

Your Diocese

Alive in Christ

The Magazine of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, Orthodox Church in America Volume XIII, No. 1 Spring, 1997



CHRIST IS RISEN

INDEED HE IS RISEN

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Archpastoral Letter of His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN

The Feast of the Resurrection, 1997

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!
Beloved Members of our Diocesan
Family,

On the Feast of Feasts—Pascha—nearly 300 million faithful of our Holy Orthodox Church throughout the world will celebrate the Glorious Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

In the Holy City of Jerusalem, from the very Tomb where the Body of our Lord was laid on Holy Friday but which was empty on “the third day,” Patriarch Diodoros will emerge with the “Holy Fire” and light the candles of countless pilgrims who have come to celebrate the Resurrection there. Before the doors of Moscow’s immense Cathedral, in the hearing of tens of thousands of faithful, Patriarch Aleksy will proclaim in his booming voice the words which forever changed the meaning of human history, *Christos voskrese iz mertvykh* . . .

Our Diocesan Celebrations

The same spirit of celebration will permeate each one of our churches in the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania. Our houses of worship will be filled to their capacity. Hundreds of faithful will participate in the time-honored processions around each of our churches. The voices of tiny children and venerable parish founders will unite in that greatest hymn ever written, “Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death and upon those in the tombs, bestowing life.”

Family upon family will together preserve the ancient tradition of blessing their Paschal foods and sharing in the *agape* meal of Pascha. But—most important of all—the lines of faithful receiving the Holy Eucharist will extend all the way from the amvon to the very



vestibule of our churches—with nearly everyone in the parish uniting his or her soul to the Risen Saviour of the World through the Sacrament of His Precious Body and Blood.

Exactly As It Should Be

Make no mistake about it: this is exactly as it should be. Pascha is precisely prescribed as the greatest celebration of the Christian Church—the greatest celebration of all humanity. We know this from the hymns of the Canon of the Matins of the Resurrection, written by St. John of Damascus:

Let the heavens rejoice in a worthy way, and let the earth be glad. And let all creation, visible and invisible, observe a celebration, for Christ our Eternal Joy is risen!

Saint John Chrysostom tells us the very same thing in his famous Paschal Homily, read in all our churches on the Feast of the Resurrection:

Whoever is a devout lover of God, let him enjoy this beautiful bright Festival. And whosoever is a grateful servant, let

him rejoice and enter into the joy of his Lord . . . Let all then enter into the joy of the Lord. Ye first and last receiving alike your reward; ye rich and poor, rejoice together. Ye sober and ye slothful, celebrate the day. Ye that have kept the fast, and ye that have not, rejoice today; for the Table is richly laden. Fare ye royally on it. The calf is a fatted one. Let no one go away hungry. Partake ye all of the cup of faith. Enjoy ye all the riches of His goodness . . .

Every Sunday, Another Pascha

The Resurrection of Christ was so profound an event that it literally changed the course of human history. The faith of the Apostles, once weak and unstable, became strengthened and confirmed by the Risen Christ. They boldly proclaimed the message of the angel at the tomb, “*He is not here; He is Risen!*” (Matthew 28:6). They spread that message to Jews and Gentiles alike, from within the walls of the Temple in Jerusalem to the very borders of the pagan Roman Empire. They were even willing to die the death of a martyr for the truth of the Christian Faith!

What they taught Christians was that they should celebrate the great event of Christ’s Resurrection, “*which opened to us the doors to Paradise,*” in the words of St. John of Damascus. The early Church gathered every Sunday, which was known as “the Lord’s Day” and did what He asked be done at the Last Supper: “*Take and eat, this is My Body . . . All of you drink of this, this is My Blood . . . Do this in remembrance of Me*” (Luke 22:18-20).

Since that time soon after Pentecost

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when the disciples “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of the Bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42), the Church of Christ has never ceased to follow the teaching of the Apostles and to break the Bread of the Eucharist in Holy Communion every Sunday. This is what we know as the Divine Liturgy.

And the Liturgy was and is celebrated each and every Sunday, because that day of the week was dedicated to the commemoration of the Resurrection of the Lord. It was “another Pascha,” a “little Resurrection.” And on that first day of the week, the early Church gathered and re-lived with the same fervor and joy the Glorious Resurrection of the Lord.

A Very Sad Reality

Unfortunately today, in our churches in America, the same spirit of the early Church does not permeate most of our lives. True, our churches are packed for the Feast of the Resurrection, and they resound with the prayerful strains of “Christ is Risen!” over and over again; and nearly entire congregations receive the Holy Eucharist that day. *But it does not continue on each Sunday!*

No, instead, too many of our faithful go back to “business as usual” in our daily lifestyles the Sunday following Pascha. They choose to do other things rather than the things to which the early Christians devoted themselves in the Acts of the Apostles. They deceive themselves into believing somehow that they are members of the Holy Church simply because they pay parish-prescribed minimum dues. Yet this is not what makes us members of the Body of Christ according to the Scripture. It is rather the *way of life* which we embrace daily.

A Worshipping Community

Father Georges Florovsky perhaps said it best when he wrote, “Christianity is a liturgical religion. The Church is first of all a worshipping community. Worship comes first; doctrine and discipline second.” We are called to celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord not only each

Pascha but also each and every Sunday. Likewise, we are called to celebrate the other great events in the life of our Lord as they appear in the liturgical calendar throughout the year. We Orthodox Christians celebrate the entire life of our Saviour—in the words of the Scriptures, in the hymns of the Holy Church, and in the Breaking of the Bread of Holy Communion.

This sense of worshipping community is not limited to twice a year! We are not “C & E Christians” (meaning ones who come to Church only on Christmas and Easter!). No, indeed!, We are *Orthodox Christians* (meaning precisely in Greek, “right-worshipping” Christians!). We are called to replicate in our churches and in our own personal spiritual lives the Church of the early Christians as Saint Luke describes in the

should fill their churches to capacity, celebrating the joy of the Risen Saviour every Sunday, every “little Resurrection,” which is another Pascha. Their voices should unite as one choir in praise of the Lord in the hymns of the Holy Church! Their minds should be attuned to the Word of God proclaimed in the Scripture and to the message of the homily—which form the teaching of the Church! They should participate in the rich symbolism of the Liturgy—from the Sign of the Cross traced repeatedly on our selves each day to the prostrations we make in humility during the Lenten Season—as we relive the events of the Life of Christ. But most importantly, having cleansed our souls through repentance and confession, we should come as they did in the early Church, Sunday after Sunday, feastday after

Throughout the year, our faithful should fill their churches to capacity, celebrating the joy of the Risen Saviour every Sunday, every “little Resurrection,” which is another Pascha.

Acts of the Apostles:

And day by day, attending the temple and breaking the Bread . . . they partook with glad and generous hearts . . . praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their numbers day by day those who were being saved (Acts 2:46-47).

A Call To Renewed Devotion

As we continue the Paschal celebration this St. Thomas Sunday and all of the other Sundays of the liturgical year, I call upon the faithful of our Diocese in this **Year of Renewed Devotion** to make every effort to imitate the faith and zeal of the Christians of the early Church and “devote themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of the Bread and the prayers.” This means not just on Pascha and the Nativity, but each and every Sunday of the year, each and every feastday of the year.

Throughout the year, our faithful

feastday, to receive the Precious Body and Blood of our Lord and God Saviour Jesus Christ!

A Challenge To All

These are the goals to which I challenge all our faithful in this **Year of Renewed Devotion**. First and foremost, I call upon all the pastors of our parishes to preach this theme in their homilies, expanding upon various aspects of this message, drawing upon the words of the Scripture and the teachings of the Holy Fathers of our Church. If we unite together, archpastor and rectors and faithful alike, we will see the fruits of our labors for the greater of Almighty God and the building up of His Holy Church!

Secondly, I call upon the officers of our local parish councils to be the leaders of this movement of renewal. In everything you do in the parish, you should serve as a model for the other lay men and women to emulate—especially in the

giving of your time and talent and treasure for the extension of the Kingdom of God here on earth and specifically in your community. This is the high ideal to which you are called upon your installation as an officer of the parish council.

With this in mind, I ask that you live up to this high calling, particularly in this **Year of Renewed Devotion** throughout the churches of our diocese. I would call upon you to set the example by attending the Liturgy every Sunday and feastday (or if that is not possible because

Likewise, I extend that same challenge to the members of the FROC chapters throughout the Diocese. Our FROC was founded on those same principles and in the same spirit of the early Church that has continued through the centuries. You are called to those same ideals today! Please live up to that high calling; please follow the apostolic teachings, please be an example for others—every Sunday and every day. Only in this way will *the Lord add to your numbers* as well.

This same challenge is likewise given

shall observe this rite . . . Then, when your children ask you, "What is the meaning of this celebration?" you shall say, "It is the Lord's Passover . . ." and tell them its story (Exodus 12:14-27).

If this was the Lord's command regarding the passage of the Hebrew people from bondage in Egypt to new life in Canaan, how much more important a story for our children, for all time, is our passage from bondage in sin and death to eternal life in God's Kingdom through the New Passover, the Holy Pascha of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! You must make sure that they know the story of the Resurrection—the events that led up to it and the events that took place after it. This is the legacy of your child as a Christian; this is the inheritance of their Baptism, this is key to their salvation and eternal life—the Holy Faith of the Holy Orthodox Church!

Nothing should be more important for them to learn and know! Nothing should be more important for them to live and celebrate! Nothing should be more important for them to share and preserve for their children yet to come! *You* must read them the stories of the Scripture from the very days of their infancy! *You* must bring them to Church each and every Sunday and teach them to love the Lord who dwells within its walls! *You* must take them up to receive Holy Communion, and together with them "*taste and see how sweet the Lord is!*" *You* must together as a family come to the Liturgy, spiritually prepared to receive, through the sacrament of Confession! And as the years go by, *you* must see to it that they *grow in wisdom and grace* by bringing them not only to Liturgy, but also to Church School and diocesan youth camp, and to serve as an altar boy or sing in the choir, to belong to the Jr. FROC, and the rest—in short, to live the Orthodox Christian life of celebrating the Life of the Risen Lord!

We Are What We Learn

So often parents decry the fact that their children no longer want to go to
Continued on the next page.

I call upon the officers of our local parish councils to be the leaders of this movement of renewal. In everything you do in the parish, you should serve as a model for the other lay men and women to emulate—especially in the giving of your time and talent and treasure for the extension of the Kingdom of God here on earth and specifically in your community.

of your work schedule, then the feastday Vigil).

I challenge you to be a role model of singing the praises of our Risen Lord in the hymns of the Church, learning the lessons of the Scripture and the teachings of the Fathers, and participating as fully as possible in all the symbolic traditions of the liturgical life of our Faith. But most of all, I encourage you to lead the lines to Holy Communion each and every Sunday, each and every feastday, as the disciples of the Lord did in the early Church. And come each week, spiritually prepared by having received the Mystery of holy confession.

All of this is what will truly make you leaders of the parish community in the eyes of the Lord. And only in this way will our parishes grow and flourish—if we are together doing the holy work of the Lord, the way He prescribes, the way His Church teaches! To assist all the parish councils of our Diocese, I will be convening a seminar-workshop on this very theme of "Renewed Devotion in Parish Life" this summer. It is to be hoped that officers from every parish will attend.

to all the organizations of our parishes—the choirs, the Church Schools, the sisterhoods and men's clubs. None of us is exempt from this call to Renewed Devotion, because the words of the Scripture apply to us all. Let us join together in this sacred renewal of our spiritual life in the local parish and throughout our Diocese as we move ever closer to the two thousandth anniversary of the Nativity of Our Lord!

A Special And Sacred Task

Last but not least, I call upon every parent in each of the parishes of our diocese to a special and sacred task. In the Book of Exodus in the Holy Bible, we read the words God uttered to the Chosen People of the Old Testament regarding the first Passover:

You shall keep this day as a day of remembrance, and make it a pilgrim-feast, a festival of the Lord . . . You shall observe this day from generation to generation as a rule for all time . . . You shall keep this as a rule for you and your children for all time . . . When you enter the land which the Lord will give you, you

Continued from page 3.

Church or to Sunday School, to holy confession or to communion. But all too often it is because they learned from an early age that *they* did not have to go to Liturgy and Church School each and every Sunday or to partake of the holy mysteries on a regular basis, because *their parents themselves did not do so*. All too often it is because parents did not read the Bible to their children on a weekly basis, did not teach them to learn and sing the hymns of the Church at home as well as in church, did not come up with them and receive the Holy Eucharist each time it was offered, or did not receive the proper spiritual preparation necessary through holy confession.

If someone should ask you, "What is the most important thing you could give your child?" Some of you might answer: a loving home life—or a good education. But more important than these—both on

this earth and in the world to come—is the Faith in our Lord that brings us to eternal life. In this **Year of Renewed Devotion**, I implore the parents of the children of our diocese to increase their efforts to live up to the special and sacred task God called upon His Chosen People in the Book of Exodus—so that they too would understand and celebrate for all time the New Passover, the Resurrection of Christ, and all the feasts of His life, and every one of the Lord's Days.

Our Joint Effort

If together as bishop and priests, parish council officers and faithful parishioners, parents and children alike, we set our goals to be those of the Holy Church from her earliest days and seek to renew our devotion to our Lord in the celebra-

tion of the Liturgy each Sunday and holy day, how great will be the gift of our diocese to the Lord on the two thousandth anniversary of His Nativity. For it will be nothing short of each and all of our souls, ever renewed, ever closer to the Lord, ever richer in the spiritual and sacramental life of His Holy Church!

This, my beloved children in Christ, is the call of this **Year of Renewed Devotion**. Join with us in our Diocesan March to the Millennium, strengthened in the Faith through our efforts in the remaining months of 1997. May the Risen Lord of heaven and earth bless us in all our endeavors in His Holy Name.

With the bestowal of my archpastoral blessings and with paternal love, I remain
Sincerely yours in the Risen Lord,
+Archbishop Herman
Archbishop of Philadelphia and
Eastern Pennsylvania

St. Tikhon's Seminary Receives Gift

His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN, Rector of St. Tikhon's Theological Seminary, was pleased recently to receive on behalf of the Board of Trustees and Administration, the first of twenty contributions in the amount of \$50,000.00 from the Betty Jo and Paul Chernay Million Dollar Charitable Trust.

Mr. Paul Chernay, son of the late Roman Vasilevich and Fannie Orischak Chernakovich, and his wife, Betty Jo, are members of the St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Mr. Paul Chernay has been for many years a dedicated member of the Board of Trustees and Benefactor of



Tikhon's Theological Seminary.

We wish to offer our heartfelt thanks and to commend Paul and Betty Jo for the love, concern and support that they have shown over the years to their local

parish, the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, St. Tikhon's Seminary and Monastery, the Orthodox Church in America and the Russian Orthodox Church.

Christ is Risen!

Indeed He is Risen!

Dedicated Clergy and Beloved Faithful of our Diocese:

CHRIST IS RISEN!

By the mercy of God we have, once again, been given the grace to behold the light of the glorious Resurrection and to enjoy the fullness of the solemn Paschal feast.

Our imperfect life has again been enlightened by the ray of the Kingdom of God, the ray of the perfect and eternal life, the joy that will not be taken from us if we decide to keep ourselves faithful to it. Today, with great trepidation, we contemplate "the unapproachable light of the Resurrection, the fire that comes to the earth, cleansing and saving the world."

Only by a pure and irreproachable heart can we preserve this unsurpassable Paschal joy with which the Venerable Seraphim of Sarov glowed, greeting each visitor with the words, "My Joy." It was with the great price of feats, tears and prayers that the Venerable Seraphim received the grace of the Holy Spirit who had enlightened his heart with the constant brilliance of Pascha.

The joy of Pascha fills the whole universe with rejoicing. We see its image even in the beauty of God's world, the rebirth of nature arising from dormant winter. In innumerable hearts of men, though, there will always be those who "loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19) and who remained deaf and indifferent to the ringing of Pascha. These people fill the world with hatred and malice. All their efforts are directed to destroy Christ's deeds on earth and to extinguish in people their thirst for holiness. When we see their work we feel our hearts heavy with sorrow and the light of the Paschal joy is dimmed. But the miracle of Christ's Resurrection proves to us that Good cannot but triumph, and that in time, according to His pleasure, His truth will prevail and His enemies will disappear as the smoke.

My dearly beloved pastors, monks and faithful of our Diocese: To us who believe in Him, may the risen Lord grant us the gifts of patience, wisdom and strength to be faithful to Him to the end. "O Christ, the Pascha great and most holy! O Wisdom, Word and Power of God! Grant that we may more perfectly partake of Thee in the day which knoweth no night of Thy Kingdom."

+HERMAN
Herman

Archbishop of Philadelphia
and Eastern Pennsylvania



Your Diocese

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Orthodox Church in America

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Your Diocese Alive

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“Living Icons of Christ”: Orthodoxy Sunday in Wilkes-Barre

The First Sunday of The Great Lent, the Sunday of the Triumph of Orthodoxy, came to our area in a special way this year. On that day, Sunday, March 16, literally hundreds of the faithful and clergy of our diocese, along with Orthodox faithful and clergy from other jurisdictions, filled the Holy Resurrection Cathedral in Wilkes-Barre to celebrate this important event in the life of the Church. They came to give thanks to God for the Holy Faith that has been handed down to them by their forefathers uncorrupted; to pray as the One Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, and to hear important words of direction from our beloved hierarchs, the Primate of the Orthodox Church in America, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius, and our own Archpastor, His Eminence, Archbishop Herman.

In his homily, Metropolitan Theodosius explained the true, theological significance of the Triumph of Orthodoxy: “The icon confirms that the eternal Son of God truly became man, that he suffered in the flesh, that he arose bodily from the dead, and that he ascended into heaven as both God and man.” He said, “It is this Christological foundation of the icon that enables us to see that by Christ and in Christ the image and likeness of God is restored. Through the Christology of the icon we come to know that each of us has been created to reflect the image of the incarnate Son and Word of God. Thus, in its lines and colors, the icon proclaims the Good News of our Lord’s saving dispensation. Put in a very concise way, the icon reveals that the human person is created to participate in the divine life of God and that this is possible only because the Son of God became a man.”

His Beatitude not only explained the meaning of the Feast in conjunction with the Great Fast, but also explained its importance to each of us in our daily lives: “By understanding the icon as con-



Sunday of Orthodoxy icon procession

firmation and proclamation of the Gospel we come to appreciate the true meaning of the Triumph of Orthodoxy. For the Triumph of Orthodoxy is nothing less than the victory of Jesus Christ over sin and death, and it is this Gospel which is to be proclaimed to all people in all times. The Triumph of Orthodoxy joyfully announces to the world that in Christ the image and likeness of God has been restored. What was distorted by humanity’s sin and death has been made new through the incarnation. It is this reformation and restoration of the image of the human person that brings us to these days which make up the Great Lent.”

As the Metropolitan reminded us, this event “coincided with the first Sunday of the Great Lent, yet it would be hasty to maintain that the relationship between the restoration of the icons and Great Lent has only an historical significance.” He added, “I want to stress that there is a significant relationship between the Feast of Orthodoxy and Great Lent. The feast proclaims the renewal of the image and likeness of God. The Fast provides the way to how we are to receive this renewed image and likeness. The emphasis Great Lent places on ascetical purification and renewal has no mean-

ing apart from our desire to be living icons of Jesus Christ. Our intensified prayer, fasting, and ongoing repentance must be grounded in this desire and cannot be perceived as ends in themselves. Unless this is our approach to Great Lent it would not be an exaggeration to say that the Feast of Orthodoxy risks being reduced to a celebration that has given up its power and life, giving content [instead] to empty rhetoric. From this reduction emerges the all-too-familiar extolling of the triumphs of the past at the expense of ignoring the need to have a living Orthodoxy in the present.”

His Beatitude concluded by calling us to our obligation and responsibility as Orthodox Christians: “As Orthodox Christians in America there is the urgent need to regain an awareness of the tremendous responsibility God has placed upon us by virtue of having received the True Faith. We are obliged by God Himself to establish and to continue the Triumph of Orthodoxy here and now. But fulfilling the divine will can only be accomplished by renewing our ascetical commitment, by knowing and living our saving doctrine and by continuing to strive towards realizing our local and canonical Church that seeks to draw all

Continued on the next page.

Living Icons

Continued from page 7.

people into the Apostolic Faith. Dearly beloved, let us receive today's Feast with joy and thanksgiving. Let us also face our common challenge of witnessing to Christ and His Gospel in this land with the zeal and courage of those who defended the icons. Together let us labor in building up one local Church in America which seeks to continue to restore the image and likeness of God in all people. Amen!"

As the large crowd stood in the pews and the priests gathered around their beloved Hierarchs, the Protodeacons Stephen Howanetz and Keith Russin proclaimed the Faith of our Fathers, the Holy Orthodox Faith. The music was indeed spiritually uplifting as the Wyoming Valley Pan-Orthodox Choir under the direction of Reader David Kessler served as a fitting backdrop to the diversity of faithful who had gathered for the occasion.

At the conclusion of the service, our beloved Vladyka Herman spoke on behalf of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania and thanked His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius for taking time out of his busy schedule to come and pray with us, and hoped that this Lent would be uplifting for himself and all of us, and that he "would continue to offer daily prayers before the Lord, knowing that we look forward to that joyous feast when we will stand before God and that we can truly say we are His children, that we want to imitate Him and for only one purpose, to lead ourselves in the direction of His Heavenly Kingdom." His Eminence reiterated the call of the metropolitan by stating that, "with each passing year it becomes more difficult to fulfill that unity we need so very badly both here in America and throughout the world." He encouraged our Primate to "continue in a state of humility, a state of dedication, and a state of love for the Lord, for what seems impossible with man is indeed possible with God."

As Metropolitan Theodosius explained in his homily, the first Triumph of Orthodoxy was held at Hagia Sophia on Sunday, March 11, 843 just as the second wave of iconoclasm finally came to an end. Historically, the controversy



Archbishop Herman welcomes Primate of Church

began in the year 726 when the Byzantine Emperor Leo III, the Isaurian, instituted a program of "reform." Although he was a brilliant military general and saved the Empire from the Islamic onslaught of his day, he was an Iconoclast (one who despises the use of icons in the church), and sought to have the Holy Icons removed from not only the churches, but monasteries and homes as well. In 730 he issued a proclamation to remove all icons from the churches, monasteries, and homes and destroy them. Leo III went so far as to call a council in 754 and forced his viewpoint on the delegates. Sadly, his son, Constantine V Copronymus (so-called because it is said he defiled the font during his infant baptism) continued to carry out his father's decisions with both the

sword and fire.

By 765 a savage persecution was under way. Those who supported the use of icons, the Iconodules, were regarded as rebels against the God and the Emperor. Many monks, who were especially zealous in their protection of the icons, became martyrs. When Constantine V died in 775, he was succeeded by his son, Leo IV the Khazar, who, although holding iconoclastic views, did put a stop to the persecutions. When he died, his widow — the Empress Irene — came to rule on account of the minority of their son Constantine VI, and suspended all persecutions. Irene had always been a devotee of both icons and monks, and she began preparations for an ecumenical council, which was held in 787 in Nicea, the place of the first Ecumenical



The honor rendered to this icon is in effect transmitted to the prototype; he who venerates the icon, venerates in it the reality for which it stands.”

But another controversy over icons would rise again when Leo V came to the Byzantine throne in 813. In 815 he began a persecution against the iconodules which continued through the reign of his son Theophilus, and it was not ended until his widow, the Empress Theodora brought a halt to the persecutions once and for all in 843.¹

On that first Sunday of Orthodoxy, a procession was held by the clergy and faithful, bringing the Holy Icons back into the Church and giving them their rightful place according to the Sacred Canons of the Seventh Ecumenical

Council. Once again this year we, too, carried the sacred icons in procession and brought them into the Church, to their proper place.

After the conclusion of the service, a beautiful lenten repast for all present was hosted by the cathedral. The opportunity for fellowship with our bishops gave everyone a sense of the true spirit of unity of which Metropolitan Theodosius and Archbishop Herman spoke. Truly, it was a “Triumph of Orthodoxy” that calls us all to become true “children of God” and “living icons of Jesus Christ.”

—Priest David Mahaffey

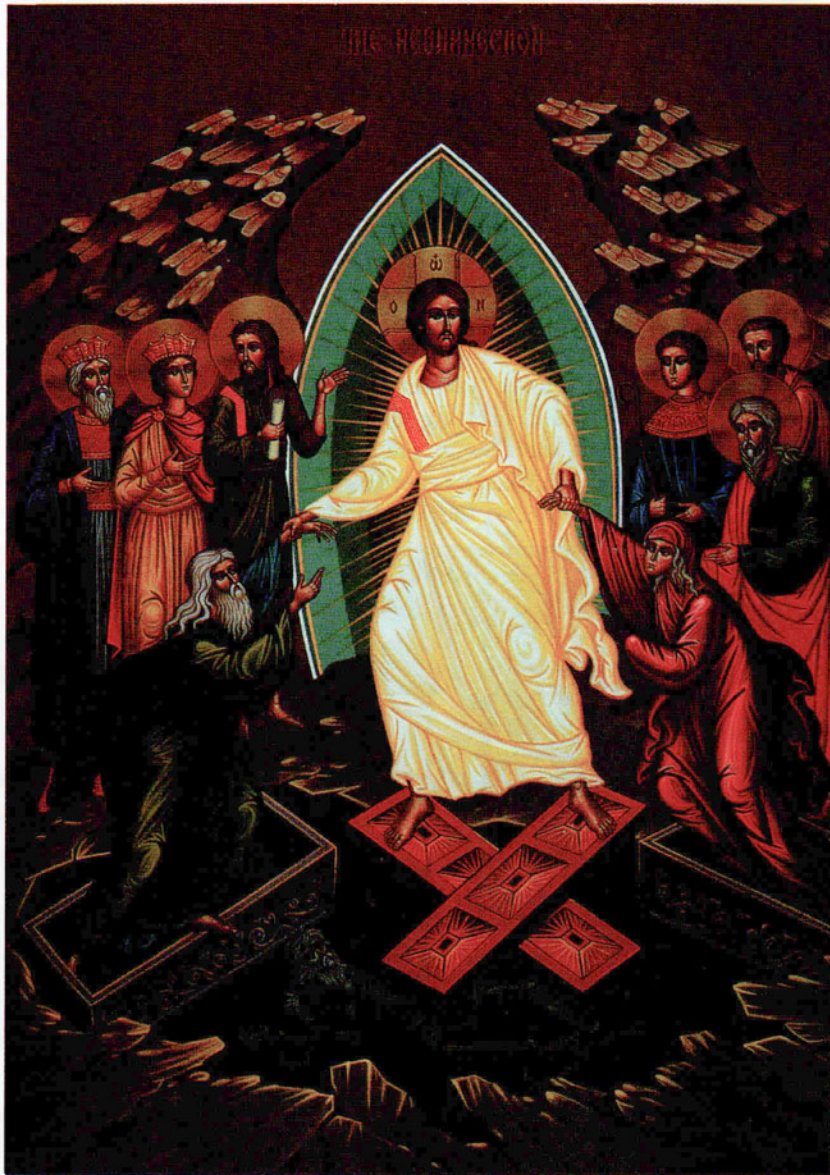
¹ Rev. George Nicozisin. *A History of the Church*, Part II. G.O.A.N.S.A., DRE, 1996. pp. 56-59.

Council. In part, the decision of that council says: “We define that the holy icons . . . should be displayed in the holy churches of God, on the sacred vessels and liturgical vestments, on walls, furnishings, and in houses and along the roads, namely, the icons of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, of our Lady the Theotokos, of the venerable angels and of all holy men. Whenever these are contemplated, they will cause those who look at them to commemorate and love their prototype. We define also that they should be kissed and that they are an object of veneration and honor [timitiki proskynisis], but not of real worship [latreia], which is reserved for Him Who is the Subject of our faith and which is proper for the Divine Nature alone . . .



Protodeacons Stephen Howanetz and Keith Russin





*From the Commentary
on the Easter Canon
by St. Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain*

Translator's Introduction

St. Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain (1749-1809) is probably best known for his work in compiling the *Philokalia*. Living at the time of the so-called "Greek

Enlightenment," a period not unlike our own in its adulation for Western secular humanism, he looked for a renaissance from a different quarter—from the living tradition of the Church, and a spiri-

tual renewal grounded in rediscovery of that tradition. But how was this rediscovery to be brought about? Part of the answer lies in the writings on prayer and spiritual life which St. Nicodemus spent

much of his life compiling, editing, and publishing. But in the *Eortodromion*, or “companion to the feasts,” a late work, he unfolds some of the riches of the source most readily accessible to all Orthodox Christians—the services of the Church. This collection of exhaustive commentaries on the matins canons for the feasts is intended for all who “hunger for the bread of wisdom” and “long to enter into the divine and spiritual meaning of the feasts of the Lord.” With his extensive use of patristic quotations and meticulous noting of scriptural references, St. Nicodemus restores the liturgical texts to their rightful place as a treasure-house of scriptural interpretation and patristic theology. He shows us how participating in worship with understanding is a major step towards recovering the “scriptural mind” of the Fathers.

These extracts from the commentary on the Easter Canon have been abridged in order to represent several troparia in a short space, and the translation is somewhat edited. St. Nicodemus’s explanations are punctilious to a fault; his points are frequently labored; and his enthusiasm for the decorative epithet is not shared by modern English. Square brackets are used to indicate paraphrases and significant omissions. It has been felt that a version which takes liberties with the Saint’s style is actually more faithful to his purpose, which was by all means to make the treasures of the liturgical tradition available and accessible to the whole body of the Church.

From the Commentary Ode 1, Irmos

The day of resurrection: let us exult, O peoples; Passover, the Passover of the Lord. For from death to life and from earth to heaven Christ God has brought us across, singing a triumphal song.

It is the practice of orators in some festal orations not to employ an introduction, but to go straight into their subject. So John of Damascus imitates them, beginning the present canon for the day that brings brightness without giving an acrostic,¹ which in a way serves as an

¹ A word or phrase formed from the initial letters of each troparion.

introduction to a canon. There were two ways in which John wanted to adorn the radiant Resurrection of the Lord . . . Firstly, by using the first tone; for the melodic character of this tone is musically pure, high in pitch and noble.² [. . .] Just as Easter is the feast of feasts and most radiant of all days, so the first tone which is used for it excels all other tones in radiance.

Secondly, the melodist adorned this day with the words of that most illustrious of festal orators, St. Gregory the Theologian. [. . .] What is remarkable is that he does not only take the subject matter from the Theologian, but actually uses his very words. Look how the beginning of the first Ode is taken straight from this fount of theology: in his sermon “*On Easter and on his tardiness*”³ (Hom. 1.1) he begins “The day of resurrection” and goes on “Let us exult in the solemn festival.” And in his second Easter sermon (Hom. 45.2),⁴ he writes, “Passover, the Passover of the Lord”; and again in the same sermon, explaining what *Pascha* means, he says: “This term means crossing, referring in the historical sense to the flight from Egypt into Canaan, and in the spiritual sense to the progress and ascent from what is lower to what is higher, and into the promised land.” So by joining these three passages into one irmos, the Melodist makes the subject of the Theologian’s oration that of his own irmos.

He goes on to give the cause of this exultation: it is the Lord’s Passover. The melodist repeats the word “Passover” to show the joy in his heart . . . The Theologian, indeed, repeats the word “Passover” three times in honor of the Holy Trinity, as he himself says explicitly. The melodist then introduces an explanation of the word *Pascha*, which he gives as the reason why we should exult, saying something like this: It is right that we Orthodox should exult today and celebrate the Passover, since Christ our Master has not brought us across from one land to another (from Egypt into the Promised Land), from an inhabited place into the Sinai desert, as He did with the

² The description is obscure; I am much indebted to Dr. Jessica Suihy-Pilalis for suggestions as to its probable meaning.

³ Translated in *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*, series 2, vol. 7, pp. 203ff.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 422ff.

old Israel; but He has brought us across from death to life, and from earth and earthly things to heaven and heavenly things. We therefore sing to the Lord, who has performed such benefactions for us, that truly triumphal song which the Israelites sang when they crossed over the Red Sea, “Let us sing unto the Lord, for gloriously has He been glorified.”

Look how wonderfully the melodist has crafted this irmos, bringing together the themes of the day of the Resurrection and of the first Ode. Having said “let us exult,” he deliberately brings in the word “Passover” and calls it a crossing, so that it is bound to recall the Israelites’ crossing of the Red Sea, thus linking in the first ode with the feast of Easter and conveying to us how that physical crossing made by the Israelites was a type of our spiritual crossing, and their Passover was a type of our Passover.⁵ [. . .]

Ode 1, Troparion 1

Let us be purified in our senses and we shall see Christ, shining like lightning in the unapproachable light of the Resurrection, and shall clearly hear Him say “Rejoice!” as we sing a triumphal song.

Since man is a composite being of soul and body, he has a double set of senses, five belonging to the soul and five to the body. The senses of the soul are intellect, reason, opinion, fantasy, and perception; those of the body are sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. So the melodist instructs us to keep the spiritual senses of our souls pure from evil desires and appetites, from blasphemous, wicked, and obscene thoughts—in short, from all the so-called passions of the soul. Similarly, we should keep our physical senses pure. We should guard our eyes from dramas, dances, games, and other unseemly and evil sights which are an incitement to pleasures of the flesh. We should keep our hearing pure

⁵ [Quoting St. Gregory the Theologian, St. Nicodemus explains that *pascha* comes from the Hebrew *pesach*, and is unconnected with Greek *paschein* “to suffer.” He continues:] Chrysostom understood the word *pascha* in a different sense: “The name of the feast, rightly interpreted, is most excellent. For *pascha* signifies ‘passing over,’ because the destroyer who struck the first-born passed over the houses of the Hebrews; and for us the passover is truly a matter of passing over the destroyer when it takes us over into eternal life, risen with Christ” (Ps.-Chrysostom, Hom. 1 *On Easter*, Migne PG 59:723).

