

December Events

St. Nicholas Celebration - Dec. 10

Nativity Feast - Service Schedule

Feast of St. Nicholas

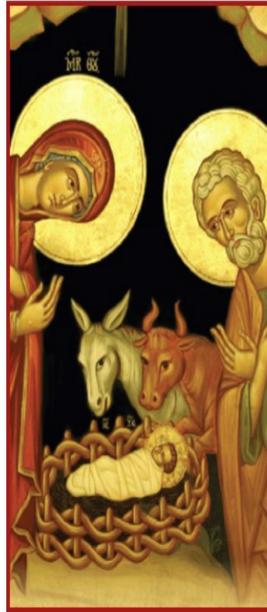
Tuesday, Dec. 5th - 6pm - Great Vespers  
 Wednesday, Dec. 6th - 9am - Divine Liturgy

Parish Celebration - Sunday, Dec. 10:

- ✦ A potluck luncheon following the Liturgy
  - ✦ A play offered by the children on the life of St. Nicholas
  - ✦ Presentation of the Annual Charity Award
- A signup for the luncheon is available in the narthex.

In the spirit of St. Nicholas, the church school children will be visiting Valley Mission in Staunton to serve breakfast on Dec. 2nd. If you can donate a scarf, hat or gloves for them to take to the Mission, it would be appreciated.

May God bless our parish during in our patronal Feast celebration!



**T**HEREFORE the Lord Himself will give you a sign: behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and you shall call His name Immanuel.

ISAIAH 7:14

Christmas Eve  
 8:45 A.M. – Matins  
 9:30 A.M. – Divine Liturgy  
 6 P.M. – Great Vespers

Christmas Day  
 8:30 A.M. – Festal Matins  
 9:30 A.M. – Divine Liturgy

Next Lampada Deadline - January 23 Themes: Anniversary Preparations



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

Address Correction Requested



# Lampada



October, 2017

O Lord, You are a Lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

## THANKSGIVING 2017 A Message From Our Hierarchs



Beloved in the Lord!

As 2017 year of our Lord draws to a close, and the sacred Season of St. Philip's (Pre-Nativity) Fast begins, we in the U.S. come again to a peculiar weekend. Our national day of Thanksgiving is perhaps the only remaining civic holiday with an overtly religious purpose: the entire nation is meant to pause and thank God for the blessings bestowed upon it. Of course, many will spend this day without any thought of God whatsoever; since they don't think of God at other times, why should this day be any different? This is a day for the people of God to delight in, however. We are a Eucharistic people; thanksgiving is our way of life. We are never more truly ourselves than when we are conscious of our dependence upon God, and God's loving providence at work in our lives.

The Greek word, *Eucharist*, means 'thanksgiving'. Each time, as we celebrate the Holy Eucharist, we, your hierarchs, offer our gratitude to Almighty God for His love and mercy. We thank our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for the blessings received through the ministry of our forefathers, both clergy and laity, ensuring the blessed present for all of us. However, we are most thankful for you, the clergy and the faithful of our Metropolia – our extended family, as our most important blessing. Of course, God's gifts are never given merely for our own enjoyment, but to equip us and empower us to do God's work in the world. Looking at our world, especially in this time of war in our ancestral homeland Ukraine and in other parts of the world,

Continued, p.12

## The Messiah - High Priest and Lord

From a Homily by St. John Chrysostom: Below is the relevant text from Hebrews 6:

Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly sanctuary.<sup>2</sup> For a tent was prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the Presence it is called the Holy Place. Behind the second curtain stood a tent called the Holy of Holies, having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, which contained a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

These preparations having thus been made, the priests go continually into the outer tent, performing their ritual duties; but into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood

which he offers for himself and for the errors of the people. By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the sanctuary is not yet opened as long as the outer tent is still standing (which is symbolic for the present age). According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, but deal only with food and drink and various ablutions, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation

But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.



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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: Dean Gakos

Treasurer: Karen Gavrilovic

Secretary: Karen Bowman

At Large: Greg Stronko

Service Group Leaders

Hospitality: Randy Brogan, Chris Harrison

Liturgy: Open

Charitable Works: Open

Evangelization: Open

Buildings/Grounds: Mager Koromhas

Library-Bookstore: Stanley Bright

Religious Formation: Basil Finnegan

Parish Ministry Coordinators

Greeters: Karen Gavrilovic

Liturgical Music: Pani Christine Holet

Web Communications: Karen Bowman

Community Care: Elaine Brogan

Parish Office - 434-973-2500

Contact Information

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. Includes entries for Sunday, November 26 through Sunday, December 24, detailing various liturgical services like Matins, Divine Liturgy, and Great Vespers.



Hospitality Report

As many of you already know the Hospitality Service Group consists of the following members: Co -Chairs; Randy Brogan, Chris Harrison: Members; Pani Christine, Stephanie Johnson and Hunter Johnson. We are a very busy group that has many projects and special events, as well as, providing or assisting volunteers for the Sunday's fellowship meal after Liturgy. Our service cannot be done without the support of the Parish and those volunteers that provide food and assistance for these events. Please be sure to sign up for a weekly Sunday fellowship meal – sign up sheets are on the bulletin board.

Our group meets quarterly and our last meeting was on Saturday, Nov. 11 when we developed a Quarterly Special Event Calendar. These events are great opportunities for Parish members to get to know each other and have fun outside of normal church activities. We will be asking for assistance during these events. Sign-up sheets will be provided for each event.

The Hospitality Group would like to thank all of you for your prayers and continued support.

Randy Brogan and Chris Harrison, Co-Chairs

Financial Stewardship - A Lifelong Endeavor

We usually think of stewardship in relationship to our 'earning years', but really it is a lifelong endeavor. Children must be taught early on the notions of the true nature of 'possessions', the evil of the love of money, wise care of our lives and livelihood, responsibility, importance of work, care of the earth, etc.

But the senior years present special challenges and opportunities to serve God as faithful stewards as well. Wise management of retirement and healthcare is always on people's minds as they retire but our sustaining work as stewards in the church should continue as well. There are many great resources for end-of-life planning, but the first thing you need to do is prepare a will, a durable power of attorney and advanced medical directives. The latter have important spiritual and moral implications - and you seek counsel from the Church regarding difficult end-of-life decisions. There are local free services available. (JABA for example). Remember - your will is a statement of who and what you really value in your life.

Consider also 'Planned Giving' as a way of 'advance planning' of your finances to maximize their effectiveness:

A Significant or Special Gift - This could be a larger gift to a Capital Campaign, or parish or Church project that increases effectiveness of the gift by its timing. In addition to parish projects, worthy recipients of such gifts might also include organizations like IOCC, OCMC missionaries, or the UOC ministries like the Camp or museum or Ancient Faith ministries.

A Creative Gift: could be something 'outside the box'. For example, a friend of our parish donated \$20,000 to OCMC - enough to build an entire church in Africa, and was able to visit the church for its dedication. A gift of \$100 - 10000 to IOCCs program to provide micro-loans to people in need, whose small businesses can then employ thousands - offering them a sustainable living.

This planned approach allows you to make meaningful financial gifts to the Church, or Her ministries, even in your senior years, while maintaining a wise reserve of funds for personal needs and reserves for your final estate. If you would like to better plan for this next phase of your life as a steward of this life, contact Fr. Robert for more information. This planning fulfills St. Paul's mandate: "Each one must do as he has made up his mind" regarding the stewardship of what God has entrusted to us. (2Cor.9)

PS. I strongly disagree with the principle of endowments for churches- which is poor stewardship of funds because they are forever impounded, and make money for the financial managers, not the purposes of the Church. Good stewardship means putting funds to use for Godly purposes.

THE SOCIAL EVENT CALENDAR: SAVE THE DATES!

St. Nicholas Day Celebration: The Parish will celebrate our name day and in a spirit of holiday fellowship.

Date: 12/10/17 Time: Following Liturgy Location: Fellowship Hall Pot Luck Dinner (fasting): Sign Up Sheets for food and drinks are in the Fellowship Hall. Surprise Guest - Children's Special Presentation

Souper Bowl Sunday:

Date: 2/4/2017 Time: Following Liturgy Location: Fellowship Hall

Proceeds go to a charity chosen by the Consistory. Sign Up Sheets will be placed in Hall

2nd Annual Chili Cook Off - To be Announced





Religious Formation

SOME USEFUL RESOURCES FOR ORTHODOX PARENTS

Several mothers (no dads) were asked to share books, periodicals, podcasts, etc, that they have found helpful in raising children. The list below is a good starting point for some basic resources on childrearing. Also, feel free to contact the UOC Office of Youth Ministry for additional ideas: uoyouth.org.

Note: The recommended prayer book for children of our parish is the small prayer book published by the UOC of U.S.A.

Online Resources

- Let Us Attend: Sunday's Gospel for Children Ancient Faith podcast – two versions for younger and older children
Close to Home Ancient (Molly Sabourin) Ancient Faith Podcast
Grace Here and Now (Molly Sabourin) Ancient Faith Podcast
Articles on parenting and mothering by former parishioner, Carrie Frederick Frost at carriefrederickfrost.com
The Ascetic Lives of Mothers (Annalisa Boyd) Ancient Faithpodcast and book
Adventures of an Orthodox Mom (Orthodox Mothers Community at orthodoxmom.com) blog and Facebook
Orthodox Mama (our former parishioner Sarah Wright at orthodoxmotherhood.com)
Readings from Under the Grapevine (Dr. Crissi Hart) Ancient Faith Podcast
Growing Child, monthly e-magazine on what to expect in your child's development
Family Life Ministry (familylifeministry.atlanta.goarch.org)

Books

- On Marriage and Family Life (St. John Chrysostom)
Raising Them Right: A Saint's Advice on Raising Children (St. Theophan the Recluse)
Raising Kids with Character That Lasts (Susan and John Yates)
A Visual Catechism of the Orthodox Church (Metropolitan of Nafpaktos Hierotheos)
OCA booklet on Baptism by Fr. Paul Lazor
OCA booklet on Preparation for First Confession
Feast Days booklets (store.ancientfaith.com/feast-days)
Seasons of the Faith: Helping your Family Celebrate the Feasts and Fasts of the Church (Sarah Wright)
Children's Bible Reader
A Child's Guide to the Divine Liturgy
Blueprints for the Little Church: Creating an Orthodox Home (Elissa Bjeletich and Caleb Shoemaker)
Raising Saints (Elissa Bjeletich) Ancient Faith Podcast
Heaven Meets Earth: Celebrating Pascha and the Twelve Feasts (John Kosmas Skinas)
Following a Sacred Path: Raising Godly Children (Elizabeth White)
Boundaries with Teens: When to Say Yes, How to Say No (Dr. John Townsend)
Smart Money Smart Kids (Dave Ramsey and Rachel Cruze)
Bringing Up Boys (Dr. James Dobson)
The Birth Order Book: Why You Are the Way You Are (Dr. Kevin Leman)

Community Care, Continued from p.20

an ailing relative or loved one. Pick up the phone (remember those?) and call an old friend or parishioner to see how they're doing. Make a big pot of soup and invite new parish members or parish friends for a monthly soup night. Bring dinner to a frazzled family. Introduce yourself to someone new at Liturgy.

