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Alive in Christ

The Magazine of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, Orthodox Church in America Volume XVIII, No. 2 ^{Summer} (Spring) 2002



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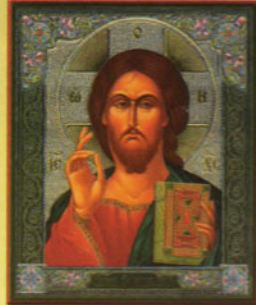
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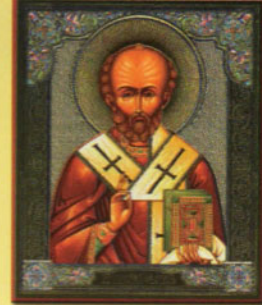
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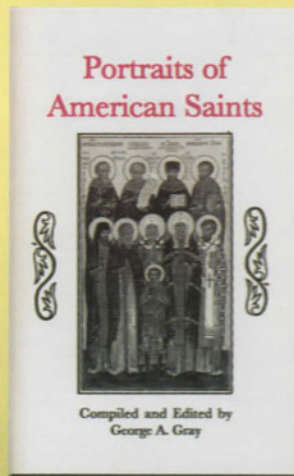


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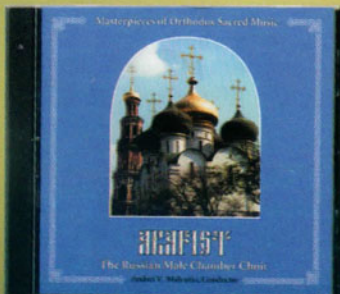
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The Most Blessed Metropolitan Theodosius A Retrospective and Thank You

Eis Polla Eti, Despota!



Editor's note: the present sermon was delivered by Archpriest Michael G. Dahulich at St. Tikhon's Monastery Church on Bright Tuesday, May 7, 2002, for the occasion of the 35th anniversary of consecration to the holy episcopacy of His Beatitude, the Most Blessed THEODOSIUS, Metropolitan of All America and Canada.

Your Beatitude, Your Eminence, Concelebrants in the Lord, Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ: *Christos Voskrese! Christ is Risen! Christos Anesti!*

We are gathered here together on this joyous day as a diocesan family — bishops, clergy and faithful — for a threefold celebration. First, we are commemorating Bright Tuesday, as we bask for the third consecutive day in the glory of Pascha, the Feast of Feasts, the Lord's Resurrection. Secondly, we are celebrating the feast of St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre, the great confessor of Orthodoxy and leader of tens of

thousands of faithful into our Holy Church, whose relics are here before us. And finally, we are marking a milestone in the annals of our Orthodox Church in America, the thirty-fifth anniversary of the episcopal consecration of His Beatitude, our beloved Primate, the Most Blessed THEODOSIUS, Metropolitan of All America and Canada which was actually yesterday, May 6.

His Beatitude's presence here with us as the celebrant of this hierarchical liturgy is a great blessing indeed. For thirty-five years — more than half his life — he has served our Church with great distinction! It gives us cause to pause and ask the questions: What is a Bishop? and What makes the episcopacy of Metropolitan THEODOSIUS unique and so special?

What is a Bishop?

A bishop is a teacher, a legislator, an administrator. He is counselor, benefactor

and disciplinarian. He is a shepherd and leader and father and friend. But primarily he is a priest, a celebrant of the Mysteries given to us by Christ the High Priest.

When the Son of God became man, he fulfilled and perfected the priesthood of the Old Law and made possible a more marvelous and more intimate presence of God among men through the holy mysteries. The bishop is never more a bishop than when he is surrounded by his people and offers the Eucharist for them. He feeds his flock the bread of life and the fountain of immortality. His greatest privilege and highest honor is to be the "servant of Christ and the steward of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. 4:1). He alone ordains new priests, oversees the receiving of new members into the Faith, and consecrates new churches. And the focus of all of these Mysteries is the holy altar, at which the bishop presides.

Continued on the next page

Metropolitan Theodosius

Continued from page 1

To the bishop is entrusted the sacred duty of preserving the Orthodox and apostolic doctrine. The Divine Liturgy itself calls attention to this duty of the bishop to teach, when it prays for him that he would “rightly define the word of Thy truth.” If you have ever had the privilege to witness the consecration of a bishop, you will recall the ancient rite, dating back to the fourth century, in which the open book of the holy gospels is placed over the head and shoulders of the bishop-elect. This is a sign of his responsibility to preach and to teach, for the prayer of the consecrating hierarchs is that he be “a leader of the blind, a light to those in darkness, an instructor of the unwise, a teacher of the young, a lamp to the world.”

As a father of a family is the head of

loving father to his flock.

A Man of Prayer

Like the many great heroes of the pages of Scripture and our Church’s honor roll of saints, Metropolitan THEODOSIUS is a man of prayer. He, like they, follow the example of our Lord himself. St. Luke recounts time and time again that before every special event in his life, our Savior Jesus Christ prayed; he spoke with his Father in heaven. The Son of God told us to pray, taught us to pray, showed us how to pray. Saint Paul followed the Lord’s example, and tells us: “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1). And His Beatitude learned that lesson well so long ago, first as a young boy and altar server, then as a seminarian, priest and hierarch.

We the faithful of the churches en-

where else in the world. He would rather celebrate the hierarchical liturgy than teach a class. He would rather consecrate a church than preside at a sobor. He would rather ordain a priest than give a speech. For more than four decades he has offered his prayers as an ordained priest and bishop and metropolitan. We, his spiritual children, have been the recipients of the answers to his requests. How many times has he said the Jesus prayer? the Lord’s prayer? the Divine Office? Only God knows. Thank God he has prayed for us!

A Prophet of Unity

Many times a saint or a bishop, a monk or a priest is remembered for a particular aspect of his ministry or preaching. The holy apostle John the Theologian is known for his message of love; Saint John Climacus, for his ladder of divine ascent;

I once asked His Beatitude what he loved to do most as the head of the Church in America. He told me very simply he loved to pray. He said that he felt more comfortable when at the altar than anywhere else in the world

the household, so the bishop is the head of his diocese. As a father has important responsibilities to his family, so the bishop does to his flock. As the father of a family is a decision-maker, with his authority coming from God, so it is with the bishop. And, as to the father are due honor, respect and obedience, so also to the bishop. The great Saint Cyprian of Carthage expresses this thought in resounding terms when he tells us: “This is the Church: the people united to the bishop, the flock faithful to their shepherd. The bishop is in the Church, and the Church is in the bishop. If anyone be not with the bishop, he is not in the Church” (Epistle 69:1).

What is it that has made Metropolitan THEODOSIUS’s primacy of the Orthodox Church America unique? What has made his episcopal ministry so special?

I would say three things distinguish His Beatitude’s service to Christ and our Church: He is a man of prayer, he has been a prophet of unity, and he is above all a

trusted to his care are the beneficiaries of his prayers. At every liturgy, our primate remembers the holy synod of bishops, all the priests and deacons and monastics, and all the faithful — young and old, sick and healthy, those in this life and those who have fallen asleep in the Lord. How many prayer services, how many akathists has he offered for our healing? How many memorial services has he celebrated for the blessed repose and eternal memory of those who have been called by the Lord? And that does not begin to include the countless, unseen hours in private prayer he spends in conversation with God for all those who have asked him to pray for them, beseeching Him who is the Giver of every good thing, to help them in their need.

I once asked His Beatitude what he loved to do most as the head of the Church in America. He told me very simply he loved to pray. He said that he felt more comfortable when at the altar than any-

Saint Seraphim of Sarov, for his teaching on the acquisition of the Holy Spirit. His Beatitude, Metropolitan THEODOSIUS will be remembered throughout history for his tireless teaching and preaching on one theme in particular throughout his ministry as primate of the autocephalous Orthodox Church in America. And it is a very important theme indeed: the unity of the Church in our country and on this continent.

In this regard he has been a prophet — not one who merely foretells what will happen in the future, but a person who speaks for God, who proclaims what is righteous and holy before God and urges that His will be done. On the subject of unity in this country, the voice of His Beatitude has indeed been prophetic, not unlike that of John the Forerunner, *the voice of one crying in the wilderness* (Matthew 3:3). Time and time again he has stressed the oneness, the unity of the Church of Christ. He has relentlessly

preached the words of our Lord: “On this rock I will build My Church” (Matthew 16:18) — “Church” in the singular. Tirelessly has he echoed the words of St. Paul: “There is one Body (the Church) and one Spirit; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all” (Ephesians 4:4-6). Fearlessly has he stressed the teaching of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicea: only one bishop in one city. Repeatedly has he reminded us of the words we sing at every liturgy in the Creed: “one holy, catholic and apostolic Church.”

From the cold recesses of Alaska, where Orthodoxy first came to America more than two centuries years ago and where he was first consecrated a bishop thirty-five years ago, to the warm beaches of Florida where this year’s All-American Council will be held; from Canada to Mexico; and throughout the world — his message has been the same. Legend will recall that he once said he would lay aside his white klobuk for the realization of church unity, of one Church in this land! Truly a prophet for our time! When the divisions of ethnic jurisdiction that have crippled Orthodoxy in this country have finally been healed, it will be the faithful witness of Metropolitan THEODOSIUS that history will remember as the herald of that unity.

A Loving Father

Above all else, though, Metropolitan THEODOSIUS is a loving father to his family in Christ — to the bishops, priests and deacons, monastics, and lay men and women alike. Whether a venerable *starosta* or an infant child, every member of the Orthodox Church in America is a son and daughter of the Lord and therefore, to His Beatitude, his own son and his daughter. Just as Christ always was, so is our metropolitan ever so approachable. His smile is warm, his touch is gentle; his outreach is engaging, his manner is mild. His “kiss of peace” is genuine; his blessing is ever so humble. His agenda is simple: he does everything “in the name of the Lord” (Romans 10:13). In the war for souls, he arms himself with two weapons: love and forgiveness.

His Beatitude’s love for others is self-evident. The patriarch, he embraces; the little child, he picks up and kisses — both with joy, both with sincerity, both with the

genuine love of Christ to share. The Metropolitan epitomizes the words of our Lord in his ministry: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, as I have loved you” (John 13:33). And in loving, he has served humbly, tirelessly at the expense of his own health. He has sought to bring into the fold of Orthodoxy in this country those seeking the truth and those who have strayed from the flock. Like the picture in the stained glass window in this church he is a replication of the Good Shepherd who lovingly seeks the lost sheep.

But what happens when someone disobeys the commandments or betrays the truth or abandons the Church? How does this father in Christ discipline? With anger and retribution? With judgment and condemnation? No! Rather, with the love and forgiveness that the father showed the prodigal son in the parable recounted by our Lord in the St. Luke’s gospel. His Beatitude clearly teaches us by his own actions: every one of God’s children is a soul created by the Father, saved by the Son, loved by the Holy Spirit. In his role as pastor of his parishes, bishop of his dio-

ceses and primate of our Church, he has been a loving and forgiving, caring and self-sacrificing father — an icon in the flesh of the gospel proclamation.

A man of prayer, a prophet of unity, a loving father — this is Metropolitan THEODOSIUS. As we commemorate this anniversary of his consecration and this silver jubilee of his primacy, it is a bitter-sweet celebration. For amid our joy looms the reality that this will be the last Bright Tuesday he will celebrate at St. Tikhon’s Monastery as the primate of our Church. For health reasons, he has chosen to retire this July, at the All-American Council, from his primatial duties. While we are saddened in one sense that he will no longer preside at the helm of the O.C.A., we are in another sense grateful to God that he will ease the strains on his life to be with us ever longer as our beloved hierarch — a man of prayer, a prophet of unity, a loving father. We thank him, and especially we thank God for His Beatitude’s thirty-five years of faithful episcopal service, as we sing to him *Eis polla eti, Despota!*

Official

HERMAN, Archbishop of Philadelphia and Eastern Pa. was elected Metropolitan of All America and Canada and was granted the title of Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada at the Second Plenary Session of the 13th All-American Council, Orlando, Fla., on July 22, 2002.

Appointed

HERMAN, Metropolitan was appointed Locum Tenens of the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pa. by the Holy Synod of Bishops at the 13th All-American Council, Orlando, Fla., on July 23, 2002.

Rev. Stephen Evanina is appointed Rector of Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, Pottstown, Pa., May 19, 2002.

Rev. Andrew J. Anderson is appointed Rector of St. Michael the Archangel Church, Wilmington, Del., July 7, 2002.

Released

Rev. John Bruchok is released from his attachment to St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in Bethlehem, Pa. and from the Diocese of Eastern Pa. and transferred to the Bulgarian Diocese of the Orthodox Church in America effective September 3, 2002.

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Orthodox Church in America

In This Issue

The Most Blessed Theodosius: Thank You!	1
13th All-American Council Elects New Primate	5
Our Lady of Pochaev Graces 98th Pilgrimage	14
Commencement Address: Bishop BASIL	19
Women's Retreat Hosts Valerie Zahirsky	22
On the Silent Prayers of the Liturgy - <i>Part 2</i>	24
Commentary of St. Cyril on John's Gospel - <i>Part XI</i>	26
The Sacredness of Newborn Life	30
A Miracle on Mount Tabor	37
An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith - <i>Part XIV</i>	38
Summer Camp: "These Truths We Hold"	45
A Message Left for Grieving Parishioners	50
5th Annual Golf Tournament Benefits Seminary	52
Byzantine Hymnody and the Octoechos	59
The Orthodox Church, the Nation, and the State	62
The Orthodox Parish in North America	68
Bishop Innocent Falls Asleep	71

Departments

All in the Diocesan Family	72
Daily Devotions	58
Graduates	53
Official	3



12th A.A.C. Elects New Primate - see page 5



Our Lady of Pochaev Visits Pennsylvania - see page 14

Your Diocese Alive in Christ

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Thirteenth All-American Council Elects Metropolitan Herman As Primate of the Orthodox Church in America

*Council Has Theme "The Parish Community:
Our Life in Christ"*

*"The Grace of the Holy Spirit has
assembled us today.
Having taken up thy Cross, we cry:
Blessed is He that comes in the name
of the Lord! Hosanna in the Highest"*

The words of this hymn still echo in my mind a week after the closing service of the 13th All-American Council. Many meetings, assemblies, conventions, councils end with those present returning to their homes to pick up where they left off, with little or no impact on their life. The 13th All-American Council had a tremendous impact and impression on those in attendance, probably because it was unique and historic. It was a historic council, with the retirement of His Beatitude Metropolitan THEODOSIUS and the election of a new primate for the Orthodox Church in America in His Be-

atitude Metropolitan HERMAN. Twenty-five years passed since an election for a new Metropolitan for our Church in America took place. Many members of our Church today were not in attendance in



Council registration

Montreal when Metropolitan THEODOSIUS was elected; those who were, remembered that participating in the election of a primate of our Church is a quite memorable event. Everyone sensed the

great significance of this year's election, while to those who were also at Montreal, the present election seemed to match that earlier one in importance. This writer is privileged to have been a clergy delegate at both historic councils. In addition to its historical importance, this year's council was special for several reasons:

Firstly, it was filled with emotion and anticipation. Emotion in that we were honoring His Beatitude Metropolitan THEODOSIUS on his retirement after twenty-five years of devoted primatial service to the Orthodox Church in America. For many in attendance, both clergy and laity, His Beatitude has been the only Metropolitan they have known and the personal relationships cultivated throughout his 25 years of service evoked a deep personal sense of emotion. There were many tearful expressions when the faithful gathered to receive his archpastoral blessing and to say, "Thank you, Your Beatitude" and, at the same time, to wish him well in his retirement. Throughout the week, His Beatitude was present to receive the personal greetings and well wishes of those whose lives he had touched throughout his primatial ministry. To His Beatitude Metropolitan THEODOSIUS, *Many Years!*

Anticipation filled the air as many wondered, "Who will be our new Metropolitan?" The selection and nomination process had been outlined in the preconiliar materials, distributed to all parishes, and were published on the O.C.A. website. Nevertheless, many wondered about their personal choice and



Opening session

Continued on the next page

All-American Council

Continued from page 5

whose name they would write on their ballot. As Monday drew near and the anticipated second plenary session arrived, the selection process began. With the singing of the hymns to the Holy Spirit and tropars to the American saints, the delegates made their selections and the ballots were collected and counted. Finally, on Monday evening, the announcement was made that the Holy Synod has selected as the primate of the Orthodox Church in America, His Beatitude Metropolitan HERMAN. To His Beatitude HERMAN, Archbishop of Washington and Metropolitan of All-America and Canada, *Many Years!* A more detailed account of the events of this important election will fol-



low in this article.

Three years ago, a record number of participants at the 12th All-American Council in Pittsburgh revealed that council to be the largest in the history of the Orthodox Church in America. Three years later, those numbers would be challenged and even surpassed. Nearly 2200 faithful of the Orthodox Church in America — hierarchs, clergy, laity and youth from across the North American continent — gathered at the Renaissance Orlando Hotel and Convention Center in Orlando, Fla. from July 21-26, for the 13th All-American Council of the Orthodox Church in America.

There was planned activity prior to the official opening of the All-American Council when the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America sponsored a Summer Golf Tournament. Quite a few golfers, some who were delegates, made the

trip to Florida earlier to take advantage of the fellowship provided before the beginning of council activities. On Saturday, the Pre-Conciliar Commission sponsored three workshops for those interested in arriving earlier. The workshops were: Principles of Christian Leadership and Dealing with Challenging People; Music: A Blessed Ministry; and a special workshop on the Church-Wide Initiative titled, FOCUS Education.

Many delegates arrived on Saturday to gather around their hierarchs and be united in the liturgical experience of praying together and to begin the council in the spirit of oneness. From the opening great vespers on Saturday evening to the closing prayer service on Friday morning, the 13th All-American Council was a reflection of the mission of the Orthodox Church in America, the local autocephalous Orthodox Church, to fulfill the commandment of Christ to baptize and teach so that all people may be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.

It is the All-American Council that brings the Church together, every three years, as the living Christian community of God's people praying, studying, deliberating and working together to fulfill our mission statement: "... to preach the fullness of the Gospel to the people of North America and to invite them to be the members of the Orthodox Church; ... to be the Body of Christ in North America and to be faithful to the traditions of the Holy Orthodox Church; ... to witness to the truth, and by God's grace in the power of the Holy Spirit, to reveal Christ's way of sanctification and eternal salvation to all."

These sentences summarize the vision of the Orthodox Church in America and her particular mission in North America.

At the hierarchical Divine Liturgy on Sunday, His Beatitude Metropolitan THEODOSIUS was the main celebrant, being joined by the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops together with Bishop MERCURIUS, Moscow Patriarchate Representative in America, and Bishop-Elect IRINEU, soon to be auxiliary to Archbishop NATHANIEL of the Romanian Episcopate. Clergy from the Diocese of



the South were invited to concelebrate as they joined the nearly 1,200 clergy and laity gathered in the presence of the relics of Saints Innocent, Herman and Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow in the assembly hall that was transformed into an Orthodox chapel for the week-long council.

In the presence of so many pious Orthodox faithful the Divine Liturgy was celebrated. One began to get a feeling that this council was going to be unique and special. It was the Divine Liturgy on Sunday that set the tone for the entire week as the council would meet in prayer to nominate and elect a new primate, and deliberate on the council's theme: "The Parish Community — Our Life in Christ."



A large number of youth were in attendance; reports say that over 475 youth were registered for the council, and following the Sunday Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, the Holy Synod hosted a breakfast for all children and youth attending in attendance. What an opportunity for the bishops and youth to meet one another in Christian fellowship!

The Sunday evening open house hospitality hour brought together bishops, clergy, delegates, observers, youth and friends in an atmosphere of Christian fellowship. The Church was coming together and the sense was that this council would be one of the most important ever held and how blessed we are to be a part of this

historical event in the life of the Church.

Liturgical worship, especially the shared experience of the Eucharist, stood at the heart of the council. The Divine Liturgy or matins was served at the beginning of each morning with vespers at the close of the day's plenary sessions. It is through worship that council participants discovered the context of the council's plenary sessions, luncheon discussions, table discussions, Bible study, workshops and other forums. Decisions were made in a prayerful spirit that reflected the nature of the council itself. It was the same spirit that guided the council delegates and participants as we worked to build a consensus on the goals, priorities and plans

that will enable the Orthodox Church in America to continue and expand her mission.

On Monday morning, His Beatitude was the lone hierarch celebrating the Divine Liturgy as this would be his final hierarchical Divine Liturgy as the primate of the Church. Following the Divine Liturgy that morning and the celebration of a service of thanksgiving, His Beatitude Metropolitan THEODOSIUS opened the 13th All-America Council. There were 1,181 pre-registrations for the council. At the opening session were 1000 bishops, clergy, lay delegates and observers who stood in quiet attention as a Navy Honor

Continued on the next page

All-American Council

Continued from page 7

Guard marched in unison bearing the U.S. flag to the center of the hall. What followed was a powerful and emotional video tribute to the September 11, 2001 tragedy that brought tears to the delegates. Special petitions were chanted for those who survived the tragedy, the rescuers, and for those who lost their lives. A "Memory Eternal" was intoned and sung by the entire assembly, followed by the traditional military "Taps." The room resonated as the national anthems of the United States, Canada and Mexico were sung by the delegates, while the anthem words flashed on two large and two small video screens. Following this stirring tribute the first plenary session continued with the traditional welcomes by the host hierarch, Archbishop DMITRI, and the chairman of the Pre-Conciliar Commission, His Grace Bishop JOB. Special nominations for the organization of the council were presented with the result that Archpriest Gregory Safchuk, St. Mark's Orthodox Church, Bethesda, Md. was elected the Council's Clergy Vice-Chair with Mr. Michael Herzak, St. Michael's Orthodox Church, Broadview Heights, Ohio elected the council's Lay Vice-Chair.

In his "state of the church" address to the entire assembly in plenary session, His Beatitude focused on the theme "Remember, Rejoice and Renew." He reflected on "A Time to Remember," recollections of the church he knew and remembered, especially during the past thirty-five years as a bishop. He called on all to be faithful to the Orthodox Faith in the midst of a changing society. We need to use the great variety of backgrounds and histories, races and cultures that make up the Orthodox Church in America, as a strength of our church. He likened this diversity to "many streams coming together to form, with God's blessing, one mighty current."

He went on to say how he rejoices in the blessings that have been bestowed by God upon our Church on this continent. We offer thanksgiving to God for the seeds of Orthodoxy planted on our American soil, beginning with the Alaskan mission and continuing with the waves of immigrants that followed. The century just passed saw the Church in America face

many obstacles: the Russian Revolution, the spread of Communism in Eastern Europe, the Depression, World Wars, conflicts and wars in Southeast Asia, the Middle East and the more recent terrorism around the world.

Drawing upon the examples of the canonized American saints, he exhorted all of us "to re-dedicate ourselves to the mission we have received as Orthodox Christians living in North America," so that



Fr. Christopher Rowe reads prayer before the amvon

the seeds of faith planted over two hundred years ago may continue to grow and flourish.

His Beatitude expressed profound gratitude to his brother hierarchs, clergy and lay coworkers who have maintained and lived a sincere commitment to the Orthodox Church in America throughout his priestly and episcopal ministry. He concluded his address with these reaffirmations:

"Orthodox Christianity is North America is not in diaspora. It is here to stay."

"Autocephaly is not only the appropriate and canonical way of organizing church life. It is a necessity for effective mission in America."

"The only fully canonical and fully traditional way of ordering the Orthodox Church's life in North America will be the

full unity of all Orthodox in one Church, with one hierarchy meeting in one Holy Synod."

"A strong movement towards Orthodox unity and autocephaly in North America would bear witness to the catholicity of the Orthodox faith, showing that Orthodoxy is not limited to the East, and is fully alive in the West."

At the conclusion of his address His Beatitude read his letter requesting the Holy Synod to grant him retirement and the status of retired hierarch. The Holy Synod accepted his letter and his retirement went into effect after the convening of the first plenary session.

The second plenary session opened on Monday afternoon with the secretary of the Holy Synod, His Grace Bishop SERAPHIM reading the decision of the Holy Synod to accept Metropolitan



Singing "The grace of the Holy Spirit has assembled us today" before the election



Fr. Daniel Kovalak announces tally of ballots

Church in America along with the guidelines approved by the Holy Synod regarding the election process. When the credentials committee reported that 639 voting delegates were in the room and the number required for a two-thirds majority vote was 426, the chancellor asked that all doors be closed. No delegate would be allowed to enter or leave once the doors were closed. Each delegate was instructed to write *one name* on the ballot for it to be valid. The balloting began.

Fr. Daniel Kovalak, chairman of the Tellers, reported the results of the first ballot. Twenty-one candidates received votes, ranging from the highest vote-getter with 267, to the lowest vote-getter with 1. Since there was no candidate receiving

a 2/3 majority, the chancellor announced the beginning of the second ballot. Each delegate was instructed to write *two names* on the ballot in order for it to be valid. Any ballot with more or less than two names would be considered invalid. After the ballots were collected, the plenary session was

recessed to resume following vespers.

When the plenary session resumed after 7 p.m. Fr. Daniel Kovalak announced the results of the second ballot: Twenty-nine candidates were nominated, with the two highest candidates being Bishop SERAPHIM with 473 votes and Archbishop HERMAN with 223 votes. The members of the Holy Synod of Bishops entered the sanctuary to elect the new Metropolitan and emerged to declare that Archbishop HERMAN of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania was elected.

After this announcement, the service of installation was served. Upon completion of that service, the session adjourned as the clergy and faithful received the blessing of His Beatitude Metropolitan HERMAN.

Later that evening, His Beatitude visited the alumni receptions of both St. Tikhon's and St. Vladimir's seminaries, as the new president of both schools. At the receptions, His Beatitude was warmly greeted and received by seminary administrators, faculty, alumni and friends with much joy and support.

On Tuesday morning, plenary session III was called to order. At this session, Dr. Alice Woog, the council project manager, offered a presentation on "Getting the Most Out of the Council." In her presentation she reminded all that worship, especially the shared participation in the Eucharist, stands at the very heart of the All-American Council. Through worship, participants discover the content of the councils' plenary sessions, discussions, fellowship, focus forums, hearings and other informational forums.

Her presentation was a good introduction for Protospesbyter Robert S. Kondratyck, who presented the Report of the Chancellor. On behalf of the entire Orthodox Church in America, he offered thanks to Metropolitan THEODOSIUS for his kindness, generosity, his deep personal commitment and integrity, his patience, humility, forgiveness and the character of his pastoral care that have won him the widespread love and admiration of those whose lives he has touched.

Fr. Bob assured the new Metropolitan "that in every way the entire Church is ready and eager to assist him in this time of transition as with God's help he strives to meet our very real challenges and opportunities with faith, hope and love."

In his address he introduced the theme of the council by referring to a report on a clergy seminar held thirty-eight years ago that listed "parish life" — this council's theme — as the third major issue facing the Church at that time. The concerns of the clergy seminar of 1964 are concerns — *needs* — that remain with us today.

Continued on the next page



New Metropolitan reads prayer

THEODOSIUS's request for retirement and declaring vacant the see of Washington, D.C. and the office of Metropolitan of All America and Canada. He also announced that His Eminence Archbishop KYRILL was appointed as Locum Tenens to preside over the nomination and election of a successor.

The Chancellor, Protospesbyter Robert S. Kondratyck opened the nomination and election procedure and called on Professor John Erickson to read the procedure as outlined in the Statute of the Orthodox

All-American Council

Continued from page 9

Topics covered in the Chancellor's Report are:

- Challenges and opportunities of living as Orthodox Christians; terrorism; terrible sin of sexual abuse and sexual misconduct; challenges from new biomedical technologies and techniques of genetic manipulation; all of these being challenges with local parish impact;

- Reflections on Church life since the 12th All-American Council, which has included the glorification of St. RAPHAEL of Brooklyn; selection of a new dean and academic dean at St. Vladimir's Seminary, a new academic dean at St. Tikhon's, and a new rector and dean at St. Herman's Seminary; the 75th anniversary celebration of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America (F.O.C.A.); new priest-in-charge and administrator for our representation church in Moscow; and the Orthodox Church in America's continued involvement in SCOBA, IOCC, OCMC, and other agencies;

- Work of the central church administration;

- Work of the individual church ministry units.

The project team coordinator, Mr. Joseph Kormas, reported on the recently conducted parish profile overview. All OCA parish priests were asked to complete a survey form answering questions about the life of their particular parish with respect to services, growth, mission, evangelization, education, etc. Out of 633 parishes contacted, there were 161 respondents to the survey. Joseph reported on the statistical data received from the clergy regarding the above-mentioned areas. In response to a question regarding parish growth over the last three years, 5% reported a serious decline; 15% a slow decline; 22% a level plateau; 33% fair growth and 25% good growth. Many parishes are in a transition period struggling to deal with the circumstances facing their respective communities. On the whole, the survey results reflect positive growth in membership numbers, active participants in parish life programs and spiritual development in our O.C.A. parishes.

The Very Rev. Thomas Hopko, retired



Metropolitan HERMAN is greeted after election



Faithful receive blessing from new primate

dean of St. Vladimir's Seminary, made the keynote presentation. Fr. Thomas authored a paper, "The Orthodox Parish in North America" that was mailed out in advance of the council to clergy and lay delegates as an aid in preparing for council discussions. The document can be used as a basis for Bible study and further discussion and reflection on the paper's themes, focusing particularly on how these themes relate to one's parish community.

Luncheon discussions were conducted on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. In those three days, one could choose from in America; Accompanying the Dying. This is only a sampling of the luncheon discussions offered to council participants.

On Tuesday afternoon and Thursday morning, time was allotted on the council's agenda for workshops on this year's council themes. Qualified individuals facili-

ment; Fellowship of Orthodox Christians implementing Bible study in the parish, youth ministry, and the learning-centered parish. All workshops were well attended and produced favorable reactions among those who attended.

A very important item for discussion was reserved for a special session Tuesday evening. A document prepared by the O.C.A.'s legal counsel on "Property Held in Trust" had been distributed to all parishes in advance of the council. The very sensitive topic of parish property and its reference in the O.C.A. Statute and how this relates to civil law generated much discussion. While the Statute is very clear that the parish or parish corporation owns its own property and, in ecclesiastical terms, creates a trust relationship between the parish and the Church, this implicit trust relationship in the Statute is not set

sented on "The Bible and Parish Life," led by Fr. Andrew Morbey, Ottawa, Canada. A Bible Study document was prepared and included in the council notebook for each delegate as an encouragement to take up the study of Scripture as a personal discipline and an integral part of one's parish life. The booklet offers suggested ways to conduct a Bible study group and five sample Bible study sessions.

The 12th All-American Council adopted two Church-Wide Initiative proposals: The Seminarian Internship Program and the Parish Education Program. The Church was able to fully fund both proposals as a result of the impromptu floor drive at the last Council. Four priest mentors and three seminarian intern graduates presented testimonies to the value of the program and what has contributed to its success, citing personal experiences to support their positive experiences. The Parish Education Program proposal has resulted in the production of the FOCUS Education Curriculum. Several team members of this project spoke on the growth and development of the FOCUS curriculum and its value in aiding parishes of all sizes and age demographics to take advantage of this parish-wide education program. All those who spoke were in favor of retaining the programs as line items in the Church budget.

On Wednesday morning, following the Church-Wide Initiatives presentation, Treasurer Fr. Dimitri Oselinsky presented his report, already prepared and part of the council notebook. He reviewed the budget process and mandates from the 12th A.A.C. that served as the basis for his report. His published report presents a brief history of financial development and support for the Orthodox Church in America, the Treasurer's Report and an examination of what it actually takes to do what we need and want to do to be faithful witnesses to Christ in our society today.

Since the last All-American Council, there have been these developments in the Office of Treasurer of our Church: an archbishop was appointed Acting Treasurer, an archpriest was appointed to be his assis-

Continued on the next page



Metropolitan Kyrill of Smolensk greets Metropolitan Herman

tated the workshops, which dealt with the topics of Christian leadership, music, integrating immigrants into the O.C.A., among 16 topics on which discussions were held. Among the topics: Sharing Thoughts in Faith after 9/11; College Graduates: Finding a Place in Parish Life; Life as a Caregiver; Helping Children Develop Appropriate Behavior in Church; Living Your Faith in the Workplace; Adjusting to Life Without One's Spouse; Trauma Survivors; O.C.A. Youth Move-

ment; Fellowship of Orthodox Christians implementing Bible study in the parish, youth ministry, and the learning-centered parish. All workshops were well attended and produced favorable reactions among those who attended.

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All-American Council

Continued from page 11

tant, and the assistant was elevated to the position of part-time Treasurer of the O.C.A., which position he currently holds.

The 12th All-American Council mandated that a "needs budget" be presented. Accordingly, Fr. Dimitri submitted a budget discussed and agreed upon by the Metropolitan Council at its 2002 spring session. The discussion centered on the establishment of a budget that would show healthy and necessary growth, with the normal needs of an autocephalous Church being addressed.

Due to the fact that Wednesday afternoon is a free afternoon, the Holy Synod decided that discussion on the fair share proposal would be held on Thursday afternoon at the 6th plenary session. This would allow ample time for delegate discussion on this very important and sensitive issue for our parishes.

On Wednesday afternoon, delegates took advantage of the time-off to visit any of a number of recreational sites offered in the Orlando area. With the hotel located across from Sea World and nearby to Disney World and other popular attractions, delegates welcomed the chance to visit these sites with their families and friends.

That evening, the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pa. hosted a council-wide reception in the atrium section of the hotel lobby to honor our beloved Archpastor, who is now our new Metropolitan HERMAN. Through the generosity of several friends of the diocese and personal friends of His Beatitude, hundreds of council attendees came to greet His Beatitude. Many council attendees did not know the new Metropolitan as we, in the Diocese of Eastern PA, know him as our Archpastor. This marvelous reception gave many a wonderful opportunity to personally greet him, receive his blessing and offer him their personal congratulations. Our thanks to those friends who made this evening's reception a reality.

The final hierarchical Divine Liturgy was celebrated Thursday morning. This was the first hierarchical liturgy celebrated by our new Metropolitan. Joining him were the Holy Synod of the O.C.A., along with Metropolitan KYRILL of Smolensk,

representing the Patriarch of Moscow; His Grace Bishop MERCURIUS, Moscow Patriarchate; His Grace Bishop BASIL, Antiochian Archdiocese; His Eminence Archbishop NICOLAE, Romanian Patriarchate; and Bishop-elect IRINEU, Romanian Episcopate in America. Clergy from the Diocese of Eastern Pa. were invited to serve at the liturgy. Following the hierarchical Divine Liturgy, the Holy Synod hosted a breakfast for all clergy wives in attendance. Matushka Betty Kondratick

mitted in revised form with the approval of the Holy Synod and added commentary, was adopted.

A personal observation by this writer: at each session a credentials report was given announcing the number of clergy and lay delegates in attendance. For the election of the Metropolitan on Monday afternoon, there were a total of 639 clergy and lay delegates present. When Thursday's session was held and a vote on the Fair Share Proposal was taking

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL		
	CLERGY	LAITY
6 - Year	Archpriest Gregory Safchuk	Dr. Alice Woog
3 - Year	Archpriest Victor Sokolov	Mat. Julianna Schmemann
Alternate	Archpriest John Dresko	Mr. Michael Herzak
PENSION BOARD		
6 - Year	Archpriest Michael Westerner	Mr. Michael Bowan
3 - Year	Archpriest John Steffaro	Mr. David Drillock
AUDITOR		
6 - Year	Archpriest David Mahaffey	
3 - Year	Archdeacon Vsevelod Borzakovsky	
Alternate	Mr. David Donlick	

introduced Metropolitan THEODOSIUS, who was responsible for initiating the Clergy Wives Breakfast. Metropolitan HERMAN spoke with the wives assuring them of his concern for the well-being of the priestly family. Both hierarchs stressed the importance of the wife in her husband's ministry and the need to be supportive of his vocation. A member of the Holy Synod sat at each table, enabling everyone an opportunity to enjoy a visit and a casual conversation with a hierarch. As a remembrance of the breakfast with the Holy Synod, each Matushka received a gift to take home.