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Easter Canon

Continued from page 11.

from frivolous songs and foul language. In the same way he tells us to preserve our other senses, too, from harmful objects, for spiritual death comes up through the senses as through windows, as it is written, "Death is come up into our windows" (Jer. 9:21).

It seems that the melodist took these words from St. Gregory the Theologian, where he says that the sheep sacrificed at Passover, which prefigures Christ, "is kept until the fifth day, perhaps because the Victim I am speaking of is sacrificed for the purification of the senses which cause us to stumble, and are a battleground because they open the door to the incitement to sin" (*Second Hom. On Easter*, 14). So if we are purified in the senses of both soul and body, and especially in our intellect and in our sight, we shall certainly be granted to see with the eyes of our soul Christ our Master, who is risen from the tomb and shines more brightly than the sun, in the light of the Resurrection so exceedingly bright as to be unapproachable. For the Lord gave an assurance of this, saying, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Mt. 5:8). The term "unapproachable" is taken from St. Paul, who says, "who alone has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light" (1 Tim. 6:16). Similarly, if we are purified in the inward and spiritual hearing of our soul and the outward hearing of our body, then we too shall certainly hear the risen Christ saying loud and clear to us, as to the Myrrhbearing Women, "Rejoice!" [...]

Ode 3, Irmos

Come, let us drink a new drink; not one brought forth miraculously from the barren rock, but a fount of immortality that has welled up from the tomb of Christ, in whom we are established.

One might wonder why the melodist refers in this irmos to the "new drink," which has no connection with the third ode, the song of Hannah (1 Sam. 2:1-10). But if we examine it carefully, we find that this irmos fits in both with the feast of the Resurrection and with the third ode. Listen: the Kingdom of God

is spoken of in Scripture in many different ways. It can refer to the Resurrection of the Lord, as when He Himself says, "I shall not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Mt. 26:29). It is His Resurrection that He calls the "Kingdom" here, according to the interpretation of St. John Chrysostom⁶ and Theophylact.⁷ Knowing this, the melodist quite naturally invites us Orthodox Christians to drink this new drink which the Lord promised. And this is a new drink in truth, because it renews us who had grown old and had been corrupted by sin and bestows incorruption upon us. For since we are risen with Christ through faith, it clearly follows that we have been renewed and given incorruption with Him. That is how this irmos fits in with the theme of the Resurrection.

The irmos also fits in with the third ode: here it says "in whom we are established" as it says in the song of Hannah "my heart is established in the Lord" (1 Sam. 2:1).⁸ The words "my heart is established" (i.e. "made firm, solid") are also reflected in the reference in the irmos to rock, which is extremely solid. So in order to show how the irmos connects with the Song of Hannah, the melodist goes back to the ancient story of the exodus where it is written that water gushed from the flinty and solid rock. He says, therefore, "Come, ye people who love Christ, let us drink new water which renews us and bestows incorruption. It is not like that which the people of Israel drank, which by a miracle welled up from the barren and solid rock; for even though that water was novel because of the strange and wonderful manner in which it gushed out, it was not new, in the sense of renewing and bestowing incorruption on those who drank. So let us not drink new water of that sort, but let us drink of the fount of incorruption which does renew and bestow incorruption, which Christ, rising today, has made to gush forth from His rock tomb, just as He Himself made the

former fount of corruptible water gush from the rock. And we are established in Christ as upon solid stone and an unshakable foundation, as St. Paul says, "Like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation . . . for no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3:10-11).

Ode 4, Troparion 2

Like a yearling lamb, our blessed and good crown is voluntarily sacrificed for all, the purifying Passover; and from the grave once more in beauty has the Sun of Righteousness shone upon us.

In the previous troparion the melodist allegorized as referring to Christ the description of the sheep slaughtered at the Jewish Passover, as a male lamb, without blemish and perfect (cf. Ex. 12:3). So here he allegorizes the term *yearling* as referring to Christ (cf. Ex. 12:5). This troparion draws on St. Gregory the Theologian; for he calls Christ a "yearling" on various grounds, but particularly because He is a blessed crown of goodness, as David says, "Thou wilt bless the crown of the year of Thy goodness" (Ps. 64/65:11), and because He is the Sun of righteousness who completes and perfects the cycle of the virtues. This is why St. John says that the Lord who is blessed and glorified by us today is a good [*chrestos*] crown. The word should be written *chrestos* (good) rather than *Christos* (Christ) (as it wrongly appears in most copies of the text), so as not to distort the quotation from the Psalm. [...]

Why is Christ the Lord called a crown of goodness? Because He contains within Himself all that is good and beneficial in a way that is circular, in the form of a crown. Or because, overcome by His own goodness, He deigned to be crowned with thorns for our sake, as it says in the Song of Songs: "Go forth and look upon King Solomon (i.e. the peaceable Christ) with the crown with which his mother (i.e. the Synagogue, since He was born of the Jews according to the flesh) crowned him on the day of his marriage, on the day of the gladness of his heart" (3:11)—that is, when He married the Church of the Gentiles on Great Friday. So Christ, who is our true and

⁶ On Matthew Hom. 82.2; NPNF 1, vol. 10, p. 492.

⁷ The Explanation by the Blessed Theophylact of the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew (House Springs, Mo., 1994), p. 229.

⁸ Where the Septuagint text differs significantly from translations based on the Hebrew, as here, quotations are translated directly from the Greek.

purifying Passover, was willingly sacrificed for all men, as a yearling lamb. This saying comes from St. Paul, who says, "For Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. 5:7). But there is also another reason why Christ is called a yearling: because He is the Sun of righteousness (i.e. of all virtue) who brings about the year by his annual cycle. For, as Malachi says, "For you who fear My Name the Sun of righteousness shall rise . . ." (4:2). So He rises today as a most brilliant Sun, and shines in beauty from the tomb as from the eastern horizon and a royal chamber, as David says of the sun: "himself like a bridegroom coming forth from his chamber" (Ps. 18/19:5). [. . .]

Ode 6, Irmos

Thou didst go down into the nethermost parts of the earth and break in pieces the bars that eternally held fast the captives, O Christ; and on the third day, like Jonah from the whale, didst Thou rise from the tomb.

The melodist makes this irmos fit in both with the sixth scriptural ode, that of Jonah, and with the feast of the Resurrection. For he borrows from Jonah the words "I went down to the land whose bars eternally hold fast" (2:6), and says to Christ: "O Jesus Christ, being God and man, you went down into hades, and broke the bars which imprisoned for all eternity those who were held captive in hades." The phrase "eternally hold fast" indicates that those bars were firmly and securely entrenched and had not been broken from all eternity by any man.

For this reason Severus applies these words to Christ rather than to Jonah; for it was not Jonah who actually went down to such a land, but the Lord, who according to the prophecy of Isaiah broke in pieces the gates of bronze and crushed the iron bars: "For I will go before you and level the mountains, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and crush the bars of iron, I will give you treasures of darkness that were hidden" (Is. 45:2-3). So the *crushing* of the bars of hades comes from this passage of Isaiah and not from Jonah. The melodist adds that "after you had broken the bars of hades, Lord, you rose from the tomb on the third day as Jonah came out of the whale, as

you yourself foretold, saying, 'As Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale'" (Mt. 12:40). St. Maximus gives an anagogical⁹ explanation of this saying of Jonah: "He calls 'land' (or 'earth') a firmly-grounded evil disposition. The 'eternal bars' strengthening this abysmal state are impassioned attachments to material things."¹⁰

Ode 7, Troparion 1

Godly-minded women with ointments ran after Thee; and Thee whom they sought with tears as a mortal, they venerated rejoicing as the living God; and they brought the glad tidings to Thy disciples, O Christ, proclaiming the mystical Passover.

The melodist has borrowed this troparion from the Song of Songs, where the bride, the soul, cries out in love to Christ the spiritual Bridegroom: "Thy name is ointment poured out; therefore the maidens love thee, they draw thee to them, let us run after thee for the fragrance of thine ointments" (1:3-4). He has aptly applied this passage to the story of the myrrhbearing women, but with a small alteration: those referred to in the Song of Songs were young, and ran behind the Bridegroom in order to be anointed with his spiritual ointment, whereas the Myrrhbearers were old women and ran in order to anoint the buried Bridegroom, Christ, with fragrant ointment. One could, however, say that the Myrrhbearers offered their ointments to the body of the Lord in order to be spiritually anointed by Him; and also that they were young, since in respect of virtue they were in their prime. For the rest, this passage from the Song of Songs applies equally to the Myrrhbearers: for they not only loved Christ who is the Bridegroom of souls and ran after Him, leaving behind everything of this world, but also drew Him into their hearts and kept Him inscribed there through love. And they worshipped Him in spirit as God and Lord, according to another saying of the Bride who speaks in the Song: "I found him whom my soul loves. I held

him, and would not let him go until I had brought him into my mother's house and into the chamber of her that conceived me" (Song 3:4); for the human heart is a house and a chamber. The mother who conceived is the Wisdom of God who created all things including the heart, according to interpreters of the Song of Songs, in particular St. Gregory of Nyssa and St. Maximus.

[. . .] The women offered ointments as an honor fitting for God, as Theodore has it, or—probably more accurately—in order to anoint His dead body, according to the custom of the Jews, so that it would remain sweet-smelling (cf. Mk. 16:1). Since, according to Theophylact, these women had no thought of anything great or worthy of the divinity of Jesus, they bought spices and hastened to anoint the dead body of the Lord. And the tears they offered in order to show their burning love for their teacher Jesus . . . As St. Isaac says, "When the love of God is stirred in the mind [of one who loves Him], straightway his heart is kindled by the love of Him and his eyes pour forth abundant tears. For love is wont to ignite tears by the recollection of beloved ones."¹¹

They offered tears also because they did not find the body of their dear Jesus . . . and they wept and lamented inconsolably, unable to bear the loss of such a Teacher and Benefactor and Saviour. For souls and hearts that love God know the worth of God, of Jesus; and so when they are deprived of Him, they run up and down and seek Him insistently and weep tears of blood for Him. Thus David wept inconsolably for the loss of God, and said, "My tears have been my food day and night, while men say to me continually, Where is your God?" (Ps. 41/42:3).

That, then, was why the women offered ointment and tears. So when they heard the risen Christ whom they were seeking saying "Rejoice," and the angel telling them, "But go, tell His disciples and Peter that He is going before you to Galilee; there you will see Him, as He told you" (Mk. 16:7)—then they changed their tears into joy and joyfully venerated you, Christ, as alive and also as God—having previously sought you

¹¹ *The Ascetical Homilies of St. Isaac the Syrian* (tr. Holy Trinity Monastery, Brookline, 1984), Homily 37, p. 183.

⁹ i.e. one that "leads the hearer up" to a higher meaning of the text.

¹⁰ *Sixth Century on Theology (= Fourth Century on Various Texts)* Ch. 92; *Philokalia II* (tr. Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware), p. 258.

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Easter Canon

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as a mortal. And they told the Apostles the good news of the mystical Passover, in other words the Resurrection. So you see what great benefits come from tears. For it was tears that allowed the Myrrhbearing Women to see the risen Christ. Tears allowed them to see the angels. Tears allowed them to be the first to proclaim the Resurrection, and to serve as evangelists to those who were Apostles and Evangelists of the Lord.

[] St. Athanasius the Great, speaking in celebration of New Sunday [i.e. Sunday after Easter] says, "When Christ had risen, He was seen by the women before the disciples, and the women told the Apostles the good news of Christ's Resurrection. And this was fitting; for the ruin brought upon Eve was turned on the devil himself. For where the sickness found an entrance, there is also the source of the cure. Where death began, there resurrection is made manifest. Woman was the cause of the transgression, and the herald of the resurrection. She who led the first Adam to his fall bears witness to the second Adam risen." Chrysostom, too, says: "You see how much honor the women earned by their attentiveness? Let us men also imitate their fervor and honor the day of the resurrection to the best of our ability—not carrying physical ointments and sweet spices, but bringing the fragrance from the actions of an excellent way of life. As the reward for their patience, they were granted to see the Lord after His Resurrection before everyone else, and to clasp His feet and worship Him; and similarly it is possible for us, if we wish, not just to clasp His feet but to receive Him entire" (i.e. through Communion).¹² Again, Cyril of Alexandria has this to say in explanation of Isaiah 27:11, "Come, ye women coming from the vision; for this is a people without discernment": "Since Israel has been put away, you women of wisdom have come, says (Jesus), proclaiming the Resurrection of Him who has slain death. Why were the disciples not the first to see Jesus when He had destroyed the dominion of death; why instead did He appear to women,

conferring on them the rank of apostle? We answer that the Only-begotten Word of God became man in order to heal what was sick and free man from the charges laid against him of old. It was necessary therefore that it should be given to women to proclaim first the good news of the Resurrection. For since the first woman brought Adam into transgression, being subservient to the serpent's words, and became herself the cause of death, was it not right that she should shake off the guilt for such terrible misdeeds through apostleship? For where sin filled full measure, as it says, grace has abounded (Rom. 5:20)."¹³

Ode 8, Irmos

This is the appointed and holy day, the first day of the Sabbaths, the Queen and Chief; the feasts of feasts and solemnity of solemnities, in which we bless Christ unto the ages.

Many exalted and glorious names and epithets are applied in this troparion to the light-bringing day of the Lord's Resurrection, also called holy Sunday. For this day is called "appointed" and "holy" by Moses on account of two honors peculiar to it: for one thing, it is the eighth day and a type of the age to come, and for another it is Easter day. As to the first point, Moses says, "And the eighth day shall be unto you an appointed holy day" (Lev. 23:36); and on the second, "These are the feasts of the Lord which are appointed and holy, which you shall proclaim at the time appointed for them. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, between the evenings is the Lord's Passover" (Lev. 23:4-5); and similarly with the feasts of Pentecost and Tabernacles. Now if the feast of the Passover that was a type is called appointed and holy, how much more should these names be given to the light-bringing Sunday which brings the real, true Passover, the risen Master Christ? This is why the melodist calls Easter Sunday an appointed and holy day.

He also calls this Sunday of Easter, literally, "the one (day) of the Sabbaths." "One" here means "first," as it is called in Genesis: "And there was evening and there was morning, one day" (Gen. 1:5).

Why is it called "one" and not "first"? Because this day of Sunday is at present the type of the age to come; but then, it will be the eighth age itself, having a light which knows no evening nor successor, and being a day without end. So St. Basil, considering why Moses says "one day" and not "the first day," says: "In order to lead our minds up to the age to come, he gave the title "one" to the image of eternity, the beginning of days, the coeval of light, the holy Sunday which has been honored by the Resurrection of the Lord."¹⁴ (Cf. also St. Gregory Palamas, *On New Sunday*¹⁵ []). Sunday, therefore, is the first of the days of the week, which are called "sabbaths" after the chief day which is the Sabbath. Easter Sunday is also called the first of the feasts which in Scripture are called sabbaths, since it celebrates the Lord's Resurrection from the dead, and through it the resurrection of the entire human race. [. . .]

Ode 9, Troparion 2

O Christ, great and most holy Passover; O Wisdom and Word and Power of God, grant us to partake of Thee more perfectly in the day of Thy Kingdom which knows no evening.

This final troparion, which serves as an epilogue to the present canon, has been drawn by the hymnographer from the epilogue to St. Gregory the Theologian's Easter sermon: "O great and holy Passover, purification of all the world—for I will speak to you as if you were animate; O Word of God, and Light and Life and Wisdom and Power; for I rejoice in all your names." The melodist quotes him almost word for word here, except that the Theologian addresses the inanimate Passover through the rhetorical figure of personification; but John Damascene addresses the animate Passover, Christ, for he has heard St. Paul saying, "For Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. 5:7). [. . .] Christ is called Wisdom, according to St. Gregory the Theologian, "as the knowledge of things divine and human. For how is it possible for the maker to be ignorant of the inner principles of what

¹² *On the Tomb and the Resurrection*, ed. Savile (Eton, 1612), Vol. 5, pp. 912-916.

¹³ *On Isaiah* III.1; PG 70:605CD, 608AB.

¹⁴ *On the Hexaemeron* II.8; NPNF2, Vol. 8, p. 65.

¹⁵ Hom. 17, PG 151:229D-232A.

He has made?" And He is called Word, again according to the Theologian, because "He is related to the Father as word is to intellect; and not only because of the passionlessness of His generation, but also because He is conjoined with Him and expresses Him. One could perhaps say that it is also like the relationship between the definition and the thing defined, since this too is called a 'word' (*logos*); for it says that he who has mental perception of the Son (this is what is meant by 'has seen,' Jn. 14:9) has perceived the Father. And a concise and simple demonstration of the Father's nature is the Son; for every offspring is a silent word of the one who begat it. And if anyone should say that He has this name because He is immanent in everything that is, he would not be wrong; for what is there that has not come into being through *logos*? And He is called Power because He preserves things that come into being and provides the power for them to keep themselves together."¹⁶ [. . .]

Note that the Theologian takes participation in the Passover in a somewhat anagogical sense; and interpreting the new drink of the vine which God the Word will drink with us in the Kingdom of the Father, he says it is "for us to learn and Him to teach and communicate the word to His disciples; for teaching is also nourishment for him who speaks" (*On Easter*, 23). The same St. Gregory divides the Passover into three: that of the Law, that of grace, and that of the age to come. As he says, "For now we shall partake of the Passover in a way that is still a type, although plainer than the old Passover; for the Passover of the Law, I dare to say, was a type of a type and rather obscure. But in a little while we shall partake of it more perfectly and clearly, when the Word drinks it new with us in His Father's Kingdom, revealing and teaching what for now He has indicated in some measure" (*On Easter*, 23).

So since the Theologian allegorized "partaking of the Passover" into the knowledge and contemplation of the intellect, John follows him, saying: "Christ, who are the true Passover, grant us to partake of You through spiritual knowledge and contemplation in that day

of Your Kingdom which knows no evening; not as we have enjoyed You in the present life, but *ektypoteron*"; which means either "apart from any form, anything that gets in the way" according to Theodore (Prodromos?), or "more clearly or perfectly," according to the Theologian. [] As St. Paul says, "Now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, then I shall know as I have been known" (1 Cor. 13:12); St. John therefore beseeches Christ that we may then enjoy the fullest and clearest knowledge and contemplation, in which we shall know God as we have been known by Him. For in the present life we cannot enjoy this knowledge because of our earthen bodies.

He calls the day of Christ's Kingdom "without evening" because, as St. Basil says, "It is not this physical sun which will make the great day of the Lord 'day'; but the rising of the Sun of Righteousness will illuminate it, which will be one and everlasting, having no night that succeeds it, but being coextensive with all eternity."¹⁷ [. . .]

May all of us, therefore, who sing and read and hear this joyous canon for the day of brightness, be not merely singers or readers or hearers of the thoughts and precepts contained in it; but may we be doers of them through our actions. We have risen with the risen Christ both through faith and through holy baptism, which is performed as a type of the Lord's burial and Resurrection. So let us live in a new way, as befits those who are risen with the risen Christ: "So that

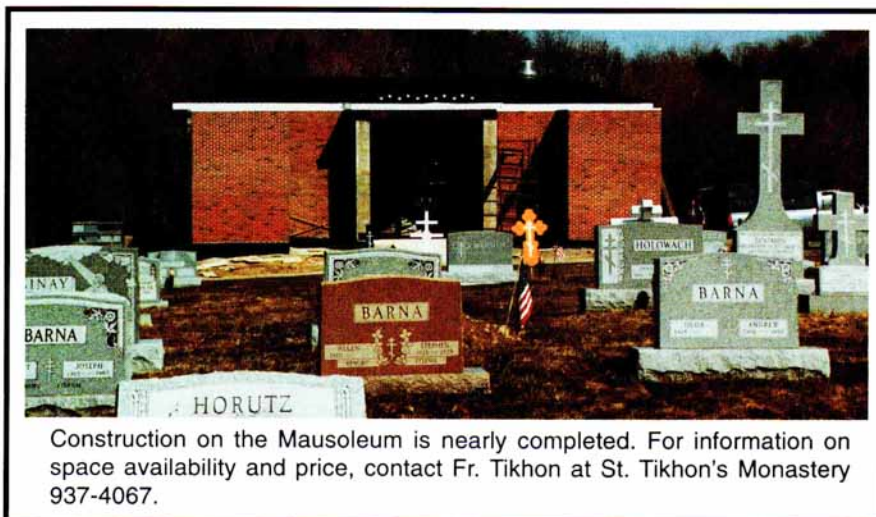
¹⁷ *On Isaiah* Ch. 1, 31; PG 30:180B.

as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). We have learned today a new life from Him who is risen. Let us then preserve it to the end, having new thoughts, speaking new words, doing new deeds, worthy of Christ's new resurrection . . . Let us beseech the risen Christ to put to death the impassioned thoughts and demons insinuated into our hearts and Himself rise within us, breaking like seals the impressions stamped on our souls and the prepossessions¹⁸ of sin, as St. Maximus says.¹⁹ [. . .]

If therefore we conduct ourselves with love for God and in newness of life, then we shall come to know within ourselves the wondrous power of the Resurrection of the Lord, which is the prior purpose for which God made all things; for St. Maximus says: "He who is initiated into the inexpressible power of the resurrection apprehends the purpose for which God first established everything."²⁰ Then we shall be accounted worthy to celebrate the holy Passover of the Lord in the present life with spiritual joy and delight of heart; and to celebrate it in the life to come "more perfectly" and more clearly, in Christ Jesus our Lord who is risen from the dead: to whom be glory and dominion with the Father and the Holy Spirit unto the ages. Amen.

—Translated by
Elizabeth Theokritoff

¹⁸ Prepossession (Greek *prolipsis*) is "the involuntary presence in the memory of former sins," which predisposes us to yield to particular temptations. See *Philokalia*, glossary.
¹⁹ Cf. *First Century on Theology*, 66; *Philokalia II*, p. 127.
²⁰ *First Century on Theology*, 66; *Philokalia II*, p. 127.



Construction on the Mausoleum is nearly completed. For information on space availability and price, contact Fr. Tikhon at St. Tikhon's Monastery 937-4067.

¹⁶ *Fourth Theological Oration*, 20; NPNF2, Vol. 7, p. 317.



Archbishop Herman addresses thousands

Another Day in Washington, D.C. A Reflection on the Annual March for Life

Well, it's 4:30 a.m. on Wednesday, January 22, and as I get ready to take a shower I begin to reflect on what my day will be like today. Once again I must make a "pilgrimage," not to St. Tikhon's Monastery for a clergy retreat or some diocesan meeting, but I am instead making the trip to attend the annual "March For Life," which sadly commemorates the twenty-fourth anniversary of the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion on demand in America. Yes, once again as I have done for the past five years on January 22, I will be spending another day in Washington, D.C.

As my early morning preparations continue and I listen to the early news and weather report, my mind flashes

through a shopping list of things I must take with me for this trip. My mind also starts to categorize my pastoral schedule of upcoming house blessing appointments, pastoral visitations, approaching feastdays and meetings, as well as the seemingly endless paperwork that covers my desk.

Once again that tempting thought, "Don't you have better things to do with our time than spend another day in Washington?" creeps into my thoughts. Quickly, I dismiss this thought. Yes, I do have other, and maybe, better things to do with my time on this day, but certainly not more important. This thought reminds me of the many comments I receive from parishioners and acquaintances when they learn of my plans to at-

tend this annual March. The comment which always seems to cut the deepest is, "What good does this annual protest really accomplish?" Immediately, I recall the lives and struggles of various saints and the martyrs who refused to accept evil decisions passed down by men. I find great strength in those dedicated individuals throughout sacred history who refused to "sit quietly" or "roll over." I find inspiration, for truly this protest is more than a struggle against an unjust law; it is a direct attack against our faith. Yes, I do have other things to do with my time on this day, but certainly nothing more important.

As I continue my journey, while looping around Baltimore on the beltway, I hear on my car radio that there has been

an explosion outside of a hotel in Washington; it is the very hotel where the First Lady, Hillary Clinton and Vice-President Al Gore will be addressing a pro-choice gathering this morning. As the initial and unconfirmed reports start to flood the airways, the vision of radical abortion clinic bombings and shootings give me a cold feeling. I can just hear the pro-choice commentary, "It is the anti-abortionists who are the dangerous murderers, not us!" Fortunately, within a few hours it is reported that this explosion was the result of a small detonator device, and equal to a small firecracker; however, tensions remain high, and local security has been beefed-up.

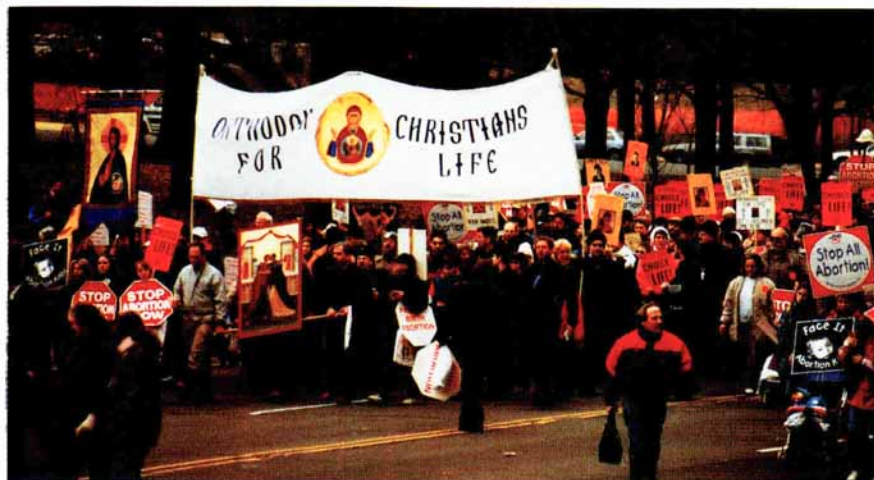
It is now nearly 10:00 a.m. and I am on the Red Line of the Metro for the short twenty-minute ride from Silver Spring, Maryland, to Union Station near the Capitol Building. On the train there are many "pilgrims" who have come to Washington to join the March. I meet and talk with a Roman Catholic priest from Cleveland, Ohio who has brought about forty children to experience and participate in this extremely important event. I tell him of the explosion, and we both share the fear of a tainted protest. From the faces on the daily Metro commuters, it is quite apparent that they're feeling it's going to be another congested Washington day with the streets filled with protesters.

While walking through the food court of Union Station, which is now crowded with people catching a quick breakfast or coffee before the rally, I meet Frs. Jason Kappanadze and Basil Stoyka, who have just come off a bus from Cleveland together with many children. They have come to attend the pro-life march. After exchanging the usual pleasantries and priestly gossip, we comment on the need for a real Orthodox presence at this important event. We all sadly agree that if this were a church meeting to discuss the calendar issue, Biblical translations, finances and assessments, ecumenical relationships, or liturgical innovation, there would be an overwhelming multitude of theologians and commentators. But on this day we are merely protesting to protect life, the greatest gift from God. The words of our Lord to St. Peter in the garden of Gethsemane ring in my head,

"What, could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak" (Matt. 26:40, 41).

From Union Station I take a leisurely twenty-city-block walk to the Ellipse in front of the White House where the pro-life rally will begin at noon. As I walk through our nation's capital, I see the remnants of President Clinton's inauguration celebration held just two days earlier on Monday. I can't help but feel the irony of how our nation honored this man, who upon a Bible took an oath to

between them a "chain" of blood-covered babies; parading through the crowd. I think, "Ah, what fodder for CNN!" Sure enough, this scene was included in their headline reports. I also see many teenagers, carrying signs, shouting slogans, dancing, and in usual protest fashion, just hanging out, and once again I can't help but wonder, "Are they here to bear witness to a great sin and injustice, or are they just enjoying a day off from school, a trip to Washington, or to experience a cool '70s style protest that their parents may have done?" Added to this



uphold the law of our land and to protect all of it's citizens, and yet has been the Chief Executive most supportive of abortion. I try to remove this anger by remembering the words of the Sanctity of Life prayer which I recited on Sunday: "Banish all evil from our hearts and wickedness from our laws . . . enlighten the minds and hearts of those blinded to the truth . . ."

At the Ellipse, I join the other Orthodox faithful who have gathered under the beautiful icon-bearing banner that proclaim *Orthodox Christians for Life*. It is still early, and after receiving the blessing from Archbishop HERMAN and greeting many fellow priests and Orthodox friends, I survey the swelling crowd which has gathered from all across the United States to be here.

Yes, this truly has become a typical media event. There is the video platform and the various news crews readying their equipment and beginning to record the day's events. I see two men, one dressed in black as the Grim Reaper, the other as a blood-covered abortionist;

scene was the very visible security force of Washington police and park rangers, the hovering news helicopters, and of course, street vendors hawking their wares. Once again I pray, "Enlighten the minds and hearts of those blinded to the truth . . ."

At noon, the rally begins, and as in past years there is inspiring music and beautiful prayers that are offered to enlighten the gathered multitude. There is of course Nellie Gray, the president of the March for Life, senators and congressmen supporting the pro-life cause, and a plethora of leaders and speakers denouncing the evil of abortion and pro-choice ("choice" is a word that means 4,400 babies a day are killed) and proclaiming *life* and the importance of its sanctity. There is also the spontaneous applause from the crowd and deafening shouts of slogans so typical of such an important event.

But one thing always touches me when I attend this annual rally. There on the dais are gathered representatives

Continued on the next page

March for Life

Continued from page 17.

from the various religions that worship here in America. All of these bishops, ministers, rabbis, and leaders are given the chance to bear witness to their faith and proclaim the sanctity of life. Among this honored group is of course, our Archbishop HERMAN, who faithfully attends this important gathering. When he is introduced and makes his proclamation, I am filled with both warm pride and yes, a touch of shame. For although we as Orthodox Christians proclaim to be a "major" religion in the United States, only one bishop and a few hundred faithful have come to bear witness. Once again I hear the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?" (Luke 17:17). Please forgive me.

After the rally has ended, those gathered begin their march from the Ellipse up Constitution Avenue towards and around the Capitol Building. They will end at the steps of the Supreme Court. It is a scene that must be experienced to be really understood. Yes, the Washington police and National Park Department will record that according to their "grid" calculations approximately 100 thousand people will have attended the March. However, after looking down Constitution Avenue towards the Washington Monument from the slight hill by the Capitol, you see the sea of people stretching for over sixteen city blocks and you wonder, "Where did they get those figures!" But this again is typical of such an event.

This year the march seemed a little different, quieter. Yes, the people seemed fewer in number; maybe it was the threat of bad weather; one hopes it was not indifference or a complacent attitude to this "political issue" or to the fact that Bill Clinton will be president for the next four years.

Another difference this year seemed to be the absence of the usual vocal "pro-choice" advocates who formerly lined the avenue, shouting such slogans as "Keep your rosaries off our ovaries!" as we marched past. During the march, however, I must admit that I felt quite proud to be an Orthodox Christian defending the sanctity of life. It is amazing



Archbishop Herman serves panahida for the aborted millions



Seminarians and faculty at March for Life

how people stop and listen as our group marches by singing "O Lord, Save Thy People . . ." and gaze upon the icons and banners which are carried by the faithful.

Upon reaching the Supreme Court, the Orthodox gathered together across the street, and under the direction of Archbishop HERMAN held a short memorial *litya* for all those innocent children who have been senselessly murdered through abortion. Once again we prayed that our Lord would "banish all evil from our hearts and wickedness from our laws . . . and enlighten the minds and hearts of those blinded to the truth . . ." Once again I would feel pride in our witness to the Truth, as the non-Orthodox marchers passing by would stop, listen, and join us in our prayer. Once again I would feel the need for a real Orthodox

presence and witness in this nation and world so easily led by evil and false ideals.

Finally, after we received a few precious words of encouragement, and the benediction and blessing from His Eminence, our Archbishop HERMAN, the Orthodox faithful who gathered in faith and love said their farewells to one another, wishing one another a safe return home, and then they began to depart for their trains, buses, and cars.

As I started to walk back to Union Station, anticipating the rush-hour traffic I would face on my journey back to Pennsylvania, I thought to myself that next year on January 22, I will be spending another day in Washington. But our prayer is that, by the mercy of God, it will not be necessary.

—Father John A. Onofrey

SAINTLY PARENTS: THE EXAMPLE OF THE PARENTS OF THE ELDER JOSEPH



Very often the Lives of the Saints begin by talking about how pious the parents of the saint were. Several things are usually emphasized — how much they prayed; how faithfully they observed all the fasts and feasts of the Church — fully participating in all aspects of Her life; and also, how much they cared for the poor and those in need — sharing their material goods, and helping those less fortunate in whatever ways they could. One of the things we see from this is the crucial role that parents play, and that their good example is extremely valuable for themselves, their children, and the many people who are helped by them and by their children.

Nowadays, we would often like to have more details about the lives of these pious parents whose children became Saints. What exactly did they do that was so spiritually nurturing for their children? Apparently, however, people in the past were not so interested in this, because such details are usually not given in the older Saints' Lives. With some of the Lives of more recent holy people, however, we learn a bit more. One example would be the Life of the Elder Joseph of Optina.

