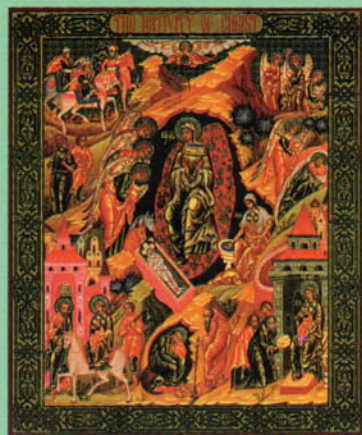


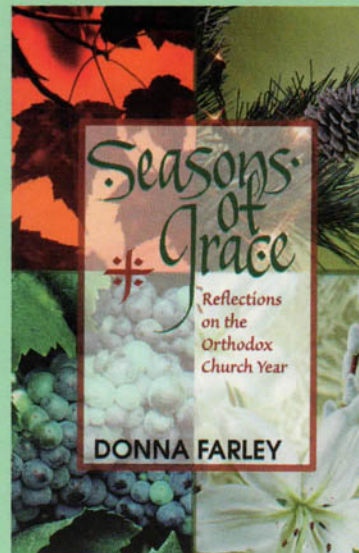


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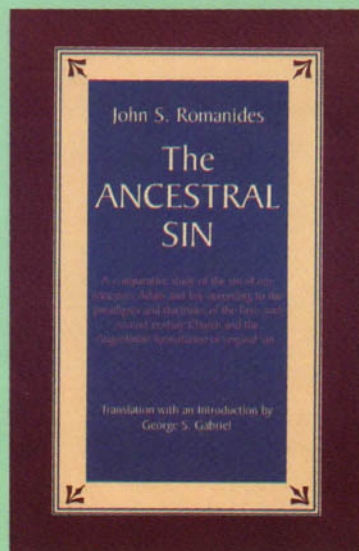


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## *Christ is Born! Glorify Him!*



Venerable pastors, God-loving monks and  
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I greet you warmly with the joy of the incarnation of Christ our  
Lord, on this holy day of His Nativity.

The eternal Peace that entered the world at the first Christmas is  
needed now, as always, in this troubled world. For in the manger  
at Bethlehem lay the true Peace of the world — when He who “is  
our peace” (Eph. 2:14) came to dwell among us. For “God sent  
his Son into the world, not to condemn the world but that the  
world might be saved through him,” and He “so loved the world,  
that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him  
should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3.17,16).

Today, with the incarnation of the Son of God, in the most pure  
face of Christ we see the “express image” of the Father’s Person,  
and in the Gospels we read the very words of the Father’s Word.  
The “God of love and peace” (2 Cor. 13:11) has dwelled among  
us, so that “to all who received him” he might give the privilege  
of becoming his children; and to that end, he has granted us to  
partake of his precious Body and Blood.

Let us join together in praying that Christ, the true Peace, will be  
embraced by the whole world, that the hearts of all may welcome  
him, and his peace remain with them. May the “peace of God,  
which passes all understanding,” be with you and your loved  
ones now and always.

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

With love in Christ,

+ *Herman*

+HERMAN, Metropolitan of all America  
and Canada

*Locum Tenens* of the Diocese of Philadelphia  
and Eastern Pennsylvania

Your Diocese

# Alive in Christ

Volume XVIII Number 3 Winter 2002  
The Official Magazine of the  
Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania  
Orthodox Church in America

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## Your Diocese Alive in Christ

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# *In Loving Tribute* *to* His Beatitude Metropolitan HERMAN



Traditional greeting with bread and salt

*The Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania held a banquet to honor our former diocesan archbishop, who has been elected Primate of the Orthodox Church in America and serves as Locum Tenens of our diocese. Over 650 guests attended the service of thanksgiving and the banquet. The keynote address was given by Archpriest Michael Dahulich, Dean of St. Tikhon's Seminary*

**Y**our Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN; Your Beatitude, Metropolitan THEODOSIUS; Your Excellencies; very reverend and reverend fathers, deacons and matushki; distinguished members of the diocesan council and the seminary board of trustees; my beloved seminarians and your families; faithful of

the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania; guests and friends; ladies and gentlemen: Christ is in our midst!

We have gathered together this evening in loving tribute to our beloved archpastor, our dear Vladyka, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, as he assumes the primacy of the Orthodox Church in America

from his distinguished predecessor, Metropolitan Theodosius. I hope that all of you realize how monumental this is. His Beatitude is one of the fifteen primates of the autocephalous Orthodox Churches in the world. He is one of only fifteen hierarchs — fifteen individuals in the entire world

*Continued on the next page*

# In Loving Tribute

Continued from page 3



Protodeacon Keith chants litany for service of thanksgiving



Archpriest Joseph Martin gives concluding remarks at cathedral

— to hold the dignity of so great a responsibility in Christ's Holy Church.

How did this happen to a person born of humble immigrant parents, Wasil and Helen Swaiko, in Bairdford, Pennsylvania? How did an altar boy who served in St. Michael's Church in Curtistville, Pa., achieve so great a distinction?

## The Work of the Lord

It was the work of the Triune God — the plan of the eternal Father, the design of Christ the High Priest, and the grace of the Holy Spirit — that made this possible. As the Lord chose Samuel and Isaiah to serve Him as prophets in the Old Testament, and Andrew and Peter and James and John to labor for Him as apostles in the early Church — so He chose Joseph Swaiko to build up the Body of Christ here in America now in this present age.

Having been nurtured in the faith by his godly parents and trained to serve at the altar by his pastor, and after graduation from high school, service in the U.S. Army, and earning his baccalaureate degree from Robert Morris College — a young man named Joseph came to St. Tikhon's Seminary 43 years ago. He became Father Herman — and he never left! First as a student, then a staff member, as a professor and then rector and now president — as a seminarian, then a priest, as a bishop, archbishop and now metropolitan — God formed him, like the potter did with Jeremiah in his book of prophecy, into a special "vessel of clay" appropriate for the plan that He had.

What was the recipe of talents for this masterpiece? What are the ingredients that the Lord used? The commitment to prayer of the prophet Elijah, the practical wisdom



Metropolitan Herman blesses faithful as they sing "Many Years"

of Solomon the king, the unwavering faith of John the Baptist, the zeal for work of the Apostle Paul — and the depth of love of John the Theologian. These are the gifts that were given to Joseph Swaiko; these are the outstanding qualities that have been the hallmark of the archpastoral ministry of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman.

## Commitment to Prayer

His Beatitude loves to pray. No matter where he has been the day before, how busy he is or how late he has been up, he attends every service. He is always early.

His rule of prayer is clearly the priority of his life.

In this world of paganism, his commitment to the Lord parallels that of Elijah as he confronted the 450 false prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18). And just like that man of God of the Old Testament prayed intensely and pressed himself to the lifeless body of the son of the widow of Zarephath and brought him back from the dead (1 Kings 17), so too Metropolitan Herman has prayed with every fiber of his being pressed to the Church entrusted to His care — the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, St. Tikhon's Seminary and St. Tikhon's Monastery — and given them new life over the thirty years of his archpastoral service.

So committed to prayer is His Beatitude that his idea of a vacation is to visit the holy shrines and monasteries of Europe and other parts of the world! As the little children sang earlier this evening so beautifully and so rightly of our dear Vladyka: "The Church is my home! Come and pray!" No words could more fittingly describe our Metropolitan.

## Practical Wisdom

His Beatitude is an administrative genius, with great business acumen. Like Solomon, the wisest king of all of history, who knew that a mother's love for her child was so great that she would rather give up her baby than see him harmed (1 Kings 3) — Metropolitan Herman knows people very well.

His approach to people is straightforward and direct, right to the heart of the matter. You know where he stands, and he tells it exactly as it is. He preaches the Gospel in the same way — simply and

## In Loving Tribute



Michael Pasonick offers toast



Fr. John Kowalczyk acted as toastmaster

clearly. He teaches class the same way — simply and clearly. He resolves problems the same way — directly and forthwith.

Recently I read in a Scranton newspaper a letter to the editor about our new primate. The individual writing was a Catholic parishioner, who lauded His Beatitude as another Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, that great preacher of the Roman Church whose television audience delighted in his straightforward and simple explanations of the Gospel message. He paid Metropolitan Herman that compliment because his message is always the same — simple and straightforward — the building up of God's Holy Church!

### Unwavering Faith

As you know, a prophet is not one who predicts the future — but one who speaks for someone else, one who speaks for God. Our Lord paid the highest compliment of all to the last of the prophets, John the Baptist: *Among those born of women there is no one greater than John the Baptist* . . . (Matthew 11:11).

A bishop, in virtue of his teaching office, speaks for God. And as John the Baptist prepared the way for Christ, Metropolitan Herman has prepared us for the Kingdom. John the Baptist believed in the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, with every fiber of his being; he was not afraid of anything or anyone, not even the power of the king; he condemned sin, in every form and by any person, even that of the king! His Beatitude's faith is likewise unswerving. He is not afraid to be unpopular; instead he preaches the word of God boldly. He never dances around an issue; rather he tells us exactly what is wrong.

As John the Baptist was nearing the



Fr. John Onofrey presents diocesan gift

end of his career, from prison he sent some of his followers to ask Jesus to tell him for sure that He was the Messiah — so that St. John might authenticate his life's work, which was to announce His coming. Instead Jesus asked for yet another test of John's faith: *Tell John the things which you hear and see: the blind see, the deaf hear, the dead are raised. Blessed is he who believes in Me* (Matthew 11:4-6). Our Lord demanded one more act of faith — as much as He could get out of St. John. So too He has put Vladyka to the test time and time again, demanding more and more of his faith: his consecration as a bishop, the awesome task of succeeding the late Archbishop Kiprian, his episcopal service and now the primacy of the Church in America.

### Tireless Zeal for Work

St. Paul pointed out once that he had worked harder than any other of the Apostles (1 Cor. 15:10). The same could be said for His Beatitude. Of all the bish-

ops in America only Vladyka governed a seminary and a monastery and a diocese. Only Metropolitan Theodosius was spread thinner! And besides that threefold responsibility, His Beatitude traveled in the stead of Metropolitan Theodosius; he chaired the pension fund and served as the treasurer of the O.C.A.; he filled in as *locum tenens* of two other dioceses and served as temporary administrator of the national Church during the primate's medical leave of absence. A man driven by his labors for Christ, he rises every day at 5 a.m., and goes downstairs to work, even if he went to bed only four hours earlier.

He has updated the seminary program, groomed the board of trustees and hand-picked the faculty. Through his leadership, the facility has been improved, a state charter has been granted, the right to award the Master of Divinity degree approved, and candidacy for full accreditation achieved. The Metropolitan has fathered the annual fall lecture series, the summer camping sessions and the winter teen retreat, as well as the vocations encounter and the altar boy retreat.

Under his direction the St. Tikhon's community of monks has grown, significant improvements have been made to the oldest monastery in America and the annual pilgrimage to the holy center of Orthodoxy in America has only gotten bigger and better. In this diocese, there has been Eucharistic renewal, the establishment of new parishes, the building of chancery offices and economic soundness and spiritual strength. All of this is because of the work of a tireless laborer in the vineyard of Christ!

*Continued on the next page*

# In Loving Tribute

Continued from page 5



Fr. Michael Dahulich gives keynote address



Faithful offer their loving tribute to their primate

## Depth of Love

Our Lord said to his disciples, *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, as I have loved you* (John 13:34). In his first epistle, St. John writes: *He who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God Whom he has not seen?* (1 John 4:20).

Indeed His Beatitude loves people — not with a touchy, feely kind of love, but with a self-sacrificing kind of love. Only God knows the countless people in need he has helped, the people he has visited and ministered to in hospitals and nursing homes, the marriages he has counseled, the vocations he has guided, the gifts he has given to the less fortunate, the comfort he has given to those in mourning.

Last month, I know, he visited Father Basil Stroyen as he lay in a hospital bed, just days before his repose. Father told me how much strength and comfort, joy and love His Beatitude brought to him. His Matushka Nina told me how much support the Metropolitan was to her in the loss of her beloved life-partner. I know the love he showed to me when I came into the O.C.A.; I know the love he showed to my deacon and his family as they came to him, abandoned and disowned.

He has even loved those who have challenged him, those who have criticized him and those who have taken him to court. You can tell just how much he has loved by the smiles of joy on the children he blessed in the cathedral today, by the tears and the cracking voice of Fr. Joseph Martin at the pulpit this afternoon and the friendship that exists between Metropolitan Theodosius and Metropolitan Herman over the years.

I would like to share with you a story that I only learned a few weeks ago. One day a priest came to the seminary wanting to visit His Beatitude. Unfortunately, he was already en route to Alaska for his first primatial visit there. So the priest decided to compose a short letter of greeting to the Metropolitan instead. After he had finished, he told me, “You know, His Beatitude is very, very special to me. If it

he and his family would have to go home; he would have to abandon his dream to be a priest. They had found no place they could afford to live in.

Do you know what he told me? He said, the Metropolitan told him to stay — he could live in the upstairs of the residence where he lived. And for the years that he was a student, he shared the now faculty-and-staff residence with Bishop

**I cannot help but think if his parents were here in person, how proud they would be of him — and what an inspiration they would be to all of us — how they would credit the grace of God for the gift of their son, and for his qualities of commitment to prayer, practical wisdom, unwavering faith, zeal for work and depth of love**

weren't for him, I wouldn't be a priest today.” I remember thinking, yeah, right. How many people are saying that today?

But this priest went on to explain himself. He said that twenty-five years ago, when he came to enroll in seminary, he already was married with a tiny infant. At that time, there were no “married students” (today they are more than half our enrollment), and there was no place for him and his family on or near campus. Having met with then Bishop Herman, he and his wife went out looking for an apartment that they could afford to rent. The next day, he came back to the bishop's office to tell him that

Herman. And he added that there would be days when Vladyka would take his daughter's diapers from the washer and put them into the dryer to help out! “So you see,” Father Samuel Smolcic told me, “I wouldn't be a priest if it weren't for the Metropolitan!”

Can you believe that? He let them live in his house! He helped them with the baby's diapers! What kind of bishop would do something like that? A bishop of love! The kind that legends are made of!

## A Good Shepherd

For 30 years, His Beatitude has been



## In Loving Tribute



Metropolitan with old friends Frs. Kondratick and Donlick



Cathedral children sing for the Metropolitan

our bishop and our archpastor — the shepherd of our diocese, on behalf of the Good Shepherd and chief archpastor, our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ (John 10:11). Indeed, in caring for Christ's flock, Metropolitan Herman has been a good shepherd. He has been, in the words of a poet: "A Good Shepherd. A mind through which Christ thinks. A heart through which Christ loves. A voice through which Christ speaks. A hand through which Christ helps."

It is only fitting that he came to his first cathedral today to be honored by us, his spiritual children. But after thirty years of episcopal service to our diocese, seminary and monastery — he is now the primate of the entire Church in America. And as we saw from our visit to Washington, D.C. last Sunday, he now belongs to the world.

I know that he will bring to the entire Orthodox Church in America — from Maine to California, Alaska to Florida, Canada to Mexico — the same qualities that he has demonstrated for the past thirty years.

### An Inspiration to All

I cannot help but think how proud His Eminence, Archbishop KIPRIAN, his mentor of blessed memory, would be if he were here in person — proud of the student he had educated, the secretary he had trained and the vicar bishop he had molded. I cannot help but think if his parents were here in person, how proud they would be of him — and what an inspiration they would be to all of us — how they would credit the grace of God for the gift of their son, and for his qualities of commitment to prayer, practical wisdom, un-

wavering faith, zeal for work and depth of love.

What an inspiration they have indeed given to us in their beloved son: an inspiration to the senior priests who have gathered here, to the newly-ordained Deacon Barnabas and to all the seminarians, and to all the children of our family in Christ.

### You Have Our Love

Your Beatitude, you indeed belong to the world — to achieve even greater heights for our Church and the glory of God. We witnessed that last week in our nation's capital, where twenty-five hierarchs from all over this planet gathered to celebrate your ascendancy to the primacy of the Orthodox Church in America.

But no matter where you travel, as you

labor to build up Christ's Holy Church, this will always be home. Not because of the residence here in South Canaan or your office here or your classroom here — but because of the hearts of those who love you here in the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania.

Your Beatitude, wherever you go, please know that you have our undying loyalty to serve you, to help you in your awesome responsibility of leading the whole Church in America. Please know that you have our prayers for good health and God's grace in your every endeavor. But most of all, please know that you have our love.

Many years, Master! *Eis polla eti, Despota!*

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

*The Editorial Staff of Your Diocese Alive in Christ*

## Thirty-Ninth Diocesan Assembly



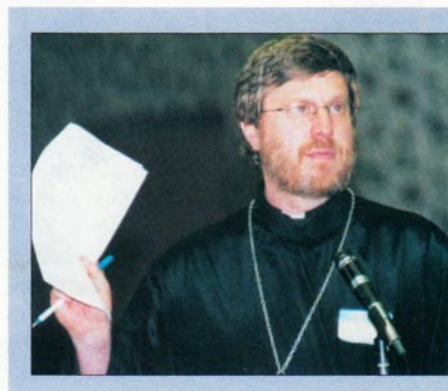
The 39th annual Diocesan Assembly of the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania was convened at St. Nicholas Church, Bethlehem on Saturday, November 16, 2002. His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN celebrated the Divine Liturgy to begin the day. Fathers Daniel Ressetar, Daniel Geeza, Joseph Martin, Vladimir Fetcho, Eugene Vansuch, John Kowalczyk, and John Udics, with Protodeacon Alexei Klimitchev concelebrated with His Beatitude. Mr. Nicholas Lezinsky directed the choir comprised of parish members and delegates.

Following a continental breakfast, the Diocesan Assembly session began in the new parish center with prayer and the blessing of His Beatitude at 11:05 a.m. The agenda was approved as presented. The credentials committee reported that the assembly comprised His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, 27 clergy delegates, 28 lay delegates, 4 alternate delegates, 3 diocesan council members, 4 observers and 3 guests for a total of 70 participants. Assembly officers were elected and included: Fr. John Udics, clergy vice chairman, Fr. David Shewczyk, clergy secretary, Mr. John Zoransky, lay vice chairman and Mrs.

Marie Proch, lay secretary.

Metropolitan Herman presented his extensive report to the delegates. Two ordinations took place this year for the diocese: Fr. Christopher Rowe was ordained to the holy priesthood and assigned to Holy Trinity Church, Catasauqua, and Barnabas Fravel — currently a student at the seminary — was ordained to the diaconate and attached to St. Tikhon's Monastery Church. Fr. Nicholas Solak was received into the diocese and assigned to Holy Trinity Church, Stroudsburg. Deacon Peter Skoog was also received and assigned to Holy Trinity Church, Pottstown. Fr. John Bruchok was transferred to the Bulgarian Diocese. Fr. Paul Ropitsky will soon retire from Holy Ascension Church, Frackville. Fr. Basil Stroyen, who served St. Tikhon's Seminary for many years and the editor of *The Orthodox Herald*, recently fell asleep in the Lord. The assembly arose and sang "Memory Eternal" to Fr. Basil and all of the departed diocesan faithful.

Parish anniversaries were noted in St. John the Baptist Church, Nanticoke (90th), St. Michael's Church, Old Forge (110th), All Saints Church, Olyphant (100th) and Holy Cross Church, Williamsport (25th).



His Beatitude reviewed all of the major events within the diocese during the last year. The youth department sponsored the annual summer camp and winter encounter. The annual women's retreat was also successful. The Memorial Day celebration included the veneration of the wonderworking Pochaev icon of the Mother of God. Our diocesan magazine, *Alive in Christ*, has received much recognition from here and abroad. Many more subscriptions to the magazine have been received from the various Orthodox patriarchates. Metropolitan Herman expressed his gratitude to all who worked to

make these events and projects successful.

Metropolitan Herman talked about his election to be the new primate of the Orthodox Church in America. He announced that he will remain as the *locum tenens* of the diocese until such time as a new diocesan bishop is elected. He also expressed his personal thanks to everyone who offered prayers, kind words, cards and their participation in the various events honoring him upon his election.

His Beatitude asked the delegates to keep Patriarch Alexy II in their prayers. The patriarch has taken ill. Metropolitan Herman offered many kind words about the patriarch's tireless efforts for the Church in Russia and for his good relationship with our Orthodox Church in America.

Metropolitan Herman discussed many areas of Church life within the Orthodox Church in America including the work of the Holy Synod, seminaries, monastic life, SCOBA, pastoral care to immigrants, and the highlights of the recent 13th All-American Council. The Holy Synod is concerned about encouraging good candidates for the priesthood and episcopacy.

Church. Metropolitan Herman spoke of the need for parishes to produce good laborers to serve and build up the Church. He asked the clergy and parish council members to set aside the necessary funds to send young men to the altar boy retreats and youth encounters. The Orthodox Church in America is the only church that does not do this on a regular basis. He called for a line item in the O.C.A. budget to support the seminaries. He reminded the delegates that the young men that are supported in their work at the seminaries will remember their benefactors in their prayers. In talking about monastic life, His Beatitude echoed the words of St. Patriarch Tikhon when he said that the Church will be only as strong as its monastic communities.

SCOBA will hopefully continue to work for the administrative unity of Orthodoxy in America. Metropolitan Philip of the Antiochian Church is very interested in this administrative unity. A meeting is scheduled for the spring in Ligonier to work toward this unity. Metropolitan Herman said that the occasion of his enthronement as primate has influenced other Orthodox churches to build good relation-

ship with the pastor. However, many of the pastors cannot speak or preach in Russian or serve in Slavonic. The seminaries are not producing pastors who can do so. Bishop Irineu has been recently consecrated for the Romanian Diocese to assist Archbishop Nathaniel with similar problems.

His Beatitude discussed the recent 13th All-American Council. The council was well organized and it gave much spiritual joy to all who participated. A great number of youth also attended the council. This council was one of the largest ever because of the honoring of Metropolitan Theodosius upon his retirement and the election of the new primate. A visionary and fair-share budget was presented at the council. A limit of \$85.00 was placed upon the national church assessment. Since the council, many budget cuts have occurred. The national church assessment will remain at \$85.00. Metropolitan Herman expressed the need to raise more funds for the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards to help meet the needs of the visionary budget proposed at the council. He asked the delegates to encourage membership in FOS within the parishes so that more budget cuts would not have to be made, thus allowing the church to grow.

Metropolitan Herman spoke to the issue of sexual abuse. He cautioned every pastor and parish to be sure that they have the proper insurance coverage. Parishes should do everything possible to be sure that the children are in good hands and under proper care during parish and church school functions. The Holy Synod has revised the guidelines on sexual abuse.

In concluding his report, Metropolitan Herman thanked everyone for their good labors within the diocese. He looks forward to the continued dedicated service of everyone to the diocese and the Orthodox Church in America. Following his extensive report, the floor was opened for questions to His Beatitude on his report. He fielded questions about the O.C.A. budget, fair-share giving, FOS and the ministry to new immigrants.

The next items on the agenda included reports of the diocesan council secretary, diocesan treasurer and diocesan auditors. All reports were approved as presented. The delegates broke for lunch and were served a lenten luncheon prepared by the parish.

*Continued on the next page*



The seminary enrollments are very good this year. Many of the students are recent converts to the Orthodox faith. While this is a good thing, these students need more time to become acclimated to Orthodox parish life. His Beatitude called upon the delegates to encourage those young men born into the faith to consider enrolling in the seminaries. Vocations need to be nurtured within the parishes. However, many parents do not encourage their sons to enter the seminary. Many look instead to money and feel that they can gain more material goods in secular careers than what can be gained in serving the Lord and His

ships with the O.C.A. Those patriarchates and Churches that participated in the enthronement are happy to see the many good things that are happening in the O.C.A. Also, a symposium was recently held at St. Vladimir's Seminary. As a result of the symposium, a theological commission has been established between the O.C.A. and the Church of Russia.

Metropolitan Herman discussed the new immigrant situation within the O.C.A. A great number of immigrants are coming to this country. Many of the parishes are not prepared to take care of them spiritually. The immigrants need to build a re-

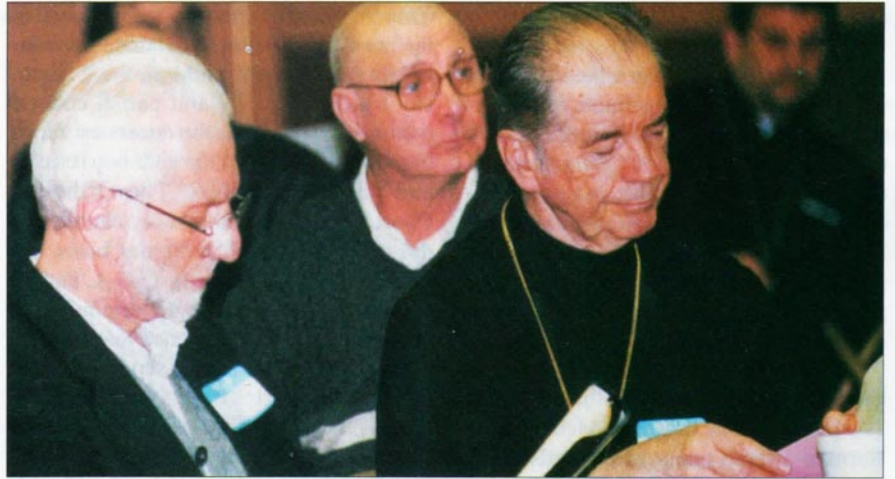
## 39th Diocesan Assembly

Continued from page 9

The deanery and diocesan departmental reports were given and approved following lunch. Commenting on the Metropolitan Council report, Fr. Vladimir Fetcho commended Metropolitan Herman on his work on the O.C.A. budget and his work in reorganizing various O.C.A. departments.

Following the reports, a lay presentation was offered by Peter Bohlender, titled "The Crisis and the Joy of Giving." In his presentation, Mr. Bohlender reviewed the history of financial support for the O.C.A. He talked about sacrificial giving and called upon the delegates to model good stewardship behavior to parishioners. The delegates then had the opportunity to discuss the presentation.

The proposed budget for 2003 of \$500,110.00 was discussed in great length. Two separate motions were made to increase the diocesan assessment: one motion would raise the diocesan assessment \$5.00 and the other motion would raise the assessment \$1.00 for the next five years. Both motions were defeated after lengthy discussion on the merits of each.



The proposed budget was approved without an increase in the diocesan assessment. The diocesan assessment will remain at \$25.00. The high cost of health insurance for clergy and their families was also discussed at length. It was determined that insurance costs are rising in every area. The current diocesan plan is the best plan for this time.

A motion was made to have a parish council conference in the spring of 2003. Metropolitan Herman was in favor of the

conference. However, he asked that all parishes convene a special parish meeting for the purpose of discussing the spiritual growth of the parish prior to the conference. In this way, conference participants will be properly prepared to discuss the important issues placed before them.

The Thirty-Ninth Diocesan Assembly closed with prayer and the blessing of our Metropolitan at 3:35 p.m.

—Archpriest David Shewczyk

## Funding the Orthodox Church's Mission in America

Since we're talking about finances and funding the Orthodox Church, perhaps our financial funding history would be a good starting point:

- 1794 to 1917 - our Church was funded by the Mother Church
- 1917 to 1930 - Church was funded through various means without a centralized system
- 1930 to 1950 - the Metropolia funded the church administration through a system of proportionate giving
- 1950 to 1967 - the 8th All-American Sobor established a per capita system which assessed each member \$1.00 per year as well as other specially designated assessments when needed
- 1967 - the 13th All-American Sobor replaced all the different methods of financial support with a \$5.00 assessment for each member
- 1973 - a financial crisis dictates the need for a Special Task Forces on Finances



Peter Bohlender

(first of many to follow between 1973 and 1991). The 3rd All-American Council raised assessment to \$7.00 per member and levied an additional financial obligation on the parishes to reduce debt

- 1977 - the 5th All-American Council proposed a "Fair Share" system of funding the operational budget of the Church
- 1980 - the 6th A.A.C. instituted a feasibility study to determine if there was parish support for a financial stewardship approach to funding the church. Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards established
- 1983 - the 7th A.A.C. reviewed the feasibility study and determined that a financial stewardship program was not a present reality. Per capita funding continued
- 1986 - the 8th A.A.C. determined there was a need for research and study to determine real needs and develop a strategic plan for running the Church
- 1988 & 1989 - the most severe financial crisis to hit the Church for many reasons resulting in a one-time special appeal by the Holy Synod of Bishops. The Synod established the policy of per capita assessments for each member, passed

through the diocesan treasuries monthly to the national Church, and held the diocese responsible for collecting the funds

- 1989 - the 9th A.A.C. resolved to phase-out the concept of the per capita assessment and implement a system of proportionate giving
- 1990 - Review of the resolution of the 9th A.A.C. by the Holy Synod determined that proportional giving, as defined, would destabilize the financial structure of the Church. The resolution was set aside and the per capita amount was raised
- 1992 - The 10th A.A.C. continued the per capita assessment, raising it to \$45.00, and recommended that financial stewardship education be implemented and a parish membership category in the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards organization

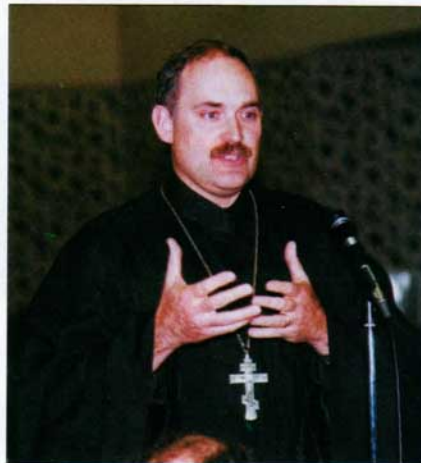
(Do you get the feeling that, as a Church, we haven't been able to get the right idea in place with any general agreement at the diocesan and parish levels, and that there is inadequate support for any plan? But there sure are plenty of feelings and opinions!)

- 1995 - the 11th A.A.C. continued the per capita assessment system but recommended that per capita assessments be used for the administration of the Church and income from the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards, gifts and endowments for the program work of the Church
- 1999 to 2002 - the 12th A.A.C. passed, and the Holy Synod approved, a resolution dealing with the following four issues:
  1. Established an interim system of financing for the three year period (continued the per capita assessment system)
  2. Establish a standard financial reporting format for parishes to send to the chancery
  3. Directed all parishes and dioceses be incorporated into the support system for the operating budget
  4. Develop a "fair share" system of support to be proposed at the 13th A.A.C.
- 2002 - the 13th A.A.C. passed the fair share system and based upon the budget proposed and passed, the fair share portion of the budget for each diocese to deal with will be their diocese membership times (x) \$85.00. How the diocese

collects this money is up to each diocese.

When I moved in to Southampton, Pa. some seven years ago, and found and joined St. Mark's Orthodox Church in Wrightstown, I was aware of a nondenominational, evangelical church in my neighborhood with perhaps 100 members that met in the basement of a furniture store. I had attended similar churches for some time. St. Mark's had about 50 members and was about 20 minutes farther away from my house but I recognized the Truth when I heard it and I joined Orthodoxy after much soul-searching.

It's interesting though, because seven



years later St. Mark's has about 59 members. The nondenominational, evangelical church has thousands of members (I hear the number is about 7,000), has bought and renovated a large old factory in the area, started a day-care, a grade school, junior high and high school and will soon start a community college. Their meeting hall seats a couple of thousand people and people come early to be sure to get a seat. There seems to be no end to the funds they have to grow and fund their many programs.

I have a friend who recently attended a local church in the Harrisburg, Pa. area and was interviewed as part of her quest for membership. During the interview, which lasted a couple of hours, the minister asked her how much money she earned. She works for the state and felt adequately paid so she told the minister her income. His response, "Well, you're really not going to fit in well here, we expect a much higher level of giving than you would be able to afford." The minister's response really upset my friend and she never went back to that church. I wonder about God's

response.

Funding the Church can be difficult and there are many ways to accomplish it. Some have been fairly good, some not so good. Our task is daunting but needful and timely.

I'm talking to "The 20%" again. I know it. But it is always like that. "You're preaching to the choir," we all complain. You know that old adage, 20% of the people do 80% of the work, and 80% of the people do 20% of the work. Every organization is like that, especially voluntary organizations. All of us here, are "The 20%." And, we are all tired of always being the ones that get called to the task. But that's how it is. If we don't do something, nothing will get done. And there is an urgent need in our Church for things to get done, and done the "right" way.

Funding the Church is *our* problem, the "20%-er's" problem. *We* have effectively failed to get the job done. And *we're* the only ones that appreciate the need. *We've* got to get refocused and re-energized. The ball is in *our* court. It's *our* duty. It's *our* turn to go out and bounce the ball.

For the Church it is a "thrive or perish" reality. A true crisis of need. You know the Church is either growing or it is declining, either it's getting better or it is getting worse. There is no such thing as maintaining the status quo. Organizations can't sit in neutral like a car waiting for a light to change. The status quo or neutral is a slippery slope to failure. We confront huge and aggressive competitors like television, shopping, time/life constraints, sports and children's activities, economic issues, other denominations and churches, confusion, apathy, secular spiritualism. It is the evil one, the very devil himself.

There was a day when Americans saw the answer to their dreams in the industrial revolution but now they have come to realize that financial success is not so fulfilling as expected. There is still "an emptiness." We look to the age of science, instant knowledge and communication and find that there is still "something missing" in our lives. Now, with the beginning of the new millennium, people seek better answers, better solutions, and spiritual fulfillment. Effective use of personal time and spending time with family are returning to our life's agenda, and the interest in eastern philosophies and meditation points to our desire for introspective time and real

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contemplation.

It is our great commission and our mission, as followers of Jesus Christ, to help Orthodoxy Christianity grow, to share Orthodoxy with others, to help others in their search for the true God.

Giving, donations, tithing, offerings, percentage giving, fund raising, fair share, proportionate giving. Do these subjects make you nervous to talk about and discuss? Generally, we keep the discussion short, wrap it in religious cliches and spiritual-sounding pieties. We treat it as something “not nice” but necessary — an unwelcome interruption. We are all conditioned, over time, to anticipate emotional disagreements, arguments and attitudes whenever the subject of money and giving comes up at diocesan meetings or in discussions with parishioners. The hair on the back of our necks just comes up and we hesitate to proceed. Others prepare to fight to protect their treasures from “pirates” that would share in their good fortune.

When you start to talk to people about money, you’re hitting people right where they live. It takes money to live and have the things we desire and that ease our life. We need money for a “rainy day” when things don’t go as planned. We use money to quantify our success and to satisfy our need for self-fulfillment. Perhaps you’ve seen one of these bumper stickers: “You win when you have the most toys”; “Success is having the most toys”; “Heaven is having the most toys.”

Yet if we take the time to stop and think about it, we realize we are all still unfulfilled. We try to fill the emptiness with activities — godly ones, or perhaps ungodly. But there is a “sadness,” an “emptiness,” and a sense that there must be something more. There’s an old song that goes, “Is that all there is? Is that all there is? If that’s all there is, my friend, then let’s keep dancing, let’s have a ball, if that’s all there is.” As Christians we have been assured by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, there is more if we make the effort to attain it. And, it is available to us now, if we will strive daily to fulfill God’s plan for each of us.

There is something more that is available to us. Union with God’s all consuming love is available to us now, but we must learn how to approach God who is like nothing else we understand. Our approach

to the world that we think we understand, will not work with God. God has a different focus, a different standard, a different approach to life. His approach we must learn and come to understand by constant effort, study and prayer.

Well — on to the job at hand, funding the church of Jesus Christ. Our success is somewhat spotty and rife with frustrations and disagreement. Funding immediately brings to mind fundraising. We’ve all done that before. Have a good cause, ask for money and the parishioners respond. We always seem to fill the gap. People feel good about themselves for a while. Then we need to ask for more. Another fund-

bers. After all that’s where we all live our lives — we are comfortable with numbers and budgets. We can discuss and argue for hours and get nowhere

- Given the chance we as people will satisfy ourselves by being loyal to Orthodoxy or to our parish and lose sight of our need for loyalty to God. Everything we expect of our parishioners, should lead them ever closer to their personal relationship to God

### The “Shame On You” Approach

- Remind the parishioners of the money they spend for TV, cable, movies, going out to dinner, on their new car and ciga-



raiser, then another and another. People seem to drop out, both the fund-raisers and the givers. There are fewer people each time that have the time or money to give.

I think we have all heard someone say, “It’s always the same people, no one else ever comes forward to help.”

There are several approaches to raising money, increasing giving, and fundraising:

### The Financial Budget Approach - (running the numbers)

- First write the budget of expenses necessary to run the church, then tell the people what is going to be needed
- Divide the budget needed by the number of members and tell them what to give — but that is unfair because it assumes that everyone gives equally and in fact the token giver is off the hook

#### Problems:

- This approach puts heavy emphasis on the money the church needs rather than on spiritual giving, and minimizes the spiritual potential of the church
- All the discussion in the world, but the focus will always remain on the num-

rettes

- Point out that their priorities are out of whack and that they are guilty of being covetous

#### Problems:

- This approach places the emphasis on how the person feels and may increase their giving but it most likely will be to make them want to get the church “off their back”
- Here the giving is rather with resentment at being judged by others who don’t really understand the situation

### The “Cry Poor” Approach

- Explain that we are living in difficult times with many bills and our church is in grave danger of going under. The church is running out of money

#### Problems:

- There is no question that parishioners will be focused on the church, probably challenging how money has been spent and what’s going wrong. People in America want to belong to winning, not losing, teams
- The church has become a beggar, holding out its hand

Perhaps we should look to Jesus as our teacher and example and see what He says about money and giving.

What is the recorded approach of Jesus to man's relationship to his money?

- 1/6 of all words of Jesus are concerned with the relationship of a person to his material possessions
- 1/3 of all of Jesus' parables are devoted to this relationship

To save time, we can summarize His teachings on the coveting of material possessions (money) as follows:

- it can be spiritually and physically

to, our material possessions needs the same high priority in our church's education programs as Jesus gave it.

- our spiritual growth, as the Church, depends on it
- our spiritual growth, as parishes, depends on it
- our spiritual growth, as Christians, depends on it
- 2000 years of the dedication of our Holy Fathers depends on it
- the Holy Icon, the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, depends on it

The real issues, in funding the church, which we must focus on are:

fill our "great commission" to spread the word of God to all peoples. Still we are hesitant to offer money in support for this greatest of icons, our Holy Church.

Well then, what are we supposed to do with our money and possessions?

- We are to give back to God a portion of what God has given us, and God has given us all things since the beginning of time
- We are to make sacrifices to God from the bountiful blessings that He has given us, always putting God and the Church first
- We are to use our resources for "good works" that support the great mission of God's people and God's Church
- We are not to covet our possessions and make them into "graven images" that take a priority over our relationship to God
- We are to use what is left, after our "offering," to support our family's needs and to live humbly before the Lord our God

"Support our family's needs" and "living humbly": this doesn't sound like the American dream. What about big houses, fast cars, fine food and wine, stylish clothes, golf clubs, distant vacations, investments and retirement plans, "the good life"? Well, actually these "icons" of the American dream are all "okay" if you can keep them in proper perspective.

You see you can have it all now, without waiting for God's blessings, like Adam and Eve did, or you can await God's permission, participate in His plan and enjoy real spiritual fruits for your effort. It just might come down to the simplest of questions: "Did you buy your big house before or after you established your sacrifice to God?" "Did you set aside some of the firstfruits of your harvest for your sacrifice or did you give to God from what was left after the mortgage?" "Do you worship God every Sunday at the Divine Liturgy or just attend Sunday's service?"

"Wait a minute. Worship? What's that got to do with it? I go to church. Get off your high horse."

I know what you're thinking. First time I heard that question about worship, it irritated me too. But it is a good question and deserves our consideration. Our worship of God in fact has many components:



deadly. Ananias and Sapphira found this out when they sold property and kept some of the money for themselves, lying to the Apostle Peter about it. They died physically and spiritually on the spot (Acts 5:1-10)

- it can be the stumbling block at the entrance of heaven, "for it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven" (Luke 18:25)
- it can keep us from God's blessings: "The deceitfulness of riches choke the word (of God) and the sower becomes unfruitful" (Matt. 13:22, Mark 4:19)
- Money is not a dirty word, and yet it (or rather, the love of it) can be the "root of all evil, leading to temptation and lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim. 6:10)

My intent is not to lead into a bible study here. Rather, it is to establish the fact that our material possessions, where we all live, can overwhelm all of our efforts to succeed spiritually as Christians and as the church, as Jesus Christ established it.

Our understanding of, and relationship

- Teaching, with confidence the basics of the theology of money
- Promoting giving according to each person's ability and/or talents, and work to grow that commitment over time as their spiritual understanding and life progresses
- Tie giving to the greatest gift of God, His Son Jesus Christ and through Him to the power of the Holy Spirit (through the Eucharist)

We all spend, without hesitation, lots of money on icons for our homes and our friends. We understand the icon's role in our Church and we venerate them whenever we have the chance. Yet the greatest icon God has given us is our Church, the very body of Christ. St. Symeon the New Theologian suggests that when we get to heaven we will each become part of the body of God, some doing the work of the head, others the arms, others the feet. St. Symeon goes on to draw the same parallel to our Church on earth, God's Church on earth is the very embodiment of God in heaven where we learn, through practice, to honor the works of God and to ful-

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daily prayers, attendance at vespers, confession, fasting, a prayerful and attentive attitude, congregational prayers and petitions, personal sacrifice, participation in the Eucharist, prayers of thanksgiving — just to name a few.

The personal sacrifice component of worship is what we need to better understand.

