

Christ is Born!

Glorify Him!

Your Diocese

Alive in Christ

The Magazine of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, Orthodox Church in America Volume XVI, No. 3 Winter 2000



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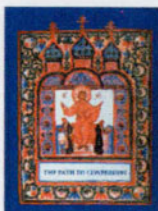


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Edited by Linda Safran

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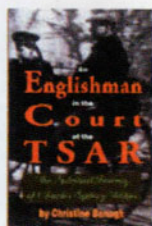


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Fr. Artemy Vladimirov

Young reader, we wish you fruitful reading! If it is granted you to reap an abundant harvest, and if this book should rouse you to action—that is, help you to prepare yourself for Confession and Holy Communion—that will be the best possible reward for its author and for all those who worked to bring it to God's light.

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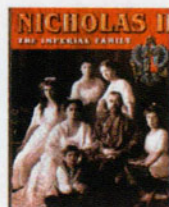


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The Spiritual Journey of Charles Sydney Gibbes

Christine Benagh

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Christ is Born!

Glorify Him!



To the God-loving Pastors, Monks and all devout Children of our Diocesan Family,

This year's feast of our Lord's Nativity is, by the calendar, the two thousandth anniversary of the Nativity according to the Flesh of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ. Yes, the second millennial anniversary of Christ's birth is now upon us, in this 2000th year of our Lord. The occasion rightly adds a special joy and radiance to the annual measureless joy of the Christmas season.

In becoming incarnate — in taking on Himself human nature — He did so for all ages. Therefore, the significance of the Nativity is that ours is the Christian era. Christ has entered human life and recreated mankind; the life of humanity is now filled with Christ; for truly "God is with us."

Today as 2000 years ago, there is in this world, "no room at the inn." The world still rejects the merciful, saving gift of the Father in sending his Son. It still rejects the Father as well, for "he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me." It is up to us, as His disciples, to receive Him, to let Him be fully formed, fully incarnated within our own lives, that we may truly be that light of the world that He charged us to be — and in so doing, draw all to Him Who is the true Light.

We pray that the joy of this 2,000th anniversary of our Savior's birth, and every blessing that it brings, may be yours, now and in the third Christian millennium.

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

With love in Christ,

+ Herman

+HERMAN
Archbishop of Philadelphia
and Eastern Pennsylvania

Nativity of Christ, 2000

Your Diocese

Alive in Christ

Volume XVI Number 3 Winter 2000
The Official Magazine of the
Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania
Orthodox Church in America

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The Cover Icon

The Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In center, Christ, with his Mother, is worshipped by angels, in a cavern which has become like heaven. At right and below, shepherds with sheep, and beasts watch the scene (cf. Isa. 1:3: "The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel does not know Me"). Below, ctr. rt.: St. Joseph sits apart since he is not the father, & is tempted by devil to doubt the virgin birth. Below ctr. lf.: washing of the Child. Edge of icon, clockwise from top lf.: an angel points the Magi towards the star, which stands over the cave; connecting ray shows its heavenly origin; Magi depart by another way; the flight into Egypt (young man at lf. is Joseph's son, future Apostle James, 1st Bishop of Jerusalem); St. Elizabeth hides in cleft rock from a pursuing soldier, while she holds son John, the future Baptist; her husband & John's father, St. Zacharias, is slain in the temple (Mt. 23:35); slaughter of Holy Innocents; above it, a house of lamentation (cf. Mt. 2:18); bott. lf., Herod orders soldiers to slay the children; ctr. lf., an angel points out the event; another warns Joseph in a dream; Magi worship Christ and present gifts in a house (Mt. 2:11).

Your Diocese Alive in Christ

Produced by the Publications Department of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, Orthodox Church in America (Diocesan Center, South Canaan, Pennsylvania 18459 (570) 937-4686), under the direction of His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN.

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Circulation Fr. Leo Poore

Editorial and Subscription Office: *Alive in Christ*, Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, South Canaan, Pennsylvania 18459
Phone (res.): (570) 876-1241.

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

Deadline for the next issue of *Your Diocese Alive in Christ* is March 15, 2001. Please submit all articles (typed) pictures, parish news, etc., on disc to *Alive in Christ*, Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, Box 130, South Canaan, PA 18459, or e-mail to library@stots.edu

Delegates Gather in Old Forge for Thirty-seventh Diocesan Assembly



Delegates register

St. Michael's Church, Old Forge was the site of the Thirty-Seventh Diocesan Assembly. The Divine Liturgy was celebrated by His Eminence Archbishop Herman, Archpriests Vladimir Fetcho, Michael Lepa, and John Kowalczyk, Priest David Mahaffey, and Deacon Alexei Klimitchev. Fr. Daniel Kovalak led a choir comprised of the parish choir, clergy and lay delegates. Immediately following liturgy, a molieben was celebrated entreating the Lord that He would bless the good intentions and efforts of His servants with the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Delegates gathered for a continental breakfast and registration following services. The Thirty-Seventh Diocesan Assembly was opened with prayer and the blessing of Archbishop Herman at 11:30 a.m. The agenda was read and accepted. The credentials committee reported the composition of the council: one hierarch, twenty-two clergy delegates, twenty-eight lay delegates, six alternates, three observers, one diocesan council representative, and one guest. The following assembly officers were elected: Fr. Vladimir Fetcho, clergy vice-chairman; Mr. Peter Bohlender, lay vice-chairman; Fr. David Shewczyk, clergy secretary

and Mrs. Marie Proch, lay secretary. The minutes of the thirty-sixth assembly were approved.

Before offering his report, Archbishop Herman welcomed the delegates and led the assembly in singing "memory eternal" for Fr. George Pawlush, who fell asleep in the Lord in September. His Eminence reviewed the vital statistics for the diocese, noting the retirements and changes in clergy assignments. Parish celebrations in Minersville, Edwardsville and Wilmington, Delaware were noted as well as building programs in Simpson, Jermyn, Williamsport and Bethlehem. The renovations to the diocesan center in South Canaan were completed and blessed.

Archbishop Herman talked about the many activities that highlighted diocesan life in the past year. A successful clergy retreat was held. The diocesan Department of Religious Education held a good and informative church school conference. The only disappointment of the conference was that more people did not attend. The youth summer camp and annual women's retreat were successful and well attended. A men's retreat is planned for next year. The time and speaker will be announced. The

Memorial Day celebration and canonization of St. Raphael was a joyous occasion. Many of the Antiochian Orthodox faithful participated in the celebration because of the canonization. It is hoped that they will return for future pilgrimages. His Eminence spoke about the hundredth anniversary of St. Tikhon's Monastery, to be celebrated in 2005. St. Tikhon's Monastery is the oldest Orthodox monastery in North America. Many saints have walked upon the monastery grounds. His Eminence said that we should begin planning now for a fitting celebration for the monastery.

Archbishop Herman then discussed events in the Orthodox Church in America. His Beatitude Metropolitan Theodosius is planning to invite the new primate of the Japanese Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Daniel. The Holy Synod of Bishops will be meet the third week in October. His Eminence announced that he will be relieved of his duties as acting treasurer of the O.C.A. on December 31, 2000. Candidates for both secretary and treasurer of the O.C.A. will be considered during the next meeting of the holy synod. The pension board is doing very well as it has

Continued on the next page

37th Diocesan Assembly

Continued from page 3

reached the milestone of \$20 million dollars. The board is working to improve pension benefits, especially to the widowed matushki. The life insurance program for clergy is under review. All clergy should be enrolled in this program in order for it to be successful. Although there is pressure for the rates to rise, they will remain the same until March or April. His Eminence pointed out that the diocesan health insurance program is still good in spite of its higher rates. He also noted that the personal assistance program for clergy and their families is being used. He encouraged the use of this program when it is needed.

His Eminence encouraged the parishes to begin preparing for the 13th All-American Council to be held in Orlando, Fla. in 2002. Every parish should now begin setting aside funds to be sure that they will be properly represented at the council rather than waiting until the last minute. He also announced a pastoral conference to be held at St. Tikhon's Monastery / Seminary June 5-7, 2001. In making this announcement, Archbishop Herman talked about the lack of new clergy. He encouraged the delegates to encourage potential candidates for the holy priesthood from their own parishes. The seminary enrollments are low at this time, but late vocations seem to be growing. He pointed out that while the seminaries are welcoming many new students who are recent converts to Orthodoxy, those born into the Orthodox faith are lacking. Fortunately, many of the retirement age clergy are still willing to serve. Our Orthodox Church will have a great shortage of clergy if all who are eligible

for retirement do so. If this should happen, smaller parishes would have to share priests or attend services at neighboring parishes. It is hoped that this situation can be avoided by encouraging new clergy vocations.

Archbishop Herman spoke about the assessments and fair-share giving. The parish census remains frozen as of the

funds are available. He also called for a line-item in the Orthodox Church in America budget for clergy education.

The diocese has completed a five-year program for spiritual growth. It is time to evaluate what has been accomplished in those five years. All of the programs during those five years were announced and well-publicized. His



Opening service of thanksgiving

1999 numbers if the parish census has decreased. This is a difficult situation for small parishes especially since these parishes contain many senior citizens. The diocese will have a parish council conference this summer to discuss this situation. His Eminence said that there is no wasting of funds in the Church. In fact, programs are often cut in order to stay within budget. The Church still must fulfill her obligations here and abroad and we need to be sure that the necessary

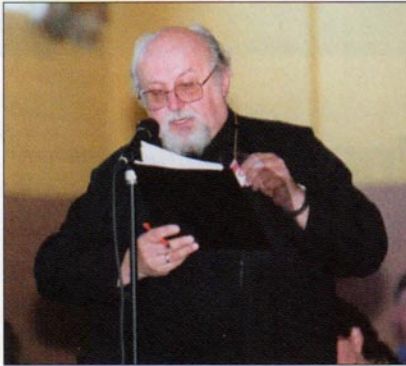
Eminence encouraged the faithful to ask themselves if this call for spiritual growth has been taken seriously. He reminded the faithful of the obligation to preach and teach the Lord's word so that others would be led to the Lord. We must ask ourselves what we can do for the building up of the Church. He encouraged the delegates to go to the monthly and annual parish meetings to discuss the life of the Church. This obligation belongs to everyone. His Eminence noted



Father Daniel Kovalak directing



Archbishop Herman delivers archpastoral report



Fr. Joseph Martin addresses Assembly



Gene Haverlak gives auditor's report



Delegate Taissia Drobish



Fr. Vladimir Fetcho, clergy vice-chairman



Delegates listen attentively

the lack of people willing to serve on the parish council and the lack of choir directors on the parishes. He encouraged strong educational programs for both the youth and adults. He talked about the need and value of a strong family life by making Christ present in the household. If He is present here, then He will be with us at work, school or wherever we go. We must ask ourselves what impression we make to others outside of the Church. He reminded the faithful that the Church will grow when we grow spiritually and this must be our goal. His Eminence encouraged the parishes to combine their resources with those of other neighboring Orthodox Churches in order to bring more people into the Orthodox Church.

The diocesan budget of \$159,420.00 was discussed and passed. The budget does not include an increase in the diocesan assessment for 2001.

Archbishop Herman talked about his experiences in Moscow for the consecration of Christ the Savior Cathedral and the glorification of over 1,000 new martyrs and saints. All of the Orthodox Churches were represented during this great celebration. His Eminence pointed out that not all of the Orthodox Churches recognize the autocephaly of the Orthodox Church in America, but it appears that this situation is changing with time. Many of the Orthodox Churches are beginning to look for the support and cooperation of the Orthodox Church in America. Our Metropolitan Theodosius has been invited to the Orthodox Churches in Albania, Greece, Romania

and Poland. We need to pray to the Lord that He will unite us. His Eminence also has received many good comments about St. Tikhon's Monastery and Seminary, our diocese, publications and retreats from people outside of the Orthodox Church in America.

Archbishop Herman concluded his report by offering his personal gratitude to all who continue to work for the glory of the Lord. He asked the delegates to continue to give of themselves for their own personal spiritual growth and the spiritual growth of their households and parishes, so that we can stand before the Lord and receive that gift that we hope for.

Fr. Fetcho thanked His Eminence for his report and he thanked him for his continual love and concern for all the diocesan faithful.

Throughout the remainder of the assembly, the delegates received and considered the reports of the diocesan council secretary, diocesan treasurer, diocesan auditors, diocesan deanery reports and the various department reports including religious education, missions, publications / public relations, youth, insurance and the metropolitan council report. Many of these reports have been published and included in a packet sent to the delegates for review prior to the assembly.

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In closing the assembly, Archbishop Herman thanked the host parish, St. Michael's for their efforts in hosting the assembly. He encouraged the delegates to continue their efforts for their salvation and the building up of the parishes and the Church.

—Archpriest David Shewczyk

The Time for Self-Examination Are We Doing Our Share In Building Up Christ's Holy Church?

The Most Reverend HERMAN
Archbishop of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania



On October 3, 2000, after giving this lecture, His Eminence was presented with a bouquet of 30 roses and carnations in recognition of the successful completion of 30 years of the annual lecture series which was initiated by him.

His Eminence Archbishop HERMAN

Glory be to Jesus Christ! You will hear nothing new this evening. All of us, including myself, will be reminded of our obligations as Christians, as followers of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Things that we have known, truly for all of our life, and yet things that perhaps we have ignored and not followed to the best of our ability.

We know that over the last five or six or ten years we have heard much concerning the condition of the Church — the shortage of hierarchs; shortage of priests; the shortage of deacons, choir directors, church school teachers; the decrease in the number of people that belong to our Church; and also that so many

of our people — even though they are members of our Church, members of the parish, for one reason or another choose not to attend church, not to actively participate in church. We want to blame all kinds of people. We want to blame the secular world; we want to blame the society that we live in; we want to blame the devil; we even want to — there are even so many people that actually blame the Lord. They blame God for the condition that they are in. Sometimes they hesitate to give Him credit for all the good things that He has given to them; but just as soon as things don't go right, just as soon as they have given in to temptations of the devil, it is then that

they want to blame none other than God.

Sadly, we hear children say, "I hate my parents — they are terrible!" Sadly, we also hear parents say "I hate my children — why did the Lord give me such children to take care of?" and go through life and we want to blame absolutely everyone else — but ourselves. They feel that everyone else is wrong; we are the only ones that have the answers, and we are the only ones who are suffering. Many times because of this feeling, we want to abandon the teachings of Christ, sometimes we even stop going to church; and we even choose to stay in that fallen state, thinking that we are having some form of enjoyment but we only add to

our own misery.

Fortunately, for each and every one of us, as one of God's children, regardless of who we may feel has abandoned us, whether we feel that it's our mother or father, brother or sister, some friend that we met along the way — we know that there is one that doesn't abandon us, and that is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He remains loving, merciful and compassionate; perhaps disappointed in seeing that we as his children are not being obedient to his commandments, to his teachings; but he remains there, with the very same love that he had right from the very beginning and will always have, in order that his one desire will be fulfilled, and that is that not one of his children will perish, but instead that they will gain eternal life.

We know that God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to come down upon earth, to live as true God and true man, to take upon himself the sins of man; to die on the Cross; to resurrect, to ascend into heaven and even there he didn't stop, and he sent the Holy Spirit that indeed the Church would be guided, that we would be protected by the Holy Spirit. He has done all of this only because he wants to make sure that we as his children would be obedient to his commandments and obedient to his teachings. He established the Church and it is to this Church that we all belong.

For the time being, our concern is going to be about the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania — it's the area that I know the best because it's my own clergy, my own spiritual children that I have had the opportunity to watch and to guide, to see some fall and to see some gain; and we know that five years ago all of us were invited — clergy and laity alike — to go on a spiritual journey, a spiritual journey that should in the end, if we are obedient to that which we set before ourselves, should make a change within our life, to transform our life, and to actually transform our communities and to lead all to God's heavenly kingdom.

We know that the first year we dedicated to spiritual growth, wherein we said that spiritually, individually, would do whatever we possibly could personally, in order to gain in that spiritual life that perhaps we have lost or perhaps become weakened. The next year we decided to strengthen

our commitment. We decided to strengthen the Lord's presence in the midst of His people. And that could be done quite simply, if only we walk in the midst of his people also and they can see nothing other than our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ — after all, we were created in his likeness and image — in the words that we utter, the deeds that we perform. They also will be able to feel Christ himself.

The following year we decided to dedicate to renewed devotion: that we would choose to pray more fervently in our own homes, that we would add to the prayer life that we already had; that we would participate not only as a family in our home, to pray together, to share the Lord's love with each other, but es-



pecially that we would carry that even into our parishes, into the churches to which we belong; and that we would participate in as many divine services as we possibly could; that if we weren't attending vespers we would start attending; if our church didn't have vespers, we would see to it that we would speak to our priest and say that we must begin, we need to have the service, because we want to grow spiritually; that we would attend the akathist, we would attend whatever service was held. If there was a mission service that was being held, especially during Great Lent, that we would make sure that we put it into our calendar, that we would participate, that we would be a part of all of that.

We also agreed the following year that we would become involved in continued education, that we ourselves would do whatever we possibly could,

perhaps read the scriptures more daily at home; that we would attend whatever lectures, retreats, were offered, whether it was within the parish, within the deanery, the diocese, the church here at South Canaan, or what have you. That we would put that also on our schedule, that that would be so important, more important than anything else that we would attempt to do, because we were concerned about growing spiritually, about transforming our life.

Last but not least, we said that we would have that evangelistic outreach: that through our own good life people would see the Christ that we love, the Christ that we imitate, and they would choose to follow us, and that we would be so kind as to even offer an invitation

for them to come into our church, and to participate, and to witness the services there. We asked parishes, perhaps to share choirs, and we're grateful that there are some churches within our diocese that have done just that. And I'm sure that by having those concerts that many people not only came into the church but they became interested in the church, that in the end it would also make a change within their life.

As we entered into that spiritual pilgrimage we also said that we would begin in Bethlehem, and we would end in Bethlehem. Not only would we begin with the Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ but throughout that entire journey that we would travel to only one place, and that is to be with Him and that it would remain with us for the rest of our life. Now we have that opportunity

Continued on the next page

Time for Self-Examination

Continued from page 7

to make that examination for ourselves. We can only remind ourselves of that which we said we were going to undertake, and then to grade ourselves as to just what we did.

Spiritual growth is not ours merely for the asking. First of all, we need to be convinced ourselves that we want to grow spiritually. If we are fair with ourselves, we'll see that most of the times we choose not to go in that direction. We choose to go in another area, something that is going to give us some peace and comfort and joy temporarily, rather than to sacrifice whatever is necessary in order to grow spiritually, in order to walk away from any sinfulness that may have taken hold of us.

Do we blame others for our lack of growth spiritually? Do we blame those within our own household, within our community? Do we blame the church, the parish that we belong to? Do we blame it on the priest? Do we even come to the conclusion that he is not doing enough as our spiritual father? We need to ask ourselves what measures have we taken in order to make that change within our life — personally, what have we done? Any growth that we may have witnessed within ourselves — is it visible to others, or is it just a matter of pride on our part that we feel that we decide to go to church, say, tomorrow, and is that considered our spiritual growth? We need to examine ourselves: was there any spiritual growth within our home? Did we make that spiritual growth come about, or did we just ignore it and do nothing about it? We need to ask ourselves, Did we strengthen the Lord's presence in the midst of His people?

We know that there is no perfect household. There is no perfect marriage. All children are not perfect. We know that there will always be disagreements, for one reason or another. But have we done anything within our daily lives, to make sure that in that household that even if there were arguments, if there were disagreements, that rather than bringing about separation, rather than bringing about hatred, that we really turned to none other than the Lord and allowed his law to be the rule within the house, when it comes to the conclusion about what we really need to do.

We know that indeed if all of us would do that, we wouldn't have the suffering, the unhappiness, the broken homes, the children that feel that they've been totally abandoned by their loved ones beginning with their parents. Have we had a positive effect on the lives of those people we come in contact with? Do we merely proclaim ourselves to be Christians and to be members of the Church, or it visible by the things that we do, by the things that we say? This examination we must give to ourselves daily. We know that indeed we need to renew our devotion, and we need to ask ourselves: Do we pray more today, even if it's only for minute longer, than we did five years ago, when we started? Do we attend more divine services today



than we did when we started? Have we encouraged that even in our own families there would be a prayer life, that we would take time out even though it's difficult?

We know that many times because sometimes both parents work, they work different shifts, and sometimes it's difficult to get the family together for a meal. But was an effort made, that whether it be for breakfast or whether it be for lunch or somewhere during the day, that we were able to fit as a family, and to really reveal our love unto the Lord, our love for each other? Did this change come about, and did it lead us to go more frequently to the sacrament of holy confession, and to the sacrament of holy communion? And to do that with much meaning and to do it with one intention in mind, that our life would change. Not to merely get in line, whether it be for confession or holy communion, just because

someone else is doing it, but especially that there would be a change within our life. That answer can be given by ourselves, by if it has made a permanent change within our lives. If it has caused us to walk away from all that is evil, then we know that absolutely we have made the right change, and we are going in the direction of our Lord.

We need to answer for ourselves, what have we done in support of continuing education, both for ourselves as well as for others? Was our presence there in order to support those also that were coming to learn about the Lord, to gain more knowledge about his Church, and more knowledge about salvation? We need to ask ourselves, what did we really do to reach out to others?

And naturally we need to start with those who are nearest and dearest to us. Whether we have a mother or a father, brother or sister or a relative or friend, that for some reason or another has gone astray, away from the teachings of Christ, have become spiritually lazy, have we done anything to reach out to that person? Have we done anything to reach out to those people that are also searching for the true Church, those people that are searching for salvation? Have our actions caused them to at least begin to investigate, to see what can be done within their own life, in order to not only bring others in, but in the process to strengthen themselves?

We can see from all of this that there are two areas that must be very, very important in our life. The family, first of all. We know that if every man or woman that are united in the sacrament of holy matrimony — they would know that if they take it seriously that they immediately establish a little church within their home. The establishment of that church means that absolutely they will be obedient to God's commandments, to his teachings, and they will fulfill the responsibility of being good parents, leading and guiding their children in only one direction, and that is the heavenly kingdom. It doesn't mean that they will never have an unkind word to say for each other, the parents, or the parents to the children, but even through all that process that in the end they would realize that the Church and Christ is far more important than anything else, and they have an obligation. If only each time that there was an argument, rather than speak

immediately of separation, to speak of divorce — we know the number of times that that takes place. And we need to examine why is it that it took place. If we were not able to sit and to discuss those things ourselves, and we know that we were united in the sacrament of holy matrimony, that we were not united by ourselves, and not by some stranger, but we were united by a priest, a priest that became our spiritual father. Yet were we willing to turn to him, each time there was a problem between husband and wife, parent and children, or did we actually let it go, keep it to ourselves, and then it was too late to call upon the priest, and sometimes even to wrongfully put the blame on the Church and on the priest, that they didn't do enough in order to help the situation?

We need to make sure that within the homes, the conduct of the parents is always one that is becoming of a Christian, one that is becoming of a husband and wife and parent to their children. As difficult as it may be, it must be a condition that is there. If for some reason or another, one or the other has fallen, we cannot let the day end without making peace with each other, and most importantly, making peace with none other than the Lord — because we have not been faithful to His commandments, to His teaching. We need to make sure that we approach these problems in a manner that is going to be rewarding for all concerned — not selfishly for myself, but for husband and wife and for children, for the entire family. We need to be willing to have an open discussion. There is no reason for parents to try to hide something from the children, because when parents get excited and are mad at each other, regardless of what part of the house they are in, it is heard by the child. The child will suffer much more if you try to keep in secret, and they will probably suffer later in life, so much as they are growing there at that particular moment; later in life they will think back to what really took place in their household. It is better that immediately the child be brought in the midst of even the argument, and perhaps it's there that that love will turn to the child, and the problem will be resolved much more easily.

Marriages are broken for very foolish reasons. In the last ten that have come before me, you almost want to laugh at

the reasons why they no longer can get along together. If they were speaking the truth, not one of those reasons are valid reasons for separation — but even then, they already came to my desk after they had already filed for a civil divorce. So all action was already taken; it was almost impossible to attempt to reconcile, and they didn't go to their pastor, nor did they come to the bishop -- but came to the bishop only because all of a sudden they decided they wanted to get married again, and in order to get married they have to submit all those papers. It would be much better if all these things were done as they are happening, and many of those things could be resolved, and suffering would be avoided for all concerned, the children as well as the parents.

The teachings remain the same for mother, father, son and daughter — they are no different. No parent can go and say that “because I am old enough, I can even commit sin; you cannot” and expect that child to be obedient to that.

Everyone needs to have an opportunity within the household for free expression of their thoughts, their feelings. Everyone must be willing to listen — when we are willing to listen to each other, it means that there is a possibility that there can be a decent dialogue and that we can resolve whatever problems are there. We need to ask the question: how often, in our household, do we talk about God, about his Church, and the gift that he really offers, of salvation? If we don't discuss it there, we can't expect that child or even the adults in that household to learn about God, to make a change within their life. It's not going to happen.

We can't have two standards: there cannot be one standard for the parent,

another standard for the child. And there will never be, so long as we accept the commandments of God and the teachings of the Church. The teachings remain the same for mother, father, son and daughter — they are no different. No parent can go and say that “because I am old enough, I can even commit sin; you cannot” and expect that child to be obedient to that. We are only leading them in the wrong direction; we confuse their mind. At one moment we are telling them they must be obedient to God, to his teachings, the teachings of the Church, then we are leading them in a different direction. We need to examine ourselves that when there was really a serious a problem, were we willing to call in the spiritual father, who was the spiritual father to mother, father, son and daughter, perhaps even grandparents? There's no reason why we should ever be ashamed to discuss those things with our spiritual father. There's no reason we should ever hesitate to bring the spiritual father in and let him sit at the same table, or let him sit in the same living room, in order that he'll be able to discuss these things and to discuss them openly, so that he could see the actions of all concerned, parents as well as children. When we do that, we know there is an opportunity for someone, and especially for the spiritual father, to lead us in the right direction.

Too often we see one person out of the family. If five are in church sometimes only one goes to the sacrament of confession and communion. If it's good for one, it should be good for all. All should prepare themselves to receive the sacrament. All should prepare themselves to repent of their sinful actions, and to be accepted once again by Christ. We need to ask ourselves every day at the end of the day, were we good imitators of Christ? What was our relationship with those nearest and dearest to us, those within our own household — and then, anyone that we may have come in contact with throughout the day itself?

If for one reason we see that we have not done the right thing, it is there that we have that opportunity to make amends, to make the changes in order that all will gain spiritually and be able to change their life. We need to make sure that with all problems that ever arise, that we will try to resolve that based on the teachings of Christ and his Church, not

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on anything else. If we try to do it on anything else it will never happen.

We need to make sure that, as we go through our family life, that we live as that family, mother and father, son and daughter, and anyone else that we may invite to come into the household. That is where the change must begin — in that little church that was established when two people were united in the holy sacrament. But it doesn't end there — it doesn't end there at all. It's only a beginning, a foundation for the other spiritual family that we belong to, that is to our parish.

We leave our home, and we must be connected actively to our parish. We need to ask of ourselves: Are we active members of the parish, or are we spectators? Do we merely go to church for vespers occasionally, for liturgy, perhaps maybe every Sunday, every feast day? And do we merely go and find that seat that is ours, and participate in nothing else in the parish? That is not the manner in which we must be members of the parish family. We need to actively participate in all that is offered by the parish. We need to volunteer our services wherever they are needed.

If we merely go in as spectators there will be too much temptation, too much temptation about looking at the wrong thing, thinking about the wrong thing. We may not like the way someone is dressed. We may not like the way they sit, or the way they stand, or perhaps that they kneel and we don't. We may not like that their children in church are making noise. We may not like that this person came into church after being away for five or six or ten years, and finally came to their senses, and wanted to return to the church, and only to find that we are passing condemnation on them, rather than rejoicing that they have entered into the church. It is not our purpose — and no church was consecrated for the purpose of turning people away. The church was consecrated in order to invite people in — invite people in that would learn about the Church, people that would participate in sacraments, people that would prepare themselves as well as others for that eternal gift of salvation.

As I go through the parishes many times I see that a lot of the children do

not participate in church school. We cannot blame the infants, we cannot blame those that are between the ages of five and fourteen. Somewhere the teaching is improper from the parents. I can understand the serious situation that parents go through when the child gets a little older. There are many parents that are sorrowful because, as much as they preach, the child wants to go in the opposite direction. However, everyone has an obligation, the parents have an obligation that they are going to bring their child up in the Orthodox faith. That's one

As I go through the parishes many times I see that a lot of the children do not participate in church school. We cannot blame the infants, we cannot blame those that are between the ages of five and fourteen. Somewhere the teaching is improper from the parents.

of the promises they made; that's exactly why they got married, in order to do that.

It's terrible, many times when I go to a parish, and sometimes even visit in a church, and a child is dropped off ten minutes late, and the child doesn't go to liturgy, but instead the same parent that dropped the child off is back in twenty minutes and is waiting outside for the child to get into the car to leave. We cannot blame that on the child. I believe the parent needs to make the examination, to see that somewhere they are not doing the right thing.

To me, if the Lord has given us a talent, do we offer to become an instructor, or to assist an instructor, or to assist the priest in teaching the children? It has become a very serious problem in parishes. We find we must beg people in order to teach. And if we don't have these people to teach, then naturally who suffers? The children suffer, because there is no one there to give them the instruction. The priest cannot be taking care of the celebration of the services, the liturgy, and at the same time be teaching. On the other hand, the parents want to bring

their child. So once, again, who suffers? The children. They are the ones that are building up the Church, and they are the ones that we need to keep within the Church.

When adult classes are instituted within a parish, we need to ask ourselves, do we participate? Or do we stay behind and discourage the priest because only one or two people have shown up? And sometimes it discourages him enough that he doesn't have the classes for instruction.

A very serious problem within our parishes, and getting more serious every day: the choir. Many times, I walk into a parish, and I can hear many, many good voices in the pews, singing sometimes, following after the choir. If the Lord has given you a voice, you need to try to use that voice and offer it to the Lord, that the services will be beautiful, that they will be pleasant for all that are within the church.

Another very serious problem is membership on parish council. Sometimes the parishes have two or three annual meetings called within a church, three times, in order to get members to serve on the parish council. There is no reason why anyone should refuse if they are asked, if they are Christians in good standing. We had that discussion today during our diocesan council, that there are some people in parishes that are saying that rather than causing the priest, and rather than causing a handful of people to go through this trouble every year, that let's make it a rule that there will be a [parish] meeting once every two or three years, and we will elect the council to serve for that period of time and only the parish council will hold their meetings during the rest of the time. We have one parish where the priest is not only the pastor, he had to accept two offices on the parish council. And he accepted only so the parish itself will continue as a lively parish.

Do we support the priest and his family? Do we support the spiritual work of the parish? Do we find fault with the priest, with others in the Church?

And it's possible that sometimes we will find fault. And there's no problem with that. However, rather than taking that and turning it into gossip, it is much better to go, to approach the priest, to approach the individual that may be concerned, to see what we can possibly do,

in order to bring about a change.

Are we really loving to all people within the parish? Sometimes people fall away for one reason or another, and they stay away for a long period of time. And it's not that they even have abandoned the church — they might not be attending that particular church, they might not even go to church anywhere. And then all of a sudden they want to come back, and the parish tells them that "you must pay \$1,500 in order to come back." I believe somewhere we need to be loving and merciful, and compassionate, no different than the Lord. We know what happened even with the prodigal son, and that means that we too must be loving to try to bring these people back.

One thing we definitely need to do that as we walk through life, we invest in many, many material things in life — we need to invest in our spiritual life. We must be a moving force in that investment; we must have that desire that absolutely we want to be able to grow spiritually, and that we want to invest in the greatest gift that is offered to us — there is no greater gift: eternal salvation. It is not ours for the asking, but instead it means that we have to work for it. We must invest ourselves by saying that we are willing to carry any form of cross, in order not to give in always to any temptation that comes along, but instead that we are willing to sacrifice in order to be obedient to the Church, in order to be obedient to the teachings of Christ.

We need to examine ourselves to see, Are we really willing to invest in the parish that we belong to? We know that always, if the roof is leaking, even if they have to call a special meeting that maybe will be held, even if it's going to be \$50,000, the money will be raised, it will be done.

We need also to invest in the Church, that it will grow spiritually. We need to make sure that the priest and his family are taken care of. We need to make sure that there will be services; we need to make sure that we will take care of all of the children that belong to that particular parish. If we don't, we know that, absolutely, it's not going to grow — it will go in the opposite direction.

We need to make sure that we are doing everything within our power to really be worthy of the name Christian, followers of Christ. That's exactly what we are, because we've been baptized and

confirmed into His army.

As we said today, it's really the day of examination — the examination to see just what we have done. We know that we gave serious consideration to spiritual growth; we gave consideration to vocations; we gave serious consideration to possible unity of the Orthodox Church in America. We also can think of serious consideration to our private union with none other than our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

There are people everywhere that want to serve the Church. If we all do our share, there will never be a shortage of hierarchs, or priests, or choir directors, or church school teachers. There will be many candidates to go and to work for the Church.

Anyone that has gone through the process knows, individually, if they personally have gone through the process of attempting to make a change in their life, they know the reward that is there. They saw the transformation of their life, and saw what they did, because of their own particular life. And it was witnessed

the entire parish is transformed. Just recently I had the opportunity of being in a parish — a parish where I had to make many visits, and sometimes unhappy visits. Thanks be to God, the last visit was a beautiful visit. And you could feel it the moment that you walked into the Church. You could feel that these were people of God that absolutely were no longer the same people — their life had been transformed. And it was visible by everyone that was there — not by me alone, absolutely not. It is such a great feeling when that happens.

In that very same parish, two young men came up to me, and the one said, "Yes, I think I'm interested in being a priest." He is going to school right now. He said, "I don't think right now, but I want to prepare myself." There was another young man that came, and he said, "Do you think I could be a priest?" And he said, "You know, people make fun of me. They say that I'm slow." And I told him, "Of course you can. As long as you prepare yourself, the Lord will never turn you away." He left and came back five



Matushka Dorothy Sulich presents bouquet

also by the people in that household, by the people in that community.

It is no different with a church. Many times what can happen is people begin to think the wrong way as to what the Church really is. And you know, we fall prey to it, when see that there is unhappiness, when there is division, all of a sudden, it's not that we turn against Christ or his Church, but we become inactive, we just sit back, we do nothing.

We go to that parish, where there has been a change made, you'll see it — and

minutes later. He said, "I have one more question." I said, "Yes?" He said, "Is it true I have to give up hunting?" And I said "Yes. Do you think you could do that?" He said, "Of course."

Those two people are no different than people we have everywhere. And I pray that in that parish, the pastor as well as the people are going to continue to nurture those two young men. Whether is it next year, or five years down the road, that they are going to come. And

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there are people everywhere, and in every parish, that love the Lord, they want to be with the Lord. What we take for granted, is something very, very serious with others.

Just recently I met a man that was searching — searching for the true Church. And in searching, he also became afflicted, very seriously afflicted. And probably for most people, especially when you're told that your days may be numbered, you feel that you want to do

everything else, but draw yourself close to the Lord, close to the Church. This individual is doing the opposite. He is making sure that not only he, but his family will embrace the Holy Orthodox faith. He said, "I have read, I have studied; and the holy fathers have shown me that it is the true Church." That gives him the strength to endure all treatments, to be able to continue to lead a decent life with his wife and his two young children, because he knows that there is something far greater in life than what we have here on this earth — that is that eternal life. What greater reward could he have than

to go there and stand before the Lord and to say, "I heard about you, I know who you are, and I have led myself and my family to you." And there are so many people like that. So many people that are looking for someone to say, "Yes, I know that you're searching, I know that you are looking — please come in and be a part of us."

That man is with us today. Please remember him in your prayers — Steven.

There is so much for us to do. We said that we started in Bethlehem and we end in Bethlehem. Actually when we first started the first encyclical that I gave, I really was hoping that we could end all of this with a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. That didn't work out; we asked even for people to make a pilgrimage, whether it be to St. Tikhon's or to any other holy place, for their own spiritual growth. We know the problems that are in the Holy Land at the present time, and so there are some that will be going. And it's very possible, the Lord is making it possible — for me to be there, where at least I will be able to offer prayers on behalf of our entire diocese, on behalf of our Church. And at the same time, to have an opportunity to be able to have the Orthodox Church in America presented to the Patriarchate in Jerusalem.

We have to continue to pray. We say we want to receive. And you see the doors are being opened. We have been invited to come and, in the last week I learned that I will probably be making three other journeys to patriarchates. We don't know what can happen, what will happen.

However, if we transform our lives, if we show the Lord that we believe in Him and that we are with him and that we support His Holy Church that we are indeed dedicated laborers in his vineyard, He is going to answer our prayers. Let us all examine ourselves — bishop, priests, laypersons. Let us grade ourselves honestly. Let us not be ashamed if we have done poorly — there is no problem with that. We have the opportunity to change all of that. So long as we are still breathing we have an opportunity to make a change within our life, and to go with the Lord. May He look favorably upon all of us, that we will transform our life, and through the transformation of our life, we will assist in transforming the world and building up His Holy Church.

Official

Parish Council Confirmations:

Christ the Saviour Church — Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
Holy Ascension Church — Berwick, Pennsylvania
Holy Assumption Church — Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Holy Trinity Church — Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
St. John the Baptist Church — Edwardsville, Pennsylvania
St. Nicholas Church — Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
St. Stephen Cathedral — Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Transfer:

Rev. Andrew Diehl was released as Rector of St. Michael Church in Wilmington, Delaware and assigned as Rector of St. Mary Church in Coaldale, Pennsylvania

Released:

Rev. George Gulin was released as Acting Rector of St. Mary's Church in Coaldale and transferred to the Diocese of the Midwest for further assignment.

Assigned:

Rev. Stephen Evanina was assigned as Acting Rector of Holy Trinity Church in Pottstown, Pennsylvania.

Rev. John Bruchok was assigned as Rector of Holy Trinity Church in Catasauqua, Pennsylvania.

Rev. Andrew Anderson was assigned as Rector of St. Michael Church in Wilmington, Delaware.