When plenary sessions resumed on Thursday afternoon, Fr. John Dresko introduced discussion on the Fair Share Proposal, developed over the past three years, based upon the resolution and mandate of the 12th All-American Council. While the proposal is not the final step we need to take to provide adequate funding for our Church, it is, nevertheless, an important step forward. Following a lively debate on the proposal, with several amendments being submitted and rejected, a vote was taken, and the Fair Share Proposal, as sub-

place, a total of 476 clergy and lay delegates were present. Was your parish represented at this important voting session? Were your priest and lay delegate present at the Thursday session to vote on the Fair Share Proposal? Financial obligations, dues, assessments, whatever you want to call it, this is an issue so important to the heart of every parish, and one that received a lot of discussion and concern and yet, when it is time to vote on the financial support of the Church, 163 delegates chose not to attend this session to express their opinions and vote.

Election results for Church-Wide Positions were announced (please see box on this page).

The elegant Grand Banquet, a tribute to His Beatitude Metropolitan THEODOSIUS in celebration of his twenty-five years of primatial service, was attended by over 1,200 guests. The toastmaster, Serge Schmemann, offered personal reflections and handled his responsibilities with dignity, grace, and wit. Among the honored guests who offered greetings to His Beatitude were Metropolitan KYRILL of Smolensk, Chairman of the Department

of External Affairs, representing His Holiness Patriarch ALEKSY of Moscow and All Russia, and His Eminence Archbishop DEMETRIOS, chairman of SCOBA and Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

A moving 25-minute video presentation, reflecting on the quarter-century of His Beatitude Metropolitan THEODOSIUS's primatial service, was shown on wide screens set up in the banquet hall. As a memento of this occasion, every fam-

tion/discussion sessions, day trips to local attractions, nightly access to a teen hospitality room with snacks, music, and videos; and a special banquet on Thursday evening. You could not miss our wonderful youth all decked in their bright yellow T shirts, with their advisors and chaperones wearing blue T-shirts. They were well behaved the entire week and were a welcome addition to the Council's programs.

Youth and young adult activities have become a regular and important part of the

displays, insurance information, office machinery, and other goods and supplies. During those off-moments at the Council, participants were able to browse and visit the 65+ exhibitors who provided a vast selection of Orthodox resources and supplies.

The All-American Council came to a close with the "Service of Prayer at the Closing of a Sacred Council" and the installation of those elected to Church-wide positions. His Beatitude Metropolitan HERMAN celebrated the service of closing as the final act at the council. The council's work, however, did not come to an end with the close of the council on Friday, July 26, as clergy and lay delegates and observers are to share their council experience with the faithful of their respective communities and to assist in putting the council's decisions into action in their dioceses, deaneries and parishes.

From Monday through Friday seven plenary sessions were held. Each one began with a reading from Holy Scripture and offered an opportunity for participants to explore various options and opportunities for dealing with important issues within the life of the Orthodox Church in America.

The council's sessions came to a close, but the work of His Beatitude has just begun. The Orthodox Church in America will now adjust to a new spiritual leader who will grow into his position with our prayerful support. Let us continue praying for his good health, asking the Lord to guide his archpastoral ministry for Many Years. Although His Beatitude has served in the episcopacy for 29 years, his elevation to the office of Metropolitan brings him a new office with new responsibilities. With our prayers he will assume the awesome responsibilities of his office and will serve the entire Orthodox Church in America with the same dedication, dignity and integrity that he has served in our diocese throughout his episcopal ministry.

We began the council singing the hymn "The Grace of the Holy Spirit has assembled us today," and truly the Holy Spirit did assemble us and did guide our week-long deliberations and decisions.

Continued on page 21



New budget is passed

ily received a copy of the video shown along with a beautiful 2003 OCA wall calendar featuring the Saints of America.

The Pre-Conciliar Commission arranged for two breakfasts to be held following Friday morning matins. One breakfast was held for the clergy delegates and clergy observers, with a presentation by His Eminence Archbishop DEMETRIOS (Greek Archdiocese), and the other for lay delegates with a presentation by His Grace Bishop BASIL (Antiochian Archdiocese).

The final plenary session of the 13th All-American Council began with a presentation from the youth who were present at the Council. Representatives from the age groups briefly addressed the Council body expressing their gratitude for the chance to be a part of its programs. Each offered personal reflections on his or her participation in the week-long youth activities. Under the direction of Fr. Michael Anderson and his Youth Department Ministry support team, week-long programs had been offered for preteens (ages 7-12) teens (ages 13-17) and young adults (ages 18+). Activities included morning educa-

All-American Councils in recent years. Some youths came with parents, as part of parish groups or as interested individuals. The Council provides the means for youth to gather for fellowship, experience the entire Church coming together and to study and discuss issues facing them as young members of the Orthodox Church in America. A separate program for young adults (ages 18-25) offered access to all plenary sessions, a complete set of AAA materials and resources, and discussion sessions on issues facing today's Church.

Professor John Erickson, Chairman of the Resolutions Committee, announced that eight resolution drafts from the floor had been submitted for consideration. They will be sent directly to the Holy Synod as the topics raised come under the bishops' purview.

A popular feature at every All-American Council is the vast display area in which vendors made available a wide assortment of Orthodox Christian books, icons, liturgical items, vestments, liturgical music, bells, recordings, church furnishings, diocesan displays, ministry unit

Our Lady of Pochaev Graces Pilgrimage To St. Tikhon's Monastery



Bishop-elect Nikon and Metropolitan Theodosius

The ninety-eighth annual pilgrimage to St. Tikhon's Monastery was truly blessed by the presence of one of the holiest icons of Russia and Ukraine — the icon "Our Lady of Pochaev" ("Pochaevskaya"). Her visit to America and to St. Tikhon's Monastery, the oldest and first Orthodox monastery in the New World, so soon after the beginning of the third millennium was a wonderful gift from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The monks and the many pilgrims alike

were richly blessed to be able to see and to touch it and to pray before this holy image, asking the All-Holy Theotokos Mary, our blessed Mother, to intercede with her Son and God, Jesus, for the welfare of God's holy people here in America and throughout the world, as well as for any personal needs, requests, and intentions.

Each pilgrimage is a unique and precious time to draw near to the Lord in life-transforming worship, praise, and prayer,

but this year the Pochaev icon's presence made the time even more special. And because of another event, another first, that took place during the pilgrimage, the icon's presence was especially fitting.

St. Tikhon's Monastery is considered the spiritual center of Orthodoxy in America. This is natural, since it was the first and oldest Orthodox monastery to be founded in the western world, and its beginnings are linked with the names of St. Tikhon of Moscow, one of the two patrons



Bishop-elect reads his acceptance speech



Consecration of Bishop Nikon of Bethesda

of the Orthodox Church in America, and of St. Raphael of Brooklyn, first Orthodox bishop consecrated in America, and of other saints who were contemporary with them or who came later.

Through the years, St. Tikhon's has been the place where bishops and priests came for spiritual rejuvenation, and where bishops came to teach and future ones to be taught. But in 2002 at this year's pilgrimage, for the first time ever a bishop was consecrated at St. Tikhon's. And it was especially fitting that the Pochaev Mother of God was present for this event, since a man being consecrated to the episcopacy is ordained to this office — the office of bishop ("overseer") — in order that he may care for the Church, for Christ's flock, as a shepherd tending and watching over her visibly, even as Christ does so invisibly. It is because a bishop does this that the episcopal office is associated with the person of the Theotokos — for she has achieved that perfection and

holiness which make her the image of the Church itself and she is the perfect example of that goal to which the members of the flock should be led, and she helps to guide them there. Therefore, as one of the marks of his office, the bishop is given to wear the panagia, that is, the icon of

humble pilgrims as we are, lovingly enlightening us spiritually by her gracious, warm, and motherly presence, and radiating to us bright rays of her glorious Son's light and grace.

In making a pilgrimage one seeks to find something spiritual and to make it a part of one's life — and as this is realized, the spirit is uplifted and the soul renewed, the heart purified and the senses illumined. This truly took place for the thousands of pilgrims who journeyed to St. Tikhon's Monastery, as God in his tender mercy granted us to have in our midst the miraculous icon of our blessed Lady.

Because of the busy schedule of this year's pilgrimage, some services and prayers customarily done during the pilgrimage itself were performed in advance. At midweek preceding the holy icon's arrival, monastic clergy performed the blessing of water at the monastery well. The

Continued on the next page

In 2002 at this year's pilgrimage, for the first time ever a bishop was consecrated at St. Tikhon's

the Theotokos, who is the icon of the Church which he is called to shepherd, and who is also, to the bishop and all the flock, a mighty intercessor and patroness and protectress. By God's mercy but through her prayers are all things established in the Church. So it was that at the first episcopal consecration ever to take place on these grounds where saints have walked, our Lady of Pochaev came to be with us,



Vesting of the new bishop



Procession to the archway with the Pochaev icon



Metropolitan Theodosius greets Our Lady of Pochaev



Metropolitan venerates the wonder-working, holy icon

Pochaev Icon Graces Pilgrimage

Continued from page 15

graves in the cemetery were blessed, as the clergy walked everywhere in the cemetery, singing the paschal troparion and sprinkling holy water.

The Pochaev icon arrived at Archbishop Herman's residence in South Canaan on Thursday. She was accompanied by Igumen Laurus (Lavr) of the Pochaev Monastery (the icon's home), Hierodeacon Serapion of the same monastery, and Alexander Yakoviuk, a seminarian from the Pochaev Seminary. At the time of her visit to St. Tikhon's, the icon was traveling continually throughout Ukraine and Russia, accompanied by Hierodeacon Serapion, whose monastic obedience at this time is to travel with the icon so that the faithful everywhere may venerate the holy image and pray before her. The icon's travels were interrupted so that she could visit St. Tikhon's.

On Friday afternoon, the icon was greeted at the archway, the sacred portal of our monastery, for the formal opening of the pilgrimage. Many faithful pilgrims gathered at the monastery archway along with the monks, carrying crosses, banners, icons, and relics. The afternoon sun was brightly shining down on the assembled throng of pilgrims as we awaited the arrival of the famous miracle-working icon. The Pochaev icon of our Lady came in joyful procession to the sacred gate of the monastery, accompanied by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius, Archbishop Herman, Archimandrite Tikhon of St. Tikhon's Monastery, and by Igumen Lavr and Hierodeacon Serapion, and a group of seminarian singers.

The icon was greeted and venerated, and then while the monastery bells pealed she was carried to the monastery church. There, we processed around the church with the icon, stopping at the sides of the church, and an akathist and prayer service in honor of the miracle-working icon of our Lord's blessed Mother was sung. After the akathist, all those present came forward to venerate the beautiful image, now inside the church, and to offer prayers for their various needs. It was a truly joyous, spiritual beginning to the pilgrimage.

Vespers and matins were served, fol-

lowed by the nomination of the Bishop-elect Nikon (Liolin) to be the Bishop of Bethesda. There was a service of thanksgiving and Protopsbyter Robert Kondratyck, O.C.A. chancellor, read the proclamation of Father Nikon's election, and presented him to the Holy Synod of Bishops who were gathered in the center of the church. The bishop-elect was then led before the bishops by Fr. Robert and Protopsbyter Thomas Hopko, Dean of St. Vladimir's Seminary, to offer his speech of acceptance. After the speech, the bishop-elect asked and received the blessing of each of the hierarchs, beginning with the metropolitan. He was then blessed with holy water.

All this took place before the holy Pochaev icon, which was enshrined in the center of the church on an easel-like stand and garlanded with a wreath of flowers. After the completion of the services, the faithful again had the opportunity to venerate the icon. Food for the pilgrims could be had in the nearby monastery trapeza, with generous faithful volunteering their time to prepare and make this available (as indeed they helped in so many ways throughout the weekend, giving of their time and labors, and by this making the pilgrimage possible).

During the evening, the icon was moved to an appropriately ornate wooden table and a vase of red roses was placed on either side. The visiting Pochaev monks sung two akathists and prayer services in honor of the icon during the evening, according to their custom, for every evening they sing an akathist to the icon, and they kept this rule every evening that the icon was at St. Tikhon's.

The next morning an overflow crowd gathered at the monastery church for the hierarchical Divine Liturgy at which not only would a bishop be consecrated, but also a new deacon and a new priest would be ordained to serve our Church in North America. Members of the Holy Synod of

Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America, a large contingent from the O.C.A.'s Albanian Diocese and from New England, and other pilgrims were present, among them being members of Bishop-elect Nikon's family.

The first part of the consecration of a new bishop takes place before the Divine Liturgy. Called the *Cheirotonia*, this part begins when the two senior priests bring the candidate from the altar to stand before the gathered hierarchs. This done, Bishop-elect Nikon — responding to questions put by Metropolitan Theodosius —



made his three confessions of faith, the first consisting of his recitation of the Creed, the second of a more detailed explanation of the doctrines of our faith, and the third regarding the sacred canons, traditions, and regulations of the Church. Only after these professions was he actually raised to the rank of bishop-elect, with the metropolitan saying the words, "The grace of the Holy Spirit, through my humility, exalts you . . . to be the Bishop-elect . . ." Then, having received the blessing of the bishops, the bishop-elect stood in the middle of the church while the archdeacon intoned Many Years. The Divine Liturgy then began.

The consecration is completed after the little entrance. It is at that point, before the gospel, that this takes place because — along with the oversight of his flock — the chief duty of any bishop is to evangelize the inhabitants of his diocese, and more generally, the entire episcopate is responsible to proclaim and bring the word of God before the world. Accordingly, before the epistle and gospel Bishop-elect

Nikon stood at the left side of the altar to await the laying on of hands. It was then that he was brought and knelt before the holy altar and an opened gospel book was placed on his head with the print side down, representing the ordaining hands of Christ himself. With the bishops all holding the gospel book, Metropolitan Theodosius made the sign of the cross over the bishop-elect's head thrice, while he read the prayers of consecration. Along with the metropolitan were the ruling archbishops and bishops of our church: Kyril, Peter, Herman, Dimitri, Nathaniel, Job, Nikolai,

newly consecrated Bishop Nikon with his episcopal riassa, mantia, and panagia and read to him an exhortation before presenting him with his pastoral staff. Bishop Nikon then went to the cathedra in the center of the church and blessed the faithful in all four directions. After the liturgy a luncheon was held in the monastery dining hall for the new bishop and the many faithful who had gathered for this festive occasion. A tent was set up next to the trapeza to accommodate the many guests who had come to be a part of the event.

Lunch was followed by a meeting of the seminary's board of trustees, convened in order to approve the conferral of degrees and diplomas. Immediately after the meeting there began the procession to the auditorium for the 60th annual academic commencement of St. Tikhon's Seminary, which was presided by the seminary presi-



Hierarchical liturgy at the pavilion

and Mark, and also Bishop Basil (Essey) of the Antiochian Archdiocese. The gospel book was then replaced on the altar, and Bishop Nikon was vested in the episcopal vestments while the bishops and choir and faithful sang *Axios!* giving the necessary confirmation to the consecration and attesting to the worthiness of the newly-consecrated to serve in the episcopal rank.

The liturgy then resumed with the chanting of the epistle. Bishop Nikon blessed the people for the first time following the holy gospel. During the liturgy the new hierarch ordained to the holy priesthood Deacon Antony Gori of the Diocese of New England, and again the cry of *Axios!* filled the church. And after the anaphora, Subdeacon Oliver Herbel, a seminarian at St. Vladimir's Seminary, was brought forward and was ordained to the holy diaconate by Bishop Nikon and *Axios!* was heard again.

After the communion was finished, Metropolitan Theodosius presented the

vice-president, Metropolitan Theodosius, along with the vice-president and rector, Archbishop Herman. The commencement speaker was Bishop Basil (Essey), of Enfeh, whose cathedra is located in Wichita, Kan. (Please see the text of his address, which is printed in this magazine.) Receiving the M.Div. degree this year were these graduates: Igor (Gregory) Kougourtsev and Joshua Frigerio, *summa cum laude*; Matthew D. Moriak, George Anastasios Kefalas, and Priest Benedict Crawford, *magna cum laude*; Deacon Valerii Shemchuk, *cum laude*; and Archpriest Michael A. Kleban, Dmitry A. Kovalyov, Priest JosÈ Emmanuel Rodriguez, and Paul J. Witek. Awarded the Diploma in Orthodox Theology were graduates Michael Tarris, *magna cum laude*, and Nicholas Finley.

Meanwhile, in the monastery church, the holy Pochaev icon continued to be venerated by pilgrims. Following commencement exercises, the resurrectional vigil was served in the monastery church.

On Sunday morning, the hierarchical Divine Liturgy was celebrated by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius, who as primate of our Church and abbot of our monastery presided at the chief services of the annual pilgrimage. Concelebrating with him were our deputy abbot, Archbishop Herman and the other bishops of our Orthodox Church in America. The faithful filled the church, and the beautiful, wonder-working icon stood in the center throughout the prayers, adorning the liturgical proceedings. After the liturgy, everyone broke bread together in the monastery dining hall.

Sunday afternoon, vespers and matins were served in the monastery church. The same evening, the grand commencement banquet in honor of the graduates was for the first time held on site, in the seminary auditorium and in a tent set up in the nearby courtyard.

Later in the evening, a molieben and akathist were sung in the monastery church before the Pochaev icon. Bishop Mercurius, the bishop of the Russian patriarchal parishes, served the offices in Church Slavonic. (The akathist that greeted the icon on Friday had been served in English.)

By this time news of the icon's presence had spread more widely, and among the pilgrims were many Russians who had traveled distances to pray before the icon. Throughout the weekend, many pilgrims brought with them small prints of the Pochaev icon which they lovingly touched briefly to the icon. Others touched pictures of their loved ones, or prayerbooks, keys, rings, and other objects, to the icon.

Monday morning brought a large crowd of faithful Orthodox Christians and many others who came from all across America and Canada to partake of the prayers and of the divine mysteries of Christ, and to venerate and pray before Our Lady's holy icon, receiving in return the grace of the Holy Spirit. According to custom, an early Divine Liturgy was sung in the monastery church, in the presence of the icon. Later in the morning, the main liturgy of the day, with most of the hierarchs, was served in the pavilion church. As the pilgrimage progressed, many brothers and sisters in Christ rejoiced to see one another, as we all joined in renewing our

Continued on the page

Pochaev Icon Graces Pilgrimage

Continued from page 17

spiritual lives, being filled with the love of the Lord.

Throughout Memorial Day, this climactic day of the pilgrimage, a line of pilgrims (at times two lines) stood before the monastery church, waiting to enter and

the pilgrimage. On Tuesday evening after vespers, a last akathist service was sung before the icon. Igumen Laurus and Hierodeacon Serapion sang the clergy portions in Slavonic, while the monastery choir sang the choir parts in English. Afterwards, the icon was carried in procession for one last time around the monastery church. It was then carried by Frs. Laurus and Serapion into the monastery

Pochaev and by Mr. Alexis Liberovsky, the O.C.A.'s historian, who served as their driver and guide for the duration of their sojourn in America. Finally, after the exchange of mutual thank-yous, embraces, and prayer requests with their guests, the St. Tikhon's Monastery brotherhood venerated the holy, wonder-working Pochaev icon one last time. She was then taken back to Syosset whence she would return to Pochaev after two days.

Two years from now, the Monastery of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk will observe its hundredth pilgrimage; three years from now, the centennial of its founding; and the year after that, the centennial of its consecration

Two years from now, the Monastery of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk will observe its hundredth pilgrimage; three years from now, the centennial of its founding; and the year after that, the centennial of its consecration. The visit of Our Lady of Pochaev was a truly blessed prelude to these events, which in their turn, likewise promise to bring spiritual benefit to our souls.

venerate the precious icon of the All-Holy and perhaps light a candle or lamp and offer prayers. During the afternoon the prayer service of healing was served at the bell tower, and all present were anointed with blessed oil for the healing of ills both spiritual and physical.

On Monday afternoon, vespers and matins were served in the monastery church, where a line of pilgrims still continued to approach in order to venerate the holy icon. As matins ended, the pilgrimage drew to its official close. As always, each pilgrim departed taking with him a spiritual gift. Each one, having paused for a moment in his or her life to lay aside worldly cares, received the Spirit's ineffable gifts of grace, which he imparts to his people in his holy Church through the mysteries and through the holy icons (and especially notably through his miracle-working icons such as Our Lady of Pochaev), and in countless ways.

The Pochaevskaya icon remained at St. Tikhon's Monastery for another day after

dormitory and into most of the rooms and individual cells of the monks in order to bless these places by her presence. She then remained in the monastery parlor while the visiting monks dined with their hosts in the monastery refectory, being joined by Seminarian Alexander from

Through the prayers of our All-holy Lady, may we all be granted to see those days in peace.



Memorial service at Metropolitan Leonty's grave



Healing service choir



Anointing of the faithful with blessed oil

St. Tikhon's Seminary Commencement Address

May 25, 2002

*Given by His Grace, Bishop BASIL of Enfeh,
of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian
Archdiocese of America*

Your Beatitudes, Your Eminences, Your Graces, Right Reverend, Very Reverend, and Reverend Fathers, brothers and sisters in and of Christ:

Christ is risen!

By month's end, tens of thousands of young people across our nation will have heard thousands of commencement addresses on as many college campuses. But this address will be rare among those addresses, because this group of graduates — you — is rare among the thousands; for these young men are commencing their service not to self and career but to God. Most, if not all, will be called to the life of a Priest of the Most High God. And for that reason my few words today will be about the sacred priesthood.

A contemporary spiritual father, Hieromonk Athanasios of the Holy Athonite Monastery of Iviron, wrote: "The priesthood is given as a manifestation of God's love for mankind. God loved us and made us His priests."

In this we learn two things — first, the priesthood is a *gift* to mankind from God; second, that it is given as — and therefore need be seen as — a sign of God's *love* for mankind.

And as God's love is so great, so is the greatness of the gift! Speaking of the grandeur of celebrating the Divine Liturgy, St. Symeon the New Theologian asks:

"Who then, favored with glory from on high, *the original glory*, would believe that there is a thing still more glorious than to celebrate the liturgy and to contemplate the Most High Nature, energizing everything, inexpressible, and inaccessible to all? . . . Had you seen Christ and received the Holy Spirit, had you been led to the Father thorough them, you would understand that to liturgize is great and awesome and that it surpasses all glory when it is done with the consciousness of a pure heart in honor of the One, holy, undefiled Trinity."¹

Contemplating the greatness and awesomeness of the priesthood, St. Symeon continues: "We touch with audacity, the inaccessible God, or rather the One who dwells in light inaccessible not only to humanity's corruptible nature but also to the exalted angelic hosts. This then is the inexpressible and supernatural that I have been instructed to perform. It impels me always to keep death before my eyes. Thus, leaving behind all satisfaction, I have been seized with fright, knowing that it is impossible for me — as for everyone,

1. Hymn 19:56-75.



Bishop BASIL delivers commencement address

I think — to celebrate this service worthily and to lead an angelic life in the body; or rather, a life higher than the angels, so as to become in dignity even closer to Him than they, since with my hands I touch, and with my mouth I eat the One before whom they stand in fear and trembling!"²

For most Orthodox Christians the "highlights" (so to speak) of the ordination of a priest are the chanting of the troparia and circuiting of the holy table, the laying-on of hands, or — and probably for *most* — the shouts of "Axios!" ("He is worthy!") and the vesting in the priestly garments.

But for me — and I believe for all who have been called of God to stand in the holy place — it is the moment during the anaphora when the bread now become Body is placed by the bishop into the cupped hands of the newly-ordained with this charge: "Receive thou this pledge, and preserve it whole and unharmed until thy last breath, for thou shalt be held to an accounting thereof at the Second Coming of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ."

2. Hymn 14:55-74.

Continued on the next page

Commencement Address

Continued from page 19

The new priest, for those few minutes — from “It is truly meet” until “Holy things are for the holy” — becomes a living discos — a Christ-bearer — a Christophoros!

And that is not the limit of the greatness and fearfulness of the moment, for that Bread become Flesh is not the only Body of Christ given into the hands of a priest — it is not the only “pledge” to be preserved “whole and unharmed.” Every particle of that Lamb, each pearl of that Divine Flesh, ought remind the priest of the souls of the faithful — members of the mystical Body of Christ — who at that moment are also entrusted to his hands and for whom he will also “be held to an accounting . . . at the Second Coming of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ”!

Concerning this, St. Symeon wrote:

“The day of reckoning awaits me and I will have to render account for the sins of those whose shepherd I am, I alone, through God’s unfathomable plan. Undoubtedly, everyone will come to judgment and will have to answer for his own conduct, whether it be good or bad. But I alone will have to make account for all and everyone.”³

It would seem that the greatness and
3. Hymn 14:75-95.

awesomeness of the priesthood would be *precisely* why one should flee from this dignity — and many, including saints, have. But for the “brother-loving poor man” — the *ptochos philadelphos* (a beautiful title coined by St. Symeon) — love of God coupled with love of brother compels him to accept priestly ordination.

The “brother-loving poor man” is none other than he who has received, who has tasted the goodness of God and feels compelled by love to share news of this goodness with his brother.

St. Symeon asks:

“Indeed, how can we remain silent about such blessings or bury the talent that was given to us, like negligent and wicked servants? Indeed a brother-loving poor man (*ptwcÚs fil-delfos*) upon begging a friend of Christ and receiving some money, joyfully ran to his brothers who were in misery and told them in private, ‘Run, make haste, so that you too may get some,’ while he pointed to the One (Christ) who had given him the coin. When they did not believe this, he opened the palm of his hand and showed it to them so that they might believe, make haste and quickly catch the benevolent man. Likewise, in my lowliness, I, poor and deprived of everything, a slave to the charity of all of you, have experienced the love of God and His compassion for man. Having re-

ceived this grace, even though I was unworthy of it, I cannot endure to be alone nor can I hide it in the ground of my soul . . . As much as is in my power I reveal to you the nature of the talent which God has given to me, and by means of words I disclose it to you in the palm of my hand. I do not speak to you secretly or privily; instead, I cry with a loud voice, ‘Run, brothers, make haste.’ Crying aloud will not suffice. I point to the Master who has given it to me — extending my words before you like fingers. I cannot remain silent about the marvellous things of God I have seen and experienced.”⁴

The one who will accept both the dignity and the burden of the sacred priesthood is the brother-loving poor man — the *ptochos philadelphos*: the priest is the one who “cannot remain silent about the marvellous things of God,” so he takes on the dignity and burden of the priesthood for the love of his brother — a poor man like himself.

In conclusion, my brother-loving poor men, I leave you this blessing from the ever-memorable Elder Joseph the Hesychast:

“My son, my blessed priest: May mercy, enlightenment, strength, peace, love and the abundant grace of the Lord be upon your noble soul. May the Lord
4. Discourse 34:68-70.



Hierarchs with Class of 2002

our God send you a good angel to direct your steps in the way of peace, according to His holy will. My truly beloved son who won my love with your noble feelings, may your fiery soul be graced with brilliant splendour. May the holy Protection of our sweetest Queen, the pure Virgin and Theotokos, cover you like Moses, along with all of your spiritual children, as the divine Andrew the Fool-for-Christ saw in Constantinople. May our sweet Jesus make your *nous* and your heart shine with His holy seal, as well as every God-pleasing work of yours, so that the enemy will not find anything at all to plunder. At His Second Coming may He reward and bless and crown every single one of your good deeds done with love. May He enrich all of your spiritual children through His rich endowment and heavenly grace, and may they become fragrant flowers of paradise, so that you will see them in that day and rejoice. I, too, rejoice, seeing all of you as flowers with the sweet fragrance of good works — I who am empty of every good. You are my happiness and joy and wealth in my poverty, my great boast. Through your spiritual works may the Father be glorified, the Son rejoice, and the Holy Spirit exult!”

My brother-loving poor men, brothers and sisters in and of Christ: Christ is risen!



Fr. Michael Dahulich offers toast at banquet



Commencement banquet

All-American Council

Continued from page 13

Regardless of what voting decisions an individual might make during the course of the Council, once actions are decided upon by the Council and approved by the Holy Synod, the decisions represent the mind of the Church. Therefore, it is incumbent on every delegate to support the decision and present it to the parish for its implementation.

“*Having taken up Thy Cross we cry . . .*” Let us go forth arm-in-arm with our new Metropolitan helping him to carry the burden of his office, and by God’s mercy, together we will write new chapters in the history of the Orthodox Church in America.

“*Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the Highest.*” Just as the faithful reached out to welcome our Lord on His entry in Jerusalem with these words, let us welcome His Beatitude Met-

ropolitan HERMAN into our dioceses, deaneries, and parishes and into our lives with the same enthusiasm, zealous spirit and with these prayerful words, *Eis polla*

eti Despota — Many Years to you, most blessed Master!

—Archpriest Eugene Vansuch



Metropolitan Herman with the bishops of SCOBA

Women's Retreat Hosts Valerie Zahirsky



Valerie Zahirsky

The Annual Women's Retreat, sponsored by the diocesan Department of Religious Education, was held on Saturday, August 3, at St. Tikhon's Monastery and Seminary. Despite sweltering conditions and the fact that the date was just a week after the All-American Council, over 85 women of all ages attended.

Our speaker this year was Valerie Zahirsky. A well-known representative of the Orthodox Church in America, Valerie has traveled to Crete, Australia, Switzerland, Damascus, Syria, and Istanbul, Turkey to participate in many women's conferences. She was also part of a teaching team in Moscow, working with religious educators. A Master of Divinity graduate of St. Vladimir's Seminary, Valerie also holds a Master's Degree in English, and has written many articles including "Growing Up Female and Orthodox" in the book, *Orthodox Women Speak*. Valerie and her husband, Fr. Michael, have two children and reside in Mingo Junction, Ohio. Her topic for this year's retreat was "The Uniqueness of Orthodoxy."

The day began with a continental

breakfast and the opening prayer service led by our newly elected Metropolitan Herman and Fr. Daniel Ressetar of Harrisburg. His Beatitude took time from his now hectic schedule to be with those gathered and to share his prayers and thoughts. All in attendance were honored and pleased that he could be with us. Speaking on behalf of Mat. Fran Vansuch, who

Matushka Valerie began her talk with a startling statistic. She stated it is now becoming required reading in some colleges and school districts to read excerpts from, or the whole of, the Koran, the "holy book" of Islam

was unable to be present, Mat. Myra Kovalak welcomed those in attendance and led the congratulations to His Beatitude on his election as our primate, also thanking him for his presence and prayers.

Matushka Valerie began her talk with a startling statistic. She stated it is now becoming required reading in some colleges and school districts to read excerpts from, or the whole of, the Koran, which is

the holy book of Islam. Citing the events of Sept. 11th, as well as a movement toward political correctness, students are finding the teachings of Islam part of their educational curriculum or syllabus. She felt in order to understand a true picture of Islam, one must read the entire Koran and not just parts of it or a condensed edition. When one does this one will understand that the God of Islam is NOT the God of Christianity.

Reading portions of The Koran and making various comparisons to Christian laws and teachings, Mat. Valerie cited the differences in punishment vs. forgiveness, condemnation vs. love and healing, and a book of laws for living vs. the Bible and our Lord Jesus Christ as a living example. Several other examples were cited of vast differences between the Christian ethic and

the Islamic vision of predestination, brutal punishments for disobedience, and condemnation for those who do not follow these teachings. As Orthodox Christians she called upon all those present to be prepared to defend our faith with these comparisons and to know the differences when challenged.

After a brief break, Mat. Valerie spoke of those attributes of Orthodox Christian-



Retreatants with Metropolitan Herman



ity which we show when we live our faith as true Christians. Using icons to illustrate, she discussed the Nativity and Transfiguration of Christ and how the same God of Heaven and earth through His love brought His Son to us. Mat. Valerie pointed out the different appearance of

people depicted in the icons.

A lenten luncheon was provided and served by a committee led by retreat chair, Maria Proch. Time was provided for photos, tours of the monastery church and icon repository, and for walking the beautiful grounds and shopping in the ever-popular

bookstore.

The afternoon session was a combination lecture and discussion. Citing saints of the church as well as icons, Mat. Valerie illustrated the variety of backgrounds from which saints have come. She gave as examples, St. Mary of Egypt and Fr. Zosimas, Simeon the 6th century fool for Christ, and St. Athanasius. After discussion and a question and answer period, she exhorted us to become ambassadors for Christ in a world searching for answers to what is the true faith. The retreat ended with a closing prayer and all were invited to stay for evening vigil in the monastery church.

The D.R.E. wishes to thank all those involved in making this retreat a success. Our thanks go to His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, Fr. Leo Poore, John and Martin Paluch, Gregory Hatrak, Victor Kuzemchak, and Fr. Dea. Alexei Klimitchev, as well as to Fr. Tikhon, Fr. Nicodemus and the monastery staff for their hospitality.

—Matushka Myra Kovalak

“Each man makes his own plagues through his own free will”

—St. Gregory of Nyssa

“The creator of sorrows and tribulations is each person through his own choice ... Nothing evil can come into existence apart from our free choice”

—Metropolitan Hierotheus of Nafpaktos

“No one can harm the person who does not injure himself”

—Title of treatise by St. John Chrysostom

On the Silent Prayers of the Liturgy: A Conversation

Part 2



Continuing the conversation begun a year earlier in these pages.

Father Athanasius: Greetings, dear friends, on this wonderful Feast of our Lord's Transfiguration.

Visitors: Greetings, Father, may we have your blessing. Some time ago we were discussing the prayers at liturgy, the silent prayers. You gave us much food for thought, but you said there was more concerning this you wished to relate to us.

Fr. A.: Yes, I recall there are specific historical and theological issues regarding these prayers. Without repeating what I already said to you, let us begin with the historical aspects. What is your understanding?

Vis.: Well, what we have heard, Father, is this: in the early Church, including the time of the apostles, there were no silent prayers. All prayer in public worship was audible. The new communities were relatively small, at first meeting in prominent members' homes, and virtually everyone was committed and zealous — it was a time of persecution; there were few, if any, nominal members. It is only logical to assume that the prayers were heard by everyone at all services.

Fr. A.: That does sound logical. So let us see. Tell me, who were the first to establish and develop the traditions of liturgy?

Vis.: The apostles.

Fr. A.: And who were the apostles?

Vis.: Christ's followers.

Fr. A.: Yes, of course. But what was their religious background?

Vis.: Jewish.

Fr. A.: All of them?

Vis.: All of them.

Fr. A.: Even Paul who was well versed in Hellenic thought?

Vis.: Certainly Paul was thoroughly Jewish, taught by Gamaliel the Elder, renowned teacher of the Torah.

Fr. A.: Since Judaism already had a highly developed tradition of public prayer — from both the Temple and the Synagogue — does it follow that the apostles started Christian worship "from scratch" or were they informed by and continued much of Jewish practice?

Vis.: Surely they would not have started from scratch.

Fr. A.: In fact, is it not most reasonable to assume they continued a great amount of Jewish liturgical practice, only filling it with new meaning, the types and

shadows of the Old Dispensation now being understood as fulfilled in Jesus Christ?

Vis.: That makes sense.