Elder Joseph was one of the great Optina elders — a succession of very famous men in the spiritual history of Russia. An elder, or *staretz*, is an exceptionally holy person, usually someone who has spiritual gifts — such as the ability to read other people's hearts and thoughts. It was common for such a *staretz* to know the names and problems of many different people without having met them, and without having heard anything about them in an ordinary way. Through their prayers, often miraculous cures of physical afflictions occurred and other problems were resolved. But their main gift was to be able to see into the hearts and minds of the large numbers of people who came seeking their advice, to determine what their sins and weaknesses were, and to discern exactly how these people could be healed, especially spiritually.

The Optina Elders lived in the Optina Monastery, about 100 miles southwest of Moscow. They were a series of very holy, clairvoyant elders who were spiritual fathers and advisers to many, many people in Russia in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The life of each of these elders was completely devoted to helping others. They had little time

even for private prayers or rest, since so many needy people came to see them daily.

This Elder Joseph was probably the closest disciple of the famous St. Amvrosy of Optina. St. Amvrosy was known personally by the famous Russian writer Dostoyevsky, who held him in mind as he created his character Staretz Zossima in *The Brothers Karamazov*. There is an excellent biography of St. Amvrosy (written before he was canonized) by John Dunlap, called *Staretz Amvrosy*. Elder Joseph became Staretz Amvrosy's successor as the leading *staretz* at Optina in 1891. He served here, in this way, until his death in 1911.

In the life of the Elder Joseph, who was born in 1837 in Kharkov Province in Russia, we do hear something about the life of his parents. We are told that they were "simple people, but very pious, kind and intelligent."¹ His father was the village-head for seventeen years, and was widely respected and loved. His Life emphasizes that both parents were very generous to the poor, and that often

¹ *The Elder Joseph of Optina*, translated by Holy Transfiguration Monastery (Boston: 1984), p. 35. All the information about Elder Joseph and his family is taken from this book, which includes two accounts of his life.

Continued on the next page.

Saintly Parents

Continued from page 19.

each one would give without the other even knowing about it. We are also told that the parents loved monastics and always gave alms to the various monasteries who had to send monks out asking for alms. His father was known to have ardently hoped that at least one of his children would become a monastic.

In the end, one daughter and their son John — the later Elder Joseph — both became monastics. His sister, who eventually became an eldress, struggled with great temptations when she first entered the monastic life, and she thought of leaving her monastery. But her mother, who had died just before these struggles began, appeared to her during her sleep and “sternly reproved her, reminding her of her monastic vows.” When Mother Leonida — as she later became — told this to Staretz Amvrosy, he said to her, “Your mother is a saint!”²

Both parents loved to go to church,

² Ibid., p. 241.

and they often read spiritual books, especially the Lives of the Saints. Thus they set a good example both in their personal prayer life, and in their active concern for others. Their mother also led her six children in daily prayer. On Feast days, she woke them early for Matins. Elder Joseph tells how as a child he really didn't want to get up so early to go to church! But once he did, he would be so happy the rest of the day. Between Matins and the Liturgy, they would go home and she would have John read an Akathist to the Savior or to the Mother of God while she censed the whole house.

His parents had a special love for St. John the Almsgiver, a wonderful married saint who became patriarch of Alexandria after his wife and children died. His whole life was so characterized by generosity to the poor that he earned the title of “Almsgiver.” When their son who became Elder Joseph was born, they named him John after this great Saint.

Apparently both parents were very loving, but the father was rather lenient,

while their mother was very strict. The children would not dare to say no to her, or let themselves be noticeably distracted during the family prayers! Elder Joseph would tell people, even when he was an elder, about how strict his mother had been.

John was only four years old when his father died, and his mother died in a cholera epidemic when he was eleven. Nevertheless, their good, loving example and teaching — their devotion to Christ and His Church, and to living the gospel life — strongly shaped him and his siblings (a number of whom were already grown and married by the time of their mother's death). His parents' pious way of life, and their desire to serve God and to help others in need as much as possible, provided a firm foundation for his spiritual growth. Building on this foundation under the guidance of Staretz Amvrosy, Joseph himself became a staretz — living a life of total dedication to helping others, through endless hours of counseling and prayer.

—Dr. Mary Ford

St. Tikhon's Monastery Pilgrimage Memorial Day 1997

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Pascha — Anti-Pascha

by I. Phountoulis

*The article that follows is a chapter from the book *Reasonable Worship*. It has been translated from the Greek by Dr. Christopher Veniamin.¹ “Anti—Pascha” is another name for the Sunday of Anti—Pascha, or Thomas Sunday.*

The joyous news of the Resurrection of the Lord rang out during the Midnight Office of Pascha on a quiet springtime night. And once again we leaped for joy in the forecourts of our churches under the star-studded sky. The words of the Angel all clad in white — “He is risen; he is not here” (Mark 16:6) — were repeated by the mouths of our hierarchs and priests and our lips sang the triumphal hymn “Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death.” And we, “those in the graves,” who were buried together with the Lord, together with all those who throughout the ages had been held captive by Hades, felt within

¹*Reasonable Worship* (Thessalonica: Patriarchal Institut. for Patristic Studies, 1971), is the result of a series of 50 radio broadcasts transmitted by the radio station “Macedonia” under the title “From the Worship of the Orthodox Church” from Feb., 1970 to Jan., 1971. “Pascha-Antipascha” being the 11th in the series. The author is Emeritus Prof. of Liturgics in the Univ. of Thessalonica, Greece. The translator is Asst. Prof. of Patristics at St. Tikhon’s Seminary.

us the “leap” of the New Life, the resurrection from the dead, “that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:4), as the Apostle says. And we repeated this song of victory ten, twenty, a hundred times in order to indicate our incalculable joy and our unshakable certainty, so that we might become aware of the victory of Christ, which is also our victory, against both Death and Hades. It is precisely here that the quintessence of Christianity is to be found. That is why the event of the Resurrection constitutes the central theme of our worship, it is the theme of Pascha, but also of each and every Sunday of the year. Christianity is founded upon the empty tomb of the Lord. Without the Resurrection the

Christian *kerygma* would be “empty,” without content, useless; and our faith would be “in vain” (1 Cor. 15:17). But also the life of each one of us springs forth from the event of the Resurrection of Christ. Together with Him the man of sin has been crucified and died, the old man of the passions and of the curse, the slave to the fear of death and of corruption. But now death has been smashed to pieces; it has lost its dominion and power. The tyrant has become a laughing-stock. Corruption is overcome by incorruption. Now we celebrate our victory and we glorify Him who has given us life by His death. And upon death who is held captive and upon Hades tramples not only Christ, as is graphically represented in the Orthodox iconography of

Continued on the next page.



Pascha—Anti-Pascha

Continued from page 21.

the Resurrection, but the whole human race which is resurrected with Him, all those who are being saved. The Blessed John Chrysostom encapsulates the triumphant voice of those that have been set free by Christ in his *Catechetical Oration*, which we heard at the end of the Midnight Office on the night of Pascha:

“Let no one fear Death, for the death of the Saviour hath set us free. Being seized by him He hath extinguished him. He Who came down into Hades, despoiled Hades. Hades was embittered when he tasted of His Flesh. Esaias, anticipating this, cried out: Hades, he says, was embittered when he met Thee below. He was embittered, for he was abolished. He was embittered, for he was mocked. He was embittered, for he was defeated. He was embittered, for he was fettered. He received a body, and encountered God. He received earth, and met Heaven. He received what he saw, and fell upon what he could not see. O Death, where is thy sting? O Hades, where is thy victory? Christ is Risen, and thou art cast down. Christ is Risen, and the demons are fallen. Christ is Risen, and the Angels rejoice. Christ is Risen, and life doth reign. Christ is Risen, and there is none dead in the tomb. For Christ is raised from the dead, and is become the first-fruits of them that slept. To Him be glory and dominion unto the ages of ages.”²

In this atmosphere of victory, of this joy and festivity, of the light that has been given to the world by the never-setting Light which has shone forth from the tomb, dark passions, trivialities, deadly hatred and the remembrance of wrongs [animosity] are allowed no place to exist. And this is the direct gift of the Resurrection: the forgiveness which has dawned from the tomb. The love and the peace of God towards man, of man towards God and of man towards his fellow man. The crown of this Paschal love is seen in the kiss which is exchanged by the faithful on the day of Pascha, which is described by the wonderful and most festive hymn, the *Doxastikon* of the

Praises in the Plagal First Tone [Fifth Tone]: “It is the day of Resurrection, let us both be adorned with the festival and embrace one another. Let us say, brethren, even to them that hate us: that we should forgive all things because of the Resurrection, and so let us cry aloud: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and to them in the tombs hath He given life.”³

The celebration of Pascha continues throughout the whole week that follows, Renewal Week, the New Week. The whole week is regarded as one Paschal day, on which “we celebrate the same life-bringing Resurrection of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ,” according to the [Greek] *Synaxarion*. And the new week draws to a close with the eighth day, the New Sunday, which is otherwise known as Thomas Sunday or Anti-Pascha. This is the *type* of the eighth day of the future age, “for it is set forth as an icon of that unending day, in the Age to Come, which is both the first and certainly the only day, which is never interrupted by night,” as is said in the [Greek] *Synaxarion*.

But the Sunday of Thomas is not an icon of the age to come simply because it is the eighth day after Pascha. It is such also because it is the day on which Christ is present in the midst of the Eleven Disciples. It is the day of the confirmation of the Resurrection, the day on which every doubt is dispelled, the day of the personal communion with, and the touching of, Him who is resurrected. It is precisely this presence and the touching of His wounds which is a *type* of the eternal presence of Christ in the Age to Come in the midst of His Church. Then nothing will obstruct the desired vision of God, of Christ, and personal communion with Him. Then the partitions of disbelief shall fall and together with Thomas the people of God shall make the saving confession: “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28).

From our hymnography of the feast we have the *Doxastikon* of Plagal Second Tone [Sixth Tone]. This refers to Christ’s entry “while the doors were shut” into the Upper Room of Sion. Thomas who was absent speaks of the event of the Resurrection with disbelief. He

desires, in order that he be assured of it, to see the Lord with His own eyes. He desires to see the side from which flowed blood and water — the *type* of Baptism. He desires to see the wound, by which the great wound — the human race — was healed. He desires to see that the one who is resurrected is not a spirit, a phantasm, but a man with flesh and bones. And it is of this same resurrected Lord, Who trampled down death and Who informed the disbelieving Thomas of the truth of His Resurrection, that the hymnographer writes:

“Thou didst come to Thy disciples, O Christ, while the doors were shut. Then, by dispensation, Thomas was not to be found among them, for he said: I will not believe unless I also behold the Master, and see the side whence there issued the blood, the water, the baptism, and observe the wound through which man, the great wound, was healed, and see that He is not a spirit, but flesh and bones. O thou who didst trample down death and didst instruct Thomas, O Lord, glory be to Thee.”⁴

Let us end our program with the Ninth Ode of the Canon for the day, written by John Damascene, in the First Tone. The *Eirmos* glorifies the Mother of the One Who is Resurrected. The three following *Troparia* refer to the appearance of Christ to His disciples, to Thomas’s touching of Christ and to the confirmation of the Divine Resurrection. These are some of the most beautiful hymns of New Sunday:

“O thou shining lamp, O Mother of God, thou most manifest glory, who art more exalted than all creation, thee do we magnify with hymns.”

“Thy radiant and most resplendent day, and Thy light-filled grace, wherein Thou didst come unto Thy disciples, O Christ, as One comely in beauty, do we magnify.”

“Thee, Whose side was touched with an earthen hand, and yet did not burn it with the fire of Thine immaterial Divine essence, do we magnify with hymns.”

“Thee, Who didst arise from the grave as God, O Christ, though we have not beheld Thee with our eyes, yet with our hearts have believed in Thee with love, do we magnify with hymns.”⁵

² Cf. V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (James Clark & Co. Ltd.: Cambridge & London, 1973), pp. 247-249; and *The Pentecostarion* (Holy Transfiguration Monastery: Boston, MA, 1990), pp. 36-37.

³ Cf. *The Petecostarion*, p.36.

⁴ Ibid., p. 67.

⁵ Ibid., p. 78.

St. Innocent, Apostle to America

1797 - 1997



In 1997 we mark the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of St. Innocent of Alaska, whom we honor as the Enlightener of the Aleuts and Apostle to the Americas. As St. Tikhon's Monastery prays to God at its annual Memorial Day Pilgrimage, beseeching the Lord's mercy and blessings upon ourselves and upon all the world, St. Innocent will be for us a special focus of attention, and we will be especially mindful of his intercessory power, knowing that St. Innocent is one of the founding fathers of the Church in America. He is a shining light for us, indicating for us — in so many ways — the "path into the Kingdom of Heaven," in the words of the title of his book:

By his labors, which established on a firm footing the Cross that St. Herman planted in America;

By his remarkable life, which stands before us as a reminder of the truth that "the Lord truly guides a man on the way that he should go";

By his breadth of vision, foreseeing and providing in advance for us, his spiritual descendents, and planning for the spread of Christ's saving message in North America and the other places he evangelized;

And lastly, by his prayers through which he continually guides and in every way aids the mission of holy Orthodoxy in this land and in his native Russian and throughout the world.

St. Innocent was born to a family of humble means, his father being the sacristan of a village parish. Who could have known on the day of his birth that he would one day do the many great things he did, and end his life as the ranking hierarch of the Church of Russia? God alone knew, and made provision for his servant at each step of the way — as he does also for each of us, whether we are

cognizant of this or not.

Like all the saints, Innocent achieved greatness not by attempting to be great, but by simply setting himself to the work that God placed before him at every point in his life, applying to the task all the talents that the Lord had endowed him with for this purpose. By doing this, he

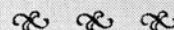
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truly "reached the heights through humility" and acquired spiritual riches through worldly poverty, for he devoted himself wholly to the service of God, finding — through the "narrow way" of obedience and self-sacrifice — the door to the broad places of the Kingdom that is not of this world.

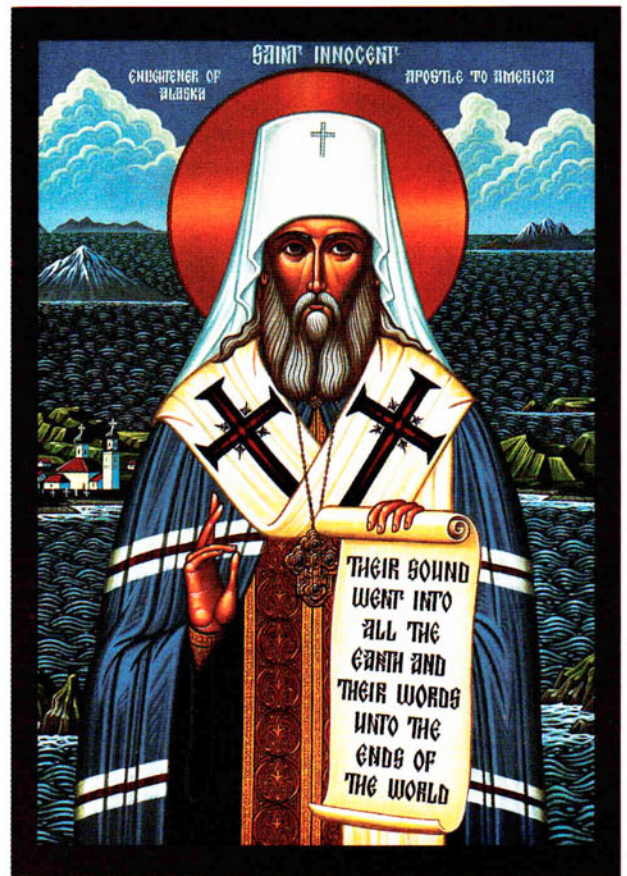
St. Innocent's zeal to spread the holy Orthodox faith to peoples as yet unenlightened by it led him to carry the light of Christ to the uncharted areas of Alaska's wilderness. But he labored not

only there, to bring about the salvation of the peoples of Alaska, but also preached the Gospel to many peoples and tribes in Siberia. God arranged that he should make a visit to Japan, where he powerfully inspired St. Nicholas (Kasatkin), the future Equal to the Apostles and Enlightener of Japan. Later, he founded a Orthodox Mission Society of the Church of Russia, in order to support these and other missionary efforts.

Innocent did nothing more than exert himself in full measure to carry out the work and will of God. By this he became an illustrious model and example for all Orthodox Christians, both monks and people living in the world, as this, and nothing more, is what the holy God requires of each and all. Our own personal faith, whose Foundation is Christ, is in the second instance supported and made possible only by the self-sacrificing deeds and labors of all the saints who have gone before us in faith — above all, of our all-holy Lady the Ever-Virgin Theotokos — and by their continuing prayers on our behalf. As we approach our Lord in prayer and entreaty at this year's Pilgrimage, we ask that, having St. Innocent as a brilliant luminary in the near firmament of our Church, we will be inspired to do no less than he in laboring and striving to please God, being concerned with the salvation of ourselves, but mindful also the needs of generations yet unborn, our descendents, whether spiritual or physical, that exist as yet only in the eternal mind and plan of our Lord. Like St. Innocent, we pray for the salvation of these future generations, asking that piety will continue to flower and that our own life may help to further this goal.



Pastoral Encyclical
to the God-Protected and Faithful Flock
of the Orthodox Church in America
on the Occasion of the
Two Hundredth Anniversary
of the Birth of
Saint Innocent of Alaska,
Equal to the Apostles
and Enlightener
of North America



Beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord!

On September 24, 1794, the seeds of Orthodox Christianity in North America were planted on the island of Kodiak, Alaska, by eight missionaries from the Monastery of Valamo in Russian Finland. With love for God and a desire to accomplish His will, they selflessly proclaimed the Good News of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ to the indigenous peoples of this land. Through their love and sacrificial labor, thousands of Aleuts, Athabaskans, Tlingit Indians and Eskimo tribes came to the knowledge of the Truth, and embraced the light of Christ and the Orthodox Christian Faith.

Like a flowering vine, the Church in North America budded forth as additional laborers and missionaries came to tend the vineyard planted in Alaska. Among them was a young Siberian priest from Irkutsk, Father John Popov Veniaminov, born August 26, 1797, barely three years after the first mission-

aries reached the Aleutian shores. Shortly after his ordination to the Holy Priesthood in 1821, he voluntarily accepted missionary service in America, and settled with his family in Unalaska in 1824.

A man of extraordinary spiritual vision and missionary zeal, Fr. John undertook his pastoral duties with utmost love and respect for his flock. Utilizing his linguistic talents, he learned the various native Alaskan languages, collaborating with the Aleut leader Ivan Pan'kov to devise a written grammar and alphabet for the Fox Island dialect of the Aleut people. He translated the Gospel of St. Matthew and many liturgical texts into Aleut, and wrote the first Aleut book, a spiritual treatise entitled *Indication of the Pathway into the Kingdom of Heaven*. His linguistic efforts continued as his pastoral responsibilities brought him to the Tlingit peoples of Southeastern Alaska and to numerous tribes in Siberia.

Recognizing that God's loving pres-

ence is revealed in deed as well as word, Father John used his many God-given gifts to prepare himself and uplift his flock. He undertook a detailed ethnographic study of the cultures and habitat of the territory, publishing a major treatise that later earned him membership in the Russian Academy of Sciences. He designed and built churches, including the Holy Ascension Church in Unalaska and the renowned Archangel Michael Cathedral in Sitka, where he also crafted the clock for the bell tower and the furniture for the Mission House which he built for the bishop's residence and Pastoral School.

Widowed in 1839, Father John accepted monastic tonsure, taking the name Innocent. Elevated to the episcopacy in 1840, he returned to Alaska with the title "Bishop of Kamchatka, the Kuril, and the Aleutian Islands." The task of ministering to the diverse needs of such a far-flung diocese was immense, but Bishop Innocent's zeal and untiring efforts dis-

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Prayer, Time, and More Prayer

Recently a gentleman stopped at the rectory one afternoon, the day before a major feast day, and asked, "Is there service tomorrow?" The priest said, "Of course—at 9 o'clock, and there is Vigil this evening at 7:00 as well." The man responded, "The service tomorrow—is it one hour?" The priest: "It will be as long as it takes!" The man did not appear the next day.

America! America! So busy you are with business, so busy acquiring earthly treasures and erecting buildings to put them in, you have only one hour occasionally to spare for God. And what time is not devoted to business is given over with almost equal passion to entertainment.

In traditional Orthodox cultures in the past, and in places even today, it was not and is not so. Sunday is the Day of the Lord (in Greek), the Day of Resurrection (in Russian)—not one hour but the whole twenty-four. And the anticipation begins, as with the Jews, at sundown the evening before. And the Twelve Great Feasts are honored as Sundays. And other feast days: St. John the Baptist, Ss. Peter and Paul, St. Nicholas, the Protection of the Most Holy Virgin, patron saints, newly-glorified saints, and so on, all are great feasts calling for our devotion and time.

It surely does spiritual damage to our sacred worship to serve and sing in an overly-hurried manner, as it does damage also to make abridgments and reductions for the sake of "saving time." Think of that phrase, "saving time"! Time is

given to us as a gift from God. "Saving time" then refers to what, and for what purpose? For earthly "business" or for the cultivation of the knowledge and love



of God? Where, when, and for how long do each of these take place? The Preacher, Ecclesiastes, reminds us that there is a time for every thought, every action, every emotion (Eccl. 3:1-8). Then he says, "What profit does one who works get from his labor? I have seen the business that God has given men to keep them busy" (v. 9-10) . . . "Whatever God does lasts forever; to add to it or subtract from it is impossible. And He does it all in such a way that men must feel awe in His presence" (v. 14).

We humans are in need of times to "feel awe in His presence." God has "planted eternity into man's mind" (v. 11). The expression and fulfillment of this innate eternity and feeling of awe at His presence may be done, it is widely

believed, by watching the stars some night, or by communing with nature at a lake or in the woods. But these "religious" feelings are at best vague and undefined, they may be only subjective feelings of self-satisfaction, temporary elevations of the human spirit. At worst, they may be euphoric spiritual delusions. But in the center of the human being is the heart, the inner shrine, where God Himself wishes to dwell, the place of the mystical union of the divine and human. How and under what circumstances can one fulfill the deepest desires here?

The unanimous teaching of the Fathers of our Church is that the door to the heart is opened by self-denial and sacrifice, and the school of the art of self-denial and sacrifice is prayer—both corporate and personal. We believe, we strive to be good, we desire harmony, we hope for God's favor, but at the same time we reduce our prayers to a minimum and our worship in the Church to one hour. Do we not see the contradiction? The result is that our faith is weak, our goodness defective, our harmony discordant, and our hope in God uncertain. Beyond that, the door of our heart remains unopened.

Saint Paul advises the faithful in Thessalonica to "pray earnestly night and day," and to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 3:10, 5:17). Clement of Alexandria describes the serious Christian as one whose "whole life is prayer and converse with God." All teachers in the Church through the ages echo the same. The conclusions from this as applied to public worship would include the conviction that our services must be conducted in their integral fulness, and that the intervening time between them must

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Prayer, Time, and More Prayer

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be filled with prayers and praise, and a prayerful approach to all our earthly requirements and duties. The transfiguration of the world, which most people cannot see at all, but which all humans deeply desire, begins in the tiny yet infinite center of each human heart.

Public worship in the Orthodox Church has always been centered in the Eucharist which is surrounded by the daily cycle of Vespers, Matins, and the Hours. Served in their completeness, these services are entirely fulfilling. Is it not amazing then that Orthodox faithful, having access to such fulfillment, in traditional Orthodox cultures regularly and often requested services beyond those? Services of prayer specifically for the living and the departed, *Moliebens* (or the *Artoclasia* in the Greek Churches) and *Panikhidas* (the Trisagion Service), were served frequently, almost daily. These services crystallize the outpourings of our love for our families, neighbors, friends, people in need, even our enemies. On second thought, this is *not* amazing, but perfectly logical and natural: having been so fulfilled by God's merciful lovingkindness, we have a further desire to help extend these gifts to the whole world and beyond to the next world. What would be truly amazing would be for Orthodox people *not* to do this, to neglect the specific needs and concerns of our loved ones, living and dead. Alas, in our present day among some of our people and parishes, these services are falling into neglect. Strangely, the services for the living are more neglected than those for the departed, prompting a certain priest to comment to his parishioners: "Perhaps if we had more requests for *Moliebens*, we wouldn't need to serve so many *Panikhidas*!"

Apparently and sadly, however, there is a noticeable decline in requests for these services in the United States, as compared with Orthodox Churches abroad, with the possible exception of Alaska. One is drawn to conclude that in the minds of the faithful in this country the special services for the living and the departed are now considered of little importance.

Clearly, the remembrance of our departed loved ones is a necessary and integral part of a complete Christian life.

The service for this is called *Panikhida* which means "all night service," and is derived from the Matins of the full All Night Vigil appointed for the days of remembrance at specific times throughout the church year. The term *Parastasis*, meaning "intercession," is also used to refer to this memorial service. Everyone surely understands the need and propriety of praying for one another while alive in this world. Prayers for our loved ones certainly must not cease when they depart this life, for in Christ there are no dead. The souls of the departed live on, awaiting the resur-

rection on the last day when the body will be reunited with the soul. And the presence of our loved ones can surely be felt by those remaining on earth if they are attuned to such a presence. Especially in the memorial services can that be felt as the prayers manifest and evoke a living, unbroken unity of love. It is this very certainty of our departed loved ones' ongoing life that transforms our tears of sorrow into tears of joy, just as our Lord transformed the tears of the Myrrhbearers at the dawn of the New Pascha.

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Services for the living are called by various names: Thanksgiving Services, *Moliebens*, Services of Prayer and Intercession, Services for various needs, Services of Blessing, and so on. It is surely strange in view of the great variety of these and their appropriateness for all sorts of human needs and intentions, that they are not requested more often. Consider for a moment only the theme of "thanksgiving." How many blessings and mercies our loving Heavenly Father grants to us daily, hourly, moment by moment! One could justly give thanks at all times, whatever joys and sorrows

lovingkindness.

We do well in our personal rule of prayer to address all our needs and concerns to God. But there is an especially great power in the combining of prayer in the House of God in a formal *Molieben* addressed to a specific intention. Our Father in Heaven knows what we need as well as what is in our mind and heart. But it is right and certainly necessary to express these things openly and to unite with others in prayer as our Lord specifically instructed us: "I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done by my Father in Heaven" (Matt. 18:19). A truly amazing promise! And immediately after that, our Lord tells us, "For where two or three are gathered in My Name, there am I in the midst of them" (v. 20).

Beyond the human need for prayers for the living and the departed, God bestows on us a further gift when we pray with others, a gift which we do not deserve and for which we may not even have asked: His gracious and ineffable mystical Presence.

—Archpriest Theodore Heckman

Let Us Pray For One Another

All over the world, at this moment, within every religion, there are people praying. Prayer is a natural human instinct, taught to us by our parents, who in turn were taught by their parents. We need only look to our personal family life experiences either at home or in church to understand the meaning and value of prayer. There are volumes written on the definition of prayer, the meaning of prayer, the importance of prayer, and the role of prayer in our life, so that I will not devote time to these aspects of prayer. The aspect of prayer which I feel is of great concern in the Church today, is that we are *not spending enough time in prayer*. In the thirty years of my priesthood I have found this to be true for both personal and communal prayer.

The model we have for our prayer life is found in two passages in the Gospel of St. Matthew. The first, shown in the Sermon on the Mount, teaches us about personal, private prayer. Our Lord taught the multitudes to “pray in secret” (Matthew 6:5ff). He teaches us that our prayer is to be humble, personal, intimate with Him, and sincere. For the Jew, prayer was an integral part of one’s life. There was hardly an event in life that did not have a prayer formula. There was prayer before and after meals; there were prayers in connection with the day, the night, the sun, the moon, the stars, the rain, the drought, the planting of seed, the harvest of food, on hearing good or bad news, when traveling by water or by land: everything had its prayer. It was intended that every happening in life should be brought before the presence of God.

Life and prayer are so interwoven that unless they are integrated, prayer has a tendency to become unreal, and life unsatisfying. Should the gap between life and prayer be so wide, both will suffer. An illustration of this integration is found in the service of Holy Thursday in ca-

There is nothing more powerful than prayer, and there is nothing to be compared with it.

-St. John Chrysostom

thedral churches when the Bishop washes the feet of his priests, imitating the example of life and prayer seen in John 13:1-17. This is the Gospel account of Jesus washing the disciples’ feet. This was the last night that Jesus was to spend with His friends before His death. The Cross and death were imminent and yet, Jesus, with complete trust in His father and love for His brethren, knelt before them one by one and began to wash their feet. When He had finished He sat down and with love, said, *If I, then, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet*. What a powerful example of love and humility! In this act is both life and prayer, in His service to the disciples and in the act of complete giving of Himself. Jesus tells us simply: this is how we ought to live. By His service He has given us an example of love in action which everyone can follow.

How do we begin to follow it? It begins with ourselves. We are all members of the Body of Christ, as no one person is an Orthodox Christian all by himself. Even in the quietness of one’s room, an Orthodox Christian prays as a member of the Church community. The most useful thing a Christian can do is to LIVE his Orthodoxy in life. The world is so busy and our daily lives are so hectic that it is possible for people who have no faith to flounder and find their lives empty and void even though the world offers so many things to fill that emptiness. But Christians live in another order, one that is not empty. The habits of prayer and

communal worship enable us to live in an orderly manner. People are able to accomplish much more with their lives because they are not concerned about themselves, or about what others think of them. They are concerned about Jesus Christ and what God thinks of their life. There is such a need in today’s society for a Christian style of life, and it need not be created by a parish or a few individuals in the parish. It already exists in the worship of the Orthodox Church.

With her abundance of liturgical services, offered for our benefit, there seem very few reasons why these services are not being celebrated in our parishes. How can we expect parishioners to LIVE Orthodox Christian lives if the parish is not providing the example by celebrating her beautiful and meaningful services? For the Orthodox Christian, the main thing is to lead a balanced life under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Personal prayer is complemented by communal prayer, which, in turn, helps to integrate life and prayer. His Eminence alluded to this important point in his archpastoral letter proclaiming 1977 a **Year of Renewed Devotion**, when he wrote, “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.” This brings us to the second example of prayer.

In the same Gospel of Matthew, our Lord gives us the second model of prayer, stressing the strength of a joint and corporate prayer: *Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them* (Matthew 18:19-20). God is with us in our prayer. Our personal prayer embraces all the needs and sorrows of the whole community. Our per-

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Let Us Pray For One Another

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sonal prayer is not to be selfish, for selfish prayer will not find an answer. We are not meant to pray solely for our needs, thinking of nothing and no one but ourselves; rather, it is our personal obligation, the personal responsibility of everyone, to pray as members of the Body of Christ for one another.

When prayer is unselfish, it is answered. It is important to bear in mind that in prayer we receive, not the answer which we desire, but the answer that God in His wisdom and His love knows to be best. With our human fears, hopes, desires, we turn to prayer in order to be relieved of some trial, some sorrow, some disappointment, some hurting and painful situation. God's answer is not usually to offer us relief, but to give us the strength to face our fears, hopes, desires, trials, sorrows, disappointments, painful situations. He does not always give us relief from these human situations, but rather He enables us to endure what we cannot understand.

To illustrate this point, let us refer to Matthew 26:36-39, Jesus's prayers in the garden of Gethsemane. Jesus came with his disciples to Gethsemane and said to them, *Sit here while I go and pray over there.* As He began to be sorrowful and distressed, He took with Him several of the disciples to stand watch with him. And He prayed further, *O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.* Jesus prayed to be released from the dread situation which confronted Him; He was not relieved of it, but rather, He was given power to meet it, to endure it, and to conquer it. In like manner, when we pray unselfishly, God sends us an answer — it is HIS ANSWER and not necessarily OURS.

Jesus promised that He would be in the midst of any small group that comes together in His name. He is just as much present in the small-town parish as He is in the large city parishes; He is just as much present at the Vespers, Matins, Molieben, Parastasis, Akathist, or any prayer service, as He is when the parish faithful gather for the Divine Liturgy. He is even present at the parish Bible study class, the adult education class, the la-

dies' society meeting, the "O" club meetings, and the parish council meeting, as He is also in the crowded surroundings of a parish festival or other social event. Jesus Christ does not work solely on numbers. He is there wherever faithful hearts gather, however few they may be, for He gives all of Himself to each individual believer.

How are these two models of prayer connected? Father George Mastrantonis writes, "Personal prayer is an initiation into the mystery of the Church. This mystery is revealed and disclosed in the corporate and sacramental worship of the Church." For the Orthodox Christian they find their connection in the Eucharist. Within the Divine Liturgy the whole life of our Lord unfolds, from Bethlehem to the Mount of Olives and Calvary, including His Resurrection and Ascension and His Second Coming which we anticipate. It is in the Divine Liturgy, the "common action" or "common service" of the Church, that we see the awesome love of God in the presence of the Eucharist. Not only do we invoke God's blessing upon the bread and wine to sanctify them, but also to change them. Christ is present in this Holy Mystery as He gives to us, His members, His precious Body and Blood for eternal life. Through this Mystery is effected the reconciling sacrifice of God for the sins of the entire community of faithful, the living as well as the departed. For the Orthodox Christian, participating in the Eucharist is nothing less than taking Jesus Christ into oneself, receiving the Lord into one's life.

Whenever the Church gathers together for prayer she performs the Liturgy, the common action of the community. During the course of her divine services we hear a series of prayerful supplications, commonly referred to as "litanies" or "petitions." We offer petitions in charity for others, for prosperity and salvation, not only for the Church and for the rulers of their nation and those in danger and trouble and adversity, but for all mankind. They include: the Great Litany, or Litany of Peace; the Little Litany, a shortened form of the Great Litany; the Augmented Litany; the Litany of Fervent Supplication, used within the context of a morning or

evening service; and the Litany for the Departed, entreating the Lord to grant rest in the heavenly Kingdom to the souls of the departed by forgiving all their sins.

