contributions."

And thus, some pointed questions: "Have you really fulfilled your obligation? Your spiritual obligation to your American home and nation? Have you brought all your treasures, all treasures which you have inherited from your forefathers and ancestors, into the common treasury of American civilization, of American life, of the American Commonwealth? Have you taught Americans from other backgrounds to respect the Orthodox Church? Have you taught them to understand the pure Orthodox Faith? Have you converted them, if not exactly to membership in the Church, then at least to an understanding that there is something distinctive, something unprecedented, something ultimately precious in your own tradition? Have you not rather kept your traditions exclusively for yourselves? Have you not rather regarded them as something connected with specific or national circumstances? Have you not rather considered them as belonging only to Russians, or to Greeks, to Rumanians, to Albanians, and as not belonging to other nations, to people with other national backgrounds? Have you fulfilled your primary responsibility?"

I suspect, my friends, that if we seriously consider these questions and undertake to answer them candidly and honestly, we will be forced to conclude that, in fact, in two hundred years we have accomplished far less than should have been expected from us. And that our greatest weakness is precisely our lack of apostolic zeal, our lack of a burning calling to apostolic endeavor and mission. Indeed: what was it that sustained the Holy Apostles as they preached the Risen Christ to the peoples of their world? What was it that sustained

St. Andrew in his journeys into Asia Minor, and, as legend that we cited above has it, into what is today Russia, Scandinavia, and Northern Europe? What inner flame sustained and guided St. Innocent in his seemingly endless journeys across the vast expanses of the Northern Pacific and across Alaska, the "Great Land"?

There are several basic and fundamental assumptions that should inform our understanding. We should in all humility recognize, first of all, that the original stimulus for the accomplishment of God's work on earth, which is the quintessential aspect of "apostolic mission," does not reside with us, the human race, but is, rather, "the Lord's doing, and is wondrous in our eyes." As the Beloved Disciple and Evangelist, St. John, reminds us, "God so loved the world that he gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). It is axiomatic and we know, of course, that there can be no other "adequate" response on our part to the depth of this Divine Love. We can try, nonetheless, and however inadequately, to show reciprocal love for God and for our fellow human beings. Such reciprocal love, in fact, according to the testimony of Christ Himself, is the summation of all the teachings of Divine Law and the Prophets: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27). "In this is love," St. John observes in his first Epistle, "not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" (1 John 4:10-11).

A second fundamental truth that we should acknowledge and continue to bear in the forefront of our consciousness is that there is no essential, fundamental difference between St. Andrew or St. Innocent and us. When the Lord first called them they were just as human as we are, just as limited in their understanding and vulnerable, and just as preoccupied with their own lives. The truth is that the call to mission resounds not

Continued on the next page.

Faithfulness to the Master

Continued from page 61.

only for the “religious professionals,” the members of the clergy or the monastics, but for all of us; and that it is not some extraordinary “supermen” who are called to accomplish God’s purposes here on earth, but, rather, average and ordinary human beings who yet are attentive to God’s will, and who in faithfulness and in struggle with themselves and with the surrounding world manage to overcome the limitations of human nature and of their individual personalities.

In his recollection of himself at the start of his missionary endeavor, for instance, St. Innocent recognized himself as a most incongruous candidate for mission. “Indeed, how could I — *why* should I (humanly speaking) — have travelled God-knows-where, when I had one of the best parishes in the city, when I enjoyed the love of my parishioners and the good graces of the authorities, when I already owned my own home and had a larger income than the salary being offered to whomever was assigned?”² Nor was there anything extraordinary about the circumstances in which he was called. By seeming coincidence, he recalls, he had been in his bishop’s drawing room when his spiritual son, the explorer John Kriukov, who had spent forty years in America, and who on many previous occasions had fruitlessly tried to convince him to go to America, “again began to tell me of the Aleut’s zeal in prayer and hearing the Word of God . . . when suddenly *Blessed be the Name of the Lord!* — I began to burn with desire to go to such a people! Even today I recall vividly the tortures I endured while waiting impatiently to inform the bishop of my wish.”³ And thus, he concludes, “May my own example serve as a new proof of the truth that ‘the Lord guides a man safely in the way he should go,’ and that each of us servants of His Church is no more than an instrument in His hands. He saw fit to establish my field of ministry in America — and that despite my opposition.”⁴

There is something quite extraordi-

²Cited in Paul D. Garrett, *St. Innocent: Apostle to America* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1979), p. 34.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., p. 36.

nary about our membership in the Church, something that all too often we take for granted, and which thus almost never comes to the forefront of our consciousness: our *chosenness*. More specifically, our chosenness for mission. “You are a chosen generation,” writes St. Peter in his First General Epistle, “a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9). If we further recall and ponder the words of Christ, “You did not chose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit” (John 15:16), which were first addressed to the Twelve, but which are now, by extension, addressed also to us, then this very peculiar aspect of our being — our chosenness — is truly astonishing.

This most peculiar aspect of our being, I would like to suggest to you, is first revealed to us in its fullness in the waters of the baptismal font and in Holy Chrismation, when we are not only “baptized into Christ,” but also “put on Christ” and are sealed with the “seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit.” All too often, because we are yet infants when we first experience this, but then are not attentive enough when we experience this again and again as adults, when it happens to our children, or nephews and nieces, or grandchildren, it all goes literally above our heads, as it were, so that “seeing, we do not see,” and “hearing, we do not hear” this remarkable thing. All too often, again, and usually for the very same reasons, at our Baptism we do not “hear” the selection from St. Matthew’s Gospel which is read to us, which in itself is quite remarkable and extraordinary both for what is proclaimed and commanded to us. Listen to it once again, carefully:

“At that time, the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. When they saw Him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given unto Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to

observe all things that I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age’” (Matt. 28:16-20).

To those who study the New Testament in a structured and formal way, as, for instance, we do in the Seminary, this passage is commonly known as the *Great Commission*. The passage has a parallel in St. Mark’s Gospel, very similar in both spirit and content:

“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned . . . And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word through the accompanying signs” (Mark 16: 15-16; 20).

Let us make an effort to understand what is expected of us as baptized Christians, as Orthodox believers.

At that time, the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them.

What does it mean to be a disciple? Quintessentially, discipleship in the Christian sense is always a deep and personal encounter with Jesus Christ, which originates in a moment of external contemplation and eventually grows to encompass and fill one’s entire life. Discipleship entails renunciation of the past, faithful obedience in the present, and commitment to following Him wherever the Master directs. It is not only an external pilgrimage, but also an internal struggle, an ongoing, deep and thorough restructuring of the self in the image of the Master, which reaches its fulfillment in the experience that St. Paul described in his Epistle to the Galatians: “It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God” (Gal. 2:20).

This is exactly how St. Innocent himself viewed the spiritual path of the Christian: “The way into the heavenly Kingdom is Jesus Christ Himself . . . But as to how we must go by this way, listen to what Jesus Christ Himself says: ‘Whoever wishes to follow me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.’”⁵

⁵Innocent, Bishop of Kamchatka, the Kurilian and Aleutian Islands, *Indication of the Way into the Kingdom of Heaven* (Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1990), p. 33.

Discipleship, however, comes at a price. The denial of self and taking up of one's cross do not come automatically, or easily, or of themselves. "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple; and whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26-27). So likewise, "Whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be my disciple." This does *not* mean, of course, that one must actually physically, emotionally or mentally, begin to hate one's loved ones or embark on a path of self-destruction.

What it *does* mean, however, is that there must be, first of all, a deep and proper ordering of the spiritual priorities of one's life; and secondly, but most importantly, that Christ Himself should be the highest spiritual priority of our lives. Our loved ones, as well as our own self-interest in leading a comfortable and self-serving life, cannot become spiritual idols to whom we bow down and serve *at the price* of serving the Master.

But lest we think that the Lord is unreasonable, that the price we are asked to pay for discipleship is too heavy or too steep, there is also, we should remember, the reward, to balance out the scales, as it were: "Then Peter said, 'See, we have left all and followed you.' So He said to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life'" (Luke 18:28-29).

When they saw Him, they worshipped him; but some doubted.

Contrary to what many of us would normally believe, doubt and self-doubt are, more often than not, normal components of a growing, maturing and deepening faith. Few of us are given the gift of a deep, childlike, unquestioning and innocent faith that remains unswerving and unshaken after passing through the crucible of life's very real trials and tribulations. And all too often, on the other hand, we are apt to mistake the counterfeit shallowness and superficiality of a "comfortable" and "unquestion-

ing" faith for genuine innocence. How can we learn to "love the Lord God . . . with all our mind" if this comfortable and unquestioning mind of ours is never exercised and ever remains "sick with the disease of ignorance?"⁶

Genuine doubt is not an excuse for disobedience. Those of the disciples who doubted ("but some doubted") *nonetheless obediently* "went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them." And it was, indeed, because of their obedience that they were given an equal measure of opportunity to participate in the last encounter on earth of Christ's disciples with their Master.

Doubt in itself does not necessarily form an impenetrable barrier to faith. The gospel account of the Risen Christ's appearance to Apostle Thomas assures us that the Lord stands ready to respond, to offer substantive evidence and validation to genuine doubt which is rooted in genuine love and an equally genuine and searching *desire for faith*. At the same time, however, we should be reminded that genuine doubt, as well as a genuine *desire for faith*, must also come to a positive resolution in acts of faith and worship: "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28).

All authority has been given unto Me, in heaven and on earth.

Central to both faith and mission is our response to one question in particular which was posed by Christ to His disciples: "Who do you say that I am?" (Mark 8:29). Fr. Georges Florovsky had occasion to remark that this is, indeed, a crucial question. "A refusal to face the challenge is already a commitment. A refusal to answer a certain question is also an answer. Abstention from judgment is also judgment."⁷ The answer that only faith can offer is precisely the answer proffered by Peter: "You are the Christ!" And if He is, indeed, the Christ, then we, His disciples, are following not just a wise and kind teacher whose teaching happened to survive the centuries; not just an itinerant philosopher who of-

fers us simply a "new and improved" philosophical system in competition with all other philosophical systems of the world; but, truly, the Lord and Master of Life, the Lord of the Universe, Who is also Lord of history. How can our mission possibly fail?

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you.

