

THE TRISAGION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

Life: Christ's Victory over Death



Last month in D.C., Holy Trinity and Chapel faithful stood in defense of the unborn and saw the first flakes of the Blizzard of 2016.

by Fr. Steven Kostoff

Friday, January 22, 2016 marked the 43rd anniversary of the infamous Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court decision of 1973 that effectively legalized unrestricted access to abortion in the United States of America. Despite [the] impending ominous weather, tens of thousands of people of faith—including many Orthodox Christians—marched in the nation's capital to express our strong disagreement with such a law...

Our “peaceful protests”—violent protests by “pro-life” advocates are hardly justifiable—afford us the opportunity to remind ourselves of the Church's ancient rejection of abortion. As the Church began to expand in its initial period of growth, it came into contact and conflict with the Roman Empire and the

proliferation of beliefs and practices that characterized the Empire's prevailing culture. As the “superpower” of its day, the Empire imposed itself both militarily and culturally on its far-flung territories and inhabitants. Both abortion and infanticide were widespread practices, hardly challenged, I believe, for the most part.

An early formulation of Christian resistance to these practices can be found in the *Didache*, a document that dates back to the early second century, in which we read, “Do not commit adultery; do not corrupt children; do not fornicate; do not steal; do not practice magic; do not go in for sorcery; do not murder a child by abortion or kill a new-born infant” (II, 2).

(continued, see LIFE, page 3)

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH
119 S. Sparks Street
State College, PA 16801

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
STATE COLLEGE, PA
PERMIT NO. 289

Schedules

	COFFEE HOUR	GREETERS	TELLERS	SERVERS
February 7	E. George and K. Oleynik	B. Roberts and M. Fedkin	G. Cattell and M. Fedkin	Team A
February 14	P. Doty and C. Strauss	M. Thompson and J. Houser	R. Patel and S. Stevens	Team B
February 21	A. Petrick and L. Radomsky	J. Pettengill and S. Pettengill	H. Torbic and M. Stevens	Team A
February 28	B. & N. Troyan and A. Stickers	I. Radomsky and M. Radomsky	G. Cattell and B. Haupt	Team B
March 6	Russian Ladies	A. Swisher and D. Swisher	M. Fedkin and S. Stevens	Team A
March 13	BLINI LUNCHEON	B. Roberts and E. Miranda	R. Patel and H. Torbic	Team B
* Denotes Fast				
** Denotes switch/change				
	Team A: A. Miranda, N. Pelikan, D. Stickers, J. Torbic, E. Swisher and J. Swisher.			Captains: D. Torbic and S. Oleynik
	Team B: J. Cadman, C. Legaspi, N. McFarland, B. Oleynik, S. Patel, and L. Torbic.			

■ FROM THE RECTOR'S DESK

Are We Wounded by Christ's Love?

The days are already noticeably longer since the darkest day of the past year, the solstice right before Christmas. In the more than 40 days since that time, we have listened to many references to the light of Christ's appearing. It was the constant theme during Theophany and home blessings.

Now, at the Feast of the Presentation celebrated last Tuesday, the Light image culminates with Simeon's prophecy: Christ is a Light to enlighten the Gentiles and the glory of God's people, Israel. Our Lord's unique role in our salvation is revealed, he is the hope and salvation of the entire world.

But at the same time, the Prophetess Anna also speaks of Christ's mother. Her role, too, is unique. She will bear the pain of that revelation all the way to the cross for "a sword shall pierce her heart." She will be in fact wounded by her love of Christ and serve as the model of all the faithful who would follow her son.

Let's ask ourselves: Are we wounded by his love as well? An angel revealed God's will that she be his mother. Magi brought gifts. Herod sought to slay her newborn child. Mary took all these things and treasured them in her heart, willing to be with her Son until the end, despite the uncertainty and the pain that her love for him brought her.

Mary stays with Christ until the End precisely because of her hope, her faith that Christ is not only her Son but her God and her Savior. Truly, love for Christ will bring pain and uncertainty to our lives as well. Yes, He is the Light of the world, but much of the world still prefers darkness to Light. Knowing that He is the Light, however, is our constant reminder that no matter how dark our days, our love of him lightens our path. This is why Mary could walk all the way to the Cross, not truly comprehending her Son but wounded by her love for him.

Soon, it is our time to walk to the Cross once again: Lent and Holy Week and Pascha. Christ enlightening our way there and Mary showing us how we are to get there. We won't be able to comprehend it all. We can arrive there nevertheless, if we are wounded by our love for him as we go.