Growing in Theosis

The theme "Growing in Theosis" is one that has special relevance for all of us. This theme is especially significant for those of us who are trying to live Orthodox spiritual lives.

If we look around the world we live in today, it is interesting to observe that in the lives of many, there is a significant increase of interest in spiritual life. Many people are seeking a personal experience of the grace of God. They desire a dynamic experience of His presence in their daily lives. Furthermore, many today are trying to satisfy this inner need through a variety of methods and means.

The recent growth of the various pseudo-Christian cults and other similar religious groups bears witness to this change in attitudes. The steady interest in "spirituality," whether from the Near, Middle or Far East, is another indication of the spiritual thirst of contemporary man. Another clear manifestation of this inner human need — with completely negative results — is the rising popularity of satanic and occult practices, as well as the neo-pagan rituals and other such ceremonies of New Age religious movements. If we add to this the tremendous interest today in anything even remotely connected with the world of psychic phenomena, we see that the need for communion with God becomes most obvious. At times it seems as if modern man is searching frantically for God.

No matter how flawed this widespread search for spiritual life may become, it reveals the fact that an innate desire for participation in divine life is basic to the human being. Indeed, this is exactly the reason why man was created. Life in communion with God *is* man's



Dr. Harry Boosalis

natural orientation. When this spiritual need is not satisfied through conventional means, then its fulfillment is sought elsewhere.

At the same time, however, we see an increasing number of conscientious believers who are finding true inner fulfillment in Orthodox spiritual life. There are many sincere and dedicated faithful who are no longer satisfied with the static state of spiritual life offered by the majority of Western denominations today. They are searching for a different and deeper spiritual life in Christ. This inner search reveals a general discontent with the vast changes prevalent in the church practices, ethical values and other traditionally accepted theological teachings of many of these Western Christian confessions. It appears that the thirst in modern man for authentic spiritual life is becoming more difficult to satisfy through the customary means provided.

This is why some seek out the Orthodox Christian truth concerning the salvation of man. They are growing wary of, and alienated from, the legalistic tendencies of the Western confessions, while becoming interested in a more *mystical* relationship with Christ. There are those who are coming to appreciate the fact that there exists another Christian teaching that differs from the conventional denominations of the West. More than a few are coming in contact with the living legacy of Orthodox Saints and the mystical teaching of our Eastern Christian tradition, which offers a more profound Christ-centered spiritual life. A growing number of believers see the Saints of the Orthodox Church as examples on which to base their own spiritual lives. For these faithful, the Saints and their teachings are the criteria that point toward the true meaning of life and

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the ultimate direction that they are to follow as they seek to live according to Christ.

The Saints challenge the believer to reach beyond the common conception of salvation that predominates in the West. For the Orthodox Church, salvation is more than the pardon of sins and transgressions. Salvation is more than being justified or acquitted for offenses committed against God. According to Orthodox teaching, salvation certainly includes forgiveness and justification, but by no means is it limited to them.

For the Saints of the Church, salvation is the acquisition of the divine grace of the Holy Spirit. To be saved is to be sanctified, and to participate in the divine life of God — or, as the Apostle Peter writes, to become “a partaker of divine nature.”¹

Thus, we see that forgiveness of sins is not the end of salvation; it is only the beginning. It should lead ultimately to mystical knowledge of God and to the acquisition of the gift of love for all mankind. In the words of St. Silouan the Athonite, “I began to beseech God for forgiveness, and He granted me *not only forgiveness but also the Holy Spirit*, and in the Holy Spirit I knew God . . . the Lord remembered not my sins, and gave me to love people, and my soul longs for the whole world to be saved and dwell in the Kingdom of Heaven . . . and delight in the love of God.”²

This is one reason why so many people are attracted to the Orthodox Faith. They are coming to realize that the Saints give guidance on how to base our lives in Christ. Through the example of their lives and the testimony of their inspired teachings, the Saints embody man’s true spiritual potential. They exemplify the words of Holy Scripture: “. . . but as He who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; since it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy.’”³ This is why the Saints of the Orthodox Church are of such vital significance for believers today. The Saints are not historic personalities confined to a bygone era. The Saints are not simply relics of an antiquated past. On the contrary, they live among us. They

¹See 2 Pet. 1.4.

²Archimandrite Sophrony, *Saint Silouan*, Essex, 1991, 270-271.

³1 Pet. 1.15,16. (RSV).

live within the Church, pouring out the light of the true meaning of the Gospel of Christ.

The Saints show us, they remind us and they help us to realize that the true goal of our life in the Church — indeed the goal of our lives on earth — is nothing less than *the acquisition of the divine grace of the Holy Spirit*. This may also be referred to as deification, divinization, sanctification or, as we will refer to it this evening, as “theosis.” All of these terms are synonymous and may be used interchangeably. *Theosis*, then, could be defined basically as a process, a spiritual process, whereby, through participation in divine grace, man is deified or sanctified. In this way, through divine grace, man becomes holy, that is to say, he becomes Christlike; man is called to become like God.

However, before proceeding to a discussion on the Orthodox teaching on man’s participation in divine grace, it would be helpful to consider some basic preliminary points.

First of all, Orthodox anthropology teaches that man was created to participate in the life of God. This is the essential meaning of the Scriptural account of the creation of man, “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness’ . . . So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him . . .”⁴ This passage from the Book of Genesis conveys the fundamental truth that man is a spiritual being, and that the true meaning of human existence is understood only in its proper theological perspective. According to the Orthodox view, God grants man the potential to participate *through grace* in His holy and divine life. This is why we were created. We were created to be vessels of divine grace. Apart from this we become something we were not originally intended to be.

When we declare our independence from our Creator, we restrict ourselves to a secular life separated from God. We then not only forfeit our theosis or sanctification, but we also fail to comprehend the fundamental purpose of our existence. Communion with God and participation in divine grace therefore constitute man’s natural way of life. It is precisely the divine image and the presence of divine grace that distinguish man from the animal kingdom. St. Silouan writes,

⁴Gen. 1. 26,27 (NKJ).

“How infirm is the soul! Without God’s grace we are like cattle, but with grace great is man in the sight of God.”⁵ And St. Gregory of Sinai adds, “. . . through trespasses, we have become akin to beasts and have lost the natural blessings given us by God, becoming as beasts instead of reasoning beings, and animals instead of divine.”⁶

We are created, therefore, and called to grow into the fullness of divine likeness. Although we have fallen from our original splendor and are now born into a state of sinful inclination, we nevertheless still retain the “image of God” in which we were originally created. The goal of Orthodox spiritual life therefore is not only to restore the image of God, but also to attain to theosis or divine likeness, or in other words, to become *like God* in Christ.

Man was not originally created in a state of completed perfection. He was, however, endowed with the unique freedom to *choose*; to choose to either live in pursuit of achieving his full potential, or else to digress toward the desecration and defacement of his true dignity as man. Only through the proper use of our God-given freedom can we cooperate with divine grace in restoring the image of God within us and attain to likeness with God, or theosis, for which we were created.

For Orthodox anthropology then, the ultimate goal of man is theosis or deification. Man is called to become a “partaker of divine nature.”⁷ This is to be understood as participation in the divine life of God, which is participation in His divine grace.

Elder Sophrony, for example, states explicitly, “Since grace is God’s uncreated energy, the Orthodox understand it as Divinity . . . The grace that is Divinity hallows man, divinizes him, makes him into a god.”⁸ This Orthodox teaching on theosis or the sanctification of man is a decisive point of difference between the divergent views of salvation that distinguish the Christian East from the non-Orthodox West.

While all this talk of theosis and

⁵*Saint Silouan*, 331. Elsewhere he adds, “Without grace man is but sinful clay, but with the grace of God the spirit of man is like unto an angel.” 328.

⁶Gregory of Sinai *Texts on Commandments and Dogmas 9, Writings from the Philokalia on Prayer of the Heart*, trans. E. Kadloubovsky and G. E. H. Palmer, London, 1992, 39; PG 150, 1241B.

⁷See 2 Pet. 1.4.

⁸*Saint Silouan*, 184.

man's deification is interesting, most of us may ask the question, "What does all this have to do with *me*?" All of this abstract theory sounds good, but how is someone like *me* supposed to apply it to my daily life? Most of us find life difficult enough as we struggle with our own day to day problems and circumstances. Can we really expect and hope to participate in divine life too, and become like Christ? And if so, then just how is someone like me, living and working in contemporary American society of today, supposed to go about it? Does the Lord really expect an "average" believer like me to attain to such a lofty goal and become like God?

Obviously, the answer is yes; and the Fathers of our Church offer much practical advice on how we are to conduct our lives as we struggle to acquire the grace of the Holy Spirit and try to grow in theosis. Their guidance and advice is certainly relevant to the conditions we live in today.

We could go on at length about the role of ascetic practice, the importance of prayer and fasting, the process of purification from passions, the significance of participation in the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church, the virtue of the keeping of the commandments and the value of reading Holy Scripture, and on and on. All of these are very important for our spiritual lives. They open up the way toward theosis and lead to the fullness of our life in Christ.

There is, however, one thing, one element, one virtue, which is so fundamental to our lives in Christ, and to our hope for salvation and sanctification, that without it everything else we may try to do will remain fruitless.

It is the mark of a true disciple of Christ. It is that which sets Christianity apart from every other religion of the world. This one thing that is so necessary, this foundation, this most important aspect of our lives as Christians, is, of course, nothing other than *love*. It is this message of *love* that characterizes our Christian faith.

Our Lord Himself proclaims the crucial role of love within the lives of his followers: "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."⁹ St. John the Apostle and Theologian also emphasizes, "God is love, and he who abides in love abides

⁹John 13.35 (NKJ).

in God, and God in him."¹⁰

This emphasis on love is of central significance to the Gospel of Christ. The Gospel itself is ultimately a message of love. The fundamental teaching of the New Testament and perhaps all of Orthodox theology could be summed up in those three simple words: "God is love."¹¹ The God of the Christians, that is the Holy Trinity, is referred to as the "God of love."¹² Indeed, love is the basic characteristic of the life of the Holy Trinity.¹³ The three divine and distinct Persons of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are One; they are "of the same essence," and are united in their perfect



love for one another.¹⁴

This then is the fundamental truth of the mystery of the Holy Trinity: God is a unity of Persons living in perfect love.¹⁵ God is love; and love presupposes another Person.¹⁶

Man, as created in the image and likeness of God, is created to share in and to live in love.¹⁷ God is love; the more man loves, the more he participates in divine life. Love is thus innate in man. Love is basic to our very being.¹⁸ It is through

¹⁰1 John 4.16 (NKJ).

¹¹1 John 4.16. Cf. 1 John 4.8.

¹²See Archim. Sophrony, *On Prayer*, Essex, 1996, 63.

¹³See Georgios Mantzaridis, *Prosopo kai thesmoi*, Thessaloniki, 1997, 34.

¹⁴See Archim. Sophrony, *We Shall See Him As He Is*, Essex, 1988, 216.

¹⁵For further reading refer to the chapter entitled "The Holy Trinity: Structure of Supreme Love" in Dumitru Staniloae, *The Experience of God*, Brookline, 1994, 245-280.

¹⁶See Staniloae, 245. Cf. Archim. Sophrony, "Perfect love does not live locked in itself but in the other Person, in other Persons." *We Shall See Him*, 230.

¹⁷See Gen. 1.26.

¹⁸See Basil the Great, *Long Rules* 2. 1; PG 31, 908BC. Cf. Sophrony: "Those who dislike and reject their fellow-man are impoverished in their being." *Saint Silouan*, 116. Cf. also Mantzaridis, *Prosopo*, 37.

love that we attain to divine likeness and realize our "true" personhood.¹⁹ Love makes man truly human; love makes man divine. In this light, we see that it is love that deifies man; it is love that makes man Christlike; it is love that makes man like God. One of the writers from the *Philokalia*, Theoliptos, even uses the term "deifying love."²⁰ St. Silouan the Athonite also writes, "The more perfect the love, the holier the life."²¹ On the other hand, without love, we distort the divine image in which we are created.²² The less we love, the more we alienate ourselves from divine life.

The importance of love for the life

of man is revealed in Christ's "double commandment of love." Our Lord was asked: "'Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?' He said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.'"²³ The commandments of Christ, therefore, are commandments of love;²⁴

¹⁹See Georgios Mantzaridis, *Christianike ethike*, Thessaloniki, 1995, 233. For further reading refer to Hieromonk Zacharias Zacharou, *'H pragmatose tes hypostatikes arches ste theologia tou Archimandritou Sophroniou*, Thessaloniki, 1998.

²⁰Theoliptos of Philadelphia, *On Inner Work in Christ and the Monastic Profession*, *Philokalia*, vol. 4, 177; PG 143, 381B.

²¹*Saint Silouan*, 366 and 75.

²²See Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Creation of Man* 5. 2; PG 44, 137C.

²³Matt. 22.36-40 (NRSV). Cf. Mark 12. 28-31.

²⁴See Archim. Sophrony, *Askesis kai theoria*, Essex, 1996, p.120.

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however, in reality it is not a question of two separate commandments, for they are both directly interrelated and interdependent — they form a “single life.”²⁵ Without love for God it is impossible to love one’s neighbor. And without love for one’s neighbor, it is impossible to truly love God.²⁶

St. John the Theologian emphasizes this point and writes, “If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother . . . how can he love God . . . ? And this commandment we have from Him; that he who loves God *must* love his brother also.”²⁷ So we see then, that love for one’s neighbor is the criterion of one’s true love for God.²⁸

The love of the Holy Trinity forms the foundation and the model for man’s love for his fellow man. Man, as created in the image and likeness of the Holy Trinity, thus has an innate “need” to live for and to love other people.²⁹ In the context of both family life and of our relationships with our friends, we all *live* for love. We all *long* for love. Indeed, *love* is essential to our lives as human beings.

The Lord commands his followers to love one another: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.”³⁰ However, the Lord’s commandments are not merely an ethical teaching; rather they reveal the true nature of man.³¹ When the Lord proclaims “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,”³² He reveals the truth that one’s “neighbor” is organically linked to one’s own being. One’s “neighbor,” that it is to say, the “other” person, thus forms an integral component of our own human person. It is interesting to compare this teaching of Christ with that of the French existentialist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, who saw the “other” as some kind of an intruder and thus as something inimical to the being of the individual.³³

On the contrary, through love for his neighbor, man fulfills the true purpose

of his life. The commandments of Christ manifest the truth that love is the way of God, and indeed love is the way *toward* God. St. Maximos the Confessor writes, “Do not disdain the commandment to love, because by it you will be a son of God.”³⁴

At this point, as we look deeper into how the Church Fathers consider love as the way toward theosis, I would like to focus in on one writer in particular. I would like to concentrate on the teaching of St. Silouan the Athonite, and together with him, his disciple, Elder Sophrony. St. Silouan’s teaching on love is especially relevant for today; he was a contemporary Russian monk of Mount Athos who fell asleep in the Lord in 1938. He was canonized a saint in 1988. His teaching seems to encapsulate the unique Orthodox perspective on this profound mystery of love.

Both St. Silouan and Elder Sophrony taught that by following the commandment to love one’s neighbor, the believer is led toward likeness with Christ. For example, Elder Sophrony writes, “There is no difference between the commandments of Christ and the life of God Himself. By abiding in Christ’s commandments, we organically become like Him.”³⁵

On the other hand, St. Silouan teaches that if one hates his neighbor, it reveals that he has made his heart “a dwelling-place for an evil spirit.”³⁶ He stresses that without love for one’s fellow man, life loses its proper orientation and becomes oppressive and difficult to endure.³⁷ To prove his point, St. Silouan suggests to his readers that they try living *without* brotherly love for even one day, in order to experience firsthand the profound difference that love makes in the daily life of man.³⁸ It is in accordance with these sayings wherein love for one’s neighbor is seen as a basic feature of human existence, that St. Silouan said so simply, yet so profoundly, “Our brother is our life.”³⁹

We must ask ourselves, however, just what is this “brotherly love” and what exactly is required in order to share in

it? It’s interesting to note how St. Silouan taught that to truly love one’s neighbor entails much pain, suffering and compassion. He refers to this clearly and writes, “. . . the greater the love, the greater the sufferings of the soul.”⁴⁰ According to Elder Sophrony, it is indeed *impossible* to love without suffering.⁴¹ He describes love as the most painful, the most difficult and the most challenging spiritual endeavor the believer will ever undertake.⁴² He taught that true love is compassionate and it is perfected through suffering.⁴³ The more man suffers on account of love, the more he becomes Christlike by participating in Christ’s all-compassionate love for man.⁴⁴ True Christlike love identifies personally with the suffering of one’s neighbor — to the point where he who loves makes the pain of others his own.

When one suffers out of love for one’s neighbor, it leads to participation in the suffering of *all* mankind. This in turn evolves into Christlike love for *all* mankind, whereby one comes to experience the inherent and natural unity of the entire human race.⁴⁵ One’s own personal experience of pain, of grief, and of suffering cannot be considered as somehow separate and cut off from the common tragedy of fallen human nature as a whole.⁴⁶

This is the theme of St. Silouan’s inspired writing entitled “Adam’s Lament.”⁴⁷ He’s not referring so much to the lament of Adam alone, nor to his own personal suffering. Rather he speaks on behalf of all humanity — on behalf of every human person.

All human beings share in the same consequences of the Fall of Adam, just as all are called to share in the same saving and sanctifying grace of life in the Resurrected and Ascended Christ.⁴⁸ When one begins to see the daily drama of the pain and suffering of his neighbor through the eyes of Christ, he then comes to see the tragic consequences of fallen humanity in a new light. He agonizes over and experiences within himself the personal pain and suffering of every

²⁵See *Saint Silouan*, 116.

²⁶See 1 John 4.20-21. Cf. Basil 3.1-2; PG 31, 917B and Dorotheos of Gaza, *Discourses* 6; PG 88, 1696 BD.

²⁷See 1 John 4.20; also *Saint Silouan*, 116.

²⁸See *Saint Silouan*, 116-117.

²⁹See Basil, 3.1; PG 31, 917A.

³⁰John 13. 34-35 (NKJ). Cf. John 15. 17.

³¹*Saint Silouan*, 47. Refer also to Archim. Sophrony, *Words of Life*, Essex, 1996, 16.

³²Matt. 22.39 (KJV). Cf. Matt. 19.19; Mark 12.31; Lev. 19.18.

³³See Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'Être et le Néant*, Paris, 1943.

³⁴Maximos the Confessor, *Chapters on Love* 4.20, trans. G.C. Berthold, 77; PG 90, 1052C. Cf. *Saint Silouan*, 116.

³⁵See *Words of Life*, 13.

³⁶See *Saint Silouan*, 101.

³⁷See *ibid.*, 426.

³⁸See *ibid.*, 426.

³⁹*ibid.*, 47 and 371. Cf. *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers*,

“Our life and our death is with our neighbor.” Anthony the Great 9; trans. B. Ward, Kalamazoo, 1984, 3; PG 65, 77B.

⁴⁰*Saint Silouan*, 75; cf. 338. See also *We Shall See Him*, 147.

⁴¹See *Words of Life*, 17.

⁴²See *Saint Silouan*, 2.

⁴³See *We Shall See Him*, 101.

⁴⁴See *Saint Silouan*, 47.

⁴⁵See *ibid.*, 233-234. Cf. Mantzaridis, *Prosopo*, 36.

⁴⁶See *His Life is Mine*, 89.

⁴⁷*Saint Silouan*, 448-456.

⁴⁸See Rom. 5.12-21 and 1 Cor. 15.21-22.

human being.⁴⁹ Elder Sophrony writes, "Where there is great love the heart necessarily suffers and feels pity for every creature . . ." ⁵⁰ He teaches that by identifying with and sharing in the common suffering of mankind, the believer comes to acquire a truly "Christian consciousness."⁵¹ He comes to participate in Christ's undying and eternal love for each and every human person.

Our "neighbor" is in fact *every* member of the human race. We are all united by the fact that we all share in the same human nature,⁵² the same human nature which has been united to God in the Person of the Incarnate Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ. Our neighbor is indeed *every* man. This is the "neighbor" whom Christ commands his followers to love *as thyself*. Such love is not restricted to one's own family, friends, fellow-parishioners or even other Christians. Christ commands the believer to love *every* human being. This is the true Christian way. St. Maximos the Confessor writes, "Be as eager as you can to love every man . . . The friends of Christ love everyone sincerely. . ." ⁵³ And this does not refer to something abstract or theoretical;⁵⁴ rather, it is on a personal level. In this way the believer comes to comprehend and to appreciate the eternal value and the precious uniqueness of every human person.⁵⁵

In the words of Elder Sophrony, "We see in others that which our own spiritual experience has shown us about ourselves . . . Whoever has experienced how deep and intense the suffering of the human spirit can be . . . has no doubt that every human being is a permanent eternal value . . . He is conscious of man's worth, conscious that 'the least of these my brethren' is dear in God's sight . . ." ⁵⁶

For St. Silouan, this true, compassionate, Christlike love for all mankind leads the believer to grieve for the salvation of *every* human person, just as if he were grieving for his own salvation.⁵⁷ His fervent desire for the salvation of every human person may be summed up further in his words, ". . . love cannot

suffer a single soul to perish."⁵⁸ Therefore, when he says "Our brother is our life"⁵⁹ St. Silouan is actually implying that *all* mankind — indeed *every* human being — is truly "our neighbor," "our brother," "our life."⁶⁰

He stresses how it is the Holy Spirit who teaches true Christlike love and compassion.⁶¹ Such love and compassion lead ultimately to Christlike sorrow for those not being saved.⁶² St. Maximos the Confessor offers an additional point: he states repeatedly that not only is the true disciple called to love *everyone*, but that he must love each and every person *equally*, in imitation of the perfect love of Christ.⁶³

There is, however, one further aspect of St. Silouan's teaching on how love leads to theosis which deserves our attention. This is the special emphasis he

uniquely Christian teaching. As compared to the commandments of the Old Testament, this commandment of Jesus Christ appears revolutionary and opposite to the prescription of the Mosaic Law.⁶⁷

The Lord Himself proclaims, "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth' [Ex. 21.24]. But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also . . . You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor [Lev. 19.18] and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you."⁶⁸ Love for enemies thus characterizes the true disciples of Christ.

Before examining St. Silouan's



places on love for enemies.⁶⁴ This theme of love for enemies is fundamental to his entire teaching. Elder Sophrony refers to love for enemies as ". . . the cornerstone of our whole teaching. It is the ultimate synthesis of all our theology."⁶⁵

To begin with, the commandment of Christ to "love thy enemy"⁶⁶ is not found in any other religion of the world; it is a

teaching on love for enemies, we must first ask ourselves — who exactly is this enemy whom Christ commands us to love? Is one supposed to understand the word "enemy" in a common everyday sense of the term, as an outright antagonist or rival? Or is there perhaps a deeper and more spiritual understanding of this word? The Lord Himself refers to an enemy as anyone who strikes us,⁶⁹ sues us,⁷⁰ forces us against our will,⁷¹ or persecutes us.⁷²

In many cases, however, an "enemy" is not necessarily the customary adversary or antagonist. Rather, an enemy is he who is the source of a particular

⁴⁹See *Saint Silouan*, 227; also *Words of Life*, 16, 111.

⁵⁰*His Life is Mine*, 127.

⁵¹See *Saint Silouan*, 227; *Words of Life*, 14-15.

⁵²See *Saint Silouan*, 108; Maximos, 2.30; PG 90, 993B.

⁵³Maximos, 4.82 and 4.98; PG 90, 1068D and 1072D.

⁵⁴See *Saint Silouan*, 222.

⁵⁵See *ibid.*, 227; also, *Words of Life*, 14.

⁵⁶*Saint Silouan*, 100.

⁵⁷See *ibid.*, 426 and 271.

⁵⁸*ibid.*, 272. He writes elsewhere, ". . . our one thought must be that all should be saved." 379. Cf. 48 and 108.

⁵⁹*ibid.*, 47 and 371.

⁶⁰Elder Sophrony writes, "In the commandment 'Love thy neighbour as thyself,' we must understand the words 'as thyself' in this way: every man, the 'whole Adam,' is my being." *Words of Life*, 16.

⁶¹See *Saint Silouan*, 314-315, 497 and 467.

⁶²See *ibid.*, 108 and 407.

⁶³See Maximos, 1.61, 1.71, 2.10, 2.30; PG 90, 973A, 976B, 988A, 993B.

⁶⁴For further reading refer to Jean-Claude Larchet "L'Amour des ennemis selon saint Silouane l'Athonite et dans la tradition patristique" in Buisson Ardent - Cahiers Saint-Silouane L'Athonite 2, Pully, 1996, 66-95.

⁶⁵*Saint Silouan*, 232; see also 228.

⁶⁶Matt. 5. 44; Luke 6.27.

⁶⁷See Mantzaridis, *Christianike ethike*, 237-238.

⁶⁸Matt. 5.38-39, 43-44. (NKJ).

⁶⁹See Matt. 5.39.

⁷⁰See Matt. 5.40.

⁷¹See Matt. 5.41.

⁷²See Matt. 5.44.

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spiritual trial or temptation.⁷³ That is worth repeating: “an enemy is he who is the source of a particular spiritual trial or temptation.” An enemy thus “strikes” and “persecutes” not only physically but also — and perhaps more often than not — he wounds with words; and this might be either intentional or unintentional.

Many times it is he with whom one has a close and personal relationship who is often perceived as this kind of a spiritual “enemy”; and this is indeed the person whom the Lord calls us to love.

Thus the person who — whether intentionally or not — makes us suffer and feel scorned and despised, he who makes us feel sorrowful and grieved, this is exactly the “enemy” who is to be loved.⁷⁴

This would include our family members, relatives and friends; fellow members of a parish community, as well as those with whom one is sacramentally linked or has spiritual bonds; even clergy and their families; a brother or sister monk, a colleague, co-worker or fellow student. It seems as if the most difficult, fierce and humbling of the inner conflicts of spiritual warfare stem from one’s personal relationships with the people whom one is closest to.

St. Silouan also refers to this broader and more spiritual definition of “enemy.” He includes as an enemy anyone who “offends you,”⁷⁵ anyone with whom one is angry, condemns or detests,⁷⁶ as well as anyone with whom one is not reconciled,⁷⁷ and also, he with whom one finds fault or looks upon with an “unkind eye.”⁷⁸

With so much importance attached to this theme of love for enemies, one would naturally ask the next question: just what exactly did St. Silouan mean by the word “love”? Just what really is this love for enemies?

The word “love” is freely and frequently used and it often takes on a variety of meanings. For St. Silouan, and for the Fathers in general, love is not a simple sentimental emotion. Love for enemies cannot be reduced to mere toleration of another person; and love for

enemies is neither a show of non-violence and a *not* returning evil for evil, nor an attitude of neutrality.⁷⁹ Love is not the mere absence of hatred.⁸⁰ Love for enemies is an effort to *do* good to someone who hates you.⁸¹

Often in the effort to do good to an enemy, we may assume that we must go to great lengths in order to demonstrate and to prove our love; however, it is not the outward showing or proving of love that matters most. Love for enemies is proven to be true when it instills inner peace within the heart of an enemy. This is the genuine mark of love — when out of sheer compassion, one tries to instill peace and calm into the heart of another



human person, especially one of our so-called “enemies.” This is not accomplished through gifts, pomp and ceremony.

According to St. Maximos the Confessor, it is accomplished through simple words, a humble attitude and gentle demeanor.⁸² St. Silouan refers to love for enemies as “the compassion of a loving heart.”⁸³

⁷³For an analysis of the meaning of love for enemies in patristic writings, refer to Jean-Claude Larchet, “L’*Amour des ennemis selon saint Silouane l’Athonite et dans la tradition patristique*” in Buisson Ardent - Cahiers Saint-Silouane L’Athonite 2, Pully, 1996, 70-79.

⁸⁰See Maximos: “The one who does not love someone does not necessarily hate him, nor again does the one who does not hate necessarily love; rather, he can be in a neutral position to him, that is, neither loving nor hating.” 2.50; trans. G. C. Berthold, 54; PG 90, 1001A. Also, 2.10; Berthold, 47-48; PG 90, 985D-988A.

⁸¹See Matt. 5.44, 48.

⁸²See Maximos: “. . . if someone else bears you a grudge, be generous and humble with him, treat him fairly, and you will deliver him from the passion.” 3.90, Berthold, 74; PG 90, 1044D.

⁸³*Saint Silouan*, 228. Elsewhere he adds, “The Holy Spirit teaches us to love our enemies, so that the soul pities them as if they were her own children.” *Ibid.*, 275.

But love for enemies must not be confined to the emotion of compassion. Love for enemies is not an emotion; it is *action*.⁸⁴ The Lord Himself urges the believer into action and teaches, “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who asks of you.”⁸⁵

The Lord here presents love as action; as “doing good,” as “blessing,” as “praying,” as “offering,” as “giving.” Clearly Christ commands the believer to *respond* to and to *react* to an enemy with good and positive acts.⁸⁶ Love for enemies is not simply a show of neutrality. It entails a positive reaction and an active response.⁸⁷

Paradoxically, it might also be said that it is not so much what one *does* that reveals love for enemies; sometimes it is what one does *not* do — and does *not say* — that truly shows genuine concern for the inner peace of an enemy. The truth and the integrity behind the believer’s actions is manifested by his *not* returning evil for evil, such as not returning angry looks and other types of aggressive remarks.⁸⁸ When the believer — out of concern for the inner peace of a so-called “enemy” — does *not* react with scorn and hatred, and when he does *not* attempt revenge, he is then on his way toward loving his enemy as the Lord commands him to do.⁸⁹

There are other practical methods and techniques that may be used in trying actively to love an enemy. For example, St. Maximos the Confessor recommends that the believer never speak ill of an enemy to anyone.⁹⁰ He elsewhere advises that by dwelling on the good things of the past, one can more easily cast out the hatred that may be present today.⁹¹ St. Symeon the New Theologian also teaches that one should always think

⁸⁴See Maximos: “Many of us talk but few of us act.” 4.85; *ibid.*, 85; PG 90, 1069A.

⁸⁵Luke 6. 27-30. (NKJ).

⁸⁶See John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Matthew* 18.3; PG 57, 269.

⁸⁷See Maximos, 4. 83; PG 90, 1068D.

⁸⁸See Sophrony, *On Prayer*, 158. Cf. Dorotheos, 8, trans. E. P. Wheeler, Kalamazoo, 1977, 152; PG 88, 1712C.

⁸⁹See John Chrysostom, *Homilies on John* 71. 3; PG 59, 388.

⁹⁰See Maximos, 4.35; PG 90, 1056B.

⁹¹See *ibid.*, 4. 26; PG 90, 1053B.

⁷³See Maximos, 4.22 and 4.16; PG 90, 1052D and 1052AB.

⁷⁴See Symeon the New Theologian, *Practical and Theological Chapters* 1.92 (*Sources Chretiennes*, v. 51, ed. J. Darrouzes, Paris, 1957, 94-96).

⁷⁵*Saint Silouan*, 414; also 497.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, 414.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, 497.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 363.

positively, remain calm and try to control one's anger.⁹²

Another very important element of loving one's enemy is the ability to forgive him. This is especially significant for St. Silouan, who writes, "If you forgive your brother the affronts he puts upon you, and love your enemies, then you will receive forgiveness for your sins, and the Lord will give you to know the love of the Holy Spirit."⁹³ True love occurs when one not only forgives, but also when one forgets, and no longer remembers or dwells on the past offenses of an enemy. St. John Chrysostom writes, "... there is nothing more grievous than the remembrance of injuries."⁹⁴ Thus, to be willing to forget completely, and actually cover-up over what one may have suffered in the past, is the mark of true Christlike love for enemies.⁹⁵

For St. Silouan, however, love for enemies is identified, above all else, as prayer.⁹⁶ Prayer is the ultimate expression of true love. To love your enemy is to pray for him; and even more exactly, it is to pray for his salvation in Christ. In this light, St. Silouan offers his own definition of true love for enemies and writes, "The soul sorrows for her enemies and prays for them because they have strayed from the truth. . . . That is love for our enemies."⁹⁷ He writes elsewhere, "The Lord is love, and He gave the Holy Spirit on earth, Who teaches the soul to love her enemies and pray for them, that they, too, may find salvation. That is true love."⁹⁸ St. Silouan states clearly, therefore, that love for enemies is prayer for their personal salvation in Christ. St. Isaac the Syrian is more specific about praying for ones enemies. He refers to it as praying for the protection of an enemy, and also that one's enemy may receive mercy from God.⁹⁹

The love for enemies commanded by Christ cannot therefore be reduced to simple passiveness or non-violence. It is an *active* response of true and compas-

sionate *prayer* for their ultimate salvation.¹⁰⁰ However, it must be pointed out that for St. Silouan, such love does not depend on human endeavor alone. He stresses that if one does indeed love his enemies, it is due directly to the grace of the Holy Spirit. He writes, "The Lord taught me to love my enemies. Without the grace of God we cannot love our enemies. Only the Holy Spirit teaches love . . ."¹⁰¹

From this perspective, we see that the commandment of Christ to "love thy enemy" reveals the way toward man's perfection and sanctification. When the believer comes to truly love his enemy, he then participates truly in the life in Christ.¹⁰² St. Silouan regarded the presence of love for enemies as "a sign of the real action of grace."¹⁰³ He who loves his enemies is thus likened unto the Lord.¹⁰⁴ It is interesting to note that Elder Sophrony directly identified love for enemies with uncreated Divine Light.¹⁰⁵ He clearly considered love for enemies as a manifestation of grace and wrote: "The bearer of such love . . . is the tabernacle of the Holy Spirit . . . the brother and friend of Christ — he is a son of God and a god through grace."¹⁰⁶ One could say that to the degree that the believer participates in the grace of divine love for enemies, to the same degree he thereby participates in the divine and uncreated energies of God.¹⁰⁷

In this light, the Lord's own words spoken to His Apostles may be taken quite literally: "But I say to you, love your enemies . . . pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven . . ."¹⁰⁸

The more the believer imitates Christ by loving his enemies, the more he "knows" Christ and participates in divine life. He not only *believes* in Christ and in the sanctification of human nature, but he *lives* the life in Christ through Christlike love.

Among the spiritual fruits obtained through love for enemies, St. Silouan includes the gift of true inner peace: "... if we love our enemies, peace will dwell in us day and night."¹⁰⁹ He teaches that even though we may pray and fast, if we fail to love our enemies, we will never have peace within our soul.¹¹⁰ According to St. Silouan, he who carries the peace of the Holy Spirit¹¹¹ within him will automatically spread peace to those around him.¹¹² Furthermore, he teaches that he who *gives* peace to others will also be *given* peace, and indeed much more than he originally gave.¹¹³

In a world clamoring and protesting for peace, amid all the violence and hatred that seem to saturate our society, this particular message of peace is especially timely in our day. There will be no peace in the world, either in society or within the family, if man does not first acquire the peace of the Lord within his own soul.¹¹⁴ The Lord Himself proclaims, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you."¹¹⁵ This peace must first begin *inwardly* within one's own soul; only then can it flow *outwardly* toward one's fellow-man, thereby affecting the communities in which we live, and by extension, our society as a whole. Herein lies the significance of St. Silouan's teaching on love for enemies.

Our so-called "enemies," therefore, must be seen in a positive and spiritual light. An enemy in reality presents a unique opportunity for the believer to attain, by the grace of God, to his salvation, to his sanctification, to his theosis. In reality, an enemy is the believer's way toward participation in divine love. Love for our enemies opens the way to our communion with God and indeed with all mankind. An enemy thus offers an opportunity to be cherished; he is not an opponent to be scorned.

The more we participate in the philanthropic love of Christ for all mankind,

⁹²See Symeon, 1.92; Sources ChrÉtiennes, vol. 51, 94-96. Silouan adds, "... be gentle with those who err and stray, and we shall be saved by God's mercy." *Saint Silouan*, 379.

⁹³*Saint Silouan*, 424; also 427. Cf. St. Mark the Ascetic, "The sign of sincere love is to forgive wrongs done to us." *No Righteousness by Works* 48, trans. Philokalia, vol. 1, 129; PG 65, 937A.

⁹⁴Chrysostom, *John* 71.3, NPNF v. 14, 262; PG 59, 390.

⁹⁵See Maximos, 4. 34; PG 90, 1056AB. Cf. Symeon 1.92; *ibid.*, 96.

⁹⁶See *Saint Silouan*, 414 and 497. Cf. Chrysostom, *Matthew* 18.4; PG 57, 269.

⁹⁷*Saint Silouan*, 379.

⁹⁸*ibid.*, 378.

⁹⁹See Isaac the Syrian, *Ascetic Homilies* 71, trans. Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 345.

¹⁰⁰See Chrysostom, *Matthew* 18. 3.4; PG 57, 269.

¹⁰¹*Saint Silouan*, 376-377; also 315, 378 and Sophrony, *On Prayer*, 29.

¹⁰²See Zacharou, "H pragmatose, 264.

¹⁰³*Saint Silouan*, 114; also 377.

¹⁰⁴See *ibid.*, 115 and 232. Cf. Chrysostom, *John* 71. 3; PG 59, 388.

¹⁰⁵See *Saint Silouan*, 232. Cf. *On Prayer*, 84-85.

¹⁰⁶*Saint Silouan*, 233. See also *His Life is Mine*, 62. He elsewhere refers to love for one's enemies as "the baptism of the Holy Ghost." *Saint Silouan*, 232.

¹⁰⁷Refer to the chapter by Mantzaridis entitled "The commandments of God as divine energies" (*Oi entoloi tou Theou os theia energeiai*) in *Prosopo*, 41-60; also Zacharou, *ibid.*, 262.

¹⁰⁸Matt. 5.44-45. (NKJ).

¹⁰⁹*Saint Silouan*, 318; also 414 & 316. Cf. Maximos "A rational soul that nourishes hate for a person cannot be at peace with God . . ." 4.35, trans. Berthold, 79; PG 90, 1056B.

¹¹⁰See *Saint Silouan*, 315.

¹¹¹See Gal. 5. 22.

¹¹²See *Saint Silouan*, 317.

¹¹³See *ibid.* 318.