When the priest begins the litanies, he exhorts the faithful to prayer. By virtue of his priestly office, he stands in front of the faithful as their representative and mediator. At the same time that he is making the supplications, the faithful in the congregation contribute all they can, by their prayers, gentleness, love, and anything else they know to be pleasing to God, especially peace.

We must strive for the peace which is possible among men, and then ask God for His peace, as is necessary for the perfection of each virtue. We are to be at peace with ourselves in order that we not be condemned by our own hearts. One who is not at peace cannot pray properly and cannot expect anything good to come from his prayer. While the priest prays for so many different needs and requests, the faithful ask for one thing only — *mercy*. The response by the faithful to the litany is "Lord, have *mercy!*" In asking Christ for his mercy, we are asking that we may obtain a place in his Kingdom.

The prayers of the Church, especially all Eucharistic prayers, are composed in the plural. The priest celebrates not in his own name, but in the name of the faithful. In the name of the whole Church the priest prays: *We*. The meaning of *We* expresses the unity of the assembled Church, the undivided Church of all those who gather to pray. The Church, as established by Christ, is the model of our earthly existence. She is unselfish and exists for all; she is opposed to all selfishness and individualism.

What are we to do?

• As Orthodox Christians we are called to love all mankind and the whole world, the world for which Christ died. When reading the newspaper and watching television news, we see how the world over there is the problem not only of physical hunger, civil unrest, and the threat of famine, there is the problem of a lack of love and of a spirit of love. All over the world, men, women, and children are famished for love, hungering to be understood, to be welcomed, and to the loved.

• As Orthodox Christians we are called to open our hearts to the whole world and to face the reality of human suffering and distress. That there is hunger, sickness, crime, the homeless, the abused is a fact of our everyday existence which confronts each of us with a personal challenge. Just a few weeks ago we heard the Gospel of the Last Judgment, read on the third pre-Lenten Sunday. This is one of the most vivid parables that Jesus ever spoke, and the lesson is very clear. God will judge us in accordance with our reaction to human need. When the whole of mankind stands before the Son of Man on the throne of His glory, there will be no distinction of persons. God's judgment does not depend on the knowledge we have acquired or on the fortune we have gained, but all the help that we have given. That help is based on love.

When we read or reread the Gospels, we notice how much time Jesus gave to individuals in need, out of His love. Our efforts to help others must be inspired and sustained by His love and by the knowledge that *inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me* (Matt. 25:40).

Life and prayer become integrated when prayer results in service and when service leads us to prayer. In prayer we gain a new insight into our calling as Orthodox Christians. What a great feeling it is to know that when we pray we are not alone in our prayer. We are part of the universal Orthodox Church who come together as members of the Body of Christ, as the "royal priesthood," out of our love for Jesus Christ, our great High Priest.

We need to come together more often as parish communities to pray. *We are not spending enough time in prayer!* Once a week at the Divine Liturgy is not enough. Our faithful need to be reacquainted with the liturgical worship of the Church, with the celebration of the fullest complement of services in our parishes. A parish priest cannot use poor attendance or the lack of attendance as an excuse not to celebrate a service. It is his priestly responsibility to raise the awareness of the faithful to the beautiful prayer life within the Orthodox Church. Celebrating a service affords the people the opportunity to come and pray. When

the service is not offered, our faithful are denied this wonderful opportunity for communal prayer. We have experienced too much of the latter in our parishes in America, and the result has been a slow spiritual death in many parishes, leading to a decline in personal prayer.



Personal prayer is absent in many households, leading to disruptive or dysfunctional family situations. The same circumstance develops in the parish family when communal prayer is absent. It need not continue. To add services to the weekly cycle so that the faithful may attend requires the effort of the parish priest, supported by his parish family. It may mean scheduling services at various times to accommodate the needs of the parishioners. I offer the following examples where parish priests provide additional services that have led to a rise in the spiritual growth of the parish while promoting the spiritual growth of the parishioners:

A) celebration of daily Matins before parishioners go to work;

B) celebration of daily Vespers at an hour when most parishioners are home from work;

C) celebration of Divine Liturgy on a weekday morning, when there is not a celebration of a major feastday. The time is early in the morning, to allow people to attend and commune before going to work;

D) a weekly or monthly celebration of an Akathist to the patron saint of the

parish or to one of the Saints of America;

E) scheduling a Lenten Akathist at mid-afternoon on the Fridays of Great Lent to allow the elderly and those unable to drive a chance to attend. The Akathist would be repeated in the evening for those able to come after

work.

F) Establishing several times throughout the week for the faithful to come to confession.

G) Bible study classes during the morning or afternoon hours in addition to class sessions in the evening.

This is by no means a complete list, but it does provide some ideas for implementation in our parishes. We may never see full parish participation at the services, and that is all right. Numbers are not always important for the Lord. What is important is that we provide the opportunity for even two or three faithful to come together in prayer.

His Eminence called upon each of his spiritual children, including parish priests, to make this 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." We have reached the first quarter of this **Year of Renewed Devotion**. Have we responded to the call?

—Archpriest Eugene Vansuch



Youth Choirs

**Singing—
A Joyful Way
to Christian
Adulthood**

Blessing homes in Harrisburg

We continually hear it said that the future of the Church is our children. The future of our choirs, our nation, our generation, and so many other aspects of life on this earth is our children and our grandchildren.

The emphasis in this essay is on the singing of our children and our young people as members of the Body of Christ. Practical suggestions and proven examples will be presented with a little criticism which should motivate a needed discussion.

At the table before meals at home, whenever the family comes together, even if the child or children are less than a year old, we should pray, singing Our Father, and the Resurrection and Nativity troparia when appropriate for the liturgical cycle. Make sure the children see and hear their parents, grandparents, and relatives, sing as a unit.

Obtain and play the CDs and audio-cassette tapes of church choirs we have for sale in our Orthodox bookstores—have some of them on hand. But play them often, not only at home, but in the car sometimes, instead of listening to other music and non-church music. Our children need to hear continually the music of the church—in pure Byzantine style, in one- or two-part harmony, or in

the majestic multi-part choral music of the Russian Orthodox Church. The language used is not important: the emphasis should be on listening to church music, to prepare our little ones for things ahead musically in the Church.

At Saturday evening Vespers and during the Sunday Divine Liturgy, parents should quietly sing with their children the responses: Lord, have mercy; Grant it, O Lord; and Amen, while the choir is singing.

To give our children further encouragement to sing in church, our parishes should return to the practice of singing by the assembly, the so-called congregational singing, at least for portions of the services. The problem here is that our choir directors and established singers are reluctant to relinquish their total involvement with the choir. They feel, whether they realize it or not, that their status or singing authority is being threatened. How can we encourage the singing by the assembly?

Here is what we do at Christ the Saviour in Harrisburg: On the seating places, chairs and pews and benches, copies of the Sunday troparia, kondakia, and other hymns of the day, with the music notes for the four parts, are placed in advance, after Vespers. Two or three persons share

the music. When the time comes for the hymns to be sung, the priest or deacon faces the assembly, waits for the choir to start, and by motioning with his hands and arms pleads with everyone to join in. The Creed, our Symbol of Faith, should also be sung by everyone. It is thrilling to hear over two hundred people and the children singing in four-part harmony when they know the words and music after many years of “practicing.” So what if someone is out of tune, can’t sing, and the children don’t know the music perfectly?

During the communion of the clergy, when the Gifts are being prepared in the altar, three or four young singers from the choir distribute more music sheets to all in church who again follow the lead of the choir. Some of the selections we use are: A New Commandment; Having Beheld the Resurrection; Hail, O Virgin, Theotokos; and Praise the Lord From the Heavens, with verses chanted in rotation by the choir members.

Everyone should be encouraged to sing joining with the choir and singing Many Years by the clergy after it is intoned.

An important point again has to be stressed. The children need to see us all sing! The stress is on the word “see.”

How do we get the young children to sing in the choir, the “big” choir? Children and students, fourteen years of age and younger, even three- and four-year-olds, can learn and rehearse an easy Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, in five minutes before the Divine Liturgy begins. After the troparia are sung by everyone in church, all the children—it is so nice to see some twenty little children in the center of the church with an adult leader!—hurry together to form a group, holding their own music sheets, even though some of them can’t read the music or are unable to read the words.

This also can be done for the responses to the litanies before the Cherubic Hymn, and for the responses before Our Father. Sometimes the children’s choir sings the responses before and after the Gospel reading beginning with Alleluia after the Epistle Lesson.

If there are special talented singers, twelve or fourteen years of age, they should be allowed to sing in the “big” choir, at the discretion of the choir director. One choir settled a dispute of when and where the children should be by having a “children’s section” just for the youth, complete with lower music stands and their own set of music books.

The other side of this arrangement is that children must sing quietly; they must not throw off the “big” choir. They should be part of a brief rehearsal when the people are venerating the cross after the Divine Liturgy.

If the choir is large, say fifty to seventy-five singers, the presence of many children shouldn’t be much of a problem. In any case, the young children should be welcomed openly. The experienced, seasoned long-term choir members should smile at the children approvingly, talk with them before and after the services, and help them, always remembering that the youngsters must take over completely one day and they won’t be potential members if we don’t encourage them now. We have to face the reality of the future!

To audition a child or student for a youth choir successfully, have him or her sing “Happy Birthday” as loud as possible individually. The singing will give the director a good idea of what the child can and cannot do. One matushka re-

minded her little singers one Sunday in church to sing loudly like Happy Birthday. When the children began singing the hymn, one of them loudly sang Happy Birthday by mistake and nearly ruined the rendition of the hymn. So please don’t remind the little singers to sing like Happy Birthday in church!

For the annual pan-Orthodox Sunday of Orthodoxy observance, the Orthodox Council of Churches of South Central Pennsylvania has a 25-voice youth choir of boys and girls who sing in two-part harmony before and after the Vespers with the 60-voice a cappella mixed choir. They sing A New Commandment, Praise the Lord From the Heavens, and verses from the Beatitudes antiphonally (this is

ioners who welcome them into their homes, are beyond expectation. In Harrisburg, we have five or six teams of “blessing homes kids.” Their parents sometimes come along, too. And it’s lots of fun. On Sunday evenings when the blessing of homes is completed for the day, the team goes to a fast-food restaurant where we stand and pray together at a table in a corner singing quietly and thanking God for His blessings.

On the third day after the Nativity of Christ, Christmas, from 6 p.m. till about 9:30 p.m. in Harrisburg (there is no school the next day) choir members and parishioners with their children visit a hospital or a nursing home and homes of shut-ins to sing carols, the *kolyady*,



Children singing in Harrisburg

used as the processional number). The youth choir, consisting of eight- to twelve-year-olds, are seated up front by the iconostasis, and sing standing, being led by an adult choir director.

Another way to encourage our young people to sing in church and in choirs is to take along three or four of them, boys and girls, when blessing homes during the Theophany season. Yes, it is a little inconvenient for the priest and it slows down the schedule set up for the visits. But the blessings received, the joy of the children’s involvement, their enthusiasm, the overt satisfaction of the parish-

and the Nativity troparion. We should not surrender this fine custom to the secular world with its TVs and computers tempting us all the time.

We hope and pray that all these examples and suggestions will encourage our children and young people to sing in church and in our choirs.

“... Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them; for such is the kingdom of heaven’” (Matthew 19:14).

—Archpriest Daniel Ressetar

Triumph of Orthodoxy, Yesterday and Today



Bishop Tikhon, later to become the first Patriarch of Moscow in the new era, preached this Homily in San Francisco's Holy Trinity Cathedral only several months after his arrival on this continent, on March 7, 1899. In this brief, yet inspired message, St. Tikhon, himself one of North America's great Orthodox missionaries and a Confessor of Orthodoxy glorified by the Church, explains the Orthodox understanding of "mission" and outlines the goals of the Orthodox Church in spreading the Goods News of Christ. Alive in Christ is pleased to publish the English translation of St. Tikhon's homily, which originally appeared in Russian in the American Orthodox Herald (VII, 1899, pp. 186-192), in honor of the 200th anniversary of the birth of St. Innocent Veniaminov, Metropolitan of Moscow, Enlightener of the Aleuts and Apostle to America.

The first Sunday of Great Lent is called the Sunday of Orthodoxy; it is called thus because this is the day of the "triumph of Orthodoxy"; on this day, a special "Office of Orthodoxy" is served in all cathedral churches. This Office was first instituted in the mid-ninth century, in commemoration of the victory of the Orthodox Church over heresies, especially the heresy of iconoclasm, which at that time confounded many in God's Church.

But the Orthodox Church, my brethren, has reason not only to commemorate the triumph of Orthodoxy in past

times, but also to savor the triumph of Orthodoxy in our own time and to celebrate it.

Indeed, should we not rejoice and thank the Lord that He, the Merciful One, watches over His Church and keeps her unharmed and invulnerable against her foes even until this day? For it was not only

in the first centuries that the Church of Christ endured various afflictions and suffered persecutions; just as it was not only in the time of the Ecumenical Councils that false teachers, who disputed in their own minds against the mind of God, assailed her. No. From the first days to the end of the age the Church on earth was and is militant. To the end of the age she can be likened to a ship with passengers sailing upon a raging and tempestuous sea, which in a minute is prepared to wash the passengers off the ship, even to sink the ship itself in its waves. And it seems that the farther the

ship sails, the stronger the waves that beat down on it, attacking it ever more viciously.

In the beginning, external persecutions from pagans beset Christians. But when the Church triumphed over them, an even greater peril manifested itself, this time from the other side: persecutions from pagans stop, but *woes from kinfolk, woes from false brethren* arise in their stead, internal attacks begin to manifest themselves. In the bosom of Christianity itself heresies and schisms begin to appear one after another. Of course, the truth of God conquered human lies; but members of the Church did not yet have the opportunity to lay down their victorious arms. This time they are called to do battle not with the ancient heretics, but with new enemies: with the unbelievers, with various naysayers and spurious representatives of almighty science. And it cannot be said that this struggle diminishes as time goes by: as soon as the Church is successful in vanquishing one foe, another has appeared.

Evil appears as a many-headed hydra, on which a new head appears as soon as one has been severed. In the end times, finally, evil will exert all its strength and in the person of the Antichrist will engage in a ruthless conflict with God's Church, and for the Church there shall be such a tribulation as there never was from the beginning of the world (Matt. 24:31). Even in past times we have seen how some flowering and once-glorious local churches have become impoverished and barren — in the end times there will be even more of a falling away. But there was never a time, and in accordance with the word of Christ, we believe that there will never be such a time, when the entire universal Church of Christ will have disappeared from the face of the earth. No: *the foundation of God stands firmly* (2 Tim. 2,19); the Church of Christ is founded on the unmovable rock, and *the gates of hell shall not overcome her* (Matt. 16:18). The more fiercely the waves beat against this unassailable immovable cliff, the further do they fall back. Sometimes it seems as though the enemies of the Church of Christ are ready to rejoice in their victory over the Church; to them it seems as though they are finally rid of her. And what of it?

Even as towering waves, once they have crashed against the ship, yet again blend in with the sea, and one can neither see them not distinguish them from other waves, so also the enemies of Christ, once having risen up against God's Church, again return to the void from whence they sprang up, while the ship of the Church continues, as before, on its victorious voyage. Every year that passes establishes beyond doubt that *the truth of the Lord endures forever*, and that *the gates of hell shall not overcome* the Church of Christ.

And so, after all this is said, how can we, the members of the Orthodox Church, not exult, and not thank God for victory over our foes? How can we refrain from rejoicing when we see that the

ing point; that life in her has clotted and she has become a dead church; at the very least, they say, she does not manifest the most important feature of life, that is to say, a missionary spirit.

It may, indeed, be true that the life of the Orthodox Church does not call attention to itself and does not sparkle with various bright colors in the same way as, perhaps, the life of other ecclesiastical communities, where there may be more outward noise and polish, but less of the concealed gifts of God's Spirit. Specifically, it is true that we do not have broadly organized missionary institutions, such as various "congregations" for "the propagation of the faith" among the non-Orthodox; and that we do not use as many material resources as they do.

Every year that passes establishes beyond doubt that *the truth of the Lord endures forever*, and that *the gates of hell shall not overcome* the Church of Christ.

Church of Christ is not a kingdom of this world, that she does not draw us to herself by worldly means and earthly enticements; that a kingdom degraded, persecuted and powerless not only did not perish in the world, but, instead, has grown and conquered the world? How can we refrain from celebrating at the thought that despite all violence, attacks, and antagonism, the Orthodox Church has preserved the faith of Christ as a priceless treasure, in its pristine purity, in such a manner of wholeness and immutability that our faith is, indeed, *the faith of the Apostles, the faith of the fathers, the Orthodox faith*?

That the Orthodox Church has preserved in the fullness of its purity and incorruptibility the original teaching is recognized by many, even from among those who do not belong to the Church. But they just add to this that the Orthodox Church, as it were, does nothing to reveal her image as the bearer of the truth, that she draws no one to herself, does not grow and does not succeed on earth; that, undertaking to preserve the pristine teaching, she has withdrawn into herself, shut herself off from everything else, and positioned herself at the free-

But the Orthodox Church does, nonetheless, remember the commandment of Christ about proclaiming the message of the Gospel, and is not at all lacking in missionary spirit. It is, rather, that her missionary activities have a different character.

In spreading Christianity, the Orthodox Church does not have the practice of building on someone else's foundation, of establishing Christianity where it already has been proclaimed, whereas other Christian communities often reap where others have sown first, and are not averse to seizing, for money or by intimidation, "sheep from other sheepfolds" into their own shelters. The Orthodox Church also shies away from certain practices that are permitted by heterodox missionaries: she does not adopt illicit methods in seeking converts to Orthodoxy, she does not enter into compromises with superstitions and human passions, she does not distort the purity of evangelical truth for the purpose of obtaining more adherents for herself, for she considers not only the quantity of believers to be important, but also their quality. But most importantly,

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St. Tikhon's Sermon

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the Orthodox Church accomplishes her task in silence, with humility and godliness, with an understanding of human frailty and Divine power.

Non-Orthodox missionaries very often are not averse to calling attention to themselves and trumpeting their accomplishments; their labors are painstakingly written down, in order that the whole world might later know of their deeds and glorify them; this is why there is much talk surrounding them. Orthodox emissaries, on the other hand, act differently: they go to their holy task not in order that through it they might obtain glory among men, but in order that they themselves may reap mercy from God, as well as salvation for others. They do not trumpet of their success before the whole world, and, indeed, do not ascribe success to themselves, but to the power of God. This is what our great missionary, Metropolitan Innocent, for example, says of himself: "How can I, in good conscience, ascribe to my own merits or even consider as a special feat that fact that I went to America? Can I really properly call mine anything at all that was good or useful in what was accomplished either through me or by my presence in those places where I served? Of course not: or at least, I shouldn't. God knows

how painful it is for me to read about or hear myself praised, especially when something that was done by someone else, or, at the very least, not by myself alone, is ascribed only to me. If this were at all possible, I confess that I would prefer that my name not even be mentioned, except in passing, as in regular listings or remembrances." Such humility is also the distinguishing characteristic of other Orthodox missionaries. There is in their activities nothing that is artificial, that is done for pose or effect. It is for this reason, perhaps, that our missionaries are not well known; but this in no way diminishes the greatness of their feats, which may serve as a befitting *spectacle for angels and men.*

Let us take the history of our North American mission as an example. This history can recount such feats as are capable of truly astounding us by their heroic valor, all the more so because the missionary heroes did not ascribe any significance to their own labors, seeing in them only a humble fulfillment of their sacred task. Without the least bit of apprehension they travelled to the most distant and inhospitable lands, which even today, even after travel has become much improved, are daunting for most people; here they suffered all possible deprivations and misfortunes, in order that they might have the least opportunity to bring

to Christ people who do not know the law. Nothing holds them back from this: neither tribulation nor distress, nor persecution, nor sword, nor famine, nor peril, nor height nor depth, even as it is written, *for Your sake we are killed all day* (Rom. 8: 35, 36, 39). Indeed, killed: let us recall, for one, Hieromonk Juvenaly, one of the enlighteners of the Aleuts. And killed not only by men: let us recall the valiant leaders of the mission, Bishops Ioasaph and Nestor, who concluded their lives in the bottomless bowels of the ocean.

How can it be, then, that the Church which gives us such selfless missionaries, who went forth in the proclamation of Christ into the impassable wilderness and here lay down their life for the faith of Christ — how can it be that such a Church may be faulted for being lifeless, inactive, not having a missionary spirit, not concerning itself with the proclamation of the Gospel? Let us therefore, my brethren, thank the Lord our Benefactor, and do whatsoever is demanded on our part for preserving the holy Orthodox faith and spreading it amongst those who yet do not know the law of the Lord.

—translated by
Archpriest Alexander Golubov,
Academic Dean,
St. Tikhon's Seminary

**Women's Retreat
at
St. Tikhon's
Monastery
August 9, 1997**

**First Annual
Men's Retreat
at
St. Tikhon's
Monastery
August 16, 1997**



Archbishop Herman Welcomes Bishop Abel from Poland

St. Tikhon's Orthodox Seminary Century Association Maslenitsa Winter Festival

Once again, the Century Association has had another truly fantastic Winter Festival. First class all the way! A five star event! This was the first party where I had so much fun I felt intoxicated but never had a drink! Such accolades for putting the *fun* in our fund-raiser go to our program chairman, the Very Rev. John Perich and Arrangements Chairwoman Mrs. Florence M. Boyko.

The two-day festival was held at the historic Radisson Hotel Lackawanna Station in Scranton, Pennsylvania and began on Saturday, February 15, 1997 with a Russian Collectible and Antiquities Bazaar featuring Father John's Collectibles from Around the World, as seen on the television shopping channel QVC. The foyer of the Grand Banquet room was turned into an exotic international bazaar. The display of exquisite Russian antiques, magnificent black lacquer boxes, beautiful dolls, crystal, eggs, and other collectibles was a sight to behold. The hotel's excellent catering department for our shoppers' pleasure featured an ethnic à la carte menu for lunch.

The highlight of this festival was on Sunday, February 16, when our Maslenitsa, a grand ball and banquet fit for the crowning of our Prince and Princess, was held. Doors to the elegantly decorated Grand Banquet room opened at 3:00 p.m. at which time attendees were able to feast at a fantastic Zakuski or appetizer buffet.

Our procession, led by His Eminence, Archbishop Herman, began promptly at 4 o'clock p.m. Archbishop Herman blessed our food and Our Father was sung. The National Anthem was beautifully sung by all attending. The banquet was a delicious gourmet meal featuring ethnic dishes to please the discerning palate.

Our master of ceremonies, Father

John, introduced our entertainment, which included Cossack Sam, a versatile accordionist, special appearances by Russian folk en-

Dr. Elizabeth Bonczar makes presentation to Archbishop Herman



tertainers, "Petroshka," Balalaika Russe Orchestra with singers and dancers who had recently appeared at the White House. A special added attraction were

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Maslenitsa Winter Festival

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the very mesmerizing Gypsy Violinists.

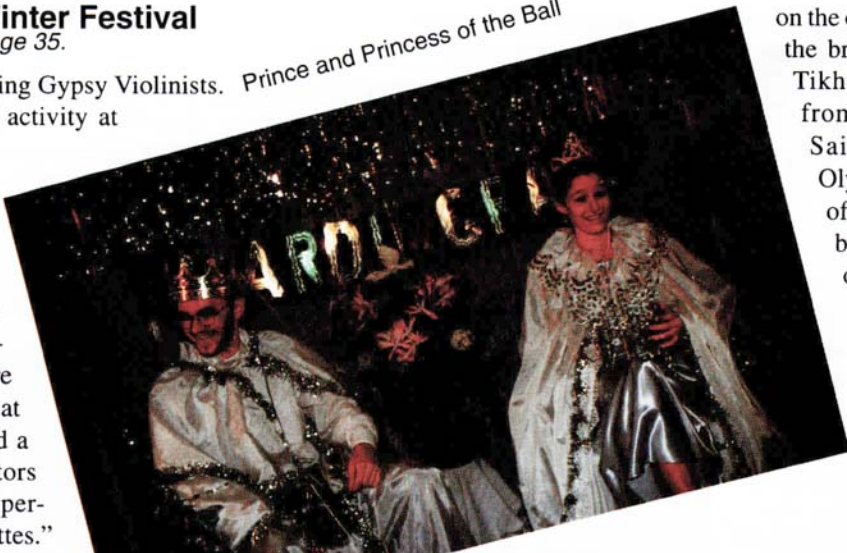
Prince and Princess of the Ball

A very special activity at this year's Maslenitsa was our Lemko Christening. Father John needed a few more actors for our skit. Additional actresses were chosen by winning at musical chairs, and a few additional actors were selected by performing as "rockettes." We must thank the stars of our skit, Ted Sovyrda, George Scochin, and David Brzuchalski, for being such good sports and we must add a special commendation to Sam Mattias for being our baby. Next year's birthday party should be very interesting.

Following the christening was our Coronation. The setting for our Coronation was a beautiful throne with a shimmering silver backdrop, winter white netting and pink and white roses displayed on a white trellis. The children attending helped make this a spectacular event by throwing streamers and confetti, waving flags, and blowing noise makers.

Last year's Prince Roman and Princess Daria crowned this year's lucky couple. The Princess this year was Taisia Perich, from Media, Pennsylvania and the Prince was Daniel Andrejuk, a seminarian from Poland. The Prince and Princess received their crowns and capes and marched around the dance floor and then were led to their thrones. All who attended could not help but cheer for our Prince and Princess of the Maslenitsa.

After our coronation, Archbishop Herman spoke a few words of encouragement to the Prince and Princess to continue to be good Orthodox Christians,



and expressed gratitude to all who planned and attended this wonderful event. Several presentations were made. Dr. Elizabeth S. Bonczar, President of the Century Association, on behalf of the Association members, presented His Eminence with checks for the Seminary totaling \$20,000. A beautiful crystal covered bowl was given to the Archbishop

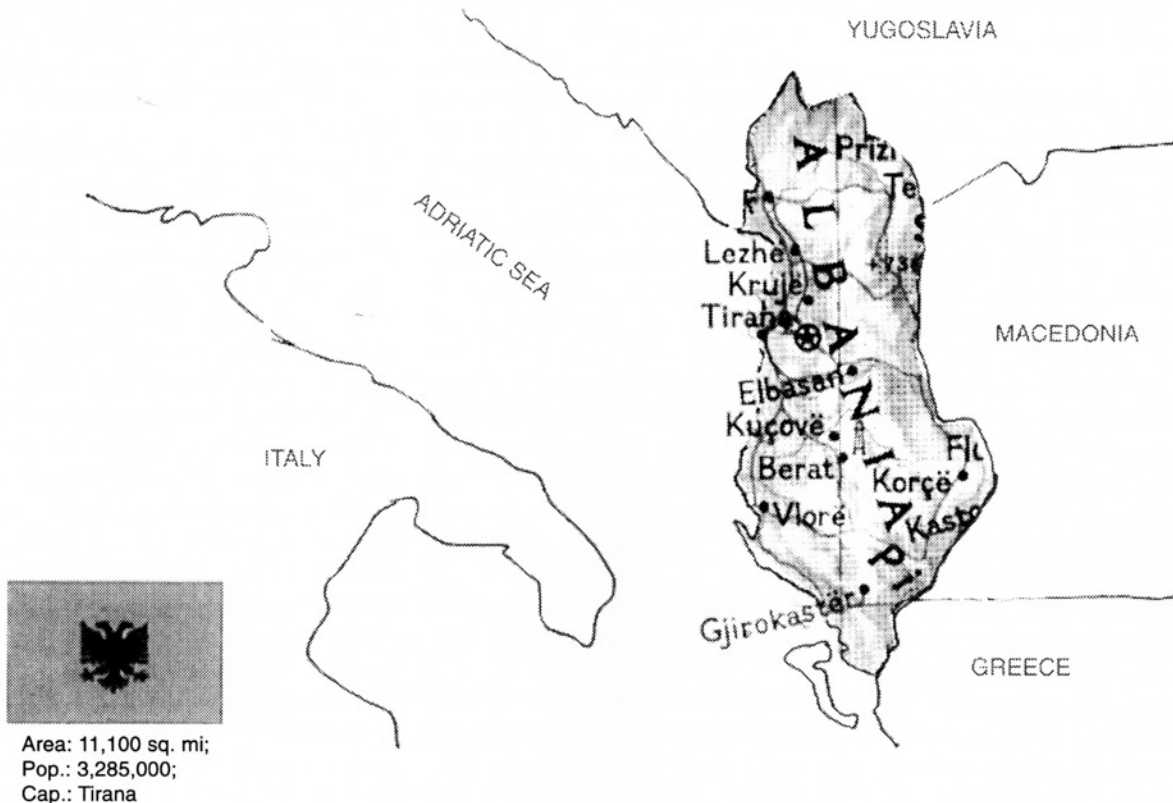
on the occasion of his birthday, and the brotherhood of monks at St. Tikhon's Monastery received from the parishioners of All Saints Orthodox Church, Olyphant, Pa., and the diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania two beautiful oil paintings, scenes of monks at work and prayer.

Our final event of the evening was our drawing. This raffle raised nearly \$3,000 to benefit the Seminary. The prizes were — once again — very generously donated by Father John. The first prize, a beautiful Franklin Mint crown ring, was won by Paul Laskovich; the second prize, a hand-painted samovar, was won by Darla Tasacione, and the third prize, a black lacquer box, was won by Andrew Dennis. Our raffle was followed by the banqueters dancing Russian folk dances, with the music provided by the wonderful Balalaika Russe Orchestra.

Our cochairs wish to extend a very special thank you to all of our sponsors and committee members whose efforts truly made this event special. To those whose attendance made this event a success, we say thank you, and state that plans for Maslenitsa IV, to be held on Sunday, February 15, 1998 at the historic Radisson Lackawanna Station, Scranton, Pa., are *under way!*

—Dr. Elizabeth Bonczar, President,
St. Tikhon's Seminary
Century Association

ALBANIA IN CRISIS



A perspective from a missionary priest of the Orthodox Church of Albania

Recent events in Albania can only be described as madness. It's as if the entire country has gone crazy. Senseless destruction. Meaningless deaths. Countless injuries. Overwhelming despair. And a continual fear and uncertainty for the future.

I recall words of wisdom Archbishop Anastasios, the head of the Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania, shared with me several times over the past three years. Whenever we experienced some frustrating difficulty or setback, he would say, "Remember, Albania was a country that Satan controlled for fifty years. Don't think that he is going to sit back and allow us to bring the light of Christ into this land without a

fight."

As our work progressed, however, I often forgot this wisdom. Unfortunately over the past month, the world has seen Satan's evil coming back with a force few could have imagined.

Recently, I visited the decrepit military hospital. Dirt lies everywhere. Plaster was falling from the walls; windows and doors were broken; flies buzzed around. Beds were rusty, mattresses had half the foam left in them. Medical attendants, doctors, nurses and visitors were smoking everywhere, even in the operating room.

The first person we met was Eda, a seven-year-old girl with a bullet in her stomach. Six days earlier she was play-

ing in the garden outside her home when a bullet that had been shot into the air landed in her body. The same day three other children in her neighborhood were killed. One of the children, a two-year-old girl, was sleeping inside her home when a bullet came through the window and went through her head.

As soon as we entered the hospital during a different visit, we heard the screaming of Bektashi, a twelve-year-old who was playing with a friend three days earlier. Unfortunately, they were playing with explosives, and one went off. Bektashi burned his entire side and arm. Forty other children were in the hospital with similar burns. In another room lay

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Albania in Crisis

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a boy with an amputated leg. A bullet had hit a main artery and the doctors had no other option but to cut off his leg. In fact, hundreds of injured people filled the hospital, most of them suffering for no logical reason at all.

And the physical suffering is only part of the picture. Kristina and her family, dear friends of ours, wonder every day what their future holds and how they will survive. Five months ago the entire family moved to Tirana from the northern city of Shkodra. Even though they sold their home, they did not have enough money to buy a new home in Tirana. So they decided to invest all their money, including money one son had saved as an immigrant worker in Greece, with one of the "promising" investment firms that were the talk of Albania. Kristina's family calculated that if they could receive the 100% return within four months as promised, they would have enough money to buy a simple two-room apartment. Instead, the company folded two months ago, and now Kristina and her family have no money, and no home. At the end of April, the rent they had previously paid is finished, and they will have nowhere to go.

People around the world are wondering what happened in Albania. International news has shown the violence and destruction of the past month, but for many people, it is the first time they have ever even heard about Albania. Following is a summary of the crisis that has engulfed Albania, and a description of the fear and despair which fill countless Albanians.

To understand the crisis in Albania, one must first realize from where Albania came. It is a country that very few people knew about or really cared about in the past. Following five hundred years of subjugation under the Ottoman Empire and a brief period of independence during the early part of the century, Albania endured forty-five years of the most oppressive communist regime in the world. This country lived in total isolation from the outside world. Over the past half-century, Albania broke ties with her former communist allies — first Yugoslavia, then the Soviet Union, then

China. Each time their leader, Enver Hoxha, claimed that his country's former allies betrayed the hard-line Marxist-Leninist path by becoming too liberal.

During this period of darkness, Albania became the first and only country in the world to ban totally all forms of religious expression. Before communism was introduced, 69% of Albanians came from a Muslim background, 21% were Orthodox, and 10% Roman Catholic. In 1967, the oppressive State publicly declared from her governmental platforms that all forms of religion ceased to exist. One example that shows the impact of such oppression was the destruction of the Orthodox Church. Most of the 1,604 churches and monasteries were destroyed, totally neglected and thereafter fell into disrepair, or were turned into sport halls, clubs, or storage depots. Between the early 1940 and the mid-'60s, the number of Orthodox clergymen in the country declined from 440 to 333. By 1990, when the country finally opened up, only 22 priests survived, all over the age of 70. Today, seven still live.

