



## Festival of the Book and Parish Retreat *Continued, from pg.1*

The following day, Dr. Rossi approached the topic from a more explicitly Orthodox perspective in the course of our parish retreat, attended by about 20 parish members and friends. He provided both deep spiritual insights and very practical ways to allow the truths of the gospel being presented to be acquired in the soul and lived out in our personal lives. He encouraged the participants to place short phrases and notes on a note card which can easily be used for reference throughout the Lenten season and beyond. Among the notes worth recollecting...

- † Christ is Everything! Prayer is hidden martyrdom.
- † Most human thoughts, most of my thoughts, are dark
- † Silence - is a choice
- † Active listening is love delivered.
- † The exhortation of the Lord to Moses and the Israelites - facing annihilation by the Egyptians: "I will fight for you, you only have to be still." Ex. 15:15
- † Suffering - is either a benefit, redemptive and liberating OR it is meaningless and embittering.



Consider practicing silence by literally setting time aside - using a clock/alarm to take us back to the world affairs, starting with a short period and expanding that. The Jesus Prayer is one of our best spiritual exercises for this purpose, by practicing our breathing, gradually slowing it to allow our souls to enter into quiet.

*We give thanks to God for the ministry of Dr. Rossi - and May He grant to him Many blessed years!*

*Next Lampada Deadline - June 1 Theme: Pentecost - Summer*



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

**Address Correction Requested**



# Lampada

Great Lent, 2016

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



## 2016 Festival of the Book and Parish Retreat

*Becoming a Healing Presence* was the title of both the book presented at this year's Festival of the Book, and our Parish Retreat presentation this year. Our guest speaker was Dr. Albert Rossi, PhD, a well known speaker in Orthodox circles, who serves as Professor of Pastoral Education at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in New York. As a psychologist with years of practice in clinical settings, Dr. Rossi has a suite of skills that he drew upon in the course of his unveiling the mystery of love that leads us to forgiveness and inner healing, that also enables us to begin to serve others - bringing health and love to others.



Dr. Rossi's first presentation was to a broad, general audience of about 50 participants at the Colonnades senior center in Charlottesville, speaking from his experience of loss, and love, in the passing of his wife over 24 years ago. Through the ministry of others, like Fr. Tom Hopko, through that period of loss, Dr. Rossi shared how his love for his wife continued to grow and become an inspiration for his continuing the path of healing and spiritual growth in the Faith.

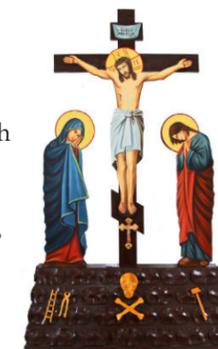
*Continued, Back cover*

## Pastoral Letter for Great Lent Permanent Council of the Ukrainian Orthodox Hierarchs

*To the Christ-loving and faithful spiritual children of the Holy Ukrainian Orthodox Church.*

*May the grace of Christ, Who endured the passion for us, abound in your lives!*

We have experienced the wondrous and sanctifying events of the season of "God with us". Through eyes of faith, made clear by our liturgical life, we have stood at the cave and received the Light of Lights emanation from it. We have journeyed with the Wise Men and offered the best of ourselves to the New Born King. We have stood at the Jordan and heard with John, "This is my beloved Son, upon Whom My favor rests". We have proclaimed with Simeon, "my eyes have seen Your



salvation ...". We have rejoiced and proclaimed the Glory of God the Father and the Gift of His Only-Begotten Son in word and deed. Now we embark upon another spiritual journey - Great Lent 2016 - a journey, which leads us to the most sacred days of the Orthodox Christian year - the days of Holy and Great Week and Feast of Feasts, the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Once again, via the words of Christ, which echo throughout our rich liturgical life, we are reminded of the holiness to which we have been invited and His affirmation of that holiness in His words and deeds as recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. In words ascribed to a prominent spiritual father of the early church, Venerable Ephraim the Syrian, we are reminded of our holy nobility. We beseech divine assistance in overcoming laziness in any guise, in exercising courage and being stalwart in the face of the trials and tribulations, in avoiding the lust for power, all of which destroy self and others. We beseech that divine assistance also in

*Continued, p.13*

### Inside this Issue

- Lenten Pastoral Letter .....p.1
- Service Schedule/Activities .....p.2
- From the Pastor .....p.5
- Parish Board Year in Review .....p.6
- Dome/HVAC Update .....p.8
- Treasurer's Report .....p.10
- The late Archbishop Dmitri .....p.13
- Report from Africa .....p.17



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: Randy Brogan  
Vice Chair: George Dilendorf  
Treasurer: Chris Harrison  
Secretary: Sdcn James Guba  
At Large: Susan Murphy

**Service Group Leaders**

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

**Contact Information**

Parish Office - 434-973-2500  
Phone at Church: (540)-456-6981  
Address: 7581 Rockfish Gap Tpk (US 250), Greenwood, VA  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 6981, Charlottesville, Va. 22906  
Email: info@stnicholasorthodoxchurch.com  
Pastor: fr.r.holet@uocusa.net  
Web: www.stnicholasorthodoxchurch.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

Sunday, April 3	Third Sunday of Great Lent - Veneration of the Holy Cross
	8:45am Matins 9:30am Divine Liturgy
Wednesday, April 6	6:00pm Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts (Potluck supper)
Friday, April 8	6:00pm Vespers - Remembrance of the Faithful Departed
Saturday, April 9	8:00am Divine Liturgy - Faithful Departed 4:00pm Great Vespers
Sunday, April 10	Fourth Sunday of Great Lent - St. John Climacus
	8:45am Matins 9:30am Divine Liturgy followed by 40th Day Memorial for + Andy Lefko
Wednesday, April 13	6:00pm Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts (Potluck supper) 8:30pm Matins - Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete
Friday, April 15	6:00pm Compline with Akathistos Hymn
Saturday, April 16	8:00am Divine Liturgy 4:00pm Great Vespers
Sunday, April 17	Fifth Sunday of Great Lent - St. Mary of Egypt
	8:45am Matins 9:30am Divine Liturgy
Wednesday, April 20	6:00pm Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts - (Potluck supper)
Friday, April 22	6:00pm Vespers for Lazarus Saturday
Saturday, April 23	8:00am Divine Liturgy 4:00pm Great Vespers for Palm Sunday
Sunday, April 24	Palm (Flowery Sunday) - Triumphal Entry of our Lord into Jerusalem - Great Feast of our Lord
	8:45am Matins 9:30am Divine Liturgy
Monday, April 25	Great and Holy Monday 6:00pm Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts (2 hrs)
Tuesday, April 26	Great and Holy Tuesday 7:00pm Bridegroom Matins (1.75 hrs)
Wednesday, April 27	Great and Holy Wednesday - The Anointing



**St. Nicholas Charity Fund - Contribution Summary for 2015**

The St. Nicholas Charity Fund serves as a repository for the financial offerings of St. Nicholas parish for charitable purposes. Income for the Fund is primarily derived from the tithe offering of the parish for charitable purposes (10% of gross income). The funds are distributed by the pastor with the guidance of the Charitable Works Service Group. Donation categories are outlined in the tables below. Total Charitable expenditures totaled: \$17,614.87. *Since 2006, the St. Nicholas Charity Fund has distributed \$135,890.42 in funds to local, regional, national and international charities! These funds represent your sacred offerings to Christ on behalf of those in need around the world.*

The categories are summarized below. 'International Orthodox' was a major focus, with the donations offered to IOCC for Syrian Relief (St. Nicholas Award), OCMC financial support for Missionary Bill Black. Note that \$5000 of that 'hit the books' in 2015 although it was originally allocated in 2014 as the St. Nicholas Award for 2014. The African Church ministry also included funds allocated to the Orthodox African mission in Gulu, Uganda in the amount of \$1450, primarily for the new roof on their facilities. The Golf Outing funds were included in the larger donation to the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank donation as part of the St. Nicholas award for 2015. The 'National Orthodox' category included donations to UOC-specific charities, notably the \$2000 presented to Met. Antony in March 2015 for support for the Church's ministry to wounded Ukrainian soldiers.