From the Rector's Desk,
Fr. John

P.S.: Speaking of being wounded by love, our parish has been walking in grief this past month with the Swisher family at the tragic loss of their youngest son, Jordon on January 4. Continue to keep them in your prayers and to keep walking with them. A 40-day memorial for Jordon is scheduled for Sunday, February 14.

Challenge Yourself to Raise Your Giving

Last year, our weekly giving average was roughly \$4,000 each Sunday (see 2015 Financial Review, last pages), far less than the \$4,800 per week we need. I humbly ask that you prayerfully consider challenging yourself and your family to increase your giving by a significant amount this year.

If you are already giving a portion of your income, consider increasing it by a percentage point in 2016. (For example if you currently give 2%, raise it to 3%; the goal to work toward is the biblical tithe of ten percent.)

If you aren't giving a percentage of your income, but give regularly, determine the percentage you gave last year and consider raising your giving by an additional percentage point.

If you only give when you attend, consider that the parish's expenses are constant week after week, month after month, and year after year. Then, come up with an amount you are willing to give each month, and give monthly.

I appeal to your ongoing generosity to Holy Trinity. May it be a blessing to you and your family.

— Robert F. Roberts
Council President

Chapel of the Holy Spirit

CATEGORY	2013 ACTUAL	2014 ACTUAL	2015 ACTUAL	2015 BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
INCOME					
<i>Stewardship Offerings</i>	\$32,814	\$32,798	\$21,690	\$31,108	87%
<i>Building Fund Donations</i>	2,975	3,419	5,247	—	—
<i>Memorial Fund</i>	—	169	—	—	—
<i>Charitable Appeals</i>	611	—	—	—	—
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	1,000	25	—	—	—
Total Income	\$37,400	\$36,411	\$26,937	\$31,108	87%
EXPENSES					
<i>Personnel</i>	15,650	14,700	8,408	7,700	109%
<i>Property/Mortgage</i>	569	10,211	2,744	4,400	62%
<i>Outreach and Fellowship</i>	1,295	3,661	2,826	1,625	174%
<i>Liturgical</i>	584	1,320	986	575	172%
<i>Furnishings</i>	542	127	326	500	65%
<i>Office Administration</i>	60	89	178	295	60%
<i>Christian Education</i>	204	387	112	200	56%
<i>Utilities</i>	90	—	339	200	170%
Total Expenses	\$18,994	\$30,495	\$15,919	\$15,495	103%
NET INCOME (EXPENSES)	\$18,406	\$5,915	\$11,018	\$15,613	71%

A Truly Blessed and Active First Month at Trinity House

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Trinity House officially opened on January 10 as youth in the High, Middle, and both Elementary Sunday School classes filled the upper, main, and lower levels, respectively. The following week, members of the Penn State Orthodox Christian Fellowship gathered for their first time in Atty Student Lounge to celebrate the new center and the New Year. This month, the Altar Society will hold its first meeting in Trinity House on Saturday, February 6 at 10 a.m. and the Women's Ministry will host its first event there too: a "game night" potluck on Friday the 12th at 7 p.m.



■ 2015 FINANCIAL YEAR IN REVIEW

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

CATEGORY	2013 ACTUAL	2014 ACTUAL	2015 ACTUAL	2015 BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
INCOME					
Budgeted Income					
Stewardship Offerings	\$183,111	\$209,471	\$209,054	\$231,284	90%
Parking	3,195	1,825	5,257	4,500	117%
Candles and Flowers	3,225	3,519	3,723	2,600	143%
Interest Income/AmazonSmile	383	195	88	100	88%
Budgeted Appeals (OCF, Deacon Support, Missions, etc.)	10,233	7,280	5,733	8,000	72%
Total Budgeted Income	\$200,147	\$222,290	\$223,855	\$246,484	91%
Non-Budgeted Income					
Funds Income (Bookstore, Building, Memorials, etc.)	17,500	131,544	74,608	—	—
Charitable Appeals Income (Special, Matthew 25, etc.)	17,456	15,960	7,782	—	—
Total Non-Budgeted Income	\$34,956	\$147,504	\$82,391	—	—
Total Income	\$235,103	\$369,794	\$306,246	—	—
EXPENSES					
Budgeted Expenses					
Personnel	\$132,471	\$135,501	\$141,844	\$144,370	98%
Mortgage	17,316	18,254	28,573	28,573	100%
Archdiocesan Assessment	20,469	22,547	21,496	21,530	100%
Utilities	5,080	6,142	9,409	10,346	91%
Outreach/Fellowship	12,502	10,488	11,384	10,000	114%
Physical Plant	3,692	6,539	9,938	7,000	142%
Office Administration	4,195	8,859	5,717	5,100	112%
Liturgical	8,514	9,895	7,258	4,675	155%
Christian Education	2,923	2,724	3,066	3,600	85%
Insurance	1,553	2,088	2,482	3,020	82%
Discretionary	1,399	2,478	1,250	1,250	100%
All-American Council Deposit	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	100%
Refurnishings	1,418	—	—	750	0%
Miscellaneous (Legal/Professional/Bank Fees, etc.)	109	336	2,529	270	937%
(Transfer to Savings/Property Reserve)	—	5,000	5,000	5,000	100%
Total Budgeted Expenses	\$212,641	\$231,851	\$250,946	\$246,484	102%
Non-Budgeted Expenses					
Funds Expenditures	11,960	126,115	29,928	—	—
Charitable Expenditures	18,685	16,243	5,588	—	—
Total Non-Budgeted Expenses	\$30,645	\$142,358	\$35,516	—	—
Total Expenses	\$243,286	\$374,208	\$286,462	—	—
NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	(\$8,183)	(\$4,415)	\$19,784	—	—

