

THE TRISAGION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

A New Ministry for the Parish



Father John, center, gathers with the teachers and students of the Sunday School on the first day of class. Sunday School is one among many ministries kicking off this month (the first day of class is September 11), but Father's new ministry may be the most significant of them all.

by Fr. John Reeves

IN JULY, DEACON ALEXANDER AND I set down to review ministry surveys and plan the next Church year in the parish. Our mission was to strengthen existing ministries, to eliminate any which might have outlived its purpose, and to add new opportunities for outreach in the community.

Thirty days later, we are all trying to take in, to make sense of, the confirmation which I received from the doctor that I am suffering from melanoma, a particularly aggressive form of cancer. On the one hand, this seems to alter plans we were laying. On the other, not so much as first might be thought.

(continued, see A NEW MINISTRY, next page)

Homeless Ministry Impacts Lives

by Samar Maalouf

Holy Trinity partners with Housing Transitions in State College to reach out to people going through life crises and help them get back on their feet. Here are two examples of people touched by our efforts. Sheri, a 53-year-old woman with no family, no job, and no driver's license, who is recovering from alcoholism and an abusive relationship, had this to say about Centre House, the shelter run by Housing Transitions: "I did it the wrong way so many times before... I'm doing things the right way this time and I'm excited about my future."

(continued, see CENTRE HOUSE TESTIMONIES, last pages)

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Schedules

	COFFEE HOUR	GREETERS	TELLERS	SERVERS
September 4	Russian Ladies	J. Fryncko and J. Cadman**	H. Torbic and M. Stevens	Team B
September 11	A.T. Pelikan and I. Miranda	B. Roberts and M. Fedkin**	B. Haupt and G. Cattell	Team A
September 18	H. Torbic and M. Thompson	M. Thompson and J. Houser	M. Fedkin and S. Stevens	Team B
September 25	J. Fryncko and K. Cattell	L. Radomsky and M. Radomsky	H. Torbic and R. Patel	Team A
October 2	J. Cadman and B. Roberts**	J. Pettengill and S. Pettengill	B. Haupt and M. Stevens	Team B
October 9	A. Legaspi and D. Van Duin	A. Swisher and D. Swisher	G. Cattell and M. Fedkin	Team A

* Denotes Fast Team A: A. Miranda, N. Pelikan, D. Stickle, J. Torbic, E. Swisher and J. Swisher. Captains: D. Torbic and S. Oleyznik
 ** Denotes switch/change Team B: J. Cadman, C. Legaspi, N. McFarland, B. Oleyznik, S. Patel, and L. Torbic.

■ FROM THE RECTOR'S DESK

A New Ministry for the Parish (continued from pg. 1)

Yes, there were some new, teaching ministries that I was looking forward to beginning. They will have to wait a while, or at least have to take a different shape. Despite these setbacks, there is a new parish ministry beginning which Deacon Alex and I could not have foreseen only a month ago.

That new ministry, as I see it, is to lead you, this parish, in the midst of my potentially life-threatening illness. While it is not one I that intended, or would have chosen, it is one that now I welcome. I welcome it because I believe that God has put this challenge before me, to be the ultimate confirmation of my calling and priesthood, to strengthen me and to strengthen you.

If we take seriously the fact that every liturgy begins with blessing the Kingdom, a kingdom which is and yet is to come, all of our life must be lived in preparation for entering that Kingdom. It is to this end that I see this new chapter in my priesthood.

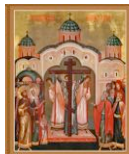
Perhaps all of my previous priestly ministry has been more of a theory about entering fully into the Kingdom of God. Now, the path before me is to let that faith pass ever more from my head to my heart.

Holy Days this Month



NATIVITY OF OUR MOST-HOLY LADY, THE THEOTOKOS

Vespers: Wednesday, Sept. 7, 7pm
Liturgy: Thursday, Sept. 8, 7am



EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS

Vespers: Tuesday, Sept. 13, 7pm
Obednitsa with Holy Communion: Wednesday, Sept. 14, 8am

Holy Unction Service for Fr. John to be Held Sept. 7

The entire parish is invited to witness the Mystery of Holy Unction for Fr. John on Wednesday, September 7 at 12:30 p.m. For those coming from work and other commitments, budget approximately 90 minutes for the service. This is an opportunity for as many of us as possible to pray alongside Father as we ask our Lord to heal Father's body and soul.

His Eminence, our Archbishop Melchisedek, our Dean, Fr. Mark Meholick, and clergy from around the country will come to be with us. In addition, several former members of the parish who have gone to serve the Church as priests will return to celebrate. Also anointing Father will be members of a pan-Orthodox support group he participates in.

Archbishop Melchisedek will stay in town through the Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos, September 7-8. Welcome and thank you to all our visiting clergy.