Far back in the Old Testament, Abraham was asked by God to sacrifice his firstborn son, to show the depth of his obedience to God. Because of Abraham's willingness to do as he was asked, God blessed him first with a lamb to replace his son on the altar and then with blessings for many years thereafter. The appropriate sacrifice was always to offer yourself, as expressed through what you had produced. This sacrifice, offering, or tithe came from the best of your harvest. In those days, for the shepherd it was the best lambs. For the farmer it was the best wheat, the best of the apples, pears or figs. Giving back to God from the bounty that God had provided for you seems to me to be appropriate and reasonable. Have we lost track of that today?

It was generally held, in the Old Testament, that each person should give 10% of his "harvest" to God. Through this holy offering to God the rest of the person's possessions were sanctified. In other words you gave to God 10% of what you earned through your own efforts. Today most of us work at our jobs for money. It is appropriate for us to offer to God a proportion of what we earn as our offering or sacrifice following the pattern set out in the bible.

It is startling, perhaps, to hear that giving money to God's church could be a key part of our worship and the development of our spiritual life. However, it is true. All of our life must be sanctified and made holy. We must strive to totally consecrate our lives to God. If you set aside your wealth as something separate from your spiritual life then it truly can become your own stumbling block to heaven.

In 1 Timothy 6:9-10, Paul explains that "Those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in

their greediness. . ." It is not money itself that is our downfall but the love of money which becomes evil and drives a wedge between God and us. Better perhaps to strive to get right with God and share the bounty God has given us in order to save our soul.

In Mark 10:23, Jesus, speaking to his disciples, says "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of heaven." Being rich in and of itself is really not the issue; rather it is the coveting of riches. Thus in Mark 10:22 when Jesus has told the rich man that he should sell his possessions and follow him, "he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great riches." No, it's not necessary to be poor and live in poverty in order to seek the kingdom of heaven, but it is necessary to fully sacrifice to God and allow God to sanctify your worldly possessions. Money must be kept in perspective and not dominate our lives.

From that idea of 10%, the word tithe was derived as meaning "a tenth." While this holy offering to God might be a nice number or concept or a basis for us to expect our congregations to tithe, it is unrealistic to expect such an offering today.

Worship involves each individual's personal sacrifice from the firstfruits of their season. Offerings, or tithes, should be our sacrifice of ourselves taken from the "best of the best," before any other consideration (before a house, before an evening out, before a new car, before a video rental). Our sacrifice should be proportional to the blessings we have received from God. In Luke 21:1-4 Jesus clarifies forever that the last two mites (pennies) of the poor widow are greater than all the casual offerings of a rich man. The true value of an offering to God, from God's perspective, comes from the size of the personal sacrifice that the offering represents not the size of the gift. With God the issue is truly the commitment of your heart and willingness to sacrifice to God.

In the 8th and 9th chapters of 2nd Corinthians, St. Paul outlines a model for sacrificial giving:

- Giving is to be in proportion to what one has (2 Cor. 8:1-8)
- It represents the degree to which a person is devoted to Christ (2 Cor. 8:1-8)
- It is a means for a person to obtain the grace of God (2 Cor. 8:1-8)
- Giving must be voluntary (2 Cor. 8:1-8)

- It is part of a person's life as a Christian (2 Cor. 8:7)
- As the Lord emptied Himself and became poor for our sakes, He gave us an example to follow (2 Cor. 8:9).
- It is proof of a person's love of Christ (2 Cor. 8:24)
- Giving should provide a good example to others (2 Cor. 9:5)
- Give sparingly, reap sparingly; or, give richly, reap richly (2 Cor. 9:6)
- Giving must be cheerful (2 Cor. 9:7)
- Giving is an occasion for thanksgiving (2 Cor. 9:11-12)
- It is sacrificial (Mark 12:43-44)

Our congregations need to learn about personal sacrifice and sacrificial giving, and come to understand them as an integral part of worshipping God. Many of us sacrifice much of our time, effort and knowledge to help the church every day, for which I am sure we receive many blessings (the "20%-ers"). Sometimes it helps to stop and reflect on those blessings so they don't get lost in our frustrations. Many people would surely receive many blessings if they would donate more of their time, energy, and talents (the "80%-ers"). All of us, however, must come to terms with our personal possessions and the "harvest" from our daily lives. Your sacrificial giving involves establishing a giving plan for yourself.

I propose the Personal Sacrificial Giving Plan for each parishioner, adult and child, that sets aside a weekly portion of what God has given them as their "harvest."

- Sacrificial giving is a plan in which the parishioner establishes their sacrifice in the beginning from their firstfruits, and not as an afterthought or from what is left over after everything else is paid
- A set sacrificial portion (a per cent recommended), would be established by each parishioner after prayer and would be what they believe, and feel in their heart, will satisfy God and sanctify the rest of their possessions
- The parishioner's sacrifice needs to be part of their budget for each week so that their plan and God's plan can work together
- The portion is weekly because after the parishioner establishes the size of their sacrifice, they should present it each week at Divine Liturgy as their personal



sacrifice to God, prior to participating in God's sacrifice for them, the Eucharist

- Each week then each parishioner offers to God their best from the firstfruits of their harvest
- This means that each week each parishioner has to recommit himself to his sacrifice to God, to plan for it, and in turn, to reap the spiritual benefits of his own sacrificial participation in God's plan

Our giving needs to be a set proportion of our produce to God. Sacrificially! Otherwise our donations and gifts are simply tokens of what we have left over, the loose change in our pocket. Our offering must be an integral part of the totality of our life and its sanctification. But, why a set proportion? Because that personal commitment, if established correctly, will require planning, and balancing, and thought, and make that gift truly sacrificial, thereby sanctifying the rest of our possessions.

Great idea? Think it will work? Maybe?

Well, be assured that God wants it to work. He bet His life as Jesus Christ on it. And it is our turn to pick up the ball and bounce it. Two thousand years of Christianity comes down to our willingness to sacrifice ourselves for the Great Commission as followers of Jesus Christ, to help Orthodoxy Christianity grow — to share Orthodoxy with others — to help others in their search for the true God. To advance this Great Commission today, in our world, takes money. And the only money that is available to our Church is our money and that of the parishioners of our parishes.

Psalm 50(51) ends, "The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." A broken spirit is not poor; rather it is sacrificial and submissive to the will of God. Yes, we must repent of our all our sins before God, holding back nothing. But, God desires that we come to realize that regardless of what we have gained financially, spiritually, or physically, it has come from Him and we should be willing to submit everything back to Him for His glory. Then we are open and able to focus on God's plan. God's will for us, His plan, is for us to know Him and to be good stewards of His creation and His Church.

As our parishioners grow in faith, worship, love and spirit, so also grow the parish, the diocese and the Orthodox Church in America. Not through organized funding drives but through Christ-centered teaching about financial matters and sacrifice.

—Peter Bohlander

*Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord"*

Abba Poemen said of Abba John the Short that he had prayed to God to take his passions away from him so that he might become free from care. He went and told an old man this, "I find myself in peace, without an enemy," he said. The old man said to him, "Go quickly, beg God to stir up warfare so that you may regain the affliction and humility that you used to have, for it is by warfare that the soul makes progress." So he besought God and when warfare came, he no longer prayed that it might be taken away, but said, "Lord, give me strength for the fight."

—from the Desert Fathers

"It is demanded of us, Christians, that we receive these heavenly and most sweet tidings [the Gospel] gratefully as they are sent from Heaven, and that from a pure heart we always give thanks to God our Benefactor, Who so freely had mercy on us, and that we show holy obedience and compliance in all thankfulness. For conscience itself instructs and convinces us to be thankful to our Benefactor. He loved us who are unworthy. Let us also love Him Who is worthy of all love. Love requires that we never offend the beloved. God is offended by every sin. Let us keep away from every sin and let us do His holy will that we may not offend Him as our compassionate Father and Benefactor."

—St. Tikhon of Zadonsk

2002

FALL



LECTURE SERIES

"In Honor of September 11, 2001"

# Orthodoxy and Islam: a Theological Perspective



Constantinople from the Sea of Marmara. The city's fall to the Turks in 1453 marked the end of the Byzantine Empire and the beginning of the Muslim rule

A proper understanding of Islam is becoming more important with the passing of each year. As the world around us continues to broaden its borders as a 'global village' we no longer can afford to remain isolated, ignorant and uninformed about the important religions that make up our new world.

Islam is one of the great monotheistic religions of mankind. But even more than a religion, it is also a sociopolitical system that bonds together millions of Muslims regardless of race or nationality. Their unity is built upon faith in the one God and in His Prophet Muhammad. In the nearly fourteen centuries of its existence,

Islam has grown and evolved into a unique political force with a distinct culture of its own. It is the most dominant religion in the Middle East. Given its strategic geographical significance on the military map, its geopolitical influence with regard to the world oil supply, and even more so, with the new threat of militant Muslim fundamentalism, we see how extremely important it is, now more than ever, to try to better understand the basic beliefs of Islam.

According to the *Dictionary of World Religions*, "Islam, from its origin, has been a religious polity. A Muslim, unlike a Jew or Christian, cannot readily separate his spiritual identity from his national identity . . . Islamic life is at once religious

and political. The mosque and state are not separable; they are complementary expressions of the same, single reality: that Islam applies to all spheres of life. Hence, nationalism, that is Muslim nationalism, will continue to elicit tensions . . ." Interestingly, that was first published in 1981, exactly twenty years before the tragedy and the terror of September 11th, 2001.

The point to be made is that while the message of Muhammad was certainly centered on religion, its ultimate aim was social. His goal was *not* the establishment of a Church, in the Orthodox understanding, as a sacramental body mystically uniting believers to God and to one other.

1. *The Perennial Dictionary of World Religions*, ed. K. Crim, New York, 1981, p. 357.

What Muhammad sought to accomplish was an egalitarian society on earth, free from injustice, corruption and the exploitation of the poor and underprivileged. He felt called to promote equality among all men with respect to social, economic and political rights.

Muhammad preached a social ethic that was directly related to and dependent on the worship of the one God. From the perspective of religious history, monotheism provides man and society with one God who is experienced initially as a 'moral imperative'.<sup>2</sup> This is exactly the essence of Muhammad's message. Man must believe and worship the one God alone, the God who rewards good behavior and punishes bad behavior. Obviously, belief in such a God, with a religion shared by all citizens, would certainly contribute to the organization and functioning of a well-ordered society.<sup>3</sup>

This emphasis on social ethics is important and constitutes a fundamental theological difference between Islam and Orthodoxy. While it would be a mistake to overstress the political and ethical aspects of Islam to the degree that we lose sight of the reality of the religious experiences of Muslim believers, Islam remains nonetheless a religion based predominantly on social ethics and moral behavior. By preaching that there is one God and that all men are equal, Muhammad stressed the moral value of each action. In Islam, therefore, morality becomes the ultimate basis of salvation.

This is quite different from the Orthodox Church. Christ came for much more than the establishment of an ethical system that would facilitate the well functioning of society. Yes, the Church does preach and teach ethics and the spiritual significance of moral choices and ethical behavior. But the life in Christ is not about participation in a well-ordered society. The life in Christ, indeed the 'abundant life' the Lord promises to His disciples,<sup>4</sup> is not about rewards for good behavior. The life in Christ is participation in divine love. This is very important and we will come back to this later, but it is worth repeating once more. The life in Christ is participation in divine love. This is what distinguishes Orthodoxy from Islam.

Here lies the fundamental difference

2. See Karen Armstrong, *A History of God*, London, 1993, p. 167.

3. See Ninian Smart, *The Religious Experience of Mankind*, New York, 1969, p. 421.

4. See John 10. 10.

between the mission of Christ and the mission of Muhammad. Christ came to transform human nature and to transfigure the whole of our human being through personal participation in the divine love of the personal God. This patristic teaching on the sanctification of human nature through the uncreated grace of divine love is not found in Islam. Such a teaching, such a unique vision of man, is found only in the Orthodox Church. In Islam, there is no theological foundation for such a teaching, neither is there such a vision of man.

One scholar writes with regard to the limits of Muslim theology, "Muhammad



Dr. Harry Boosalis

preached an ethic that we might call socialist as a consequence of his worship of the one God. There were no obligatory doctrines about God: indeed, the Koran is highly suspicious of theological speculation . . . The Christian doctrines of the Incarnation and the Trinity seemed prime examples [of such speculation] and, not surprisingly, the Muslims found these notions blasphemous."<sup>5</sup>

Aside from these basic theological differences, another very important point we must take into account is that, at this present time in history, there is a great struggle taking place within the Muslim world today. Both on a personal level as well as on a national scale, there is much concern over the threat of modernism from the West.

Many Muslims believe that Western, and in particular American dominance in the cultural, economic and political

spheres affecting the Middle East has had a negative effect on Islam. As a result of these westernizing tendencies, there is now a call to go back to traditional values and to adhere to the fundamental principles of Islam. According to the official *Guidelines for Dialogue between Christians and Muslims* published by the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue, "There exist Muslims today who would like to see Islam applied to all parts of public and private life, since they are convinced that the Law revealed in the Koran is in every detail part of the perfect divine will for human society . . . In their concern for the strict observance of worship and for the correct Islamic organization of life, they are resolved to see the Law of God applied without compromise. Trying to bring Islam back to its essential foundations (of the Koran, Tradition, and the Law) they would insist on reviving laws, traditions and institutions thought to be outmoded [by contemporary standards] . . ."<sup>6</sup>

Many present day reform movements are attempting to restore and revitalize Islamic society based on traditional values and more 'fundamental' principles. The strength of Islam lies in the fact that "it is not only a religion regulating the spiritual life of the believer, but also an all-embracing way of life governing the totality of the Muslim's being."<sup>7</sup> These movements are concerned with reinterpreting Islam through the perspective of the puritanical principles of Muhammad. Islamic fundamentalism, as is the case with the fundamentalists of every religion, holds that the only true way of life for real believers is the insistence on a literal interpretation of Scripture and the exact observance of the letter of the Law.

According to Dr. Seyyed Nasr, Professor of Islamic Studies at George Washington University and one of the world's foremost authorities on Islam, Muslim fundamentalism was unheard of before the eighteenth century.<sup>8</sup> The rise of fundamentalism, as in all religions, is a reaction, or better yet, an *over*-reaction to modernism. Western modernism confronted Islam for the first time in the eighteenth century. Dr.

6. *Guidelines for Dialogue between Christians and Muslims*, Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue, New York, 1981, p. 25.

7. Caesar Farah, *Islam*, New York, 1970, p. 14.

8. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, proceedings from the conference panel discussion, 'Paths to the Heart: Sufism and the Christian East', University of South Carolina, Columbia, 2001, as of yet unpublished.

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## Orthodoxy and Islam

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Nasr contends that if there were no modernism, then there would be no fundamentalist reaction to it.

When Napoleon invaded Egypt at the close of the eighteenth century, the only Muslims who resisted the new modernist trends were the Sufi mystics. This modernist movement gradually gave way to the severe and extreme reaction that followed. These are the historical roots of Muslim fundamentalism. In the twentieth century, stronger movements arose seeking further reform away from modernism. As the United States grew more and more involved in the politics of the Middle East because of its vital interests in the world oil supply, these fundamentalist resistance movements continued to spread. Many Muslims began to heed the call back to reform and to the fundamentals of true and traditional Islam.

According to Dr. Nasr, this overreaction to modernist movements and the call back to fundamentalism is not unique to Islam. All religions have their own form of fundamentalism, traditionalism and modernism, including Christianity, perhaps even our own Orthodoxy. Does not our own Orthodoxy share in these same types and trends of fundamentalist, traditionalist and modernist interpretations? Is our own Orthodoxy not open to similar overreactions as well?

As we have so clearly learned from the tragic events of September 11th, this concern for upholding the fundamental religious principles of Islam has now turned instead into contempt, zealous resentment and outright hatred toward the West. As the Islamic world enters the dawn of the new century with rising resentment toward Western society, the time to try to appreciate the appeal of this great religion is now come.

The Prophet Muhammad fought for Arab unity by establishing a society based on a shared faith and common religion. This was accomplished by the worship of the one God alone and by the establishment of laws that carried with them divine authority. With such religious laws, Muhammad hoped to unite the scattered and divided Arab people into one nation. The fact that Muhammad's mission was accomplished in his own lifetime is a living testimony to his unique role in history as the founder of the Arab nation as well

as the religion of Islam. The global influence and enormous impact that this one single man had on the history of mankind is indeed remarkable.<sup>9</sup>

This new religion recognized the universal brotherhood of all Muslims: "First the Arabs of Arabia and later, with the expansion of Islam outside of Arabia, all those who submitted to Allah in Islam were looked upon as rightful members of this vast fraternity."<sup>10</sup> Muhammad made it easy for converts to accept the new religion by keeping its beliefs and practices as simple as possible. By stressing the moral value of each action and by making morality the basis of salvation, only a few principles were laid down that every Mus-



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lim was required to believe and to practice. Muhammad knew his audience well. He was able to reduce the essence of the new religion to the believer's level of comprehension and credibility. This made it easier for the common Arab to accept and follow the new religion.<sup>11</sup>

It's interesting to compare Orthodoxy with Islam on this particular point. It seems as if in Islam there is no place for the miraculous, at least not in the same sense as there is in the life of the Orthodox believer. The religion of Islam seems much more 'credible' than Orthodoxy, that is to say, it is more 'believable,' more 'plausible' and easier to accept. The Muslim is not called to ascend the limitations of the human mind through a living faith in something so miraculous as the belief

9. For further reading refer to Annemarie Schimmel, *And Muhammad is His Messenger*, Chapel Hill, 1985.

10. Farah, p. 63.

11. Farah, p. 104.

in the Incarnation of the Son of God.

The Orthodox believer, on the other hand, through his personal participation in the Mystery of the Holy Eucharist manifests his personal belief that God became man. The believer's faith in the miraculous is expressed in his belief in the change of the elements from wine to divine Blood, and from bread to the Lord's Risen Body. In Islam, however, there is no theological need to express this faith in the 'miraculous,' since there is no belief that God became man. Related to this is the fact that while there are indeed Muslim saints,<sup>12</sup> there is no place in Islam for a 'veneration' of saints, at least not as we know it; neither is there the same kind of veneration for holy icons or holy relics.

Muhammad's goals were much more simple than that. His primary aim was to indoctrinate and instill in his followers the will to obey and abide by the commandments of the one God. In this way Muhammad united the Arabs, and indeed all Muslims, through a common profession of faith and through their shared religious practices.

The religious and theological teachings of Islam are actually quite simple and easy to remember. They have been conveniently summarized as 'five basic beliefs' and 'five basic practices.' Belief is only validated through practice. A practicing Muslim is required to follow these five fundamental *beliefs* and these five basic *practices*. Both are necessary for one's faith as a Muslim.

The five *beliefs* are as follows: 1. the Belief in One God, 2. the Belief in Angels, 3. the Belief in Many Prophets but One Message, 4. the Belief in the Day of Judgment, and 5. the Belief in the *Qadar*, which means the 'timeless knowledge of God' or 'the pre-knowledge of God'.<sup>13</sup> The Islamic belief in *Qadar* may be seen as somewhat analogous to the Augustinian and Calvinistic notion of predestination.

The five *practices* of Islam or, as they are more commonly known, the 'Five Pillars of Observance' are the following: 1. The Practice of the *Shahadah* or Testimony, which is the recitation of the words 'There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is his Prophet'; 2. The Practice of Prayer: the general practice is for Muslims to pray five times a day: at dawn,

12. E. g., see Farid al-Din Attar, *Muslim Saints and Mystics*, trans. A. J. Arberry, London, 1987.

13. Cf. Riadh El-Droubie, *Five World Faiths*, ed. W. Owen Cole, London, 1991, p. 167.

at noon, in the middle of the afternoon, at sunset and at the onset of darkness,<sup>14</sup> and always facing Mecca; 3. The Practice of Almsgiving; 4. The Practice of Fasting during the month of Ramadan; and 5. The Practice of Pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca. I will highlight two of the more important beliefs mentioned above: the Belief in One God, which relates to Islamic 'theology' properly speaking, and the Belief in the Day of Judgment, which addresses themes in Islamic eschatology.

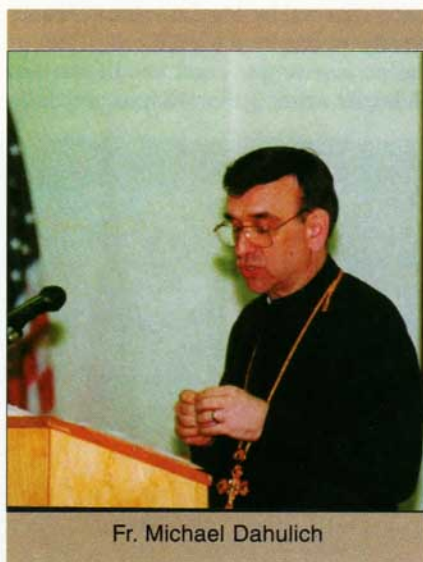
We begin with the first belief, the belief in One God. Islam is based on the belief in One God and submission to Him. The absolute unity of God is the central dogma of Islam. This fundamental belief is expressed in the first pillar of observance or practice, the *Shahadah* or 'Testimony' of one's faith. The *Shahadah* or 'Testimony' is a simple affirmation of the uniqueness of God. It is repeated daily by devout Muslims at the appointed time of prayer.

The *Shahadah*, 'There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is his Prophet', has been referred to as the 'Creed' of Islam.<sup>15</sup> These are the words a person pronounces when he converts to Islam. "The one prerequisite for becoming a Muslim is to profess the *shahadah* (or open testimony . . . 'there is no god but Allah [and Muhammad is his Prophet]')."<sup>16</sup> It is interesting to see how there is no real rite of initiation in Islam *per se*, as we know it in the sacrament of Holy Baptism. It seems as if there is no sacramental act or liturgical action that accompanies and manifests the spiritual reality of becoming Muslim.

Why is this so? This is because in Islam, there is no divine incarnation. In Islam, there is no teaching on the deification of man. In Islam, there is no idea of participation in divine life, neither theologically nor in practice. Islam has no experience of liturgical or sacramental life as we know it because there is not any kind of a conscious and personal participation in divine life. The focus is primarily directed toward the promise of rewards for ethical behavior. For Orthodoxy, man is called to much more than rewards for good behavior. The Orthodox Christian finds the focus of his spiritual life in his participation in the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church. In Islam there is virtually nothing corresponding to this aspect of the

life in Christ. "The ritual of Islam centers simply on prayer."<sup>17</sup> Prayer is the primary way of worship, not liturgical and sacramental participation in the life of the Holy Church.

Already we see how much more simplistic Islamic theology is in comparison to Orthodoxy. There is no doctrine of the Holy Trinity, nor is their any idea of an Incarnation of God. The Muslim view of monotheism seems much more restricted than the Orthodox teaching on the Holy Trinity. One very important point that shows the theological divergence between the monotheism as understood in Islam and the Orthodox understanding, is the Muslim overemphasis on God's unity.



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This overemphasis is manifested in their monotonous mantra 'God is One.' Islam's overemphasis on God's unity seems to go against the wisdom of the Church Fathers and their apophatic approach to the mystery of God. By overemphasizing the unity of God and over-stressing that 'God is One,' our understanding of God is in fact restricted, because we are actually limiting God to the confines of human reason.

This is why it is more proper to say, in the true apophatic spirit of the Church Fathers, that God is *more* than One. God is *above* the concept of unity. God is a mystery that is so far above our limited created nature, that we really cannot apply any human concepts to Him. We cannot even refer to God in any rational categories of human thought. While there is indeed a Muslim teaching that is analagous to the apophatic approach of the Church

Fathers,<sup>18</sup> the Islamic understanding remains somewhat different. While the apophatic teaching of the utter 'unknowability' of God is certainly found within Islam, the Muslim doctrine of the unity of God does not really reflect this truth as does the mystery of the Holy Trinity.

The main message of the Orthodox doctrine of the Holy Trinity is that God is indeed One, yet He is much more than One. God is indeed three divine Persons, yet He is something *more* than three divine Persons. Our doctrine of the mystery of the Holy Trinity tells us that we *can* not and we *must* not limit God through the use of human concepts and terms. God is completely beyond our created nature. The uncreated nature of God transcends the limited abilities of our human brain. Thus, the basic teaching of our doctrine of the Holy Trinity is this: We do not know what God is, nor will we ever be able to fully comprehend Him. God is a mystery, yet He has indeed revealed Himself to man. God has revealed Himself as three Persons living in the unity of perfect love.

This then is the fundamental truth of the mystery of the Holy Trinity: God is a unity of three Persons living in perfect love. God is love; and love presupposes another Person. The Muslim believes that God is One. The Orthodox Christian goes beyond this. God is more than One. God is more than unity. God is above any rational concept. The mystery of the Holy Trinity supersedes the rational limitations of our human mind. God is One, yet He is One in Three.

From an Orthodox perspective, the Muslim overemphasis on the unity of God also seems to leave a deep chasm between God's uncreated divine nature and man's created human nature. Of course for the Orthodox Christian, the great divide between God and creation has been bridged for all eternity by virtue of the Incarnation of the Son of God. For the Muslim, however, this great chasm remains. According to one Islamic scholar, "Allah is not identifiable with man, with whom His only connection is the fact He created him."<sup>19</sup>

This is in sharp contrast to the Orthodox understanding of the Incarnation, where God not only 'connects' with His

14. See Smart, p. 383.

15. See El-Drouble, p. 167.

16. Farah, *Islam*, p. 103.

17. Smart, p. 421.

18. See Armstrong, pp. 212-213 and Caesar Farah, *Islam*, p. 107.

19. Farah, p. 108.

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creation, but he indeed 'identifies' with man, by personally assuming human nature in the Person of the God-man, Jesus Christ. Such differences show how both religions can proclaim their faith in One God, yet their basic understanding of monotheism remains incompatible.

Not only does Islamic theology seem to depersonalize God, but man's personal relationship with God is also minimized. God's relationship with man is seen mainly as one of a Creator to His creature or a Judge to a defendant. God's relationship with man as a father to a son is not as apparent in Islam, nor is it made manifest as much as it is in Orthodoxy.

Another interesting point to consider is how the lack of an incarnational theology manifests itself in religious art. Mosques rarely contain any religious pictures of people or depictions of historic events. And if there are such depictions, they do not have any liturgical role, nor do they function in the same way as holy icons. From an Orthodox point of view, this cold absence of the many human faces that bring such warmth to the walls of Orthodox Churches simply manifests this 'depersonalized' relationship with the Muslim God. In Muslim mosques, the basic type of art is generally geometrical designs and verses quoted from the Koran in Arabic calligraphy.

This lack of an incarnational theology is also expressed in the Islamic understanding of the religious unity among Muslims. One Islamic scholar writes, "In partaking of Islam the Muslim acknowledges his dependence on God, his creator . . . and his solidarity with fellow Muslims."<sup>20</sup> The important idea here is 'solidarity with fellow Muslims.' Obviously in Islam, as in all religions, there is a kind of connection or bonding that takes place with one's 'fellow Muslims.' The difference with Orthodoxy lies in the fact that Islam 'bonds' one only to fellow *Muslims*. In the Orthodox Church, the believer is called to 'union' with *all* mankind and indeed with *all* of creation.

The 'solidarity' offered to Muslims through the religion of Islam is not the same thing as the mystical union with God and communion with all mankind such as can be achieved and experienced in the Orthodox Church. Rather, Islam provides man with a more limited concept of

20. Farah, p. 48.

'unity'. Islamic 'unity' may be perceived more as a social 'solidarity' that is achieved basically by *human* means through commonly shared practices and beliefs. The Orthodox Church, on the other hand, provides man with the divine means for mystical communion with God and sacramental unity with all mankind. This is achieved through liturgical and sacramental participation in the life in Christ. In Islam, there is nothing that corresponds to this liturgical and sacramental life. The ritual of Islam centers primarily on prayer.<sup>21</sup> In Islam, prayer is the primary way to worship, not corporate liturgical life and sacramental participation.

If one looks closer at the daily prayer ritual required by Muslims, one is immediately struck by the rigid religiosity of the precise times, exact conditions and elaborate washing ritual that accompanies

ankles three times. During this time of washing a prayer of supplication is said."<sup>22</sup>

Another interesting condition for prayer is that there must be a clean place for prayer. According to Dr. El-Droubie, "Muslims can pray in any place provided it is clean."<sup>23</sup> It is interesting to compare this practice of prayer in clean places with the practice of St. Anthony the Great, who retreated inside an empty tomb in order to pray. There are also countless other examples of such saints who likewise pursued prayer in 'unclean' places. Dr. El-Droubie continues, "[Muslims] can pray on the grass in the park, in an office or factory, on any clean floor . . . or in a splendid mosque. When a Muslim travels or goes to a place where he is not sure of finding a clean area, he carries a small prayer rug with him. The rug, according to tradition . . . must conform [in itself] to special



it. A Muslim must perform compulsory prayer five times a day. There are also certain conditions for prayer that are very interesting. One of these conditions for prayer is to be clean bodily.

The rather elaborate washing ritual that generally accompanies Muslim prayer is described by Dr. Riadh El-Droubie, who is involved in Islamic education in Great Britain and is the author of several books on Islam. He writes, "The ablution is an essential part of prayer. Every Muslim must start in the name of God and wash his hands three times and rinse his mouth three times, then his nostrils three times, followed by washing the arms to the elbow three times, starting with the right hand first, then with moist hands to go over the head, ears and neck, then feet to the

21. See Smart, p. 421

conditions."<sup>24</sup>

It is rather ironic to think that while a Muslim, technically speaking, is 'free' to pray in any place, that place must first be clean, he must pray five times a day and preferably at prescribed times, and one's prayer must be, or at least it normally is, preceded by a precise washing ritual. Whether or not this ritual is always performed in the proper way as outlined above is not the real issue here. The point is that this is the recommended and traditionally prescribed Muslim way to pray.

What is missing here is that sense of freedom and the great variety of ways for pursuing prayer, as is readily seen by reading the lives of Orthodox saints. While

22. El-Droubie, pp. 167-168.

23. El-Droubie, p. 168.

24. El-Droubie, p. 168.

there is certainly freedom and flexibility for the Muslim in prayer, as is attested to in the tradition of Sufi mysticism,<sup>25</sup> still the general practice of praying five times a day seems overly focused on the rituals and regulations that must accompany it. Everything appears so rigidly set and must be strictly fulfilled. The focus of prayer seems to be on the religious act for its own sake, rather than the personal and existential encounter with the personal God.

Of course for the Orthodox, such an 'encounter' is based on one's sacramental and liturgical life within the Church. In comparison, Islam may appear as a religion of ethics, based on prescribed rules and precise regulations. Yes indeed, there is a rich Muslim mystical tradition that shares many elements with Orthodoxy. The question of which tradition influenced the other is a matter of debate. The point



is that even though there are Muslim mystics who might in fact sound Orthodox and may even use similar concepts and terms, still, the overall theological vision of Islam remains restricted to the realm of ethics and religious ritual.

With this in mind, let us move on to eschatology. Another interesting comparison to be made between Orthodoxy and Islam relates to their eschatological teachings. Eschatology addresses issues that deal with the end times, including death, the Resurrection, the Last Judgment, Paradise and Hell. In Islam, there is indeed a belief in bodily resurrection.<sup>26</sup> However, it does not appear to have the same central significance as it does in Orthodoxy. It is not a resurrection for life as is experienced in the Christian East. Instead, the

Muslim concept of bodily resurrection is associated more with judgment rather than with eternal life. In Islam, bodily resurrection is not seen in the light of Christ's victory over death. More importantly to the Muslim, the theological significance of bodily resurrection seems reduced to the status of a prerequisite for the Last Judgment. According to one Islamic scholar, "The object of the Resurrection is to judge the deeds of men for the purpose of rewarding the faithful and punishing the guilty."<sup>27</sup> The main emphasis is that it is a resurrection for judgment, not a resurrection for life.

With regard to the belief in the Last Judgment, the Muslim teaching does bear some similarities with Orthodoxy. However, there are great differences as well. First of all, Islam goes to much more length in its very literal interpretation of the Scriptural and traditional depictions of heaven and hell. This 'over-literal' interpretation appears in the Muslim understanding of heaven. Many of us are familiar with the extravagant and vivid descriptions of the Muslim heaven, where good Muslims enjoy wonderful gardens and splendid fountains, where they wear beautiful clothes and, according to one account, where "delicious food and wine would be served to them by dark-eyed maidens . . ."<sup>28</sup>

From an Orthodox perspective, the belief in the Last Judgment seems to play a much more fundamental role in Islam than it does in Orthodoxy. Perhaps the Last Judgment becomes more of a focal point in Islam since the belief in rewards and punishment is so central to the religious life of the Muslim. This eschatological perspective is perhaps the main factor motivating Muslim behavior. Not only does the Muslim God reward those who serve him, he also punishes those who do not. According to one author, "This eschatology reinforced the insistence on serving Allah through righteous and just behavior. It was also an important factor in the faith and courage that animated the warriors of Islam. Death would be rewarded by something more splendid than plunder and power. Disloyalty would be punished by something worse than earthly torture and execution."<sup>29</sup> One can see a connection between this kind of a mentality and the kind that motivates the funda-

mentalist suicide bombers of our day. These so-called suicide bombers sincerely believe that they will be rewarded for serving Allah in this highest way.

A further manifestation of Islam's preoccupation with rewards and punishment is the teaching of the expiation of sins through the proper amount of punishment. One scholar writes, "Those who had embraced the revelations of Allah, even if they had sinned, will spend a term in Hell proportionate to their sins. They will be delivered therefrom upon expiating their sins by the right amount of punishment. The Sunni [or 'Orthodox'] Muslim, however, insists that no infidel who denied the existence of God, or any person who did not believe in the unity of God, shall ever be redeemed. While, on the other hand, no one who acknowledged the existence and unity of God will be made to suffer eternal fire. The Koran goes into considerable detail to portray the nature of punishments and rewards."<sup>30</sup>

Although most Muslims will assert, "it would be completely unjust to claim that Islam is fundamentally legalistic,"<sup>31</sup> the emphasis on judgment, trial, punishment and rewards remains the primary focus of Islamic eschatology. For instance, according to one author, "Judgment does not immediately follow the Resurrection. Mankind resurrected must wait a long time during which period anxiety and suspicion will torment those in doubt . . . At the given time the great book in which the deeds of mankind have been recorded will be opened and a list of each one's deeds will be given . . ."<sup>32</sup> Once the judgment has been proclaimed, "There will follow a period of mutual retaliation when those who were made to suffer unjustly will have satisfaction. The injurer will be made to yield a measure of his good works to the injured proportionate to the injury . . . Brutes will be made to pay the penalty for cruelty. Then God will command that they be turned into dust. The wicked, however, are destined to protracted suffering in Hell . . ."<sup>33</sup>

It is interesting to note the similarities of Muslim eschatology with the teachings of extreme Calvinism. Islam seems even more enamored with a vengeful God. Our Orthodox tradition, on the contrary, considers the Judgment to be the direct and

25. See Annemarie Schimmel, *The Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, Chapel Hill, 1975 and Farid al-Din Attar, *Muslim Saints and Mystics*, trans. A. J. Arberry, London, 1987.

26. See Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an*, Minneapolis, 1989, pp. 115-120.

27. Farah, *Islam*, p. 114.

28. Smart, p. 382.

29. Smart, p. 382.

30. Farah, p. 116.

31. *Guidelines for Dialogue* p. 72.

32. Farah, p. 115.

33. Farah, p. 115.

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immediate presence of God's great love and glory. At that time, the love and glory of God will pierce each and every human soul. This will bring either light, love, joy and peace to those who accepted the Truth that God became man, or it will naturally provoke fear, misery, pain and suffering in those who rejected and fought against this Truth of God's great love for man. God does not take delight in any human suffering, nor does He will to punish any of His children. However, He does respect human freedom, at all costs, and even allows and tolerates the consequences of our free choices.

For the record, allow me to repeat — to say that it is only the Orthodox who see God as a compassionate lover of mankind, and that the Muslims see God only as a wrathful Judge seeking revenge is obviously an oversimplification and it is absolutely false. In fact, of the ninety-nine names that refer to God in the Muslim tradition, the names of the All Merciful (Ar-Rahman) and All Compassionate (Ar-Rahim) are among the first.<sup>34</sup> There are also many Muslim saints, mystics and theologians who have appreciated, and continue to appreciate, the theological significance of the mystery of divine love.<sup>35</sup> The fact still remains, however, that in Orthodoxy, as we will see, love takes on a totally new theological perspective.

Let us look deeper now at our own Orthodox theology in order to better understand how our faith differs from Islam. As we have seen, the two main theological differences between Islam and Orthodoxy are: 1. Monotheism as understood by the Muslims cannot be reconciled with the Orthodox understanding of the mystery of the Holy Trinity, and 2. the Christian belief in the Incarnation of the Son of God is flatly rejected by Islam.

To put it in other words, the Muslim stresses the unity of God and the faith that He is One. Their basic theological doctrines do not really go beyond this one simple affirmation. The Orthodox Christian, on the other hand, stresses that God is more than unity. God is more than the concept of One. God is love. The Muslims believe that God is One. The Orthodox go further and believe that God is love.

34. *The Name and the Named*, ed. Tosun Bayrak, Louisville, 2000, pp. 48-52.

35. E. g., see Annemarie Schimmel, 'Al-Hallaj, Martyr of Mystical Love' in her book *The Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, Chapel Hill, 1975, pp. 62-77.

The teaching that God is love is fundamental to the New Testament. Indeed, perhaps all of Orthodox theology could be summed up in those three simple words: "God is love."<sup>36</sup> The God of the Christians, that is the Holy Trinity, is referred to as the 'God of love.'<sup>37</sup>

Love is the basic characteristic of the life of the Holy Trinity.<sup>38</sup> The three divine and distinct Persons of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are One; they are 'of the same essence,' and united in their perfect love for one another.<sup>39</sup> This then is the fundamental truth of the mystery of the Holy Trinity: God is a unity of Persons living in perfect love.<sup>40</sup> God is love; and love presupposes another Person,<sup>41</sup> whether divine or human.

Man, as created in the image and likeness of God, is created to share in and to live in love.<sup>42</sup> God is love; the more man loves, the more he participates in divine life. Love is thus innate in man. Love is basic to our very being.<sup>43</sup> It is through love that we attain to divine likeness and realize our 'true' personhood.<sup>44</sup> Love makes man truly human; love makes man divine. In this light, we see that it is love that deifies man; it is love that makes man Christ-like; it is love that makes man like God. One of the writers from the *Philokalia*, Theoliptos, even uses the term 'deifying love.'<sup>45</sup> The more man loves, the more deified he becomes.<sup>46</sup> On the other hand, without love, we distort the divine image in which we are created.<sup>47</sup> The less we love, the more we alienate ourselves from divine life.

Love is the mark of a true disciple of Christ. Love is that which sets Christianity apart from every other religion of the world. It is this message of love that char-

36. 1 John 4. 16. Cf. 1 John 4. 8.

37. See Archim. Sophrony, *On Prayer*, Essex, 1996, p. 63.

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

39. See Archim. Sophrony, *We Shall See Him as He Is*, Essex, 1988, p. 216.

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

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

42. See Gen. 1. 26.

43. See St. Basil the Great, *The Long Rules* 2. 1; PG 31, 908BC. Cf. Archim. Sophrony, "Those who dislike and reject their fellowman are impoverished in their being." *Saint Silouan the Athonite*, Essex, 1991, p. 116. Cf. also Mantzaridis, p. 37.

44. See Georgios Mantzaridis, *Christianike ethike*, Thessaloniki, 1995, p. 233.

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

46. See *Saint Silouan the Athonite*, pp. 366 and 75.

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

acterizes our Christian faith. Our Lord Himself proclaims the crucial role of love within the lives of His followers: *By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*<sup>48</sup> St. John the Apostle and Theologian also emphasizes, *God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.*<sup>49</sup> This emphasis on love is of central significance to the Gospel of Christ. The Gospel itself is ultimately a message of love.

The importance of love for the life of man is revealed in Christ's 'double commandment of love.' Our Lord was asked: *'Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?'* He said to him, *'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.'*<sup>50</sup> The commandments of Christ, therefore, are commandments of love.<sup>51</sup> However, in reality it is not a question of two separate commandments. They are both directly interrelated and interdependent on one another. They form a 'single life.'<sup>52</sup> Without love for God it is impossible to love one's neighbor. And without love for one's neighbor, it is impossible to truly love God.<sup>53</sup>

St. John the Theologian emphasizes this point and writes, *If someone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother . . . how can he love God . . . ? And this commandment we have from Him; that he who loves God must love his brother also.*<sup>54</sup> So we see then, that love for one's neighbor is the criterion of one's true love for God.<sup>55</sup>

The love of the Holy Trinity forms the foundation on which man's love for his fellow man is modeled. Man, as created in the image and likeness of the Holy Trinity, thus has an innate 'need' to live for and to love other people.<sup>56</sup> Both in the context of family life, as well as in regard to our relationships with our friends, we all live for love. We all long for love. We're

48. John 13. 35 (NKJ).

49. 1 John 4. 16 (NKJ).

50. Matt. 22. 36-40 (NRSV). Cf. Mark 12. 28-31.

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

52. See *Saint Silouan the Athonite*, p. 116.

53. See 1 John 4. 20-21. Cf. St. Basil the Great, *The Long Rules* 3.1-2; PG 31, 917B and St. Dorotheos of Gaza, *Discourses* 6; PG 88, 1696 BD.

54. See 1 John 4. 20. See also *Saint Silouan the Athonite*, p. 116.

55. See *Saint Silouan the Athonite*, pp. 116-117.

56. See St. Basil the Great, *The Long Rules* 3. 1; PG 31, 917A.



all *looking* for love. Indeed, *love* is essential to our lives as human beings. To *love* someone and to *be loved* by someone; this is what brings *life* to human existence.