Things began to change with the fall of the communist government in 1990. Albania, the last of the European communist governments to collapse, opened up and discovered itself in the dark ages — politically, economically, and religiously. Over the next six years, the country began to take deliberate forward steps to bring itself back into the 20th century. With democratic elections, foreign investment entering the country, freedom of religion, and an opening up of society, Albania appeared to be on the right path.

Much of the progress, however, may be destroyed because of the present national tragedy. Seeds of the present crisis began clearly appearing during the questionable elections of May 1996. International observers all concurred that the national elections were filled with fraud and corruption. The results left many Albanians questioning the validity of the democratic process here. Then, the summer and fall witnessed a great increase in both a number of questionable investment companies, and the unusually large participation of Albanian families within such companies. These "pyramid" investment schemes promised

outrageous returns on investment. Some companies even promised 300% interest within a three or four month period. Although some of the bigger companies had operated in Albania for more than four years, their popularity increased mainly during the second half of 1996, when some experts estimate that as many as 80% of Albanian families invested in these schemes.

In December 1996 and January 1997, some of these companies collapsed and tens of thousands of Albanian families fell into a desperate economic situation. Many families lost their life savings. Some families had sold their homes in hope of investing the money and getting a greater return. Now they had no money, and not even a home in which to live. Many families lost all the money their children had saved as immigrants abroad.

My dear friend Jani has three sons who have worked in Athens for the past five years. They had saved \$40,000 with the sweat and blood only immigrants can understand, and invested it all in the firms. Now they have nothing.

Kristaq, a student from our seminary, had sold his 120 sheep and invested the money. Like many of his fellow villagers who acted in a similar manner, he now has nothing but his home and land.

A rise in suicides has occurred. A woman from Pogradec had invested all her family's money without the knowledge of her husband. When the investment company folded, she felt she couldn't tell her husband, and she stepped in front of an oncoming train.

The stories are countless.

Outsiders may be critical of these reckless investments, but the situation here shows many people motivated by a combination of desperation, hope and naiveté. People on pension received \$40 a month, which isn't enough to buy food and pay for electricity. Some of these people saw such investment firms as their only hope. They sold their homes and invested money in hope of simply having extra money to supplement their meager pension. Once they got their return, they would again buy a house. Others had moved from villages or smaller cities to Tirana in hopes of a better life. The money they received from selling their former homes wasn't enough to buy

a house in Tirana. So they invested the money, thinking that for six months they could live in crowded quarters with a relative, and then receive their return and buy a small home in Tirana. Now they are without money and homeless.

Whatever the story, the bottom line was that many people fell into despair and anger. People became furious at the government, who supported and publicized these investment firms. Many people remember what President Sali Berisha said six months earlier on national television: "This money [returns from the companies] is the cleanest money there is." The president was often seen on television with the presidents of the various investment firms. Many people felt that the government knew very well what type of firms these companies were and had a responsibility to warn the people of their risk. Instead, the country's leaders downplayed the risk and encouraged all Albanians to take part.

The consequence of such actions was to help create the present chaos engulfing Albania. Anarchy reigned. Chaos began in the southern city of Vlore, where citizens protested in the streets against the government. Students at the university began a hunger strike. When the secret police tried to stop the strikers and protesters, the citizens rose up in response. Breaking into army depots, they armed themselves and slowly took control of the entire south. In a matter of several days, the government lost control of the country. The army ceased to function; police left their posts. Most army depots throughout the country were opened and looted. Certain elements opened all the prisons and freed more than 1700 prisoners. Shops, food depots, factories, schools, and other institutions were looted and destroyed. The Agriculture University, with its library of 150 thousand books, was set on fire. People sold machine guns for as little as five dollars. Madness reigned.

In the capital of Tirana, we fortunately experienced the madness in its fullest form only briefly. For three en-

tire days, we heard continuous machine-gun fire day and night. The foreign embassies evacuated most of their citizens. My wife Faith, along with many of our co-workers and friends, were evacuated by U.S. Marine helicopters. Within the Orthodox Church, only a handful of expatriate workers remained. We chose to stay as a sign of our solidarity with our Albanian brothers and sisters, to minister to their spiritual needs during this uncertain time, and to begin preparing for the massive relief work that will be necessary when things calm down.

Although the three days of constant fear ceased, a different atmosphere of

A rise in suicides has occurred. A woman from Pogradec had invested all her family's money without the knowledge of her husband. When the investment company folded, she felt she couldn't tell her husband, and she stepped in front of an oncoming train.

apprehension and despair has gripped the city and country. While the majority of the country remains in anarchy, without police, and in constant fear of bandits, Tirana lives with the dread of the unknown. Life on the streets has slowly returned to an outward normalcy. Shops have reopened, but with inflated prices. People walk around during the day. Cars and the usual horse and carriages traverse the city streets. But an uneasiness and uncertainty remain. Schools remain closed, and a forced curfew from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. continues. Sporadic gunfire can be heard, especially at night. Children are seen playing with guns. One day I walked out of my own apartment and a neighborhood boy, 10 years old, offered me some of the hundreds of bullets he had.

Leaders continue to accept no blame,

instead choosing to place responsibility on invisible foes. Many Albanians express feelings of being in former communist times. Even on television they see the head of the secret police inform the parliament that foreign elements are the entire cause of all the problems facing the country.

Many people are filled with continual fear and despair. The general madness has shocked the people — the looting, the senseless destruction, the hundreds of meaningless deaths and thousands of injuries. People are questioning how all this could happen, and asking what has gotten into the hearts of its people. Many believe that certain forces created this atmosphere of anarchy — the Mafia, the 1700 freed criminals, the secret police — but no one can deny that common citizens also took part in the chaos.

The entire situation has reminded me of the evil that exists within all of us. Alexander Solzhenitsyn once wrote, "The line of good and evil does not run between countries or ethnicities, but it runs through the heart of every person." As I reflect on this country, how true that statement appears. Scenes here reminded me of what happened in Los Angeles back in 1992. We are all capable of such evil, and we must take care.

I believe the answer for Albania is not simply the change of a political system, but a radical change of people's hearts: a transformation that occurs in a sincere conversion in Christ. After seeing this chaos, we as the Church must recommit ourselves to focusing more on helping people encounter Christ in the depths of their hearts. That is the only change that can give us the power to overcome the evil within, and to have hope in the face of such oppressive despair.

Archbishop Anastasios offered several appeals to the nation throughout the crisis. His latest one, on March 15, called on all people to find that good within, and not to allow the evil to display itself in outward acts of senseless destruction and violence. He stated:

"During these tragic hours through

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Albania in Crisis

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which Albania is passing, indefinable and uncontrolled dark powers are released from even the hearts of common citizens. When the smallest opportunity is given, there are many who will mercilessly steal from whomever it may be, even their own neighbor. They do not hesitate to plunder hospitals, orphanages, schools, and religious institutions, injuring the sick, the elderly, and innocent children.

"Enough! This hysteria must stop. It is unheard of for someone to protest against an injustice that was done to him

by some in power, by doing injustice to others who are even more weak than he.

"Those who act in this way do not seem to believe in anything at all. Nevertheless, especially to those who pretend to belong to some religious community, let them responsibly hear this: As much as they may steal, they will not prosper. It is as if they invest in pyramid schemes. They are happy for a short time, but in the long run they will lose everything. No one can play with God's justice. . ."

In the end, God's justice will prevail. We Christians can be sure of that! His hope and His good news will overcome

the present chaos, just as it overcame the fifty years of atheistic darkness. It is appropriate that the great feast of Easter is soon approaching. Easter reminds the world of the eternal message of hope. After the cross comes the resurrection. Christ has risen and trampled down Satan and all his power and evil. In the end, His justice will prevail.

—Priest Luke Veronis

Fr. Luke, who grew up within the Annunciation Orthodox Church in Lancaster, Pa., has served since January 1994 as a missionary priest and teacher, together with his wife Faith, for the Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania.

International Appeal For Albania Relief Fund

The Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania, through its national ministry of "Diaconia Agapes" (Service of Love), struggles to assist the suffering people of Albania by having developed a wide social work and outreach. During the last five years, Diaconia Agapes has already distributed thousands of tons of food, clothing, and medicines. Expressing God's sacrificial love for all humanity, she has created the necessary structures for a continuous transmission of help to all Albanians irrespective of their race or religion.

These past weeks, using the network of parishes of the Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania, Diaconia Agapes cares for the collection and distribution of goods in a quick and correct way.

On behalf of the Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania, I appeal to the international community at large for humanitarian assistance and financial contributions towards the delivery of emergency relief aid in response to the present crisis in Albania which has affected all citizens in every city and village.

During this critical time friendly relations among human beings become consolidated. There now exists much pain, deprivation, and despair in Albania. Let us alleviate all this with gentle care, generous love and a sincere respect towards the dignity of the Albanian people.

Tirana, March 24, 1997

+Anastasios

Archbishop of Tirana and All Albania

*Those who would like to help Albania should make their tax-deductible checks payable to the "International Orthodox Christian Charities." In the notation area, please indicate **ALBANIA RELIEF FUND**. Mail checks to IOCC, 711 W. 40th St. Suite 306, Baltimore, MD, 21210, USA.*

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

Part VII



We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. (4:6)

And we Christians, whence are we? *We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. We are of God* by means of our spirit which is in the image of God; by means of Holy Baptism *we are of God* — begotten anew, begotten in our entire being; or more exactly, we are continually begotten of God. Whether we believe or whether we love, whether we pray or whether we fast, or whether we accomplish some evangelic feat — always we are begotten *of God*, we become *of God*. We draw from God all of our thoughts, all of our soul, all of our heart, all of our energy, all of our life, all of our existence. And indeed, it is within our rights to maintain that *we are of God*. If we live by means of the holy mysteries and the holy virtues, we truly live in God, “for in him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28). This is why we boldly assert that *we are of God*. All that we have comes from God: mind and soul, heart and body, goods and instructions,

thoughts and acts, life and existence — this is why the one who recognizes the true God *heareth us*, because he recognizes like by means of like. Every spirit that does not hear God recognizes neither God nor the Godbearing saints, he is not of God, he is not of the truth — he is a spirit of error. The *spirit of error* abuses men by a wrongful teaching concerning the origin of the world and of man, concerning the meaning of life and of death, concerning good and evil and in general concerning all and everything. “When the liar speaketh, he speaketh of his own (John 8:44),” and those who hear him are all those who love to lie. The fundamental lie, “the father of lies,” is to say that Christ is not God, and from thence flows the second fundamental lie:

that there is no God. From these two lies come the swarm of all other lies in all realms — *the spirit of error* is woven by them.

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. (7-8)

We are of God. And in what manner? Through love. For love is also that moral divine energy which begets us of God, which makes us sons of God, which makes us God, which makes us *of God*. *God is love*, and this is why love is a moral energy which creates the divine, a force of deification. If love fills the human being, it fills him with divine energies which give rebirth to him and transfigure him into a new being, into a new soul, into a new heart, into a new reason, into a new life. Then all thoughts in him are of God, as are all his feelings and all his actions — and he knows God in a new way, the most true and the most convincing way. Only such a true and organic unity with God, that unity which obtains when one is born of the love of God — only this birth can give us true knowledge of God. If man is not born

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through the love of God, he cannot know God; but if man does not know God, he does not habitually recognize Him either. Because God is love, love binds us, draws us together spiritually and unites us to all divine creatures — and above all with men. He who loves his brother possesses God, knows God, for he is born of God; he who does not love his brother, does not have God, does not know God, does not see in man divine beings, beings in the image and likeness of God, for he is not born of God. The Holy Theologian announces to us the glad tidings of this: *Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.* It is from love that proceed the divine birth and the divine knowledge of man; without love, man is not born of God nor does he know God: he is ignorant of God — he is Godless.

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. (4:9)

In truth, the love of God towards men could not be better manifested than by sending God the Word into the world so that men might be able to live through Him. The life of God became our own, it became the life of men through the incarnation of the Word; the Word became man so that man might receive life from God, so that man might be taught by that life, and so that he might receive the necessary strength for the fulfillment of his life on earth in the human condition. What is divine life? — the life of Jesus Christ on earth. In what does this life consist? — to live by divine Truth, by divine Love, by divine Righteousness, by divine Holiness and by the other divine attributes. All these are the living and divine energies which the God-man brought into our human world and which He transformed into our human life. He entered into our life, bringing the energies of the life of God, and He thus transformed our human life into divine life. God the Word became God-man so that

our life might become a life of God — in this lies the entire mystery of the divine love for all men; it is in this way that the God-man resolved, in the most perfect manner, the problem of human life.

It is through this divine life that it is said of men that they are created in the image of God, for if men had lived by the energy of the image of God and of the desire for God, they would have fulfilled themselves more and more perfectly in the life of God; they would have thus remained forever in Paradise, for Paradise is nothing else than life for God and life through God: it is divine life.

When man allowed sin to enter into himself and into his life, he began to transform his life into a life of the devil — to live in sin means to live through the devil, for the devil only lives through sin. Do you want to know of what the devil lives? Commit sin and you will know, for it is in sin that is found the whole mystery of his life. The devil is entirely in sin, he knows nothing outside of sin and where the devil is — there also is hell. Hell is nothing else than living in sin. In truth, only two possibilities are offered to human life, upon earth and in other worlds: the divine life and the diabolical life, to love God and to love the devil. These are the only two categories of human existence in this world or in the other; these are the two eternal deciding factors of the human being. Man can do absolutely nothing outside of them: if he could be freed from them, he would cease to be a human.

That we might live through him, that we might live by Him: that is, by Christ. Now, when can we thus live through Him? When we live through His Truth, through His Love, through His Righteousness, through His Goodness — in a word: when we live through His Gospel and through His Church. For in the Church we find not only the Gospel but Christ Himself as well, the marvellous God-man, with all His perfections and with all His holy energies and virtues. And there is yet something else: there is an intermediary: the Church is the eternally living Body of the God-man, Christ, His eternally living organism, and the members of the Church are the molecules and cells of this organism; and all

live through Him, the God-man, they live from Him and by Him. In this way, the great proclamation of Saint John, the “son of thunder,” that *we live through him*, is fulfilled continuously in the Church, in all her members, from the beginning until today — for they all live by Him and through Him. It is a unique and uninterrupted process of divine life. It is through the holy mysteries that one enters into this process; it is through the holy virtues that one remains forever in Him, for the Church is nothing else than the God-man renewed across the centuries, and divine life is in Him.

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (4:10)

Though we are sinners and corrupted, it would not have been astonishing at all if we had been the first to show love for the God Who has unceasingly showered us with such magnificent blessings. Love ought to have been our first duty towards such an untiring and generous benefactor, but we did not even love Him because so much had our sins made us enemies of God that everything that came from God infuriated us. Sin is hostility towards God; nay, even more, sin is hatred of God. Carried away by the love of sin, men love sins and their sweetness, and they hate God and all that is consecrated to Him. He who loves sin cannot love God, for by nature sin is a force that is contradictory to God, hostile to God, antagonistic towards God. When men voluntarily submit to sin, they at once carry within themselves this force that fights against God, that continually opposes itself to God — that hates God. With time, this force paralyzes the soul of man, and the soul no longer feels God, no longer even recognizes God; she begins to maintain that there is no God. In the end of all ends, the friends of sin are inevitably lead to a-theism and anti-theism: the refusal of God and the struggle against God and all that is of God.

The love of God for sinful men is the greatest of all the miracles of Divine Mercy. Only this love could *send the son* of God into a human world that was hostile to God, in order to save men from

sin by an infinite feat of love for man. In His whole Person, Christ the Lord represents, and is, the true love of man — and this is why we also call Him the “only friend of man” and the “God Who loves mankind.” For in this does love consist: *to have mercy* on the sinner and to condemn the sin; to save the sinner and destroy the sin; to separate sin from man so as to have mercy on man and to condemn the sin: in this consists the only and true love for man.

The man-God, through His love for man, is entirely a *propitiation* for our sins, He is all mercy, all commiseration, all compassion — it is in this and for this that He is salvation. He had mercy on the human race as never anyone could have imagined, for only the God Who loves man could imagine and put into action such a perfect manner of saving men from sin: through the God-man, through His life from His birth and all that followed through His death upon the Cross, His Resurrection and His Ascension — all this in order to save men from sin, from death and from the devil. This is true love, love that has no equal; here truly is the love of man, and He rightly bears this name; this is truly the only real mercy towards men. He is thus likewise the only propitiatory victim before God for the sins of the human race. Only the infinite sacrifice of Christ, in His love for man, for the sins of the human race could soften God towards this race, obstinate and senseless in its love of sin. It is by an unlimited feat of love for man, to save him from sin, that the God-man became, and forever remains, *the propitiation for our sins*.

Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. (4:11)

Christ the Lord is the image of love and of the love of man, and this image is perfect and all-perfect. In Christ, we have experienced and we constantly experience this love that we in no way deserve, and because of this, we must love one another in this love, through this love and because of this love. This is the new love and the new commandment of love: new because it loves man even in sin, new because it has tenderness for the sinner while condemning his sin; new because

it does not kill sinners on account of sin, but kills sin and saves the sinner. It is because this love of Christ is so perfect and so salutary that it becomes the first duty of all Christians: *We ought to love one another*. For if we accomplish this duty, we continue the work of the God-man, the salvation of men; we save both ourselves and others — or more exactly: we save ourselves through others. Salvation is the extension of the love of Christ to all those who believe in Him. We save ourselves from sin, from death, and from the devil, through the love of Christ and through the love of Christ for men.

No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. (4:12)

It is love that leads God to descend into the soul and through Him will it live; in this way it shall see God Who otherwise remains invisible. It is through love that God became man, that He was incarnate, that He was made man. So is it with man: through love he becomes God, he is made God, he is made “God by grace.” Through love, the invisible God becomes incarnate and visible, for divine love is a force of incarnation: it transports the one who loves into the one who is loved, it makes him take flesh in him, it merges their lives into a single one, their souls into a single one, their hearts into a single one; and they feel themselves to be one, even though they remain two particular personalities. This applies to all the members of the Church: through mutual love, they incarnate themselves in each other: one in all and all in one; likewise they think, they feel, they act together, communally, “with all the saints” (Eph. 3:18).

This is what is written in the Acts of the Apostles: “And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things in common” (Acts 4:32). The man who experiences the love of Christ has placed God in his soul, he lives with Him, he thinks with Him, he feels with Him, he acts with Him — in a word: *God dwells*

in him. This is why, for him, God is his most immediate experience of living, his most immediate reality, his most immediate event, his most immediate experience. And when God dwells in man, He also perfects the love of man, for, little by little, divine love pours over from God into the human soul, and it grows, becoming a more perfect love through the other holy virtues — until finally man’s entire being becomes love. Then this love knows no bounds — for God *is love*, and it is for this reason that divine love has no limits. It is through love that God dwells in the soul of man, and this is why this love is perfect.

Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. (4:13-15)

Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. Here again is another direct experience of the Holy Spirit: when Christ came into our life as God-man, He also introduced into it the Holy Spirit. At the time of the Last Supper, the Savior had promised to all His holy disciples — and through them to all His other disciples — that the Holy Spirit would testify of Him (John 15:26). Indeed, this promise has been fulfilled: the Lord Christ gives the Holy Spirit to His disciples, and it is He Who fills them with that feeling, with that knowledge, and with that conviction that Christ is the God-man and the Savior, that He remained in the Church, and dwells in her — with all His being, with all His virtues, and with all His holy energies; and that we, dwelling in the Church, dwell in Him, through His Holiness and His Holy Strength. This is why the Holy Theologian announces the glad tidings: that life is in Christ, that life is in the Holy Spirit, that life is in the Holy and Indivisible Trinity.

It is the Holy Spirit Who grants us the spiritual vision by which we see that God the Father sent His Son to save the

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St. Justin Popovich

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world, and therefore, it is the entire Holy Trinity that participates in this way in the salvation of the world. Whatever be our manner of attaining to Christ and to His work of salvation, we always feel and see that He is the Son of God, sent by God the Father Himself to accomplish the work of the salvation of the world. In particular, this is what the eyewitnesses of the Incarnation of the Son of God saw and felt and this is why this Holy Witness declares: *And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.*

Christ the Lord, in His infinite love for man, accomplished the salvation of the world through the benevolence of the Father and with the collaboration of the Holy Spirit; but this work is such a personal work for Him that He is the One Who also bears the Name of Savior [*Soter*] — for this is indeed what the name of Jesus signifies: neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit were called Jesus. From the entire edifice of salvation accomplished by Jesus, it is evident that He is truly the Son of God, that He is truly the Second Person of the Trinity, that He is truly the Word of God. He who contemplates this and who testifies of it is entirely in God the Savior, and God is in him, for this contemplation delights him — and it is with joy that he fulfills all the commandments of salvation. But it is God the Savior Himself who is present in the commandments of salvation, present for His saints through his salvation-bearing powers. This is why Holy Theologian announces the glad tidings: *Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.*

And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. (4:16)

We have known the love of God through the Savior. Verily, until then we did not know what true love was — but with the Savior, we came to know the true love: when He saved men from sin, from death and from the devil. Until His

coming, there had only been tales and fables about the love of God, but from the time of the Savior, love truly entered into our world for the first time; it is then that we came to know divine love, and that we believed in Him. And we who are miserable and cowardly slaves of death, of sin and of the devil, in what could we have trusted and believed — if not in the One Who saves us from this triple power of universal destruction and extermination: sin, death and the devil? The Savior revealed to us that God is love and that He comes (because of love and through love) to dwell in man and to save him from death, sin and the devil. He also revealed to us that it is in this manner that He gives to man the necessary strength so that he in turn might dwell in God through love and might contribute to his own salvation by living by love through the commandments of God. Until the appearance of the God-man, Christ, and until the time of the salvation of the world which He accomplished, one could neither affirm, nor confirm, that God is love; but with the God-man, and through the God-man, this becomes the most evident truth, the first truth and the first reality — a truth which everyone can check by his own experience, by his own observation: God dwells in man through love, and saves him through love — and likewise, through love man dwells in God and saves himself through love. The Holy Evangelist proclaims the greatest and most concrete good news of the New Testament: *God is love and he who dwells in love, dwelleth in God and God in Him.*

Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. (4:17-18)

Herein, that is, in that God dwells in us and that He is love, and in that we who dwell in God may continually grow in love, and that in Him we may perfect ourselves, without limit or boundary. Love, as an all powerful divine force,

casts out all sin from us and preserves us in a holy life, a divine life, thus giving us the freedom not to fear the Day of Judgment. Indeed, we are in the world of evil and of sin — but we fear neither evil nor sin, for we live through Christ God. He is the One Who vanquishes in us through His divine energies, Who overcomes all evil, Who crushes all sin. We are not of the world, but we live through Christ in the world — and it is thus that we crush our sins and our evil, because as he is, so are we in this world. His life in this world is an image, an example and a model for our life in this world. Even though he wrote a long time after our Savior's Ascension into Heaven, it is in the present that the Holy Theologian speaks: that we might be in this world as he is. He thereby uncovers for us this great mystery, that the Lord Christ continues to live in this world, through the Church — for dwelling in her, He continues to dwell with us in this world. He is a contemporary of every member of this earthly Church, throughout the course of the ages. This is why every generation of faithful can say with the Son of Thunder: *that we might be in this world as he is.* In this world, we live through Him: As he is, in Truth, in Righteousness, in Love, so are we. All that is His is ours, for it is for us that He left Himself in the Church and that He gives himself over to her continually, especially in the Holy Mystery of communion and in the other Holy Mysteries and Holy Virtues.

He gives Himself entirely, and we can live in this world as He lived: evangelically and in a divine-human way. For the Disciples of Christ, the principal rule of the Gospel is: as he is, so do we live; as he is, so do we think; as he is, so do we feel; as he is, so do we act; as he is, so do we look upon this world and upon all the other worlds. It is the divine love of Christ that leads us through all this and that preserves us in this — this is why there is no fear for us; this is why we have no fear, neither of death, nor of sin, nor of the devil, nor of torture, nor of pain, nor of suffering. In the love of Christ are found all the divine powers of Christ, and who could frighten them? Death, sin, hell, or all the powers of evil and of hell? When this love, ever more

perfect, is in us, it casts out all fear from us. This is why Christians are the true heroes of this world: only they have been able fearlessly to overcome on all the battle fields of this world. The only path by which the love of Christ is perfected in us is a long and painful one, because this path is composed of all the evangelical virtues — for evangelical love grows, lives and is perfected only through the other evangelical virtues: through prayer, fasting, humility, peace, patience, hope, faith, and so on . . . On this path, love walks, grows tired, and falls — but it is the only path that can lead us to perfect love. This is why the Holy Theologian announces to us this good news: *There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.*

We love him, because he first loved us. (4:19)

This is an answer to the question: why do we love Christ? We love Him because He first loved us. In what way? In that for us and in our place, he conquered death, sin and the devil, and in that He gave to us immortality and life eternal. This is the only true love; every other kind of love is true only in the measure in which it comes from this love, in the measure in which it is like Him. Our love of Christ is the natural response to the love of Christ for man: no other love on earth is as justified or deserved as our love towards Christ. Is someone who has

no love for Christ really a man? Has he remained a man? This is the sign that something in him has been destroyed. That which in him is most precious, most elevated and most human, that which makes him a man, has degenerated into something hideous, into something monstrous, entirely marked with the imprint of a curse, of the demonic — something in which are found all of hell and all of death. Then are the strange words of the Great Apostle made clear for us: *If anyone love not the lord, let him be anathema (I Cor. 16:22)*. For outside of the love of the God-man, there is no blessing for a human being, there is no peace, there is no joy, there is no Truth, there is no Justice, there is no Immortality, there is no eternity, there is no Paradise, there is no Blessedness.

If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also. (4:20-21)

Love of Christ blossoms into love of brother, into love of truth, into love of Righteousness, into love of good, into love of holiness, into love of peace, into love of purity — into love for all that is divine, for all that is immortal, for all that is eternal. All these expressions of love are divine, holy, and eternal because their

root is divine, holy, and eternal — because their root is the love of Christ; they are all natural and inevitable manifestations of the love of Christ. All these expressions of love are the objectification and projection, the incarnation and fulfillment, the life and mode of existence of the love of Christ: without them, there is no divine love — and where there is no true love of Christ, there is neither true divine love nor true love of man. Christ is the God-man, and love towards him is always at once love towards God and love towards man, love of God and love of man. In Christianity, the love of man is the proof of the love of God, and the love of God is the proof of the love of man. Love towards God is manifested naturally in love towards a human being as a divine-human being, that is, as a divine brother and as an eternal brother.

This is why the Holy Theologian particularly emphasizes this Good News: *If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.* It is only when he is felt in God and seen as coming from God that man becomes for man a brother in Christ, an immortal brother. Only the man who is in Christ God feels thus, beholds thus, and sees men through his love of God.

To be continued.



1997 Winter Teen Retreat



Fifty-one young Orthodox Christians made their way to St. Tikhon's Seminary this past February 7-8-9 weekend for the annual Diocesan Winter Teen Retreat. What a wonderful weekend it was! God blessed us with balmy weather (above 20 degrees). The food was great, the fellowship exciting and our guest speaker was most stimulating with his presentations.

The weekend began with our usual sign-in on Friday evening with room assignments, and our Pizza Snack (provided by Berwick's finest pizza baker—our dearly beloved Fr. Andrew Shuga), followed by our opening Prayer Service led by Fr. Eugene Vansuch, with responses sung by the retreat participants.

A surprise for our retreaters this year was our guest speaker. Last year was the first time we had the Director of Youth Ministries with us as the Retreat Leader, and with much success, it was decided to invite him back. This year, the Na-

tional Director of Youth Ministries for the Orthodox Church in America returned to our Retreat—much to the surprise of the youth, not as a layman but as a deacon. We welcomed Fr. Deacon Michael Anderson once again to our Diocesan Youth Retreat.

The Lehigh Valley Jr. "O" Club hosted the "Sock Hop" which was held in the gym. This informal dance gives the guys and gals an opportunity to do the "Electric Slide" or just meander around visiting with old friends, making new friends or even "hanging around to play a little hoops," utilizing the basketball equipment in the gym.

Following the social hour in the gym, we returned to the dormitory for the first presentation by Fr. Deacon Michael, introducing the theme: "*What's love got to do with it?*" . . . Everything!" His talk gave everyone an opportunity to think about personal relationships and their importance in our lives.

Our program for Saturday morning began with morning prayers in the Seminary Chapel, followed by breakfast in the Monastery Dining Hall. Then we were off to our designated area for our first presentation of the day by Fr. Deacon Michael. With everyone seated on the floor in a circle, Fr. Deacon Michael began his program with music that is "in" for today's young adults. Discussing how music can affect our mood and our feelings, the teens responded: "It makes us 'Feel Good' . . . "Music helps us to share our culture, our values, our feeling" . . . "Part of those feelings is the need to feel and be loved" . . . "Associations and relationships with love are friends, fun, a caring family, peace and kindness." Much discussion focused on varieties of *Love*: Christian love, physical love, and parental love. Commenting on the serious temptation to engage in a physical relationship, 50% of the teens present

knew of or had friends who have been sexually active. Quite a frightening statistic when we take into consideration that the average age of our retreat group was fifteen years old! Our Orthodox children are not immune from the temptations of the world facing them in their young lives. As a Church we need to help provide them with all the support needed to meet the social temptations they encounter in the secular world.

Fr. Deacon Michael delivered a loud and clear message about what the Church teaches regarding love by referring both to Holy Scripture — the many Biblical references on love — and writings from the Church Fathers. With a captive audience, everyone participated with many questions and reflections on their lives and their peers. He stated, “Love is part of our Orthodox Christian life. We live it! We live by Christian example. Love is not only a physical relationship, a commitment, but a Way of Life!” (Read I Corinthians 13. An attachment, “Is It Really Love?” based on I Corinthians 13, is found at the end of the article.)

Lunch in the Monastery Dining Hall followed the first presentation, which gave ample time for the retreaters to compose their questions for the discussion time with His Eminence, planned for later in the evening. Walking to and from the Monastery Dining Hall for all our meals gave the teens a great chance to share their thoughts and feelings in private conversations with one another or with the adult counselors, many of whom are parents.

The second session, following lunch, continued the lively discussion from the morning session. After two wonderful sessions, there was free time for visiting, a walk, games, a skate on the pond or simply quiet time for personal reflection. The Vigil service in the Monastery Church is always an uplifting experience for all to sing, pray, and prepare for the Divine Liturgy through the mystery of penance.

His Eminence Archbishop HERMAN joined the retreaters for dinner along with the seminarians. The annual “Fireside Chat” with Archbishop HERMAN has become a favorite tradition of the weekend retreat. The questions get better every year! His Eminence graciously ac-

cepts the questions and comments offered by the teenagers. His willingness to spend time with the teenagers shows his concern for their needs. He listened to their questions, comments, and concerns, and his pastoral love is clearly expressed in his answers. What a blessing it is to have His Eminence a part of the Retreat!

Another tradition gaining popularity

among the teenagers is the “Ice Cream Sundae Social.” Even the seminarians joined us for the delicious dessert and fun time. The teenagers appreciated the chance to meet the seminarians, who were very helpful throughout the weekend with the Retreat. After the social and fellowship, it is time for cleanup and ready for bed. “Lights out” is early as it

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Winter Teen Retreat

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is time to begin our prayerful preparation for the Divine Liturgy in the morning.

The Hierarchical Divine Liturgy is a beautiful Liturgy to end the Retreat. For some of the teenagers, it is the only opportunity they have to see a bishop celebrate the Divine Liturgy. The seminarians sing the responses and the teens are joined by their parents to participate in the closing service for the Retreat. The farewell lunch in the Monastery Dining Hall brings together the teens, parents, family members, and seminarians with His Eminence in closing a wonderful weekend. The assembly sang *Many Years* to the newly ordained Deacon Michael Anderson, asking the Lord's blessing upon him and Matushka Vicky and their ministry in their work for the Church.

Fr. Alexander Golubov, the Academic Dean of St. Tikhon's Seminary, extended greetings from the St. Tikhon Seminary Family and welcomed all who gathered for the successful Winter Teen Retreat. His Eminence closed the retreat by presenting all the teenagers with an icon of the Orthodox Saints of North America.

Another retreat weekend comes to a close. The time goes by very quickly, but the memories and friendships made by the teenagers will be lasting. This is what the Retreat is all about! Many of the teenagers came for the first time, not knowing what to expect, but already are making plans to attend the Summer Camp and looking forward to the next Winter Teen Retreat.



1997 Winter Teen Retreat



The DRE extends its heartfelt appreciation to all the young men and women for participating in this year's weekend retreat, to the parents for their love and support, and to all the various parish organizations who gave financial aid, enabling the teens to attend. A special thanks to the seminarians for sharing their dorm with us, to Fr. Andrew Shuga for his devoted time in making and preparing the wonderful pizza; and the seminary staff who worked in various ways to help the DRE. A special note of gratitude to Archbishop HERMAN for his continued support of the DRE activities and programs and for his encouragement, patience and love. *Eis polla eti Despota, Vladyka!*

I must not forget to extend a personal thank you to the parishes and to all the DRE members whose food donations for the weekend aided in keeping our expenses to a minimum. A great big thank you to my DRE committee for sharing their weekend by cooking, cleaning, chaperoning, and counseling.