Fr. A.: Now a few minutes ago you said you thought that all prayers in the early Church were audible. The use of silent prayers must then have been a later development — perhaps somewhat accidentally?

Vis.: Yes, we heard that after the persecutions ceased, the Christian faith was adopted by the Empire, the mission was now immense. Basilicas were turned into churches, large buildings and cathedrals went up everywhere. In these large buildings the sound of a single human voice tended to get lost; only the music of the choir carried through from end to end. Hence the prayers became "silent" accidentally. Doesn't this sound credible?

Fr. A.: Somewhat, but it ignores several things. First, that the builders of churches at that time knew how to put up a building where the human voice would carry exceptionally well. Only in the modern world with all our technical knowledge do we seem not to be able to do that. But more importantly, it ignores the Jewish background of Christian liturgical practices, practices which are *apostolic*.

Vis.: Are you trying to tell us that the apostles themselves used a low voice in certain parts of the Liturgy?

Fr. A.: I am saying that it would be extremely unlikely if they did *not*!

Vis.: How could you possibly know precisely what the apostles did in this regard?

Fr. A.: I know they were Jews, and that

they along with our Lord Himself worshipped in the Jerusalem Temple and in the synagogues of Palestine. And there, lo and behold, was a long-established tradition of prayers in worship said in a low voice or in complete silence.

Vis.: Really! How could this be?

Fr. A.: The Jewish tradition of silent prayers traces to the pious woman, Hannah, wife of Elkanah and mother of the Prophet Samuel, more than a thousand years before the Incarnation of Christ. Hannah was barren and, of course, this was very unfortunate for a married Jewish woman. She therefore prayed fervently at the Shiloh sanctuary for a child. The high priest Eli saw her and mistakenly thought she was drunk because she was moving her lips but there was no sound coming out of her mouth. She was, in fact, praying silently with great fervor. And her prayers were answered. Although she was aged, she gave birth to a boy whom she named Samuel (which means “the name of God”). Her name, by the way, means “grace.” After she in gratitude gave the child to God’s service, God blessed her with three more boys and two beautiful girls. Since the actual fulfillment of her prayer was unlikely because of her advanced age, yet she gave birth then to not one but six children, the rabbis considered her prayer as a great example of how one should pray. The tradition of silent prayer was employed then in Jewish liturgy and called the *amidah*. It is the main prayer of any service, and it is said silently while standing, feet together, facing the Temple in Jerusalem, and with a joyful heart. Jewish law forbids the *amidah* to be said if one is not joyful.

Vis.: Amazing! Truly amazing.

Fr. A.: There is more. The very fact that the Hebrew term *amidah* means literally “standing” is also instructive. As we all know the early Christian mission to the Jews was not nearly as successful as the mission to the Gentiles, the “Greeks.” These latter would not have been familiar with the details of Jewish worship. The anaphora of our Christian liturgies therefore begins with the words: *Stomen kalos; stomen meta phovou . . .* (“Let us stand aright, let us stand in awe . . .”) The non-Jews needed to be reminded that at the ap-

proach of the *amidah*, one must stand in reverence. But Jewish liturgical tradition employed silent prayers in other places as well. Before the initial six psalms of the Sabbath evening service there is silent prayer. This service was, of course, the model from which our vespers developed and the model for the synaxis or the first part of the Divine Liturgy. In that ancient liturgy which bears the name of St. James, we see silent prayers at the very beginning of the service and throughout, as we do in the liturgies of St. Basil, St. John Chrysostom, and the Liturgy of Pre-sanctified Gifts. The traditional liturgy of the Western Church also reflects this ancient Jewish/Apostolic practice. Even the words of institution were said in a low voice in the Latin mass. Through the years — until the Protestant Reformation — almost no one challenged or changed this tradition.

Vis.: Almost no one?

Fr. A.: Yes. We have an interesting challenge to this. It came not from within the Church but from the Emperor of Byzantium, Justinian. The exact date is recorded: on the 26th of March, 565, Justinian issued a novella, no. 137, which decreed that the silent prayers of the liturgy should be recited aloud. It states: “We order all bishops and priests to say the prayers used in the divine anaphora and holy baptism not inaudibly, but in a voice that can be heard by the faithful . . .” It is clear that what the Emperor was asking for was precisely a novelty, an innovation. The practice of the silent prayers was ancient and universal. Moreover there is no evidence whatever that this decree was obeyed by anyone, in spite of the fact that it read, “We order . . .” The Church considered the Emperor, no matter how powerful or pious, to be not competent to decide on matters of the Church’s liturgy. In an era when the ignoring of an imperial command could lead to imprisonment, torture, or death, this is a remarkable testimony to the strength of this liturgical tradition.

Vis.: Amazing, surely. But let us assume all this is correct — the practice is ancient, apostolic, universal, and venerable. Cannot the Church, for pastoral reasons, for reasons of edifying the faithful, or preventing misunderstanding, in a given time and place change

its practice? After all, no one is changing the prayers themselves.

Fr. A.: The first question would then be: what radical contemporary Church situation would motivate the Church to do this? Are the people hopelessly uneducated and in such intellectual darkness that they cannot know or study the liturgy or read a prayerbook? You know well, in fact, that our Orthodox people have never been so educated and perceptive as they are now. We have an enormous literature in the English language available concerning every aspect of our Church’s life and teaching, including books on the liturgy. Everywhere there are elaborate church school programs functioning at every age level: for the youth, adult study groups, classes for inquirers. I fail to see why today our liturgy, the central mystery of the Church, must be transformed into a Sunday school.

Vis.: We see your point.

Fr. A.: The other question arising from the proposal of an innovation would address even more directly the problem. Innovations have always been considered unacceptable in the True Church of Christ because the faith we experience in liturgy and proclaim in doctrine is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic; if Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever, so is His Body and Bride, the Church. Introducing novelties inevitably compromises and distorts the integrity of the Faith.

Vis.: What is doctrinal about a *method* of liturgical prayer?

Fr. A.: In any study of Orthodox teaching one soon comes to the distinction between cataphatic expressions (those positively stated) and apophatic expressions (those stated negatively, such as God’s infinity and incomprehensibility). The fathers considered the apophatic expressions to be higher than the cataphatic, since they point beyond into the realm of the ineffable and wordless. This distinction was wonderfully defined by the great Gregory Palamas who decisively distinguished in God the divine *essence* (which is incomprehensible) from the divine *energies* (which uphold the universe and in which humans in the process of theosis can participate). The distinction is not a disjunction; there is *one* God. But these distinctions are absolutely

Continued on page 36

Commentary of St. Cyril of Alexandria On the Gospel of John

Part XI

That the Only-Begotten, alone, is by nature the Son from the Father, as being from him and in him.

No man has seen God at any time; the Only-Begotten God,¹ who is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him (John 1:18).

Observe again, here, the vigilance of the Spirit-clad.² He was not unaware that some, searching with bitterness into the things spoken about Only-Begotten, would surely say: "You said, good sir, that you had seen his glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father (John 1:14); then — when you ought to unfold to us the explanation of this and to tell us something fit for God and due — you made your demonstration from his superiority to Moses and to John's measure, as though one could not see his glory in any other way,³ although the blessed Prophet Isaiah says, *I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and his train filled the*

temple. Above it stood the Seraphim, each one had six wings; with two he covered his face and with two he covered his feet and with two he flew; and one cried to another and said, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory' (Isa. 6:1-3). Again, Ezekiel cried openly to us that he saw both the Cherubim, having a firmament like a sapphire resting upon their heads, and likewise the Lord of hosts upon a throne. His words are these: And there was a voice, he says, from the firmament that was over their heads, and above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it; and I saw as the color of amber, from the appearance of his loins even upwards and from the appearance of his loins even downwards, I saw as it were the appearance of fire and it had brightness round about, as the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord (Ezek. 1:25,26-28).

Therefore, since it was not unlikely that not a few of the more unlearned would say some such things to us, the blessed Evangelist needfully hastens to cut short their attempts, saying, *No man has seen God at any time; for the Only-Begotten,*



himself being God, who is in the bosom of God the Father, made this declaration to us, saying most clearly to Moses the revealer of sacred things, *No one shall see my face and live (Ex. 33:20);* and at some time to his own disciples: *Not that any man has seen the Father, except he who is from God, he has seen the Father (John 6:46).* For only to him who is the Son by nature is the Father visible, and that in such a way as one may suppose that the divine nature sees and is seen divinely, but not by any other of the things which are. Yet the word of the holy prophets is not in any way false when they cry out that they saw the Lord of hosts (Isa. 6:1), for they do not affirm that they saw that very thing that God's nature is according to essence; but they themselves too openly cry out, *This is the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord (Ezek. 1:28).* Therefore the shape of the divine glory was darkly formed out of things such as are ours, and was rather a likeness telling divine things as in a picture, while the truth of them ascends to a superiority beyond mind and speech. Therefore the most wise Evangelist most

1. "only-begotten God": St. Cyril's text of John's Gospel, along with that of many patristic writers, reads thus. While this textual variant gives strong support to the Son's divinity, it differs from the generally received Orthodox text, which reads "only-begotten Son."

2. Spirit-clad: or, "Spirit-bearing," "clothed in the Spirit": St. Cyril's epithet for the evangelist John.

3. The complaint of these persons (whose bitterness prevents them from honoring the Son with his deserved superior rank) would be that St. John speaks (1:8,15,17, and esp. 18) of the Son's superiority to the Baptist and to Moses in terms of the fact that the latter two did not see God, whereas he fails to mention that some such as Isaiah and Ezekiel had indeed seen God's glory.

excellently says, *And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*, bringing in the demonstration of this from his superiority to all. For as the power of the Creator of all is seen from *the beauty of the creatures proportionally* (Wis. 13:5), and *the heavens voicelessly declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows his handiwork* (Psa. 18:1 LXX), so again the Only-Begotten, as God, is proved superior in glory and more resplendent, surpassing apprehension as regards the power of the eye; and in that he surpasses the creation, he is considered, and is glorified, as being above it. I think, then, that the words now before us are replete with this thought and no other. But we must note again that he both calls the Son *Only-begotten God*, and says that he *is in the bosom of the Father*, that he may be shown again to be outside of any connaturality [same-naturedness] with the creation, and to have his own proper existence [being] from the Father and in the Father. For if he is truly *Only-begotten God*, how is he not by nature other than those who are gods and sons by adoption? For the Only-begotten will be conceived of not among many brethren, but as the only one from the Father. But while there are, as Paul says, many who are called gods in heaven and earth (1 Cor. 8:5), since the Son is *Only-begotten God*, he will clearly be outside of the rest and will not be counted among those who are gods by grace, but will rather be true God with the Father. For Paul links him so, telling us, *But for us [there is] one God the Father, from whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ through whom are all things* (1 Cor. 8:6). For, the Father being by nature one God, the Word who is from him and in him will not remain external from being God, but is conspicuous in the character of his begetter, and with respect to essence, ascends to an equal dignity in accordance with tact that he is, by nature, God.

For this reason he says that he is in *the Bosom of the Father*, that you may again form an idea of his being in him and from him according to what is said in the Psalms: *From the womb before the morning-star have I begotten you* (Psa. 109:3 LXX). For as in this instance he puts *from the womb*, because of his being from him and authentically from the likeness of things attaching to us (for things born of men proceed from the womb) — so too

when he says *in the bosom*, he would plainly show the Son all but in the womb of the Father which begot him forth, (in some, so to speak, divine shining-forth and unspeakable coming forth with respect to his own hypostasis), but which still possesses him, since the Divine offspring did not come forth from the Father by cutting away or division with respect to the body. And indeed the Son somewhere says that he is *in the Father* and has again *the Father in him*. For the Father's very own essence passing essentially into the Son, shows the Father in him, and the Father again has the Son rooted in himself in exact sameness of essence and being begotten of him, yet not by division or interval of place, but inherent and ever coexisting: in this way, rather, shall we reverently understand that the Son is *in the Bosom of the Father*, not as some of those who are accustomed to fighting against God have taken it, *whose condemnation is just* (Rom 3:8): for they *pervert all equity*, as the Prophet says (Mic. 3:9), undoing the ears of the simpler ones and *sinning without heed against the brethren, for whom Christ died* (1 Cor 8:12,11).

It is necessary to say what it is, then, that these [persons] are both thinking and saying and trying to teach others. When the holy Evangelist says that the Son is *in the Bosom of God the Father*, and the children of the Church think rightly, and affirm that he is therefore from the Father and in the Father, and contend and rightly so, that the true mode of generation must be preserved: immediately those who are drunk with all unlearning laugh outright and even dare to say: Your opinion, sirs, is all nonsense; for you are not well-instructed when you think of God in this way, that because the Son is said to be *in the Bosom of the Father*, he is therefore wholly of his essence, also foolishly imagining that he is the fruit of the unoriginate nature. For have you not heard, they say, in the Gospel parables, when Christ himself was discoursing about the rich man and Lazarus, that *it came to pass that Lazarus died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom*? Will you then grant, because Lazarus was in Abraham's bosom, that therefore he is from him and in him by nature — or will you not rightly refuse to say this, and you yourselves, with us as well, allow that love is the meaning of the "bosom"? Accordingly, we say that the Son is in *the bosom of God the Father*,

instead of in his love, as he himself also says in a certain place, *The Father loves the Son* (John 3:35).

But when these critics attack us with these words, though they are zealous about nothing except railing, then we will answer them as well, arraying against them the right word of the truth: "The bosom, good sirs, according to you, means love, for we just now heard you say this. Will we then, since *God loved the world* (John 3:16) as the Savior says, and *The Lord loves the gates of Sion* (Psa. 86:2), according to the holy Psalmist — without trepidation say that both the world itself and the gates of Sion are in the bosom of God the Father? And when he says too to the revealer of sacred things, Moses, *Put your hand into your bosom* (Exod. 4:6), tell me, does he command him to love his hand and not rather keep it hidden? How, then, will we not incur great laughter by this — rather, how indeed are we not behaving with impiety towards the Father himself, if we say that all things are in his bosom, and make that which is the special privilege of the Only-begotten, common to the rest, so that the Son may have nothing beside [what] the creation [has]?"

Therefore, saying good-bye to their ill-advice, we will go on the straight road of thoughts of the truth, whenever the Son is said to be in the Father's bosom, and we conceive of him as from him and in him; and accurately taking in the tenor of this thought, we shall find it thus and not otherwise. *The Only-begotten God*, he says, *who is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared [him]*. For when he said *Only-begotten and God*, he immediately says, *who is in the bosom of the Father*; that he may be conceived of as Son from him and in him naturally, saying *bosom of the Father* instead of essence, as by a bodily illustration. For things manifest are types of things spiritual, and things that are among us lead us by the hand to the apprehension of the things that are above us; and corporeal [bodily] things are often taken in the way of image and introduce to us the apprehension of subtler thoughts, even if they are understood in their proper time as they were uttered, as he says to Moses, *Put your hand into your bosom*. And it will no way hurt our argument to say that Lazarus was laid in Abraham's bosom, but rather it will aid it and will go along with our thoughts. For the divine

Continued on the next page

St. Cyril on John's Gospel

Continued from page 27

Scripture says this, so to speak: "Lazarus having died and deceased from his life in the body, was carried into Abraham's bosom," instead of "was numbered among Abraham's children."⁴ For God said to him, "I have made you a father of many nations," for so is it somewhere written of him, *For I made you a father of many nations* (Gen. 17:5).

And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" And he confessed and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ" (John 1:19-20).

The evangelist recalls his own words and is eager to explain to us more fully, and doing it extremely well, what he had already told us briefly as in summary. For having said *There was a man sent from God, whose name was John; the same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light* (John 1:6,7), he of necessity introduces also the kind of witness given by him. For *when*, he says, the chiefs of the Jewish hierarchies according to the Law, *sent priests and Levites to him, commanding them to ask him what he would say about himself, then he confessed* very openly, spurning all shame for the truth's sake. For he said, *I am not the Christ*. So the compiler of this book says, neither do I lie, but I say of him, *He was not the light but [was sent] to bear witness of the Light* (John 1:8).

And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elias?"⁵ And he says "I am not." "Are you that prophet?" And he answered, "No" (John 1:21).

Having said again by way of explanation, *he confessed, I am not the Christ*, he tries to show how or in what form was the utterance of this confession; and by this he appears to me to wish to expose the uninstructedness of the Jews.⁶ For *profess-*

ing themselves to be wise they became fools (Rom. 1:22), and puffed up at their knowledge of the Law, and ever putting forward the commandments of Moses and asserting that they were perfectly instructed in the words of the holy prophets, by their foolish questions they are convicted of being wholly uninstructed. For the hierophant [revealer of sacred things] Moses, saying that the Lord should be revealed as a Prophet foretold to the children of Israel, *The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet from your midst, of your brothers, like me; to him you will hearken according to all that you desired of the Lord your God at Horeb* (Deut. 18:15,16,18). The blessed Isaiah, introducing the forerunner and foreannouncer [John] to us, says *The voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight'* (Isa. 40:3, Matt. 3:3). And besides these things, the prophet Joel says of the Tishbite (now this was Elias) *See, I send you Elias the Tishbite who shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse* (Mal. 4:5,6; Luke 1:17).

So, there being three who were promised should come, [the Messiah] and John and Elias, the Jews expect that more will come, in order that they may justly hear, *You err, not knowing the Scriptures* (Matt. 22:29). For when they inquired of the blessed Baptist and learned that he was not the Christ, they answer, *What then? Are you Elias?* and on his saying *I am not*, when they ought to have asked concerning the forerunner (for he was who remained) they ignorantly return to Christ himself, who was revealed through the law as a prophet. For observe what they say, not knowing what was told them through Moses: *Are you the Prophet? And he answered, No*. For he was not the Christ, as he had already before declared.

What do you say about yourself? "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness" (John 1:22c,23a)

He accuses them sharply as knowing nothing, and accredits the purpose or duty entrusted to him by prophetic testimony. **For I** come, he says, to say nothing else than that the expected one, is finally at the doors — yes, rather, the Lord within the doors. Be ready to go whatever road he commands you; you have walked in that

given through Moses, take up that which is through Christ, because the choir of the holy prophets foretold this to us.

A comparison of sayings about the path [road, way] that is according to Christ.

Isaiah. *Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his path and we will walk in it.* (Isa. 2:3)

The same. *There will be there a pure path, and it shall be called a holy path; no lion shall be there nor any of the wicked beasts ascend there, but the scattered shall walk in it.* (Isa. 35:8,9)

The same. *A beginning [or dominion, sovereignty] will I give to Sion, and will exhort Jerusalem into the path.* (Isa. 41:27)

The same. *And I will bring the blind by a road that they have not known, and paths that they did not perceive will I make them tread* (Ibid. 42:16).

Jeremiah. *Stand in the roads, and ask for the Lord's eternal paths, and see what kind the good road is, and travel in it, and you shall find sanctification for your souls* (Jer. 6:16).

So: what is the way [path, road] that is good and purifies those who walk in it, let Christ himself say: *I am the way [path, road]* (John 14:6).

Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees. And they asked him, saying, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elias, nor the Prophet?" (John 1:24-25).

Those who were sent from the Jews (they were Levites and certain of those who belonged to the priesthood) were convicted of asking foolish questions. For supposing that Christ was one person, and that prophet declared by the Law was another, they said, after the holy Baptist had said, *"I am not the Christ," "Are you the Prophet?"* (John 1:20-21). But observe: the multitude of the *Pharisees* also is caught in conceit of wisdom rather than having really an accurate knowledge of the divine oracles. For *why*, it says, *do you baptize at all, if you are not the Christ nor Elias neither the Prophet?* And they are shown again to be toiling with no little senselessness against the Baptist. For it seems they do not think it fit to number him among those expected, but sickened by the haughtiness that was their foster-sister, they consider that he is nothing,

4. St. Cyril rejects the notion that Lazarus' being carried into Abraham's bosom means that he is from Abraham and in Abraham, explaining the bodily figure in another way in this instance, and supporting his view by the quote from Genesis.

5. Elias: the Greek form of Elijah, used by the evangelist and by St. Cyril.

6. In the section that follows, St. Cyril shows that, whereas the OT foretold that three would come — the Prophet (the Messiah or Christ), Elijah (or Elias), and the John the Forerunner — the Jews mistakenly thought that the Prophet and the Messiah would be different people, since they ask John if he is either of them, as if the two were not the same.

even though he is foreannounced by the voice of the prophet. For though they heard, *I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord* (John 1:23, Matt. 3:3), not accepting his message, they rebuke him without restraint, saying things like this: "There is nothing in you, sir, worthy of credit, nor wondrous, nor great; why *do you baptize* even at all? Why do you, who are absolutely nothing, take in hand so great a thing?" It was the habit of the ungodly Pharisees to act thus, to disparage one who was already come, to pretend to honor one who was to come. For in order that they might always procure for themselves honors at the hand of the Jews, and might procure to themselves incomes of money, they desire that none except themselves should appear illustrious. For so it was that they slew the Heir himself also, saying Come, let us kill him and let us seize his inheritance (Matt. 21:38).

John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know. It is he who, coming after me, has become [was] before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie" (John 1:26).

With much forbearance the blessed Baptist endures the critics, and at just the right moment he make the declaration about himself a basis of the proclamation of salvation, and teaches those who were sent from the Pharisees now even against their will that Christ was within the doors. For he says: "I am introducing an instructional baptism, washing those defiled by sin with water for a beginning of penitence and teaching them to go up from the lower to the more perfect. For by this I fulfill in act that which I was sent to proclaim, namely, *Prepare the way of the Lord*. For the Giver of the greater and most notable gifts and supplier of all perfection of good things, *stands among you*, as yet unknown on account of the veil of flesh, but so much surpassing me, the Baptist, that I must consider myself not to have even the measure of a servant's place in his presence." For I think that this is the meaning of *I am not worthy to unfasten the latchet of his shoes*.

And in saying what is true, he accomplishes another useful thing, for he persuades the haughty Pharisee to think humbly, also bringing himself forward as an example of this.

But he says that *these things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan*, adding this too as a sign of accurate and careful narration. For as the saying goes, in our ac-

counts of things that require it, we are all accustomed to mention also the places where they happened.

To be continued.



Diocesan clergy and seminary staff hosted Metropolitan Herman at a private reception

The Sacredness of Newborn Life



The Orthodox Peace Fellowship convened at St. Tikhon's Seminary on June 19-23, 2002. Among the lectures presented was this one by Fr. John Breck

I.

Recent discussions in the area of bioethics have focused the public's attention almost exclusively on the issues of embryonic stem cell research and the cloning of human embryos. These are crucial issues that threaten to undermine the conviction, basic to Orthodox Christianity, that human life is inherently sacred and deserves to be nurtured and protected from conception until death.

Ethicists who share this belief in the sacredness of human life are presently caught up in cultural warfare with opposing forces whose chief motivations are potential profits for the pharmaceutical industry and preservation of the legal right

to abortion on demand at any stage of a pregnancy. If the government, for example, were to acknowledge that human life begins at conception — meaning fertilization — then it would jeopardize the future of embryo experimentation and undermine the principle of unrestricted abortion enshrined in judicial interpretations of *Roe v. Wade*.

The dust cloud kicked up by this struggle has obscured a related matter that is equally significant in this country's utilitarian atmosphere, which places rights over responsibilities and personal convenience over the value of persons. That is the issue of the newborn child and our social, family and ecclesial responsibilities in his or her regard. In what follows, I would like to move away from the question of the child in vitro or in utero, and turn our attention to the way God calls us to welcome the newborn infant, particularly when that child is marked by some

form of genetic anomaly or physical disability.

As we advance into this new millennium, it is clear that our children are facing a situation of crisis worse than they have ever known. Children have always been threatened by poverty, forced labor, prostitution and abandonment. Today, we have to add to that list such threats as partial-birth abortion, which kills a child as it emerges from the womb; infanticide, recommended by would-be ethicists who believe a child must demonstrate a viability free of genetic defects in order to have the "right" to live; together with an appalling increase in violence, both in school and at home. Recent estimates suggest that one American child in five lives in poverty and that one in six suffers from hunger. Although drug use is down relative to its levels of ten years ago, it is concentrated today in certain sectors of society — and not only the poorest. And as the French writer Fran ois Chateaubriand said about love, it "devastates the souls in which it reigns."

In 1999, the whole world came to know the name of Littleton, Colorado. This obscure western town became a symbol of the violence and wanton killing committed increasingly by youngsters against their own kind. Hospital emergency rooms are visited by a growing number of children who have been physically and sexually abused. Much of that abuse, as the media delights in informing us today, has been perpetrated by Christian parents and clergy. In Europe as well as in the United States, certain forms of violence directed against the very young have become virtually institutionalized. We may note, for example, gross neglect and abuse in the foster care system; or the



Informal discussion following the lecture

incarceration of teen-agers with adults in our state prisons, where the frequency of rape, by any civilized standard, makes their punishment “cruel and unusual.” And it is clear that the responsibility for these kinds of violence lies in large part with social and economic systems that favor the wealthy and the powerful over the poor and the defenseless.

In the face of all this, we can well understand why so many of our young people no longer find any meaning to life or hope in their future. In many parts of the world, children are born to become either victims or aggressors, or both (think, for example, of the generations of Lebanese and now Palestinian youths who have spent their entire childhood in a world at war).

To be sure, this is a one-sided and pessimistic view of the situation that gives too little consideration to the many children who are nourished by loving families and supported by intelligent and effective social structures. Nevertheless, there is no denying that a great many children today find themselves in a crisis not of their own making. It is incumbent upon us, therefore, as members of the Body of Christ, to seek out ways to ameliorate this critical situation, faced by our children even before the time of their birth. This is all the more necessary when it is a matter of those children marked with disabilities, who by that very fact are systematically marginalized and often threatened with extinction.

II.

Who in fact is this one we know and welcome as “the newborn child”?

To answer the question, Christian anthropology refers us to christology. To understand who we are, we need to begin with the image of the eternal Son of God, who is Himself the archetype of our humanity, who became flesh by assuming the fullness of our human condition and our human destiny, including death. A mystery envelops every child, a mystery whose key lies in the image of the Christ-child. This is true whether the child in question is born thriving or born dead, whether that child is welcomed with loving affection or aborted as an unwanted nuisance.

“When the fullness of time came,” St Paul tells us, “God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law” (Gal 4:4). This is the child prophesied by Isaiah:

“Behold, a virgin will conceive and bear a child, and shall call his name Emmanuel,” which means “God is with us.” This child, born of a humble virgin, is described by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews in remarkably exalted language: “In these last days [God] has spoken to us by a Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom also He created the world. This Son reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of His nature, upholding the universe by His word of power” (Heb 1:2-3). The apostle Paul adds to this extraordinary affirmation, “In Him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness of life in Him, who is the head of all rule and authority” (Col 2:9-10). Every human existence finds its fulfillment in the person of Him whom the *Kontakion* of the Nativity proclaims as “this little child, the eternal God.”

The true meaning of Christ’s incarnation is revealed to us in the liturgy and the iconography of the Church. It is there that we find graphically portrayed the “descent” of Him who contains in Himself the fullness, the “pleroma” of divinity. By that descent — that “kenotic” movement toward our fallen state (Phil 2:7) — this divine Son was able to assume our humanity and transfigure it into the glory that He possessed with the Father before the foundation of the world (cf. John 17:5).

Within the Orthodox tradition there are two principal icons that depict the incarnation of the Son of God in the person of the Christ-child. The most well known is the icon of Christmas, the Lord’s Nativity. This is an image of the ideal family, comprising Mary, Joseph and the infant Jesus. It is all the more “ideal” because it so eloquently represents both the poverty and the abandonment that weigh upon them. These painful conditions presage the journey that the child Himself will undertake: a journey which will lead Him to the cross and to death. Even at His birth, the child is wrapped, not in swaddling clothes but in a shroud, and he is laid, not in a manger but on an altar of sacrifice. His ostensible father Joseph is shown under attack by demonic doubt concerning the paternity of this newborn infant. And Mary herself gazes into the infinite distance, contemplating the mystery of a birth that will lead ineluctably to suffering, both for the child and for His mother.

Nevertheless, as in the icons called

Hodigitria or “Guide,” or still more in those that evoke the Eleousa, *Umileniye* or “Tenderness,” the principal theme of the icon of the Nativity is that of Gift, the sacred offering of the Christ-child by His holy Mother, so that in Him and by Him the world might be transformed from the corruption of death to the glory and beauty of eternal Life.

This motif appears as well in those icons known as “the Sign.” This is the second sacred image which “represents” — that is, which renders present and accessible in the experience of the worshipper — the mystery of God incarnate. Here, Mary appears as the *Orante*, the Virgin Mother who makes ceaseless supplication on behalf of the world. Bearing the Christ-child in her womb, she offers Him for the life of the world. Her womb, as the liturgical texts declare, is more spacious than the heavens, since it contains the Incomprehensible and Uncontainable One. This antinomy is repeatedly expressed by the liturgy of the Nativity feast. One of the major themes of that celebration holds that the incarnation of Christ occurred *atreptos*, “without change.” This means that the Son of God became the son of Mary without surrendering His divinity, without changing His essential identity.

“Beholding him who was created in His image and likeness, fallen because of his transgression, Jesus [sic] bowed the heavens and came down. He dwelt within the womb of a Virgin without undergoing change, in order to reform within her deformed Adam, who cried out to Him, ‘Glory to your appearance, my Redeemer and my God!’” (Compline, Nativity Vigil).

The aposticha verses of this same service declare that “The Word assumed flesh but did not separate Himself from the Father.” He was God, and He remains God for all eternity.

The liturgy of the Nativity feast gives eloquent expression to this ineffable gesture of total humility, by which the Author of creation “humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even death upon a cross” (Phil 2:8). According to the Nicene Symbol of Faith, this “kenosis” or self-abasement occurred “for us men and for our salvation.”

“Beholding man, the work of His own hands, destined for perdition, the Creator bowed the heavens and came down. From the pure and holy Virgin He clothed Him-

Continued on the next page

Newborn Life

Continued from page 31

self in the fullness of human existence and truly took flesh, for He has covered Himself with glory” (Matins of Nativity, Ode 1).

The salvation accomplished by the incarnate Son, however, is not limited to delivering us from perdition, from liberating mankind from bondage to death and corruption. If the eternal God became a little child in the womb of the Virgin, it was in order to lead us along the pathway known in Orthodox ascetic tradition as the way of “purification, illumination and deification.”

“O our defender Christ, you have covered with shame the enemy of mortal man, now that you have ineffably taken flesh as a shield and, in this form, you have given us the gift of deification. For it is the desire for that gift that caused us to fall from above into the pit of darkness” (Matins of Nativity, Ode 7).

These sacred images and liturgical texts recall several themes that throw light on the mystery of the incarnation. At the same time, they clarify another mystery: that of the newborn child. If the eternal Word is the archetype of the human person — if He is both the First and the Last Adam — He is also, by virtue of His nativity in the flesh, the archetype of every child who is born into this world. As Author of life, as Creator and Redeemer, He submits Himself to the conditions to which every child is subjected.

Today is born of the Virgin the One who holds all creation in His hands.

As a mortal, He, the incomprehensible One, is wrapped in swaddling clothes.

As God, He is laid in a manger, He who in the beginning established the heavens.

He takes as food His mother's milk, He who poured out manna to His people in the wilderness.

He, the Bridegroom of the Church, invites the Magi.

He, the son of the Virgin, accepts their gifts.

We worship your Nativity, O Christ.

Grant us to behold your holy Theophany!
(Nativity, Troparion of the Ninth Hour)

The divine child, born of a Virgin, accepts to be wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger, in order to liberate mankind, like Lazarus, from the shroud

of the dead and raise us from the depths of death and corruption. He who fed the Israelites in the desert feeds Himself from His mother's milk, in order that He might become Eucharist, the heavenly Bread that feeds the multitudes. He who invites the Magi accepts their gifts, in order to foreshadow the offering of His own life as the supreme Gift, the supreme sacrifice that works out the world's salvation.

God accepts to humble Himself through the Incarnation for a single reason: because He loves the world He has created and longs to seek and find, to save and glorify the children who bear His divine image. His purpose is to restore Adam to his original purity and innocence. To do so, He Himself assumes the humility and innocence proper only to little children. For children are the very image of the Innocent One, the spotless Lamb who represents the perfect offering to God. According to St Gregory Palamas, “Before the mind becomes embroiled with them, the passions which are naturally implanted in children conduce not to sin but to the sustaining of nature. For this reason they are not at that stage evil.”¹ The child is thus the icon of Christ, as Christ is the icon, the prototypical image, of the child. This includes not only the newborn, but all those who become like little children in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt 18:3f; 19:14; cf. John 1:12).

In the Church's iconography and liturgy we thus find a great many themes that illustrate the intimate relation which exists between the incarnate Christ and the newborn child. There is the theme of the family, united by prayer and by love; the theme of the mother who receives from God the child which she will offer back to Him as a sacrifice of praise; and the theme of the Innocent One, whose vocation is to offer Himself to others wholly and freely, with a love that knows no limit.

Who, in fact, is this newborn child we are called to welcome, protect, nurture and love?

He or she is the image of Christ, the Son of God, who — “without change” — became the son of Mary, for the salvation of the world and the deification of all those who receive Him with thanksgiving and devotion. “To all who received Him,” the

evangelist John tells us, “to all those who believed in His name, He gave power to become children of God” (1:12). To become a child of God is to return to our original state of innocence, purity, beauty, but also of vulnerability, which characterized the first human person, fashioned in the image of his creator. This is the “Adamic state,” proper to every newborn child. Yet it is a state soon lost in a world of sin, where the innocent, inside or outside the womb, are massacred like the little children of Bethlehem.

The newborn child bears within himself the divine image, the image of Christ, and with that image comes the possibility for deification. But this tiny infant also bears within himself the seeds of corruption. The continuous and arduous struggle between the two — between deification and corruption — will lead him inevitably along the pathway of suffering and death. The newborn child is an image of the Christ-child; but he is also an image of Christ crucified.

III.

If the child born into this world is indeed an image or icon of Christ, he will also become the image of his parents. We live in an age in which the traditional role of the parents has been largely rejected as a relic of a distant past. For virtues such as religious faith, altruism, obedience, honor, rectitude, and civility, we have substituted egotistical attitudes of auto-idolatry, self-gratification, in-your-face aggressiveness, and cutthroat competition — tempered only by a concern to think and act in a way regarded by others as “politically correct.” And parents are expected to inculcate such distorted attitudes in their children. Pressures behind such expectations come from our present social and cultural milieu, conditioned as it is by television, films and other media. Quite naturally, our children, like their parents, are increasingly obsessed with the Internet: an extraordinary instrument of communication, but one which transmits anything and everything in the name of “information.”

Rather than lose ourselves in a fruitless quest for some idealized pre-technological age of the past, though, we need to ask a question. Is it possible for us today to reconsider the role and the responsibilities of parents in a way that stresses spiritual values over self-centered attitudes? If not, then we are facing a greater crisis than

1. “To the Most Reverend Nun Xenia,” 42; *The Philokalia* vol. IV, ed. Palmer, Sherrard and Ware (London: Faber and Faber, 1995), p. 310.

most of us imagine. For the first responsibility of parents — in fact, their most basic vocation — is to reflect to their children the image of God, an image of truth, faithfulness, integrity and love.

The parents, however, do not bring up their children in isolation. Their role in raising their offspring is complemented by the activity of other members of the Church. At least four basic actions are indispensable for raising our young appropriately, actions that need to be undertaken and sustained both at home and in the parish community. Children need to be *welcomed, nourished, educated and loved*.