Saints, martyrs, faithful in every generation have expressed faith in the Resurrection and have grounded their hope in Life Eternal, looking ever to Jesus, the Author and the Finisher of our faith. Truly, to quote Jarislav Pelikan, "If Christ is risen, nothing else matters; and if Christ is not risen, nothing else matters."

This is where I find myself, called to confess existentially what I have professed intellectually and theologically over the years, and thereby to continue leading you to the Kingdom of God, as well.

This is my new ministry. Already, I count it a blessing. ■

From the Rector's Desk,
Fr. John

Trinity's team of volunteers, Margaret comes back to Centre House regularly and helps prepare meals, part of her giving back to her community.

Volunteers from Holy Trinity visit Centre House every second Tuesday of the month. There they cook, share a meal and spend time with the residents. It is a great time to chat with the residents, play with the kids, or just listen to whatever the residents would like to share. For one night a month, we are the big sisters and brothers to our little siblings in Christ, showing them His love.

Holy Trinity also helps homeless at the shelter by collecting quarters for them to use for laundry. Those coins help the residents keep clean and stay integrated in society. The quarter collection box is found in the Parish Hall by the entrance to the kitchen.

I have been in this ministry for the past four years. I first thought of it as a way for me to share my meals with someone rather than eating alone. It was more

On Doing Good for Others

Good and evil both increase at compound interest. That is why the little decisions you and I make every day are of such infinite importance. The smallest good act today is the capture of a strategic point from which, a few months later, you may be able to go on to victories you never dreamed of. An apparently trivial indulgence in lust or anger today is the loss of a ridge or railway line or bridgehead from which the enemy may launch an attack otherwise impossible.

— C.S. Lewis

them helping me than me helping them. They are good people who give me a sense of appreciation for life and the opportunities that God gives us everyday!

To be part of the homeless ministry, pick the second Tuesday of your preferred month and contact me at samaralmaalouf@gmail.com, I will be happy to add your name to the calendar. Open dates are September 13 and December 13 of 2016, and any month in 2017. For more information on Housing Transitions and Centre House visit housingtransitions.org. ■

■ MATTHEW 25

The Joy of Christ Can Be Ours by Melody Thompson

How joyfully we would serve Christ if we could see Him in front of us and personally hear his request for food, clothing, or other human needs. Wouldn't we drop whatever we were doing and minister to Him? Such joy can be ours; it is truly within our reach. Christ Himself tells us that He is with us in anyone around us who has such human needs, and that in ministering to them we minister to Him: "Inasmuch as you have done it to the least of these my brethren, you have done it to me."

The *Matthew 25* ministry group reaches out and helps disadvantaged and underprivileged persons outside our parish in accordance with this Gospel message. Parish-wide drives occur during August and the Lenten, Thanksgiving, and Christmas seasons.

We have worked to meet a wide range of needs for local school children, single mothers, disaster victims, mental health clients, an Orthodox orphanage, and prisoners, among others. Members participate in some or all of the activities as their schedules permit.



After spending the morning sorting and shopping, Mt. 25 volunteers stretch out a receipt listing \$1,616.17 of newly bought back-to-school items.

Please prayerfully consider enriching your life and the lives of others by joining this ministry. For more information, email matthew25@holyltrinity-oca.org or see me or Deacon Alex. ■

■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

Happy Church New Year

by Fr. Thaddaeus Hardenbrook

We've completed our annual cycle of remembering, celebrating, and entering into God's plan for our salvation: the prophecies, His birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and the sacramental presence of His body, the Church.

From a human perspective, we can be tempted with frustration at times when moving from the end of something back to its beginning—doing it over again. Yet in the case of the liturgical year, we give thanks to God that we can once again joyfully celebrate His benevolence towards us. For in our finite state we need fresh starts, and this is one of them.

From the culmination of Pascha, Ascension, Pentecost, and Transfiguration, we move back to the beginning events, the Nativity of the Mother of God and the Nativity of the Son of God Himself. We start this life-giving cycle over again, and the Holy Spirit, to the degree that we participate, further increases in us the sacramental realities that propel our salvation.

God, who created and loves us, knows our human frailty and our need for renewal. Marriages have their anniversaries, children their birthdays, the departed their memorials, and the saints their feasts.

Centre House Testimonies

(continued from pg. 1)

The hospitality of the shelter's staff and volunteers helped Sheri get back on her feet. Now, more than a year sober, Sheri has a full time job and has been named employee of the month.

Sheri is not alone. After struggling with addiction, debt, failed relationships and failed businesses, Margaret was about to pull the trigger and end her

These are milestones of progress and sources of motivation for us, seasons of opportunity as we spiral ever upward towards heaven.