The Lord Himself commands his followers to love one another: *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.*<sup>57</sup> However, the Lord's commandments are not merely an ethical teaching; rather they reveal the true nature of man.<sup>58</sup> When the Lord proclaims *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,*<sup>59</sup> He reveals the truth that one's 'neighbor' is organically linked to one's own being. One's 'neighbor', that it is to say, the 'other' person, thus forms an integral component of our own human person. It is interesting to compare this teaching of Christ

writer in particular. I would like to concentrate on the teaching of St. Silouan the Athonite, and together with him, his disciple, Elder Sophrony. St. Silouan's teaching on love is especially relevant for today. He personified Christ's teaching on love, putting the theology of the Fathers into practice. Not only that, but he is also very relevant for us this evening because of the fact that today, September 24, is also the feast day of St. Silouan. His teaching seems to encapsulate the unique Orthodox perspective on the profound mystery of love.

Both St. Silouan and Elder Sophrony taught that by following the commandment to love one's neighbor, the believer is led toward likeness with Christ. For example, Elder Sophrony writes, "There

There is a further aspect of St. Silouan's teaching on love that deserves our attention. This is the special emphasis he places on love for enemies.<sup>67</sup> This theme of love for enemies is fundamental to his entire teaching.

To begin with, the commandment of Christ to *love thy enemy*<sup>68</sup> is not found in any other religion of the world. It is unique to Christianity. As compared to the commandments of the Old Testament, this commandment of Jesus Christ appears revolutionary and opposite to the prescription of the Mosaic Law.<sup>69</sup>

For St. Silouan, love for enemies is identified, above all else, as prayer.<sup>70</sup> Prayer is the ultimate expression of true love. To love your enemy is to pray for him; and even more exactly, it is to pray for his salvation in Christ. In this light, St. Silouan offers his own definition of true love for enemies and writes, "The soul sorrows for her enemies and prays for them because they have strayed from the truth . . . That is love for our enemies."<sup>71</sup> He writes elsewhere, "The Lord is love, and He gave the Holy Spirit on earth, Who teaches the soul to love her enemies and pray for them, that they, too, may find salvation. That is true love."<sup>72</sup> St. Silouan states clearly, therefore, that love for enemies is prayer for their personal salvation in Christ. St. Isaac the Syrian is more specific about praying for one's enemies. He refers to it as praying for the protection of an enemy, and also that one's enemy may receive mercy from God.<sup>73</sup>

The love for enemies commanded by Christ cannot therefore be reduced to simple passiveness or nonviolence. It is an *active* response of true and compassionate *prayer* for their ultimate salvation.<sup>74</sup> However, it must be pointed out that for St. Silouan, such love does not depend on human endeavor alone. He stresses that if *one does indeed love one's enemies, it is*



with that of the French existentialist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, who saw the 'other' as some kind of an intruder and thus as something inimical to the being of the individual.<sup>60</sup>

On the contrary, through love for his neighbor, man fulfills the true purpose of his life. The commandments of Christ manifest the truth that love is the way of God, and indeed love is the way toward God. St. Maximos the Confessor writes, *Do not disdain the commandment to love, because by it you will be a son of God.*<sup>61</sup>

At this point, as we look deeper into how the Church Fathers consider love as the way toward man's participation in divine life, I would like to focus in on one

is no difference between the commandments of Christ and the life of God Himself. By abiding in Christ's commandments, we organically become like Him.<sup>62</sup>

On the other hand, St. Silouan teaches that if one hates his neighbor, it reveals that he has made his heart 'a dwelling-place for an evil spirit.'<sup>63</sup> He stresses that without love for one's fellow man, life loses its proper orientation and becomes oppressive and difficult to endure.<sup>64</sup> To prove his point, St. Silouan suggests to his readers that they try living *without* brotherly love for even one day, in order to experience firsthand the profound difference that love makes in the daily life of man.<sup>65</sup> It is in accordance with these sayings wherein love for one's neighbor is seen as a basic feature of human existence that St. Silouan said so simply, yet so profoundly, "Our brother is our life."<sup>66</sup>

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

58. *Saint Silouan the Athonite*, p. 47. Refer also to Archim. Sophrony, *Words of Life*, Essex, 1996, p. 16.

59. Matt. 22. 39 (KJV). Cf. Matt. 19. 19; Mark 12. 31; Lev. 19. 18.

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

61. St. Maximos the Confessor, *Chapters on Love* 4. 20, trans. G. C. Berthold, p. 77; PG 90, 1052C. Cf. *Saint Silouan the Athonite*, p. 116.

62. See Archim. Sophrony, *Words of Life*, p. 13.

63. See *Saint Silouan the Athonite*, p. 101.

64. *Ibid.* p. 428.

65. *Ibid.* p. 426.

66. *Ibid.* pp. 47 and 371. Cf. *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, "Our life and our death is with our neighbor." St. Anthony the Great 9; trans. B. Ward, Kalamazoo, 1984, p. 3; PG 65, 77B.

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

68. Matt. 5. 44; Luke 6. 27.

69. See Georgios Mantzaridis, *Christianike ethike*, Thessaloniki, 1995, pp. 237-238.

70. See *Saint Silouan the Athonite*, pp. 414 and 497. Cf. St. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Matthew* 18. 4; PG 57, 269.

71. *Saint Silouan the Athonite*, p. 379.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 378.

73. See St. Isaac the Syrian, *Ascetic Homilies* 71, trans. Holy Transfiguration Monastery, p. 345.

74. See St. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Matthew* 18. 3.4; PG 57, 269.

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## Orthodoxy and Islam

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due directly to the grace of the Holy Spirit. He writes, "The Lord taught me to love my enemies. Without the grace of God we cannot love our enemies. Only the Holy Spirit teaches love . . ."75

From this perspective, we see that the commandment of Christ to *love thy enemy* reveals the way toward man's perfection and sanctification. When the believer comes to truly love his enemy, he then participates truly in the life in Christ.<sup>76</sup> St. Silouan regarded the presence of love for enemies as "a sign of the real action of grace."<sup>77</sup> He who loves his enemies is thus likened unto the Lord.<sup>78</sup>

It is interesting to note that Elder Sophrony directly identified love for enemies with uncreated Divine Light.<sup>79</sup> He clearly considered love for enemies as a manifestation of grace and wrote: "The bearer of such love . . . is the tabernacle of the Holy Spirit . . . the brother and friend of Christ — he is a son of God and a god through grace."<sup>80</sup> One could say that to the degree that the believer participates in the grace of divine love for enemies, to the same degree he thereby participates in the divine and uncreated energies of God.<sup>81</sup>

In this light, the Lord's own words spoken to His Apostles may be taken quite literally: *But I say to you, love your enemies . . . pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven . . .*<sup>82</sup>

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

The more we participate in the phil-

75. *Saint Silouan the Athonite*, pp. 376-377. See also pp. 315, 378 and Archim. Sophrony *On Prayer*, p. 29.

76. See Hieromonk Zacharias Zacharou, *He pragmatose tes hypostatikes arches ste theologia tou Archimandritou Sophroniou*. Thessaloniki, 1998, p. 264.

77. *Saint Silouan the Athonite*, p. 114. See also p. 377.

78. *Ibid.*, pp. 115 and 232. Cf. St. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on John* 71. 3; PG 59, 388.

79. See *Saint Silouan the Athonite*, p. 232. Cf. *On Prayer*, pp. 84-85.

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

81. Refer to the chapter by Georgios Mantzaridis entitled "The commandments of God as divine energies" in *Prosopo kai thesmoi*, Thessaloniki, 1997, pp. 41-60. See also Hieromonk Zacharias Zacharou, *ibid.*, p. 262.

82. Matt. 5. 44-45. (NKJ).

anthropic love of Christ for all mankind, the more we will come to appreciate the unique worth that Christ places on each and every human person, and this includes our 'enemies'. This is the ultimate manifestation of the life in Christ. This is what it means to be 'alive in Christ'; it is to acquire the same consciousness as Christ, the same compassion as Christ and the same desire that Christ has for the salvation of each and every human person, including our enemies.<sup>83</sup>

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

83. See 1 Tim. 2. 4.

Silouan. Through love, we too can become like Christ.

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

I end with the words of St. Maximos the Confessor, who writes, "Many people have said much about love, but only in seeking it among Christ's disciples will you find it, for only they have the true love, the teacher of love . . . Therefore, the one who possesses love possesses God himself, since 'God is love.'"<sup>84</sup>

—Dr. Harry Boosalis

*Another lecture from this year's series will appear in the spring 2003 issue.*

84. St. Maximos the Confessor, *Chapters on Love* 4. 100; trans. G. C. Berthold, p. 87; PG 90, 1073A.

## Official

### Parish Council Confirmations Since August 2002

St. Michael the Archangel Orthodox Church, Wilmington, DE  
St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church, Bethlehem, PA  
Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church, Harrisburg, PA  
St. John's Orthodox Church, Nanticoke, PA  
Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, Wilkes-Barre, PA  
Holy Annunciation Orthodox Church, Berwick, PA  
St. Stephen's Orthodox Catholic Cathedral, Philadelphia, PA  
St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church, Edwardsville PA

### Receptions

Deacon Peter Skoog was received into the Diocese of Eastern PA and attached to Holy Trinity Church in Pottstown, PA

Priest Nicholas Solak was received into the Diocese of Eastern PA and assigned Acting Rector of Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in Stroudsburg, PA

### Ordination

Deacon Barnabas Fravel was ordained to the Holy Priesthood on December 6, 2002 and attached to St. Tikhon's Monastery in South Canaan, PA

### Appointment

Archimandrite Tikhon (Mollard) was appointed Deputy Abbot of St. Tikhon's Monastery in South Canaan, PA effective December 13, 2002

# All Saints Church Celebrates Centennial

On Sunday September 22, 2002, a hundred years of history and several years of preparation were fulfilled in a beautiful and memorable centennial celebration.

Preparation for this blessed event began in September 2001 with a "kickoff" weekend to begin the year of celebration and outreach which would mark this milestone in the history of the All Saints Church in Olyphant, Pa. Many of the faithful and extended family members of the parish came and shared in a weekend of fellowship and prayer. The weekend was highlighted by a chicken barbecue dinner sponsored by the All Saints Sr. "O" Club, Chapter 105. Many of the faithful and our guests came and enjoyed the informal family atmosphere, and many stayed well into the afternoon in fellowship and in anticipation of the events of the coming year.

Throughout the course of this year many events were held to witness to the parish's history, faith and life. These events included an increase in services and fellowship such as a St. Nicholas Day Akathist, and a potluck dinner to bring together the faithful of the parish. A concert featuring the Russian Cappella Choir "Archiglas" was sponsored by the parish to share our beautiful sacred music with the community, and a benefit concert by the Bicentennial Male Chorus was held to extend a helping hand to those suffering the effects of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. These and many other events helped to pave the way to a wonderful celebration.

Much work was also done to the facilities in preparation for the celebration. The church hall and kitchen were renovated, with new bathrooms, a new concrete floor and new kitchen appliances being added. New carpeting was installed

in the church and a cleaning and painting project was carried out. A handicapped lift was generously donated and installed in the vestibule to ensure that all would be able to come and join in the celebration. Finally, an air conditioning system was installed to ensure the comfort of the faithful in the warm summer months. All these projects and more were accomplished through the hard work and generosity of the faithful of the parish.

The centennial celebration itself commenced with a memorial Divine Liturgy on Saturday, September 21, 2002 at which all the departed founders, pastors, and

members of the parish were remembered in prayer and love. Many of the faithful as well as some of our honored guests participated in this beautiful liturgy. The prayers of the concelebrants and the faithful together, and the beautiful responses of the church choir, provided an awesome and moving tribute to those who contributed to the rich history and faith of All Saints. Following the evening great vespers service, All Saints "O" Club once again provided all in attendance with an opportunity to gather and share in fellowship by sponsoring a luncheon. Many took

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## All Saints Church

*Continued from page 25*

the opportunity to stay and reminisce about the history of the church, greet old friends, and enjoy one another's company.

On Sunday everyone awaited with great anticipation the arrival of the new primate of the Orthodox Church in America, His Beatitude Metropolitan HERMAN. It was truly a blessing to greet our former archpastor as the new primate of our Church and to be gathered around him in prayer to give thanks to God for the many blessings He has bestowed upon us. Joining His Beatitude for the celebration of the primatial Divine Liturgy were Archpriest Vladimir Fetcho, Dean of the Wilkes-Barre Deanery, Archpriest Paul Shafran, a son of All Saints parish, Archpriest Michael Lepa, former choir director and good friend of the parish, Priest Peter Dubinin, former pastor of All Saints, Priest Vasily Gilbert, another parish son, Priest Joseph Gallick, and our present pastor, Priest Nicholas Wyslutzky.

During the Divine Liturgy the pastor and the parish were honored when His Beatitude awarded Fr. Nicholas the gold cross, and was doubly blessed to witness

one of its sons, Fr. Vasily Gilbert, being awarded the kamilavka. These awards provided all with an opportunity to be recognized for their hard work and labors for the building up of the Church, and a witness to the rich history and work of All Saints.

In his homily His Beatitude reminded all those gathered that today presents us not only with the chance to celebrate the past but also reminds us of the great task set before us to continue the work and labor of our ancestors for the continued building up of Christ's Holy Church. He encouraged all to find the same faith, trust and dedication the apostles had as they trusted in the Lord and set out into the deep after a long, hard and disappointing day, only to receive the great draught of fish because of that same faith and love that was shared with us in the gospel lesson for the day (Luke 5:1-11): "Today we do not just celebrate the past but are called by our Lord to set out into the future and bring those searching for the truth into the Church. Each and every one of us must continue in faith and love to labor for the building up of Christ's Holy Church, that is the true meaning of our celebration."

With his profound words His Beatitude inspired all who heard him to continue the work and labor of love that is the Church.

The liturgy was joyous and moving for all who came to pray and celebrate this momentous occasion! The singing of the choir, under the direction of Reader David Brzuchalski, was inspiring and moving as they lifted their voices and the prayers of the faithful up to the heavenly throne. The most moving part of the liturgy was to see almost all in attendance come forward to receive the holy Eucharist and reaffirm their faith and love for Christ by receiving His holy Body and Blood.

The Divine Liturgy concluded with a service of thanksgiving and a festal procession during which all the faithful and friends of All Saints thanked God for the many blessings He has bestowed, and continues to bestow on us. Before the veneration of the cross the entire parish was honored, as several of our parish sons and daughters offered their love back to the Church. Father Paul and Matushka Mary Shafran, together with Matushka Pauline Warnecke, presented All Saints with a beautiful icon of the Holy Theotokos as a token of their love for their home parish.



Fr. Nicholas Wyslutzky receives gold cross



Fr. Peter Dubinin communes the faithful



Fr. Vasily Gilbert reads prayer before the amvon



Fr. Paul Shafran presents icon of Theotokos

The presence of the Holy Theotokos was felt by all through this gift of genuine love. Also, several members of All Saints were honored for their love and dedication to the service of the Church. Mr. & Mrs. Michael Prestys, Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Schlasta, Mr. Michael Kuzmiak, Jr., Mr. Joseph F. Mazur, and Reader David Brzuchalski were called forward to receive His Beatitude's blessing and a gramota for their love and dedicated service to All Saints. These few individuals represented the many who continue, tirelessly, to work and labor for the building up of All Saints Orthodox Church.

Our centennial celebration culminated with a beautiful grand banquet at the Heart Lake Lodge, in Jermyn, Pa. More than three hundred faithful, friends, and honored guests attended this crowning moment of our 100th anniversary. Father Vasily Gilbert, who acted as toastmaster for the celebration, greeted all with warmth and love as he guided the celebratory program, interjecting many of his fond memories of life in our parish. Many approached the podium to offer their congratulations and best wishes not only for the centennial celebration but for the continued prosperity of All Saints.

His Beatitude Metropolitan Herman once again offered his inspiration and encouragement to all that the work of the Church must continue. He reminded all that it is not enough just to sit back and celebrate but that we must strive to bring those separated and strangers to the Church into the fold. He related a story about a recent visit to one of the parishes in the Orthodox Church in America at which he saw and approached two wheelchair-bound elderly people who had come to be present for his visit. He spoke of how overjoyed they were that he had stopped to talk with them, and how they had felt separated from their parish because of

their disability and lack of contact with those they were close to before their abilities had been limited. "This is the task before all of us — to reach out to all those who have been separated by illness or for any reason from the churches they considered to be their home. In order for us to continue the rich history of our Church we must reach out to them first, and bring them back home. It is only in this way that we will continue to prosper and grow."

The next speaker was Fr Nicholas Wyslutzky. Fr. Nicholas thanked all who had contributed in any way to the success of this great celebration and of All Saints Church. He reminded everyone that on this day the Lord had given us an opportunity to relax and celebrate our accomplishments, even if only for a day. He then spoke about the hard work, sacrifice, and labors that made up the 100 years of All Saints history. "Today we rejoice with our fathers and mothers, grandfathers and grandmothers, great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers, who sacrificed, labored, and prayed for all that we have today. Today they pass the gauntlet to us, to set forth on a future that will be remembered by our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Let us rejoice and celebrate today for tomorrow our work must and will continue!"

Many of those who went forth to serve the Church and those who have served it as faithful pastors and as matushki were present as our honored guests. Among them were Frs. Paul Shafran and Vasily Gilbert, sons of All Saints. Also present were Matushki Pauline Warnecke, Lovey Ropitsky, Ellen Chupeck, and Nancy Gallick, and Mrs. Barbara Puhalla who faithfully have served and serve the Church as little mothers to the many parishes they have served. All Saints also rejoiced to have present Fr. Peter Dubinin who traveled far to return to his former

parish for this great day of celebration, as well as Matushka Olga Chanda who together with her late husband, Archpriest Michael Chanda, served the church faithfully for many years.

We were also pleased to have with us Deacon Barnabas Fravel and his lovely wife Daria, on this great day of our hundredth anniversary. They have become adopted children of All Saints due in part to their loving and dedicated service to All Saints through the seminarian internship program of the O.C.A. As a small token of our thanks Deacon Barnabas was presented with a scholarship to help cover the expense of a valued seminary education. We hope their future in the diocese will not take them far so that their presence and love remain close to All Saints.

Finally, a small token of All Saints' love and congratulations was offered to His Beatitude Metropolitan Herman, the man under whose loving archpastoral guidance the parish has thrived for more than twenty-five years. With love and respect His Beatitude was asked to remember that He is always welcome at our parish and that it was hoped his new responsibilities a primate of the Orthodox Church would not take him away entirely from the parishes he helped to prosper and thrive.

The celebration continued into the evening with fellowship and dancing and remembering the many faithful members of All Saints who helped make this a great day for all. Our thanks to His Beatitude, our sister parishes in the diocese, and especially the Wilkes-Barre Deanery through whose prayers and support we prosper and thrive. Please continue to remember the pastor and faithful of All Saints in your prayers to Christ our God, that through His grace and love we may continue to build upon the rich history of our parish.

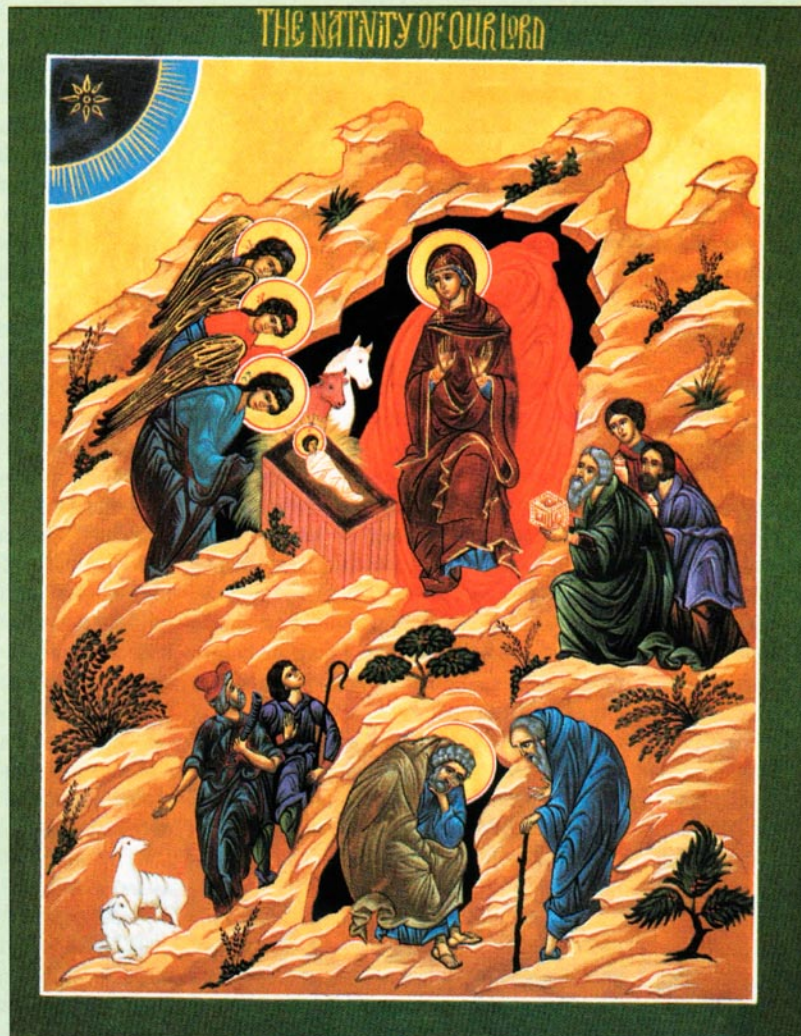
—Priest Nicholas Wyslutzky



Gramota recipients with Metropolitan



Dignitaries and honored guests at banquet



## God's Work of Salvation and Man

*Editor's note: the following lecture was delivered in the Church of Saint Silouan on 1 January, A.D. 2000.*

If, according to the word of the wise Solomon, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven" (Eccles. 3:1), is it not now, perhaps, the time and the season for us to call to mind and reflect upon the greatest event under the sun: the appearance in the flesh of Our Great God? This event is "the great mystery of godliness" (1 Tim. 3:16), and has its roots in the Mind of God, where it was "kept secret since the world began" (Rom. 16:25). It was prepared by means of prophetic events,

utterances and holy scriptures, to an incredibly great degree of detail. "But when the fulness of the time was come" (Gal. 4:4), this mystery was made manifest with glory and made known unto all nations through Jesus Christ. In other words, the prophecy was fulfilled "after the eternal purpose" (Eph. 3:11), in accordance with which "unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given" (Isa. 9:6).

This is an opportunity, therefore, for the spirit of each and every Christian to "call to remembrance" (*anamnesis*) all of God's works from the beginning of sacred history down to the last times. This is a challenge for our minds to go deeper into God's providential decrees with regard to

Creation, His providence and His justice, so that we may rekindle within ourselves the life-giving breath of the Creator, and become partakers of His divine benefices. Holy remembrance of the wondrous works of God softens man's heart and fills it with sentiments of gratitude. Gratitude brings an increase of God's charisms in man, and leads him to the perfection of "an honourable disposition" (*philotimia*) according to God: it inspires him to prayer and glorification of God, and gives birth within the soul to dispositions and streams of divine love, which are stronger than sin and death.

The remembrance of God's works is not psychological and is not made in or-

der to serve psychological needs, not even the most noble of these. The wonderful works of God that we bring to mind are eternal events, wrought by the operation and grace of God; and when they are brought to mind in a spirit of thanksgiving and grateful confession, we become partakers of the creative grace and work of God. They prepare us and lead us into a greater fullness of the divine love.

Scripture teaches us that God, from the moment He created man, has concerned Himself with him. He fashioned us and bestowed upon us the talents of His goodness. He brought us into being and gave us life, endowing us with a body and soul, a spirit, a heart, and the senses. He established the earth as our footstool, the wondrous canopy of the heavens as a cover over our heads. He gave us the sun "to rule by day" and for the welfare of our life, and also air to breathe. He placed the beasts of the field, fowls of the air, fish and plants under our rule, and provided us with divers fruits of the earth to satisfy our needs and for our enjoyment, and also with clothing and the materials for our homes. In an amazing way, He has fostered the development of industry, in order to meet the needs of the earth's growing population, and made our survival possible and also pleasant. God has placed an immeasurable quantity of material wealth and energy at our disposal. As the holy Fathers say, we have our whole existence on loan from God: a loan without end.

Every molecule of the air we breathe is a new loan. Everything we have is a loan and a gift. "What do we have that we have not received" (cf. 1 Cor. 4:7).

Not only are the bounties of the created universe a loan. We have, in addition to these, the generosity of the Provider of every good thing in the richness of His providence. For at every moment He watches over us for the preservation of our health and strength. He cooperates in every good deed and by His surpassing wisdom orders our lives. He gives us parents, friends and above all wise instructors. He is the Protector of our outward lives, and the success of those of our undertakings that are for our benefit. It is He that shields us from invisible evils and the fever of death, and does so with mathematical precision, even when, on man's side, there is no hope of salvation. It is He Who said: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John 5:17).

And what more can we say about the priceless loans that He credits us with by means of the riches of His spiritual gifts? God honoured man by creating him "in His image and likeness" (cf. Gen. 1:26). The very first breath that He breathed into man's nostrils crowned him with glory and honour, and in a prophetic way prepared him to receive the revelation of the Good Tidings that His Son was to bring into the world. In his original state, man was, as the Apostle says, "the image and glory of God" (1 Cor. 11:7). But when he chose to usurp this glory and "to become as God" (cf. Gen. 3:5), he found himself estranged from his Origin, since this glory proceeds "from God only" (John 5:44), and rightly must return to God. This estrangement gave the transgressor over to corruption and death. Nevertheless God, faithful and steadfast to His original design — to make man a partaker of His divine glory and beatitude — does not cease to devise ways, humbly, to visit His creature.

But in order for the wealth of His spiritual graces to reach man, it was necessary that this be preceded by a long period, during which God would make ready the Coming of His Son into the world. Looking at the history of God's relation with man, we see nothing less than the tender-loving care of the Former for the latter. Job, in his titanic struggle to understand the depth of God's judgments, and to stand firm in His truth, says that this is precisely why man is a great wonder: because God has fixed His Spirit upon him, visits him every morning, and tries him every moment (cf. Job 7:17-18). God's continual visitations on man are indeed blessed and indescribably beneficial. Man himself becomes a "deep heart" with divine and spiritual awareness. He becomes the object of God's tireless operation, which perfects him and makes him a reasonable creature fashioned after the image of God. The righteous were aware of the privilege and beatitude of these visitations, and yearned to receive God's salvation. The Lord bears witness to this, saying, "many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them" (Luke 10:24). And He also said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad" (John 8:56). Of course, all the righteous received God's visitations in a prophetic manner, and rejoiced in the hope of the coming salvation.

Every time the righteous demonstrated virtue and righteousness in their lives, they received a foretaste of the blessing of the things to come. All of God's visitations on man proved to be fruitless in the long run, and in reality were only preparations (somewhat at a distance and "in part") for the effectual and permanent advent of God's grace, which was so desirous to those who had been deprived of it, since "all had sinned" (cf. Rom. 3:23).

However, many of God's visitations on the Old Israel were so strong and rich in divine presence and power, that they proved to be of great value for the formation and moulding of God's people. Moses himself instituted annual feasts for their commemoration. Most distinguished among these was the Feast of the Passover, the commemoration of the deliverance of the children of Israel out of the hand of the Egyptians, and their passage upon dry land in the midst of the Red Sea. By this great and wondrous event, God revealed His power and glory, and also His special favour for His people, saving them from certain disaster and annihilation. By celebrating the Passover each year with all solemnity and over seven days, the Israelites bore witness to their gratitude to God their Saviour, and thereby received the blessing and grace to continue in the knowledge of the true God, even in the midst of great and powerful idol-worshipping nations. And each and every Jew had as his highest bounden duty to tell "to the generation following" (Ps. 48:13) of the mercy and care of God for His people, and that the Lord of Hosts is He Who watches over and saves Israel.

In short, man is the object of God's visitations, and he, guided by the spirit of prophecy, instituted feasts, so that, by recalling the wondrous deeds performed by God in the past, he might rekindle the grace in them for the present, and also draw power from them for new feats of faith and piety.

The twofold striving of God's mercy, on the one side, and man's faithfulness on the other, continued over the wearisome flow of the ages. The Lord, "who alone fashioneth the hearts of men" (cf. Ps. 33:15), looked down "upon all the inhabitants of the earth" (Ps. 33:14), and surveyed their works. From the very first moment of Adam's fall God sought after the transgressor: "Adam, Where art thou?" (Gen. 3:9). And He continued to seek

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## God's Work of Salvation and Man

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among the sons of men for at least one with understanding, who would seek God and do good. The Psalmist, in desperation, tells us that such a one could not be found, because "They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Pss. 14:3; 53:3).

But when "the fulness of times" had come (Eph. 1:10), such a person was found on earth, the Holy Virgin, who possessed every sovereign beauty and glory "within" (Ps. 45:14). Her presence before God was so bright and sublime, that the King of heaven "desired her beauty" (cf. Ps. 45:11), overshadowed her with His Holy Spirit, made her the throne of the Cherubim, and "bowed the heavens also, and came down" (Ps. 18:9; 2 Sam. 22:10).

According to the teaching of the holy Fathers, the Holy Virgin was a perfect vessel, which contained all the spiritual charisms and divine virtues. Three virtues, however, stand out in particular.

First, her "hesychastic" withdrawal into the Holy of Holies and her hesychastic prayer. That is to say, her perfect dying to this present world, and her Cherubic appearance before the Living God, the God of her Fathers. She forgot her people and the house of her father. But instead, she offered to God unceasing supplication for the salvation of the whole world. She became receptive to perfect revelation, drew the Most High towards her, and showed herself to be a Bethlehem — a house of the Bread of Life — the Mother of Christ, of God. Just as Abraham, by obeying the voice of God and forsaking his kinsmen, received the promises, just as Jacob, while being persecuted, came to that fearful place, the Gate of heaven, and just as Israel, exposed to the dangers of the desert, received revelations, so too did the Holy Virgin, who was dead to the world, become the dwelling-place of the Godhead. Secondly, her humility. As she says herself, the Lord "hath regarded the low estate [sc. humility] of his handmaiden" (Luke 1:48). The "nothingness" of her profound and extreme humility became the stuff by which the Highest wrought the recreation of the human race. By means of this humility the Most Holy Virgin, prophetically, set herself on the Way which her Son was to reveal, and was fulfilling

the law of His Spirit: "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 14:11; 18:14), and thus He that is mighty "hath done" for her great things (Luke 1:49), and raised her up higher even than the angelic powers.

Thirdly, her purity, which was never violated, neither by a glance, nor by thought, nor even by the slightest movement of the heart. Her heart was completely given over to God, and it was this "handing over" (*paravdosi*) that made her worthy to converse with God, and made God await her word, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38), as the indispensable consent for the work of the salvation of the world.

The Son and Word of God "was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). The Word of God "tabernacled" in the Virgin's womb, the Son of God was born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary. The event of the incarnation of God is also the greatest and most sublime visitation of all, by which God has honoured the race of men. He united Himself with them, He became like them, and "through the eternal Spirit" (Heb. 9:14), gave Himself as a sacrifice on behalf of those held captive and them that were condemned, and found "eternal redemption" for all (Heb. 9:12).

A great and glorious mystery is revealed, therefore, in infinite and glorious love. God gives his Only-begotten Son to the world, so "that we might live through him" (1 John 4:9). But the Son too gives Himself "for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal. 1:4). And the Holy Spirit also offers Himself, in order to "guide you into all the truth" (John 16:13) of the fullness of the Trinity's love. It is in this blessed tradition of God's "giving" to man that the happiness of reasonable creatures is to be found, and in which God's plan "before the world began" (Titus 1:2) for His image, man, is fulfilled.

At the very moment in which the Divinity was united with humanity in the Person of Our Lord Jesus Christ, all the charisms of the divine power — "the things that pertain unto life and godliness" — were transmitted to us, and in this way the most precious and greatest of God's

promises were fulfilled, so that we might become partakers of the divine nature and escape the corruption that is brought about by fleshly desires (cf. 2 Pet. 1:3-4). Our weakness became intertwined with divine power, our falsehood blotted out by the divine truth, our darkness illumined by the divine light, and our death abolished by divine life. And truly, as the great Apostle exclaims with wonder at the incomprehensible righteousness of divine love, God "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32).

Thus, the tradition of God's giving (*paradosis*) to man, by which all the good things of life and salvation have been bestowed upon us, signifies the weakness of the flesh assumed by Christ. This is His profound poverty, by which He hid His boundless eternity on the day of His Nativity. It signifies the emptying (*kenosis*) of His divine power and wisdom. And what is more, it signifies His unspeakable love, which is "unto the end" (John 13:1). And who can measure the distance from the height of His divine nature to the depth of His humiliation, that infinite distance which He travelled in order to find and save the lost sheep, fallen man? The limited (human) mind can follow Christ neither in His ascent beyond the heavens, nor in His descent into the abyss of fallen nature.

Christ's descent into the infernal regions and His ascent beyond the heavens constitute a single work, thanks to which the world was reconciled with God and the gifts of the Holy Spirit were given so that they might bear witness to the participation of men in the "greater abundance" (cf. John 10:10) of the life of God. Christ's prayer of agony in Gethsemane, His Passion, Cross and Resurrection are the focal point and "summing up" (recapitulation) of this work. By the "precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:19), our race was redeemed from all the lamentable and tragic offspring of sin. As the Apostle says, man's grandeur consists in the honour which Christ bestowed upon him when he was bought with the price of His precious blood (cf. 1 Cor. 6:20 and 7:23). As "having been set free by a ransom," man ought to measure up to Christ's salvation and not to debase his worth to the passions of dishonour, neither should he





become a slave to the desire to please people.

Christ, through His passion and death, which “by the grace of God” He tasted for every man, brought “many sons unto glory” and perfection (Heb. 2:9-10). But just a few hours before He sealed the work of the salvation of mankind with His blood, He willed to give a practical way and means by which the faithful could always remain in the grace of eternal salvation. As He was handing down the mystery of His Sacrifice to His disciples, and through them to Christians of all ages, He said: “This is my body which is given for you . . . This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you . . . this do in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:19-20). In other words, the Lord, as the new and spiritual Lawgiver, gives us the commandment to “call to remembrance” the work of His Sacrifice, from which spring eternal redemption and salvation. The work of His Sacrifice was accomplished by the power of the eternal Spirit (cf. Heb. 9:14), and as an event remains forever in eternity, and His grace saves those who believe “unto perpetuity” (Heb. 10:14). The remembrance of these awesome events in the life of Christ is made on a daily basis by the Church in the Mystery of the Divine Eucharist.

Why did the Lord command us to perform the daily enactment of His Sacrifice “in remembrance” of Him? He knew that we are inclined towards ingratitude. Christ healed ten lepers and only one of them returned to give thanks, and with sorrow He said: “Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?” (Luke 17:17). The

Lord’s Sacrifice is sufficient, indeed more than sufficient, to save the whole world. Thus, the Lord did not want us to appear ungrateful and fall short of the grace of salvation. Through the remembrance of His Sacrifice He wished to inspire gratitude in us, and for that gratitude to prepare our hearts to receive the grace of His salvation with humility. His Cross wiped out sin and His death became the fountain of life. By calling to remembrance Christ’s victory, we raise up the standard of His victory in our hearts, and by His grace we too are shown to be victors over sin and also, consequently, over death; and this rejoices not only the author of our salvation, but also all the saints of heaven (cf. Luke 15:7).

It behoves us, therefore, if we do not wish to be deceived but to remain true in this transient world, to confess, in accordance with the Apostolic preaching, that “Jesus Christ is come in the flesh” (1 John 4:2). If we desire to make Christ’s victory over sin and death our own, we should be resolved not to know any thing other than “Jesus Christ, and him crucified” (1 Cor. 2:2). Fixing the mind’s attention on the crucified God brings the grace of salvation, which accompanies this remembrance with power, and transforms it into the living memory “of Jesus Christ raised from the dead” (2 Tim. 2:8).

The Apostle Paul, when speaking of the same mystery, adds certain new elements, and sets forth the remembrance of Christ’s Sacrifice as a pattern for our life. The great Paul says: “For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in

which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord’s death till he come” (1 Cor. 11:23-26). And the Church, by the mouth of “that revealer of heaven,” Saint Basil the Great [the Saint whom we celebrate this day], adds that by this remembrance not only do we show His death, but we also confess His resurrection. And this is our work *par excellence* “till he come,” so that we might remain steadfast in the grace of redemption and show ourselves to be “a new creation” in Christ, with a pure conscience, free from the dead works of sin, worshipping the living God “in spirit and in truth” (John 4:23; cf. Heb. 9:14). The grace which is given in return for the gratitude of this remembrance opens up the heart to embrace yet another eternal event, that of Christ’s Second Coming. Christ came, and remains with us “unto the end of the world” (Matt. 28:20), but He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead (cf. 2 Tim. 4:1). And the event of Christ’s Second Coming is in part present and at work even now, but is to be revealed in all its majesty and glory.

If now, therefore, two thousand years after having received the perfect revelation of the Spirit, written “in fleshy tables of the heart” (2 Cor. 3:3), we wish worthily to give thanks to God our Benefactor and Saviour, we should go deeper into the Mystery of His Eucharistic remembrance. This remembrance which takes place in the Eucharist is the fulfillment of the commandment of Christ the Lord. It also introduces the eschatological dimension into our lives, since we are enjoined to keep this remembrance “till he come.” And it places us on the Way of the Lord, and the Way is none other than Christ Himself, He Who comes and is to come, for as He said: “I am the way” (John 14:6).

The Way of the Lord revealed the nature of His being, that is, that “God is love” (1 John 4:8, 16), and indeed love “unto the end” (John 13:1). And man, by calling to remembrance the Way of the Lord, expresses his own love and gratitude for

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## God's Work of Salvation and Man

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God's saving work. And this he does, "till he come." Man, in placing himself on the Way of the Lord by fulfilling His commandment, has the Lord as a fellow-traveller and becomes united with Him.

The Lord's commandment is "exceeding great" and "life eternal." Its culture remains unattainable to the man who loves himself. Truly, "Who then can be saved?" (Luke 18:26). But the Lord said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God" (Luke 18:27). In other words, Christ has fulfilled all of God's commandments to the point of perfection: "I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (John 15:10). For us, it is enough to follow Him, as He bade us to do, when He said: "come, follow me" (Luke 18:22). And all the things that He has achieved by His obedience to the unoriginate Father, freely become ours. By following the Lord we inherit the eternal salvation that He obtained for us by giving Himself over as a ransom unto death, by which we were held captive.

Remembrance of His death, which the Lord endured for our sake, and His Resurrection, is synonymous with the struggle to follow Him "whithersoever he goeth" (Rev. 14:4). In order that their zeal and fervour not be diminished, His disciples must always call to remembrance His impending Coming, not grow slothful before His bridechamber, nor should they content themselves with any talents that they might have. Expectation of the things to come lends a certain tension to their lives, and makes His disciples well-pleasing to the Holy Spirit, to Whom they have commended their lives. The "place" where we are instructed in the remembrance of the Lord and become practised in the expectation of the Lord's Coming is the Divine Liturgy, which is celebrated by the People of God in church.

Each day is a gift of God's goodness, which is given to us that "we might perfect holiness in the fear of God" (cf. 2 Cor. 7:1). In the Liturgy we embrace the past and the future and refer all things back to God, in full and all-embracing thanksgiving for all those things which God has done in order to set us before His face, with a thorough (or clean) confession of all our sins and a petition for their forgiveness, and with the entreaty that we might

be received into a worthy and continuous attendance before Him. That is, we offer all our life to God. And God is pleased with our offering and returns the gifts back to us, accompanied by His life, the Holy Spirit. Having placed in these gifts all the expectation of our life, we say to God, "Thine own, of thine own, we offer unto thee, in all and for all." And God replies to us, saying, "The holy things unto the holy," having rendered unto us "the true Light," "the heavenly Spirit," "the true faith," and the whole salvation of God the Holy Trinity. An exchange of lives takes place in the Divine Liturgy. Man offers his limited and transient life to God and God in return grants him His limitless and eternal life. In this way, each day is filled with the fullness of life, and our whole lifetime becomes an "acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:19).

The exchange of our life with the life of God, which takes place in the Liturgy and, in accordance with the figure of the Liturgy, in our every deed and operation, must preserve the tension and intensity of the Apostles' "till he come" (1 Cor. 11:26). With this end in view, it behoves the faithful to love the Lord's manifestation:

- 1) to meditate on the Coming of Jesus Christ
- 2) to tirelessly await Him
- 3) to desire Him with all their hearts
- 4) to prepare themselves for Him with diligence

Without expectation there is no hope. Without hope there is no salvation, "For we are saved by hope" (Rom. 8:24). And without salvation there is no Christianity.

Christianity knows that Christ worked the redemption of the world by means of His blood and death. It knows, moreover, better than do unbelievers, that the law of sin lives among its members. It has a clearer view of sin, because its inner sense has not been extinguished by the desires of the passions, nor by the dullness of the conscience. Consequently, it is perfectly natural for the Christian to await the Coming of Christ, Who "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21), and rid him of every trace of impurity, all rebelliousness of sin, every temptation.