St. Luke's recension of Christ's "Great Commission" to the disciples says essentially the same thing: "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24: 45-50). St. Mark puts it more succinctly, but within an all-encompassing cosmic dimension: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

The Church that Christ founded on earth with the promise that even the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it (Matt. 16:18) does not belong in a ghetto, however broadly or narrowly defined. It is not the exclusive domain of some particular ethnic-cultural group, a sectarian stronghold of "those in the know," a secret society of the "mystically initiated," or even an "ivory tower" for intellectual snobs. There is no hidden agenda for social revolution, or struggle for political dominance, or support for a particular economic system. Nor are there any teachings other than those that Christ Himself taught, and which are recorded in the Holy Scriptures, read openly and proclaimed to all who would listen. And thus there are no walls or barriers which can be artificially erected by anyone to prevent any individual or group of individuals who so desire from becoming His disciples, or from spreading the Christian faith to "all corners of the universe."

And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

What other assurances do we need that we are not alone? What other guarantees will sustain us in both our external life and inner struggle as we strive to lead Christian lives, and to share what

Continued on the next page.

⁶Unseen Warfare, as edited by Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain and revised by Theophan the Recluse, trans. E. Kadloubovsky and G. E. H. Palmer (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995), p. 90.

⁷The Predicament of the Christian Historian, in Christianity and Culture (Collected Works, II; Belmont, Mass.: Nordland, 1974), p. 53.

Faithfulness to the Master

Continued from page 63.

we have with others, except the assurance that Christ *is with us*? On Christmas Eve we triumphantly proclaim this truth to the whole world: God is with us, understand, all ye nations, and submit yourselves, for God is with us! What other assurance do we need except this that our lives are, indeed, meaningful; that there is Higher Reason and Purpose not only to our own lives, but to all of Creation; and that the hardships, trials and tribulations that we experience in life should not discourage us from seeking the way into the Kingdom, or seeking to share our faith and hope with the whole world?

What is it, then, that we must do to nurture apostolic mission? We can reduce what we have learned from our two Apostles and Enlighteners, St. Andrew and St. Innocent, to three simple words: *faith, obedience, and faithfulness*. We must, first of all, have faith in Christ as our Lord and Master, and let this faith become the very substance of our life. Faith must be sown and nurtured with love and dedication. Children must be taught faith in Christ in the very same way that we teach them to read, write, and count. We understand full well that to send our children into the world without having taught them at least the very basics of reading, writing and arithmetic is to condemn them to a crippled existence and, ultimately, to failure. Similarly, to send our children into life without having taught them faith in Jesus Christ is to condemn them to spiritual paralysis, and to spiritual failure.

We must, secondly, learn obedience. We must make our lives conform to what has been taught to us by our Lord and Master; we must struggle with the corruption of sin in human nature and lead lives worthy of the Sacrifice that has been offered for us by our Redeemer. Everything that Christ taught us has been faithfully preserved by His Disciples and Apostles, and their Successors. This forms the very substance of the life of the Church. Very often, unfortunately, we expect the Church to conform rather to us, to our own very limited understanding of Her. We expect Her to sustain our lives in all sorts of ghettos that we con-

struct for ourselves, and then discover, to our chagrin, that we have been imprisoned by our own limitations. And we must obediently do precisely that which the Lord has commanded: go out into the whole world, make disciples of all nations, teach, preach and baptize.

And finally, we must learn faithfulness. Very often the smallest of obstacles, or even the tiniest doubt, is cause enough for us to abandon Christ, His teachings, and His Church. And then we are surprised to find ourselves lost in a hostile and often meaningless universe which is closing in on us; we are surprised that our marriages, careers, our very lives seem to disintegrate and fall apart before our very eyes; and we are surprised, finally, that the idols which we have made

in our own image, to which we have bowed and which we have served, do not sustain us in our hour of need.

Let us be faithful, dear Fathers, Sisters and Brothers, to the traditions that we have received from our Enlighteners and Apostles, St. Andrew and St. Innocent. Let us emulate their faith, and obediently follow in their footsteps in the fulfillment of the commandments of Christ. May this be our hope: that Christ will reign among His people, and that the light of Orthodoxy will shine brightly for future generations of Orthodox people in America.

—Archpriest Alexander Golubov
Father Alexander is the Academic Dean of St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary.

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

ALL SAINTS ORTHODOX CHURCH Olyphant, Pa.

All Saints Orthodox Church
All Saints Senior R Club
All Saints Junior R Club
All Saints Heritage Shop
Fr. & Matushka Peter Dubinin
Fr. & Matushka Michael Chanda
John & Florence M. Boyko
Mr & Mrs Lawrence Bonczar
Cassie, Larry & Michael Bonczar
Helen Bryer
Olga Boyko
Marie Bock
Brian & Ruth Brown
Mr & Mrs David Brzuchalski & family
Stephania Butchko
Mr & Mrs Raymond Dubois & family
Mrs John Dzwonczyk
Joseph Dzwonczyk
Mr & Mrs Elmer Generotti
Michael & Judy Evancavich
Mary Jane & Tanya Gilbert
Johanna, Joan, & Janet Gima
Irene Glowatz
Olga Grancey
Nicholas & Marie Holowatch
Vera & Natalie Hoyniak
Justine Horhutz
Mary Hoyniak & Debbie
Mr & Mrs Harry Hoyniak
Ann Klemko
Mr & Mrs Victor Koziar
Lubov Kopestonsky
Agnes Kuhar
John & Mary Korucz & family
Edward & Eleanor Krushinski
Michael & Amerilia Kuzmiak

Olga Longwell
Regina McAvoy
Joseph & Nancy Mazur
Frances Meholic
Dr Gregory Meholic
Mr & Mrs William Mezick & family
Mary & Maria Oles
Mr & Mrs Joseph O'Brien & family
Vera & Olga Paulishak
Mr & Mrs George Perechinsky
Mr & Mrs John Puthorosky Sr
Mr & Mrs John Puthorosky Jr & Ashley
Margarite Puthorosky
Charles Poslosky
Thomas & Barbara Puhalla
Mr & Mrs Peter Rezanka Sr
Mr & Mrs Peter Rezanka Jr & family
Johh & Annette Schlasta
George & Joan Schlasta
Mr & Mrs Joseph Semon & family
Mrs Mary Semon
William Semon
Adele Shopay
Mr & Mrs George Scochin & family
Dorothy Skorupka
Mr & Mrs James Specht & family
Kenneth Stafursky
Daniel Stafursky
Mr & Mrs Stephen Stafursky
Mr & Mrs Mark Stankiewicz
Linda Stuchlak
Michael Stuchlak
Mr & Mrs Stephen Verespy & family
Julia Voloshen
Mary Wasilchak

Christ is Born!

Glorify Him!

HOLY RESURRECTION CHURCH

Alden Station

Fr. Vladimir & Matushka Elizabeth Petorak
Basil and Molly Pisch
Peter Holoviak
Mr. & Mrs. James Schraeder, Sr.
Mr. & Mrs. James Schraeder, Jr.
Amanda Schraeder
Kristin Schraeder
Ann Yuhas
Mary Yuhas
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Stenko
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Stenko & Son
Joseph J. Hitzner
Julia Czeck
Michael & Faith Kardash
Marie Hudock
Tillie Haverlak

HOLY ANNUNCIATION ORTHODOX CHURCH

Berwick

Very Rev. & Mrs. Andrew Shuga
Larissa Shuga
David Shuga
Anita Shuga
Mrs. Helen Umphred
Diane, Tom & Alyssa Macri
Marie & Paul Laytar
Mr. & Mrs. Metro Rudy
Mary Burns
Mr. & Mrs. John Parker & Family
Harry L. Kuchka
Stephen Mihaly
Mary & Alex Berbick
Alice Sacco
Andy, Lisa Mihaly & Family
Mrs. Helen Veshka
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Jurbala
George & Olga Bedis
Anna Shanno
Mr. & Mrs. Roy Ervin & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Popko, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Perau
Joan Kost
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Mihaly, Sr.
Mrs. Mary Mahonchak
Mr. & Mrs. Roy Peckham & Sons
Mrs. Olga Danko & Children
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Ciganek
Mrs. Anna Jurbala
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Husak
Dr. John P. Husak
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Kuchka & Family
Dr. & Mrs. Alfred Takacs
Lee & Kathy Kuchka
Charles & Irene Andrews
Mr. & Mrs. George Laytar
Helen & John Beily
Mrs. Mary Parker
Richard, Elena, Tom, Michelle Lockard
Mrs. Mary Maholick
Mrs. Mary Zenzel
Mrs. Helen Beckevich
Mary Kost
Mrs. Susan Holoviak
John Keblish
Josephine Bevilacqua
Olga Murphy
Tamara, Glenn, & Jordan Beckley
Mrs. Ann R. DeMelfi
Mrs. Mary Jurbala
Helen Slavich
Helen & Frank Petak
Michael C. Petak
Anonymous
Mrs. Mary Dendler
Mr. Michael Minjack
Wm. Kalanick, Sr.

Michael Kost
Mr. & Mrs. Ernest Drum & Family
Mrs. Stella Jurbala

ST. NICHOLAS RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Bethlehem

St. Nicholas Altar Society
Dorothy Stafiniak, President
Lehigh Valley "O" Club
Chapter #166
Dennis Chrush, President
St. Nicholas Church Choir
Nicholas Lezinsky, Director
V. Rev. Eugene & Matushka Fran Vansuch
Damian Vansuch
Basil Vansuch
Jason Vansuch
Matushka Margaret Resselar
Gary & Marie Angstadt & Sons
Rose Ann Bachik
Charles Beechan
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Belzner
Mr. & Mrs. David Bench & Family
Peter Billie
Miss Anna Billie
Martha Billy
Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Bobal & Family
Vera Bortniak
Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Brandstetter
Dr. & Mrs. Gregory Brusko
G. Damian Brusko
Helen Butch
Theresa Kasmer Butler & Family
Joseph & Jean Butrymowicz
Nicole L. Campbell
Paul & Betty Jo Chernay
Greg & Cindy Chernay
Basil & Helen Choman
Mr. & Mrs. Peter J. Chromiak
Dennis & Lynn Chrush
Alyssa Chrush
Rodney Cook & Family
Lisa Curry
Andrew, Karen, & Ben Cuttic
Mrs. Natalie Danczenko
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Danko & Family
Nicholas DeBias
Michael & Mary Dorosh
Michael J. & Marina M. Dorosh
Damian A. Drasher
Donald & Carole Fair
Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan Fallos
Andrew Fartuch Family
Ted & Betty Fedora
R. Seraphim Freedman
Patty Felix
A Friend
John & Olga Frimenko
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Gaynor
Helen Gingrich & Family
Gregory Guiditus
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Guditis
Mr. & Mrs. Alan Guiducci
Leza Hahalis
Alex, Anastasia, George Hahalis
Helen Haney
Andrew Haseneccz
Charles Haseneccz
Elizabeth Haseneccz
Rose Marie Heckman
Doctors Julius & Anna Herz
Mary Holva
Leo & Mary Howell
Leo & Adam Howell
Mrs. Mary Hresko
Suzanna Hretz
Daniel Nicholas Hretz

