



Report From Africa

The Adventures of OCMC Missionary, Bill Black

We had the distinct pleasure of welcoming Dr. Bill (aka Professor, Reader, Missionary, Deputy Dean, Joseph) Black over the Christmas holiday. In a surprise visit, Bill opted to spend some of his 'missionary vacation' here in the states. There was some not so good news as well, because, the Patriarchal Seminary where Bill is assigned to serve in Nairobi has yet to open this year. This is due to a financial shortfall which has many causes, but suffice it to say, that if the lone Orthodox seminary in central Africa is closed, there will be no new missions, no new priests to serve 3/4 of the entire continent!

Bill's position as Deputy Dean is one of awesome responsibility, yet he is unable to exercise it due to these circumstances. In his most recent post, sent from the field to his friends through OCMC, Bill explains the situation a bit, in his own unique and insightful way. While we were able to get Bill the funds from our St. Nicholas award for 2016 in the form of \$5000, the need is much greater than that.

So if you know of others who may be able to assist this cause financially, please put them in touch with Bill through OCMC. In the meantime, we can all pray that his ministry remains fruitful, despite the fact that the path seems to meander a bit at the moment. You can read his blog entries here: https://www.ocmc.org/resources/view_article.aspx?ArticleId=2281

Ω



Bill is signing up new recruits for the mission. Maybe they can sign up Deena for another tour as well?

Next Lampada Deadline - June 1 Themes: Pentecost - Summer



St. Nicholas Orthodox Church
P.O. Box 6981
Charlottesville Virginia 22906

Address Correction Requested



Lampada



Great Lent, 2017

Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, Have mercy on me a sinner.

Great Lent Epistle in the Year of our Lord 2017

PERMANENT CONFERENCE OF UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX BISHOPS BEYOND THE BORDERS OF UKRAINE

Beloved in the Lord, Reverend Clergy! Dear Brothers and Sisters!

By the Grace of God, very recently we joyfully celebrated the Great Feast of the Incarnation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who "for us men and for our salvation came down from the heavens and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man." (The Nicene Creed).



In these days, Great Lent is already beginning and our Holy Church is preparing us for the events, the culmination of the history of humanity, in the relationship between the Creator and His creation. For God so loved the world that He gave His Only-Begotten Son to die for us in order to grant us eternal life, (John 3:16). For our sake and for our salvation, the Son of God willingly suffers and endures crucifixion and death. During this Holy 40 day period, as we approach the most important event for us all, the Holy Church calls us to adequately prepare ourselves to come near, to feel the incomprehensible love of God for us sinners, and to understand the price that was paid so that we may receive salvation and eternal life. The Lord says "if anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (Matthew 16:24).

Continued, Back cover

Great Lent - A Time of Spiritual Healing:

ON ACCIDIE, DEJECTION OR DEPRESSION By St. Tichon of Zadonsk

As Great Lent is a time of great spiritual struggle, I'm sure many of us have had to deal with the passion of acedia - acedia (a type of spiritual depression). Here is the spiritual medicine from St. Tichon - in an answer to a monk who suffered from the spirit of accidia.

I see from your letter that you have been assailed by the spirit of dejection. This is a grievous passion, against which Christians seeking salvation must struggle fiercely. Dejection assails even such as have bread and other objects of necessity ready at hand. How much the more, then, does it attack those who live in solitude? I commend to you the following practices:



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1. Exhort yourself, force yourself, to prayer and every good work, however contrary be your inclination. As a lazy horse, driven by a whip, is compelled by man to walk and to trot, even so must we coerce ourselves into performing every kind of labor, and how much the more, to pray. God, beholding your efforts and your labor, will grant you zeal and inclination. Habit of itself creates the inclination, and, it might be said, attracts us towards prayer and good deeds. Learn to acquire this habit, and it will draw

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A Parish of the Eastern Eparchy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA

His Eminence Metropolitan +Antony Presiding Hierarch

Parish Leaders

V. Rev. Robert Holet, Pastor Leadership Board

Chair: Jacob Ritter Vice Chair: Bryan Alexander Treasurer: Karen Gavrilovic Secretary: Sden James Guba At Large: Susan Murphy

Service Group Leaders

Hospitality: Randy Brogan, Chris Harrison Liturgy: Troy Hamilton Charitable Works: Cynthia Patzig Evangelization: Karen Gavrilovic Buildings/Grounds: Vladimir Gavrilovic Library-Bookstore: Stanley Bright Religious Formation: Basil Finnegan Parish Ministries Greeters: Karen Gavrilovic Liturgical Music: Pani Christine Holet Web Committee: Karen Bowman Community Care: Elaine Brogan

Contact Information

Parish Office - 434-973-2500 Phone at Church: (540)-456-6981 Address: 7581 Rockfish Gap Tpk (US 250), Greenwood, VA Mailing Address: P.O. Box 6981, Charlottesville, Va. 22906 Email: info@stnicholasorthodoxchurch.com Pastor: fr.r.holet@uocusa.net Web: www.33-AD.org To reach Fr. Robert: First call the rectory phone: 434-973-2500 and leave a message. If you are unable to reach him at that number, then try the cell phone: 434-987-8170. The cell phone is used only during travel. Email is checked daily.

Liturgical Services Schedule Subject to Change - See the Online Calendar for Updates

Table with 2 columns: Date and Service Details. Rows include: Sunday, March 5 (FIRST SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT - Sunday of Orthodoxy), Wednesday, March 8, Friday, March 10, Saturday, March 11, Sunday, March 12 (SECOND SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT - St. Gregory Palamas), Wednesday, March 15, Friday, March 17, Saturday, March 18, Sunday, March 19 (THIRD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT - VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS), Wednesday, March 22, Friday, March 24, Saturday, March 25, Sunday, March 26 (FOURTH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT - St. John Climacus), Wednesday, March 29, Friday, March 31, Saturday, April 1, Sunday, April 2 (FIFTH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT - St. Mary of Egypt).



PASCHA BASKETS AND THEN SOME –

Today, most of us think that bringing of Pascha baskets loaded with meat and cheese and other rich foods to church is a Slavic custom. Did you know that it was once the universal practice of the Church?

In the early days of the Church, on the Great Feasts, families brought baskets of food to church, where the baskets would be blessed and the food shared. We see that custom still on the Feast of Transfiguration, when the baskets of grapes and fruit are blessed. In the Slavic countries, there is a traditional list of foods for the baskets, a list that hasn't changed much since the days when the baskets were still a universal custom. A listing of these foods can be found elsewhere in the Lampada.

The custom of bringing baskets of food to church on Pascha was mostly lost in non-Slavic lands due to occupation of one sort or another. In England and America, the custom was abandoned with the banning of "holy day" celebrations in the 17th century. Interesting that, when the "holy days" were restored, "Easter baskets" returned - as small baskets filled with eggs and sweets for children. Translation issue, perhaps?

The ancient practice lived on in the Slavic countries. Wicker baskets are still loaded with rich foods and meats, decorated with bows and flowers, and covered with beautifully embroidered cloths. They're brought to the church before Paschal Matins, with a candle is tucked into each basket to be lit when the priest blesses the baskets after the services. In some cultures, these foods were the only ones eaten during Bright Week - so the baskets would be huge!

TRADITIONAL FOODS FOR PASCHA BASKETS?

Are there traditional foods to be included in Pascha baskets? Remembering that these baskets represent the families' representation of their Lenten sacrifice, at St. Nicholas parish we encourage inclusion of foods important to the entire family. I am heartened when I visit the tables during the Paschal celebration to see the different representations of "breaking the fast!" Who knew so many forms of chocolate existed? Cheese Pascha? Breads? And the post-Paschal toasts are always an education!

As you visit with your Parish family (and your own family members) during this Paschal celebration, share stories about your family traditions – pysanky, rushnyks, red eggs, candles, bows, flowers, Church service participation, Grave decoration, midnight service processions – just to suggest some. Find out what your family considers as important parts of this time – I know you'll be enlightened as I always am! If you need recipes or would like to share some of your own, please e-mail Pani Christine!. Next year we'll get to Greek practice of the roasting of the Lamb!

Blessed Pascha to all! - PMC~

"We are the Champions, my friends...."