Notice that the last great feast of the closing year is the Dormition of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, while the first great feast of the New Year is her Nativity. Christ is the beginning and end of all things Christian. Yet the Theotokos is the chosen passage, the gate through which the incarnate Son entered into the world and opened the way of salvation for all mankind. Therefore her birth and death, that is her entire life, encapsulate the earthly life of Christ, as her womb mysteriously circumscribed Him.

The Church celebrates this day by thanking God for the spiritual and material harvests of the past year, beseeching Him for fair weather, seasonable rains, and an abundant harvest of grace and physical well-being in the year to come. This is a good time for each of us to do the same. Take a moment during personal prayers, driving in the car alone, when the kids are napping, or at any other convenient time, and thank God for what the last year offered in both blessings and challenges.

Happy New Year! ■

life. But God had another plan—Housing Transitions provided her with the love she was missing.

“One of the things I tell people is when they are in situations, like being homeless, is that Centre House is such a nurturing environment,” she said. “There's just love here. You feel it when you walk in the door. I always felt that here.”

Since then, Margaret has built a career, paid her debt, and been sober for the past 10 years. Like Holy

Women's Book Study Set to Start

The Women's Book Study returns this Tuesday, September 13 at 10 a.m., and alternating Tuesdays thereafter through November 8. The group will meet in the Trinity House Conference Room and will study the life of Mother Alexandria, founder of the Monastery of the Transfiguration in Ellwood City. The books can be purchased in the bookstore for \$12. Mary Lanser will lead a discussion on the first chapter at the initial meeting. For more information, email women@holyltrinity-oca.org.

Online Giving Portal Opens

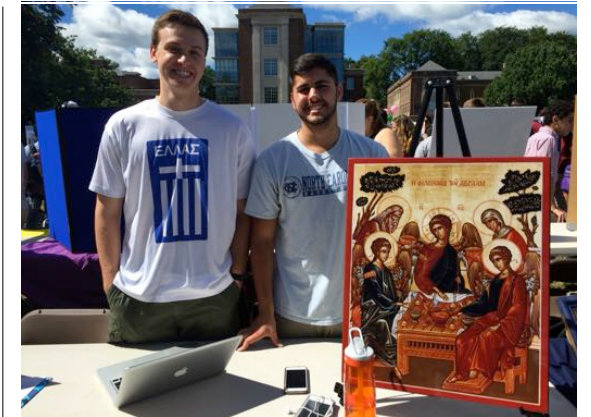
After the summer in development, eTithing officially became active at holyltrinity-oca.org/give on August 31. Now, at no cost to you—and at a minimal cost to the parish (on average, less than the price of offering envelopes)—your donations can be withdrawn directly from your checking account, savings account, or debit card. In its first day of service alone, more than a half dozen people had used the payment portal. Be sure to give the new system a try and to send your feedback to online.giving@holyltrinity-oca.org.

Altar Society Appreciation RSVPs

As a reminder, the Altar Society will have a luncheon of appreciation for all current and prospective members. It will take place on Saturday, September 10 at 10 a.m. in the Trinity House Conference Room. RSVP to Matushka Linda (ljr8ster@gmail.com) by September 7 so we may have an accurate count for the meal.

Icon Painting Workshop

From November 6-12, the Bethany Retreat Center will host an opportunity to create an icon written in the ancient Byzantine style. Mary Kay Laplante will lead the class in creating an icon of the Mother of God using ancient techniques and natural materials. The cost is \$800 per person, which includes overnight accommodations, meals, class instruction, and all materials. Previous artistic experience is not necessary. For information email mklaplante11@gmail.com.



Dozens of Students Discover OCF at Involvement Fair

The Penn State Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) joined many of its fellow official student organizations on the HUB Lawn last month. One of the best opportunities for students to get involved in campus life, the annual Involvement Fair connected new and returning Orthodox students to the group and gave our OCF an opportunity to witness the Faith to passersby. The effort paid off—dozens of new students came to OCF's first meeting, the End-of-Summer BBQ at Spring Creek Park, and the Freshman Social at Trinity House. ■

■ NEWS AND NOTES

Sister Vassa to Speak in Eastern Pennsylvania Next Month

Sister Dr. Vassa [Larin], the well known nun and liturgist at the University of Vienna, Austria; and host of the popular catechetical YouTube series titled “Coffee with Sr. Vassa”, will offer presentations across eastern Pennsylvania this October.

On Monday, October 17, Sister Vassa will speak at Holy Cross Church, Williamsport, at 7 p.m. Saint Tikhon's Monastery and Seminary, South Canaan, will host Sister Vassa on Tuesday, October 18 at noon. She will be at Christ the Saviour Church, Harrisburg, on Wednesday, October 19 at 7 p.m.