You are part of this community, and we know you care. How can you help weave this tapestry? Remember, small gestures mean the most. In the end, it's about loving one another in Christ, with all our flaws and messiness. As with many things, there is no "perfect time" to care for others. Don't wait until your house is immaculate, or when you choose the perfect pen and stationery. It is the gesture of love, just as you are, that will mean something to those to whom you reach out."

Consider the beautiful tapestry that is St. Nicholas Orthodox Church. As we enter this Nativity season and 2018, think about how you can do something more for that "other" family of yours! We anticipate the birth of baby Hamilton in the not too distant future. Look out for email blasts and/or announcements at church concerning meals that we can prepare for the family. Our work is a collective effort by the whole parish. Let us strive to make it wonderful in the upcoming year.

In Christ,

Elaine Brogan-ministry leader with the support of Deena Gakos, Pani Christine Holet, David Murphy, Amy Skretta



Liturgical Services (cont.)

Table with 3 columns: Day, Date, and Service Details. Includes entries for Monday, December 25 (Feast of the Nativity), Tuesday, December 26 (Divine Liturgy), Saturday, December 30 (Great Vespers), Sunday, December 31 (Sunday After Nativity), Friday, January 5 (Vigil Eve of Theophany), Saturday, January 6 (Feast of the Theophany), Sunday, January 7 (Sunday After Theophany), and Tuesday, January 9 (Moleben to St. John the Baptist).

Ongoing and Special Events Calendar

Table with 3 columns: Event Name, Time, and Date. Lists events such as Parish Prayer Vigil - Right to Life, Religious Formation Service Group, Session II: Jesus Christ and the Temple, Charitable Works Service Group, Evangelization/Outreach Service Group, Session III: Jesus Christ and the Temple, Parish Board Meeting, Session IV: Jesus Christ and the Temple, Buildings and Grounds Service Group, Parish Prayer Vigil - Right to Life, Session V: Jesus Christ and the Temple, Work Party - Preparation for Christmas, Liturgy Group, Charitable Works Service Group, Evangelization-Outreach Service Groups, and Parish Board Meeting.

Many Blessed Years!

Birthdays

Confessions for Christmas

Saturdays - after Vespers (5pm)

Wednesdays - Dec. 13, 20 after Moleben

Or By Request / Appointment
Everyone should receive the Mystery of Penance during the fasting seasons.

Saints Days



Pastor's Message

# Developing our Resources in 2018

The holiday season is upon us and what I find is that December, like May is usually kind of a 'lost' month as the focus of the parish swings to Thanksgiving, the St. Nicholas Feast and the Nativity and Theophany feasts, which rightly draw us spiritually into the awareness of God's blessings for us and our stewardship of those blessings. Usually, there isn't a lot of time to tackle other projects, and while we do make a special effort to do our new-year stewardship dedication and ask the service groups to consider projects and funding for the next year, realistically, we're all going in a somewhat different direction for now, and rightly so.

But we can and should see our work as a Church in the light of the Nativity and Theophany Feasts. St. Luke's infancy narrative is especially sensitive to the proclamation of the coming of Christ through His birth as Good News for the poor. Our charitable work proceeds from that spirit and understanding of who we are and what we are called to be. The Nativity of Our Lord, and even the Theophany, as revelation of the Trinity, are unfathomable mysteries - but a mystery, hidden from all eternity, that God desires to reveal to 'those on earth.' (Col. 1:26), hence the ministry of evangelization makes each of these feasts not only cosmic in nature, but also ecclesiological - the essence of what it means to be The Church. So we don't lose sight of our holy work - to share the Gospel and proclaim 'Peace on Earth, good will toward men.' (Lk 23)

To so participate with the angels in this holy work, we use earthly tools and resources. Our mission emerges from our love of Christ and His revelation of Himself to us, but it is carried out through practical means. So it is appropriate to ask, as the parish 20th Anniversary approaches, how capable are we in carrying out this task? How suitable are our facilities to welcome people and literally incorporate them into the Body of Christ, His Church.

To answer the former question, we would have to say that we put forth a lot of effort in recent years, sowing the seeds of the Gospel, through programs and events. The fruits of those are often not borne for months, years or decades. But I should think that we could become much better at these efforts, if we learn from others, how to engage people 'in the marketplace' to share the Good News of salvation with them. In the old days, simply putting ads in the paper or doing church tours during a festival were deemed sufficient. No more. The good news is that there are new resources available to help us, including a new movie produced by Ancient Faith, that can serve as a way of engagement with people about their religious beliefs especially those who are only 'marginally' religious or agnostic. It's a growing group to reach - so we should look for ways that we can reach out to them.



Regarding the latter, we know that the needs of our facilities ebb and flow. But it seems to me that there are three very immediate needs that should be addressed, if we are to better accommodate our existing congregation, and a growing congregation in the future: Nave space, social hall space/ease of movement and parking. Each of these areas is somewhat constrained, if we consider the sociologist's observation (for Americans) that an 80% full space will make it difficult for new people to 'find their place' easily. Our Facility Planning committee has done much of the background work already, to begin formulating a plan to address each of these needs. There are certain opportunities that present themselves at the moment that might be timely if, in 2018, the parish decides to undertake a major project to expand our facility capabilities.

There is a lot of work to do here, and we're not going to just leave it up to Vladimir and the Facility Master Plan Committee to pull a plan out of the hat, or pull us all along in the process. Rather, early in 2018, we will need a concerted effort by **each Service Group** to lead a parish discussion about what we really need or even want. So here some examples of questions which should be asked:

- ✦ **Liturgy Group:** How many people should our church hold? What would the expansion look like? What about raising the roof and adding a dome?

*Continued, next page*



# The Parish in Pictures



We began Church school with a blessing in September. Deena and the children are now busily working on a St. Nicholas Day production with props and all!



Celebrating Yelena and Stanley's wedding, thought a bit belatedly. The bloom is very much on the rose.



Our Theophany visitors made a surprise visit this fall. Could it be that an early winter is coming?



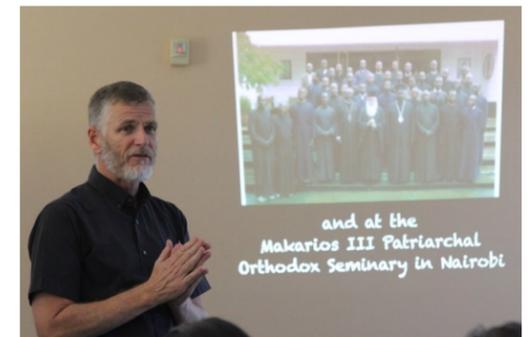
Oliver's mom joined us this fall for a visit to her med student son. Wonderful folks!

## Missionary Visitor - A Special Friend Is In Town

Bill Black is on a whirlwind tour of Orthodox parishes in the US during his visit this fall, from his overseas service as an OCMC missionary to Kenya. Although Bill is staying in Crozet, we only see him on weekdays as all of his weekends are spent sharing the good news of God's blessings to the people of Africa.

Bill's missionary focus will be changing when he returns as he'll be working in the western part of Kenya continuing his teaching and stewardship ministry, focusing on helping clergy reach out to their congregations with the Gospel of Christ.

You can learn more about Bill's ministry by logging onto his personal blog: <http://onesimusredivivus.blogspot.com/> an his OCMC page (which accepts FUNDING!) here: [http://www.ocmc.org/about/view\\_missionary.aspx?MissionaryId=41](http://www.ocmc.org/about/view_missionary.aspx?MissionaryId=41) Or just contact him and visit in person during the week when he's in town.





## Community Happenings

As with all families, there has been a lot going on in our parish family as we approach the end of the year. One of our members, Eileen Opincar, moved back to Oregon in September to be nearer to her family. Eileen took very seriously her work with the pro-life movement in Charitable Works as well as the way she tenderly wrote messages to parishioners in her birthday and get well greeting cards. *We will miss Eileen's contribution to our ministry, but know that we will always be connected through our faith.*



At the end of July, many of us celebrated from afar the marriage of Elena and Stanley Bright. While Basil and Barbara Finnegan were able to represent St. Nicholas at the ceremony, the parish had a chance to celebrate with the happy couple at the end of October with a lovely wedding cake. We look forward to having Elena in our family and getting to know her. Many blessed years to the happy couple!! *Mnobyaya l'eta!!!*

In early October, we were once again brought together to mourn the passing of one of our senior members. While we grieved with the Gavrilovic family in May at the passing of their dear mother+ Vera, we now lost the patriarch of the family, +John. Our thanks to all parishioners that attended the services as well as assisted prior to, during and after the mercy meal held in the parish hall. While we mourn his passing, we know that he and his beloved Vera are once again united in God's Heavenly kingdom. Our deepest sympathies to Vladimir, Karen, John and Elena-Vichnaya Pamyat!!