■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

Life: The Expression of God's Creativity

(Continued from page 1.)

In the fourth century, Saint Basil the Great wrote the following: *“Those who give potions for the destruction of the child conceived in the womb are murderers, as are those who take potions which kill the child”* (Letter 188, Canon 8). St. Basil clearly does not apply all of the responsibility for this decision upon the mother of the child, but includes those who provide the “service.” In today’s world, one can only imagine the enormous pressure placed upon a young and vulnerable woman to “terminate” an “unwanted pregnancy” by those around her, including her “medical advisors.” The pressure increases with the psychological assurance that what is legal cannot be wrong—though one’s maternal intuitions and instincts may be offering an internal protest of a different nature.

It is essential to offer a positive response rather than simply rejecting abortion as immoral, though our very human instincts make such a rejection perfectly natural. As Christians, we must continue to affirm the sacred gift of life within the context of what some have gone so far as to name a “culture of death”—in my opinion, not an unfair characterization... [S]uch an affirmation [is] at the very beginning of Fr. John Breck’s wonderful book, *The Sacred Gift of Life*, a theological, bioethical and pastoral articulation of

what the Church has proclaimed “from the beginning”—the victory of life over death in Christ:

Orthodox Christianity affirms that life is a gift, freely bestowed by the God of love... Human life, therefore, is to be received and welcomed with an attitude of joy and thanksgiving. It is to be cherished, preserved and protected as the most sublime expression of God’s creative activity. God has brought us “from non-being into being” for more than mere biological existence. He has chosen us for Life, of which the ultimate end is participation in the eternal glory of the Risen Christ, “in the inheritance of the saints in light” (Col. 1:12; Eph. 1:18).

We cannot simply be content with denouncing abortion as an evil practice, true as that may be. We must actively seek to alleviate the conditions of those tempted into such a decision because of their harsh environments or marginalized social status. Compassion—more than judgment—can be a much more effective response to a deeply troubling practice that wounds the sensibility and soul of any Christian who is aware of the God of life, Who has granted us life abundantly in Christ Jesus. ■

EDITOR’S NOTE: Fr. Steven Kostoff is the rector of Christ the Savior in Cincinnati. More of his articles can be found at oca.org/reflections.

Other Pro-life Events

Annual Auction to be Held February 7

Centre County Citizens Concerned for Human Life, (CCHL) a local pro-life organization, will sponsor a fundraising auction and garage sale at 10 a.m. on Saturday, February 6 at the Knights of Columbus Hall (850 Stratford Drive in State College). Doors will open at 9 a.m. Donations of new or like-new items are requested. Call 237-3213 for more information.

Regional Pro-Life Oratory Contest

The 2016 Pennsylvania Pro-Life Federation Essay Contest is accepting entries through March 7, 2016. To win, participants must write a pro-life essay about abortion, euthanasia or stem cell research. There is a 500-word limit for grades 7-9 and a 750-word limit for grades 10-12. Video submissions are also being accepted this year. Cash prizes will be awarded to the top finishers. For a full list of guidelines or for more information, visit paprolife.org.