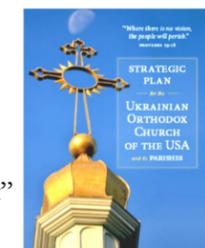
If you are old enough to remember this lyric and are the first to respond with the correct answer, we will see that you get the proper recognition!



As you all know, we have asked for a team to be assembled that will be the "conduit" for information about the UOC of USA's Strategic Planning effort. With thanks to God, our team has been formed! Your representatives are Karl Bowman, Mager Koromhas and Pani Christine Holet.

Our first meeting will be mid-to late March, but we already have a couple of ideas already on the drawing table. Getting your feedback to share with the Strategic Planning Task Forces is really important to the success of this effort! We are also going to try to "connect the dots" between our own Plan developed a few years ago, and the current work of the UOC of USA. Note - that Elaine Brogan, as our Community Care leader is already participating in the meetings of the Task Force working developing parish life. Way to step up Elaine!

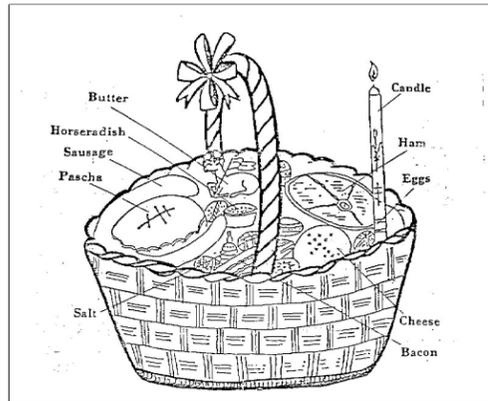
There was a comment at our Leader's Meeting earlier this year about opening doors to share information with other parishes and jurisdictions. If any of you are serious about this, here is a way to start. Look for opportunities to share feedback, and also to learn about available resources within and outside the UOC of USA. Pray for us, and for all of our service groups!





A 'Traditional'* Easter Basket from the Carpathian Mountains in Ukraine

Among the beautiful customs of the Slavs, the practice of bringing an Easter basket to church on Easter Sunday is an age-old tradition. It stems from the desire of the Christian community to ask God's blessings on the foods that will break the Great Fast and from which they have abstained during the forty days. The religious significance attached to the foods



eaten are symbolic of Christ himself, our true Passover. The prohibition of particular foods during the Lenten season, namely meat and dairy products, naturally become the main staple during the festive time of the Resurrection celebration. We have here listed the articles of food traditionally placed in a wicker basket and brought to Church for Easter services after which a solemn blessing takes place. The faithful take their foods home to be enjoyed by the whole family. If one has abstained from these foods during the Lenten season and particularly Holy Week, they would naturally taste better on Resurrection Sunday.

PASCHA is the Easter Bread. It is sweet yeast bread rich in eggs, butter, etc. symbolic of Christ Himself, Who is our true bread. It is usually a round loaf baked with a golden crust decorated with symbols indicative of Christ. Sometimes a Cross is placed on top of the dough encircled by a plait giving it a crown effect. At times abbreviations for the name of Christ - IC, XC -

which represent the name Jesus Christ in Greek, are made of rolled dough and placed on top.

HAM is the fresh-meat popular with the Slavs as the main dish, particularly because its richness and symbolic of the great joy of abundance at the Resurrection. Some prefer veal or lamb. This is usually well roasted or cooked as well as other meats so that the festivity of the day will not be a burden with preparation and that all may enjoy the feast.

SAUSAGE - 'KOLBAS', a spicy garlic flavored pork product is indicative of God's favor and generosity.

BACON is usually included after being cured and smoked. It may be spiced and is symbolic of the overabundance of God's mercy on us.

CHEESE (HRUDKA) made in a variety of ways, but primarily in a ball shape and having a rather bland but sweet taste, is indicative of the moderation that Christians should have in all things. The cheese may be decorated with a cross out of cloves of pepper balls.

HORSERADISH (HRIN) is mixed with grated red beets and symbolizes the Passion of Christ still in our minds but sweetened with sugar because of the Resurrection. The bitter sweet, red color mixture reminds us of the sufferings of Christ.

SALT is the condiment necessary to flavor our foods and reminds us of our responsibility to "flavor" life about us with the values of Christ.

EGGS or PYSANKY to be eaten are hardboiled, and brightly decorated with symbols of the Resurrection by markings in beeswax. They are indicative of new life in the Resurrection. Other pysanky are specially prepared in permanent dyes in exquisite patterns and blown out for decorative use throughout the year.

Sometimes, a large Easter Bread or Pascha is made and brought in a large linen cloth to be blessed separately. Also, if the origin of the people was from a wine growing area, a sweet wine is included. In modern times, other foods are added as well, common to the country and customs of the people.

These are placed in a wicker basket and a light colored or pastel ribbon is tied to the handle. A decorated candle is placed in the basket and lit at the time of the blessing and during the Resurrection meal. A linen covering usually embroidered with the depiction of the Risen Christ or Symbols or words "Christ is Risen" is placed over the food in the basket as it is brought to the Church.

*As per Carpathian / Ukrainian custom Special basket covers are available from the Parish Bookstore. Edited from GCU Bulletin.

If you would like to receive recipes for any of these foods, please contact Pani Matka Christine.



Liturgical Services (cont.)

	Venerable Titus the Wonderworker
	8:45am Matins
	9:30am Divine Liturgy
Wednesday, April 5	6:00pm Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts
Friday, April 7	6:00pm Vespers for Lazarus Saturday
Saturday, April 8	8:00am Divine Liturgy - Lazarus Saturday
	4:00pm Great Vespers
Sunday, April 9	PALM (FLOWERY) SUNDAY - Entry of Our Lord into Jerusalem. Feast of our Lord
	8:45am Matins
	9:30am Divine Liturgy
	-- Beginning of the Great and Holy Week --
Monday, April 10	Great and Holy Monday
	6:00pm Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts (2 hrs)
Tuesday, April 11	Great and Holy Tuesday
	7:00pm Bridegroom Matins (1.75 hrs)
Wednesday, April 12	Great and Holy Wednesday - The Anointing
	6:00pm Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts (1.75 hrs)
	7:45pm Service of Holy Anointing (1.5 hrs)
Thursday, April 13	Great and Holy Thursday - The Mystical Supper
	5:00pm Vespers - Liturgy of St. Basil (2.5 hrs)
	7:30pm Matins for Great and Holy Friday - Reading of Passion Gospels (2 hrs)
Friday, April 14	GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY - THE CRUCIFIXION AND DEATH OF OUR LORD
	8:00am Royal Hours for Great Friday (2 hrs)
	6:00pm Great Vespers with Procession of the Holy Shroud (1.5 hrs)
	9:00pm Jerusalem Matins (2.5 hrs) followed by All Night Vigil at Tomb
Saturday, April 15	GREAT AND HOLY SATURDAY - DESCENT INTO HADES
	12:00n Paschal Vigil: Vespers - Divine Liturgy of St. Basil (2.5 hrs)
Sunday, April 16	HOLY PASCHA - THE FEAST OF FEASTS: THE GLORIOUS RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD, GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST
	11:45pm Midnight Office
	12:00mn Procession - Resurrection Matins
	Divine Liturgy of Pascha (2 hrs) followed by Blessing of Paschal Foods/Fellowship Meal
	9:30am Paschal Vespers (not Divine Liturgy)
Monday, April 17	9:00am Divine Liturgy - Bright Monday
Saturday, April 22	4:00pm Great Vespers

Continued, next page

Many Blessed Years!

Birthdays

Saints Days

Dorian Lester

Opportunities for Confession during the Lenten Season:

- † Saturdays after Vespers
 - † After all Lenten Services
 - † By Appointment - call for a time
- By the guidance of the Metropolia, every Orthodox Christian should avail themselves of the opportunity to be cleansed of sin through the Mystery of Holy Penance during Great Lent, so as to approach Holy Communion on Holy Pascha.

Please don't wait til the last minute!