The Christian suffers in this world, and suffers perhaps even more than other men do, because, apart from sufferings, which are the common lot of our nature, he also

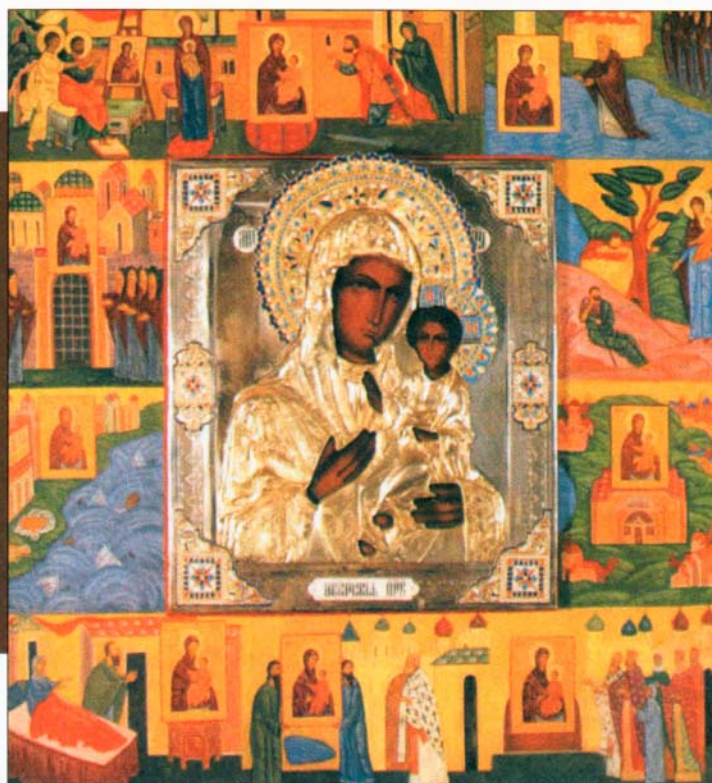
inherits and bears a special cross, the cross of faith, by which he becomes like his Teacher, Christ. How unfortunate would the believer be in his suffering, if he did not have all his faith in Christ, Who entered into His glory through sufferings, and Who will come again to clothe in glory those who suffer for His sake. This hope causes him to rejoice in the sufferings of this present time, and to regard them but as small and unworthy "to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18). All the saints of the last twenty centuries, from the time of Peter, the Leader of the Apostles, down to our own times, through their hope in Christ's Coming, regarded sufferings as a sign of divine election and as an indispensable prerequisite "for the spirit of glory and of God" to rest in our hearts (1 Pet. 4:14).

As the day of Christ's Coming draws near, so will the negative signs which announce His Coming (His Parousia) increase: the grief of nations, sicknesses, scandals, betrayals, multitudinous injustices, love's growing cold, the destruction of the environment and above all widespread indifference and inattentiveness to the fact that, in accordance with the prophecies, the Lord will come as a thief. But despite the turmoil of evils Christians hear the Lord's voice clearly, which tells them: "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28).

As the day of Christ's Coming draws near, so the privilege of "believing on Christ" and "suffering for his sake" becomes greater (cf. Phil. 1:29). That is why the faithful must also "Look for and hasten unto the coming of the day of God" (cf. 2 Pet. 3:12), giving thanks to the Lord, Who for our sake became the Passover and "righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30), whilst at the same time not ceasing to supplicate for a more perfect and unshakable participation in His eternal kingdom, together with the "clouds" and choirs of all the saints, which, by His grace, have been given to us as tokens of the incorruptible consolation that awaits "them that love his appearing" (2 Tim. 4:8).

—The Very Rev. Dr. Zacharias (Zacharou), The Stavropegic Monastery of St. John the Baptist, Essex. Translated from the Greek by Christopher Veniamin

# The Miraculous Iveron Icon of the Theotokos



**T**he Iveron Icon shown here resides at St. Mark's Church in Wrightstown, Pennsylvania. The center image is a reproduction of the original one which came to Mount Athos in the year 999. Around the central icon are ten panels showing the story of this very special image. These panels were painted by monks in present-day Georgia, at the request of the Ergemlidze Family, members of St. Mark's Church.

The first panel (top, left) shows St. Luke, his hand guided by an angel, painting the original icon. The Virgin and Child appear to the holy apostle in a clear, unmistakable vision. There is therefore a double grace working here: the vision and the angel's guidance. Our skeptical age, filled with doubt and unbelief, does not want to accept that St. Luke produced icons, or if he did, that any of his original works have been preserved through the years to our day. But we, the faithful, know in the inner recesses of our heart that where God so wills, His grace protects, preserves, and transmits what is useful for our salvation and what is meant to edify and give joy to those who believe.

In the ninth century the original icon came to be in the possession of a widow who lived in Nicea. This town in Asia Minor was the location of two ecumenical councils: the first, which composed the first eight articles of the Nicene Creed; and the seventh, which reinstated the veneration of icons after the long struggle with the iconoclasts. The widow cherished this icon with extraordinary faith. Near her home she erected a small chapel and placed the icon there. She often went to this chapel to offer her prayers.

During the reign of the iconoclast emperor of Byzantium, Theophilus, soldiers came to the house and chapel of the widow. By imperial decree icons were not to be venerated or even possessed by the faithful. The soldiers spoke threatening words to the woman, and one of them struck the icon with his sword. Immediately blood began to flow from the cheek of the Virgin. The offending soldier was deeply shaken by this. He threw down his sword and repented from the depths of his heart. From that moment the soldier renounced the iconoclastic heresy, and even-

tually entered the monastic life. Our second panel (top, center) shows the soldier the moment after he threw down his sword. After the soldiers departed, the widow, accompanied by her only son, spent many hours of prayer before the icon, asking for guidance. Then the woman with great reverence arose and took up the icon and brought it to the shore of the sea. There she prayed to the All-Holy Virgin, asking that this image be preserved from the emperor's wrath. After her prayer, she cast the icon into the sea, and the icon did not sink, nor did it fall on its side but remained upright on the waves, heading westward. Astonished and heartened at this sight, the widow gave thanks to the Lord and to the Mother of God. In a vision the Virgin comforted the woman, assuring her that this icon would find its way to a monastery and would be honored by people of many races and languages through the centuries.

The widow's son, listening to the counsel of his mother, left for Thessalonica. Guided by God, the boy eventually came

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## Iveron Icon

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to Mount Athos and embraced the monastic life. During his conversations with the other monks, he related in detail the story of his mother's icon.

Years later, in the year 999 (some sources say 1000), a column of fire was seen by the monks of the Iveron Monastery on Mount Athos. Day after day this strange fire was seen off the coast, from the water to the sky. At the base of this light there appeared to be an icon floating upright. Some of the monks put to sea with rowboats to retrieve the icon. But when anyone approached, the icon drew away. The Abbot, Father John, called the brothers to prayer in the Monastery Church, asking the Lord to grant them this sacred and priceless treasure as a heritage of their monastery. After three days the Most Holy Theotokos appeared in a vision to the monk Gabriel, a pious brother of Georgian descent who was noted for his discernment, austerity of life, and purity of heart. The Mother of God told him to enter the sea, walk upon the waves, and retrieve the icon. "I have chosen thee because thou dost bear the name of the Archangel Gabriel Who announced to me the Good News of Christ taking flesh in my womb," she said. The next day the brothers went to the shore with candles, incense, and chanting, and Gabriel entered the water on his knees and was transported to the icon. With great joy and reverence the monks met the icon as Gabriel returned. They all went in procession to the church, escorting the marvelous icon. They prayed and rejoiced for three days and nights, placing the Mother of God inside the holy bema of the main church. On the next day, when the brothers came to matins, they could not find the icon; it was not at the spot where they had placed it. After a worried search, one of the monks found it by the gate of the monastery. With prayers and tears, they took it to the same place in the church. Again the following morning the icon was found at the gate. After the third time the Theotokos appeared again to Gabriel, saying, "Tell the Abbot and brethren not to hinder me; I do not wish to be protected by you — rather I wish to protect you, both in this life and in the future one. Behold, I give you a sign: as long as you behold my icon, the grace and mercy of my Son will not depart from you." Then the monks built a chapel by

the gate, and they placed the wonder-working icon there. (Panel 3, top right shows Gabriel about to embrace the icon on the water. Panel 4 displays the icon enshrined at the gate.)

For a thousand years now the Theotokos has chosen to rest in this chapel. The name "portaitissa" has been given to this icon, meaning "keeper of the portal," since the Virgin chose to be placed by the portal of the monastery.

Panel 5 (just below #3) illustrates the following event: a poor man, a beggar, came one evening to the monastery looking for food. The monks were always generous to the needy, but for some reason the brother who was assigned to the gate

he knew immediately that something very unusual had happened. He went to the other brothers and related all this. They all knew that it was the Holy Mother of God who had provided the coin. The brothers immediately invited the beggar to eat with them, and they took the coin and placed it by the icon. Searching for other evidence of the Virgin's visit, they found nothing.

The sixth panel (below #4 on the left) depicts the following. The year is 1308. Fifteen ships of Persian soldiers come to shore and begin to attack the monastery. The monks are naturally frightened. Quickly they gather the sacred inventory, the chalice, discos, etc., and their beloved

**They prayed and rejoiced for three days and nights, placing the Mother of God inside the holy bema of the main church. On the next day, when the brothers came to matins, they could not find the icon; it was not at the spot where they had placed it. After a worried search, one of the monks found it by the gate of the monastery. With prayers and tears, they took it to the same place in the church. Again the following morning the icon was found at the gate. After the third time the Theotokos appeared again to Gabriel, saying, "Tell the Abbot and brethren not to hinder me; I do not wish to be protected by you — rather I wish to protect you, both in this life and in the future one"**

that night refused the beggar. After the brother left, the poor man sat on the ground and began to weep. Soon a woman appeared to him. She was dressed like a queen and had a child in her arms. She asked the man why he was sitting there weeping. "I am sick and hungry and have nothing. I asked the monk for food, but was given nothing," he said. "Do not be worried, my son," said the woman. "Take this coin and go to the monastery and buy some bread." He returned to the gate, found the same monk, and put the coin in his hand, saying humbly, "Please give me some bread for this coin." The monk noticed that the coin was unusual — it was made of gold, worth very much. "Who gave this to you?" asked the monk. "A woman carrying a child," was the answer. On hearing this the brother was terrified;

icon of the Theotokos, and bring them to a building nearby. Meanwhile the invaders are looting and attempting to destroy the monastery buildings. In spite of their best efforts at vandalism, the buildings remained unharmed. The invaders took all they could find and returned to their ships. As they headed out to sea a strong wind came, churning up great waves and dashing all the ships except one to bits. The leader of the band was on the single remaining vessel, and when the wind subsided he returned to the shore. Approaching the monastery, he was shaking with fear and remorse. He gave back all the stolen goods from his vessel, and then ran away. The monks all gave glory to God and thanksgiving to their Protectress on High.

Panel 7 brings us to the year 1865 when

there was a great fire at Iveron. Many cells and buildings were destroyed. The chapel with the wonder-working icon was completely unharmed.

News of the Iveron Icon and its miracles reached Russia through pilgrims who had visited Mount Athos. The rest of our panels portray events relating to the copy made on Athos and brought to Moscow.

Panel 8 (bottom, left): the year is 1648. The daughter of Tsar Alexei, infirm from birth, was unable to walk. Doctors could not help her. Each day the girl was in great distress. One night a vision appeared to her: the Holy Theotokos stood before her as a Queen and shining as the sun. "Tell your father to bring to Moscow my icon of the Iveron Monastery on Mount Athos," she said. The Tsar on hearing this immediately sent a message to the Holy Mountain to have a copy made and brought to Moscow. When the icon approached the gates of the city, all the citizens came out

to greet it: the patriarch, the tsar, the royal family, and all the people. The Tsar's daughter in her bed was not informed about its arrival. She asked a servant, "Where has everyone gone?" "Today the Mother of God of Iveron is coming — to help you," said the servants. "How can this be? Why hasn't anyone told me?" she said. And immediately she jumped out of her bed and ran outside until she found the great crowd of people. Her parents and everyone else looked in amazement. The girl was fully healed. The Tsar then spoke to the wonder-working icon: "I will pay generous salaries to many people to care for you. And I will build a beautiful chapel near the entrance to the Kremlin. You will guard the gate and be the protectress of all Russia." Panels 9 and 10 show the icon brought to the patriarch and placed in its chapel by the walls of the Kremlin.

During the dark and terrible Bolshevik period, the chapel with its icon stood there at first. Many people still had faith

and came to venerate it. But on July 29, 1929, the chapel was destroyed by the godless authorities. The icon was saved and placed in the church of the Holy Resurrection in Moscow. In time, that church also was destroyed, and nothing is known about the precious icon after that.

After the end of that dark period, in the year 1995, in the month of October, the Church in Moscow celebrated the coming of the original icon to that city with a newly rebuilt chapel and gateway. A new copy is enshrined there for the veneration of the faithful. And other copies are prepared and blessed and sent to other countries, including our own America. And the grace of God through the blessings and miracles of the Most Holy Theotokos stream forth from these icons uplifting the faithful with the peace and joy of the Holy Spirit.

—Archpriest Theodore Heckman



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## Holy Cross Church Observes 25th Anniversary



A yearlong schedule of special monthly events culminated in a weekend of festivities on November 2 and 3, 2002, celebrating the 25th anniversary of Holy Cross Orthodox Church in Williamsport, Pa.

The 25th anniversary weekend began with a Divine Liturgy on Saturday, November 2 that included memorial prayers for the departed founders, benefactors and builders of the parish. The service set the spiritual tone for the celebration and was followed by final preparations for the events to come (including the removal of the church pews to accommodate the large number of expected guests).

Special guest for the weekend was His Beatitude, Metropolitan THEODOSIUS, former first hierarch of the Orthodox Church in America, who recently retired after a quarter century of outstanding primate service. His Beatitude arrived for great vespers, and at the conclusion of the service graciously presented the parish with relics of eight canonized saints of the Church, speaking briefly of their lives. The relics, which will soon be appropriately displayed for the veneration by the faithful, are those of the holy greatmartyr Barbara, St. Herman of Alaska, St. Patriarch

Tikhon of Moscow, Apostle to America St. Innocent, St. Raphael, Bishop of Brooklyn, St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre, St. Prince Daniel of Moscow, and the new-martyr St. Elizabeth the Righteous. A hospitality hour in the Holy Cross Orthodox Fellowship Center followed vespers.

On Sunday morning, November 3, Metropolitan Theodosius was formally

welcomed by parish council representative Scott Ambrose Seyler and rector Archpriest Daniel Kovalak. Following the vesting of the main celebrant, His Beatitude prayerfully received Randy Shatto and Christine Schramm into the catechumenate at Holy Cross Church, urging them to aspire to the faith of the Apostle Thomas who declared of Christ,



Celebrants with Metropolitan Theodosius

"My Lord and My God."

Concelebrating the hierarchical liturgy together with the metropolitan and parish rector were: Archpriest Vladimir Fetcho, rector of St. Nicholas Church, Olyphant and Dean of the Wilkes-Barre Deanery; Archpriest Daniel Ressetar, rector of Christ the Savior Church, Harrisburg and Dean of the Frackville Deanery; Archpriest Michael Dahulich, Dean of St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary; Priest Nicholas Wyslutsky, rector of All Saints Church, Olyphant; Protodeacon Stephen Howanetz; and parish native son, Deacon Barnabas Fravel. Seminarians Brian Paul Fetsko, Bert Johnson and parishioner James Chuta served as subdeacons. Altar boys were Paul Beard, Michael Raptis, Pavlo Beiter and Nicholas Petorak.

During the liturgy, before the small entrance, His Beatitude presented Father Daniel with the jeweled cross award on behalf of Metropolitan HERMAN and the Synod of Bishops of the O.C.A.

Nearly two hundred worshippers attended the liturgy, packing the humble log church and filling it with the joyful songs of praise to God in congregational singing led by Matushka Myra Kovalak. Also in attendance was Williamsport's Mayor Michael Rafferty, a longtime friend of the parish. Metropolitan Theodosius gave the homily, focusing on the faith of Jairus and the woman with an issue of blood (Luke 8:41-56) and challenging the community to "keep the faith" for its next 25 years. Two chalices nourished the faithful with the precious gifts of the holy Eucharist. A service of thanksgiving concluded the liturgical prayers and the metropolitan distributed icons of St. Innocent to everyone present.

A festive coffee hour in the Holy Cross Orthodox Fellowship Center followed the glorious services, with refreshments provided, as always, by members of the Holy Cross Auxiliary. During the fellowship, those in attendance were treated to a slide show highlighting the parish history, and a videotape of the volunteer construction of the Fellowship Center, which opened in July, 2002. Afterwards we departed for the Williamsport Country Club for the grand banquet.

At the anniversary banquet 225 guests were welcomed, among them a number of relocated parishioners who had returned to Williamsport for the celebration. As souvenirs of the occasion, the guests were

presented with a commemorative book, a candy-filled imprinted coffee mug, and a publication entitled "In Honor of 25 Years," which included text by renowned poet and parishioner Marjorie Maddox-Hafer along with over fifty color photographs from the parish archives. Music was provided by members of the Williamsport Chamber Orchestra. Following the opening prayer and singing of the national anthem, a welcome was extended by Fr. Kovalak who served as master of ceremonies.

Greetings were offered by Fr. Vladimir Fetcho and Mrs. Gwen Bernstine, executive director of the United Churches of

parish in four different segments of his popular "On the Pennsylvania Road" series, and he was referred to by the master of ceremonies as the "*ex-officio* Chairman of the Parish Public Relations Committee." His tribute and humorous anecdotes from his travels were well-received.

Our building chairman, Paul Beard, offered reflections on the construction of the fellowship center, saluting the many in attendance who actively participated in the building of the new structure (including the rector/carpenter). After his remarks, he was presented with a parish citation that will be displayed in the bell tower of the fellowship center, as a remem-



Archpriest Daniel Kovalak, toastmaster

Lycoming County, who lauded the parish for its many and varied contributions to numerous ecumenical ministries. Past president of Holy Cross, Elsie Skvir Nierle, offered greetings on behalf of the parish council, and shared stories from the early days of the mission.

Metropolitan Theodosius gave an address in which he paid tribute to the spirit and faith of Holy Cross Church as reminiscent of his first pastoral assignment in Illinois. Referring to himself as the DM ("designated metropolitan"), he displayed his charm and wit which were much appreciated by all. Following his address, guests sang Happy Birthday to him and presented him with a fruit basket.

Television personality Mike Stevens of WNEP-TV 16 spoke on "Holy Cross: A Landmark on the Pennsylvania Road." Over the years Stevens has featured the

brance of his dedication and painstaking labors.

Finally, Fr. Michael Dahulich likened the love and ethic of Holy Cross parish to the ancient church of Philippi which the Holy Apostle Paul praised as well-pleasing to God. He urged the parish not only to maintain the dynamic of life in Christ but also challenged it to follow the apostolic model for growth by becoming a parent church, laboring to give birth to "a child" elsewhere in north-central Pennsylvania.

Throughout the weekend, special recognition was offered *in absentia* to Metropolitan HERMAN who celebrated the first liturgy for the Williamsport Orthodox Mission on November 6, 1977 and has been a constant support and presence throughout the history of the parish.

*Continued on the next page*

## Holy Cross Church

*Continued from page 37*

Though he had originally planned to be present for the celebration, his new primate duties prevented him from doing so.

All the faithful of Holy Cross Church in Williamsport join in offering our thanks to Metropolitan THEODOSIUS, to the attending clergy, and to all who made our 25th anniversary celebration a memorable event filled with immeasurable spiritual joy. We express our sincere appreciation for the special efforts of the many parish families who served in many and various ways, as acknowledged during the banquet.

Above all, we offer our thanks and gratitude to almighty God for his many mercies to us both as a parish and as individual believers. And we pray that he will continue to bless and enrich his people in Williamsport, Pennsylvania who are gathered in this parish dedicated to the glorification of his precious and life-creating Holy Cross.

—Archpriest Daniel Kovalak



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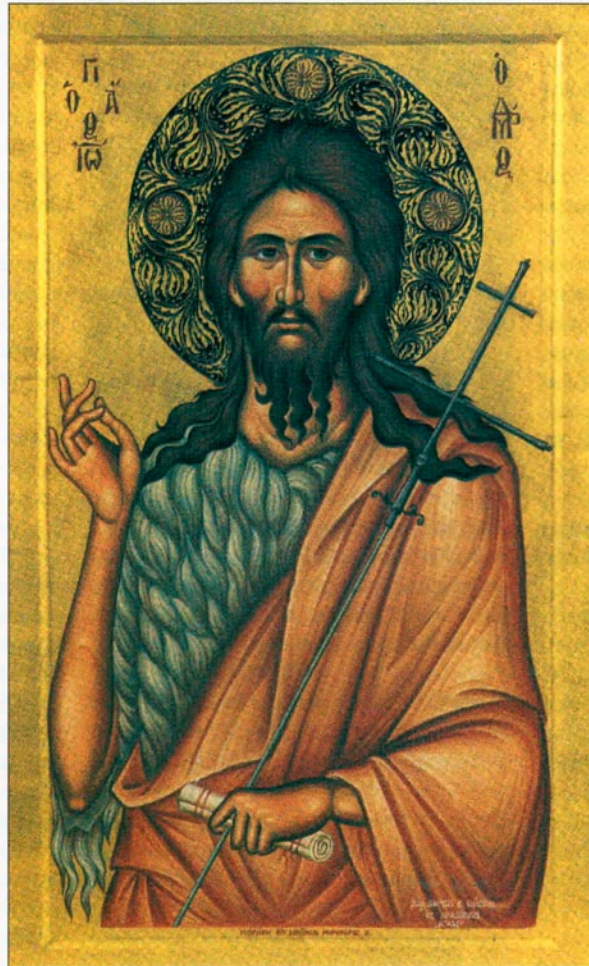
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# Commentary of St. Cyril of Alexandria On the Gospel of John

## Part XII

John 1:29-51



Icon St. John the Baptist

The next day he<sup>1</sup> sees Jesus coming to him (John 1:29).

In a very short space of time, the Baptist is shown to be both prophet and apostle. For, the one whom he was heralding as coming, he now points out as come. In this he leaps beyond even the measure of prophets, as the Savior himself says when discoursing with the Jews about him, *What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet* (Matt. 11:9). For they in their times prophesied that Christ would be revealed, but he, crying that he shall come, also pointed him out come.<sup>2</sup> For the next day, it says, *he sees Jesus coming to him*.

... and says, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29b).

No longer does *prepare the way* suit, since from this point on, he for whom the preparation is made is seen and is before the eyes; this fact necessitates other words.

1. he: i.e. John (as the received Church text reads).

2. The same idea is expressed also in the hymn of the Forerunner: "You were granted to baptize in the streams of the Jordan him whom they proclaimed."

It has become needful to explain, who he is who is come, and for what purpose he who has come to us from heaven, makes his descent. So, he says, *Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*, whom the prophet Isaiah signifies to us, when he says, *He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb* (Isa. 53:7); whom

the law of Moses also portrayed long ago; but then it saved in part, not extending mercy to all, for it was a type and shadow; but now he who was dimly pictured of old, the Lamb itself, the spotless sacrifice, is led to the slaughter for all, that he might rout *the sin of the world*, that he might overturn the destroyer of the earth, that dying for all he might bring to nothing death, that he might undo the curse that is on us, that henceforth he might bring to an end *Dust you are, and to dust shall you return*, that he might become the second Adam, not *from earth*, but *from heaven*, and might be the beginning of all good to the nature of man, deliverance from the alien corruption, bestower of eternal life, foundation of our reconciliation to God, beginning of godliness and righteousness, way to the Kingdom of Heaven. For *one Lamb died for all* (2 Cor. 5:14), saving the whole flock on earth to God the Father, one for all, that he might subject all to God, one for all, that he might gain all, that from henceforth all *should no longer live for themselves, but for him who died for them and*

Continued on the next page

## St. Cyril on John's Gospel

*Continued from page 39*

*rose again* (2 Cor. 5:15). For since we were in many sins, and were therefore subject to death and corruption, the Father gave the Son, a redemption for us, one for all, since all are in him, and he is over all. One died for all, that all should live in him. For death, having swallowed up the *Lamb* for all, has vomited forth all in him and with him. For we all were in Christ, who on account of us and for us died and rose again. But, sin having been destroyed, how could death, which was from it and because of it, not altogether come to nothing? The root having died, how could the shoot yet survive? For what sort of reason would we still die, now that sin has been destroyed? Therefore, jubilant, let us say with regard to the sacrifice of the Lamb of God: *Death, where is your sting? Grave, where is your victory?* (1 Cor 15:55, Hos. 13:14). For all *iniquity*, as the psalmist sings somewhere, *shall stop her mouth* (Ps. 106:42), no longer able to accuse those who have sinned from infirmity. For it is *God that justifies, who is he that condemns?* (Rom 8:33,34). *Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us* (Gal 3:13), that we might escape the curse that was from transgression.

*This is He of whom I said, "After me is coming a man who was before me, for he was first before me"* (John 1:30).

He leads the hearers to the remembrance of his words, and yields to Christ the superiority in glory, accomplishing the task not of love, but rather of truth and necessity. For the creature is subject (even if it wills not) to the Creator, the slave to the master, the supplied to the bestower. But how Christ was *after* John, yet *before* him, for he was *first* before him, as he himself confesses, we have spoken sufficiently in the above.

*And I did not know him; but that he should be revealed to Israel, for this reason I came baptizing with water* (John 1:31).

He who leaped in his own mother's womb while the holy Virgin carried the Lord in her womb — a prophet before the pangs of travail, a disciple in the embryonic state — says of the Saviour, *I did not know him*, and he speaks truthfully, for he does not lie. For God knows all things of himself and not being taught, but the crea-

ture, by being taught. For the Spirit, dwelling in the Saints, fulfills what is lacking, and freely gives to human nature his own good, I mean, knowledge of things to come, and of the hidden mysteries. Therefore the blessed Baptist, in saying that he does not know the Lord, in no way speaks falsely with regard to his own faculty of human nature, and the measure befitting the creature — but he attributes the knowledge of all things to God alone, who through the Holy Spirit enlightens man to the apprehension of hidden things.

And very profitably he says that he did not, of himself, know Christ, but has come with due authority for the purpose of revealing him to Israel, [adding this] that he [John] may not seem to be hastening to bear testimony of his own accord, nor be thought by any to be the servant of his own will, but the worker of the divine economy [dispensation, plan], the minister of the counsel from above that reveals to him the *Lamb who takes away the sin of the world*.

So, that the Jews may more easily come to believe on our Savior Christ, and may have the most worthy opinion of him, he says that he knows him, not having known him,<sup>3</sup> so that from here on they may understand God who revealed him, and being awestruck at the judgment from above, may receive his message concerning him, and seeing the servant so great, may proportionally estimate the Master's rank. For, how can his saying that he had come in order to set him clearly before Israel, not by all means denote the service that is fitting to a servant?

**That the Holy Spirit is in the Son not by participation, not from outside, but essentially [by essence] and by nature.**

*And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and he remained upon him. And I did not*

3. The verb in the second part of this comparison ("not having known") is a form of *oída*, meaning literally *see*, but often (as here) used with the sense of *know*. The Baptist twice uses this expression (vv. 31 and 33), saying he "did not know" Christ. St. Cyril observes that the Baptist "knows him, not having known him" explaining this with reference to most or all of the following ideas: (a) God knows himself from himself, but man knows what he knows of God only from being taught; (b) being God, Christ is not known, in the sense that he is not *fully* known, except to himself; (c) St. John now knows Christ, because he has *seen* him, but before he did not know him because he had not *seen* him, though he did know him in his mother's womb; (d) he now knows and confesses him to the extent of knowing that he is the *Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*; (e) there is a possible reference to growth in the Baptist's knowledge and understanding of Christ; (f) likewise, in the words "knows him, not having known him," a possible reference to the mystery that God is both known and hidden.

*know him; but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit'"* (John 1:32-33).

Having said above that he did not know him, he profitably explains and uncovers the divine mystery, both showing that he who told him was God the Father, and clearly relating the manner of the revelation. By all these things he profits the mind of the hearers, and says by them that the mystery of Christ toward men was taught him from God, showing that his opponents are fighting against the decree from above, and are to their own peril arraying themselves against the Father's mighty purpose. For this was the part of one skillfully persuading them to desist from their vain counsel, and to receive him who by the Father's goodwill came for the salvation of all. He therefore testifies both that he *saw the Spirit descending from heaven upon him*, in the form of a dove, and that *it remained on him*. Then, in addition, he says that he himself was the witness, who heard with his own ears, from him who *sent him to baptize with water*; that he upon whom the Spirit came and remained *on him is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit*. Most worthy of belief, therefore, is the witness, supernatural is the sign, and over all is the Father who revealed.

And these things are so. But it may be that the heretic, fond of carping, will jump up and, grinning broadly, say "What do you say to us this time, sirs, and what argument will you make, overpowering that which is written? See, he says that the Spirit descends upon the Son; see, he is anointed by God the Father; that which he does not have, he quite clearly receives, the psalmist co-witnessing with us and saying, as to him: *Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows* (Ps. 44:7). So how can the Son any more be co-essential with the perfect Father, being himself not of that sort, and being anointed on account of it?"

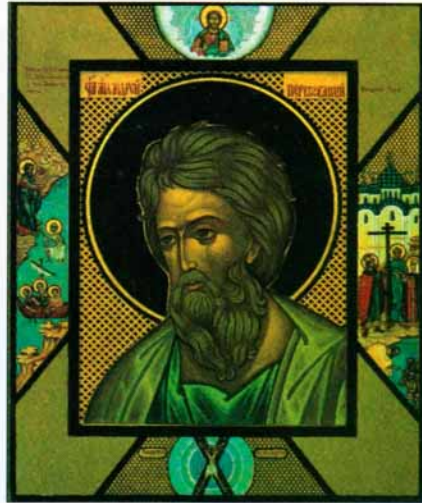
To this then I think it right to say to those who overturn the holy doctrines of the Church and pervert the truth of the Scriptures: *Awaken, you drunkards, from your wine* (Joel 1:5 LXX), so that viewing the clear beauty of the truth, you may be able with us to cry to the Son: *Truly you are the Son of God* (Matt. 14:23). For if you fully believe that he is by nature God, how can he not have perfection?

And it's time for you to speak impiously against the Father himself as well; for, as you say, why is it necessary that *he* have perfection? Why shouldn't he be brought down to the humiliation of his offspring, who is imperfect (according to you), since in the Son the divine essence has, according to your unlearned and uninstructed reasoning, once and for all received the power of not having perfection? For we will not divide that great and untainted [divine] nature into different words, so that it should happen to be imperfect in one [hypostasis], and again perfect in the other [hypostasis]. Since the definition of human nature, as well, is one with respect to all men, and equal in all of us, what man could be less human? Nor yet will anyone be considered more so than another. And I suppose that one angel will not differ in anything from another angel in respect of their being what they are from sameness of nature (angels, that is), all being linked with one another into one nature. How then can the nature which is divine and surpassing all be viewed as inferior to things that have a beginning in its own special good, and endure a condition which the creature cannot endure?<sup>4</sup> How will it be at all simple and uncompounded, if perfection and imperfection appear in it? For it will be compounded of both, since perfection is not the same kind of thing as imperfection. For if they are of the same kind and there is no difference between them, everything which is perfect will also be imperfect, without distinction; and if again anything be imperfect, this too would be perfect. And the charge against the Son will be nothing, even though according to your surmising he appears not perfect; but neither will the Father himself, though witnessed to in respect of his perfection, surpass the Son, and there is an end of our dispute. But if much gap separates imperfection from perfection, and the divine nature admits both together, it is compound, and not simple.

But someone may say, "Contraries are incompatible, and do not coexist in one subject at the same time, as for instance, in a body, white and black skin together." My friend, you have backed up my argument well and vigorously. For if the divine nature is one, and there is none other than it, tell me how will it admit of contraries? How will things unlike one

4. I.e. to be compounded of both perfect and imperfect.

another come together into one subject? But since the Father is God by nature, the Son too is God by nature. He will therefore differ in nothing from the Father, with regard to being perfect, since he is begotten of his divine and most perfect essence. Because — isn't it necessary that he who is from a perfect Parent, be perfect, since he is both his exact likeness, *and the express image of his person*, as it is written (Heb. 1:3)? Now I suppose everyone will consent and agree to this. Or, let someone come forward and tell how the Son is the exact image of the perfect Father, not hav-



ing perfection in his own nature, according to the uncounsel of some. For since he is the impress and image, he too is himself perfect, like him whose image he is.

But, someone says, "John saw the Spirit descending from heaven upon the Son, and he has sanctification from outside [himself], for he receives it as not having it." So it is time to call him openly a creature, barely honored with a little excellence, perfected and sanctified in equal rank with the rest, and having his supply of good things — an acquired one. Then how can the Evangelist not be lying when he says, *From his fullness we have all received* (John 1:16)? For how can he be full in his own nature, when he received from another? Or how can God be thought of at all as Father, if the Only-begotten is a creature, and not rather a Son? For if this were so, both he himself would be falsely called Father, and the Son will not be Truth, having upon him a spurious dignity and a title of mere words. For us, therefore, everything will be gone: the Father being neither truly father, nor the

Son that by nature which he is said to be. But if God is truly Father, he surely has that of which he is Father — the Son, obviously, from himself.

Then how can the deity, holy by nature, engender from itself that which is void of holiness, and bring forth its own fruit destitute of its own inherent properties? For if he has sanctification from outside, as they say in their babbling — they need to confess, even against their will, that he was not always holy, but became so afterwards, when the Spirit descended upon him, as John says. Then how was the Son holy even before the incarnation? For the Seraphim glorified him as such, repeating the *Holy*, in order, from the first to the third time. So if he was holy even before the incarnation — yes, even more, being ever with the Father — how would he need a sanctifier, and this in the last times when he became human? I am amazed that this too escapes them, with all their love of research. For don't we have to see that the Son could reject sanctification at any time, if it is not in him essentially [according to essence] but came to him as it does to us, or any other reasonable creature? But will not that which falls away from sanctification, not be altogether under the bonds of sin, and sink to the worse, no longer retaining power to be apart from vice? Therefore neither will the Son be found to be unchangeable, and the Psalmist will lie crying in the Spirit as to Him, *But you are the same* (Ps. 101:27).

Besides what has been already said, let this too be considered, for it brings in a related idea: All reasoning will demonstrate that something that is partaken of is by nature something other than the partaker. For if this were not true, but [that] differs from this in no way, and is the same, that which partakes of anything partakes of itself, which is incredible even to think of — for how can anyone be imagined to partake of himself? But if the things mentioned lie altogether in natural diversity one to another, and the necessity of reasoning separates them, let those who give the Spirit to the Only-Begotten by participation see to what a depth of impiety they sink unawares. For if the Son is partaker of the Spirit, and the Spirit is holy by nature, he himself will not be holy by nature, but is shown to be so entirely through combination with another, being

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## St. Cyril on John's Gospel

*Continued from page 41*

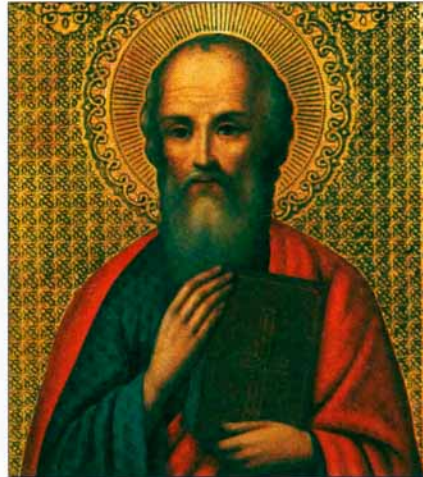
transformed by a gift, to a better state than that in which he was at first. But let the fighter against God again look into how great impiety the question casts him down. For first some change and turning, as we said before, will be found to exist regarding the Son. And being (according to you) changed, and having advanced towards the better, he will be shown to be not only not inferior to the Father, but even somehow to have become superior; and we will say how this is, taking it from the divine Scripture. The divine Paul says somewhere of him: *Let this mind be in you, according to what was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied himself, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself* (Phil. 2:5-8).

So, since even before the incarnation, he was in the form and equality of the Father, but at the time of the incarnation, when he received the Spirit from heaven he was sanctified, according to them, and by reason of this became both better and greater than himself — from that point on surpassing, it is plain, even the measure of his Begetter. And if on receiving the Spirit he climbed up to a stature above that of the Father, then the Spirit is superior even to the Father himself, since he bestows on the Son the superiority over him. Who then will not shudder at the mere hearing of this?

How truly hard it is even to go through such arguments, but only in this way can the harm caused by their stubbornness be expelled. So, we will say to them again: If when the Word of God became man, he is then also sanctified by receiving the Spirit, but before the incarnation was in the form and equality of the Father, not yet being sanctified according to them, it is time that they should boldly say that God the Father is not holy, if the Word, who in all things is altogether of the same form, and equal to him, was not holy in the beginning, but became so entirely in the last times. And again, if he who receives the Spirit is truly the Word of God, and is sanctified in his own nature, let our opponents say whether in doing this, he became greater or less than himself, or remained the same. For if he has nothing more from the Spirit, but remains the same as he was,

do not be offended at learning that it *descended* on him. But if he was injured by receiving it, and became less, you will introduce to us the Word as passible, and will accuse the Father's essence as wronging rather than sanctifying. But if he became better by receiving the Spirit, but was in the form of and equal to the Father even before he (according to you) became improved, the Father has not attained to the height of glory, but will be in that measure of it in which the Son, who has advanced to the better, was [being] of the same form and equal to him.

I consider therefore that it is opportune



to say to the ill-instructed heretics, *Behold a people foolish and without understanding, who have eyes, and do not see; who have ears and do not hear* (Jer. 5:21); *for the god of this world has indeed blinded the eyes of those who do not believe, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine* (2 Cor. 4:4) to them: they are deserving of pity, rather than of anger. For they do not understand what they read. But henceforth it will be clear that the reasoning is true, even if we have not made the unadorned demonstration perfectly clear by our previous attempts. Again this which is spoken by the mouth of Paul will be brought forward: *Let this mind be in you, according to what was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied himself, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself* (Phil. 2:5-8). Observe that he is very amazed at the Son as being equal and in the same form as God the Father, that, by reason of his love for us, he does not seize

this, but descends to lowliness, through the form of a servant, being emptied by reason of his humanity. But if, sirs, he were, rather, sanctified on receiving the Spirit when He became man, and were, through the sanctification, rendered superior to himself, into what kind of lowliness shall we see him to have descended? How is that made low that was exalted, how did that descend that was sanctified, or how did it not rather ascend, and was exalted for the better? What emptiness has filling through the Spirit? Or how will he at all be thought to have been incarnate for our sakes, who underwent so great profit in respect of himself? How did the *Rich* become *poor* for our sakes (2 Cor. 8:9), who was enriched because of us? How was he rich even before his advent, who according to them received in it what He had not had, namely the Spirit? Or, how will he not, rather, rightly offer us a thank-offering for what he gained by means of us? *Be astonished*, as it is written, *O heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, says the Lord; for the people of the heterodox have in truth committed two evils, understanding neither what they say, nor concerning what they strongly maintain* (1 Tim. 1:7), and they do not think it grievous to incur, in this way, such danger in the weightiest matters. For otherwise, shedding bitter tears from their eyes, and lifting up a mighty voice on high, they would have approached saying, *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips. Incline not my heart to words of wickedness* (Ps 140:3,4). For in truth their words are words of wickedness, being in labor and bringing forth extreme mischief to the hearers. But we, having expelled their babbling from our heart, will walk in the right way of the faith, bearing in mind that which is written: *Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ* (2 Cor 10:5). Come then, and bringing our mind into captivity as to the subjects before us, let us subject it to the glory of the Only-Begotten, bringing all things wisely to his obedience, that is, to the mode of the incarnation. For, *being rich, for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich* (2 Cor. 8:9). Now receive, if you please, our proof through that which is also now before us, opening a forbearing ear to our words.

The divine Scripture testifies that man was made in the image and likeness of God who is over all. And indeed, he who compiled the first book for us (Moses, who *above all men* was known to God) (Ex. 33:17 LXX) says, *And God created man, in the image of God created he him* (Gen. 1:27). But he again taught us that through the Spirit he was sealed to the divine image, when he said *And breathed into his countenance the breath of life* (Gen. 2:7) For the Spirit at the same time began to put [eternal] life into his formation and to impress, divinely, his own image on him. Thus the most excellent artificer God, having formed the reasonable living creature upon the earth, gave him the saving commandment. And he was in paradise, as it is written, still keeping the gift, and eminent in the divine image of him that made him, through the Holy Spirit that indwells him. But when, perverted by the devil's wiles, he began to despise his Creator, and began to grieve his Benefactor by trampling on the law assigned him, he recalled the grace given to him; and he who was then made alive, first heard *Dust you are, and to dust shall you return* (Gen. 3:19). And now the likeness to God was defaced through the inroad of sin, and the impress was no longer bright, but fainter and darkened because of the transgression. But when the human race had reached an innumerable multitude, and sin had dominion over them all, despoiling each man's soul in many ways, his nature was stripped of the ancient grace; the Spirit departed altogether, and the reasonable creature fell into the most extreme folly, ignorant even of its Creator. But the artificer of all, having endured for a long time, now takes pity on the corrupted world, and being Good, he hastened to gather together his runaway flock upon earth to those above, and decreed that through the Spirit, human nature should be transformed anew to the original image. For in no other way was it possible for the divine impress to shine forth in him again, as it had earlier done previously.