The welcoming of a child is a complicated matter that requires a great deal of preparation. First of all, the parents need to prepare themselves to assume both the pregnancy itself and the material and moral obligations that become theirs following the birth. Preparation of this kind requires an ongoing attitude of prayer, by which the parents make a ceaseless offering to God both of their child and of themselves. Yet their prayer is necessarily the prayer of the Christian community as well.

The eighth day after the birth, the child receives a name, often of a saint commemorated on the day of the birth. This creates a vital link between the newborn infant and a member of the eternal communion of saints. The prayer offered by the priest at the laying on of hands asks God “that the light of your countenance might shine upon your servant (*Name*), and that the Cross of your only Son be impressed on his/her heart and thoughts.” This is a request for a blessing. But it goes on to ask for protection against “the vanity of the world and every evil counsel of the enemy.”

As soon as the name is given, the Church by its liturgical prayer associates the newborn child with Christ. This unites the child with Christ’s crucifixion, and also with His victory over demonic power and over death. This intimate link between the child and Christ will be reaffirmed when the child is baptized, chrismated and then “churched,” introduced into the communion of the faithful on the fortieth day after the birth. The final prayer offered for the mother on that day captures just this emphasis.

“O God the Father Almighty, who by thy mighty-voiced Prophet Isaiah didst foretell unto us the incarnation through a Virgin of thine Only-begotten Son and our

God; who in these latter days, by thy good pleasure and the cooperation of the Holy Spirit, for the salvation of us men, and because of thy boundless compassion, didst graciously will to become a babe by her. Do now, O Lord, who dost preserve children, bless this infant, together with *his/her* parents and *his/her* sponsors; and grant that, in due season, *he/she* may be united, through water and the Spirit of the new birth, unto thy holy flock of reason-endowed sheep, which is called by the name of thy Christ.”

The Church’s welcome of the newborn

It’s deeply regrettable that we have lost any real sense for the importance of godparents in the life and formation of our children. The Church in its wisdom grants to these sponsors roles and responsibilities which the parents are incapable of assuming because of their lack of objectivity. The newborn child needs to be welcomed, nourished, educated and loved, not only by its own parents, but also by the Church family, represented above all by the godmother and godfather. Accordingly, it is incumbent on us to recover the true meaning of sponsorship within the Church



Dr. Albert Raboteau leads workshops

child thus comprises not only baptism, recognized as the rite of initiation, but also the giving of a name, which signifies for the child that he or she is inscribed in the Book of Life (Phil 4:3; Rev 3:5; 21:27).

This ecclesial welcome is, of course, to be more than a mere formality. To insure that it represents a genuine integration of the child into the family of God, which will provide appropriate nurturing and spiritual formation, the community appoints godparents: spiritual elders, who assume primary responsibility for the religious and spiritual development of the child, all the while embracing that child with abundant love and affection. The godparents are called to work in close relationship with the parents and the parish community, to provide the child with needed spiritual nourishment and training. It is they, as well, who, during childhood trials or adolescent crises, offer loving support not only to the child but also to the child’s parents.

and to support by every means possible the service rendered by godparents within our parish communities. Our children today are in very great need of their ministry, and it is our obligation before God to respond appropriately and decisively to that need.

IV.

Everything we have said to this point makes it clear that the child who comes into the world possesses an absolute and inviolable personal value. The similarity between his image and that of Christ derives from the fact that *from conception* that child bears the image of his Creator. From his birth, and by the very fact of his existence, he bears a visible witness to the beauty, the innocence and the humility of our Savior. Child of God and child of Adam, he is endowed with the sacred gift of life, whose ultimate purpose is to enable him to share fully and intimately in

Continued on the next page

Newborn Life

Continued from page 33

the very life of God.

But can we affirm the same thing with regard to handicapped children, those born with deformities or disabilities? If the newborn child is marked by genetic defects, if its face lacks any semblance of beauty or its brain is damaged, does that child possess the same honor and have a right to the same protection as a “normal” child who is in good physical condition? If the question seems offensive, we need nonetheless to raise it today. This is because more and more self-proclaimed guardians of public morality argue that each newborn infant should give proof of its viability and its “human value” before society grants it the “right” to live.

That sort of attitude represents an extreme form of utilitarianism, one based on expediency run amok. And this kind of utilitarian approach is gaining ground today in Western Europe as well as in the United States. It’s enough to evoke the name of Peter Singer, for example, the Australian bioethicist, who, to the consternation of many, was hired a few years ago by Princeton University, a cultural and intellectual center esteemed throughout the world. Or we can mention Joseph Fletcher, a former priest turned agnostic, who in the 1960s gained an international reputation for his elaboration of contextual or “situation ethics.” This deconstructionist approach to ethical analysis rejects every absolute norm — every standard, principle or truth — and locates the criteria for all moral decision-making within the immediate situation itself. The result is sheer moral relativism, with a consequent breakdown in respect for God and other persons. Where moral absolutes are systematically rejected, the inevitable effects of sin are to substitute expediency for principle and self-interest for sacrificial love.

According to the perspective represented by Singer, Fletcher and their ilk, the human person is defined by strictly functional criteria: consciousness, for example, with the rational and motor capacities necessary to make decisions and take action. These are criteria of social utility, derived from a philosophical position that places function above being. The simple fact that one exists is no longer sufficient for that individual to qualify as a “person,” worthy of respect and legal protection.

That individual must be able to think and act rationally, and be endowed with the capacity to contribute actively and positively to social life. Otherwise, these ethicists hold, society has no obligation whatsoever to assume the financial and psychological burdens that a profoundly handicapped person imposes upon it.

Those who preach this kind of functional utilitarianism propose a gamut of disabilities that *ab ovo* render the child marginalized, a prime candidate for abortion or infanticide. Others, who tend to be more conservative or traditional, will often accept abortion on demand, yet reject unconditionally the killing of a newborn child. Still, they recognize the appropriateness of refusing active and sustained treatment to children born with terminal illnesses or disabilities, such as anencephaly, Tay-Sachs disease or the Lesch-Nyhan syndrome, each of which results from ge-



netic anomalies that bring on premature death, often within hours of birth. In such cases, as we may all agree, medical treatment should be strictly palliative. No heroic efforts should be undertaken which merely extend biological existence artificially, since in cases like these such efforts merely prolong the dying process. (This, by the way, is a rule of thumb that should apply to any terminally ill patient, that is, one whose prognosis indicates clearly that he or she is suffering the irreversible consequences of an accident or disease, and has lost all capacity for self-sustained existence.)

Ethicists such as Singer and Fletcher, however, are much more radical. They

include in the category of the “non-viable” — that is, those who have no claim to being “persons” in the true sense — even Down’s syndrome children, those afflicted with “trisomy 21,” an extra twenty-first chromosome. In Fletcher’s view, a Down’s child is not a person because of the profound intellectual deficiency that usually accompanies the anomaly. Such children, pejoratively referred to as “mongoloid,” are accordingly to be eliminated by abortion or by infanticide.²

There are two comments I would like to make in this regard. First of all, the sacred character of human life — which God Himself invests in the child at its conception — does not in any way depend on the physical or mental health of the individual, nor is it a function of the quality of one’s DNA.³ *The dignity of “person” is bestowed by God, not by human convention.* This is why an embryo, or a patient in deep

coma, is and remains a “person” in the fullest sense of the term. And this is why infanticide can never be sanctioned or blessed by the Church. Whereas palliative care and gestures of love offered to a profoundly handicapped infant are always morally obligatory, the expediency of infanticide, including “partial-birth abortion,” must be rejected as an act of sheer murder.

The second comment I’d like to make is more personal. Anyone who has known or lived with Down’s syndrome persons

2. J. Fletcher, “The ‘Right’ to Live and the ‘Right’ to Die,” *The Humanist* 34 (July/Aug, 1974), 12-15; see also Richard C. Sparks, *To Treat or Not to Treat. Bioethics and the Handicapped Newborn* (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), ch. 4, esp. pp. 250ff.

knows the difficulties and challenges that arise in raising and educating them. Their physical and emotional needs can be extreme and exhausting. But those who care for them know also how much such a child — and they always remain a “child” — gives joy and love to the family and all those around them.⁴

I often think back to the late 1960s and early 70s, when my wife and I had frequent contact with Marie (Masha, to her friends), the Down’s syndrome child of a former professor at the St Sergius Theological Institute in Paris. Every Holy Friday Masha, dressed all in black, lived the agony of the crucified Christ; and every Pascha morning she rejoiced at His resurrection. Her face was radiant and her joy palpable. The entire parish community, which had embraced her unconditionally, was profoundly enriched by her presence and her prayer.

One day we were invited by Masha’s mother to share a meal with their family. As my wife and I entered the child’s room — at that time she must have been about forty years old — we found her busy playing. All the while she was talking to a photograph of her godfather, a beloved and long-deceased priest who had also been a dear friend of ours. Masha spoke with him, just as little children speak casually with angels. There was nothing artificial about it, nothing at all invented. She was carrying on a conversation with her godfather, that’s all. And he was most definitely present, in some indefinable but unmistakable way, a way that was absolutely real. Masha spoke to him now in French, now in Russian. When she noticed our presence, she greeted us with a smile — in English. We later learned from a family acquaintance that her mother had long before taught her to recite several prayers in German.

An exceptional child, yes. But Masha was exceptional because of the love and the tender compassion she received from her parents and others who cared for her — persons whose lives were profoundly touched and blessed by her presence, her faith, and her love.

Do we really want to live in a world devoid of persons like Masha, just because

the sonogram exists and abortions are legal? I desperately hope we don’t. Yet the New Eugenics that has gripped this country is rapidly moving us toward a “final solution” in which no genetic anomaly will be tolerated, no “defective” child will be born or allowed to live.

How, then, should we welcome a disabled child? Just as we would want to be welcomed ourselves, as we would want our own healthy children to be welcomed. There where genetic or other deformations are so deleterious that the child is destined to a brief existence marked by acute pain, where death stares the child in the face day by day and moment by moment, there we can certainly opt for strictly palliative care. Medical heroics have no place, no justification, in such cases. Biological existence is not an end in itself, to be preserved at all cost, despite intractable and dehumanizing suffering that no pain management can adequately relieve. In such cases, charity demands that the medical team do all in their power to provide whatever comfort is possible and to prepare the child for a gentle and peaceful death.

Yet it is our responsibility, as members of the Body of Christ, to accompany the child and his parents along the difficult pathway that stretches out before them, and by our ceaseless prayer on their behalf, to surrender them into the open hands of the God of love and of life.

V.

In conclusion, allow me to summarize a few of the points I have tried to elaborate here.

With regard to every newborn child, and disabled children in particular, we need to keep certain points in mind. First of all, every child born into the world is gifted by our Creator with absolute value and personal worth. Consequently, to recall the affirmation made by Olivier Clément, every child without exception “is worthy of infinite compassion.”⁵

From his conception until his death, the child is a *person*, a bearer of the divine image, whose primary vocation is to conform increasingly to the “likeness” of God. This vocation consists in a long and difficult quest to acquire virtues, which are nothing other than divine “energies,” such as justice, wisdom, beauty, compassion, and love. Human life is sacred from its origin because it is created in the *imago*

Dei and called to assume the ascetic struggle that leads toward divine perfection. It is this exalted vocation that transforms every individual existence into personal life. This is “sacred” life, since it originates from an act of the Father’s creative love, and its ultimate end is to glorify and share eternally in the personal, communal Life of the Holy Trinity.

Second, we need to remember that every newborn infant is essentially a child of the Church. Each one is created and called to become an “ecclesial being,” an integral member of the Body of Christ. Therefore, it is our responsibility as adult members of that Body, to assure that the children of our families and our parish communities are welcomed, nurtured, educated and loved with a love and faithfulness which reflect the unshakable faithfulness and crucified love which Christ offers to us.

Finally, with regard to disabled children, we need to remind ourselves constantly of one basic truth. The Innocent Victim *par excellence* is Jesus Christ Himself. It is He who has made Himself infinitely vulnerable, in order to accomplish the greatest gesture of love that we can imagine. As Suffering Servant, “He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53, 3,5).

It is precisely this image of the Suffering Servant, fulfilled in the person of Jesus, which affirms and confirms the infinite value of disabled children, and obliges us to welcome them with thankfulness and with love. The handicapped person is the very image of the suffering Son of God. In that person we have a continual confirmation of St Paul’s paradoxical observation: the power of God is made perfect in weakness (2 Cor 12:9).

The so-called “normal” child born into this world can benefit from a broad spectrum of practically inexhaustible possibilities. This is not true of the handicapped

Continued on the next page

3. DNA: deoxyribonucleic acid, the genetic “blueprint” of human life, contained in the chromosomes.

4. It is not only Down’s children who so bless a family that receives them with love. See Flannery O’Connor’s remarkable “Introduction to ‘A Memoir of Mary Ann,’” in S. and R. Fitzgerald, *Mystery and Manners* (NY: Noonday Press), 1962/1969, pp. 213-228.

5. For a brief and highly sensitive treatment of this theme, that reveals just such compassion, see Fr. John Chryssavgis, *The Body of Christ. A place of welcome for people with disabilities* (Minneapolis, MN: Light & Life Pub. Co.), 2002.

Newborn Life

Continued from page 25

newborn, who will suffer all his life the consequences of some severe malfunctioning of his body or mind. In order that his infirmity not reach to the depths of his soul, we need to assume the responsibility to welcome him with compassion, understanding, courage, and an abundance of affection. That is, to welcome him as Christ welcomes us, with our own spiritual defects, weaknesses and suffering.

Who, then, is this newborn child that comes into the world?

Whatever the state of his health, whatever his defects or disabilities, he is an icon of Christ and a gift from God, both for his family and for the Church. We, therefore, are invited to welcome him with open arms, to do for him what we are called always to do for one another: to offer him as a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to the God who is the Author of his life, just as He is of our own. "Thine own of

thine own, we offer unto thee." We should make this liturgical, priestly gesture whenever a child is born. Receiving from God the unique and infinitely precious gift of this child, we offer him back to God by our prayer and our love.

At the same time, we assume fully and without hesitation the life of this infant, whatever his mental or physical condition. Both in the family and in the ecclesial community we welcome that child as the Magi and shepherds welcomed the child Jesus. And we commit ourselves to do all in our power, in order that this child, like Jesus Himself, might grow in wisdom and stature, and that the grace of God might repose upon him.

—Archpriest John Breck

11. "To the Most Reverend Nun Xenia," 42; *The Philokalia* vol. IV, ed. Palmer, Sherrard and Ware (London: Faber and Faber, 1995), p. 310.

22. J. Fletcher, "The 'Right' to Live and the 'Right' to Die," *The Humanist* 34 (July/Aug. 1974), 12-15; see also Richard C. Sparks, *To Treat or Not to Treat. Bioethics and the Handicapped Newborn* (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), ch. 4, esp. pp. 250ff.

33. DNA: deoxyribonucleic acid, the genetic "blueprint" of hu-

man life, contained in the chromosomes.

44. It is not only Down's children who so bless a family that receives them with love. See Flannery O'Connor's remarkable "Introduction to 'A Memoir of Mary Ann,'" in S. and R. Fitzgerald, *Mystery and Manners* (NY: Noonday Press), 1962/1969, pp. 213-228.

55. For a brief and highly sensitive treatment of this theme, that reveals just such compassion, see Fr. John Chryssavgis, *The Body of Christ. A place of welcome for people with disabilities* (Minneapolis, MN: Light & Life Pub. Co.), 2002.

For an offence, whatever kind may have been given, one must not only not avenge oneself, but on the contrary must all the more forgive from the heart, even though it may resist this, and must incline the heart by conviction of the word of God: "If you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

We must not judge anyone, even if with our own eyes we have seen someone sinning, or walking in transgression of God's commandments. For according to the word of God: "Judge not, that you not be judged."

—St. Seraphim of Sarov

Silent Prayers

Continued from page 25

essential in our human understanding — to prevent the delusion that we can know God completely, and to maintain our humility before Him. God's inner being is always and forever hidden even from the perception of angels and redeemed humans, while His self-revelation is always available to those who are being saved.

If we all agree that the law of prayer (*lex orandi*) must reflect exactly and fully the law of belief (*lex credendi*), then the liturgy must have both cataphatic and apophatic aspects. It must have both words — to express the revelation of God; and silence — to indicate the ineffable. It must employ the language of the earth: words, carefully chosen and poetically sounding; and the language of heaven: noetic silence. Our liturgy, properly served, does just that. And it is not only in the spoken and silent prayers where we see this, but in the whole theology of veiling manifest in the liturgy: the priest's vestments, the veils of the chalice and paten, the iconostasis and curtain, the opening and closing of doors — all these manifest the liturgy's constant interplay of the *lex credendi* of our Orthodox faith. Without this interplay,

the full truth and poetic beauty of our Church are compromised and ultimately desecrated.

Vis.: My goodness! This is serious business.

Fr. A.: You see why I feel strongly about this.

Vis.: We do, indeed. We are very grateful to you.

Fr. A.: I am thankful for your kind attention. May God's grace and love be with you.

— Archpriest Theodore Heckman



Metropolitan Herman celebrating the Divine Liturgy with Bishop Nikolai at the Chapel in Spruce Island

A Miracle on Mount Tabor

Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord, 1993

Editor's note: our previous issue featured an article about the Holy Fire in Jerusalem. Of related interest is a tradition of another miracle, this one at the feast-day of the Transfiguration of our Lord on Mount Tabor. T. and F. Markovitsy of Cabramatta, Australia, describe events that were observed in 1993. Their account, originally published in the Sept.-Oct. 1993 issue of Orthodox Life, is reprinted here by permission.

Our daughter Anna was a witness to a miraculous vision above the Greek Monastery early in the morning on Mount Tabor during the Feast of the Transfiguration. She retold her experience in detail to us requesting that we pass on her experience to others.

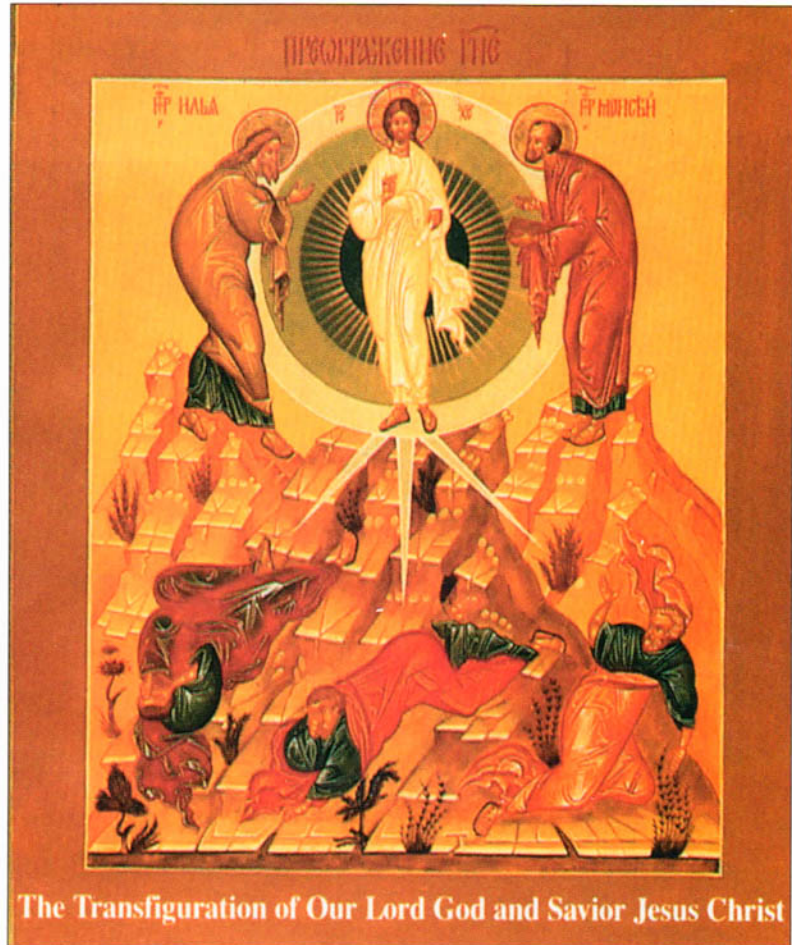
There is a custom among Orthodox Greeks, Arabs, and Russians to come to Mount Tabor on the Feast of the Transfiguration. According to tradition, on the day of the Transfiguration a cloud descends on the Greek Monastery located on the mountain. On this year's Feast day Anna was given a monastery car and, together with nuns and her husband Dmitry, she traveled to the services on Mount Tabor. It took three hours to reach Mount Tabor from Jerusalem where the Greeks serve matins and liturgy during the night, as on Pascha. Their group arrived at Mount Tabor before the beginning of matins where many people had already gathered. It was hot and stifling in the church. Outside, all around, the Orthodox Arabs celebrated . . . The service started after midnight. They served in Greek, though the Gospel was read in many languages. It was difficult to remain to the end of the service due to the heat and the shoving. The nuns and Dmitry received Communion, and after the final blessing they decided to go home. First they decided to go to the sea of Galilee and rest on the shore and wait until sunrise to return to Jerusalem. But fatigue overcame them, and they decided to simply drive across the courtyard and park their car near the Catholic monastery. They arrived at the monastery,

turned off the engine, and situated themselves. The nuns took a blanket and spread it under the trees. Anna and Dmitry lowered the seats and decided to sleep in the car. The noisy crowds could still be heard from the mountain, but could not disturb their sleeping, for it was already three o'clock in the morning.

Suddenly, around four o'clock, Dmitry arose and awoke Anna. There was a dead silence, and one could see in front of the car, above the Greek monastery, how a cloud descended from the sky. It was quiet all around, there was no breeze or noise. The crowd was silent. Dmitry and Anna jumped out of the car and woke the nuns. They all gazed and began to pray with tears. The cloud descended right onto the monastery, and suddenly grace-filled fire

began to burst forth from it, like on Pascha, except much more so. Suddenly the whole roof of the monastery was on fire, then there was fire in the trees, then the fire, like tongues of light, shot out from the cloud, then the fire was among the crowd. This miracle of the Holy Fire continued for two hours.

At dawn everything disappeared leaving everyone who had seen the vision in a state of inexplicable spiritual inspiration and fear. Having returned to the monastery, they told everyone of their vision and were asked to spread the information to everyone. The Greeks explained that since in the beginning, the Transfiguration happened before the sufferings of the Saviour, that this new vision was a forewarning of some event to come.



The Transfiguration of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ

An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith

by St. John of Damascus

Part XIV

In this part of the fourth and last book of his work on the Orthodox faith, the great Damascene theologian and monk discusses the nature of Eucharistic mystery, Christ's genealogy, the Theotokos, and the honor due to the saints, their relics, and icons.

4.13 About the holy and immaculate Mysteries of the Lord.

God, who is good and altogether good and more than good, who is goodness throughout, by reason of the exceeding riches of his goodness did not permit only himself, that is his nature, to be good, with no other to participate in it, but because of this he made first the spiritual and heavenly powers; next the visible and perceptible universe; next man with his spiritual and sentient nature. Therefore, all things which he made share in his goodness in respect of their existence.¹ For he himself is existence to all, since all things that are, are in him,² not only because it was he that brought them out of nothing into being, but because his energy preserves and maintains all that he made, and especially



the living creatures. For both in that they exist and in that they enjoy life they share in his goodness. But in truth those of them that have reason have a still greater share in that, both because of what has been already said and also because of the very reason which they possess. For they are somehow more dearly akin to him, even though he is incomparably higher than they.

Man, however, being endowed with reason and free will, received the power of continuous union with God through his own choice, if indeed he should abide in goodness, that is in obedience to his Maker. Since, however, he transgressed the command of his Creator and became liable to death and corruption, the Creator and Maker of our race, because of the depths of his compassion,³ took on our

likeness, becoming man in all things but without sin, and was united to our nature.⁴ For since he bestowed on us his own image and his own spirit and we did not keep them safe, he took himself a share in our poor and weak nature, in order that he might cleanse us and make us incorruptible, and establish us once more as partakers of his divinity.

For it was fitting that not only the firstfruits of our nature⁵ should partake in the higher good but every man who wished it, and that a second birth should take

place and that the nourishment should be new and suitable to the birth, and that, in this manner, the measure of perfection should be attained. Through his birth, that is, his incarnation, and baptism and passion and resurrection, he delivered our nature from the sin of our first parent and death and corruption, and became the firstfruits of the resurrection, and made himself the way and image and pattern, in order that we, too, following in his footsteps, may become by adoption what he is himself by nature,⁶ sons and heirs of God and joint heirs with him. He gave us therefore, as I said, a second birth in order that, just as we who are born of Adam are in

1. This statement reflects the teachings that (1) goodness is more basic, more fundamental to God's nature than his very existence is; and (2) creation is "very good," and remains so, even despite the fall. (Cf. Gen. 1:31). The evil that attaches to creation as the result of the fall is only incidental, to creation; it does not belong to the inner essence of creation, but is an external (and foreign) influence which can, therefore, be removed.

2. Rom. 11:36.

3. literally, "his bowels of" compassion (this is the biblical phrase); see the book *Out of the Depths* by Met. Philip Saliba and Jos. Allen.

4. Heb. 2:17.

5. "firstfruits of our nature": that is, Jesus Christ.

6. Rom. 7:17.

his image and are the heirs of the curse and corruption, so also being born of him⁷ we may be in his likeness and heirs of his incorruption and blessing and glory.

Now seeing that this Adam is spiritual, it was fitting that both the birth and likewise the food should be spiritual too, but since we are of a double and compound nature, it is fitting that both the birth should be double and likewise the food compound. We were therefore given a birth by water and Spirit: I mean, by the holy baptism;⁸ and the food is the very bread of life, our Lord Jesus Christ, who came down from heaven.⁹ For when he was about to take on himself a voluntary death for our sakes, on the night on which he gave himself up, he laid a new covenant on his holy disciples and apostles, and through them on all who believe on him. In the upper chamber, then, of holy and illustrious Sion, after he had eaten the ancient Passover with his disciples and had fulfilled the ancient covenant, he washed his disciples' feet¹⁰ in token of the holy baptism. Then having broken bread he gave it to them saying, "Take, eat, this is my body broken for you for the remission of sins."¹¹ Likewise also he took the cup of wine and water and gave it to them saying, "Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood, the blood of the New Testament which is shed for you for the remission of sins. Do this in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you show forth the death of the Son of man and confess his resurrection until he comes."¹²

If then the Word of God is quick and energizing,¹³ and the Lord did all that he willed;¹⁴ if he said, "Let there be light" and there was light, "Let there be a firmament" and there was a firmament;¹⁵ if the heavens were established by the Word of the Lord and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth;¹⁶ if the heaven and the earth, water and fire and air and the whole glory of these, and, in truth, this most noble creature, man, were perfected by the Word of the Lord; if God the Word of his own will became man and the pure and undefiled blood of the holy and ever-virginal one

made his flesh without the aid of seed, can he not then make the bread his body and the wine and water his blood? He said in the beginning, "Let the earth bring forth grass," and even until this present day, when the rain comes it brings forth its proper fruits, urged on and strengthened by the divine command. God said, "This is my body," and "This is my blood," and "Do this in remembrance of me." And it is so, by his omnipotent [all-powerful] command, till he comes; for it was in this sense that he said "until he come"; and the overshadowing power of the Holy Spirit becomes, through the invocation, the rain to this new cultivation. For just as God made all that he made by the energy [activity, operation] of the Holy Spirit, so also now the energy of the Spirit performs those things that are above nature and which it is not possible to comprehend except by faith alone. "How shall this be," said the holy Virgin, "seeing I know not a man?" And the archangel Gabriel answered her: "The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you."¹⁷ And now you ask how the bread became Christ's body and the wine and water Christ's blood. And I say to you, "The Holy Spirit is present and does those things which surpass reason and thought."

Further, bread and wine are employed, because God knows man's infirmity; for in general man turns away discontentedly from what is not well-worn by custom. And so with his usual indulgence he performs his supernatural works through familiar objects; and just as in the case of baptism, since it is man's custom to wash himself with water and anoint himself with oil, he connected the grace of the Spirit with the oil and the water and made it the water of regeneration [rebirth] — in like manner since it is man's custom to eat and to drink water and wine, he connected his divinity with these and made them his body and blood in order that we may rise to what is supernatural through what is familiar and natural.

The body which is born of the holy Virgin is in truth body united with divinity, not that the body which was received up into the heavens descends,¹⁸ but that the bread itself and the wine are changed into God's body and blood. But if you inquire how this happens, it is enough for you to learn that it was through the Holy

Spirit, just as also, from the holy Theotokos through the Spirit, the Lord took to himself and in himself flesh.¹⁹ And we know nothing further except that the Word of God is true and acting, and is omnipotent, but the manner of this cannot be searched out. But one can put it well thus: that just as in nature the bread by the eating and the wine and the water by the drinking are changed into the body and blood of the eater and drinker, and do not become a different body from the former one, so the bread of the *prothesis*²⁰ and the wine and water are supernaturally changed by the invocation and presence of the Holy Spirit into the body and blood of Christ, and are not two but one and the same.

So, to those who partake worthily with faith, it is for the remission of sins and for life everlasting and for the safeguarding of soul and body; but to those who partake unworthily without faith, it is for chastisement and punishment, just as also the death of the Lord became to those who believe life and incorruption for the enjoyment of eternal blessedness, while to those who do not believe and to the murderers of the Lord, it is for everlasting chastisement and punishment.

The bread and the wine are not merely figures [types, images] of the body and blood of Christ (this cannot be!) but the Lord's deified body itself; for the Lord said, "This is my body," not "This is a figure of my body"; and "my blood," not "a figure of my blood." And on a previous occasion he had said to the Jews, "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood you have no life in you. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink." And again, "He who feeds on²¹ me shall live."²²

Therefore with all fear and a pure conscience and certain faith let us draw near and it will assuredly be to us as we believe, doubting nothing. Let us pay hom-

19. *in himself*: Christ's flesh, his humanity, subsisted within his hypostasis (person), being united with his divinity within the hypostasis.

20. *prothesis*, "setting forth": refers to the gifts which are offered in the eucharist, also, to the table of oblation where these are prepared, i.e. where the *proskomedia* is performed.

21. The verb here translated "feeds on" is in Greek *trogen*. This word is not a form of *esthein*, the usual verb "to eat." Rather, *trogen* is a form of *trogein* which means "crunch, gnaw." Thus, Christ literally teaches— here as earlier in John chapter 6 — that to have eternal life we must "crunch" or "gnaw" his flesh. This graphic way of speaking excludes the heretical notions that the eucharistic bread and wine do not become in a true sense Christ's Body and Blood, or that we partake of them in some sense "spiritually" but not through partaking of the Bread and Wine, or that they gifts are Christ's Body and Blood only for those who believe them to be such.

22. John 6:51-55. Many manuscripts add "life eternal"; i.e. "shall live eternal life."

7. born of him: i.e., the second Adam, Christ.

8. John 3:3.

9. John 6:48.

10. John 13.

11. Liturgy of St. James and of St. John; cf. Matt. 26:26; 1

Cor. 11:24 (Orthodox text).

12. Matt. 26:27-28 and parallels; 1 Cor. 11:24-26.

13. Heb. 4:12.

14. Ps. 134:6 LXX.

15. Gen. 1:3,6.

16. Ps. 32:6 LXX.

17. Luke 1:34-35.

18. descends: i.e. when the divine liturgy is performed.

Continued on the next page

Exact Exposition

Continued from page 39

age to it in all purity both of soul and body, for it is twofold. Let us draw near to it with an ardent desire, and with our hands held in the form of the cross let us receive the body of the Crucified; and, directing our eyes and lips and brows, let us partake of the divine coal in order that the fire of the longing that is in us, with the additional heat derived from the coal, may utterly consume our sins and enlighten our hearts, and that we may be inflamed and deified by the participation in the divine fire. Isaiah saw the coal.²³ But coal is not plain wood, but wood united with fire; in a similar way as well, the bread of the communion is not plain bread but bread united with divinity. But a body which is united with divinity is not one nature, but has one nature belonging to the body and another belonging to the divinity that is united to it, so that the compound is not one nature but two.

With bread and wine, Melchisedek, the priest of the most high God, received Abraham on his return from the slaughter of the foreign tribes.²⁴ That table formed in advance an image of this mystical table, just as that priest was a type and image of Christ, the true high priest.²⁵ "For you are a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek."²⁶ Of this bread, the show-bread was an image.²⁷ This surely is that pure and bloodless sacrifice which the Lord, through the prophet, said is offered to him from the rising to the setting of the sun.²⁸

The body and blood of Christ are making for the support of our soul and body, without being consumed or suffering decay, not making for the draught (this cannot be), but for our being and preservation, a protection against all kinds of injury, a purging from all uncleanness: should one receive base gold, they purify it by the critical burning lest in the future we be condemned with this world.²⁹ They purify from diseases and all kinds of calamities; according to the words of the divine Apostle:³⁰ "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But

when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." This too is what he says, "So that he who partakes of the body and blood of Christ unworthily, eats and drinks condemnation to himself."³¹ Being purified by this, we are united to the body of Christ and to his Spirit and become the body of Christ.

This bread is the firstfruits of the future bread which is *epiousios*, i.e. necessary for existence. For the word *epiousion* signifies either the future, that is him who is for a future age, or else him of whom we partake for the preservation of our essence.³² Whether then it is in this sense or that, it is fitting to speak so of the Lord's body. For the Lord's flesh is life-giving spirit because it was conceived of the life-giving Spirit. For what is born of the Spirit is spirit. But I do not say this to take away the nature of the body, but I wish to make clear its life-giving and divine power.³³

But if some persons called the bread and the wine "antitypes" of the body and blood of the Lord, as did the divinely inspired Basil,³⁴ they said so not after the consecration but before the consecration, so calling the offering itself.

Participation is spoken of; for through it we partake of the divinity of Jesus. Communion, too, is spoken of, and it is an actual communion [fellowship], because through it we have communion with Christ and share in his flesh and his divinity: yes, we have communion and are united with one another through it. For since we partake of one bread, we all become one body of Christ and one blood, and members one of another, being of one body with Christ.³⁵

With all our strength, therefore, let us beware lest we receive communion from, or grant it to heretics: "Give not that which is holy to the dogs, says the Lord, neither cast your pearls before swine,"³⁶ lest we become partakers in their dishonor and condemnation. For if there is union in truth with Christ and with one another, we are assuredly voluntarily united also with all

those who partake with us. For this union is effected voluntarily and not against our inclination. "For we are all one body because we partake of the one bread," as the divine Apostle says.³⁷

Further, "antitypes" of future things are spoken of, not as though they were not in reality Christ's body and blood, but that now we partake of Christ's divinity through them, while then we shall partake mentally through the vision alone.³⁸

4.14 *About our Lord's genealogy, and about the holy Theotokos.*

Concerning the holy and supremely-hymned ever-virgin and Theotokos Mary, we have said something in the preceding chapters, bringing forward what was most opportune, namely, that accurately and truly she is, and is called, the Mother of God. Now let us fill in the blanks. For, being preordained by the eternal foreknowing counsel of God and imaged forth [prefigured] and proclaimed in diverse images and discourses of the prophets through the Holy Spirit, she sprang at the predetermined time from the root of David, according to the promises that were made to him. "For the Lord has sworn," he says "in truth to David, he will not turn from it: of the fruit of your body will I set upon your throne."³⁹ And again, "Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie to David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven."⁴⁰ And Isaiah says: "And there shall come out a rod from the stem of Jesse and a branch shall grow out of his roots."⁴¹

But it is expressly demonstrated by Matthew and Luke, the most holy evangelists, that Joseph is descended from the tribe of David. But Matthew derives Joseph from David through Solomon, while Luke does so through Nathan; while both pass in silence over the holy Virgin's origin.

