



A Prayer of Thanksgiving

By St. Basil the Great

O Existing One, Master Lord, God, almighty and adorable Father: It is truly meet and right and befitting the majesty of Thy holiness that we should praise Thee, hymn Thee, bless Thee, worship Thee, give thanks unto Thee and glorify Thee, the only truly existing God, and offer unto Thee with contrite heart and spirit of humility this our rational worship; for Thou art He that hath graciously bestowed upon us the knowledge of Thy truth.

And who is sufficient to speak of Thy mighty acts, to make all Thy praises to be heard, or to tell of all Thy wonders at every season?

O Master of all, Lord of heaven and earth, and of all creation both visible and invisible, Who sittest upon the throne of glory and beholdest the depths, Who art unoriginate, invisible, immutable, the Father of our Lord: the great God and Savior Jesus Christ, our Hope, Who is the Image of Thy goodness, the Seal of equal type, in Himself showing forth Thee, the Father, the living Word, the true God, the Wisdom before all ages, the Life, Sanctification, Power, the true Light, through Whom the Holy Spirit was manifested: the Spirit of truth, the Gift of adoption, the Pledge of the inheritance to come, the First-fruits of eternal good things, the life-giving Power, the Fountain of sanctification, by Whom enabled every rational and intelligent creature doth serve Thee and ascribe to Thee perpetual praise, for all things are Thy servants.

Filled thus with great awe at Thine immeasurable mercies and love, do Thou receive the unfeigned praise and thanksgiving of our unworthy hearts for all that Thou hast provided for us in this world and the next, and enable us to walk before Thee in holiness and purity all the days of our life in fitting gratitude for Thy loving-kindness to us;

For blessed art Thou O Holy Father together with Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ to Whom, with Thee and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory and worship, now and every and unto ages of ages.



Source: Orthodox.net
Includes excerpts from St. Basil's Anaphora

Please Remember in Your Prayers

For the Living

Debbie
Special Intention
Special Intention
Walter (recovery)
Chris (lymphoma)
Laura (lung cancer)

John (health)
Michele (health)
For all who grieve
Karen (recovery)
Special Intention
Anne (health)

For the Departed

For all Christians who have been
kidnapped and died in the
Middle East and Africa due to
religious persecution

For all of our departed family
members

For all victims of human
trafficking

General Intentions

- For your parish and your new pastor, Fr. Charles and his family.
- For a swift containment of the Coronavirus infections in China and around the world. For healing for those infected.
- For Subdeacon Joseph Black - and his travels here in the United States during his home visit.
- For the protection of all unborn children and for those active in supporting mothers and their unborn children through local pregnancy center ministries.
- For Frannie, Joe, Debbie, Lois, Gertrude, Junior, Jerry, Randy, Rayburn, Shea, Taylor, and all who serve those in need in Grundy and in Southwest Virginia. And for all whom they are called to serve especially those suffering during this winter cold spell.
- For those who are combatting the evil of human trafficking in our land, and around the world.
- For our Orthodox ministries endeavoring to serve those in need in our nation and around the world, such as IOCC, OCMC, ZOE for Life, FOCUS, Orthodox Prison Ministry, etc.



Lampada

February, 2020

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



Greetings from Father Charles

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Greetings to you all in the name of our Lord. On behalf of my wife Melania and our family, I would like to thank you all for the many expressions of welcome and goodwill we have received -- we are grateful. We are likewise grateful to our most merciful and compassionate Lord, the source of all that is good, for the many blessings bestowed upon this community and parish family. May we all continue to give thanks to God for the blessings we have received in abundance, and to be good and faithful stewards of those gifts.

We are about embark on our preparation for Great Lent (the Triodion) in which the focus of our prayer life and corporate worship, and indeed our orientation toward life and the world, will begin to shift. On 16 February -- the Sunday of the Prodigal Son -- we will formally bid farewell to Father Robert and Pani Matka Christine as they move onward into the next chapter of their own lives, to explore where the Lord might lead them. In keeping with the Lenten "tone" of the Fast into which we are headed, this will be a time of "bright sadness" for the parish: sadness that we must say goodbye to those we love, but also the brightness of thanksgiving for the decades of love, service and devotion the Holets have offered -- to each and every one of us. It is the meaning and purpose of a human life to be offered in love and service and with thanksgiving. Father Robert and Pani Christine have made this



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Forgiveness in Christ - Again and Again

by St. Peter of Damascus (excerpted from - Preachersinstitute.org)

Even if you are not what you should be, you should not despair. It is bad enough that you have sinned; why in addition do you wrong God by regarding Him in your ignorance as powerless? Is He, who for your sake created the great universe that you behold, incapable of saving your soul? And if you say that this fact, as well as His incarnation, only makes your condemnation worse, then repent; and He will receive your repentance, as He accepted that of the Prodigal Son (cf. Luke 15:20) and the prostitute (cf. Luke 7:37-50).



But if repentance is too much for you, and you sin out of habit even when you do not want to, show humility like the publican (cf. Luke 18:13): this is enough to ensure your salvation. For he who sins without repenting, yet does not despair, must of necessity regard himself as the lowest of creatures, and will not dare to judge or censure anyone. Rather, he will marvel at God's compassion, and will be full of gratitude towards his Benefactor, and so receive many other blessings as well. Even if he is subject to the devil in that he sins, yet from fear of God he disobeys the enemy when the latter tries to make him despair. Because of this he has his portion with God; for he is grateful, gives thanks, is patient, fears God, does not judge so that he may not be judged. All these are crucial qualities. It is as St. John Chrysostom says about Gehenna: "...it is almost of greater benefit to us than the kingdom of heaven,

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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

Fr. Charles Sanderson, Pastor

Leadership Board

Chair: Stanley Bright

Vice Chair: Greg Stronko

Treasurer: Stephanie Johnson

Secretary: Basil Finnegan

At Large: Sdcn. David Murphy

Service Group Leaders

Hospitality: Randy Brogan

Liturgy: Open

Charitable Works: Catherine Hoyle

Evangelization: Open

Buildings/ Grounds: Florin Moldovan

Library-Bookstore: Patricia Hardesty

Religious Formation: Basil Finnegan

Parish Ministry Coordinators

Church School: Susan Murphy

Greeters: Karen Gavrilovic

Web Communications: Karen
Bowman

Community Care: Elaine Brogan

Men's Fellowship: Hunter Johnson

Bookstore: Larry Uzzell

Contact Information

Parish Office

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Charlottesville, Va. 22906

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Liturgical Services Schedule

Subject to Change - See weekly Bulletin and the Online Calendar for Updates

Note: With the anticipation of the beginning of Great Lent, and the new service schedule with Fr. Charles, the schedule of weekly molebens will be suspended. Please check weekly for any schedule changes.