Holy Trinity Calendar

All events take place at 119 South Sparks Street in State College, unless where noted.
Events listed at **Trinity House** take place at 123 South Sparks Street, in State College.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
January 31 Sunday School, 9am (<i>Locations vary; All classes begin in the Parish Hall.</i>) Matins, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am Archdiocesan Youth Ice Skating Outing 3:30pm-5:30pm @ PPG Rink, Pittsburgh	February 1 Great Vespers/Litiya/ Blessing of Candles, 7pm	2 MEETING OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE Divine Liturgy, 8am (<i>Hours, 7:40am</i>)	3 Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions Clergy Staff Meeting, 7pm	4 Penn State Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF): Weekly Dinner and Discussion, 6pm @ 122 Pasquerilla Center	5	6 Altar Society Meeting, 10am @ Trinity House—Conference Room Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
7 Matins/Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am Penn State OCF: Super Bowl Party, 5:30pm-10pm @ Trinity House—Atty Student Lounge	8 Young Adult Potluck and Game Night, 6pm @ 4817 W. Whitehall Rd., Pennsylvania Furnace (Leathers' Home)	9 Homeless Ministry, 4pm @ Centre House, 217 E. Nittany Ave.	10 Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions Parish Council Meeting, 7pm	11 Penn State OCF: Dinner and Discussion, 6pm @ 122 Pasquerilla Center	12 Women's Game Night and Potluck, 7pm @ Trinity House—Atty Lounge Winter Camp (gr. 7-12) Begins (thru. Monday) @ Antiochian Village, Bolivar, PA	13 Children's Choir Rehearsal, 5:15pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
14 Zacchaeus Sunday Matins/Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am 40-Day Memorial for Jordon Swisher, 11:45am Parents Session, 12:15pm @ Trinity House—Lower Level	15 Penn State OCF: Student Night, 7pm @ Trinity House—Atty Lounge	16	17 Vespers, 5:30pm (<i>No Confessions</i>)	18 Penn State OCF: Dinner and Prayer Night, 6pm @ Eisenhower Chapel & 122 Pasquerilla Center	19	20 Men's Fellowship Breakfast, 9am Vespers, 6pm (<i>No Confessions</i>)
21 Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee (Fast Free Week) Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (<i>Hours, 9:40am</i>) Orthodox Youth Association (OYA, gr. 9-12) & Jr. OYA (gr. 5-8) Monthly Activity, 6pm	22	23	24 First and Second Finding of the Head of St. John Vespers, 5:30pm (<i>No Confessions</i>)	25 Penn State OCF: Dinner and Discussion, 6pm @ 122 Pasquerilla Center	26	27 St. Raphael of Brooklyn Children's Choir Rehearsal, 5:15pm Vespers, 6pm (<i>No Confessions</i>)
28 Sunday of the Prodigal Son Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (<i>Hours, 9:40am</i>)	29 Penn State OCF: Student Night, 7pm @ Trinity House—Atty Lounge	March 1 Matthew 25 Lenten Drive Organizational Meeting, 3:30pm	2 Vespers, 5:30pm (<i>No Confessions</i>)	3 Penn State OCF: Dinner and Discussion, 6pm @ 122 Pasquerilla Center	4	5 Memorial Saturday of Meatfare Vespers, 6pm (<i>No Confessions</i>)
6 Sunday of the Last Judgment—Meatfare Sunday Divine Liturgy, 10am (<i>Hours, 9:40am; No Sunday School</i>)	7	8 Homeless Ministry, 4pm @ Centre House, 217 E. Nittany Ave.	9 Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions Parish Council Meeting, 7pm	10 Penn State OCF: Dinner and Discussion, 6pm @ 122 Pasquerilla Center	11	12 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions

Chapel Calendar

All events take place at the new building (145 North Kern Street) in Beavertown, unless where noted.

Tuesday 2 MEETING OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE (<i>Hours/Divine Liturgy, 7:40am @ Holy Trinity</i>) Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm	Sunday 21 Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee (Fast Free) Hours, 9:40am Obednitsa with Holy Communion, 10am Book Study, 12:30pm
Saturday 6 Great Vespers, 6pm	Tuesday 23 Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm
Sunday 7 Hours, 9:40am Divine Liturgy, 10am Book Study: "The Tools of Spiritual Warfare," 12:30pm	Sunday 28 Sunday of the Prodigal Son Hours, 9:40am Obednitsa with Holy Communion, 10am Book Study, 12:30pm
Tuesday 9 Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm	Tuesday March 1 Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm
Sunday 14 Zacchaeus Sunday Hours, 9:40am Obednitsa with Holy Communion, 10am Book Study: "The Tools of Spiritual Warfare," 12:30pm	Saturday 5 Great Vespers, 6pm
Tuesday 16 Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm	Sunday 6 Sunday of the Last Judgment (Meatfare) Hours, 9:40am Obednitsa with Holy Communion, 10am Book Study, 12:30pm
Saturday 19 Vespers, 6pm	Tuesday 8 Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm

February 2016