The series is being presented by the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania and the Orthodox Council of Churches of South Central Pennsylvania. ■

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
28 Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Penn State Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) BBQ, 2pm-6pm @ Spring Creek Park, Houserville (Rides depart from HUB at 1:45pm.) Vespers, 7pm	29 Beheading of St. John the Forerunner	30 Penn State OCF Freshman Social, 7pm-10pm @ Atty Student Lounge, Trinity House	31 Vespers, 5:30pm Akathist to St. Nektarios of Pentapolis, 6:15pm	September 1 St. Simeon the Stylite (Church New Year) Penn State Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF): Dinner and Discussion, 6pm @ 124 Pasquerilla Center	2	3 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
4 Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Sunday School Student Registration, 11:45am-1pm	5 <i>Labor Day</i> (Trinity House and Parish Offices Closed)	6 Clergy Staff Meeting, 6pm	7 Holy Unction Service for Fr. John, 12:30pm Sunday School Teacher Meeting, 6:15pm Great Vespers with Litiya, 7pm Confessions	8 NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS Divine Liturgy, 7am (Hours, 6:40am) Penn State OCF: Dinner and Prayer Night, 6pm @ Pasquerilla Ctr.	9	10 Altar Society Appreciation Luncheon, 11am @ Trinity House Conference Room Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
11 Sunday Before the Elevation of the Cross First Day of Sunday School, 9am (Locations vary; All classes begin in the Parish Hall.) Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am)	12 Penn State Student Night, 7pm-10pm @ Atty Student Lounge, Trinity House	13 Women's Book Study, 10am @ Trinity House Conference Room Homeless Ministry, 4pm @ Centre House, 217 E. Nittany Ave. Great Vespers/Litiya, 7pm	14 ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS Obednitsa with Holy Communion, 8am Vespers, 5:30pm Akathist, 6:15pm Parish Council Mtg., 7pm	15 Penn State OCF: Dinner and Discussion, 6pm @ 124 Pasquerilla Center	16	17 Men's Fellowship Breakfast, 9am Vespers, 6pm (No Confessions)
18 Sunday After the Elevation of the Cross Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am)	19 Young Adult Fellowship Potluck, Campfire, and Game Night, 6pm @ Leathers' Home, 4817 W. Whitehall Rd.	20	21 Vespers, 5:30pm Akathist to St. Nektarios of Pentapolis, 6:15pm	22 Penn State OCF: Dinner and Game Night, 6pm @ 124 Pasquerilla Center	23 Conception of St. John the Forerunner	24 New Martyrs of Alaska Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
25 Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Sunday School Family Picnic, 4:30pm @ Circleville Park—Pavilion 2 (200 Little Lion Dr., Park Forest)	26 Penn State Student Night, 7pm-10pm @ Atty Student Lounge, Trinity House	27 Women's Book Study: "Royal Monastic Princess Ilenea: The Story of Mother Alexandra", 10am @ Trinity House Conference Room	28 Vespers, 5:30pm Akathist to the Most-Holy Theotokos, Healer of Cancer, 6:15pm	29 Penn State OCF: "Stump the Priest" Night, 6pm @ 124 Pasquerilla Center	30	October 1 Protection of the Theotokos Altar Society Meeting, 10am @ Trinity House Conference Room Vespers, 6pm (No Confessions)
2 Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Parents Session, 12pm @ Trinity House Lower Level Combined OYA (Orthodox Youth Association, gr. 9-12) and Jr. OYA (gr. 5-8) Monthly Outing, 6pm	3	4 Clergy Staff Meeting, 6pm	5 Vespers, 5:30pm Akathist to St. Nektarios of Pentapolis, 6:15pm	6 St. Innocent of Alaska Annual Women's Night Out, 6pm @ The Greek, 102 E. Clinton Ave. Penn State OCF: Dinner and Discussion, 6pm @ 124 Pasquerilla Center	7 Penn State OCF: Father's First Friday Film Series: Zorba the Greek, 7pm @ Atty Student Lounge, Trinity House	8 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions

Chapel Calendar

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

Saturday 3 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions	Saturday 17 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
Sunday 4 Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am)	Sunday 18 Sunday After the Elevation of the Cross Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am)
Tuesday 6 Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm	Tuesday 20 Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm
Thursday 8 NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS (Hours/Divine Liturgy @ Holy Trinity, 6:40am)	Saturday 24 Selinsgrove Market Street Festival Outreach , 8am-4:30pm
Sunday 11 Sunday Before the Elevation of the Cross Obednitsa with Holy Communion, 10am (Hours, 9:40am)	Sunday 25 Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am)
Tuesday 13 Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm	Monday 26 Monthly Women's "Hats and Blankets for Babies" Knitting/Crocheting Outreach, 6:30pm
Wednesday 14 ELEVATION OF THE CROSS (Deacon's Obednitsa with Holy Communion @ Holy Trinity, 8am)	Tuesday 27 Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm
	Saturday Oct. 1 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions

September 2016