Xenia Sophia Hretz
Mary Hudak
Ann Marie Hutz
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Isbansky
Peter Jubinski
Sarah Jubinski
P. Daniel Jubinski
George & Rose Mary Jubinski
Mrs. Mary Jurta
Mrs. Helen Karel
Mrs. Mary Kasander
Eric Kasander
Jeffrey J. Kasander, D.M.D.
Jim, Nadia Kelly & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Keretz
Bill & Sandi Keysock & Family
Vera Kiak
Albert & Esther Kiechel
Gary Kiechel
Mr. & Mrs. Jesse Kiefer & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Kohudic
Selar & Jo Ann Konsevitch
Mrs. Donald Koretski
John Koretski
Mary Koretski
Stephanie Koretski
Mr. & Mrs. Timothy Kovalenko & Family
Olga Kozachonok
Bob, Kathy, Terrie Kriebel
Rebecca, Michael Kriebel
Michael H. Kuchka
Dr. Michael R. Kuchka
Mr. & Mrs. Leon Kukura
Alexei & Maria Kurenkov
Paula Lahutsky
Russell Lahutsky
Vladimir B. Lairy
Nicholas & Judy Lezinsky
Kyra, Matthew, & Peter Lezinsky
Lichtenwalner Family
Mrs. Olga Logechnik
Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey C. Lovell
Bill & Irene Macenka
Olga Macenka
Mary Madensky
Mr. & Mrs. Randall Marsh & Family
John Mason
Mary McKay
Eugenia Jane Meilinger
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Metz & Family
Mrs. Helen Mohr
Mrs. Irene Momrock
Jack & Barbara Monarek & Family
Mrs. Theresa Nalepa
Nick's Brother
Bill, Susan, & Elizabeth Nielsen
Robert & Ellen Novatnack & Daughters
Mr. & Mrs. Alexander Ostapenko & Family
Mrs. Helen Perlow
Rose Petney
Mary Petrovich
Eleanor M. Phillips
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph M. Pinkowicz & Family
Julia Pipok
Nicholas G. Pippis
Reader & Mrs. William Podlusky & Family
Mrs. Anna Prohidney
Mrs. Pauline Radchuck
Dr. Gregory & Rosalie Radio
Scott & Keri Radio
Laura Riley
Valerie Ristvey
Mr. & Mrs. George Ristvey
Gordon & Valerie Roberts
Matthew, Alexander, & Nicholas Roberts
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Roman
Alex & Gregory Roman
Nancy A. Sabol

Christ is Born!

John Saharuk
Mrs. Olga Sawarynski
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Sawarynski
Alexandra Schichalew
Helen Schweisgut
Mr. & Mrs. James Seifert & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Senick, Jr.
Mary Silfies
Mrs. Helen Skibo
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Slivka, Eric & Peter
John Smakula
Florence Smakula
Laura Smakula
Margaret Smakula
Wasley Smakula
Mr. & Mrs. Gary Solan & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Stafiniak
Joseph & Stephen Stafiniak
Miss Michele Stafiniak
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Stellato & Family
Boris & Vera Stoiancheff
Julia Strohl
Olga Sviatko
Anastasia Symanovich
Russell & Ola Tatusko
Wash & Helen Telephack
Mrs. Irene Tomolovski
William & Evelyn Urban
Martha Wagner
Louise Walker
Catherine Witko
Dick, Helen & Stacy Yergey
Rosemary Ziegenfuss
Mary Zackos

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

Catasauqua
Fr. Pavel & Matushka Paula Soucek
Reader Chris & Mary Ann Rowe, Kati, Sam
Joseph & Mary Horoschak
John & Pat Wasko
Robert & Rebecca Romanchak
George & Harriet Mazur
Lucy Wasco
John Karpeuk
Susan Greitzer
Charles & Helen Gaston
Richard & Jean Garrison
Andrew & Pat Brusko, Zachery, Andrew
Verna Teman
Mary Zbur
JoAnn Yurconic
Olga Salivonchik
Scott & Dana Morgan, Alexis
Eva Fox
Dr. Serges & Fay Salivonchik
Mary Yuhas
Edward & Paulene Bachert
Mark & Jeanne Zeliros, Anastasia, Catherine
Sue Cressman
Richard & Mary Baker, Kathy
Max & Mary Yurconic
Michael & Vincentine Brusko
David & Danielle Bachert
Mary Zemchak
Dorothy Smickley
Louis & Betty Hilt
Helen Suda
Mildred Bowski
Robert & Cheryl Steck, Cassia
Michael & Tonyo Gaston, Michael, Lucas
Kip & Sherry Fedetz, Andrew, Alex
Vince & Nicki Fugazzotto
Edward & Holly Bachert, Zachery, Nathaniel
Michael & Elizabeth Harahus
Chris & Nina Bagshaw, Halle
John & Sandra Miller
Fred & Sophie Long
Helen Mondjack
Pete Kandianis & Family
Sam & Carol Baron
Alex & Joyce Zemlansky

ST. MARY'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

Coaldale
Fr. Paul & Matushka Borick
Anastasia Bench
Mr. & Mrs. John Bench & Family
Helen Berezniak
John Berezniak, Jr.
Harry Bialis
Ted Bogosh
Helen Butts
Mary Bybel
Stephanie Chmel
Melanie & David Christman & Daughters
Dr. & Mrs. Richard Chwastiak
Nicole & Richard Chwastiak
Larry & Irene Davis
William & Helen Evtushick
Raymond & Nadine Fegley
Josiah Fegley
Rose Gibson
Rose Harkins
Florence & Ted Hawranick
Olga Hebda
Catherine Hedes
Joe Herbert
Jennie Jupin
Olga Kash
Helen & Wash King
John King
Ann Kononchuk
Rose Lisella
Michael Lorchak
Ted & Pauline Lorchak
Mary Lutash
Ben & Olga Macalush
Nicholas & Helen Macenka
Marie Maholick
Nick Maholick
Pauline Maholick
Paul & Kay Maliniak
Helen McCullion
Helen Ostrosky
Michael & Julie Patochek
Petrina Poko
Bernard & Ann Pisko
John & Irene Puschak
Ted & Cathy Puschak
Joseph & Nancy Rugerri
Paul & Helen Sheers
John & Eleanor Sidorak
John Sidoraki, Jr.
Olga Sidoraki
Ted, Susan & Emma Sidoraki
Anna Slanta
Simon & Martha Stafiniak
Martha D. Teno
Sylvester & Helen Vavra
Ann Wargo
Olga Weiss
Harry Wyshosky
Helen Yaroma
Mary K. Zemanik
Michael F. Zemanik

ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

Coatesville
Rev. George Giannaris
Rev. Dimitri Voytilla
Church Choir
George Babich
Samuel Babich
Vera Hatcher
Alex Griskevich
Jean Papst
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Svokos & Family
Mrs. Ann Wilson
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Watts
Mr. & Mrs. John Zatytczyc
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Sarosi

Mr. Michael Sarosi
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Sarosi
Mrs. Nanette Hare
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Rucihak
Mrs. Karen Campbell
Mrs. Maria Toth
Mrs. Sandy Dzwonczyk

ST. ANDREW ORTHODOX CHURCH

Dallas
Very Rev. Michael Lepa
Florence Brin
Mrs. Robert T. Rhodes
Margaret B. Yankoski

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

Edwardsville
Rev. Fr. Emilian & Matushka Laryssa Hutnyan
Natalia & Zachary Hutnyan
Olga Doroski
Mr. & Mrs. Ted Bischak
Choir Director, Reader Gregory Sagan
Mr. & Mrs. Clarence Hamersley
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Oleynick
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Fedorko
Donna Rybka
Julia Sitar
Mary Nickett
Jean Kutzer
Michael Kolinchok
Betty and Joe Wozniak
Eugene & Joe Wozniak
Anna B. Dutko
Elizabeth Dutko
Mary Rock
Tatiana Panco
Helen Moncovich
Eva Kopko
Helen Deletconich
Olga Stapay
Wanda Wanko
Olga Morgan
George Grabousky
Martha Gingo
Julia Capp
Julia Seman
Michael Skopic
Sandy Williams
Anna Pengrin
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Prokopchak
Steve & Kathy Harmanos
Michael & Kyra Harmanos
Anna Romanchick
Patricia Romanchick
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Vancamp
Mr. & Mrs. John Seman
Christine Adamski & Family
Julia Roschak
Anna Billek
Tatiana Radsavitch
Betty Morgans
Dorothy Roberts
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Gingo
Hope Lukatchick
Evelyn & Richard Swetts
Nikki Ann Roll
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Hoidra
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Mazur
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Rilko
Evelyn Stapay

HOLY ASCENSION ORTHODOX CHURCH

Frackville
V. Rev. Paul and Matushka Ropitsky
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Cuttic & Sons
Larissa Holowaty
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Holowaty
Mrs. Eva Cuttic
Michael Ropitsky
John Malinchok and Nan
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Zimmerman
Sophie Osenbach
Mary Torick

Glorify Him!