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Sunday, February 16 | Sunday of the Prodigal Son |
| | 9:30am Divine Liturgy |
| Saturday, February 22 | 4:00pm Reader's Vespers |
| Sunday, February 23 | Sunday of the Last Judgment (Meatfare Sunday) |
| | 9:30am Typika Service served by Deacon Nick Zachary |
| Sunday, March 1 | Sunday of Forgiveness (Cheesefare) (Great Lent begins) |
| | 8:45am Matins |
| | 9:30am Divine Liturgy |
| | 12noon Forgiveness Vespers |
| Monday, March 2 | 6pm Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete |
| Tuesday, March 3 | 6pm Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete |
| Wednesday, March 4 | 6pm Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete |
| Thursday, March 5 | 6pm Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete |
| Friday, March 6 | 6pm Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts |
| Saturday, March 7 | 4pm Great Vespers |
| Sunday, March 8 | First Sunday of Great Lent - Sunday of Orthodoxy |
| | 8:45am Matins |
| | 9:30am Divine Liturgy (of St. Basil) |
| | followed by procession with the Holy Icons |
| | TBA Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers (Richmond) |
| Friday, March 13 | 6:00pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts |
| Saturday, March 14 | Memorial Saturday |
| | 8:00am Divine Liturgy with Memorial Litiya |
| | 4:00pm Great Vespers |
| Sunday, March 15 | Second Sunday of Great Lent - St. Gregory Palamas |
| | 8:45am Matins |
| | 9:30am Divine Liturgy (of St. Basil) |
| Wednesday, March 18 | 6:00pm Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts |
| | followed by Presentation on Christian Motherhood |
| | by Dr. Carrie Frederick Frost |
| Saturday, March 21 | Memorial Saturday |
| | 8:00am Divine Liturgy with Memorial Litiya |
| | 4:00pm Great Vespers |



Call to Action - March for Life

**"God did not make death, and He does not delight in the death of the living.
For He created All things that they might exist."**

Excerpt form "The Wisdom of Solomon"
and quoted by Met. Tikhon at the Pro Life March in D.C. on Jan. 24, 2020.

On Friday, January 24th a few of us from St. Nicholas Parish stood outside of Planned Parenthood in Charlottesville to silently make a stand against abortion and to join our witness with the witness of tens of thousands who had come from across the nation to participate in the Pro Life March in Washington, D.C. The D.C. March was one of the largest ever and this year included a significant number of Orthodox hierarchs (including Archbishop Daniel of the UOC/USA), clergy and lay people. OCA Metropolitan Tikhon addressed the crowd reaffirming the Church's unchanging stand for life and praying "in somber remembrance for the innocent children whose lives have been taken while still in the womb. We

weep for these children, as once did Rachael who wept for her children....We pray for healing and repentance for those who have participated in the act of abortion."



Archbishop Daniel joins the
Orthodox hierarchs in the March

On Thursday, Feb. 13th another group from St. Nicholas will travel to Richmond to protest the state's growing pro abortion legislation. The state of Virginia is now in the forefront of state efforts to dismantle pro life legislation as well as legislation upholding traditional family values. Although there have been some victories for conservative values, almost every day at least one new heinous law is either brought forward or passed.

First the good news:

- HB 1051 did not pass the Senate. It would have targeted faith-based adoption agencies (like Catholic Charities) by repealing longstanding conscience rights for adoption agencies. The bill opposed religious diversity by targeting faith based nonprofits and putting them out of business simply for restricting placement to a traditional home with a traditional mom (woman) and traditional dad (man).

- HB 580 was withdrawn by the originator of the bill, Delegate Elizabeth Guzman. If passed this would have expanded the definition of "an abused or neglected child" to one whose parent does not affirm the child's same-sex desires or gender confusion. This would have undermined the parents' effort to guide their child away from behavior they knew to be harmful to the child.

Other good news is that a Christian group of Virginia medical doctors and dentists held a press conference the week of Jan.27th to push back against the effort to expand abortion in ways that are unsafe for women. They also spoke against physician assisted suicide as well as attempts to legitimize concepts such as "gender identity" and "sexual orientation".

Now for the bad news:

On January 29th the House passed "a massive change to abortion laws. This bill rolls back long standing policy offering protection to women seeking abortions and laws that ensure they have the knowledge and resources needed to make an informed decision. The bill allows non-physicians to perform abortions for the first time in our history, the informed consent and 24-hour waiting period were repealed, and abortions will now be performed in locations that do not meet hospital standard for safety." (From the Tony Wilt - House of Delegates 26th District of VA website). One result of this is that no ultrasounds or counselling are required before an abortion. During the same week, an amendment was defeated that would ensure that abortion providers *could not sell fetal tissue for profit*. Also defeated was an amendment to insure that infants born alive after an attempted abortion would *receive immediate medical care!!* If you are following the current Virginia legislative season at all, it is impossible to not see the direction our society is taking. But you can act! At this point the most effective thing you can do is to let your own delegates know you opinion on these pro life/pro family issues. Another way is to follow sites like "Family Foundation" to stay informed.