Category	Amt
Admin	\$ 48.42
Community Care	\$ 715.12
Individual	\$ 1,841.60
International Orthodox	\$ 11,037.94
Local Charity	\$ 2,912.86
National Orthodox	\$ 3,530.00
Right to Life	\$ 250.00
SW Virginia	\$ 2,278.93

In 2016 we anticipate a high level of activity in support of the Syrian refugees again this year and continued support for Dr. Black, with the possibility of special fund-raisers for charity purposes.

If there are any local, national or international charities that you believe worthy of support by our Church, please contact Cynthia Patzig or Father Robert so that these can be considered at a future meeting of the Charitable works group. May God bless your for your continued support! Ω

*Hospitality Projects for the Year!*

**Beer and Brats** on Thomas Weekend!

Our second-annual celebration will be the weekend of Thomas Sunday. Check your calendars – and vote for the best time on the FORUM.

**Picnic!** Up for a picnic? We are discussing possibilities for summer or fall picnics. More on this in the coming weeks.

**Wine and Cheese Social** – Summer is coming! We'd like to offer this opportunity twice during the Summer months (once the time for Vespers moves back to our 7:00 pm schedule).

**Movie Night!** Anyone remember the drive-in? How about an outdoor movie this summer? Wouldn't have to be a weekend – school will be out, after all! Think tailgates, PJ's, popcorn, hot dogs, nachos, and a feel-good movie...

**Art Exhibit** – Did you know that we have talented artists in our midst? We have (by accident!) discovered the humble folk and have wished for a long time to be able to share their talents in a way that would beautify our Church home and perhaps teach us a thing or two... We are pleased to announce that we will be offering the first chance to enjoy the abilities of one of our own, through an exhibit of their work on the walls of our Social Hall. Our hope is to offer the exhibits on a rotating basis, changing them once a quarter or so. We plan to use the walls of the Social Hall for these exhibits; if the display is one that would be better offered in another way (table?), we'll get creative!

If you are able to contribute to this effort, please contact Pani Christine. If you do not wish to be identified, we will honor that request – realizing that some of you wish for your talents to remain anonymous.

As you can see, lots of ideas - what we need is help! If any of these activities particularly appeal to you, vote for them in the FORUM poll!

Pani Christine, Coordinator





## Discipline for Success

*"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." Ephesians 6:12*

Wrestling, the ultimate man on man combative sport, arguably the most difficult, the most strenuous, the most physically exhausting, and also the most physically and psychologically intimidating sport in existence, is also the oldest sport in existence, and was used by the ancients to train soldiers for live combat. In the sport of wrestling, the object was (and still is) to completely subdue one's opponent, instead of kill him, as in combat. The Spartans trained young boys in wrestling in the agoge and it is one of the first Olympic sports in existence. It is also the sport first mentioned in Holy Scripture, in Genesis 32:22, where Jacob wrestles with a pre-incarnate Christ, arguably God Himself, and therefore, the only mention of the Lord participating in a human sport. Indeed it is during Great Lent every year when Christians wrestle with themselves and with the enemy, without and within, with the goal of obtaining their salvation.

One member of St. Nicholas Orthodox Church has taken wrestling to another level. Russ Hill, son of Fr. George and Matushka Pamela Hill, has been wrestling opponents on the mat since he was five years old when Fr. George was attending seminary at St. Tikhon's. After wrestling competitively for thirteen years, he just concluded his high school career with 114 wins and 7 losses. The team MVP and Captain of the Western Albarle High School wrestling team, he went undefeated this past regular season, winning the Jefferson District and Conference 32 championships and placing 3<sup>rd</sup> at the VHSL Western Regionals and 3<sup>rd</sup> at the VHSL 3A State Championship. The only two matches he lost this season were to the state champion, and both were in sudden death overtime.



Russ is set to wrestle in college, for the NCAA Division I Southern Conference Citadel Bulldogs next fall. We hope to see him represent the Bulldogs well, and most importantly, his Orthodox faith. Whether competitive wrestling is a metaphor for the spiritual reality or vice versa, plenty of both goes into our ultimate salvation. Ultimately, we strive with unending toil for the goal of the Lord raising our hand in victory. One thing for sure, Russ knows something about the work it takes to make that happen.

Note - for a more detailed story on his accomplishments, check out : [https://issuu.com/scrimmageplay/docs/issue\\_10-7-final?e=1483493/33420164](https://issuu.com/scrimmageplay/docs/issue_10-7-final?e=1483493/33420164).

*On behalf of St. Nicholas Parish, we extend congratulations to Russ on his exceptional accomplishments and we wish him future success in the arena of wrestling, and in every aspect of his life upon graduation.*

### Report from Africa, cont. from prev. page

No retirement plans for the grandparents. But I've seen joy. Plain, ungarnished joy.

Joy is wonderful, and it overflows. Joy makes some to cry, and others to shout. And some just have to move their feet. I found joy this past Sunday, in an unexpected place, in this land that has so little. Little did I know as I drove down dusty bumpy roads, past small farms with their maize and chickens and goats, past the tidy mud-walled homes with tin roofs and the occasional round hut with a thatched roof, little did I know that there might be joy here. But there is, in this land where the faithful pray, in this land where Bishops dance. Ω



### Liturgical Services (cont.)

	6:00pm	Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts (1.75 hrs)
	7:45pm	Service of Holy Anointing (1.5 hrs)
Thursday, April 28		<b>Great and Holy Thursday - The Mystical Supper</b>
	5:00pm	Vespers - Liturgy of St. Basil (2.5 hrs)
	7:30pm	Matins for Great and Holy Friday - Reading of Passion Gospels (2 hrs)
Friday, April 29		<b>GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY - THE CRUCIFIXION AND DEATH OF OUR LORD</b>
	8:00am	Royal Hours for Great Friday (2 hrs)
	6:00pm	Great Vespers with Procession of the Holy Shroud (1.5 hrs)
	9:00pm	Jerusalem Matins (2.5hrs) followed by All Night Vigil at Tomb
Saturday, April 30		<b>GREAT AND HOLY SATURDAY - DESCENT INTO HADES</b>
	12:00n	Paschal Vigil: Vespers - Divine Liturgy of St. Basil (2.5 hrs)
Sunday, May 1		<b>HOLY PASCHA - THE FEAST OF FEASTS: THE GLORIOUS RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD, GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST</b>
	11:45pm	Midnight Office
	<b>12:00mn</b>	<b>Procession - Resurrection Matins</b> Divine Liturgy of Pascha (2 hrs) followed by Blessing of Paschal Foods/Fellowship Meal
	9:30am	Paschal Vespers (not Divine Liturgy)
Monday, May 2	8:00am	Divine Liturgy - Bright Monday
		<i>--- Additional services/activities for Bright Week to be announced ---</i>
Saturday, May 7	3:00pm	Great Vespers for Thomas Sunday (Note time change)
Sunday, May 8		<b>THOMAS SUNDAY - Second Paschal Sunday</b>
	8:45am	Matins
	9:30am	Divine Liturgy
Tuesday, May 10	6:00pm	Moleben (Intercession Service)
Saturday, May 14	4:00pm	Great Vespers
Sunday, May 15		<b>Third Paschal Sunday - The Holy Myrrhbearers</b>
	8:45am	Matins
	9:30am	Divine Liturgy
Tuesday, May 17	6:00pm	Moleben (Intercession Service)
Saturday, May 21	TBA	Great Vespers followed by Graduate Reception
Sunday, May 22		<b>Fourth Paschal Sunday - The Paralytic</b>
	8:45am	Matins
	9:30am	Divine Liturgy

## Many Blessed Years!

### Birthdays

### Saints Days

Note - According to local tradition, the commemoration of the name's day of St. George (April 23, May 6) if it falls during Lent or Holy Week, is moved to Bright Monday



Note

The latest Parish Calendar with liturgical and event activities can be readily accessed on the parish website: [www.33-AD.org](http://www.33-AD.org)



### Ongoing and Special Events Calendar

Evangelization/Outreach Svc Group	6:00pm	Tuesday, April 4
Buildings and Grounds Svc Group	5:00pm	Thursday, April 14
Library Bookstore Svc Group	3:00pm	Saturday, April 16
Work Party - Pascha prep	9:30 - 2pm	Saturday, April 23
Right to Life Prayer Vigil - (at Planned Parenthood)	12n	Tuesday, April 26
Hospitality Service Group	TBA	
Charitable Works Service Group	2:00pm	Saturday, May 7
Beer and Brats Paschal Social	After Vespers	Saturday, May 7
Religious Formation Service Group	7:00pm	Tuesday, May 10
Reception for Graduates	After Vespers	Saturday, May 23

#### Ongoing Events - (Subject to change)

Pastor's Office Hours	1pm - 5pm	Wednesdays - Weekly
Inquiry into Orthodoxy	After Liturgy	Weekly as needed
Convert Instructions	7:30pm	Wednesdays
Church School	After Liturgy	North Wing
Confessions - Mystery of Holy Penance - After Vespers, Lenten services or by appt.		