With the departure of Eileen Opincar, we are so very happy to welcome Amy Skretta to Community Care. Amy is looking forward to working on the greeting card part of our ministry. In talking with her and discussing what we do (or attempt to do) for the parish, she provided the following reflection. She told me to use it or discard it as I wished, but I think she sums up our efforts quite nicely:

*"The connections we make with each other are a deliberate effort. We in the Community Care ministry put pen to paper and send cards to those who celebrate and those who grieve. We reach out a helping hand to those in need. We make connections from person to person, threading us together like a tapestry. We challenge you to do the same over the next couple of months. Buy or make a few blank cards, and write to*

**Continued, next page**

## Please Remember in Your Prayers

|   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| Ileana and family<br>Lynn ( <i>special need</i> )<br>Isabelle Virginia<br>Jackie - car accident recovery<br>Brad and Stacey<br>Sam and family<br>Mioara ( <i>cancer</i> ) | Michael (faith)<br>Fr. Stefan<br>Alice ( <i>rehab</i> )<br>Marjorie ( <i>grief</i> )<br>Rev Mac ( <i>hip - healing /recover</i> )<br>Glenda, Fran and Jackie<br>Michael (health) and Kathy | Frs. Victor, Bazyl, John<br>Demetra and Gregory<br>June<br>Laurie ( <i>Scott, Benjamin, Nicholas</i> )<br>Samy's Mother ( <i>health</i> )<br>Andrew ( <i>rehabilitation</i> ) | John ( <i>special need</i> )<br>Chris and family<br>Special Intention<br><br>For all who are seminarians or seeking to follow God's call to holy service in the Church |
|---|--|---|--|

## General Intentions

- ✦ For our parish Anniversary preparations and projects underway.
- ✦ For those travelling during the holiday season.
- ✦ For the victims of the massacres recently in Texas, California and New York.
- ✦ For OCMC missionary William (Bill) Black and God's leading in his mission endeavors and safety in his travels. And for John and Mary and all who serve as missionaries abroad.
- ✦ For those in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, Florida, Texas suffering from earthquakes, floods, storms, and fires. For the people in Africa afflicted by disease, especially the emergence of the Plague in Madagascar.
- ✦ For refugees who are seeking refuge in Lesvos and around the world and the people who extend love for them..
- ✦ For healing of the City of Charlottesville and our region and nation of the civil strife of recent weeks. For the physical healing of those injured and the repose of those who have died.
- ✦ For Dorian, Natalia and all who are imprisoned and for the Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry.
- ✦ God's continued blessing and fruitfulness in the holy work offered to Christ by Frannie, Joe, Debbie, Lois, Charlotte, Gertrude, Junior, Jerry, Randy, Rayburn, Shea, Taylor, and all who serve those in need in SW Va.



## Pastor's Message *Continued from previous page*

- ✦ **Hospitality:** How many people should we easily fit in the hall weekly? Do we want to consider leasing it to be available for outside users? What kinds of finishes would be attractive and functional? What about a commercial kitchen?
- ✦ **Buildings and Grounds:** What is possible to us to expand parking? What should the shed area be used for? What about overall parish storage needs (tools, supplies)? What can be envisioned aesthetically to make the lower portion of the property not only attractive, but functional as well. Is it time to look to new systems like water, sewage, etc.?
- ✦ **Charitable Works:** Are there any charitable efforts that can / should be undertaken that would be expedited by having storage space available - i.e. storage for family supplies, LOVE Inc needs, food ministry, wheelchair ministry, etc.
- ✦ **Religious Formation:** How many Church school classrooms are reasonable to plan for? How can we create a space for children to 'romp' after the Liturgy? What kinds of dedicated spaces (or shared spaces) do we need to conduct adult religious education effectively? Are there technological needs that should be built into such spaces?
- ✦ **Library-Bookstore:** How do we better plan and give access to library and bookstore capabilities. Do these need to move? In an electronic age, what about digital access?
- ✦ **Evangelization-Outreach:** How do our facilities (by their beauty, ease of access, theological statement) enable new people to come to the faith? Are there stumbling blocks for newcomers in the way that things are configured?
- ✦ **Parish Board:** What are the administrative needs? Desks, filing, cabinetry/supplies, Secure storage, etc.? How are the competing needs for parish space managed?
- ✦ **Office of the Pastor and Clergy:** Special clergy needs - liturgical, office, pastoral counseling spaces, etc.



A robust conversation in each of these areas will stir us to an awareness of the many opportunities we have to utilize what God has entrusted to us, so that we can grow and mature as a parish to move on to future endeavors. This first stage is 'polling' - or brainstorming, trying to get many good ideas out there so that we can see what kind of support is there to proceed, followed up by gaining a consensus on what we can and should do. Once we have a sense of that - and all functional areas are being addressed, we can toss this back to our gifted 'visionaries' and designers who can come up with a series of plans (or phased plans) that can get us to where we want to go. The result of this effort, supported by ongoing input from all, will be a 'plan' or mockup or model of what our future facilities will look like in the future.

To date, our efforts to make improvements have been made out of necessity (the roof is leaking, the AC is shot). With this effort a different outcome can emerge - a visionary medium to long term plan that will be true to our parish mission, ideally consistent with the parish Master Plan. If we want to utilize the 20th Anniversary event as a catalyst for this important process, it will be necessary for each service group to move forward beginning in 2018, on its area of assessment of the current and future needs.

Christianity, even salvation, is often viewed as a process. May God inspire us over the course of the holy Feasts to be renewed in our mission to live fully our sacramental, liturgical life and actualize the mission of the Church, pooling the many resources that God has entrusted to us that we may capture His divine purpose for us, and our mission in our community.

*Fr. Robert*

## Introduction to Orthodoxy - Convert Instructions

We commend to your prayers, Ruth Garibaldi, who has begun our course of introduction to Orthodoxy. Please pray for Ruth and others who may be seeking God's path to a deeper relationship in Him through the Orthodox Church.

The process of bringing people to a deeper relationship with Christ through the Church is one that involves the whole Church. If you would be able to provide assistance in teaching this course content, please let me know.

Our Evangelization and Outreach ministry exists for this very purpose - to provide a means for people outside of our parish to experience the Orthodox faith as our way of coming to know Christ. In the course of the year, we hold programs in house and public 'visibility' efforts to allow people to catch a glimpse of what this is all about.

Hopefully in 2018 we'll have our 'Invite a Friend to Church' day, with special activities on a Sunday to help new people learn a little more easily what's happening in our church life.



### Christ and The Temple *(cont. from p. 1)*

[St. Paul/the author of Hebrews] has shown from the Priest, from the Priesthood, from the [Old] Covenant, that that [dispensation] was to have an end. From this point he shows it from the fashion of the tabernacle itself. How? This, he says, [was] the Holy and the Holy of Holies. The holy place then is a symbol of the former period (for there all things are done by means of sacrifices); but the Holy of Holies of this that is now present. And by the Holy of Holies he means Heaven; and by the veil, Heaven, and the Flesh enters into that within the veil: that is to say, through the veil of His flesh. And it were well to speak of this passage, taking it up from the beginning. What then does he say? Then verily the first had also (the first what? The Covenant). Ordinances of Divine service. What are ordinances? symbols or rites. Then; as (he means) it has not now. He shows that it had already given place, for (he says) it had at that time; so that now, although it stood, it is not.



And the worldly Sanctuary. He calls it worldly, inasmuch as it was permitted to all to tread it, and in the same house the place was manifest where the priests stood, where the Jews, the Proselytes, the Grecians, the Nazarites. Since, therefore even Gentiles were permitted to tread it, he calls it worldly. For surely the Jews were not the world. Then he says there was a tabernacle made; the first, which is called holy, wherein was the Candlestick, and the Table, and the Show-bread. These things are symbols of the world.

And after the second veil. There was then not one veil, but there was another veil outside also) the tabernacle, which is called holy of holies. Observe how everywhere he calls it a tabernacle in regard of [God's] encamping there, which had a golden Censer, and the ark of the Covenant overlaid round about with gold: wherein was the golden pot that held the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant. All these things were venerable and conspicuous memorials of the Jewish obstinacy; and the tables of the covenant (for they broke them) And the manna (for they murmured; and therefore handing on the memory thereof to posterity, He commanded it to be laid up in a golden pot. And Aaron's rod that budded. And over it, the Cherubim of glory. What is the Cherubim of glory? He either means the glorious, or those which are under God, shadowing the mercy-seat. But in another point of view also he extols these things in his discourse, in order to show that those which come after them are greater. Of which we cannot now speak particularly. In these words He hints that these were not merely what was seen, but were a sort of enigmas. Of which we cannot now speak particularly, perhaps because they needed a long discourse.

Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle accomplishing the service [of God]. That is, these things indeed were [there], but the Jews did not enjoy them: they saw them not. So that they were no more theirs than [ours] for whom they prophesied. But into the second the High Priest went alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people. You see that the types were already laid down beforehand? For, lest they should say, 'How is there but one sacrifice? He shows that this was so from the beginning, since at least the more holy and the awesome sacrifice was but one. And how did the High Priest offer once for all? Thus were they accustomed to do from the beginning, for then also the High Priest offered once for all.

And well said he, not without blood. (Not indeed without blood, yet not this blood, for the business was not so great.) He signifies that there shall be a sacrifice, not consumed by fire, but rather distinguished by blood. For inasmuch as He called the Cross a sacrifice, though it had neither fire, nor logs, nor was offered many times, but had been offered in blood once for all; He shows that the ancient sacrifice also was of this kind, was offered once for all in blood, which He offers for Himself; again, for Himself; and for the errors of the people. He said not sins; but errors, that they might not be high-minded. For even if you have not sinned intentionally, yet unintentionally you have erred, and from this no man is pure. And everywhere, for Himself, showing that Christ is much greater. For if He be separated from our sins, how did He offer for Himself? Why then did you say these things (one says)? Because this is [a mark] of One that is superior.

Thus far there is no speculation. But from this point he philosophizes and says, The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the Holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing. For this cause he says have these things been thus ordained, that we might learn that the Holy of Holies, that is, Heaven, is as yet inaccessible. Let us not then think, (he says, that because we do not enter them, they have no existence: inasmuch as neither did we enter the Most Holy place, which he says was established as a figure for the time then present. What does he mean by the time present? That before the coming of Christ: For after the coming of Christ, it is no longer a time present: For how could it be, having arrived, and being ended?