Therefore, it now follows to say what he devises to achieve this end, how he implanted in us grace inviolate, how the Spirit again took root in man, and in what manner nature was re-formed to its old condition. The first man — being earthy, and of the earth, and having placed in his own power the choice between good and evil, being master of the inclination to each

— was caught by a cruel deception, and having inclined to disobedience, he falls to the earth, the mother out of which he sprang, but this time, being ruled over by corruption and death, he transmits the penalty to his whole race. With the evil growing and multiplying in us, and our understanding ever descending to the worse, sin reigned, and thus from that time on the nature of man was shown bereft of the Holy Spirit who had dwelled in him. *For the Holy Spirit of wisdom will flee deceit, as it is written, nor will he dwell in the body that is subject to sin* (Wisdom. 1:5,4).

Since, therefore, the first Adam did not preserve the grace given him from God, the God and Father was minded to send us from heaven the second Adam. For he sends, in our likeness, his own Son who is by nature without variability or change, and wholly unknowing of sin, so that *as by the disobedience* (Rom. 5:19) of the first, we became subject to divine wrath, so through the obedience of the second, we might both escape the curse, and its evils might come to nothing. But when the Word of God became man, he received the Spirit from the Father as one of us (not receiving anything for himself individually, for he was the Giver of the Spirit), but in order that he who knew no sin might, by receiving it as man, preserve it to our nature, and might again root in us the grace which had left us. It was for this reason, I consider, that the holy Baptist profitably added, *I saw the Spirit descending from heaven, and it remained on him*. For it had fled from us by reason of sin, but he who knew no sin, became as one of us, that the Spirit might be accustomed to abide in us, having — in him — no occasion for departure or withdrawal.

Therefore for us, through himself, he receives the Spirit and renews to our nature the ancient good. For it is for this [purpose] also that he is said *for our sakes to become poor* (2 Cor. 8:9). For being rich as God, and lacking no good thing, he became man lacking all things, to whom it is somewhere said — and that very well — *What have you that you did not receive?* So, as being by nature life, he died for our sakes according to the flesh, that he might overcome death for us and raise up our whole nature together with himself (for we all were in him, in that he became a human being); in this way he also receives the Spirit for our sakes, that he may sanctify our whole nature. For he came not to

profit himself, but to be for us all the beginning [source, principle] and the way [road, path] and the door of the heavenly good things. For if he had not pleased to receive, as man, or to suffer too, as one of us, how could anyone have shown that he *humbled himself?* Or how would *the form of a servant* have been fittingly kept, if nothing befitting a servant were written about him? So, don't let the all-wise account of the dispensation be pulled to pieces, which the divine Paul himself rightly admires, crying out: *To the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the Church to the principalities and powers in heavenly places according to the eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord* (Eph. 3:10-11). For wisdom indeed, and worthy of God, is the great mystery of the incarnation seen to be.

Such an opinion of our Saviour do I suppose that we ought to have, who choose to be pious and rejoice in rightness of doctrines. For *we* ourselves also will not descend to such lack of reason as to suppose that the Spirit was by participation in him who is the Son by nature, and was not rather inherent according to essence, just as in the Father himself. For as the Holy Spirit is of the Father, so too is he of the Son. So did we also read in the divine Scriptures. For it says: *After they had come to Mysia they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus<sup>5</sup> did not permit them* (Acts 16:7).

But if it seems good to those with overcontentious zeal, to object to our words regarding these matters, and to assert again that the Spirit is in the Son by participation, or that, not being in him before, he then came to be in him when he was baptized during the period of his incarnation, let him see into what and how great absurdities he will fall. To begin with, the Savior says: *Among those born of women, there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist* (Matt. 11:11). And true is the saying; but we see him who has attained to the summit of glory and virtue that belong to us, honoring Christ with incomparable excellencies. For *I am not worthy, he says, to stoop down and untie his sandal strap* (Mark 1:7). How then is it not

5. The words "of Jesus" are not in most Orthodox Bibles, but were in St. Cyril's text and in the early Syriac translation of Acts. However, similar phrases are found elsewhere in the NT: e.g. Rom. 8:9, *Spirit of Christ* and Phil. 1:19, *Spirit of Jesus Christ*. Similar to this is the teaching of Gregory of Cyprus that the Spirit is *eternally manifested* by Christ.

*Continued on the next page*

## St. Cyril on John's Gospel

Continued from page 43

absurd — yes, impious rather — to believe that John was filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb (Luke 1:15) because it is so written of him; and to suppose then that his Master — yes, rather the Master and Lord of all — first received the Spirit when he was baptized, albeit Saint Gabriel says to the holy Virgin, *The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that holy one who is to be born of you will be called the Son of God* (Luke 1:35). And let the lover of learning observe again how the word is in labor with so great a conception. For concerning John, it says *he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit* (for the Holy Spirit was in him as a gift, and not essentially), but of the Savior, he no longer says *will be filled* but, conceiving rightly, *that holy one who is to be born*. Nor did he add *will be*; for as God, he was always this<sup>6</sup> by nature.

But I think we ought to seek after what is profitable from all quarters; and, the voice of the archangel having been once brought forward, come, let us exercise ourselves a little in it. *The Holy Spirit*, he says, *will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that holy one who is to be born of you will be called the Son of God*. Accordingly, let him who because of great unlearning opposes the right doctrines of the Church, tell us whether the Word of God the Father, even before the incarnation, was Son, or had the glory in name only, but was a bastard, and falsely called [Son]. For if he says that he<sup>7</sup> was not the Son at all, he will be denying the Father (for of whom will he be Father, if he has no Son?); and he will think contrary to all the divine Scriptures.

Now if he confesses that even before the incarnation the Son both was and was called Son, how is it that the archangel tells us that that which was to be born of the holy Virgin should be called the Son of God, even when he was this by nature even long before? The Son, as being with the Father from eternity, as having an origin of being,<sup>8</sup> is according to the time of his incarnation called Son of God, on account of his appearance in the world with a body. In the same manner, having in himself

essentially, his own Spirit, he is said to receive it as man, preserving to the humanity<sup>9</sup> the order suitable to it, and with it appropriating [making his own] the things that pertain to us.<sup>10</sup>

But how can the Word be thought of at all apart from his own Spirit? For would it not be absurd to say that a man's spirit, which is in him according to the rule [definition] of nature, and for the completeness of the living-being, was separated from him? Now I think that this is very obvious to everyone. How, therefore, shall we



sever from the Son, the Spirit which is so inherent and essentially united, and which comes forth through him, and exists in him by nature, so that it cannot be thought to be other than he by reason both of identity of working, and the very exact likeness of nature. Hear what the Savior says to his own disciples: *If you love Me, keep My commandments, and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter [Helper], the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive* (cf. John 14:15-17). Note that he plainly calls the Holy Spirit, "Spirit of Truth." But that he and no other than he is the truth, hear him again saying, *I am the Truth* (John 14:6). So, the Son, by nature being and being called truth — see what great unity the Spirit has with him. For the disciple John says somewhere about our Savior, *This is he who came by water and blood and the spirit*,<sup>11</sup> *Jesus Christ; not by water only,*

*but by water and blood; and it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth* (1 John 5:6). Therefore also, the Holy Spirit dwelling in our inner man, Christ himself is said to dwell [settle] there, and such is the reality with respect to the kinship.<sup>12</sup> And indeed the blessed Paul teaches this most clearly, saying, *But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness* (Rom. 8:9,10).

Apply, sir, a keen ear to what is said. Having named the Spirit of Christ that dwells in us, he immediately added, *If Christ is in you*, introducing the Son's exact likeness with the Spirit, who is his own and pours forth from him by nature.<sup>13</sup> Therefore he is also called *the Spirit of adoption* (Rom. 8:15), and in him *we cry Abba, Father*. And as the blessed John somewhere says, *By this we know that he is in us, because he has given us of his Spirit* (cf. 1 Jn. 4:13).

I really think that these things will be enough to enable the children of the Church to repel the mischief of the heterodox. But if anyone is besotted in the unmixed strong drink of their uninstructedness, and supposes that the Son first received the Spirit when he became man, let him show that the Word of God was not holy before the incarnation, and we will hold our peace.

But one may well be amazed that the holy evangelist everywhere, with much observance, preserves what befits the divine nature. For since he said above that *No man has seen God at any time*, (John 1:18) and now he says that the blessed Baptist *saw the Spirit descend from heaven upon the Son*, he adds of necessity, *I saw the Spirit*, but in the form of a dove, not himself by nature, as he is, but shadowed in the gentlest animal; that in this again he<sup>14</sup> might be shown to preserve his natural likeness and affinity to the Son, who says *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly*

12. kinship, i.e., the closeness, the unity, of the Son and Spirit.

13. *Par' autou kata physin procheomenon*. In saying that the Spirit "pours forth" from (para) the Son, St. Cyril may have in mind the Spirit's temporal mission, or more generally, the close kinship and the unity of the Son and Spirit which he has just been describing. He is not teaching *filioque*, i.e. that the Spirit proceeds from the Son, for it is his opinion rather that the Spirit's procession is *through* the Son. This he explains later in the present work, when commenting on John 15:26, adding that it is the Father "from whom [the Spirit] proceeds," and "the Comforter . . . comes from the Father."

14. he: the Spirit.

6. this: i.e., holy.

7. he: the Word.

8. His origin of being is the Father, who begets him.

9. the humanity: i.e., his humanity, his human nature.

10. The Word was the Word and Son before the incarnation, but from the time of his incarnation is *as man* called Son of God, gaining by this certain advantages for the human race. At the same time, his divine nature appropriates to itself and makes its own the things pertaining to human nature.

11. The words "and the spirit," included in St. Cyril's text, are absent from the customary Church text.

in heart (Matt. 11:29). So then, the Spirit will not fall away from being God by nature; for the fact of never having been seen at any time has been preserved to him, except under the form of a dove, on account of the need of the disciple. For the blessed Baptist says that the descent of the Spirit was given him as a sign and token, and he adds to his testimonies regarding our Savior, *He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, "Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit"* (John 1:38). For this reason I think it especially fitting to laugh at those senseless heretics who take that which was set forth by way of a sign, as actual fact, even though it took place providentially, as has been already said, in order to accommodate the needs of human nature.

*And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God* (John 1:34).

Certain is that witness who speaks what he has actually seen. For he was probably not ignorant of that which was written, *That which your eyes have seen, tell* (Prov. 25:7 LXX). So he says, *I saw the sign, and I understood that which it signified. And I testify that this is the Son of God, who was proclaimed by the law that is through Moses, and heralded by the voice of the holy prophets. And again, it seems to me that the blessed evangelist is saying with great certitude, This is the Son of God: that is, the one and only natural heir of the Father's own nature,*<sup>15</sup> to whom we too, are being conformed according to adoption, and through whom we are called by grace to the dignity of sonship. For as from God the Father *every family in heaven and earth is named* (Eph. 3:15) from his being properly, and first, and truly Father, so too is all sonship from the Son, by reason of his being properly and alone truly Son, not bastard, nor falsely-called, but of the essence of God the Father, not by a cutting off, or emanation, or division, or severance (for the divine nature is altogether impassible), but as one from one, ever coexisting and coeternal and innate in him who begot him, being in him, and coming forth from him, indivisibly and without separation, since the Divinity is not after the manner of a body, nor bounded by space, nor of a nature such as to make progressive footsteps. But similar to the way that from fire there comes forth the heat that is in it — appearing to

be separate from it in idea, and to be other than it, though by nature existing from it and in it — and proceeds from it without suffering any harm in the way of cutting off, division, or emanation (for it is preserved whole in the whole fire) — so shall we conceive of the divine offspring too, thinking on this in a manner most worthy of God, and believing on the one hand that the Son exists in his own person, yet not placing him outside the one and ineffable deity, nor saying that he is of another substance than the Father. For then he would



no longer be rightly conceived of as Son, but something other than this, and a recent God would arise to us, other than he that alone is. For how can that which is not by nature of one essence with God, not fall away completely from being true God? But since the blessed Baptist is both trustworthy and of the greatest repute, and testifies that *This is the Son of God*, we will confess the Son to be altogether very God and from the Father's essence; for the name of sonship signifies to us this and nothing else.

*Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as he walked, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world"* (John 1:35-36).<sup>16</sup>

The blessed Baptist has already pointed him out before; but you see, repeating the same words again, he points Jesus out to his disciples, and calls him *the Lamb of God*, and says that *he takes away the sin of the world*, all but bringing

his hearers to remembrance of him who says in the prophets: *I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, and will not remember your sins* (Isa. 43:25). But it is not for nothing that the Baptist repeats the same identification of the Savior. For it is a work of excellence in teaching to fix securely in the souls of the pupils, the lesson that has not yet been accepted, not shrinking at repetition, but rather enduring it for the profit of those being educated. For it is for this reason that blessed Paul too says, *To write the same things to you is not tedious for me, but for you it is safe.* (Phil. 3:1).

*And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus* (John 1:37).

Do you see the fruit that is the companion of teaching, yielded from it? Do you see how great the gain realized from repetition? So let those who are entrusted with teaching learn from this, to show themselves superior to all reluctance, and to esteem silence more harmful to themselves than to the hearers, and not to bury the Lord's talent in listless sloth, as *in the earth*, but rather to give his *money to the exchangers* Mt. 25:18). For the Savior will receive his own with usury, and will bring to life, like seed, the implanted word. You have here a most excellent proof of what has been said. For the Baptist, who does not shrink from pointing out the Lord to his disciples, and from saying a second time, *Look, the Lamb of God*, is seen to have so greatly profited them, as to have even persuaded them to follow him from now on and to desire discipleship under him already.

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*The deadline for  
our Easter issue of*

*Your Diocese  
Alive in Christ*

**is April 24, 2003**

Please send all submissions to:

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South Canaan, PA 18459

<sup>16</sup> The words "who takes away the sin of the world" are in St. Cyril's text, but in most copies of the Gospel they are not found here but only in verse 29.

# A Woman's Quest for Spiritual Guidance

*Editor's note: The authors of these letters, a nun and her spiritual director, are atypical in some respects. The nun was Princess Irene Eulogia Choumnaina Palaiologina, a Byzantine princess and daughter-in-law of the emperor. Her husband, Despot John Palaiologos, son of the emperor, died leaving her a widow at age 16 (in 1307), and as was not uncommon in those times, she was forced to accept a life of monasticism, which she lived till her death nearly half a century later, in 1355, becoming the abbess of the women's monastery of the Savior Who Loves Mankind. Desiring guidance in the spiritual life, around 1335 she corresponded with a monk whose help she sought for this purpose. Because of his relatively young age, the monk, whose identity is uncertain, exhibited some reluctance to fulfill the role of spiritual guide, though he did so partly out of deference to her high political status. Stripped of its external, historical particulars, the correspondence presents a valuable record of "A Woman's Quest for Spiritual Guidance," which is the title chosen by the translator of the collection.*

[Answer to the First Letter]

I was glad to receive your most eloquent and wise letter, holy Father. Its beauty delighted me and moved me to write to you so that you may understand two things about me: from my mistakes in accents and itacisms [you will understand] my ignorance and want of training in the art of grammar. But [you will also understand] my capacity for thinking, small as it is; I owe it to the great gift and benevolence and grace of my Maker and Savior Jesus Christ and not to human education or explanation. They would have taught me grammar too, if they cared for me so much



[as to give me an education].

I am grateful for the letter of Your Holiness and I commend and admire it. I am grateful for your praise, even though I am nothing and a total stranger to such compliments. Nevertheless, [I am grateful] for your kind feelings and your good opinion of me. On the other hand, I praise and admire [your letter] because the [letter] in itself shows great philosophical ability. I mean that it is ability and great evidence of philosophy to present in a few and brief words a very significant and important matter. So, Your Holiness, you made your letter deliberately brief out of humility and in the hope of escaping my detection, but you achieved the opposite of your intention. For when I saw such ability in so few words, I praised you even more and felt impelled to disturb you.

I request Your Holiness, therefore, to let me see your other works also. Furthermore it is my request, and ardent request, that you do not deprive me of the work of Your Holiness in honor of the most holy Patriarch Kyr-Athanasios.

[Letter 2]

Not only did I give something good but I also received [the same] in return. Rather, without giving anything good I received something marvelous: from the mouth of a woman came a voice fit for a wise and noble man; it was the natural product of a naturally wise soul. Previously, I wondered at the princess's love of learning, but now I wonder whether there is anything more useful that she can ingeniously discover and take from elsewhere than she can offer to others from her own counsel.

It seems to me that my works will appear useless when offered to such a creature. So by the very means by which you earnestly tried to urge me to give you my works, you deter me from giving them to you. However, it is rude to disobey your command. Just as I said, though, it is not easy to give them out. Some of them are still on the paper on which they were first written. They are in the form of drafts and difficult to make out, while those which have been finished — as I am wont to finish them, that is — remain in Thessalonike. Among the latter are those which I happened to write in honor of the noble and holy Athanasios. Having said none of these things [to you] at the time, I failed to tell the truth. I wrote to have these [works] sent to me soon, and when they are brought here you may have those you wish. Neither will I refuse to give you those [that are here] as soon as they are edited. It is a fact that no one begrudges anyone anything that is not good.

[Letter 3]

If they asked the sun what part of the creation it would rather have prevail on the rest, it would answer thus (if it could



utter a word): that it would like the Universe to be eyes in order to apprehend the sun's own beauty. And if someone asked a most wise and learned man what he, too, would like more than anything else, he would ask for an understanding audience. This is why I was compelled to write to you in a rash and thoughtless manner, considering neither your wisdom nor my ignorance, but considering this alone: to let you know that you are not talking to an audience that is utterly lacking in understanding, even if I cannot approach your wisdom.

You lead a life of poverty, simplicity, self-effacement and obscurity in Christ, hiding and covering up your wisdom like a budding rose. Thus you have left your most wise writings neglected and cast aside and you keep them only in drafts. I suspect that you did not even edit those you sent to Thessalonike, nor did your friends force you to do so. But you must know that just as "the iron strikes the firestone," I shall not cease striking until I light up the torch of your writings. So, if it is possible to copy from the draft those of your works which are more necessary [for me to read] and whatever Your Holiness approves and considers me worthy of seeing, I shall not hesitate to send paper and [pay for] the expenses. If this is not possible, [send me] at least your writings on the Patriarch Kyr Athanasios, if there is a copy. And if you do not wish these to circulate, I guarantee that also, because of the antipathy of certain people. But if even this is not convenient, let the living spring come — let Your Holiness visit me — and I shall bear the loss of the river that flows with writings.

I would like, however, to mention the following: in your first letter, Your Holiness, you said to me that you sent me that letter as a taste of the wine-cask; if I did not find it distasteful, I could drain the cask. Yet, although I found it delicious, I did not even partake of a pitcher. I fear, therefore, that my ignorance and obtuseness sealed the cask. Because you do not wish to be praised yourself, you praised me excessively to make me realize how much [praise] is due to a wise and learned man, if even an illiterate and ignorant woman is given so much praise. You wished me to understand the enormity of the debt and feeling dizzy at the thought to refrain from praising you. Things turned out as you intended.

#### [Letter 4]

I thought that what I wrote would quell your eagerness. But since I see that it rather kindled and increased it extraordinarily, I sent to you some discourses which are not good although they appear to you to be good. These discourses of mine, for which you particularly asked, were found in the monasteries of the renowned Athanasios and they are not as I set them down later and left them in Thessalonike, but they were taken directly from birth, so to speak, and therefore they are not as carefully worked out. Still they are more polished than the rest of my discourses that are here. Read these, and if you require the rest, I shall hand them over to you after they have been copied, in accordance with your orders. I do not believe that these discourses should be kept from those for whom I wrote them. For even if I am not too anxious to display them, they were written so that these individuals might hear them, not that they might not.

#### [Letter 5]

"I exulted because of thy words," holy Father, "as one that finds much spoil." I was caught between two emotions. I felt both great joy and much sorrow. I rejoiced at the beauty of your writing. For what is not admirable about it? The fire-breathing rhetoric or the saintly and most pious and proficient instruction? For you "instruct in an instructive way," and the instruction is such that no important argument is omitted and the "dispute is between the arguments not the speakers." In such an impeccable manner you deal a vital blow to the enemy of truth! Or is not the benefit of your teaching [to be admired]? Not only [the benefit] of those for whom it was written, but of us also who read it. For we are certainly taught about gentleness of spirit and the meaning of forbearance and the laws of double peace — I mean both the divine and human — and what was the peace that Christ bequeathed to His disciples and what is human peace, and how he who is to have the Holy Spirit dwell in him needs the divine peace. The discourse explains this admirably and reconciles the Prophet's saying with that of the Gospel. Or, again, [should one not admire] the great facility of mind and breadth of perception and the marvelous and unaffected language? The breadth

of your perception reduces me to straits, Father, and your great ease, makes me uneasy. I was so charmed by your writing that I neglected all my duties, although they were most pressing, and did not let go of your discourse until I had finished all of it.

These were, then, the reasons for my rejoicing, but even more so it was your virtue which shines through your writings for those who are not altogether blind. As for the causes of my sorrow, they were the following: the fact that a man was born filled with blessings — wisdom, knowledge, eloquence, and what is more important, virtue — and he races through time and time hurries him off, stealing away the glory which is his due. All this because of his virtue and because he does not care to show off, there being no one who desires and seeks out the good. As I was turning these thoughts around in my mind, I said to myself with many tears: "Where is your spirit, my lord and father-in-law, the mighty and holy emperor? You were a born philosopher and loved virtue and learning and goodness and the monks! And you, my most wise father, who gave me life? Here is the friend you were seeking! Here is the kind of monk in whose company you delighted! O what a loss you suffered, both you, my father, and you, Your Holiness, the author of this work, holy Father!" For I shall turn back to you. "You do not have, as I see, a worthy and genial judge and listener." I almost blame public opinion for being rather insensitive to such greatness. If my father and father-in-law were alive, even though you run away from fame with a most swift foot, they would have chased you with honor's swifter feet, moved by the love of honor, and they would have caught you as they were wont to do.

As truth is my witness, I do not say this to flatter you. I am just telling you what I noticed and learned from my reading. You should know and write to assure me whether I grasped and understood all the meaning of your work. I am providing paper for [copies] of the rest of your works.

#### *To be continued.*

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# Daily Devotions

## JANUARY

1. Col. 2:8-12 (Circumcision) Luke 2:20-21,40-52 (Circumcision)
2. Titus 1:1-4, 2:1 Mark 12:38-44
3. Rom. 6:3-11 Mark 1:1-8
4. 1 Tim. 3:14-14:5 (Sat bef.) Matt. 3:1-11 (Sat bef. Theophany)
5. Eph. 1:16-23 Luke 18:2-8
6. 2 Tim 4:5-8 (Sun. bef.) Mark 1:1-8 (Sun. bef. Theophany)
7. Titus 2:11-14, 3:4-7 Luke 3:1-18
8. 1 Cor 10:1-4 (Bless. waters) Matt. 3:13-17
9. Acts 19:1-8 (St. John) Mark 1:9-11 (Blessing of waters)
10. Heb. 4:1-13,5:11-6:8 John 1:29-34 (St. John)
11. Heb. 6:9-12 Luke 19:45-48, 20:1-8
12. Heb. 7:18-25 Luke 20:9-18
13. Eph. 6:10-17 (Sat. after) Matt. 4:1-11 (Sat. after Theophany)
14. Eph. 2:11-13 Luke 12:32-40
15. Eph. 4:7-13 (Sun. after) Matt. 4:12-17 (Sun after Theophany)
16. Heb. 8:7-13 Luke 20:27-44
17. Heb. 9:8-10; 9:15-23 Luke 21:12-19
18. Heb. 10:1-18 Luke 21:5-7,10-11,20-24
19. Heb. 10:35-11:7 Luke 21:28-33
20. Heb. 11:8,11-16 Luke 21:37-22:8
21. Eph. 5:1-8 Luke 13:18-29
22. Col. 3:12-16 Luke 18:35-43
23. Heb. 11:17-23, 27-31 Mark 8:11-21
24. Heb. 12:25-26, 13:22-25 Mark 8:22-26
25. James 1:1-18 Mark 8:30-34
26. James 1:19-27 Mark 9:10-16
27. James 2:1-13 Mark 9:33-41
28. Col. 1:1-2,7-11 Luke 14:1-11
29. 1 Tim. 1:15-17 Matt. 15:21-28
30. James 2:14-26 Mark 9:42-10:1
31. James 3:1-10 Mark 10:2-12
32. James 3:11-4:6 Mark 10:11-16
33. James 4:7-5:9 Mark 10:17-27
34. 1 Pet. 1:1-2,10-12, 2:6-10 Mark 10:23-32

## FEBRUARY

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

## MARCH

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

## APRIL

1. Genesis 9:8-17 Proverbs 12:8-22
2. Genesis 9:18-10:1 Proverbs 12:23-13:9
3. Genesis 10:32-11:9 Proverbs 13:19-14:6
4. Genesis 12:1-7 Proverbs 14:15-26
5. Heb. 6:9-12 Mark 7:31-37
6. Heb. 6:13-20 Mark 9:17-31
7. Genesis 13:12-18 Proverbs 14:27-15:4
8. Genesis 15:1-15 Proverbs 15:7-19
9. Genesis 17:1-9 Proverbs 15:20-16:9
10. Genesis 18:20-33 Proverbs 16:17-17:17
11. Genesis 22:1-18 Proverbs 17:17-18:5
12. Heb. 9:24-28 Mark 8:27-31
13. Heb. 9:11-14 Mark 10:32-45
14. Genesis 27:1-42 Proverbs 19:16-25
15. Genesis 31:3-16 Proverbs 21:3-21
16. Genesis 43:26-32; 45:1-16 Proverbs 21:23-22:4
17. Genesis 46:1-7 Proverbs 23:15-24:5
18. Genesis 49:33-50:26 Proverbs 31:8-31
19. Heb. 12:28-13:8 John 11:1-45
20. Phil. 4:4-9 John 12:1-18
21. Exod 1:1-20 Job 1:1-12 Matt. 24:3-35
22. Exod 2:5-10 Job 1:13-22 Matt. 24:36-26:2
23. Exod 2:11-22 Job 2:1-10 Matt. 26:6-16
24. Exod 19:10-19 Mt 26:2-20 Jn 13:3-17 Mt 26:21-39
25. Job 38:1-23, 42:1-5 Lk 22:43-45 Mt 26:40-27:2
26. Exod 33:11-23 Mt 27:1-38 Lk 23:39-43 Mt 27:39-54
27. Job 42:12-16 Is 52:13-54:1 Jn 19:31-37 Mt 27:55-61
28. Rom. 6:3-11 Matt. 28:1-20
29. Acts 1:1-8 John 1:1-17
30. Acts 1:12-17,21-26 John 1:18-28
31. Acts 2:14-21 Luke 24:12-35
32. Acts 2:22-36 John 1:35-51

## *In Memoriam*

### **The Very Reverend W. Basil Stroyen, Ph.D.**



**T**he Very Rev. W. Basil Stroyen, former dean of St. Tikhon's Seminary and retired U.S. Air Force chaplain, reposed on August 14, 2002 at his home in Hunlock Creek, Pennsylvania.

Born on April 24, 1925 in Frackville, Pa., he was the son of the late Very Rev. Basil M. and Matushka Anna (Smuzanitz) Stroyen. He graduated from St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary and earned a bachelor's degree from Rutgers University, a master's from the University of Illinois and a doctorate from Syracuse University. His dissertation was published by Catholic University of America Press, and he did postgraduate work in the field of gerontology.

Married to the former Nina Bohush, he was ordained to the holy priesthood in June 1946. His first parish assignment was Moundsville, W.V. and Bellaire, Ohio, with orders to also service the needs of the faithful in Robins, Ohio. His subsequent assignments included parishes in Rahway, N.J., Mayfield, Pa., Syracuse, N.Y., Dallas, Pa., Jackson, N.J. and Lansford, Pa. He founded the first Orthodox parish in Honolulu, Hawaii.

He served in the United States Air Force for 25 years as a chaplain of the Orthodox faith. He had been active during the Korean and Vietnam wars, and retired with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Father Basil became the dean of St. Tikhon's Seminary in 1959, at a time when the theological school was on the verge of closing. He not only taught there, but by



1961 he had restored the school to a firm educational and financial ground. He also taught at the University of Maryland and the University of Scranton, and was a counselor at Lackawanna Community College.

Proficient in the Russian language, he served as an analyst on a Yale University Research Project and following his retirement from the military, he worked for a branch of the federal government interviewing refugees from the Soviet Union. He was an active member of the Metropolia Commission on the Resettlement of Displaced Persons, taking over 75 immigrants into his home and helping them in many ways to adjust to life in the United States.

He promoted and organized Sunday schools in several parishes. During the last few years of his life, he participated in a national telephone

counseling ministry. But he is perhaps best known as the founder and editor for the past 51 years of the widely-read and popularly-acclaimed publication, *The Orthodox Herald*. The monthly newspaper, with transjurisdictional and international circulation, reaches more than 7500 households.

Father Basil was honored by His Beatitude Metropolitan THEODOSIUS and the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America with the silver medal of the Order of Saint Innocent and a special gramota, in recognition of his distinguished service to both St. Tikhon's Seminary and the Orthodox Church in America.

His Beatitude Metropolitan HERMAN celebrated the priest's burial service and the hierarchical Divine Liturgy with requiem service, at St. Tikhon's Monastery Church on Friday and Saturday, August 16 and 17. He was assisted by several clergy of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania. Military honors were conducted by McGuire Air Force Base, with interment in St. Tikhon's Cemetery.

Matushka Nina asks that memorial contributions in Father's memory be made to: St. Tikhon's Library Building Fund, in care of Attorney Basil G. Russin, 1575 Wyoming Avenue, Forty Fort, PA 18704.

May the Archpriest Basil's memory be eternal!

# An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith

## by St. John of Damascus

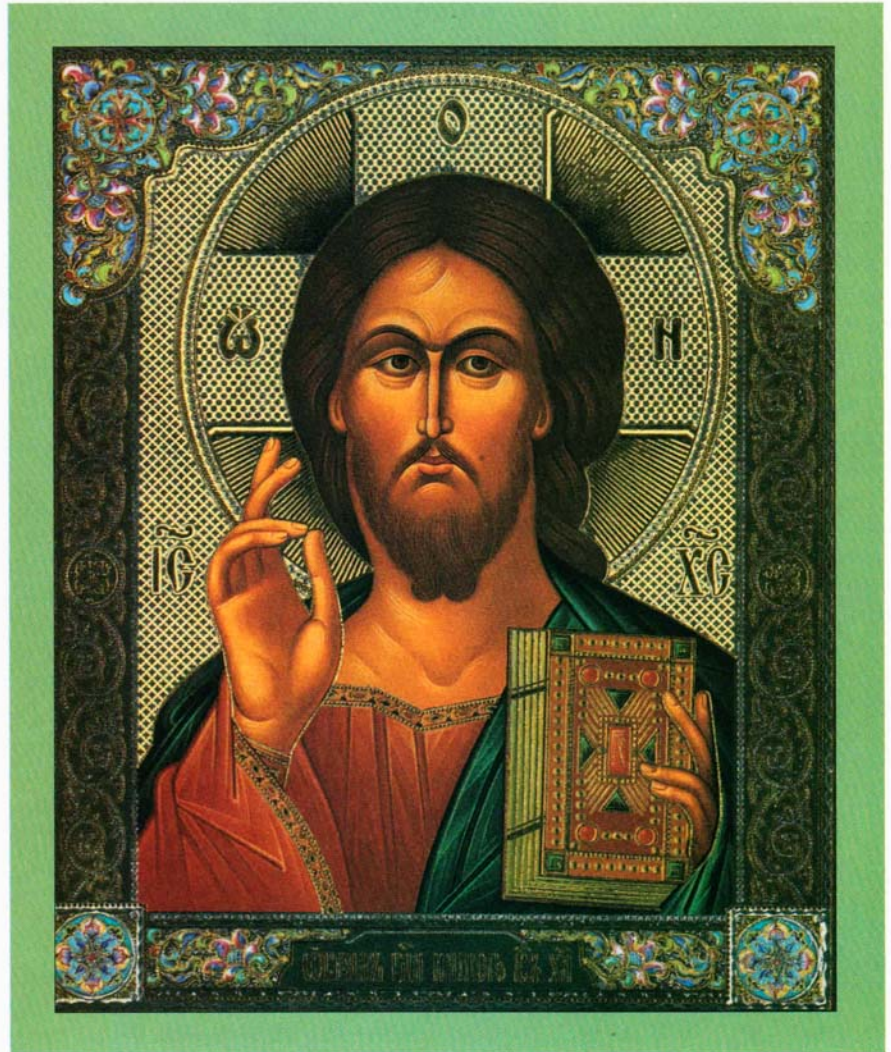
### Part XV

**S**t. John summarizes the Orthodox teaching on the Bible, categorizes and explains different kinds of sayings about Christ found in Scripture, and answers those who say that God is the author of evil.

#### 4.17 About Scripture.

One is the God who is proclaimed by both the Old and the New Testaments, who is praised and glorified in the Trinity; says the Lord, *I have come not to destroy the law but to fulfill it.*<sup>1</sup> For he himself worked out our salvation, in furtherance of which is all Scripture and all mystery. And again, *Search the Scriptures, for these testify of Me.*<sup>2</sup> And the Apostle says, *God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by his Son.*<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, it was through the Holy Spirit that the law and the prophets, and the evangelists and apostles and pastors and teachers spoke.

All Scripture, then, is given by inspiration of God and is also assuredly profitable.<sup>4</sup> Therefore it is most beautiful and profitable for souls to search the Scriptures. For just like the tree planted by the channels of waters, so also the soul watered by the divine Scripture is enriched and in its season gives fruit, orthodox belief, and is adorned with evergreen foliage,<sup>5</sup> I mean, actions pleasing to God. For through the Holy Scriptures we are put in harmony with regard to virtuous actions and untroubled contemplation. For in these we find both exhortation to every virtue and dissuasion from every vice. So if we are lovers of learning, we shall also be learned in many things. For by care and toil and the grace of God the Giver, all things prosper. *For every one who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to*



*him who knocks it will be opened.*<sup>6</sup> So let us knock at that very fair garden [paradise] of the Scriptures, so fragrant and sweet and blooming, with its varied sounds of spiritual and divinely-inspired birds ringing all around our ears, laying hold of our hearts, comforting the mourner, pacifying the angry person and filling him with everlasting joy; [that garden] which sets our mind on the gold-gleaming and radiant back of the divine

dove, whose bright pinions<sup>7</sup> lead up to the only-begotten Son and heir<sup>8</sup> of the husbandman of that spiritual vineyard and through him bring us to the Father of lights.<sup>9</sup> But let us not knock carelessly but rather zealously and constantly, let us not grow weary knocking.<sup>10</sup> For in this way it will be opened to us. If we read once or twice and do not understand what we read, let us not grow weary, but let us persist,

1. Matt. 5:17.

2. John 5:39.

3. Heb. 1:1-2.

4. 2 Tim. 3:16..

5. Psa. 1:3.

6. Luke 11:10. This verse carries a suggestion of continuance or persistence, i.e. "keep asking . . . keep seeking . . . keep knocking."

7. Psa. 67 (68):13.

8. Matt. 21:37.

9. Jas. 1:17.

10. Cf. note 6.

let us talk much, let us inquire. *For ask your Father*, it says, *and he will show you; your elders, and they will tell you.*<sup>11</sup> *For there is not in everyone that knowledge.*<sup>12</sup> Let us draw from the wellspring of paradise perennial and purest waters springing into life eternal.<sup>13</sup> Let us luxuriate, let us take delight insatiably, for the Scriptures possess inexhaustible grace. But if we are able to reap anything useful from outside sources, there is nothing to forbid that. Let us become proven money-dealers, heaping up the true and pure gold and discarding what is adulterated. Let us keep the most beautiful sayings, but let us throw to the dogs absurd gods and strange myths, for we may be able most strongly to prevail against them, through themselves.

Note, further, that there are 22 books of the Old Testament, one for each letter of the Hebrew tongue. For there are 22 letters, 5 of which are double, and so they come to be 27. For the letters *Caph, Mem, Nun, Pe*,<sup>14</sup> *Sade* are double. And thus in this way the number of the books is 22, but is found to be 27 because of the double character of 5. For Ruth is joined on to Judges, and the Hebrews count them one book; the first and second books of Kingdoms are counted one, and so are the third and fourth books of Kingdoms;<sup>15</sup> and also the first and second of Paraleipomena;<sup>16</sup> and the first and second of Esdra. In this way, then, the books are collected together in four pentateuchs [5-vol. works] and two others remain over, to form thus the canonical books. Five of them are of the law, that is, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. This, the legislation, is the first pentateuch. Then comes another pentateuch, the so-called *Graphieia* [Writings], or as they are called by some, the *Hagiographa* [Holy Writings], which are the following: Jesus the Son of Nave,<sup>17</sup> Judges along with Ruth, 1st and 2nd Kingdoms, which are one book, 3rd and 4th Kingdoms, which are one book, and the two books of the Paraleipomena which are one book. This is the second pentateuch. The third pentateuch is the books in verse, that is, Job, Psalms, Proverbs of Solomon, Ecclesiastes of the same,<sup>18</sup> and the Song

of Songs of the same. The fourth pentateuch is the prophetic books, that is, the twelve prophets constituting one book, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, [and] Daniel. Then come the two books of Esdra made into one, and Esther.<sup>19</sup> There are also the All-Virtuous,<sup>20</sup> that is the Wisdom of Solomon, and the Wisdom of Jesus, which was published in Hebrew by the father of Sirach, and afterwards translated into Greek by his grandson, Jesus, the Son of Sirach. These are virtuous and noble, but are not counted nor were they placed in the ark.<sup>21</sup>

The New Testament contains four gospels, that according to Matthew, that according to Mark, that according to Luke, that according to John; the Acts of the holy apostles by Luke the Evangelist; seven catholic epistles: one of James, two of Peter, three of John, one of Jude; fourteen letters of the apostle Paul; the Revelation of John the Evangelist; the Canons of the holy apostles, by Clement.

#### 4.18 Concerning the things said with respect to Christ.

The things said concerning Christ fall into four generic ways of speaking.<sup>22</sup> For some fit him even before the incarnation, others in the union,<sup>23</sup> others after the union, and others after the resurrection. Also, of those that refer to the period before the incarnation there are six ways of speaking: for some of them declare the union of nature and the identity in essence with the Father, as this one: *I and My Father are one*;<sup>24</sup> also this, *He who has seen me has seen the Father*;<sup>25</sup> and this, *Who being in the form of God*,<sup>26</sup> and so forth. Others declare the perfection of the hypostasis [subsistence, "Person"], such as these: *Son of God*, and *the express image of his person*,<sup>27</sup> and *Angel [Messenger] of great*

*counsel, wonderful counselor*,<sup>28</sup> and the like.

Again, others declare the indwelling [interpenetration] of the hypostases in one another, as, *I am in the Father and the Father in me*,<sup>29</sup> and their inseparable foundation, as, for instance, the Word, and wisdom, and power, and radiance. For the Word<sup>30</sup> is in the Mind<sup>31</sup> (word according to essence,<sup>32</sup> I mean), and wisdom, likewise; and power is in the one who is powerful, and radiance in the light, all springing forth from these.<sup>33</sup>

And others make known the fact of his origin from the Father as cause, for instance *My Father is greater than I*.<sup>34</sup> For from him he derives both his being and all that he has: his being was by generative and not by creative means, as, *I came forth from the Father and am come*,<sup>35</sup> and *I live because of [by] the Father*.<sup>36</sup> But all that he has is not his by free gift or by teaching, but in a causal sense, as, *The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do*.<sup>37</sup> For if the Father is not, neither is the Son. For the Son is of the Father and in the Father and with the Father, and not after the Father. Similarly too, what he does is from him and with him. For there is one and the same — not similar but the same — will and energy and power in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

But other [things] are as fulfilling of the Father's good pleasure through his energy [activity, operation], and not as through an instrument or a servant, but as through his essential and hypostatic Word and Wisdom and Power, because the action observed in Father and Son is one, for instance: *All things were made through him*,<sup>38</sup> and *He sent his word and healed them*,<sup>39</sup> and *That they may believe that you sent me*.<sup>40</sup>

28. Isa. 9:6. The Greek word *angelos* means both "angel" and "messenger."

29. John 14:10.

30. Gk. *logos*. The Logos of God is God's Word (or Speech) but also his Reason.

31. Gk. *no*, dative of *nous*, Mind (or Intellect), used as an image of the Father. (In this 3-fold patristic image, the Spirit is God's *pneuma* = breath or spirit which carries forth the divine Word that is uttered eternally by the Mind, the Father).

32. The 3 hypostases are distinct, but indwell one another, being of one and the same essence.

33. *Word, and wisdom, and power, and radiance*; these characterize the Son, but originate in the Father, who is Mind, Light, etc. as St. John explains.

34. John 14:28.

35. John 16:28.

36. John 6:57.

37. John 5:19.

38. John 1:3.

39. Psa. 106 (107):20.

40. John 11:42.

11. Deut. 32:7.

12. 1 Cor. 8:7.

13. John 4:14.

14. Some mss. read *phi*.

15. 1-4 Kingdoms in the Greek Scriptures = 1-2 Samuel + 1-2 Kings in the Hebrew Scriptures.

16. "Chronicles" is the Hebrew title of these books; the meaning of the Greek name is obscure but is usually interpreted as "things passed over," "omissions."

17. Joshua, the son of Nun.

18. the same: Solomon (ditto for the Song of Songs).

19. Two mss. read *and Judith and Esther*, while Epiphanius omits mention of *Judith*. St. John's list of the canonical books omits several books found in the Septuagint or "LXX," the Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures.

20. Gk. *Panaretos*.

21. St. John notes that some of the deuterocanonical books are not regarded as holy Scripture, though they are worthwhile and virtuous books. Other Orthodox sources count them as Scripture but do not accord them the same weight as the earlier books. Which view is "correct"? From an Orthodox perspective, the question itself may not need to be asked, for there was originally no Orthodox "Bible" as such, but rather various holy writings, some of which (e.g. the gospels) carry more weight, and others less.