May you all enjoy the blessings of a glorious Pascha and may God bless and be with you.

In Christ,
Matushka Fran Vansuch,
DRE Chairperson

Is It Really Love? A Look at 1 Corinthians 13

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LOVE is patient. 2. LOVE is kind. 3. LOVE does not envy 4. LOVE does not boast. 5. LOVE is not arrogant 6. LOVE is not rude. 7. LOVE is not selfish. 8. LOVE is not irritable 9. LOVE is not resentful. 10. LOVE does not rejoice in wrongdoing. 11. LOVE rejoices in the truth. 12. LOVE always bears all things. 13. LOVE always trusts. 14. LOVE always hopes. 15. LOVE always endures all things. 16. LOVE never ends. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LUST is impatient; it needs to be appeased immediately. 2. LUST is cruel. 3. LUST is jealous. 4. LUST likes to brag. 5. LUST is arrogant. 6. LUST is insensitive to other people's feelings. 7. LUST seeks only self-pleasure. 8. LUST is demanding and uncaring, angering easily. 9. LUST is resentful and looks for ways to get even. 10. LUST rejoices in evil deeds that help it get its way. 11. LUST is deceptive and secretive. 12. LUST only protects himself/herself. 13. LUST never trusts what it can't manipulate. 14. LUST only cares about satisfying "needs" and desires. 15. LUST is sporadic and without commitment. 16. LUST is always short-term. |
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UPCOMING DRE ACTIVITY

The Department of Religious Education

**PRESENTS THE
3rd ANNUAL WOMEN'S RETREAT**

Saturday, August 9, 1997

St. Tikhon's Seminary
South Canaan, Pa.

THEME: "MARRIED SAINTS"

Speakers: Dr. David and Dr. Mary Ford

Authors and Faculty members of St. Tikhon's Seminary

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Life of our Father Among the Saints Innocent of Alaska

The following life is from the Act of the Holy Synod of the Church of Russia dated October 6, 1977, the date of St. Innocent's glorification.

The Divine Providence of the Consubstantial and Life-Giving Holy Trinity, for the Holy Church and the salvation of all those who belong to her, has now shown to the world a new luminary of faith and piety, who has joined the glorious heavenly ranks of saints and men pleasing to God: St. Innocent, Metropolitan of Moscow and Kolomna, supplicant for the souls of all men.

St. Innocent dedicated his entire life to the service of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Holy Church, both in spreading the word of the Gospel to those ignorant of Christ, and in ecclesiastical administration, establishing the body of Christ's Church.

Metropolitan Innocent of Moscow (secular name Ivan Evseyevich Popov-Veniaminov) was born on August 26, 1797, in the village of Anginskoe, Verkholsk District, Irkutsk Gubernia, into the family of a server. In his fifth year, he was already receiving instruction in reading and writing from his ailing father, who died in August, 1803.

In 1807, the future bishop entered the Irkutsk theological seminary, subsisting on a meager state grant. In 1817, a year before completing his studies at the seminary, he took a wife, and on May 18 of that year was ordained deacon of the Church of the Annunciation in Irkutsk. On graduating from the seminary in 1818, Deacon John Veniaminov was appointed a teacher in the parish school, and on May 18, 1821, he was ordained priest to serve in the Church of the Annunciation.

Father John Veniaminov was in the Church of the Annunciation for only two years, but in this short time he was able to win the deepest respect of his parish-



ioners for the purity of his life, his conscientious celebration of divine services, and his pastoral zeal.

But the Lord did not intend Father John Veniaminov to fulfill God's call in Irkutsk. Divine Providence led him onto the path of apostolic service first of all in the distant Aleutian Islands.

At the beginning of 1823, Bishop Mikhail of Irkutsk received instructions from the Holy Synod to send a priest to the island of Unalaska in the Aleutians. However, no member of the Irkutsk clergy was prepared to volunteer for this arduous mission. Then Father John Veniaminov announced his willingness to devote himself to pastoral service on these distant islands.

In later life, His Eminence Innocent would recall how after an inner struggle he had said "Blessed be the name of the Lord!" and was consumed by a burning desire to throw himself into the service of a people ignorant of Christ, but who

were, according to the accounts of eyewitnesses, eager to hear the Gospel teachings.

On May 7, 1823, Father John Veniaminov departed from Irkutsk for his new home accompanied by his aging mother, his wife, his infant son Innocent, and his brother Stefan. Their journey was long and exceptionally arduous. It took them more than a year to travel from Irkutsk to the island of Unalaska, which Father John finally reached on July 29, 1824.

It was from this point in time and place that the man who in his own lifetime became known as "the apostle of America" began his indefatigable apostolic mission, a mission that was to last almost half a century. His apostolic feat was achieved in the severest climatic conditions constantly fraught with mortal danger.

After he and his family had made their home in a wretched earth house,

Father John Veniaminov undertook as his first task the construction of a church on the island and set about studying the local languages and dialects. He trained some of the islanders as carpenters, metalworkers, blacksmiths, bricklayers, and stonemasons, and with their assistance in July 1825 he entered upon the construction of the church, which was consecrated in honor of the Ascension the following July.

Father John Veniaminov's parish embraced not only the island of Unalaska, but also the neighboring Fox Islands and Pribilof Islands, whose inhabitants had been converted to Christianity before his arrival, but who retained many of their pagan ways and customs. Their new spiritual father often had to travel from one island to the other, battling through the stormy ocean waves on a fragile canoe, at enormous risk to his own life and limb.

His travels over the islands greatly advanced Father John Veniaminov's familiarity with the local dialects. In a short time he had mastered six local dialects, and selecting the most widespread of these, he devised for it an alphabet of Cyrillic letters, and translated the Gospel According to St. Matthew, and the most frequently used prayers and hymns. These latter were so successfully adopted by the local populace that they soon ousted the shamanic chants. The zealous missionary waged a vigorous campaign against the vicious practices of the natives, and soon succeeded in overcoming them.

Father John Veniaminov's first translations—the Catechism and the Gospel According to St. Matthew—appeared in Aleut (Fox Island dialect) in 1828. He also wrote an article in this language: *The Path to the Kingdom of Heaven* and compiled a grammar for the Aleut dialect.

Father John Veniaminov's zeal was not confined to the propagation and affirmation of Orthodoxy amongst the Aleutians, and so in 1829, with the blessing of Bishop Mikhail of Irkutsk, he undertook a journey to the American mainland, to Nushagak, where he brought the word of Christ to the inhabitants of the Bering seaboard, and baptized those that believed.

In November 1834, Father John

Veniaminov was transferred to Sitka Island, to the town of Novoarkhangelsk. This opened up to him a new and wider field of missionary activity amongst the Koluschans (or Tlingits), who had not previously been attended by missionaries, by reason of their firm allegiance to their pagan ways.

On Sitka, Father John Veniaminov devoted himself body and soul to the illumination of the Koluschans, having first assiduously studied their dialect, morés, and customs. His linguistic labors were crowned with great successes here too, and bore fruition in the composition of a scholarly work: "Notes on the

His sound judgment and common sense earned him access to the coarse, but simple and good hearts of the local people.

Koluschans and Kodiak Tongues as well as Other Dialects of the Russo-American Territories, with a Russian-Koluschans Glossary," the publication of which was greeted as a great event in the world of scholarship.

In contemporary descriptions of Father John Veniaminov's fifteen-year missionary service on the islands of Unalaska and Sitka, he was likened to St. Stefan of Perm. His sound judgment and common sense earned him access to the coarse, but simple and good hearts of the local people. The truths of Christ's teaching were conveyed to them in accordance with their mental development; they were instructed in an atmosphere of total freedom of belief and the truths were not forced upon them. Father John Veniaminov waited in patience until people evinced a desire to be baptized. A school was built for the local children, and he provided it with readers and textbooks of his own composition and translated by his own hand into the local dialects, and he, too, was their teacher. After leading them into the light of the Gospel word, he instructed them in various crafts and trades, teaching the Koluschans how to vaccinate. This approach won him the trust of the stubborn pagans. Father John Veniaminov's contemporaries record that the natives loved their teacher and illuminator like a real father, since he was indeed both bene-

factor and father, teacher and patron to his spiritual children that he had saved for Christ.

In his fifteen years of missionary activity in the Aleutian Islands, Father John Veniaminov was led by his increasing familiarity with the problems of missionary work to the conclusion that a successful development of missionary service in these areas demanded, first and foremost, the construction of many new churches, the founding of a permanent mission in the north of America, the appointment of clergymen and missionaries, and the establishment of a deanery under a diocesan bishop.

Father John took these proposals to St. Petersburg, where he reported to the Holy Synod on the state of the Church's mission in Russian America, and asked assistance for its extension and improvement.

Father John presented his translations of the Catechism and the Gospel According to St. Matthew, and his article, *The Path to the Kingdom of Heaven*, to the Holy Synod, and sought their permission to have these printed in the Aleut language as a necessary precondition for the success of the mission, which permission was granted by the Holy Synod on February 12, 1840. Then Father John departed for Moscow to pray before the city's shrines, to collect donations for the mission in America, and to present himself to Metropolitan Philaret, who, when recalling Father John Veniaminov, would always say: "There is something apostolic about that man." Father John was summoned by the Holy Synod to St. Petersburg in the autumn, and he gave an account to them of the state of the mission in North America, and of his own missionary labors, and in accordance with the decree of the Holy Synod was raised by Metropolitan Philaret on Christmas Day to the rank of archpriest.

At the beginning of 1840, Father John Veniaminov, while in St. Petersburg, received news of the death of his wife (No-

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Act of the Holy Synod

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ember 24, 1838). He sought permission to return to Irkutsk to his bereaved family, but Metropolitan Philaret dissuaded him from this, and consoling him in his profound grief, urged him to take the vows. This suggestion came as a surprise to Father John, and he at first ignored it, setting off on a pilgrimage to the Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra, and to Kiev.

On his return to St. Petersburg, Father John Veniaminov decided to take the vows.

On November 29, 1840, Archpriest John Veniaminov made his vows before Metropolitan Philaret and was given the name of Innocent of Irkutsk, and on November 30, he was raised to the rank of archimandrite.

At the same time the Holy Synod decided to establish a special episcopal see for the Russo-American churches. On December 15, 1840, in the Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God in St. Petersburg, Archimandrite Innocent Veniaminov was nominated to the newly-established see, and consecrated Bishop of Kamchatka, the Kurils, and the Aleutians, with his seat on the island of Sitka, in the town of Novoarkhangelsk, which he reached in September, 1841.

His exalted episcopal dignity did not distract His Grace Bishop Innocent from his apostolic service, but, on the contrary, invested it with an even wider range. His Grace gave a modest account of his missionary labors on Sitka in his letters. On April 30, 1842, he wrote: "My activities since my arrival in Sitka have been nothing great. As follows: (1) A mission has been sent to Nushagak, which will reach its destination no earlier than the middle of this June ...; (2) on December 17, the theological school was opened, at present numbering 23 Creole and native students ... (3) in spring I visited Kodiak to inspect the churches there and was pleased beyond all expectation by what I saw. The Kodiaks have become quite unlike their former selves ... and, as they themselves informed me, are now 'beginning to come out of the darkness into the light' ... In two days time I shall be setting off on an inspection tour of my diocese, which will continue for the duration of 16 months."

On May 5, 1842, His Grace Innocent set off on this tour of his far-flung diocese. On May 28, the Feast of the Ascension, he arrived on the island of Unalaska, and served in the church he had built and consecrated. The local Aleuts presented their beloved archpastor with "cagles," skillfully woven out of grasses and fine roots. Then, after visiting Atka, Unga, Pribilof, Bering, and Elovoy islands, on August 18, 1842, His Grace Bishop Innocent arrived in the town of Petropavlovsk (on Kamchatka). Later, by winter routes, he set off from here on a tour of the Kamchatka churches. After his arduous winter journey through Kamchatka, His Grace reached the town of Okhotsk in April 1843, where he spent a little over four months, in which time he was able with his paternal benevolence to win the trust of the Koryaks, Chukchi, and Tunguses, which greatly helped him propagate amongst them the Word of God.

In August of that year, he departed for Sitka, bringing to an end his first journey through his extensive diocese. In 1846, Bishop Innocent undertook a second journey, and in 1850 a third, which continued his journey across the Asian part of his diocese. He celebrated Liturgy in all the churches he visited, and moliebens or All-Night Vigils in the chapels, and everywhere he delivered homilies. By the ukase of the Holy Synod of April 21, 1850, Bishop Innocent was elevated to the dignity of archbishop for his fruitful missionary service. In 1852, the Yakut area was admitted to the Kamchatka Diocese, and in September 1853, Archbishop Innocent took up permanent residence in the town of Yakutsk. From there, the archbishop took frequent trips throughout his enlarged diocese. He devoted much energy to the translation of the Scriptures and service books into the Yakut language.

In the first half of 1857, Archbishop Innocent made a tour of Yakutia and North America, inspecting his farthest parishes, and at the end of June he was summoned to St. Petersburg to participate in the sessions of the Holy Synod. Archbishop Innocent's proposals that the see be transferred from Yakutsk to the Amur, and vicariates be set up in Sitka

and Yakutsk were accepted and approved by all the members of the Holy Synod. His Grace was patently unhappy about spending so much time at the Holy Synod sessions, and on January 21, 1858, he was, "on his own request," released from attending the Holy Synod. He thereupon set off for Irkutsk, traveling by way of Moscow. From Irkutsk, he went on to the Amur, to the town of Nikolaevsk, where he consecrated churches, preached Christianity to the Nanai, Peindals, and Samoghirs, and returned to Irkutsk in September, traveling through Ayan.

In July 1859, an event of profound significance took place in the Church in Yakutia; thanks to the solicitude and labors of His Grace Archbishop Innocent, his Yakut flock for the first time heard the Word of God and divine service in their native tongue.

Because of its remoteness from the diocesan center of the Amur and Ussuri areas, and also as a result of the opening of two vicariates in the Kamchatka Diocese—in Novoarkhangelsk (1859) and Yakutsk (1860)—and the appointment of vicar bishops to these vicariates, His Grace Innocent decided to transfer his seat from Yakutsk to the town of Blagoveshchensk. He departed from Yakutsk to Irkutsk in February 1860 to consecrate the Vicar of Yakutia, and then made two journeys (in 1860 and 1861) along the Amur and the Ussuri, and then round Kamchatka. When on his way from Nikolaevsk to Kamchatka, the archbishop's vessel was torn from its anchorage off Sakhalin by a powerful storm and ran aground a few meters from a stone reef (on the night of August 29, 1861), but no one was injured, and all were safely conveyed to shore in the early morning. As they had no choice but to go on to Kamchatka by way of Japan, Archbishop Innocent and his companions took passage on a passing ship for Tokyo, which they reached on September 9. This was the second occasion on which the apostle of America met the apostle of Japan, Archbishop Nikolai (Kasatkin) of Japan, since canonized as Equal to the Apostles. A few months earlier in the town of Nikolaevsk, Archbishop Innocent had given his blessing to Hieromonk Nikolai on the eve of the

latter's departure for missionary service in Japan.

In October when he arrived in Petropavlovsk (on Kamchatka) His Grace Innocent carried out his fourth tour of Kamchatka.

In September 1862, Archbishop Innocent settled in his new see in Blagoveshchensk, and continued his archpastoral service with unabated zeal, tending to the spiritual needs of his flock, and preaching the Word of God among the heathen.

In April 1865, the Holy Synod issued an ukase on the appointment of His Grace Archbishop Innocent as a member of the Holy Governing Synod.

The concession of the Russian territories in North America to the United States of America caused His Grace Innocent great anxiety for the fate of the still young Orthodox Church in that area, which had been largely founded and built up through his own apostolic labors. Consequently, he believed that the American vicariate should not be closed down, but its residence transferred from Novoarkhangel'sk to San Francisco. In addition, he insisted on the necessity of appointing a new vicar with a knowledge of English, and proposed that His Grace the Vicar Bishop and all the Orthodox clergy in America should celebrate Divine Liturgy and the other church services in English, for which purpose the service books should be translated into the English language.

On November 19, 1867, Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow departed to the Lord.

Archbishop Innocent was fond of quoting the verse from the Psalms: *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord* (Ps. 37, 23), and the Lord saw fit to guide the steps of His good servant Innocent to a new exalted and responsible service in His Church; on January 5, 1868, Archbishop Innocent of Kamchatka was nominated Metropolitan of Moscow and Kolomna, successor to the man he had so deeply revered and in whom he had confided his missionary activities, seeking his guidance and help. According to eyewitnesses, the news of his appointment to the Metropolitan see of Moscow and Kolomna, which reached him in Blagoveshchensk on January 18,

1868, seriously troubled the aging hierarch and missionary. For a whole day he was in a state of anxiety, "and in the evening, before retiring, prayed longer than usual, staying long on his knees." In February, His Eminence departed for Moscow, the place of his new service, and arrived there on May 25. The day after his arrival, Metropolitan Innocent celebrated Divine Liturgy in the Cathedral of the Dormition, delivering a short, but deeply moving and humble address to his new flock before the service, after the Hours. After his apostolic salutation invoking the grace and peace of God the Father and of Jesus Christ our Lord upon the flock, Metropolitan Innocent said: "Who am I that I presume to take up both the word and the authority of my predecessors? Reared in a time and place of great remoteness, more than half of my life spent in a distant land, I am no more than a humble tiller of a small portion of Christ's pastures, a teacher of infants and those in the infancy of faith. Is it fitting that such as I, the least of Christ's laborers, should be allowed to work in this great garden of Christ, glorious and ancient? And that such a teacher should be entrusted with a flock from whose bosom teachers and mentors, and even teachers of teachers go forth to all ends of Russia? . . . Who am I beside my predecessor? There can be no comparison . . . But who am I to oppose the bidding of God, the King of Heaven, without Whose will not even a hair falls from our heads? . . . No, I said to myself, let it be done to me as it pleases the Lord: 'I shall go whither Thou biddeth!' And thus I have come to you. And so, bless me, O Lord, in my new undertaking! Brethren and fathers, especially you, our enlightened mentors and fathers, it is not befitting that you should have an ignorant hierarch such as I am. But for love of Christ bear with me and remember me also in your private prayers; intensify your prayers that heresy and sophistry do not take advantage of my ignorance and steal into the heart of Orthodoxy." On May 31, Metropolitan Innocent made his first entrance into the Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra in his capacity as its Holy Archimandrite.

Metropolitan Innocent's administration of the Moscow Diocese was char-

acterized by his energetic attendance at and participation in everything that a pastor of the Church could and should be concerned with in his diocese. Any person desirous of seeing him would feel no fear in approaching him, being fully confident that he would receive a kind and cordial reception, sympathy for his grief, and a readiness to provide all possible assistance both in word and deed. And no one ever went away from him without receiving help and solace.

In November 1868, Metropolitan Innocent traveled to St. Petersburg to take part in the sessions of the Holy Synod, the first of many such visits, the last being undertaken by His Eminence from January to March 1878.

Metropolitan Innocent's advice and assistance, as that of an experienced missionary, was sought by many young missionaries and, in particular, the apostle of Japan, Hieromonk Nikolai (Kasatkin). Hieromonk Nikolai was deeply influenced by the Metropolitan, and on his recommendation undertook a serious study of the Japanese language. In 1870, the Holy Synod established the Japanese Orthodox Mission, headed by the now Archimandrite Nikolai (Kasatkin), a move that was also made under the influence of Metropolitan Innocent. Shortly before his death, Metropolitan Innocent expressed his desire to see an episcopal see established in Japan, which desire was fulfilled in 1880.

Both in Moscow and in the Holy Synod, Metropolitan Innocent achieved, under the guidance of Divine Providence, a great deal for the missionary cause that he had been unable even to conceive of during his own time in the field, and which no one else had been capable of achieving.

It was on Metropolitan Innocent's proposal that in 1875 a fourth Moscow saint, Philipp, was added to the list of those whose feast is celebrated on October 5. Previously, from 1596, this had been the feastday of the Holy Hierarchs of Moscow, Peter, Alexis, and Jonah.

In 1876, the discovery of grievous misprints and unintelligible phrases in some of the service books led Metropolitan Innocent to call for a revision of all these books. A special committee was set

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Act of the Holy Synod

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up in Moscow for this purpose.

Metropolitan Innocent's administration of his diocese brought fruitful results: many members of the Moscow and village clergy were provided with houses by their churches, and their standard of living improved, all thanks to funds raised by Metropolitan Innocent; a home for retired clergymen was opened in 1871; a diocesan school of icon-painting and other arts was opened for poor children and orphans of the clergy who were not able to attend ordinary schools (1873); Metropolitan Philaret's school for daughters of the clergy was reformed, primarily for those not receiving any pensions or subsidies; and a church dedicated to the Protecting Veil of the Mother of God was built for the Moscow Theological Academy.

Feeling that his end was approaching, on Holy Tuesday (March 27, 1879), Metropolitan Innocent requested that the Mystery of Holy Unction be administered to him. On March 29, Maundy Thursday, after early Liturgy, he received Holy Communion. On Holy Saturday (March 31), at 2:45 a.m., the great hierarch and apostle went to sleep in the Lord.

On April 5, 1879, the body of Metropolitan Innocent of Moscow was laid to rest in the cloister of St. Sergius. Two epitaphs were engraved on his headstone: "May the Lord God remember your episcopal service in His Kingdom now and for ever and world without end" and, "We beseech Thee our Lord Jesus Christ to heed the prayers of Metropolitan Innocent and have mercy on us."

His contemporaries left the following descriptions of His Eminence Metropolitan Innocent's personality: "His Eminence Innocent stands out magnificently in the midst of our Orthodox hierarchs, ancient and new, for his remarkable and original qualities. Having grown up and worked up to the age of seventy in the midst of artless nature, surrounded by simple children of this nature, he was himself approachable, kind, and welcoming, straightforward and free of partiality, caring not for show or finery, nor prone to flaunt either his knowledge or

his services, and his behavior at all times was simple and humble. His great natural intelligence was enriched with a wealth of knowledge such as is the lot of few men to acquire. His heart had no place for envy and cunning, ambition and vanity, desire for riches or for earthly comforts. From his early childhood he had to wage a constant struggle with severe natural conditions and people, resisting need and privation, and he taught himself patience and industry, courage and perseverance, self-control and resourcefulness, restraint and the ability to be content with little, and implicit submission to the holy will of God in all circumstances . . ."

"His name is glorified and venerated both here and in other lands. Every Russian jealous of his nation's honor and glory, and every educated person who respects learning and integrity venerates the splendid person of our apostle of Kamchatka and the Aleutians."

"He is of a straightforward and upright character. His apostolic feats are known through the length and breadth of Russia . . . His Grace is approachable because of his own simple nature; . . . and attentive to supplicants because his heart is full of love."

"His Eminence Innocent is cast in the likeness of the Apostles, full of piety and prudence."

"Metropolitan Innocent's spiritual personality was formed outside the conventions and artificiality of our society; he was pure of heart and always well-intentioned, guided by neither pride nor vanity; he had nothing to seek from people, nor any reason to strike false attitudes before them; he appeared outwardly as he was within: an upright, sincere, loving, and benevolent pastor. By character he was an energetic man, always prepared to exert himself, to undergo privation and full of patience, his own severest judge and untiring in his endeavor."

He was a "man of high moral standards, great learning, noble character, unselfish and assiduous in the performance of his duty," to quote the Holy Synod's reference of June 18, 1825.

Materials relating to the pastoral and missionary activities of Metropolitan Innocent of blessed memory have been

received from the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of America, collected together by a commission for the canonization of His Eminence the Metropolitan. The commission's primary task was to investigate all the unpublished materials relating to the North American period of his life.

It is patently clear from these materials that His Eminence Innocent was, from his first years of apostolic service, devoted in body and soul to the Holy Church and the propagation of the Word of God, that he was outstanding in his sobriety and clearness of intellect, which was combined with a profound faith in the Lord, that he was a man of great industry, in possession of enormous resources of energy and willpower, and that he was benevolent, gentle in heart, selfless, and modest.

Preaching the Gospel was His Eminence Innocent's feat in life. This he accomplished in the face of great hardship and privation. He had to cover great distances in small boats across tempestuous seas, and in sleighs driven by dogs or deer across snowy wastes. There is a mass of factual evidence to illustrate these journeys, which seriously undermined his health. But they also brought him great spiritual joy. He wrote as follows to his bishop in Irkutsk about his missionary expedition to the island of Unga in 1828: "Words cannot describe the zeal with which the Aleuts received my teaching, the gratitude with which they honored me for having instructed them, or the spiritual pleasure which teaching them brought me. Thanks be to God the Word, for granting me His Word, and for enlightening and comforting them with the Word."

The preaching of the Word of God played a predominant role in His Eminence Innocent's apostolic service. He was a remarkable preacher, and would never fail to avail himself of an opportunity to deliver a sermon or hold a discussion and, once he was consecrated bishop, he energetically exhorted his clergy to do likewise: "Woe to him who is called and put to propagate the Word and does not do so!" he wrote. ". . . When explaining the objects of faith it is important to speak with circumspection, clearly, distinctly, and in as few words

as possible, or your sermon will meet with little success . . . You must convey to your hearers the essential message of all Jesus Christ's teaching: that we repent, believe in Him and nourish a selfless and pure love for Him and all mankind . . . If you are to win your hearers' hearts you must speak from your heart, for it is the strength of our heart's feeling that moves us to speak. And so only he who is filled to overflowing with faith and love will be able to speak with a wisdom which his hearers' hearts will be unable to resist . . ."

Approximately a hundred years have passed since the death of St. Innocent of eternal memory, but the memory of this holy man is still fresh in the mind of the Church, in the hearts of countless Christians who venerate him as a man pleasing to God, an apostle and hierarch. . .

On the basis of all that has been recounted above the Holy Synod, having offered up its praise and glory to the Lord our Savior and Provider for all the world, Who has bestowed His bountiful mercy on His Church, has determined to include His Eminence Innocent of eternal memory, Metropolitan of Moscow, Apostle of America and Siberia, in the catalogue of saints glorified through the grace of God . . .

Notice thereof is given hereby to all the faithful children of the Holy Church, and let them give praise to the Triune God Who has ordained that they shall glorify His righteous servant Innocent, intercessor for their souls. And let them lift up their voices in prayer to St. Innocent, who stands before the Throne of God in heavenly glory, that through his prayers and intercession the Lord God may keep all believers in harmony, truth and love, and grant peace and salvation unto all mankind. Amen.

**St. Innocent Celebration
200th Anniversary
of his birth**

August 24 & 25, 1997

**St. Tikhon's Monastery
South Canaan, Pennsylvania**

Our Culture of Death

As we prepare to move into the third millennium since the earthly life of our Lord, American Orthodox Christians are living in a culture in which the accepted and increasingly common way to deal with difficult social problems is death. Problem, unexpected pregnancy? Death to the child in the womb by abortion! Terminally ill patient? Death to the patient by assisted suicide or outright euthanasia! Much of the debate surrounding these issues has focused on the emotional appeal "Whose body is it anyway?" and "Whose death is it anyway?" arguing that no one, no government, no church, has the right to interfere in these most individual and personal decisions. And yet such "privacy arguments," which are often voiced by Orthodox Christians, are totally antiethical to an Orthodox Christian understanding of man and even the whole created universe.

Stewards

In the opening pages of the Holy Bible, the story of creation sets forth the proper relationship between God, mankind, the created world, and man's use of the world. The story is filled with the sense that man and woman are entrusted with divine gifts—the gift of creation and the gift of their own lives. Man is given the task of caring for God's creation: "The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it" (Gen. 2:15).

The important truth related in the Genesis account of creation is that man is not the *owner* of the created world, but the *steward*. A steward is one who manages the affairs of another. Man is given the sacred trust of overseeing what God has created: the world, himself, and other people. Since man alone in both his body and soul is created in the image of God, man must have the utmost reverence for the gift of life which he has received from God. To be stewards rather than owners means that we are not free to do what we wish with our lives or the lives of others.

We acknowledge that life is a precious gift from the Creator and is sacred. This same theme is repeated very clearly in the pages of the New Testament: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body" (I Cor. 6:19-20).

Yet many Orthodox Christians in our time, influenced by the surrounding culture of death, have declared their independence from the Creator! We are no longer stewards, we are the owners! "It's my body! It's a woman's right to choose! It's my life! It's my death!" A popular chant at pro-abortion rallies goes "Not the Church, not the state, women must decide their fate!"

The Way of Death

The great spiritual danger facing people with such "independent" attitudes and behavior is described by St. Paul in his epistle to the Romans:

"For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace . . . So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live" (Rom. 8:5-6; 12-13).

Reflecting on these warnings of Holy Scripture, all of the sainted Fathers and Mothers of the Church wrote repeatedly of the danger of "trusting oneself," that is, following our own will and desires and thinking and believing that we know what is best for our lives. In the spiritual classic *Unseen Warfare* edited by both St. Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain and St. Theophan the Recluse, we read, "Not to rely on oneself is so necessary in our struggle, my beloved brother, that without this, be assured, not only will you fail to gain the desired victory, but you

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St. John Chrysostom's Commentary on Psalm 121

Editor's note: Ps. 121 is the third psalm in the eighteenth kathisma, read in church on most of the days when the Liturgy of the Presanctified is served, and on many other occasions throughout the year also. St. John's commentaries on Psalms 119 and 120 were published earlier in Alive in Christ.

I was glad when they said to me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.

Our feet were standing in your courts, O Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is being built as a city shared together.

For there the tribes went up, the tribes of the Lord, as a testimony for Israel,

To give thanks to the name of the Lord.

For there are set thrones for judgment, thrones over the house of David.

Ask now for the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem,

And for prosperity for those who love you.

Let peace be now in your strength, and abundance in your mighty towers.

For my brethren's and my neighbors' sake, I sought peace concerning you.

For the sake of the house of the Lord our God I will speak good things for you.

I was glad when they said to me, let us go into the house of the Lord. But now many are discontented at these words! When someone is invited to go up, whether it is to the racetrack or to the theater of iniquity, many are they who break into a run; but if it is to go to a house of prayer, there are few who do not hesitate. But with the Jews it was not so; and what is worse than that the Christians should appear as lazier than they? And as for them, why are they so? Again

I say, from their captivity they were improved. Those who formerly were made sick by the Temple and the hearing of divine teachings, and neglected them, but devoted themselves to the mountains and valleys and hills, and with much impiety were attached to the longing for that kind of service.¹

From this time forward they are warmed to the heart by this promise,² and they stand up straight and rise up and are joyful in mind. For since they had been in a state of hunger and thirst - not hunger for bread and thirst for water, but for hearing the word of the Lord - being tormented by this punishment, they sought with greater longing for these things from which they had only recently fallen out. And thus they began to attach themselves to the foundation, saying *Your servants have held her stones dear, and they had pity on her dust;*³ and again *Then shall I come and shall behold the face of God;*⁴ and again: *I shall remember you from Jordan and Hermoniem, from the little mountain;*⁵ and again: *I made mention of these things, and I poured out my soul in me.*⁶ Why did you make mention [of it], he said to me? *That I may arrive in the place of the wondrous tabernacle, even to the house of God.*" That is to say, that I may arrive at the choirs, the feasts, the worship [in] that [place].

Our feet were standing in your courts, O Jerusalem. Another [version has]: *I*

¹ I.e., the worship of false gods, often conducted at the "high places" on mountains. "Service" here embraces the notion of worship; that which, according to Holy Tradition, is given to God alone, but not to icons (images), since God says, in the Ten Commandments, "I am the Lord your God . . . you shall not make for yourself an idol . . . you shall not worship them, nor serve them. For I am the Lord your God, a jealous God . . ." (Ex. 20:4-5).

² I.e., of entering the temple.
³ Ps. 101:14. The reference is to the stones and dust of the city's foundation (see below). (Note: LXX numbering employed throughout.)

⁴ Cf. Ps. 41:2.

⁵ Ps. 41:6.

⁶ Ps. 41:4.

rejoiced when they said to me: we have come into the house of the Lord; our feet stood in your courts, O Jerusalem. Do you see the supreme delight? How, enjoying their circumstances, they also were delighting in the very words, with much longing being absorbed in the house of prayer and the city.

God has always been accustomed to act in this way. For whenever we have good things but do not perceive it, he casts them out of our hands, so that what the delight [in having these things] did not accomplish, the privation [of them] may do. And this they did experience,⁷ clinging to the city, clinging to the Temple,⁸ knowing by this that in return for their native land⁹ they received much grace [or, a great gift] beyond these things.¹⁰

"Jerusalem is being built as a city." Another version: "is built as a city." Well now, either this is - according to the Seventy - that Jerusalem will be built as a city, the text showing the time frame as being before the construction,¹¹ or - according to the other translation - we received back Jerusalem built as a city, manifesting events after the captivity,¹² because at that time the city's desolation was very complete and there remained only the ruins of overturned towers and the remnants of collapsed walls of the former city. And when they returned and saw the desolation, they invoked that former heyday, how there had been an assembly, and princes, and kings, and high priests, and prosperity because of the prevalence of good order and rule -

⁷ I.e. They came to realize how precious the city and temple were to them.

⁸ In spirit, during the exile.

⁹ Or, fatherland (Gk. *patrida*).

¹⁰ I.e., beyond the foundation stones and dust to which they were clinging.

¹¹ I.e., during the exile, when the construction is in the future.

¹² Looking to a time following the return, when the Jews would return and remember the city's good days (see below).

but now cloaked in dejection. And [to see] that it is so, listen to what follows: *Jerusalem is being built as a city*. For at that time it was not yet a city. Clearly, and from which he follows, saying: *Whose sharing is in one place*.¹³ For he speaks of that which is hammered, of buildings, and sturdy, and packed, and that it had no desolation in its midst, but was in all quarters densely packed, completed, consolidated, being something continuous and conjoined just as before the captivity. And so says a certain interpreter, showing this clearly: “possessing union.”