In another Lampada article Katrina Hamilton shared her experience of hearing Abby Johnson, the author of the book "Unplanned" (which was later turned into a powerful movie). Among many wonderful things Abby said that night, the one I most remember was a call to action. "We have waited for the cavalry to show up.. They aren't coming!" It's up to each of us to fight back. Pray! Be informed! Contact you state and federal representatives!. Support pro life groups like AVA Care in Harrisonburg and THRIVE in Charlottesville! Join our silent monthly vigil outside of Planned Parenthood! Ω



Forgiveness in Christ, cont. from p.1

since because of it many enter into the kingdom of heaven, while few enter for the sake of the kingdom itself; and if they do not enter it, it is by virtue of God's compassion. Gehenna pursues us with fear, the kingdom embraces us with love, and through them both we are saved by God's grace .“(Homily On 1 Timothy 15:3).

If those attacked by many passions of soul and body endure patiently, do not out of negligence surrender their free will, and do not despair, they are saved. Similarly, he who has attained the state of dispassion, freedom from fear and lightness of heart, quickly falls if he does not confess God’s grace continually by not judging anyone. Indeed, should he dare to judge someone, he makes it evident that in acquiring his wealth he has relied on his own strength, as St. Maximus states. St. John of Damascus says that if someone still subject to the passions, and still bereft of the light of spiritual knowledge, is put in charge of anyone, he is in great danger; and so is the person who has received dispassion and spiritual knowledge from God but does not help other people.

Nothing so benefits the weak as withdrawal into stillness, or the man subject to the passions and without spiritual knowledge as obedience combined with stillness. Nor is there anything better than to know one’s own weakness and ignorance, nor anything worse than not to recognize them. No passion is so hateful as pride, or as ridiculous as avarice, “the root of all evils” (1 Tim. 6:10): for those who with great labor mine silver, and then hide it in the earth again, remain without any profit. That is why the Lord says, “Do not store up treasures on earth” (Matt. 6:19); and again: “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matt. 6:21).

For the intellect of man is drawn by longing towards those things with which it habitually occupies itself, whether these be earthly things, or the passions, or heavenly and eternal blessings. As St. Basil the Great says, a persistent habit acquires all the strength of nature (Long Rules 6).

A weak person especially ought to pay attention to the promptings of his conscience, so that he may free his soul from all condemnation. Otherwise at the end of his life he may repent in vain and mourn eternally. The person who cannot endure for Christ’s sake a physical death as Christ did, should at least be willing to endure death spiritually. Then he will be a martyr with respect to his conscience, in that he does not submit to the demons that assail him, or to their purposes, but conquers them, as did the holy martyrs and the holy fathers. The first were bodily martyrs, the latter spiritual martyrs. By forcing oneself slightly, one defeats the enemy; through slight negligence one is filled with darkness and destroyed.

Excerpt from A Treasure of Divine Knowledge in The Philokalia (vol. 3).

Greetings From Fr. Charles, cont. from p.1

most worthy offering to this parish community, and we wish them many blessed and fruitful years to come. Mnobaya Lita!

So what comes next? Why, Great Lent of course! As we make our individual and collective preparations for our Lenten journey together, I will be asking for help from many of you both with the usual tasks we are used to during the course of the Fast, and with some additional or new tasks as well. You will notice a couple of differences in our schedule of Lenten services this year. I would encourage you to review the schedule and plan ahead to facilitate your full participation. So much of Lent is oriented toward our preparation, and we need to create the interior space, in our souls and in our lives, for the Lord to do His work. So please begin planning now, and may the Lord bless you all as we head, together as a parish family, into this time of Holy preparation.

With love in Christ,

-Father Charles.

Update from Missionary Bill Black

Please keep in your prayers, missionary Bill Black as he now begins his at-home stay and visitation in the United States from February through April.. As this is written, he is meeting with senior staff at Orthodox Christian Missionary Centerto brief them on the situation in Kenya and throughout Africa. As you may know, Bill recently moved (with much travail) from Kisumu in West Kenya back to Nairobi, where he will resume his ministry in educating seminarians at the Makarios Patriarchal Seminary, while also offering course work at St. Paul’s Episcopal seminary.

During his time in the United States, Bill will be visiting many parishes, sharing his story, and opening the minds and hearts of Americans to the need for a robust evangelization effort in Africa by the Orthodox Church, as coordinated by OCMC, and hopes to visit St. Nicholas during Bright Week. Please also consider offering financial support to his ministry - through OCMC.



Liturgical Services (cont. from previous page)

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Sunday, March 22 | Third Sunday of Great Lent - Sunday of the Holy Cross |
| | 8:45am Matins |
| | 9:30am Divine Liturgy (of St. Basil) |
| Tuesday, March 24 | Forefeast of the Annunciation |
| | 6:00pm Vespers |
| Friday, March 27 | 6:00pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts |
| Saturday, March 28 | Memorial Saturday |
| | 8:00am Divine Liturgy with Memorial Litiya |
| | 4:00pm Great Vespers |
| Sunday, March 29 | Fourth Sunday of Great Lent - St. John Climacus |
| | 8:45am Matins |
| | 9:30am Divine Liturgy (of St. Basil) |
| Friday, April 3 | 6:00pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts |
| Saturday, April 4 | Glorification of the Birthgiver of God (Akathist Saturday) |
| | 4pm Akathist |
| | 5pm Great Vespers |
| Sunday, April 5 | Fifth Sunday of Great Lent - St. Mary of Egypt |
| | 8:45am Matins |
| | 9:30am Divine Liturgy (of St. Basil) |
| Wednesday, April 8 | 6:00pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts |
| | - - - Beginning of Holy Week - - - |
| Saturday, April 11 | Lazarus Saturday |
| | 8:00am Divine Liturgy |
| | 4pm Great Vespers (Palm Sunday) |
| Sunday, April 12 | Palm (Flowery) Sunday |
| | 8:45am Matins |
| | 9:30am Divine Liturgy |
| | 6:00pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts |
| Monday, April 13 | Great and Holy Monday |
| | 6:00pm Bridegroom Matins |
| Tuesday, April 14 | Great and Holy Tuesday |
| | 6:00pm Bridegroom Matins |
| Wednesday, April 15 | Great and Holy Wednesday - The Anointing |
| | 6:00pm Service of Holy Unction |
| Thursday, April 16 | Holy Thursday - The Mystical Supper |
| | 9:30am Vesperal Liturgy of St. Basil the Great, followed by the washing of the feet |
| | 6:00pm Matins of Great and Holy Friday, with the reading of the Passion Gospels |
| Friday, April 17 | Great and Holy Friday - The Crucifixion and Death of our Lord |
| | 9:30am Royal Hours for Great and Holy Friday |
| | 3:00pm Great Vespers with the Procession and emplacement of the Holy Shroud |

Many Blessed Years!