22. Greek *tropos* is here rendered variously (and interchangeably) as: *way of speaking, style, style of speaking, mode*.

23. union: i.e. the union of the two natures in the one hypostasis of the Word; the hypostatic union.

24. John 10:30.

25. John 14:9.

26. Phil. 2:6.

27. Heb. 1:3.

*Continued on the next page*

## An Exact Exposition

Continued from page 51

Again, some have a prophetic sense, and of these some are in the future tense: for instance, *He shall come openly*,<sup>41</sup> and this from Zechariah, *Look, your King is coming to you*,<sup>42</sup> and this from Micah, *See, the Lord comes [is coming] out of his place and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth*.<sup>43</sup> But others, though future, are put in the past tense, as, for instance, *This is our God; therefore he was seen upon the earth and dwelled among men*,<sup>44</sup> and *The Lord created me in the beginning of his ways for his works*,<sup>45</sup> and *Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows*,<sup>46</sup> and similar [places].

So, the things said that refer to the period before the union will be applicable to him even after the union, but those that refer to the period after the union will not be applicable at all before the union, unless indeed in a prophetic sense, as we said. Those that refer to the time of the union are of three ways of speaking. For when our discourse deals with the higher aspect, we speak of the deification of the flesh, its being endowed with the Word, and its exceeding exaltation, and so on, making manifest the riches that are added to the flesh from the union and natural conjunction with the most high God the Word. And when our discourse deals with the lower aspect, we speak of the incarnation of God the Word, his becoming man, his emptying of himself, his poverty, his humility. For these and similar things are imposed upon the Word and God through his admixture with humanity. Again, when we keep both sides in view at the same time, we speak of union, community, anointing, natural conjunction, conformation and the like. The former two ways of speaking, then, have their reason in this third way of speaking. For through the union it is made clear what either has obtained from the intimate junction with and permeation through the other. For through the union in hypostasis the flesh is said to be deified and to become God and to be equally God with the Word; and God the Word is said to be made flesh, and to become a human being, and is called creature, and last; not in the sense that the two natures

are changed into one compound nature (for it is not possible in one nature for opposed natural qualities to exist together),<sup>47</sup> but in the sense that the two natures are united in hypostasis and permeate each other without confusion or transmutation [change]. And the interpenetration [permeation] did not come from the flesh but from the divinity, for it is impossible that the flesh should permeate through the divinity; but the divine nature once permeating through the flesh gave also to the flesh the same ineffable power of permeation; and this indeed is what we call union.

Notice also that of those<sup>48</sup> ways of speaking [modes] belonging to the period of the union, in the case of the first and second, reciprocation is observed. For when we speak about the flesh, we use the terms deification and assumption of the Word and exceeding exaltation and anointing. For these are derived from divinity, but are observed in connection with the flesh. And when we speak about the Word, we use the terms emptying, incarnation, becoming human, humility and the like; and these, as we said, are imposed on the Word and God from the flesh. For he himself willingly endured these things.

Of the things that refer to the period after the union there are three ways of speaking. The first disclose the divine nature, for instance: *I am in the Father and the Father in Me*,<sup>49</sup> and *I and the Father are one*,<sup>50</sup> and all those things which are affirmed of him before his assumption of humanity, will be affirmed of him even after his assumption of humanity, with this exception, that he did not assume the flesh<sup>51</sup> and its natural properties.

The second disclose the human nature, for instance: *Now you are seeking to kill me, a man who has told you the truth*,<sup>52</sup> and *Even so must the Son of Man be lifted up*,<sup>53</sup> and the like.

Now of the things said and written about Christ the Savior after the manner of men, whether they deal with sayings or actions, there are six ways of speaking. For some of them were done or said naturally in accordance with the incarnation; for instance, his birth from a virgin, his growth and progress with age, his hunger, thirst, weariness, fear, sleep, piercing with nails, death and all similar natural and in-

nocent passions. For in all these there is a mixture of what is divine and what is human, although they are held to belong in reality to the body, the divine not suffering any of these, but through them working out the economy of our salvation.

Others are of the nature of simulation, such as Christ's question, *Where have you laid Lazarus?*,<sup>54</sup> his running to the fig tree, his shrinking, that is, his drawing back, his praying, and his making *as though he would have gone further*.<sup>55</sup> For neither as God nor as man was he in need of these or similar things, but he makes a display according to what would be fitting for his humanity with respect to the demands of what was necessary and what was profitable. For example, the praying was to show that he is not opposed to God, for he gives honor to the Father as the cause of himself;<sup>56</sup> and the question was not put in ignorance but to show that he is truly human, along with being God; and the drawing back is to teach us not to be impetuous nor to give ourselves up.

Again some things are said in the manner of association and relation, as for example: *My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?*<sup>57</sup> and *He made him who knew no sin to be sin for us*,<sup>58</sup> and *having become a curse for us*,<sup>59</sup> also, *Then the Son himself will also be subject to him who put all things under him*.<sup>60</sup> For neither as God nor as man was he ever forsaken by the Father, nor did he become sin or a curse, nor did he require to be made subject to the Father. For as God he is equal to the Father and not opposed to him nor subjected to him; and as God, he was never at any time disobedient to his Begetter to make it necessary for him to make him subject. He said these things, then, claiming our person as his own, and ranking himself with us. For we are bound in the fetters of sin and the curse as faithless and disobedient, and therefore forsaken.

Others things again are said on account of a distinction in thought. For if you divide in thought things that in very truth are inseparable — let us say, the flesh<sup>61</sup> from the Word — the terms 'servant' and 'ignorant' are used of Him, for indeed he was of a subject and ignorant nature, and except that it was united with God the

41. Psa. 49 (50):3.

42. Zech. 9:9.

43. Mic. 1:3.

44. Bar. 3:38.

45. Prov. 8:22.

46. Psa. 44 (45):7.

47. See above, Book 3, section 2.

48. I.e. the three such modes, or styles (see previous par.)

49. John 14:1.

50. John 10:30.

51. flesh: i.e. human nature, humanity (Gk. *sarka*).

52. John 8:40.

53. John 3:14.

54. John 11:34.

55. Luke 24:28.

56. See above, Book 3, sec. 24.

57. Matt. 27:46.

58. 2 Cor. 5:21.

59. Gal. 3:13.

60. 1 Cor. 15:28.

Word, his flesh was servile and ignorant.<sup>62</sup> But because of the union in hypostasis with God the Word it was neither servile nor ignorant. In this way, too, he called the Father his God.

Other statements, again are for the purpose of revealing him to us and strengthening our faith, like this: *And now, O Father, glorify me with the glory which I had with you, before the world was.*<sup>63</sup> For he himself was glorified and is glorified, but his glory was not manifested nor confirmed to us. Also what the apostle said: *Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the*

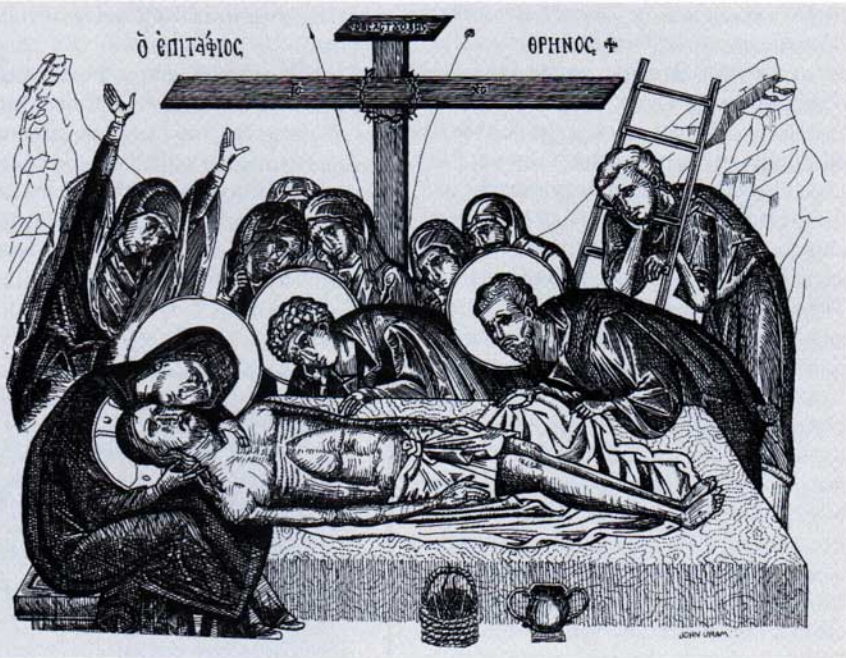
*of the Father, so he who feeds on me will live because of me.*<sup>68</sup> And this: *I go to my Father and you see me no more.*<sup>69</sup> And this: *They would not have crucified the Lord of glory.*<sup>70</sup> And this: *And no one has ascended to heaven but he who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven,*<sup>71</sup> and similar.

Again, of the affirmations that refer to the period after the resurrection some are suitable to God, as this: *Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,*<sup>72</sup> for here 'Son' is clearly used as God; also this: *See, I am with you always, even to the end of the*

place to place without trouble, and passing in through closed gates. Others have the character of simulation, for instance: *He made as though he would have gone further.*<sup>76</sup> Others are appropriate to the double nature, for instance, *I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God,*<sup>77</sup> and *The King of glory shall come in*<sup>78</sup> and *He sat down on the right hand of the majesty on High.*<sup>79</sup> Finally others are to be understood as though he were ranking himself with us, in the manner of separation in pure thought, as, *My God and your God.*<sup>80</sup>

So it is necessary for those sayings

*I go to my  
Father and  
you see me  
no more.*



*resurrection from the dead.*<sup>64</sup> For by the miracles and the resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit it was manifested and confirmed to the world that he is the Son of God. And this too: The Child grew in wisdom and grace.<sup>65</sup>

Others again have reference to his appropriation of the personal life of the Jews, in numbering himself among the Jews, as he says to the Samaritan woman, *You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is from the Jews.*<sup>66</sup>

The third way of speaking declares the one hypostasis, also proving the combination:<sup>67</sup> for instance, *And I live because*

*age,*<sup>73</sup> and other similar ones. For he is with us as God. Others are suitable to man, for instance: *They held him by the feet,*<sup>74</sup> and *There they will see me,*<sup>75</sup> and so forth.

Now of the things referring to the period after the Resurrection that are applicable [suitable] to humanity, there are different modes. For some did actually take place, yet not according to nature, but according to economy [dispensation], in order to confirm the fact that the same body which suffered, rose again; such are the bruises, the eating, and the drinking after the resurrection. Others took place actually and naturally, e.g. changing from

which are sublime to be attributed to the divine nature, which is superior to passion and body; and for those which are humble to be attributed to the human nature; and for those which are common, to be attributed to the combination, that is, the one Christ, who is God and man. And it should be understood that both belong to one and the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. For if we know what is proper to each, and perceive that both are performed from one, we will believe rightly and will not be led astray. At the same time, from all these [sayings] is the difference between the united natures discerned, and the fact that — as the most divine Cyril says — the divinity and the humanity are not one with respect to

61. flesh: humanity, human nature (Grk. *sarka*).

62. See above, Book 3, sec. 21.

63. John 17:5.

64. Rom. 1:4.

65. cf. Luke 2:40,52.

66. John 4:22.

67. combination: the union of the two natures in the one Person of Christ.

68. John 6:57.

69. John 16:10.

70. 1 Cor. 2:8.

71. John 3:13.

72. Matt. 28:19.

73. Matt. 28:20.

74. cf. Matt. 28:9.

75. Matt. 28:10.

76. Luke 24:28.

77. John 20:17.

78. Psa. 23 (24):7.

79. Heb. 1:3.

80. John 20:17.

*Continued on the next page*

## An Exact Exposition

Continued from page 53

natural quality. But yet there is but one Son and Christ and Lord; and as he is one, one also is his person [individual self] — the unity according to hypostasis being in no way divided in parts on account of the knowledge of the distinction in nature.

### 4.19 *That God is not the cause of evils.*

It should be observed that it is the custom in the Holy Scripture to call God's permission his energy [activity], as when the apostle says in the Epistle to the Romans, *Does not the potter have power [authority] over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?*<sup>81</sup> Because, on the one hand, he himself makes even the things that are evil; for he himself alone is the Author of all things — yet he himself does not furnish things honorable or dishonorable, but the personal capacity of each for free choice. And this is plain from what the same Apostle says in the second epistle to Timothy: *In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. Therefore if a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.*<sup>82</sup> And it is evident that the purification must be voluntary: for it says, *if a man cleanses himself.* But the answer that follows, would reply, "If a man does not cleanse himself he will be a vessel for dishonor, useless to the master and fit only to be broken in pieces." So, this passage which we have quoted and this one: *God has committed them all to disobedience,*<sup>83</sup> and this: *God has given them the spirit of slumber, eyes of not seeing, and ears of not hearing;*<sup>84</sup> all these must be understood not as of God energizing [acting, operating], but as of God giving place [yielding], both because of free-will and because goodness knows no compulsion.

His permission, therefore, is usually spoken of in the Holy Scripture as his activity [energy] and work. But even when it says that God creates evils,<sup>85</sup> and that there is no evil in a city that the Lord has

81. Rom. 9:21. St. John refers to the fact that this (and other) Scriptural texts do not speak of God giving permission to the clay (i.e. man) to choose good or evil, but instead speak of the results (honor, or dishonor) as if this were the result of God's activity (energy).

82. 2 Tim. 2:20-21.

83. Rom. 11:32.

84. Isa. 29:10, Rom. 11:8.

85. cf. Isa. 45:7.

not done,<sup>86</sup> it does not point to God as the cause of evils, but the word "evil" is used in two ways, with two meanings. For sometimes it means what is evil by nature, and this is the opposite of virtue and the will of God; and sometimes it means that which is evil and oppressive to our sensation, that is to say, afflictions and calamities. Now these are seemingly evil because they are painful, but in reality they are good. For they become, to those who understand, agents of conversion and salvation. These things happen by God, says the Scripture.

Moreover, it is to be observed also that of these, we ourselves are causes; for involuntary evils are the offspring of voluntary ones.

This also should be recognized, that it is usual in the Scriptures for some things that ought to be considered as effects to be stated in a causal sense, as here: *Against you only have I sinned and done this evil in your sight, that you might be justified when you speak, and prevail when you are judged.*<sup>87</sup> For the sinner did not sin in

86. cf. Amos 3:6.  
87. Psa. 50 (51):4.

order that God might prevail, and again God did not require our sin in order that he might by it be revealed as victor. For, beyond comparison, he wins the victor's prize against all, even those who are sinless, being the Maker, incomprehensible and uncreated and possessing a natural and not acquired glory. For it is because when we sin he is not unjust in his anger against us; and when he forgives the penitents he is shown as victor over our wickedness. But we ourselves do not sin with a view to this, but [these things happen] because the matter turns out in this way. It is just as if someone was sitting down while at work and a friend stood nearby, and he said, "My friend came in order that I might do no work today." But the friend was not present in order that the person would not work, but that was the result, because being occupied with receiving his friend he did not work. These things as well are spoken of as effects because matters resulted that way. And God does not wish that he alone should be just [righteous], but that all should become like him, as much as possible.

*To be continued.*

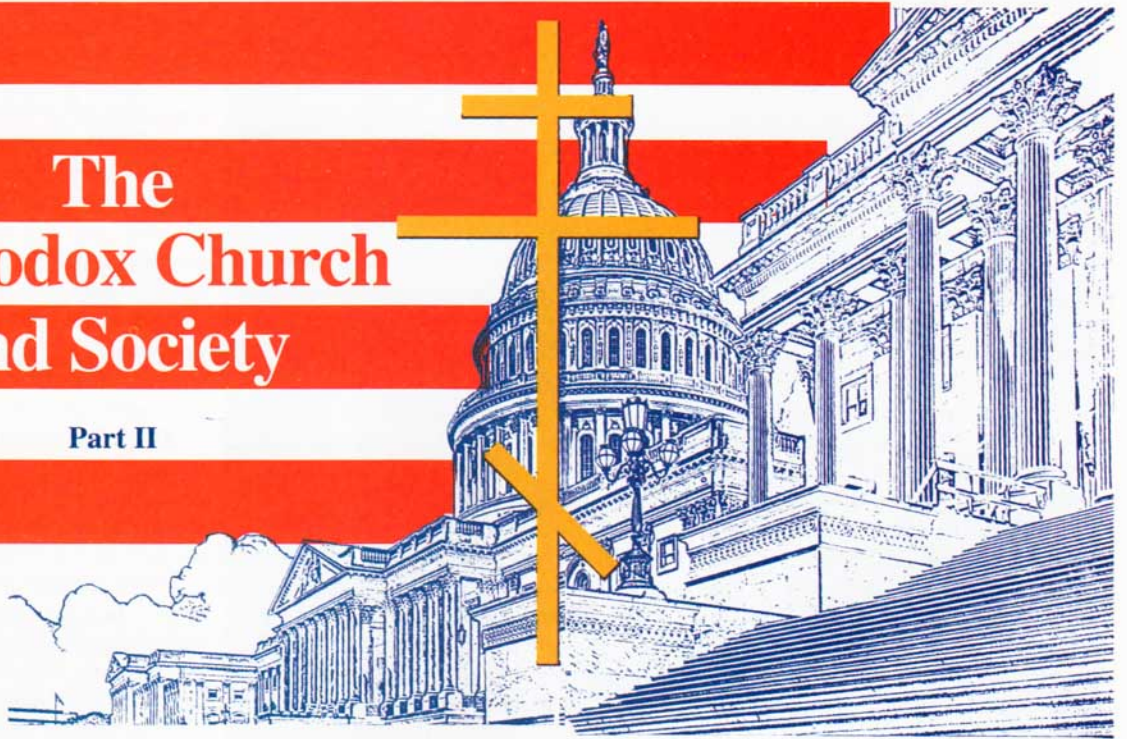
The Christian who fails to respond to the invitation of the Holy Spirit and does not take part in the liturgical gathering of the Holy Eucharist, separates himself or herself from the shared life of the Body of Christ. Such a Christian is under the domination of Satan. In order to be a member of the body of Christ, the Christian must share not only in the common worship of the Church, but also in the communion of the Body and Blood of Christ . . . Holy Communion, among other things, is a gift of God . . . the shared food which grants true life to the unity of the faithful. This food destroys the demonic powers, keeps death far from the body of Christ, and grants life — the life in God.

—from *Partakers of Divine Nature*,  
by Archimandrite Christoforos Stavropoulos



# The Orthodox Church and Society

## Part II



### III. Church and State, Section 4.<sup>1</sup> (cont'd)

In the United State of America, where there has been a multi-confessional state from the outset, the principle of radical separation of Church and State has been established, whereby the power system is neutral to all confessions. However, absolute neutrality is hardly feasible at all. Every country has to reckon with the real religious composition of its population. No Christian denomination taken separately makes up a majority in the United States, yet the decisive majority of people in the U.S. are specifically Christians. This reality is reflected, for example, in the fact that the president takes the oath of office on the Bible, Sundays are official days off, etc.

The principle of church-state separation, however, also has another genealogy. In the European continent it has resulted from the anticlerical or outright anti-church struggle, well known particularly

from the history of the French Revolution. In these cases, the Church is separated from the State not because of the multi-confessionalism of the citizens, but because the State identifies itself with a particular anti-Christian or altogether anti-religious ideology, making it pointless to speak about its neutrality towards religion and even its purely secular nature. For the Church, it normally means restrictions, limited rights, discrimination or outright persecution. The history of the 20th century has given many examples of this attitude of State towards religion and Church in various countries of the world.

There is also a form of church-state relations, intermediate between the established church and the radical separation of Church from State, whereby the Church has the status of a private corporation. It is the status of the Church as a legal public corporation. In this case, the Church can have some privileges and obligations delegated to her by the state without being the Established Church in the proper sense of this word.

Today a number of countries, such as Great Britain, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Greece, still have Established Churches. Other states, which increasingly grow in number (USA, France), build their relations with religious communities on the

basis of full separation. In Germany, the Catholic, Evangelical and some other Churches have the status of legal public corporations, while other religious communities are fully separated from the state and regarded as private corporations. In practice, however, the real status of religious communities in most of these countries depends little on whether they are separated or not from the state. In some countries where Churches have retained the public status, it has been reduced to collecting taxes for their upkeep by the public fiscal administration and recognizing church baptism and marriage records as valid legally as civil status certificates registered by public administrative bodies.

Today the Orthodox Church performs her service to God and people in various countries. In some of them she represents the nationwide confession (Greece, Romania, Bulgaria), while in others, which are multinational, the religion of the ethnic majority (Russia). In still other countries, those who belong to the Orthodox Church comprise a religious minority surrounded by either heterodox Christians (Finland, Poland, USA) or people of other religions (Japan, Syria, Turkey). In some small countries the Orthodox Church has the

*Continued on the next page*

<sup>1</sup> This is one section of a serialized presentation of a study published in 2000 by the Russian Orthodox Church (R.O.C.) with the title *The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church*. The present version is based on the translation provided by the Moscow Patriarchate, 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](http://www.incommunion.org). The print version, including a convenient index, is available at a modest price from St. Tikhon's Seminary Bookstore. The original Russian text can be viewed at the R.O.C. website.

## Orthodox Church and Society

*Continued from page 55*

status of the state religion (Cyprus, Greece), while in other countries it is separate from the state. There are also differences in the concrete legal and political contexts in which the Local Orthodox Churches live. They all, however, build both their internal order and relations with the government on the commandments of Christ, teachings of the apostles, the holy canons and the two-thousand-year-long historical experience and in many situations, find an opportunity to pursue their God-commanded goals, thus revealing their otherworldly nature, their heavenly, divine origin.

**III. 5.** Given their different natures, Church and State use different means for attaining their goals. The state relies basically on material power (including coercion), and on respective secular ideological systems, whereas the Church has at her disposal religious and moral means to give spiritual guidance to the flock and to attract new children.

The Church infallibly preaches the Truth of Christ and teaches moral commandments which came from God Himself. Therefore, she has no power to change anything in her teaching. Nor has she the power to fall silent and to stop preaching the Truth, whatever other teachings may be prescribed or propagated by state bodies. In this respect, the Church is absolutely free from the state. For the sake of the unhindered and internally free preaching of the Truth, the Church has suffered persecution by the enemies of Christ many times throughout her history. But the persecuted Church is also called to endure the persecution with patience, without refusing to be loyal to the state persecuting her.

Legal sovereignty in the territory of a state belongs to its authorities. Therefore, it is they who determine the legal status of a Local Church or her position, either giving her an opportunity for the unhindered fulfillment of the church's mission, or restricting this opportunity. Thus, state power makes judgment on itself and eventually predicts its own fate. The Church remains loyal to the state, but God's commandment to fulfill the task of salvation in any situation or circumstance is above this loyalty.

If the state authorities force Orthodox believers to apostatize from Christ and His

Church and to commit sinful and spiritually harmful actions, the Church should refuse to obey the state. The Christian, following the will of his conscience, can refuse to fulfill the commands of the state that would force him into a grave sin. If the Church and her holy authorities find it impossible to obey state laws and orders, after a due consideration of the problem, they may take the following action: enter into direct dialogue with the authorities on the problem; call upon the people to use the democratic mechanisms to change the legislation or review the authorities' decision; apply to international bodies and world public opinion; and appeal to her faithful for peaceful civil disobedience.

**III. 6.** The principle of the freedom of conscience, which emerged as a legal notion in the 18th-19th centuries, has become a fundamental principle of interpersonal relations only after World War I. It was confirmed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and included in the constitutions of most states. The emergence of this principle testifies that in the contemporary world, religion is being turned from a "social" into a "private" affair of a person. This process in itself indicates that the spiritual value system has disintegrated, and that most people in a society that affirms freedom of conscience no longer aspire for salvation. If initially the state emerged as an instrument of asserting divine law in society, freedom of conscience has ultimately turned the state into an exclusively temporal institution with no religious commitments.

The adoption of freedom of conscience as a legal principle points to the fact that society has lost its religious goals and values, and has become massively apostate and actually indifferent to the task of the Church and to the overcoming of sin. However, this principle has proved to be one of the means by which the Church exists in a non-religious world, enabling her to enjoy a legal status in a secular state, and independence from those in society who believe differently, or do not believe at all.

The religious-ideological neutrality of the state does not contradict the Christian concept of the Church's calling in society. The Church, however, should point out to the state that it is inadmissible to propagate such convictions or actions which may result in total control over a person's life, convictions and relations with other

people, as well as erosion in personal, family or public morality, insult of religious feelings, damage to the cultural and spiritual identity of the people, and threats to the sacred gift of life. In implementing her social, charitable, educational and other socially significant projects, the Church may rely on the support and assistance of the state. She also has the right to expect that the state, in building its relations with religious bodies, will take into account the number of their followers and the place they occupy in forming the historical, cultural and spiritual image of the people and their public position.

**III. 7.** The forms and methods of government are conditioned in many ways by the spiritual and moral condition of society. Aware of this, the Church accepts the people's choice or, at least, does not resist it. Under the rule of the Judges (the civil system described in the Book of Judges), power was exercised not through coercion, but authority, which was sanctioned by God. For this authority to be effective, the faith in society should be very strong. Under a monarchy, power remains God-given, but for its exercise it uses not so much spiritual authority as coercion. The shift from the judges' rule to monarchy indicated the weakening of faith — it was this fact that caused the need to replace the King Invisible by a visible king. Contemporary democracies, including those monarchical in form, do not seek divine sanction of power. They represent a form of government in secular society that presupposes the right of every able-bodied citizen to express his will through elections.

Any change in the form of government to that more religiously rooted, introduced without spiritualizing society itself, will inevitably degenerate into falsehood and hypocrisy and make this form weak and valueless in the eyes of the people. However, one cannot altogether exclude the possibility of such a spiritual revival of society as to make natural a religiously higher form of government. But under slavery every one should follow St. Paul's advice: "if you should have the chance of being free, accept it" (1 Cor. 7:21). At the same time, the Church should give more attention not to the system of the outer organization of state, but to the inner condition of her members' hearts. Therefore, the Church does not believe it possible for her to become an initiator of any change in

the form of government. Along the same line, the 1994 Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church stressed the soundness of the attitude whereby "the Church does not give preference to any social system or to any of the existing political doctrines."

**III. 8.** The state, including the secular state, is normally aware of its calling to build the life of the people on the principles of good and justice, taking care of both the material and spiritual welfare of society. Therefore, the Church can cooperate with the state in affairs which benefit the Church herself, as well as the individual and society. For the Church this cooperation should be part of her saving mission, which embraces comprehensively the concern for man. The Church is called to take part in building human life in all spheres where it is possible and, in doing so, to join efforts with representatives of the secular authority.

Church-state cooperation should be realized on the following conditions: the Church's participation in the work of the state corresponds to her nature and calling; the state does exercise control over the Church's social work; and the Church is not involved in the spheres of public activity where her work is impossible for canonical and other reasons.

The areas of church-state cooperation in the present historical period are as follows:

a) peacemaking on international, inter-ethnic and civic levels, and promoting mutual understanding and cooperation among people, nations and states;

b) concern for the preservation of morality in society;

c) spiritual, cultural, moral and patriotic education and formation;

d) charity and the development of joint social programs;

e) preservation, restoration and development of historical and cultural heritage, including concern for the preservation of historical and cultural monuments;

f) dialogue with governmental bodies of all branches and levels on issues important for the Church and society, including the development of appropriate laws, by-laws, regulations and decisions;

g) care of the military and law-enforcement workers and their spiritual and moral education;

h) efforts to prevent crime and care of prisoners;

i) science and research;

j) health care;

k) culture and the arts;

l) work of ecclesiastical and secular mass media;

m) preservation of the environment;

n) economic activity for the benefit of the Church, state and society;

o) support for the institution of the family, for motherhood and childhood;

p) opposition to the work of pseudo-religious structures presenting a threat to the individual and society.

Church-state cooperation is also possible in some other areas if it contributes to the fulfillment of the tasks enumerated above.

At the same time, there are areas in which the clergy and canonical church structures cannot support the state or cooperate with it. They are as follows:

a) political struggle, election agitation, campaigns in support of particular political parties and public and political leaders;

b) waging civil war or aggressive external war;

c) direct participation in intelligence and any other activity that requires secrecy by law, even in making one's confession or reporting to the church authorities.

Among the traditional areas of the social efforts of the Orthodox Church is intercession with the government for the needs of the people, the rights and concerns of individual citizens or social groups. This intercession is a duty of the Church, realized through verbal or written interventions by appropriate church bodies with the governmental bodies of various branches and levels.

**III. 9.** In the contemporary state, power is normally divided into the legislative, executive and judicial branches at the national, regional and local levels. This determines the specifications of the Church's relations with the authorities at various branches and levels.

Relations with the legislative power consist in dialogue between the Church and the legislators on the improvement of national and local laws pertaining to the life of the Church, church-state cooperation and the spheres of the Church's social concern. This dialogue also concerns the resolutions and decisions of the legislative power that have no direct bearing on legislation.

In contacts with the executive power,

the Church should conduct dialogue on making decisions pertaining to the life of the Church, church-state cooperation and the spheres of the Church's social concern. To this end, the Church maintains contacts on the respective level with central and local executive power bodies, including those responsible for solving practical problems in the life and work of religious organizations and those responsible for monitoring the observance of law (organs of justice, prosecution, interior) by the above-mentioned bodies.

The Church's relationships with the judiciary on various levels should be limited to the representation, if necessary, of her interests in court. The Church does not interfere in the judicial authorities' exercise of its functions and powers. Except for absolute necessity, the interests of the Church are represented in court by lay people empowered by the church authorities on the respective level (*Chalcedon 9*). Internal church disputes should not be brought out to secular court (*Antioch 12*). Inter-confessional conflicts, and conflicts with schismatics that do not touch upon doctrinal matters can be brought to secular court (*Carthage 59*).

**III. 10.** The holy canons forbid the clergy to approach the government without permission from the church superiors. Thus, *Canon 11* of the *Council of Sardica* reads: "If any bishop or presbyter or generally any one of the clergy dare to go to the ruler without permission and credentials from the bishop of the province and even more so from the bishop of the metropolis, let him be suspended and deprived not only of communion, but also of the dignity he enjoyed. If an urgent necessity makes one go to the ruler, let him do this with consideration and permission of the bishop of the metropolis and other bishops of that province and let him be sent with credentials from them."

The Church's contacts and cooperation with the highest state authorities are carried out by the Patriarch and the Holy Synod directly, or through representatives who have powers confirmed in writing. Her contacts and cooperation with the regional governments are carried out by diocesan bishops, or through representatives who also have powers confirmed in writing. Her contacts and cooperation with the local authorities and self-government bodies are carried out by deaneries and

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parishes with the blessing of their diocesan bishops. The representatives of the church supreme authorities empowered to maintain contacts with the governmental bodies may be appointed both on a permanent and an *ad hoc* basis.

If a matter considered previously on the local or regional level is referred to the highest governmental bodies, the diocesan bishop is to notify the Patriarch and the Holy Synod about it and ask them to keep in contact with the state regarding further consideration of this matter. If a legal case is transferred from a local or regional to the highest level, the diocesan bishop should make a written report to the Patriarch and the Holy Synod about the earlier court examination. Those presiding over self-governed church districts and the administrators of dioceses in particular states have a special blessing from the Patriarch and the Holy Synod to maintain contacts with the leaders of these states.

**III. 11.** To avoid any confusion of church and state affairs and to prevent the church authority from acquiring temporal nature, the canons prohibit the clergy from participating in the affairs of state government. *Apostolic Canon* 81 reads: "It does not befit a bishop or a presbyter to enter the affairs of the people's government, but to be always engaged in the affairs of the Church." *Apostolic Canon* 6 and *Canon 10* of the *Seventh Ecumenical Council* speak of the same thing. In the contemporary context, these provisions apply not only to administration, but also to participation in the representative bodies of power (see V. 2).

### IV. Christian Ethics and Secular Law

**IV. 1.** God is perfection, therefore the world created by Him is perfect and harmonious. Life is observance of the divine laws, as God Himself is life endless and abundant. Through the original fall, evil and sin entered the world. At the same time, fallen man has retained the freedom to choose the right way with God's help. In this effort, the observance of God-given commandments asserts life. But deviation from them leads inevitably to destruction and death, as it is nothing else but deviation from God, hence, from being and life, which can be only in Him: "See, I have set before you this day life and good, and

death and evil; in that I command you this day to love the Lord your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes and His judgments, that you may live But if your hearts turn away, so that you will not hear, but shall be drawn away you shall surely perish, and you shall not prolong your days upon the land" (Deut. 30:15-18). In the earthly order of things, sin and retribution do not often follow each other immediately but many years and even generations may intervene: "For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of those who hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments" (Deut. 5:9-10). This distance between crime and punishment keeps man free, on the one hand, and compels reasonable and pious people to study the divine commandments with special attention, on the other, in order to learn to distinguish between right and wrong, lawful and unlawful.

Among the oldest monuments of the written language are numerous collections of homilies and statutes. Undoubtedly, they go back to the even earlier, pre-alphabet existence of humanity, since "the work of the law" is written by God in human hearts (Rom. 2:15). Law has been there in human society from time immemorial. The first rules were given to man as far back as the time of paradise (Gen. 2:16-17). After the fall, which is the violation of divine law by man, law becomes a boundary, and trespassing against it threatens the destruction of both the human personality and human community.

**IV. 2.** Law is called to manifest the one divine law of the universe in social and political realms. At the same time, any legal system developed by the human community, being as it is a fruit of historical development, carries a seal of limitation and imperfection. Law is a special realm, different from the related ethical realm, as it does not deal with the inner conditions of the human heart, since God alone is its Reader.

Yet it is human behavior and actions that is the subject of legal regulations, which is the essence of legislation. The law also provides for coercive measures for making people obey it. The legislative sanctions to restore the trampled law and order make law a reliable means of

holding society together, unless, as it has often happened in history, the whole system of the enforced law collapses. However, as no human community can exist without law, a new legislative system always emerges in place of the destroyed law and order.

The law contains a certain minimum of moral standards compulsory for all members of society. Secular law has as its task not to turn the world lying in evil into the Kingdom of God, but to prevent it from turning it into hell. The fundamental principle of law is: "do not do to others what you would not want to be done to you." If a person has committed a sinful action against another, the damage inflicted on the integrity of the divine law and order can be made up by the suffering of the offender, or pardon, whereby the moral consequences of a sinful action are assumed by the person (ruler, spiritual father, community, etc.) who issues pardon. Suffering heals the soul affected by sin, while the voluntary suffering of the innocent for the sins of a criminal represents the highest form of redemption, the ultimate of which is the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Who took upon Himself the sin of the world (Jn 1:29).

**IV. 3.** The understanding of where the "wounding edge" separating one person from another lies has been different in various societies and in various periods. The more religious a human community, the greater its awareness of the unity and integrity of the world. People in a religiously integrated society are viewed in two perspectives, both as unique personalities, who either stand or fall before God (Rom. 14:4) and who cannot be judged by other people, and as members of the one civil body, in which the illness of one member leads to the sickness and even death of the whole body. In the latter case, every person can and must be judged by the whole community, since the actions of one make an impact on many. The seeking of the spirit of peace by one righteous man, according to St. Seraphim of Sarov, leads to the salvation of thousands around him, while a sin committed by one culprit may entail the death of many.

This attitude to sinful and criminal manifestations is firmly grounded in Holy Scriptures and the Tradition of the Church. "By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted; but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked" (Prov. 11:11). St. Basil the

Great taught the people of Caesarea in Cappadocia: "Because of a few, disasters come upon a whole people, and because of the evil deeds of one, many have to taste their fruits. Ahab committed sacrilege, and all the chariots were defeated; already Zimri committed whoredom with a Midianite woman, and Israel was punished." St. Cyprian of Moscow writes much the same thing: "Do you not know that people's sin falls upon the prince, and the prince's sin falls upon the people?"

That is why old statute books also regulated those aspects of life which are outside regulation by today's law. For instance, by the legal provisions of the Pentateuch, adultery was punished by

divine norm, replacing it by an opposite one, it ceases to be law and becomes lawlessness, in whatever legal garments it may dress itself. For instance, the Decalogue clearly states: "Honor your father and your mother" (Ex. 20:12). Any secular norm that contradicts this commandment, indicts not only its offender, but the legislator himself. In other words, human law has never contained divine law in its fullness, but in order to remain law it is obliged to conform to the God-established principles, rather than to erode them.

**IV. 4.** Historically, both religious and secular laws have a common source, from which they originate. Moreover, for a long time they represented two sides of the one

and can thus essentially be part of civil law. Christian law is fundamentally supra-social. It cannot be part of civil law, though in Christian societies it can make a favorable influence on it as its moral foundation.

Previously, the Christian state usually used the modified law system of pagan times (for instance, Roman law was used in the *Codex of Justinian*), since it included the norms consonant with divine truth. However, any attempt to develop civil, criminal and public law based on the Gospel alone cannot be effective, for without the full 'churching' of life — that is, without complete victory over sin — the law of the Church cannot become the law

**In the Church founded by the Lord Jesus, there is a special law based on Divine Revelation. It is *canon law*. While other religious statutes are given to a humanity that has fallen away from God and can thus essentially be part of civil law, Christian law is fundamentally supra-social. It cannot be part of civil law, though in Christian societies it can make a favorable influence on it as its moral foundation**

death (Lev. 20:10), whereas today it is not regarded as a legal offense in most countries. If the vision of the integrity of the world is lost, the field of legal regulation becomes reduced to cases of visible damage done, and the boundaries of the latter become more narrow with the erosion of public morality and secularization of consciousness. For instance, today's law treats sorcery, which was a grave crime in ancient communities, as an imaginary action not to be punished. The fallen nature of man, who has distorted his awareness, does not allow him to accept the divine law in all its fullness. In various periods, people have been aware of only part of this law. This is evident from the Gospels' accounts of the Savior's discussion about divorce. Moses permitted divorce "because of the hardness of our hearts," but it was not so "from the beginning," because in marriage a man becomes "one flesh" with his wife, making marriage indissoluble (Mt. 19:3-5).

However, in the cases where the human law completely rejects the absolute

legal field. This idea of law is also characteristic of the Old Testament.

The Lord Jesus Christ, in calling those who are faithful to Him into the Kingdom that is not of this world, separated (Lk. 12:51-52) the Church as His body from the world lying in evil. In Christianity, the internal law of the Church is free from the spiritually-fallen state of the world and is even opposed to it (Mt. 5:21-47). This opposition, however, is not the violation, but the fulfillment of the law of the divine Truth in its fullness, which humanity repudiated in the fall. Comparing the Old Testament norms with that of the Gospel, in His Sermon on the Mount the Lord calls people to seek to fully identify 'life' with the absolute divine law, that is, to seek deification: "Be perfect therefore, even as your Father Who is in heaven is perfect" (Mt. 5:48).

**IV. 5.** In the Church founded by the Lord Jesus, there is a special law based on Divine Revelation. It is *canon law*. While other religious statutes are given to a humanity that has fallen away from God

of the world. This victory is possible, however, only in the eschatological perspective.

However, the experience of the Christianization of the legal system inherited from pagan Rome under Emperor Justinian proved to be quite successful. It was so, not in the least because the legislator, in developing the *Codex*, was fully aware of the dividing line between the order of this world — marked with the fall and sinful erosion, even in the Christian era — and the statutes of the grace-giving body of Christ, the Church, whose members, and the citizens of a Christian state, are the same people. The *Codex of Justinian* determined for centuries the Byzantine legal system and made a considerable impact on the development of law systems in Russia and in some Western European countries, both in the middle ages and in modern times.

**IV. 6.** The idea of the inalienable rights of the individual has become one of the dominating principles in the contemporary

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sense of justice. The idea of these rights is based on the biblical teaching of man as made in the image and likeness of God, as an ontologically free creature. "Examine what is around you," writes St. Anthony of Egypt, "and see that princes and masters have power only over your body, not over your soul, and always keep this in mind. This is why, for example, when they order you to kill or to do something else that is inappropriate, unrighteous and harmful for the soul, it is not proper to obey them, even though they torture your body. God has created the soul free and self-ruled, and it is free to do as it wills, good or bad."

Christian social ethics demanded that a certain autonomous sphere should be reserved for man, in which his conscience might remain the "autocratic" master, for it is freewill choices that ultimately determine one's path: salvation or death, the way to Christ or the way away from Christ. The right to believe, to live, to have a family is what protects the inherent foundations of human freedom from the arbitrary rule of outer forces. These internal rights are complemented and ensured by other, external ones, such as the right to free movement, information and property, to its possession and disposition.

God keeps man free, never forcing His will on man. On the contrary, Satan seeks to possess the human will — to enslave it. If a law conforms to the divine truth revealed by the Lord Jesus Christ, then it also stands guard over human freedom: "Where the Spirit is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17). Therefore, such a law guards the inalienable rights of the personality. Those traditions, however, which do not know of the principle of the freedom of Christ, often seek to subject human consciousness to the external will of a ruler or a collective.

**IV. 7.** As secularism developed, the lofty principles of inalienable human rights turned into a notion of the rights of the individual outside his relationship with God. In this process, the freedom of the personality was transformed into the protection of self-will (as long as it is not detrimental to individuals), and into the demand that the state should guarantee a certain material living standard for the individual and family. In the contemporary systematic understanding of human civil

rights, man is treated not as the image of God, but as a self-sufficient and self-sufficing subject. Outside God, however, there is only fallen man, who is rather far from being the ideal of perfection aspired to by Christians and revealed in Christ ("*Ecce homo!*"). For the Christian sense of justice, the idea of human freedom and rights is bound up with the idea of service. The Christian needs rights, so that in exercising them he may first of all fulfill in the best possible way his lofty calling to be in "the likeness of God," and secondly, so that he may fulfill his duty before God and the Church, and before other people, family, state, nation and other human communities.