*Continued, next page*



### Evangelization - Outreach Update

One outreach opportunity we have right now is to invite people to our parish discussion on *Christ and the Temple*, that will take place on four consecutive Thursday evenings from 7pm-8pm. These sessions are open to the public, and should offer a unique glimpse into the

spiritual insights of the Orthodox Church to this important theme - especially so as we await the coming of the Messiah, who is the High Priest. *So what does it mean to be High Priest?* Come and find out and bring a friend.



At our December meeting, I would like the group to view the DVD, *Becoming Truly Human*, that has been developed especially as a tool for parish outreach to younger people. It tracks the responses of a small group of people who are unaffiliated with Christianity, and their reasons why, as well as one fellow who's journey to Orthodoxy emerges rather beautifully through it all.

The program can be used as a simple in-home means of reaching out to people to share who they are and what they believe in an unpretentious way, while opening the door of the Christian Faith to them. The production quality is very high and the film is being used by the Antiochian Archdiocese as a part of a package program for parishes to offer such an outreach. The full package provides online training and support from Sdcn. Adam Roberts who coordinates the program. Once we view the program we can determine its merits and whether it might be worthwhile to try to pull a program together of this sort in our parish. In addition, we hope to hold the 'Invite a Friend' to Church Sunday some time in early 2018. Consider inviting a friend to church for Christmas too. With Chris Harrison's artistry, we are running some ads to help boost public awareness during the holiday season. Let us know if you or anyone you know sees them! We also hope to have some local outreach programs in 2018.

### On Decorum *Continued, from prev. page*

what you wear to church - at least as much as you care about what you wear to a job interview or a wedding. When we come to church we should *present ourselves as best we can*. Appropriate dress for Divine Liturgy for gentlemen is not business casual. It is, at the very least, a button shirt and a tie, slacks, and loafers, never sneakers or sandals. Ladies should wear a dress, skirt (at the appropriate length, not too far above the knees) and heels or flats. Young ladies, cover your shoulders. This isn't the appropriate time to wear your super-cute sun dress. Wait till you get outside before you try to catch some rays and show off your tan. These are not expensive clothes. They can all be purchased at Wal-Mart. Children, likewise, should not look like they are in church for a play date. They should have church clothes that they don't wear anywhere else. This is appropriate to the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. This is decorum.

Speaking just for me, when I'm at work, I wear the uniform of a US Army Officer. It reminds me who I am and what I am doing; that the work I am performing is significant. It reminds me that I am a professional military officer and that I need to adjust my attitude to my profession. However, when I am not at work, you will probably find me wearing shorts, a tank top, flip flops, and a ball hat so my bald head doesn't get burned. I have never, in 48 years, gone to a Sunday morning church service, either when I was Protestant or after I became Orthodox, without a coat and tie. Ever since I started seminary I have been under the obedience of wearing a cassock to church. I will confess to you, I personally loathe wearing a cassock. I think it looks like a dress, and the whole reason you see me wearing the black vest is because I have the subjective opinion that it looks slightly more manly (!) However, it forcibly reminds me of who I am and my calling. It reminds me of the sacred space and time of the Holy Sanctuary and the divine services.

*To Be Continued....The above represents Fr. George's identifies on the subject. Please also review the counsel and specific directives in the Parish Bulletins over the past 2 months describing appropriate dress and behaviors. The focus of decorum is always on how what is external is revealing what is internal - which is what really counts.*

### Some Key Dates in 2018

**Sunday, February 19th - Cheesefare Sunday - Beginning of Great Lent**

**Sunday, April 8 - Holy Pascha**

**Saturday, April 21st - Twentieth Anniversary of the Parish - Archpastoral Visit by Metropolitan Antony and Hierarchical Divine Liturgy**

**July 28, 2017 - Centennial Celebration - UOC of the USA, South Bound Brook, NJ**

**Saturday, August 18th - Parish Anniversary - Homecoming Picnic**





### ON DECORUM IN CHURCH (Part II)

By Fr. George Hill

Pastor's note: This is part II of an article submitted by Fr. George in the previous Lampada. As you know, there has been a series of bulletin articles about it for many weeks. The topic is important for each of us - and yes, a teaching that is a little difficult to accept, even as it is offered in love. Our study of Christ in the Temple is to help us be aware of how truly awesome our sacred space and divine worship truly is, and what our responsibilities are as we approach the Holy.

These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. (1 Tim. 3:14-15)

When we refuse to recognize the sacred as sacred by exercising the appropriate decorum, we profane it by default, that is, we treat it as profane. When we do this we commit blasphemy against the sacred. Blasphemy, quite literally, is treating the sacred as profane, treating the special as ordinary. This is done by humans through a lack of appropriate decorum pertaining to the sacred time and space, the sacred object, or the sacred act. We profane the sacred by exercising similar decorum that we would in a profane environment (for example a playground, a ballpark, a gymnasium, a party, the workplace, the family room at home, or even an outhouse). Improper decorum pertaining to the sacred is, by definition, blasphemy. It is, quite frankly, the work of the devil. God's holy work is to bring order out of chaos. The devil's blasphemous work is to bring chaos out of order.

God is order. Order is both designed and disciplined. It doesn't happen *ex nihilo* (out of nothing). Chaos cannot bring forth order. Only order can bring forth order. It follows logically: in mathematics, any number multiplied by zero is zero. Chaos is a lack of designed and disciplined order, it needs both intelligent design and discipline. Oswald Spengler in his book *The Decline of the West* (published in the early 20th Century) stated that Western Civilization was in its winter in the late 19th Century. This was noticeable by a mere observation of the decline in society-wide decorum, the main necessary ingredient for any civilization in the mind of Cicero. This is observable today everywhere you look, quite noticeably by the lack of decorum among the faithful in our churches.

While the Orthodox Church was all that was left in Russia through her 80 year struggle with Marxist ideology, and while she maintained that one lasting piece of Russian and Western culture in the onslaught of communism which wrought more than 25 million deaths under Stalin alone, I don't hold such high hopes for the Church in America; not because of the resilience of the Church herself, but because of Americans. This is all observable in the lack of decorum so common in our midst.

When we gather for Sunday morning Divine Liturgy, it is the most sacred time and space that most of us will ever encounter this side of eternity. However, in seeking higher virtue, we may have lost our own. In Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* he speaks of virtue not being the opposite of vice, but being found in the golden mean, the perfect center, between two opposing vices. For instance, the golden mean virtue of courage was in the precise middle between being cowardliness on one side and foolhardiness on the other. Sometimes as American Orthodox Churches (St. Nicholas being no exception) instead of seeking the golden mean virtues of welcoming hospitality and all-inclusiveness, have feared the vices of ethnocentrism and cliquishness so much that we slip into the opposing vice of apathy in proper decorum in the most sacred time and space any of us will ever encounter, and it is the *faithful*, not our guests, that are doing it. If we do so, we are profaning the most sacred time and space any of us will ever encounter this side of eternity.

#### An Example - The Lack of Decorum in How We Dress

I grew up as a Southern Baptist. My parents took me to church every Sunday. From the time of my earliest memory to the day he died, I never saw my father in church without a coat and tie or my mother without a dress and heels. I was taught in my non-sacramental upbringing that there were church clothes (we called them Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes), school clothes, and everything else clothes. However, church clothes were the nicest. Why? Because, my parents taught me that when we are in the House of God we owe it to present ourselves in that fashion. How much more so would we do that when we know we are in the actual presence of God in His Kingdom, in the presence of the Eucharist? Yet, I have seen the faithful wear clothes to Divine Liturgy that would get the average person excused from an average professional job interview. These are clothes that you would never even consider wearing to a traditional secular wedding. I've even seen a grown man wearing shorts to church in my line to receive the Holy Eucharist. The usual response to something like this is, "God doesn't care what you wear to church." I happen to agree. However, you should care

Continued, next page



### Treasurer's Report

Abridged Monthly - Sept - mid Nov. 2017

| Category              | 9/1/2017-9/30/2017 | 10/1/2017-10/31/2017 | 11/1/2017-11/13/2017 | OVERALL TOTAL     |
|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>INCOME</b>         |                    |                      |                      |                   |
| Collection            | 14,005.83          | 16,722.66            | 3,626.52             | 151,679.10        |
| Interest Inc          | 4.43               | 2.06                 | 0.00                 | 52.68             |
| FROM General (922)    | 0.00               | 0.00                 | 3,045.00             | 33,654.00         |
| FROM Project (821)    | 0.00               | 0.00                 | 132.75               | 3,732.75          |
| <b>TOTAL INCOME</b>   | <b>14,010.26</b>   | <b>16,724.72</b>     | <b>6,804.27</b>      | <b>189,118.53</b> |
| <b>EXPENSES</b>       |                    |                      |                      |                   |
| B&G Op                | 237.46             | 326.58               | 305.74               | 4,296.31          |
| Charity Operating     | 3,102.85           | 1,171.92             | 1,360.75             | 21,052.11         |
| Comm Op               | 166.76             | 103.82               | 172.74               | 2,377.88          |
| E&O Op                | 185.00             | 0.00                 | 0.00                 | 1,134.59          |
| Hosp. Op              | 64.06              | 205.55               | 75.27                | 1,790.38          |
| LG Op                 | 12.64              | 0.00                 | 68.00                | 2,995.55          |
| LG Proj               | 0.00               | 0.00                 | 0.00                 | 3,600.00          |
| Lib. Op               | 0.00               | 0.00                 | 0.00                 | 136.88            |
| Mortgage interest     | 920.28             | 887.50               | 914.08               | 10,049.59         |
| PB Op                 | 4,785.00           | 10,761.24            | 4,435.00             | 70,507.18         |
| RF Op                 | 0.00               | 0.00                 | 132.75               | 440.55            |
| TO Contingency (370)  | 0.00               | 0.00                 | 0.00                 | 24,658.00         |
| TO General (922)      | 0.00               | 0.00                 | 132.75               | 3,732.75          |
| TO Project (821)      | 0.00               | 0.00                 | 3,045.00             | 8,996.00          |
| TO Mortgage Principal | 825.58             | 858.36               | 831.78               | 9,154.87          |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b> | <b>10,299.63</b>   | <b>14,314.97</b>     | <b>11,473.86</b>     | <b>164,922.64</b> |
| <b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>  | <b>3,710.63</b>    | <b>2,409.75</b>      | <b>-4,669.59</b>     | <b>24,195.89</b>  |

As we wind up the year and give thanks for our blessings, it is a good time to say thank you for all you have done to support the Parish by sharing your time, talents and treasures. Your faithful donations, which are put to use through our service groups, keep our parish and our ministries thriving. As service group leaders and members, this is a good time to look back on expenditures to date and see how well you have used the funds entrusted to you. It's also a good time to start thinking about next year and the projects you hope to undertake.