Birthdays

| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Mark Bonds | February 16 |
| Zady Johnson | February 24 |
| Gregory Stronko | February 26 |
| Sdcn David Murphy | March 11 |
| Deena Gakos | March 13 |
| Von Hardesty | March 16 |
| Karen Gavrilovic | March 19 |
| Simon Skretta | March 20 |
| Lydia Homick | March 21 |
| Gregory Brogan | March 22 |
| Matthew Skretta | March 28 |
| Joseph Murphy | April 6 |
| Karl Bowman | April 27 |
| Sdcn Joseph Black | April 30 |

Saints Days

| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Ashley Malcolm | February 19 |
| Patricia Hardesty | March 17 |
| Simon Skretta | March 20 |
| Adrian Gakos | March 26 |
| Lydia Malcolm | March 27 |
| Stanley Bright | April 23 |

Christian Motherhood Book - Presentation by Carrie Frederick Frost

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<https://www.vabook.org/program/reflecting-on-the-divine-in-our-lives/>

And for the book:

<https://www.amazon.com/Maternal-Body-Theology-Incarnation-Christian/dp/0809153912>



Liturgical Services (cont. from previous page)

| | | |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Saturday, April 18 | 6:00pm | Jerusalem Matins - Lamentation and Procession followed by all-night vigil at the Tomb |
| | Holy Saturday - Descent of our Lord into Hades | |
| Sunday, April 19 | 9:30am | Paschal Vigil: Vesperal Liturgy (St. Basil) |
| | 11:30pm | Midnight Office |
| | GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA | |
| Monday, April 20 | 12:00mn | Resurrection Matins followed by Divine Liturgy followed by Blessing of Baskets |
| | 1:00pm | Agape Vespers |
| | Bright Monday | |
| Saturday, April 25 | 8:00am | Divine Liturgy |
| | 6:00pm | Great Vespers |
| Sunday, April 26 | First Paschal Sunday - Thomas Sunday | |
| | 8:45am | Matins |
| | 9:30am | Divine Liturgy |

Special Events and Activities

Note: During the time of transition, the schedule will be more fluid to accommodate Fr. Charles's schedule, and more activities will tend to take place during the weekends. These will be announced beforehand.

Among the events to be formally scheduled:

Wednesday, March 18th - After Presanctified Liturgy: Visit by Dr. Carrie Frederick Frost - (speaking on her new book on Orthodoxy and Motherhood) She will also offer a Festival of the Book Presentation on Friday at noon in CitySpace in Charlottesville.

See the Lenten Schedule for the Special Services appropriate to the Season - including The Great Canon of St. Andrew (first week of Great Lent), Sunday of Orthodoxy, the Memorial Saturdays and Akathistos Saturday.

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------|---|
| Saturday, April 11 | 10am | Work Day / cleaning and preparation of the church for Holy Week |
| Friday, April 24 | tentative | Beer - Brats Annual Bright Week celebration. |

Also:

This year, the Greek Cathedral of Ss Constantine and Helen in Richmond will host the annual regional Sunday of Orthodoxy celebration. Details to be announced.

There will be special visitors to the Church for Great Lent from other Churches - at the Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts.

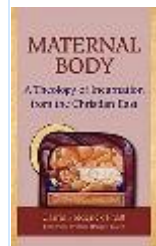
Guest Speaker
During Great Lent

During the week of March 16, Carrie Frederick Frost, a former parishioner and long-time friend of St. Nicholas parish, will be returning to Charlottesville as part of a bigger 'book tour' to



share the insights from researching her new book, **Maternal Body: A Theology of Incarnation from the Christian East**

There will be two events where Carrie will speak. First, the parish schedule will be set to accommodate holding the Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts on Wednesday, March 18th. Following the Liturgy, at the fellowship meal, Carrie will speak about the book to the parishioners and friends gathered. She may also be available to speak specifically to parents and mothers if there is interest.



On Friday, March 20 at 12noon at CitySpace in Charlottesville, Carrie will participate in a forum discussion titled: **Reflecting on the Divine in our Lives** as an event of the Virginia Festival of the Book.

Parishioners who know Carrie will celebrate this wonderful accomplishment, recalling that much of her work took place while she was completing her doctoral dissertation, all the while raising triplets!

These events promise to be informative and engaging. Please consider promoting the event in your own circle of friends, and on social media. Links:

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Lenten Spiritual Growth

Spiritual Reading Resources

As we head into Great Lent this year, your servants would like to suggest several sources to help you grow in our most holy faith, once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3).

Two Bible study podcasts hosted on Ancient Faith Radio are most illuminating. **The Whole Counsel of God**, both podcast and blog, by Fr. Stephen De Young, **Search the Scriptures** and **Search the Scriptures Live**, both by Dr. Jeannie Constantinou. Her husband is a retired Orthodox priest and a native Greek speaker and is called on occasionally to explain some fine points of Scripture in the original Greek text. Another excellent series at Ancient Faith is **Worship in Spirit and Truth** by Fr. Thomas Hopko of blessed memory. Fr. Tom covers all details of the Divine Liturgy from its origins in the Jewish Second Temple period to Orthodox practice today.

These recordings are good listening during drive time or if you have an hour or so to listen and follow along in your Bible. Shorter reflections are also available such as **A Lamp for Today** by Dr. Edith M. Humphrey, Professor of New Testament at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Offerings for busy moms and children abound!