¹¹⁴Referring to the acquisition of inner peace, St. Silouan once again reveals his great love for the prayerful reading of Holy Scripture, "The soul cannot know peace if she does not explore God's law day and night, for this law was written by the Spirit of God, and from the Scriptures the Divine Spirit passes into the soul . . ." *Saint Silouan*, 316.

¹¹⁵John 14. 27. (NKJV)

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Growing in Theosis

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the more we will come to appreciate the unique worth that Christ places on each and every human person, and this includes our "enemies." This is the ultimate manifestation of the life in Christ. This is what it means to be "alive in Christ"; it is to acquire the same consciousness as Christ, the same compassion as Christ and the same desire that Christ has for the salvation of each and every human person, including our enemies.¹¹⁶

Through his participation in divine love, St. Silouan experienced directly its deifying effects. He experienced in a most personal way the ontological unity of all mankind. Seeing his brother as his own life, St. Silouan prayed for the salvation of others even more than he did for himself. This is where his *love*, and this is where his *life* in Christ ultimately led him — he became Christlike. He participated personally in Christlike love, in Christlike compassion and in Christlike prayer for the salvation of all mankind. If we too can learn to love our enemies, we too can become like St. Silouan. Through love, we too can become like Christ.

Such a high and exalted degree of love, however, is rarely found today. Many people talk about love. Many people are looking for love. Yet few see the significance of the theological perspective of this divine mystery. Although many different philosophies and religions, as well as countless poets and playwrights throughout history, all offer their own perspectives on the mysterious nature of love, none share the truth provided by our Holy Orthodox Church.

In conclusion, I end with the words of St. Maximos the Confessor, who writes, "*Many people have said much about love, but only in seeking it among Christ's disciples will you find it, for only they have the true love, the teacher of love... Therefore, the one who possesses love possesses God himself, since 'God is love.'*"¹¹⁷

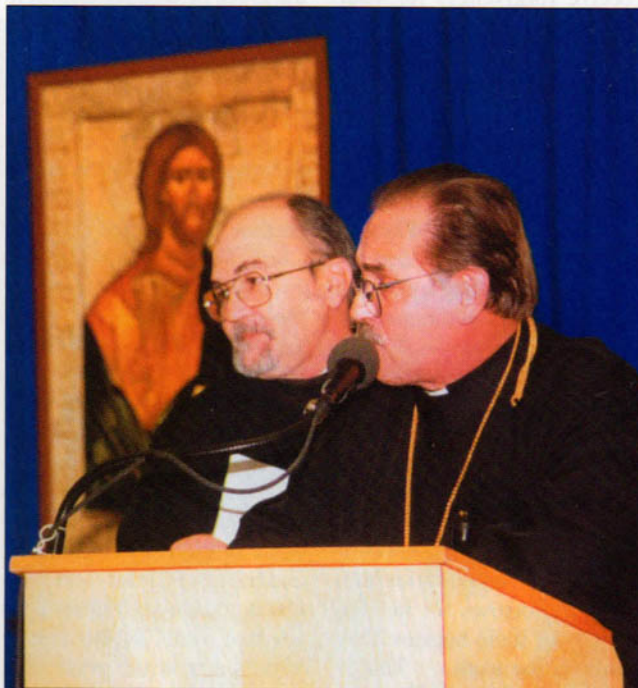
—Dr. Harry Boosalis

¹¹⁶See 1 Tim. 2, 4.

¹¹⁷Maximos, 4:100; trans. Berthold, 87; PG 90, 1073A.

Christ is Born!

Society of the Friends of St. Tikhon's



A meeting of the Society of the Friends of St. Tikhon's was conducted at St. Tikhon's Monastery dining hall on Sunday, October 29, 2000. Mr. John Paluch, president, informed the Friends that he had presented the first installment of our pledge towards the monastery black-topping fund, to Archbishop HERMAN at the annual Founders Day Dinner on October 8, 2000.

Mr. Paluch expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the many Friends of St. Tikhon's who participated in this fundraising event.

Also, it was decided to conduct a gift raffle on Sunday, February 11, when the Friends will conduct a breakfast at St. Tikhon's Seminary dining room immediately following Divine Liturgy.

The third annual chicken barbecue / flea market will be held Saturday, August 18, 2001.

The following Friends were elected as officers for the coming year: Mr. John Paluch, pres.; Ms. Julia Jacewicz, immed. past pres.; Father Deacon Gabriel Petorak, vice-pres.; Ms. Alice Boga, secy.; Matushka Dorothy Sulich, financial secy.; Mr. Thomas Donlick, treas. Archpriest Daniel K. Donlick is spiritual advisor.

We inaugurated a membership campaign for the year 2001, asking members to encourage family and friends to join this worthy organization. Please contact Matushka Dorothy Sulich at the seminary office for membership forms.

—John Paluch, President

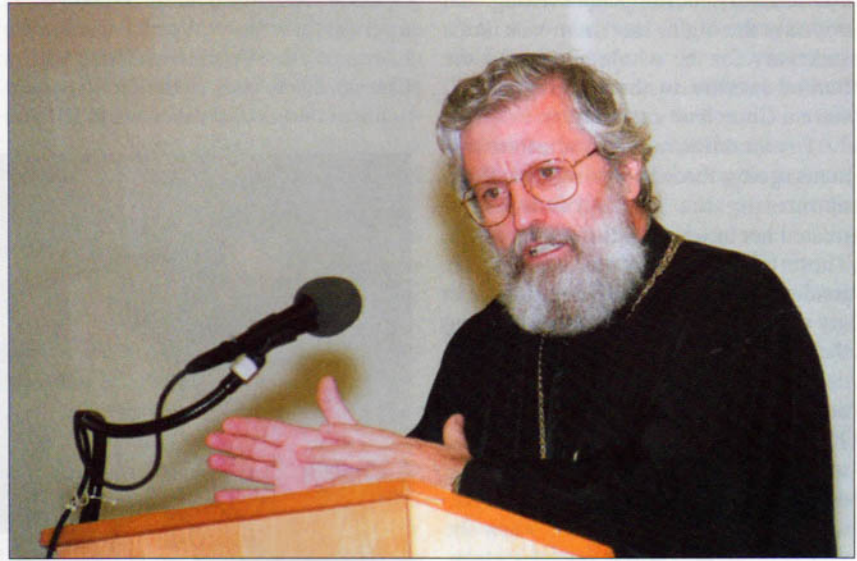
Fostering Vocations to the Priesthood

It is a great privilege for me to be with you tonight and to address you on something that is so vital and so important in our Holy Church and Tradition. I want to speak from the heart, so I have not prepared a text. I hope you will bear with me because I can be long-winded in giving my stories and reminiscences. But I want to speak from the heart about a subject that can best be approached in this personal way.

My subject is fostering vocations to the priesthood, and I want to start with one or two personal stories. The first story takes me back to my early years when I was a young boy. What is it that actually produces priests? In my case, and this is my witness, it was my family. It is, in fact, my great-grandmother Areti from my mother's side and my grandmother Photini from my father's side.

From my mother's side, I never met my grandmother Sophia because she died young, but I met her mother Areti. She lived to be very old in the island of Aegina. She was the most sacred person in my mother's family and had met St. Nectarios. I cannot help thinking of her all the time, because she was my first spiritual mentor. Let me recall some of my reminiscences.

One of my students asked me once, "Father, who is the best theologian you have met in your life?" I did not hesitate at all. I immediately said, "This is my great-grandmother." He said "What? Your great-grandmother?" I said, "Yes, absolutely so." "Well, how could that be the case? Did she have a theological degree? Had she studied theology? What kind of person was your great-grandmother?" I tried to explain to him as I had done many times to other students that my great-grandmother was, technically speaking, illiterate inasmuch as she could not write or read Greek. But then,



Protopresbyter George D. Dragas

in the village of the Holy Incorporeals or Bodiless Powers of the Angels, where she lived most of her life (*Hagioi Asomatoi* — a village located close to the holy Monastery of St. Nectarios in the wonderful island of Aegina), there was no other person, so I thought as a boy, who could actually follow everything that was done in Church, correct the chanter, for instance, or embarrass the priest by reminding him of what he had left undone.

Who fosters priests? I say, the holy people of God, the family and the community. The family is an important unit that the Lord has created. Through the family God has given us many blessings. The mystery of natural life is nurtured there and so is the mystery of the life that comes from above, the eternal life. God Himself came into a human family. He came to us naturally through a human mother. The holy Virgin-Mother of Christ, the Holy Theotokos, whom we greatly honor in our holy Tradition, is a key to understanding our Lord's earthly life, the economy of his flesh. She

followed Him at every step, from the cradle to the Cross, the Resurrection, and the Ascension and thus she became the first one to sit on his right hand introducing us to the mystery of the Church. *More honorable than the Cherubim and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim*, as we sing all the time, this is what this Mother is and what all mothers are for.

The Holy Mother of God is the model not only of all women, but also of all human beings, for she has the first place on the right hand of Christ. Now in a certain sense this is what my great-grandmother was to me. She is the first one that led me to become a priest. Since I was a little boy, I learned from her to believe and to discern that the icons are not just pictures, but they are alive, as it were, for they lead to eternal persons that open up the mystery of heaven to us when they are rightly viewed.

I remember — and to this day when I go to the island I have the same experience — that I could not go through the

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Fostering Vocations

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great-grandmother's bedroom without crossing myself, for there in the old house, the holy icons of the little iconostasis high up in the corner, the sanctuary of the house and of the family were very much alive. Throughout my great-grandmother's life the light of her candelabrum never went out. It burned continuously, morning and evening, and not only the night. Her room was like a sanctuary for the whole house and she burned incense in the evening as if it were a Church or a monastery.

I remember how my mother and aunts, going through that room and encountering the great-grandmother, treated her as a sacred (priestly) person. These reminiscences are amongst my fondest, the greatest, and loom large in my consciousness. I remember writing the family names of the living and the deceased that we took to the Church to be commemorated before the Divine Throne. She would recount to me the story of every person we wrote down, especially of her deceased husband. Actually the great-grandmother, when she was very young, at the age of sixteen, had dedicated herself to the Mother of God because she wished to become a nun. But then she was the only child and her mother decided, as it was the custom in those days, that she should get married. In fact, as I learned, she was to marry the first and best man in the island. He was one of the sea divers for sponges who were famous in those days in that island and in other islands of the Aegean Sea.

Stylianos was the great grandfather's name. The marriage took place after certain trials because the great-grandmother ran away and went hiding in some caves on the mountains praying to the Mother of God that she should show her what to do. If it was the Mother of God's will, then she could marry, otherwise she was prepared to stay and die there. She had dedicated her life to the Mother of God and to the Church. The story goes that the people who searched for her found her three days later in the mountain caves and so the marriage took place.

Three months later Stylianos died while diving in the North African shores and never returned to the island. My great-grandmother's daughter Sophia was born an orphan after the death of her

father. She was my mother's mother and died young, leaving behind her eight children, who looked to the great-grandmother as their mother. She wore black clothes as it was and still is the custom for widows in many places in Greece, and looked and lived like a nun although she was not one.

The great-grandmother never took vows, never joined a monastery, but everybody recognized her in the village as a person that was totally dedicated to the Lord, to the Mother of God, to the Church. Everybody in the family would confirm this. As for me, I could tell you

ultimate meaning of this life, that is really the kingdom of Heaven which is inside us and for which we are all destined by God.

I remember my great-grandmother telling me how I can go straight to St. John the Baptist, if I have a problem. He is always there. He is always near. He is the Forerunner who can show you the way. If you have a problem, go to him and speak to him and he will speak to you. His holy icon was prominent in her icon corner.

I remember as I grew up the encounters of my great-grandmother with my



lots of things about her, and I feel that I could write my best book on her. I cherish all the reminiscences I have of her holy person, because I saw her as a priestly person, a saint of the Church, fostering priesthood, my own vocation. The question for us today is how can we do the same in our family? How can we keep our holy Tradition in the family in such a way that the priestly vocation is fostered on all levels? The family has a crucial place in our Tradition.

When we examine the lives of the great Fathers and Saints of the Church, we often find great-grandmothers or grandmothers beside them. Should I mention the names of the greatest Fathers of the Church — St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory the Theologian, St. John Chrysostom? They are legends, those mothers who actually raised them in the awesome fear of the Lord. These mothers taught their children to recognize not only the light of this life, but also the light which never sets, the uncreated light of God. They also taught them to seek what is first in life, what is closer to the

aunts and uncles who were culturally quite sophisticated and brought into the village house new challenges of new sophistications and fashions from the big city of Athens year after year. I remember — and you may laugh at this — the occasion when the first aromatic soap was brought by an aunt to the village house. It met with the great-grandmother's great resistance, for it was considered as a source of spiritual contamination, and caused considerable tension! There were many other such occasions of denunciation of dubious sophistications and of inevitable conflict. In spite of all these, the amazing respect for the great-grandmother, of my sophisticated aunts and uncles who came from the big city to the village, always remained unaltered.

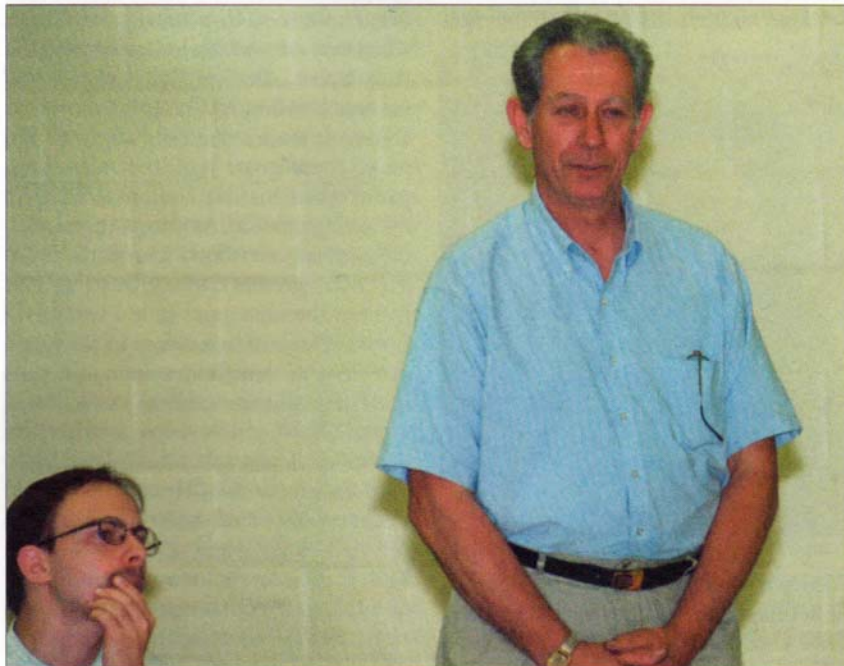
"Grandmother" ('Yaya'), one of my aunts said on another occasion, "Can you tell me what to do with such and such a problem?" Actually all grandchildren would come to her with their problems. And she would send them to St. John the Baptist, to Archangel Gabriel, to the

Holy Mother of God, to the Lord himself. On many occasions she went and interceded to the saints for them for they could not do this themselves. So she actually acted as a priestly person, as a mediator in the small sanctuary of her family. I observed all these things and they taught me indelible lessons as a young person.

I was very close to the great-grandmother because she asked me every day to read to her the *troparion* for the day, that is, the *apolytikion* of the Saint or

me there and to teach me everything through her acts, her orthopraxy.

I am certain that my great-grandmother had marked me out for the priesthood. I can tell you that when I was a student of theology at Edinburgh — something I could not have predicted when I was a little boy, went to Church with her and observed all the veneration and prostrations — I kept thinking of her all the time and especially of the way we prepared for Church before the first bell rang summoning the people to the morn-



ing service. She knew most of these things. Sometimes I couldn't find it and she would tell me what the feast of the day was and whether there was a Liturgy or not and whether we should get up very early in the morning to prepare for Church.

When there was a liturgy, we would get up early in the morning and go to the Church before the priest appeared, to do our veneration and to prepare for the service. The priest was embarrassed to find her, an old woman, and me, a little boy, being there first, prostrating before the icon of Christ. He would say, "Oh, auntie Areti," (as it was customary in the island to call every woman "auntie" and every man "uncle") "you have beaten me to it again. When shall this end?" And the great-grandmother would say, "Father, you do your job and I do mine." And what was her job? It was to bring

me there and to teach me everything through her acts, her orthopraxy. I can also tell you that the day she died, she was with me in my room at Edinburgh. This is an unbelievable experience that occurred once in my life. She told my mother on her deathbed that her beloved one in the family was not there to greet her. The beloved was I. But she also told her that she would see me that night and that she was going to see me again! "Don't you worry about that," she told my mother before she drew her last breath.

Another thing that I remember most clearly is the list with all the names of the living and the dead that I wrote for her countless times to take to Church for commemoration. She exemplified in this the lay priesthood that brought all these names to the heavenly altar of the Church, and thereby sustained and sanctified the whole family before the Lord. How could I escape from becoming a

priest after all this preparation? She was preparing me while I was a little boy for this high ministry.

My other (paternal) grandmother Photini was a very different person, since she lived in the capital and belonged to a more affluent family. Technically speaking, she was not educated either, even though she had been brought up in Athens. She was much richer and, as a result, she felt that she was much more important. Nevertheless, this grandmother too had a tremendous respect and reverence for the Church's Holy Tradition.

Grandmother Photini's home iconostasis was equally venerable and equally alive. I went every Saturday to her room to write the family names for commemoration and to hear the stories of the relatives from her noble family. There was one thing that rang like a chorus in my ears, and still rings every time I prepare as priest the holy *prosphora* for the Divine Liturgy. I hear the names that she recounted to me and I hear this chorus. "When I go, who is going to prepare all these names and take them to Church?" I cannot forget any of these names that I wrote as a child! I remember her grandparents and parents, her husband and deceased children and other relatives and I mention them all, and I feel that she's with me every time I'm in the sanctuary and I prepare for divine celebration.

Who are my first and decisive teachers? These are my grandmothers! Yes, there have been many others, my parents, my teachers, some great theologians. But the grandmothers were the first to teach me how to approach the Church through the Saints, considering the Saints not as some persons who lived in the past, but as some persons who live today and always, who are ahead of us, who are above us, who are our future, for they are with the Lord Himself who is the chief cornerstone.

We Orthodox are not traditionalists in the sense that we look to the past, because our past is not behind us. We do not go back to Old Testament times or New Testament times, as many people would have us do today especially those in academic circles. I clearly see the shortsightedness of many modern academics that search in history for clues to the faith. Have they not received this

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powerful Orthodox understanding of life, experience and tradition?

The Saints are above us, not behind us. They have gone ahead of us. Heaven is where we're all moving. We're not expecting something new to happen in this world, in this history, beyond what has happened to our Lord, who is risen from the dead, glorified in heaven, and lives forever. The holy Symbol of the Faith, the sacred Creed is our clue that specifies our most sacred and true perspective. It is this perspective that we need to keep alive in our families. To keep this alive means to foster the vocation to the priesthood. To lose it means to experience the crises that many have in their broken families today. And there's crisis upon crisis in the modern families and in modern society in the midst of the plentiful and sophisticated goods that human beings pursue and enjoy today. They find themselves being very lonely, very disappointed, caged, and imprisoned. I could give many examples to illustrate all these cases, but we can all supply our own. In contrast to these I remember the refreshing liveliness and profound simplicity of my grandmothers and mother. They all pushed me on to the right direction and helped me to grow up and learn truly and critically what the true life is all about, and how I should never waver from it.

My great-grandmother always asked me to test my faith. And I did. And the more I tested it, the more I discovered that faith, our faith, our holy Church, our holy Orthodox Tradition, are the greatest of all things that we may ask for in this life. So I grew up asking questions all the time. I remember that in going to Church I always put questions to the grandmothers and they answered me. "Why do we light candles? Why do we do prostrations? Why this and why that?" And I was amazed with the many things my grandmothers knew, things that people today do not know anymore. Here is an example that comes to mind.

I remember that on a Saturday morning after writing the family names for the Church I was given by my grandmother in Athens two coins to buy two candles, one extra coin to give alms to the poor beggars outside the Church, and one additional coin for myself to buy sweets.

Why two candles? I do not know how many people in Church today would know the answer to this question, since few now light two candles at their entrance to the narthex. Indeed many seem to be confused as to which side to choose for their candle, since on entering into the narthex, there are two sets of icons and two sets of lights. My grandmothers knew that one candle is for the living and one for the deceased and they correspond to the two sets of names that we write and submit to the priest for commemoration.

This reminds me of an incident that



occurred when I was a priest in Glasgow, in Scotland. We had raised some money for a Church in Russia and there was a service at the Church. A group of Russian brethren had come from Russia to collect the money. A Russian lady approached me at the narthex and asked, "Father, which is the side for the dead and which for the living, because I don't remember. I haven't been to Church for a long time. But I know from my grandmother that I have to do two candles." I could not help thinking of my grandmother right away and I said, "Thank God for our grandmothers!" This Russian woman knew that she had to light two candles, because of the way she was brought up in her family. Doesn't this say a lot about keeping the faith and indeed about fostering vocations to the priesthood? I think so. But let me try to explain why this is so by trying to answer the key question of this address.

What is the priesthood? The priesthood is an order of service, which the Lord has set up until we all grow into

the fullness of Christ. It is an order of service that offers us Christ and our life in Christ and in his Body, the Church. Priests are servants of Christ who serve in his saving plan for the people. There is, however, a double side to the priesthood. There is the general priesthood and the special priesthood.

The general priesthood is the priesthood of all believers, as the Protestant Christians like to call it. In the Epistle to the Hebrews it is called *royal priesthood* and has to do with all Christians. All Christians are *ordained*, or enter into the order of the saving service of Christ when they are *chrismated* and receive the Holy Spirit. All Christians are *priested* inasmuch as they let the Holy Spirit, who abides in them, take hold of them and make them grow in Christ becoming partakers of his life and co-servants in his saving mission. As priests vested with the general priesthood Christians make life offerings, that is to say, they live their lives in the name and in the service of Christ. They offer services in the name of Christ to their fellow human beings until they all enter into the saving mystery of Christ, until everyone grows into this mystery and gets transformed by it, until the kingdom of Heaven takes hold of everyone and the will of the Father is fulfilled on the earth as it is in Heaven. This is done in the two contexts of the family and the community and it has as many extensions as family and community may have.

The other priesthood, the special priesthood, is also tied to Christ but in a special way. It is tied to Christ's unique self-offering through a special order of service that is designed to remind us of this offering as the true basis of our existence, life and service as Christians. Christ's offering for us, what He did for us and for the whole world, is unique and unrepeatable and is tied to his unique High-Priesthood. The special priesthood that we observe in the Church is an imitation and presentation of the unique Priesthood of Christ.

Orthodox Bishops and Presbyters are types and places of Christ's High-priestly and Priestly presence (*eis typon kai topou Christou*). This is a mystery, a sacrament, ordained by Christ himself through his holy Apostles. This is why, in our Orthodox tradition when we kiss the hand of a Bishop or a priest, we kiss Christ's

hand and receive Christ's blessing. Priests are representatives of Christ and Christ works through the priests. The special priesthood, then, is a reminder (*anamnesis*) of what Christ has done for us in a unique way and, therefore, also of what we are called to do in thankful (*eucharistic*) response to it. He loved us all first and offered Himself for us all first, and for the whole world. He summons us not only to receive the grace that springs from his unique self-offering but also to communicate this grace to other human beings through our own sacrifice and offering. That is what the priesthood is all about.

The special priesthood is uniquely tied to Christ's Eucharistic self-offering, through which our salvation and the salvation of the world is accomplished. As such it is supportive of or prerequisite to the general priesthood that ties all believers through their response to Christ. The question that naturally arises here is how one gets to be ordained to this special priesthood? Perhaps I may be allowed to indulge again in personal reminiscences in trying to answer this question.

I remember when my time for becoming a priest began to draw near. I knew of this time since I was a little boy, and my wife came to know of it too. I remember the day when the Archbishop in London talked to my wife privately on the occasion of a visit. "Do you mind if I talk to your wife privately?" he said. "By all means," I said. I did not know what he wanted to talk about. He told her that he did not need to ask me. "Do you think we two can do it and make him a priest?" "Yes, You're right. You don't have to ask him. I think he was born that way. But I don't think I was. I don't think I'm ready for it. I don't think I can be a *presbyter*. How can I be worthy of such a task? How can I stand next to him? I can't do it now," my wife responded. The Archbishop was very pleased with her answer and said, "Well, thank you for being so honest and so direct in what you say. May I ask you to do one thing? Think about it, pray about it and when you feel you're ready, just give me a call and we'll both act on it." My wife told me this afterwards when the time came.

Who fosters vocations to the priesthood? Is it great-grandmothers, grandmothers, mothers, wives? Yes, it is! But isn't this amazing? No it isn't. This is what happened to me. When my time

came it was my wife that announced it. She was actually instrumental in bringing about this special time. The Archbishop who asked her had died and the new Archbishop who heard her response acted on it immediately as if he had been briefed by his predecessor! The important point for me is that she announced it, because she had fostered it. She actually stood as the last link in a sacred chain, which includes her mother, my mother, my grandmother and my great-grandmother.

When I think of those who fostered my vocation to the priesthood, my thought ultimately turns to the holy Mother of God who fostered the voca-



tion of the Great High Priest whom the Heavenly Father sent to offer himself for our sakes. And so my conclusion is drawn. It is not at all amazing that women are God's primary agents in fostering in the Church the vocation to the special priesthood. It is because they are more attuned to the general priesthood like the Mother of Christ, the holy Theotokos, who is also the new Mother of all redeemed humanity. It is the general priesthood that fosters the special one. In all the enthronements of Bishops or Archbishops that I have seen as a priest, their mothers occupied the first place at the *synaxis*. By the same token in all ordinations of married priests their wives stood first in the congregation.

When my ordination had been announced, several people tried to discourage me for proceeding with it. I remember a colleague of mine in the university where I taught who tried to do so. "My

dear friend, are you really going to become a priest? You're a professor! Why do you want to be a priest? Wouldn't this be a risk to your academic integrity?" This reminds me of many of our young people today who study theology to be professors but not priests! Many times this is due to the failure of those who surround them, sometimes even to those who mentor and teach them, in fostering their vocation to the priesthood or supporting them in their calling. Friends and relatives fail today either because they have lost their spiritual perspective, or because they are weak and lack the strength for supporting others. That is why we have reached a moment of crisis.

The whole world needs priests. America needs priests. All the Orthodox jurisdictions in America need priests, but we all suffer from the same syndrome. What is it? Isn't it our failure or sloth in fostering the holy life within the family and the community? Do our women follow the Mother of God? Are our professors focused on the reality of Christ and the Church? Do Christians take up their vocation to the general priesthood? When we look at them today we see a double-mindedness. They would go to Church, do what they have learned to do — light their candles, keep their fasting as far as they can, try to follow the Orthodox way. But they have their mind in other things and concerns and their mind is split so as to be unable to see the wholeness and integrity of the Christian vocation and nurture the Christian priesthood.

We need to be consistent as Orthodox Christians in order to foster vocations to the priesthood in our families and communities. But having said this we must also realize that a priest is not made by us. It was not the great-grandmother who made me a priest although her role was crucial. It was primarily the Lord Himself, as I know in the depths of my heart. But I also know that the Lord worked through my great-grandmother, for she provided what I needed as a young human being in order to open up to God and hear His calling. And I'm so grateful. When I mention the names at the *prothesis*, her name goes first in every Liturgy. I always think of her as a person who is ahead of me. She told my mother that she would see me again. I

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Fostering Vocations

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know what she means. She's gone ahead and is waiting for me. We are not to remain here forever and we all know it. But our lifestyle many times proves the opposite. If this life is indeed very transient, then we have to ask ourselves what we are going to leave behind. The general priesthood is one thing that we have to offer, so that the mystery of Christ may be truly opened to us, to our beloved ones, to our friends, to our environment, and may foster the vocation to the special priesthood to the glory of Christ.

Fostering the vocation to the priesthood may also be done through supporting institutions that are dedicated to training and raising priests, such as schools and seminaries. A good example that comes to mind is the Patriarchal School of Holy Zion in Jerusalem, which has trained and raised many priests for this venerable Church, which is honored since ancient times as the mother of all the Churches. I learned about this school and its vital role for the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulcher through some students of mine who joined this venerable school when they were very young. It is most moving and amazing to hear the stories of many priests of the Church of Jerusalem who are graduates of this school. I am sure that the same applies to this holy seminary of St. Tikhon's and to the other holy Orthodox seminaries in this country.

Yet another way of fostering vocations to the priesthood is by offering full support to the work of our dedicated bishops and priests in the Church. How

many people have become priests because of other priests? By supporting the priesthood in our parish, we also support the priesthood in the Church in general. Good and healthy parishes are blessed with raising many priests for the Church. The Church is like a great treasury, a garden, and a new world with tremendous potential. When we approach it with an open heart and hand, then all sorts of marvelous things may happen. The most important of them is our constant renewal and, therefore, our proper participation in the Church's holy mission. All depends on whether we make a right entrance to it, on whether we stand well, on whether we truly enter into the kingdom of Heaven in entering into our Church. The kingdom of Heaven embraces, not only sacred space, sacred things, sacred Liturgies, holy sacraments and everything that brings to us the blessing of God, but also all of us singly and communally. The Church enters into us and takes hold of us.

One of the great Saints and theologians of the Church, St. Maximos the Confessor, a Secretary of State in Constantinople who became a monk, a theologian, a holy man, a father of Byzantine Orthodox theology, as my venerable teacher of blessed memory Fr George Florovsky called him, tells us in his profound treatise of *Mystagogy*, what the great twin mystery of the identity and liturgy of the Church is. It all begins with the uncreated God. Its first image is God's love and freedom that bring about the miracle of creation. Nothing would exist if the Church, that is God's love and freedom, did not operate. It is this

uncreated operation that constitutes the mystery of the Church, which is greater than the world and the basis of it. Then the mystery of the Church and her liturgy moves to the invisible world of the Angels that lies above and is the first creation. St. Maximos then explains how this Church that is above, the Church of the first-born (*ecclesia protocon*), enters into the mystery of the visible world that was created subsequently. And so the invisible Church also becomes visible. Then the Church is extended further and further until it reaches the earth and embraces the human being. The Church is revealed on the earth and takes on the face of the human being! The final and most intimate icon of the Church is the human soul. The eternal and living God has created the human soul in His image and likeness and poured his love and freedom into it so that the whole mystery of the Church, which is beyond our comprehension, is actually ours, inside us. A human being that realizes this destiny and is alert and aware of the mystery of the Church cannot but be a priest that fosters the vocation to the most sacred priesthood.

I believe that that great soul of St. Maximos was the same as that great soul of my great-grandmother. When one day at vespers she incensed her house and all the chickens and animals in her yard, as well as the sky above with the early stars, I asked her, "Why Yaya do you incense these things?" "My eyes," she replied, "don't you think that we have to sanctify the whole world by thanking God for it?" Was she a priest? Oh, yes, she was, like St. Maximos. She had a soul that really reflected the mystery of the Church. The Church is certainly and supremely revealed in the sanctified space and time where the holy mysteries of Christ are celebrated according to the holy order. But then the Church is reflected in innumerable icons even in each human soul. The mystery of the Eucharist is reflected in all sorts of ways and above all in the life of every individual. If there is one individual in a family that is like that, then that family will certainly foster the true vocation to the priesthood, which is not only for the special priest that wears the cassock, but also for everyone in the Church who serves in the body of Christ by virtue of the Royal Priesthood.

—Protopresbyter George D. Dragas

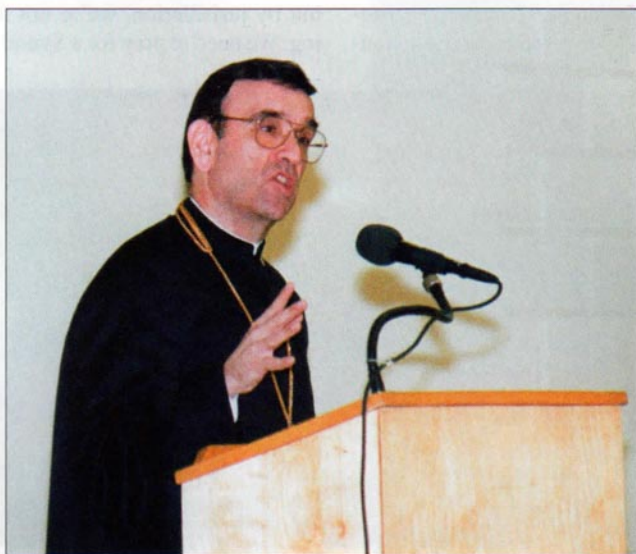
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Uniting Our Church in This Country



Protopresbyter Michael G. Dahulich

From the very onset of our education in the Church, we know that the need for the Church is to be one. The words of our Lord make it crystal clear that there is only one Church. "I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." It says that in the Gospel of Matthew. And as he prepares to ascend the Cross for the sake of us and for our salvation, he tells the world what he prays for to his Father. He says this about the members of his Church: "That they may be one even as we are one, that the world may believe that thou has sent me." Throughout the scripture — in St. Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 2 and chapter 20, in St. Paul, his Letters to the Corinthians and the Ephesians and Colossians, the Church is one. In the *Teaching of the Holy Apostles*, the document that is called the *Didache*, we read: "As this bread was scattered over the hills and then brought together and made one, one Church was formed." St. Ignatius of Antioch very early in the

second century writes: "Wherever the bishop is, so the people gather; for there is the fullness of the Church." The holy fathers — St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Vincent of Lerins; the Russian theologians — Alexei Khomiakov and Sergius Bulgakov, all testify and presume the Church is one. Those of you who have studied church history know about the establishment of the Church throughout the world, whether it was the mother church of all churches in Jerusalem, or its replication in the churches that St. Paul missionized, or the patriarchates that were founded; the creation of local churches like Cyprus and Georgia, the missionizing of Russia, that vast land that had one metropolitan from Constantinople; and the other autocephalous churches throughout history. The Church was always one. That's the tradition: the words of St. Paul in the scripture, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, one Church." Even the little children of our parishes know, I believe, in one Holy Catholic and

Apostolic Church. We know that we believe that; and in most of the world, Orthodoxy lives it.

The reality in America, however, is a different story. St. Paul once chastised the Corinthians and said, "There are contentions among you. To those who say, 'I am of Paul,' and 'I am of Cephas,' and 'I am of Christ,' I say: is Christ divided?" Yet we say: 'I am of Constantinople.' 'I am of Antioch.' 'I am of Moscow.' Is Christ divided? In canon law, in the 34th canon of the Holy Apostles, we read: "Together the bishops must work in conciliarity, in a council, together, in every land." And yet the bishops of this country have yet to form one synod. In fact, they have all actually only met together once so far. The first ecumenical council held in 325 in Nicea, has an 8th canon, and it reads: "There must not be two bishops in any city." Have you ever been to Pittsburgh? The fourth council, in Chalcedon — canon 21 insists: "Two metropolitans may not be in the same province." Yet Metropolitan Theodosius, Metropolitan Philip, Metropolitan Christopher, Metropolitan Joseph, Metropolitan Constantine, Metropolitan Nicholas all have overlapping jurisdictions — not to mention Archbishop Demetrius and Archbishop Victorin.

From 1794 till 1921, there was only one ecclesial organization in this land. Today, there are about a dozen canonical jurisdictions in the U.S. — not to mention the groups that are not canonical, that are not regularized and in communion with the whole Church.

In 1872 there was a synod held in Constantinople, and the Church

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condemned the heresy of phyletism — subjugation of the Church to nationalism — to make nationalism more important than the faith of the Church. And yet those very jurisdictions of this country are founded and perpetuated and maintained on the issue of ethnic origin, custom, tradition. That's the reality — that's the reality.

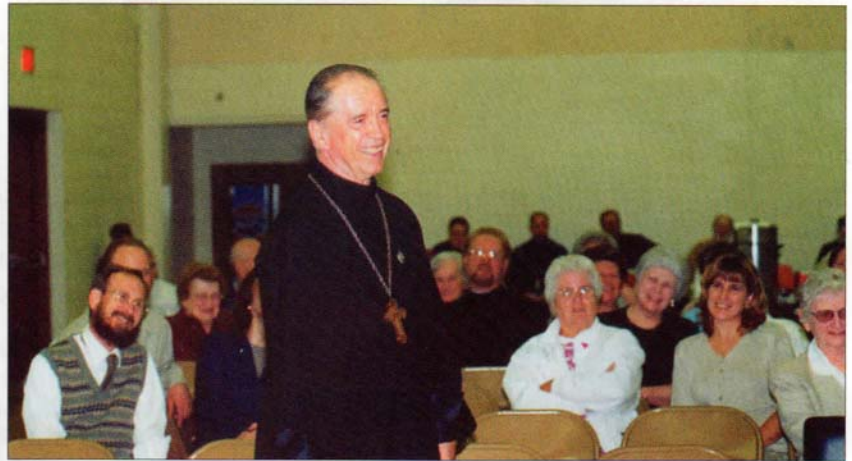
Let's dream for a while. Let's dream about what we might have. Can you imagine a moral issue? Cloning. A moral issue. Whether or not we should give medical benefits to gay partners who work in a particular government office, benefits for their significant other. Could you imagine if we had a Synod of Bishops speaking out in this country? Guiding our people and being a voice of conscience for America? Can you imagine fifty bishops marching into President Clinton's office, protesting the bombing of Serbia, or the persecution of Christians in Turkey or anywhere else in the world? When we go into small numbers of ethnic enclaves, they think it's a political issue - Serbian bishops supporting Milosevich; or Greeks upset with Turks. Fifty bishops. Can you imagine fifty bishops standing together on the ellipse in Washington, DC? Singing a panikhida for those who have been slaughtered in abortion? It's possible. Pick an area — Philadelphia; Scranton-Wilkes-Barre; Harrisburg; Bethlehem-Allentown. We could conceivably have an Orthodox school training children in the way they should go and graduate them. Have a feeding center for the seminary, for choir directors; for good, strong Orthodox Christians — it's possible.