Anna Dudash
William and Mary Keysock
Michael Dyszel
Val, Anna, Renee Eippert
John and Margie Orris
Olga Williams
Margaret Kuchta
Mr. and Mrs. John Pellock
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Smarkanich
Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Kleman
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Trynosky
Mr. and Mrs. John Semanchick
Helen and Myron Polanchyck
Olga Purcell
Mary Diffenderfer
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Malinchok
Mr. and Mrs. Peter Swoboda
David Keysock
Catherine Motz
Mary Zokuskie
Theresa Basara
Sandra and John Morash & Family
Olga and Jim Hreshko
Olga Chuma
Betty Yust
Carole Sagan
Peter and Marie Weremedic
Michael and Roseann Weremedic
Peter Weremedic, Jr.
Jim and Lisa Weremedic & Jimmy
Michael and Elizabeth Weremedic
Anna Jordan
Mr. and Mrs. Peter Stoppi
Joe and Anna Martin
Mel Martin
Paul Martin
John Cooper
Anna Andrusichen
Mr. and Mrs. John Podany
Anna and Alex Peleschak & Family
David and Donna Peleschak
Nancy and Anna Sowchak
Marge and Joe Pasquali & Family
Mary and George Reed & Family
Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Tatusko
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Onuskanich
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Dikun
Mrs. Julia Beltrami
Dr. Paul Thomas
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Thomas, Sr.
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Fletcher
Peter and Barbara Pelak
Olga Chrush
Sergius Chrush
Michael Kasmer
Zachery, Nicholas, Gregory, & Christopher Wilson
Mr. and Mrs. Edmund Boniscavage
Mary Burock
Vera Timko
Sophie Chrin
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Bricker
Dr.'s Robert and MaryLou Bricker & Family
Mr. and Mrs. Shawn Kane & Family

ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA ORTHODOX CHURCH Gradyville

V. Rev. & Mrs. John Perich
Taisia & Alixandra Perich
Reader George & Anastasia Plisko
Reader Oleg Dudkin
Reader Gregory, Sharon, Katye & Alexander
Hubiak
Olga Pishtey
Albert Fernandez
Eugenia & Leroy Hughes
John & Mollie Smarsh
Sonia Krowzow
Mat. Mary Fedownke
The Hammerer Family
Tamara Pohomov
Larissa, Damelle, & Geo. Pahomov
Mary & Bill Kessler
Margaret K. Staeford

Walt Chernous
Eleanor Bryan
John Krowzow
Joan G. Godun
Theresa Veronick
Serge & Svetlana Tapykoff
Mr. & Mrs. George Taylor & Sons
Claire & Maryellen Brown
Susan & Jim Chobany
Bill & Jeanne Sokurenko
George & Chrystel Krugovoy
Mr. & Mrs. John Pusey, Sr. & Family
Mr. & Mrs. John Prokop & Amanda
John Onuskanich
Stephen M. Sissions
Dorothy Sissons
Millie Sokol
Martha & Kevin Grewell & Sons
Alex & Peg Hendrick
Tom & Debbie Bradley & Emily
Alice Rubercheck & Family
Anna C. Woodring
Daniel, Dania, Stefanie, Katys, Mark, Nicholas
Babiak
Anastasia Jabkowski
Nancy & Alan Pesolyar
Dan & Daria Babiak
Leonard G. Soroka
Nita Harris Siciliano & Sons, Peter & Mark
Victor Krupitsch
Nadia Stulpin
Alexander T. Godun
Genie Horsky
Marianne Wood & Children
Rubercheck Family
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Motel
Daria, Tony, Natalya, & Michael Tatsciore
Daria C. Collins

CHRIST THE SAVIOUR ORTHODOX CHURCH Harrisburg

Father Dan & Theodora Ressetar
Father Michael & Olga Kovach
Anonymous
Akram Ayoub
Mr. & Mrs. Haitham Ayoub & Riham
Jim & Marilynn Antonio & Sons
John R. Barns
John & Sue Buddwalk
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Bretz
Mr. & Mrs. S.E. Barbu
John Caba, Jr.
Gerald & Ann Cole
George L. Cvijic
Suzanne Demchak
Lorie & Gary DiClemente
David & Diane Dugan
Mr. & Mrs. John J. Dotsey
Mary Dotsey
Tusha Dernbach
Joseph & Pauline Fetsko
Brian Fetsko
Mr. & Mrs. Andy Fedetz
Andrea Hancher
Hancher Family - Ron & Pam
Andrea, Beth Ann, David Hancher
Ron & Libby Hancher
Jim & Vickie Henry
James & Christine Hardenstine & Family
Paul & Mary Ann Hadginske & Family
Mr. & Mrs. George Kaznowsky
Bill & Anna Kuchta
John & Lydia Kachur & Family
George & Marilou Klipa
Alex & Janet Kuzupas
Mr. & Mrs. Gary Kneiss
Rebecca, Rachel, Elizabeth Kneiss
George P. & Evelyn Krempasaky

Myra McInnis
Katharine Macut
Sue B. Mandell
Mr. & Mrs. Adam Mallick
Tim McMahon
Mr. & Mrs. Roger Miller
The Nesko Family
Dr. & Mrs. Joseph Norato & Family
Evelyn J. Onufer & Mother Mary
Mr. & Mrs. John Osuch & Sons
Matushka Prislowsky
Nick Pestrock
Paul & Betty Pellegrini
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Pawlak
Mr. & Mrs. John Patnychuk
Nicholas Ressetar
Alexander Ressetar
Gregory & Candi Ressetar
Sophia & Dimitri Ressetar
Larry & Megan Smith
John & Nadzia Schilling
Russell & Shirley Sass
Nick & Barb Somple & Family
Bill & Irene Sumple
June Taleff
Helen Tatusko
Mildred & Sue Wolfe
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Wood & Family
Ron, Judy, Holly, & Noelle Webb
Mike & Janice Zuro & Nicholas

ST. VLADIMIR'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

Lopez

Hieromonk Michael (Thier)
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Vanderpool
David Vanderpool
Mary Kravetz
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Kravitz
Helen Fullerton
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Kachmarsky
Mrs. Nicholas Kachmarsky
Rosemary Kachmarsky
Robert Teese
Alice Dworsky
Rosalie Burke
Emily Andrewlavage
Helen Dennis
Pauline Hubiak
Mary Saxe
Olga Rodka
Robert Rodka
Craig Kachmarsky
Mary Christini
Andrew & Katherine Matychak
Stefie Neuffer
Vera Gulich
Norma & Sharon McCobin
Michael C. Reifel
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Maximiek
Mr. & Mrs. Edwin D. Cole
Marie Delovich
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Carter & Family
Dr. Natalie N. Gardener & Monica
Mr. & Mrs. John J. Caccia, Sr.
Mr. Edward J. Enright
Mr. & Mrs. William J. Enright & Family
Leo Mattichak
George Ferik
Mr. & Mrs. John Kriel
In Memory of Michael McCobin
In Memory of Mary Neddoff
Mr. & Mrs. Paul St. Germain
Theresa & Daniel Kulsicavage
Alexandra J. Bulich
Carol (Katherine) Mann

HOLY ASCENSION ORTHODOX CHURCH Lykens

Rev. Nicholas Wyslutsky
Matushka Elizabeth Wyslutsky

Christ is Born!

Joachim Wyslutzky
Nancy & John Coles
Johnnie & Chris Coles
Mike & Olga Hrinda
Anna Hand
Ann Mahoney
John & Mary Mehalko
Dr. & Mrs. Alexander Pianovich
Dr. & Mrs. Paul Pianovich
Alex & Stephen Pianovich
William & Susan Pinkerton
Nadia Sass
Suzanne Smeltz
Gayle & John Sultzbaugh
Elisabeth Sultzbaugh
Andrew Sultzbaugh
Kathryn Zimmerman

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

McAdoo

Fr. Theodore Orzolek
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Zabitchuk
Pearl Elko
Julia Forte
Helen Osuch
Lonnie Polli
Samuel Kurtz
Ann Fanelli
Irene Yaworsky
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Kurtz, Jr. & Son
Mary Stronko
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Kurtz, Sr.
Anna Lee Davidovitch
Mr. & Mrs. Gregory Kurtz & Family
Mary Ann Graino
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Kurtz & Son
Emelia & Andy Beizer

ST. MICHAEL'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

Mount Carmel

V. Rev. Michael Evans & Family
Anna Gondal
Joe Coletti
Florence Bubernak
Julia Barnes
Catherine Hardnock
Dorothy Beckus
Eva Roushinko
Charles & Anna Raber
Mary Shields
Chris Buchkarik
Olga Berkoski
Mary & Charles Chidovich
Millie & Ben Trefsgar
Mr. & Mrs. M. Yonkovig
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Sebasovich
Helen Sorocka
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Alekseyko
Theresa & John Pochekaelo
Anna & Delores Wislock
Bill & Geri Wislock
George Panikarcheck
Anna Panikarcheck
Mr. & Mrs. Bernie Malkoski
Leon Markovich
Bob & Marie Kuchta
George Bortnichak
Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Zbicki
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Yastishak
Costy Melnick
Mr. & Mrs. Ernie Hill
Catherine Shaffchick
Margaret Olaf
Julia Bushick
Marie Cuff
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Paduhovich
Mrs. Pearl Winnick
Valentina Wood
Anna (Kowalchick) Grivnovics
Mary Zeluskey
Mary Moroz
Mr. & Mrs. George Winnick
Olga Thomas
Peter Yastishak

Mrs. Mary Kandrot
Mary Breslin
Joe Buckwash
Amelia Markovich
Mrs. Mary Homicz
Mary Gerrity & Family
Chris & Jean Mathias

SS. PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

Minersville

Fr. Michael & Matushka Hatrak
Matthew & Natalie Hatrak
James & Anna Antonio
Susie & Andrew Frew
Madeline Bonchalk
John Bonchalk
Helen Polinsky
Andrew Polinsky
Mr. & Mrs. Luke Oakill
Rick, Lynda, Lauren & Ricky Hutton
Olga Kirkauskas
Michael & Lisa Pascuzzo
Christian Michael Pascuzzo
JoAnn Brinich
Ralph, Kathy, Jenn & Adam Brinich
David & Georgene Studlack
John & Anna Olexa
Mary Wartella
Anna & Sandra Wyslutzky
Harry, Peggy, Dave & Janine Oakill
Elsie Herman
Malusky Family
Stablum Family
Mike & Barb Rogers & Daughters
Sonya, Ed, Eddie & Joshua Bosack

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

Nanticoke

Fr. & Matushka Stephen Karaffa
Olga Carvey
Mary Zupko
Marge & Jay Sokol
John & Ellie Pihanich
Paul & Olga Sulewsky
Mary Hunchar
Mary Misewich
Joe Paprota
Joey & Jill Paprota
Warho Family
Pete & Norma Waseyda
Joe & Mary Paprota
John & Theresa Klos
Steve & Adeline Brezna
Dorothy Fagula
Helen Zukowski
Michael & Pearle Zupko

ST. MICHAEL'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

Old Forge

Fr. David & Mat. Karen Mahaffey
Nikolas, Michael, Seth & Kyra Mahaffey
Fr. Elias Krenitsky
Mat. Delores Dzury
Mary Adamiak
Maria Augustine
Walter & Ann Marie Ermolovich
Tillie Augustine
Jacob & Marge Barsigian
John & Sandra Barsigian
Jon & Anna Marie Black
Agnes Buranich
Helen Chesniak
Cushman Family
Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Elko & Family
Walter & Ann Marie Ermolovich
Neal & Ann Freeman
Mrs. Nicholas Halchak
Mr. & Mrs. Alex Jadick