If you prefer reading to listening please consider these Lenten classics - many of which can be borrowed from our parish library:

- † **Great Lent** by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann
- † **Lenten Spring** by Fr. Thomas Hopko
- † **The Way of a Pilgrim** by Anonymous
- † **The Way of the Ascetic** by Tito Colliander
- † **The Power of the Name: The Jesus Prayer in Orthodox Spirituality** by Met. Kallistos [Ware]

And for those of you who purchased a copy of the **Lenten Triodion** underwritten by the service group a few years ago, remember what a treasury of wonderful prayers you have in that volume.

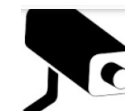
Lastly, please share your favorite sources of spiritual nourishment with the rest of us. Unlike the Yukon Gold Rush, our Orthodox faith is a mother lode that is truly inexhaustible!

Basil Finnegan,
Religious Formation Service Group

Buildings and Grounds Projects and Needs

At their February meeting, the Buildings and Grounds Group worked with the compilation of projects for 2020 and beyond. Among the projects highlighted included:

- Facilities Security assessment: Current locking arrangements and potential improvements. This would include consideration of access to the property during off hours, lighting / security /motion activated security systems and online security monitoring .
- Church driveway entry markers.
- Sacristy door replacement.
- Gutters installation and possible roof reconfiguration.
- Formulate list of additional potential projects for the 2020 calendar year.



For more info contact Florin Moldovan: fmoll3333@hotmail.com

Congratulations - Many Blessed Years!



To the newest Schmalzbach,
Raphael James, newly born son of our former parishioners
and long-time friends
Alexandra and Brian Schmalzbach. Alexandra
and Raphael are both doing great!.



Lenten Spiritual Growth

Almsgiving - Charitable Works

The parish's Charitable Works service group has set up several projects to emphasize to us all the importance of almsgiving and works of mercy during the Lenten season. Here's a summary of the activities ongoing and anticipated:



- † First of all, the collection of the **Baby Bottles for AvaCare** in Harrisonburg will conclude on Sunday, February 23rd
- † The Charitable Works Group is **collecting paper towels** during Great Lent, March 1- April 19, for the Crozet UMC's Grace Grocery (food pantry). You will find the collection baskets near our "babushka". Thank you!
- † In light of the our parish's recent venture into ways to assist in the **Human Trafficking** issue, we will start collecting some items for needy victims to aid them in their plight. This is a small, initial gesture, but it is one feasible way to demonstrate compassion through Christ's teachings to these people who are trapped in a most complicated and serious situation. We learned from the presentation given in Jan. by the Shenandoah Valley Task Force Team that when they encounter victims of sex trafficking, these people are in need of many basic items. We would like to assemble a load of kits containing simple items such as water, snacks and soap which could be distributed by the task force.

Please help gather items; time and place for drop off will be announced soon. In the meantime, please consider contributing supplies. The list of needs for the kits includes:

| | | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|-------------|-----------|
| Personal Items: | shampoo | conditioner | body wash | deodorant |
| | toothbrush (<i>soft</i>) | toothpaste | skin lotion | |
| Snacks: | nonperishables (<i>granola bars, nabs, gum, hard candy, chips, individual size items, nuts</i>) | | | |
| | bottled water | small plastic bottles of juice or juice boxes | | |
| Gift Cards: | Walmart <i>or</i> Target | | | |

- † **UOC Annual Great Lent Giveaway:** The details for this charitable effort, especially focused on youth efforts, and coordinated by the UOC Youth Ministry will be announced shortly - stay tuned.
- † Another Youth-oriented activity is the annual **coin box** that encourages youth to donate to the missionary efforts of the Orthodox Christian Missionary Center. Please submit your order form, or e-mail us at coinbox@ocmc.org, by February 21st to receive activity- lesson plans and coin boxes in time for Mission Sunday, March 1st!
- † Also, **International Orthodox Christian Charities** has produced flyers on almsgiving which also serve as a reminder of the great opportunities to serve the Lord and those in need through a cooperative effort with IOCC. The initial brochure will be distributed on one of the forthcoming Sundays.

Notes from the Parish Board

The Parish Board since late November, when Fr Robert surprised us with his announcement that he planned to retire at the end of February, has primarily been focused on the transition. We want to do everything we can to ensure that the transition from Fr Robert to Fr Charles goes smoothly. This includes not just taking care of all the administrative details, but more importantly helping Fr Charles get settled. And, of course, we also want to give Fr Robert and Pani Christine a good send off, to wish them well in the next chapter of their life, and to express the parish's deep appreciation for their years of service. Usually at year end much of the board's attention is focused on preparing the budget for the coming year, and this year is no exception. During the past year two significant projects have been undertaken by the Buildings & Grounds service group, erecting a fence in the yard to ensure the safety of our children at play, and the repair of the sacristy door. We appreciate the dedication and hard work they and other service groups have undertaken. The board looks forward with enthusiasm to a new chapter under Fr Charles in the life of our parish.

Stanley Bright, Board Chair



Pastor's Reflection

Let us Give Thanks to the Lord!

The reasons I have done the Lampada for the better part of twenty years are two-fold. The first reason is forward-thinking; it helps me corral my own thoughts and plans as to what I need to do for the coming months - compiling liturgical calendars, and getting our ducks in order. Great Lent is a good example - as you can see from Fr. Charles's schedule on p.2. But the other is backward-looking - reflecting on what has happened or is happening in the midst of the community, to recognize the work of people and allow them to express their thoughts and impressions as part of the larger parish community, whether it be in church service (service groups), personal reflections, or just sharing the news with pictures of what's been happening. This latter exercise amazes me because, as I noted at the Charitable Works service group meeting on Feb. 2, these events reflect the dynamism and amazing set of skills of our faithful, and their willingness to use them in the context of the church. And even when an article might not appear for one reason or another, the fact is that the work and the efforts continue so that our liturgy, administration, fellowship-hospitality, religious formation (adult, youth, library-bookstore), charity, buildings and grounds care, outreach and evangelization efforts all continue on, like a stream running with water, that runs whether we are aware of it or not.