It's possible — we could have an Orthodox college in this state. Or an Orthodox nursing home or retirement facility, or home for unwed mothers who have to decide what to do with the life they're not prepared to raise. All of that is possible: one church could ease the vocations crisis because we could use personnel much more wisely. Priests would be able to go do mission work in unchurched America or in the world, and still maintain the care of the parishes that we have.

Can you imagine one church in an area like Philadelphia, Scranton, or Harrisburg — get them all together and have

this huge celebration for the world to see, for ourselves to see; cooperating as congregations, growing stronger, maybe even able to buy time on television to educate people through the mass media, to the truth. All of that is possible — all of it is possible.

Instead, we have on the four sides of a city block in one town, three churches, each with fifty-some members. Dwindling congregations in large inner cities and in small rural areas; parishes struggling to pay clergy salaries and hospi-



talization and rectory costs; dioceses stretching funds to perpetuate parallel institutions. Another camp, another chancery, in the same city. Churches created by division and divisiveness — not by mission and evangelism but by disgruntled people who just start another church, at the expense of a parish. The Catholics and the Orthodox do not appear to be on the same page in terms of unity of the church. It's our fault. We leave, we convey the image — not of the one true Church, to the Protestants, to the unchurched; we convey the ethnic ghetto parish hanging on to the old country. No one conveys that for us. That's the reality. And so what do we do? First, we need to pray. We need to pray to see the vision of what we ought to be.

The notion of the local church is that it's a replica of the council of the Trinity — one God, three Persons; it is a council: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The local church — the hierarch, the clergy, the people — one church — in every diocese together. The national church is formed with the same kind of structure: individual cells making one organization.

In the *sobornost* of the Church, in the conciliarity of the Church, the nature of the Church is the church in council, together — all of the bishops in a synod, meeting twice a year, regularly and when needed for special occasions, and in today's day of mass communications those bishops are a telecommunication call away even though they're at one end of the country or the other. But if we're divided not by space, and not by time, but by jurisdiction, we're not functioning. We need to pray for a Synod of Bish-

ops in this country.

Ligonier, if you remember, was the first step. I was privileged to be there. His Eminence was there. Most of the bishops of this country were there. And I really believe that I witnessed a sense of empowering by the Holy Spirit that those bishops had, that they were making a bold statement to the world of what lies ahead for them to do, to make one church, to make America Orthodox, to make the Church grow in this country.

They made an important agreement that they would not establish a church in a community that already had an existing parish that was Orthodox. That's important because living organisms don't grow by division. Tear a piece of paper, you have two pieces of paper. You take a living organism, you cut it, you have the seeds of death. They made that agreement, and they agreed to meet again; and thank God, my understanding is that next year in Washington D.C., they're going to meet again, we're going to pray that that happens and that there is someday a synod created of bishops working together in concert and in

council, representing their local diocese in the one Church of America; and that someday they can call a council of all of the bishops and priests and representatives of every parish in this country to deal with the issues that have to be dealt with. Important issues, like making America Orthodox; important issues like a common position on marriage; important issues like what is our position vis-a-vis other churches, other denominations; what does our church have to say about the moral issues of the time. We

neither Jew nor Gentile, Jew nor Greek. We could add any ethnic jurisdictional name to that. Orthodox is Orthodox. We have to believe that.

Last week Father Dragas talked about his vocation and how his grandmother affected his life and trained him in the faith. And in much the same way my grandmothers, and my mom, affected my vocation. My mother is to me the most wonderful woman in the world. She's very pious and very sincere — and very naive. But she reflects, in one simple



have to pray — we have to pray for those representations of the conciliarity of the one church of America to happen. We have to pray that the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople will use his canonical prerogatives to establish proper order of the one church in this country, and that all the mother churches overseas will relinquish their control over the US and support one church in America. We have to pray that a Great Holy Synod of all the Churches of the world, of all of the Orthodox Churches of the world, will convene, and one of the things that they will do is recognize and ratify the oneness of the Church in America. It's a lot to pray for. And every one of those measures rests in the hands of hierarchs, which means besides praying, there isn't anything else that you and I can do on this level.

There's a lot that we can do on another level. Priests, deacons, and lay men and women together can be, maybe become and then be, the reality of one Church in this country, guided by the Holy Spirit — and the single principle, the single principle is "Orthodox is Orthodox." St. Paul said, in Christ there is

sentence, the position of so many of us in the Church in America. When she calls me up she'll say, "How's the teaching going — how are they treating you on the other side?" And I have to say, "Mom, it's the same side. It's the same Church." What's wrong with this picture? We've created the "sides." That's the reality. We've created those "sides" — whether we choose to admit it or not, we live those sides. And so — together — priests and people have to help the bishops so that as they reach the point of creating a synod in America, we're ready for that. We're not ready if good, naive, pious people think there are sides. There's a lot of educating to do. We need to pray together. That's easy to do. We just have to do it enough.

We just can't get together on the Sunday of Orthodoxy, read the Synodicon of the Council of Nicea and say Yes! and then go back to ethnic parishes and taking sides and making the same spinning of the wheels in a rut. Local clergy brotherhoods, and they are throughout this state, together with their faithful need to gather for weekday vespers, thanksgivings, and add that on to a lenten service.

Holy unction, which requires multiple priests — things that don't affect the Saturday night-Sunday morning schedule, the order of the churches — to get together and to pray — to be one voice, from one church, to the almighty God, asking for what we know ought to be, to happen. We need to invite each other and support each other on parish anniversaries, patron feast days, ordinations, or vocation, or consecrations of churches, for blessings, dedications of new buildings. Most places are doing that. We can go one step further. We need to sacrifice a Sunday of the year, like they do in the Triple Cities, close the churches, and have a combined liturgy, and show everybody how really strong we are in an area, and unite for that one liturgy all voices in prayer to God for the one church, to demonstrate to ourselves, first, and to everybody else, second, the unity and strength of the Orthodox presence in a given area. No more rivalries, no more sides, no more lack of communication, no more estrangement. Orthodox is Orthodox — one church.

We have to show our unity, our catholic unity. Catholic in our understanding doesn't mean Roman Catholic. It means the fullness of the Church. The Church was catholic when it was just a tiny entity in the Mediterranean area. When Ignatius said "there is the catholic Church," he meant "there is the fullness of the Church," wherever the bishop is. And so, where the bishop is we need to gather. So what does that mean? When Archbishop Herman comes, or any bishop comes, into this area, into Wilkes-Barre, into Olyphant, you know what? St. Ignatius would say the churches should close and they should be where the bishop is. When His Eminence blessed the water for Epiphany in Penn's Landing in Philadelphia, there should have been 30 churches gathered together. Where the bishop is — that is what should be.

Of course, it would be wise to schedule those events on Saturdays because it doesn't conflict. But you know what? Even if it does conflict, even if it happens on a Sunday, we shouldn't be afraid about missing one collection in our parishes, because by supporting wherever His Eminence is, we're supporting our church. Orthodox is Orthodox. We're

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getting the same liturgy, the same sacraments, and putting our money into that collection plate for that parish, we're supporting ourselves. Because there are no sides: Orthodox is Orthodox. And we need to support each other's parishes — absolutely. We need to go to lenten missions and retreats and speaking programs that our neighbors sponsor. All it means is, we shut the TV off and go. That's what it means. It means we give up the football game or the baseball game and we tell our kids today, you're not going to play the video, you're going to go to church.

Parish dinners — we all have to eat somewhere, right? There was a time when parish dinners were the social event of the month. How far down are they on the list of our social lives today? Anniversary celebrations — when the church is celebrating 95 years in this town or 75 years in that town, we need to be there. It's the celebration of the Church's history in America. And fundraising festivities — we need to support our neighboring parishes, whether they're Greek or Russian, or Antiochian, or Ukrainian, or whatever. I have a pet peeve I want to share with you. My field of study is really New Testament but there's one thing we can learn from our predecessors in the Old Testament. The Jewish people stick together. They support each other. They stand together in their faith, they speak out, so that they are not discriminated against; they help each other in business; they support each other; they praise each other; they rejoice when one of them succeeds; and they hurt when one of them fails. And you know what? Everybody knows it. I dare say there are more Orthodox in this country than there are Jewish people — but no one would ever know it. Because we don't do that; we don't support each other; we don't encourage each other.

Sometimes our idea is to be critical of someone who succeeds or of a parish that is flourishing. Our idea is to crawl on top of somebody and bring them down and take their place, instead of pushing them up, supporting one another — we need to adopt that approach. We need to stand together support each other, rejoice with one another, help each other. That's how that tiny group of people not

only have survived — but they succeed. Because they have taken their identity, merged it with God and promoted it in every country that they've been in. Well, Orthodox is Orthodox.

There are projects that we can do, great projects that we can do together — and I think we need to consider some of them. If you're a small parish in a small town, it might be time to think about combining Sunday schools with another small parish in that same small town, so that all those children get the best education in real classroom settings with the best teachers that are available in the Orthodox community. Combine youth

jurisdictions, at work together to aid in Russian, in Serbia and Albania, and in Africa and Latin America — the government has matched those funds, treated us like we were one church, working together. Great things have happened for so many people, because we worked together. You can do that on a parish level, on a community level, with a soup kitchen. Taking care of the homeless, clothing drives, food drives — doing the work of Christ in your area, in your outreach to those less fortunate than you are. Together — because Orthodox is Orthodox. We need to network — we need to network desperately. What does that



activities. How do you expect young people to meet each other and become friends and maybe fall in love and marry if they don't have that interaction? A small parish cannot afford a renowned speaker — but several small parishes together can; whereas, a few small parishes or a large parish can.

St. Paul says in his letter to the Galatians, "Bear one another's burdens," and so if you are a big parish and your neighbor is a small parish, am I my brother's keeper? The scripture would say yes. The Church at Philippi helped other local churches, helped the mother church of Jerusalem, because it had been blessed. And you know what? When you give of your blessings, the Lord gives it all back. Working together is proof in itself. An organization called International Orthodox Christian Charities — dioceses,

mean? That means if you or your children get transferred in work and have to move somewhere, find a church for them. It might not be a Carpatho-Russian church. It might not be a Bulgarian Church. But Orthodox is Orthodox. Find a church. Call the priest and say: "we're coming" — or "my daughter is coming. Please — here's the address." Kids go off to college — you've got to find a church, you've got to find a priest, you've got to corral them into the Church.

Intermarriage — you've got to find a church — and it might need to be an all-English parish. You've got to find a church, for we're losing vocations — find a church! God doesn't say "Keep holy the Sabbath except when you are on vacation in Florida or California or Hawaii"! We need to understand this: we

are the true Church. It's not a matter of religious indifferentism — "It doesn't make any difference, there's one God, doesn't make any difference where I go, where I get married, when I move, what I do." Yes, there is only one God and you know what Fathers say: There is only one God, therefore there is only one truth; therefore only one true faith, therefore there is only one true Church. We have to believe that it's us. And instead of worrying about the perogie recipe, if it's what my mother used or what the new person is using or whether or not we're going to paint the interior of the church the same color that it was painted 90 years ago — we need to worry about networking our people into the true Church wherever they go, and whatever they do.

And it's not just a question of numbers. People say to me, Why are you worried about numbers? Are we going to grow? It's not a matter of numbers. It's a matter of saving souls — souls that Christ died for, souls that have been baptized in the Orthodox faith, souls that need to be nourished in the sacramental life of the Orthodox Church — that's what it's a matter of. And it is also a matter of mothers and fathers whose hearts become broken somewhere along the line because their children and grandchildren are no longer a part of the Church that they were raised in. That's what it's a matter of; it's not a matter of numbers, it's a matter of an individual soul — every one of which is important. We need — no matter whether that parish out there is Greek or Syrian or Russian — we need to send them to the one true Church; because Orthodox is Orthodox.

We need to network people who move into the area into our church. We cannot have the attitude, "Well, we're founders here, it's gonna be this way or that way." We want to give and share the faith that we have with everybody. We want to bring back people who have left for whatever reason, maybe because the perogie recipe was wrong. We want to bring them back. We want to bring people who are looking for Christ who have not found Him somewhere.

I am not saying go steal a good Catholic or a good Episcopalian — I'm saying take people who are looking for the true Church, or who need to look for the true Church because they are

nowhere. Be proud of your faith, be proud of your church — and know there is one God, and therefore there is only one truth, only one true faith, one true Church. And if we don't believe it is us we should all go home now. All of this is a lot of work.

But you know what? Doing this kind of work has great potential, evidenced by great success. You know, you've probably read about it, in Worcester, Massachusetts, they have an Orthodox nursing home that was created, estab-

"We need — no matter whether that parish out there is Greek or Syrian or Russian — we need to send them to the one true Church; because Orthodox is Orthodox."

lished, built, founded, by the local parishes working together. They are in the process right now, grade by grade, of building up an Orthodox school in Pittsburgh. I am amazed at the incredibly active clergy association in Philadelphia, all that they do together to promote Orthodoxy, the growth of the faith there, growth in theosis that Dr. Harry talked about two weeks ago. We've seen a breakdown of those harsh sides, right here — sharing the clergy. His Eminence has a parish in Coatesville which needed a priest, and so he talked to a retired Greek Orthodox pastor who is serving there in that small parish. And you know what? Together, now, that former O.C.A. constituents and the Greeks who weren't going to a church anywhere, are one family. There is a retired Carpatho-Russian priest who is serving in a church in Edwardsville — sharing in the one family, in the one faith and one Church. That kind of sharing could someday be a solution toward the vocation crisis, toward rising costs and shrinking membership.

We cannot be afraid to do those once unthinkable things. Look at the results. Blessing for the priest, blessing for the

parish, blessing for His Eminence, blessing for Christ. We need to live the reality that is true — we have one faith, one Lord, one baptism. Orthodox is Orthodox.

I've told my students a number of times that if we are really serious about this, just think: if you took all of the parishes in this Scranton-Wilkes-Barre area, or the Philadelphia area, or the Harrisburg area, or the Bethlehem-Allentown area, and they worked together — clergy, the faithful, together — all of those churches in that district. Now we're not talking about competing with anything yet that's going on. If they just work together to promote the one church, this would be the future seeds of an area deanery in an American church. And if we put all of those districts together in to a region, and have the closest bishop to oversee them, direct and guide them in matters of faith, then we could have the seeds of a local diocese without ever transgressing the boundaries of parishes. Or, dioceses that exist now. If we live like this now, if we work together to come to know each other, to come to pray for and together with each other, to come to love each other — as the one church, then we'll be ready for the unity that will come at the hierarchical level when that happens. There doesn't have to be any change in existing parishes, there doesn't have to be any change in property ownership, there doesn't have to be any change in particular customs or local traditions — just have to work like we are the one church, believe that we are the one church — live what we are. What unites us is the faith, what unites us is the Church. That's what we have, that's who we are. Orthodox is Orthodox.

We need to have one Church, make no bones about it — because the Lord commands it, because the Fathers teach it, because tradition demands it. And you know what? I believe we will be one Church, one of two ways: it will either be by our obedience to the tradition, our working to make this happen, or it will happen by default because of our failure to obey the tradition. What do I mean? I mean if we don't do what we're supposed to do, then much like Israel in the Old Testament, we will shrink to the point that we will no longer be able to afford the heresy of phyletism, of ethnic

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nationality. We will shrink to the position that the Holy Spirit will teach the remnant that is left that Orthodox is Orthodox. It is going to happen because that's the nature of the Church. So we can take the situation and do what we are supposed to do, or we can sit back and let it happen by default. I could opt for the first way. I would ask to inspire you to the first way. I would pray that we pray together and work together and live together the first way because we can do it, we can do it — with the help of God. We need to seek always the good of the Church.

St. Paul said in his letter to the Philippians, "Forgetting what lies behind us, and looking forward to what lies ahead." We have to have a vision — and the vision is, we are Orthodox, we are the Church of the Apostles. We are the faith of undivided Christianity. Orthodox is Orthodox. We have to trust that what seems to be impossible to men is possible with God, as Jesus said in the gospel of St. Mark. We need a vision. The vision is: one Church. One Church in America, making America Orthodox. But we have to be, as Fr. Alexander said in the introduction, one witness to the truth — not several voices speaking in different languages, doing different things, being on other "sides" from each

another — one witness. Orthodox is Orthodox. When I was a young priest, actually when I was in seminary, and as a young priest, I marveled at the zeal of the Orthodox Church in America, the OCA, when it received its autocephaly. It was consumed with the challenge that that autocephaly demanded. We need to, all of us, not just the OCA, all of us need to rekindle that kind of zeal — to make the Church one, to make Orthodoxy one witness in America, and to make America Orthodox Christian.

I would like to share with you, in conclusion, the text of a message that was adopted here — here, on the very ground we are standing on — at the All-American Council of the Orthodox Church in America, October 20, 1970. Listen and listen well:

"To all Orthodox Christians in America: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. We, the bishops, clergy and laity of the Orthodox Church in America, united in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ at our All-American Council, address this message to all our brothers of the Orthodox faith in America. The grace and the mercy of God be with you. The time has come for us to fulfill Christ's prayer that 'all may be one . . . that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me' (John 17:21). Our witness to the truth of our Orthodox faith on this continent, where we Orthodox are a minority, lies in our

perfect and total unity. How can the world accept and believe our claim to be the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, of having kept in its fullness the Orthodox faith, if we ourselves are divided? We have the same faith, the same tradition, the same hope, the same mission. We should then constitute one Church — visibly organically, fully. Such is the requirement of our Orthodox faith and we know that always and everywhere the Orthodox Church has existed and exists as one Church. There can, therefore, be no excuse for our jurisdictional divisions, alienation from one another, and parochialism. The removal of such divisions, and the organic unity of all Orthodox in America is the goal of our Church, and we invite you to become a part of that unity. But we also know and fully acknowledge that we have come from various backgrounds and been nourished by various traditions within the same unique Orthodox tradition. We believe that this variety constitutes the richness of American Orthodoxy, and that whatever is true, noble, inspired and Christian in our various customs and practices ought to be fully preserved and, if possible, shared. Therefore, although we insist that the One Orthodox church here must be the home of all, we equally stress that there must be no loss of our respective national and cultural heritages, and certainly, no domination of any group by any other but a full equality, total trust and truly Christian brotherhood. As we send you the peace and love of our first Council as the Orthodox Church in America, we assure you that we understand ourselves, first and foremost as the servants of the full unity of the Church in freedom, love and mutual respect of all churches and dioceses of our Orthodox Church in the world and in this blessed land of America. Glory to our Lord Jesus Christ, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, unto ages of ages. Amen!"

This vision, this zeal, this formula for one Church — Orthodox is Orthodox — respectful of all, loving all, praying for all, needs to be resurrected in order to bring about one Church in America, the first one. We must do it; you must do your part in your parish to do it. God help us to have one Church in America. To Him be the glory unto ages of ages. Amen.

—Archpriest Michael Dahulich



The icon, Synaxis of Saints of Carpatho-Rus', is a digitalized photographic reproduction of the highest quality mounted on hardwood by professional craftsmen. It depicts 12 Saints from our ancestors' homeland who have been glorified by the Orthodox Church, and whose lives provide examples of piety for all to imitate. With the purchase of each icon, a brief explanation of the Saints in the icon is included.

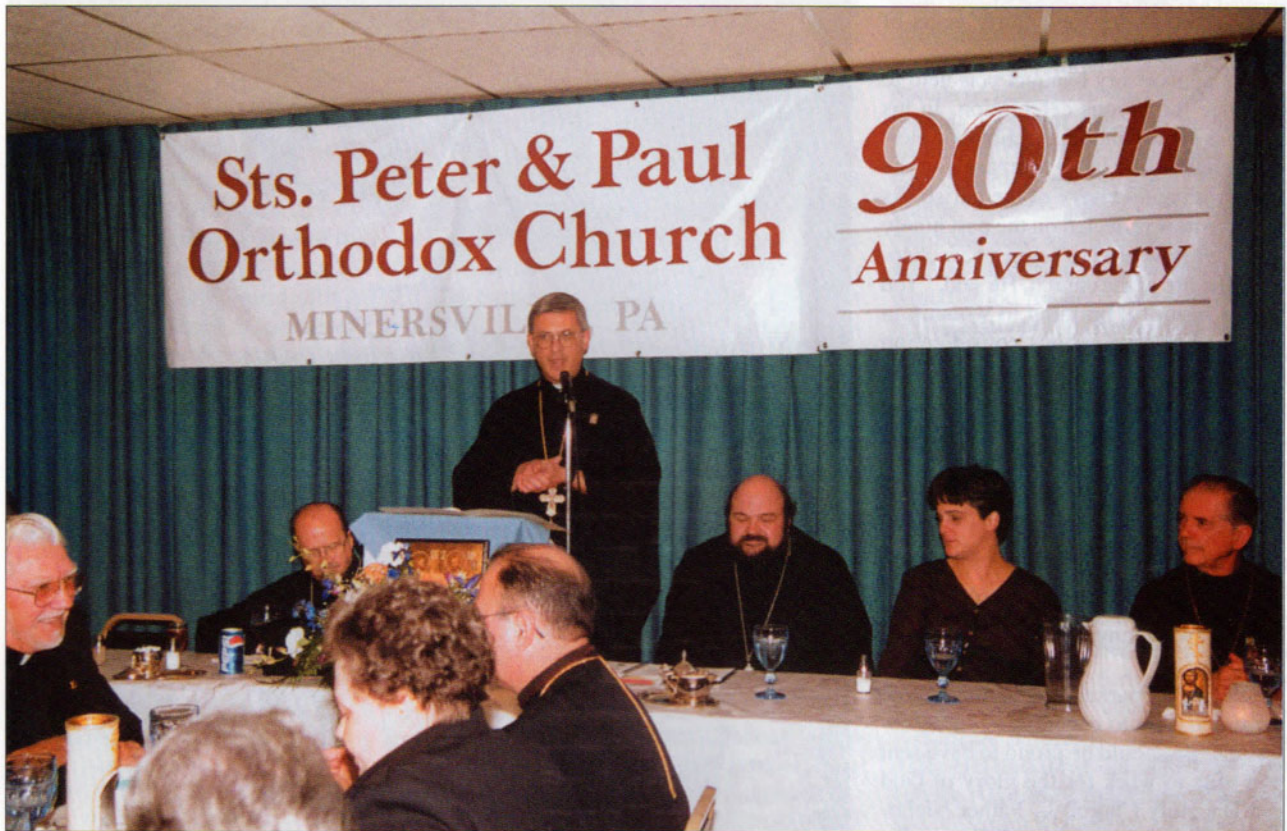
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Father Michael Hatrak addresses banquet

Ninetieth Anniversary Celebrated in Minersville

Saints Peter and Paul Church in Minersville marked the millennium by celebrating the ninetieth anniversary of the parish founding, on September 23-24, 2000.

A hierarchical Divine Liturgy was celebrated September 24 by Archbishop HERMAN. Serving with him were Archpriest Michael Hatrak, pastor; Archpriests Michael Kovach and Michael Evans; Priest Nicholas Wyslutsky, a son of the parish, and Deacon Alexei Klimitchev.

In his homily, His Eminence spoke about the gospel reading for the day and how it calls all men to be fishers of men.

“As the disciples overcame disappointments, so your founding fathers did also. But they didn’t give up, and knew the Lord would always be there to give His assistance so that we will be able to accomplish all great things, not only for ourselves, but those that we come in contact with. They wanted a church to be established and made available, for all those who wanted to find eternal salvation, so that they could have their children baptized there, and participate in the sacraments and receive the grace of God. And you have continued the same.”

He went on to urge us “to rededicate our lives to Christ and His holy Church,

offering our love for Him and for all mankind, knowing that so long as we fulfill that, we will obtain eternal salvation. There is no greater commandment than to love one another.”

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, Archbishop Herman presented a Synodal gramota to the parish. Luke Oakill, parish council president, accepted the gramota for the parish. His Eminence also offered congratulations from Metropolitan THEODOSIUS and from the Holy Synod of Bishops, taking note of all the love given for the building up of our holy Church. A gramota was also

Continued on the next page

Minersville

Continued from page 33

given to Father Michael and Matushka Valerie Hatrak for their thirty years of devoted service.

An anniversary banquet was held to continue the joyous celebration. In his remarks at the banquet, Archbishop Herman challenged us to prepare for the hundredth anniversary of the parish. As we have now reflected on the past ninety years, we now need to begin a new chapter in the life of the church. He said, "You have a beautiful building to worship in and need to give serious consideration to the spiritual life of the parish, and to the spiritual life of every individual so that when we come to the celebration of one hundred years we can try to stand before the Lord, and He will acknowledge and continue to grant you that spiritual growth, knowing that not only have you drawn yourself closer to the Lord and His Heavenly Kingdom, but also have drawn many, many other people with you."

He also remarked that in this time of increased need to encourage church vocations, we should be proud to have sent two sons to work for the glory of God and His Holy Church — Father Nicholas Wyslutzky, pastor of All Saints Orthodox Church, Olyphant, PA and Gregory Hatrak, manager of St. Tikhon's Seminary Bookstore. Our parish can also be proud to acknowledge the work of our former choir director, Father John Stefero, now a military chaplain and St. Tikhon's Seminary graduate.

Our parish secretary Constance Calabrese offered closing remarks, thanking everyone for their contributions to make the event a wonderful celebration. Although we may be small in numbers, she noted, the strength of the parish is that we love and care for the Church and for one another, and that wonderful things come in small packages.

An anniversary is always a time of reflection and looking back in history. Our parish history began in 1910 when a small group of people saw the need to establish a place of worship in Minersville. They first purchased a hall to worship in and a plot of ground for a cemetery. Two small houses were bought at the present location in 1913. One was razed to make way for the church and the other used as a rectory. The rectory



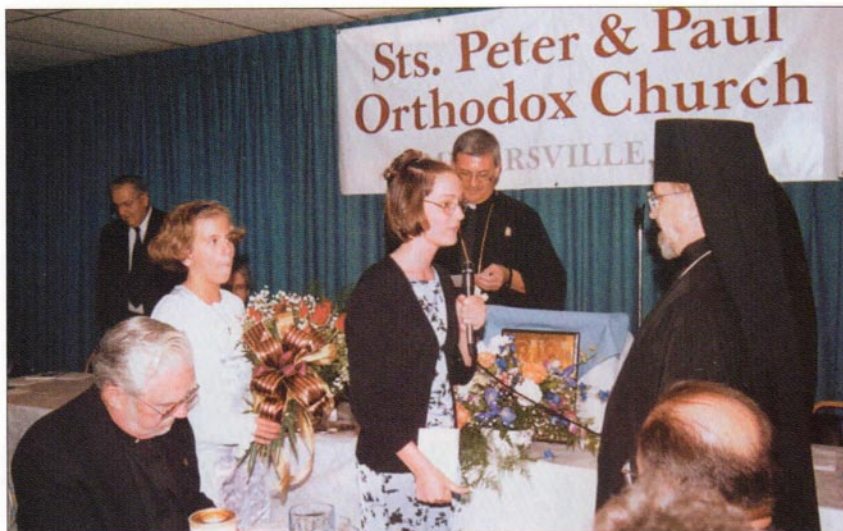
Anointing the faithful with blessed oil



Conclusion of the Divine Liturgy



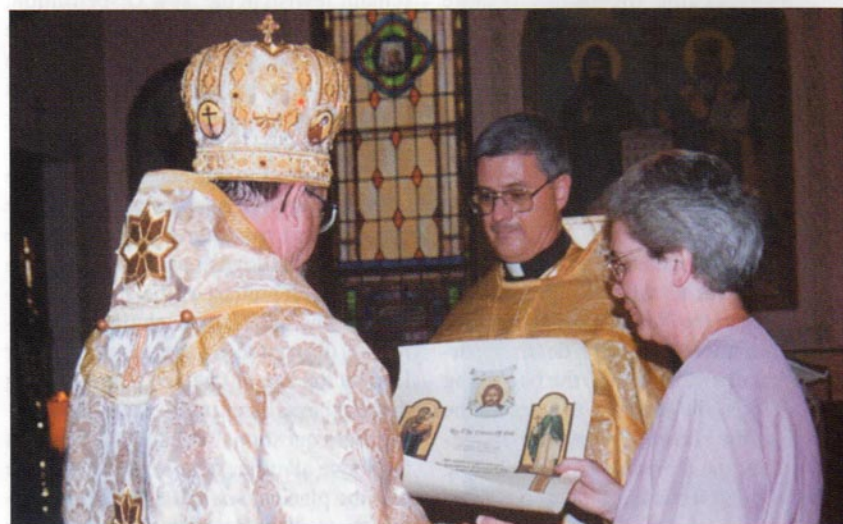
Acolytes



Floral presentation



Church president receives gramota



Fr. Michael and Matushka Valerie awarded gramota

basement was used for church services until 1914. By then the basement of the new church was completed, which was used for 23 years. The present church was completed in 1937 and dedicated on Labor Day, 1938. St. Ann's Altar Society was established and purchased necessary items for the church. Every year something was either added to or improved in the parish.

On September 4, 1950, the fortieth

The present church was completed in 1937 and dedicated on Labor Day, 1938.

anniversary of the founding, and fifty years before the present anniversary, the burning of the mortgage was witnessed. His Grace, Bishop Nikon consecrated the church and placed a relic in the holy table. The following years saw additional improvements to the church and rectory interiors.

In 1983, Ronald Wyslutsky, son of Anna and the late Nicholas Wyslutsky, became the first parishioner to enter St. Tikhon's Seminary. We were privileged to witness his ordination to the priesthood in our church in 1994. Also that year, Gregory Hatrak, son of V.Rev. Michael and Matushka Hatrak, graduated from St. Tikhon's Seminary.

Along with the necessary improvements through the years, our exquisite chandelier was refurbished, a granite cross was placed in the cemetery and in preparation for this ninetieth anniversary, the interior, exterior and basement of the church were repainted.

The parish of SS. Peter and Paul has accomplished much in ninety years, and Almighty God, with His continued blessings, will sustain our efforts and dedication to preserve our faith for future generations.

—Matushka Valerie Hatrak

The Winter Feasts and the Temple

There is a wonderful symmetry in the winter celebrations of our Church. At the exact center of the season is the Nativity of our Lord. This feast is preceded by a forty-day fast (beginning on November 15), and the whole season is concluded forty days after the Nativity with the observance of the Meeting of our Lord in the Temple (February 2).

The significance of the number 40 is multiple. In the case of the forty-day fast it signifies a time of probation and trial — a person or a people given the opportunity of proving themselves worthy. Thus the forty-day period becomes a time of preparation for a new situation or era. The other meaning of forty, that represented by the period after Christ's birth, is derived from the combination of four times ten. Four is the symbol of creation, of material completeness. Multiplied by ten (which represents the perfection of order, as the basis of the whole numerical system is a calculation by 10), the number forty here stands for a whole new epoch, an era of fulfillment and perfection. In this case it is the New Dispensation brought about by the birth of Christ God in the flesh. The whole dual symbolism of the number forty before and after a decisive event is manifested again in the days preceding and following our Lord's glorious Resurrection.

The number symbolism, interesting and suggestive as it is, gives way to an even more instructive feature of the winter feasts. Six days after the beginning of the Nativity Fast, a Great Feast occurs: the Entrance of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple. The child Mary is brought to the Temple in Jerusalem not simply to be dedicated, as Jewish law prescribed, but to remain there, to be brought up there, to be taught by the elders and nourished by an angel. So the beginning of the winter cycle is marked by a Feast of the Temple. At the end of



the cycle also the Feast takes place in the Temple. The young maiden who was raised in that most sacred place returns now with her forty-day old child to offer Him in thanksgiving and to offer the sacrifice associated with a first-born son. She who became the living Temple comes to the Temple to offer her child, the Incarnate God to God. At the beginning, then, and at the end of winter the center of activity is the Temple of Jerusalem, the center of worship for the people of God, Israel, in the midst of the world and in the middle of the ages of humanity.

What is the meaning of this Temple theme now for us who are the New Israel, living in the New Dispensation? We know that after our Lord's death, resurrection, and ascension and the beginning of the Apostolic mission to baptize the nations, the Temple was utterly destroyed by the Romans, so that not one stone was left upon another, as our Lord prophesied (Matt. 24:2 and parallel texts). The fragment called the "West-

ern Wall" which survived and still stands today was in fact not part of the Temple itself, but an outer wall which surrounded the Temple mount. This wall, *Kotel ha-ma'aravi* in Hebrew, has taken on great emotional significance for those who remain Jewish in the New Dispensation, but it has little or no meaning for the Christian. What then does this Temple theme in our Christian usage signify, as it stands at the gateway to our winter celebrations and at the conclusion?

The answer to this question lies in the answer to another question: what was the primary and overriding purpose of the Temple to the Jewish people? It was the place of celebration of the Jewish festivals; it was a place of teaching and learning — illustrated by the account of our Lord at the age of twelve "sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions" (Luke 2:41-51). But far above all other functions, the Temple was the place of *sacrifice*. Enormous effort went on there each day, year after year, as offerings were made to God in

elaborate ritual sacrifice. There were daily offerings, special offerings for Shabbat and Festivals, as well as voluntary offerings for special occasions — offerings made, for example, by a man and wife in thanksgiving for the birth of a child. Our Lord's family and He Himself throughout His earthly life made journeys again and again for all such occasions.

The Temple, therefore, was synonymous with *sacrifice*. In this we see the logic of the beginning and end of the winter celebrations of our Church.

On the Eve of the Nativity, at the Ninth Hour, a portion of the Epistle to the Hebrews is read: "as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He (Christ) also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. 2:14-15). Here is the theme which is revealed explicitly and implicitly throughout our winter observances: that Christ comes not merely to teach and heal and to provide an example for us, but to die, to offer Himself as the ultimate sacrifice, and in this act to set free the sons and daughters of Adam from the prison of sin and death. As the whole history of Israel, from Adam and Eve to the Virgin Mary, is a foreshadowing of the coming of Christ in the flesh, so that Coming which is unfolded in the winter festivals, is itself a foreshadowing of Christ's battle and triumph over sin and death through His passion, death, burial, and Resurrection in the springtime.

In the prayer of the Litany of Supplication in St. Basil's Liturgy the celebrant asks God to receive this sacrifice "as Thou didst receive the gifts of Abel, the sacrifices of Noah, the whole burnt offerings of Abraham, the priestly offices of Moses and Aaron, and the peace-offerings of Samuel; even as Thou didst receive from Thy Holy Apostles this true worship . . ." One cannot read the Old Testament without noticing that the core of Jewish worship was always the offering of sacrifice: during the time of the Temple; prior to that, the Tabernacle in the wilderness; and prior to that the various altars of the righteous heroes of Israel. And the core of the worship in the New Era is also sacrifice; in this case, the sacrifice of Christ presented through

out all time on the altars of every Church where the Divine Liturgy is celebrated.

If the act of sacrifice, then, is of highest importance in both the Old Israel and New, what is its precise logic? Why is it so necessary? What does it do? Everyone on earth knows — though not everyone acknowledges it — that God is the creator and giver of all life. If God creates and sustains all things, and we humans are His product, then for us to lift up the things of the earth which sustain us, which keep us alive, to lift them up in grateful offering, we, as it were, give back to God what is His. And this is the highest worship, since it is the acknowledgment of not only the true source of things but also their true nature and destiny. As all things come from God's hand, so all things are destined to return to Him. In short, the act of sacrifice acknowledges the truth of things.

Now when God created all things, He saw that they were good, and they were also perfect and sacred, since He is perfect and holy. But through the beguiling of Satan, Adam, who is both a man and humanity, disobeyed God's will. The natural sacredness became distorted, the harmony of creation became broken and fragmented and turned away from its purpose. So the act of sacrifice acquired more meaning than it first had; it became restorative, reconstructive; it purified and conciliated; it became redemptive. As fallen man offers sacrifices to God, the gifts are received by Him, and He gives them back restored, renewed, perfected, and again sacred, thus showing both His acceptance of the gifts and forgiveness of the giver. The people of Israel offered animals and grain to show their desire for reconciliation and to secure again God's favor. They offered lavish sacrifices again and again, and they carefully chose animals and grain without spot or blemish. Yet with all this, they could not make the perfect and ultimate sacrifice which would renew and restore human nature and all creation. They dared not offer human sacrifice, and since it was flawed it would not have served the purpose anyway. When God commanded Abraham to put his beloved son on the altar, Abraham out of extreme faith and obedience set about to do this. But God stopped him at the last moment and provided instead an animal.

When finally the time appointed for the ultimate sacrifice came, God's Son

became at once the priest and victim on the altar of the Cross, and this time the Father in heaven did not stop the procedure but allowed it to take full course. Christ's sacrifice ended the brokenness caused by sin: the darkness of ignorance, the tyranny of Satan, and the dread and power of death, and ushered in a new creation. Such is the power of a true and perfect sacrifice. There is nothing conceivably equal to it.

At the beginning of the winter cycle we hear: "Let us, the Orthodox, all hasten together with our lamps and glorify the Mother of God, for today she is offered to the Lord as an acceptable sacrifice" (Second Canon at Matins, Ode 5). And: "Let us praise in hymns the child by nature who was shown forth as Mother beyond nature. For today she is offered to the Lord in the Temple of the Law as a sweet-smelling savor, the spiritual fruit of her righteous parents" (Second Canon at Matins, Ode 9).

With her sacrificial life, the Most Holy Virgin prepares for and begins her active role in the ultimate sacrifice of her Son to Whom she gave human nature.

In the midst of winter the offerings of the Magi from the East pre-announce our Lord's identity as king, priest, and sacrificial victim: "eagerly opening their treasures, they offered to Him precious gifts: refined gold, as to the King of the ages, and frankincense, as to the God of all; and myrrh they offered to the immortal, as to one three days dead" (Verse at the Vespers Apostikha, Nativity Eve).

The very cave of His birth foreshadows the cave of His burial, as the icons of these events reveal.

And at the end of winter we hear: "Today He Who once gave the Law to Moses on Sinai submits to the ordinances of the Law . . . and as God He is brought as an offering to Himself, setting us free from the curse of the Law and granting light to our souls" (from the Litya of the Meeting). And: "Simeon, having been granted the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning himself, blesses the Virgin and Theotokos Mary, and foretells in figures the Passion of her Son . . ." (from the Apostikha of the same feast).