Sunday, April 23 **Thomas Sunday** - Second Paschal Sunday

8:45am Sunday Matins
9:30am Divine Liturgy

Saturday, April 29 4:00pm Great Vespers

Sunday, April 29 **Sunday of the Holy Myrrhbearers**- Third Paschal Sunday

8:45am Sunday Matins
9:30am Divine Liturgy

Ongoing and Special Events Calendar

Bible Study - In Home (regional)	TBA	
Potluck Fasting Meal - After Presanctified Liturgies - Educational video on Syrian Relief Crisis		Wednesdays of Great Lent
Evangelization/Outreach Service Group	6:00pm	Tuesday, March 7
Buildings and Grounds Service Group	6:30pm	Thursday, March 9
Parish Board Meeting	6:30pm	Tuesday, March 14
Parish Champions Meeting	4:30pm	Wednesday March 22
Planning Gathering - 20th Anniversary	After Liturgy	Saturday, March 25
Parish Right to Life Vigil (at Planned Parenthood)	12n	Tuesday, March 28
Religious Formation Service Group	6:30pm	Tuesday, March 28
Charitable Works Service Group	2:30pm	Saturday, April 1
Parish Semi-Annual Meeting	11:30am	Sunday, April 2
Evangelization/Outreach Service Group	6:00pm	Tuesday, April 4
Work Party - Holy Week Prep/Decorating	9am -4pm	Saturday, April 8

Iconography Visits

We've had difficulties scheduling a time to make the church visitations as part of our iconography learning curve. We are, however, hoping to set up a trip, possibly during a weekday, during March. The iconographer under consideration is Michael Kapeluck, who visited our parish last year. See www.archangelicons.com



Parish Semi-Annual Meeting

We will hold our Spring Semi-Annual Meeting on Sunday, April 2 from 11:30am, finishing no later than 1pm. There are two primary objectives:

- Review/Approve the Budget for 2017
- Goals for the 20th Anniversary of the Parish to take place in 2018.

Please plan to attend this important meeting and consider ways that you can contribute your efforts to the Anniversary Planning Process.

Confessions for Great Lent and Pascha

It is the discipline of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church that all of our members should participate in the Mystery of Holy Penance at the barest of minimums, annually during Great Lent in preparation for Holy Pascha.

Those who wish to receive Holy Communion on a regular basis must realize that the spiritual therapy of Holy Confession is an ongoing need in the spiritual life, and Confession during the other penitential periods (Apostles' Fast, Dormition Fast, Nativity Fast) is necessary as spiritual medicine. The Church has long advocated for regular Confession, even monthly or more frequently for those who seek to grow in their relationship with Christ. A spiritual relationship with the pastor that allows for quiet, personal discussion outside of the formal Confession may also be helpful on an occasional or regular basis. Simply express your desire for such and we can arrange a suitable time.

Please utilize the suggested form for Confession, as this allows a better preparation and communication at the time of Confession.

Please note that regular Confessions will not be available before services on Holy Saturday or Pascha. Ω



Parish Leadership Retreat - Looking Forward

In what is becoming a tradition, our parish held a Leaders' Retreat on January 28th, to set a course for the new year. Almost all of our Service Groups and ministries were represented and provided insights into the dynamics to improve our parish life. Fr. Robert started the day with a brief spiritual reflection on the leadership roles in Acts of the Apostles, noting that the apostles specifically called forth others (the deacons) to minister to the special needs the community encountered, so that the apostles themselves could remain focused on their primary ministries of prayer and the preaching of the Word. As is often the case, clergy get involved in many different aspects of church life, from prophet to janitor and everything in between, and the real calling of the priest is to remain focused on certain spiritual priorities which can easily be overshadowed by other things. Fr Robert then mentioned a few of the critical needs that a pastor has for the lay leaders to be responsive in terms of exercising responsive stewardship over the areas entrusted to them, holding regular meetings and especially fostering formal and informal communications. These are all vital in a context like ours where the parish is small, and everyone's contribution to the common effort is so important, and hence valued.



Preach it Pani!

Pani Matka Christine followed up with an informative PowerPoint presentation based on information garnered at a special gathering earlier that week, sponsored by Covenant Church in Charlottesville, on Event Planning. Among the key points she emphasized were the importance of allowing plenty of time for advance planning (at least a year in advance for significant events), and the importance of not only engaging volunteers, but also training them - in as much detail as possible. Follow up and review of events is also vital - so that errors and shortcomings can be avoided in the future. If an event is planned well, everyone knows what they can and should be doing, and the overall spirit and effectiveness of the event is amplified. There was a consensus among those gathered that we should review Pani's materials so that our 20th anniversary event, and other important events can be well executed.

The final portion of the day was led by Leadership Board Chair, Jake Ritter, which included an open discussion on plans for 20th Anniversary and other activities for the year. (A number of the ideas discussed are presented in the Pastor's Message on p.4) The Parish Board will be gathering a group to allow a creativity session to be held on March 25th so that everyone can bring their ideas to the table. An outline of a plan will be presented for approval by the parish at the semi-annual meeting on April 2nd, and the plan is to have all of our service groups actively involved in the celebration of the Anniversary.

Last Minute Notice: Metropolitan Antony has tentatively confirmed his availability to make a visit for the 20th Anniversary for the weekend of April 22nd, 2018. Mark your calendars!

Souper Bowl Sunday

In February, our parish offered a special fund raiser sponsored by the Ukrainian Orthodox League called 'Souper Bowl Sunday', with fresh soups and breads. The proceeds will be sent to the UOL and forwarded to the UOC St. Andrew Ministry to aid the elderly and homeless in Ukraine - a special need this year given that they are having a very harsh winter.



Thanks to everyone who offered their cooking skills for the event! May God bless all those in need who will be served through the St. Andrew ministry.

Kardiotissa Icon to Visit Richmond

Friday, March 31st at 6:00 pm At Ss Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church



The holy myrrh-streaming icon will be available for Veneration and Anointing of the icon in conjunction with the Akathist Hymn.

Perhaps we can arrange for carpooling for those interested?

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ANTIOCH BAPTIST CHURCH



Lenten Pastoral Letter of the Hierarchs, cont. from p. 1

The days of Great Lent are the days when, with God's help, we should make the maximum effort, weak and sinful as we are, to carry our cross. We should try to repent more deeply, to cleanse our body and soul from sin more, to forgive others more, to pray more, to fast more, to engage in constant spiritual warfare and thus lay a good foundation for our spiritual cleansing and spiritual development so that we are adequately prepared for Passion Week and the Holy Resurrection. As the Holy Orthodox Church teaches, the path to God is the way of carrying our cross; it is a narrow and thorny path; it is the path of continuous falls under the cross and of continuous rises again. This is the way, after our personal Golgotha, wherein the light of Christ's Resurrection will shine on us. We must never forget the words of our Lord: "Where I am, there my servant will be also" (John 12:26). In our days, people who truly seek God do not seek a religious corporation that is financially rich or gives easy answers to concerns about God or gathers thousands of people in stadiums who want to listen to easy messages that are pleasant to their ears about themselves and about God. They are told that God is their friend, that He loves them, that He forgives them and they don't need to do anything serious and sacrificial in their life to be "saved". They are told to take the wide gate and the broad way to God, rather than the narrow gate and difficult way as is said in the Holy Gospel (Matthew 7:13-14). But our Orthodox Church is not spiritual fast food, and the true way to God is the way of Golgotha, the way of sacrifice, the way of limitation in life. This is the way of the cross which leads through Golgotha to Resurrection.