One ought to remember that it was not the custom of the Hebrews nor of the divine Scripture to give genealogies of women; and the law was to prevent one

23. Isa. 6:6.

24. Gen. 14:18.

25. Lev. 14.

26. Ps. 109:4 LXX.

27. I.e. the show-bread, which was kept in a jar on the altar in the tabernacle under the Old Covenant of the Jews, was an image of the eucharistic bread of holy communion.

28. Mal. 1:2.

29. Just as impure gold is refined in a crucible, we are refined by partaking of the Eucharist.

30. 1 Cor. 11:32-33.

31. 1 Cor. 11:29.

32. St. John is referring here to the words from the Lord's Prayer, which are usually translated, "Give us this day our daily bread." *Epiousios* is the Greek word that is rendered "daily." *Epiousios* in a literal sense means "above essence" or "superessential," "supersubstantial," but more generally it has — as Damascene explains — two meanings: "necessary" or "for the morrow." I.e. "Give us this day our necessary bread," or "give us this day our bread for the morrow" (or for the future), since Christ is "he who is for a future age."

33. John 6:63.

34. Liturgy of St. Basil.

35. *Ibid.*: "And unite all of us to one another who become partakers of the one Bread and Cup in the communion of the Holy Spirit." Cf. Rom. 12:5.

36. Matt. 7:6.

37. 1 Cor. 10:17.

38. Once consecrated, the holy gifts are not antitypes of Christ's Body and Blood but are themselves the Body and Blood. But they are *antitypes* in two senses: before being consecrated, with reference to the divine Body and Blood which they will become; and after they are consecrated, with reference to the future life when we will partake of Christ directly without the need for the eucharistic gifts.

39. Ps. 131:11 LXX.

40. Ps. 88:35-37 LXX.

41. Isa. 41:1.

tribe seeking wives from another.⁴² And so since Joseph was descended from the tribe of David and was a just man (for the divine Gospel testifies to this), he would not have espoused the holy Virgin contrary to the law; he would not have taken her unless she had been of the same tribe. It was sufficient, therefore, to demonstrate the descent of Joseph.

One also should take notice of this, that the law was that when a man died without seed, this man's brother should take to wife the wife of the dead man and raise up seed to his brother.⁴³ The offspring, therefore, belonged by nature to the second, that is, to him that begot it, but by

died childless, and Jacob his brother, of the tribe of Solomon, took his wife and raised up seed to his brother and begot Joseph. Joseph, therefore, is by nature the son of Jacob, of the line of Solomon, but by law he is the son of Heli of the line of Nathan.

Joachim accordingly took to wife that revered and praiseworthy woman, Anna. But just as the earlier Anna⁴⁴ who was barren, bore Samuel by prayer and by promise, so also this Anna by supplication and promise from God bore the Theotokos, in order that she might not even in this be behind the illustrious ones. Accordingly it was grace (for this is the trans-

temple fit for the most high God.

Moreover, since the enemy of our salvation was keeping a watchful eye on virgins, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, who said, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son and shall call his name Emmanuel, which is, being interpreted, 'God with us,'" ⁴⁶ in order that he who "takes the wise in their own craftiness"⁴⁷ may deceive him who always glories in his wisdom, the maiden is given in marriage to Joseph by the priests, a new book to him who is versed in letters;⁴⁸ but the marriage was both the protection of the virgin and the delusion of him who was keeping a watchful eye on virgins. Now when the fullness of time was come, the messenger of the Lord was sent to her, with the good news of our Lord's conception. And thus she conceived the Son of God, the hypostatic power of the Father, "not of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man,"⁴⁹ that is to say, by connection and seed, but by the Father's good pleasure and the Holy Spirit's cooperation. She ministered to the Creator in that he was created, to the Fashioner in that he was fashioned, and to the Son of God and God in that he was made flesh and became man from her pure and immaculate flesh and blood, satisfying the debt of the first mother. For just as the latter was formed from Adam without connection, so also did the former bring forth the new Adam, who was brought forth in accordance with the laws of parturition and above the nature of generation.

For he who was of the Father, yet without mother, was born of woman without a father's cooperation. And so far as he was born of woman, his birth was in accordance with the laws of parturition, while so far as he had no father, his birth was above the nature of generation; and in that it was at the usual time (for he was born on the completion of the ninth month when the tenth was just beginning), his birth was in accordance with the laws of parturition, while in that it was painless it was above the laws of generation. For, as pleasure did not precede it, pain did not follow it, according to the prophet who says, "Before she travailed, she brought forth, and again, before her pain came she was delivered of a man-child."⁵⁰ The incarnate Son of God, therefore, was born of her, not a di-



law to the dead.

So, born of the line of Nathan, the son of David, Levi engendered [begot] Melchi and Panther; Panther engendered Barpanther, so called. This Barpanther engendered Joachim; Joachim engendered the holy Theotokos. And of the line of Solomon, the son of David, Mathan had a wife of whom he begot Jacob. Now on the death of Mathan, Melchi, of the tribe of Nathan, the son of Levi and brother of Panther, married the wife of Mathan, Jacob's mother, of whom he begot Heli. Therefore Jacob and Heli became brothers on the mother's side, Jacob being of the tribe of Solomon and Heli of the tribe of Nathan. Then Heli of the tribe of Nathan

litation of "Anna") that bore the lady, for this is what Mary's title⁴⁵ signifies; for she truly became the Lady of all created things in becoming the Mother of the Creator. Further, she was in the house of Joachim, of the Sheep-Gate, and was brought up to the temple. Then planted in the House of God and increased by the Spirit, like a fruitful olive tree, she became the home of every virtue, turning her mind away from every secular and carnal desire, and thus keeping her soul as well as her body virginal, as was proper for her who was to receive God into her bosom. For as he is holy, he finds rest among the holy [saints]. Thus, therefore, she strove after holiness, and was declared a holy and wonderful

42. Num 36:6ff.
43. Deut. 25:5.

44. Heb. Hannah. 1 Sam. 1:2.
45. Grk. *onoma*.

46. Isa. 7:14, Matt. 1:23.
47. 1 Cor. 3:19, Job 5:13.
48. Isa. 29:11.
49. John 1:13.
50. Isa. 66:7.

Continued on the next page

Exact Exposition

Continued from page 41

vinely-inspired man but God incarnate; not a prophet anointed with energy but by the presence of the anointing One in his completeness, so that the Anointer became man and the Anointed [became] God, not by a change of nature but by union in the hypostasis [subsistence, "Person"]. For the Anointer and the Anointed were one and the same, anointing, in the capacity of God, himself as man. How is she not, therefore, the Theotokos, who from herself gave birth to the incarnate God? Truly, rightly, and in all correctness, is she Theotokos [Birthgiver of God, Bearer of God] and Lady and Mistress over all created things, who played the part of the Creator's servant and mother. But just as he who was conceived kept her who conceived still virgin, in the same way too, he who was born preserved her virginity intact, only passing through her and keeping her closed.⁵¹ The conception, indeed, was through the sense of hearing, but the birth through the usual path by which children come, although some tell tales of his birth through the side⁵² of the Mother of God. For it was not impossible for him to have come by this gate, without injuring her seal in any way.⁵³

The ever-virgin One thus remains still virgin even after the birth, having never at any time up till death consorted with a man. For although it is written, "And knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born Son,"⁵⁴ yet note that he who is first-begotten is first-born even if he is only-begotten. For the word "first-born" means that he was born first but does not at all suggest the birth of others. And the word "till" [Gk. *eos*] signifies the limit of the appointed time but does not exclude the time thereafter. For the Lord says, "And see, I am with you always, even till [Gk. *eos*] the end of the age,"⁵⁵ not meaning by that that he will be separated from us after the completion of the age. Indeed, the di-

vine apostle says, "And so shall we ever be with the Lord,"⁵⁶ meaning after the general resurrection.

For could it be possible that she who had borne God, and from experience of the subsequent events had come to know the miracle, should receive the embrace of a man. Away with this thought! It is not the part of a chaste mind to think such things, far less to commit such acts.

But this blessed woman, who was deemed worthy of gifts that are supernatural, suffered those pains which she escaped at the birth, in the hour of the passion, enduring from motherly sympathy the convulsing of her bowels, and when she saw him whom she knew by the manner of his generation to be God, being destroyed like a criminal, her thoughts pierced her as a sword, and this is the meaning of this verse: "And a sword shall pierce through your own soul also."⁵⁷ But the joy of the resurrection transforms the pain, proclaiming him who died in the flesh, to be God.

4.15 *About the honor due to the saints and their remains [relics].*

Honor must be paid to the saints as friends of Christ, as children and heirs of God; in the words of John the theologian and evangelist, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become children of God";⁵⁸ "So they are no longer servants, but sons; and if sons, also heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ."⁵⁹ And the Lord in the holy Gospels says to his apostles, "You are my friends [. . .] No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing."⁶⁰ And further, if the Creator and Lord of all things is called also King of kings and Lord of lords⁶¹ and God of gods, surely also the saints are gods and lords and kings. For God is and is called God

and Lord and King of these. For "I am the God of Abraham," he said to Moses, "the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob."⁶² And God made Moses a god to Pharaoh.⁶³ Now I mean gods and kings and lords not in nature, but as rulers and masters of their passions, and as preserving a truthful likeness to the divine image according to which they were made (for the image of a king is also called king), and as being united to God of their own freewill and receiving him as an indweller and becoming by grace through participation with him what he is himself by nature. How,



then, can the worshippers and friends and sons of God not be held in honor? For the honor shown to the most thoughtful of fellow-servants is a proof of good feeling towards the common Master.

These are made treasuries and pure habitations of God: "For I will dwell in them," said God, "and walk in them, and I will be their God."⁶⁴ The divine Scripture likewise says that the "souls of the righteous are in the hand of God and death shall not lay hold of them."⁶⁵ For death is rather the sleep of the saints than their death. "For they travailed in this life and shall live forever,"⁶⁶ "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."⁶⁷ What then, is more precious than to be in the hand of God? For God is life and light, and those who are in God's hand are in life and light.

Further, the Apostle tells us that God dwelt even in their bodies in a spiritual way, saying, "Do you not know that your

51. Ezek. 44:2.

52. Side: Gk. *pleuras*, "side," "rib." There is theological, if not literal truth to this explanation of Christ's birth. The holy fathers explain that from the side, or rib, of the first Adam came Eve who led the world into sin; but the second Eve, Mary, more than made amends for this slip, because she gave birth, from her "side," to the second Adam who not only restored man's fall but also led him up to heaven.

53. Just as the passage from Ezek. (see note 51) suggests, St. John implies that Christ could have been and was born through the normal birth channel without harming Mary's virginity in any way. This is consistent with the Church's hymnography and iconography, which teach that her virginity was intact before, during and after the birth of Christ.

54. Matt. 1:25.

55. Matt. 28:20.

56. 1 Thess. 4:17.

57. Luke 2:35.

58. John 1:12.

59. Gal. 4:7, Rom. 8:17.

60. John 15:14-15.

61. Rev. 19:16.

62. Exod. 3:6.

63. Exod. 7:1.

64. Lev. 26:12, 2 Cor 6:16.

65. Wisd. 3:1.

66. Psa. 39:9, 10 LXX.

67. Psa. 115:15 LXX.

bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit dwelling in you?"⁶⁸ and "The Lord is that Spirit,⁶⁹ and "If any one destroy the temple of God, God will destroy him."⁷⁰ Surely, then, we must ascribe honor to the living temples of God, the living tabernacles of God. These, while they lived, stood with confidence before God.

The Master Christ made the relics [remains] of the saints to be fountains of salvation to us, pouring forth manifold blessings and abounding in fragrant myrrh; and let no one disbelieve this. For if water burst in the desert from the steep and solid rock



at God's will and from a donkey's jawbone to quench Samson's thirst,⁷¹ is it incredible that fragrant oil should gush from the martyrs' remains? By no means, at least to those who know the power of God and the honor which he accords his saints.

In the law every one who touches a dead body was considered impure, but these are not dead. For from the time when he who is himself life and the cause of life was reckoned among the dead, we do not call those dead who have fallen asleep in the hope of the resurrection and in faith on him. For how could a dead body work miracles? How, therefore, are demons driven off by them, diseases dispelled, sick persons made well, the blind restored to sight, lepers purified, temptations and troubles overcome, and how does every good gift from the Father of lights come down through them to those who pray with sure faith? How much labor would you not undergo to find a patron to introduce you to a mortal king and speak to him on your behalf? So, are not those who are the pa-

trons of the whole race, and make intercession to God for us, worthy of honor? Yes, certainly, we ought to give honor to them by raising temples to God in their name, bringing them fruit-offerings, honoring their memories and delighting in them spiritually, in order that the joy of those who encourage us to such celebration may be ours, that in our attempts at worship we may not on the contrary cause them offense. For those who worship God will take pleasure in those things by which God is worshipped, while his shield-bearers will be angry at those things with which God is angered. In psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,⁷² in contrition and in pity for the needy, let us believers do service to the saints, as God also is served in these things. Let us raise to them monuments and visible icons [images], and let us ourselves become, through imitation of their virtues, living monuments and icons of them. Let us give honor, as being strictly and truly the Theotokos, to her who bore God. Let us honor also the forerunner John as prophet and baptist, as apostle and martyr, For "among those who are born of women there has not risen a greater than John the Baptist,"⁷³ as the Lord says, and he became the first to proclaim the kingdom. The apostles, let us honor as the Lord's brothers, who saw him face to face and ministered to his sufferings, for those whom the God and Father "foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son," "first apostles, second prophets," third "pastors and teachers."⁷⁴ Let us also honor the martyrs of the Lord chosen out of every class, as soldiers of Christ who have drunk his cup and were then baptized with the baptism of his life-bringing death, to be partakers of his passion and glory: the leader of whom is Stephen, the first deacon of Christ and apostle and first martyr. Also let us honor our holy fathers, the God-possessed ascetics, whose struggle was the longer and more toilsome

one of the conscience; "who wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; they wandered in deserts and in mountains and in dens and caves of the earth, of whom the world was not worthy."⁷⁵ Let us honor those who were prophets⁷⁶ before the grace, the patriarchs and righteous men who foretold the coming of the Lord. Let us carefully review the life of these men, and let us emulate their faith⁷⁷ and love and hope and zeal and way of life, and endurance of sufferings and patience even to blood, in order that we may be sharers with them in their crowns of glory.

4.16 About icons.

But since some find fault with us when we venerate [bow before] and honor the image of our Saviour and [that] of our Lady, and those also of the rest of the saints and servants of Christ, let them remember that in the beginning God created man after his own image.⁷⁸ On what grounds, then, do we show reverence to one another except as being made after God's image? For as Basil, that very learned expounder of divine things, says, "the honor given to the image passes over to the prototype." Now a prototype is that which is imaged, from which the derivative is obtained. Why was it that the Mosaic people honored from every side the tabernacle⁷⁹ which bore an image and type of heavenly things, or rather of the whole creation? God indeed said to Moses, "See that you make them after their pattern which was shown you on the mountain."⁸⁰ And the Cherubim, which overshadow the mercy seat, are they not the work of men's hands? Furthermore, what is the celebrated Temple at Jerusalem? Is it not handmade and fashioned by the skill of men?⁸¹

Moreover the divine Scripture blames those who worship graven images, but also those who sacrifice to demons. The Greeks sacrificed and the Jews also sacrificed, but the Greeks [sacrificed] to demons and the Jews to God. And the sacrifice of the Greeks was rejected and condemned, but the sacrifice of the righteous was very acceptable to God. For Noah sacrificed, and "God smelled a sweet savour,"⁸² receiving the fragrance of the right choice and

68. 1 Cor 3:16.

69. 2 Cor 3:17.

70. 1 Cor 3:17.

71. Exod. 17:6, Jud. 15:17.

72. Ephes. 5:19.

73. Matt. 11:11.

74. Rom. 8:29, 1 Cor. 12:28, Eph. 4:11

75. Heb. 11:37-38.

76. Grk. *prophetas*, pre-speakers.

77. Heb. 13:7.

78. Gen. 1:26.

79. Exod. 33:10.

80. Exod. 25:40, Heb. 8:5.

81. 1 Kings 8.

82. Gen 8:21.

Continued on the next page

Exact Exposition

Continued from page 43

goodwill towards him. On the other hand, the graven images of the Greeks, since they were images of deities, were rejected and forbidden.

But besides this, who can make an imitation of the invisible, incorporeal, uncircumscribed, formless God? Therefore to give form to the Divine is the height of folly and impiety. And so it is that in the Old Testament the use of images was not common. But after God, in his tender-hearted mercy⁸³ became in truth a human being for our salvation — not as he was seen by Abraham in the resemblance of a man nor as he was seen by the prophets, but in being truly man — and after he lived upon the earth and dwelled among people, worked miracles, suffered, was crucified, rose again and was taken back to heaven, since all these things actually took place and were seen by people, they were written for the remembrance and instruction of us who were not alive at that time in

83. lit., bowels of pity (a biblical phrase, cf. 1 John 3:17 etc.).

84. Both the cross bearing Christ's image and the one not bearing it, are venerated, because both typify and bring to mind Christ who was crucified on the Cross. This proves that in neither case is honor being given to the matter of the image of the cross but instead it passes over to the prototypes, to the original cross and more especially to Christ who was crucified on it.

order that though we did not see, we may, hearing and believing, still obtain the blessing of the Lord. But since not every one has a knowledge of letters nor time for reading, the Fathers gave their sanction to depicting these events in icons [images] as being acts of great heroism, in order that they should form a concise memorial of them. Without doubt, often, when we do not have the Lord's passion in mind and we see the image of Christ's crucifixion, his saving passion is brought back to memory, and we fall down and venerate not the material, but that which is imaged; just as we do not venerate the matter of the Gospel [book], nor the material of the Cross, but that which these typify. For in what does the cross that does not have the representation of the Lord, differ from one that has it?⁸⁴ It is just the same also in the case of the Mother of God. For the honor which we give to her is referred to him who was made incarnate from her. And similarly also the brave acts of holy men stir us up to be brave and to emulate and imitate their valor and to glorify God. For as we said, the honor that is given to the best of fellow-servants is a proof of goodwill towards our common Lady, and the honor rendered to the image passes over to the prototype. But this

is an unwritten tradition, just as is also the worshipping towards the East and the worship of the Cross, and very many other similar things.

A certain tale, too, is told, how Abgar,⁸⁵ when he was king over the city of the Edessenes, sent a portrait painter to paint a likeness of the Lord, and when the painter could not paint because of the brightness that shone from his countenance, the Lord himself put a garment over his own divine and life-giving face and impressed on it an image of himself and in this way sent it to Abgar⁸⁶ who desired this.

Moreover Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, tells us in these words that the Apostles handed down much that was unwritten: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you have been taught by us, whether by word or by our epistle."⁸⁷ And to the Corinthians he writes, "Now I praise you, brothers, that you remember me in all things, and keep the traditions just as I have delivered them to you."⁸⁸

To be continued.

85. Text: Augarus.

86. See previous note.

87. 2 Thess 2:15.

88. 1 Cor. 11:2.



Metropolitan Herman before the holy relics of St. Herman of Alaska at the Holy Resurrection Church in Kodiak

St. Tikhon's Summer Camp 2002

"These Truths We Hold"



Amidst the rolling hills of South Canaan with sunshine and comfortable summer climate, boys and girls arrived in anticipation of a week filled with sports, swimming, and friendship at the annual St. Tikhon's Summer Youth Camp held July 7-13, 2002 on the St. Tikhon Seminary grounds.

This year, 142 campers ages seven through thirteen gathered from around the diocese, as well as from western Pennsylvania and neighboring states of Ohio, New Jersey, New York, Delaware and points farther south. The camp was under Martin Paluch's leadership and the Very Rev. Basil Stoyka served as camp chaplain. Camp nurse was Mrs. Catherine Terry. Again this year, Fr. John Onofrey and his staff coordinated food preparation, and Matushka Myra Kovalak took charge of supervising the dormitory.

This year's theme, *These Truths We Hold*, was chosen by our Metropolitan Herman (who, when camp took place prior to the election at the All-American Council, was still our diocesan Archbishop). The theme's intent was to present basic truths about our Orthodox faith so that campers might increase their understanding of the rich inheritance they have received as Orthodox Christians.

One of our aims was to help our Orthodox children express basic Orthodox beliefs, using the terms our Church uses in expressing her theology. We wanted to help them strengthen their understanding of a spiritual life rooted in prayer, fasting, confession, and communion, and liturgical worship in the Body of Christ. As they



lived through the camp week, we hoped the children would express their Orthodox Christianity as a faith of love of God and love of neighbor.

The campers were given such opportunities as they took part in workshop activities, daily worship at morning and evening prayers, and just as they lived their faith with one another in the dormitory and on the grounds during the week. The children were required to attend vespers and Divine Liturgy, and they sang responses under the direction of Mr. Michael Mellin. Many campers volunteered to read prayers and epistles during the services. Priests were available to hear confessions in preparation for Holy Communion at Saturday's Divine Liturgy.

Grouped according to age designations of 7/8s, 9/10s, and 11-13, campers rotated daily in activities of swimming, sports and recreation, and workshops. There were choir rehearsals and crafts sessions, time for letter writing, and time for lounging with friends. All campers shared in kitchen duty and cleanup time in the dormitory. And plenty of water was made available to campers daily at all points on the grounds.

Many teens attended as well — those

Continued on the next page

Summer Camp 2002

Continued from 45

Persistent Campers (PCs) so named because, having enjoyed camp and friendships so much, they return year after year. The PCs followed a separate track of programming devised by Fr. Andrew Diehl and Matushka Suzanna Diehl.

Archbishop Herman visited with campers at the Sunday and Thursday evening cookouts and joined them at the Monday evening supper in the trapeza. He was also the main celebrant at Divine Liturgy on Saturday.

Samantha Glassman, age 12, from Holy Cross Orthodox Church received the Good Samaritan Camp Award. This award is given to honor the camper who, like the Good Samaritan in the Bible parable, exhibits more than average love and concern for a fellow human being.

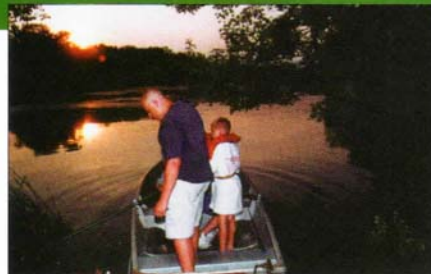
The Very Rev. Michael Dahulich, administrative dean of St. Tikhon's Seminary, urged all campers to join The Society of St. Peter the Aleut, a group of Orthodox Christian children dedicated and pledged to remain always in their Orthodox faith. Fr. Michael spoke about the club he has started for all Orthodox children to encourage them to treasure their Orthodox Christian faith and heritage. The society is named for the twelve-year-old Alaskan martyr who declared boldly in the face of torture: "I am a Christian; I will not betray my faith!" Members will receive a newsletter and medal in honor of their participation.

Each year the camp offers activities that have become traditions over the years: the hike to Flat Rock, a pinata, washerboard competition, basketball tournament, and fishing at Pickerel Pond. Many trekked out to Flat Rock, despite cloudy skies, although the hike was cut short because of rain. This year there was a small campfire early in the week and a roaring bonfire (controlled by Greg Hatrack, a volunteer firefighter) on Thursday evening after the hayride. Campers stuffed Martin, their director, with hay after Thursday's hayride — a definite camp tradition.

"The Answer Box" gave campers a chance to search for additional information about Orthodoxy. Daily sets of questions for each age group were to be answered for points totaling 100 by the end

of the week. Many boys and girls answered the questions for the other two age groups, thereby gaining additional points. Top scorer was Stephan Russin whose tally was 194 points. Natalia Hutnyan placed second with 127 points, and Becky Oliver placed third with 122.

Campers were treated to a surprise visit by "Happiness," a group of dancers aged eight to seventeen from Smolensk, Russia. Campers loudly and enthusiastically cheered the young performers whose repertoire included traditional Russian folk dances, ballet, jazz, tap, modern dance, and songs, and a recitation in English of the entire folk poem, "The House That Jack Built." The young dancers appeared in colorful Russian — and American-style — costumes they sewed themselves. With training and choreography by Ms. Elena



Vakunova, the dancers had won the coveted "Constellation" Dance Competition held this year at Saratov, Russia.

Sponsored by World Links Adoption Agency, the group visited northeast Pennsylvania to raise money for the children who, though not orphans, live in boarding schools that are the equivalent to our foster-care system in America. Rosemary Opshinsky, director of the summer project, organized the entire program.

Archbishop Herman blessed each dancer, spoke about how the Lord has blessed them with talent, and asked that the Lord would bless them for many, many years. He also said that he wished their stay would be rewarding while in America.



During workshops and special sessions, campers were given an opportunity to learn more about their Orthodox faith in daily themes developed by Mrs. Anna Marie Black, program coordinator. Any discussion about our Orthodox faith included, of necessity, talk about the Resurrection since Christ's Resurrection is the foundation of our faith — as St. Paul writes, "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain" (I Cor. 15:14).

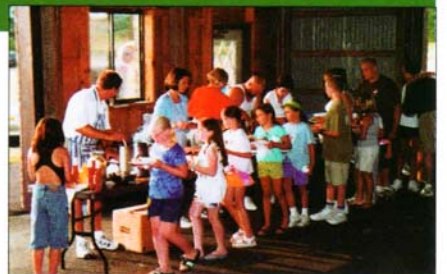
Monday's theme, *Blessed is He Who Comes in the Name of the Lord*, was centered on Jesus Christ, the Son of God, sent by His Father to save us from sin and death. Fr. Basil gave a talk to all campers about Christ as one of the Holy Trinity and that each of us is made in the image and likeness of God. The individual workshop sessions focused on Christ as the second Person of the Holy Trinity, using the terms the Church uses, with campers discussing "Who Is Jesus Christ?" The 7/8s focused on the icon of Christ's Entry Into Jerusalem to better understand the saving work that Christ began in Jerusalem and would complete by His death on the cross and His Resurrection. The children, in fact, ended their session by singing the Paschal troparion, "Christ is risen!" *Blessed is He Who Comes in the Name of the Lord*, the day's theme, is the inscription on the gateway leading to the monastery church and grounds. This phrase also is sung at each Divine Liturgy immediately as the chalice is presented for Holy Communion.

On Monday afternoon, each group of campers made an etching of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk, having then a reminder of the patron saint of the monastery church. Monk Vladimir from the brotherhood of St. John's Monastery in Hiram, Ohio, presented the art project to the children. In the evening the campers gathered to view the nighttime stars. Gabe Bilas guided the search for various heavenly bodies.

Tuesday's theme *Make Disciples of All Nations* was chosen to emphasize the mission of the apostles who were commanded by Christ to go out to all the world to baptize in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The Very Rev. Michael Dahulich spoke to all campers about baptism and what it means for their lives. He continued this theme as he spoke with the older boys and girls about the beginnings of Orthodoxy as it was rooted in the time of the apostles, emphasizing that we are a church of councils. Younger campers talked briefly about the twelve apostles.

On Wednesday, the theme was *Through the Cross Joy Has Come Into All the World*. Campers heard the Rev. Michael Medis speak about the Cross of Christ, comparing it to the brass serpent used by Moses — a prefiguring of the crucified Christ. Workshop discussions emphasized that Orthodoxy preaches the joy of the cross, remembering not just Christ's crucifixion, but His joyous Resurrection.

During workshops, campers were re-
Continued on the next page



Summer Camp 2002

Continued from 47

minded about Christ's voluntary suffering on the cross and about the cross's power to protect them in times of distress. The 9/10s examined the text of the Resurrection Troparion in Tone 7, sung during Divine Liturgy as part of the cycle of the eight tones, to further understand that Christ, by His dying on the cross, has broken the bonds of Hades and destroyed death.

*By thy Cross thou didst destroy death;
To the thief thou didst open Paradise.
For the myrrhbearers thou didst
change weeping into joy*

*And thou didst command thine
Apostles, O Christ God, to proclaim that
thou art risen*

Granting the world great mercy.

Campers Ages 11 and Up listened to testimonies from two adults about their journeys into Orthodoxy. One of the camp counselors, Mrs. Edwina Fartuch, described the discrimination and struggle she experienced among many Christian groups of people because of her dark skin and Guatemalan heritage. Fr. Medis talked about his long search for truth among numerous Protestant Christian disciplines and his finally finding the true faith in Orthodox Christianity. The remarks by both speakers emphasized the cross they carried to proclaim the truth about Christ — a reminder to the children and us that we each carry our own "cross" as we live our life in Christ.

For those interested, Dr. David Ford, Associate Professor of History at St. Tikhon's Seminary, presented "Adventures on the Road to Church History" — a summary of the beginnings of Orthodox Christianity, tracing the history of our faith from the time of the apostles, showing how it continues unchanged to the present. The youngsters and adults who attended responded enthusiastically to the session.

Young campers made a model church, showing the iconostasis, floor layout, and altar table.

Thursday's theme was *Except by Prayer and Fasting*. Fr. Basil talked with all the campers about the Orthodox understanding of fasting. During workshops, the two younger groups talked about the difference between praying personal prayers at home and praying as the Church at worship. They talked about prayers to

their guardian angels and patron saints and about the different reasons we pray, such as praising and thanking God, asking God to help the sick, or for the well being of our friends and families.

Campers Ages 11 and Up listened to Hieromonk Tikhon from the St. Tikhon's Monastery brotherhood talk about the Jesus prayer. Hieromonk Tikhon demon-

strated how to use a prayer rope as a guide to focusing on one's prayers and one's prayer rule in private prayer. He emphasized that each person's prayer rule may be different from the prayer rule of someone else.

Monk Vladimir, from St. John's Monastery brotherhood, demonstrated how to make the prayer ropes for each group.



Each camper made his or her own prayer rope to take home. The archbishop blessed the prayer ropes.

Friday's theme was *Do This In Remembrance of Me*. Since receiving the Body and Blood of the Risen Christ is central to our worship at Divine Liturgy, the workshop activities were to focus on preparing for and receiving Holy Communion. In the morning's large-group session, Fr. Michael Dahulich talked with campers about miracles — the many miracles that Christ performed — with His Resurrection from the dead as the most wondrous miracle of all. Then, in individual workshops, the priests Frs. Stoyka, Medis, and Dahulich spoke with campers about preparing for confession and receiving communion.

The PCs, the teens attending camp, followed a separate schedule focusing on an Orthodox perspective on death. In view of recent teen suicides and accidental deaths during the year not only within the diocese but in the general geographic area, Fr. Diehl hoped to counteract the oft-held belief among teenagers that they will not die. Teens were urged to avoid dangerous situations (especially involving alcohol and drugs) that pose a risk to their lives. It was impressed upon them that all our actions and choices have consequences later on.

The teens also met with Fr. Michael Dahulich who spoke with them about marriage — about being baptized in the faith, marrying in the faith, and staying in the faith. Fr. Michael also expressed his concern that young adults do things in “the

proper order,” doing what is pleasing to Christ.

Friday's meeting with teens centered on the importance of receiving Holy Communion, how we remember that Christ is in us and we in Him as we partake of His

Friday's meeting with teens centered on the importance of receiving Holy Communion, how we remember that Christ is in us and we in Him as we partake of His Body and His Blood — and the many ramifications this has for us who accept a life in Christ

Body and His Blood — and the many ramifications this has for us who accept a life in Christ.

In the evening on Friday, campers gathered in the pavilion for a closing activity. Two groups of 9/10s presented skits on miracles of Jesus. A banner colored by the youngest campers was presented, proclaiming “Orthodoxy = Right Belief” as testimony to the theme of this year's camp. Adult staff attempted to answer questions about the Orthodox faith posed by campers during the week. Then it was time to have snacks and return to the dormitory for packing and quiet reflection before the next day's Divine Liturgy.

At the monastery church the next morning, the children gathered at Divine Liturgy to sing responses and to receive Holy Communion. After breakfast in the trapeza, the campers exchanged addresses and e-mail addresses, said their good-byes, and helped pack their family car. As they departed they took away with them another week of camp memories. (For many campers their parting was of short dura-

tion, since they would see one another at the All-American Council later in the month.)

As for the camp staff, then the cleanup would begin — the dormitory cleared, the paddle boats docked; the sports equipment put away. Craft supplies would be packed, and the pavilion cleaned. The swimming pool would be closed until another camp season.

Those adults who work at camp do so as volunteers and leave their homes and the workplace to be with our young members of the Orthodox Church. Whether as counselors in the dorms, as food preparers in the kitchen, as workers on the grounds doing a multitude of tasks, they all share a common goal: to enable our young children to enjoy God's creation amidst an Orthodox setting, to worship together as the living Church, to establish friendships with one another as *Orthodox*. The children come, of course, to play and to be with one another. But by coming together, whether in play or in worship, they represent the Church. Their presence together as Orthodox Christians now ensures the likelihood that they will gather together as Orthodox Christians as they get older. They are members of the Church, of Christ's Body, by virtue of their baptism and chrismation as Orthodox Christians. May we continue to serve these youngsters, being ever aware that we help them grow, not just in friendship or in simply knowing about their faith, but in their spiritual lives, truly loving God and neighbor. Glory to God for all things!

—Anna Marie Black,
Program Coordinator



Jesus Leaves Message For Grieving Flock In the Ruins of Their Church



On Sunday, April 7, 2002, a three-alarm fire destroyed the Orthodox Church of the Redeemer in Los Altos, Calif. The beautiful church, built in 1985, was completely gutted in the blaze, which investigators said was the result of arson. Reported by a passerby at 4:45 a.m., the fire was brought under control only after 55 firefighters had battled it for two hours. Flames reaching hundreds of feet into the air destroyed stained glass windows, a towering dome, a large wooden cross and the holy icons. The very hot fire caused heavy ceiling beams and the roof to collapse onto the wooden altar and pews, leaving a mound of rubble, stone pillars, and the shell of a church where the 6,000 sq. ft. temple had stood.

The monetary loss was \$1 million, but much heavier to bear was the grief that weighed down the hearts of the 170 to 300 families that make up the multiethnic parish. Parishioners said more than half the membership are 1st, 2nd and 3rd generation immigrants from Palestine.

Before the fire, the church was being used as a bimonthly meeting place for the Arab-Jewish Dialogue of the South Bay, a peace-promoting interfaith group. The group, not officially sponsored by the church, also met at a local synagogue. A year before the fire, tile and carpeting were replaced when vandals flooded the church after inserting a hose through a window.

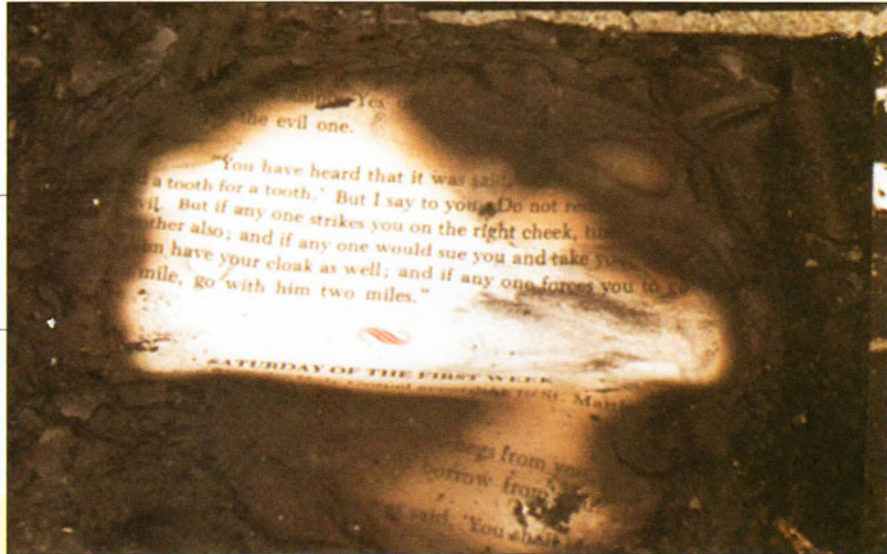
At a worship service held at a neighboring church later on the day of the fire, pastor

Fr. Samer Youssef reminded his flock that "Our temple may have burned to the ground, but we are the temple of the Holy Spirit. God resides in the altar of each of our hearts."