David Jadick
Michael & Marge Jadick
Daniel Jones
Helen B. Krenitsky
Helen T. Krenitsky
Julia Kuzmack
Luke Ludwig
Tina Ludwig
Joseph & Ann Marie Macijowsky
Paul & Rose Mizerak
Ann & Lovie Peregrim
Helen Percy
Theresa & Helen Polanchik
Daniel & Sandra Pregmon
Michael & Eva Pregmon
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Pregmon
Mr. & Mrs. William Pregmon
Mr. & Mrs. Al Pritchyk
Mr. & Mrs. John Pritchyk
George & Marilyn Serniak
Stephen Christopher Serniak
Michael Spitko, Jr.
Pauline Spitko
Paul, Martha, & Paul Andrew Tumavitch
Ann Tyrpak
Mrs. Jean Wasko
Mildred Wozniak
Daria Ziemba
Robert Ziemba
Roseanne Ziemba
Anna Zupko

ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

Olyphant

Fr. and Matushka Fetcho
Alexandra Butchko
Michele Butchko
Jonathan, James, Julie, & Rick Cesari
Mr. & Mrs. John Chichilla, Sr.
Michelle Chichilla
Paul & Sylvia Dreater
Lt. Paul Dreater, Jr.
Tanya Dreater
Mike Evanina
Joseph & Dorothy Fetchina
Kyra Fetchina
Olga Fetchina
Marie Grabania
Michael Grabania
George Kopestonsky
Olga Kuzmick
Anna Murawsky
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Price
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Rebar
Dr. & Mrs. Larry R. Sherman
Mr. & Mrs. James Thomashefsky
Ann Thomashefsky
Helen Witiak
Mary Youshock

ST. STEPHEN'S ORTHODOX CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL

Philadelphia

Fr. Daniel & Matushka Mary Geeza
Rdr. Daniel & Taissa Drobish
The Cathedral Choir of St. Stephen's
Mary Birkenbach
Ron & Kathy Bisaga
Ronald Bisaga II
John S. Borick
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Burch
Anna Burdzak
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Colter
Kate, John & the boys (Cox)
Nick Cronin
Michele, Matthew & Natalie Decker
Mr. & Mrs. Willis Dietrich
David Daniel Drobish
Elsie Olga Drobish
George & Pauline Englesson
Barbara, Katie, & Patrick Fagan
Mrs. Mary Fedoronko
Paul & Diane Fedoronko
Bill and Nina Gavula

Glorify Him!

Kathie, Michael & Matthew Gavula
Olga & John Gazak
Capt. & Mrs. Michael Geeza
Greg & Cindy Geeza
Dave & Elham Geeza
Mr. & Mrs. Leonard Greenglinger & Family
Mary Gressen
Michael & Jennie Harb
Mr. & Mrs. John Herbert
Ann & Joseph Herrschaft
Nina & Nick Horsky
Arnold, Katherine, Anna, & Alexandra Jensky
Alice Karpiak
Nadia Kolesnik
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Kolesnik & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Kolesnik & Family
Mr. & Mrs. John Kolesnik, Jr. & Family
Mrs. Tatiana Koniuch
John Kozlowski
Bill Kraftician
Alex Kuzmen
Mr. & Mrs. John V. Lisovitch
Sonia Marina & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Mokriski
Christine Nass
Janice Nass
Rose Neher
Mr. & Mrs. Joe O'Brick & Irene
Catherine Paulasack
Yana Platonova
Helen Plunkett
Mr. & Mrs. Stephan Pron
Pron-Zwick Family
Theodore Pschick
Mary Radick
John, Denise, Sonia & Michael Rowe
Olga Russin
Anna D. Simpson
Larry, Connie, Jon & Chris Skvir
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Stephanowich
Bob Tallick
William & Eva Wasser
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Wurster
Yencha Family
Diane, Vince & Nicholas Zanghi
Mr. & Mrs. John Zulack

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH Pottstown

V. Rev. Nicholas & Vera Yuschak
Mr. & Mrs. John Boretsky
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Brilla, Jr. & Family
Brilla Family
Dorothy Ecker
Nettie Hart
Michael Holowis
Kyra Marchesini & Family
Tanya MaCura Family
Ann Meko
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Novak & Family
Helen Pershinsky
Era Popoff
Mary & Joe Rapchinsky
Mr. & Mrs. William Romanick
John Sekellick
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Sekellick & Family
Sandra Wurster

ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

St. Clair
Stella Kadingo
Jared Zane
Sam Wisnosky
Dan Perrin
Leah Chrush
Olga DeMarkis
Russell Draovitch
Leo Draovitch
Ted Sagan
Jeanette Sagan
A Friend
Anonymous

ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA ORTHODOX CHURCH Shillington

The Parish Council
The Sunday School Teachers & Students
The Our Lady of Lazan Sisterhood
The Parish Choir
Rev. & Mrs. John A. Onofrey
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Anderson & Family
Ms. Louise Coleman
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Dougherty & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Drenchko, Sr.
John & Marie Drosdak
Gloria Duty & Sons
Mr. & Mrs. Jefferson Gore & Sons
Bill & Rosalie Hardman
Mr. & Mrs. Ed Hyland
The Kawood Family
Mrs. Eva Kopera
Dr. & Mrs. Wadim Kurjanowicz
Mrs. Jean Kusior
Fred & Garnice Leer & Family
Mr. John Lorchak
Mike & Vera Losk
Mrs. Deborah Lucas & Michael
Mrs. Irene Lupco
John, Dana & Raymond MacKoul
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Mallick
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Matsick & Family
Mr. John McGanka
Mrs. Gertrude Melniczek
Mr. & Mrs. Karl Osterburg
Mrs. Ruth M. Ruth
Michael & Teresa Savage
Dave, Janna & Taylor Scheese
Mr. Walter Sebastian
Mr. & Mrs. John Seman & Family
Ms. Sandra Semion
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Sichak & Family
Ms. Gloria Spitko
Mrs. Catherine Terenchin
Ms. Cheryl Terenchin
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Wanenchak & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Yurick & Daughters
Hank & Anne Zerbe

ST. BASIL'S CHURCH Simpson

Rev. Leo Poore
Pearl Bock
James & Mary Anne Braun
Maria K. & Jefferson H. Braun
Olga & John Buberniak
Mary Chupeck
Sam & Nadine Demianovich
Helen Dorval
Olga Gallick
Helen Hrichuk
Stephen & Esther Kowalsky
Thomas & Elaine Kravetsky
Laurie, Lynn & Kimberly Kravetsky
Helen Kutch
Michael & Theresa Luczkovich
Julia Mazza
Anastasia Mikulak
Michael J. & Julia Mikulak
John & Mary Okorn
Walter & Maria Proch
Maria & John Proch
Walter & Mary Anne Proch
Christina M. & Elizabeth A. Proch
Dr. David & Daria Roat
Jo Ann Sample

SS. PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH Uniondale

Michael and Olga Jubinsky
Marie Hutnyan

Martha Dorosh
Peter and Catherine Jubinsky
Lovely Klym
Donald and Ann Bock
Ronald & Lubov Kilmer
Walter and Lorraine Terry and Family
Rose Kennedy
Steve Urda

ST. TIKHON'S MONASTERY CHURCH South Canaan

His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN
Very Rev. Daniel & Matushka Delores
Donlick
Very Rev. Alexander & Matushka Elena
Golubov
Alex Golubov
Protodeacon Keith S. Russin
Reader Gregory Hatrak
Reader Gregory Sulich
Matushka Mary Borichevsky
Matushka Dolores Dzury
Matushka Dorothy Sulich
Galina Abolins
Mary Andreychik
Marge Barna
Olga Barna
Bill & Alice Boga
Emma S. Collins
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Ermolovich
Betty Figura
Daisy Geeza
Mr. & Mrs. John Getzie, Jr.
John, III & Joseph Getzie
Mr. & Mrs. William Huniak
Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Kavalkovich & Ronald, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. John Kuchmanich
Katherine Lazorack
Jule Lepa
Mr. & Mrs. John Minarick
John & JoAnne Paluch
Martin Paluch
Ken & Margaret Paulic
Stephanie Sklarsky
Joseph & Olga Telowsky
Julianna, Maria & Michael Tihanich
Paul Wozniak
Julia, Bill & Susan Zielinski
Drs. David & Mary Ford & Daughter
Emmelia

HOLY RESURRECTION ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL Wilkes-Barre

Very Rev. Joseph & Matushka Gloria Martin
Marina Martin
Reader David & Kathryn Kessler & Children
Protodeacon Keith S. Russin
Deacon Sergei & Vicki Kapral
Holy Resurrection Cathedral Choir
Andrew Buleza
Mr. & Mrs. John Dulsky
Mrs. Helen Pryor & Family
Stella Terpack
Margaret Sapp
Laverne Chapman
Betty Polk
Mrs. Peter Humko
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Tempalski
Agnes Timchak
Mrs. Mary Onufer
Michael & Nancy Pieck
Joseph & Julia Mascioli
Sylvester Dugan
John & Irene Zimich
Edward & Evelyn Wysocki
Dancheck Family
John Zoranski
Doris Zoranski
Evelyn Suhoski
Elizabeth Reese
Eva Berlozan
Marge Kotarski
Mr. & Mrs. Sam Ostopick

Christ is Born!