All the feasts of winter look towards the coming season of our Lord's "hour," the final journey to Jerusalem, not to the Temple to sacrifice a lamb or two doves, but outside the city walls — to the Cross.

—Archpriest Theodore Heckman

The Life of Saint Xenia of Petersburg

Commemorated January 24



St. Xenia, who lived in St. Petersburg, Russia, was glorified as a saint by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1989.

Xenia Grigorievna was born around 1730 into a good family, probably of the lower aristocracy. She married at around the age of twenty. She and her husband, an imperial chorister named Col. Andrei Theodorovich, enjoyed several years of marriage together, living a comfortable, happy, and presumably uneventful life in the capital city of Russia, Saint Petersburg.

Then one night, at a drinking party, Xenia's husband, young and in good health, suddenly died. Her whole world caved in upon her. Not only was she so unexpectedly bereft of her beloved husband, but there was the real danger that he had died without repenting for his sins. For the young couple had been rather worldly, not particularly interested in the life of the Church. And he had died without the benefit of partaking of the holy mysteries of Confession and the Eucharist.

To the amazement of her friends and relatives, Xenia began to give away all her possessions. Her money and personal belongings she gave to the poor, and her house she gave to her close friend, Paraskeva Antonova.

Her relatives decided that she must have lost her senses from the shock of losing her husband. They petitioned the trustees of his estate, which had been left to her, to investigate whether or not Xenia was mentally competent to dispose of her property in a sensible way. The trustees did call her in, and found her to be of perfectly sound mind, with every right to do with her property as she wished.

Her *Life* then states, "Having realized that there can be no true happiness on earth, and that worldly possessions are



only a hindrance to the attaining of true joy in God, and having, therefore, relieved herself of all such hindrances, Xenia suddenly vanished from Saint Petersburg for eight years. It is said that during these years she lived at some hermitage with a sisterhood of holy ascetics, learning about prayer and the

spiritual life from an elder."¹

Then she returned to Saint Petersburg to begin her long pilgrimage towards the Kingdom of Heaven by walking the streets of the poorest part of the city, the

1. *The Life and Miracles of Blessed Xenia of St. Petersburg* (Jordanville, N. Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1986), p. 9.

Storona district, and sleeping in a field under the open sky. She clothed herself in one of her husband's old uniforms, and from that time on, she took his name, Andrei Theodorovich, as her own, refusing any longer to answer to the name of Xenia. "It was as if she, in her deep devotion to her husband, had hoped in some way to take upon herself the burden of his unrepented sins and of his unfortunate demise without the Holy Mysteries."² So at this time, she was called to the very unusual role of being a fool for Christ — a most difficult *podvig* (i.e., spiritual struggle), meant only for those who are spiritually advanced and who have a special calling.

For thirty-seven years she lived in this way. As her Life says, "The Blessed One was always ready to help anyone in any way possible. During the day she would wander the streets, her face reflecting her internal spirit of meekness, humility and kindness by its warm, friendly glow. At night, in all seasons, she would go into a field and enter into conversation with God Himself."³

Honoring her complete devotion to Him, God granted her the gift of clairvoyance, by which she helped many of the residents of the Storona. And it was truly miraculous how she survived so many winters, living in the outdoors as she did.

She had a particular attachment to the Smolensk Cemetery, which can be seen in the following incident. "On one occasion in 1794, toward the end of Xenia's long life, a new church was being built in the Smolensk Cemetery. Workers began to notice that, during the night, someone would haul mounds of brick to the top of the building where they were needed. The workers were amazed by this and resolved to find out who this tireless worker could be. By posting a watchman they were able to discover that it was the Servant-of-God, Xenia."⁴

God's special pilgrim on earth finally departed to her heavenly home, around the year 1800. Her humility, and her unflinching devotion to her husband, are seen in the epitaph on her gravestone in the Smolensk Cemetery: "In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Here lies the body of the servant of God, Xenia Grigorievna, wife of the Imperial

Chorister, Colonel Andrei Theodorovich Petrov. Widowed at the age of 26, a Pilgrim for 45 years, she lived a total of 71 years. She was known by the name Andrei Theodorovich. May whoever knew me pray for my soul that his own may be saved. Amen."⁵

• • •

Blessed Xenia has never stopped helping those who ask for her prayers. Countless miracles have been attributed to her intercession before the throne of

Blessed Xenia has never stopped helping those who ask for her prayers. Countless miracles have been attributed to her intercession before the throne of God.

God.⁶ We will relate only one such story here — one that involves the healing of a marriage:

"Mr. Kl—, who had been a very peaceful person and in love with life during the first years of his marriage, now began to be irritable and to express greater and greater dissatisfaction with his position and with the conditions of his life. He began to be away from home often, sneaking off after work and no one knew where he spent his nights. He refused to reply when his wife enquired concerning this, and he began to treat the children coldly, becoming a stranger in his own home.

"This worsening relationship with her husband added to her already strenuous toils, and worries about the children began to strain the wife's health, and her chest began to weaken. Then a new sorrow befell the family: the husband was fired from his job. This last event finally

broke the poor woman and she took to her bed. Doctors were consulted and they diagnosed tuberculosis. It was very painful for the unhappy mother to face the possibility of leaving her large brood of children in the hands of her jobless husband.

"With tears she begged God to grant guidance to her husband and to save him, and also to allow her to live long enough to raise her children. At the same time she induced her husband to write a letter for her to a close friend in Saint Petersburg, Maria P., requesting that the friend go to the Smolensk Cemetery, to the grave of Blessed Xenia, and have a *panikhida* offered for the Blessed One, praying for the health of the ill wife and for her husband.

"Upon receiving the letter, Maria hurried to Xenia, had the memorial service offered for her, prayed, took some sand from the grave and oil from the votive lamp, and sent these to her ill friend.

"The dying mother placed the soil under her pillow, and the oil she smeared on her chest several times. From that time on Mrs. Kl—'s illness began to subside. Within a month's time she was completely well and her husband had received a new position in Kovno with an even better salary. The family has lived there in peace and well-being to this day."⁷

Troparion, Tone 4

Having renounced the vanity of the earthly world, you took up the cross of a homeless life of wandering. You did not fear grief, privation, and the mockery of men, and you knew the love of Christ. Now taking sweet delight in this love in Heaven, O Xenia, blessed and divinely-wise one, pray for the salvation of our souls.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

From Marriage As a Path to Holiness: Lives of Married Saints, by David and Mary Ford (S. Canaan, Pa.: St. Tikhon's Seminary Press, 1994). The book, which recounts the lives of over 130 married saints of our Church, also has a 35-page introduction describing various aspects of the Orthodox understanding of marriage, including its relationship with monasticism. This book is available from the St. Tikhon's Bookstore.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 15

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁶ Many testimonies of her miraculous aid are given in *The Life and Miracles of Blessed Xenia of St. Petersburg*, pp. 18-74.



Fr. Andrew Diehl welcomes Archbishop HERMAN

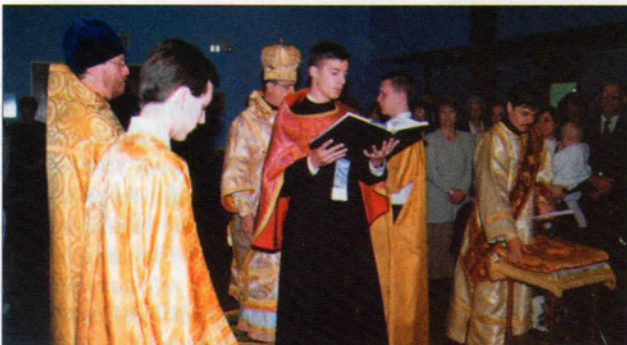
St. Michael's Church in Wilmington Marks 85th Year

Eighty-five years! What an accomplishment! On October 22, 2000, St. Michael the Archangel parish in Wilmington, Delaware celebrated the momentous occasion, having arrived at this point under the spiritual guidance of our pastor, Father Andrew Diehl. From our humble beginnings in a small row-home converted into a chapel, to the

beautiful structure that sits off of Kirkwood Highway today, the witness to Christ in the city of Wilmington has been our goal.

The celebration opened with the arrival of His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN, for Great Vespers, on Saturday, October 21. Responses were beautifully sung by our parish choir, and all

remarked at the full church, and the many children that filled the temple -- evidence of the successful ministry of Father Andrew. After the beautiful service, a reception was held in the church hall prepared and served by the ladies of our parish. Everyone shared memories, reminisced, and prepared for the celebration of the divine services next morning.



Timothy Hojnicky tonsured Reader



The Little Entrance

The Lord greeted us Sunday morning with a beautiful day. All the preparations were in order, and before long, the bells pealed signaling His Eminence had arrived. Fr. Andrew greeted the Archbishop in the customary manner, welcoming him to a full church, with full choir and a full altar, showing the love of the faithful eager to participate in this celebration. During the reading of the third hour, Timothy Hojnicky was tonsured a reader. Joining our Archbishop Herman and the parish rector, Father Andrew Diehl, were Priest John Zabinko from Sitka, Alaska, and Archpriest Thomas Succarotte from Madison, Ill., parish sons who returned to join their home parish family. Following the beautiful liturgy, Father Diehl accepted — on behalf of the parish — a gramota from His Eminence for the accomplishment of 85 years to the service of God in Wilmington.

Everyone then went to the Christiana Hilton for the grand banquet. During the program President James Carpenter presented “thank you” gifts to Alexandra Dryden, Olga Maloney, and Paul Chalfant, in appreciation for all their work in preparing this celebration. The highlight of the program was the keynote address offered by our Archbishop HERMAN. Our program president also gave a heartwarming speech.

A surprise gift was given to James S. Riley, the parishioner who was felt best exemplifies what it means to be an Orthodox Christian, and the kind of person that made 85 years possible for such a small community; yet James is only one of many who made the success of our parish possible.

Remarks were offered by Father Andrew Diehl and others. After a benediction from the Archbishop, the parish enjoyed music and dancing for the remainder of the afternoon.

So much to be thankful for! The Lord has bestowed upon His servants in Wilmington countless blessings. Our prayer is for the Lord to keep us safe, by the protection of the Holy Archangel Michael, to whom we pray weekly, “Deliver us from oppressions, since you are the leader of the ranks of dominions on high!” Amen.

Glory to God for All Things!

—Reader Timothy Hojnicky contributed to this report



Fr. Andrew with Archbishop and 13 newly chrismated faithful



Grand banquet



Fr. Andrew Diehl awarded gramota for his tireless efforts

For the Hours of Pain

Part V

The author continues the second of his three chapters, titled "Resurrection and Life, Death and Mourning"

2.8 First Fruits and the Harvest

These arguments were more than sufficient for the divine Apostle to show the anti-Christian errors and the destructive consequences, which face the person who denies the resurrection of the dead. When the Christian hears what an abyss the denial of the resurrection of the dead leads to, it horrifies him. With all his heart he desires to stand on solid ground, to be safe and to breathe freely. The godbearing Apostle now offers this solid ground, when he proclaims: Don't be afraid; there isn't any such danger for faithful Christians, because Christ rose from the dead first, to be followed by those who are sleeping the sleep of death. Behold the words of that great proclamation: *But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept* (verse 20).

"Firstfruits." In Greek, the word refers to the first ripe fruits. When the farmer returns from his field with a sheaf of ripe, mature wheat, he has a guarantee that he will harvest top quality wheat, and that the yield will be abundant. Some months before, he had put the seed in the ground. It decayed and didn't show any signs of life. But when the right time came, it germinated, grew, bore fruit, and yielded a rich crop. In the same way our bodies are sown in the earth and decay. The time will come, however, when they will come alive again, and rise up, new and incorruptible. We have the firstfruits of bodies, the Lord's body which rose from the tomb. The Lord's Resurrection constitutes a certain guarantee and a sure sign of the general harvest, which will take place at a time known only to God;

it is a sure sign, that, after the cold dark winter of death, the sweet spring of the resurrection will follow. Bright and glorious bodies will suddenly rise from the tombs, to unite with the soul and ascend to the Heavenly mansions, just as the Lord's body did, when it was raised from the dead. It is a sign so sure that the Holy Spirit presents the resurrection, to John, as a fact already accomplished. John saw "... the sea give up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them" (Rev. 20: 13).

"The firstfruits of those that slept." Other people were also miraculously raised by the Lord and the Apostles. On the one hand, these resurrections show that all the dead will be raised, but they were not resurrections to eternal life. A miraculous return of the soul to the mortal body took place. This resumption of life, however, resulted once again in the separation of the soul from the body. Both Jairus' daughter and the widow's son, as well as Lazarus and Tabitha, even though they were raised from the dead in this present life died again after awhile. Their bodies were given to the tomb and decay, but Christ rose from the dead and entered a life completely immune to death. His new body was incorruptible and suitable for the other,

spiritual and eternal world, the world of perpetual joy and blessedness. He entered that other world as "the firstfruits of them that slept, the firstborn from the dead, and the head of the Church." He went there, to be followed by the body — that is, by us, who make up the body of Christ — because the head can never be separated from the body. He became the firstfruits for that life, so we also can live the life which our head lives. In this present world we live for that life, so this present life really has tremendous value, because it constitutes the preparatory period for that life, which we will enjoy in all its fullness after the resurrection of our bodies from the dead. We know that only that coin which can buy something precious has great value. Thus it is with the present life. It has value because we can buy the eternal and blessed life with it, by believing on Christ and by devoting ourselves to Him.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren," the Divine Paul commands, "be ye steadfast, unmoveable" in the faith of the resurrected Lord and in the resurrection of the dead. With this faith let us work to develop a spiritual and virtuous life. Let us patiently resist sin and the evil one, who wants to cast both soul and body into hell. Let us patiently try to bear the



sufferings of this present life, and especially — worst of all — the death of our loved ones, with the sweet hope of the resurrection; let us peacefully face the death which will separate the body from the soul. The soul will go to be with Christ, and the body to the tomb, until that separation also ends. For the time will surely come (the times and the ages steadily advance toward it), when “the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel” (in other words the end of the present corruptible world will be heralded, and the Second Coming of Christ announced with prearranged signs and supernatural events which the all-powerful command of God will put into action) “and the dead in Christ shall be raised first, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall *we ever be with the Lord*” (I Thess. 4:16, 17). From that time on we will live with the Lord and participate in His blessed happiness and glory: “Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and *God Himself shall be with them, and be their god*. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and *there shall be no more death neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away*” (Rev. 20:3,4).

With joy overflowing because of the glad fact of the resurrection of the dead and of the final abolition of death, the godbearing Apostle Paul victoriously proclaims: “When this corruptible (body) shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” Here is victory over death and the glorious restoration to Heaven due to God’s priceless love, which is expressed by Jesus Christ, so Paul cries out: “Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Thus the Divine Paul ends his famous chapter on the resurrection of the dead with this thanksgiving, which causes the faithful to spontaneously utter the word “Amen.” With this most important word the Holy Spirit also seals the last chapter of John’s Gospel, which tells about

the Lord’s Resurrection, and is the last chapter of the four Gospels. The word “Amen” is therefore the divine seal which completely certifies the truth of the Gospel writings. Whatever has been written in the holy book is certain, true, and completely unaltered. Such is the meaning of the word “Amen.”

“Amen” is the holy prayer, the prayer of thanksgiving. The faithful must offer it to our Lord Jesus Christ every time he studies the Holy Gospel, every time he remembers the Lord’s Resurrection, every time he recites the creed and comes to its last article: “And I look for the resurrection of the dead and life everlasting, Amen”; for wholehearted thanks and gratitude belong to Christ the Savior, who, through His Resurrection from the dead “. . . hath begotten us again unto a living hope.”

2.9 A Philosophy for Death

As soon as the divine, God-planted religion of Christ had taken root in the soil of earth, its holy teaching, and especially its truth about the resurrection of the dead, became a priceless balm for its followers. It effectively healed hearts wounded by the death of loved ones — the hearts of parents and children, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters. As soon as these people had been united with Christ, the Lord’s proclamation about a resurrection and new life went deep into their souls; for the Lord had said with surety, “*I am the resurrection and the life*. He that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live.” We have already mentioned the famous fifteenth chapter of the Apostle Paul’s letter to the Corinthians, which develops so persuasively the new teaching about the resurrection of the dead. It planted the sure and certain hope of the resurrection in the souls of the first Christians. It created an attitude entirely new and contrary to the discouragement and the black hopelessness which their idolatrous life had created.

Indeed. These people had once been idol worshippers. They had participated in all those fearful customs of mourning; but now that they had become Christians the situation was different. On the one hand they escorted the bodies of loved ones to the grave; on the other hand they committed the souls of the dead to the Lord in Heaven. Of course, they cried when they had to face death. Yet, they

retained a spiritual peace based on the belief and hope that the soul of the departed was “with Christ,” and that his body would be raised when the trumpet of the archangel sounded. No longer did professional mourners gather around the bodies of martyrs to wail in their heart-rending way, but believers gathered in an almost festive way to speak of the Christian hope. On the walls of the catacombs, over the tombs of the sleeping, symbols, such as olive trees, peacocks, anchors, and palm trees, were inscribed, which stood for hope and the resurrection. Relatives and friends sang songs of joy and gladness as they accompanied the dead, songs which told of the resurrection. Some carried torches, symbols of the daybreak in Heaven; others followed carrying palm branches, symbols of victory. The remains of one such happy family were found in a catacomb on the Greek island of Milos, in a common tomb (3rd or 4th century A.D.). According to the inscription the family consisted of the mother Eutychia (Good Fortune), who was fortunate indeed in having three sons who were priests: Asklepis, Elpizon, and a younger Asklepis; and three daughters: the deaconess Agaliasis, the virgin Eutychia, and the virgin Klaudianes. In Athens, the former capital of idolatry, as many as were fortunate enough to have joined their beings with Christ, faced the death of loved ones with the blessed hope which the following inscription expresses:

Here the earth covers the body, but into the heavens the soul has flown to rejoin its loved ones; in truth, an honor won because of its virtue.

Another inscription, which was found in Thessalonica, shows that the Christian son Kalokairos had prepared “. . . the cemetery *until the resurrection*” for his “beloved parents,” because the tomb would be used only temporarily, until the resurrection.

After the years of the persecutions, the death of outstanding Christians was used as all opportunity to proclaim the change in the sentiments of Christians about death; for Christian hope had subtracted from death whatever was gloomy and fearful and horrible. In the year 311, the faithful buried the body of the Bishop of Alexandria, Peter. As symbols of victory they carried palm branches and

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For the Hours of Pain

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torches and censers and sang hymns, as though they were triumphant. St. John Chrysostom explains more clearly the character which the funerals and funeral processions of the Christians assumed. "Tell me," he says, "what place gay torches have?" He replies, "Because we accompany the dead as though they were victorious athletes." Again he asks, "Why do we have hymns at funerals?" Because with them we glorify and thank God for crowning the departed, for delivering him from his toil, for taking him from the land of fear to be near Him." So all of these things are acts of rejoicing, says the holy father.

When Caesarius the physician died, his brother, St. Gregory the Theologian, preached a funeral sermon which reveals the same true philosophy: "And now our illustrious Caesarius has been restored to us," Gregory says, "when his honored dust and celebrated corpse, after being escorted home amidst a succession of hymns and public orations, has been honored by the holy hands of his parents"; while his mother, substituting the festal garments of religion for the trappings of woe, has overcome her tears by her philosophy, and lulled to sleep lamentations by psalmody, as her son enjoys honors worthy of his newly regenerate soul, which has been, through water, transformed by the Spirit."

Under similar circumstances, others would be drowning in sorrow, but the Fathers took advantage of the opportunity to teach those who took part in the funeral, even when they were burying their own close relatives. So Gregory, addressing himself to Caesarius, says: "And now for thee, sacred and holy soul, we pray for an entrance into Heaven; mayest thou enjoy such repose as the bosom of Abraham affords, mayest thou behold the choir of Angels, and the glories and splendors of sainted men; aye, mayest thou be united to that choir and share in their joy, looking down from on high on all things here, on what men call wealth, and despicable dignities, and deceitful honors, and the errors of our senses, and the tangle of this life, and its confusion and ignorance, as if we were fighting in the dark; whilst thou art in attendance upon the Great King and filled with the light which streams forth from Him."

Then, turning to his listeners, Gregory asks: "How much longer have we to live, ye men of honored eld, so near to God? How long are we to suffer here? Not even man's whole life is long, compared with the Eternity of Divine Nature, still less the remains of life, and what I may call the parting of our human breath, the close of our frail existence. How much has Caesarius outstripped us? How long shall we be left to mourn his departure? Are we not hastening to the same abode? Shall we not soon be covered by the same stone? Shall we not shortly be reduced to the same dust? . . . Such my brethren, is our existence, who live this transient life, such our pastime upon earth: we come into existence out of non-existence, and after existing are dissolved. We are unsubstantial dreams, impalpable visions, like the flight of a passing bird, like a ship leaving no track upon the sea, a speck of dust, a vapor, an early dew, a flower that quickly blooms, and quickly fades. As for man his days are as grass, as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth."

Lest his listeners be tempted to think that death annihilates us, however, he hurries to proclaim the blessed hope of the resurrection of the dead. "Why am I faint-hearted in my hopes?" he asks. Why behave like a mere creature of a day? I await the voice of the Archangel, the last trumpet, the transformation of the heavens, the transfiguration of the earth, the liberation of the elements, the renovation of the universe. Then shall I see Caesarius himself, no longer in exile, no longer laid upon a bier, no longer the object of mourning and pity, but brilliant, glorious, heavenly, such as in my dreams I have often beheld thee, dearest and most loving of brothers, pictured thus by my desire, if not by the very truth."

Let us cite another example which St. Gregory of Nyssa, brother of Basil the Great, relates in the biography of their sister Macrina. First, he tells how their mother and sister reacted when they learned of the sudden death of Naucratus, who was only 27. When the mother first heard it, she yielded to the sorrow and fainted. She was not carried away by the affliction, however, says St. Gregory, nor did she do anything petty or feminine. She didn't cry out because of the evil, nor tear her clothing, nor wail, because of the misfortune, nor moan in a terrible way. But she remained calm

and warded off the natural attacks of affliction with her own and her daughter's right thoughts. It was then, mainly, that the virgin Macrina's soul proved to be good and superior, St. Gregory continues, because naturally, she was suffering too, just as her mother was. Naucratus was her brother, a charming brother, a brother snatched away by death. Even so, she proved to be above physical tribulation, and with her words of comfort she also lifted up her mother, so that she too, was above the misfortune. With her example, she guided her toward patience and bravery. Her life was so virtuous that her mother had a sense of well-being just from looking at her.

When Basil the Great died his death "brought about widespread mourning both in his homeland and in all the world," writes the same holy father Gregory. Their sister Macrina first heard about the misfortune indirectly, by rumor. She felt a deep psychic emotion for the great loss (for how could she react otherwise when even the enemies of the truth felt the same way when they heard about Basil's death?). But just as gold has to undergo many progressive and exacting stages of refinement, to finally be pure, so it was with her. In as much as her lofty intellect had been tested by different afflictions, her soul proved to be pure and indomitable in every way. First, she had been tested by the death of her other brother; then by the loss of her mother; and finally, when the common good of their generation, Basil the Great, was separated from life here on earth. So Macrina remained, says Gregory, as an unconquerable athlete, completely oblivious to the attacks of misfortune.

2.10 Heroism in the Face of Death

We have noted how some outstanding Christians of the 4th century reacted to the death of loved ones; we have seen what an admirable stand they took. We have also told how Macrina, sister of the two great fathers of the Church, Basil and Gregory, reacted when her family was taken from her. Now we should devote a few lines to Macrina's own death.

She was a woman completely saturated in, and shaped by, Christian teaching and hope. As she faced her own death, she retained the same heroism shown when she had faced the death of

her beloved brothers and compassionate mother. Her last words, a most edifying prayer, with which she delivered up her spirit, show this clearly. Her brother, St. Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, has preserved them for us, and we present them here, in translation:

"For us, Lord," she said prayerfully, "thou hast abolished the fear of death. For us, thou hast made the end of life here the beginning of true life. For a time thou allowest our bodies to rest in sleep, and thou awakenest them again at the sound of the last trumpet. Thou givest our dust, which thou hast fashioned with thine hands, to the earth as a deposit; and again that which thou hast given is gathered up, and the mortal and unseemly in us is transformed through incorruptibility and grace. Thou hast redeemed us from the curse and from sin, having become both for us. Thou hast broken the heads of the dragon, who, through the chasm of disobedience, clutched man by the throat. For us thou hast wrought the resurrection, tearing down the gates of hades, and overthrowing the Devil, the holder of the power of death. To those who fear thee thou gavest the emblem of the holy Cross for a sign, for the tearing down of negation and hostility, and for the security of our life. O eternal God, upon whom I was cast from my mother's womb, whom my soul loved with all its might, to whom I committed both my flesh and my soul from my childhood up until now, give me a shining angel to lead me toward the place of peace, where the water of refreshment is, by the bosoms of the holy fathers. O stayer of the fiery sword, and restorer of man to Paradise — for he was crucified with thee, and fell down before thy mercies — remember me too in thy kingdom, for I too was crucified with thee, and nailed down my flesh because of thy fear, and was frightened by thy judgments. May that terrible gulf not separate me from thine elect, nor the bewitcher be found in my path, nor my sin be found before thine eyes, if having erred through the weakness of our nature, I sinned in word or deed or thought. O thou who hast power to forgive sins upon earth, forgive me; that I may find rest and be found before thee as my body is thrown off, not having any stain in my soul. But may my soul be accepted into thy hands blameless and spotless, as incense before thee."

A large group of virgins, Macrina's

beloved friends, took part in her funeral, under the direction of her brother, St. Gregory. Their conduct was equally admirable and inspired by Christian hope. All night, relates St. Gregory, they gathered around her and sang hymns, in the same triumphant way as the early Christians had gathered around the bodies of the martyrs. When morning came, however, a whole crowd of people, who had flocked in from the surrounding villages, made noise and interrupted the hymn singing with their sobbing and wailing. "Although I was personally suffering," he continues, "because of the great loss, I separated the men from the women, mixed the crowd of women in with the choir of virgins, and the men with the monks. Then I arranged a rhythmic and harmonic singing of psalms, between the two sections, just like in church when the whole congregation sings psalms and is divided into choirs. The throng, bearing large candles and singing hymns accompanied the remains of the dead; and the result was a mystic procession, a psalmody from one end to the other, just like that song which the three slaves sang."

But were these mournful funerals and funeral processions, or were they pious celebrations of rejoicing, and processions of hope, and glad farewells to those on their way to Heaven? Do they not

teach and inspire the supreme philosophy in the face of man's greatest disaster, death?

Yes. The new religion and truth which came down from Heaven and was planted in the world by the incarnate God, by Jesus Christ, made such a difference. But unfortunately, that attitude of heroism, which even the weakest creatures received from the teaching of Christ, was adulterated. Of course, there are always some Christians in every generation who keep the pure Christian attitude toward death. From the time of the great Fathers, however, some Christians resumed their idolatrous customs of mourning when their loved ones died. During the persecutions the Christians were purged and only the genuine ones remained. When the persecutions stopped some people entered the fold of the Christian religion, who indeed took the name and exterior appearance of Christianity, but in their souls they remained idolaters. It isn't strange then, that from the 4th century we find such Christians. It was against them that St. John Chrysostom so often directed his censure for their conduct during death and mourning.

To be continued.

For the Hours of Pain, by Archimandrite Seraphim (Papakostas), translated by Leslie Jerome Newville

CHURCH CONSECRATION

Saturday, September 15, 2001

ST. BASIL'S

9 Lord Avenue, Simpson, PA

HIERARCHICAL DIVINE LITURGY — 9:30 A.M.

Join us for the blessing of our new church!

Annual St. Tikhon's Founder's Day Dinner

This past October 10, 2000, the St. Tikhon's Seminary and Monastery community gathered once again to celebrate the memory of St. Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow, the beloved founder in 1905 of our monastery and future seminary. The festivities began with a hierarchical Divine Liturgy celebrated by our dearly beloved deputy abbot and rector, Archbishop HERMAN. During the liturgy one of our seminarians, Fr. James Weremedic, was ordained to the holy priesthood by the laying on of hands of His Eminence. It was a wonderful sight to see that the vision of our founder, St. Patriarch Tikhon, was fulfilled once again by the ordination of Fr. James.

A banquet held in the seminary gymnasium followed the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. The dinner was graciously hosted once again by the Campbell, Ohio "O" Club. We were filled to capacity with the beloved members of our community, the monastery brotherhood, as well as many friends and Century Association members. The seminarians of St. Tikhon's Seminary once again offered their services as waiters. Also, as a show of love towards their fellow seminarian, they presented Fr. James with a wooden pectoral cross in honor of his ordination to the Holy Priesthood.

After enjoying this wonderful meal and fellowship, the St. Tikhon's Century Association held its annual meeting, wherein they accomplished much. Elizabeth S. Bonczar, Ph.D., presented His Eminence with a monetary donation in continuing support of the seminary's good works. The Society of the Friends of St. Tikhon's likewise presented a monetary gift for the seminary and monastery.

The executive board and members of the Century Association having concluded their discussions, resolved to set



Archbishop HERMAN



Banquet



President Bonczar presents check to seminary Rector

a goal of \$65,000 to be raised this coming year to continue to show their support and love of St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary. The last order of business for the association was the election of executive board officers. This year the offices of president and treasurer were open for nomination and filled by Rev. Leo Poore and Maria Proch, respectively. The association extended its

heartfelt thanks to its immediate past president Elizabeth Bonczar and treasurer George Malinich for their dedicated service and great efforts. His Eminence Archbishop HERMAN extended an invitation to the members of the Century Association to join him at his residence immediately after the meeting, for fellowship.

—Priest Leo Poore

St. John the Baptist Church Burns Mortgage, Blesses Sacred Articles



Procession to church

On Sunday, October 1, 2000, His Eminence, Archbishop Herman led the celebration of the blessing of new electronic bells, six new processional banners, and the refurbishing of candle stands, eternal lamp, crosses, artophorion, gospel book and other items at St. John the Baptist Church in Edwardsville, Pa. The day of spiritual celebration marked the 90th year of the founding of St. John's.

The day began with the joyful anticipation of His Eminence's arrival at the rectory, where a procession formed with cross, flags, banners, candles, icons, and church school children bearing processional flowers. The new bell system was ringing the Russian kolokol as the Archbishop was escorted to the church. He was received at the church doors by Mrs. Kathy Harmanos, council president, with the traditional bread and salt. Father Michael Slovesko welcomed His Eminence with the holy cross, saying, "We welcome Your Eminence to St. John's to offer the sacrifice of the Divine Liturgy, asking your blessing upon our faithful. May God bless you with good health, that you may continue to lead us in the paths of His righteousness for many more years. Eis polla eti Despota!"



Blessing of sacred articles

The archbishop entered the filled church as the parish choir, under the direction of Matthew Hoidra, sang the hierarchical entrance hymn "It is truly meet . . ." The church school children formed an arch with their processional flowers as our hierarch walked down the aisle to the raised the episcopal throne in the center of the church. The people were focused on the archbishop who was being vested in his impressive episcopal vestments and miter. There was a feeling of the presence of the modern day apostle in the person of our hierarch.

His Eminence began the prayers of blessing for all the liturgical appoint-

ments. Assisted by deacons and subdeacons, Archbishop Herman encircled the church and blessed the banners and other refurbished items and the people with holy water. The Divine Liturgy commenced with His Eminence being assisted by the pastor of St. John's, Father Michael Slovesko and Father Michael Lepa. The liturgy became a spiritual experience as the deacons chanted the litanies to the response of the choir and the blessings of the Archbishop upon a prayerful crowd. His Eminence gave a moving sermon, stressing where there is love for God, the Church of

Continued on the next page

St. John's in Edwardsville

Continued from page 47

Christ is built up. The spirit of thanksgiving and joy was in the mind and hearts of all. The climax of the liturgy was the reception of the Holy Eucharist when nearly everyone present came forward to the chalice.

At the conclusion of the liturgy Archbishop Herman bestowed a Hramota upon Father Michael and the parishioners of St. John's, recognizing their accomplishments for the Church and diocese. An unspoken gratitude was expressed in the reaction of the Father Slovesko and the faithful. The faithful venerated the holy cross. Afterwards, we assembled at the Knights of Columbus in Luzerne for a grand banquet.

While the people were waiting for the banquet to begin, an outstanding two-year pictorial life of the parish was available. Florence Mazur, parish activity photographer and Mary Lou Fedorko were responsible for the presentation, which covered every phase of parish life and included individual photographs of parishioners.

Some two hundred people and guests were present for the family style meal that was enjoyed by all. The banquet program was opened by council president Kathy Harmanos who warmly welcomed everyone. Mrs. Harmanos spoke saying "Decisions are made by those who show up. Two years ago the council, in a meeting, recognized the need for beautifying the interior of the church. Today we witnessed the completion of that decision." A gracious thank-you was extended to those who had donated toward the goal; the list was long.

Another highlight of the program was the burning of the debt the parish had incurred when a residence was purchased across from the church. Treasurer Ann Pengrin, President Kathy Harmanos, Father Michael looked on as Archbishop Herman, with candle in hand, burned the paper, showing the property was debt free as everyone sang "Spasi Hospodi ludi tvoya . . ."

Archbishop Herman gave the main address. In his many comments he stated that the day seemed like Palm Sunday and Pascha. His Eminence was referring to the children with their flowers, and the joyful atmosphere he and all present experienced. Our spiritual father complimented and congratulated his



Banquet



people for their successful endeavors. Father Michael Slovesko concluded the speakers' program by offering our thanks to the Archbishop for his presence, to all the donors for their support, and to all for their love.

Seated at the dais with the Archbishop were Father John and Mat. Kathy Kowalczyk, Father Joseph and Mat. Gloria Martin, Mat. Anna Marie Slovesko, and all who addressed the crowd. The Archbishop concluded the program with the benediction.

The early Orthodox Christians of Edwardsville parish came from Russia, Galicia, and Carpatho-Russia. They attended Holy Resurrection Cathedral in Wilkes-Barre. Looking to the future and foreseeing the need of their own parish, a committee was formed and the first step toward their ultimate goal was taken in 1907 when a piece of property was

purchased on Short Street and a school building was erected. The blessing of Father Alexis Toth was obtained to establish the parish. Father Toth appointed his assistant, Father Gregory Shutak to conduct evening classes in religion and Russian culture.

In 1910 a special meeting was conducted during which a decision was reached to petition Archbishop Platon for the establishment of a parish. On June 5, 1910 Frs. Shutak and Basil Oranovsky served vespers, after which a meeting was held and a resolution was read from Archbishop Platon officially opening the new parish and appointing Fr. Oranovsky as pastor.

The spirit of our forefathers is still perpetuated in St. John's parish today. May the Lord's blessing be upon us in the years ahead!

—Archpriest Michael Slovesko

Dinner Held in Peckville Benefits Seminary

A benefit pasta and meatball dinner was held on Monday, November 13, 2000, at the Italian Villa Restaurant, in Peckville, PA, to benefit St. Tikhon's Seminary. This event was brought about by the generous offer and efforts of Drs. Eli Stavisky, Stephen Rebar and Albert F. Giallorenzi, co-owners of the restaurant. Dr. Stavisky is a member of the seminary's Board of Trustees.

In a meeting with the seminary rector, Archbishop Herman, Dr. Stavisky offered his restaurant and cooking staff to host a benefit for St. Tikhon's. Beginning early in October, plans were made to organize the event and bring it to fruition. The committee included Archbishop Herman, Drs. Stavisky, Rebar, and Giallorenzi; Archpriests Daniel Donlick, Joseph Martin, Vladimir Fetcho, John Kowalczyk, and David Shewczyk, Priests Leo Poore, David Mahaffey, and Nicholas Wyslutsky; Matushka Dorothy Sulich and Mr. Martin Paluch.

The dinner was held on November 13, 2000 with two seatings at 5:30 and 7:30 p.m. It was an overwhelming success! An impressive gathering of individuals came and demonstrated their love and support for St. Tikhon's Seminary and its initiatives. Archbishop Herman, together with our generous hosts, strove to greet all the patrons of this event while they enjoyed their meals. The evening was even more successful thanks to the members of the restaurant staff, seminarians, and others who volunteered their time and talents to cook, serve and host the event. Our thanks to everyone who helped make this benefit a success, and especially to Drs. Stavisky, Rebar, and Giallorenzi for their support for our seminary.

—Priest Nicholas Wyslutsky



The Other Nine

The school auditorium was crowded with excited students, teachers, families, and friends, awaiting the beginning of the awards convocation. Everyone was eager to learn who would receive prizes and recognition for the year's work.

Tammy Young, one of the members of the first grade class, kept turning around till she found where her dad and mother were sitting. Assured that they were there, she settled back to listen to the long list of honors for each class. She was really proud to see her big sister, Jessica, receive the prize for the best sewing project. When her brother Tim was given special commendation for the model volcano he had made in the science fair, she applauded excitedly, remembering how hard Tim had worked to get the volcano to send out smoke and sparks!

Finally the program ended. After all the goodbyes had been said, and "Have a good summer! See you at the pool!" Tammy's folks started for the parking lot. Expecting to find their children waiting for them, to go to the pizza shop for the family's traditional "school's over" celebration, Mom and Dad were surprised to find no one in sight. When ten minutes had gone by, Mrs. Young headed back to the building to see where her offspring were. She caught sight of Tammy chatting intently with Mr. Brant, the custodian. Seeing her mother, Tammy turned toward her as she concluded her goodbye to her friend.

Walking with the little girl until they reached the mother, Mr. Brant called out cheerfully, "You've got some little girl here, Mrs. Young. I've been head custodian here at this school for twenty-five years and never before has a student thanked me for cleaning up the room after all the messes students make doing projects and having parties! Surely is a pleasant ending to the year. God bless you, Tammy. Have a good summer. I'll look forward to cleaning up more messes in September!"

You can be assured Mother was



delighted to hear such kind words about Tammy! Near the car they caught up with their son Tim, who was talking with a lady.