As a result of the secularization of modern times, the theory of natural law prevailed, which, in its construction, did not take into account the fallen state of humanity. This theory, however, did not lose links with Christian tradition, for it proceeded from the conviction that the notions of good and evil were inherent in humanity. Therefore, law grew up from life itself, based on conscience ("the categorical moral imperative"). This theory was dominant in European society up to the 19th century. Its practical consequences included, first, the principle of the historical continuity of the legal domain (law cannot be abolished, just as conscience cannot be abolished; it can only be improved and adjusted — also legally — to new situations and cases). Second, it gave rise to the principle of precedent (in conformity with conscience and the legal tradition, the court can pass a right sentence, that is a sentence consonant with Divine Truth).

In the contemporary understanding of law, views apologetic towards the positive law in force have prevailed. Law is viewed as a human invention, a construction that is built by society to benefit itself and to fulfill tasks defined by itself. Hence, any changes to the law, if approved by society, are considered valid. The written law has no *absolute* legal basis whatsoever. This view gives validity to a revolution that rejects the laws of "the old world," and to the full rejection of the moral norm if this rejection is approved by society. Thus, if in contemporary society abortion is not believed to be murder, it is not such legally either. Apologists for positive law believe that society can introduce very diverse standards, on the one hand, and

consider any law in force to be legitimate by virtue of its very existence, on the other.

**IV. 8.** The law and order of a particular country is a special version of the common world-view law, characteristic of a given nation. The national law expresses the fundamental principles of relations between persons, between power and society and between institutions, in accordance with the peculiarities of a given nation moving in history. The national law is imperfect, for imperfect and sinful is any nation. However, it establishes a framework for the people's life if it translates God's absolute truths and adjusts them to the concrete historical and national existence.

Thus, law and order in Russia gradually developed and grew ever more complex for a millennium as society itself developed and grew in its complexity. The conventional Slavic law, which had preserved the ancient common Aryan forms until the 10th century, due to Christianization, incorporated some elements of Byzantine legislation. It did it through the *Codex of Justinian*, which traces back to classical Roman law and church canon law, which at that time was fused with civil law. From the 17th century, Russian law drew extensively on the standards and legal logic of Western European law, doing it in a fairly organic way, since the Roman legal tradition, basic for Europe, was borrowed by Russia from Constantinople together with Christianity as far back as the 10th-11th centuries. The Old Russian *Russkaya Pravda* (*Russian Truth*), princes' statutes and charters, legal documents and books, the Council of the Hundred Chapters and the 1649 *Conciliar Code*, Petrine articles and decrees, legal actions by Catherine the Great and Alexander I, reforms of Alexander II and the 1906 *Basic Law* — all represented one legal fabric of the people's creative body. Some standards became out of date, while other came to replace them. Some legal innovations failed as being inconsistent with the order of people's life and ceased to be applied. The flow of the river of Russian national law, whose sources were lost in distant history, was stopped in the year 1917. On November 22 of that year, the *Council of People's Commissars*, in conformity with the spirit of positive law, repealed the whole body of Russian legislation. After the collapse of the Soviet state in the early 1990's, the legal system of the

CIS and Baltic countries is still in the making. At its foundation are the ideas that are prevalent in the contemporary secularized sense of justice.

**IV. 9.** The Church of Christ, preserving her own autonomous law based on holy canons and keeping within church life proper, can exist in the framework of very diverse legal systems, which she treats with respect. The Church invariably calls upon her flock to be law-abiding citizens of their earthly homeland. At the same time, she has always underlined the unshakeable limits to which her faithful should obey the law.

In everything that concerns the exclusively earthly order of things, the Orthodox Christian is obliged to obey the law, regardless of how imperfect and unfortunate it is. However, when compliance with legal requirements threatens his eternal

and other such organizations, based on various political doctrines and views. These organizations, seeking to order social life according to the political convictions of their members, have as one of their goals to hold or reform power in the state. Exercising powers given to them by popular vote during elections, political organizations can participate in the work of the legislative and executive power structures.

The presence in society of different, sometimes opposing political convictions and discordant interests generates political struggle, which is waged by both legitimate and morally justified methods, and by methods that sometimes contradict the norms of civil law and Christian and natural morality.

**V. 2.** The Church, according to God's commandment, has a task to show concern for the unity of her children, and

Christ, writes: "You all make up as if one church of God, as if one altar, as if one Jesus."

In face of political differences, contradictions and struggle, the Church preaches peace and cooperation among people holding differing political views. She also acknowledges the presence of various political convictions among her episcopate, clergy and laity, except for such views that clearly lead to actions contradicting the faith and moral norms of Church Tradition.

It is impossible for the Church's Supreme Authorities and for the clergy (hence for the Church as a whole), to participate in some of the activities of political organizations and election processes, such as publicly supporting or running political organizations, or working for particular candidates in election campaigns, and so forth. The clergy are not allowed to be nominated for elections to any body of representative power at any level. At the same time, nothing should prevent bishops, clergy and laity from participation in the expression of the popular will by voting along with other citizens.

In church history there have been a number of instances when the whole Church gave support to various political doctrines, views, organizations and leaders. In some cases, this support was linked with the need for the Church to defend her fundamental interests in the extreme conditions of anti-religious persecution and the destructive and restrictive actions of the non-Orthodox and non-Christian powers. In other cases, this support resulted from pressure from the state or political structures and usually led to divisions and controversies within the Church and to the falling away of some of her people infirm in their faith.

In the 20th century, some of the clergy and hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church were members of some representative bodies of power, in particular, the State *Duma* of the Russian Empire and the Supreme Soviets of the USSR and the Russian Federation, some local councils and legislative assemblies. In some cases, their participation in the work of governmental bodies was beneficial for the Church and society. However, it sometimes generated confusion and divisions. This happened especially when the clergy were permitted to run for elective offices

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**In face of political differences, contradictions and struggle, the Church preaches peace and cooperation among people holding differing political views. She also acknowledges the presence of various political convictions among her episcopate, clergy and laity, except for such views that clearly lead to actions contradicting the faith and moral norms of Church Tradition**

salvation and involves an apostasy or commitment of another doubtless sin before God and his neighbor, the Christian is called to perform the feat of confession for the sake of God's truth and the salvation of his soul for eternal life. He must speak out lawfully against an indisputable violation committed by society or state against the statutes and commandments of God. If this lawful action is impossible or ineffective, he must take up the position of civil disobedience (see, III. 5).

#### **V. Church and Politics**

**V.1.** In the contemporary state, citizens participate in the government of the country by voting. Most of them belong to political parties, movements, unions, blocs

peace and harmony in society and the involvement of all her members in common creative efforts. The Church is called to preach and build peace with outer society: "If it is possible, as much as lies within you, live peaceably with all men" (Rom. 12:19); "Pursue peace with all men" (Heb. 12:14). It is even more important for her, however, to be internally united in faith and love: "I beseech you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that there be no divisions among you; but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind" (1 Cor. 1:10). For the Church, the highest value is her unity as the mystical Body of Christ (Eph. 1:23), on which the eternal salvation of humanity depends. St. Ignatius of Antioch, the God-Bearer, addressing the members of the Church of

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without the blessing of the Church. The practice of this participation as a whole has shown that it is almost impossible without one's assuming responsibility for making decisions which are in the interests of only a part of the population and against those of others. This is a situation that seriously complicates the pastoral and missionary work of the clergy, who are called to be, according to St. Paul, "all things to all men that by all means some may be saved" (1 Cor. 9:22). At the same time, history has shown that the decision of the clergy to participate or not to participate in political activities was made and should be made depending on the needs of each particular era, and on the internal condition of the church organism and its role in the state. From the canonical point of view however, the answer to the question of whether a priest should work as a professional in public office is unequivocally negative.

On October 8, 1919, St. Tikhon appealed to the clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church not to interfere in the political struggle. He pointed out in particular that the servants of the Church "by virtue of their rank should be above and outside any political interests. They should remember the canonical rules of the Holy Church whereby she prohibits her servants from interfering in the political life of the country, joining any political parties and, what is more, from making the liturgical rites a tool of political demonstrations."

Prior to the elections of the USSR people's deputies, the Holy Synod resolved on December 27, 1988, that "in case of the nomination and election of representatives of our Church, blessing is to be given for this activity, in the conviction that it will benefit the faithful and our whole society." In addition to being elected as USSR people's deputies, some bishops and clerics occupied deputy's posts in republic, regional and local soviets. The new situation in the political life compelled the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church in October 1989 to pay more attention to two questions: "First, how far can the Church go in assuming responsibility for political decisions without casting doubt on their pastoral authority; and, second, is it permissible for the Church to refuse participation in legislation and the opportunity to

make a moral impact on the political process at a time when a particular decision may determine even the fate of the country itself?" As a result of this discussion, the Bishops' Council recognized the Holy Synod's decision of December 27, 1988, as valid only for the previous elections. It adopted the procedure for the future, whereby the Supreme Church Authorities, namely the Holy Synod (in case of bishops) and ruling bishops (in case of clergy under their jurisdiction), should decide beforehand in every particular case whether the participation of the clergy in an election campaign was desirable.

Notwithstanding, some representatives of the clergy did take part in the elections without obtaining the necessary blessing. The Holy Synod regretted to state on March 20, 1990 that "the Russian Orthodox Church declines the moral and religious responsibility for the participation of these persons in the elected offices." For the reasons of *oikonomia*, the Synod refrained from using appropriate sanctions against the violators, stating that "such behavior lies on their own consciences." On October 8, 1993, in view of the establishment of a professional parliament in Russia, the Holy Synod, at its enlarged session, decided to direct the clergy to refrain from participating in the parliamentary elections in Russia as nominees to parliament. It resolved that the clergy who violated this decision would be defrocked. The 1994 Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church approved this resolution as "timely and wise," and resolved to apply it to "the future participation of the clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church in any election of representatives to bodies of power in the CIS and Baltic countries, on both national and local levels."

The same Bishops' Council, responding to the challenges of time, in faithfulness to the holy canons adopted a number of rules concerning the subject under discussion. Thus, in one of its resolutions, the Council decided: "to reaffirm the impossibility for the Church as a whole to give support, first of all in election campaigns, to any political party, movement, bloc, union or a similar organization and to any of their leaders To consider it extremely undesirable for the clergy to join political parties, movements, unions, blocs and similar organizations which are intended primarily for pre-election struggle."

The Bishops' Council that took place

in 1997 developed the principles of the Church's relations with political organizations, and made one of its previous resolutions even stronger, by refusing to give its blessing to the clergy to join political associations. It resolved, in particular, in its statement *On Relations with the State and Secular Society*: "to welcome the Church's dialogue and contacts with political organizations, if such contacts are not supportive politically; to consider it admissible to maintain cooperation with these organizations in tasks beneficial for the Church and the people, unless this cooperation can be interpreted as political support; to consider inadmissible the participation of bishops and clergy in any election campaign or their memberships in political associations whose constitutions provide for the nomination of their candidate to elective offices on all levels."

The fact that the Church as a whole does not participate either in political struggle, nor in the work of political parties, nor in election processes, does not mean she refuses to express publicly her position on socially significant issues and to present this position to governmental bodies in any country and on any level. This position may be expressed only by Councils, the church authorities and those empowered to act for them. In any case, the right to express it cannot be delegated to public offices or political or other secular organizations.

V. 3. Nothing can prevent Orthodox laity from participating in the work of legislative, executive and judicial bodies and political organizations. This involvement has taken place under various political systems, such as autocracy, constitutional monarchy and various forms of the republic system. The participation of Orthodox laity in secular and political processes was difficult only in the contexts of non-Christian rule and the regime of state atheism.

In participating in governmental and political processes, Orthodox laity are called to base their work on the norms of the gospel's morality: the unity of justice and mercy (Ps. 85:10); the concern for the spiritual and material welfare of people; the love of the fatherland; and the desire to transform the surrounding world according to the Word of Christ.

At the same time, the Christian politician or statesman should be well aware that in historical reality and, all the more so, in the context of today's divided and



contentious society, most decisions adopted and political actions taken tend to benefit only a part of society, while restricting or infringing upon the interests and wishes of others. Many such decisions and actions are stained with sin or connivance with sin. Precisely for this reason the Orthodox politician or statesman is required to be very sensitive spiritually and morally.

The Christian who works in the sphere of civic and political building is called to seek the gift of special self-sacrifice and special self-denial. He needs to be utterly attentive to his own spiritual condition, so that his civic or political work may not turn from service into an end in itself that nourishes pride, greed and other vices. It should be remembered that "principalities or powers, all things were created by him, and for him and by him all things stand" (Col. 1:16-17). St. Gregory the Theologian, addressing the rulers, wrote: "It is with Christ that you command, with Christ that you govern, from Him that you have received the sword." St. John Chrysostom says: "A true king is he who conquers anger and jealousy and voluptuousness and subjects everything to the laws of God and does not allow the passion for pleasure to prevail in his soul. I would like to see such a man in command of the people, and the throne, and the cities and the provinces, and the troops, because he who has subjected the physical passions to reason would easily govern people also according to the divine laws. But he who appears to command people but in fact accommodates himself to wrath and ambition and pleasure will not know how to dispose of power."

**V. 4.** The participation of Orthodox laity in the work of governmental bodies and political processes may be both individual and corporate, within special Christian (Orthodox) political organizations or Christian (Orthodox) units of larger political associations. In both cases, the faithful have the right to choose and express their political convictions, to make decisions and to carry out appropriate work. At the same time, lay people who participate in civic or political activity individually or within various organizations do it independently, without identifying their political work with the stand of the Church as a whole or any of the canonical church institutions or speaking for them. At the same time, the supreme church authority

does not give special blessing upon the political activity of the laity.

The 1994 Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church resolved that it is admissible for lay people to join political organizations and "to found such organizations, and if they describe themselves as Christian or Orthodox organizations,

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they are called to increase their interaction with the church authorities. It is also possible for the clergy, including those representing canonical church structures and the church authorities, to participate in particular activities of political organizations and maintain cooperation with them in tasks beneficial for the Church and society, if this participation is not supportive of political organizations and contributes to building peace and accord among people and in the church community."

A similar resolution of the 1997 Bishops' Council reads, specifically: "We believe it is possible for lay people to participate in the work of political organizations and to found such organizations if the latter have no clergy among their members and conduct responsible consultations with the church authorities. We resolve

that these organizations, as participants in the political process, cannot enjoy the blessing of the church authorities and speak for the Church. The Church's blessing cannot be given and, if given previously, will be denied to the church-civil organizations involved in election campaigns and political agitation and claiming to express the Church's opinion, which is expressed before the state and society only by church Councils, His Holiness the Patriarch and the Holy Synod. The same should be applied to both church and secular mass media."

The existence of Christian (Orthodox) political organizations and Christian (Orthodox) units in larger political associations is perceived by the Church as positive as it helps lay people to engage in common political and secular work based on Christian spiritual and moral principles. These organizations, while being free in their activity, are called to consult the church authorities and to coordinate their actions in implementing the Church's position on public issues.

In relations between the Church as a whole and Christian (Orthodox) political organizations, in which Orthodox lay people participate, and individual Orthodox politicians and statesmen, situations may arise where their statements or actions essentially differ from the Church's stand on public issues or impede the realization of this stand. In such cases, the Church authorities should ascertain the fact of differing positions and state it publicly, in order to avoid confusion and misunderstanding among the faithful and society at large. The statement of such a difference should compel the Orthodox laity participating in political activity to think whether it is appropriate for them to continue their membership in this political organization.

Orthodox Christians should not participate in organizations having the nature of secret societies that presuppose one's total subjection to the leaders and conscious refusal to disclose their inner essence when consulting Church authorities, and even when making one's confession. The Church cannot approve of the participation of Orthodox laity and, even more so, clergy in non-Orthodox societies of this kind, since by their very nature they divert a person of his total commitment to the Church of God and her canonical order.

*To be continued.*

## St. Cyril on John's Gospel

Continued from page 45

Then Jesus turned and, seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?" (John 1:38a).

Helpfully, the Lord turns to those following him, that by deed you may learn that which is sung, *I sought the Lord and he heard me* (Psa. 33:4). For while we do not yet seek the Lord by good habits and rightness in believing, we are in some fashion behind him; but when, thirsting after his divine law, we track the holy and choice way of righteousness, he will then look at us, crying aloud what is written, *Turn to me, and I will turn to you, says the Lord of hosts* (Zech. 1:3). But he says to them, *What do you seek?* Not as though he did not know — impossible! for he knows all things, as God — but making the question a beginning and root of his discourse.

*They said to him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are you staying?"* (John 1:38b).

As people well-taught, do those who have been questioned reply. For they already call him, *Master*, by this clearly displaying their readiness to learn. Then they beg to know his domicile, as about to tell him there, at an opportune time, their need. For they probably did not think it right to hold a discussion about essential things as an accompaniment to being on the road. What is said will be useful to us as a pattern again.

*He says to them, "Come and see"* (John 1:39a).

He does not point out the house, though asked to do so, but rather he commands them come immediately to it — teaching first, as by example, that it is not well to put delays in the way of the search for the good things (for delay in things profitable is altogether harmful); and this too besides: that to those who are still ignorant of the holy house of our Savior Christ, that is, the Church, it will not suffice to salvation that they should learn where it is, but that they should enter into it through the faith, and see clearly the things that are privately [secretly, mystically] accomplished therein.

*They came and saw where he was staying, and remained with him that day. It was about the tenth hour* (John 1:39b).

Assiduously, the disciples applied themselves to gaining knowledge of the divine mysteries. For I do not think a dabbling mind is well suited to those desiring to learn, but rather one that loves to work, and has overcome faint-heartedness<sup>17</sup> in good labors, so that during their whole lifetime they may excel in perfect zeal. For I think the words, *they remained with him that day*, dimly signify this. And when he says, *It was about the tenth hour*, we, adapting our own discourse to the advantage of each, say that with regard to this very thing, the historian of theology again through this subtle handiwork teaches us that the mighty mystery of our Savior was made known not in the beginning of the present world, but now, when time is drawing towards its close. For in the last days, as it is written, we shall be *all taught by God* (Isa. 54:13). Again, I pray, take as an image of what has been said about the tenth hour, the disciples cleaving to the Savior, of whom the holy Evangelist says that having once become his guests they remained with him; that those who through faith have entered into the holy house, and have run to Christ, may learn that it is necessary to remain with him, and not to desire to become estranged again, either turning aside into sin, or again hurrying back to unbelief.

*One of the two who heard John speak and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first finds his own brother, Simon, and says to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is, translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus* (John 1:40-42a).

Those who have just now received the talent immediately do business with the talent, and bring it to the Master. For truly, obedient and docile souls are of this kind, not needing many words for profit, nor bearing the fruit of their instruction after cycles of years or months, but attaining the goal of wisdom along with the beginning of their instruction. For it says, *give instruction to a wise person, and he will be yet wiser; teach a just [righteous] one, and he will increase in learning* (Prov. 9:9). So, Andrew saves his brother (now this was Peter), by disclosing the whole mystery in a brief summary. For he says, *We have found as Treasure hid in a field*, or as the one *Pearl of great price*, Jesus, according to the parables in the Gospels.

*Now when Jesus looked at him, he said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas," which is translated, A Stone* (John 1:42b).

He who sees the hearts and reins (cf. Jer. 20:12) looks at him in a divine fashion, and sees what great piety the disciple will attain to, what great virtue he will possess, and at what end [consummation, perfection] he will finish. For he who knows *all things before they are* is not ignorant of anything. Indeed, he especially instructs that one who is called, in regard to this: that being true God, he has knowledge without being taught. For without requiring a single word, nor even seeking to learn who or from where the man is who has come to him, he states what father he was born of, and what his own name was, and permits him to be called Simon no more, already exercising authority over him as being his; but he renames him Peter from Petra (John 1:42), for he was about to found his church upon him.

*The day following Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and he finds Philip, and says to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter* (John 1:43-44).

Philip was of a like mind with those who had preceded, and was very ready to follow Christ. For Christ knew that he too would be good; and therefore he says *Follow me*, making this saying an indication of the grace that was upon him,<sup>18</sup> and in which he commands him to follow, affirming to him that his way of life was most excellent. For he would not have chosen him, if he had not been altogether good.

*Philip finds Nathaniel, and says to him, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets, wrote — Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph"* (John 1:45).

The disciple was very quick to bear fruit, that by this he might show himself in maturity akin to those who had come before. For he finds *Nathanael*, not simply meeting him as he is going along, but making careful search for him, for he knew that he was most conscientious and fond of learning. Then he says that he has found the Christ who was proclaimed through all the divine Scripture, addressing himself not as to a person who is ignorant, but as to one extremely well-versed in the teachings both of all-wise Moses and of the prophets. For an untrue supposition

18. him: Jesus.

Continued on the next page

17. or, pettiness; literally "littleness of soul."

prevailed among the Jews concerning our Savior Christ, that he should be of the city or village of Nazareth, while the word related in the divine Scripture regarding this is that he is a Bethlehemite. *And you, O land of Bethlehem, it says, house of Ephratha, are not least of those among the thousands of Judah; out of you shall he come forth to me, who is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity* (Mic. 5:2 LXX). For he was brought up in Nazareth, as the evangelist himself too somewhere has testified, saying, *And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up* (Luke 4:16); but he was not from there, but was from where we have already said — rather, indeed, as the voice of the prophet affirmed. Now Philip, following the supposition of the Jews says,

*Can anything good come out of Nazareth?* (John 1:46b).

Nathanael readily agrees that that which is expected to appear out of Nazareth is something great and most fair.<sup>19</sup> Doubtless it is perfectly clear that not only did he take Nazareth as a pledge of what he was seeking, but combining knowledge from the law and prophets as one very knowledgeable, he gained swift understanding.

*Philip says to him, "Come and see"* (John 1:46c)

Sight will be a match for faith, he says, and having only conversed with him you will confess more spiritedly, and will unhesitatingly say that he is indeed the Expected One. But we must believe that there was a divine and ineffable grace flowing forth with the words of the Savior, and enchanting the souls of the listeners. For it was written thus: *Everyone marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth* (Luke 4:22). For as his word is mighty in power, so too is it effective at persuasion.

*Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, and said of him, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit"* (John 1:47).

Not yet having made a practice of giving proof by means of signs [miracles], Christ endeavored in another way to persuade both his own disciples, and the wiser of those who came to him, that he was by

19. St. Cyril appears to read the text not as a question but as an affirmation that something good can come out of Nazareth.

20. I.e. of faith that Jesus is the Word and Son.

nature Son and God, but who for the salvation of all had come in human form. What then was the turn of speech that led to faith? Quite clearly, it was knowledge appropriate to God. For to know all things is suited to God alone. Accordingly, he receives Nathanael, not by flatteries snatching him away with a view to this attitude [disposition],<sup>20</sup> but by these things confirming to his conscience that he, as God, knows hearts.

*Nathaniel says to him, "From where do you know me?"* (John 1:48a).

Nathaniel is beginning to be amazed, and is being called in conformity with a faith that is already firm; but he still thinks it proper to learn how he has knowledge about him. For souls that are eager to learn and love God, are very precise. Now he may have thought that things about himself had been set before the Lord by Philip.

*Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you"* (John 1:48b).

The Savior dissolved his surmise, saying that even before his meeting and conversing with Philip, he had seen him under the fig tree, though not present in body. Very profitably, both the fig tree and the place are named, and this provides him with a guarantee that he had been seen. For one who had already accurately learned even that which was with him, would be readily embraced.

*Nathanael answered and said to him: "Rabbi, you are the Son of God, you are the King of Israel"* (John 1:49a).

He knows that God alone is the searcher of hearts, and gives to no other to understand the mind of man — reflecting well, as is likely, that [saying] in the psalms, *God tests the hearts and reins* (Psa. 7:9). For the psalmist too has attributed this as accruing to no other, as peculiar to the divine nature alone. So when he knew that the Lord saw his thoughts revolving in his mind in yet voiceless whispers, immediately he calls him *Teacher*, already entering readily into discipleship under him, and confesses him *Son of God* and *King of Israel*, in whom are existent the properties of Deity, and as one well instructed he affirms him to be wholly and by nature God.

*Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,'*

*do you believe? You shall see greater things than these"* (John 1:50).

You will be firmer with respect to faith, he says, when you see *greater things than these*. For how will he who has believed because of one sign, not be altogether better through many, especially since they will be even more remarkably manifest than the things now being marveled at?

*Most assuredly I say to you, hereafter you will see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man* (John 1:51).

The word that seals Nathanael's faith is now common to all. But in saying that angels will be seen hastening up and down upon the Son of Man, that is, ministering and serving his ordinances for the salvation of all who will believe, he says that then especially shall he be revealed as being by nature the Son of God. For it is not one another that the rational powers serve, but God, definitely. And this teaching does not take away subordination among the angels; for neither can this reasonably be called servitude. But through the holy evangelists we have heard that *angels came to our Savior Christ, and ministered to [served] him* (Matt. 4:11).

*To be continued. Based on the Pusey translation, with revisions.*

## Kontakion Hymn

Today the Virgin gives birth  
to the transcendent one,  
And the earth offers a cave  
to the unapproachable  
one!

Angels, with shepherds,  
glorify Him!

The wise men journey with  
the star, since for our sake  
the Eternal God was born  
as a little child.

# Christ is Born!

## Holy Resurrection Church

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 Michael Kardash  
 Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Kluger  
 Stephen Kozemchak  
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 Mary Schraeder  
 James D. Schraeder, Jr.  
 Joseph J. Hitzner  
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## Holy Annunciation Church

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## St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

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 St. Nicholas "O" Club  
 Dennis Chrusch, Pres.  
 St. Nicholas Church Choir  
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 G. Damian Brusko  
 Cameron Nicholas Brusko  
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 Theresa Kasmer Butler  
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Joseph & Jean Butrymowicz

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 Christopher Carney  
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 Greg & Cindy Chernay  
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## Holy Trinity Church

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 Reader Michael & Vincentine Brusko

# *Glorify Him!*

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 JoAnn Yurconic  
 Max & Mary Yurconic  
 Jim & Helen O'Brien, Kelly Melissa  
 Niki Fugazzotto, Blaise  
 Patrick Kelleher  
 Kiprian & Sherri Fedetz, Alex, Andrew  
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 Dana Morgan, Alexis, Joshua  
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 Melanie & David Christman  
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 Simon & Martha Stafiniak  
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 Church Choir  
 The Parish Council  
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 Reader John Zatydzyc  
 George Babich  
 Samuel Babich  
 Karen Campbell & Family  
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 Martha Skiadas  
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 Joseph Shipsky  
 Mary Steponaitis  
 Elizabeth Wargo  
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**St. John the Baptist Church  
 Edwardsville, Pa.**

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 Eva Kopko  
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 Pat Kulikowich  
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 Mary Catherine  
 Marie Martin  
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 Helen Moncovich  
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 Evelyn Stapay  
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 Eva Turaj  
 Sandra Williams  
 Wanda Wanko  
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**Holy Ascension Church  
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 Olga Williams  
 Anna Andrusichen  
 Mary Burock  
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# Christ is Born!

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Vera M. Timko  
Larisa Holowaty  
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William & Mary Keysock  
David, Greg & Daniel Keysock  
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Eva Mucha  
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Martin  
Mel Martin  
Paul Martin  
Olga Feinaur  
Pat, George & Vanessa Kania  
Mary Torick  
Anna Dudash  
Dr. James & Olga Hreshko  
Sandra Morash & Sons  
Theresa Basara  
Olga Chuma  
Elizabeth Yust  
Elias, Theresa & Michele Chuma  
Dr. John, Dolores & Jarrett Williams  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Swoboda  
Matushka Helen Kuchta  
John & Margie Oris  
Margaret Kuchta  
Sonya Bosack & Joshua  
Anna Lesko  
Alexis & Daniel Lesko  
Stephanie & Dan Lesko  
Lorraine Luschavage  
Vincent Luschavage  
Anna Bendinsky  
Mary Burock  
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Greg & Rita Tatusko  
Michael & Carol Cuttic  
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Richard & Nicole Chwastiak  
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Jack & Pat Frie  
Peter & Marie Weremedic  
Michael, Roseanne & Mike Weremedic  
Peter Weremedic Jr.  
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Matthew Cuttic

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V. Rev. & Matushka Nicholas S. Yuschak  
Taisia & Alexandra Perich  
Sonya Perich  
Matushka Mary Fedoronko  
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Katya & Alexander Hubiak  
Reader Oleg & Gene Drkin  
Dan & Daria Babiak & Family  
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Claire & Maryellen Brown  
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The Child Family  
The Chobany Family  
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Marta, Kevin, Zack & Dan Grewell

The Hammerer Family  
Anastasia Jankowski  
Ann & Marty Kelley & Children  
Doris K. Koveal  
Sonia Krnozow  
The Krugovoy Family  
The Lynch Family  
Tanya, Nicholas, Timothy & Alex Macura  
Don & Lu Ann Motel  
Judith T. Newell  
George & Danielle Pahomov  
Larissa Pahomov  
Susan Pasqualone  
Francis Plasha  
John, Dina, Amanda & Alexander Prokop  
Mr. & Mrs. Purey & Family  
Nita Harris Siciliano & Sons  
John & Mollie Smarsh  
Bill & Jeanne Sokurenko  
Deborah & Samantha Stanton  
Svetlana & Serge Taptikoff  
Tony, Daria, Natalya & Michael Tataschiere  
Mary Anne & Andy Toroney

## Christ the Savior Church Harrisburg, Pa.

V. Rev. & Mrs. Daniel Ressetar  
V. Rev. Dr. & Mrs. Michael Kovach  
V. Rev. & Mrs. Neal J. Carrigan  
Sbdn. & Mrs. Richard Hathaway  
Dn. & Mrs. Harry Linsinbigler  
Mr. & Mrs. Roy Arnbartsumian  
Mr. Sebatu Andemichael  
Mr. James Antonio Jr.  
Mr. Grigory Arakelov  
Mr. Igor Arakelov  
Mr. & Mrs. Haitham Ayoub  
Ms. Margaret Balog  
Mrs. Sylvester Barbu  
Mr. John R. Barns  
Drs. John & Judy Blebea  
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Bretz  
Mrs. Deborah Bricker  
Mrs. Patricia Bromley  
Mr. Daniel Buddwalk  
Mr. & Mrs. John Buddwalk  
Mrs. Monica Burgett  
Mr. John Caba Jr.  
Mrs. Marina Cameron  
Mrs. B. Challenger  
Mr. & Mrs. Bodan Ciorcirlan  
Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Cole  
Mr. & Mrs. John Costas  
Mr. George Cvijic  
Mr. Steven Danko  
Mr. & Mrs. John Dedyo  
Miss Susan Demchak  
Mr. Zekerias Dermas  
Mrs. Lone DiClemente  
Mr. Joshua DiFlorio  
Mrs. Anna K Doray  
Mr. & Mrs. John Dotsey  
Mrs. Mary Dotsey  
Mr. Paul Dotsey  
Ms Susan Dotsey  
Mrs. Paul Drebot  
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Drebot  
Mr. Terry Drebot  
Mr. Thomas Drebot  
Mr. Robert Drozd  
Mr. Joseph Dudick  
Mr. David Dugan  
Mrs. Marianne English  
Mr. Steven English

Mr. & Mrs. Michael Essis  
Mr. & Mrs. Salem Essis  
Mrs. John Essock  
Mr. & Mrs. John Farrow  
Mr. Joseph Fatula  
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Fedetz  
Mr. Timothy Fedetz  
Mr. Brian Fetsko  
Mr. Jeffrey Fetsko  
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Fetsko  
Mr. & Mrs. Milton Gaither  
Mr. H Gebreselassie  
Mr. & Mrs. Kidane Ghebremichael  
Mrs. Saba Ghebremichael  
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Hadginske  
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Hair  
Miss Betbann Hancher  
Mr. David Hancher  
Capt. Ronald Handier, Jr  
Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Hancher Sr  
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Hanratty  
Mrs. Christine Hardenstine  
Mrs. Maria W. Ilebda  
Mr. & Mrs. James Henry  
Mr. & Mrs. Carl Hisiro  
Mrs. Elizabeth Howe  
Mrs. Marie Intrieri  
Mr. & Mrs. Symeon Jekel  
Mrs. Jayne Johnson  
Mrs. Kathleen Kalina  
Mr. & Mrs. William Kantor  
Mr. & Mrs. George Kaznowsky  
Mrs. Cathi Kemp  
Mrs. George Klipa  
Mr. Gary Kneiss  
Mr. & Mrs. George Krempasky  
Mr. James Krut  
Mr. & Mrs. Basil Kuchta  
Mrs. Tessie Kuchta  
Miss Katherine Kuchwara  
Att'y & Mrs. John S. Kundrat  
Mrs. Helen Kurylo  
Mr. & Mrs. Alex Kuzupas  
Mrs. Stephen Macut  
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Makosky  
Mrs. Gloria Maliniak  
Mr. Adam Mallick  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Mallick  
Mrs. Lydia Mantle  
Mr. David Martin  
Mrs. Maryann Mawbinney  
Mr. Joseph Mazurek  
Mrs. Deborah McGinnes  
Mr. Douglas McGinnes  
Miss Meghan McGinnes  
Mrs. Angela McGreevy  
Mrs. Myra McInnis  
Mrs. Christine McKeown  
Mr. Timothy McMahon  
Mrs. Thomas Middlesworth  
Mr. John Middick  
Mrs. Sonya Miele  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Mihalaki, Sr.  
Mrs. Ellen Miller  
Dr. Paul G. Miller  
Mr. Eugene Minarich  
Mr. Jonathan Minarich  
Mr. Eli Mioff  
Ms. Elizabeth Motz  
Mr. Ted Motz Jr.  
Mrs. Jo-Ann Nesko  
Dr. John D. Nester  
Mr. & Mrs. David Newhouse  
Dr. & Mrs. Joseph Norato

# Glorify Him!

Mrs. Evelyn Orntfer  
 Mr. Walter Onufrak, Jr.  
 Mr. Brian Osuch  
 Mr. & Mrs. John Osuch  
 Mrs. Katherine Pankiw  
 Mrs. Rita Papach  
 Mr. Stephen Pawlak  
 Dr. David Pawlush  
 Mr. Michael G. Pawlush  
 Mr. & Mrs. Paul Pellegrini  
 Mr. Nicholas Pestrock  
 Mr. Donald Pidich  
 Mr. Carl Polansky  
 Mrs. Christine Priggins  
 Mr. John Pylypciw  
 Mr. Alexander Rzesetar  
 Mr. Gregory Rzesetar  
 Mr. Nicholas Rzesetar  
 Mrs. Agnes Risser  
 Mr. Mark Rodak  
 Mr. Joseph Russian  
 Mr. & Mrs. Russell Sass  
 Mr. & Mrs. John Schilling Sr.  
 Mr. Michael Schubert  
 Miss Larissa Shuga  
 Miss Basima Shunnara  
 Mr. & Mrs. Saliba Shunnara  
 Miss Salwa Shunnara  
 Mr. & Mrs. Frank Skirpan  
 Mr. Lawrence Smith  
 Mr. Nicholas Somple  
 Mr. Andrew Spaseff  
 Mrs. Effie Spaseff  
 Mrs. John Spaseff  
 Mrs. Marie Spaseff  
 Mr. & Mrs. Basil Suple  
 Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Sutovich Jr.  
 Mr. & Mrs. Harry Sysak  
 Miss Ruth Sysak  
 Mr. & Mrs. Maksym Szewcyk  
 Mr. J. Milton Taleff  
 Mr. Jamie Taleff  
 Mrs. June Taleff  
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter Taleff, Jr.  
 Mrs. Helen Tatusko  
 Yerusalem Tesfazio  
 Mrs. Natalie Treece  
 Mrs. Anne D.Trunk  
 Mrs. Jane A. Volscko  
 Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Washburn  
 Mr. & Mrs. Leo Washburn, Sr.  
 Ms. Noelle Webb  
 Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Webb  
 Mrs. Joanne Wevodau  
 Mrs. Sara Wickard  
 Mrs. Mildred Wolfe  
 Ms. Susan Wolfe  
 Miss Marianne Wood  
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Wood  
 Mr. Stephen Wood  
 Mrs. Helen Yannone  
 Mr. Robert Yanosky  
 Mrs. Mary Young  
 Mrs. Michael Zart  
 Mr. & Mrs. Aghesom T. Zerezgi  
 Mr. & Mrs. Teklai Zerezgi  
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael Zuro

## St. Michael's Church Jermyn, Pa.

Fr. John & Mat. Kathy Kowalczyk, Sophia & Nicky  
 Fr. Gabriel & Mat. Dolores Petorak  
 Subdeacon Vasili & Alexandra Gardecki  
 Andrea & Jeff Baldan & Family

Debby & Barry Bernosky & Family  
 Wendy & Serge Bochnovich & Family  
 Eileen & Ed Brzuchalski  
 Dennis & Sonia Buberniak  
 Dave & Ann Butler  
 Patricia & Tom Cadwalader & Tom  
 Sandy & Kevin Carney & Family  
 Sandy & Jeff Cavanaugh & Sons  
 Sharon & Randy Clear & Family  
 Denise Cobb & Kyle  
 Eileen & Bob Dance  
 Eva Demchak  
 Marie Derkasch  
 Stephen & Chris Derkasch  
 Dr. & Mrs. William Derkasch  
 William, Courtney & Alexa Derkasch  
 Dolores Dreater  
 Kaye Fedirko  
 Donald & Rosalie Fives  
 Tammy, Bill & Shelby Lynn Fives  
 Annabelle Franchak  
 Nicholas & Pauline Frenchko  
 Peter & Dolores Frenchko  
 Joseph Getzie  
 Nicholas Getzie  
 Peter Getzie  
 Tom & Helen Grancey  
 Dorothy & Andy Hanchak  
 Joan & Bill Hanchak  
 Julia Hanchak  
 Elizabeth Hockin  
 John A. Hockin, Jr. Esq.  
 Mary Kay & John Hockin  
 Jon, Debby & Jonathan Jaye  
 Olga Jaye  
 Dorothy Keklak  
 Rose Kelechawa  
 Julia Kitchura  
 Mike & Gloria Klapatch & Sons  
 Henry, Simone & Jeremi Korpusik  
 Mary & Henry Korpusik  
 Eva Krenitsky  
 Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Krenitsky  
 Irene Kupinski  
 Maria & Nicholas Landi  
 Daria Leahman  
 Cindy & Mike Mancini  
 Sam & JoAnn Mattise  
 Scott & Paula Melesky & Family  
 Tom Meredith  
 Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Michalczuk  
 Michael & Mary Ann Mikulak  
 Gale Y. Morris  
 Sam & Mary Ann Mosley  
 Ann & Ed Narcoonis  
 John & Barbara Nayduch  
 Roxanne & Miles Neutts  
 Justine Orlando  
 Andy & Margaret Petriliak  
 Stephanie & Rob Pliska & Family  
 John & Patsy Pash  
 Geroge, Marilyn & Joshua Petorak  
 Martha Pollock  
 Willard Puzza  
 Al & Barbara Radtke  
 Mary Joan Rusiniak  
 Susan & Dave Schlasta & Family  
 Adam & Mary Ann Serafini  
 Dolores Sernak  
 John Sernak  
 Mary Sernak  
 Ron, Lorraine & Ann Sernak  
 Dolores Serniak  
 Steven Serniak

Gloria & Tom Shaw  
 Anastasia Sloat  
 Jerry & Marilyn Soroka & Family  
 Robert & Julie Speicher  
 John Susko  
 Irene Swirdovich  
 Chap. Col. (R) Peter & Martha Telencio  
 Damian & Stephen Telencio  
 Bob & Millie Telep  
 Rebecca Telep  
 John & Yvonne Wargo & Family  
 Mary Wyziak  
 JoAnne Yurchak  
 Julia Zaccone  
 Peter D. Zaccone  
 Mary Zielinski  
 Betty Zrowka  
 Joe & Dorothy Zrowka

## St. Vladimir Church Lopez, Pa.

Hieromonk Michael Their  
 Rosalie Burke  
 Mr. & Mrs. John J. Caccia  
 Alice Dworsky  
 Mr. Edward Enright  
 Mr. & Mrs. William Enright  
 Helen Fullerton  
 Vera Gulich  
 Mrs. Helen M. Kachmarksy  
 Mr. & Mrs. P. Kachmarksy  
 Mary Kravetz  
 Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Kravitz  
 Mr. & Mrs. J. Kriel  
 Tresa & Dan Kulsicave  
 Emily Lavace  
 Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Matychak  
 Steffie Neuffer  
 Mr. & Mrs. David Vanderpool  
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Vanderpool  
 Mr. & Mrs. Allen Williams & Children

## Holy Ascension Church Lykens, Pa.

V. Rev. John & Mat. Daria Mason  
 V. Rev. Michael & Mat. Sonya Evans  
 John & Nancy Coles  
 Johnnie & Chris Coles  
 Michael Evans III  
 Olga Hrinda  
 Ann Mahoney  
 John Mehalko  
 Dr. & Mrs. Alexander Pianovich  
 Dr. & Mrs. Paul A. Pianovich  
 Alex Pianovich  
 Stephen Pianovich  
 William & Susan Pinkerton  
 Nadia Sass  
 Ann Sovich  
 Nicholas Sovich  
 John N. Sweikert  
 John R. Sweikert  
 Julia Sweikert  
 George Tiazkun  
 Patti & Joe Welsh  
 Kathleen Welsh