But parishioners, in their grief, were profoundly comforted also by a miraculous message that God left for them among the ashes of their church.

On April 14, a week after the fire, parishioners held Palm Sunday celebrations on the grounds. They gathered for Divine Liturgy for the first time since the fire. The liturgy was served under a tent in front of the church ruins, for all were determined to hold services on their own grounds. "Nothing can keep us from worshipping our God: not fire, not flood nor any form of persecution," said Father Samer. "The Lord said, 'Where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.' We stand together today, united as one community in Christ, not in our church building, but with God in our midst."

Father Samer revealed that he found the charred remains of the holy gospel book in the ashes of the church's holy altar. The readable section of the top page of the book contained a powerful message from St. Matthew's gospel about forgiveness: "Whoever strikes you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two" (Mat. 5:38-41). Like the words of the Lord's Prayer, the



message is one requiring unconditional forgiveness of one's opponents. Both passages were given by Jesus in his Sermon on the Mount.

The pastor said he discovered the Bible while sifting through layers of ruins. The book was black and covered in ash. Fr. Samer saw something white under the burned pages. When he blew the ashes from the book, he uncovered a passage. "We were amazed to see that the message staring up at us from the burnt gospel book was our Lord Jesus Christ's command to 'turn the other cheek' and not to resist violence with violence or a crime with more crimes," said Father Samer. "An evil person can only be overcome by good."

Fr. Samer noted, "All of the pages up to that passage were destroyed, including the book's metal cover, which melted in the 1,000-plus degrees emitted from the flames. The glass pedestal on which the book sat was also destroyed by the flames." Along with the gospel passage, the holy cross used in church processions was also unharmed. The priest sorted through the ruins with federal agents days after the fire.

Parishioners were visibly moved by their priest's words and by seeing the book itself. "I was there taking pictures when Father blew the ashes off the book and saw the miraculous message," said Jules Jammal, a parishioner at the church for over 25 years. "We

were all in awe when we first saw it. It is so amazing that the only part of the page to survive is that particular gospel."

"My goodness," I thought. It was really touching," Youssef said. "This is a Christian lesson to us. Christ is with us, even in the fire. I feel Christ is guiding us in a difficult situation . . . He is telling us to be courageous and continue our teaching." The lesson about forgiveness that Christ left for his bereaved sheep was read to them by Fr. Samer when the people gathered for the Palm Sunday services. Congregants venerated the holy gospel book as they departed.

Soon afterwards, the miracle was followed by another one, which demonstrated the healing power of love. A group of Jewish sixth graders visited the church early in May and presented a \$1300 check to the parish in an effort to help heal the wounds. The students, from the Mid-Peninsula Jewish Community Day School, raised the money through a bake sale and by soliciting donations at their synagogues. The children said they knew the money wouldn't be enough to help the church rebuild, but they hoped it would inspire others to contribute.*

The Orthodox Church of the Redeemer is under the jurisdiction of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese. It has served the faithful of the South San Francisco Bay Area for 40 years.

* For information on how to contribute, see the parish website www.orthodoxredeemer.org

St. Tikhon's Seminary Fifth Annual Golf Tournament

Seventy-seven golfers joined in on Saturday, August 17, 2002 to enjoy a round of golf and good fellowship, and to help reduce the debt at St. Tikhon's Seminary. The tournament was held at the par 72, Mt. Laurel Golf Club in White Haven, Pa. The weather was superb and a great day of golf and fellowship was had by all. The winner of the championship flight was the Michael Pasonick Jr. group. The winner of the first flight was the Paul Pasonick group, and the winner of the second flight was the Fr. John Onufrey group. Other skill contests were held.

After the round was completed, an awards banquet was held to honor the winners and to thank all who participated in the event. V. Rev. Michael Dahulich, representing Metropolitan Herman, thanked the ladies and gentlemen for participating and making this event a huge success. Finally the prizes were awarded, and a raffle followed which was enjoyed by all.

Special thanks to Al Wanas and Michael Pasonick Jr., whose donations of lunch and golf balls were appreciated by all.

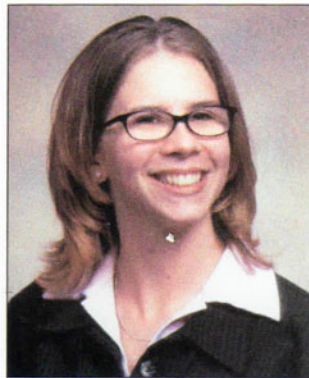
Next year's tournament will be held on Saturday, August 16, 2003 at Mt. Laurel Golf Club. Mark your calendars and be ready for a few surprises!



We Salute Our 2002 Graduates



Sarah Aed
Wyoming Valley West H.S.
St. John the Baptist Church
Nanticoke, Pa.



Amy Mae Allen
Messiah College
St. Michael's Church
Jermyn, Pa.



Stefanie A. Babiak
Owen J. Roberts H.S. School
St. Herman of Alaska Church
Gradyville, Pa.



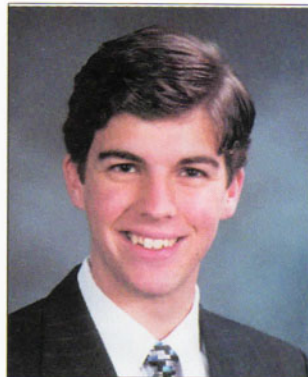
Ivan Baldytchev
Newark High School
St. Michael's Church
Wilmington, Del.



Larissa Bench
Bloomsburg University
St. Mary's Church
Coaldale, Pa.



Nicholas Birocik
Tamaqua High School
St. Mary's Church
Coaldale, Pa.



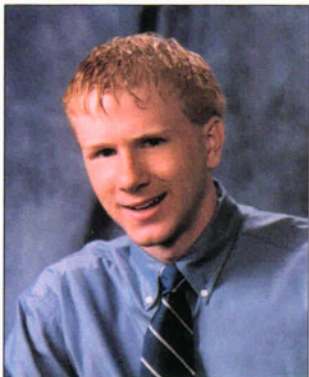
Zachary Borichevsky
Central Bucks West H.S.
St. Mark's Church
Wrightstown, Pa.



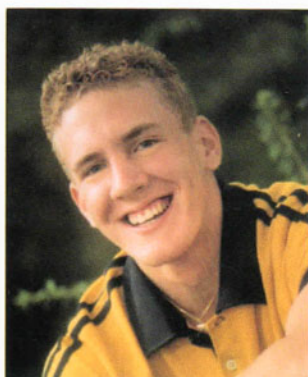
Jessica Bricker
Lower Dauphin High School
Christ the Saviour Church
Harrisburg, Pa.



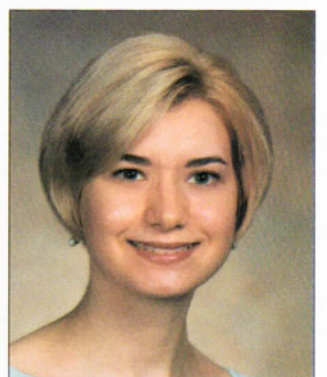
Luda Bryzsheva, Ph.D.
Penn State University
Christ the Saviour Church
Harrisburg, Pa.



James Cesari
Mid Valley High School
St. Nicholas Church
Olyphant, Pa.



Jeff Cavanaugh
Lakeland Jr./Sr. H.S.
St. Michael's Church
Jermyn, Pa.

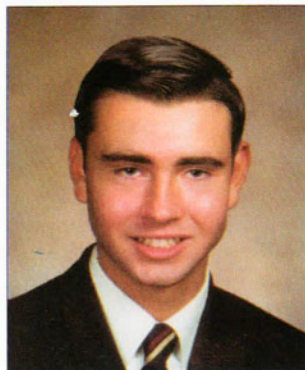


Karen Chernikovich
College Misericordia
St. John the Baptist Church
Nanticoke, Pa.

We Salute Our 2002 Graduates



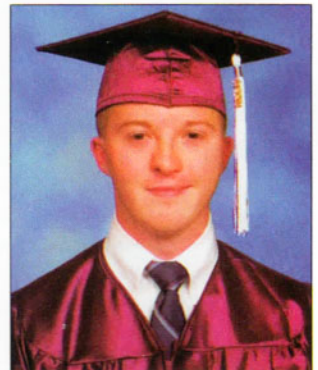
Kenneth Michael Chrusch
Montgomery Co. Comm. College
Holy Trinity Church
Pottstown, Pa.



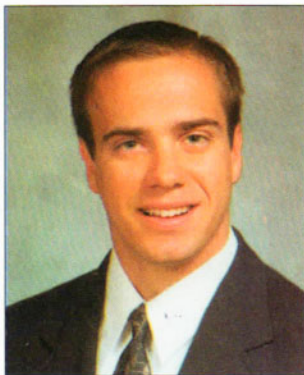
Kyle Condit
Easton High School
St. Nicholas Church
Bethlehem, Pa.



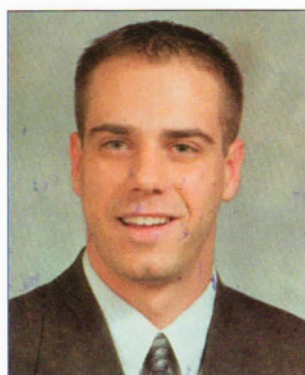
Andrea Dougherty
Lock Haven University
St. Herman of Alaska Church
Shillington, Pa.



Dennis F. Hanratty, Jr.
Thompson Institute
Christ the Saviour Church
Harrisburg, Pa.



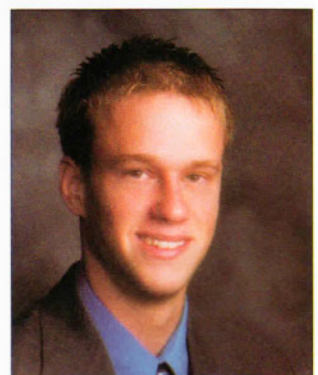
Matthew Henry
Penn State University
Christ the Saviour Church
Harrisburg, Pa.



Michael J. Henry
Penn State University
Christ the Saviour Church
Harrisburg, Pa.



Timothy Edward Hojnicky
University of Delaware
St. Michael's Church
Wilmington, Del.



Mark S. Keifer
Berwick Area High School
Holy Annunciation Church
Berwick, Pa.



Melissa Kerpock
Moravian College
St. Nicholas Church
Bethlehem, Pa.



Natalia Joanna Kovalak
Bishop Neumann H.S.
Holy Cross Church
Williamsport, Pa.



Sophia Kowalczyk
Lakeland Jr./Sr. H.S.
St. Michael's Church
Jermyn, Pa.



Carrie Marie Kurtz
Hazleton Area H.S.
Holy Trinity Church
McAdoo, Pa.

We Salute Our 2002 Graduates



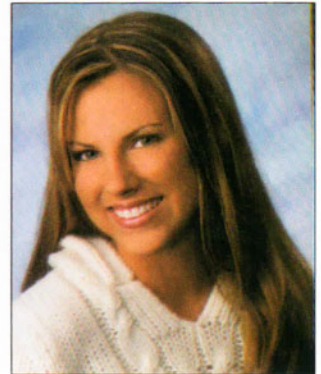
Michelle Lockard
Berwick Area High School
Holy Annunciation Church
Berwick, Pa.



Alyssa Marie Macri
Lycoming College
Holy Annunciation Church
Berwick, Pa.



Stacy Markov
Abington Heights H.S.
St. Michael's Church
Jermyn, Pa.



Lisa Matsick
Wilson High School
St. Herman of Alaska Church
Shillington, Pa.



Hope Mease
Pottsville Area H.S.
Assumption of Virgin Mary
Church
St. Clair, Pa.



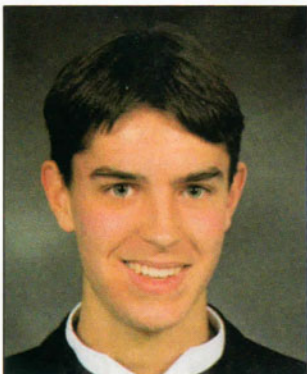
Kimberly Metz
Emmaus High School
St. Nicholas Church
Bethlehem, Pa.



Hope Evangeline Newhouse
The Solebury School
Christ the Saviour Church
Harrisburg, Pa.



Tanya Barbara Ostapenko
Louis E. Dieruff H.S.
St. Nicholas Church
Bethlehem, Pa.



David Peck
Towle Institute
St. Michael's Church
Wilmington, Del.



Casey Pinto
Bangor Area High School
Holy Trinity Church
Stroudsburg, Pa.



Larissa Marie Pron
Haverford High School
St. Stephen's Cathedral
Philadelphia, Pa.



Jordan Purcell
Northern Lebanon High School
Christ the Saviour Church
Harrisburg, Pa.

We Salute Our 2002 Graduates



Christine Rapchinsky
Boyetown Area H.S.
Holy Trinity Church
Pottstown, Pa.



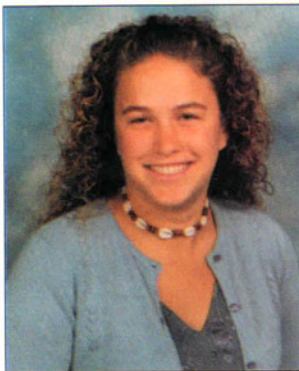
Natasha Rezanka
Western Wayne H.S.
All Saints Church
Olyphant, Pa.



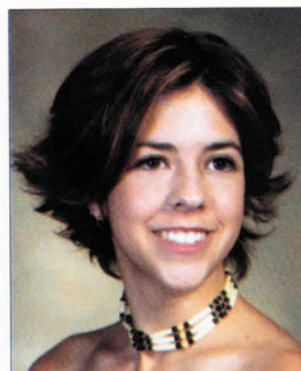
Kara Sekellick
Kimberton Waldorf School
Holy Trinity Church
Pottstown, Pa.



Natalie Schilling
Central Dauphin High School
Christ the Saviour Church
Harrisburg, Pa.



Amber Simchak
Lycoming College
St. Mary's Church
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Kaci Solan
Northern Lehigh H. S.
St. Nicholas Church
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Jeremy Soroka
Penn State University
St. Michael's Church
Jermyn, Pa.



Jilliam Soroka
Abington Heights H.S.
St. Michael's Church
Jermyn, Pa.



Yvonne Svokos
Bishop Shanahan H.S.
St. Nicholas Church
Coatesville, Pa.



Jennifer Tomcavage
So. Columbia Area H.S.
St. Michael's Church
Mt. Carmel, Pa.



Tracy Toroney
Moravian College
St. Nicholas Church
Bethlehem, Pa.



Benjamin Michael Weaver
Coatesville High School
St. Herman of Alaska Church
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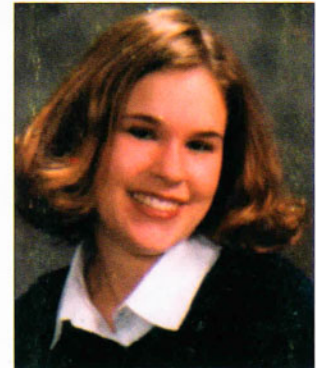
Piper Treece
Hershey High School
Christ the Saviour Church
Harrisburg, Pa.



Jolene Weikel
Montgomery Co. Comm. College
Holy Trinity Church
Pottstown, Pa.



Abigail Anne Welsh
Lebanon Valley College
Holy Ascension Church
Lykens, Pa.



Tracy Yokimishyn
University of Scranton
St. Michael's Church
Old Forge, Pa.



Dana Zabowski
W. Virginia Univ.
St. Michael's Church
Wilmington, Del.

NO PHOTOS:

Kelly Brilla
Millersville University
Holy Trinity Church
Pottstown, Pa.

Andrew Hammerer
University of Delaware
St. Herman of Alaska Church
Gradyville, Pa.

Alexis Hair
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Old Forge, Pa.

There are only a few words in the Jesus Prayer, but they contain everything. It was recognized long ago that once a person acquired the habit of this prayer, it could take the place of all other oral prayers. If used in the way the Holy Fathers describe, this prayer has great power; but of those who habitually recite it, not everyone discovers its power, not everyone tastes of its fruits. Why should this be so? It is because they wish to grasp for themselves that which is a gift of God, coming only by his grace. But whoever has truly understood the nature of prayer will continue to search. Whatever you seek, seek it with all your strength, but do not expect your own search and efforts to bear fruit of themselves. Put your trust in the Lord, ascribing nothing to yourself, and he will give you your heart's desire [Ps. 36:3,4 LXX]. When people ask, "What must I do to gain this or that virtue?" there is only one answer: "Turn to the Lord and He will give it to you. There is no other way to find what you seek."

-- St. Theophanes the Recluse (passage abridged)

Daily Devotions

SEPTEMBER

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------------|---|
| 1. | 1 Tim. 2:1-7 (New Year) | Luke 4:16-22 (New Year) |
| | 1 Cor. 4:9-16 | Matt. 17:14-23 |
| 2. | 2 Cor. 2:4-15 | Matt. 23:13-22 |
| 3. | 2 Cor. 2:14-3:3 | Matt. 23:23-28 |
| 4. | 2 Cor. 3:4-11 | Matt. 23:29-39 |
| 5. | 2 Cor. 4:1-6 | Matt. 24:13-28 |
| 6. | 2 Cor. 4:13-18 | Matt. 24:27-33,42-51 |
| 7. | 1 Cor. 2:6-9; 1:3-9 | Matt. 10:37-11:1, 19:3-12 |
| 8. | Gal 6:11-18, 1 Cor 9:2-12 | John 3:13-17, Matt 18:23-35 |
| | Phil 2:5-11 (Theot) | Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28 (Theot) |
| 9. | 2 Cor. 5:10-15 | Mark 1:9-15 |
| 10. | 2 Cor. 5:15-21 | Mark 1:16-22 |
| 11. | 2 Cor. 6:11-16 | Mark 1:23-28 |
| 12. | 2 Cor. 7:1-16 | Mark 1:29-35, 2:18-22 |
| 13. | 1 Cor. 1:26-29 | Matt. 20:29-34 |
| 14. | 1 Cor. 1:18-24 (Cross) | John 19:6-11, 13-20, 25-28, 30-35 (Cross) |
| 15. | Gal. 2:16-20 | Mark 8:34-9:1 |
| | 1 Cor. 15:1-11 | Matt. 19:16-26 |
| 16. | 2 Cor. 8:7-15 | Luke 3:19-22 |
| 17. | 2 Cor. 8:16-9:5 | Luke 3:23-4:1 |
| 18. | 2 Cor. 9:12-10:7 | Luke 4:1-15 |
| 19. | 2 Cor. 10:7-18 | Luke 4:16-22 |
| 20. | 2 Cor. 11:5-21 | Luke 4:22-30 |
| 21. | 1 Cor. 10:26-29, 2:6-9 | John 8:21-30, Luke 4:31-36 |
| 22. | 1 Cor. 16:13-24 | Luke 5:1-11 |
| 23. | 2 Cor. 12:10-19 | Luke 4:37-44 |
| 24. | 2 Cor. 12:20-13:2 | Luke 5:12-16 |
| 25. | 2 Cor. 13:3-13 | Luke 5:33-39 |
| 26. | Gal. 1:1-10, 20-2:5 | Luke 6:12-19 |
| 27. | Gal. 2:6-10 | Luke 6:17-23 |
| 28. | 1 Cor. 4:1-5 | Luke 5:17-26 |
| 29. | 2 Cor. 1:21-2:4 | Luke 6:31-36 |
| 30. | Gal. 2:11-16, 21-3:7 | Luke 6:24-30, 37-45 |

OCTOBER

- | | | |
|-----|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. | Heb. 9:1-7 (Theot) | Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28 (Theot) |
| 2. | Gal. 3:15-22 | Luke 6:46-7:1 |
| 3. | Gal. 3:23-4:5 | Luke 7:17-30 |
| 4. | Gal. 4:8-21 | Luke 7:31-35 |
| 5. | 1 Cor. 4:17-5:5 | Luke 5:27-32 |
| 6. | 2 Cor. 4:6-15 | Luke 7:11-16 |
| 7. | Gal. 4:28-5:10 | Luke 7:36-50 |
| 8. | Gal. 5:11-21 | Luke 8:1-3 |
| 9. | Gal. 6:2-10 | Luke 8:22-25 |
| 10. | Eph. 1:1-9 | Luke 9:7-11 |
| 11. | Eph. 1:7-17 | Luke 9:12-18 |
| 12. | 1 Cor. 10:23-28 | Luke 6:1-10 |
| 13. | 2 Cor. 6:1-10 | Luke 8:5-15 |
| | Heb. 13:7-16 (Fathers) | John 17:1-13 (Fathers) |
| 14. | Eph. 1:22-2:3 | Luke 9:18-22 |
| 15. | Eph. 2:19-3:7 | Luke 9:23-27 |
| 16. | Eph. 3:8-21 | Luke 9:44-50 |
| 17. | Eph. 4:14-19 | Luke 9:49-56 |
| 18. | Eph. 4:17-25 | Luke 10:1-15 |
| 19. | 1 Cor. 14:20-25 | Luke 7:2-10 |
| 20. | 2 Cor. 6:16-7:1 | Luke 16:19-31 |
| 21. | Eph. 4:25-32 | Luke 10:22-24 |
| 22. | Eph. 5:20-26 | Luke 11:1-10 |
| 23. | Eph. 5:25-33 | Luke 11:9-13 |
| 24. | Eph. 5:33-6:9 | Luke 11:14-23 |
| 25. | Eph. 6:18-24 | Luke 11:23-26 |
| 26. | 1 Cor. 15:39-45 | Luke 8:16-21 |
| 27. | 2 Cor. 9:6-11 | Luke 8:26-39 |
| 28. | Phil. 1:1-7 | Luke 11:29-33 |
| 29. | Phil. 1:8-14 | Luke 11:34-41 |
| 30. | Phil. 1:12-20 | Luke 11:42-46 |
| 31. | Phil. 1:20-27 | Luke 11:47-12:1 |

NOVEMBER

- | | | |
|-----|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. | Phil. 1:27-2:4 | Luke 12:2-12 |
| 2. | 1 Cor. 15:58-16:3 | Luke 9:1-6 |
| 3. | 2 Cor. 11:31-12:9 | Luke 8:41-56 |
| 4. | Phil. 2:12-16 | Luke 12:13-15, 22-31 |
| 5. | Phil. 2:17-23 | Luke 12:42-48 |
| 6. | Phil. 2:24-30 | Luke 12:48-13:9 |
| 7. | Phil. 3:1-19 | Luke 13:1-9, 31-35 |
| 8. | Heb. 2:2-10 (Angels) | Luke 10:16-21 (Angels) |
| 9. | 2 Cor. 1:8-11 | Luke 9:37-43 |
| 10. | Gal. 1:11-19 | Luke 10:25-37 |
| 11. | Phil. 4:10-23 | Luke 14:12-15 |
| 12. | Col. 1:1-2, 7-11 | Luke 14:25-35 |
| 13. | Col. 1:18-23 | Luke 15:1-10 |
| 14. | Col. 1:24-29 | Luke 16:1-9 |
| 15. | Col. 2:1-7 | Luke 16:15-18; 17:1-4 |
| 16. | 2 Cor. 3:12-18 | 2 Cor. 3:12-18 |
| 17. | Gal. 2:16-20 | Luke 12:16-21 |
| 18. | Col. 2:13-20 | Luke 17:20-25 |
| 19. | Col. 2:20-3:3 | Luke 17:26-37 |
| 20. | Col. 3:17-4:9 | Luke 18:15-17, 26-34 |
| 21. | Heb. 9:1-7 (Theot) | Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28 (Theot) |
| 22. | Col. 4:10-18 | Luke 19:12-28 |
| 23. | 2 Cor. 5:1-10 | Luke 10:19-21 |
| 24. | Gal. 6:11-18 | Luke 13:10-17 |
| 25. | 1 Thess. 1:1-5 | Luke 19:37-44 |
| 26. | 1 Thess. 1:6-10 | Luke 19:45-48 |
| 27. | 1 Thess. 2:1-8 | Luke 20:1-8 |
| 28. | 1 Thess. 2:9-14 | Luke 20:9-18 |
| 29. | 1 Thess. 2:14-19 | Luke 20:19-26 |
| 30. | 2 Cor. 8:1-5 | Luke 12:32-40 |

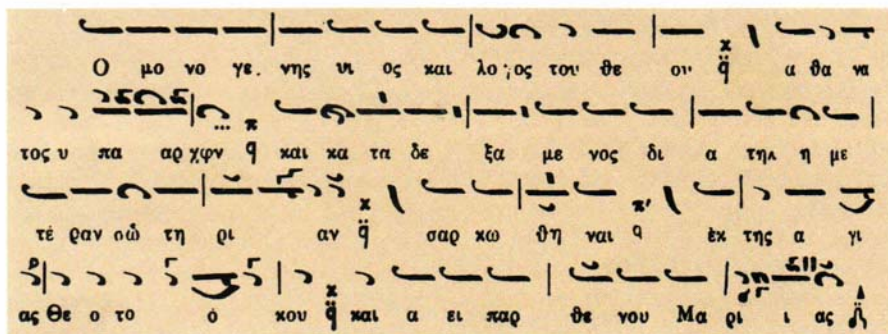
DECEMBER

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. | Eph. 2:4-10 | Luke 18:18-27 |
| 2. | 1 Thess. 2:20-3:8 | Luke 20:27-44 |
| 3. | 1 Thess. 3:9-13 | Luke 21:12-19 |
| 4. | 1 Thess. 4:1-12 | Luke 21:5-7, 10-11, 20-24 |
| 5. | 1 Thess. 5:1-13, 24-28 | Luke 21:28-33, 37-22:8 |
| 6. | Heb. 13:17-21 (St Nicholas) | Luke 6:17-23 (St Nicholas) |
| 7. | 2 Cor. 11:1-6 | Luke 13:18-29 |
| 8. | Eph. 2:14-22 | Luke 17:12-19 |
| 9. | 2 Thess. 1:1-10 | Mark 8:11-21 |
| 10. | 2 Thess. 1:10-2:2 | Mark 8:22-26 |
| 11. | 2 Thess. 2:1-12 | Mark 8:30-34 |
| 12. | 2 Thess. 2:13-3:5 | Mark 9:10-16 |
| 13. | 2 Thess. 3:6-18 | Mark 9:33-41 |
| 14. | Gal. 1:3-10 | Luke 14:1-11 |
| 15. | Col. 3:4-11 (Forefathers) | Luke 14:16-24 (Forefathers) |
| 16. | 1 Tim. 1:1-7 | Mark 9:42-10:1 |
| 17. | 1 Tim. 1:8-14 | Mark 10:2-12 |
| 18. | 1 Tim. 1:18-20; 2:8-15 | Mark 10:11-16 |
| 19. | 1 Tim. 3:1-13 | Mark 10:17-27 |
| 20. | 1 Tim. 4:4-8, 16 | Mark 10:23-32 |
| 21. | Gal. 3:8-12 | Luke 13:18-29, 16:10-15 |
| 22. | Heb 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40 | Matt. 1:1-25 |
| 23. | 1 Tim. 5:1-10 | Mark 10:46-52 |
| 24. | Heb 1:1-12 | Luke 2:1-20 |
| 25. | Gal. 4:4-7 | Matt. 2:1-12 |
| 26. | Heb. 2:11-18 (Theot) | Matt 2:13-23 (Theot) |
| 27. | 2 Tim. 1:1-2, 8-18 | Mark 12:1-12 |
| 28. | 1 Tim. 6:11-16 | Matt. 12:15-21 |
| | Gal. 5:22-6:2 | Luke 17:3-10 |
| 29. | Gal. 1:11-19 | Matt. 2:13-23 |
| 30. | 2 Tim. 2:20-26 | Mark 12:13-17 |
| 31. | 2 Tim. 3:16-4:4 | Mark 12:18-27 |

Byzantine Hymnology and The Development Of the Octoechos

“All who are attuned to sacred songs and study their meaning from beginning to end will find themselves approaching God . . .”
— St. Gregory Palamas

“And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives . . .”
(Matt. 26:30)



Byzantine music notation: “Only Begotten Son” by the Emperor St. Justinian

From the Canticles of Moses to the Psalms of David, from the Magnificat of the Theotokos to the Cherubic hymns of St. John Koukouzeles, the praises of the Lord have been intoned by God’s people in various ways from ancient times. “Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the lands! Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into His presence with singing!” (Psalm 100:1-2). The praises of God’s people have formed such an inseparable part of the experience with the great “I AM” that St. Gregory Palamas boldly proclaims the Church’s hymnography a “reliable criterion of Orthodoxy and a true witness to the Orthodox Tradition.”¹ Just how does this occur, and why? Did it happen all at once? Are hymns really that important? Did the tradition of ancient Israel have an effect on the liturgical hymnology of today? We will attempt to identify briefly some important elements in Orthodox hymnology (much of which originated during the Byzantine era), and to consider how these hymns came about and their place and influence within the worship of the Church. We will focus especially the *Great Octoechos*, which is one of the main service books used today in our daily services, a book of hymns centered around the weekly celebration of

Christ’s resurrection.

It is apparent that from the beginnings of Christianity, hymns played a central role in expressing the dogmatic truths of the Church. Referring to early hymns embedded in the texts of Scripture (for example, Rom. 11:33-36 and Rev. 1:5-8), Dmitri Conomos writes, “The preservation in the text of the New Testament of these archaic hymns is of great importance for the history of hymnography. It also reveals the manifold extent to which early Christians employed hymns both in common worship and private prayer.”² The early Church historian Eusebius also mentions an exchange between the governor Pliny and the Emperor Trajan to the effect that the early Christians gathered on Sunday and sang hymns to Christ as God. Still, adds Conomos, it is very difficult to “trace early Greek Christian hymnography due to the persecutions and the period of instability that the Greek language underwent at that time.”³ We do have, however — from as early as the 2nd century — St. Melito of Sardis’s homily on Pascha, a wonderful example of a sermon which seems to be either pure hymnography or a poetic homily; it may even be the precursor of the *kontakion*.⁴

As mentioned in Acts (2:46), the apostles continued to go to the Temple to

pray and worship. In some geographical areas, it took many years for the break between the synagogue-temple worship and that of the Christian community to become complete. The subsequent continuity of the life and style of Christian worship with the Jewish worship that preceded it, was inevitable, for the worship of the “new Israel,” the Church, developed from that of the “old Israel.” As examples of this, it is known from the writings of St. Basil in the 4th century that in his day, psalms were still being sung antiphonally, as was done in the Jewish synagogue. Evidence of the common heritage can still be seen even in our time; fascinatingly, “the initial formulae and cadence of the psalm-tunes have changed so little that some of the ‘toni psalmoreum’ [psalm melodies] sung today by Jews from Arabia, Persia, or Morocco are practically identical with those of the Roman Church in the tenth century.”⁵

As an expression of the heart, music touches the deepest places of a person’s being. It is interesting to contemplate the transformative aspect of hymnography when used as a vehicle conveying the power of the Spirit. St. Paul alludes to this, mentioning prophetic “singing in the Spirit” (1 Cor. 14:15) which is also found throughout the Old Testament (for one

2. Conomos, 3.

3. Conomos, 6.

4. See Conomos, 5.

5. Wellesz, 36.

1. Topping, 12.

Continued on the next page

Byzantine Hymnology

Continued from page 59

example of this, see 1 Chron. 25:1).

Music's power to affect the soul extends also to its possible misuse, with damaging results. Thus at various times, heretics — among them Arius — used catchy, alluring melodies and hymns to propagate their various heretical doctrines. As a result hymnology was viewed by the Orthodox as well, as potentially a polemical weapon. Sozomen, the church historian wrote, "Because St. Ephraim [the Syrian] saw that the Syrians were enchanted by the beauty of poetry and the rhythm of music and were gradually accepting heretical doctrines, despite the fact that he did not have a Greek education, he decided to employ [the heretic] Harmonios' metres; and he composed new hymns following the correct teachings of the Church, on the former's pattern."⁶

The earliest known form of poetry/hymnology that was used in Byzantium (and is still in use till the present day) was the troparion. This was the simplest, shortest and most frequently used hymn, and we know that some of the earliest troparia, sung before the fourth century and possibly as early as the second, are among the hymns still sung today: "O Gladsome Light," "Christ is Risen," and the Trisagion.⁷ Originally the troparion was "written in poetic prose and inserted after each verse of a psalm. In the fifth century, when the troparia were composed in strophic [stanza] form and became longer, these poetical prayers were sung only after the three to six last verses of a psalm. Hymns of this kind are known to have formed part of matins and vespers in churches and monasteries in the fifth century. In this period [the cycle of services] consisted of psalms, of the nine [Biblical] Odes, of certain formulae dating back to the earliest times of Christianity, and of the Troparia, added by contemporary hymnodists."⁸ No music survives from this period but it is generally believed that "the hymns had simple tunes, generally based on the principle of one tone to each syllable of the text, to render them suitable for congregational singing."⁹

The mystical/spiritual underpinnings of the Orthodox Christian Byzantine system of music have deep roots in ancient Greece, going as far back as Pythagoreans.

The early Byzantine Church's understanding of hymnology is best expressed by St. Dionysius the Areopagite: "The hymns and canticles of the Church are the reflection of the spiritual chants, transmitted by the celestial hierarchy to mankind and made audible to human ears in the form of Psalms. When the singing of the hymns has brought our souls into harmony with ritual which is to follow . . . [then] it is possible through these to be led to the immaterial archetypes."¹⁰

Thus, from the Church's viewpoint, hymns are seen as iconographic, for "the hymnographer, too, had to follow a model, a hymn already existing for a feast . . . This model was considered an echo of the hymn sung by the angels . . . The vast treasury of Byzantine melodies was developed from a limited number of archetypes, transmitted by the angels to prophets and inspired Saints . . . The Byzantine musician is bound to keep as closely as possible to these models."¹¹

Pertinent to this fascinating aspect of the Byzantine model of hymnology is the subsequent interrelationship and interdependence of words and music. "The text is paramount, and the words and their meaning suggest the very contour and rhythm of the music . . . hymnwriters [were not] simply professional musicians; they [were] liturgical poets whose basic task was neither music or poetry but prayer . . ."¹²

From the famous *Code of Laws* (528) of the Emperor St. Justinian (527-565) we know that the main cycle of services, similar to what we use today (vespers, matins, Divine Liturgy, etc.), was in place by the early 6th century. Around this time also, the kontakion "makes its appearance suddenly without any [known] antecedents."¹³

The kontakion is a poetic sermon "derived from the main forms of Syriac poetry in the 4th and 5th century, viz. Memra, Madrasa, and Sogitha,"¹⁴ consisting of 18 to 30 stanzas, each stanza containing from 3 to 13 lines. The kontakion is heralded as "a mystery of poetic creativity . . . weld[ing] together many diverse elements, some traditional and others new, to fashion an intricate, complex Byzantine design . . . like thousands of tiny tesserae in a mosaic . . . form[ing] an organic, eloquent image of the central events in Christian

sacred history . . . using spirited dialogue, doxology, prayers, and exhortations, lyrics and displays of theological wit . . ."¹⁵

Byzantine hagiography records that the introduction of the kontakion into the cycle of services was due to the labor of Syrian-born St. Romanos the Melodist. Miraculously, St. Romanos was granted the gift of writing kontakia from the Mother of God after an incident on the eve of the Nativity of Christ in which his fellow church chanters humiliated the "unlearned" saint in front of the emperor. That evening, after fervent prayer to the Theotokos, to whom he was constantly devoted, she appeared to him while he was resting and commanded him to eat a small scroll she was carrying.¹⁶ He immediately awoke and went into the service for the Nativity and began singing the Christmas kontakion that we still use today: "Today the Virgin gives birth to the transcendent one . . ." Over a thousand kontakia are ascribed to his authorship, of which fifty-six of survive today. Many of these are still sung today after the 6th ode of the matins canon (although only the first stanza is now sung).