And thereupon after this he says another praise of her: *For there the tribes went up, the tribes of the Lord, a testimony of Israel, to give thanks to the name of the Lord*. For it is especially by this that the city is adorned: not by its size and its buildings, as by also being brought together there, where there is a certain plan or deliberation, where an assembly exists, where there was a plan set forth about certain things. For since the Temple was in that very place, and all the sacred offices were performed there, there were the priests, and Levites, and the palace, and the shrines where entrance was restricted; the porticoes, and sacrifices, and altars, and feasts; the festivals, prayers, and teaching, and in a word, there was where the way of life of the nation was effected. It was necessary especially that the tribes assemble three times each year, at the major and public feasts, at Passover,¹⁴ Pentecost, and the feast of Tabernacles. For he¹⁵ did not go out to them in any other place. Therefore speaking of her praise he¹⁶ said: *There the tribes went up*, and another, *There scepters went up*. And not simply tribes, but tribes of the Lord. All the tribes were the Lord's, but he did not go out to them nor did he accomplish these things in their private homes, but in the

great city¹⁷ that is honored by this, gathering and attracting everyone to herself.

Now this is the necessary condition for divine knowledge: that, not straying in anything, they have places of refuge, and means of departing from the worship of idols. This is why he gave commandments to sacrifice there, to pray there, to celebrate a festival there, walling off their erring and deceived mind by the confinement of place, checking, unseating and overturning the impiety. Making this clear, he also says: *Tribes of the Lord, a testimony to Israel*. Why is it *A testimony to Israel*? The greatest testimony, a proof, a demonstration of God's providence,¹⁸ that no defence at all be left to them when they leap aside, when they turn away and desert to the idols.

For this was the greatest proof of his providential care, power, and wisdom. For indeed, there the Law was read, that contains the narratives and histories of the ancient achievements.¹⁹ And there they would be bound together in love, having dealings with one another. For the foundations of the feasts truly became for them the occasion and the basis of their association and mingling with one another. There greater reverence exists, piety abounds, and countless good things are brought to pass from their coming together in the city.

To give thanks to the name of the Lord.²⁰ That is, to give thanks, to worship, to praise, to offer, to sacrifice - things which urge them towards piety and which establish their way of life on a surer footing.

For there have sat thrones for judgment, thrones over the house of David. See also how he speaks of the city's privileges. And of what sort is it? That the kings are there. It is for this that “there have sat thrones for judgment, thrones

over the house of David.” Another [version]: *thrones of the house of David*. For the double rule, whether of priests or of the kings, was linked there, like some double crown and diadem of the city that was adorned in all these things. There were the judges, to whom also things surpassing [the purview of] the many were referred. For if some decree or sentence came about in the other cities, causing some trouble, the decree would be referred to the expertise of the judges at Jerusalem, from whence a resolution would emerge. But that is how it was in the former days; but as for now²¹ things are much worse, for the desolation was truly complete. The city was razed to the ground and burned; little remained of the buildings. Its appearance brought sorrow, and it bore only a memory, only a hint, of the earlier days of greatness.

This is why he does not close out his words with [this] gloomy [note], but moves on in the expectation of more joyful ones, saying: *Ask now the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem*. Why is it, *Ask now the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem*? [It is this] instead of: “require, demand.”²² Another said: “Embrace.”²³ That is, “entreat that she may return to the former good times, that she may be delivered from frequent wars; that henceforth she may enjoy freedom from fear.” This, then, he either says or prophesies. *Ask now for the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem*. That is, that she may acquire peace. *And for prosperity for those who love you*. Another, “for those who are at peace.” Another, “that they may prosper while loving you.”

Great, then, is the superabundance of well-being, when good things are appointed not [only] for her, but when those who love her may also enjoy them. Indeed, in former times the contrary was the case. For those who hated and fought against her, these especially were strong and were mightier than the others, and more splendid, and were adept at raising their signs of victory. But those who love you now will be in great security

Continued on the next page.

¹³ More literally, “of which the sharing is in the same place,” or “of which the sharing is together,” the last three words being the translation of the Greek idiom *epi to auto*. Significantly this idiom also appears later in this kathisma, in Ps. 132:1: “Behold now, what is so good, or so pleasant, as for brethren to dwell together?” as well as in Acts 2:1, where the Apostles were gathered *in one place* when the Holy Spirit came upon them. The idiom *epi to auto* is sometimes translated in these occurrences as “in concord,” or “in unity.” These renderings are not in the text, though they fit well with it, as St. John's commentary indeed goes on to suggest.

¹⁴ Gk. *pascha*.

¹⁵ He: i.e., God.

¹⁶ David, the Psalmist.

¹⁷ Or, mother city (Gr. *metropolis*).

¹⁸ More literally, forethought (Gk. *pronoia*); often trans. as providence or providential care.

¹⁹ I.e., the achievements and history of the nation of Israel.

²⁰ The word here translated as “give thanks” has as its older meaning “to confess” in the various senses of the word. The original meaning was later broadened (see St. John's comments that follow) to include other ideas, among them, that of giving of thanks and of praise. As to the English translation of this word in the context of the present psalm verse, it is difficult to bring all these meanings across in translation; perhaps it is best to render the word “give thanks,” not only because of the centrality of thanksgiving for Israel, but also in view of the eventual fulfillment of Israel's worship in the New Israel, the Church, which has as its unifying basis the thanksgiving (i.e. Eucharist).

²¹ (during and after the Exile.)

²² From what follows, the meaning may be that peace and freedom from fear are by their nature granted by a free gift, not by compulsion.

²³ Or, greet.

Commentary on Psalm 121

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and freedom from fear. It is they that join with you to make plans. Now he is either saying that they will be assisting you in the future, or that they will themselves be citizens.

Let peace be now in your strength. Another, in your fortifications. Another, in your perimeter. Why is it in your strength? In your foundations, in your inhabitants, in your abundance. For since war is ruinous, and it destroyed her,²⁴ he prays for peace for her. *And abundance in your fortified towers. Another, in your palaces.*²⁵ Another, *happiness. Another, daylight.* For he predicted for them not only deliverance from woes, but also an increase of many good things: peace, abundance, good seasons. For what is the good of peace, if need and poverty and hunger are joined to it? And what advantage is there in plenty when war weighs heavy upon it? So that is why he prophesies for them the pairing of those good things, both that they should be in prosperity, and that they have this in security, through peace.

For the sake of my brethren and my neighbors. Either he is speaking of the

²⁴ Her: i.e., Jerusalem.

²⁵ Or treasuries; tents.

seven hundred neighbors who were set against them, and prays that there may be peace and that they will be humbled and will know the power of God, or he is calling the inhabitants of the city "brethren." *For the sake, therefore, of my brethren and my neighbors,* let there be peace, so that finally, at least, there may for once be a rest, with better things taking place by way of accompaniment. *I sought peace concerning you. For the sake of the house of the Lord our God I will speak good things for you. Another, I will speak peace in you.* After he said, *For the sake of my brethren and my neighbors*—showing that it is not on account of the worthiness of the others but rather in order that he may benefit them that he prays this—he adds: *For the sake of the house of the Lord our God;* that is, on account of his glory I pray for peace, so that once again his worship and service may return, and that it may come to pass that his teaching increase. For there were, on the one hand, those who were born during the captivity, and, on the other, those who were witnesses both of the descent [into it] and of the return. And while the service to God was being fulfilled, all of them were learning from the elders of the ancient well-doing and pros-

perous times, for it was while they were in those conditions that they lapsed. Do you see how he checks their folly, in order that as they did not suffer punishment according to what they deserved, they might acknowledge the good things they had regained, but learn that it was for the glory of God that they had returned to their homeland, and learning, might abide with great stability and, not sinning again, might gain from their experience, might comprehend their trial?

Therefore knowing these things, let us especially not fall; but if at some time we do come to a fall through sins, let us be zealous to stand up quickly; and in order that we not walk again on our prior course, let us listen to what [was said] to the paralytic: "See, you have become whole; sin no more, lest something worse befall you." For he spoke so for this reason: that those who are inured to virtue would guard it securely, and that those who are freeing themselves from sins might continue in the change towards excellence, so that in common with all [the saved] they may reach the heavenly good things, which may we all enjoy, by the grace and love for man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and dominion, unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Official

Released from Diocese:

Rev. Emilian Hutnyan to Diocese of Western PA

Released from Assignment:

V. Rev. Michael Lepa is released from his assignment at St. Andrew Church, Dallas, PA and attached to St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church in South Canaan

Additional Duties:

V. Rev. Joseph Martin, in addition to his duties as Rector of Holy Resurrection Cathedral, Wilkes-Barre, PA is appointed Acting Rector of St. John the Baptist Church in Edwarsville, PA.

Awards:

JEWELLED CROSS:

Archpriest Paul Borick
Archpriest Michael Evans
Archpriest John Kowalczyk

SYNODAL GRAMOTAS:

Archpriest Daniel D. Ressetar
Archpriest Paul Ropitsky
Archpriest Nicholas Yuschak

KAMILAVKA:

Priest Leonhard L. Poore

SKUFIA:

Priest David Mahaffey
Priest Nicholas Wyslutsky

PARISH COUNCIL CONFIRMATIONS

St. Michael Church - Wilmington, DE
Holy Resurrection Church - Alden Station
Holy Trinity Church - Catasauqua
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St. John the Baptist Church - Dundaff
St. John the Baptist Church - Edwarsville
Holy Ascension Church - Frackville
St. Herman Church - Gradyville
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St. Vladimir Church - Lopez
SS. Peter and Paul Church - Minersville
St. Michael Church - Old Forge
All Saints Church - Olyphant
St. Nicholas Church - Olyphant
Holy Assumption Church - Philadelphia
Holy Trinity Church - Pottstown
Holy Assumption - St. Clair
St. Herman Church - Shillington
St. Basil Church - Simpson
Holy Trinity Church - Stroudsburg
Holy Trinity Church - Wilkes-Barre
Holy Cross Church - Williamsport
St. Mark Church - Wrightstown

St. John Chrysostom's Commentary on Psalm 9

Part III

. . . The nations have been trapped in the destruction which they prepared; in the same trap which they hid, their foot hath been taken.

The Lord is known executing judgments.

The sinner hath been taken in the works of his hands.

Let the sinners be turned back into hades;

all the nations that forget God.

For the poor shall not be forgotten unto the end.

The patience of the needy shall not perish unto the ages.

Arise, O Lord, let not man be strengthened;

let the nations be judged before thee.

Set, O Lord, a lawgiver over them;

Let the nations know that they are men.

Why, O Lord, hast thou stood afar off;

Why dost thou hide thyself in seasonable times, in tribulation? . . .

The nations have been trapped in the destruction which they prepared. Another translator says: *They have sunk.* He calls vice, "destruction," because nothing so destroys us as vice. There is nothing weaker than the man of vice: he is conquered by the existence of his own weapons; as iron perishes from rust and fur from moths, so also a sinner from vice. In such a way sin, yet before the punishment of God, avenges itself to the one who fulfills it. So, how the prophet talks much about the heavenly justice and help of God, but this does not happen at once, but often slowly and after a while. Because of this, many are still more careless. Now he teaches, that punishment is not far away, that it comprehends people of vice, as even Paul says: *and receiving in their own persons the due penalty for their error.* And see, how precisely he uses the expression. *They have been trapped,* he says, that is pow-

erfully held, subjected to inevitable unhappiness. And further: *in the same trap which they hid, their foot hath been taken.* He says that the vice lords bind themselves with indisputable bonds. This was put off to the Apostles and Jews. The Jews, rising against the Apostles, did not cause them any harm, but subjected themselves to innumerable troubles, having deprived the cities of freedom and all that follows. The teachings of the apostles were spread, but the evil-minded ones were destroyed. So also those who thrust the three youths into the Babylonian furnace themselves perished from it. So it was also for Daniel. However, in the case of Daniel this occurred naturally, since they themselves thrust him in. But why, with the three youths, when the king sinned, were those standing before the furnace punished? Because they already were in the arms of the flames, having served the command of tyranny and have bowed to the golden idols. *In the same trap, which they hid.* See how he expresses the breadth of the guilt. So as their deed was shameful, they concealed this and tried to conceal themselves.

The Lord is known executing judgments. Another translator says: *has been known, having executed judgment,* that is, punishing, chastising, avenging. Do you see still another form of benefit from punishment? It not only makes those punished more zealous, he says, but it makes preparation that the word of the knowledge of God may shine forth. And from here one may see still more, how God converts people. So, when He allowed it, the herd of swine rushed down the steep bank and were drowned in the sea, then the people especially were afraid (Mark 5:13-18). And in the Old Testament the Jews, *when I slew, then I sought Him,* as the prophet says.

Why does he not do this continually? Because he wishes that people do good

deeds not from force but from good will, encouraging this not so much by punishment, as by good deeds. But, they say, isn't it much better to be good by necessity, than to be evil in a free situation? It is impossible to be good by necessity. The one who is good only because he is bound, does not remain good always, but, having received freedom, returns to evil, but the one who is educated to do good in a free situation, and is made such, this one remains fervent in good.

The sinner hath been taken in the works of his hands. He didn't even say: the hands of the God-fearing, but the hands of the very sinner. Do you see how he varies his speech, putting forth this punishment which comes from above, that punishment which comes from vice? Where is the punishment from above? *The Lord is known,* he says, *executing judgments.* Where is the punishment from vice? *The nations have been trapped in the destruction which they prepared.* And further, depicting the punishment which comes from vice, he says: *the sinner hath been taken in the works of his hands.* He speaks not about the single punishment by God, because God often waits and lingers, and not about the one punishment from vice, because many quietly betrayed him; but his speech confirms these and others. For this reason he continues: *the sinner hath been taken in the works of his hands.* Another translator says *of his fingers.* In such a way, when you lay snares, then don't think that you lay them for others: you spread nets for your very self. *Let the sinners be turned back into Hades, all the nations that forget God.* Another: *be driven back.* Again he dwells on this, to point out that vice inevitably is accompanied with punishment, that the impure deed leads to death, and sins to troubles.

For the poor shall not be forgotten unto the end, the patience of the needy
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Commentary on Psalm 9

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shall not perish unto the ages. Another translator says: *the expectations of the meek shall not be forgotten for ever.* He said well: *not for ever*, instilling the idea that one must not always see peace! How is patience revealed, if there is always peace? But the idea of his words are the following: for the vice lords there will be punishment and many troubles, because God does not allow the injured continually to suffer troubles. By this he even comforts the latter, and frightens the former, and shows the love of God for mankind, for even the delay makes the latter more excellent, and leads the former to repentance. See, again, the poor are honored, not simply the poor, but the brokenhearted, because they especially are also capable of patience, or it is better to say, one comes from the other, humblemindedness produces patience, and patience humblemindedness. If someone asks: How is poverty humility? We say: because it is especially capable of good deeds. The rich lead a life in uneasiness and confusion, but the poor easily bears all, being trained often by reason of poverty as in a wrestling school. Therefore, even Christ said that for the rich it is difficult to enter into the kingdom (Mt. 19:23). What does this mean? *the patience of the needy shall not perish unto the ages.* It means: he never perishes, and unfaithfully he receives his own fruit. This does not always occur in the affairs of the living, where often the goal is not reached, and the labors are lost. So the farmers wait for the harvests, and the merchant for the profits, but often the fruits of his labors depends upon unseasonable weather and other things. For God this does not happen; on the contrary, the goal is reached unfaithfully.

But the steadfast assurance in reaching the goal comes with a small comfort. *Arise, O Lord, let not man be strengthened.* Another translator says, *Let him not be confident. Let the nations be judged before thee!* Another says: *even before thy face.* Having spoken about the multitude of men who persevere in evil, having remembered their vices, plunder, covetousness, murders, the prophet asks God for help for the injured. Such is the love of mankind of the

saints: they cared not only about their very selves, but about the whole universe, as about a single house, and they pray to God for all the people, as about a single body. *Arise, O Lord, let not man be strengthened.* What does *Arise, O Lord* mean? Avenge, he says, help, punish the unrighteous. And well he uses such simple expressions: *Arise*, and *let not man be strengthened*, as if to point out that man is nothing, he comes from the earth, he is dust and ashes. *Let the nations be judged before thee.* What do these words signify? He says, give the penalty for the offenses; they have not become better on account of the long-suffering; demand the accounting of their effronteries.

Set, O Lord, a lawgiver over them, let the nations know that they are men. Another says *continually.* What does it mean to say: *Set a lawgiver over them?* So as they, he says, do everything without authority, not wishing to give a report, then thou arise, and let there be punishment for them instead of admonition. Also even another translator says, expressing himself thus: *Lead them in fear, O Lord.* See, how he does not wish punishment for them, but that they would learn, would reform and would not live lawlessly. For he says, there will be retribution for them instead of admonition, but also for others. But in order that you may see what profit is here, how this destroys their illness. Listen further. *Let the nations know*, he says, *that they are men.* The idea of his words is such: Many have lost even this, they forgot their nature, went out of their minds, not knowing themselves.

And well he adds: *continually*, expressing that [one needs to know this] not only in times of troubles, but even in time of blessings. If Thou wilt punish them now, then they, having a healthy fear and the memory of their misfortunes, will in good times conduct themselves according to their own nature. Do you see how the prophet prays for them and wishes that they abandon their madness? Really, not to know themselves is the greatest madness, worse than lunacy. The latter is the illness of the involuntary, but the former is the result of a corrupt will.

Why, O Lord, hast thou stood afar off, why dost thou hide thyself in seasonable times, in tribulation? The prophet says this from the person of the afflicted, petitioning and beseeching God, but by no means reproaching Him. Many of those who suffer distress think to judge before the proper time (just as those who will be amputated petition the doctor to go away from them before the amputation is really absolutely final); they ask harm for themselves, because suffering, they are not able to bear the pains. They often shout to a doctor: You torment me, you destroyed me, you killed me, but these are not words of reason, but of pain. Thus, then, do many of the fainthearted speak in afflictions, when they do not bear the toil. And Zephaniah (Sofonius) also speaks similar words (Zeph. 3:1). But this is under the Old Testament, when it was commensurate with the limits [of that time]; but this is far from the philosophy that is in the New.

To be continued.

—Translated by

Archpriest Eugene Tarris

PARISH COUNCIL CONFERENCE

JUNE 28, 1997

Speaker: FR. MICHAEL DAHULICH

Hosted by

St. Nicholas Church
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Encyclical

Continued from page 24.

tinguished him as an example to all in life, faith, and spiritual understanding. He developed a pastoral school with an ambitious spiritual and secular curriculum for the training of priests. He established the model of a true missionary as he traveled the length and breadth of his diocese (over 12,000 miles) by dogsled, kayak, boat, and any means necessary to minister to his flock.

Though nearly blind, and having requested retirement, Bishop Innocent was called to the leadership of the Church in Russia as Metropolitan of Moscow on January 19, 1868, following the death of Metropolitan Philaret. Continuing his vigorous ministry, he established the Russian Missionary Society in 1869, and pursued the further development of the Siberian and North American missions, as well as the expanded missionary efforts in Japan, China, and other areas of the Far East. His long and remarkable ministry continued to the day of his death on Holy Saturday, March 31, 1879. His glorification as a saint was joyfully proclaimed on October 6, 1977.

In prayerful commemoration and celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of St. Innocent of Alaska, Equal to the Apostles and Enlightener of North America, it is with great joy that we dedicate the year 1997 to his memory. In recognition of the legacy of his remarkable ministry, we urge our faithful clergy and laity to intensify their commitment to the vision he pursued. We strongly encourage young and old alike to emulate him as a model of wise and faithful stewardship. We call upon our communities to study his life and to follow his example by planting new seeds of faith, especially in this time of faithlessness and open apostasy. We exhort all to discern the means by which his legacy might be rekindled and renewed in our ministry and service in the world. And we seek his intercession before the throne of the Lord God of Hosts, so that we may be made worthy to nurture the seeds which he planted in this land.

We invite everyone to join us in renewing the commitment to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ by word and by deed in all the places where we live

and work. The glory to which Saint Innocent has been called is the same glory which we have been challenged to seek in our own lives, our own communities, and our own time. We especially call upon the faithful to dedicate Tuesday, August 26, 1997, the actual day of Saint Innocent's birth, as a day of recommitment to the vision established by Saint Herman of Alaska and nurtured by Saint Innocent—a vision of an Orthodox Church in North America that is a vibrant example of the boundless love of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ and a witness to His Truth.

Dear brothers and sisters, as we prepare to celebrate the memory of Saint Innocent, let us reflect upon the talents and gifts, the blessings and challenges placed before us as the Church in North America. Let us, in the spirit of Saint Innocent, being ever mindful of our calling to evangelize and witness, go forth to plant and sow the seeds of faith on the same soil once tilled by this saintly bishop. May his life and ministry be a source of inspiration and strength to us, that through our life and mission we may

glorify the all-honorable and majestic name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit throughout the coming year and all the days of our lives.

In the love of Jesus Christ and the spirit of Saint Innocent,

+THEODOSIUS, Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada

+KYRILL, Archbishop of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania and the Bulgarian Diocese

+PETER, Archbishop of New York and New Jersey

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+JOB, Bishop of Chicago and the Midwest

+TIKHON, Bishop of San Francisco and the West

+SERAPHIM, Bishop of Ottawa and Canada

+INNOCENT, Bishop of Anchorage

Our Culture of Death

Continued from page 55.

will be unable to resist the smallest attack of the enemy. Engrave this deeply in your mind and heart."

Our culture of death fosters in us a desire to do exactly this: rely on ourselves, exercise our right to choose, exercise control over our body, exercise control over our destiny. It seduces us

into believing that we are owners of our lives rather than stewards. Our "culture of death" is correctly named, for it uses death as a solution for difficult social problems, and it leads to spiritual death because of the attitudes it instills in the hearts and souls of people who profess that Jesus Christ is the Lord and Master of their lives.

—Priest Edward Pehanich

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Mr. and Mrs. Paul W. Sernak
Ron, Lorraine, & Ann Sernak
Delores Serniak
Steven Serniak and Allison
Gloria Shaw
Anastasia Sloat
Marilyn and Jerry Soroka & Children
Gene Strosky
John Susko
Irene Swirdovich
Chap. Col. Peter and Matushka Telencio
Damian and Stephen Telencio
Bob, Millie, and Rebecca Telep
John, Yvonne, Wargo & Family
Michael and Mary Wyziak
Julia Zaccone
Peter D. Zaccone
Mary Zielinski
Joseph and Dorothy Zrowka
Betty Zrowka

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

McAdoo
Father Theodore Orzolek
Michael & Anna Kurtz, Sr.
Samuel Kurtz, Sr.
Pearl Elko
Mary Ann Graino
Cathy Haber
Irene Yaworsky
Julie Forte
Greg & Kathy Kurtz
Lonnie Polli
Helen Osuch

Michael R. Kurtz
Peter Kurtz
Mike Zabitchuck
Paul Smerconich
Michael & Jan Kurtz, Jr.

SS. PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH Minersville

Fr. Michael & Matushka Hatrak
Natalie Hatrak
Matt Hatrak & Brenda Fehr
JoAnn Brinich
Richard, Lynda, Lauren & Ricky Hutton
Michael, Lisa & Christian Pascuzzo
Ralph, Kathy, Jennifer & Adam Brinich
James & Anna Antonio
Ralph & Helen Citrullo
Susie Frew
Andrew Frew
Olga Kirkauskas
Elsie Herman
Harry, Peggy, David & Janie Oakill
Stablum Family
Anna Wyslutzky
Mary Wartella
Mike & Barb Rogers & Family
David & Georgene Studlack & Family
Malusky Family
Luke & Theresa Oakill

ST. MICHAEL'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

Mount Carmel

V. Rev. Michael Evans & Family
Olga Berkoski
Pearl Livanis
Mary Shields
Christine Buchkarik
Mary Moroz
Florence Bubernak
Anna (Kowalchick) Grivnovis
Mary Zeluskey
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Sebasovich
Helen Sorocka
Julia Barnes
Costy Melnick
Mary Kandrot
George Panikarcheck
Anna Panikarachuck
Bernie & Tanya Malkoski
Leon Markovich
John & Theresa Pochekailo
Anna & Delores Wislock
Bill & Gerry Wislock
Katherine Shaffchick
J. Yastishak
Ann Tanney
Marie Cuff
Olga & Paul Paduhovich
Adam Leschinsky
Joe Coletti
Mr. & Mrs. Ronert Thomas
Mr. & Mrs. Ernie Hill
Charles & Mary Chidovich
Charles Chidovich, Jr.
Winnick Family
Valentina & Victoria Wood
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Alekseyko
Margaret Olaf
Amelia Markovich
Bob & Marie Kuchta
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Tosca
Ann Gondal
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Yonkovig
Eva Roushinko

Ben & Millie Trefsgar
Dorothy Beckus
Catherine Hardnock
Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Zbicki
Evann Shamus
Deanna Ciocco
Julia Bushick
George & Valerie Winnick
Mrs. Mary Homicz

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH Nanticoke

Fr. & Matushka Stephen Karaffa
Olga Carvey
Mary Zupko
Jay & Marge Sokol
John & Ellie Pihanich
Paul & Olga Sulewski
Joe Paprota
Joey & Jill Paprota
Mr. & Mrs. George Cieslak
Mr. & Mrs. John Klos
Joe & Mary Paprota
Jim & Mary Ann Oram
Pete & Norma Wasinda
Helen & Ted Dargiewicz
Steve & Adeline Brezna
Zachary Breck
Dorothy Speary
James & Susan Breck
Mary Hunchar
Mary Misewich
Warho Family

ALL SAINTS ORTHODOX CHURCH Olyphant

All Saints Church
All Saints Sr. "R" Club
All Saints Jr. "R" Club
All Saints Heritage Shop
Rev. & Mrs. Nicholas Wyslutzky
John & Florence Boyko
Olga Boyko
Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Bonczar
Cassie, Larry & Michael Bonczar
Brian & Ruth Brown
Helen Bryer
Mr. & Mrs. David Brzuchalski &
Family
Stephania Butchko
Rev. & Mrs. Michael Chanda
Mr. & Mrs. David Crea & Daughters
Judy & Michael Evancavich
Mary Jane & Tanya Gilbert
Irene Glowatz
Vera & Natalie Hoyniak
Justine Horhutz
Nicholas & Marie Holowich
Mary Hoyniak
Mr. & Mrs. Harry Hunyak
In Memory of Michael Kuhar
Agnes Kuhar
Edward & Eleanor Krushinsky
Ann Klemko
Mike & Amelia Kuzmiak
Victor & Ann Marie Koziar
Christopher & Kaylan Kovalchik
Fran Meholic
Dr. Greg Meholic
Regina McAvoy
Claudia Mikulak
Joseph & Nancy Mazur
Mary & Maria Oles

Christ is Risen!

Mr. & Mrs. John Puthrosky, Sr.
Margerette Puthrosky
George & Betty Perechinsky
Mr. & Mrs. John Puthrosky & Ashley
Vera & Olga Paulishak
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Rezanka, Sr.
Barbara Russin
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Rezanka, Jr. & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Bryan Siebecker & Daughters
Mr. & Mrs. James Spect
Kyra, Chelsea, & Ian Spect
Adell Shopay
George & Joan Schlasta
Dorothy Skorupka
Eleanor Sinawa
E. & S. Enterprise
John & Annette Schlasta
Mike Stuchlak
Linda Stuchlak
Mary Semon
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Semon & Daughters
Steve & Pat Stafursky
Ken Stafursky
Dan Stafursky
Mr. & Mrs. George Scochin & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Verespy & Sons
Julia Veroshin
Mary Wasilchak

ST. STEPHEN'S ORTHODOX CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL Philadelphia

Fr. Daniel & Matushka Geeza
St. Stephen's Cathedral Choir
St. Stephen's Women's Society
Barbara Afanassiev
Natasha Afanassiev
Mary D. Birkenbach
Kathy & Ron Bisaga
Dan & Sonia, Stephen & Christine Bondira
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Burch
Anna Burdziak
Jack, Judy, & Jennifer Clyde
Charles & Halina Colter & Family
Nicholas Cronin
Helen Davis
Michelle & Ray Decker
Matthew & Natalie Decker
Willis & Lubie Dietrich
Elsie Olga Drobish
Reader Daniel, Taissa, & David Drobish
Dr. George & Pauline Engelson
Margaret Engleson
Matushka Mary Fedoronko
Orest J. Fedoronko
Paul, Diane, Laura, & John Fedoronko
Bill & Nina Gavula
Julia Gavula
Kathie Gavula
Michael & Michael Gavula
Olga & John Gazak
Capt. Michael, Mary Frances & Anastasia
Geeza
David, Elham, Alexis, & Matthew Geeza
Greg & Cindy Geeza
Jelena Grabania
Lester, Marianne, & Paul Grabania
Leonard Greenglinger & Family
Mary Gressen
Michael & Jennie Harb
Anna Michael Hargrave
John & Agnes Herbut
Ann & Joe Herrschaft
Nicholas & Nina Horsky
Michael, Galina, & Helena Imms
Katherine & Arnie Jensky

Anna & Alexandra Jensky
Peter Kalandiak
Lorraine & Harold Kane
Alice Karpiak
Mr. & Mrs. John Kolesnik & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Kolesnik & Family
Nadia Kolesnik
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Kolesnik & Family
Annette Kopistansky
Greg & Lydia Kuzmenchuk
Ed, Mark, & Nicole Lampreich
Pete & Martha Linski
Lydia & Matthew Magee
Sonia, Larissa, & Mickey Mariani
Walter & Mary Mokriski
Janice Nass
Christine Nass
Rose Neher
Joseph, Barbara, & Kerri Irene O'Brick
Olga Opruseck
Catherine Paulasack
Helen Plunkett
Heinz & Tamara Poessi & Paul
Stephan & Marge Pron
Pron-Zwick Family
Ted Pschick
Mary Radick
John, Denise, Sonia, & Michael Rowe
Olga Russin
Al Silveria, Jr.
Anna D. Simpson
Joseph C. Simpson
Larry, Connie, Jon, & Chris Skvir
John & Helen Szulak
Dr. & Mrs. Michael Tapytkoff
Michael & Natalie Tapytkoff
Alice Victor
William & Eva Wasser
Sandra & Charles Wurster
Vincent, Diane, Nicholas, & Kristina Zanghi
Mr. & Mrs. George Ziatkowski & Family
Barbara, Nick, Karen, & Kristopher

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH Pottstown

Fr. Nicholas & Matushka Yuschak
Mr. Michael Brilla, Sr.
Dot Ecker
Netti Hart
Mr. Michael Holowis
Anna Meko
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Novak
Helen Pershinsky
Mary & Joe Rapshinsky
Mr. & Mrs. William Romanik
Mr. John Sekellick

ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

St. Clair
Fr. Michael & Matushka Hatrak & Family
Sam & Joan Wisnosky
Steve R. Pelak
Joe Zane
Dan Perrin
Mary Melkonich
Russell Draovitch
Leo Draovitch
Nancy Messina
Ann Shaskan
Jean Zane
Olga DeMarkis
Stella Kadingo
Jared Zane
Leah Chrush
Tatiana Heffner

Reader Gregory Sagan
Ted & Jeannette Sagan

ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA ORTHODOX CHURCH Shillington

The Parish Council
The Sunday School Teachers & Students
The Our Lady of Kazan Sisterhood
The Parish Choir
Rev. & Mrs. John A. Onofrey
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Anderson & Family
Ms. Louise Coleman
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Dougherty & Family
Mr. & Mrs. John Drosdak
Mr. William Mark Dudash
Mr. & Mrs. Jefferson Gore & Family
Bill & Rosalie Hardman
Mr. & Mrs. Ed Hyland
The Kawood Family
Mrs. Eva Kopera
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Koran
Mrs. Jean Kusior
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Leer & Family
Mike & Vera Losk
Mrs. Deborah Lucas & Michael
Mrs. Irene Lupco
John, Dana, & Raymond MacKoul
Michael & Janice Mallick
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Matsick & Family
Mrs. Marie McCarty
Mrs. Gertrude Melniczek
Mr. & Mrs. Karll Osterburg
Mrs. Ruth M. Ruth
David, Janna, & Taylor Scheese
Mr. & Mrs. John Seman & Family
Ms. Sandra Semion
The Shilo Family
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Sichak & Family
Ms. Gloria Spitko
Mrs. Catherine Terenchin
Ms. Cheryl Terenchin
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Wanenchak & Family
Mr. John Yonchuk
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Yurick & Daughters
Hank & Anne Zerbe

ST. BASIL'S CHURCH Simpson

Rev. Leo Poore
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. & Juila Mikulak
John & Mary Okorn
Walter & Marie Proch
Maria & John Proch
Walter & Mary Anne Proch
Christina M. & Elizabeth A. Proch
Dr. David & Daria Roat
JoAnn Somple

Indeed He is Risen!