As His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew said: "The Orthodox Church is distinguished from other Christian churches in that she has preserved unadulterated the first and most ancient ecclesiastical tradition and teaching, has avoided innovation and personal interpretation of the Holy Scriptures and dogmas of faith" (Encountering the Mystery by His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew). As we say in the Sunday of Orthodoxy: "this is the Apostolic faith, this is the faith of our Fathers, this is the Orthodox faith, this faith has established the universe". Orthodoxy is not a philosophy, not a theory, not an ideology, but a way of life that should be lived, that should be experienced, as the psalmist David says: "Taste and see that the Lord is good." (Psalm 33)

The Holy Orthodox Church has one goal: with God's mercy and blessing, and through prayer, fasting, almsgiving, love for each other, through the Holy Sacraments, especially the Holy Eucharist, that we achieve salvation. The Lord says: "Without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). Let us beseech the Lord not to leave us without His great mercy and bounty and that He strengthen us spiritually and physically, especially in these days of Great Lent, so that we can adequately meet His Holy Resurrection. We sincerely greet the pious Ukrainian nation in Ukraine and beyond the borders of Ukraine with the beginning of Great Lent and we call God's blessings upon all of you. Your servants in our Lord Jesus Christ,

- +YURIJ, Metropolitan - UOC of Canada
- +ANTONY, Metropolitan - UOC of the USA, and the Diaspora
- +IOAN, Archbishop - UOC in Diaspora
- +JEREMIAH, Archbishop - UOC of Brazil and South America
- +ILARION, Bishop - UOC of Canada
- +ANDRIY, Bishop - UOC of Canada
- +DANIEL, Bishop - UOC of the USA

Coming soon from E&O....

Just in time for the Paschal season, the Evangelization & Outreach group will debut a new welcome packet for visitors. We'll be providing several general brochures about Eastern Orthodoxy for those inquiring about our faith and for newcomers to our church. Later in the year, we hope to put together a similar packet for new parish members and catechumens that will include more specific materials about our particular parish. We will also be adding outdoor brochure holders next to our front door, and at the shrine, to provide off-hours visitors information about our parish, service times and an appropriate prayer for the icon at the shrine. Later in Spring, we are planning a local outreach event in Nelson County (Wintergreen area) to introduce the Orthodox to our local community. Please let me know if you are interested in helping with these efforts.

Karen Gavrilovic, Coordinator

During Great Lent we will be collecting food for the Crozet Community, distributed through the UMC Food Pantry. Baskets into which to place your donations of nonperishable foods are in the narthex. Please remember our neighbors in need during this season.



From Generation to Generation

You O, Lord will keep us and preserve us, from generation to generation. (Prokimenon - Moleben to the Godbearer, Ps. 45)

It's hard to believe that one year ago it was in this very space that I put forward the perspective that our 20th Parish Anniversary will be approaching in June 2018. As the past year has gone by quickly its all the more important to plan appropriately for this event and the opportunities it presents. These opportunities invite us to :



- ✦ To Offer thanks to God - remembering His Blessings
- ✦ To Gather - as the past, present and future Church to appreciate our common mission.
- ✦ To Apply our Efforts - to express our mission and ministry in new ways.

As an overall theme for this event I would suggest the title of this piece, "From Generation to Generation". It is an excerpt from the biblical notion of God's continuing blessing, known so well by the Hebrews and adopted by the early Church, that while you and I might live in one generation, Who we are as a Church is intimately linked to the faith and faithfulness of those who have gone before us and passed along our Christian faith and Holy Tradition - as well as our need to see our mission of passing on to a new generation, the same blessings and promise of God's blessings to the new generation. In this we celebrate our founders, and look forward to ways that we can pass on the 'keys to the Kingdom' to those who are younger, but filled with the same faith and Spirit.

A parish anniversary is a great opportunity to see whether this 'passing on' tradition is vibrantly at work in the parish or not. Many times I've gone to a 75th or 100th anniversary of a church, and wondered, sometimes out loud, whether there would be another anniversary 25 years hence. This is because the parish community had become isolated, its membership aging, its facilities sagging, its ministries impotent, and its outreach to others non-existent. Similarly, our anniversary becomes a great time to seriously assess our own state of parish affairs and dedicate ourselves to the spirit of passing on our faith to a new, younger generation. Part of this process means fostering vocations to the priesthood and other ministries, the foundation of which is the engagement of young adults (and even teens) in other active modes of service in the name of Christ - in worship, in fellowship, in care of those in need, and evangelization. Its only when those in the younger generation take up the mantle of such a willingness to engage in the life of the Church, that they will be made ready to assume the mantle of full leadership of the Church in her ministries.

At our January Leadership meeting, we discussed ways that we can exhibit the spirit of celebration for the 20th Anniversary in several distinct ways:

- **A 'Homecoming' Event** - to include a visit by the Metropolitan (and bishop?), to which we can invite all of our members, past members and friends. A special effort can be made to connect young adults (past OCF members) to reconnect not only to our parish, but to one another. This would most likely take place after Pascha next year.
- **Completion of the Pantocrator Icon in the Dome** - this will serve as a visible symbol of our parish's spiritual heart and point toward our future witness and activities.
- **Kickoff of a New Major Undertaking** - in conjunction with the parish Facility Study, this may include one or more of the following:
 - 1) Major renovations or formulation of plans to consider/plan new construction.
 - 2) The next phase of the iconography project
 - 3) An effort to reduce/eliminate the parish debt
 - 4) Kickoff of a broad based Capital Campaign.

Any such efforts, while being a worthy undertaking, would require special dedication by parish volunteers and under the guidance of the affiliated service groups.

FOCUS - To a New Generation

As a member of the 'parent' generation of the parish, it's obvious to me (as to any parent) that what has been given to us



From Generation to Generation *Continued from p. 4*

only to the extent that it is passed on to the next generation. The next generation must become the new stewards of the Church, who receive what the Lord entrusts, appreciate it, value it, preserve it, share it, enhance it, and call it forth into a new dimension of spiritual maturity. From Generation to Generation in this context means raising up and training new spiritual leaders, including those ordained for ministry and those not formally ordained but nonetheless fully called, to exercise the spiritual ministry entrusted to them (preach the gospel, heal the sick, raise the dead, teach affirm, correct, restore, etc. - Mt. 28, Mk. 16)

Old and New Challenges

If the Church is entrusted to a new generation of leaders, it must first discern a strong commitment and sacrificial dedication to serving the Church in her mission and ministries. Lacking this, the ordained shepherd becomes a hireling, (Jn. 10:12) and the flock is abandoned to the world and its wolves. The un-ordained leader can become listless or loses heart when the going gets tough. An encroaching worldliness attacks everyone today, but maybe most specially young families - thrusting upon our flock expectations of conformity to worldly (secular or worse) values and practices that create a spiritual dualism in the home. Our leaders in the next generation must be ready, willing and able to not only fight these forces in their own lives, but teach and show others the narrow path of Christianity through this contemporary mine-field. (For an article on Millennials and the Church see: <http://orthodoxoutpost.com/?p=212>)

While it would be easy to focus on the long and laborious 'To Do' lists involved with each of the possible projects listed in the bullet list above, a true parish celebration would be incomplete without a spiritual mediation and a deep remembrance of God's blessings, His work and activity in our lives. This is the nature of all liturgical prayer - preceding from *anamnesis* (remembrance), prioritized through obedience to the command of Christ (Do *this*), and actualized by nothing less than the Grace of the Holy Spirit (*epiclesis*). Without such spiritual underpinnings, any anniversary activity could easily devolve into a hyperactivity that causes much more harm than good. Perhaps it would be a valuable exercise during the course of Great Lent in 2018, to have an off site overnight parish retreat for the entire parish to go deeper into these matters spiritually.

So, part of the great challenge for us as we look at all of this one year out is to ask:

- ⇒ What kinds of sacrifices can we (I and you) make to take full advantage of this opportunity?
- ⇒ How do we decide what not to do - so that whatever we do do, is done well, in a timely fashion, with a minimum of heartache?
- ⇒ Where is God's voice leading the 'new generation' of the Church?

These are not small questions easily answered, and the months will fly by - so please look for ways to join our parish leaders in offering your service to this greater effort, always for the glory of God alone. Ω

Fr. Robert

Stewardship Dedication - 2017

by Fr. Robert



Annually in the Fall, I encourage our parish members and friends to consider the blessings the Lord has bestowed upon them, and give thanks, and make a response of a commitment through a sacred offering of what the Lord will provide as a 'first portion' thanksgiving offering. This forms a faith basis to our financial management of affairs of the Church. This year, our commitments were significantly down - as only 8 families made the Stewardship Dedication, but the average percentage was up - to almost a full tithe - at 9.1% of gross income.

I want to thank those individuals and families who have made this step of faith to commit yourself, your life and each other to Christ our God, and to the ministry of our Lord locally in our parish. I, in turn, commit to you our goal to serve as good and faithful stewards of all that the Lord entrusts to us, through your hands in sacred offering. Ω



On Spiritual Despondency - St. Tikhon *Continued, from p.1*



you to prayer and good deeds.