## Holy Trinity Church McAdoo, Pa.

Rev. Fr. Timothy Hasencz  
 Helen Cortez  
 Anna Lee Davidovitch  
 Pearl Elko  
 Anna Fanelli  
 Rosell Gardecki

# Christ is Born!

Mary Ann Graino  
 Michael & Michelle Klesh  
 Anna Mae Kuklis  
 Daniel Kurtz  
 Dough Kurtz  
 Greg & Cathy Kurtz & Family  
 Joe & Linda Kurtz & Sons  
 Anna Kurtz  
 Mike & Jan Kurtz & Son  
 Daniel Oneschuck  
 Helen Osuch  
 Cindy Polli  
 Lonnie Polli  
 Sophie & Clark Shuman  
 Paul Smerkanich  
 Mary Stronko  
 John Yatsko  
 Irene Yaworsky  
 Michael Zabitchuck

## S. Peter & Paul Church Minersville, Pa.

Fr. Michael & Mat. Valeria Hatrak  
 Natalie Hatrak  
 James & Anna Antonio  
 John Barnetsky  
 JoAnn Brinich  
 Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Brinich & Family  
 Susie Frew  
 Elsie Herman  
 Rick & Lynda, Ricky & Lauren Hutton  
 Olga Kirkauskas  
 Lydia, John & Johnny Malusky  
 Mr. & Mrs. Harry Oakill & Family  
 Mr. & Mrs. Luke Oakill  
 Anna Olexa  
 Michael & Lisa Pascuzzo  
 Christian & Sofia Pascuzzo  
 Stablum Family  
 David & Georgine Studlack  
 Deb Frew Timko  
 Anna & Sandra Wyslutsky

## St. Michael's Church Mount Carmel, Pa.

V. Rev. Michael & Matushka Sonia Evans  
 Michael Evans III  
 A Friend  
 Mr. & Mrs. Thomas P. Alekseyko  
 Anastasia Beckus  
 Dorothy Beckus  
 Olga Berkoski  
 Geo Bortnichak  
 Florence Bubernak  
 Chris Buchkarik  
 Julia Bushick  
 Mary & Charles Chidovich  
 John Chidovich  
 Marie Cuff  
 Anna Gondal  
 Catherine Hardnock  
 Mary Homicz  
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter Horoschak  
 Mary Kandrot  
 Bob & Marie Kuchta  
 Olga Leon  
 Daniel Leon  
 Adam Leschinsky  
 Bernie & Tanya Malkoski  
 Mrs. Amelia Markovich  
 Leon Markovich  
 Jean & Chris Mathias  
 Costy Melnick  
 Mary Moroz

Margaret Olaf  
 Olga Paduhovich  
 Anna Panikarchuck  
 Geroge Panikarcheck  
 Peter Paskell  
 C. Shaffchick  
 Mr. & Mrs. Walter Sebasovich  
 Eveann Shamus  
 Helen Sorocka  
 Ann Tanney  
 Mrs. Helen Timpko  
 Mildred & Ben Trefsgar  
 Pearl Winnick  
 Theresa & Delores Wislock  
 Paul Wislock  
 Val & Victoria Wood  
 Peter Yastishak  
 Vera & Stanley Zbicki  
 Mary Zeluskey

## St. John the Baptist Church Nanticoke, Pa.

Father & Matushka Stephen Karaffa  
 Peter & Elizabeth Hetman  
 Mary Hunchan  
 John Pihanich  
 Joe & Jill Paprota  
 Joe & Mary Paprota  
 Joseph P. Papropa  
 Jay & Marge Sokol  
 The Truszkowski Family  
 Peter Wasenda & Cathy Stankey  
 Pearle & Mike Zupko

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

Father David & Mat. Karen Mahaffey  
 V. Rev. Theodore Orzolek  
 V. Rev. Elias Krenitsky  
 St. Michael's Altar Boys  
 St. Michael's Church Choir  
 St. Michael's Church School  
 The Parish Council  
 Nikolas Mahaffey  
 Michael Mahaffey  
 Seth Mahaffey  
 Kyra Mahaffey  
 Mary Adamiak  
 Kate, David, Alexa & Adam Barsigian  
 Margaret & Jacob Barsigian  
 Sandra & John Barsigian  
 Agnes Buranich  
 Helen Chesniak  
 Sandra & William Condon  
 David, Lana & David Paul Cushner  
 John & Margaret Cushner  
 Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Elko & Family  
 Maria & Jacob Emily  
 Dr. Tanya Ermolovich  
 Walter & Anne Marie Ermolovich  
 Neal & Ann Freeman  
 Peter Gyza  
 Mrs. Nicholas Halchak  
 Harrison Hubiak  
 Mr. & Mrs. Aleck Jadick  
 David Jadick  
 Michael & Margaret Jadick  
 John Jadik, Sr.  
 Nancy Jurnack  
 Al & Mary Krenitsky  
 Gregory Krevko  
 Tina Ludwig  
 Joseph & Ann Marie Macijowsky  
 Ann Peregrin  
 Lovie Peregrin

Theresa & Helen Polanchik  
 Anna I. Pregmon  
 Margaret & Walter Pregmon  
 William Pregmon  
 Al & Mary Pritchky  
 Irene & John Pritchky  
 George & Marilyn Serniak  
 Sebastian Stephen Serniak  
 Stephen & Amanda Serniak  
 Stephen & Ingrid Serniak  
 Martha, Paul & Paul Andrew Tumavitch  
 Ann Tyrpak  
 Jean Wasko  
 Stephen & Jennifer Yokimishyn  
 Anna Zupko

## All Saints Church 211 Willow Avenue Olyphant, Pa.

Rev. & Mrs. Nicholas Wyslutsky  
 Joachim, Simeon & Gabriella Wyslutsky  
 Helen Bryer  
 David & Mary Brzuchalski  
 Alexis Brzuchalski  
 Nicholas Brzuchalski  
 Stephania Butchko  
 Elizabeth Generotti  
 Mary Jane & Tanya Gilbert  
 Irene Glowatz  
 Nick & Marie Holowatch  
 Justine Horhut  
 Harry & Elizabeth Hunyak  
 Anna Klemko  
 Eleanor Krushinski  
 Michael & Amelia Kuzmiak & Family  
 Frances & Gregory Meholic  
 Claudia Mikulak  
 William Moskwa  
 Mary & Maria Oles  
 Olga & Vera Paulishak  
 Betty & George Perechinsky  
 Mike & Sonia Prestys & Sons  
 Brabara Puhalla  
 Ashley Puthorosky  
 John & Marguerite Puthorosky  
 Marguerite Puthorosky  
 Peter & Joni Rezanka & Family  
 Ann & Joe Schlasta  
 Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Semon & Family  
 James & Donna Specht  
 Kyra, Chelsea & Ian Specht  
 Dan, Susan, Samantha & Stephanie Stafursky  
 Ken Stafursky  
 Mrs. Mary Stafursky  
 Steve & Pat Stafursky  
 Linda Stuchlak  
 Michael Stuchlak Sr.  
 Julia Voloshen  
 Mary Wasilchak

## St. Nicholas Church Olyphant, Pa.

Fr. Vladimir Fetcho  
 Matushka Marianne Fetcho  
 Richard & Julie Cesari  
 James & Jonathan Cesari  
 Ellen Cherry  
 Lisa Cherry  
 John Chichilla  
 Josephine Chichilla  
 Mr. & Mrs. Henry J. Derbin  
 Jerry, Carol & Nicole Dreater  
 Mr. & Mrs. Paul Dreater  
 Capt. & Mrs. Paul Dreater Jr.



# Glorify Him!

Kayla & Liam Evanina  
 Dorothy Fetchina  
 Joseph Fetchina  
 Marie Grabania  
 Michael Grabania  
 Mr. & Mrs. David B. Hughes  
 George Kopestonsky  
 Olga Kuzmick  
 Kyra Nightinglae  
 John Nightingale  
 Vera Price  
 Tom Price  
 Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Rebar  
 Dr. & Mrs. Larry R Sherman  
 Helen Thomashefsky  
 James Thomashefsky  
 John & Ann Turko  
 Mary Youshock

## Assumption of the Holy Virgin Mary

### Philadelphia, Pa.

V. Rev. John Udics  
 Father Sergius Willis  
 Matuska Mildred Soroka  
 David & Emelie Albrecht  
 Dr. David E. Albrecht  
 Melanie Albrecht  
 John & Helen Alexander  
 Norma, Barbara, Matthew, Christopher, David Andrews  
 George Brasko  
 William & Julia Brasko  
 Emma Burychka  
 Julianne Carrol  
 Elizabeth R. Chadwick  
 Robert & Grace Corba  
 John & Julia Drimak  
 Jack, Lynn, John, Marc, Justin Drimak  
 Helen Dzugan  
 Anna Fedor  
 Julia Gavula  
 Walter Gavula  
 Edward & Patricia Gerasimoff  
 Emil Gerasimoff  
 Simon & May Herbert  
 Daniel S Herbert  
 Sandra, Neil, Alex & Samantha Hourahan  
 Julia Jugan  
 Albert & Catherine Kavalkovich  
 Ken, Debra, Alex, & Anastasia Kavalkovich  
 Marie Lamarr  
 Rick, Dana, & Jason LeRoy  
 Anna Mackiewicz  
 Richard, Linda, Stacey, Alexis Mackiewicz  
 John & May Makara  
 Julia Makara  
 Anne McCartney  
 Michael McCartney  
 Nina & Natalie Patterson  
 David Pellack  
 John & Margaret Pellack  
 John, May & Emily Pellack  
 Michael Pence Jr.  
 Catherine Petruscu  
 Joseph Rabik  
 Joe, Kathy, & Anastasia Renzetti  
 Helen Rile  
 May Robovitsky  
 Florence Savchak  
 George & Olga Vail  
 Ann Varhula  
 Helen & Timothy Wanenchak  
 Michael J Wanenchak  
 Michael Jr & Treasa Wanenchak  
 Sharon Wanenchak

Lisa Welle  
 Peter & Annamae Witiak Jr.  
 Andrew Zuzulock  
 Donald, Eleanor, Peter & Adam

## St. Stephen's Cathedral Philadelphia, Pa.

Fr. Daniel & Matushka Mary Geeza  
 Matushka Mary Fedoronko  
 Mary Ann Alfimow  
 Marlan Andrew Allen  
 Atanas Atanasov  
 Mr. & Mrs. Igor Bergners  
 Mary D. Birkenbach  
 Ron & Kathy Bisaga  
 Sonia, Dan, Stephen & Christine Bondira  
 Gregory, Carolyn & Grace Borichevsky  
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Burch  
 Anna Burdziak  
 Anna Cebular  
 Paul Cholakis  
 Judy, Jack & Jennifer Clyde  
 Mr. & Mrs. Charles Colter  
 John & Kate Cox  
 Nicholas, Alexander & Andre Cox  
 Nicholas Cronin  
 Dorothy Crossan  
 Helen Davis, Mark, Steve & Family  
 Ray, Michelle, Matthew & Natalie Decker  
 Willis & Lubie Dietrich  
 Reader Daniel & Taissa Drobish  
 David & Damian Drobish  
 Dr. George & Pauline Englesson  
 Margret Englesson  
 Paul, Diane, Laura & John Fedoronko  
 Dr Jack, Irene, Alexander, Halina, Kyra &  
 Sophia Forest  
 Nina & Bill Gavula  
 Michael & Matthew Gavula  
 Kathie Gavula & Sergio Rabaca  
 Olga Gazak  
 Elisabeth Gentieu  
 Ekaterina Gorbachevski  
 Jelena Grabania  
 Lester Grabania & Paul  
 Mary Gressen  
 Anna M. Fedryck-Hargrave  
 William & Nina Hartzell  
 Agnes & John Herbut  
 Helene & Mike Hopkins  
 Nicholas & Nina Horsky  
 Zachary, Stacy, Aleksei & Oksana Hulayew  
 Galina, Michael & Lena Imms  
 Katherine & Natalie Jadwin  
 Arnold, Katherine, Anna & Alexa Jensky  
 Catherine, Leonard, Christopher, Michael &  
 Nicholas Jones  
 Jeff & Mary Ellen Jones  
 Lorraine & Harold Kane  
 Alice Karpiak  
 Nadia Kolesnik  
 Mr. & Mrs. John Kolesnik & Family  
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael Kolesnik & Family  
 Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Kolesnik & Family  
 Annette Kopistansky  
 Mike & Alice Kopistansky  
 John Kozlowski  
 Bill Kraftician  
 Alex & Valentina Kuzman  
 Greg, Lydia & Kira Kuzmanchuk  
 Helen Lackatos  
 Steven Lackatos  
 Mikeal, Alyssa & Sarah Lamprieich

Nicole Lamprieich  
 Peter & Martha Linski  
 Sonia, Larissa & Michael Jr. Mariani  
 Marge Maurer  
 Mr. & Mrs. Merduszew  
 Anna Miller  
 Walter & Mary Mokriski  
 Adele & Lev Mozhaev  
 Janice Nass  
 Christine Nass  
 Phil & Irene O'Brien & Dasha  
 John O'Brick  
 Joseph O'Brick & Kern Irene  
 Olga Oprouseck  
 Catherine Paulasack  
 Helen Plunkett  
 Heinz & Tamara Poessl  
 Stephan & Marge Pron  
 Larissa & Stephan Pron  
 Mary Radick  
 Tom, Nina, Nicholas, Deanna & Victoria Rapak  
 Peter & Heather Ren  
 Katie & Hollie Ren  
 Valentina & Jonathan Rhodes  
 Sarah & Alexa Rhodes  
 John, Denise, Sonia & Michael Rowe  
 Anna D. Simpson  
 Joseph C. Simpson  
 Martha, Jack, Megan, Adam, Jacob &  
 Amelia Sisko  
 Larry, Connie, Jon & Chris Skvir  
 Basil, Eva, Anthony & Anna Smith  
 Joseph & Catherine Steame  
 Walter & Carolyn Stephan-Stephanowich  
 Tatiana Stephanowich & Kristin LaMacchia  
 John & Helen Szulak  
 Robert Gregory Tallick  
 Dr. Michael, Amelia, Michael &  
 Natalie Tapykoff  
 Lydia P. Tichy  
 Alice Victor  
 Eva & Bill Wasser  
 Mr. & Mrs. Andrew J. Yencha  
 Andrew, Megan, Stephen, Matthew &  
 Timothy Yencha  
 Maura Ann Yencha & Andrew Wagner  
 Diane, Vincent, Nicholas & Kristina Zanghi  
 Irene Zaroff  
 Margarite & George Zlatkowski & Family  
 John, Anna & John Zwick

## Holy Trinity Church Pottstown, Pa.

Fr. Stephen, Mat. Jessica & Jacob Evanina  
 Dn. Peter, Mat. Marnie, Marija, Joshua & Kyra Skoo  
 Reader John, Alexandra, Eryn & Lydia Black  
 Mr. & Mrs. Jon Black  
 Mr. Joseph Dutzer  
 Martha Mossner  
 Nettie Hart  
 John & Helen Boretzky  
 Mary Rapchinsky & Family  
 Tessie Kuchta  
 Julie Zewan  
 Helen Kline  
 Daniel & Marina Long  
 Rebecca Hutnyan  
 Kyra, Gregory, Philip & Kathryn Marchesini  
 Joseph, Kristina, Daniel & Alexander Bendyk  
 Effie Romanik  
 James, Gale, Julianne & Stephen Hutnyan  
 James & Annette Freeze  
 Mr. & Mrs. George Gerasimowicz  
 Anna Efimova & David Derafelo

# Christ is Born!

For the Health of Fr. Michael, Love Kyra  
Carolyn Haas  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Brilla & Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Ken Sekellick & Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Kyril Diener & Family  
Mr. & Mrs. James Crawford  
Mr. & Mrs. David Eurillo & Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Holloway  
Michelle Marsteller & Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Hrebiien  
Michael Chrusch  
Charles & Alexandra Wurster  
Jolene Weikel  
Helen Pershinsky

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

Fr. Michael & Mat. Valeria Hatrak  
Leah Chrush  
Olga DeMarkis  
Tusha Dernbach  
Tatiana Heffner  
John Hoptak  
Nancy Jones  
Jim & Ruthann Kerick  
Justyna Pelak  
Steve Pelak  
Ted & Jeanette Sagan  
Sam Wisnosky

## St. Herman of Alaska Orthodox Church Shillington, Pa.

Very Rev. & Mrs. John A. Onofrey  
The Parish Council  
The Sunday School Teachers & Students  
The Our Lady of Kazan Sisterhood  
The Parish Choir  
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Anderson & Family  
Mrs. Vera (Ressetar) Bortniak  
Ms. Louise Coleman  
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Dougherty & Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Drenchko  
John & Marie Drosdak  
The Drosdak-Barto Family  
Pat & Bill Dudash  
Mr. William N. Dudash  
Mr. & Mrs. Douglas Duriez & Daughters  
Mrs. Gloria Duty & Sons  
Nicholas & Kathy Ermolovich  
Mrs. Sonja Fatula  
Mrs. Nancy Ghantous  
Mr. & Mrs. Jefferson Gore & Sons  
Mr. & Mrs. David Grim & Family  
Bill & Rosalie Nardman  
Barbara, Joseph & Jacob Hetrick  
Terry & Debbie Hojnovski  
Mr. Walter Hojnovski  
Daniel & Xenia Hretz  
Mr. & Mrs. Ed Hyland  
The Kavood Family  
Mr. Alex Kirjanov  
Mrs. Eva Kopera  
Dr. & Mrs. Vadim Kurjanovicz  
Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Kusior  
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Leer & Family  
Mr. & Mrs. John Lorchak  
Michael & Vera Losk  
Mrs. Irene Lupco  
John, Dana & Raymond MaciCoul  
Michael & Janice Mallick  
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Matsick & Family  
Paul & Marie McCarty  
John & Gertrude Melniczek

Mr. George Nakonetchny  
Mr. & Mrs. Karl Osterburg  
Ms. Camille Palese  
Mrs. Olga Palese  
Mrs. Alexandra Pravlocki & Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Reba & Family  
Matushka Margaret Ressetar  
Mrs. Eleanor Ruth  
Mrs. Ruth N. Ruth  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Savage  
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Sebastian  
Mr. & Mrs. John Semen & Family  
Ms. Alexandra Semion  
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Sichak & Family  
Mrs. Tinamarie Snyder  
Ms. Gloria Spitko & Kyra  
Catherine & Cheryl Terenchin  
Kyle, Dana & Zoe Elizabeth Teter  
Mr. & Mrs. Steve Vlasak & Sons  
Hr. & Mrs. Eugene Wanenchak & Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Chip Weaver & Family  
Ryan & Traci Weinstein & Daughters  
Mrs. Deborah Wissler & Michael Lucas  
Mr. & Mrs. Edvard Yurick & Daughters  
Hank & Anne Zerbe

## St. Basil's Church Simpson, Pa.

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

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

Metropolitan HERMAN  
V. Rev. Daniel K. & Mat. Dolores Donlick  
V. Rev. Michael S. Dahulich  
V. Rev. Alexander, Mat. Elena & Alex Golubov  
V. Rev. Michael Lepa  
Archdn. Alexei, Mat. Cecelia & Anya Klimitchev  
Protodeacon Keith S. Russin  
Rev. Deacon Walter, Mat. Nancy & Flora Smith  
Reader Thomas Donlick  
Reader Gregory Hatrak  
Reader Gregory Sulich  
Matushka Elizabeth Geeza  
Matushka Dorothy Sulich  
Galina Abolins  
Eugene Abolins  
Andrews Family  
Mary Andreychik  
Marge Barna  
Olga Barna

Alice Boga  
Emma S. Collins  
Betty A. Figura  
Drs. David & Mary Ford, & Emmelia  
Daisy Geeza  
Julia Jacewicz  
Ron & Lorraine Kavalkovich & Ron, Jr.  
John & Helen Kuchmanich  
Nicholaus Kuzemchak  
Victor Kuzemchak  
Metro Lazorack  
John & Mildred Naholnik  
Ken & Peg Paulic  
Mr. & Mrs. John W. Paluch  
Martin S. Paluch  
Robert H. Roth  
Ann Sernak  
Paul Wozniak

## Holy Trinity Church Stroudsburg, Pa.

Father & Matushka Nicholas J. Solak  
Reader David Mastroberte  
David & Doreen Donlick  
Russ & Nancy Futchko  
Carl & Jane Hodel  
Tom & Helen Kessler  
Peter & Helen Stavisky

## Saints Peter & Paul Church Uniondale, Pa.

Rev. Hieromonk Alexander (Mayba)  
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Bendyk  
Donald & Ann Bock  
Vladimir & Betty Demianovich  
Martha Dorosh  
Peter Jubinsky  
Peter & Linda Jubinsky & Family  
Rose Kennedy  
Lubov & Ronald Kilmer  
Lovey Klym  
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Terry & Family

## Holy Resurrection Cathedral Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

Archpriest Joseph & Mat. Gloria Martin  
Marina & Elena Martin  
Protodeacon Keith S. Russin  
Deacon Sergei & Mat. Vicki Kapral  
Sergei & Alexander Kapral  
Reader David & Kathryn Kessler  
David, Tatiana & Hannah Kessler  
Andrew Buleza  
Matushka Maria Shuga  
Helen Umphred  
Mary Onufer  
Helen Humko  
John & Doris Zoranski  
Kyra Zoranski  
Mrs. Frank Romanchek  
Edward & Evelyn Wysocki  
Agnes Timchak  
John & Irene Zimich  
Mrs. William Kozey & Son  
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Hutz  
David P Hutz MD  
Mrs. Steve Krill Sr  
Michael, Nancy & Abby Pieck  
Marguerite & Tom Czekalski  
Vera & Ray Kraynanski  
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Tarantini  
Olga Layton  
Manusky Family

# Glorify Him!

Eva Berlozan  
Dr & Mrs John Haber & Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Good & Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Judd Good  
Sandy, Julieann & Nicholas Kapelan

## Holy Trinity Church Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

Fr. David & Matushka Sharon Shewczyk  
Timothy & Nicholas Shewczyk  
Matushka Ann Pawlush  
Holy Trinity Altar Boys  
Eleanor & Theodore Sovyrda  
Peter & Theresa Pawlak  
Mr. & Mrs. David Mills  
Andrew Dennis  
Edward & Helen Gudaitis  
Anna & Stanley Bishop  
Melanie & Nicolas Bishop  
John & Denise Meck  
Paul, Corie & Abby Meck  
Ted Polk  
Joan Puma  
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Sanders  
Mary Bankos  
Susan Bawn  
Nan Zula  
Elaine Benczkowski  
Mary & Stephen Krill  
Marianne & Jeremy Haugh  
Nettle Kompinski  
Anna Goobic  
Helen & Peter Welgo  
Mrs. Mildred Mayher  
William & Mary Gurka  
Michael & Leona Stchur  
Marion & Eve Sowyrda  
John Pawlak  
Lydia Homick  
Justine Paddock  
Evelyn Kozmlski  
Jason & Colleen King  
Mrs. Robert T. Rhodes  
Mary Piznar  
Liz & John Gurka  
Anna Bromuko  
Mr. & Mrs. Vladimir Dutko  
Helen Zavada  
William Talpash, Jr.  
Pearl Tutko  
Mary Yankovich & Family  
Michael & Vera Lisko  
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Chilcott & Family  
Walter Mason  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Holoviak & Vladimir  
Vera Fairchok

## St. Mark's Church Wrightstown, Pa.

Archpriest Theodore Heckman  
Deacon Gregory & Mat. Martha Moser  
Jeanette Ruano  
Peter, Daniela & Christian Toma  
Sandy, Peter, & Stephanie Bohlender  
Dorothy, Ken, Nichole & Stephen Martiak  
Lucy & Michelle Znak  
Nicholas, Marina, Larissa, Katerina Moser  
Janet M. Kalenish  
Sam Mervis  
Reader George Nakonetschny  
Irene & Sergei Arhipov  
Zach, Connie, & Sergei Borichevsky  
Monia & James Pitra

Sonja Lengel  
John Stavisky  
Anatole & Cynthia Bredikin  
Doug, Sharon, Anna, Lydia, & John Yates  
Patti Connelly  
Justin Heckman  
Boris & Joanne Borichevsky  
Jack & Barbara Malriat  
Zofia Patterson  
Julia Petrov  
Stephanie Ristvey  
Charles & Joe Rybny  
Kevin & Mary Anne Swan  
Elizabeth Werner  
Patrick Colucci  
Tim Gall

## St. Michael's Church Wilmington, Del.

Fr. Andrew & Mat. Karen Anderson  
Vassily & Grace Schulgin  
Dolores B. Karawulan  
Marie Karawulan  
James M. Carpenter  
James S. & Olga Riley  
Onufry & Dorothy Zabinko  
Paul, Vera & Matt Chalfant  
George & Helen Kruse  
Allen & Colleen Shatley & family  
The Phillips Family  
Michael Sinovich  
Julianna Mogish  
Pearl & Ned Minnich  
James & Anne Riley & Family  
Basil & Cindy Peck & Family  
Stephanie & Edward Hojnicki  
Sophia M. Puit  
Mary Guretsky  
John & Helen Ciach  
Bill & Alice Dryden  
Joe & Susan Wojciechowski  
Yuriy O. Kovalchuk  
Bill & Mane Henman & Family  
Nihmat & Alice Morjana & Family  
Peter & Elizabeth Melnik  
The Fedak Family  
The Hines Family  
Olga & John Maloney  
David & Christine Roberts & Family  
Sacha Stoyanova  
Helen McNally  
Hon. Menill & Mary Trader  
Tom & Sylvia Holt  
The U of D college students  
James & Frances Wilson  
Agnes Meginniss  
Robed & Jean Zapora  
Diane duPont & son Henry  
Michael, Amy & Joshua Pavlovich  
Caton, Lisa & Asha Tompkins  
Anonymous  
Ed & Karen Hojnicki  
Leah Hojnicki  
Vera Vladimirova  
Larry & Melissa Conover, Hannah & Emily  
Craig, JoAnna, Jason & Rebecca Stump  
Nabih & Georgia Harb  
Rashid & Mona Elia  
Sami & Mily Shaer  
Saliba & Insirah Shaer  
Harry & Evelyn Kutch  
Reader Timothy Hojnicki  
Thomas, Lynn, Daniel & Megan Sulpizi  
Irene Scarloss & daughter Susan

Yelena L. Fox & son Yakov  
Sergey & Irma Baldytshev  
Dr. Bruce & Nancy Wales  
James & Paula Flynn  
Ivan Baldytshev  
Olga S. O'Neill  
Daniel & Cristina Kraiter & Family  
Christopher & Nona Carey & Family  
Sophia Golbiw  
Maria Gregors & Family  
Ellen Gundersen  
Helen Kansak  
Gregory, Laura & Alexander Kaznowsky  
Paul & Marianne Newmeyer & Family  
Vasily & Helen Obertyschew  
Albert Schock  
Marie Skrobot  
James & Barbara Hicks  
Stanley & Helen Borowski  
Gary Delasser  
Hany & Emily Wujcik  
The Zabowski family



## All in the Diocesan Family

### Berwick

#### Holy Annunciation Church

Our parish family reached out into the local community the weekend of August 17-18 with a feature article. Our annual church picnic was held on Sunday, Aug. 18. During this past summer, the church school enjoyed a bowling outing at the Briar Creek sporting complex and a trip to Camel Beach water park. The church school held a cookie sale on Sunday, Nov. 24 and sponsored a food drive during the first three weeks in November with the proceeds going to the Berwick food kitchen and St. Tikhon's Seminary. Holy Annunciation's Ladies Organization (HALO) has been busy holding our first pre-advent dinner on November 10.

Diane Macri coordinated a meal on Saturday, Sept. 21 at the Berwick Soup Kitchen. The meal was prepared in our newly-renovated kitchen and then taken to the soup kitchen for distribution. Our kitchen renovation project was approved with an approximate cost of over \$50,000, and in Nov. 2002, our loan was paid.

**Wedding:** Megan Lehman and Adam Wayne Phillips, Oct. 26.

**Chrismations:** Theodore Allen Tripp II, and Heather Davida Tripp, Aug. 14.

**Baptism:** Theodore Allen Tripp III, Amilia Grace Tripp, and Elliot Faust Tripp, Aug. 14.



Mr. & Mrs. Phillips with Fathers Peter and James



Newly-illuminated Tripp family with godparents and Father James

### Catasauqua, Holy Trinity Church



Parishioners enjoying breakfast sponsored by the church school



Reader and Mrs. Michael Brusko receive a blessing from Fr. Christopher on their fiftieth wedding anniversary

## Coaldale

### St. Mary's Church

On Thursday, Aug. 22, the church school children and parents made their annual adventure trip to Camel Beach water park for a fun day in the sun. A church school retreat was held on Aug. 24 under the direction of Matushka Suzanna and Barbara Teno. The next day, His Beatitude Metropolitan HERMAN made an archpastoral visit to our parish.

Our annual homecoming Patron Saint Dinner-Dance was held Sept. 8. The town of Coaldale celebrated its 175th anniversary on Oct. 13 with a parade, and St. Mary's had a float with the theme "Fishers of Men." On the weekend of Nov. 9 & 10 the parish held the annual Christmas bazaar. The Jr. "O" Club hosted the Central Pa. District Convention on Oct. 27, and served a roast beef and halupki dinner.

## Harrisburg

### Christ the Saviour Church

The Spirit of '76 National Convention of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America (FOCA) was held the Radison Penn Harris Hotel in Harrisburg over the Labor Day weekend. Sponsors for the convention were the Central Pa. District of the FOCA, the Harrisburg "O" Club, and Christ the Saviour parish. The convention honored retiring Metropolitan Theodosius and welcomed the newly elected Metropolitan Herman.

On Oct. 22, Zedashe, a seven member choral group from the Republic of Georgia, gave a concert at the parish hall.

**Baptism:** Vladimir Vladimirovich, son of Marina (Kuchereva) and Vladimir Borodianski, Oct. 25.



Stephen Rudenko is made a reader by Metropolitan Herman



Fr. Andrew is awarded the kamilavka by Met. Herman



FOCA Convention in Harrisburg



Zedashe choir with Fr. Daniel

### Old Forge

#### St. Michael's Church

**Wedding:** Stephen and Jennifer (Youngman) Yokimishyn, Oct. 19.

### Pottstown

#### Holy Trinity Church

We welcomed these new members into our parish: Mr. & Mrs. Jim O'Brien and children Melissa and Kelly, Mr. & Mrs. Mike Limar and children Matthew and Thomas, Mr. & Mrs. Steve Symanovich, Mrs. Linda Beiber, and Mr. Patrick Kelleher.

The annual picnic was held in August. We replaced our original roof and installed new carpeting in the church.

### Shillington

#### St. Herman's Church

On Saturday, Sept. 14, the parish sponsored a bus trip to New York City to see *The Lion King* on Broadway. Afterwards, the bus made a quick trip to "Ground Zero," the World Trade Center disaster site. On Saturday, Sept. 21, St. Herman's sponsored a "rummage, pierogie & baked goods" sale. On Oct. 27, the church school sponsored its annual scrambled egg and sausage breakfast to benefit our church's Christmas stocking project. On Sunday, Nov. 10, over 80 parishioners gathered for our annual covered dish harvest dinner.

As a part of St. Herman's community outreach program, the parish is collecting items for two local shelters: Berks Women in Crisis and the Reading Emergency Shelter. Each month, selected items (e.g. shampoo and toothpaste in October) are collected and distributed to these shelters. The church school's senior class is also participating in this program by sponsoring a local child for the Christmas holiday.

In November, Fr. John Onofrey was elected president of Orthodox Council of Churches of South Central Pa., a pan-Orthodox council of 15 churches. Fr. John is also the president of the Gov. Mifflin Ministerium and will be leading members of 14 local churches in a community Thanksgiving Eve service.

**Marriage:** Mary Anne (Seman) & Kyle Kweder, Oct. 26.



### Mt. Carmel

#### St. Michael's Church



Newlyweds Brian and Jennifer (Brown) Updegrove with Frs. Michael Evans & Daniel Kovalak, Sept. 21



The Yokimishyns with Fr. David



Parishioners of St. Herman's enjoy breakfast sponsored by the church school



Mr. & Mrs. Teter with Father John

South Canaan, St. Tikhon's Monastery



Matushka Nina Stroyen is presented with the St. Innocent Award



Mrs. Rose Kennedy receives the St. Innocent Award at Founder's Day Banquet



Ordination of Deacon Barnabas

## WINTER TEEN RETREAT

Feb. 7, 8, 9, 2003

### St. Tikhon's Seminary

Retreat Speaker:  
**Ronald Tucci**  
Youth Director  
St. Mary's  
Orthodox Cathedral  
Minneapolis, MN



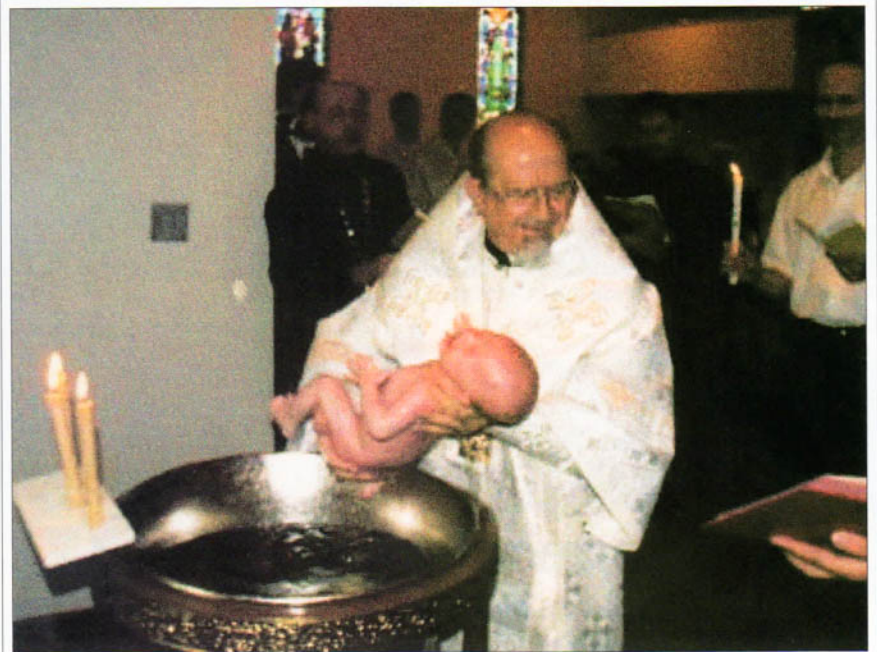
Metropolitan Herman with the newly-ordained deacon and his family



Founder's Day Banquet at St. Tikhon's Seminary



Fr. Michael Dahulich lectures on New Testament at Holy Cross



Vladimir, son of Peter and Paula Holoviak, is baptized by His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN

**Williamsport  
Holy Cross Church**

Vacation Bible School was held this year the week of August 12. Fr. Michael Dahulich lectured on the New Testament on Sept. 16. We hosted a vesper service on the campus of Bucknell University in Lewisburg during Parent's Weekend in

October. Representatives of Holy Cross participated in the Annual Life-Chain held on Oct. 6 and the CROP Walk against hunger Oct. 13. The parish hosted the diocesan Bicentennial Male Chorus on Oct. 20 to benefit the O.C.A.'s 9/11 Emergency



Relief Fund. Our parish's 25th anniversary was celebrated Nov. 2-3, with Metropolitan Theodosius as main celebrant.

**Baptisms:** Abigail Morin, Aug. 11; Alexa Yonkin, Aug. 25; Janna Maria Seyler, Oct. 20; Sean John Forker, Oct. 27.

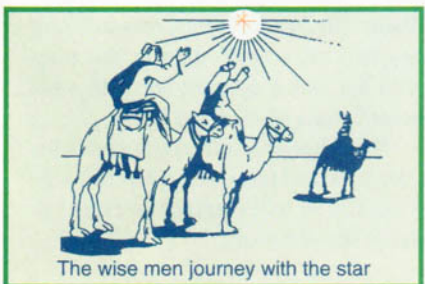
**Marriages:** John & Stephanie Raptis, Oct. 6; Sean & Laura Forker, Oct. 27.



Baptism of Alexa Yonkin



Janna Maria Seyler and family



The wise men journey with the star



Fr. Daniel during Vacation Bible School



Fr. Daniel leading vespers at Bucknell



Sean & Laura Forker receive their crowns from Fr. Dan

## Wilmington

### St. Michael's Church

On Sunday, Nov. 17 at 5 p.m., 16 people gathered for the historic first meeting of the newly-formed Orthodox Christian Fellowship at the University of Delaware. Present with the students were Fr. Andrew J. Anderson, one of the club's spiritual advisors, and Dr. Thomas Buchanan, the club's faculty advisor. The group plans on meeting each Sunday evening at 5 p.m. for vespers and fellowship. A mailing has gone out to the 115 registered Orthodox Christians on campus inviting them to join, and flyers have been posted everywhere on the campus.



OCF students from University of Delaware with Fr. Andrew

## Tribute to Oldest Parishioner



Five generations of Catherine Conick's family

Catherine Shipyky Conick was born February 11, 1906 in Zubrick, Austro-Hungarian Empire (present-day western Ukraine) and came to this country at the young age of 16. She is one of founders of St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church in Dundaff, and has the distinction of being the oldest parishioner.

Catherine has been a lifelong parishioner and has played a very important part in the history and growth of St. John's. Up until a few years ago she was at every service, singing in the choir and helping with all of the vari-

ous fundraising projects throughout the year. At age 95, she became great-great-grandmother to Taylor Cotte (born Nov. 29, 2001) and this past March, when Catherine was 96, her great-great-granddaughter Elena Sloan was born.

Catherine has been homebound for several years, being cared for by her children and her pastor, Fr. Dionysius Swencki, who visits and administers the sacrament to her on a regular basis. Fr. Dionysius notes that Catherine's faith, love of God, and love of our Holy Orthodox Church continue to be a remarkable example for all Orthodox faithful. Even

while her physical strength is fading, her spiritual love and complete lack of fear give all of us around her greater courage and faith.

Metropolitan Herman was spiritual father to Catherine for many years and this is something that she cherishes dearly. His Beatitude took time not long ago to visit with Catherine and pray with her and it uplifted her with a renewed sense of love and faith.

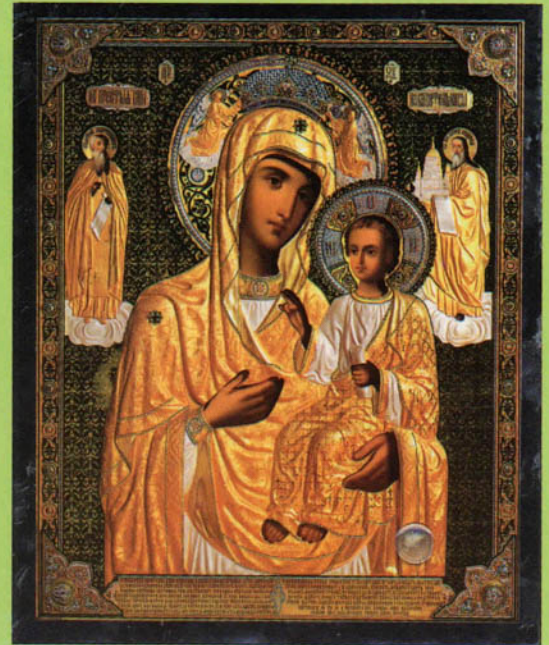
We continue to offer our prayers for Catherine and that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will continue to grant her many blessed years.

# New from *St. Tikhon's Bookstore*

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*Mother of God the Redeemer*

*Also Available the following images  
of the Mother of God:*

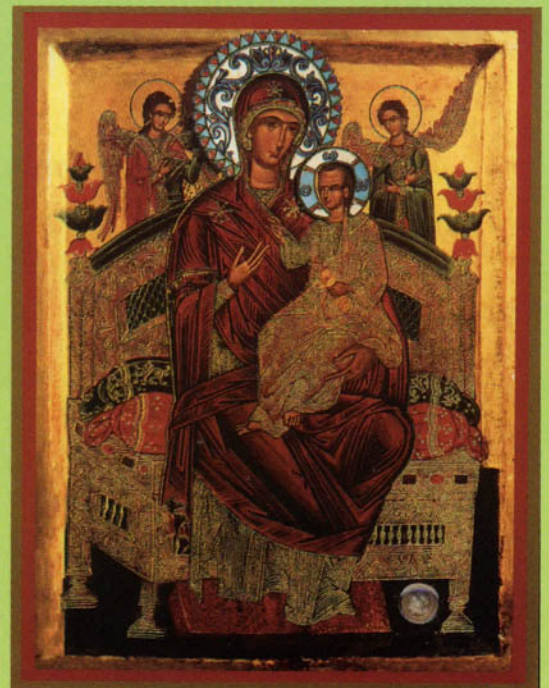
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Ninth Annual  
**St. Tikhon's Century Association  
Winter Festival**

For the benefit of St. Tikhon's Seminary  
**Sunday February 16, 2003**

*Come and Enjoy a Night of Russian Cuisine  
Dancing with Joe Stanly & His Cadets*

**St. Michael's Parish Hall**

403 Delaware Street  
Jermyn, Pennsylvania

*A pre-lenten celebration*  
Cocktails — 4:00 P.M.  
Dinner — 5:00 P.M.

**Reservations should be made before February 10, 2003**

*For tickets call:*

**Matushka Dorothy Sulich  
at St. Tikhon's (570) 937-4411**

Please make checks payable to:  
**St. Tikhon's Century Association  
P.O. Box 130  
South Canaan, PA 18549**

Banquet: Adults - \$35.00, Child under 10 - \$10.00