### Confessions for Pascha

It is the discipline of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church that all of our members should participate in the Mystery of Holy Penance at the barest of minimums, annually during Great Lent in preparation for Holy Pascha. Those who wish to receive Holy Communion on a regular basis must realize that the spiritual therapy of Holy Confession is an ongoing need in the spiritual life, and Confession during the other penitential periods (Apostles' Fast, Dormition Fast, Nativity Fast) is necessary as spiritual medicine. The Church has long advocated for regular Confession, even monthly or more frequently for those who seek to grow

in their relationship with Christ. A spiritual relationship with the pastor that allows for quiet, personal discussion outside of the formal Confession may also be helpful on an occasional or regular basis. Simply express your desire for such and we can arrange a suitable time. Utilize the suggested form for Confession, as this allows a better preparation and communication at the time of Confession. *Please note that regular Confessions will not be available before services on Pascha.* Ω

### Please Remember in Your Prayers

Karen (healing) Fr. John (cancer) Harold (nursing home) Newborn Mary Grace - Mother Jennifer & Jam. Fr. Ben, Fr. Nestor, Fr. Paisii (health) John, Martin and Wade (health) Zach (special intention) Maria (recovery) Laurie (continued recovery)	Toms Sue and Family Joe (cancer) Laurie (car accident) and family Frs. Jakiw and Vasyl Jessica (pancreatitis) Theodore (near death) Tim (recovery) Jonathan (cancer)	<b>For the Departed</b> Andrew (newly departed) +Virginia +Frances (newly departed) +Fr. Robert - newly departed +Ed, newly departed +Walter, newly departed +Millie, newly departed +Richard - newly departed +Christopher newly departed
		For those who have died in the civil war in Ukraine For those who have sacrificed their lives as Christian Martyrs in the Middle East For All of our members of the Military who have died in the service of our Country

#### General Intentions

- Please remember +Andy Lefko in your prayers. His 40th day memorial will be on April 10th. Please also pray for his wife Suzanne, and his son and daughter and their families, and all who grieve his passing. Memory eternal!
- For Hunter and Stephanie Johnson, James Fulks and Mager Karoumbas, and for all who are seeking the Way to Christ through instruction and reception into the Holy Orthodox Church.
- For the Syrian and Iraqi refugees and all refugees arriving in our country, especially our Christian brothers and sisters, and for those who minister to their needs.
- For Reader Joseph, for John and Mary, and all who serve as missionaries and those they serve.
- For God's continued blessing and fruitfulness in the holy work being offered to Christ by Frannie, Joe, Debbie, Lois, Charlotte, Gertrude, Junior, Jerry, Randy, Rayburn, Shea and all who serve those in need in SW Virginia.
- For LOVE Inc. and the Churches who serve with this ministry.
- For Dorian, Natalia, and for all who are imprisoned.
- For our mission parishes in Bel Air, Md., Dover, Del and missions throughout our country.



### Report From Africa

By OCMC Missionary, Bill Black

There is joy in the Divine Liturgy of the Orthodox Church, deep joy. Faithful believers coming together to pray, to reorient their lives around the Holy Trinity, around the love that is our God.

The Liturgy itself is a choreography, a kind of dance. The priests follow steps practiced as far back as the Church's memory goes. Processions with the Gospel book, and then with the unconsecrated bread and wine become the Lord Jesus bringing Good News to the World, and then the Lord Himself going up to Jerusalem, to the cross for the sake of the world that God so loved.



And there is the response, the constant response of the faithful, singing their 'Amen,' adding their 'Lord have mercy,' singing the great ancient hymns of the Church.

It doesn't matter that people sometimes don't see this, that sometimes the Orthodox themselves give the appearance that they don't believe what they are saying or what the Church around them is singing. The Church is the outstretched hand of God to every person who comes, giving to each one of us yet another opportunity to touch God, to meet with God, to listen to God, to be transformed by God.

Sometimes protocol is mistaken for theology. And we Orthodox are very good at protocol. Sometimes propriety is mistaken for goodness. Sometimes decorum is mistaken for spirituality. Sometimes the form seems more important than the content. Sometimes joy is overlooked as a fruit of the Holy Spirit's presence and work in our lives. But then, sometimes not.

This past Sunday, I was in the middle of a celebration of the Divine Liturgy. The Bishop had just come through the Royal Doors with the Holy Gifts for God's people. The brightly dressed choir launched into a call-and-response riff of praise, with drums and guitars, the choir ladies in their bright blue blouses and their sensible navy skirts and the men in the back row singing their hearts out, and everyone swaying back and forth. And the people lined up, first the children and then the grownups, a long, long line of people waiting their turn to receive the Holy Gifts, the Body and the Blood of our Lord. And as I was watching, I noticed that people in the line were, in fact everyone in line was moving with the music. Young mamas carrying babies, old mamas with their grey hair covered by bright scarfs, young men jiving, old men stepping - I suddenly realize that everyone is dancing, two-stepping up to the Bishop, dancing before the Lord, dancing for the Lord. Even I found myself moving, dancing, such was the scene, it was contagious, such was the joy around me.

And it continued. Once the Liturgy was finished and the offering was being collected. We take offerings here by having people bring theirs up to the front. And the people came with their offerings to the Lord. And they came dancing, unselfconsciously dancing. And the Bishop came down for the final blessing, and he was dancing. We didn't want it to end.

Life is hard in rural Kenya, a scramble to come up with enough. There is none of the bling and glitter that beguile so many in the West. No granite countertops here, or three car suburban garages. No Tablets for children.

Continued, next page

#### Internet Resources You Can Use

Several of our parish members have wonderful blogs online that you should check out!

**Sarah Wright's Blog - The Orthodox Mama** - has great suggestions for Orthodox family life - personal growth, raising children in the faith etc. <http://www.theorthodoxmama.com/>. Her most recent post is about "The Date Night Challenge"



**Bill Black's Blog - Onesimus** - not only tells stories of his ministry in Africa, but also some deep theological reflection on the Faith, culture, scripture and Tradition. And a few fun things thrown in. His most recent entry is about

**Fr. Robert's Blogs** - are stewardship-focused. One is based on the website: [orthodoxsteward.com](http://orthodoxsteward.com). A second UOC stewardship blog is available at: <https://stewardshipnowblog.wordpress.com/>. An Ancient Faith podcast on stewardship may also be forthcoming. One recent



## Hospitality Service Group Report

St. Martha, Sister of Lazarus and Mary

From Luke Chapter 10, we hear that, when Jesus entered the village, a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. Most of the time we focus on the actions of Mary, recognizing her as Christ did as the one who "has chosen the good portion...." What, then, of Martha?



On the sign-up sheet in the social hall, there is a picture of an icon commemorating that visit. Mary is depicted at Christ's feet, with Lazarus behind Him. Martha is somewhat removed from the vignette, but notice that she is still able to participate in the conversation, should she choose or be asked to do so.

Here's the thought for the Spring: Perhaps ALL our roles occupied are exactly as they should be - and the preparations undertaken by Martha made it possible for the real work (teaching) to be done in an atmosphere of comfort and welcome.

THIS is the stuff of hospitality. Can you find a time (birthday, anniversary, Feast day, Memorial) to offer your best efforts in the way of St. Martha, to enable the work of Christ to continue outside of the Church services? If so, please sign up in the Social Hall, or contact Pani Christine.

We welcome you! *Ласкаво просимо! Laskavo prosymo!* - See the Activities Schedule on p. 18!