2. Zeal is also acquired by variety in our occupations—that is, by turning from one task to another. And so you must do as follows: pray, then perform some manual task, then read a book, then meditate on your spiritual condition, on eternal salvation, and so on. And do these things alternately. If dejection grips you fiercely, leave your room, and walking up and down, mediate on Christ; lift your mind to God and pray. Thus dejection will leave you.
3. The thought of death, which perchance may cross your mind, the thought of Christ's judgment, of eternal torment and of eternal bliss, turns away dejection. Meditate on these things.
4. Pray and sigh, pleading with God Himself to grant you zeal and inclination: for without Him we are good for no task whatsoever.

If you follow these four instructions, believe me, little by little you will attain both zeal and inclination. God expects from us labor and courageous deeds; and He has promised to help those who labor. May you so labor that God may help you. He helps those who strive, not those who rest and slumber. Satan lies in wait to accomplish our perdition; nor should we slumber, but should stand erect and give battle to so fierce an antagonist; and this can be accomplished through prayer and reading and every kind of good work, so that when the Evil One visits us, he shall find no place. "Resist the Devil and he will fly from you." No man is more easily approached by the Devil than one who lives in slothfulness and leisure; this is a house well swept and adorned for the Evil One. Meditate on these things and beware, and pray for me, sinner.

Seek salvation in Christ. Ω

Are You Seeking Health?



The Church is often called a 'spiritual hospital'. But the fact is that our spiritual health is intimately tied to our bodily, emotional and mental health as well. We have a number of people in our parish who practice in the medical arts and sciences. In addition, there are other therapies that can sometimes alleviate suffering which are non-traditional, but nonetheless rooted deeply in human practice. (If you're curious about this, ask Fr. Robert about a woman who found an extraordinary healing from her chronic Lyme disease, or another who was cured of terminal cancer through a non-traditional means). In addition, many medical practitioners are now looking at new approaches to areas such as back pain, anti-immune diseases, and 'syndromes' for which there is no cure, or even relief from suffering. In some cases, bodily infirmity can be traced to inner emotional, psychic or even spiritual infirmities. I know of many such cases, even in my own family or in the lives of our parish members. Sometimes non-traditional therapies can be quite helpful.

During the Lenten Season there are a number of special times where we focus on healing. The Gospel of the Second Sunday recounts the Lord's healing of the Paralytic and the link to the forgiveness of his (hidden?) sins.



The following Sunday we venerate the Holy Cross, which reminds us of the healing power of the 'wood', exemplified by the lifting up of the serpent in the desert on a pole by Moses, to bring healing to the Israelites in the desert, which is recalled by Christ in his prediction of his Crucifixion (Jn. 3:14) The Cross is the symbol of healing - as we hear in the reading from prophecy of Isaiah, "By his wounds (on the cross), we are healed." Recalling this, in the Orthodox Church the bishop specifically imitates Christ (and Moses) by carrying the crozier as a type of staff, upon which are portrayed two serpents. These are clear reminders to us of the healing ministry of Christ (body and soul), the apostolic Church (including the apostles Peter, Paul and Luke), and through the martyrs, the saints of every age, including St. Nicholas and the wonderworkers and spiritual healers, such as Ss Cosmas and Damian.

We venerate the relics and offer special anointings in the Church, especially using the oils from the myrrh streaming icons or from the lamps at holy shrines. Annually, we offer the sacramental anointing on Great and Holy Wednesday for healing of soul and body. The Church has many prayers (and ecclesial practitioners) who may be able to help you, or someone you know, to find restoration in body or spirit. Do not hesitate to ask for a special prayer for your personal need for healing - do it as an exercise of Faith! So perhaps the Church can find a new/but ancient dimension of her life and ministry in Christ - that of healing, even through non-traditional means. So, Let's start a conversation about this - for the health of all of us.



A Word or Two from Community Care

The last few months have been busy ones for the Community Care ministry group. We were blessed and honored to be part of the Mercy Meal for the departed handmaiden of God +Tatiana Efthyvoulou. While many of us in the parish did not have the pleasure of knowing Tatiana, you couldn't help but feel that you knew her a little bit better after watching the slide show that played during the meal. It was good for the parishioners who could attend the service and show our support for the family as we prayed collectively for the soul of their departed mother and grandmother. Thank you also to all who helped in so many different ways that day and prior to it—purchasing and cooking the food, setting up the tables, decorating the tables, serving the food, social hall cleanup, and finally putting the hall back together for Sunday coffee hour. Special thanks to Deena Gakos and her “baklava wizard,” for making a tray of the tasty dessert. It was truly appreciated by all in attendance.

Welcome to Helen Elizabeth, daughter of Stephanie and Hunter Johnson, born on February 9th. The family is very appreciative of meals they have already received. Hunter tells me they are not fussy eaters, have no food allergies and Stephanie loves pasta! Meals may also be brought to the parish hall freezer-labeled JOHNSON- and kept there for either pickup or delivery to Stephanie and Hunter. Please contact Elaine Brogan if you have any questions about participating in this most appreciated activity!



"The handmaiden of God, Helen Elizabeth, is Churched...in the midst of the Church she will sing the praise of the Lord"

Speaking of meals, there has been an initiative to reach out to some parishioners that we may not have seen in church lately and who might appreciate a visit or food delivery. Maybe think about doubling a favorite recipe when you are cooking for this Lenten season and it can be housed in the parish hall freezer. Label the container as a SHUT-IN MEAL, identify what you have made, and we will see that it is delivered to the appropriate individuals. Please contact Elaine Brogan, ministry leader or Cynthia Patzig, Charitable Works service group leader, should you have any questions concerning this very important outreach.

During the Lenten season, there will be 2 services for the Faithful Departed. These services are scheduled for Vespers on Friday, March 10th as well as prior to Vespers on Saturday, March 18th. Should you be interested in honoring the departed during this time of year and wish to make koliva, please see Elaine Brogan for the main ingredient as well as an easy recipe to follow. You will be really glad to learn this simple, yet meaningful tradition in our Holy Church.

Thank you again to all of the members of our ministry-Eileen Opincar, Deena Gakos, David Murphy, and Pani Christine Holet-who help to keep things rolling along! We are always looking for individuals who would like to be part of this vital ministry. Please consider talking to any one of us!

Yours, in Christ,

Elaine Brogan, Ministry leader

Community Care Ministry Note: On Friday, March 10, at the evening Vespers for the Departed, we will hold a special Memorial Litiya service (Panachida) in commemoration of the 40th day since the passing to eternal life of +Tatiana Efthyvoulou. We anticipate that several members of Tatiana's immediate family, including her daughter Zoe, will be in attendance. Please take a little time to extend to Zoe and her family your well wishes and prayerful condolences on their loss, by participating in the service that evening, which will begin at 6pm.

It's Not too Early - Plan for Holy Week!

Great Lent is already here - consider these suggestions to make Holy Week and Pascha a special time.

- ✦ Take time off work now - especially for Great Friday, Holy Saturday, and of course, Pascha. It's always a good idea to give yourself an extra day after Pascha, (Bright Monday) to allow yourself to wind down a bit after the strain of Holy Week. *Note -Great Lent is not the time for us to take vacation - unless it's a spiritual retreat.*
- ✦ Plan your time to bring the children - certain services are 'foundational' to a child's experience of Orthodox Holy Week, especially Great Friday Vespers and of course the Pascha Matins/Liturgy. Sometimes parents do well to 'platoon' over the week to make it work.
- ✦ Need a special cover (rushnik) for your Pascha basket or is your paschal candle getting droopy? Pick one up now!
- ✦ Do try to set aside some time on Lazarus Saturday for the annual work party to beautify the building and grounds for Holy Week and Pascha. We usually have special tasks that are fun for the kids, like making the palm/willows to hold and the palm crosses for Palm Sunday.