Members of the Parish Board will be working with you in the coming months to develop next year's budget. Look for emails with detailed spending reports and share those with your groups so you can start formulating your budget request. Now would be an appropriate time to revisit the Master Plan goals as they relate to your service group. If you need a copy of the master plan, or you need any additional budget information, please contact me at [karengavrilovic@gmail.com](mailto:karengavrilovic@gmail.com). I can provide you information about historic spending for your group and project funds that may have been set aside for expenditures that relate to your service area. Also, if anyone has reimbursements requests to submit for this year, please submit them before the end of the year. Reimbursement forms are in the Treasurer's mailbox.

Karen Gavrilovic, Treasurer

| Account Balances - As of 11/13/2017 |                    |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| As of 11/13/2017                    |                    |
| Account                             | 11/13/2017 Balance |
| <b>Bank Accounts</b>                |                    |
| Contingency (370)                   | 24,996.12          |
| General (922)                       | 20,471.95          |
| Project (821)                       | 18,588.55          |
| <b>TOTAL Bank Accounts</b>          | <b>64,056.62</b>   |
| <b>Liability Accounts</b>           |                    |
| Mortgage Principal                  | -234,977.75        |
| <b>TOTAL Liability Accounts</b>     | <b>-234,977.75</b> |
| <b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>                | <b>-170,921.13</b> |



### Christ and The Temple *(cont. from p. 10)*

There is too something else which he indicates, when he says this, which was a figure for the time then present, that is, became the Type. In which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience. You see now what is the meaning of The Law made nothing perfect, and if that first [covenant] had been faultless. How? As pertaining to the conscience. For the sacrifices did not put away the defilement from the soul, but still were concerned with the body: after the law of a carnal commandment. For certainly they could not put away adultery, nor murder, nor sacrilege. Do you see? You have eaten this, You have not eaten that, which are matters of indifference, which stood only in food and drinks, and various washings. ...

And [in] various washings, and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation. For this is the righteousness of the flesh. Here he depreciates the sacrifices, showing that they had no efficacy, and that they existed till the time of reformation, that is, they waited for the time that reforms all things.

But Christ having come as High Priest of good things that have come by a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands. Here he means the flesh. And well did he say, greater and more perfect, since God The Word and all the power of The Spirit dwells therein; For God gives not the Spirit by measure unto Him. John And more perfect, as being both blameless, and setting right greater things. That is, not of this creation. See how [it was] greater. For it would not have been of the Spirit Matthew 1:20, if man had constructed it. Nor yet is it of this creation; that is, not of these created things, but spiritual, of the Holy Ghost.



Do you see how he calls the body tabernacle and veil and heaven. By a greater and more perfect tabernacle. Through the veil, that is, His flesh. And again, into that within the veil. And again, entering into the Holy of Holies, to appear before the face of God. Why then does he this? According as one thing or a different one is signified. I mean for instance, the Heaven is a veil, for as a veil it walls off the Holy of Holies; the flesh [is a veil] hiding the Godhead; and the tabernacle likewise holding the Godhead. Again, Heaven [is] a tabernacle: for the Priest is there within.

But Christ, he says, having come an High Priest - he did not say, become, but having come, that is, having come for this very purpose, not having been successor to another. He did not come first and then become High Priest, but came and became at the same time. And he did not say having come an High Priest of things which are sacrificed, but of good things that have come, as if his discourse had not power to put the whole before us. Neither by the blood, he says, of goats and calves (All things are changed) but by His own Blood, He entered in once for all into the Holy Place. See thus he called Heaven. Once for all (he says) He entered into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption. And this expression having obtained, revealed things very difficult, and that are beyond expectation, how by one entering in, He obtained everlasting redemption.

Next comes that which is calculated to persuade. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the Blood of Christ, who through the Holy Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God. For (he says) if the blood of bulls is able to purify the flesh, much rather shall the Blood of Christ wipe away the defilement of the soul. For that you may not suppose when you hear the word sanctifies, that it is some great thing, he marks out and shows the difference between each of these purifications, and how the one of them is high and the other low. And says it is so with good reason, since that is the blood of bulls, and this the Blood of Christ.

Nor was he content with the name, but he sets forth also the manner of the offering. Who (he says) through the Holy Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, that is, the victim was without blemish, pure from sins - through the Holy Spirit, not through fire, nor through any other things. Shall purge your conscience, he says, from dead works. And well said he from dead works; if any man touched a dead body, he was polluted; and here, if any man touch a dead work, he is defiled through his conscience. To serve (he says) the Living and true God. Here he declares that it is not [possible] while one has dead works to serve the Living and true God, for they are both dead and false; and with good reason he says this. Ω

*(St. John Chrysostom concludes the sermon addressing several matters of the local congregation. This passage from Hebrews is used frequently in the Orthodox Church, notably as the Epistle Reading for the Marian Feasts)*



### Metropolitan Antony, *cont. from p. 16*

Once Ukraine became an independent nation following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was reborn, Archbishop Antony has accompanied his brother bishops on many journeys to the faithful of the nation. The majority of these trips included the delivery of millions of dollars' worth of aid of all kinds to the faithful and the need y of the nation – including religious educational materials, prayer books, medical supplies, opening of soup kitchens, aid for the rebuilding of Churches in both urban and rural village settings. The Archbishop continually reminds the faithful of his Church that their Christian responsibility means so much more than simply attending Church on a Sunday morning and making a small donation. He invites them to reach out with their physical beings to help heal those who need healing with a willingness to deny themselves for the sake of others.



From 1994 to the present day Archbishop Antony has served as Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees of St. Sophia Seminary and in 1995 he was elected by the Regular Sobor of the UOC of USA as President of the Consistory – Chief Administrative Officer for the Metropolia. He continues to serve in this capacity today. He accompanied Metropolitan Constantine when invited by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1994 to discussions about the renewal of the ancient relationship between the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Patriarchate, which dates back to the year 988, when Ukraine accepted the Holy Orthodox Faith as its own under then Prince Volodymyr the Great. These discussions led to the acceptance, on the Sunday of Orthodoxy 1995, under the omophorion of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I of the Ukrainian Orthodox Churches in the Diaspora and their hierarchs taking their rightful place at the Altar of our Lord, alongside their brother Orthodox Hierarchs throughout the Orthodox world. His All-Holiness and the Great and Holy Synod of Constantinople formally elected and ritually included Archbishop Antony in the Diptychs of Holy Orthodoxy as titular Archbishop of the ancient See of Hierapolis. One of the greatest accomplishments during this period through the combined efforts of Archbishop Antony, representing the Council of Bishops of the UOC of USA, and Bishop Vsevolod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in America, the two existing Ukrainian Orthodox Jurisdictions in the USA were finally and irrevocably united after decades of failed attempts. This is seen by the faithful of both churches as an accomplishment that united brothers and sisters once again – and even those of specific birth families who were separated from one another.

If one would ask His Eminence he felt his best efforts accomplished, he would respond immediately that it is the division of the UOC ministry into various Consistory Offices of Ministry, led by competent individuals and volunteers. He is most emotional about his establishment in 2003 of the Orycia Federwicz and Natalie Dedeluk Orphanage Adoption Program in Ukraine, named after the two California sisters who contributed the initial grant to make the program possible. The church adopted three of the most remote and underdeveloped orphanages – with the most severely mentally and physically handicapped children who were placed there by the Soviets out of sight – and unfortunately out of mind. Each year college student missionary teams travel to visit these orphanages to renovate buildings, purchase necessary items and most importantly to interact with and love the more than 300 children living in them.

The Metropolitan has visited and supported the Church's ministry effort in Appalachia. The 1998 Sobor of the UOC of USA initiated the development of a new History and Education Complex at the Metropolia Center. Archbishop Antony leads this continuing project, which will include an Archive and Research Center in memory of Metropolitan Andrew Kuschak, the Seminary/Church Library in Memory of Metropolitan John Theodorovich and the Ukrainian Museum of New Jersey in Memory of Metropolitan/Patriarch Mstyslay. At the first meeting of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America in 2010, Archbishop Antony was elected as Treasurer of the Assembly and heads the Committee for Financial Affairs.

Following the repose of Metropolitan Constantine of blessed memory (21 May, 2012), the Archbishop assumed the responsibilities of the Locum Tenens of the Metropolia See of the UOC of the USA. During the Extraordinary Sobor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA (October 6, 2012), His Eminence Archbishop Antony was nominated and elected as Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA and enthroned on Saturday, January 26, 2013 at St. Andrew Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral in Silver Spring, MD with hierarchs, representing various Orthodox jurisdictions of North America and representatives of Catholic and other Christian communities, and was greeted by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, conveyed formal and private greetings of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I to the new Metropolitan of the UOC of the USA. Ω

### The UOC Strategic Plan Implementation - You Can Help!

The Philanthropic Outreach team (Outreach and Evangelism Goal 7.3) has composed a survey that will help us develop materials to help every parish start or advance their outreach. We are sending this survey to all parish champions, parish priests, and parish board members. We would like feedback from you and as many people as we can. Every member of the UOC of USA can participate in this survey. If there are any parish members asking if they can take the survey, **please pass it along.** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/UOCSPOE73PhilanthropicOutreachSurvey2017>

In addition, if you would like to participate in ANY of the Strategic Planning initiatives, now's the time to step forward. See one of our 'parish champions' - Pani Christine or Karl Bowman for more details. Or to join the 'New Mission Parish' goal, contact Fr. Robert who is coordinating that goal.





## From our Metropolia

*Champions of the Faith*

### His Eminence Metropolitan Antony

This year's theme for the UOC Youth Ministry is "Champions of the Faith". Since the UOC is celebrating its 100th Anniversary, it was deemed appropriate to share a little about the life of our Metropolitan. As the Church celebrates its 100th Anniversary, the Lampada will feature a number of articles about the history of the Church and some of its key personalities.