"Oh my, Mrs. Young," declared Anita, the chief cook in the school cafeteria, "I didn't mean for Tim to be so late, but we sure appreciated his help. He's been giving us a hand tidying up the punch and cookies table. It was real good of him. Thanks, Tim, though I'm sorry you had to wait... But let me just say one more thing."

Mrs. Young smiled to herself, knowing how Anita always had 'just one more thing' to say. Yet she wasn't prepared for these few words.

Anita kept on talking. "Tim said something to us gals in the kitchen tonight that made us feel downright happy. He said, 'Thank you for feeding us so well all year!' We usually only hear grumbings about the 'lousy' food. That 'thank-you' really put a good finish to this year! Enjoy your vacation, Tim!"

By the time the three got to the car, Jessica was there with Dad. They had been chatting earnestly.

Dad turned to Mother. "Honey, I've just been treated to one of the nicest happenings a dad can ever have. Our lovely daughter — who made us very proud tonight for her fine work — told me she was so thankful for her mom and dad who were always there to help and guide her. I won't soon forget that 'thank-you' — and just want you to know about it."

As mother put on her seat belt, she smiled. "This is really a 'thank you'

night." Then she told of her meeting with Mr. Brant and Anita.

"Kids," Dad concluded, "hearing such words is a true joy to your mother and me. Saying thank you is a real benefit — to the one who says it and to the one who receives it. But what pleases me most tonight is that you took time to say thank you for routine, everyday things. We usually manage to express our gratitude for special gifts and remembrances. But to show our appreciation for the little things that we often take for granted — that is really evidencing true thankfulness. Keep it up — and thank you for your thanks!"

IN THE SAME SCHOOL AUDITORIUM that night was another student, this one in the fourth grade. She too watched where her parents sat. But all during the long program she fussed and fidgeted. Even her classmates told her to be still. As soon as she was dismissed she pushed her way to the punch table, mumbling as she went, "Glad that boring program is over." (Of course, it was no surprise to anyone that this girl had not won one honor!) Grabbing a handful of cookies and bumping into several older ladies as she went, she at last found her parents.

"Let's get out of here. School's done and if I had my way, you'd never see me here again."

"But don't you want to say goodbye and thank you to your teacher for a good year, Opal honey?" suggested her mother quietly.

“Why should I thank her?” growled Opal. “She never did anything for me.”

“Come now, Opal,” interjected Dad. “You know Mrs. Brown has been kind to you. Remember, when you were sick with pneumonia and had to rest for so long, how she brought all your work home and helped you?”

“So what?” retorted the cranky girl, “That’s what she’s paid for. Come on, let’s go!”

An embarrassed set of parents followed the ungrateful girl out of the building. Opal had not been speaking quietly, and her rude words were heard by those standing near them. But that didn’t bother her. To no one did she offer a smile or kind look, much less an expression of gratitude or thanks.

“Shall we stop for pizza? We were sitting with the Youngs and they were going there for a family ‘school’s out’ celebration. They invited us to join them. I think it’d be nice,” suggested Dad, to which Mother readily agreed.

“Are you crazy? Be seen with that goofy family!?! They’ll probably *pray* when they get their pizza. I’d rather be dying than be near them... They’re for the birds — vultures preferably!”

“Opal! Watch your tongue!” reprimanded Dad. To this Opal merely stuck out her tongue as far as she could and jumped into the car.

“Hurry up,” she whined. “I want to be home in time for the late show!”

Sad and bewildered, Opal’s parents drove home, lamenting to themselves the kind of person their daughter was becoming — but never giving any thought as to how to alter her disagreeable attitude and behavior.

• • •

“Be thankful” is a theme we hear often in the Bible. A great story Jesus told was about ten sick men, ill with a bad disease called leprosy. Long ago there wasn’t anything to do if you got that disease. You just wandered around begging until you died. You couldn’t even stay in a town if you had this illness.

Just imagine how thrilled these ten men were when they saw they were healed by Jesus. He watched them scurrying off to report their healing to the priests in the town. How gladly He received one of them who came back to say thank you. But Jesus added, “Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine?”

Is that percentage still the same

today? Does only one person in ten remember to say thank you? Are you the one who does — or are you one of the nine? Think about *being* thankful — and *saying* it — for things small and big!

READ FROM YOUR BIBLE:
Luke 17:11-19

Theme verse: “Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

Something to think about and talk over with your family:

What is giving thanks?
Name some ways to show you are thankful. For what should we be thankful?

What does Psalm 106:1 tell us about why to give thanks?
Whom should we thank?
For what? Things small or large?
Look in your Bible to see in which places you can read about giving thanks.

PRAYER

Our loving Father God, who gives us so much to enjoy: so often we only hold out our hands to grab more things from You. We think we deserve everything we have... and continually ask for more. Teach us to say Thank You — with our lips and with our hearts. May we always be the one to return thanks — and never forget, like the nine. Amen.



His Eminence Archbishop Herman is main celebrant at Christ the Savior Cathedral in Moscow



Archbishop Herman receives a copy of the original icon of Christ the Savior, being honored as the first bishop to serve alone in that cathedral

An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith

by St. John of Damascus

Part IX



Continuing Book 3 of his work, the holy writer considers whether and how Christ's natures can be enumerated, and then compares the terms nature and hypostasis. He considers the Trisagion hymn, a famous phrase of St. Cyril of Alexandria, and the title Theotokos.

3.8 In reply to those who ask whether the natures of the Lord are reckoned under a continuous or a discontinuous [distinguished, differentiated] enumeration.

If any one asks concerning the natures of the Lord if they are reckoned under a continuous or distinguished [discontinuous] enumeration, we will say that the natures of the Lord are neither one body nor one manifestation, nor one line, nor time, nor place, so as to be reduced to a continuous quantity. For these are the things that are reckoned

continuously.

Further note that number deals with things that differ, and it is quite impossible to enumerate things that differ from one another in no respect; and just so far as they differ are they enumerated; for instance, Peter and Paul are not counted separately in so far as they are one. For since they are one in respect of their essence they cannot be spoken of as two natures, but as they differ in respect of hypostasis¹ they are spoken of as two hypostases, so that number deals with differences, and just as the differing objects differ from one another so far they are enumerated.

The natures of the Lord, then, are united without confusion so far as regards hypostasis² and they are divided

¹Here and throughout, this word may alternatively be translated as *subsistence*, or, somewhat loosely, as "person."

without separation according to the method and manner of difference. And it is not according to the manner in which they are united that they are enumerated, for it is not in respect of hypostasis that we hold that there are two natures of Christ, but it is according to the manner in which they are divided without separation, that they are enumerated, for it is in respect of the method and manner of difference that there are two natures of Christ. For being united in hypostasis and permeating one another, they are united without confusion, each preserving throughout its own peculiar and natural difference. Hence, since they are enumerated according to the manner of difference, and that alone, they must be regarded under a discontinuous

²"united . . . as regards hypostasis": i.e. are united perfectly within the one "person" or subsistence.

enumeration [quantity].

Christ, therefore, is one, perfect God and perfect man; we worship him along with the Father and the Spirit, with one adoration, with His immaculate flesh,³ not holding that the flesh is unfit to be worshipped; for in fact it is worshipped in the one hypostasis of the Word, which indeed became hypostasis with reference to it. But in this we do not do homage to that which is created. For we worship him, not as mere flesh, but as flesh united with divinity, and because his two natures are brought under the one person and one hypostasis of God the Word. I fear to touch coal because of the fire bound up with the wood. I worship the twofold nature of Christ because of the divinity that is in him bound up with flesh. For I do not introduce a fourth person⁴ into the Trinity, not at all; but I confess one person of God the Word and of his flesh, and the Trinity remains Trinity, even after the incarnation of the Word.

In reply to those who ask whether the two natures are reckoned under a continuous or a discontinuous [distinguished] enumeration. [The following paragraph is a condensed restatement of the preceding — Ed.]

The natures of the Lord are neither one body nor one manifestation, nor one line, nor place, nor time, so as to be reckoned under a continuous quantity, for these are the things that are reckoned continuously. But the natures of the Lord are united without confusion in respect of hypostasis, and are divided without separation according to the method and manner of difference. And according to the manner in which they are united they are not enumerated. For we do not say that the natures of Christ are two hypostases or two in respect of hypostasis. But according to the manner in which they are divided without division, are they enumerated. For there are two natures according to the method and manner of distinction [difference]. For being united in hypostasis and permeating one another they are united without confusion, neither having been changed

into the other, but each preserving its own natural distinction [difference] even after the union. For that which is created remained created, and that which is uncreated, uncreated. By the manner of the distinction [difference], then, and in that alone, they are enumerated, and thus are reckoned under a quantity that is discontinuous [distinguished]. For things which differ from each other in no respect cannot be enumerated, but just so far as they differ are they enumerated; for instance, Peter and Paul are not enumerated in those respects in which they are one, for being one in respect of their essence they are not two natures nor are they so spoken of. But inasmuch as they differ in hypostasis they are spoken of as two hypostases; so that the distinction [difference] is the cause of the enumeration.

3.9 In reply to the question whether there is nature that has no hypostasis [subsistence].

For although there is no nature without hypostasis, nor essence apart from person (since in truth it is in persons and hypostases that essence and nature are to be contemplated), yet it does not necessarily follow that the natures that are united to one another in a hypostasis [subsistence, "person"] should have each its own proper hypostasis. For after they have come together into one hypostasis, it is possible that neither should they be without hypostasis, nor should each have its own peculiar hypostasis, but that both should have one and the same hypostasis. For since one and the same hypostasis of the Word has become the hypostasis of the natures, neither of them is permitted to be without hypostasis, nor are they allowed to have hypostases that differ from each other, or to have sometimes the hypostasis of this nature and sometimes of that, but always without division or separation they both have the same hypostasis — a hypostasis which is not broken up into parts or divided, so that one part should belong to this, and one to that, but which belongs wholly to this and wholly to that in its absolute entirety. For the flesh of the Word of God did not subsist as an independent hypostasis, nor did there arise another hypostasis [subsistence] besides that of the Word of God, but the flesh existed in the same hypostasis rather than a hypostasis existing independently. Wherefore,

neither does it lack subsistence [hypostasis] altogether, nor yet is there thus introduced into the Trinity another hypostasis.

3.10 Concerning the Trisagion.

This being so, we declare that the addition which the vain-minded Peter the Fuller made to the Trisagion [Thrice Holy Hymn] is blasphemous;⁵ for it introduces a fourth person into the Trinity, giving a separate place to the Son of God, who is the truly subsisting power of the Father, and a separate place to him who was crucified as though he were different from the "Mighty One," or as though the Holy Trinity was considered possible [capable of suffering], and the Father and the Holy Spirit suffered on the Cross along with the Son. Leave off this blasphemous and nonsensical interpolation! For we hold the words "Holy God" to refer to the Father, without limiting the title of divinity to him alone, but also acknowledging as God the Son and the Holy Spirit; and the words "Holy Mighty" we ascribe to the Son, without stripping the Father and the Holy Spirit of might; and the words "Holy Immortal" we attribute to the Holy Spirit, without depriving the Father and the Son of immortality. For, indeed, we apply all the divine names simply and unconditionally to each of the hypostases in imitation of the divine Apostle's words: *But for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and we from Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ through whom are all things, and we through Him; and one Holy Spirit, in whom are all things, and we in him.*⁶ And, nevertheless, we follow Gregory the Theologian when he says, "But to us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and one Holy Spirit, in whom are all things"; for the words "from whom" and "through whom" and "in whom" do not divide the natures (for neither the prepositions nor the order of the names could ever be changed), but they characterize the properties of one unconfused nature. And

³Peter, a holder of monophysite convictions, added to the Trisagion hymn the words "who was crucified for us" in order to stress the union of the divine and human natures in Christ.

⁴Cf. 1 Cor. 8:6. The NPNF translator states that, while the words referring to the Holy Spirit are not in the biblical text, they are found in several mss. of this and other works of Damascene, and St. Basil's *On the Holy Spirit* and in St. Gregory Nazianzus.

Continued on the next page

³"Flesh" here and elsewhere, denotes Christ's human nature — his human body, soul, will, energy.

⁴Grk. *prosopon*, here and in the next clause. "Person" is a more proper translation of this word than it is of *hypostasis*, although both are often so translated. *Prosopon* also has the meanings "face" or "mask." Speaking of the persons of the Trinity, the Orthodox use *prosopon* in the sense of "person," whereas the heretical Modalists used it in the sense of "face" or "mask."

Exact Exposition

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this becomes clear from the fact that they are once more gathered into one, if only one reads with care these words of the same apostle: *from him and through him and in him are all things: to him be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.* (Rom. 11:36).

For that the “Trisagion” refers not to the Son alone, but to the Holy Trinity, the divine and saintly Athanasius and Basil and Gregory, and all the band of the divinely-inspired Fathers bear witness; because, as a matter of fact, by the threefold holiness the Holy Seraphim suggest to us the three subsistences of the superessential Godhead.⁷ But by the one Lordship they denote the one essence and dominion of the supremely-divine Trinity. Gregory the Theologian of a truth says, “Thus, then, the Holy of Holies, which is completely veiled by the Seraphim, and is glorified with three consecrations, meet together in one lordship and one divinity.” This was the most beautiful and sublime philosophy of still another of our predecessors.

Ecclesiastical historians, then, say that once when the people of Constantinople were offering prayers to God to avert a threatened calamity, during Proclus’s tenure of the office of Archbishop, it happened that a boy was snatched up from among the people, and was taught by angelic teachers the Thrice-Holy hymn, “Holy God! Holy Mighty! Holy Immortal! have mercy on us,” and when he was restored to earth once again, he told what he had learned, and all the people sang the hymn, and so the threatened calamity was averted. And in the fourth holy and great ecumenical council, I mean the one at Chalcedon, we are told that it was in this form that the hymn was sung; for the minutes of this holy assembly so record it. It is, therefore, a matter for laughter and ridicule that this thrice-holy hymn, taught us by the angels, and confirmed by the averting of calamity, ratified and established by so great an assembly of the holy Fathers, and sung first by the Seraphim as a declaration of the three hypostases of the Divinity, should be mangled and, indeed, emended to suit the view of the stupid Fuller as though he were higher than the Seraphim. But oh! the arrogance! not to say folly! But we say it

⁷Isaiah 1:3.

thus, though demons should rend us in pieces: “Holy God! Holy Mighty! Holy Immortal! have mercy on us.”

3.11 *About nature as contemplated in species [kind, class] and in individual, and about the difference between union and incarnation; and, how this is to be understood: “the one incarnate nature of the Word of God.”⁸*

Nature is regarded either abstractly as a matter of pure thought (for it has no independent existence), or commonly in all subsistences [existences, *hypostases*] of the same species, as their bond of union, and is then spoken of as nature contemplated in species; or universally as the same, but with the addition of accidents, in one subsistence [existence, *hypostasis*], and is spoken of as nature viewed in the individual, this being identical with nature viewed in species. God the incarnate Word, therefore, did not assume the nature that is regarded as an abstraction in pure thought (for this is not incarnation, but only an imposture and a figment of incarnation), nor the nature regarded in kind [species], for he did not assume all the subsistences [existences, *hypostases*]; but the nature viewed in the individual, which is identical with that regarded in kind [species]. For he took on himself the firstfruits [elements] of our compound nature, and these not as having an independent existence or as being originally an individual, and assumed by him in this way, but as existing in his own hypostasis [subsistence, “person”]. For the hypostasis of God’s Word in itself became the hypostasis of the flesh, and accordingly “the Word became flesh” (Jn 1:14) clearly without any change, and likewise the flesh became Word without alteration, and God became man. For God is what the Word is, and man is God through having one and the same hypostasis. And so it is possible to speak of the same thing as being the nature of the Word and the nature in the individual. For it signifies strictly and exclusively neither the individual, that is, the hypostasis, nor the common nature of the hypostases, but the common nature as viewed and presented in one of the hypostases.

Union, then, is one thing, and

⁸This famous formula of St. Cyril of Alexandria is acceptable to both the Orthodox and the Monophysites, and consequently has always been considered a possible basis for reconciling the two groups.

incarnation⁹ is something quite different. For union signifies only the conjunction, but not at all that with which union is effected. But incarnation (which is just the same as if one said “the putting on of human nature”) signifies that the conjunction is with flesh, that is to say, with man, just as the heating of iron implies its union with fire. Indeed, the blessed Cyril himself, when he is interpreting the phrase, “the one incarnate nature of the Word of God,” says in the second epistle to Succensus, “For if we simply said ‘the one nature of the Word’ and then were silent, and did not add the word ‘incarnate,’ but, so to speak, quite excluded the economy,¹⁰ there would be some plausibility in the question they pretend to ask, ‘If the whole [Christ] is one nature, what becomes of the perfection in humanity, or how has the essence that is after our kind continued to exist?’¹¹ But inasmuch as the perfection in humanity and the assertion of the essence like us are conveyed in the word ‘incarnate,’ they must cease from leaning on this mere straw.” Here, then, he used the “nature” of the Word in the sense of nature. For if he had used nature in the sense of “hypostasis,” it would not have been absurd to have omitted the “incarnate.” For when we say simply one hypostasis of God the Word, we do not err. In like manner, also, Leontius of Byzantium considered this phrase to refer to nature, and not instead to hypostasis. But in the *Defence* which he wrote in reply to the attacks that Theodoret made on the second anathema, the blessed Cyril says this: “The nature of the Word, that is, the hypostasis, which is the Word itself.” So that “the nature of the Word” means neither the hypostasis alone, nor “the common nature of the hypostasis,” but the common nature viewed as a whole in the hypostasis of the Word.¹²

It has been said, then, that the nature of the Word became flesh, that is, was united to flesh; but that the nature of the Word suffered in the flesh we have never heard up till now, though we have been

⁹Literally, the taking on or assuming of flesh. But as St. John is about to explain, this means also the assumption or taking on of human nature, of humanity; the becoming man, becoming human.

¹⁰“Economy” sometimes refers to God’s creation and redemption of the world, but here it points more specifically to the redemption and particularly the incarnation.

¹¹Nestorians pretended to accuse Cyril’s formula of insufficiently defending Christ’s human nature.

¹²St. Cyril sometimes seemed to use *physis* to mean “person” instead of its later accepted meaning of “nature,” but St. John shows that in the formula under consideration this is not the case.

taught that Christ suffered in the flesh. So that “the nature of the Word” does not mean “the hypostasis.” It remains, therefore, to say that to become flesh is to be united with the flesh, while the Word having become flesh means that the hypostasis of the Word became, without change, the hypostasis of the flesh. It has also been said that God became man, and man God. For the Word which is God became man, without alteration. But that the divinity¹³ became man, or became flesh, or put on the nature of man, this we have never heard. This, indeed, we have learned, that the divinity was united to humanity in one of its hypostases, and it has been stated that God took on a different form or essence, namely our own. For the name God is applicable to each of the hypostases, but we cannot use the term “divinity” in reference to hypostasis. For we are never told that the Divinity is the Father alone, or the Son alone, or the Holy Spirit alone. For “divinity” [deity, godhead] implies “nature,” while “Father” implies hypostasis [person], just as “humanity” implies nature, and “Peter” hypostasis [person]. But “God” indicates the common element of the nature, and is applicable derivatively to each of the hypostases, just as “man” is. For He who has divine nature is God, and he who has human nature is man.

Besides all this, notice that the Father and the Holy Spirit take no part at all in the incarnation of the Word except in connection with the miracles, and with respect to good will and purpose.

3.12 *That the holy Virgin is the Mother of God: an argument directed against the Nestorians.*

Moreover we proclaim the holy Virgin to be in strict truth the Theotokos. For inasmuch as He who was born of her was true God, she who bore the true God incarnate is the true mother of God. For we hold that God was born of her, not implying that the divinity of the Word received from her the beginning of its being, but meaning that God the Word himself, who was begotten of the Father timelessly before the ages, and was with the Father and the Spirit without

beginning and through eternity, took up His abode in these last days for the sake of our salvation in the Virgin’s womb, and was without change made flesh and born of her. For the holy Virgin did not bear mere man but true God; and not mere God but God incarnate, who did not bring down his body from Heaven, nor simply passed through the Virgin as channel, but received from her flesh of like essence to our own and subsisting in himself. For if the body had come down from heaven and had not partaken of our nature, what would have been the use of his becoming man? For the purpose of the Word of God’s becoming man was that the very same nature which had sinned and fallen and become corrupted, should triumph over the deceiving tyrant and so be freed from corruption, just as the divine apostle puts it, *For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.*¹⁴ If the first is true the second must also be true.

Now although he says, *The first Adam is of the earth, earthy; the second Adam is the Lord from Heaven,*¹⁵ he does not say that his body is from heaven, but emphasizes the fact that he is not mere man. Because note, he called him both Adam and Lord, thus indicating his double nature. For Adam is, being interpreted, earthborn; and it is clear that man’s nature is earthborn since he is formed from earth, but the title Lord signifies his divine essence.

And again the Apostle says: *God sent forth His only-begotten Son, made of a woman.*¹⁶ He did not say “made by a woman.” Therefore the divine apostle meant that the only-begotten Son of God and God is the same as he who was made man of the Virgin, and that he who was born of the Virgin is the same as the Son of God and God.

But he was born after the bodily fashion inasmuch as he became man, and did not take up his abode in a man formed beforehand, as in a prophet, but became himself in essence and truth man, that is, he caused flesh animated with a rational soul and intellect to subsist in his own hypostasis, and himself became a hypostasis for it. For this is the meaning of *made of a woman*. For how could the very Word of God himself have been made under the law, if he did not become

man of like essence with ourselves?

Hence it is with justice and truth that we call the holy Mary the Theotokos; for this name embraces the whole mystery of the dispensation. For if she who bore him is the Theotokos, assuredly he who was born of her is God and likewise also man. For how could God, who was before the ages, have been born of a woman unless he had become man? For the son of man must clearly be man himself. But if he who was born of a woman is himself God, manifestly he who was born of God the Father in accordance with the laws of an essence that is divine and knows no beginning, and he who was in the last days born of the Virgin in accordance with the laws of an essence that has beginning and is subject to time, that is, an essence which is human, must be one and the same. The name in truth signifies the one hypostasis and the two natures and the two births of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But we never say that the holy Virgin is the Christotokos¹⁷ because it was in order to do away with the name Theotokos, and to bring dishonor on her who alone is in truth worthy of honor above all creation, the Theotokos, that the impure and abominable Judaizing Nestorius, that vessel of dishonor, invented this name for an insult. For David the king, and Aaron, the high priest, are also called Christ, for it is customary to make kings and priests by anointing; and besides every God-inspired man may be called Christ, yet he is not by nature God; yes, the accursed Nestorius insulted him who was born of the Virgin by calling him God-bearer. Far be it from us to speak of or think of as God-bearer only, him who is in truth God incarnate. For the Word himself became flesh, having been in truth conceived of the Virgin, but coming forth as God with the assumed nature which, as soon as he was brought forth into being, was deified by him, so that these three things took place simultaneously, the assumption of our nature, the coming into being, and the deification of the assumed nature by the Word. And thus it is that the holy Virgin is thought of and spoken of as the Theotokos, not only because of the nature of the Word, but also because of the deification of man’s nature, the miracles of conception and of existence being

¹³This word, which is alternately translated as “deity” or “godhead,” is often used as a synonym for God, but as St. John goes on to show, it refers more especially to God’s divine nature; just as “humanity” refers to man, but more especially to man’s nature. Neither “deity” nor “humanity” are used to refer to divine or human persons (hypostases).

¹⁴1 Cor. 15:21.

¹⁵1 Cor. 15:47.

¹⁶Gal. 4:4.

¹⁷“Birthgiver of Christ”; less precisely, “Mother of Christ.”

Continued on the next page

Metropolitan THEODOSIUS Officiates At Burial of Monk Anthony (Duchaine)

Editor's note: Monk Anthony of St. Tikhon's Monastery reposed on Dec. 5 and was interred at the St. Arseny of Konevits Skete which he built. Fr. Anthony regularly prepared the feature Daily Devotions for this magazine. In addition, he prepared the calendar, annual rubrics book, and several liturgical books. Fr. Anthony has served as seminary registrar, instructor in Old Testament, and as Acting Academic Dean at St. Tikhon's Seminary. At his funeral, the Metropolitan offered these reflections:

"I am the Resurrection and the Life; he who believes in me, though he may die, he shall live; and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die" (John 11:25-26).

These words of the Lord, spoken to Martha, the sister of Lazarus, on the road outside of Bethany, refer to two realities — the reality of death and the reality of life. Like Martha and her sister Mary, today we are confronted with the harsh reality of death as we mourn the sudden passing of our brother, the Monk Anthony. Yet, like Martha and Mary, who were grieving over the death of their beloved brother, we too are comforted by the Lord. As we gather today in sorrow, and shocked by Father Anthony's sudden passing, we are consoled by His words of comfort and hope and by His assurance of eternal life for those who believe in Him.

Speaking to Martha, our Lord acknowledges the reality of death. Indeed, He Himself grieves and weeps over the



death of his friend Lazarus. But His acknowledgment of death and the pain and sorrow it causes those who remain also provides a prelude to the proclamation of the victory of Life over death. In responding to the death of Lazarus with tears, anger, and profound emotion, Jesus declares to Martha and to us that death is already conquered, indeed, He Himself is the Conqueror of death: He is the Resurrection and the Life.

Because Jesus Christ is the Resurrection and the Life, those joined to Him in Baptism and through a living faith shall never die, but shall be joined to Him throughout eternity. Yes, death is real. We see it even now before our very eyes. But, what we see — what arouses emotion, what causes pain, confusion, and shock — has no finality. This is not an end. It is not the end of life. For in Christ Jesus, death is the "Passover," the transition to the life which has no end, to the life where there is no "sickness, sorrow, or sighing."

The life of a monk is the life of a

person who has already "died to the world" in order to bear witness to life eternal in the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus, Father Anthony, as one who was admitted to the angelic habit, lived with his eyes focused not on life here below, but on the life of heaven. And the Lord has now called him to that life.

This afternoon we have gathered to pray for our newly-departed brother, Father Anthony, and to honor his body with the simple dignity and profound spiritual beauty of the monastic burial service. In our prayers, let us commend him to Christ, who is the Resurrection and the Life and the Repose of His servants. May he be granted rest with the Saints, where "sickness is no more, neither sorrow nor sighing, but life everlasting." And may our prayer today enable us to further confess that Jesus Christ, is the Resurrection and the Life. With Martha, let us also proclaim: "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God, who is come into the world" (John 11:27).

Exact Exposition

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wrought together, namely, on the one hand the conception the Word, and on the other hand the existence of the flesh in the Word himself, the Mother of God herself in a manner surpassing nature accomplishing the fashioner's being fashioned, and the becoming man of the God and maker of all, who deified the nature that he assumed; the union preserving those things that had been united, just as

they were united, that is to say, not only Christ's divine nature but also his human nature, not only that which is above us but that which is of us. For he was not first made like us and only later became higher than us, but at all times, from his first coating into being he existed with the double nature, because he existed in the Word himself from the beginning of the conception. Therefore, he is, in accordance with his own nature, human,

but also supranaturally, of God and divine. Moreover he possesses the properties of the animate flesh; for at the word of the incarnation¹⁸ the Word received these, which naturally came into being by the ordering of natural activity in accord with the reality.

To be continued.

Based on the NPNF translation, with revisions.

St. Tikhon's Seminary Third Annual Golf Tournament



Sixty golfers joined in on Saturday, September 9, 2000 to enjoy a round of golf good fellowship and to raise money for St. Tikhon's Seminary. The tournament was held at the Par 72 Blue Ridge Trail Golf Club in Mountaintop, PA. The weather cooperated fully and a good day on the golf course was had by all. The winners of the tournament was the team of Paul Pezak, Mike Remetta, Mike Sokoloski Jr and Tony Battaglia. Winners of the First Flight was the George Fetch group. Prizes were awarded for the longest drive and closest to the line. The winner of the long drive was George Fetch, and due to a misunderstanding with the golf course personnel, there was no closest to the line winner. Hole No. 15 was the attraction of the day, with every golfer to make a

hole in one being awarded a \$10,000 prize. Unfortunately no one was able to claim the prize.

We were honored at the awards dinner to have in attendance His Eminence Archbishop Herman, who gave the blessing and thanked everyone who participated for their support of the seminary. The golf committee, consisting of Fr. David Shewczyk, Fr. Nicholas Wyslutsky, Fr. John Kowalczyk, Al Wanas, Ted Sovyrda, Peter Resanka and Bernard Golubiewski announced the awarding of the MOST VALUABLE PRAYER award which was presented to His Eminence Archbishop Herman.

After dinner, the Archbishop addressed the group and told of the good work the seminary is doing and the need for funding to continue their work in

education of men who wish to further serve our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. The prizes were then awarded to the winning teams and a raffle followed. Prizes were donated by Premium Brands, Verrastro Dist., Wyoming Beverage, and Falcone Beverage, TGI Fridays, Applebys, Eagle Golf. Dick's Sporting Goods, Nevada Bob's, with special thanks going to Al Wanas, who supplied lunch for the golfers and Michael Pasonick Jr., who donated golf balls for each player and a few dozen for the raffle that followed.

The next tournament, the fourth annual, is scheduled for Saturday September 8, 2002 at Blue Ridge Trail Golf Club with a 2:00 p.m. shotgun start. So clean your golf clubs, get your foursome together, mark your calendars, and practice to enter next year's tournament.

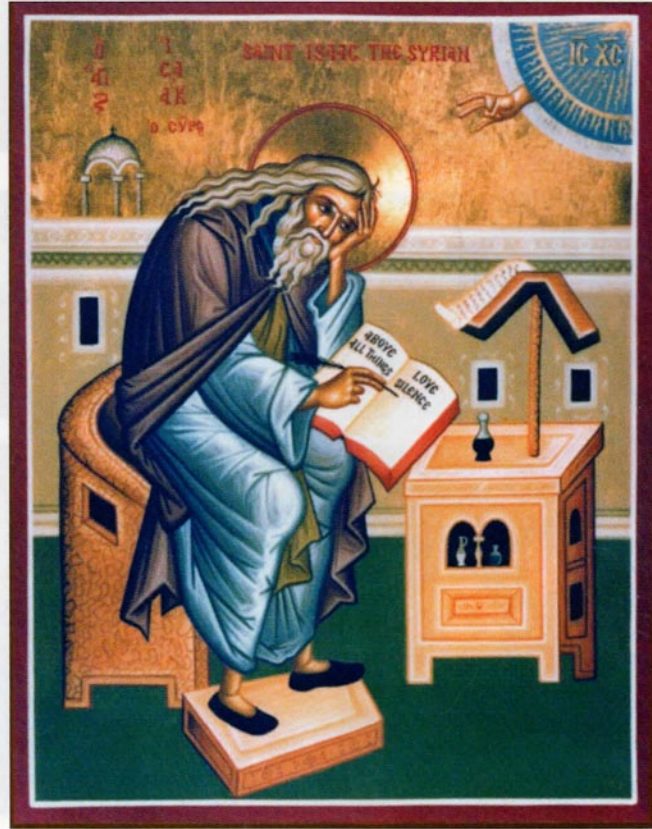
A Short History of Syrian Christianity

Part III

From A.D. 750 to the Crusades

The Syrian Church under the Abbasids

In 750 the Umayyad empire suddenly collapsed, brought down by a rebellion originating in eastern Iran that spread westward until its cause was embraced by Abu al-Abbas, head of the Abbasid house. Abu al-Abbas was acclaimed caliph and stormed Damascus in April 750, thus establishing the new Abbasid Caliphate (in 762 the Abbasids moved the capital to Baghdad). The Abbasids were more stringently orthodox than the Umayyads, and they were far more aggressive in their treatment of religious minorities. Indeed, the third caliph of the Abbasid dynasty, Mahdi (775-785), even tightened the legal restrictions placed upon Christians by the "Pact of Umar." Nevertheless, the Nestorians were permitted to move their catholicate to Baghdad, a noteworthy honor considering that their main rivals, the Jacobites, were not even allowed to post a bishop in Baghdad. In their catholicos, Timothy I (778-823), the Nestorians fortunately possessed a skillful diplomat and erudite speaker. Timothy I, the greatest of all the catholicos who served under the Abbasid Caliphate, was originally from the region of Adiabene. His dealings with the Abbasid caliph were cordial; he even skillfully debated the caliph in a remarkable example of interreligious dialogue. For example, when the caliph asked him "What do you say about Muhammed?" he adroitly replied that Muhammed was worthy of praise for walking in the path of the prophets and teaching the doctrine of one God; like



the prophets of Israel, he separated his people from idolatry and polytheism, and attached them to the worship of the one and only God. According to Timothy, Muhammed taught about God, His Word and His Spirit. And when the caliph then said, "You should, therefore, accept the word of the Prophet that God is one and there is no other," Timothy agreed, but continued, "This belief in one God, I have learned from the Torah, from the Prophets, and from the Gospel. I stand by it and shall die in it . . . I believe in one God in three, and three in one, but not in three different godheads, however, but in the persons of God's Word and His Spirit." Timothy was equally skilled in dealing with contentious bishops — during his catholicate of forty-five years he tirelessly worked to eradicate *simony* and

other corrupt practices from the Nestorian Church. As an eager missionary, Timothy established a bishopric in San'a (the capital of Yemen) despite stringent Muslim laws prohibiting Christianity in Arabia. He also appointed a metropolitan in India (i.e., thus granting the Indian Christians independence from the metropolitanate of Fars), converted the *khagan* of Turkestan to Christianity, and even sent a missionary bishop named David to the Nestorians in China. Timothy also reached out to both the Jacobites and the Melkites in a spirit of cooperation, treating them fairly despite his position of primacy and his Nestorian theological convictions. In the early Abbasid period there were also several other prominent Christian intellectuals in the Abbasid empire, among whom were the

court astrologer Theophilus ibn-Tuma (a Maronite), translator of Homer's *Iliad* into Arabic, the court physician Yuhanna ibn-Masawayh (a Nestorian), and the court librarian Hunayn ibn-Ishaq (a Nestorian), translator of the collected works of Aristotle, Plato's *Republic*, and the works of Galen and Hippocrates into Arabic.

The privileged position of Nestorianism in the Abbasid Caliphate did not mean, however, that Christians lived entirely without threat to their religious liberty. Even the relatively tolerant caliphs Mahdi (775-785) and Harun al-Rashid (785-809) were not always kind to Christianity. After suffering a humiliating defeat at the hands of the Byzantines, Mahdi ordered the destruction of some churches and forbade Christians from owning slaves. Moreover, Mahdi was alarmed at the growth of the radically ascetic Manichean sect, resulting in harassment of Christian monasteries, whose monks were sometimes confused with Manichees. In 807 Harun al-Rashid, the celebrated caliph of *Arabian Nights* fame, ordered all churches in border towns destroyed in an act of vengeance provoked by his war with Byzantium. Although many of these churches were immediately rebuilt by order of Harun al-Rashid himself, the incident reminded Christians of just how precarious was their religious freedom under Muslim domination. Conditions grew much worse during the repressive caliphate of Mutawakkil (847-861), whose rigid adherence to Sunni orthodoxy was stifling of all independent thought in the Abbasid Caliphate. Called "a hater of Christians" by the Jacobite historian Abu'l Faraj, Mutawakkil deposed the Nestorian catholicos Theodosius in 849, destroyed countless churches and monasteries, ordered Christian graves to be razed to ground level, prohibited Christians from learning Arabic in school, and forced Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, and other religious minorities to mark themselves as non-Muslims by wearing yellow patches on their clothing.

At the same time Christianity was internally decaying, as historical records indicate that corruption was rife among church prelates in the latter half of the ninth century and throughout the tenth century; for example, Nestorian catholicos Abraham III (905-937)

actually bribed the caliph with a large sum of jewels in order to prevent the Jacobites from naming a resident bishop in Baghdad. Monasticism was also in a sorry state, as monasteries were often poorly maintained by the monks and frequently raided by marauding Kurdish tribesmen. A common practice was the taking of secret wives or concubines by monks. Liturgical decline was another problem, as contemporaneous sources describe wide divergences in the rules of worship and hymnody to the point that "all was in confusion." New heresies, such as Messalianism (a sect characterized by excessive asceticism and gnosticizing dualism),¹ sowed discord and insubordination amongst the Christian communities struggling to survive in the Abbasid Caliphate. However, it must be acknowledged that even during the darkest days of Abbasid tyranny, there were few executions and no general massacres of Christians. Christian prelates still ruled in their seats of honor and bishops and priests freely preached and administered the sacraments. The Nestorian Church was actually still growing, adding eight new metropolitanates by the end of the tenth century. Moreover, Christians could still be found in high positions in education and government, despite their second-class status; Christian merchants, artisans, and landowners still held great wealth, despite ever-increasing taxation; and Christian physicians still remained relatively unrivaled in the medical profession. Thus it can be concluded that after four centuries of Muslim rule the Syrian Church may have been wounded, but it was nevertheless still surviving.

The status of Christianity in the Abbasid empire by A.D. 1000 could still be described as quite good. Although Muslims had now attained a narrow majority of the empire's population, almost all of the major cities (except in Arabia) had significant communities of Christians. In the countryside, Christians were still majorities in Lebanon and northern Iraq, and a relatively large minority in Syria. Orthodox Melkites,

1. The Messalians (also known as the Eucratites) may have originated as early as the second century. They held that intense and ceaseless prayer was the only weapon against the passions by which demons hold power over people. They lived on alms, refusing to work as that would involve compromise with the demon-governed world, and held some bizarre notions concerning the vision of God. Messalianism was condemned as heresy by local councils at Antioch (ca. 385) and Constantinople (426), and by the Third Ecumenical Council (Ephesus, 431).