Parish Financial Report - 2016

INCOME			
INCOME Category	Budget 2016	Actual 2016	Percent
General Collection	137,000.00	130,269.33	95%
Candles	2,700.00	2,872.25	106%
Charity	1,100.00	1,865.83	170%
Other	1,200.00	5,284.00	440%
Iconography Proj	1,500.00	1,076.00	72%
Interest Inc	100	66.1	66%
TOTAL INCOME	143,600.00	141,433.51	98%
OPERATING BUDGET	134,315.00	127,763.88	95%

BALANCES	
Funds	Budget 2016
General Fund	19,002.42
Contingency Fund	14,970.23
Project	14,374.51
Other	1,200.00
Iconography Project	1,500.00
Interest Income	100
TOTAL Funds	51,147.16
Mortgage Balance Due	242,530.02

EXPENSES							
Expense Category	Budget 2016	Actual 2016	Percent	INCOME	Budget 2016	Actual 2016	Percent
Building & Grounds	7,200.00	5,142.29	71%	Library	400	87.26	22%
Electricity	3,600.00	2,882.58	80%	Acquisitions	250	0	0%
Ext. Maintenance	2,800.00	2,207.35	79%	Supplies	0	87.26	
Interior Maintenance	800	0	0%	Miscellaneous	150	0	0%
Miscellaneous	0	52.36		Parish Board-Admin	78,845.00	77,292.57	98%
Charity	13,800.00	15,255.89	111%	Compensation	51,700.00	52,447.02	101%
Communications	2,600.00	2,301.23	89%	Conference, SOBOR	2,500.00	1,403.75	56%
Internet, Web Srvcs.	700	325.1	46%	Consistory Assessment	11,645.00	11,345.01	97%
Telephone	1,900.00	1,976.13	104%	Copier, Printing, Off. Supplies	1,000.00	268.36	27%
Evangelization & Outreach	3,370.00	1,584.04	47%	Insurance	1,600.00	1,791.00	112%
Advertising	2,520.00	1,515.00	60%	Miscellaneous	600	301.43	50%
Conference, Training	500	0	0%	Retirement Contribution	9,800.00	9,736.00	99%
Miscellaneous	50	15	30%	Religious Formation	0	0	0%
Printing, Publication	100	0	0%	Mortgage Principal	9,200.00	9,542.58	104%
Supplies	50	54.04	108%	Mortgage Interest	11,800.00	11,407.74	97%
Event Support	150	0	0%	PROJECT BUDGET	46,650.00	51,618.20	111%
Hospitality	2,780.00	1,993.64	72%	Building & Grounds	42,650.00	42,640.00	100%
Coffee Hour Food	2,080.00	1,443.96	69%	Evangelization & Outreach	4,000.00	3,720.90	93%
Event Food	500	501.94	100%	Hospitality	0	52.29	
Event Supplies	100	0	0%	Liturgy Group	0	5,205.01	
Kitchen Supplies	100	47.74	48%	TOTAL EXPENSES	180,965.00	179,382.08	99%
Liturgy Group	4,320.00	3,156.64	73%	NET (Income-Expenses)	-37,365.00	-37,948.57	
Candles	1,600.00	1,355.59	85%	Transfers to General Fund			
Flowers/Palms	300	152.07	51%	FROM Contingency		30,000.00	
Miscellaneous	1,000.00	80.4	8%	FROM Project		9,150.00	
Publications etc	20	336.45	1682%			39,150.00	
Sanctuary Supplies	1,000.00	1,066.38	107%	NET Adding Transfers		1,201.43	
Vestments/Altar	400	165.75	41%				

Our thanks to our Treasurer, Karen Gavrilovic, to those who assist with our financial assistants and to all who have supported our parish financially in 2016.

Commentary, next page



Treasurer's Summary Notes: 2016 - 2017

- ◆ The year-end income/expense summary for 2016 is included on the previous page of this Lampada. Thankfully, we did a pretty good job staying within budget. However, it is notable that 2016 collection income (excluding candles and earmarked donations) was below what was projected and down from previous years. Excluding projects such as the HVAC and the dome, which were funded from our contingency and project funds respectively, operating expenses did not exceed expenses because service groups did not spend as much as was anticipated. Your gifts are vital to the work of the parish and your stewardship is greatly appreciated.
- ◆ The Parish Board is hard at work preparing a proposed budget to be presented at the semi-annual Parish Meeting scheduled for March 26th. The 2017 budget has been developed with input from each service group, as well as a look back at income and expenses for 2016, prior years and established Parish priorities such as proportional giving to support charitable works and our commitment to the UOC of the USA. Thank you to all service group leaders who contributed to this effort.
- ◆ For the past few years, the Parish Board has undertaken an effort to pull together information, policies and procedures that guide our Parish. The intent is to compile a Parish Policy and Procedures manual so that vital information is accessible, and to make sure that the "institutional memory" of the Parish is captured in one place. As part of this effort, the Parish Board has started by focusing on financial issues. In January, the Board adopted a formal policy for reimbursement of parish expenses. The most significant change to current practice is *that all reimbursement requests should be submitted to the treasurer within 60 days of the expenditure*. Please let me know if you have any questions or if you would like to see a full copy of the policy. I can be reached at karengavilovic@gmail.com.

Karen Gavrilovic, Treasurer

Please Remember in Your Prayers

Angela (<i>special need</i>) Mary (<i>surgery</i>) Newborn Helen Elizabeth and family Jessica (<i>heart health</i>) Lisa (<i>surgery recovery</i>) Chris and Heather and family (<i>special need</i>) Glen (<i>hospice</i>) George (<i>long term health</i>)	Fr. Jon and Barbara (<i>recovery</i>) Gregory (<i>heart condition</i>) George (<i>concussion</i>) and Joanna Mary (<i>recovery</i>) Pam (<i>special need</i>) Samy (<i>eye - recovery</i>) Nonna (<i>healing</i>) Charlie (<i>medical need</i>)	John (<i>health</i>) Robert (<i>cancer</i>) Ron and Valerie For Parishioners w/ <i>Special Needs</i> Robbie (<i>mental health</i>) Fr. Vasyi (<i>healing</i>) Vera (<i>special need</i>) Dick (<i>hospice</i>)	For the Departed +Tatiana +Joanna Dr. Joseph May For those killed in the civil unrest in the Middle East and Ukraine
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General Intentions

- For all who hate us, those who have offended us and for us all.
- For a firm adherence to the Holy Orthodox Faith that has been entrusted to us and for all Orthodox faithful around the world
- For our parish, as we discern and plan for the forthcoming 20th Anniversary.
- For seasonable weather - and all who rely upon the weather for their livelihood, especially farmers.
- For all refugees and immigrants - for safe passage to a place of peace and for encouragement and healing in their suffering. For all who have died in the conflicts in the Middle East.
- For Reader Joseph, for the Patriarchal Seminary in Nairobi, and for John and Mary, and all who serve as missionaries and those they serve. For a reopening of the Seminary and its spiritual prosperity.
- God's continued blessing and fruitfulness in the holy work being offered to Christ by Frannie, Joe, Debbie, Lois, Charlotte, Gertrude, Junior, Jerry, Randy, Rayburn, Shea and all who serve those in need in SW Virginia.
- For Dorian, Natalia, and for all who are imprisoned and for those in Orthodox prison ministry.



Hospitality Reminders

Things are definitely not quiet around hospitality! Every Sunday morning, you can find the kitchen in the parish hall busy with folks preparing food and drinks. A big thank you to everyone who has signed up to set up the buffet foods and beverages as well as those people that bring extra food. Extra hands are always welcome to do cleanup and empty trash cans from around the building. A lot goes into a successful coffee hour and we thank each and everyone of our parishioners (and sometime visitors!) that help out. Please check the signup sheet on the parish hall bulletin board to see if there are any Sundays that might be open for fellowship hour service!

Just a reminder that most Wednesdays during the Great Fast, there will be potluck suppers following the Pre-sanctified Liturgy. Please consider bringing a dish or a crockpot of a favorite fasting and join us for these delicious meals and some pleasant fellowship.

As will also need volunteers to help set up and clean up after the Pascha Meal on April 15th. Those of you that attend understand how much fun it is to celebrate Christ's Resurrection after the blessing of the baskets! However as with any party, there is clean up and set up to ensure that everyone has a good time. In the coming days there will sign up sheets in the fellowship hall - or you can contact Randy or Chris.