**His Eminence Metropolitan Antony** – secular John Scharba – was born on 30 January 1947 to John and Dorothy Scharba, the eldest of five siblings. He was baptized on 23 March 1947 in St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Orthodox Parish, Sharon, PA. He received his elementary and secondary education in the Sharpville, PA school system and his religious education in St. John Parish. Young John began receiving a call to the holy priesthood at a very young age and was involved in the youth and young adult groups in his parish, but upon his graduation from high school, he decided to test his "call" by enrolling in Pennsylvania's Edinboro State University to prepare for a worldly career as a foreign journalist. After two years our Lord made it abundantly clear to him that he was on the wrong path and led him to St. Andrew College-Seminary in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada – the only Ukrainian Orthodox Seminary existing in the free world at the time. He simultaneously enrolled at the University of Manitoba, the campus of which is the location of St. Andrew Seminary. He graduated from the University of Manitoba in 1970 with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and then in 1971 completed his studies at St. Andrew Seminary receiving a Bachelor of Divinity – the equivalent of today's Master of Divinity in most seminaries. He remained in Winnipeg, having accepted an offer to become the Dean of Residence for St. Andrew College – a residence for both theology students and Orthodox and some non-Orthodox students of the University of Manitoba.



John was ordained to the Holy Deaconate on 1 October 1972 by then Bishop Constantine at St. Vladimir Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral, Parma, OH and then to the Holy Priesthood on 26 November 1972, again by Bishop Constantine, in his home parish of St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Sharon, PA. He was assigned to his first parish – St. Vladimir UOC, Ambridge, PA in December of 1972 and remained there for four years. Fr. John was then transferred to St. Michael Ukrainian Orthodox Parish, Hammond, IN where he served for the next nine years. He was very much involved with the youth of his parishes and within the Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolia. He served as Spiritual Advisor for the Ukrainian Orthodox camping program at Camp Kon-O-Kwee in Western, PA. He also served for ten years as the Spiritual Advisor of the Jr. Ukrainian Orthodox League of the USA and for ten years as Chairman of the Sr. Ukrainian Orthodox League's Clergy Candidate Commission, which administered the Metropolitan John Theodorovich Scholarship Fund in support of the Church's seminarians.

During his pastorate at St. Michael Parish, Hammond, Fr. John continued his education in the Graduate School of Theology at Loyola University, Chicago and at Purdue University in Indiana in the Graduate School of Educational Counseling, both of which enhance his pastoral ministry in very particular ways, providing insight into comparative theology and the very secular educational system of our nation, which has served him well in his parish and seminary education responsibilities.

At the regular Church Sobor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA in 1981, Fr. John was elected as a bishop of the Church. In 1982 he was tonsured as a monastic and in 1985 with the monastic name Antony – after St. Anthony the Great, whose feast day falls exactly on the Bishop's birthday and he was then elevated to the rank of Archimandrite in May of 1983. He remained serving as pastor of his parish until 6 October 1985, when he was consecrated as Bishop at St. Andrew Memorial Church at the Ukrainian Orthodox Church's Metropolia Center in South Bound Brook, NJ. He was immediately assigned as Rector and Administrator of St. Sophia Seminary where he served through 1989. In addition to this he assumed the Editorship of the English edition of the Ukrainian Orthodox Word, the official publication of the Church and later accepted the editorship of the finally combined Ukrainian/English publication, which exists today.

Bishop Antony was asked and agreed to fill a void in the life of the Ukrainian Orthodox Eparchy of Australia and New Zealand in 1989 and served as Bishop there in addition to his responsibilities to his Church in the USA. He served in this capacity through 1997 when another hierarch from Europe was assigned to relieve him of this enormous responsibility. During his service in Australia, he was able to diligently progress toward and accomplish the unification of the two Ukrainian Orthodox dioceses that existed for decades into a single church. During these difficult years of constant travel, Bishop Antony was elevated to the rank of Archbishop by the Council of Bishops of the UOC of USA.



Continued, next page



## Looking at Death

Having had the painful experience of the death of both my parents in the past few months, I have had to make a lot of decisions on end-of-life issues that dealt directly with our Orthodox faith and traditions. I wanted to share some of my experiences and some potentially useful advice on the topic of Orthodox death and burial, in the event that it is helpful to other parishioners that may be facing these issues some day in the (hopefully distant) future.

To start, I would recommend for those who are interested, a very good book on the subject called *A Christian Ending* by J. Mark and Elizabeth J. Barna. This book has far more advice than I can share here but I would emphasize that it should not be taken as a measure of "correct" Orthodox burial, but just as a sample of some of our deep reservoir of traditions that can be used if time, money or circumstances allow. A priest's advice should always be consulted for specifics and no one should feel bad if they don't follow these traditions to the letter. Secondly, a few people have asked me about the old world style caskets and burial shroud we used. These were both found through online searching. The caskets are hand made by a pair of Ukrainian brothers who are bringing back the crafting of traditional Orthodox caskets. Their website is <http://www.orthodox-coffins.com/>. The shrouds can be found on a wonderful website that brings together traditional Orthodox craftspeople from around the country, called New World Byzantine Studios, at <http://nwbstudios.com/>.



Funeral homes can provide some essential services, and most work hard to accommodate the needs of families. Hill and Wood Funeral Home worked very well with us on our desires to eschew the almost universal practice of embalming the bodies. With both hospital and funeral home staff, we carefully explained our belief in the sacredness of the body and our desire to minimize invasive procedures and – after some initial hesitation – they all became very supportive. The same held true for the cemetery. Riverview cemetery in Charlottesville has one whole section where Orthodox have traditionally been interred. All the graves face east (to arise and meet Christ when he comes again!) and there are several traditional cross motifs on the monuments. I designed my parents' monument, including their names in Cyrillic and the traditional ICXC seal and they were very helpful in making sure every detail was faithfully reproduced in granite. We did have to do some negotiation on the concrete vault which is required to prevent settling of the earth upon decay of the casket. After discussion, they agreed to turn the vault upside down – as they do for Jewish burials – so that the bottom of the casket could be in contact with the earth and the needed conversion of dust to dust could occur most naturally.

There are other details that I would be happy to share with anyone who is interested but I didn't want to leave the topic without a word on what matters most. First, Karen and I will be eternally grateful for the fervent prayers that our priest and our parish offered for the souls of my departed parents. Second, we have both found that this experience, despite the sorrow, has been an unforeseen opportunity to do some deep reflections on our faith and to enter a little bit into the 'deep theology' of our life on this earth and our life hereafter according to our Lord's teachings.

The first thing I must say is that our Orthodox understanding of death has been a great comfort to me and continues to comfort me as I go through the process of grieving. We understand first that death is not "natural," and was not God's original intent for us. God intended us for eternal life and it was the fall that took this away from us. However, we also know that Christ destroyed death once and for all and brought us back to God's original intent by allowing us the opportunity for eternal life. In approaching ever closer to Christ, we approach the possibility of life in eternity and the abolition of death.

These two aspects, when deeply understood and felt can bring enormous comfort to a grieving heart, and can help one reject, on the one hand, the false idea that grieving isn't somehow natural or appropriate in this day and age. We can and should grieve, and feel in our hearts that this separation and sorrow wasn't God's intent for His children. However, we also know to not grieve overly (*IThess 4*), and it gives a brightness to our sorrow to know that Christ can bring us all back together in His glory and for all eternity. So, my advice for those experiencing this event is to read deeply what the scriptures and the fathers say on death and grief and to draw comfort from their depth of wisdom about this most trying aspect of our humanity. Further, I have also found great comfort in the Orthodox rituals and traditions around death, through the prayers that contain them. They give an appropriate and sacred container for our grieving and sense of loss. I don't have space to list them here, but our traditional rites, starting with the prayers for the separation of soul and body, to the final sealing of the casket "until the second coming of Christ" can bring tremendous healing and peace to us as we come to understand our grief in the context of God's infinite merciful care for us, both during and after our time on earth. Truly everything He does is for our care and healing.

I hope that this will be helpful to any who face these issues in the future and I would be happy to follow up with anyone who has other questions on this topic.

*In Christ,  
Vladimir Gavrilovic, October 2017*



## Charlottesville - A New Reality

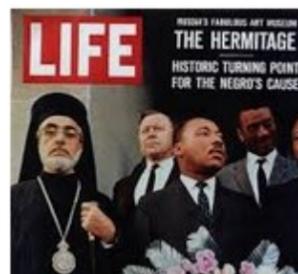
Where were you when the events in Charlottesville came down last August? Well for my part, I was unaware of it all as I worked at church printing off the prior edition of the *Lampada* and didn't really know much about it until that Sunday afternoon.

As these events of August recede and some of the crisis talk, many people have been nonetheless been affected, in our community and around the world. For many of us, it was just the latest wave of social violence, now hitting closer to home. For others, it serves as a political siren to finally *address* issues of racial injustice - but that effort went awry, tragically last summer. For some, it is receding into the murkiness of memory as the bright lights of the holidays, as they always do, attract attention - and other people figure out what kind of memorial would be 'nice' and what should finally be done with those statues so as to *move on*.

From my perspective, as a pastor, the Charlottesville community remains in upheaval. What we have are fire lines, seemingly along racial lines, aggravated by political opportunists and instigators and anarchists of every stripe, with a fire accelerant provided by a media looking for a story, not a resolution to a problem. This situation will not change on its own. However, as always, the wide majority of people want a peaceful, reasonable solution to problems and leadership such that 'we may lead a quiet life in all piety and dignity' as we pray in the Liturgy.

What can we do? For my part, I'm quite out of the loop regarding the way of life, and challenges of minority populations and their communities and struggles in Charlottesville. My focus is, and has been, our small scattered community of 75 or so faithful across a 7 county area. In recent months, I have begun to meet with some other local pastors, to first try to grow in understanding of other communities in the area, and if indicated, do something to address the situation through some action.