This is the way the grace of God works - it is continuous and efficacious. His grace engages us to make us co-workers and servants by the power of the Holy Spirit to carry out this work - which is nothing less than holy, because He makes it so. Reflecting on all of this makes me truly thankful, in two ways. First, I'm thankful that I could be a part of it, and a part of your lives as you have become the Church and continue to grow in that identity, as members of His Body. I'm thankful for the trust that you have shown in allowing (or better surrendering) your precious time and love to this holy work. As I've shared with people, gaining the identity as a true spiritual father has been a very slow, halting process for me. It is not enough for me to invest my own time and love in the process. Rather, this recognition only comes when others say 'yes' as a common effort in the spiritual family, in which the priest then engages truly as 'spiritual father'. Our common work, and meetings, often provided moments for me to catch a candid glimpse of how you really do take the matters of our Faith and apply it in your lives. And it also points to me that what I ever see is only the proverbial tip of the iceberg, where you are routinely orienting your life to Christ.

As St. Paul put it, in his second letter to the Corinthians,

"Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your store of seed and will increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way to be generous on every occasion, and your giving through us will produce thanksgiving to God. For this ministry of service is not only supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanksgiving to God...."

Given the breadth of over two decades of cause for 'Thanksgiving' to God that I can mention, I do feel a need to express my personal thanks in several specific instances recognizing that my words and memory will fail to exercise this task thoroughly and fully.

To Our Almighty Lord and Savior - In thanksgiving for every good and perfect gift that has been sent forth from on high and for the blessing to be able to serve as priest at our Liturgies and as pastor in serving His people.

To His Eminence Met. Antony, and His Eminence Archbishop Daniel - who had the audacity to entrust such a work to me (and us) in the first place, not only serving this parish (first as a mission), but in the priestly ministry in its fulness. The relationship for me has not only been life-giving, but ministry-sustaining and without their prayers, counsel and support there would have been no spiritual fruit borne here - none.

To Fr. Charles Sanderson - whom I've known for many years. As we've walked a few paths together, I would never have guessed that he might be the man to take over the reins in service of this community. Over these years, and most recently since he has been serving among us, I've been amazed and thankful to God for his spirit of love of God, his family, the Faith and his growing love of you and me, in being willing to sacrifice so much to serve as pastor here. It will be a joy for me to see how the Holy Spirit grows the life of the Church through his ministry and that of Pani Melania in the months and years to come.

To Those who have followed the Lord's call to service - receiving ordination at the hands of Orthodox bishops, such as Fathers Paisius McGrath and Anthony Perkins, now serving the Lord afar, Sdcn Joseph Black - also

Continued, p. 6



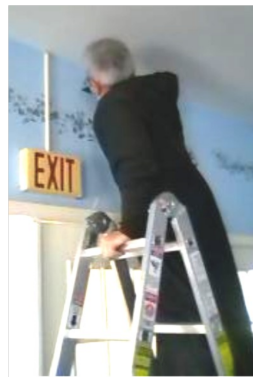
Pastor's Message, continued from p.5

serving the Lord afar in Kenya. And for our subdeacons and readers who are called now to serve the Lord with fear and gladness in their sacred work. We thank God for this witness to respond to a calling to personal, sacrificial service.

For our Lay Leaders - including our present and past service group, parish board and ministry leaders, who have served the Lord and His Church through your service-works and ministries. This service first of all is a sacrifice of your precious time, and a willingness to engage with me, and with others as we try to serve the Lord and meet the needs of his people together. Special thanks to everyone who offers hospitality, clean the building, connect those in our parish in times of need, reach out to bring the Faith to others or meet their needs - and all of our sacred works. Without organization and leadership and encouragement - the work of the parish would have been far less effective and even unsustainable.

For all who have offered gifts to God - As you know, from my stewardship perspective - it's all about offering our gifts to God. And this includes your financial offerings which has enabled the parish not just to 'pay its bills', but to do its sacred work. And the livelihood of the pastor is sustained by these offerings to God just as ancient offerings of the Hebrews supported the priestly tribe of Levi, through the stewardship of our parish board of administration. And over the years, many have offered countless gifts and gestures of kindness - some of which today adorn our home and which I hold very deeply in my heart and memory.

For all who have prayed - for me and Christine and our families, especially during our times of need such as my mother's funeral last year. This prayer is life-giving and sustaining - and healing. Sometimes when things are not so good, your prayers have kept them from becoming worse!



For parents and families - Our parish has long had a 'youthful' dynamic as the many pictures in our photo albums show. That the children are in Church, and bring a special gift of life to a congregation is of great benefit and affirmation to the entire congregation. But what is particularly telling is the witness of the parents, who make it a point to participate as a family, often possible only through great sacrifice (known only to them). But this also encourages others that '*we can do it*' and not only just attend services, but provide special youth events (like the annual St. Nicholas play) that has brought many a smile, and always a tear, to me.

For those advancing in years - with whom I am identifying more and more, who remind me of the essential need to be faithful to that which we have received from our elders, especially those who have been with us from the early years of parish life.- like Daria, Cynthia, Richard and Vonnie, Karl and Karen, and Basil, and many others. Orthodoxy honors its elders - because our spiritual life came from them and is sustained by their prayers and witness. Those of you who have allowed me to share in the most intimate moments of life - life and death, grief and joy, depression and hope - these moments shared are among the richest for me of the liturgy of life which the Divine Liturgy reflects and heals.

I am also thankful for those who have not responded to my ministry, or have resisted or rejected it (or me) or left our church. The deep feelings of inadequacy and the longing for them to know Christ does not abate - but rather serves as a reminder that Christ is the Shepherd of the Church and he continues to call them and me, and will lead them and me - and this is a call to my heart to prayer and recognition of my own limitations and, at times, startling inadequacies.

In as similar spirit, for *those who have confessed your sins* to Christ in my hearing, your willingness not to let your sins overcome you is a great encouragement to me not to let mine overcome me. Rather, in speaking the words of Christ's forgiveness in absolution, I am reminded of the universal forgiveness of Christ -and the penance moment blesses everyone present.