## Hierarchs Pastoral Letter - Great Lent

Continued, from p.1

ridding ourselves of useless and harmful speech, which contributes neither to our edification nor to the improvement of our fellow man. We who have been called by Christ to shepherd and oversee this segment of His Holy Vineyard – that of the Holy Ukrainian Orthodox Church – make this Lenten journey with you, our beloved spiritual children. For us all this is a time of purification, a time of personal renewal and time of divesting ourselves of those accouterments, which prevent the Light of Christ from penetration our lives and transforming us. It is a time of faithfulness to Christ our Lord, Who like the Father, continues to manifest His fidelity to us stubborn prodigals who stray from him – sometimes because of human weakness, often purposefully. With you we beseech the One, Whom we acknowledge as the Lord and Master of our lives, to grant us the spirit of humility, meekness, patience and love so that Lent 2016 might signal growth in personal integrity and holiness. It is by these that we, who are conscious of our own sins, might assist in the spiritual edification of our brothers and sisters in the Faith. With you and our brethren in Ukraine and throughout the world we enter this Lenten Season 2016 as humble pilgrims, willing to change, to divest ourselves of the old and to receive with joy and thanksgiving the many good gifts of God – Graces – Mysteries, through fasting, through increased prayer and repentance. These Graces make it possible to open ourselves up to Christ who offered Himself for us, our fellow man and the life of the world.

Repentance, is much more than abstinence. Our Holy Church calls us to repentance in our life, and calls us to fulfill God's commandment – calls upon each of us to make a self-recognition of our conscience, the offenses made to others and the forgiveness to those that have sinned against us. The Church calls upon us to bring our repentance within the light of God's truth, thereby, receiving the remission of our sins. Is that not why, that in all humility and sincerity of heart we beg of our Lord, "Oh giver of life open the doors of repentance for me." Our repentance will make us think less of self and more of being concerned and care for the needs of all God's children. Entering the season of Great Lent – the road of the Great Fast will take each of us to the greatest joy of the Lord's Resurrection – the joy of life conquering death, - the night that is more brilliant than the sun and banishes all darkness.

We request your prayers during these days of self-scrutiny, these days of spiritual growth and we assure you of our own prayers in your behalf. May Christ, the Lord and Master of our lives, grant us those gifts, which are necessary for our salvation and may we be the wise servants, who accept them with humility and thanksgiving. We, by the Grace of God, your Hierarchs pray that your experience of the Great Lenten Season truly will be holy and that with gratitude to All-mighty God you arrive at the resurrection of Jesus Christ and His empty tomb. Growing in grace with you and with you anticipating the glorious day of Christ's Resurrection, we remain,

Your servants in our Lord Jesus Christ,

The His Eminence +Antony, His Eminence and the Hierarchs of Ukrainian Orthodox Churches of the USA and of Canada



## Opportunities - Lost? Paradise - ?

The past 50 years or so could arguably be called the Golden Age of Opportunity. In America, in purely material terms, the chance to achieve through hard work for a concerted period of time (with diligence and discipline) has never been greater. One need only read the story of someone like Dr. Ben Carson, the world class neurosurgeon turned presidential candidate, to see what can happen for anyone, including a woe-begotten teenager in Baltimore headed to a life of frustration, poverty and a premature death. And while the examples like Dr. Carson are exemplary, modern communications and travel provide ordinary college students world-class travel experiences, vocational training, and the means to foster one's life through care and intellectual pursuits.

The challenge today is very different from what it was in my father's day. During the Depression, the opportunities were nil. Mere survival consumed almost everybody's time, effort and meager resources. When serious illnesses swept through the country (like the 1917 Influenza outbreak), to live through the week was an accomplishment, and no easy one. The easy opportunities were reserved for the well-to-do, and those connected to seats of power socially, financially and materially. There were opportunities for others - just few and far between. They required radical sacrifice, with no promise of success. Today, the opportunities for young people are especially broad, and deep. For now.

The problem today may be this - "There are too many opportunities!" College students are faced with the decision to select a major early in their college careers - and the wrong choice may mean years of frustration and re-programming and the emotional wreckage and financial burden that goes with 'failure'. But these are the issues of life vocation and 'stewardship of life' that everyone must go through - discerning their personal gifts and aptitudes and applying oneself to take advantage of the education, training and experiences afforded.

So far, so good.

But what *spiritual* opportunities do we face? We could call a spiritual opportunity, in a broad sense, any opportunity to see the face of Christ, to grow in His service, or deepen our relationship with Him. In these terms, if we think about it, the spiritual opportunities are even more present and widespread than the material ones. To see the face of Christ, one need only go to assist a person in need - one who is poor, sick, hungry, ill, or in prison. This affords you a face-to-face meeting with the Master Himself! (Mt. 25). Spiritual opportunities to serve are all over the place. In addition to serving Christ through those in need, there are many other 'works' that can become the requisite 'works of service', embody *spiritual* opportunity.



Those moments of life presented to us to deepen our faith relationship with God are special spiritual opportunities. The entire season of Great Lent is a Spiritual Opportunity to apply ourselves, and participate in spiritual exercises that open the door for the Spirit of God to make us aware of the real Truths of our faith and the Lord of Truth Himself. Even the Internet, despite the opportunities it presents for *serious* sin, offers certain spiritual growth opportunities - if you go to the right places - like Ancient Faith or MyOCN. Some spiritual opportunities are in the ether - on the Internet - but others may be right under our noses and so easy to miss.

We can only avail ourselves of so many opportunities - and it takes wisdom and a willingness to diligently pursue the right ones. I will mention four that took place this past month or so - were opportunities *lost or found?*

The *first* was the establishment of the *Parish Forum*, about which I wrote in this space in the *Lampada*, and have tried to develop since October. A quick look at the statistics shows that few of the parish members have bothered to check it out, let alone sign up or post anything - despite frequent reminders. It was intended to be an aid and opportunity to *build community* through a *robust online discussion*, sharing of our lives, and common work. It would seem that this opportunity is slipping away.

The *second* opportunity was the occasion of the passing to eternal life of *Andy Lefko*. Although a member of our parish for almost 10 years, many did not know Andy (but perhaps prayed for him as his name was on the list weekly list). To see the face of Christ in a dying person is an opportunity. To prayerfully attend a funeral (at the funeral home or in church) and to bring consolation to family members grieving is a spiritual blessing and opportunity to serve Christ.

The *third* was our parish Festival of the Book and Retreat presented by Dr. Albert Rossi, Professor of Pastoral Care at St. Vladimir's Seminary. You can read more elsewhere in the *Lampada* about that - but again - despite the wonderful efforts

Continued, next page



### Long Term Project - Anniversary?

Believe it or not, our parish is approaching it's 18th anniversary this year, and while that one is not particularly notable, a 20th, or 25th anniversary is. Milestone anniversaries serve as a good opportunity to celebrate the mission of the parish, and God's work in our midst, and to re-focus on our spiritual calling. It also provides special opportunities for major projects that can be undertaken in acknowledgement of that mission. I have proposed three major projects for consideration by the parish for this purpose:



- ◆ Capital Campaign - Iconography project, facility enhancement
- ◆ Capital Campaign - Retirement of the Debt (\$250k)
- ◆ Long Term Facility Planning - Architectural and site plan rendering possible future buildout of our facilities

If we wish to do anything for the 20th anniversary, it should be considered very soon, otherwise, we have to wait for the 25th. A poll on the Forum is set up for you to vote and register your thoughts. May God bless our efforts to serve Him!

Fr Robert

### Sunday of Orthodoxy, 2016



The Sunday of Orthodoxy provided our parish with two special opportunities to reflect on and give witness to our holy Faith received from our spiritual forebears. First, in remembrance of the Triumph of the Orthodox over the heretical iconoclasts, the parish children held icons for veneration by the congregation at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

Later in the afternoon, we were invited to participate in a communal celebration held at Holy Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church in Charlottesville. Fr. Panagiotis Hanley and the Greek Orthodox community welcomed warmly for the Vespers service with the procession of icons, and for a wonderful fellowship meal in the Church hall. Long-time friend and former pastor in the local Orthodox community, Fr. Michael Furry from St. Innocent mission (Bulgarian Metropolia) in Roanoke joined us, as did Fr. Peter Rexinas, retired Greek Orthodox priest who resides in Charlottesville.

It is hoped that we can do more such events in synergy with our other Orthodox brothers and sisters in the region.



### Opportunities, cont. from p. 5

of some of the members of our Evangelization Outreach Service Group, most in the parish just allowed the opportunity to pass by. Because this is a pattern is consistent year to year, that due to financial and other considerations event may no longer be a viable, life-giving spiritual opportunity for the parish to offer next year, as some in the parish have suggested.