Note that there are at least 3 such *clergy* groups in the area. One group leans to activism (which may be part of the problem), while another is seeking to hold a peaceful interfaith prayer service and show of solidarity on December 4. You most likely know nothing of the group with which I participate - they are not presently doing anything public. It doesn't have a name or Acronym. But if you're interested in this topic, there will be future opportunities to get involved in dialogue and promoting peace and reconciliation through the efforts of this group. If you would like to see a statement that has been formed to give themselves, as pastors, a Christian view of the matter, ask me - it's rather well written. Alternatively, we can hold our own internal discussion, as a starting point for an outreach or joint participation in a formal way. If you would like to participate in such an effort, please let me know.



For us as Orthodox, I'm reminded of the witness of the late Greek Archbishop Iakovos, who took a very visible role in the Civil Rights movement in the US, out of a conviction that the Faith requires us to advocate for others in special circumstances. Very few of us are called upon to make such a public and prophetic witness, like the Archbishop, marching with Martin Luther King. But maybe there is something we can *do now* - in fact what we are called upon to do, is to pray and be open to how God may help us to be part of the solution.

## Help Wanted!

### Looking for A Worthy Job?

The Pregnancy Centers of Central Virginia have an opening for a **Finance Manager** - reports to the Executive Director

**Hours/Wages:** 28 hours/week; salary dependent on experience

### Qualifications:

- \* Be a committed Christian who demonstrates a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord
- \* Exhibit strong commitment and dedication to the pro-life position, shows integrity and sexual purity
- \* Agree with and be willing to uphold the Statement of Principle, Statement of Faith and policies of The Pregnancy Centers of Central Virginia
- \* Experience with QuickBooks and general accounting procedures
- \* Experience with general computer operations including MS Windows operating system, Microsoft Office, etc

For more information: (434) 817-4554.

A family new to the area is looking for someone to clean their house on a regular basis. If you would like to pursue this opportunity, contact Fr. Robert. They loved their Ukrainian cleaning ladies when they lived in Cleveland!



## Charitable Works Update

The parish may not have been as aware of our efforts to support the RAM Health Fair in Grundy this year because we did not take up our usual collection for blankets and books. We did, however, transport several hundred blankets that were donated to us to Grundy and, as always, Frannie and her staff were extremely grateful for our help. That Health Fair, held the first weekend in October, went very well. Almost 1,000 persons attended and many of those received more than one service. As usual the greatest number were in need of dental care.

In the next two months the Charitable Works service group will focus on Right to Life activities. First we would ask that each of you consider participating in the Right to Life March on Friday, January 19th in Washington, D.C. This march is always held on the Friday closest to the Roe Vs. Wade Supreme Court decision - a sad day in the life of our country. The march is the biggest and most visible annual national witness to the sanctity of human life. The Orthodox has always had representation. Some from our parish might want to drive up themselves on that day and join with the Orthodox Pro Life group in D.C. Others could choose to ride up on a bus chartered by St. Thomas Catholic Church in Charlottesville. *With a little communication and organization, we can boost our participation in this event - just let some one on the Charitable Works Service Group know if you can join us on that day.*

In addition to the D.C. march we will again kick off our Baby Bottle campaign to support the work of the AVA Pregnancy Center in Harrisonburg. The kick off date is the beginning of Great Lent (which this year falls on Feb. 19th). Most of you know what this involves: we send baby bottles home with each family and ask that every member fill them with loose change, money you have saved because of the Fast, etc. and return them at the end of Great Lent. AVA makes a tremendous witness in Harrisonburg and has expanded their ministry to all three universities in the area.

Why is this so important? I think most of you would agree that these innocent unborn children have no choice in the matter of having their lives taken from them and that they need protection. But maybe you don't know that the abortion "Pro Choice" movement is becoming even more strident than ever. An interview on NPR recently interviewed a pro abortion advocate who believes that no one should be made to feel guilty over the choice of aborting her child; In fact the idea now is to "... push to kill the consciences that remind us that with every abortion, an innocent, defenseless human being is paying the price for some else's 'choice'" (from an editorial by Rita Dunaway "Battling Abortion Extremism" that appeared in the Harrisonburg Daily News Record on Saturday, Nov.18th). If it is up to this sort of thinking, it won't be long before abortion is considered just a routine part of a woman's life --- nothing to worry about, a dinner table conversation. If this bothers you at all - then please consider joining our parish in its pro life stand! (And of course a part of that involvement is to continue our monthly silent vigil in front of the Charlottesville Planned Parenthood on the 4th Tuesday of every month.)

Cynthia Patyig

## Alaska Bound

is a new calendar parish the Sunday we were there was also the Transfiguration, and the last day of the annual Eagle River Institute. Because of all this, the social hour, outside on picnic tables, was a salmon barbecue, salmon barbecued three different ways. We enjoyed the food and fellowship, meeting many interesting people.

The next day we came back for a walk around the grounds and to visit St Sergius Chapel. We also went a few miles up the road to Eklutna, where there are two churches, the original nineteenth century log church, and the later clapboard church, and a cemetery. There was a small gift shop and a lady who gave tours. The parish primarily serves a native American Danaina Athabaskan community. The Danaina Athabaskans have a tradition of building spirit houses over their graves, this tradition which existed before their conversion to Orthodox Christianity continues, and can be seen in the cemetery, where many graves have both a spirit house and a three bar cross. The spirit houses are very colorful, each family has its own colors.

To be continued...





## Iconography Update

Last week I had the opportunity to check with Mr. Michael Kapeluck, who is serving as our iconographer for the dome project. The program has begun and has several phases, based upon his overall work schedule that he outlines months in advance. He has begun the initial sketch of the Pantocrator icon itself onto paper that serves as the template for the actual icon painted. In the second phase, Michael will be painting the icons of the sixteen prophets in the octagonal drum section - the four major prophets (*Isaiab, Jeremiab, Daniel, Ezekeiel*) and twelve minor prophets (*Hosea, Amos, Micah, Joel, Obadiab, Jonab, Nabum, Habakkuk, Zephaniab, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi*) These will be half figures with their own scrolls proclaiming the glory of God, as delineated in the iconography manuals. He will begin painting the prophet figures in his studio in early December.



A band of text (to be determined) will also be added (see the accompanying icon). The painting of the icon itself will commence in early February. A decision about the blue in the background of the prophets will need to be determined as well.

In order to make final preparation for the icon, it would be necessary to have some skilled volunteers assess the surface of the dome to assure it has been fully prepared - sanded and primed, with a coat of satin latex paint. This work would best be done in late January, immediately before the icon itself is painted, so that scaffolding is erected for the shortest period of time. If you would like to participate in the final preparation for the icon, please see Fr. Robert.

The goal will be to have the icons completed by the beginning of Great Lent, and blessed by the Metropolitan when he visits in April.

## Δ GLIMPSE OF THE ALASKAN CHURCH

By Stanley Bright

The following is a short account of the extended honeymoon that Stanley and Elena enjoyed last summer. Ed.

From the time that Elena and I began to plan our trip it was intended to be as much a pilgrimage, as a trip to enjoy the majestic natural beauty of Alaska. Our first priority was to visit Spruce Island, where Saint Herman had lived and been buried. We knew that today there was a monastery there, and on a smaller island nearby a women's monastery. We discovered that there was a Pilgrimage to Spruce Island, organized by OCA's Diocese of Alaska on August 9th, Saint Herman's Day. We were going to be gone for 37 days, encompassing five Sundays, the Transfiguration, the Dormition, and St Herman's Day. We used the directory maintained by the Assembly of Bishop's to figure out which churches we would like to visit.



We already knew there were plenty of Orthodox churches in Alaska, a legacy of the missionary efforts of the Russian Orthodox Church during the nineteenth century. OCA's Diocese of Alaska has more than ninety parishes, most of these parishes call themselves Russian Orthodox and use the Old Calendar, other Orthodox jurisdictions also have a presence there. One parish which really caught my attention when looking for a church in or near Anchorage, was St John's Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral in Eagle River; it looked like an exciting place with a lot going on. We decided to go there on our first Sunday. We arrived about fifteen minutes before Liturgy and were greeted by a man named Stanley (easy for me to remember), who told us about the history of the parish.

The first priest was Fr Harold Dunaway, who was sent to Anchorage with his wife Barbara in 1968 by Campus Crusade for Christ. His ministry flourished and in 1975 moved to a five acre site in Eagle River. He was one of the men, who along with Fr Peter Gillquist, began searching for the early church, and became part of the Antiochian Orthodox Church in 1987. In 1984 the Permanent Fund, began paying a dividend to Alaska residents, and the members of the parish decided to use their dividends to build a church. The church building is a geodesic dome made of Alaskan birch and most of the work was performed by members of the church. Today the church has a fifty-five acre campus, which includes a cemetery, St Sergius Chapel, a church school, a guest house, and other buildings. An entire community of about 75 families has grown up around the church. Today the Archpriest is Fr Marc Dunaway, son of Fr Harold. This

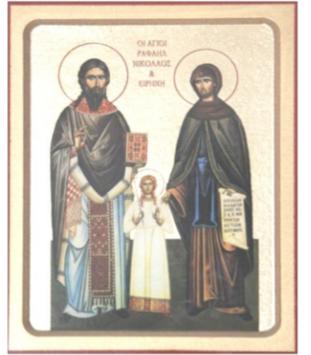
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## Ss Raphael, Nicholas, and Irene

By Cynthia Patzig

Several months ago, Dr. Vasilea Digidiki and her husband sent a beautiful icon from the Greek island of Lesvos to our parish – the icon of Saints Raphael, Nicholas and Irene. I am sure you have noticed it beneath the crucifix in the church, but you may not know the wonderful story of their lives and their martyrdom. When I made a pilgrimage to Greece in 2008 I was greatly blessed to be able to venerate the relics of these three saints and to learn of their lives and the miraculous finding of their relics. Let me tell you their story.



In the small town of Thermi outside of the city of Mitilene residents had long known of an abandoned chapel that had been built on the site of an ancient monastery. The history of that monastery had been forgotten but often a beautiful fragrance was reported there as well as the appearance of a tall monk often carrying a censor and surrounded by a beautiful indescribable light. Once a very young girl was searching in the hills surrounding the ancient site for her lost lamb. Suddenly a monk appeared in front of her. She asked him if he had seen her lamb. He just smiled at her and then disappeared, but at the very moment he disappeared her lamb came bounding over to her. Yet no one knew anything about this monk or about what had happened at the monastery.