And of course, I am especially thankful to God for my life-companion, co-minister and loving wife, **Pani Matka Christine**. Just to have someone with whom I can share these rich, and at times challenging, moments and not be alone has been simply essential to my life and ministry here. But this says nothing of her own extraordinary contributions to this community of which every one of you is aware, and which, trying to enumerate, would never do justice in reciting them, even if they could all be somehow listed.

To God be all glory - To the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit - Christ is in our midst! Let us go forth in peace

P. Robert



An Important Message for Young People

*Last year, several folks attended a special presentation by Abby Johnson, formerly a leading proponent of abortion who had a radical change of heart. **Here is Katrina's experience of the evening:!***

On Tuesday, September 24th, 2019, I went to an event at the Harrisonburg First Assembly Church, with my dad and Cynthia Patzig. Abby Johnson was there to talk about her life. She spoke about how she'd had two abortions as a young adult, her 8 year job at Planned Parenthood, how at the end of the eight years she finally saw an abortion being performed and it caused her to quit her job, and change her life (which I think is really inspiring). How she could do, and support, so much evil, and then change her life around is incredible to me.



Abby Johnson now travels around the world making speeches. She is the founder of "*And Then There Were None*", which has inspired over 430 people to leave the abortion industry. She wrote a book about her life called, "**Unplanned**". There is a movie based on it, which I saw before I went to the talk. It's rated "R", but it's an amazing and inspiring story, and I think everyone should watch it (especially teenagers, so they can see the truth about abortion).



Abby Johnson may have committed many sins, but God always forgives (if you repent). And she makes up for all the evil she did, with the amazing work she does now.

Hearing Abby Johnson speak was a very spiritual moment for me. It showed me that even if you do many horrible things in life, you can always turn your life around. **And God always forgives. Ω**

Evangelization and Outreach + Greeters Update

Without a doubt our most important "greeting" duties over the next several months will be welcoming our new Priest and his family with warmth, faith and love! We won't forget our visitors though, or our Evangelization and Outreach service group activities. Father Robert, as our spiritual leader, has always guided these efforts, but over the last year or two he also stepped in as defacto leader of the E&O service group as that position remained vacant. We expect Father Charles will take the spiritual reins from Father Robert and steer our E&O efforts in the future both by helping us continue with some of our most successful initiatives, like the East/West event and Festival of the Book (look for upcoming information on this since our former parishioner, Carrie Frost, will be part of an FOB program this year featuring her new book) and furthering local outreach like our recent program on the Ancient Church held in Crozet in November.

As much as we may fear the changes that will come, this transition brings an opportunity to assess where we are and where we hope to go as a Parish with our evangelization and outreach initiatives. Self reflection is healthy and could bring new vitality to our group, not only in the form of a new E&O service group leader (any volunteers???), but also with fresh ideas about how to spread the Gospel in our community. What better way to honor Father Robert and Pani Christine's legacy than to keep the Parish they have nurtured and entrusted to each of us (and Father Charles) thriving and growing?

One resource for E&O is the first national study on evangelization and outreach in Orthodox parishes in the United States, released by the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA in 2017 and available on-line here:

<http://www.assemblyofbishops.org/news/2017/evangelization-study-report>. This exhaustive document (200 pages!) is the result of a survey of 75 churches, including our own. Members of the E&O service group reviewed it when it was released but many in the parish may not have seen it. The study is full of examples about how to successfully keep a Parish growing, how to introduce the Orthodox faith to visitors and how to spread the Gospel in the surrounding community. *We face an uphill climb since less than 1% of Americans are Orthodox Christians, and even fewer, approximately .3%, of Virginians are Orthodox Christians.* Our Orthodox faith is a rare gift to be shared- join us as we consider how we might bring it to the other 99%!

Karen Garrilovic



St. Nicholas Charity Fund Summary - 2019

A key foundation stone of St. Nicholas parish life has been the commitment to placing charitable works at the center of parish life. Early on, the St. Nicholas Charity Fund was established to serve as a repository of funds made available by the parish community for this purpose, beginning with a tithe of the parish income received from regular parishioner donations. This is our way of consecrating all of our parish life to Christ our God - through the service of others - as the first fruits of our offerings. The fund is administered by the pastor, for two reasons. First, it allows for a 'quick response' to needs which are pending. So if LOVE Inc informs us of a special, worthy need, funds can be made available almost immediately for such. The second reason is the need for pastoral discretion, and at times, confidentiality. At times the funds are distributed to (vetted) individual recipients, including parishioners in need. While our Community Care ministry can certainly address many of our needs, there are some which require 'special handling', such as the need to allocate funds for counseling services, or to meet basic, essential needs of life. The pastor consults regularly with the Charitable Works Service Group to prioritize Charity Fund funding.

You will notice that this year's Charity Fund allocations (over \$12,300) track pretty consistently with past year.s We have several major, regular recipients who are trusted for their capabilities to use these funds effectively. These include:

- **OCMC** - Orthodox Christian Mission Center - our parish's dedication of \$250/mo to the support of missionary Bill Black in Kenya
- **IOCC** - International Orthodox Christian Charities - responds to Charitable needs in the name of the Orthodox Church around the world.
- **Community Care** - is our parish's charitable efforts toward people in need within our parish community. Other acts of kindness are extended to those in our 'parish circle' such as a gift of flowers to Matushka Moses on the passing of Fr. John.
- **Other Orthodox Charities** - Including funding in support of worthy efforts of our Metropolia, local parishes, monasteries, seminaries, etc.
- **LOVE Inc** - Our parish has joined forces with other Christian communities in the area to meet the needs of individuals through LOVE Inc. Which pools resources of the community to have a greater, and better discerned response than a reactionary approach. We make an annual donation of \$1000, and also respond to additional needs as expressed.
- **Other Local Ministries** - would include the **local prison ministries** in our jails and at Augusta Correctional Center. Prison ministry was a focus of the St. Nicholas award in 2019.