Monophysite Jacobites, and Maronites (the Lebanese adherents of Monothelism) were still fairly numerous, although the strongest Christian group in the Abbasid Caliphate was the Nestorian Church, which extended across Asia throughout Iraq, Iran, India, Turkestan (Central Asia), and China. By the year 1000 the Nestorian catholicos in Baghdad counted the allegiance of 20 metropolitans, 250 bishops, and approximately 12 million adherents (out of a total of about 50 million Christians worldwide). The Nestorian catholicos was also designated by the Abbasids as the chief representative for all of the Christians in their empire. Nevertheless, there were already ominous signs of decline: Chinese Nestorianism failed to survive the collapse of the T'ang dynasty in 960 (though still maintaining the allegiance of the Uighurs and several important Mongol tribes). Furthermore, the Nestorian Church, after securing the conversion of the formerly Manichee Turks,² only ended up eventually losing them *en masse* to Islam. The election of the Nestorian catholicos by the bishops, moreover, was simply a sham; in reality the catholicos was appointed by the Abbasid caliph.

By A.D. 1000 the Abbasid empire had already begun its slow decline, though it took until 1258 to finally collapse. Ironically, the reasons for the caliphate's decline were bloody feuds over succession, Islam's own splintering into rival religious factions, and unresolved disputes about spiritual authority in Islamic law and theology. The most divisive factor in Islam revolved around the rivalry between the orthodox Sunnis and the heretical Shi'is. This division in Islam began quite early, with the defeat of the Alid dynasty by the Umayyads in 660. The Alids' Shi'i followers then became a ruthlessly persecuted minority,

2. Manicheanism was a gnostic sect of Persian origin founded by Mani (216-276). Technically a non-Christian religion, it came to be regarded as a Christian heresy, reemerging in medieval times in the more Christianized forms of the Paulician, Bogomil, and Cathari sects. Manichean teachings were grounded on a radical dualism of light and darkness, from which they developed an elaborate theory of redemption, whereby the particles of light trapped in this world are liberated through astrological and ascetical practices and returned to the immaterial heavenly realm of light. The sect's leaders, known as "the Elect" or "the Perfect" devoted their entire lives to freeing particles of light trapped in matter. Virtually dead in the West by the sixth century, Manicheanism survived in Persia, Turkestan, and China until the fourteenth century. Portuguese traders in China reported the existence of Manichees in southern China as late as the seventeenth century.

Continued on the next page

Syrian Christianity

Continued from page 59

but one which continued to dream of the day when they would triumph over their Sunni. Their first opportunity emerged in 945, when a Shi'i leader, Ahmad ibn-Buwayh, who claimed descent from the last Sassanid emperor, seized Baghdad and deposed the caliph. But rather than assuming the caliphate himself, ibn-Buwayh installed as a figurehead caliph a suitably orthodox Sunni Abbasid. Thus, for the next century the empire was governed by Buwayhid *emirs*, who held the temporal powers of the caliphate, while powerless caliphs retained spiritual leadership. The Buwayhid period, called the "Persian renaissance," was a time of remarkable peace and tolerance for the Christian minority. Indeed, the greatest Buwayhid *emir*, Adud (949-983), appointed a Christian, Nasr ibn-Harun, as grand vizier of the empire, who was given the authority to build and repair churches and monasteries throughout the empire. Moreover, the Nestorian *catholicos* remained a figure of considerable political influence as the head of the largest community of Christians in the empire — an influence that enabled the Nestorians to resume sending missionaries eastward for the evangelization of the Mongols.

The Buwayhid seizure of power in Baghdad, however, did cost the empire its control over North Africa. Early in the tenth century a Shi'i claiming descent from Muhammed's daughter Fatima seized control in Tunis, and his Fatimid successors gradually extended their rule both east and west across North Africa, eventually building an empire stretching from Morocco to Egypt. In 969 the Fatimids finally entered Fustat (Old Cairo) and proclaimed a new, Shi'i caliphate. In the same year the Fatimids advanced into Asia and captured Damascus. Fatimid expansion was not checked by the declining Abbasids; rather, a newly resurgent Byzantium halted the Fatimid advance in a thirty-year "crusade" led by emperors Nicephorus Phocas and Basil II. During the closing decades of the tenth century, Christians were still a majority in Syria. Despite the war between the Fatimids and the Byzantines, the Fatimid caliphs treated Christians with even greater toleration than the Abbasids, perhaps

because the Fatimids were heavily dependent on Christian administrators. For example, the caliph al-Aziz (975-996) appointed a Christian, Isa ibn-Nastur, as his grand vizier (whose wife, incidentally, was the sister of the Melkite patriarchs of Antioch and Jerusalem). Al-Aziz even donated money for the construction of new churches, despite the occasional protests of angry Muslims, and abolished the payment of annual tribute by Christians. The next Fatimid caliph, al-Hakim (996-1021), also showed tolerance towards Christians until 1009, after which he mercilessly persecuted the Christians for seven years. Although he relaxed his attacks against Christians and Jews during the last five years of his reign, to the horror of orthodox Muslims the manic-depressive caliph proclaimed himself an incarnation of God and diverted his fury towards Muslims who refused to recognize his deity. Al-Hakim was secretly killed in 1021, but his body was never found and his followers, the Druzes, still believe that he shall return in glory as a messianic savior. After the death of al-Hakim, the Fatimids signed a peace treaty with Byzantium in 1027, in which they agreed to the restoration of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and permitted Christians who had been forcibly converted to Islam under al-Hakim to return to their former faith publicly without retribution.

The Crusades

During the eleventh century a new power was rising within the Abbasid empire, that of the Turks. The Turks originated in Central Asia, and even today the population of Central Asia (four out of the five Central Asian republics and China's Sinkiang Autonomous Region) is still predominantly Turkic. Ruled by both Iranians and Chinese, the Turks founded their own kingdom in the middle of the eighth century, and adopted Manicheism as their state religion. By 850 their kingdom had broken up, and although some Turks remained Manichees for another four centuries, the majority had by this time converted to Nestorian Christianity. Around AD 1000 some Turkic tribes began a gradual westward migration, possibly in reaction to Chinese expansionism. After seizing Bukhara from its Persian rulers in 999, the Karluk Turks converted to Islam.

Meanwhile, the Seljuk Turks moved south into Afghanistan but, dissatisfied with their subordination to the Ghaznavids, suddenly moved westward across Iran and eventually seized Baghdad, under the pretext of freeing the Abbasid caliph from his Shi'i Buwayhid overlords, in 1055. It is unclear when the Seljuks converted to Islam from Nestorianism, but a likely estimate would be sometime in the early eleventh century. The Turks remained restless, continuing their westward advance into Christian Armenia, which they conquered in 1071, and then crowning their victory with an even greater one over the Byzantine emperor Romanus Diogenes, whom they captured in battle. Thereafter, the Turks held a permanent footing in the Anatolian hinterland of the Byzantine Empire. The appearance of the Turks, together with the threat they posed to Byzantium, terrified Christian Europe — the result being the Crusades. Christian resentment against Islam had been building for much of the eleventh century. In 1009 the mad caliph al-Hakim had destroyed the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and, adding insult to injury, repudiated the treaty made between Harun al-Rashid and Charlemagne that had guaranteed safe passage of Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem. Although the treaty between al-Zahir and Constantine VIII in 1027 resulted in the rebuilding of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Western Christians never forgot how easily the rights of pilgrims could be lost. In 1079 the Turks took Jerusalem which, together with their conquest of Armenia and victory over Byzantium in 1071, and subsequent drive across Anatolia over the next twenty years, drove Byzantine Emperor Alexius I to ask for help from Pope Urban II. So in 1096 Urban II issued his call at the Council of Clermont-Ferrand, and armies of French knights landed outside Constantinople in 1097. After duly swearing fealty to Alexius I, the Crusaders promptly scored an unexpected victory against the Turks at Nicaea on July 1, 1097. The Seljuk capital of Iconium fell in August 1097 and finally the important city of Antioch, after a lengthy siege, surrendered to the crusaders on June 3, 1098. Up until this point the Crusaders honored their agreement with Alexius to return formerly Byzantine territory to his control, but in

Antioch the Crusaders set up a principality under Bohemond of Taranto. Shortly afterward other Crusader armies took Tripoli and Edessa, which became new Crusader states. Jerusalem finally fell to the Crusaders on July 15, 1099; a Kingdom of Jerusalem under Baldwin of Lorraine was set up, to which the three other Crusader states owed fealty. The success of the Crusaders can be explained by the internal divisions among the Turks; despite an outward facade of unity, the Abbasid empire was simply too massive and sophisticated to be held together by the only recently civilized Seljuk sultans. By 1092, a mere thirty-seven years after the Seljuk capture of Baghdad, the Turkish tradition of dividing inheritance and distributing it in pieces had resulted in the emergence of a cluster of Turkish sultanates and emirates no longer ruled from Baghdad. Furthermore, the Fatimid caliphate in Cairo was not a serious obstacle to the Crusaders, as the Fatimids were not too sorry to watch the defeat of one Turkish emirate after another.

During the era of Crusader rule (1099-1291), the Christian population in Syria consisted of both Crusaders and natives. The original Crusaders numbered about 30,000, but in the years that followed they were joined by colonists from the Christian West, who then formed the ruling Frankish elite. The native Syrian population consisted of both Christians and Muslims, with the Christians still holding majorities in large cities such as Antioch, Damascus, and Edessa. The Syrian Christians were not too impressed with their new overlords, and were shocked by the barbarism of the "Franks" in comparison to the Arabo-Persian civilization of the Abbasids. At first the large Monophysite communities of Jacobites and Armenians welcomed the Crusaders as liberators, but they took no more kindly to Latin Christian discrimination against them than to their mistreatment by their former masters, whether Byzantine or Muslim. As far as the Frankish Crusaders were concerned, the native Christians were schismatics and heretics and were treated as such. The Crusaders considered the Greek Melkites to be merely schismatic (despite the fact that the Greek patriarchate of Antioch had not yet officially severed communion with Rome), but they were

also military allies and orthodox in doctrine. At first the Latin clergy considered the Greek Melkite hierarchy as coequal, but soon the Greek patriarchs of Antioch and Jerusalem were displaced in favor of Latin patriarchs and exiled to Constantinople. The Monophysites, Maronites, and Nestorians, on the other hand, were officially heretics, which ironically made them easier to deal with and secured for them somewhat favorable treatment. Rome was eager to entice them back into Christian unity under the papacy, and was prepared to offer them favorable terms. The Maronites were the most successfully absorbed. In 1182 the Maronites officially renounced the Monothelite heresy and made their submission to the pope, who in turn allowed them to retain their own Syriac liturgy and traditions as a separate rite. The Maronites also enthusiastically supported the Crusaders, with as many as 40,000 joining the Crusaders in their campaigns against the Turks. The Jacobites and Armenians welcomed the Crusaders as liberators, but attempted to remain as ecclesiastically independent of Latin Christianity as possible under the circumstances. Thus a bizarre ecclesiastical arrangement was devised in which Jacobite and Armenian bishops, while still adhering to Monophysitism, were appointed as "suffragans" of the Latin hierarchy in the Crusader principalities. Along with the Crusaders there eventually arrived friars of the new Roman Catholic missionary orders, the Franciscans and the Dominicans. These missionary friars were generally well-intentioned; they often chided the Frankish colonists for their unchristian behavior towards the natives, strove to heal the divisions among the various Christian churches, and reached out to evangelize the Muslims. For example, the Dominican friar William of Tripoli is reported to have baptized more than a thousand Muslims in Lebanon. Yet these humble friars were not the only members of Roman Catholic religious orders to arrive in the East, so too did the military orders of the Knights Templars and the Knights of St. John, whose wealth and power aroused and fueled the hostility of the native Christians against the Frankish elite. By the middle of the twelfth century, however, even the Frankish elite began orientalizing,

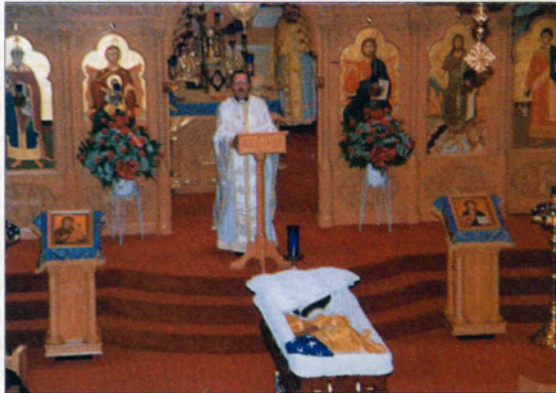
adopting the customs and often intermarrying with the native Syrian Christians. Indeed, they treated their Muslim subjects in the countryside far better than did contemporaneous Muslim rulers. But it was already too late for, as a result of feudal disorganization, one Crusader state after another began falling before the onslaught of the Muslim counterattack. Edessa fell first in 1144, prompting Pope Eugenius III (1145-1153) to summon the Second Crusade, which ended in disaster. Even worse for the Crusaders, the Muslims soon began to unite behind the remarkable new sultan of Egypt, Salah al-Din (1171-1193). Salah al-Din was a Kurdish chieftain who overthrew the Fatimids and received an appointment from the Abbasid caliph as the sultan of Egypt (a Sunni Muslim, Salah al-Din accepted the Abbasid caliph's spiritual authority). Salah al-Din soon succeeded in uniting the fractured forces of Islam into a *jihad* against the Crusaders, finally capturing Jerusalem in 1187, where he tore the great gold cross off the Dome of the Rock (the Crusaders had converted the important Muslim shrine into a church while they held Jerusalem). He allowed the defeated Crusaders to leave the city in peace on condition that they pay their own ransom — some 2000 out of the 10,000 Crusaders stranded in the city were too poor to raise the necessary gold and were sold into slavery. A Third Crusade, under the joint command of Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, King Philip II of France, and King Richard of England soon arrived, but eventually ended in a truce with Salah al-Din. The diplomatic success of Emperor Frederick II with the Muslim sultan of Egypt, al-Kamil, had briefly revived the fortunes of the Crusaders. Jerusalem was transferred back to Christian rule and in 1228 Frederick was crowned as King of Jerusalem. The treaty also turned over Bethlehem, Nazareth, and the fortresses of Jaffa, Caesarea, and Sidon to Frederick.

However, this new Christian kingdom proved short-lived, and Jerusalem was retaken by the Muslims in 1244. Thereafter, Crusader territories gradually decreased until the port of Acre, the last of the Crusader holdings, fell to the Muslims in 1291.

To be continued.

—Priest Sophrony Royer

Archpriest George Pawlush Memory Eternal



Father Theodore Boback preaches at funeral



Final farewell

The Very Reverend George Pawlush, 77, pastor emeritus of Holy Trinity Church, Wilkes-Barre, fell asleep in the Lord on September 4, 2000.

Archpriest George Pawlush was a 1940 graduate of Olyphant High School. He received his theological diploma from St. Tikhon's Seminary. He also served in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II. Fr. George was ordained to the holy priesthood at Holy Virgin Protection Cathedral, New York City. He served as pastor of SS. Cyril and Methodius Church, Terryville, Conn. He was assistant pastor, pastor and dean of Holy Resurrection Cathedral, Wilkes-Barre. Fr. George was reassigned to Holy Trinity Church, Wilkes-Barre which he served until his retirement.

Besides his parish ministry, Fr.

George served as dean of the Wilkes-Barre Deanery. He was the senior Eastern Orthodox chaplain at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Plains, PA. Fr. George was chaplain of American Legion Post 741, Miners Mills, the Pennsylvania American Legion District 12; chaplain of the Wilkes-Barre Fire Department, national spiritual advisor of the Russian Orthodox Catholic Mutual Aid Society, and a member of the Kiwanis Club, Wilkes-Barre.

Fr. George is survived by his wife of 54 years, the former Anne Yuhas; sons George, David, Michael and Neil; one daughter, Hope Boback; and twelve grandchildren.

The order for the burial of a priest was served by Archbishop Herman and several clergy on Friday evening, September 8 at Holy Trinity Church. Divine Liturgy was celebrated the

next morning. Interment followed at St. Tikhon's Monastery, South Canaan.

Fr. George was a diligent witness for the Orthodox Church in his community. He is fondly remembered by everyone for his good sense of humor. He had a deep and abiding sense of gratitude to God for all His blessings, and to everyone who assisted him and his family. He defined a pastor as one who entered into the life of his people. Truly, Fr. George entered into the life of his people throughout his many years of dedicated service to the Lord and Master of his life. Fr. George has touched the lives of many people and he has left us with a legacy and example of a venerable father and priest. Memory Eternal!

—Archpriest David Shewczyk

Daily Devotions

JANUARY

1. Col. 2:8-12 (Circumcision)
2. 2 Tim. 4:5-8 (Sun. Before)
3. James 2:14-26
4. James 3:1-10
5. 1 Cor. 9:19-27
6. Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7 (Theophany)
7. Acts 19:1-8 (Forerunner)
8. Eph. 6:10-17 (Sat. After)
9. Eph. 4:7-18 (Sun. After)
10. 1 Pet. 2:21-3:9
11. 1 Pet. 3:10-22
12. 1 Pet. 4:1-11
13. 1 Pet. 4:12-5:5
14. 2 Pet. 1:1-10
15. 2 Tim. 2:11-19
16. Col. 1:12-18
17. Heb. 3:5-11, 17-19
18. Heb. 4:1-13
19. Heb. 5:11-6:8
20. Heb. 7:1-6
21. Heb. 7:18-25
22. Eph. 2:11-13
23. Col. 3:4-11
24. Heb. 8:7-13
25. Heb. 9:8-10, 15-23
26. Heb. 10:1-18
27. Heb. 10:35-11:7
28. Heb. 11:8, 11-16
29. Eph. 5:1-8
30. Col. 3:12-16
31. Heb. 11:17-23, 27-31

FEBRUARY

1. Heb. 12:25-26; 13:22-25
2. Heb. 7:7-17 (Meeting)
3. James 1:19-27
4. James 2:1-13
5. Col. 1:3-6
6. 1 Tim. 1:15-17
7. James 2:14-26
8. James 3:1-10
9. James 3:11-4:6
10. James 4:7-5:9
11. 1 Pet. 1:1-2, 10-12; 2:6-10
12. 1 Thess. 5:14-23
13. 1 Tim. 4:9-15
14. 1 Pet. 2:21-3:9
15. 1 Pet. 3:10-22
16. 1 Pet. 4:1-11
17. 1 Pet. 4:12-5:5
18. 2 Pet. 1:1-10
19. 2 Tim. 2:11-19
20. 2 Tim. 3:10-15
21. 2 Pet. 1:20-2:9
22. 2 Pet. 2:9-22
23. 2 Pet. 3:1-18
24. 1 John 1:8-2:6
25. 1 John 2:7-17
26. 2 Tim. 3:1-9
27. 1 Cor. 6:12-20
28. 1 John 2:18-3:10
29. 1 John 3:11-20

- Luke 2:20-31, 40-52 (Circumcision)
- Mark 1:1-8 (Sunday Before Theophany)
- Mark 12:13-17
- Mark 12:18-27
- Luke 3:1-18
- Matt. 3:13-17 (Theophany)
- John 1:29-34 (Forerunner)
- Matt. 4:1-11 (Saturday After Theophany)
- Matt. 4:12-17 (Sunday After Theophany)
- Luke 19:37-44
- Luke 19:45-48
- Luke 20:1-8
- Luke 20:9-18
- Luke 20:19-26
- Luke 12:32-40
- Luke 18:18-27
- Luke 20:27-44
- Luke 21:12-19
- Luke 21:5-7, 10-11, 20-24
- Luke 21:28-33
- Luke 21:37-22:8
- Luke 13:18-29
- Luke 18:35-43
- Mark 8:11-21
- Mark 8:22-26
- Mark 8:30-34
- Mark 9:10-16
- Mark 9:33-41
- Luke 14:1-11
- Luke 17:12-19
- Mark 9:42-10:12

MARCH

1. 1 John 3:21-4:6
2. 1 John 4:20-5:21
3. 2 John 1:1-13
4. 1 Cor. 10:23-28
5. 1 Cor. 8:8-9:2
6. 3 John 1:1-15
7. Jude 1:1-10
8. Joel 2:12-26
9. Jude 1:11-25
10. Zechariah 8:7-17
11. Rom. 14:19-26
12. Rom. 13:11-14:4
13. Genesis 1:1-13
14. Genesis 1:14-23
15. Genesis 1:24-2:3
16. Genesis 2:4-19
17. Genesis 2:20-3:20
18. Heb. 1:1-12
19. Heb. 11:24-6:32-12:2
20. Genesis 3:21-4:7
21. Genesis 4:8-15
22. Genesis 4:16-26
23. Genesis 5:1-24
24. Genesis 5:32-6:8
25. Heb. 2:11-18 (Annunciation)
26. Heb. 1:10-2:3
27. Genesis 6:9-22
28. Genesis 7:1-5
29. Genesis 7:6-9
30. Genesis 7:11-8:3
31. Genesis 8:4-22

- Mark 14:43-15:1
- Mark 15:1-15
- Mark 15:22-25, 33-41
- Luke 21:8-9, 25-27, 33-36
- Matt. 25:31-36
- Luke 19:29-40; 22:7-39
- Luke 22:39-42, 45-23:1
- Joel 3:12-21
- Luke 23:2-34, 44-56
- Zechariah 8:19-23
- Matt. 6:1-13
- Matt. 6:14-21
- Proverbs 1:1-20
- Proverbs 1:20-33
- Proverbs 2:1-22
- Proverbs 3:1-18
- Proverbs 3:19-34
- Mark 2:23-3:5
- John 1:43-51
- Proverbs 3:34-4:22
- Proverbs 5:1-15
- Proverbs 5:15-6:4
- Proverbs 6:3-20
- Proverbs 6:20-7:1
- Luke 1:24-38 (Annunc.)
- Mark 2:1-12
- Proverbs 8:1-21
- Proverbs 8:32-9:11
- Proverbs 9:12-18
- Proverbs 10:1-22
- Proverbs 10:31-11:12

APRIL

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

- Mark 2:14-17
- Mark 8:34-9:1
- Proverbs 11:19-12:6
- Proverbs 12:8-22
- Proverbs 12:23-13:9
- Proverbs 13:19-14:6
- Proverbs 14:15-26
- Mark 7:31-37
- Mark 9:17-31
- Proverbs 14:27-15:4
- Proverbs 15:7-19
- Proverbs 15:20-16:9
- Proverbs 16:17-17:17
- Proverbs 17:17-18:5
- Mark 8:27-31
- Mark 10:32-45
- Proverbs 19:16-25
- Proverbs 21:3-21
- Proverbs 21:23-22:4
- Proverbs 23:15-24:4
- Proverbs 31:8-31
- John 11:1-45
- John 12:1-18 (Palm Sun.)
- Job 1:1-12
- Job 1:13-22
- Job 2:1-10
- Job 38:1-23; 42:1-5
- Job 42:12-16
- Matt. 28:1-20
- John 1:1-17 (Holy Pascha)

Christ is Born!

Holy Resurrection Church

Alden Station, Pa.

Archpriest Vladimir & Matushka Petorak
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Leonard A. Cholewa
Julia Czeck
Tillie Haverlak
Joseph J. Hitzner
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Faith Kardash
Michael Kardash
Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Kluger
Don & Kathy Kulick
Josephine Meholic
Basil & Molly Pisch
Alicia & Beth Petroski
Dr. & Mrs. Donald J. Reese & Family
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Berwick, Pa.

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Larissa Shuga
David Shuga
Glenn, Tamara, Jordan, & Zachary Beckley
Mr. George Bedis
John & Helen Beily
Mary & Alex Berbick
Mary K. Burns
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Ciganek
Olga Danko Family
Ann R. DeMelfi
Mr. & Mrs. Roy Ervin & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Harrison, Jr.
Susan K. Holoviak
Paul & Jean Husak
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Jurbala
Mrs. Anna Jurbala
Mrs. Mary Jurbala
Mr. & Mrs. Harry Kuchka
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Kuchka & Family
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Tom, Diane, Alyssa Macri
Mrs. Mary Z. Maholick
Mrs. Mary Mahonchak
Andy, Lisa, Kristin, & A.J. Mihaly
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Mihaly Sr.
Mr. Michael Mihaly
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John Parker
Mrs. Mary Parker
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Ann Marie & Roy Peckham
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Anita & Vincent Spaits
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St. Nicholas O Club
Barbara Roman, President
St. Nicholas Church Choir
Nicholas Lezinsky, Director
V.Rev. Eugene & Matushka Fran Vansuch
Reader Jason Vansuch
Gary & Marie Angstadt & Sons
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Mr. & Mrs. David Bench
Martha Billy
Mr. & Mrs. Gerard Bobal & Family
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Cameron Nicholas Bruoko

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Theresa Kasmer Butler & Family

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Nicole Campbell

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Greg & Cindy Chernay

Mrs. Johanna Chomko

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Alyssa Chrush

Ruth Condit

Rodney Cook & Family

Lisa Curry

Kr. & Mrs. Andrew Cuttic

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Marina M. Dorosh

Michael J. & Toni Dorosh

Damian A. Drasher

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Andrew Fartuch Family

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Patty Felix

John & Olga Frimenko

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Mrs. Elizabeth Grigoruk

Mr. & Mrs. Walter Grigoruk

Gregory Guiditus

Mr. & Mrs. Charles Guiditus

Mr. & Mrs. Glenn Guanowsky

Taras & Yuri Guanowsky

Mr. & Mrs. Alan Guidicci & Family

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Mary Ann Hanas

Charles Hasenecz

Elizabeth Hasenecz

Nadine & Elias Hasenecz

Timothy Hacenez

Doctors Julius & Anna Herz

Mary Holva

Mary Howell and Sons

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Ann Marie Hutz

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Dr. & Mrs. Gary Jenkins

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Sarah Jubinski

P. Daniel Jubinski

George & Rose Mary Jubinsky

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Eric Kasander

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Stephanie Koretski

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Ann Krill

Michael H. Kuchka

Dr. Michael R. Kuchka

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Vladimir B. Laury

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Scott Radio

Keri Radio

Mary Radio

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Michele Stafiniak

Stephen Stafiniak

Mr & Mrs. Edward Stellato & Family

Boris & Vera Stoiancheff

Julia Strohl

Olga Sviatko

Ola Tatusko

Wash & Helen Telepchak

Rachel Toroney

Damian, Stacey & Gabriel Vansuch

Basil & Kate Vansuch & Isabelle Claire

Andrea Vinsky

Martha Wagner

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Dr. & Mrs. Thomas J. Weida & Family

Catherine Witko

Rosemary Ziegenfus

Holy Trinity Church

Catasauqua, Pa.

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Mary Bruchok

Fr. Dn. Chris & Mat. Mary Ann Rowe, Katie and

Samuel

Mildred Bowski

Reader Michael & Vincentine Brusko

Richard & Mary Bench-Baker

Andrew & Patrick Brusko

Andrew, Shelly, Krystal & Gabriel Brusko

David & Janice Cudlic, Laura and David

Helen Cudlic

Kip & Sherri Fedetz, Andrew and Alex

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Charles & Helen Gaston
Michael Lucas & Michael Gaston
Susan Greitzer
Peter & Sue Kandianis and Laurel Ann & William
Anna Katchur
Anna Lalo
George & Harriet Mazur
Jack & Sandra Miller
Dana Morgan, Alexis and Joshua
Don, Gail & Alex Ortner
Anna Piha
Robert & Rebecca Romanchik
Dr. Serges & Fay Salivonchik
Helen Suda
Mary Yuhas
Max, Mary & JoAnne Yurconic
Mary Zbur
Mark & Jeanne Zelios, Catherine and Anastasia

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Matushka Irene Borick
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George Barrett
Anastasia Bench
Mr. & Mrs. John Bench & Family
Helen Berezniak
Harry Bialis
William Bybel
Stephanie Chmel
Melanie & Dave Christman & Daughters
Millie & Nick Danchak
William & Helen Evetushick
Julia Forte
Ted Goida
Rose Harkins
Olga Hebda
Catherine Hedes
Joe Herbert
Anna P Horoschak
Jennie Jupin
Olga Kash
John & Dorothy King
Mrs. Mary King
Mr. & Mrs. Wash King
John & Olga Kushnir
Helen Redash Lanzilotta
Michael Lorchak
Ted & Pauline Lorchak
Mary Lutash
Ben & Olga Macalush
Paul & Kay Maliniak
Helen McCullian
Helen & Marie Ostrosky
Bernard & Ann Pisko
Petrina Poko
Irene & Jack Puschak
Ted & Kathy Puschak
Harry Redash
Stephen Redash
Douglas & Mary Ellen Rudenko
Nancy Ruggeri
Paul & Helen Sheers
Althea Shellock
Anna Slanta
Martha & Simon Stafiniak
John, Barb, Nika & Ivan Sidoriak
John & Eleanor Sidoriak
Olga Sidoriak
Ted, Susan & Emma Sidoriak
Martha D Teno
Mr. & Mrs. Nick Teno
Elizabeth P Warcholac
Anna Wargo
Harry Wyshosky
Helen Yaroma
Ron & Marie Yurchak

Mary K Zemanik

St. Nicholas Church Coatesville, Pa.

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Samuel Babich
Karen Campbell
Sandy & Val Dzwonczyk
Anna Evangelou
Alex Griskevich
Nanette Hare & Family
Vera Hatcher
John Kosturos
Popie Kousisis
Eugenia A. Papst
Nicholas & Ann Ruczhak
Chuck & Sheri Sarosi
Mr. Michael Sarosi
Peter & Georgette Sarosi
Martha & Ted Skiadas
Peter, Effie, Yevonne & Billy Svokos
Maria Toth
Ann Wilson
Athens Zaferes
John & Mary Zatyyczyc

St. John the Baptist Church Dundaff, Pa.

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Mary Allen
Tamara & Peter Anderline & Family
Catherine Conick
Greg Congdon
Mary Ann Congdon
Anne Janusz
Peter Kowalsky
Larissa & Sam Laing
In mem. of Mary & Thomas Mikolaichik
Kathryn & Edward Owens
George & Dee Sheypuk & Family
Joseph Shipsky
Mary Steponaitis
Elizabeth Wargo
Stephen Wargo
Janice Witko
Ann, Ronald & Bill Wolfe
Elsie Woytowich
Martha Wytowich
Mary Woytowich
Donald Zablatzky
Michael G. Zuk Family

St. John the Baptist Church Edwardsville, Pa.

Very Rev. Protospresbyter Michael and
Matushka Ann Marie Slovesko
Christine Adamski
Karen Adamski
Lorraine Arner
Eva Balash
Anna H Billek
Ted & Helen Bischak
Nadine Booth
Lorraine Brader
Julia Capp
Helen Deletconich
William Deletconich
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Deletkanich
Lucille And Ben Dragan
Anna B. Dutko
Elizabeth Dutko
Elizabeth Ervin
Michael & Mary Lou Fedorko
Michael, Sean, Briana Fedorko
Christine Ferenchick
Tyler & Megan Ferenchick
Nell Furman
Shirley & Eugene Gingo
Martha Gingo

Aaron & Matthew Gingo
Aric-Michelle & Ivan Victor Gingo
Kathy Harmanos
Kyra Harmanos
Ted & Mary Hazinski
Margaret Hoidra
Mem. of Raymond Kobusky
Helen Kobusky
Eva Kopko
Mary Kosciuszko
Steve-Rebecca, Gabrielle & Talia Kosierowski
Florence Kotch
Beatrice Kowalskie
Pat & Michael Kulikovich
Jean Kutzer & Family
Lydia & James Lynch
Lynch children James & Mary
Helen Medar
Helen Monconovich
Olga Morgan
Tillie Panco
Anna Pengrin
Mary Pengrin-Sal
David Price
Richard Price
Kathryn Prokopchak
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Rilko
Brandyn Robbins
Julia Roschak
Henry & Angela Sal
Helen Sharock
John & Carol Sitar
Julia Sitar
Eva Souchick
Marie And Peter Souchick
Samuel & Mary Stanbchak
Paul Stevens, Sr.
Richard Swetts Evelyn & John
Eva Turaj
Wanda Wanko
Sandra Williams
Elizabeth Wozniak
Joseph Wozniak, Jr.
Helen Yakowec

Holy Ascension Church Frackville, Pa.

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Michael Ropitsky
Anna Alexo
Anna Andrisichen
Theresa Basara
Julia Beltrami
Anna Bendinsky
Eva & Edmund Boniscavage
Braskey Family
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Gary and Andrea Buchanan
Helen Chrin and son Michael
Olga Chrush
Serguis Chrush
Olga Chuma
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Nicole & Richard Chwastiak
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Jean & Frank Holowaty
Larissa Holowaty
Olga and Dr. James Hresko
Mr. & Mrs. Shawn Kane & Family
Michael Kasmer
David, Greg and Daniel Keysock
William and Mary Keysock
Vera & Pat Kleman
Mike & Kitty Kopy
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Christ is Born!

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Daneil Lesko, Jr.
Stephany Lesko

Mrs. Loraine Lusavage
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Paul and Martha Malinchok

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Mel Martin

Paul Martin

Paul Medvetz

Morrash Family

Catherine Motz

Eva Mucha

John & Margaret Nester

Mike & Helen Onuskanich

Sophie Osenbach

Midge Palounas

Mary Parano

Mary Pasquali & Family

Peter and Barbara Pelak

Alex and Anna Peleschak

David and Donna Peleschak

Sandra Anne Peleschak

Steve Peleschak

John and Sophie Pellock

John Podany

Helen and Myron Ploanchyk

Peter Rachko

George and Mary Reed

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Mr. & Mrs. John Semanchik

Andrew Smarkanic

Nancy and Anna Sowchak

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Nicholas Tatusko

Dr. Paul Thomas

Mr. & Mrs. Paul Thomas Sr.

Vera Timko

Mary Torick

Mary Torick

Michael & Mary Trynosky

Christine Varanks

Fr. James, Matushka Lisa and Jimmy Weremedic

Michael, Roseanna, and Mike Weremedic

Peter and Marie Weremedic

Peter Weremedic Jr.

Liz & John Wittig

Olga Williams

Elizabeth Yust

Richard & Pauline Zimmerman

St. Herman's Church Gradyville, Pa.

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V. Rev. & Matushka Nicholas S. Yuschak

Matushka Mary Fedoronko

Taisia & Alexandra Perich

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Jon & Anna Marie Black

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Claire & Mary Ellen Brown

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Walter Chernous

John & Virginia Child

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Miroslave Duka

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Kevin & Marta Grewell & Sons

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Alex & Peg Hendrick

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Anastasia Jabkowski

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Mary & Bill Kessler

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Don & Lu Ann Motel

George, Danielle & Larissa Pahomov

Tamara Pahomov

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Millie Sokol

Samantha & Deborah Stanton

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Svetlana & Serge Taptykoff

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Mrs. Theresa Veronick

Anna Woodring

Christ the Saviour Church Harrisburg, Pa.

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Mather Michael & Olga Kovach

Subdeacon Richard & Shirley Hathaway

Mr. & Mrs. Roy Ambertsumian,

Sebhatu Andemichael

Mr. & Mrs. James Antonio & Family

Igor & Elina Arakelov

Haitham, Luna, Riham & Marie Ayoub

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Mrs. S. E. Barbu

John R. Barns

Dan & Donna Bretz

Drs. John & Judy Blebea

Nathalie Borozny

Dan & Donna Bretz

Deborah Bricker

Patti, Danny, Michael & Andrew Bromley

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Dan Buddwalk

Monica Burgett

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Marina Cameron

Christine Carter

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Bogdon & Cristina Ciocirlan

Gerald & Ann Cole

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George Cvijic, Sr.

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Susan Demchak

Zekerias Dermas

Pamela DeWall

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Mrs. Mary Dotsey

Susan Dotsey

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Pat Drebot

Terry Drebot

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Mr. & Mrs. Salem Essis

Mrs. Mary Essock

Joseph Fatula

Andrew and Dorothy Fedetz

Timothy Fedetz

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Joseph & Paula Fetsko

Jeffrey Fetsko

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Milton & Elizabeth Gaither

Amanuel Ghebremichael

Mr. & Mrs. Kidane Ghebremichael

Dr. Razvan Gramovici

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Ronald Hancher, Jr.

Ronald & Elizabeth Hancher

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Hattie & George Kaznowsky

Cathi Kemp

Ludmilla Kern.

Mrs. George Klipa

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James Krut

Bazil & Anna Kuchta

Mrs. Tessie Kuchta

Katherine Kuchwara

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Mrs. Gloria Maliniak

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Michael & Alice Mallick

Lydia Mantle

David, Cheryl, Christina & Joey Martin

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Mrs. Maryann Mawhinney

Joseph Mazurek

Keyra McBurnett

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Douglas McGinnis

Ms. Angela McGreevy

Mrs. Myra McInnis

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Sonya Miele

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Johnathan Minrich

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Mrs. Elizabeth Motz

David & Joann Nesko

Dr. John D. Nester

Dr. & Mrs. Joseph Norato

Joseph Norato

Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Norko

Mrs. Evelyn Onufer

Glori Onufrak

Walter Onufrak, Jr.

Mr. & Mrs. Walter Onufrak

Mr. & Mrs. John Osuch Jr.