I make no judgment of anyone else about participation in such things - but must ask myself whether my efforts to set forth certain spiritual opportunities such as this is timely, and wise. I know it has been *only marginally effective*. I might do better to focus on other areas of pastoral service that could be more fruitful, rather than trying to create group events, which despite offering the potential promise of green pasture, is not a place where the parish flock, as a group, wishes to go.

During Great Lent, we are called upon to reflect upon our lives, and see our lost opportunities in much the same way that Adam and Eve, or the Prodigal Son, saw their squandered opportunities. They regretted them - bitterly, but this awareness can lead to a true, deep repentance that changes our life outlook and what we do with the opportunities that remain. If we can see the opportunities before us for what they really are, they will not be opportunities lost - and our souls will not be lost as well. Ω



### Charitable Works Service Group

The anticipated work of the Charitable Works Service Group for this year is a result of our interaction with various ministries during the year 2015. In general, we are going to expand some areas, redefine others, and step back from others.

**Right to Life:** Our participation in Right to Life activities during 2015 were rather minimal and were limited to financial support of several pro life agencies, to the Harrisonburg AVA (pregnancy center) baby bottle campaign, and to a parish vigil outside of Planned Parenthood in Charlottesville in the fall. This year, however, we hope to do much more thanks to the leadership of Eileen Opincar. Starting on Tuesday, March 29<sup>th</sup> we will gather at noon in front of Planned Parenthood for an Orthodox prayer vigil. We have also scheduled Tuesday, April 19<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, May 24<sup>th</sup> for vigils. We have already reserved a table for the Charlottesville Pregnancy Center banquet in October and hope many of our parishioners will choose to attend. In December we will begin to plan to the January Pro Life March in Washington, D.C.

**Syrian Refugee Crisis:** Last fall it became pretty clear that at some time in the future our parish would once again be involved in refugee resettlement situations, but because of the current political world situation, we decided for the time being to focus our help through IOCC. We have done so through financial contributions and through our effort last fall to put together 100 IOCC hygiene kits. This year we are setting aside May 8<sup>th</sup> (Mother's Day) after Liturgy to put together about 50 infant kits for IOCC. Since the Syrian Christians (and other minority religions) have just been officially identified as being victims of ISIS genocide, we anticipate that during the coming year we will actually begin to see the arrival of Christian Orthodox families from Syria and Iraq - particularly in the Harrisonburg area. We need to prepare for that situation by defining as a parish how we can be involved, what are our resources, what are our limitations/limits, etc. We learned from our work with the Eritrean/Ethiopian refugees several years ago that we need to have a plan of action before actually getting involved. Several parishioners have recently indicated that they would like to be involved with this particular sub-ministry of Charitable Works. Thank you!!!

Our most ambitious plan for 2016 is to sponsor a day long **Special Forum** for the Charlottesville community on the history of Syrian Christianity and the present Syrian refugee crisis. This would possibly involve some sort of Middle Eastern dinner and a panel of speakers including someone from IOCC. This will take a lot of coordinating within our parish, but would be a wonderful thing to do. Our hope is that we could offer the program some time in November

**Southwest Virginia and Grundy:** We have maintained our strong relationship with the people in this area over the past year, and as always, have received far more than we were able to offer. We have made several one day trips to the area just to renew friendships, encourage the work of friends in various ministries, and to catch up on the overall situation there. (Nothing has gotten better there economically; the coal mining industry is almost at a stand still.) We also sent down blankets and children's books for the R.A.M. Health faith in early October and then in July took a small group down for a few days to do some home repair and maintenance work. This time we worked with Harmon Memorial Church and Pastor Shea rather than B.N.U. Unfortunately Buchanan Neighbors United has had to limit the type of work they offer and they now focus on helping with utility bills. Other losses are that Sunrise Center and Gift of Love are ending their ministries. This year we hope to take a work group down the week of July 10<sup>th</sup> (through the 15<sup>th</sup>) working again with Harmon Memorial Church and will continue to support the R.A.M. Health Fair, and encourage and support the Back Pack Blessing program.

**Prison Ministry:** Larry Uzzell has continued to maintain a wonderful correspondence with an Orthodox prisoner serving a life term. This relationship led to a prison cross prayer card that we distributed to members of the parish early in this year. The cross was made by Dorian, Larry's (and our) friend in prison. We are hoping the the Orthodox Prison Ministry might be interested in developing the distribution of this card for others. Our prison ministry is beginning to expand into the local jails/prisons. One of our parish friends, Samy Gadalla, is being trained for this work.

**LOVE Inc:** Last year our relationship with LOVE INC sort of fell apart when Bryan Siebeking moved to Washington state. For a while we had no liaison person from our parish to keep our involvement with LOVE INC active. But now Oliver Filutowski has stepped forward to be that person, so during the coming year we should once again be more active in helping provide for local people in need.

Thanks to all of you who make all of this possible through your participation in the various outreach projects of the Charitable Works Service Group. Our patron saint is St. Nicholas, and I know he is always interceding for us in everything - but especially in our work with those in need.

With gratefulness for each of you!

Cynthia Patzig, Coordinator



## COMMUNITY CARE: YEAR IN REVIEW-2015



One of the beautiful things about our work in the Community Care ministry at St. Nicholas is that we are able to be there for our fellow parishioners, be it the happy or sad times of their lives. We can show a Christian presence and live the life which Christ teaches us to do every day! I am grateful for the members of our ministry: Eileen Opincar, Deena Gakos, David Murphy and Pani Christine Holet. The time they have taken as well as the talents they have shown in support of their fellow parishioners is a beautiful thing. There is a change to note: Eileen Opincar will be handing off the birthday cards to new member Vonnie Zubyk and she will be focusing on the shut-ins and those among us who may be experiencing illness and hospitalization. Please feel free to share a concern you have about someone in the parish family with Father Robert and he will share it with our ministry as he deems appropriate.

While it is wonderful to be there for all of the sweet new babies that we seem to welcome every year, late this past winter we were blessed to offer service to the family of +Andy Lefko, following his blessed repose. This was of very few funerals actually held in our church and it was a privilege to be there with our departed brother and pray the lovely words of the service, as Andy was welcomed into the Bosom of Abraham.

We have had more than new babies to celebrate this year! On St. Thomas Sunday, Jake (Jacob) Ritter and Cadet Will (Moses) Ryerson, were Chrismated and welcomed into the Holy Orthodox Church. While Jake has been in our midst for quite a while, Will has come to us from VMI, where he has been instructed by Father George Hill. Both of the newly chrismated young men were presented with gifts on behalf of the parish.

As if Jake didn't have enough sacramental excitement for one year, he experienced the Rite of Crowning and married lovely Kelly Schantz at the end of August. Following the ceremony and prior to their picnic reception, a lovely cocktail hour was enjoyed by all attendees in the social hall of the parish.

Graduation season came in the spring and St. Nicholas was well represented with the Pomp and Circumstance crowd. Congratulations to Julia Harrison graduating from Albemarle High School as well as her sister Maureen, who was a winter 2014 grad from William and Mary. John Gavrilovic II graduated from Virginia Tech, Katie Karas graduated from James Madison University and twin brother Matt Karas completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Virginia. On the graduate level, Carrie Frost returned to Charlottesville, successfully defended her dissertation, and subsequently received her PhD in religious studies, Matt Duncan received his Philosophy PhD and Father George Hill was awarded a MA in religious studies. Various icons were gifted to all of the graduates.

Last but not least, we were once again blessed with the birth of some pretty adorable babies at St. Nicholas. The joy continued when we were able to stand in witness at their Baptisms! Congratulations to Benjamin Thomas Alexander (parents Bryan and Laura), Ephrem Joseph Gakos (parents Dean and Deena), and James Ethan "Jamie" Malcolm (parents Daniel and Ashley). All were presented a gift by the Community Care ministry on behalf of the parish. Visits were made, meals were delivered as well as some frozen meals stored in the parish freezer!

Thank you to all who support our work and pray for our ability to carry out this ministry. In faith and in love,

*Elaine Brogan, Community Care leader - With Eileen, Deena, David, Vonnie, Pani Matka Christine*

### Archbishop Dmitri, continued from previous page

sioned by another denomination that had increasingly become unmoored from sound doctrine. It was not surprising, then, that Vladika's strict fealty to the faith of our Fathers was what impressed my friend the most. What he said was true, I answered, but what impressed me even more was the way that he united uncompromising orthodoxy with a seemingly effortless love of everyone around him.