It's worthwhile to note that this is no small amount - and in fact if one is poor, every little bit helps! Note too, that there are other funds provided by our parish, such as the Baby bottles to AVA Care that are not channeled through the Charity Fund. In 2019 we did not participate in the Pregnancy Center banquets as a parish, hence the usual expenditure for the Pregnancy Center can be made up in 2020.

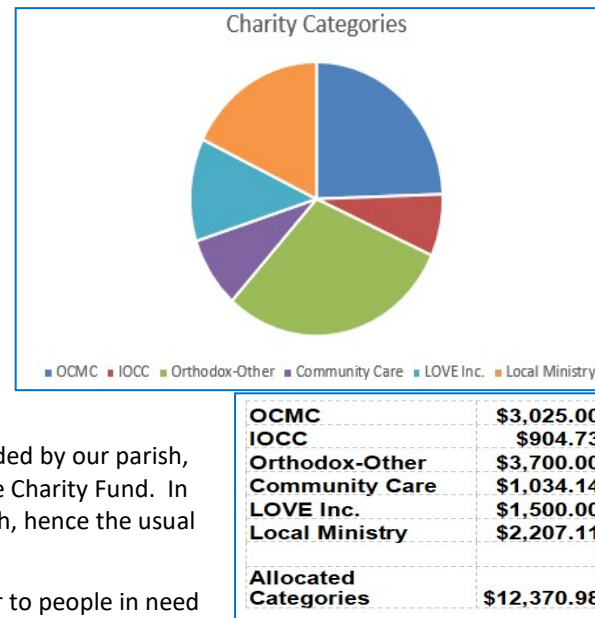
Also in 2020, there will be a concerted effort to look for ways to minister to people in need who are caught in the web of human trafficking. It's anticipated that there will be a significant effort in this area by the parish, and funding to support this effort. Once the Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry gets its new administrative structure in place, it will be worthwhile to look for ways to support them financially in 2020.

It's also worthwhile to note that over the past 10 years, our Charity Fund allocations have averaged over \$14,000 per year. This amounts to close to \$150,000 over just the past 10 years, bringing assistance to countless numbers of people in our parish, our community, our region, support for the Church's broader ministries, and around the world.

| Bank Accounts Summary (2-11-20) | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Contingency | \$ 25,347.42 |
| General | \$ 9,272.50 |
| Project | \$ 4,368.88 |
| TOTAL Bank Accounts | \$ 38,988.80 |
| Mortgage Principal - | \$ (177,004.27) |

For me, I am thankful to the opportunity to administer this fund over these many years. A binder has been compiled which has sample letters and responses of the many people who have been recipients of the St. Nicholas funds over the years. May *their* thanksgiving be received by God and be joined to our own, for the opportunity to be co-workers in this realm of Christ's vineyard and inspire us to enthusiastic and generous service.

May St. Nicholas Inspire us to holiness and generosity in love of others!



The Pastor's Wife – Random Reflections

When we began this ministry, one of my friends, also a Priest's wife, said to me, "*There is no 'Pani 101' class. Should be. Isn't. Just be yourself and God will take it from there.*" Now, 25-plus years later, I know that that advice was sound, if not sufficient at the time(!) She was right in one very important suggestion – and God has taken my gifts and molded them into what He needed of me.



The calling of a Priest is a calling that, if he is married, must include his wife (and family) as well. From the time of the ordination prayers, the priest and his wife are connected in a distinct way as a *team* to work toward God's will in the Kingdom. I read once that there is no other occupation – except maybe that of First Lady – in which a spouse is so defined by what her husband does. She faces assumptions regarding her role that in many cases have nothing to do with her God-given gifts. That's when, if she's smart, the Priest's wife will let go and let God do His work....

One of the most important responsibilities of a Priest's wife is to bring balance to the ministry and the marriage. As I have often said (most recently in our Parish sit-down), the Pastorate is a 24/7/365 job for anyone who seriously views his vocation. Sometimes, in our efforts to serve as good stewards of the gifts God provides, we forget that it is as important to take care of ourselves as it is to take care of others. I would bet that 90+ percent of all clergy would say "Amen!" to that....

My life and responsibilities have changed greatly in my years here. I have moved from being a working spouse to a non-working (outside for compensation!) spouse. I lived through the passing of my father and grandmother within months of each other. I have developed skills I never knew I had, to do work I never thought I would have to do – at many levels. It's time for me to move into another role; God is moving me in other directions, known and unknown, at this point. All is part of the adventure that is life!

I have tried in my time here to lead by example – to do the work I could do in this Parish so that others would feel welcomed and honored. It is my prayer that you will remember me – and us – as servants who set an example for those God sent through our doors.

You will be in my prayers. May we be in yours as well – and may God bless all of our efforts as stewards of His Kingdom!

S'Bohom!

Pani Christine, the Pastor's Wife



Library and Bookstore Offerings

The St. Nicholas Library and Bookstore are rich resources for our parish. Our mission is to support Parish members and friends by providing quality spiritual reading for the encouragement, education, and growth in holiness. Take a look at what's new -let us know if there are books that you'd like to see. New library titles include:

- *Rallying the Really Human Things*, by Vigen Guroian
- *The Orthodox Church in Ukraine* by Nicholas Denysenko
- *The Age of Paradise: Christendom from Pentecost to the First Millennium*, by John Strickland

We have purchased three books as follow-up to the Combatting Pornography Seminar offered here last year:

- *Wired for Intimacy : How Pornography Hijacks the Male Brain*, by William Struthers
- *Every Man's Battle: Winning the War on Sexual Temptation One Victory at a Time*, by Stephen Arterburn
- *Every Woman's Battle: Discovering God's Plan for Sexual and Emotional Fulfillment*, by Shannon Ethridge

We'd like to make extra books freely available through a "Little Free Library" that we could set up near our building entrance. If someone would like to help - Thanks! Contact Patricia Hardesty (patricia.hardesty@gmail.com) for details.



Pictures from the Past