Mrs. Steve Krill, Sr.
Olga Layton
Vladimir Glowatsky
Anna Wensel
Kyra E. Zoranski
Andy & Florence Skordinski
Mr. & Mrs. D.H. Anderson
Mr. & Mrs. Harry Holak
Peter & Anna Sokola
Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Stempian

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH Wilkes-Barre

Rev. David and Matushka Sharon Shewczyk
Timothy & Nicholas Shewczyk
V. Rev. George and Matushka Pawlush
Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Sovyrda
Mary Skordinski
Mrs. Helen Zavada
Mrs. Mary Petro
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Welgo
John & Gabriel Homick
Mary Salmay
John Horutz
Pearl Tutko
Andrew Dennis
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Dennis
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Dennis
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Canyuch
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Gudaitis
J.P. and Denise Meck
Mr. & Mrs. William Gurka
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Pawlak
Mr. & Mrs. Basil Homick
Mr. & Mrs. Boris Mayher
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Gozick
John Pawlak
The Canyuch Sisters
Holy Trinity Altar Boys
Mr. & Mrs. David Mills
Mr. & Mrs. William Yankovich
Susan Brown
Mary Banks
Mr. & Mrs. John Bromuko
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Talpash
Mary Piznar
Michael & Leona Stchur
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Sanders
Mrs. Michael Goobic
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Goobic
Mr. & Mrs. Jonah Goobic
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Goobic, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Golubiewski

ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS CHURCH

Williamsport
Fr. Dan and Mat. Myra Kovalak
Daria and Natalia Kovalak
Michael and Carol Serwint
Mr. & Mrs. Lew Shatto
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Beard, Paul & Tatiana
Yvonne and Nathan Bohlander
Phillip Kundis
Elsie Skvir Nierle
Nancy Pashchuk and James Chuta
Dr. & Mrs. Minas Hiras
Mr. & Mrs. Doug Brown and Family
Helen Evrard and Family
Helen Fowler
John Sam, Jr.
Michael and Julia Stefanick

ST. MARK'S ORTHODOX CHURCH Wrightstown

V. Rev. Theodore Heckman
The Rev. Dn. Gregory & Martha Moser
Nicholas, Marina, & Larissa Moser
Boris & Joanne Borichevsky
Damian & Brian Borichevsky
Myron & Linette Sedor & Family
John Wanko
Peter & Vicki Kiproff
Jeanette Ruano

The Znak Family
Peter, Sandy, & Stephanie Bohlender
Sergei, Connie, & Zachary Borichevsky
James & Monia Pitra
Tom & Julie Alost
Valerie Polakow & William Peterman
Vera Nakonetschny Gambone
Elena & Nicholas Nakonetschny
Samuel Mervis, Jr.
Charles Super
The Marmaluk Family
Irene & Sergei Arhipov
George & Alla Nakonetschny
Anthony & Robin Nakonetschny
Steven Nakonetschny
Michael, Alicia, & Amber Nakonetschny
Hebe Helen Bulley
Sharon Burketet & Doug Yates
Kevin & Mary Anne Swan & Family
Janet Kalenish
Larisa, Justin, & Chryse Heckman
Edward & Sonya Miele & Family
Joe Horoschak
Charles & Judy Rybny & Family
John & Elizabeth Sherbin
Elizabeth Werner
Peter & Julia Ren

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL CHURCH

Wilmington, DE
Fr. Andrew & Matushka Suzanna Diehl
Bill & Alice Dryden
Olga O'Neill
Bill & Marie Herrman & Family
Leon & Lisa Ciach
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Sulpizi & Children
Marie Gregors
Robert & Jean Zapora
Marie Karawulan
Agnes Meginniss
Sofia Puit
Harry & Emily Wujcik
Pete & Dolores Karawulan
Kutch Family
Mr. & Mrs. James S. Riley
Paul, Vera & Matt Chalfant
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Sinovich & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Onufry Zabinko
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Melnik
Mr. & Mrs. James T. Whitacre
Jim & Anne Riley & Family
Ed & Karen Hojnicky & Family
Paul, Marianne, Barbara & Julianna Newmeyer

ST. MICHAEL'S ORTHODOX CHURCH Jermyn

Fr. John and Matushka Kowalczyk, Sophia and Nicky
Fr. Gabriel and Matushka Petorak
Andrea and Jeff Baldan and Family
Debbie and Barry Bernosky and Family
Wendy and Serge Bochnovich and Family
Mary Bowan
Willard and Sue Brown and Family
Ed and Eileen Brzuchalski
Dennis and Sonia Buberniak
Valerie Buberniak
Denise Cobb & Kyle
Patricia and Tom Cadwalader
Sandra and Kevin Carney
Sandy and Jeff Cavanaugh and Family
Candi Ann Celler
Sharon and Randy Cleary and Family
Denise Cobb and Kyle
Bob and Eileen Dance
Dolores Dreater
Jean Dzwonczyk
John Dzwonczyk
Kay Fedirko

Donald, Rosalie and Bill Fives
Annabell Franchak
Barbara and Tony Franchak
Delores and Peter Frenchko
Joseph Getzie
Nicholas Getzie
Peter Getzie
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Gillott
Tom, Helen and Stephanie Gracey
Bessie Guzey
John and Lucille Hanchak
Andy and Dorothy Hanchak
Bill and Joan Hanchak
Julia Hanchak and Tom
Clarise Ann Hesser
Mr. and Mrs. Alex Hockin
Mr. and Mrs. John Hockin and John
John and Debbie Jaye and Jonathan
Olga Jaye
Mr. and Mrs. Carl Jeryga and Daughters
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Jesuitt and Daughter
Ken, Stacey and Stephanie Kashuba
Dorothy Keklak
Rose Kelechawa
Julia Kitchura
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Klapatch & Sons
Henry II and Jeremi Korpusik
Mary and Henry Korpusik
Thelma Koval
Mr. and Mrs. John Krenitsky
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Krenitsky
Irene Kupinski
Helen Lahey
Daria Leahman
JoAnn and Sam Mattise
Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Michalczyk
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Mikulak
Mrs. Anna Mizok
Mrs. Alice Mosley
Barbara and John Nayduch
Roxanne and Miles Neutts
Justine Orlando
Camille Palese
Olga Palese
Barbara Palubniak
Tillie Palubniak
Andrew and Margaret Petrilak
Ma;tha Pollock
Willard Puzza
Mary Rusiniak
Martha Scopelliti
John Sernak
Mary Sernak
Millie Sernak
Mr. and Mrs. Paul W. Sernak
Ron, Lorraine and Ann Sernak
Delores Serniak
Steven Serniak and Allison
Gloria Shaw
Janice Skolic
Anastasia Sloat
Marilyn and Jerry Soroka and Children
Gene Strosky
John Susko
Irene Swirdovich
Chap. Col. Peter and Matushka Telencio
Damian and Stephen Telencio
Bob, Millie and Rebecca Telep
John and Yvonne Wargo and Family
Mary Wyziak and Michael
Joseph N. Zaccone, Mary and Maria
Julia Zaccone
Peter D. Zaccone
Mary Zielinski
Betty Zrowka
Joseph and Dorothy Zrowka

Daily Devotions

JANUARY

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Col. 2:8-12 (Circumcision) | Luke 2:20-31,40-52 (Circumcision) |
| 2. James 1:19-27 | Mark 12:38-44 |
| 3. Acts 13:24-33 (Royal Hours) | Matt. 3:1-11 (Royal Hours) |
| 4. Col. 1:3-6 | Luke 18:2-8 |
| 5. 2 Tim. 4:5-8 | Mark 1:1-8 |
| 6. Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7 (Theophany) | Matt. 3:13-17 (Theophany) |
| 7. Acts 19:1-8 (Forerunner) | John 1:29-34 (Forerunner) |
| 8. James 3:11-4:6 | Luke 20:1-8 |
| 9. James 4:7-5:9 | Luke 20:9-18 |
| 10. 1 Pet. 1:1-2,10-12; 2:6-10 | Luke 20:19-26 |
| 11. Eph. 6:10-17 | Matt. 4:1-11 |
| 12. Eph. 4:7-13 | Matt. 4:12-17 |
| 13. 1 Pet. 2:21-3:9 | Luke 20:27-44 |
| 14. 1 Pet. 3:10-22 | Luke 21:12-19 |
| 15. 1 Pet. 4:1-11 | Luke 21:5-7,10-11,20-24 |
| 16. 1 Pet. 4:12-5:5 | Luke 21:28-33 |
| 17. 2 Pet. 1:1-10 | Luke 21:37-22:6 |
| 18. 2 Tim. 2:11-19 | Luke 13:18-29 |
| 19. Col. 3:4-11 | Luke 18:35-43 |
| 20. Heb. 8:7-13 | Mark 8:11-21 |
| 21. Heb. 9:8-10,15-23 | Mark 8:22-26 |
| 22. Heb. 10:1-18 | Mark 8:30-34 |
| 23. Heb. 10:35-11:7 | Mark 9:10-16 |
| 24. Heb. 11:8,11-16 | Mark 9:33-41 |
| 25. Eph. 5:1-8 | Luke 14:1-11 |
| 26. Col. 3:12-16 | Matt. 15:21-28 |
| 27. Heb. 11:17-23,27-31 | Mark 9:42-10:1 |
| 28. Heb. 12:25-26; 13:22-25 | Mark 10:2-12 |
| 29. James 1:1-18 | Mark 10:11-16 |
| 30. James 1:19-27 | Mark 10:17-27 |
| 31. James 2:1-13 | Mark 10:23-32 |

FEBRUARY

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Col. 1:3-6 | Luke 16:10-15 |
| 2. Heb. 7:7-17 (Meeting) | Luke 2:22-40 (Meeting) |
| 3. James 2:14-26 | Mark 10:46-52 |
| 4. James 3:1-10 | Mark 11:11-23 |
| 5. James 3:11-4:6 | Mark 11:23-26 |
| 6. James 4:7-5:9 | Mark 11:27-33 |
| 7. 1 Pet. 1:1-2,10-12; 2:6-10 | Mark 12:1-12 |
| 8. 1 Thess. 5:14-23 | Luke 17:3-10 |
| 9. 1 Tim. 4:9-15 | Luke 19:1-10 |
| 10. 1 Pet. 2:21-3:9 | Mark 12:13-17 |
| 11. 1 Pet. 3:10-22 | Mark 12:18-27 |
| 12. 1 Pet. 4:1-11 | Mark 12:28-37 |
| 13. 1 Pet. 4:12-5:5 | Mark 12:38-44 |
| 14. 2 Pet. 1:1-10 | Mark 13:1-8 |
| 15. 2 Tim. 2:11-19 | Luke 18:2-8 |
| 16. 2 Tim. 3:10-15 | Luke 18:10-14 |
| 17. 2 Pet. 1:20-2:9 | Mark 13:9-13 |
| 18. 2 Pet. 2:9-22 | Mark 13:14-23 |
| 19. 2 Pet. 3:1-18 | Mark 13:24-31 |
| 20. 1 John 1:8-2:6 | Mark 13:31-14:2 |
| 21. 1 John 2:7-17 | Mark 14:3-9 |
| 22. 2 Tim. 3:1-9 | Luke 20:46-21:4 |
| 23. 1 Cor. 6:12-20 | Luke 15:11-32 |
| 24. 1 John 2:18-3:10 | Mark 11:1-11 |
| 25. 1 John 3:11-20 | Mark 14:10-42 |
| 26. 1 John 3:21-4:6 | Mark 14:43-15:1 |
| 27. 1 John 4:20-5:21 | Mark 15:1-15 |
| 28. 2 John 1:1-13 | Mark 15:22-25,33-41 |