I already knew some devout believers who were uncompromising in their faith, but many of them were equally rigid and hard—and sometimes even contemptuous—toward those who were not as upstanding as themselves. And I knew of people who tried to be charitable to everyone around them, but their eagerness to express their love for others often led them into an indifference or laxity about the moral or doctrinal errors of others. Abp. Dmitri was unique because he could blend the two without contradiction or even apparent difficulty. He could truly, as St. Augustine admonished, love the sinner while hating the sin. I could recount innumerable small stories about Abp. Dmitri, but I fear that in the retelling, they would sound trivial to many ears. They are not the sort of accounts that ordinarily make it into the traditional "Lives of the Saints." Instead, the kind of stories I have to tell all serve as mere illustrations of a man who was loving, wise, faithful, joyous, generous, shrewd, and who, above all, placed Christ at the center of his life. In other words, *a saint*. Ω

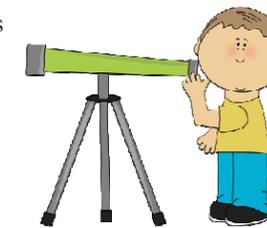


## St Nicholas Parish: Year in Review / A Look Ahead

A lot has happened within our service groups since our last semi-annual Parish Meeting (September 2015). Vladimir Gavrilovic transitioned from Board Chair to serve as our Building and Grounds group leader. Karen Gavrilovic moved to head the Evangelization and Outreach group, assuming the mantle from Basil Finnegan, who so ably led that group since its inception. Basil now heads the Religious Formation group. Troy Hamilton assumes the head of the Liturgy group, following the dedicated service and productive leadership of Bryan Alexander. Our "bearded wonder" David Murphy is now enrolled in distance learning with St. Sophia's Seminary and as a result has passed the helm of the Library and Bookstore group to Stanley Bright and Pat Hardesty. Stephanie Siebeking and Megan Duncan left us at the end of last summer for career opportunities and as a result, the all-important Hospitality group is now headed by the culinary genius of Pani Christine Holet.

These new leaders afford us the opportunity to anticipate future successes within our parish.

- Building and Grounds-A new HVAC system by Fall 2016
- B and G in conjunction with the Liturgy group-Dome installation/iconography project
- Charitable Works-continued involvement in Grundy, Local food banks, prison ministry, caring for our parish community as well as ramping up our presence with caring for the unborn as well as a possible fall symposium on Christianity in the Middle East
- Evangelization and Outreach-Iconography workshop and family golf outing
- Library and Bookstore-keeping an inventory of religious books and items for purchase as well as adding titles for the benefit and education of parishioners
- Liturgy group-in conjunction with E and O, working on an iconography workshop, in anticipation of having new icons written for the worship space
- Religious Formation- more of an emphasis on adult education topics on both sides of the mountain as well as continued focus on the religious education of our children
- Hospitality group-continuing to welcome our guests and parishioners following Liturgy with a delicious coffee hour, as well as featured events like Beer and Brats, special potlucks provided by our service groups on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month, as well as the Wednesday night Presanctified potlucks.



**Big Time Cooling Capacity!**

Please take the time to thank all of our Service Group leaders and members for their hard work and dedication. They are the backbone of our parish!

In Christ,

*Randy Brogan, Board Chair*

## LIBRARY - BOOKSTORE SERVICE GROUP



The Library - Bookstore Service Group has been working on getting our entire collection catalogued and labeled. Patricia Hardest led a work session in which she taught us how to go online and catalogue the books. We are trying to find some more bookcases that match the bookcases we currently have, as we need more shelf space for all the books we have. The Library has a good collection which is shelved under user friendly categories, we encourage you to come in and browse, find a good book, check it out, and take it home to read.

*Stanley Bright, Coordinator*



## Buildings & Grounds Update – Are we Dome Yet?

What's an Orthodox church without a dome? Or without a working heating and air conditioning system? Well, that isn't St. Nicholas – not for long, anyway! This year, we have two major projects (and some small ones) that Building and Grounds has been focusing on that reflect the two sides of our Service Group's mission – maintenance and betterment.

Fixing the HVAC (Heating Ventilating and Air Conditioning) system is definitely the more prosaic maintenance side of our mission, while the raising of a new dome is one of the terrific opportunities we have to participate in the betterment of our temple to the glory of God.



The "Before" Picture - March 25, 2016

First, on the HVAC, we owe great gratitude to folks like Karl Bowman, who wrote the request for bids, Jake Ritter, who coordinated all the bidding and especially Tim Stratos, who was the overall project coordinator and oversaw the fine work done by our contractor Clyde E. Smith, who installed the first phase of the overall HVAC system, in the nave and altar area. In the coming year, we hope to complete the next phases of work in the social hall, narthex and north wing to address our heating and cooling needs for a good long while!

Second, by the time you read this, there may well be a new dome installed in the nave of the church, or at least a hole in the ceiling where the new dome will go! This is the first step in a much larger iconography initiative that, Lord willing, will be unfolding in our church in the coming months. The guiding light of the dome installation project has been Florin Moldovan, whose quiet expertise and leadership in seeing this project to fruition is truly a blessing to us. We still have design details to finalize, such as insulation, lighting and the big one – the iconography in the dome! Although our dome is modest in size, I can well envision a day when a small child suddenly looks up in awe when standing in the nave to see the Pantocrator looking down on us from the dome!

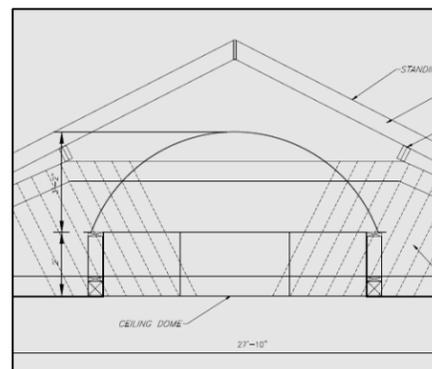


Did you guys forget something?

Smaller projects are also proceeding, such as the new parking signs (thank you Karl, Richard and Stanley), and a potential bid for a church cleaning service (thanks to Mager Koromhas for creating a bid package). In addition, we are planning for a shed clean out that will kick off during our Lazarus Saturday work day and continue for several weekends until we have a broom clean shed to use for future good purposes.

Finally, the big project we look to tackle in the latter part of the year is a long term Facilities Plan for the church and grounds. If you are interested in this or any other B&G projects or activities, please drop me a line anytime!

Vladimir Gavrilovic, Coordinator



Drawing of the New Dome



In this case, the ceiling coming down is a good thing!



## Our Spiritual Father Archbishop Dmitri, a Remembrance

By Lynn Uzzell

Something exciting was discovered in Dallas on March 4. The body of Archbishop Dmitri was disinterred in order to be moved to a new chapel that had been built for the purpose, and his body was found to be incorrupt after almost five years in the tomb. He had been buried without being embalmed, and the conditions in the tomb were exceedingly damp. The incorruptibility of the flesh is neither a necessary sign nor a certain sign of sainthood, but it is an apparent miracle after death, one that merely confirms what many had already believed about the life of Abp. Dmitri.

This is exciting news for American Orthodoxy. If Abp. Dmitri is eventually declared a saint, then he will be the first saint (that we know of) who was born in the United States. And it is exciting news for me, personally. Vladika was the person most responsible for bringing me into the Church; he introduced me to my future husband, Larry; and he married us. Our most treasured photo from the wedding shows Vladika leading us, with our hands bound together, in the dance of Isaiah.

Archbishop Dmitri was born Robert Royster, and raised by a devout Baptist family in the small town of Teague, Texas. By the time that he and his older sister were teenagers, they were living in Dallas. Abp. Dmitri credits her (and by all accounts, she was really something) with first discovering Orthodoxy through her independent researches into the Church Fathers. The two were first received into the Greek Church in Dallas in 1941! Some members of that very Greek church would openly question why these two Anglo-Texan teenagers had elbowed their way into their inner sanctum, but he recalled that most members were very welcoming. He later remained very close with the Greek parish while he presided as OCA Bishop of Dallas and the South.