ST. TIKHON'S MONASTERY CHURCH South Canaan

His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN
V. Rev. Daniel & Matushka Delores Donlick
V. Rev. Alexander, Matushka Elena & Alex
Golubov

V. Rev. Michael Lepa
Protodeacon Keith S. Russin
Reader Gregory Hatrak
Reader Gregory Sulich
Matushka Mary Borichevsky
Matushka Dorothy Sulich
Galina Abolins
Mary Andreychik
Marge Barna
Olga Barna
Bill & Alice Boga
Emma S. Collins
Betty Figura
Drs. David & Mary Ford & Emmelia Svetlana
Daisy Geeza
Mr. & Mrs. William Huniak
Julia Jacewicz
Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Kavalkovich & Ronald, Jr.
Katherine Lazorack
Jule Lepa
Mr. & Mrs. John Minarick
John & Mildred Naholnik
Mr. & Mrs. John Paluch
Martin Paluch
Mr. and Mrs. Ken Paulic
Julianna, Maria & Michael Tihanich
Paul Wozniak
Julia, William & Susan Zielinski

SS. PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH Uniondale

Donald and Ann Bock
Pearl Bock
Lovey Klym
Ronald and Lubov Kilmer
Mr. and Mrs. Walter Terry and Family
Rose Kennedy
Marie Hutnyan
Martha Dorosh
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Demianovich, Jr. & Family

HOLY RESURRECTION ORTHODOX CHURCH Wilkes-Barre

Very Rev. Joseph & Matushka Gloria Martin
Protodeacon Keith S. Russin
Dn. Sergei & Matushka Vicki Kapral
Reader David & Kathryn Kessler
David Nicholas & Tatiana Kessler
Mr. & Mrs. John Dulsky
Andrew Buleza
Matushka Eleanor Krell
Mary Onufer
Stella Terpack
Mrs. Helen Pryor & Family
Marion & Wendell Thoman
Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Stempien
Laverne Chapman
Helen Umphred
Betty Polk
Anna Kotzer
John & Doris Zoranski
Michael, Nancy & Abby Pieck
Sam & Rose Ostopick
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Wysocki
Agnes Timchak
Alice Laskowski
Sylvester Dugan
Marge Kotarski

Charles & Irene Urban
Charlene Faust
Elizabeth Reese
John & Irene Zimich
Mrs. Mary Krill
Joseph Romanick
Sandy, Julieann & Nicholas Kapelan
Ann Wensel
Julia Segear & Family
Eva Berlozan
Sandra King
Olga Layton
Vladimir Glowatsky
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Narkoff
Mrs. Michael Felch, Sr.
Dolores Grabko
Evelyn Suhoski
Mrs. William Kozy & Son
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Hutz & Son
Margaret Sapp
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Humko
Mr. & Mrs. P. Sokola
Mr. & Mrs. John Evanchick
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Schmid
Andy & Florence Skordinski
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Romanuski
Kyra E. Zoranski

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH Wilkes-Barre

Rev. & Mrs. David Shewczyk
Timothy & Nicholas Shewczyk
Father & Matushka Pawlush
Mr. & Mrs. Ted Sovyrda
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Lisko, Sr.
Mary Bankos
Sue Bawn
Mr. & Mrs. David C. Mills
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Basarab
Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Golubiewski
Pearl Tutko
Mary Skordinski
Mr. & Mrs. Vladimir Dutko
Mr. & Mrs. Boris Mayher
Mrs. Robert T. Rhodes
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Welgo
Holy Trinity Altar Boys
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Talpash
Rachael & Christa Talpash
Mary Piznar
Justine Paddock
Basil & Lydia Homick
Helen Spinicci
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Zula
Marianne Krill
Stephen & Mary B. Krill
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Sanders
Theresa & Peter Pawlak
Mrs. Helen Zavada
Mrs. Mary Petro
Mike & Rita Goobic
Nick & Vera Goobic
Jonah & Donna Goobic
Edward & Helen Gudaitis
Liz & John Gurka
JP. & Denise Meck
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Gozick
Peter & Dorothy Welgus & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Sam Cross

HOLY CROSS CHURCH Williamsport

Fr. Dan and Myra Kovalak
Daria and Natalia Kovalak
Elsie Skvir Nierle

John T. Kovich
Michael and Julia Stefanick
Yvonne and Nathan Bohlander
Doug and Patti Brown & Family
Helene Fowler
Dr. and Mrs. Minas Hiras
Anonymous

ST. MARK'S ORTHODOX CHURCH Wrightstown

The V. Rev. Theodore Heckman
The Rev. Dn. Gregory & Martha Moser
Peter, Sandra, & Stephanie Bohlander
Nicholas, Marina, & Larissa Moser
Vicki & Peter Kiproff
Janet Kalenish
Samuel Mervis, Jr.
Reader George & Alla Nakonetschny
Anthony & Robin Nakonetschny
Steven Nakonetschny
Michael, Alicia, & Amber Nakonetschny
Hebe Helen Bulley
Myron, Linette, Stephen, & Anastasia
Sedor
John Wanko
Boris, Joanne, Damian, & Brian
Borichevsky
Lucy & Michelle Znak
Sonya, Ed, & Kristy Miele
Richard Baranowski
Vera Nakonetschny Gambone
Elena Nakonetschny
Nicholas Nakonetschny
Valerie Polakow
George Ren
Antonina Ren & Eugene Ren
Irene & Sergei Arhipov
Sharon Burkett & Doug Yates
Sonja Lengel
James & Monia Pitra
Delores Marmaluk & Family
Jeanette Ruano
Larisa, Justin, & Chryse Heckman
Peter & Heather Ren & Family
Joseph Horoschak
Badri Ergemlidze
Lyudmila Grom

ST. MICHAEL'S ORTHODOX CHURCH Wilmington, DE

Rev. Andrew & Matushka Suzanna Diehl
Peter & Dolores Karawulan
Sofia M. Puit
Harry & Emily Wujik
Mary Tuneff
Bill & Alice Dryden
Marie Karawilan
Jim and Anne Riley & Family
Marianne, Paul, Barbara, & Julianna
Newmeyer
Olga Krylova
Paul, Vera, & Matt Chalfant
David & Christine Roberts & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Hojnicki, Sr.
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Hojnicki, Jr. & Family
Bill & Marie Herrman & Family
Peter & Elizabeth Melnik

Daily Devotions

MAY

1. Acts 2:38-43
2. Acts 3:1-8
3. Acts 3:11-16
4. Acts 5:12-20
5. Acts 3:19-26
6. Acts 4:1-10
7. Acts 4:13-22
8. Acts 4:23-31
9. Acts 5:1-11
10. Acts 5:21-33
11. Acts 6:1-7
12. Acts 6:8-7:5,47-60
13. Acts 8:5-17
14. Acts 8:18-25
15. Acts 8:26-39
16. Acts 8:40-9:19
17. Acts 9:20-31
18. Acts 9:32-42
19. Acts 10:1-16
20. Acts 10:21-33
21. Acts 14:6-18
22. Acts 10:44-11:10
23. Acts 10:44-11:10
24. Acts 12:1-11
25. Acts 11:19-26,29-30
26. Acts 12:12-17
27. Acts 12:25-13:12
28. Acts 13:13-24
29. Acts 14:20-27
30. Acts 15:5-34
31. Acts 15:35-41

- John 3:1-15
- John 2:12-22
- John 3:22-33
- John 20:19-31
- John 2:1-11
- John 3:16-21
- John 5:17-24
- John 5:24-30
- John 5:30-6:2
- John 6:14-27
- Mark 15:43-16:8
- John 4:46-54
- John 6:27-33
- John 6:35-39
- John 6:40-44
- John 6:48-54
- John 15:17-16:2
- John 5:1-15
- John 6:56-69
- John 7:1-13
- John 7:14-30
- John 8:12-20
- John 8:21-30
- John 8:31-42
- John 4:5-42
- John 8:42-51
- John 8:51-59
- John 6:5-14
- John 9:39-10:9
- John 10:17-28
- John 10:27-38

JULY

1. Rom. 7:14-8:2
2. Rom. 8:2-13
3. Rom. 8:22-27
4. Rom. 9:6-19
5. Rom. 3:28-4:3
6. Rom. 5:1-10
7. Rom. 9:18-33
8. Rom. 10:11-11:2
9. Rom. 11:2-12
10. Rom. 11:13-24
11. Rom. 11:25-36
12. Rom. 6:11-17
13. Rom. 6:18-23
- Heb. 13:7-16 (Fathers)
14. Rom. 12:4-5,15-21
15. Rom. 14:9-18
16. Rom. 15:7-16
17. Rom. 15:17-29
18. Rom. 16:1-16
19. Rom. 8:14-21
20. Rom. 10:1-10
21. Rom. 16:17-24
22. 1 Cor. 1:1-9
23. 1 Cor. 2:9-3:8
24. 1 Cor. 3:18-23
25. 1 Cor. 4:5-8
26. Rom. 9:1-5
27. Rom. 12:6-14
28. 1 Cor. 5:9-6:11
29. 1 Cor. 6:20-7:12
30. 1 Cor. 7:12-24
31. 1 Cor. 7:24-35

- Matt. 10:9-15
- Matt. 10:16-22
- Matt. 10:23-31
- Matt. 10:32-36; 11:1
- Matt. 7:24-8:4
- Matt. 6:22-33
- Matt. 11:2-15
- Matt. 11:16-20
- Matt. 11:20-26
- Matt. 11:27-30
- Matt. 12:1-8
- Matt. 8:14-23
- Matt. 8:5-13
- John 17:1-13 (Frs.)
- Matt. 12:9-13
- Matt. 12:14-16,22-30
- Matt. 12:38-45
- Matt. 12:46-13:3
- Matt. 13:4-9
- Matt. 9:9-13
- Matt. 8:28-9:1
- Matt. 13:10-23
- Matt. 13:24-30
- Matt. 13:31-36
- Matt. 13:36-43
- Matt. 13:44-54
- Matt. 9:18-26
- Matt. 9:1-8
- Matt. 13:54-58
- Matt. 14:1-13
- Matt. 14:35-15:11
- Matt. 15:12-21

JUNE

1. Acts 16:16-34
2. Acts 17:1-15
3. Acts 17:19-28
4. Acts 18:22-28
5. Acts 1:1-12 (Ascension)
6. Acts 19:1-8
7. Acts 20:7-12
8. Acts 20:16-18,28-36
9. Acts 21:8-14
10. Acts 21:26-32
11. Acts 23:1-11
12. Acts 25:13-19
13. Acts 27:1-44
14. Acts 28:1-31
15. Acts 2:1-11 (Pentecost)
16. Eph. 5:9-19
17. Rom. 1:1-7,13-17
18. Rom. 1:18-27
19. Rom. 1:28-2:9
20. Rom. 2:14-29
21. Rom. 1:7-12
22. Heb. 11:33-12:2
23. Rom. 2:28-3:18
24. Rom. 4:4-12
- Rom. 13:11-14:4 (St. John)
25. Rom. 4:13-25
26. Rom. 5:10-16
27. Rom. 5:17-6:2
28. Rom. 3:19-26
29. Rom. 2:10-16
- 2 Cor. 11:21-12:9 (Apostles)
30. Rom. 7:1-13

- John 9:1-38
- John 11:47-57
- John 12:19-36
- John 12:36-47
- Luke 24:36-53 (Ascension)
- John 14:1-11
- John 14:10-21
- John 17:1-13
- John 14:27-15:7
- John 16:2-13
- John 16:15-23
- John 16:23-33
- John 17:18-26
- John 21:15-25
- John 7:37-42; 8:12 (Pentecost)
- Matt. 18:10-20
- Matt. 4:25-5:13
- Matt. 5:20-26
- Matt. Matt. 5:27-32
- Matt. 5:33-41
- Matt. 5:42-48
- Matt. 10:32-33,37-38; 19:27-30
- Matt. 6:31-34; 7:9-11
- Matt. 7:15-21
- Luke 1:1-25,57-68,76,80 (St. John)
- Matt. 7:21-33
- Matt. 8:23-27
- Matt. 9:14-17
- Matt. 7:1-8
- Matt. 4:18-23
- Matt. 16:13-19 (Apostles)
- Matt. 9:36-10:8

AUGUST

1. 1 Cor. 7:35-8:7
2. Rom. 12:1-3
3. Rom. 15:1-7
4. 1 Cor. 9:13-18
5. 1 Cor. 10:5-12
6. 2 Peter 1:10-19 (Transfig.)
7. 1 Cor. 10:28-11:7
8. 1 Cor. 11:8-22
9. Rom. 13:1-10
10. 1 Cor. 1:10-18
11. 1 Cor. 11:31-12:6
12. 1 Cor. 12:12-26
13. 1 Cor. 13:4-14:5
14. 1 Cor. 14:6-19
15. Phil. 2:5-11 (Dormition)
16. Rom. 14:6-9
17. 1 Cor. 3:9-17
18. 1 Cor. 15:12-19
19. 1 Cor. 15:29-38
20. 1 Cor. 16:4-12
21. 2 Cor. 1:1-7
22. 2 Cor. 1:12-20
23. Rom. 15:30-33
24. 1 Cor. 4:9-16
25. 2 Cor. 2:4-15
26. 2 Cor. 2:14-3:3
27. 2 Cor. 3:4-11
28. 2 Cor. 4:1-6
29. 2 Cor. 4:13-18
- Acts 13:25-32 (St. John)
30. 1 Cor. 1:3-9
31. 1 Cor. 9:2-12

- Matt. 15:29-31
- Matt. 10:37-11:1
- Matt. 9:27-35
- Matt. 16:1-6
- Matt. 16:6-12
- Matt. 17:1-9 (Transf.)
- Matt. 16:24-28
- Matt. 17:10-18
- Matt. 12:30-37
- Matt. 14:14-22
- Matt. 18:1-11
- Matt.18:18-22;19:1-2,13-15
- Matt. 20:1-16
- Matt. 20:17-28
- Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28
- Matt. 15:32-39
- Matt. 14:22-34
- Matt. 21:18-22
- Matt. 21:23-27
- Matt. 21:28-32
- Matt. 21:43-46
- Matt. 22:23-33
- Matt. 17:24-18:4
- Matt. 17:14-23
- Matt. 23:13-22
- Matt. 23:23-28
- Matt. 23:29-38
- Matt. 24:13-28
- Matt. 24:27-33,42-51
- Mark 6:14-20 (St. John)
- Matt. 19:3-12
- Matt. 18:23-35

All in the Diocesan Family

BETHLEHEM

St. Nicholas Church

Baptism: Cameron Nicholas Brusko, son of Dr. & Mrs. Gregory Brusko, March 23.

Church school: The children held their annual procession of icons commemorating the Sunday of Orthodoxy. Fr. Michael Oleksa, from Kodiak, Alaska, met with the church school children, teachers and parents for a special presentation on Orthodoxy in Alaska.

On Saturday, March 22, five children participated in the sacrament of holy confession for the first time: Stephanie Danko, Jonalyn Kasander, Lydia Marsh, Alexander Roberts and Gregory Roman. All were presented with a Divine Liturgy prayer book in remembrance of this important day in their lives. A breakfast following the Divine Liturgy was held in their honor.

The Church School sponsored a two-day pysanky workshop on Sunday, April 6 and Sunday, April 13 in preparation for Pascha.

Special parish visitors: Fr. Michael Oleksa, Dean of St. Herman's Orthodox Seminary, Kodiak, Alaska visited the parish on the first Sunday of Lent. Fr. Michael gave the homily at the Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers, held at St. Nicholas's church and sponsored by the Lehigh Valley Brotherhood of Orthodox Clergy.

On the Second Sunday of Lent, Fr. Kwame Joseph Labi, rector of Holy Transfiguration Orthodox Cathedral, Accra, Ghana, West Africa, met with our Church school children and teachers for a presentation on the Orthodox Church in Africa. He delivered the homily and spoke to the faithful during coffee hour on the missionary work taking place in West Africa. The parish of St. Nicholas has a sister-parish relationship with the Cathedral in Accra, which began in 1988, when Fr. Kwame made his initial visit to our parish.

The fourth Sunday of Lent weekend was the parish retreat, led by Fr. Basil Summer. Fr. Basil joined us for a weekend of liturgical services, prayer and presentations centered on this year's dioc-

esan theme of Renewed Devotion in our parish and personal life.

Parish activities:

The St. Nicholas parish choir recently recorded a tape and CD, "Greatly Rejoice," consisting of hymns from the Compline and Matins of the Nativity Eve Vigil and a collection of traditional Russian Christmas carols in English and Slavonic. The tapes and CD are available for purchase through the church or from Nicholas Lezinsky, the choir director. The choir presented a concert of Nativity music on December 19 for our own church community, and gave another concert for Bethlehem First Night, the city-wide celebration on New Year's Eve.

The Lehigh Valley Sr. "O" Club sponsored its annual "Heartbeat Sunday" on

Cheesefare Sunday with a Health Fair. Blood pressure screenings and blood sugar testing were available for all parishioners following the Divine Liturgy and before the annual Blini Dinner. Proceeds of the dinner benefitted the National FROC Heartbeat Sunday Project.

A successful Fish Dinner was held on Friday, March 28, for the benefit of our sister-parish in Klin, Russia. The Klin sister-parish committee sponsored the dinner, which was open to the public.

Future activities include our annual "Russian Days" festival the weekend after Labor Day, September 5-7, 1997. Plan to join our annual parish festival.

The installation of the new icons for the parish will take place after the feast of Pentecost and be completed sometime in late July or early August.

BERWICK

Holy Annunciation Church



Archbishop Herman at the Anniversary Banquet

Holy Annunciation Orthodox Church honored V. Rev. Andrew and Matushka Maria Shuga for their 25 years of service to the parish and community on Sunday, February 16. Honored guests present at the dinner held at the Willow Run Inn were His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN and State Representative John Gordner. Presentations were made to Fr. Andrew by Rep. John Gordner, by Andrew Mihaly Jr. on behalf of Mayor Lou Biacchi and by Glenn Beckley, Jr. Board Member on behalf of the parishioners.

Continued on the next page.



Fr. Andrew and Matushka Maria Shuga

CATASAUQUA

Holy Trinity Church

The community Roast Beef Dinner was held on Saturday, March 1 in the parish hall. A parish bake sale was held in the Lehigh Valley Mall on March 21 and 22. The next community dinner is scheduled for May 3 from 4-6:30 p.m. in the parish hall.

Baptisms: Stephanie Lyn, daughter of Christina (Horoshak) and William Reynolds, September 14; Cassia Anna, daughter of Cheryl (Bachert) and Robert Steck, October 12; Blaise Vincent, son of Nikolya (Romanchik) and Vincent Fugazzotto, January 4; Madeline Nicole, daughter of Holly (Hlay) and Edward Bachert, January 25; Cidney Elizabeth, daughter of Danielle (Holdsworth) and David Bachert, April 12.

Chrismation: Susan Miller, November 17. Marriage: Peter Kandianis and Susan Miller, December 28.



Mr. and Mrs. Peter Kandianis

COALDALE

St. Mary's Church

The Church School children held their annual St. Nicholas Program on Sunday, Dec. 15. They portrayed "Twas the Night Before." The children were then visited by St. Nicholas who presented them with Christmas stockings filled with candy and gifts.

The ladies and men of the parish have been busy with the baking of paskas in March and April and preparing for the Annual Fish Dinner in April.

Summer parish events: Chinese Auction, May 18; Twenty-fifth Anniversary of Ordination to the Holy Priesthood for Father Paul Borick, June 22; Chicken BBQ and Bake Sale, July 19; and Annual Patron Saint Dinner/Dance, Sept. 21.

Baptism: Julia Alexis, daughter of



St. Nicholas Day Program

MaryEllen and Douglas Rudenko, March 2. First Confession: Allysa Vavra, February 8.

DALLAS

St. Andrew's Church

Archbishop Herman together with the Pastor, Fr. Michael Lepa celebrated the final Liturgy in St. Andrews. Due to financial concerns the parish disbanded. All of the faithful have joined nearby churches and the property has been turned over to the diocese. A dinner was held during which the parishioners shared their Christian fellowship together for that last time as a parish community. A special thank you was given to Fr. Michael for the many years that he labored in caring as a pastor for the souls entrusted to his spiritual care.



A visit from St. Nicholas



Faithful of St. Andrew's in Dallas

DUNDAFF

St. John the Baptist Church



Fr. Dennis Swencki receives the Gold Cross on March 1st in South Canaan.

St. John's Church will hold its Annual Mother's Day Dinner on May 11 and its Annual Fall Dinner on September 21. For ticket information call 222-3831 or 282-6734.

HARRISBURG

Christ the Savior Church

The annual parish food festival and picnic will be held on Sunday, June 8. The 35th anniversary of the founding of the parish will be celebrated the week-end of October 17-19, 1998 when the icon murals written by Father Theodore Jurewicz will be blessed.

Baptisms: Nikita, son of Marina (Kucherenko) and Vladimir Borodianski, November 26; Natnael, son of Azeb (Estefanos) and Michael Mekonnen, January 25; Larissa, son of Marianne (Allen) and Timothy McMahon, February 25; and Evan, son of Angela (Mioff) and John McGreevy, March 2.

Chrismations: David, Joanne and Alyssa Nesko, March 22.

JERMYN

St. Michael's Church

St. Michael's Scholarship Committee sponsored a bus trip to see the live passion play in Union City, New Jersey, on Saturday, March 15 and on May 7 (sold out) to see the play "Phantom of the Opera" in New York City.

St. Michael's Altar Society, together with the Hall Committee, made and sold

GRADYVILLE

St. Herman of Alaska

The Annual Christmas Bazaar was held in December. In January, the Church School children performed the Yolka. The traditional story of the Nativity was presented with many of the younger children having their first roles in the play.

Summer events: Spring festival, May 17 and 18.



Annual Yolka

over 1,600 pascha breads.

St. Tikhon's Seminary choir sang the responses at the Presanctified Liturgy celebrated on Wednesday of the Week of the Cross.

The V. Rev. Michael Dahulich was the main celebrant and speaker at the Presanctified liturgy for the fourth Wednesday in Great Lent.

MINERSVILLE

SS. Peter and Paul Church

Summer events: Church School pic-

nic at Knoebel's Grove, July 23.

Marriage: Brian and Ludmilla Sidorova, February 16. Ludmilla is a recent immigrant from Kazakhstan.

OLYPHANT

St. Nicholas Church

On January 26, His Eminence Archbishop Herman presented the relics of St. Patriarch Tikhon to the Church. St. Tikhon consecrated the Church in 1904.

Continued on the next page.



Archbishop Herman presents relics to the Church

OLD FORGE
St. Michael's Church

St. Nicholas made his annual visit to St. Michael's at a breakfast that followed Divine Liturgy on December 8. Fr. David Mahaffey welcomed St. Nicholas who then greeted each of the parish's children and presented them with treats donated by St. Michael's Men's Club. The breakfast was prepared by the Breakfast Committee.

The annual yolka was presented on December 29. This year the children learned about St. Michael's Miracle at Colossae. The play was written and directed by Anna Marie Black, based on the writings of St. Nicholai of Zhicha.

St. Michael's Church School, the Sisterhood, parishioners and friends traveled to Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania to attend a performance of "The Miracle of Christmas" at Sight and Sound, Inc. on December 30.

Baptisms: Adam James, son of Debra and Adam Drechin III, January 22 and Olivia Leah, daughter of Debra and Peter Keslosky, February 16.

Chrismation: Samantha Mahoney, December 15.

PHILADELPHIA
St. Stephen's Cathedral



Archpriest Daniel Geeza make a presentation to Archbishop Herman on behalf of St. Tikhon's Seminary during a recent visit

Christ is Risen!
Indeed He is Risen!



Gramotas presented to George and Jennie Grabania and Michael and Marie Grabania, and an icon to Dr. Stephen Rebar



St. Nicholas Day in Old Forge



Faithful of the cathedral

SHILLINGTON

St. Herman of Alaska Church

The children of St. Herman's parish presented their annual Nativity Program on Sunday, December 22. Each class, under the direction of its teacher, offered a short presentation on the Christmas theme.

On Sunday, January 5, over 40 members of the parish gathered for a "covered dish" Holy Supper in preparation of Holy Theophany. Following the lenten meal, the Vigil for Theophany with the Great Blessing of Water was celebrated.

Chrismation: Mrs. Ruth Ruth, December 22.



Ruth Ruth being chrismated in Shillington



St. Nicholas greets Joseph and Marie Reba



Annual Christmas program in Shillington

SIMPSON

St. Basil's Church

The Annual Chicken Barbecue will be held on Saturday, June 21 at the Grattan Singer Social Hall from 4-7 p.m.

ST. CLAIR

St. Mary's Church

St. Mary's Orthodox Church will hold a Chicken Barbecue on May 18.

WILLIAMSPORT

Holy Cross Church

The Holy Cross children presented "Scrambling for Christmas" in December. It included the Holy Cross Tykes in their debut performance. Members of the Teen Group had their term projects published in the parish bulletin. All the children were presented with icons of the Incarnation as a remembrance. At the

SOUTH CANAAN

St. Tikhon's Monastery Church



Deacon David Fox ordained to the holy priesthood on February 2

Continued on the next page.

parish meeting on January 26, the parishioners adopted a three-phase beautification project to include a new iconostasis and iconography. Plans were also discussed for the observance of the 20th anniversary of the parish slated for November 2, 1997.

Holy Cross was the site of an observance of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on January 29, sponsored by the United Churches of Lycoming County. Some seventy-five visitors joined in singing the Akathist "Glory to God For All Things," followed by a discussion on hope and healing, led by Fr. Daniel Kovalak. The event focused especially on two anniversaries: a year since the floods that devastated the area, and six months since the tragedy of Flight 800 when 25 local residents were killed. "Orthodoxy 101" was the title of an introductory session in the history, teaching and worship of the Church held on February 19. Seventeen people attended, most of whom had no previous connection to the Church. Several are pursuing additional classes of instruction.

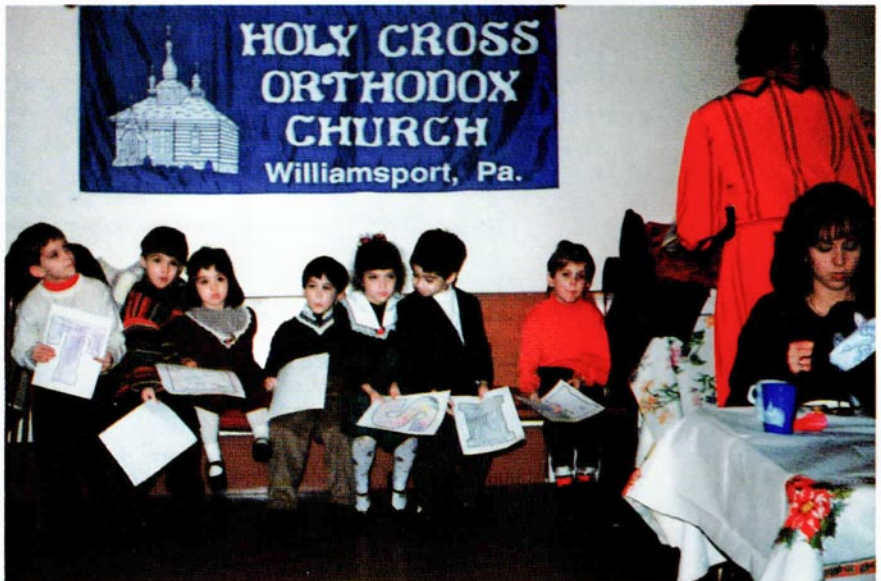
Holy Cross published a series of eight weekly newspaper advertisements in the Williamsport *Sun-Gazette* in connection with Lent. The columns featured sermonettes by Fr. Daniel Kovalak. Costs of the ads were underwritten by parishioners. Other special Lenten Projects included special offerings for local charitable agencies, canned goods collection for St. Anthony's Center, and coin box offerings for the Orthodox Christian Mission Center. "Return from Exile" was the theme of a parish retreat held on March 29. Participants reflected upon the trials and tribulations of the Prophet Jeremiah and his Lamentations over Jerusalem. Discussions centered on the parable of the Prodigal Son who returned to his Father's house from his exile in "a far country." The retreat concluded with supper and Vespers.

Chrismation: Barnabas (Stephen) Fravel, January 5.

Our next issue of
Alive in Christ
is our annual graduates issue.



Fr. Theodore Orzolek elevated to Archpriest on March 1



Christmas program in Williamsport

WILKES-BARRE
Holy Trinity Church

Lt. Col. Sandra Serafin, daughter of Steve and Betty Serafin, has assumed command of the 15th Operations Support Squadron at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii.



Lt. Col. Sandra Serafin

WILKES-BARRE
Holy Resurrection Cathedral



Archbishop Herman and the Tamburitzans following the Annual Performance on February 9

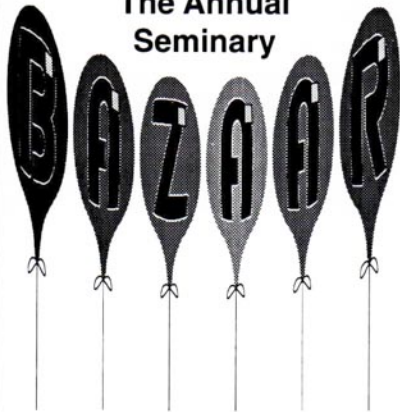
1st Annual Businessmen's Reception

Michael Pasonick presented Archbishop Herman with \$6,000 from the proceeds of the First Annual Businessmen's Reception held in Wilkes-Barre on Sunday, January 26.



Michael Pasonick welcomes guests at Businessmen's Reception

The Society of the Friends of St. Tikhon's Seminary Will Sponsor The Annual Seminary



August 24, 1997

on the grounds of St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church Nanticoke, Pa.



Michael Pasonick presents check to Archbishop

*You are Cordially Invited to Attend the
St. Tikhon's Seminary Grand Banquet
Celebrating the
55th Annual Academic Commencement*

on

Sunday, May 25, 1997

4:30 p.m. - Cocktails / 5:30 p.m. - Dinner and Dance

At

Fiorelli's

1501 Main Street, Peckville, Pennsylvania

\$35.00 per ticket

For Banquet Reservations, please contact

Mrs. Florence M. Boyko, Reservations Chairperson

211 Summit Pointe, Scranton, PA 18508

Phone: (717) 343-2232

Checks must accompany all reservations.

Please make checks payable to:

St. Tikhon's Seminary

Reservations close May 15, 1997

AREA HOTEL AND MOTEL ACCOMODATIONS

The following listing reflects availability of rooms for Saturday and Sunday, May 24 and 25, 1997, and reflects in most cases a special rate for Pilgrims and Guests. Therefore you are requested to call the hotel / motel of your choice as soon as possible and identify yourself as a St. Tikhon's pilgrim / guest. (Please make your hotel and motel reservations early)

Victoria Inns
Route 315,
Pittston Township, PA 18640
(717) 655-1234
Single: \$80.00 Double: \$65.00

Oliveri's Crystal Lake Hotel & Motor Lodge
On Crystal Lake, R.D. 1, Carbondale, PA 18407
(717) 222-3181; (717) 876-1931
Single: \$45.00 Double: \$63.00

Comfort Inn
Hamlin, PA
(800) 523-4426
Single: \$59.00 Double: \$59.00

Holiday Inn
Dunmore, PA (717) 343-4771
Single: \$79.00 Double: \$89.00

Fife & Drum Motel
Honesdale, PA (717) 253-1392
Single: \$39.00 Double: \$49.00

St. Tikhon's Bookstore
P O Box B / St. Tikhon's Road
South Canaan, PA 18459
Phone (888) 454-6678 Fax (717)937-3100

Spring Cross Sale!!!



New Paschal Compact Discs from St. Tikhon's Bookstore



CD 1000 - *The Liturgy of Orthodox Holy Week*

A heartwarming collection of hymns from Holy Week and Pascha in the Russian Orthodox Church. Sung by the Ural Choir under the direction of Vladislav Novik. Sung in Slavonic.

\$17.95



CD 1001 - *Easter in the Russian Orthodox Church*

Selections from the Paschal service sung by the Moscow Patriarchate Choir, under the direction of Hieromonk Amvrosy. All Selections sung in Church Slavonic.

\$17.95

Ninety-Third Annual Pilgrimage
St. Tikhon's Orthodox Monastery — South Canaan, Pennsylvania
May 23-26, 1997

The Brotherhood of the Monastery of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk, America's first Orthodox Monastery, located in the village of South Canaan, Pennsylvania in the beautiful Pocono mountains, invites you to gather with our Venerable Hierarchs, Beloved Clergy, and Faithful Orthodox Christians to celebrate the 93rd Annual Pilgrimage.

The Pilgrimage this year is dedicated to the memory of one of the great lights of our Church, St. Innocent, the Enlightener of the Aleuts and Apostle to the Americas, who was born two centuries ago this year, and now stands before the throne of the Almighty God, praying for us. Join us in prayer and Christian fellowship as we honor St. Innocent and ask his hierarchical intercessions!

Pilgrimage Schedule

Friday, May 23, 1997

- 4:00 p.m. Formal Opening of the Pilgrimage — Vespers and Matins—Monastery Church
- 6:00 p.m. Procession around the Monastery Church and Akathist to St. Tikhon of Zadonsk, followed by the veneration of his relics

Saturday, May 24, 1997

- 9:00 p.m. Hierarchical Divine Liturgy
- 2:00 p.m. The 55th Annual Academic Commencement of St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary—Seminary Auditorium
- 4:00 p.m. All-Night Vigil—Monastery Church

Sunday, May 25, 1997

- 9:00 a.m. Hierarchical Divine Liturgy
- 4:00 p.m. Vespers and Matins—Monastery Church*

Monday, May 26, 1997

- 7:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy—Monastery Church*
- 9:15 a.m. Pilgrims' Procession to the Monastery, Greeting of the Primate and Bishops, and vesting of the Main Celebrant
- 10:00 a.m. Hierarchical Divine Liturgy—Pavilion
- 2:00 p.m. Molieben to the Most Holy Theotokos and Anointing of the Sick, Infirm, and all Pilgrims—Monastery Bell Tower
- 4:00 p.m. Vespers and Matins—Monastery Church

*Priests will be available for confessions at these times.



Plan now to organize a bus from your parish or group.