MARCH

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. 1 Cor. 10:23-28 | Luke 21:8-9,25-27,33-36 |
| 2. 1 Cor. 8:8-9:2 | Matt. 25:31-46 |
| 3. 3 John 1:1-15 | Luke 19:29-40; 22:7-39 |
| 4. Jude 1:1-10 | Luke 22:39-42,45-23:1 |
| 5. Joel 2:12-26 | Joel 3:12-21 |
| 6. Jude 1:11-25 | Luke 23:2-34,44-56 |
| 7. Zechariah 8:7-17 | Zechariah 8:19-23 |
| 8. Rom. 14:19-26 | Matt. 6:1-13 |
| 9. Rom. 13:11-14:4 | Matt. 6:14-21 |
| 10. Genesis 1:1-13 | Proverbs 1:1-20 |
| 11. Genesis 1:14-23 | Proverbs 1:20-33 |
| 12. Genesis 1:24-2:3 | Proverbs 2:1-22 |
| 13. Genesis 2:4-19 | Proverbs 3:1-18 |
| 14. Genesis 2:20-3:20 | Proverbs 3:19-34 |
| 15. Heb. 1:1-12 | Mark 2:23-3:5 |
| 16. Heb. 11:24-5,32-12:2 | John 1:43-51 |
| 17. Genesis 3:21-4:7 | Proverbs 3:34-4:22 |
| 18. Genesis 4:8-15 | Proverbs 5:1-15 |
| 19. Genesis 4:16-26 | Proverbs 5:15-6:4 |
| 20. Genesis 5:1-24 | Proverbs 6:3-20 |
| 21. Genesis 5:32-6:8 | Proverbs 6:20-7:1 |
| 22. Heb. 3:12-16 | Mark 1:35-44 |
| 23. Heb. 1:10-2:3 | Mark 2:1-12 |
| 24. Genesis 6:9-22 | Proverbs 8:1-21 |
| 25. Heb. 2:11-18 (Annunciation) | Luke 1:24-38 (Annunciation) |
| 26. Genesis 7:6-9 | Proverbs 9:12-18 |
| 27. Genesis 7:11-8:3 | Proverbs 10:1-22 |
| 28. Genesis 8:4-22 | Proverbs 10:31-11:12 |
| 29. Heb. 10:32-38 | Mark 2:14-17 |
| 30. Heb. 4:14-5:6 | Mark 8:34-9:1 |
| 31. Genesis 8:21-9:7 | Proverbs 11:19-12:6 |

APRIL

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Genesis 9:8-17 | Proverbs 12:8-22 |
| 2. Genesis 9:18-10:1 | Proverbs 12:23-13:9 |
| 3. Genesis 10:32-11:9 | Proverbs 13:19-14:6 |
| 4. Genesis 12:1-7 | Proverbs 14:15-26 |
| 5. Heb. 6:9-12 | Mark 7:31-37 |
| 6. Heb. 6:13-20 | Mark 9:17-31 |
| 7. Genesis 13:12-18 | Proverbs 14:27-15:4 |
| 8. Genesis 15:1-15 | Proverbs 15:7-19 |
| 9. Genesis 17:1-9 | Proverbs 15:20-16:9 |
| 10. Genesis 18:20-33 | Proverbs 16:17-17:17 |
| 11. Genesis 22:1-18 | Proverbs 17:17-18:5 |
| 12. Heb. 9:24-28 | Mark 8:27-31 |
| 13. Heb. 9:11-14 | Mark 10:32-45 |
| 14. Genesis 27:1-42 | Proverbs 19:16-25 |
| 15. Genesis 31:3-16 | Proverbs 21:3-21 |
| 16. Genesis 43:26-32 | Proverbs 21:23-22:4 |
| 17. Genesis 46:1-7 | Proverbs 23:15-24:5 |
| 18. Genesis 49:33-50:26 | Proverbs 31:8-31 |
| 19. Heb. 12:28-13:8 | John 11:1-45 |
| 20. Phil. 4:4-9 (Palm Sunday) | John 12:1-18 (Palm Sunday) |
| 21. Exodus 1:1-20 | Job 1:1-12 |
| 22. Exodus 2:5-10 | Job 1:13-22 |
| 23. Exodus 2:11-22 | Job 2:1-10 |
| 24. Exodus 19:10-19 | Job 38:1-23; 42:1-5 |
| 25. Exodus 33:11-23 | Job 42:12-16 |
| 26. Rom. 6:3-11 | Matt. 28:1-20 |
| 27. Acts 1:1-8 (Pascha) | John 1:1-17 (Pascha) |
| 28. Acts 1:12-17,21-26 | John 1:18-28 |
| 29. Acts 2:14-21 | Luke 24:12-35 |
| 30. Acts 2:22-36 | John 1:35-51 |

All in the Diocesan Family

COALDALE

St. Mary's Church

Church school classes began on Sept. 22, with all the Church School children receiving confession and communion. This date is also set aside for a Youth Sunday with many of the children helping at the Divine Liturgy. Justin King received his first Holy Confession on Sunday, October 6.

The 25th annual Christmas Bazaar was held on the weekend of November 9-10 with the hall looking like a Christmas wonderland. Many handmade ornaments and crafts were on display and it was a great success.

Congratulations go to Anna Harahuess, who celebrated her ninety-first birthday November 2.

The parish was saddened by the loss of Helen Philapovich who fell asleep in the Lord on July 31. She was an active member of the parish for many years as well as the local and district "R" club. May her memory be eternal.

HARRISBURG

Christ the Savior Church

Christ the Savior Parish has started a St. Theophan Study Group for those who want to enrich their lives with the writings of the saints. It meets every second and fourth Saturday of the month at 5:00 p.m.

A Vacation Bible School in Harrisburg Church July 29-Aug. 2 on the theme "Bringing the Church into the Home" was attended by 25 children aged 5 to 12.

Fr. Daniel Ressetar, the rector, was in Poland this past September for a service at the grave of his great-uncle, priest-martyr Maksym (Sandowicz) of Carpatho-Rus'. Metropolitan Wassily of Warsaw and Archbishop Adam of Sanok concelebrated the Molieben with thirty priests.

Two auctions in October, a Chinese raffle chaired by Dorothy Fedetz and Alice Mallick and a Fine Art auction chaired by Evelyn Krempasky, were beneficial to the debt reduction fund.

The Harrisburg Senior "O" Club is sponsoring a trip to Sight and Sound near Lancaster on Saturday, Jan. 4 to see a production of "The Miracle of Christmas."

The men's softball team was awarded four trophies after finishing the season with a league-leading 21-4 record and



St. Mary's Church held its annual Dinner/Dance on Sunday, Sept. 8, 1996



25th Christmas Bazaar at Coaldale



Vacation Bible School in Harrisburg

first place in the post season playoff tournament. Their manager is Carl Hisiro.

Baptisms: Michael Alexander, son of Suzan (Strohecker) and Barry Dando, Aug. 11; Alec Robert, son of Amber (Hallman) and Robert Behney, Oct. 13; Daniel Robert, son of Barbara (Kuchta) and Bret Challenger, Nov. 2.

OLD FORGE

St. Michael's Church

Fr. Joseph Fester of the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards presented a workshop on stewardship for the parishioners of St. Michael's in September.

Archbishop HERMAN made an Archpastoral visit on the patronal feast

of the parish, Sunday, Nov. 10, which was also its 105th anniversary. During the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, Fr. David Mahaffey was awarded the nabadrennick. At the reception held that afternoon, Archbishop Herman presented Joseph & Ann Marie Macijowsky with a Gramota for their many years of dedicated service to St. Michael's and to the Diocese. His Eminence presented Mr. Anthony Bellenzeni, Sr. with a plaque, on behalf of the parish on his retirement after over thirty years of service to the parish as hall janitor. A dance was held with music by the Polka Hops.

Dana & Sue Talley were again in St. Michael's church after their recent trip to Albania and presented a concert of Christmas music for the enjoyment of many parishioners and visitors on Saturday, November 23, 1996.

Marriages: Paul Polanchik & Mary Travato, Sept. 28, 1996; Felix Lettini & Nadine Polanchik, Oct. 27.

MINERSVILLE

SS. Peter & Paul Church

Marriage: Patricia Stetz & Thomas Grammes, Oct. 6.

ST. CLAIR

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church

St. Mary's Church welcomed new members to the parish recently: Gloria Harley, and her sons Harry and John, and Veronica Harley-Fritz, and her sons Zachary and Aaron.

SHILLINGTON

St. Herman of Alaska Church

A covered-dish Harvest Dinner was held November 10 in the church hall. On Wednesday, Nov. 27, fifty parishioners took a bus trip to the Radio City Music Hall to see the annual Christmas Show (this was a "make-up" event from the one scheduled last January that was cancelled because the blizzard of '96). The Sisterhood St. Nicholas Dinner was held on Sunday, Dec. 8.

Baptism: Erin Nicole Wolfer, Nov. 30, 1996.

Marriage: Terry Hojnowski & Deborah Singley, Nov. 16, 1996.

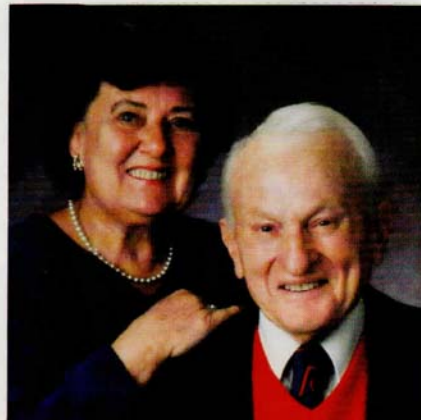
Anniversary: Michael & Vera Losk celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a molieben celebrated by Fr. Joseph Toroney on Sunday, Nov. 3, attended with many family and friends.



Minersville Church School members and families enjoyed a day in July at Knobel's Amusement Park, and in August a picnic at Lake Wynonah.



Fr. Michael Hatrak immerses Aaron Charles, son of Veronica & Charles Fritz into the waters of holy baptism.



Michael & Vera Losk celebrate 50th anniversary

SOUTH CANAAN

St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery

The opening of the Academic School year began in September for the largest student body ever at our seminary. During the opening services, the new seminarians were blessed to wear the cassock. This year there are students from every diocese in the continental United States and Canada, as well as students from Russia, Ukraine, and other Eastern European countries. During a reception at the Archbishop's residence, seminarians and their families got acquainted with each other and enjoyed entertainment

Continued on the next page.