For those who are interested in learning more about these and other biographical details, it will not be difficult to find them. I would rather say a few words about the personal experience of being in the presence of a holy man. In my case, I cannot recollect a succession of signs and wonders—he performed no miracles that I was ever aware of. Instead, getting to know him meant a growing recognition that I was in the presence of a man who radiated love, who held an unswerving devotion to Christ and the Orthodox faith, and who lived his life in service to others.

Larry recently asked me about my first encounter with Vladika, and I don't even remember for certain. It might have been when a friend brought me to a Pascha service for the first time. I will certainly always remember the way that he boomed out the reading of St. John Chrysostom's Paschal sermon, welcoming everyone who had come to the feast, even those who had arrived at the eleventh hour. For an interloper, such as I felt myself to be on that night, it was the warmest embrace the Church could offer. To this day, every time I hear that sermon my mind drifts back to my first Pascha and the way that he had read it.



During Bright Week, he would always host two parties at his house. He would cook some of his specialties—he was an excellent chef—and all the guests contributed their favorite dishes. Children always flocked around him. His feasts (and Bright Week was not the only time that he entertained) were always amazing, and his hospitality was unstinting. I once asked him to meet with some intellectually curious friends of mine from the university. He not only accepted but he turned the occasion into a gala. He also hosted a brunch for some of our wedding guests in his home. I do not remember him ever denying a request, and I do remember, with some chagrin, that I had many requests to make. I do not think I appreciated enough, then, how uncommon was his effusive generosity.

This love and generosity was mingled with a profound and penetrating mind, one that was flexible and yet fixed on Jesus Christ as his lodestar. Every year he would prepare a sermon for the same gospel readings, yet every year his parishioners would hear something new. At the same time, all of his sermons focused on the love and sacrifice of Christ.

Abp. Dmitri's Wednesday night Bible studies were legendary. He would pass out the Greek-English interlinear translation of the pages we were working on, and he would sometimes speak all evening about a single line of Scripture—parsing out each word and drawing out the linguistic nuances, the historical context, and the theological significance. These intensive studies—it would often take more than a year to get through a single epistle—would form the foundation for the books that he wrote. I remember once, during the period when I and a friend of mine were still inquirers, that he praised Archbishop Dmitri for his uncompromising orthodoxy. My friend was attracted to our church because he had been disillusioned.

Continued, next page



## An Event-Full Beginning to 2016: Evangelization and Outreach Update

If you hear folks around church talking about “baby steps,” don’t assume they are bragging about their kids. They just might be talking about what they learned in the Financial Peace University program that concluded at the beginning of March. Stanley Bright served as coordinator for our first ever Financial Peace University



FPU Spring Class of 2016

course which was offered to those within the parish and the surrounding community. About half of the 20 program participants were from outside our parish. The nine week course, developed by financial guru and media personality Dave Ramsey, offers sound financial advice from a Christian perspective with an emphasis on debt reduction/elimination and wise saving. The weekly meetings provided for plenty of discussion and camaraderie. At the end of the course, Father Robert offered a short prayer service and presented the “graduates” with an icon of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Our parish made some new friends who will hopefully remember what they learned at FPU but also know that they are always welcome here. We may offer this course in

the future; please let Karen Gavrilovic know if you would be interested in either helping out or taking the class.

The other thing you might hear around church these days is silence. Our Festival of the Book speaker and retreat leader, Dr. Albert Rossi of St. Vladimir’s Seminary in New York, spoke of the importance of silence and stillness as a way to center ourselves and open ourselves up to hear the voice of the Lord. He addressed a crowd of about 50 on Friday afternoon March 18, at the Colonnades in Charlottesville, sharing insights on life, death and the importance of inner stillness which is neglected in today’s “connected” yet disconnected world. He suggested that you can only know who you are and be a source of strength and hope for others, “a healing presence”, by becoming less egocentric, more grateful and more inwardly reflective in a way that leads us to share a positive energy with those around us.

Dr. Rossi continued his message about becoming a healing presence and connecting to the world to come at our Parish Lenten Retreat on Saturday, March 19. He began by reminding the approximately 30 participants that “God is everything” and that “the cross is a difficult privilege.” He said that as Christians we are Christ’s presence on Earth and we have the ability to share that presence with others through our actions and words. “Active listening is love delivered.” He shared his experiences about the loss of his wife to cancer and the transformative effect of her death and suffering on his family. He led retreat participants through a series of exercises to examine how Christ has been present in our lives and urged us to pray, and practice silence and stillness so that we may hear the voice of the Lord in our hearts.

One of the highlights of the retreat was at the end of the day when a couple, who came to the retreat after hearing Dr. Rossi speak at the Colonnades, thanked the Parish for an enriching and welcoming experience. The Smiths are annual visitors to the Festival of the Book but also lay ministers in their own Protestant church in North Carolina. Our parish participates in Festival of the Book as an outreach ministry to those of other faiths, but rarely are we blessed enough to have FOB participants join us at our retreat. Many thanks to Dr. Rossi for reminding us of the words of St. Irenaeus : “Relax in God’s Hands.” Dr. Rossi’s book, *Becoming a Healing Presence*, which includes many of the stories he shared during his visit, is available for purchase in our bookstore for the special price of \$10 and from our lending library.

E&O (and our greeter ministry) is gearing up for the rest of the year. We are planning for our annual golf outing in the fall/late summer and exploring participating in the Crozet Fourth of July parade this year and in the Crozet Festival. Long term, we are beginning to gather information about holding an iconography workshop at our Parish. If any of these projects sounds interesting, we would love your help. Our next meeting is at 6:00 pm, Tuesday, April 5, snacks provided...please join us!!

*Karen Gavrilovic, Coordinator*



## MY GRANDMOTHER’S FASTING

*By Vladimir Gavrilovic*



My grandmother is my ideal for fasting. Not that I have ever approached her fasting level but I have always hoped that someday I might. She was born in 1905 and died in 1998 at the age of 93. She wasn’t always so strict in her fasting, nor as pious as I knew her in her old age. She grew up with a very strict father who didn’t allow her or her sister to see men. Her father ran the village “Kafana” – a restaurant and bar – and he knew how men in the village were!

Once, when she was a young maid, she went to a “Slava” in a neighboring village without his permission. Each village had a patron saint in Serbia. It wasn’t just whom the church was named after, the saint really was seen as the protector of the village and every year on that saint’s day, there would be a great festival in each village, with feasting and music after the liturgy and itinerant vendors that set up stalls along the main street. It was a day for shopping, strolling, singing and dancing the Kolo – the traditional circle dance of Serbia. We are not quite sure what exactly happened when my grandmother went to the Slava but she was apparently “seen” with another man at that Slava and her father was outraged when he heard it. This resulted in a big fight with her father and it was the impetus for him to exercise his paternal imperative and force her to marry another man from their village who had been pining after her for months but in whom she had showed no interest. This arranged, or rather forced, marriage to my grandfather was asymmetrical as a result but they were nevertheless loyal partners through their lives and bravely faced the joys and tragedies they their life brought them.

With the German invasion of Yugoslavia in 1941, their lives changed totally and in 1942, tragedy struck their house. My grandmother’s father, her uncles and in fact all the men of the village were rounded up and shot as a reprisal for four German soldiers killed in an ambush by Partisans in the hills outside the village. My grandfather survived that massacre by the cleverness and daring of his wife (more about that story another time) and they were able to live out the war by moving out of the village to my home town of Sremska Mitrovica. The events of the war and her husband’s survival were the occasions that led to a deepening of my grandmother’s faith and an inner pledge she made to God to live in piety in gratitude for his saving blessings during the war. Since the war, she dressed in black the rest of her life, in a perpetual mourning for her father. The usual pious tradition in Serbia was to dress in Crnina (“blackness”) for one year when mourning a loved one but she kept up her mourning dress all her life. From that time, also, she regularly attended church services, as long as her legs allowed her to walk to church, and she kept up her strict fasting regimen until her death. Aka, as we called her, was one of the leaders in our town of an Orthodox prayer society called the “Bogomoljci.” Not to be confused with the medieval heresy called *Bogomilism*, this society was not a heretical sect but a pious Orthodox lay society that met for prayer meetings in people’s houses. Before the war, the Bogomoljci was formed spontaneously as a grass roots movement among the Serbs to combat the growing tide of secularism and communism in Yugoslavia. Their great spiritual leader was Saint Nikolai Velimirovic and in the 1930s, he would preach at outdoor prayer meetings with crowds of over 100,000. After the war, with the persecution of religion in Yugoslavia, the Bogomoljci were able to meet privately in people’s houses during a time when being seen in church was not good for your material wellbeing, and Aka’s house was the site of weekly meetings.