Brian Osuch

Katherine Pankiw

Rita Papach

Stephen Pawlak

Dr. David Pawlush

Mr. Michael G. Pawlush

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 Nicholas Pestrock
 Donald Pidich
 Carl Polansky
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 Dimitri & Sophia Ressetar
 Gregory & Candi Ressetar
 Nicholas Ressetar
 Mrs. William Risser
 Mark Rodak
 Joseph Russian
 Elena Sarkisova
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 Mr. & Mrs. Gaij Windemaker
 Mildred & Susan Wofe
 Sandy & Rick Wood & Family
 Mrs. Helen Yannone
 Mrs. Mary Young
 Andrea & Michael Zart
 Larry Zedlovich
 Aghesom Zerezgi
 Mr. Teklai Zerezgi
 Michael & Janice Zuro & Family

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 Sophia and Nicky
 Father Gabriel and Matushka Petorak
 Reader Vasili & Alexandra Gardecki
 Debby and Barry Bernosky and Family
 Wendy and Serge Bochnovich and Family
 Mary Bowan Sue and Willard Brown
 Eileen and Ed Brzuchalski
 Dennis and Sonia Buberniak
 Cindy Butler
 Dave and Ann Butler
 Sandy, Kevin and Morgan Carney
 Denise Cobb and Kyle
 Eileen & Bob Dance
 Eva Demchak
 Marie Derkasch
 Stephen and Chris Derkasch
 Dr. and Mrs. William Derkasch
 Dolores Dreater
 Kaye Fedirko
 Bill, Donald, Rosalie and Tammy Fives
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 Nick and Pauline Frenchko
 Peter and Delores Frenchko
 Joseph Getzie

Nicholas Getzie
 Peter Getzie
 Bessie Guzey
 Dorothy and Andy Hanchak
 Joan and Bill Hanchak
 Julia Hanchak
 Elizabeth Hockin
 Atty. John A. Hockin Jr.
 Mary Kay and John Hockin
 Jon, Debby and Jonathan Jaye
 Olga Jaye
 Dorothy Keklak
 Rose Kelechawa
 Julia Kitchura
 Michael and Gloria Klapatch and Sons
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 Eva Krenitsky
 Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Krenitsky
 Irene Kupinski
 Maria and Nicholas Landi
 Daria Leahman
 Mike Mancini
 Sam and JoAnn Mattise
 Scott and Paula Melesky and Mark
 Tom Meredith
 Anna Michalczyk
 Mary Ann and Michael Mikuliak
 Sam and Mary Ann Mosley
 John and Barbara Nayduch
 Roxanne and Miles Neutts
 Justine Orlando
 Camille Palese
 Olga Palese
 Tillie Palubniak
 Andy and Margaret Petriiak
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 Al and Barbara Radtke
 Martha Scopelliti
 Adam and Mary Ann Serafini
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 Ron and Lorraine Sernak and Ann
 Delores Serniak
 Steven Serniak
 Gloria and Tom Shaw
 Anastasia Sloat
 Bob and Julie Speicher
 Irene Swirdovich
 Chap. Col. (R) Peter and Martha Telencio
 Damian and Stephen Telencio
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 Rebecca Telep
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 Peter D. Zacone
 Mary Zielinski
 Betty Zrowka
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 Lopez, Pa.**
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 Basil Thier
 Emily Andrewlavage
 Rosalie Burke
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 Alice Dworsky
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 Mr. & Mrs. William J. Enright & Family
 Helen Fullerton
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 Vera Gulich
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 Rosemary Kachmarsky
 Peter, Helen & Craig Kachmarsky
 Theresa & Daniel Kulsicavage
 Leo Mattichak
 Andrew & Katherine Matychak

Stefie Neuffer
 Olga Rodka
 Robert Rodka
 Mr. & Mrs. Paul St. Germain
 Mary Saxe
 Robert B. Teese
 David Vanderpool
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Vanderpool
 Carol D. Williams

Holy Ascension Church Lykens, Pa.

V. Rev. John & Matushka Daria Mason
 V. Rev. Michael & Matushka Sonya Evans
 John & Nancy Coles
 John M. & Chris Coles
 Anna Kopko
 Ann Mahoney
 John & Mary Mehalco
 William & Susan Pinkerton
 Olga & Michael Hrinda
 Dr. & Mrs. Alexander Pianovich
 Dr. & Mrs. Paul A. Pianovich
 Alex & Stephen Pianovich
 Catherine Siemons
 Ann Sovich
 Nicholas Sovich, Jr.
 John R. & Judy Sweikert
 John N. Sweikert
 George Tiazkun
 Joe & Patti Welsh
 Kathleen Welsh
 Nadia Sass
 Helen Timko

Holy Trinity Church McAdoo, Pa.

Very Rev. & Matushka Claude Vinyard
 A Friend
 John & Kim Buckeye & Sons
 Helen Cortez
 Anna Lee Davidovich
 Pearl Elko
 Anna Fanelli
 Julia Forte
 Mary Ann Graino
 Michelle & Michael Klesh
 Anna Kubulis
 Danny Kurtz
 Greg & Cathy Kurtz & Family
 Joseph & Linda Kurtz & Sons
 Michael & Anna Kurtz, Sr.
 Michael & Jan Kurtz, Jr. & Son
 Michael R. Kurtz
 Sam Kurtz
 Danny Oneschuck
 Helen Osuch
 Cindy Polli
 Lonnie Polli
 Michelle Richey
 Clark & Sophie Shuman
 Paul Smerkonich
 Mary Stronko
 William Tezcekar
 Irene Yaworsky
 Ronnie Yaworsky & Family
 Michael Zabitchuck

SS. Peter & Paul Church Minersville, Pa.

Fr. Michael and Matushka Hatrak
 Natalie Hatrak
 James and Anna Antonio
 John Barnetsky
 JoAnn Brinich
 Ralph and Kathy Brinich
 Jenn and Adam Frantz
 Susie Frew
 Elsie Herman
 Rick and Lynda Hutton
 Ricky and Lauren Hutton
 Olga Kirkauskas
 In Memory of Tessie Kozlov

Christ is Born!

Lydia, John and Johnny Malusky
 Harry, Peggy, Dave and Janine Oakill
 Luke and Theresa Oakill
 Anna Olexa
 Michael and Lisa Pascuzzo
 Christian and Sofia Pascuzzo
 Stablum Family
 Andy and Ann Marie Studlack
 Anna Wyslutsky
 Sandra Wyslutsky

**St. Michael's Church
 Mount Carmel, Pa.**
 V. Rev. Michael & Matushka Sonia Evans

Michael Evans
 Jerry & Mary Breslin
 Chris Buchkarik
 Anna Panikarchuck
 George Pamikarcheck
 Bernie & Tanya Malkoski
 Mary Homicz
 Mildred & Ben Trefsgar
 John & Theresa Pochekailo
 Anna & Dolores Wislock
 Gloria Event & Family
 Mrs. Helen Timpko
 Mr. & Mrs. Walter Sebasovich
 Anna Gondal
 Mrs. Mary Moroz
 Olga & Paul Paduhovich
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter Horoschak
 Marie Cuff
 Florence Bubernak
 Bob & Marie Kuchta
 George Bortnichak
 Mary & Charley Chidovich
 Olga Berkoski
 Margaret Olaf
 Joseph Katchick
 Victoria Wood

Mr & Mrs. Thomas Alekseyko
 Mr. & Mrs. Ermie Hill

Julia Bushick
 Jean Mathias
 Costy Melnick
 Olga Leon
 Daniel Leon
 Pearl Winnick
 Valentina Wood
 Hal Smith
 Anna Kowalchick Grivnovics
 Leon Markovich
 Ann Tanney
 Eveann Shamus
 Mr & Mrs Joseph Tosca
 Mr & Mrs Stanley Zbicki
 Mrs. Amelia Markovich
 Dorothy Beckus
 Catherine Hardnock
 Anastasia Beckus
 Peter Yastisak
 Mary Kandrot
 Peter Paskell

**St. John the Baptist
 Nanticoke, Pa.**
 Fr. & Matushka Stephen Karaffa
 Peter & Elizabeth Hetman
 John & Theresa Klas
 Joe & Mary Paprota
 Joe & Jillian Paprota
 Joseph Paprota
 John Pihanich
 Margie & Jay Sokol
 Paul & Olga Sulewski
 Peter & Patricia Truszkowski & Family
 Warho Family
 Mary Zupko
 Pearl & Mike Zupko

**St. Michael's Church
 Old Forge, Pa.**

Father David & Matushka Karen Mahaffey
 V.Rev. Theodore Orzolek
 Nikolas, Michael, Seth & Kyra Mahaffey
 Kate, David, Alexa & Adam Barsigian
 Margaret & Jacob Barsigian
 Sandra & John Barsigian
 Agnes Buranich
 Helen Chesniak
 Mr. & Mrs. William Condon
 Cushner & Ermolovich Families
 Maria Emily & Jake
 Dr. Tanya Ermolovich
 Walter & Anne Marie Ermolovich
 Neal & Ann Freeman
 Mrs. Nicholas Halchak
 Sarah Honcharick
 Mr. & Mrs. Alex Jadick
 David Jadick
 Michael & Margaret Jadick
 John Jadick
 Al & Mary Krenitsky
 Gregory Krevko
 Juliana Kuzmack
 Tina Ludwig
 Joseph & Ann Marie Macijowsky
 Helen Percy
 Ann Peregrim
 Lovie Peregrim
 Mr. & Mrs. Steve Polanchik
 Theresa & Helen Polanchik
 Walter & Margaret Pregmon
 Al & Mary Pritchuk
 Irene & John Pritchuk
 Olga Semack
 George & Marilyn Serniak
 Stephen & Amanda Serniak
 Stephen & Ingrid Serniak
 Martha, Paul & Paul Andrew Tumavitch
 Jean Wasko
 Mildred Wozniak
 Anna Zupko

**All Saints Church
 Olyphant, Pa.**
 Rev. & Mrs. Nicholas Wyslutsky
 Joachim Wyslutsky
 Simeon Wyslutsky
 Gabriella Wyslutsky
 Brian, Ruth, & Matthew Brown
 Helen Bryer
 David & Mary Brzuchalski
 Stephana Butchko
 Florence Chmiel
 Joseph Dzwonczyk
 Elizabeth Generotti
 Mary Jane & Tanya Gilbert
 Irene Glowatz
 Nicholas & Marie Holowatch
 Justine Horhutz
 Anna Howansky
 Natalie Hoyniak
 Harry & Elizabeth Hunyak
 Ken & Stacey Kashuba
 Stephanie, Kaitlyn, & Zachary Kashuba
 Anna Klemko
 Eleanor Krushinski
 Michael & Amelia Kuzmiak
 Joseph & Anastasia Mazur
 Francis Meholic
 Dr. Gregory Meholic
 William & Katherine Mezick
 Claudia Mikulak
 Mary and Maria Oles
 Olga & Vera Paulishak
 George & Elizabeth Perechinsky
 Sonia & Michael Prestys, Jr.
 Barbara Puhalla
 John & Marguerite Puthorosky
 Marguerite Puthorosky
 Ashley Puthorosky
 Ann & Joseph Schlasta
 Joe & Helen Semon

Anna & Christina Semon
 James & Donna Specht
 Kyra, Chelsea & Ian Specht
 Steve & Pat Stafursky
 Ken Stafursky
 Dan, Susan, Samantha & Stephanie Stafursky
 Linda Stuchlak
 Michael Stuchlak, Sr.
 Julioa Voloshen
 Mary Wasilchak

**St. Nicholas Church
 Olyphant, Pa.**
 Fr. & Matushka Vladimir Fetcho
 Richard & Julie Cesari
 James & Jonathan Cesari
 John & Josephine Chichilla
 Jerry, Carol & Niki Dreater
 Paul & Sylvia Dreater
 Capt. & Mrs. Paul Dreater Jr.
 Bill & Marie Evanina
 Dorothy Fetchina
 Joseph Fetchina
 Kyra Fetchina
 Marie Grabania
 Michael Grabania
 George & Theresa Havirlak & Family
 Tatiana & David B. Hughes
 George Kopestonsky
 Olga Kuzmick
 Tom & Vera Price
 Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Rebar
 Dr. & Mrs. Larry R. Sherman
 Ann Thomashefsky
 Helen Thomashefsky
 James Thomashefsky
 Mary Youshock

**Assumption of the Holy Virgin Church
 Philadelphia, Pa.**
 Fr. John Udics
 Matuska Mildred Soroka
 David & Emilie Albrecht
 Dr. David E. Albrecht, Jr.
 Melanie Albrecht
 John & Helen Alexander
 Norman, Barbara, Matthew, Chris & David Andrews
 George Brasko
 Emma Burychka
 Julianne Carrol
 Elizabeth R. Chadwich
 Robert & Grace Corba
 John & Julia Drimak
 Helen Dzugan
 Paul & Julia Gavula
 Emily Gerasimoff
 Simon & Mary Herbert
 Sandra & Neil Hourahan
 Julia Jugan
 Albert & Catherine Kavalkovich
 Ken, Debra, Alex & Anastasia Kavalkovich
 Irene Kavcsak
 Marie Lamarr
 Richard, Dana & Jason LeRoy
 Anna Mackiewicz
 Julia Makara
 John Marko
 Anne McCartney
 Michael McCartney
 Mrs. Susan Mohnach
 David Pellack
 John & Margaret Pellack
 John, Mary & Emily Pellack
 Joseph, Michael, Sr. & Michael Pence, Jr.
 Joseph Rabik
 Joe, Kathy & Anastasia Renzetti
 Mary Robovitsky
 Florence Savchak
 George & Olga Vail
 Ann Varhula
 Helen & Timothy Wanenchak
 Michael Wanenchak, Jr.

Glorify Him!

Sharon Wanenchak
Lisa Welle
Arthur Willis
Peter & Annamae Witiak, Jr.

St. Stephen's Cathedral Philadelphia, Pa.

Fr. Daniel and Matushka Mary Geeza
Matushka Mary Fedoronko
Barbara Afanassiev
Natasha & Mark Afanassiev-Purvis
Mary Ann Alfimow
Barbara & Karen Belsito
Mary Birkenbach
Ron & Kathy Bisaga
Sonia, Dan, Stephen & Christine Bondira
Nicholas & Zoya Bubernak
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Burch
Anna Burdziak
Anna Cebular
Paul Cholakis
Judy, Jack & Jennifer Clyde
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Colter
John & Kate Cox
Nicholas, Alexander & Andre Cox
Nicholas Cronin
Dorothy Crossan
Helen Davis, Mark & Steve & Family
Ray, Michelle, Matthew & Natalie Decker
Willis & Lubie Dietrich
Reader Daniel & Taissa Drobish
David Drobish
Dr. George & Pauline Englesson
Margret Englesson
Elaine Ezrow & Joe Clark
Paul, Diane, Laura & John Fedoronko
Dr. Jack, Irene, Alexander, Halina & Kyra Forest
Nina, Bill, Kathie, Michael & Matthew Gavula
Olga & John Gazak
Jelena Grabania
Lester Grabania & Paul
Mary Gressen
Anna Michael Hargrave
Agnes & John Herbut
Joe & Ann Herrschaft
Nicholas & Nina Horsky
Galina, Michael & Lena Imms
Arnold, Katherine, Anna & Alexa Jensky
Catherine, Leonard, Christopher, Michael & Nicholas
Jones
Jeff, Mary Ellen Jones
Helene Jones
Peter Kalandiak
Lorraine & Harold Kane
Alice Karpiak
Nadia Kolesnik
Mr. & Mrs. John Kolesnik & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Kolesnik & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Kolesnik & Family
Annette Kopistansky
John Kozlowski
Bill Kraftician
Alex & Valentina Kuzman
Greg, Lydia & Kira Kuzmanchuk
Helen Lackatos
Nicole Lampriech
Peter & Martha Linski
Sonia, Larissa & Michael Jr. Mariani
Mr. & Mrs. Merduszew
Anna Miller
Walter & Mary Mokriski
Adele & Lev Mozhaev
Janice Nass
Phil & Irene O'Brien & Dasha
John O'Brick
Joseph O'Brick & Kern Irene
Olga Oprouseck
Catherine Paulasack
Helen Plunkett
Heinz & Tamara Poessl
Stephan & Marge Pron
Pron-Zwick Family
Mary Radick
Tom, Nina, Nicholas, Deanna & Victoria Rapak

John, Denise, Sonia & Michael Rowe
Olga Russin
Julia Shestkov
Al Silveira Jr.
Anna Simpson
Joseph C. Simpson
Martha, Jack, Megan, Adam, Jacob & Amelia Sisko
Larry, Connie, Jon & Chris Skvir
Joe Stearne
Walter & Carolyn Stephan-Stephanowich
Tatiana Stephan & Kristin LaMacchia
John & Helen Szulak
Robert Gregory Tallick
Dr. Michael, Amelia, Michael & Natalie Taptykoff
Lydia Tichy
Alice Victor
Eva & Joe Wasser
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew J. Yencha
Andrew & Megan Yencha
Maura Ann Yencha
Diane, Vincent, Nicholas & Knistina Zanghi
Tatiana Zapanti & Patricia

Holy Trinity Church Pottstown, Pa.

Fr. Stephen & Matushka Jessica Evanina & Jacob
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Bendyk & Family
John & Helen Boretsky
Brilla Family
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Brilla & Family
Joseph Dutzer
Dorothy Eckler
Nettie Hart
Helen Hrebień
Christina Hutnyan
Mr. & Mrs. James Hutnyan & Family
Rebecca Hutnyan
Helen Kline
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel & Marina Long
Kyra & Greg Marchesini
Michelle Marsteller & Family
Mary Monarek
Mr. & Mrs. Michael & Doris Novak
Helen Pershinsky
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Phanich, Sr.
Angela Rapchinski
Christine Rapchinski
Michael Rapchinski
Mary Rapchinski
Effie Romanik
Ken Sekellick & Family
Julia Zewan

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church St. Clair, Pa.

Fr. Michael and Matushka Hatrak
Natalie Hatrak
Leah Chrush
Olga DeMarkis
Tusha Derbaeh
Marguerite Dimoff
Mr. & Mrs. Wassil Draovitch
Jim & Ruthann Kerick
Steve Pelak
Justyna Pelak
George Papinchak
Verna Papinchak
Ted & Jeanette Sagan

St. Herman of Alaska Orthodox Church Shillington, Pa.

Rev. & Mrs. John A. Onofrey
The Parish Council
The Sunday School Teachers & Student
The Our Lady of Kazan Sisterhood
The Parish Choir
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Anderson
Christina & Joshua Anderson
Mrs. Vera Bortniak
Ms. Louise Coleman
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Dougherty & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Drenchko, Sr.

Mr. & Mrs. John Drosdak
Christopher, Stephanie, Mark & Joshua
Mr. Bill Dudash, Sr.
Hr. William Mark Dudash
Mrs. Gloria Duty & Sons
Nicholas & Kathy Ermolovich
Mr. & Mrs. Jefferson Gore & Sons
Bill & Rosalie Hardman
Barbara, Joseph & Jacob Hetrick
Mr. Jimmy Hoffa
Suzanna, Daniel & Xenia Hretz
Mr. & Mrs. Ed Hyland
Bradley & Rebecca Kauffman
The Kavood Family
Mrs. Eva Kopera
Dr. & Mrs. Vadim Kurjanowicz
Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Kusior
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Leer & Family
Mr. & Mrs. John Lorchak
Michael & Vera Losk
Mrs. Irene Lupco
John, Dana & Raymond Mackoul
Michael & Janice Mallick
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Matsick & Family
Mr. & Mrs. John Melniczek
Mr. & Mrs. Karl Osterburg
Mrs. Alexandra Prawlocki & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Reba & Family
Matushka Margaret Ressetar
Mrs. Ruth M. Ruth
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Savage
David, Janna & Taylor Scheese
Mr. & Mrs. John Seman & Family
Ms. Sandra Semion
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Sichak & Family
Ms. Gloria Spitko & Kyra
Mrs. Catherine & Sonja Terenchin
Ms. Cheryl Terenchin
Mrs. Mary Terenchin & Family
Kyle & Daria Teter
Mr. & Mrs. Steve Vlasak & Sons
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Wanenchak & Family
Miss Tina Marie Waselus
Mrs. Deborah Wissler & Michael Lucas
Mr. & Mrs. Chip Weaver & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Yurick & Family
Hank & Anne Zerbe

St. Basil's Church Simpson, Pa.

Fr. 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 & Ester Kowalsky
Thomas & Elaine Kravetsky
Laurie, Lynn & Kimberly Kravetsky
Helen Kutch
Michael & Theresa Luczkovich
Julia Mazza
Anastasia Mikulak
Michael J & Julia Mikulak
John & Mary Okorn
Marie Proch
Maria & John Proch
Walter & Mary Anne Proch
Christina M & Elizabeth A. Proch
Dr. David & Daria Roat
Alexandra & Benjamin Roat
Doris Skasko
Michael, Mary A, Michael & Daniel Skasko
Jo Ann Somple

St. Tikhon's Monastery Church South Canaan, Pa.

His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN
V. Rev. Daniel & Matushka Delores Donlick
V. Rev. Alexander, Matushka Elena & Alex Golubov
Rev. James & Matushka Lisa Weremedic & James, Jr.
Protodeacon Keith S. Russin

Christ is Born!

Reader Gregory Hatrak
 Reader Gregory Sulich
 Matushka Elizabeth Geeza
 Matushka Dorothy Sulich
 Galina Abolins
 Mr. & Mrs. Jeremiah Andrews & Joanna
 Marge Barna
 Alice Boga
 Mr. Thomas Donlick
 Betty Figura
 Drs. David & Mary Ford & Emmelia
 Daisy Geeza
 Mr. & Mrs. William Huniak
 Julia Jacewicz
 Ron & Lorraine Kavalkovich
 Ron Kavalkovich, Jr.
 Albert and Katherine Kavalkovich
 Nicholaus Kuzemchak
 Victor Kuzemchak
 John & Mildred Naholnik
 John & JoAnne Paluch
 Martin Paluch
 Ken & Margaret Paulic
 Paul Wozniak

Holy Trinity Church Stroudsburg, Pa.

Fr. & Matushka Neal J. Carrigan
 Rebecca & Brian Boyle
 Donna Burger
 Pam Faetch
 Russ & Nancy Futchko
 Chris Haritos
 Dennis & Liz Hatch
 Tom & Helen Kessler
 Michael & Carole Limar & Family
 Kathryn Pinto
 The Souilliard Family
 Peter & Helen Stavisky
 Dorothy Strelczyk
 Walter & Marion Zablotsky

Saints Peter & Paul Church Union Dale, Pa.

Rev. Hieromonk Alexander (Mayba)
 Joesph Bendyk
 Donald and Ann Bock
 Vladimir and Betty Demianovich
 Martha Dorosh
 Peter Jubinsky
 Peter and Linda Jubinsky and Family
 Rob & Carol Kelleher & Ryan
 Rose Kennedy
 Lubov and Ronald Kilmer
 Lovey Klym
 Antonette Terry
 Walter and Lorraine Terry and Family

Holy Resurrection Cathedral Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

Archpriest Joseph Martin & Matushka Gloria Martin
 Marina & Elena Martin
 Protodeacon Keith S. Russin
 Reader David & Kathryn Kessler
 David, Tatiana & Hannah Kessler
 Andrew Buleza
 Michael & Nancy Pieck
 Mary Onufer
 Helen Humko
 Justine & Jim Borino
 John & Irene Zimich
 Kyra Zoranski
 John & Doris Zoranski
 Edward & Evelyn Wysocki
 Manusk Family
 Evelyn Suboski
 Mrs Helen Pryor
 Olga Layton
 Laverne Chapman
 Eva Berlozan
 Nettie Yaremko
 Agnes Timchak
 Marge Kotarski
 Vera Kraynanski
 Marguerite & Tom Czekalski

Rose & Sam Ostopick
 Lovey Drahus
 Bill & Mary Cooper
 Sylvester Dugan
 John & Anna Dulsky
 Sandy, Julieann & Nicholas Kapelan

Holy Trinity Church Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

Fr. David and Matushka Sharon Shewczyk
 Timothy and Nicholas Shewczyk
 Matushka Anne Pawlush
 Holy Trinity Altar Boys
 Theodore and Eleanor Sovyrda
 Mary Skordinski
 William and Mary Gurka
 Anastasia and Bernard Golubiewski
 Peter and Helen Welgo
 Peter and Theresa Pawlak
 Anna and Stanley Bishop
 Melanie and Nicolas Bishop
 Edward and Helen Gudaitis
 Mr. and Mrs. Vladimir Dutko
 Dolores and Paul Gozick
 Anna Goobic
 Nettie Kompinski
 Mrs. Robert T. Rhodes
 Mary Bankos
 Sue Bawn
 Joe and Nan Zula
 Mary and Stephen Krill
 Marianne and Jeremy Haugh
 Barbara King
 Stephen Lukachik
 Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Sanders
 Mr. and Mrs. John Bromuko
 Mary Piznar
 Mr. and Mrs. Richard Kuhl
 Dotty Kozmiski
 John Pawlak
 Andrew Dennis
 Mr. and Mrs. Michael Dennis, Jr.
 Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Dennis
 Mrs. Helen Zavada
 Mrs. Mary Petro
 Mrs. Mary Yankovich
 Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Zielinski
 Michael and Leona Stchur
 Mildred L. Mayher
 Mr. and Mrs. Michael Lisko
 Michael and Lisa Talpash
 Rachael and Christa Talpash
 Marie Talpash
 Lydia Homick
 Mr. and Mrs. Peter M. Pawtak
 Pearl Tutko
 Liz and John Gurka
 William Talpash, Jr.
 Valerie Czahor
 John and Denise Meck
 Paul, Cone and Abby Meck
 David and Deborah Mills
 Gregory, Laura, Michael and Christopher Polk
 Joan Puma
 Ted Polk
 Steve and Jean Hutz
 Ann Lukatchik
 Jerry and Donna Stankiewicz
 Jerry, Jason and Greg Stankiewicz
 Walter Mason
 June and Jerry Chilcott and Family
 Elani Polk

Holy Cross Church Williamsport, Pa.

Fr. Dan, Myra & Natalia Kovalak
 Paul, Christina, Pavlo, Dimitra & Sophia Beiter
 Yvonne & Nathan Bohlander
 Peter, Lillian & Zoe Calkins
 Ann Chabal
 Matt & Evelyn Chabal
 Mr & Mrs George Haagen

Henry & Cally Herman
 Eileen Juran
 Phil Kundis
 Lamprinos Family
 Olympia Sarantos Marnoch
 Elsie Skvir Nierle
 Nancy Pashchuk & Sem. James Chuta
 John, Michael & Stephanie Raptis
 John Sam Jr & Family
 Mr & Mrs Michael Serwint
 Scott, Alexandra, Lukas & Celina Seyler
 Mr & Mrs Lew Shatto
 Shiposki Family
 Sinatra Family
 Michael & Julia Stefanick
 Williams Family

St. Michael's Church Wilmington, Del.

Fr. Andrew & Mat. Diehl
 St. Michaels Altar Boys
 Mr. & Mrs. James S. Riley
 James & Anne Riley & Family
 Paul, Vera, & Matt Chalfant
 David, Christine, Kristen, & David Jr. Roberts
 Mr. & Mrs. Harry Kutch
 Mr. & Mrs. Nedwin Minnich
 Mr. & Mrs. James Flynn
 Olga & John H. Maloney
 Dolores E. Karawulan
 Mr. & Mrs. Edward Hojnicki, Jr. & Family
 Bill & Alice Dryden
 Mary Tuneff
 Irene Sulick
 Thomas & Lynn Sulpizi & Children
 Mr. & Mrs. Nabih K. Harb
 Marie Karawulan
 Peter & Elizabeth Melnik
 Hany & Emily Wujcik
 Olga Rybachak
 John & Helen Ciach
 Joanne, Kent and Kevin DeVries
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael Sinovich
 Allen & Colleen Shatley
 Olga S. O'Neill
 George Kruse
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Peck
 Mr. & Mrs. Larry Conover & Hannah
 Mary Lynn Kemperman & Family
 Julie & Frazier Phillips & Family
 Dorothy Scari
 Helen Kansak
 Rdr. Timothy E. Hojnicki
 Lt. & Mrs. William Wennberg

St. Mark's Church Wrightstown, Pa.

Archpriest Theodore Heckman
 Fr. Dn. Gregory & Martha Moser
 Jeanette Ruano
 Doug Yates & Sharon Burkett & Anna
 Kevin & Mary Ann Swan & sons
 Monia & James Pitra
 Peter, Sandy, & Stephanie Bohlender
 John Wanko
 Sonia Lengel
 Nicholas, Marina, Larissa & Katerina Moser
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Baranowski
 Jack and Barbara Malriat
 Cynthia & Anatole Bredikin
 Sam Mervs
 Joe Siwiec
 Ken, Dorothy, Nichole & Stephen Martiak
 Dana & Christian Toma
 Peter & Vicki Kiproff
 Stephanie & Valerie Ristvey
 Sergei & Irene Arhijov
 Boris & Joanne Borichevsky
 John & Elizabeth Sherbin
 Lucy Znak
 Gil & Helen Harvey
 Tira & Robert Mitchell & Children
 Eustace Lund
 Justin & Chryse Heckman

All in the Diocesan Family

Coaldale

St. Mary's Nativity Church

His Eminence Archbishop Herman paid an archpastoral visit to St. Mary's Church for the parish patronal feast in September. The clergy and faithful attended a dinner following the hierarchical Divine Liturgy.

Frackville

Holy Ascension Church

On Sunday, Oct. 29, 2000, the Central PA District of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America (FOCA) held its 70th annual convention at our parish, sponsored by the Frackville "O" Club. Archbishop Herman celebrated Divine Liturgy with Fr. Paul Ropitsky, the host pastor. Many delegates and guests were present and several sang in the choir under the direction of Larissa Holowatty.

After liturgy, a banquet luncheon was held in the parish hall. A program book was published. David Keysock, chapter president and convention co-chair, greeted the guests. Archbishop Herman encouraged the fellowship to continue their good work on behalf of the Church, to look for new members, and to establish or reactivate chapters. Immediate Past National President John Petronko and Governor Nicholas Ressetar also spoke. District scholarship awards were made by Lt. Gov. Gary Lelo, scholarship chairman. Michael Semanco received a scholarship and thanked the convention co-chairs and Fr. Ropitsky for their hospitality.

All members of our diocese, including youth ages 10 through 17, are invited to join the fellowship, which is an official organization of the Orthodox Church in America, founded in 1927. Chapters are located throughout the country. Consider establishing a new chapter in your parish or reactivating a former chapter. If you have no chapter, you may join the district chapter-at-large. Parishes without junior chapters are asked to sponsor their eligible youth for the nominal fee of \$5 per year. The many benefits include receiving the *Orthodox Christian Journal*. Our diocese comprises three districts: Central PA District (the Frackville Deanery area), Anthracite District (most



Doug Rudenko welcomes Archbishop Herman



Patronal feast day dinner at St. Mary's in Coaldale



Michael Bromley receives the \$500 Fedetz Family Scholarship Award

of the Wilkes-Barre Deanery) and Colonial District (most of the Philadelphia Deanery). For more information on how to join or establish a chapter, contact

Nicholas Ressetar at 717-761-2121 or email tsarnick3@aol.com.

Continued on the next page

**Harrisburg
Christ the Saviour Church**

Archpriest Daniel Ressetar and parishioners took part in the first International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) dinner held at the Greek Orthodox cathedral in Camp Hill.

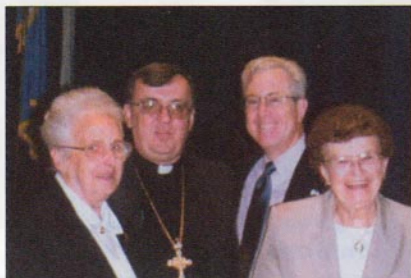
Baptism: Semhart, daughter of Aghesom and Letina Zarezgi, Oct. 28.

Marriage: Thomas A. Drebot and Kathy E. Frey, Oct. 21.

**Jermyn
St. Michael's Church**

On Saturday, Oct. 14, Anastasia Sloat and Mary Zielinski won the Volunteer of the Year Award from the Department of Corrections. Commissioner Horn presented the distinguished award on behalf of S.C.I. Waymart (formerly Farview State Hospital).

On Sunday, July 16, nearly 200 parishioners gathered for a testimonial dinner to honor the recent elevation of the Rev. Deacon Gabriel Petorak to Protodeacon.



Anastasia Sloat, Mary Zielinski, Commissioner Horn, and Fr. John

**Lykens
Holy Ascension Church**

A group of inquiring women from the Tower City United Methodist Church visited the parish recently to learn more about the Orthodox faith. Archpriest Michael Evans made a presentation on our faith to the woman and presented them with copies of *Alive in Christ* magazine. The parishioners hosted the group for refreshments following the presentation.

The refurbishing of the domes of our church in October enhanced the beauty of God's house in Lykens.

**Mount Carmel
St. Michael's Church**

The parishioners are learning about their faith by attending lectures given by



Fr. John and Protodeacon Gabriel with the newly baptized children of the parish and their mothers. L-R: Victoria Kravetsky and Lynn, Patricia Cadawalder and Thomas, Stephanie Pliska and Robert, Paula Melesky and Mark, Rachel Vaverchak and Ryan



Newly baptized Celine Twardzik



Protodeacon Gabriel and Matushka Petorak with family members



Fr. Michael with visitors at Holy Ascension Church in Lykens



John and Mary Mehalko with Fr. Michael on 60th wedding anniversary

the pastor, Archpriest Michael Evans. The group meets twice monthly.

An eightieth birthday celebration was held for Mrs. Helen Timpko. In attendance were Mrs. Timpko's sons, Archpriests Nicholas and Frank Timpko, and her daughters, Matushka Mary Suda with husband Archpriest Paul Suda, and Matushka Anna Voytilla with husband, Archpriest John Voytilla. A dinner was held at the Lookout House on Nescopeck Mountain near Sybertsville.



Mrs. Helen Timpko with family and friends at birthday party



Mary & Charles Chidovich celebrate 56th wedding anniversary

**Old Forge
St. Michael's Church**

On Sunday, Oct. 8 following the Divine Liturgy, a molieben was held for George and Mary Oselinsky on their 75th wedding anniversary. Their son, Archpriest Dimitri Oselinsky of Clifton, New Jersey, hosted a reception for his parents.

**St. Clair
Assumption of the Virgin Mary
Church**

On the parish patronal feast day, the akathist hymn to the Dormition of the



Fr. Michael with adult education class at Mt. Carmel

Theotokos was sung. Among those who gathered to pray were area clergy and faithful from the Frackville deanery. Guest homilist was Archpriest David

Shewczyk of Holy Trinity Church, Wilkes-Barre.

Continued on the next page



Fr. David Shewczyk preaches at akathist



Baptism of Joshua Barto

**Shillington
St. Herman of Alaska Church**

On Saturday, Sept. 23, the parish sponsored a trip to New York City to see "Les Miserables." The church school sponsored its annual breakfast Sunday, Oct. 22. The breakfast was well attended and raised \$500 for the OCA's Christmas Stockings for Russia project. On Sunday, Nov. 12, the parish held its annual covered-dish harvest dinner. Parishioners and guests enjoyed the afternoon of Christian fellowship. In November, Fr. John Onofrey was elected president of the Governor Mifflin Ministerium, an active ecumenical association of fifteen local churches.

Baptism: Joshua Christopher Barto, Sept. 17

Marriage: Rebecca Sichak and Bradley Kauffman, Oct. 7



Marriage of Rebecca & Bradley Kauffman

**Simpson
St. Basil the Great Church**



Benjamin David Roat baptized in the newly constructed church



Children pitch in to raise money for needy Russian children

The spotless Virgin, seeing the pre-eternal God as a child who had taken flesh of her, held him in her arms and kissed him without ceasing. Filled with joy, she said to him, "Most High God, King invisible, how is it that I look upon you? I cannot understand the mystery of your measureless poverty; for the smallest of caves, a strange dwelling for you, finds room for you within itself. You were born without destroying my virginity, but you have kept my womb as it was before childbirth, and you grant the world great mercy."

**South Canaan
St. Tikhon's Monastery Church**



Opening retreat at St. Tikhon's Seminary



Ordination of Deacon James Weremedic to holy priesthood

**Wilkes-Barre
Holy Trinity Church**

Holy Trinity Church, Wilkes-Barre recently honored its college graduates. Peter Michael Pawlak graduated from Johnson Technical Institute in Scranton with a degree in electronics and fluidic engineering and was class valedictorian. Marianne Krill Haugh graduated from Hood College in Frederick, Md., receiving a master's degree in curriculum instruction, with emphasis in secondary education. Ivan Bogan, Jr. graduated from Wilkes University in Wilkes-Barre with a B.A. in political science.

The annual bazaar was held in July. In September, our annual appreciation dinner took place. The church school hosted a fall costume party for the children of the local parishes. The fifth annual harvest dinner was held in November.



Father James and family with Archbishop Herman

**Williamsport
Holy Cross**

The pastor and parishioners continue to work diligently on the construction of a new fellowship center behind their unique log church. The 46' x 66' structure features an upper-log perimeter (to complement the church), kitchen and stage areas, porch, and rest rooms. The main entrance will be a log bell tower. Crews work almost daily under the leadership of parishioner-builder Paul Beard. Members of the Holy Cross Auxiliary provide meals for the workers. The estimated cost of the project is \$110,000.

On Nov. 12, the parish celebrated its
Continued on the next page.



Holy Trinity's graduates and their families

23rd anniversary and the 12th since consecration of the church. A coffee hour was held in the unfinished fellowship center. An anniversary fund drive generated nearly \$15,000 for the project, adding to some \$70,000 already contributed or pledged.

Holy Cross recently disbursed over \$750 in special offerings to combat hunger. Sixteen parishioners participated in the annual CROP WALK against hunger, on Oct. 8.

Our parish continues to provide monthly worship services on the campus of Bucknell University in Lewisburg. Many parishioners travel to join in these services, and several students attend church regularly at Holy Cross. Services are also offered at four area federal correctional institutions where Fr. Dan Kovalak is accompanied by parish volunteers Scoff Seyler and Carol Serwint. Parish president Lew Shatto presented scholarship gifts of \$500 each on behalf of the community to parish seminarians James Chuta and Barnabas Stephen Fravel.

Marriages: Daria Kovalak was wedded to seminarian Barnabas Stephen Fravel on Sept. 3. Archbishop HERMAN presided, assisted by Archpriests Dan Kovalak and Eugene Pianovich, the bride's father and grandfather respectively. Amelia Henning was wedded to Aaron Walker on Oct. 8. Concelebrating were Fr William Caldaroni of Holy Transfiguration Church, Wheaton, Ill. and Fr. Theodore Petrides of Holy Cross Church, Stroudsburg, Pa.

The self-indulgent are distressed by criticism and hardship; the lovers of God, by praise and luxury. If someone falls into some sin, and does not feel remorseful over his offense as he should, he will easily fall again into the same snare.

Just as suffering and dishonor usually give birth to virtues, so also pleasure and self-esteem usually engender vices.

A person who has come to know the truth does not reject the afflictions that befall him, for he understands that they lead him to the fear of God.

—St. Mark the Ascetic



Building the roof of new fellowship center at Holy Cross



Marriage of Dana Kovalak and Barnabas Steven Fravel



Marriage of Amelia Henning and Aaron Walker

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

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