St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery

Continued from page 73.

offered by one of the new students.

The Founder's Day Liturgy saw the ordination to the diaconate of David Fox, from the Diocese of the West. Deacon David is the new Student Elder for the Dormitory and is currently a senior in the Master of Divinity program. The banquet which followed the Divine Liturgy was prepared by members of the Campbell, Ohio parish and was enjoyed by a large gathering.

WILLIAMSPORT Holy Cross Church

On the weekend of the patronal feast of the parish, the feast of the Cross, a display of crosses from around the world was exhibited at the parish, viewed by many visitors.

Holy Cross parishioners participated in the Annual "Life-Chain" on Oct. 6. The pro-life event included over 1,000 area residents who lined a major highway for one hour in silent, prayerful protest against abortion. The same day, parish members went to DuBois to hear Frankie Shaeffer, outspoken Orthodox author of many books and "The Christian Activist" magazine. On October 13, Holy Cross parishioners participated in the Annual "Crop Walk" against world hunger, joining nearly a thousand area residents in raising funds for the efforts of Church World Service. Special offerings "for the hungry" also support the Thanksgiving Basket Project of the United Churches "Shepherd of the Streets" Ministry.

Mother Christophora, from Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Ellwood City, Pa., presented a talk on Monday, Oct. 7, titled "Making Sense out of Suffering." Also present was Mother Inez from Holy Trinity Orthodox Monastery of Guatemala, who traveled to Williamsport with Mother Christophora.

In conjunction with the O.C.A.'s Year of Vocations, Holy Cross hosted the St. Tikhon's Seminary Choir on Oct. 27. Fr. Alexander Golubov, Academic Dean of the Seminary delivered the sermon. After the liturgy, parishioners were introduced to the seminarians and seminary programs at a fellowship hour hosted by the Auxiliary. The parish responded with contributions amounting to \$2,000.

On Nov. 21, Fr. Daniel and Holy Cross parishioners led a Vesper Service for Orthodox students in the chapel of



Opening of the academic year at St. Tikhon's Seminary



Ordination of David Fox to the Diaconate



Founder's Day Banquet

Bucknell University in Lewisburg. The parish continues to reach out to Orthodox students at four area colleges, and also to prisoners, celebrating monthly Vespers at two area federal correctional facilities. On Nov. 22, the parish hosted a potluck dinner for "native son" Fr. Peter Dubinin prior to his assignment as an Orthodox military chaplain.

Donations totaling over \$4,000 were presented to Dr. Daniel Chandler, principal of Montoursville High School for the scholarship fund, in memory of the students killed in the crash of Flight 800. The monies came from the national FROC (\$3,500); Holy Cross Parish (\$500); and St. Nicholas Parish, Bethlehem (\$100).



Fr. Daniel Kovalak and Abp. Herman present donations to Dr. Chandler.



Fr. Dan Kovalak, Mother Christophora, and Mother Inez.

WILKES-BARRE

Holy Trinity

Fr. Joseph Fester presented a workshop for members of the Holy Trinity and Holy Resurrection parishes in Wilkes-Barre. The workshop taught principles of Orthodox stewardship and showed how their implementation can enhance parish life.

Parishioners recently made a bus trip to Sight and Sound Theatre in Lancaster to see the story of Noah and the Ark.



F.O.S. members and guests gather at reception to hear Fr. Joseph Fester.

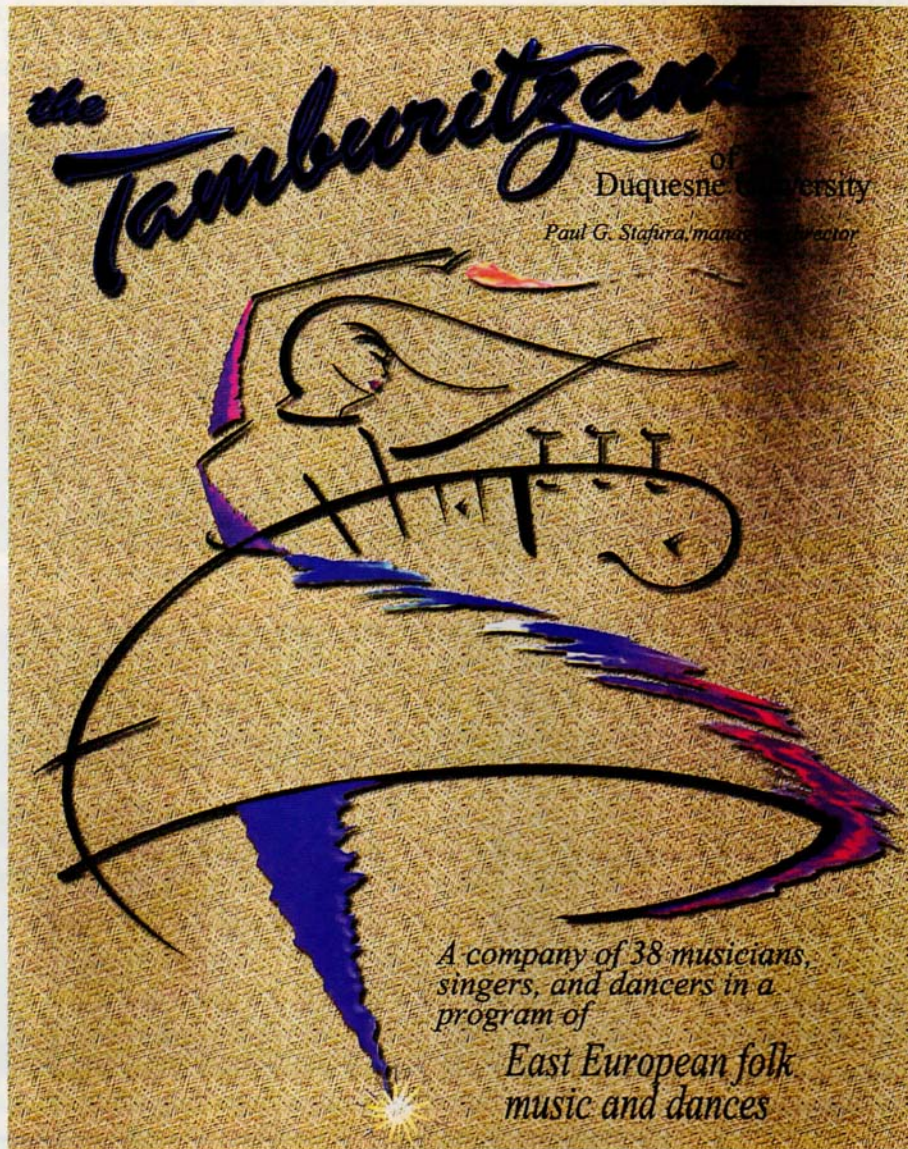


Holy Trinity parishioners travel to performance of "Noah and the Ark."

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

The Department of Religious Education extends greetings on the Nativity to His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN, the diocesan clergy and faithful parishioners who have shown continued love and support for the programs our department has offered. It is our humble prayer that the DRE programs may bring our diocesan family closer to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
A most blessed and peaceful Nativity season to all of you.

With love in Christ,
 Department of Religious Education members



Sunday February 9, 1997 - 3:00 p.m.

Elmer L. Meyers Auditorium

341 Carey Avenue, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

— One Performance —

Adults \$18.00 Students \$12.00 For Tickets 822-7725

St. Tikhon's Bookstore
P O Box B / St. Tikhon's Road
South Canaan, PA 18459
Phone: (888) 454-6678 Fax: (717) 937-3100

Holiday Compact Discs
From St. Tikhon's Bookstore!!!



Christmas in Russia!

A collection of Russian and Ukrainian Carols sung by the choirs of various Russian religious orders.

CD018 \$17.95



Hymnes De Noël!

An inspirational collection of liturgical music, sung in traditional Byzantine chant, by the Greek Byzantine Choir.

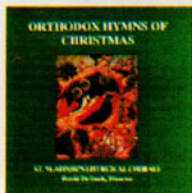
CD047 \$17.95



Christmas Serbian Orthodox Carols!

A collection of liturgical and folk Christmas Hymns sung by the RTV Belgrade Choir.

CD054 \$17.95



Orthodox Hymns of Christmas!

Select hymns from the Christmas service of the Orthodox Church, sung in English by St. Vladimir's Liturgical Chorale.

CD079 \$15.95



Русское Рождество

Russian Christmas!

A compilation of hymns from the Christmas Service sung by the Theodorovskaya Mother of God Icon Church Choir!

CD111 \$17.95

**THIRD ANNUAL ST. TIKHON'S
CENTURY ASSOCIATION
RUSSIAN WINTER FESTIVAL**

February 15 and 16, 1997

The Historic Radisson Lackawanna Station Hotel
700 Lackawanna Avenue, Scranton, Pennsylvania
Special Rates: \$69.00 for single or double plus tax.

Call 800-347-6888 for reservations.

A block of rooms reserved until January 31!

Special Events on Saturday, February 15:

The Lackawanna Station will be turned into a Russian Collectible, Jewelry,
Fine Art and Antique Bazaar featuring Father John Perich as seen
on QVC with his Treasures from Around the World!

Open from 11:00 A.M. till 7:00 P.M.

The Hotel's excellent chef will be featuring a Russian a la carte menu
for lunch from 11:00 to 2:00 P.M.

Special Event on Sunday, February 16:

MASLENITSA: A RUSSIAN PRE-LENTEN CELEBRATION

Time: 3:00 P.M. - Reception with open cash bar

4:00 P.M. - A Russian Style Grand Banquet

Entertainment: Accordionist Cossack Sam Solkuluk, Russian Folk
Ensemble "Misha and Natasha," Russian Baritone Singer Gary Nova,
Gypsy Balalaikas Orchestra, and new this year will be a Russian Sword
Dance Group. Don't miss our ethnic skit called "A LEMKO CHRISTENING!"
Finale will be: Crowning of our own Prince and Princess of the Maslenitsa!

Co-Chairs: V. Rev. John Perich and Mrs. Florence M. Boyko.

Reservations should be sent to:

Florence M. Boyko

211 Summit Point, Scranton, PA 18508 717-343-2232

NO LATER THAN FEBRUARY 5, 1997

Please make checks payable to:

St. Tikhon's Century Association

Ticket Price for Banquet: Adult \$35.00 Child \$15.00

Reservations can be made for tables of 10