Aka’s fasting would consist of what were called oil fasts and water fasts. She followed all the prescribed fasts of the Church and consulted her calendar every day to see which days were water fasts. Water fasts were days that no oil was allowed and she would say that she was fasting “on water” those days. What that meant is that she would substitute water for oil in the roux she used to make her daily thick soups, or “chushpaiz.” This incidentally came from the German “zu Speis” which means “before meals” (I think). During the “water fasts,” her normal routine would be to make a roux with water, salt and flour, then add string beans, lentils or kidney beans and boil until cooked. She would eat this with bread for lunch and dinner and for breakfast, she would have piece of bread with fruit jam. The “oil fasts” wouldn’t change the menu at all, they just involved the addition of cooking oil to the roux. She never made a fuss or talked about her fasting. She just stuck to her calendar and her prayers. Prayers would be done at night, before retiring and would often last an hour or two, as she prayed for her whole family, both living and asleep in the Lord. My grandmother, while a stern and serious woman in her old age, was completely sincere and rock solid in her faith. She also loved her grandchildren enormously and would light up when seeing them, calling them her “sunshine,” or her “soul”. Despite her serious nature, she enjoyed the old music of her youth, sometimes singing along when it was played in a beautiful high voice; and would often enjoy a glass of plum brandy before good meal and a glass of beer (*on non-fasting days of course*).

My grandmother has always been my ideal of a strong, and pious Christian woman; I will always treasure her memory. Ω



## Financial Summary

Expenses	
<b>B&amp;G Op</b>	Hosp. Proj 770.80
Electricity 3,658.50	<b>LG Op</b>
Exterior Maintenance 2,812.94	Candles 1,512.71
Interior Maintenance 574.02	Flowers and Palms 241.40
<b>TOTAL B&amp;G Op 7,045.46</b>	Miscellaneous 1,010.50
<b>B&amp;G Proj 857.00</b>	Publications & Subscriptions 20.00
Physical Development Plan 195.20	Sanctuary Supplies 995.61
Sacristy Windows 0.00	Vestments & Altar Covers 25.99
<b>TOTAL B&amp;G Proj 1,052.20</b>	<b>TOTAL LG Op 3,806.21</b>
Bookstore Transfer 27.11	LG Proj 0.00
Cash 0.00	Iconography Project 0.00
Charity Operating 16,926.69	<b>TOTAL LG Proj 0.00</b>
<b>Comm Op</b>	<b>Lib. Op</b>
Telephone 1,893.42	Acquisitions 506.62
<b>TOTAL Comm Op 1,893.42</b>	Lib. Op- Miscellaneous 30.70
<b>Comm Proj</b>	<b>TOTAL Lib. Op 537.32</b>
Web Upgrade 679.34	Mortgage principal 9172.06
<b>TOTAL Comm Proj 679.34</b>	Mortgage interest 12,796.79
Consistory Special Assessment 504.00	<b>PB Op</b>
<b>E&amp;O Op</b>	Compensation 51,272.40
Advertising 3,848.96	Conference, Training & SOBOR 0.00
Conference and Training 625.94	Consistory Assessment 11,904.44
Miscellaneous 225.58	Event Expense 3,889.23
Printing & Publications 0.00	Insurance 1,519.00
<b>TOTAL E&amp;O Op 4,700.48</b>	Miscellaneous 529.07
<b>E&amp;O Proj 469.94</b>	Office Supplies 627.11
<b>Hosp. Op</b>	Retirement Contribution 9,374.00
Coffee Hour Food 3,110.55	<b>TOTAL PB Op 79,115.25</b>
Event Food 206.92	<b>RF Op</b>
Event Supplies 0.00	Adult Education 59.22
Kitchen Supplies 27.51	Conference, Training & Camp 0.00
Miscellaneous 58.83	Festival of the Book 0.00
<b>TOTAL Hosp. Op 3,403.81</b>	Retreats 0.00
	<b>TOTAL RF Op 59.22</b>
	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES 142,960.10</b>

### A Few Notes on Finances

The Lord has provided graciously for us as a parish in 2015, as our income exceeded our expenses once again, by just under \$1000. Some of the funds in our project account are restricted funds, meaning that they were donated for specific intentions such as the iconography project, hence we will make those available in 2016 as needed.

As a result of the deliberations of our Buildings and Grounds Service Group and Parish Board, the decision was made in January to begin a phase in of a new HVAC system for the Church. The dome installation is underway and the funds for this are available from reserve funds. The decision to do phase 2 of the the HVAC installation will be made, pending sufficient cash flow.

INCOME	
Collection	137,221.76
Candles	2,683.12
Charity	1,067.95
Collection	0.00
<b>TOTAL Charity 1,067.95</b>	
Golf	400.00
Iconography Project	1,487.00
Other	822.00
<b>TOTAL Collection 143,681.83</b>	
Interest Inc	105.99
<b>TOTAL INCOME 143,787.82</b>	

### Account Balances - As of 3/31/2016

Account	3/31/2016 Balance
<b>Bank Accounts</b>	
Contingency	15,253.51
General	20,953.14
Project	15,259.26
<b>TOTAL Bank Accounts 51,465.91</b>	
<b>Liability Accounts</b>	
Mortgage Principal	-252,175.39
<b>TOTAL Liability Accounts -252,175.39</b>	
<b>OVERALL TOTAL -200,709.48</b>	

Key: Op =Operations, Proj = Projects according to the service groups. So - BG Op means Buildings and Grounds operations. Hosp. Proj. means Hospitality Projects. Categories listed in alphabetical

## Religious Formation Service Group

The Religious Formation Service group met for the first time in recent memory to begin again the vital work of tending to the Christian educational needs of the parish. If we are not paying attention to our progress in the Faith, both individually and collectively, we will be regressing. There is no static position that will last indefinitely. The Apostle Peter urges us to "...giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge..." 2 Peter 2:5

The Apostle Paul warns us against neglecting our faith in this passage, "Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?" Hebrews 2:1-4

Let us all then take these words to heart and diligently tend to the garden of our souls and minds in which our most holy Faith has taken root. Please pray for this service group that the Lord would direct our steps for the benefit of all, both within our parish family and the world in which we live out this faith. "Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." Jude 1:3

Basil Finnegan, Coordinator

## Making Connections Through Christian Service

Earlier this month, Oliver Filutowski took a week away from his med school studies to join an OCF Real Break team serving the **Hogar Rafael Orphanage** in Guatemala. Over the years, a number of our parish members (and some 'old' ones) have journeyed south to support this precious ministry. While there Oliver connected with Mother Alexandra, who was a frequent visitor to our community for a period of time before relocating to monastery in Guatemala. We were able to send a check from the Charity Fund to the orphanage, in effect, allowing you to 'connect' in a real way to the ministry there.



Also, we continue to hear from our brother in the Lord, Bill Black who's teaching as a missionary at the Patriarchal Seminary in Kenya.

May God bless those providing this ministry in an ongoing way - and if you would like to participate in any of the ministries of the UOC (orphanage trip) or national Orthodox ministries like OCMC or IOCC, we may be able to partner with you and your work in some manner, financially and spiritually.

## UOC Camping Programs for 2016

As a parish, we fully support the efforts of our Church to provide special opportunities for our youth to grow in the faith through an enriching camping program at our beautiful All Saints Camp in Emlenton, Pa. Over the years, a number of our parish youth have participated and we may provide some financial aid 'scholarships' to our parish members for this purpose.

This year, there are four encampments - Diocesan Church School, Teenage Conference, Mommy and Me / Daddy and Me, and a new camp this year - the St. Nicholas Camp for special needs youth and their parents.

If you have any questions about the Camp, feel free to contact our UOC Youth minister, Ms. Natalie Kapeluck Nixon at uocyouth@aol.com. **Staffing Opportunities** are available for those over 18 who have the desire and maturity to provide support to the campers during their stay. While the pay isn't great, the blessings are tremendous and it's a great way to meet other young people in a common, sacred service. And do contact Fr. Robert about the scholarship opportunities made available from our Charity Fund.