Around the end of the 7th century, the complex poetical liturgical form known as the *canon*¹⁷ was introduced by St. Andrew, the archbishop of Crete (d. 740) who was an ardent defender against monothelism, and a writer of many books, poems, and canons. Originally from Damascus, Saint Andrew was tonsured at the Monastery of St. Sabbas, where canon-writers such as St. John of Damascus and his half brother St. Cosmos flourished in the 8th century. St. Andrew set the standard of the canon at a transformative level using hymns which applied the deeper meaning of Biblical stories, themes, and images to the self, the soul. The best known example of this kind of profound Biblical exegesis is seen in his work known as the *Great Canon*, also called the "king of canons."

The canon itself is "a complex poetical form made up of nine Odes . . . each of which originally consisted of six to nine troparia . . . modeled on the pattern of the nine Biblical Canticles." It "has the character of hymns of praise."¹⁸ The canon eventually took the place of the kontakion in the service due to the fact that "the

15. Vaporis, 15-18.

16. Cf. Ezek. 3:3ff., Rev. 10:9.

17. Grk. kanon, "rule," probably so named on account of the precisely regimented structure of this long hymn, or group of hymns.

18. Wellesz, 198.

6. Quoted in Conomos, 7.

7. See Topping, 8.

8. Wellesz, 171.

9. Conomos, 11.

10. Eccles. Hier. 10:7, 10:2:4.

11. Wellesz, 59-60.

12. Sacred Music, 5-6.

13. Wellesz, 182.

14. Wellesz, 184.

canon . . . reflected the religious ideas and the atmosphere of the Byzantine Church at its height better than the poems of earlier generations . . . the eschatological mood and the highly elaborate repetitions [in the canon] produce in the listener a mystical mood, which was intensified by the solemnity of the services and the visual impression of the icons.¹⁹ The canon eventually became a focal point in the liturgical life of the Church.

By the middle of the 8th century, the full cycle of liturgical services had been compiled, codified, and edited by the Syrian-born St. John Damascus (675-749). Heralded as a “harp of the Holy Spirit,” St. John was one of the first “systematic” theologians (see his work *Fount of Knowledge*) and was instrumental in the theological defense against iconoclasm. With a clear and penetrating vision into the mysteries of God, St. John’s hymnography “gave voice with faultless harmony to a large number of hymns that embody the deepest theological insights of the Church Fathers.”²⁰

The *Great Octoechos* (or *Book of Eight Tones*; also called the *Parakletike*, which means both “comforting” and “invoking”) was compiled in part from a collection of hymns that was in use in Antioch. As a sort of proto-primitive *octoechos*, the Syriac translations of today’s text of the Octoechos bear the name of Severus, the monophysite Patriarch (512-518) of Antioch. *Octoechos* refers to an eight-week cycle of hymns, each week of which is sung in one of eight melodic modes. Each such mode, called a “tone” (Greek *echos*) is chanted for a week beginning from Sunday, and thus the cycle fills eight consecutive weeks.

In addition to writing many of the hymns and canons, St. John selected, adapted, and arranged the *Octoechos*, removing and editing unsuitable melodies. “The Octoechos which he handed down to posterity consists of compositions sublime with respect not only to their music quality, but also their diction, style, and content, which conveys carefully expressed Christian teachings . . . procuring for him the reputation of being the greatest master of the form of this poetry . . .”²¹ His compilation of the *Octoechos* proved so useful and valuable that the Church, both East and West, adopted its usage dur-

ing his lifetime.

St. John of Damascus’s work cannot be understated. The saint, called by Fr. Vapouris the “first fount” of Byzantine music, not only provided theological elucidations — as exemplified by the Paschal Canon, known as the “queen of canons” — but St. John also was the first to “work out a theory and system of musical notation . . . a reformed, stenographic type” which Byzantine music had lacked until that time. He also was the first to express in book form, a theory of the eight tones.²²

The second major period of growth in the general area of liturgical hymnology occurred in and around the Studion Monastery in Constantinople. Among the leaders of this “renaissance of religious activity” which followed the end of the iconoclast heresy²³ were the saints Theodore the Studite (d. 828) and his brother, Joseph the Bishop of Thessalonica. Both composed a great many hymns, canons, and kontakia, including many for the lenten *Triodion*. Other hymnographers — among them Theodore, Theophanes, and Methodius — composed hymnology for the services to saints and feast days. Even some of the Byzantine emperors made significant contributions to our hymnography; for example, the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogennitus composed the eleven resurrectional expostilaria (“hymns of light”) used at Sunday matins.

By this time, as a result of the work coming from the Studite Monastery, the canons were “no longer [mere] paraphrases of the Canticles, as were those of the [earlier] hymn-writers of St. Sabbas. In the first period of hymn-writers, the Odes were loosely linked together. Now the canon becomes a unity. With great skill a single thought is worked out and varied in all the odes . . .”²⁴ St. Joseph the Hymnographer (d. 883), following this model, was one of the last hymnographers to fill in the remaining spaces of the Octoechos during the weekdays, eventually completing the “Great Octoechos.”

The living treasury of liturgical prayers that we Orthodox Christians have today is the amazing culmination and fruit of the labors of almost a thousand years of hymnographers, genuinely witnessing to and reflecting the reality of the Kingdom

of God’s presence here and now, and the unity in time of the Church’s life and liturgy — a kind of eternal “today.”

Thirty of these hymnographers are canonized. Their inspired work marvelously reflects the Holy Spirit’s presence in the Church. The two main centers of hymnography, the monastery of St. Sabbas in the 7th century and the Studion in the 9th, produced saints who left behind to us their holy hymns which now help to unite the Church of every age and place.

Reflecting, we see that the Church’s hymns “require careful reading . . . [for] they are a poetic treasure [of] mystical beauty and power . . .”²⁵ Unfortunately, today in the West, there has been very little attention given to the study of the treasury of Orthodox hymnology, which Fr. John Meyendorff called “a poetic encyclopedia of patristic spirituality and theology.”²⁶ In peering into and through the “icons” that the Church’s hymns comprise, one begins to see into the depths of the Spirit, and thus to realize that the Church’s liturgical life is the place of an entry into the memory of the Church, which is the very mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2).

Appreciation and love for our Church’s hymnography, and — above all, its utilization in prayerful liturgy — forms an important precondition for the success of her mission. For “if there is to be a renaissance of Orthodox missionary and evangelical work in America there must be a rebirth of liturgical life.”²⁷

—Riassaphor Monk Seraphim

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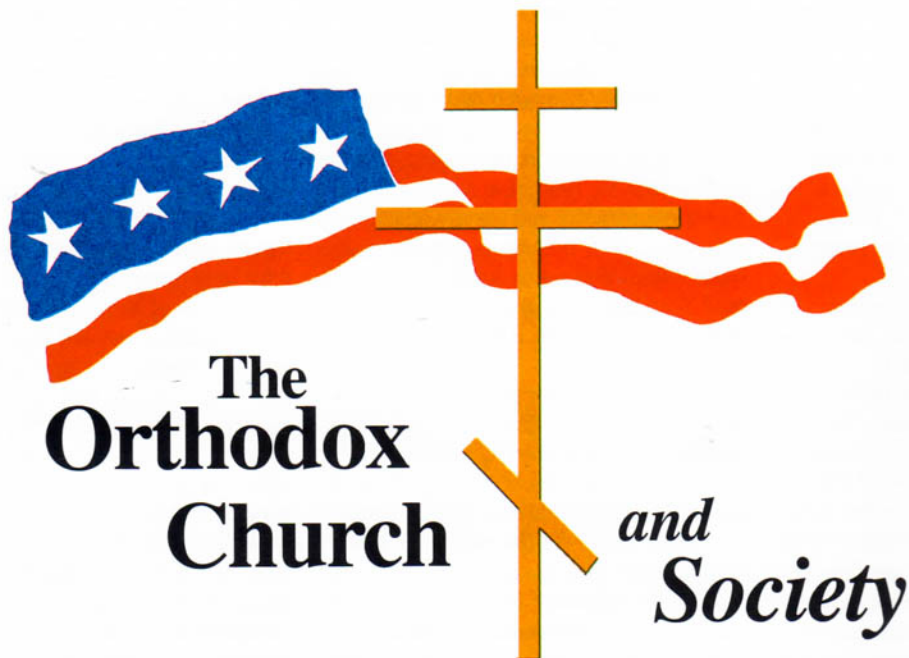
23. Wellesz, 140.

24. Wellesz, 234

25. Topping, 5.

26. Meyendorff, 123.

27. Archbishop Robert Arida, Dean of Holy Trinity Cathedral in Boston (OCA) (Psalm Notes, vol. 2, no. 2, Fall 1997, 7).



The Orthodox Church and Society

Editor's note: In 2000, the Church of Russia produced a document titled "The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church," which is probably the most comprehensive statement of social ethics ever formulated by any Orthodox Church. It is explicitly stated that the document may be revised and improved. While predictably some portions address specifically conditions in Russia, much is of interest and value to Orthodox Christians in other lands.¹

The full document has sixteen sections. Presented here are the first two sections, "Basic Theological Principles" and "Church and Nation," together with the beginning of the third section, "Church and State." At the present time of national trial and crisis in our own country, these topics will be of particular interest to Orthodox Americans.

I. Basic Theological Principles

I. 1. The Church is the assembly of believers in Christ, which He Himself calls

1. The present English translation is based on that provided by the Moscow Patriarchate, but with substantial editing for accuracy and other improvements by St. Innocent/Firebird Videos, Inc., with whose permission it is presented here. The full document is online at www.incommunion.org. The print version of it (which includes a convenient index) is available at a modest price from St. Tikhon's Seminary Bookstore. The original Russian text can be viewed at the website of the Church of Russia.

every one to join. In her, "all things heavenly and earthly" should be united in Christ, for He is the Head of "the Church, which is His Body, the fullness of Him Who fills all in all" (Eph. 1:22-23). In the Church creation is deified and God's original design for the world and man is fulfilled by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Church is a result of both the redemptive feat performed by the Son, Who was sent by the Father, and the sanctifying action of the Holy Spirit, Who descended on the great day of Pentecost. According to St. Irenaeus of Lyons, Christ put Himself at the head of humanity, becoming the Head of renewed humanity as His body, in which access is found to the source of the Holy Spirit. The Church is the unity of "the new humanity in Christ," "the unity of God's grace dwelling in the multitude of rational creatures who submit to grace" (A.S. Khomyakov). "Men, women, children, deeply divided as to race, nation, language, way of life, work, education, status, wealth all are restored by the Church in the Spirit. All receive from her one nature which is beyond corruption—the nature that is not affected by the numerous and profound ways by which people differ from one another. In her, no one is at all separated from what is held in common, because everyone is as if dissolved in one another by the simple

and indivisible power of faith" (St. Maximus the Confessor).

I. 2. The Church is a divine-human organism. Being the Body of Christ, she unites in herself the two natures, divine and human, with their inherent actions and wills. The Church relates to the world through her human, created nature. However, she interacts with it not as a purely earthly organism but in all her mysterious fullness. It is the divine-human nature of the Church that makes possible the grace-giving transformation and purification of the world accomplished in history in the creative co-work, "synergy," of the members and the Head of the Church-Body.

The Church is not of this world, just as her Lord, Jesus, is not of this world. However, He came into the world He was to save and restore, "humbling" Himself to match its conditions. The Church should go through the process of historical *kenosis* [self-emptying], fulfilling her redemptive mission. Her goal is not only the salvation of people in this world, but also the salvation and restoration of the world itself. The Church is called to act in the world in the image of Christ, to bear witness to Him and His Kingdom. The members of the Church are called to share in Christ's mission, in His service to the world, which is possible for the Church only as a conciliar service so that "the

world may believe" (Jn.17:21). The Church is called to serve for the salvation of the world, for even the Son of Man Himself "came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mk. 10:45).

The Savior said about Himself: I am among you as He Who serves" (Lk. 22:27). Service on behalf of the salvation of the world and human beings cannot be limited by national and religious boundaries, as the Lord Himself states clearly in the parable of the merciful Samaritan. Moreover, the members of the Church encounter Christ as the One Who assumed all the sins and suffering of the world when they welcome the hungry, homeless, sick or prisoner. Help given to those who suffer is in the full sense help given to Christ Himself, and the fulfillment of this commandment determines the eternal fate of every person (Mt. 25:31-41). Christ calls upon His disciples not to shun the world, but to be "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world."

The Church, being the Body of the God-Man, Christ, is divine and human. However, even if Christ is the perfect God-Man, the Church is not yet perfect in her divine humanity, for on earth she has to struggle with sin; and her humanity, though inherently united with the Godhead, is far from expressing Him and matching Him in everything.

I. 3. Life in the Church, to which every one is called, is continuous ministry to God and people. All the people of God are called to it. The members of the Body of Christ, participating in common service, also fulfill their particular functions. Each is given a special gift to serve all. "As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pet. 4:10). "For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit; to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits; to another different kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; but one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills" (1 Cor. 12:8-11). Gifts of the manifold grace of God are given to every one individually, but for the common ministry of the people of God (also for the service of

the world). And this represents the common service of the Church performed on the basis of not one, but many diverse gifts. The variety of gifts creates various ministries; however, "there are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all" (1 Cor. 12:5-6).

The Church also calls her faithful children to participation in the life of society, which should be based on the principles of Christian morality. In the High Priestly Prayer, the Lord Jesus prayed to the Heavenly Father for His followers: "I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that you should keep them from the evil one As You sent me into the world, I also have sent them into the world" (Jn. 17:15, 18). It is inadmissible to shun the surrounding world in a Manichaeian way. Christian participation in it should be based on the awareness that the world, society and state are objects of God's love, for they are to be transformed and purified according to the principles of God-commanded love. The Christian should view the world and society in the light of his ultimate destiny, in the eschatological light of the Kingdom of God.

The variety of gifts in the Church are manifested in a special way in her social ministry. The undivided church organism participates in the life of the world around it in its fullness, but the clergy, monastics and laity can realize this participation in different ways and to different degrees.

I. 4. Fulfilling the mission of the salvation of the human race, the Church performs its mission not only through direct preaching, but also through good works aimed to improve the spiritual-moral and material condition of the world around her. To this end, she enters into cooperation with the state, even if it is not Christian, as well as with various public associations and individuals, even if they do not identify themselves with the Christian faith. Without setting herself the direct task to have all converted to Orthodoxy as a condition for cooperation, the Church hopes that joint charity will lead its workers and people around them to the knowledge of the Truth, help them to preserve or restore faithfulness to the God-given moral norms, and inspire them to seek peace, harmony and well-being the conditions in which the Church can best fulfill her saving work.

II. Church and Nation

II. 1. The Old Testament people of Israel were the prototype of the peoples of God the New Testament Church of Christ. The redemptive feat of Christ the Savior brought the Church into being as the new humanity, the spiritual posterity of the forefather Abraham. By His Blood Christ "has redeemed us to God out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation" (Rev. 5:9). The Church by her very nature is universal and therefore supranational. In the Church "there is no distinction between Jew and Greek" (Rom. 10:12). Just as God is not the God of the Jews alone but also of the Gentiles (Rom. 3:29), so the Church does not divide people on either national or class grounds: in her "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all" (Col. 3:11).

In the contemporary world, the notion of "nation" is used in two meanings, as an ethnic community and the aggregate citizens of a particular country. Relationships between church and nation should be viewed in the context of both meanings of this word.

In the Old Testament, the terms '*am* and *goy* are used to denote "a people." In the Hebrew Bible, each term is given a quite concrete meaning, the former denoting God's chosen people of Israel, the latter in its plural form *goyim*, the Gentiles. In the Greek Bible (*Septuagint*), the first term was rendered by the term *laos* (people) or *demos* (a nation as a political entity), while the second by the term *ethnos* ("nation," and in the plural *ethne*, meaning "heathen").

God's chosen people of Israel are opposed to other nations throughout the Old Testament books associated in one way or another with the history of Israel. The people of Israel were chosen not because they surpassed other nations in number or anything else, but because God chose and loved them (Deut. 7:6-8). The notion of God's chosen people was a religious one in the Old Testament. The feeling of national community characteristic of the sons of Israel was rooted in the awareness of their belonging to God through a covenant made by their fathers with the Lord. The people of Israel became God's people,

Continued on the next page

Orthodox Church and Society

Continued from page 63

whose calling was to preserve the faith in the one true God, and to bear witness to this faith before other nations so that through Israel, the God-Man Jesus Christ, the Savior of all people, may be revealed to the world.

In addition to their sharing one religion, the unity of the people of God was secured by their ethnic and linguistic community and their being rooted in a particular land, their fatherland.

The ethnic community of the Israelites was rooted in their origin from one forefather, Abraham. "We have Abraham as our father" (Mt. 3:9; Lk. 3:8), the ancient Jews would say, emphasizing their belonging to the posterity of the one whom God ordained to become "a father of many nations" (Gen. 17:5). Great importance was attached to the preservation of the purity of the blood: marriages with foreigners were not approved because in these marriages "the holy seed" was mingled with "the people of those lands" (Ezra 9:2).

God gave the people of Israel the Promised Land for their livelihood. After they came out of Egypt, these people went to Canaan, the land of their predecessors, and by God's will conquered it. Since then the land of Canaan became the land of Israel, while its capital city, Jerusalem, became the principal spiritual and political center of God's chosen people. The people of Israel spoke one language that was not only the language of everyday life, but also the language of prayer. Moreover, Hebrew was the language of Revelation, for it was in it Hebrew that God Himself spoke to the people of Israel. In the era before the coming of Christ when the dwellers of Judea spoke Aramaic, Greek was elevated to the status of the national language, while Hebrew continued to be treated as a sacred language in which worship was conducted in the temple.

Being universal by nature, the Church is at the same time an organism, one body (1 Cor. 12:12). She is the one community of the children of God, "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God" (1 Pet. 2:9-10). The unity of these new people is secured not by its ethnic, cultural or linguistic community, but by their common faith in Christ and Baptism.

The new people of God "have no continuing city here, but seek one to come" (Heb. 13:14). The spiritual homeland of all Christians is not earthly Jerusalem, but the Jerusalem "which is above" (Gal. 4:26). The Gospel of Christ is preached not in the sacred language understandable to one people, but in all tongues (Acts. 2:3-11). The Gospel is not preached for one chosen people to preserve the true faith, but so that "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:10-11).

II. 2. The universal nature of the Church, however, does not mean that Christians should have no right to national identity and national self-expressions. On the contrary, the Church unites in herself the universal with the national. Thus, the Orthodox Church, though universal, consists of many Autocephalous National Churches. Orthodox Christians, aware of being citizens of the heavenly homeland, should not forget about their earthly homeland. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the Divine Founder of the Church, had no shelter on earth (Mt. 8:20) and pointed out that the teaching He brought was not local or national in nature: "the hour is coming when you shall neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father (Jn. 4:21). Nevertheless, He identified Himself with the people to whom He belonged by birth. Talking to the Samaritan woman, He stressed His belonging to the Jewish nation: "You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews" (Jn. 4:22). Jesus was a loyal subject of the Roman Empire and paid taxes to Caesar (Mt. 22:16-21). St. Paul, in his letters teaching on the supranational nature of the Church of Christ, did not forget that by birth he was "a Hebrew of the Hebrews" (Phil. 3:5), though a Roman by citizenship (Acts 22:25-29).

The cultural distinctions of particular nations are expressed in the liturgical and other church art, especially in the peculiarities of the Christian order of life. All this creates national Christian cultures. Among saints venerated by the Orthodox Church, many became famous for the love of their earthly homeland and faithfulness to it. Russian hagiographic sources praise the holy Prince Michael of Tver who "gave his life for his fatherland," comparing his

feat to the martyrdom of the holy protomartyr Dimitrios of Thessalonika: "The good lover of his fatherland said about his native city of Thessalonika, 'O Lord, if you ruin this city, I will perish together with it, but if you save it, I will also be saved.'"

At all times the Church has called upon her children to love their homeland on earth and not to spare their lives to protect it if it were threatened. The Russian Church on many occasions gave her blessing to the people for them to take part in liberation wars. Thus, in 1380, the venerable Sergius, the Abbot and Miracle-Worker of Radonezh, blessed the Russian troops headed by the holy Prince Dimitri Donskoi before their battle with the Tartar-Mongol invaders. In 1612, St. Germogen, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, gave his blessing to the citizen army in their struggle with the Polish invaders. In 1813,² during the war with the French aggressors, St. Philaret of Moscow said to his flock: "If you avoid dying for the honor and freedom of the Fatherland, you will die a criminal or a slave; die for the Faith and the Fatherland and you will be granted life and a crown in heaven."

The holy righteous John of Kronstadt wrote this about love of one's earthly homeland: "Love the earthly homeland it has raised, distinguished, honored and equipped you with everything; but have special love for the heavenly homeland that homeland is incomparably more precious than this one, because it is holy, righteous and incorruptible. The priceless blood of the Son of God has earned that homeland for you. But in order to be members of that homeland, you should respect and love its laws, just as you are obliged to respect the laws of the earthly homeland."

II. 3. Christian patriotism may be expressed at the same time with regard to a nation as an ethnic community and as a community of its citizens. The Orthodox Christian is called to love his fatherland, which has a territorial dimension, and his brothers by blood who live everywhere in the world. This love is one of the ways of fulfilling God's commandment of love for one's neighbor, which includes love of one's family, fellow-tribesmen and fellow-citizens.

2. [Editor's note: There is an error here: Platon was Metropolitan in 1813; St. Philaret was Metropolitan of Moscow between 1826 and 1867. Perhaps the date is 1853, during the Crimean War against the British, French and Turks.]

The patriotism of the Orthodox Christian should be active. It is manifested when he defends his fatherland against an enemy, works for the good of the motherland, cares for the good order of people's life through, among other things, participation in the affairs of government. The Christian is called to preserve and develop national culture and people's self-awareness.

When a nation — civil or ethnic — represents fully or predominantly a mono-confessional Orthodox community, it can in a certain sense be regarded as the one community of faith — an Orthodox nation.

II. 4. At the same time, national sentiments can cause such sinful phenomena as aggressive nationalism, xenophobia, national exclusiveness and inter-ethnic enmity. At their extremes, these phenomena often lead to the restriction of the rights of individuals and nations, wars and other manifestations of violence.

It is contrary to Orthodox ethics to divide nations into the best and the worst and to belittle any ethnic or civic nation. Even more contrary to Orthodoxy are the teachings which put the nation in the place of God or reduce faith to one of the aspects of national self-awareness.

Opposing these sinful phenomena, the Orthodox Church carries out the mission of reconciliation between hostile nations and their representatives. Thus, in inter-ethnic conflicts, she does not identify herself with any side, except for cases when one of the sides commit evident aggression or injustice.

III. Church and State

III. 1. The Church, as a divine-human organism, not only has a mysterious nature, not submissive to the elements of the world, but also has an historical component, which comes in touch with the outside world, including the state. The state, which exists for the purpose of ordering worldly life, also comes into contact with the Church. Relationships between the state and the followers of genuine religion have continuously changed in the course of history.

The family represented the initial cell of human society. The holy history of the Old Testament shows that the state was not formed at once. The Old Testament people had no state before Joseph's broth-

ers went to Egypt. The state was gradually formed in the epoch of the Judges. As a result of a complex historical development guided by Divine Providence, complicated social relations led to the emergence of the state.

In ancient Israel, before the period of the Kings, there was genuine theocracy, i.e. the "rule of God," which proved to be unique in history. However, as society moved away from obedience to God as the organizer of worldly affairs, people began to think about the need to have a worldly ruler. The Lord, while accepting the people's choice and authorizing the new form of government, regrets their rejection of divine rule. "And the Lord said to Samuel: Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. Therefore, listen to their voice,; but give them a solemn warning, and show them what sort of king shall reign over them" (1 Sam. 8:7, 9).

Thus, the emergence of the temporal state should not be understood as a reality originally established by God. It was rather God's granting human beings an opportunity to order their social life by their own free will, so that this order — as a response to the earthly reality distorted by sin — could help avoid a greater sin through opposing it by means of temporal power. At the same time, the Lord says clearly through Samuel's mouth that He expects this temporal authority to be faithful to His commandments and to do good works: "Now therefore behold the king you have chosen, and whom you have desired! and, behold, the Lord has set a king over you. If you will fear the Lord, and serve Him, and obey His voice, and not rebel against the Commandment of the Lord, and if both you and the king who reigns over you are faithful to the Lord your God, well and good. But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord, but rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then shall the hand of the Lord be against you, as it was against your fathers" (1 Sam. 12:13-15). When Saul violated the Lord's commandment, God rejected him (1 Sam. 16:1) and ordered him to anoint His other chosen one, David, a son of the commoner, Jesse.

The Son of God Who reigns over heaven and earth (Mt. 28:18), by becoming man, subjected Himself to the worldly order of things, obeying also the bearers

of state power. To His crucifier, Pilate, the Roman procurator in Jerusalem, He said, "You could have no power at all against me, unless it were given to you from above" (Jn. 19:11). The Savior gave this answer to the tempting question of a Pharisee about whether it is permissible to pay tribute to Caesar: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's" (Mt. 22:21).

Explaining the teaching of Christ on the right attitude to state power, St. Paul wrote: "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resists the power, resists the ordinance of God; and they who resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Will you then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and you shall have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to you for good. But if you do that which is evil, be afraid; for he bears not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him who does evil. Wherefore you must be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience's sake. For this cause pay tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their due: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor" (Rom. 13:1-7). The same idea was expressed by St. Peter: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or to governors, as to those who are sent for the praise of those who do well. For so is the will of God, that with well-doing you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God" (1 Pet. 2:13-16). The apostles taught Christians to obey the authorities regardless of their attitude to the Church. In the apostolic era, the Church of Christ was persecuted both by the Jewish and Roman State authorities. This did not prevent the martyrs and other Christians of that time from praying for prosecutors and recognizing their power.

III. 2. The fall of Adam brought to the world sins and vices which needed public opposition. The first of them was the murder of Cain by Abel (Gen. 4:1-16). Aware of this, people in all known societ-

Continued on the next page

Orthodox Church and Society

Continued from page 65

ies began to establish laws restricting evil and supporting good. For the Old Testament people, God Himself was the Law-maker Who gave rules to regulate not only religious life proper but also public life (Ex. 20-23).

God blesses the state as an essential element of life in the world distorted by sin, in which both the individual and society need to be protected from the dangerous manifestations of sin. At the same time, the need for the state arose not because God willed it for the primitive Adam, but because of the fall and because the actions to restrict the dominion of sin over the world conformed to His will. Holy Scriptures calls upon the powers that be to use the power of the state for restricting evil and supporting good, in which it sees the moral meaning of the existence of the state (Rom. 13:3-4). It follows from the above that anarchy is the absence of proper order in a state and society, while calls to anarchy, and attempts to introduce it, run contrary to the Christian outlook (Rom. 13:2).

The Church not only prescribes for her children to obey state power regardless of the convictions and faith of its bearers, but also prays for it, "that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty" (1 Tim. 2:2). At the same time, Christians should avoid attempts to make state power absolute, and should recognize the limits of its purely earthly, temporal and transient value, conditioned by the presence of sin in the world and the need to restrain it. According to the teaching of the Church, power itself has no right to make itself absolute by extending its limits up to complete autonomy from God and from the order of things established by Him. This can lead to the abuse of power and even to the deification of rulers. The state, just as other human institutions, even if aimed at the good, may tend to transform itself into a self-serving institution. Numerous historical examples of such a transformation show that in this case the state loses its true purpose.

III. 3. In church-state relations, the difference in their natures should be taken into account. The Church has been founded by God Himself, our Lord Jesus Christ, while the God-instituted nature of state power is revealed in historical process only indirectly. The goal of the

Church is the eternal salvation of people, while the goal of the state is their well-being on earth.

"My kingdom is not of this world," says the Savior (Jn. 18:36). "This world" is only partially obedient to God, but for the most part it seeks to become autonomous from its own Creator and Lord. To the extent the world disobeys God it obeys "the father of lies" and "lies in wickedness" (Jn. 8:44; 1 Jn. 5:19). But the Church as "the Body of Christ" (1 Cor. 12:27) and "the pillar and ground of truth" (1 Tim. 3:15) in her mysterious essence can have no evil in herself, nor any shadow of darkness. Since the state is part of "this world," it has no part in the Kingdom of God, for where there is Christ, "Who is all and in all" (Col. 3:11), there is no room for coercion, nor is there opposition between the human and the divine, hence there is no state.

In the contemporary world, the state is normally secular and not bound by any religious commitments. Its cooperation with the Church is limited to several areas and based on mutual non-interference into each other's affairs. However, the state is aware, as a rule, that earthly well-being is unthinkable without respect for certain moral norms the norms which are also essential for the eternal salvation of mankind. Therefore, the tasks and work of the Church and the state may coincide not only in seeking purely earthly welfare, but also in the fulfillment of the saving mission of the Church.

The principle of the secular state cannot be understood as implying that religion should be radically forced out of all the spheres of the people's lives, nor that religious associations should be debarred from decision-making on socially significant problems and deprived of the right to evaluate the actions of the authorities. This principle presupposes only a certain division of domains between church and state and their non-interference into each other's affairs.

The Church should not assume the prerogatives of the state, such as resistance to sin by force, use of temporal authoritative powers, or assumption of the governmental functions which presuppose coercion or restriction. At the same time, the Church may request or urge the government to exercise power in particular cases, yet the decision rests with the state.

The state should not interfere in the life

of the Church or her government, doctrine, liturgical life, counseling, etc., or the work of canonical church institutions in general, except for those aspects where the Church is supposed to operate as a legal identity, and is thus obliged to enter into certain relations with the state, its legislation and governmental agencies. The Church expects that the state will respect her canonical norms and other internal statutes.

III. 4. Various models of relationships between the Orthodox Church and the state have developed in the course of history.

The Orthodox tradition has developed an explicit ideal of church-state relations. Since church-state relations entail two-way traffic, the above-mentioned ideal could emerge in history only in a state that recognizes the Orthodox Church as the greatest people's shrine, in other words, only in an Orthodox state.

Attempts to work out this form were undertaken in Byzantium, where the principles of church-state relations were expressed in the canons and the laws of the empire and were reflected in patristic writings. In their totality these principles were described as a *symphony* between church and state. It is essentially cooperation, mutual support and mutual responsibility, without one side intruding into the exclusive domain of the other. The bishop obeys the government as a subject, but his episcopal power does not come from a government official. Similarly, a government official obeys his bishop as a member of the Church, who seeks salvation in it, but not because his power comes from the power of the bishop. The state, in such a symphonic relationship with the Church, seeks her spiritual support, prayer for itself and blessing upon its work to achieve the goal of its citizens' welfare, while the Church enjoys support from the state in creating conditions favorable for preaching and for the spiritual care of her children who are at the same time citizens of the state.

St. Justinian in his *Sixth Novella* formulates the principle lying at the basis of the church-state symphony: "The greatest blessings granted to human beings by God's ultimate grace are priesthood and kingdom: the former (priesthood, church authority) involves taking care of divine affairs, while the latter (kingdom, government) involves guiding and taking care of human affairs; and both have the same goal

— the enhancing of human life. Therefore, nothing lies so heavy on the hearts of kings as the honor of priests, who on their part serve them, praying continually for them to God. And if the priesthood is well ordered in everything and is pleasing to God, then there will be full harmony between them in everything that serves the good and benefit of the human race. Therefore, we exert the greatest possible effort to guard the true dogmas of God and the honor of the priesthood, hoping to receive through it great blessings from God and to hold fast to the ones which we have.” Guided by this norm, Emperor Justinian in his *Novellas* recognized the canons as having the power of state laws.

The classical Byzantine formula of relationships between state and church power is contained in the *Epanagoge* (late 9th century): “The temporal power and the priesthood relate to each other as body and soul; they are necessary for state order just as body and soul are necessary in a living man. It is in their bonding and harmony that the well-being of a state lies.”

This symphony, however, did not exist in Byzantium in an absolutely pure form. In practice it was often violated and distorted. The Church was repeatedly subjected to caesaro-papist claims from the state authorities, which were essentially the demands that the head of the state — the emperor — should have the decisive say in ordering church affairs. Along with the sinful human love of power, these claims had also an historical reason. The Christian emperors of Byzantium were direct successors of the Roman pagan rulers who, among their numerous titles, had that of *pontifex maximus*, chief priest. The caesaro-papist tendency manifested itself most bluntly and dangerously for the Church in the policies of heretical emperors, especially in the iconoclastic era.

Unlike a Byzantine *basileus*, Russian tsars had a different legacy. For this and other historical reasons, the relationship between the church and state authorities was more harmonious in Russian antiquity. However, there were also deviations from the canonical norms (under Ivan the Terrible and in the confrontation between Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich and Patriarch Nikon).

As far as the Synodal period is concerned, the evident distortion of the symphonic norm for two centuries in church history is associated with the distinct im-

pact that the Protestant doctrine of territory and established church (see below) made on the Russian perception of law and order and political life. An attempt to assert the ideal of symphony in the new situation when the empire collapsed was made by the Local Council of 1917-1918. In the declaration that preceded the *Action on Church-State Relations*, the demand to separate church and state was likened to the wish that “the sun should not shine and fire should not warm up. The Church, by the internal law of her being, cannot renounce her calling to enlighten, to transform the whole human life, to imbue it with her rays.” In the resolution of the Council on the legal status of the Orthodox Church of Russia, the state is called upon to accept, in particular, these provisions: “the Russian Orthodox Church, being part of the one Universal Church of Christ, shall have the preeminent public and legal status among other confessions in the Russian State, which befits her as the greatest shrine for the overwhelming majority of the population and a great historical force that built the Russian State. As soon as they are made public, decrees and statutes issued by the Orthodox Church for herself, according to the order she established, as well as actions of the church government and court shall be recognized by the State as legally valid and authoritative unless they violate state laws. State laws concerning the Orthodox Church shall be issued only with the consent of the church authorities.” Subsequent Local Councils were held in situations when history made it impossible to return to the pre-Revolutionary principles of church-state relations. Nevertheless, the Church asserted her traditional role in the life of society and expressed readiness to work in the social realm. Thus, the 1990 Local Council stated: “Throughout her millennium-long history the Russian Orthodox Church has educated the faithful in the spirit of patriotism and love of peace. Patriotism is manifested in the concern for the historical heritage of the Fatherland, in active civil capacity by sharing the joys and hardships of her people, in zealous and conscientious work and in concern for the moral state of society and for the preservation of nature” (from the *Message of the Council*).