Now for something completely different—Save the date for our 3rd annual Bright Friday Beer and Brats event (Target Date - April 21st). Our service group provides brats, hot dogs, buns, condiments and parishioners can sign up for side dishes. Typically, several of our parish brewmeisters have brought in some of their home made brews for those in attendance to sample! If you've never attended before, consider joining us this year for this fun family activity!!

Finally, congratulations to group members Stephanie and Hunter Johnson, on the birth of their beautiful daughter, Helen Elizabeth. Welcome to our newest member! We start 'em young around Hospitality!!!

Randy Brogan (Co-Chair), Chris Harrison (Co-Chair) and members - Stephanie Johnson, Hunter Johnson, John Hoyle, Catharine Hoyle and Christine (Pani) Holet

UOC Camping Programs for 2017

The dates are set for the annual UOC Camping programs - for youth of all ages.

**Diocesan Church School Camp: June 25 - July 8, 2017
for Children 9 - 13**

**Teenage Conference: July 9 - 22, 2017
for Teenagers 13 - 18**

**Mommy & Me/Daddy & Me Camp: July 31 - August 4, 2017
Children 4 - 8 and their parents**

**St. Nicholas Program: June 16 - 19, 2017,
Youth with disabilities ages 9 - 19 and their family**



In addition to the Youth Programs, the Camp offers special fellowship/family weekends for everyone over Memorial Day and Labor Day. Scholarship funds and assistance with transportation for parish members may be available from our charity fund.

Also Staffing and volunteer opportunities are available for all camps. Please see: <http://www.uocyouth.org/UOCCP.html> for more information.

Come spend a delightful time at All Saints Camp, pray in St. Thomas Chapel,
enjoy the fellowship and the opportunity to serve others,
and bask in the beauty of the Allegheny Mountains and Allegheny River.



Charitable Works And Great Lent

There are three things we are asked to attend to during Great Lent: fasting, prayer and almsgiving. Sometimes it seems the first two are emphasized at the expense of the third: almsgiving. Among the Fathers of the Church, however, almsgiving seemed to be the most concrete expression of faith and love – that by which we will be most strictly judged at the Last Judgement. St. John Chrysostom spoke often about this.

“Do you see that the failure to give alms is enough to cast a person into hell-fire? For where will be avail who does not give alms? Do you fast every day? So also did those foolish virgins, but it availed them nothing. Do you pray? So did they. What of it? Prayer without almsgiving is unfruitful. Without that all things are unclean and unprofitable. The better part of virtue is destroyed...”
(From The Lenten Spring, by Fr. Thomas Hopko p. 128)

St. Basil was no less firm about the necessity of almsgiving:

“He who takes another’s clothing is called a thief but he who fails to clothe the naked, if he could, deserves the very same name. The grain in your barns belongs to the hungry. The coat in your closet belongs to the naked...You sin against all those whom you are able to help, but fail to do so.”
(Ibid., p. 129)

So during this time of Great Lent, please think about ways you can personally be involved with helping those in need. One way to do this is to generously support our Lenten Food Drive which begins on Sunday, March 5th. Another is to make time on the 4th Tuesday in March (the 28th) to join the parish’s Pro Life Silent Prayer Vigil at noon outside Planned Parenthood. We are also considering making baby kits for IOCC which are then sent to areas most in need of emergency help. It would be great to have parish members help us buy the items needed for the kits as well as help us put the kits together. Another suggestion for Lenten almsgiving is to prepare soup that can be kept in our parish freezer for families needing help in time of illness. These are just some ideas within the parish, but there are so many more opportunities all around us.

So many Orthodox saints, like St. Nicholas of Myra, were known for the generosity to the poor. One of my favorite stories is about St. Myron of Crete. He was a hard working and fairly successful farmer – doing better than most around him.

He had a generous heart and whenever someone couldn’t pay him for his goods, he simply gave it away. The more he gave, the more people came to him for help. One night he caught two thieves trying to steal some of his grain. They only had a very small sack. It was obvious to St. Myron, that they were truly in want so he provided them with a larger sack and told them to take as much as they needed and to come back in the daylight next time.. Although word of this kind deed encouraged even more people to come to him for aid, it also stimulated others to help Myron care for the poor. It was a wonderful circle of kindness – and a great example of God’s merciful providence.

Finally I just wanted to say that although we have cancelled the Syrian Relief event that we had planned for the spring, we have not lessened in our desire to help the displaced people in Syria and those who have sought refuge in other countries. We will be planning smaller events to raise awareness of the situation in Syria as well as to generate funds to help provide aid. In the meantime please pray daily – not only for the people in Syria, but for those suffering in Iraq, Eritrea, and so many other countries devastated by war.

Cynthia Patzig, Coordinator

Field Trip to Grundy Anyone?

In early February, a tractor trailer full of wool blankets (over 3000) showed up at Covenant Church in Charlottesville, supplied by a foundation that provides assistance to those with emergency needs. Karl Bowman, Chris Harrison and Fr. Robert joined the group of people from churches around Charlottesville to pick up the blankets, and our allotment of over 350 blankets is now sitting in our shed. But they shouldn’t stay there!



Because we try to supply blankets annually to the RAM Health Fair in Grundy, Virginia, we thought this would be a great way to get some heavier blankets for the Fair this year. We need to get these blankets to Grundy as soon as possible. We may be able to connect up with some of the folks from Grundy to meet half way for the delivery. But its certainly still cold enough to use these before winter is over.



So if you can take a day to help deliver these to Grundy, please contact Cynthia Patzig, so that others can benefit. Can you think of a better sacrificial Lenten offering of your time for the sake of others?



Building & Grounds Update – Facilities Master Plan

Bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ - Galatians, 6:2

I am writing this update the day after our parish site assessment, when David Murphy, Mager Koromhas and I spent a chilly February morning tramping the church grounds. We spent the morning poking around the woods looking for property corners, measuring the distance to fence lines and sighing at the state of repair of things like the parking lot and the shed foundations. It left us with a better understanding, however, of both our opportunities and limitations to the ultimate future expansion for our church.

In the last *Lampada*, I introduced the Facilities Master Plan process for St. Nicholas. I shared the four phases of the process that we will be undertaking in the coming months. The four phases are 1. Assessment, 2. Future Development Program, 3. Alternatives and 4. Final Design. We are now in the closing stages of phase 1, Assessment, which is an evaluation of the current condition of the church interior, exterior and grounds. Next, we will develop cost estimates for bringing everything in the church and grounds to a working state of repair before we move onto the next phase, Future Development Program, where we will address the parish’s future development needs. These cost estimates in the first phase are important to understand what our financial needs might be for repairs even before looking at future expansions.

The next phase will involve working with all the Service Groups on taking a look at what our future space and facility needs are from the perspective of each Service Group and its ministry. Stay tuned for announcements of special meetings and/or outreach to get a solid list of future parish needs from the Service Groups so that we can build the Master Plan on a solid foundation of realistic future needs.

Currently, other teams from the B&G group are doing assessments of the church interior and exterior, and systems such as plumbing, electrical and well/septic systems. We still are awaiting final results of the assessments which will come at the end of February, but some of the challenges that are jumping out as first order repair needs are the parking lot and the well and septic systems. These are not the most exciting things to build a major fund raising campaign around and to most people, they probably seem pretty far removed from the spiritual dimension of our faith. However, our spiritual foundation relies on a sound physical plant to support it. If you’ve ever stayed at a monastery for a few days, you realize that the monastic men and women do an awful lot of mundane work to keep the building and grounds going and don’t just spend all their time in prayer and meditation. And the fact that someone fixed a broken slab on the path leading to the church means that we don’t stumble on our way to prayers. Maybe that’s too obvious a metaphor but maybe it isn’t a bad way to think about this more mundane repair work – how can turning aside from what is broken lead us to stumble on our way to salvation? Moreover, don’t we need to repair what is broken today before we can build what is needed for tomorrow?

So, that’s a spiritual way to look at these practical matters. I sincerely hope that you will all engage with us on this process in some small way in the coming months as we walk together to take care of our spiritual homestead here at St. Nicholas – both in fixing what is needed today and in thinking about what we can build together for tomorrow!