Many years later in 1959 workmen were beginning construction of a new chapel on the same site. As they were digging they found a grave containing a skeleton with the skull resting some ten inches from the body. The foreman of the crew carelessly threw the bones into a sack, but when he tried to move the sack he couldn't and his arm became paralyzed.

Terrified the foreman went to his village priest and asked him to serve a memorial service at the site, but the priest said that was impossible unless he knew for whom he was offering the service. That night a monk appeared to the priest and to many others in the village. To each he told the same story: his name was Raphael and he came from Ithaka. These dreams occurred among many different people for several months and sometimes he added that he was martyred by the Turks on April 9, 1463. Eventually the whole story was revealed to many people.

After serving briefly in the army, St. Raphael was tonsured a monk and then was ordained a priest. He served for a while at a church in Athens. During that time he met a young Greek student named Nicholas who was so influenced by St. Raphael that he too became a monk. When Constantinople fell to the Turks in 1453 the two fled to Lesvos to the monastery near Thermi. Other monks soon joined them and for nearly 9 years they lived in peace. In 1462 the Turkish sultan occupied the island and on Good Friday of 1463, in response to a small insurrection in the area, Turks seized the monastery because it was supposedly harboring Greek agitators. Among those at the monastery besides the monks were the mayor of Thermi and his family including his twelve year old daughter, Irene. The Turks tortured the little girl in front of her parents hoping to extract information from them about the whereabouts of the agitators. When they gave them no answer Irene was thrown into a large pot and burned alive. On Bright Tuesday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 1463 St. Raphael was stabbed repeatedly and then hung upside down from a tree and his jaw was sawed through. His friend, Nicholas, who was tied to a tree died of heart failure when he witnessed the torture of his friend.. The Turks then burned the monastery and left. Two monks who had been hiding in the woods, fetched a local priest and a memorial service was said for the martyrs that night.. For centuries afterwards it was a local custom to attend Liturgy at the destroyed monastery on Bright Tuesday, but eventually this custom disappeared and no one could actually remember the reason for visiting the site.. Only the strange lights, a beautiful fragrance and the occasional appearance of a tall monk who carried a censor in his hand testified to the past history.

Since 1959 when this story was first revealed, many miracles have been attributed to St. Nicholas as well as to Sts. Nicholas and Irene. St. Irene often appears in a yellow dress with her hair in two long braids – just as our icon depicts her. That is supposedly how she looked on the day she was martyred. All three saints often appear to adults-- mostly in dreams, but frequently to children when they are awake.

I think it is very fitting that these three saints repose on the island of Lesvos today. Having offered refuge to those fleeing the Turkish persecution in 1463 and having themselves suffered and died for their faith, they once again watch over the island of Lesvos as it receives so many more refugees. Holy Sts. Raphael, Nicholas and Irene pray for us, for those who seek your protection and for those rendering aid to suffering refugees on the island of Lesvos and around the world!



Thanksgiving Homily, cont. from p.1

may we offer even more profound thanks, give more generously, and serve more effectively.

When we celebrate Thanksgiving Day this year, let us do so in the spirit of our ancestors. Let us make it more than a day to enjoy family fellowship, fine food and football, by taking time to count our blessings as individuals, as families, and as a nation. Let us begin the day properly, by attending the liturgical service – hopefully at least a Moleben – in all our parish churches to worship and thank our God.

Let us offer special gratitude for our religious freedom and remember in prayer all who have ever helped us in a time of need. Finally, as “one nation under God”, we cannot forget those who have less or nothing at all. Let us reach out to those in need – for example, through the Ukrainian Orthodox League’s Thanksgiving Tithe Event – to share our bounty, however humble, with them. The very best way to give thanks to God for His abundant blessings upon us is to imitate Him by providing blessings to others.

We know well that God is good; may we be helped to tell of God's mercy and loving kindness to all we meet in this sacred holiday season. May the peace of Christ dwell with you abundantly.

With thankful hearts in prayer, we are those who pray for you unceasingly,

+ Antony, Metropolitan

+ Daniel, Archbishop

A Thanksgiving Meditation by Fr. Robert

This Thanksgiving I did what I suggest other people should do - take some extra time on Thanksgiving to bring to mind the many people who have been a blessing to me. As I started the exercise I quickly came to realize that the list was growing quickly. While the story begins with the inner circle, of the those closest to me (Christine, my Mother, Pauline) remembering my deceased father, Michael, served as a reminder that the significance of relationships goes beyond whether a person lives in this world or not. As one gets older, a larger percentage of people in one’s circle move across the great barrier - but their significance and importance does not diminish and in some cases, grows. But in my immediate family I have brothers and a sister, who have spouses and I also have nieces and nephews, and now that their old enough - their spouses and children.

Thinking back in time, I came to remember more and more people - and that my ties to those closest to me also looped me into their circles of influence. I had a chance to remember, if but briefly, the dozen brothers and sisters of each of my parents, who became aunts and uncles and adding their spouses and kids (cousins) the group began to grow exponentially. I had passed the threshold of ‘closeness’ - realizing that most of them were present to me only in my memories of youth. Christine’s family, my inlaws, are closer to me over many years now - decades. This is the advantage they have over ‘today’s people’ - like our parish members and friends. Yet even in our parish there are some I’ve known for almost 2 decades. Others are close because we have worked together, in the parish, or shared things in common. One by one each person brings along not only themselves, but their families and friends who have intersected with my life, and the Church. All for good.

My life has many such circles - childhood friends, high school, college, and people who I came to know when I entered seminary - some of whom had important formative rolls in who I am today, including instructors, classmates and importantly, my ordaining hierarchs (+Met Stephen Kocisko). Ministry brings one into contact with many many people, and while I have served to some degree, those who I know have served me by sharing themselves, their lives, their joys, sorrows, insights, food, wealth, and a host of other things which have become a part of me. The thread of these people has directly run through a dozen small communities in five states, but there have been so many others ancillary to parish life who make their appearance in life - like the art history professor who gave me a crash course in Michelangelo before I went to Florence. Not all such encounters have been happy or had seemingly good outcomes, but in some measure there is a presence of the spark of divine love and the challenge to respond to in the moment in these relationship. And lest I forget, there are numerous people in my secular work world - in the steel mills, financial services firms, chamber of commerce, Lake Monticello, Commonwealth Of Va., etc - each of whom brought enrichment to me. With each of



Parish Music Ministry Notes

Glory to Jesus Christ!

During this time of Thanksgiving, it is no coincidence that we are embarking on our first formal lay leader training program for the Liturgical Music Ministry. For those of you new to the Parish, and for the seasoned congregants (I), I think a little history is important for you to know, so that you understand what a big step this is....

From our beginnings in 1998, the practice of Liturgical music at St. Nicholas Parish has followed the congregational singing model, in keeping with our desire for people to learn that everyone has a role and a responsibility to participate in worship. We have experienced the typical ebbs and flows of voices and volunteers, groups of talented individuals who offer their abilities in service to our Church. God has blessed us to have experienced many wonderful liturgical moments – made even more special because we have not gathered at any time other than during the services to do this sacred work. People are busy, schedules are complicated – and we have been grateful for the willingness of those who have stepped up to take active roles in chanting and reading.

There is a verse from 1 Corinthians 13:11, “When I was a child, I talked like a child; I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me.” Looking at the history of this ministry within the Parish, I’m going to hope that it was the “youth” of my service that contributed to the lack of any formal developmental programming and guidelines for people who have the skills that are obviously present within our congregation.

It has been some years since we moved from the Mission phase of Parish life to that of a fully-recognized Parish. Why not do the same for our Music Ministry? So....guidelines were sent to 10 individuals who have been participating in this ministry to date, to gather those interested in the new program. Of those, 7 responded – 4 of those responses were positive. The first group of participants was blessed by Fr. Robert in mid-November to serve in this important role.

I am more than grateful that we have so many talented individuals in this Parish! Please remember that, no matter where we stand in the Nave during the Holy Services, our participation is welcomed. By the angels, with whom we join our voices when we enter the Holy Space. By our co-workers in worship, those with whom we stand and praise the God “Who alone works wonders.” By children and guests, who see by our example that our Faith welcomes our efforts. Our congregational singing model will not change with these new initiatives. What will hopefully result is a new way to help those who have come to our Parish from other programs - and those who are new to Orthodoxy who may wish to learn about the roles they can play in Liturgical worship.

We will be starting to work with a new group of lay readers in first quarter 2018. Also in the 2018 plan is a program for lay chanters. Stay tuned for details – and if you are interested in learning about and/or serving in either of these ministries....see you in Church!

Pani Christine Holst, Director, Liturgical Music Ministry

Thanksgiving, cont. from prev. page

them I wonder now - how is (s)he doing? Where has their life gone? Lest we forget too, the many others - who have given by serving - medical professionals, (like my eye surgeon who saved the sight in one of my eyes) -service providers of every sort from professionals to wait staff, the latter of which can make or break a day or week. And neighbors - old and new who are part of a locale - sadly, far less so now than the iconic neighbors I grew up with like Barb. Let’s not forget some other people, like my friends in the horse business. In most cases, no one in the parish knows any of these people.

Now what is the purpose of this reflection? There is no purpose, no end, no goal - only to see how God has blessed me through these and thousands of people, in countless ways both known and felt, and others in ways utterly unknown to me. To fashion a metaphor, if life is like our life-blood, then the people in my life (and yours in yours) are like the cells, platelets, compounds, and plasma of our blood, which flow through us always even though we are quite unaware of their presence. They have become part of us, and give us the ability to live - by bringing oxygen to our muscles, nutrition to our minds, protection from disease to our organs, and in some cases the very medium of the transmission of life itself. These are necessary, and taken into us from outside - and lest we think we don’t need them, we need only realize what happens when we stop eating something essential for life, or simply drinking water. And strangely, I have also become part of their lives (whether they like it or not!) and roll around inside of them in some strange way. For this - I give thanks and glory to God! Ω

Lay Reader’s Program... Development Plan...Scheduling... Individual and Group