In the European medieval West, a doctrine of “two swords” was formed, not without influence by the work of St. Au-

gustine entitled *The City of God*. According to it, the power of both church and state — the former directly, the latter indirectly — go back to the Bishop of Rome. Popes were absolute monarchs ruling over the Papal States, a part of Italy, the remnant of which is the Vatican today. Many bishops, especially in feudally divided Germany, were princes with state-like jurisdiction over their territories, with their own governments and armies of which they were the leaders.

The Reformation left no ground for the popes and Catholic bishops to preserve their power in the territories of countries which became Protestant. In the 17th-19th centuries, the legal conditions in Catholic countries also changed — so much so that the Catholic Church was in fact removed from government. Along with the Vatican, however, the doctrine of “two swords” helped to retain the practice of concluding agreements in the form of *concordats* between the Roman Curia and states in which there were Catholic communities. Due to this, the legal status of these communities was determined in many countries not only by internal laws, but also by the law regulating international relations, to which the Vatican State was subject.

In the countries where the Reformation triumphed and later in some Catholic countries, the territorial principle was established in church-state relations, giving the state full sovereignty over a territory and the religious communities found in it. This system of relations was expressed in the phrase *cujus est regio, illius est religio* (the religion of the sovereign is the religion of the country). If realized consistently, this system implies that those whose faith is different from that of the bearers of the highest state power should be banished from the state (a practice realized more than once). In real life, however, this principle gained a foothold in a softer form described as the established church. It gives to the majority religious community, to which the sovereign belongs and which he officially heads, the privileges of the state Church. A combination of this system of church-state relations with remnants of the traditional “symphony” inherited from Byzantium determined the peculiarity of the legal status of the Orthodox Church in the Synodal period in Russia.

To be continued.

The Orthodox Parish in North America



Editor's note: The present document, written by Father Thomas Hopko, is a study document, intended to be read by parishioners in preparation for the Thirteenth All-American Council. The original document includes suggestions for scripture reading, discussions, and reflections. These are not included here but may be viewed with the document at the O.C.A. website, www.oca.org.

The theme of the Thirteenth All-American Council of the Orthodox Church in America is *The Parish Community: Our Life in Christ*. After the family, we experience our life in Christ primarily in the parish. From birth to death, the parish community is where God “raises the infants, guides the young, supports the aged, encourages the faint-hearted, reunites the separated, leads back those who are in error and joins them to His Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church” (from the Anaphora prayers of St. Basil). The vitality of spiritual life in our families and personal prayer is nourished by the parish. All outreach to, and our relationships with, our neighborhoods, dioceses, the national church as well as the worldwide church flow from the parish community.

Many people today lament the state of our parish life in modern and secular North American society. There are many crises to be dealt with daily, simply because the

devil hates and opposes the holiness and unity of a true parish community whose life is fully in Christ.

The purpose of this paper is not to despair over these crises, but to examine our parish life, rejoice and give thanks for the godly aspects of our communities and enable us to see the shortcomings as challenges and opportunities to strengthen and grow our life in Christ.

Self-examination, whether as an individual or a community, is often a painful experience. It is not easy to admit failures. Change is never comfortable. It is also not our purpose to place blame for why failures and shortcomings exist. The task at hand is rather to state the essential things to be believed, understood and done if Orthodox parishes in North America today are to be Christian according to traditional Orthodox teaching and practice.

One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic

An Orthodox parish has only one God-given reason for being. It exists to be the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ. Whatever the original reasons and conditions for its founding, whatever other services and activities it may provide, whatever other desires and needs it may fulfill for its members, a community of Orthodox Christians must be Christ's one holy Church. If it is not, then it is neither Christian nor Orthodox, whatever else

it may be and do.

A parish must be *the* Church of Christ, and not simply a church, because, according to the Orthodox faith, every local community of Orthodox Christians with a priest must be, and theologically understood actually is the one Church of Christ. Theologically speaking, there are not many Orthodox Churches; there is only one. An Orthodox parish is this one Church or it is not an Orthodox church at all. Each parish, therefore, must be the one and only Church of Christ. The parish must be holy because Christ's Church is holy. Everything in the parish, and everything about it, must be holy because God and Christ are holy. There can be no part of a parish that is not sanctified by the holiness of God and His Son Jesus Christ, “the holy One of God.” There can be no aspect of a parish not inspired and empowered by God's Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of God and of Christ. Everything in and about a parish — its organization, structure, administration, finances and properties, as well as its theological and moral teachings and practices, and its liturgical and sacramental rites and services — must be of God. They must be determined by God, inspired by God and submitted to God for His glory and the good of His people.

The Christian parish must also be catholic. For the parish to be “catholic”

means that it is full, complete and whole, lacking nothing in its mystical and sacramental being and life as Christ's holy Church. In an Orthodox Christian parish the whole fullness of God must dwell, as in Christ's body, with all the fullness of life and grace and truth, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

The word *catholic* literally means full or whole or complete. It does not, in the first instance, mean universal or worldwide. Thus every local Christian community, every "parish" in the contemporary American meaning of the word, theologically, mystically and sacramentally is, in apostolic words, "Christ's body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (Ephesians 1:23). It is the "household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). Everything expresses this. Everything testifies to this. This obviously does not mean that a parish will not be particular and limited in its human empirical, cultural and sociological forms. It has to be, since it is made up of human beings. But all of a parish's particular aspects, with all of its teachings, services and activities, if they are Orthodox and Christian, will be open to the boundless fullness of God and will thereby be inclusive to everyone and everything that is good and holy and true.

And, according to the understanding of Christ's Church in the Nicene creed, the Orthodox parish that is truly Christian will not only be the same Church of Christ with every other parish — one with God's unity, holy with God's holiness, and catholic with God's fullness. It will also be apostolic with God's own apostolicity which is found in the Church of Christ in all times and places.

An Orthodox parish, if it is Christ's one holy Church, will be apostolic in at least two meanings of the term. It will be apostolic because it is founded upon Christ's apostles and firmly rooted in apostolic doctrine and tradition. It will keep and live "the faith which was once and for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). It will preserve and pass on the apostolic "deposit" (*paratheke*) which has been guarded and developed by Orthodox Christians, particularly through their bishops, in all times and places, from apostolic times to the present (cf. 1 Timothy 6:20 ; 2 Timothy 1:12,14).

An Orthodox parish is apostolic also because it exists with God's mission,

which is the mission of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the apostles of all ages, beginning with Christ's own. The Greek word *apostolo*, from which the words apostle and apostolic are derived, means "to send." So does the Latin word *mitto*, from which are derived the words mission and missionary. According to the scriptures, Jesus the Messiah is Himself "the apostle" (Hebrews 3:1). According to His scriptural testimony, especially the Gospel according to St. John, Jesus speaks the words, does the work, and accomplishes the will "of the Father, the One, who sent Him" (cf. John 6:29,44; 7:28,33; 17:3,18). In the same scriptures, the apostles, being filled with the Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father and is sent by the Son, are themselves sent into the world by Jesus to proclaim the gospel of God's Kingdom. "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you . . . Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:21).

An Orthodox Christian parish, however it was founded and for whatever purpose it was organized, must understand itself to be an apostolic community with a missionary purpose. Its members, especially its leaders, must be conscious of themselves as people sent by Christ from God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to bring God's unity, holiness and fullness to all human beings in this divided, sinful and fragmented world. If a parish has no awareness and consciousness of being "sent" by God to speak His words, to do His work, and to accomplish His will in this world, then it is not an Orthodox Christian parish. At best it is a bunch of decent people carrying on a bundle of benign activities for their own benefit. At worst, to use apocalyptic words, it is a "synagogue of Satan" perverting God's gospel by its "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (which) will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come" (Revelation 2:9, 3:9; Matt. 12:31-32; Mark 3:28).

The members of an Orthodox parish must be motivated to keep God's commandments as their essential and ultimately exclusive reason for being. The life and activity of an Orthodox parish should be perfectly described by Jesus' answer to the question concerning the first and great commandment of the law of God.

And one of the scribes . . . asked him, "Which commandment is first of all?" Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God, the Lord is one;

and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these" (Mark 12:28-31).

In the Gospel according to St. Matthew, Jesus teaches that "on these two commandments [Deut. 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18] depend all the law and the prophets" (Matthew 22:40). For our present purposes we can also say that on these two commandments depend the whole being and life of an Orthodox Christian parish.

Heart: Liturgical Worship and Sacramental Service

Jesus says that God must be loved first of all with all one's heart. In biblical usage, the heart is the center of a person's being. It is the ground of a person's life, the seat of a person's will, and the source of a person's activity, beginning with one's words. It is the "place where God bears witness to himself," according to St. Isaac of Syria; the place in a person, according to St. Macarius, which contains God himself, and Christ and the Holy Spirit, and the whole of creation, visible and invisible, spiritual and material, good and evil. A person's heart reveals what he or she really is, and really thinks, and really wants and really does. "For where your treasure is," Jesus tells us, "there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:21).

The heart of a parish, if it is Christ's one holy Church, will be totally given to God. In this sense, the heart of an Orthodox Christian parish will be its liturgical and sacramental worship. Worship will constitute the parish's core. It will be the parish's essential mode of self-realization. It will be its basic reason for being, the foundational purpose for its existence and life.

An Orthodox Christian parish is first and foremost a worshipping community. It exists to praise, bless and glorify God, to ceaselessly sing the thrice-holy hymn to the life-creating Trinity. Its essential purpose is to baptize people in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; to enable them to die in Christ and to be raised with Him to newness of life; to be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit; to hear God's word, to respond to God's gospel, to confess and repent of our sins, to participate in the eucharistic sacrifice

Continued on the next page

Orthodox Parish in North America

Continued from page 69
of Christ's Body and Blood; and to actualize God's Kingdom on earth, in spirit and truth, by faith and grace, until Christ comes in glory at the close of the age.

Soul: Spiritual Life and Pastoral Care

An Orthodox Christian parish must also be a community of people loving God with all their souls, as God's law commands and Jesus confirms. The word *soul* (Greek *psyche*, Hebrew *nefesh*) literally means *life* and is often rendered as such in contemporary translations of the Bible in English.

Loving God with all one's soul means loving Him with all of one's thoughts, words and deeds in all of the routine thinking, talking and acting involved in everyday living. For an Orthodox Christian parish, if it is Christ's holy church, this means that the community as a whole, and each individual member of it, is personally committed to living a Christian spiritual life by struggling to keep God's commandments. "If you love me," Jesus says in St. John's Gospel, "you will keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Comforter (Greek: *parakletos*; counselor, advocate) to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you" (John 14:15-17).

Christian spiritual life relates to every aspect of a person's being and to every area of a person's life and work. It has to do with his or her body and behavior, as well as to his or her thoughts and feelings. It has to do with sexuality as well as spirituality, with public and political action as well as with private and personal activity. People need help in living a Christian spiritual life in its fullness and depth. People do not mechanically become "members of Christ" and "temples of the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 6:15-19) and do not magically possess the "mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:16) and become "one spirit" with the Lord. (1 Corinthians 6:17).

Members of Christ's Church must have spiritual guidance and direction. They require pastoral attention, thoughts, and care. They need instruction in "fighting the good fight" by learning how to resist temp-

tation, to reject evil thoughts, to overcome spiritual passions by partaking, through faith and grace, in Christ's victory through the Holy Spirit. Such spiritual and pastoral services must be present in an Orthodox Christian parish if it is truly Christ's holy Church. They need not, and indeed cannot be provided by the clergy alone. It is the duty of bishops and priests, however, to see that these services are provided by people capable of doing so, for the benefit of those willing to receive them. The Orthodox Christian parish is the proper place for this to happen. If it is not happening, then, once again, the parish community is not Christ's Church.

Essential also to an Orthodox parish, if it is Christ's holy Church, is total mobilization of efforts to love God with all of one's mind through enlightenment and education.

Mind: Education and Enlightenment

Essential also to an Orthodox parish, if it is Christ's holy Church, is total mobilization of efforts to love God with all of one's mind through enlightenment and education.

Jesus' first title in the scripture is rabbi, which means teacher or master (Grk: *didaskalos*, Latin: *magister*). As messianic pastor and priest, Christ is also "the prophet" who brings ultimate and lasting judgment upon those who hear and reject him (John 1:21, 6:14; Acts 3:22-26). The Lord's first followers are called disciples or students. And the first thing that is said about those who believed in God's gospel of Christ crucified and glorified is that they "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42).

An Orthodox Christian parish, therefore, is essentially a teaching and learning community for all its members. It is a school of disciples whose master is Christ as He speaks within the community of believers, especially through the pastors and those with the charism and training for teaching and preaching.

An Orthodox parish without well-prepared evangelical and exegetical sermons at its liturgical services, and well-prepared

doctrinal and catechetical sessions as part of its educational ministry, whatever else it might do, including having lots of liturgical services and loads of social events, can hardly be an Orthodox Christian Church. This is especially true now in North America when Christianity generally, not to speak of Orthodoxy, is not a respected, accepted and supported part of public life and education, but is rather warred against, scorned and ridiculed by powerful forces in society.

Strength: Mission and Philanthropy

Loving God with all one's strength, particularly according to the Hebrew text of holy scripture, means that we are to love God with all that we possess, primarily our money and property. Strength, in this context, does not merely mean mental, emotional or physical might, though these, of course, are not to be excluded from our love for the Lord.

An Orthodox Christian parish, when it is Christ's holy Church, is obliged to use all of its powers for God's glory and the people's good. Christians as individual persons, as well as families, parishes and dioceses, will have to give account to Christ for how they used their God-given strength. We will have to answer for our use of money and resources, property and possessions, positions and profits. We will be asked how we loved "in deed and in truth," and not merely "in word or speech," through concrete acts of charity for the hungry and thirsty, the sick and suffering, the homeless and naked, the persecuted and imprisoned (cf. 1 John 3:18; Matt. 25:31-46).

On judgment day, the Lord will not ask us about our parish size and facilities. Nor will He be interested in our liturgical schedule or style. He will not ask us how we dressed or what we ate. He will be indifferent to how large our church temples were, or where they were located, or how they were decorated and appointed. Nor will He ask us to recite the Nicene Creed, or to explain the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. All of these things are important, but their significance has only one end: the love of God with all one's heart, soul, mind, and strength, expressed as it can only be expressed in this present age, in concrete acts of love for our neighbors, first of all the members of our own families and parishes, and most of all for those who hate and oppose us.

Love of God with all our strength through acts of love for our neighbors and enemies is enacted primarily in acts of evangelism and philanthropy. While sacramental participation in an Orthodox parish is strictly reserved for committed Orthodox Christians who take full responsibility for the Church's faith and life, and completely identify with the Church's path through history, the philanthropic and evangelical activities of an Orthodox Christian parish as well as its services of teaching, counseling, and prayerful intercession, have no bounds or limitations of any kind. They are to be exercised freely and without discrimination for all people regardless of their religion, nationality, race, sexual behavior, or relation to Christ's church. The first Christians, as witnessed in the New Testament, and such saints as John Chrysostom and Olympia, and Fr. John of Kronstadt and Mother Maria Skobtsova, taught and practiced this Christian truth without the slightest hesitation, equivocation or compromise.

A parish without carefully planned and implemented evangelical and philanthropic activity directed both within and outside its parochial bounds, is, once again, simply not Orthodox or Christian.

Structure and Administration

In order for these aspects of parish life to be actualized, a parish community must have the proper Christian structure and administration. The head of the parish in its total life is the presbyter, who is ordained and assigned by the diocesan bishop. He is also embraced and accepted by the parish as the community's spiritual and sacramental leader, father and pastor. The parish priest, properly understood in Christian Orthodoxy, is neither domineering nor servile. He is neither an authoritarian "stand-in" for an absent hierarch, nor a hired underling at the beck and call of a secularized board of trustees. He is rather a called, trained, tested and ordained teacher, pastor and priest who guarantees the presence and action of Christ in the community. His God-given task, confirmed and supported by the faithful, is to empower every parishioner to find and fulfill his or her calling as a member of Christ's Body. He is the servant of servants, for God's glory and the good of all people. When functioning properly in love, this structure maintains its identity and integrity as Christ's Body, the household of God.

Unity and Variety

Until God's Kingdom comes with power and the end of the age, Orthodox Christian parishes around the world will be struggling to be Christ's holy Church. These parishes, certainly in the United States and Canada, will be of a great variety of sizes, shapes and styles, though each one, theologically and mystically, will be the very same Church of Christ. The parishes will be composed of different kinds of people. They will be of different cultures and traditions. They will have different emphases and possibilities in worship, education, pastoral care, and philanthropic and evangelical activity. None of them will claim that they can do everything by themselves. They will acknowledge that they need each other, that they are constrained by truth and love to cooperate with each other, that they must complete each other, but must complete each other in Christian service and ministry.

They will know that the only way in which they should strive to outdo each other is in expressing godly zeal, brotherly affection, due honor and mutual respect (cf. Romans 12:9-13).

Whatever confusions and difficulties confront Orthodox Christianity in North America today, whatever their origins and causes, and whatever temptations and trials they bring to believers, there is no good reason why an Orthodox Christian parish in the United States or Canada cannot be Christ's holy Church. All that is required is that its members, beginning with its leaders, be firmly resolved to have it so. Their afflictions will be great, as Christ has promised, but their successes are assured by His victory. "In the world you have tribulation," Jesus says to his apostles, "but take courage, I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). "For what is impossible with men is possible with God" (Luke 18:27).

Bishop Innocent Falls Asleep

On Tuesday, May 7, 2002, the Chancery of the Orthodox Church in America was informed that His Grace, Bishop Innocent [Gula], Retired Auxiliary to His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius, passed away peacefully in his sleep at his residence in Alaska on Bright Monday, May 6, 2002.

Born in Hazelton, Pa. on August 20, 1949, the son of George and Elizabeth Baka Gula, Bishop Innocent received a B.A. degree in Philosophy and Psychology from Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, Pa. in 1971. In 1976, he received an M.S. degree in Religious Education from Marywood College, Scranton, Pa. The following year he graduated from Saint Tikhon's Seminary, South Canaan, Pa., where he served as editor of the *Tikhonaire* and president of the student council.

Bishop Innocent was ordained to the diaconate in February 1979 and to the priesthood the following May. In 1980 he established Saint Gregory of Nyssa Church, Seaford, N.Y. Three years later he was appointed Administrator of the Annunciation Monas-

tic Community, Tuxedo Park, N.Y., where he was instrumental in initiating and directing retreat programs and served as an instructor of liturgics in a diaconate program. He also served as rector of parishes in New York City and New Jersey prior to his assignment as chaplain to the Community of the Holy Myrrhbearers, Otego, N.Y. in 1990.

In 1994 he was appointed chaplain and Dean of Students at Saint Herman Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kodiak, Alaska. The following year, he was elected Auxiliary to Metropolitan Theodosius, *Locum Tenens* of the Diocese of Alaska. His consecration to the episcopacy took place at Saint Innocent Cathedral, Anchorage, AK on September 15-16, 1995.

In March 2001, Bishop Innocent was relieved of his duties in Alaska and subsequently retired from active ministry. Funeral services took place in Hazelton, Pa. on Monday May 13, 2002. Burial was in the family plot at St. Mary's Church Cemetery, Hazelton, PA.

May Bishop Innocent's memory be eternal!

All in the Diocesan Family

Berwick

Holy Annunciation Church

Archbishop Herman made an archpastoral visit to Berwick on April 7, installing Fr. James Weremedic as rector of the parish. On Saturday, May 18, the women's group, HALO, held a Baklava Bash, and sponsored a church school picnic on June 20. Three graduates from the parish were honored on June 23.

Baptism: Nathan Richard, son of Stephanie & Todd Sponenberg, July 14.

Chrismation: Stevi (Paraskeva) Laubach & Lavonne (Tatiana) Kuchka, May 4.



Nathan Sponenberg is baptized

Bethlehem

St. Nicholas Church

A celebration was held on June 30 honoring Fr. Eugene Vansuch on the 35th anniversary of his priesthood.

Coaldale

St. Mary's Church

On Bright Saturday a paschal egg hunt was held on the parish grounds. A successful Chinese auction was conducted on May 19. The end of the church school year was celebrated with a visit to the Roller Roost in Pottsville.

Gradyville

St. Herman of Alaska Church

The church school of St. Herman's hosted a dinner following a Presanctified



Fr. James chrismates new Church members



Fr. Eugene and his family with Metropolitan Herman



Fr. Eugene and his family with Metropolitan Herman

Liturgy, and raised \$180 for the Orthodox Christian Mission Fund. The graduates were honored on the Feast of Pentecost. On June 8, the parish held a successful Mediterranean Night with Greek foods, pastries and music.

**Harrisburg
Christ the Saviour Church**

Fr. Daniel Ressetar and Matushka Theodora have moved into a new rectory situated on an acre of ground adjoining the church property. On Sunday June 9, a combined parish picnic and ethnic food festival was held on the parish grounds.

Our graduates were honored following the Divine Liturgy on June 16; they received Orthodox Study Bibles.

We welcomed Archpriest Neal and Matushka Sherry Carrigan to our parish on July 1. Fr. Neal is now attached to Christ the Saviour following his move to the Harrisburg area as CEO for the Pennsylvania Association for the Blind.

Marriage: Bernard Joseph Komoroski, Jr. & Holly Christina Webb, June 8.



Fr. John Perich presents icons to the graduates



A check for the Orthodox Christian Mission Fund



An oil painting of Christ the Saviour Church was donated by Dr. Sava Macut Minersville

SS. Peter & Paul Church

Marriage: John & Cindy Studlack, July 5.



Mr. & Mrs. John Studlack



Deacon Haralambos serving his first Divine Liturgy

**Jermyn
St. Michael's Church**

Baptisms: Nicole Alexis Melesky, daughter of Paula & Scott Melesky, June 18. Robert John Thomas, son of Anna & John Thomas, June 19. Dianna Krenitsky, daughter of David & Debbie Krenitsky, Aug. 31.



Baptism of Dianna Krenitsky



Protodeacon Gabriel presents \$1,000 to St. Mary's Church, Dubrinich, Ukraine, sister church of St. Michael's, Jermyn

*Is Our Lord Calling
You To The
Holy Priesthood?*

For further information please call or write the seminary registrar at:

St. Tikhon's Orthodox
Theological Seminary
Box 130
South Canaan, PA 18459
Phone (570) 937-4411



Fr. Daniel dedicates new playground in Harrisburg



Protodeacon Gabriel Petorak awarded the kamilavka



Protodeacon and Matushka Petorak, Metropolitan Herman, and Fr. John

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

Marriage: Stephen Stanley Switay & Christine Marie Bushick, June 8.

Baptism: Simon Elias, son of George & Valerie (Zbicki) Winnick, April 13.



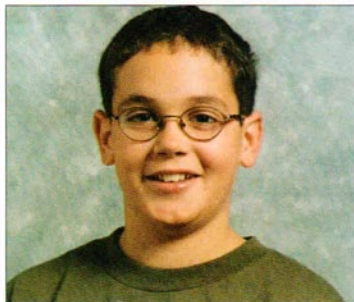
Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Switay with Fr. Michael



The newly baptized Simeon

**Nanticoke
St. John the Baptist Church**

Zachary Breck and his father were the winners at a local golf club tournament.



Zachary Breck, golf champion

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

On July 14 during the Divine Liturgy, pastor Fr. David Mahaffey was elevated to the rank of archpriest. At the end of the liturgy Archbishop Herman presented Matushka Karen with a gramota, and a reception followed.



Matushka Karen receives diocesan gramota



Fr. David Mahaffey elevated to archpriest

**Olyphant
St. Nicholas Church**



Fr. Vladimir Fetcho receives award



Father Vladimir and Matushka Marianne with Metropolitan

On June 2 Archpriest Vladimir Fetcho received the St. Innocent award, bronze order, for over 30 years of service as parish pastor. A celebration followed the Divine Liturgy, at Heart Lake Lounge.

**Philadelphia
St. Stephen's Cathedral**

The youth of St. Stephen's put into practice lessons they had learned in church

school this year. During Great Lent they each brought flowers to the church to plant. Afterwards, the teachers served a lenten luncheon and then all participated in the vespers service. As a result of their hard work, the parish grounds were especially beautiful for Pascha this year. The project enhanced the parish grounds and at the same time taught the youth about using their talents for God.



Young landscapers at the cathedral gather for a photo



Two of the cathedral youth plant flowers

**Pottstown
Holy Trinity Church**

On Sunday May 19, Archbishop Herman made an archpastoral visit to Holy Trinity Church in Pottstown. At the hierarchical Divine Liturgy, choir director John Black was tonsured a reader and Fr. Stephen was installed as rector and received the nabadrennik.

New doors and windows are being installed by Baut Studios of Swoyersville. New carpeting and tile in the church and vestibule have been completed, along with other modifications.

Baptism: Zechary Brown, May 11.

Chrismations: Angelina Jolene Weikel, James & Annette Freeze, May 4.



Lunch is enjoyed after a hard day's work



James Freeze and Angelina Jolene Weikel are chrismated

**Philadelphia
St. Mary's Church**



On Bright Tuesday Fr. John Udics received the jeweled cross at St. Tikhon's Monastery





Vladyka Herman bless the new doors at Holy Trinity



Fr. Stephen receives the nabedrennik during the liturgy

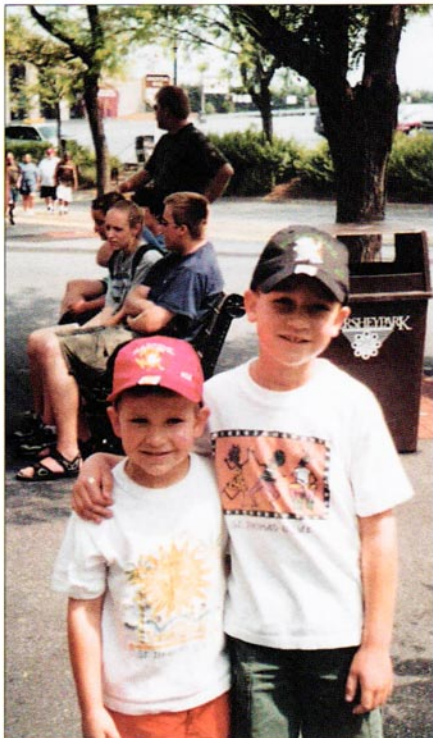
**Shillington
St. Herman of Alaska Church**

Phase one of a three-phase project of stained glass window repair and restoration was completed in April. On June 2, the church school completed its year of studies with some recreation at a laser tag park in Reading. Over fifty kids enjoyed an outing June 20 at Hershey Park, when the parish celebrated its annual Family Day picnic. Baseball, food, and fellowship were the hallmarks of a day with the Reading Phillies baseball team on Aug. 15.

Chrismation: William Hardman, March 24.



John Black and family with Metropolitan Herman



Some happy Shillington picnicers at Hershey Park



William Hardman received in Orthodoxy

South Canaan
St. Tikhon's Monastery



Protodeacon Alexei elevated to archdeacon by Metropolitan Herman



Archdeacon Alexei and Matushka Cecilia with Metropolitan Herman



Track stars from Holy Cross



All Saints Day observance at Holy Cross

Williamsport
Holy Cross Church

Holy Cross parish is observing its twenty-fifth anniversary with various special events. Fr. Dan Kovalak presented a three-part lecture series on church history in June, and a vacation Bible school was held August 12-16. The anniversary will culminate with a festal Divine Liturgy and a grand banquet at the Williamsport Country Club, on Sunday, Nov. 3.

A team of track stars from the parish participated May 17-18 in the 24 hour Relay for Life sponsored by the American Cancer Society. The participants from Holy



Fr. Theodore blesses new icon

Cross were John Sam, George Lamprinos, Fr. Dan and Tatiana & Judy Beard.

Chrismation: Pam (Martha) Paulhamus, May 4.

**Wrightstown
St. Mark's Church**

The St. Mark's rectory has recently been remodeled. Renovations included new siding and insulation, and were financed entirely by generous donations from the parishioners. The Alla Nakonetschny memorial icon was blessed by Fr. Theodore on Sunday, June 16. The icon, the work of iconographer Ivan Rumiantsev, portrays the Most Holy Theotokos being uplifted by angels.

Five members were added to the church on Lazarus Saturday as Fr. Theodore baptized Julia Petrov and Patricia Connolly and received through chrismation Jack & Barbara Malriat and Kevin McCafferty.

Marriage: Damian Borichevsky and Amanda Yocham, May 19.

**Wilmington
St. Michael's Church**

An icon of St. Christopher was recently blessed, adding to the beauty of the temple at Wilmington. The icon was given in memory of Christopher Riley, captain of the altar boys, who died tragically in a car accident last December 27. Christopher was the son of James and Anne Riley and grandson of Olga and James Riley, Sr. May his memory be eternal!

A vacation Bible school was conducted at St. Michael's June 17 to 21. Led by Church School Coordinator Mrs. Lynn Sulpizi, it focused on "Women Heroes of Faith." The lives of Saints Ruth, Esther, Mary & Martha, Catherine, and the blessed Theotokos were examined. The parish thanks Mrs. Sulpizi and the other mothers and teenagers for their help with the program.

Chrismation: Paul Scott, May 4.



Services of initiation at St. Mark's on Lazarus Saturday



Fr. Andrew blesses new icon of St. Christopher



Mrs. Lynn Sulpizi explains church music



Paul Scott with his college friends and Fr. Andrew

Deadline for the next issue of

Your Diocese

Alive in Christ

is November 20, 2001

*Submit photos and
articles by that date*

Holy Cross Opens New Center



Fr. Dan opens new center with prayer

Deaine For parishioners of Holy Cross Church, July 14, 2002 marked the fulfillment of nearly two years of dedicated, painstaking effort by volunteer crews and some \$131,000 in building fund contributions, which enabled the parish to occupy its new Orthodox Fellowship Center without a mortgage.

The publicity surrounding the event led many to think the parish has special connections in the media. On July 12, WNEP-TV channel 16 aired a report by Mike Stevens in his popular "On the Pennsylvania Road" segment. It featured the building and included interviews with master builder Paul Beard and resident stained glass craftsman Matt Chabal. Some folks traveled from considerable distances for the opening as a result of this story. On the same day, the *Harrisburg Patriot-News* carried the story with a color photo, and an interview with Holy Cross pastor Fr. Dan Kovalak could be heard in various news segments on local radio. An article was also carried in the *Sunbury Daily-Item* newspaper. Meanwhile, the Williamsport *Sun-Gazette* ran an article and parishioners went door-to-door in the neighborhood distributing leaflets announcing the opening and inviting neighbors to come and see what's happening in our backyard. A similar invitation was offered in an advertisement

in the *Sun-Gazette*.

Since Archbishop HERMAN offered a blessing for the yet-unfinished building during his archpastoral visit on April 7, the Grand Opening ceremony included a brief dedication service, blessing with holy water, and ribbon-cutting. Father Kovalak and parish council president Lew Shatto snipped a piece of the ribbon, but builder Paul Beard *really* cut the ribbon in Holy Cross fashion — with a chain saw — to the delight of all! Then, all entered to enjoy a bounteous table of goodies prepared by the Holy Cross Auxiliary.

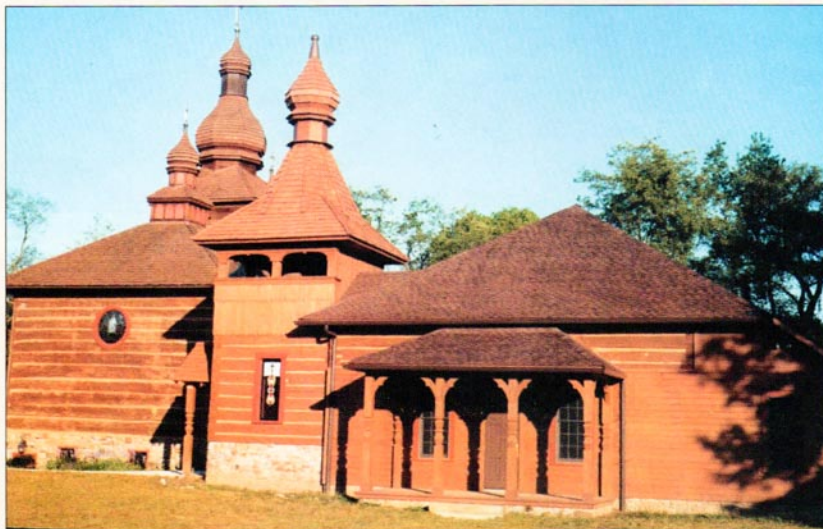
It was no wonder that the parish, having ambitiously spread the word, welcomed over 100 visitors to the Grand Opening within a three-hour period. Each was warmly greeted by council members (who wore "ask me" buttons), given a packet of information about the church, the center, and the Orthodox faith and an icon card of "Christ in the Garden" (one of our newest icons), and was escorted to the refreshment area and asked to sign a guest book where many of them offered favorable comments.

Another important element of the opening was a tour of the church with explanations by Father Dan. Seventy-six visitors participated in the scheduled tour. And no sooner were they dismissed than another group of 28 entered for tour number two! It was a great outreach to first-timers to the church, and to the Orthodox faith!

On the following Saturday, July 20, the opening was featured in a story with four color photos that graced the front page of the religion section of the *Sun-Gazette*. The headline said it all: OPENING IN GRAND STYLE. And so it was.

As Holy Cross celebrates its 25th anniversary year, the parish anticipates many "events" in the Fellowship Center in the future that will live up to the "grandness" of its opening!

for further information
Fr. Dan Kovalak (570) 322-3020



View of the new hall and church

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South Canaan, Pennsylvania

Theme:

CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM
A Study in Honor of September 11, 2001

Thirty-Second Lecture Series

Tuesday, September 17, 2002

The Bible and the Koran

The Very Rev. Michael Dahulich, Ph.D., Administrative Dean and Associate Professor of New Testament, St. Tikhon's Seminary

The Bible and the Koran are each believed by their respective adherents to be the revealed Word of the One True God. This lecture will compare the two and will examine their similar and differing views on: God, Jesus and Mohammed, this world and the Kingdom, society and morality, men and women, the human soul and eternal life.

Tuesday, September 24, 2002

Two Theologies of God

Prof. Harry Boosalis, Th.D., Associate Professor of Dogmatic Theology, St. Tikhon's Seminary

Although both religions are monotheistic and confess their belief in One God, their respective understandings of God differ greatly. This lecture will discuss the two different approaches to the mystery of God and show how Orthodoxy and Islam differ not only from a theological perspective, but also as a way of life.

Tuesday, October 1, 2002

The Record of Church History

Prof. David C. Ford, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Church History, St. Tikhon's Seminary

This talk will focus on the interaction with Islam of great Orthodox Saints – SS. John of Damascus, Gregory Palamas, Dmitri Donskoi, Sergius of Radonezh, Prince Lazar of the Serbs, Gennadios II, Cosmas Aitolos and Gregory V. History shows these Saints had quite varied experiences in their relationships with Muslims.

Tuesday, October 8, 2002

The Testimony of a Convert

Reader Joseph Lucas, Convert from Islam to Orthodox Christianity, Holy Assumption Church, Pittsburgh, Pa.

This personal confession will reveal why one young man first embraced Islam and then subsequently renounced that faith and converted to Orthodox Christianity. His story will explain the collapse of his marriage and his struggles to gain custody of his two children to have them baptized and raised in the Orthodox Church.

Lectures begin at 7:00 P.M.

REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Registration Fee: \$12.00 per person; \$100.00 for a group of 9 or more per parish. Please make checks payable to: St. Tikhon's Seminary.
Mail by Monday, September 16, 2002 to **St. Tikhon's Seminary Lectures Series, Box 130, South Canaan, PA 18459**
or present at the registration desk at the seminary on Sept. 17, 2001, from 6:00 to 6:45 p.m.