Vladimir Gavrilovic
Building & Grounds Service Group leader.



On further inspection - Buildings and Grounds needs more volunteers under 5 feet tall.



A View from the Seminary Window

A menagerie of news and notes from your local seminarian, David Murphy

I offer the following assorted thoughts for your consideration as I consider the kinds of things I would like the parish to know about my life as a student at St. Sophia Seminary. I hope that you will feel free to ask me questions about my experience there, and I promise to make my best effort at a good answer!

Ours is *not* a congregational church.

I drive up to New Jersey just outside of New York City once each month for classes. (This is the program called ‘Short Residency’ and is intended for ‘late vocations.’ Many fine jokes could be made about both terms.) It is not a short trip, and the miles add up pretty quickly. But one of the main benefits is the important realization that our parish isn’t just going it alone in the wiles of Mr. Jefferson’s Virginia; we are part of a larger whole, and the life of that whole is what sustains us, even 375 miles away. It is all too easy to forget that we are part of a larger body, and our immediate context for that larger body is the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA. Many will perhaps be pleasantly surprised to know those real and lasting connections between our parish and the broader metropolia are not only generally ecclesial, but particularly personal as well. I regularly and happily interact with Fr. Anthony Perkins, a vocation from our parish who now serves a UOC parish in Allentown, Pennsylvania. He also serves as the Vocations Director for the UOC and regularly teaches seminary classes. He has been tremendously helpful in a wide variety of ways. I also get to visit periodically with Pani Matka Oksana Pasakas (nee Mahlay), who once upon a time came down for a mission trip to our little fledgling parish and helped build the icon shrine out front. So, there really are meaningful links between our parish and the diocese of which we are a part. I get to benefit from those connections regularly in my monthly trips to class, and we all benefit from them in an ongoing way when we join our prayers together as one holy Church.

English speakers are welcome!

So I just said that our immediate context for life in Christ’s Church is the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA...but you’ll notice that ‘Murphy’ doesn’t quite bear the usual marks of a traditional Ukrainian name. (Murphchenko?) Of course the ethnic stuff is there—and it is rich and offers the fruit of a wonderful heritage—but I have been made to feel very welcome among other seminarians, staff, and faculty despite my glaring lack of Ukrainian language skills and the annoying knack for asking at dinner, “What’s that?”



That plus a nickel will get you a hot cup of nothin’.

Seminary is place for someone to go to gather with others, study, discuss, learn, and pray in order to discern a vocation in the Church. It is not a place for someone who has already discerned the vocation; that person we call a priest. Or, on the other hand, the person in seminary isn’t seeking to discern a vocation because they think that they have it all wrapped up nice and tidy before they show up. That is a dangerous state to be in, and it begs the question if that person is at the seminary to hear something from God or not. The listening to the Lord is a key difference. Why? Because no shortage of folks have gone to seminaries who didn’t belong there (hopefully they don’t graduate and get ordained!). It is a true and cautionary tale that even Stalin was a seminarian for a time. This is a sobering fact. The discernment with others and under the guidance of good bishops is the crucial factor. Just going and taking classes and doing the lone wolf routine because you’ve already discerned your calling beforehand...well, that plus a nickel may well get you a hot cup of nothin’ in the end.

But: If you are reading this and perhaps wonder what your life in the Church should be or could be, then seminary may be just the right place for you to be. You may well be someone who is in just the right spot in your life to discern God’s calling. Seminary is the place to do that. And age doesn’t matter, either! I am 36, and Deacon Paul from Rhode Island is 72. Ask if you have questions. (Fr. Robert is, undoubtedly, an even better person to ask!)

We are truly blessed in our bishops.

I don’t say this sort of thing lightly. I must tell you that His Eminence Metropolitan Antony has been very generous to me personally in conversation and in the giving of himself in encouragement as I seek to discern my life in the

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View from the Seminary, continued from p. 10

Church. Likewise, His Eminence Archbishop-Elect Daniel is nearly a ray of sunshine each time I happen to see him at the seminary. His energy and enthusiasm seem boundless, and I admire the ways he channels that to encourage and shepherd those around him. What I have been blessed to receive from both our hierarchs does not indicate that I am special, however—they simply give of themselves in a selfless way to everyone they encounter. That is who they are. These are both men who love God and love their neighbor, and they have each become an embodiment of the Good Shepherd in their leadership of the UOC. It is an example of selfless and self-giving leadership, and we are blessed so deeply by their ministry among us. Do I bend down and kiss their hands when I greet them because that is what I am supposed to do? You bet I do. Am I thankful each time I do for the wonderful, godly men the Lord has put at the head of the UOC-USA? You bet I am.

“I don’t know why you say goodbye, I say hello.”

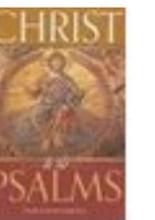
Many of you will recall the Frosts, who were active members of our parish for the better part of a decade and moved to the west coast a couple of years ago. Carrie and Matt were just about the first Orthodox folks that Susan and I knew personally (about a decade ago now). They introduced us to the Schmalzbachs, invited us to come to St. Nicholas, fed us tasty food and fielded our many questions...and here we are. So imagine my surprise and delight to learn that Carrie would be one of my instructors last term for Sacramental Theology! As she noted at the beginning of that course in the fall term, Carrie and I first met as classmates at UVa in a seminar on Augustine—and now I have to watch out to be sure I refer to her as “Professor” while in class (just to keep everything on the up-and-up, you understand). She is teaching a ‘Special Topics’ kind of course for us this term as well. Let me know if you are interested and I’ll be happy to share those syllabi and any others you’d like to see for the courses I’ve had so far. There has been lots of very good coursework all around.

Tired? Yes. Better for it? I hope so. Thankful for the opportunity? *Definitely.*

The act of physically getting myself to and from classes each month is demanding—and that says nothing about the actual academic preparation for classes, which is a bit intensive sometimes. Good and enriching to be sure, but plentiful as well. What I could not have anticipated beforehand is the great good it does me to get away, even just for a short time. There are aspects of my commute each month and the time spent in classes and services that are not unlike being on retreat. So while I am worn out in many ways when I return, there is also the sense of being restored and renewed a bit in others. This all leaves me with a lasting feeling of thankfulness to those who make it possible for me to do this. There are many fine folks included in that list, not least of which is my parish family—you! Thank you! But I am deeply grateful to my wife for making the many sacrifices necessary as I make my

Religious Formation Service Group

As I write this article I am babysitting the grandchildren while the parents enjoy an evening out and Lent is approaching. I used to dread the Great Fast. It was ominous and there was no way around it. Then one Lent, toward the end, I found that I was enabled via the discipline to behold the Lord in a way that I would not have been able to without fasting. It took me to a place I could not have otherwise reached. I don’t relish the fast but it doesn’t seem as ominous anymore.



This year your Religious Formation Service Group is recommending the book “*Christ in the Psalms*” by Fr. Patrick Henry Reardon for group study. The four regions are Harrisonburg, Staunton-Waynesboro, Charlottesville and 29 North. If you would like to participate in a group study please contact others so inclined who live near you and coordinate day, time, place and leading the study. If a group study isn’t available to you, we still recommend the book for private devotion and reflection, especially during Lent. Other profitable books come to mind such as “*Great Lent*” by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann, “*The Way of the Pilgrim*” and “*Thirty Steps to Heaven: The Ladder of Divine Ascent*.” And if the time to read either in a group or by yourself is just not achievable, there is a plethora of free podcasts available to stream or download at Ancient Faith Radio. Fr. Tom Hopko has an series called “*Speaking the Truth in Love*” with about a dozen that deal with Lent. Our very own Fr. Robert has a podcast series called “*First Fruits of Christian Living: Orthodox Christian Stewardship Today*.” And Fr. Anthony Perkins, who was ordained at St. Nicholas, has a podcast called “*Good Guys Wear Black?*”

So on behalf of the Religious Formation Service Group, we wish you all a blessed and prosperous journey through this tithe of the year and look forward to the Feast of Feasts. Your unworthy servant,

Basil Finnegan Coordinator