

THE TRISAGION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

Preparing for Christ: A Women's Retreat



Photo Credit: IconSV.ru

The Parable of the Ten Bridesmaids from the Gospel of St. Matthew (25:1-13) will serve to highlight the Women's Retreat theme of watchfulness and prayer. Christ tells of ten virgins: five were prepared for the bridegroom's coming but five were not and locked out of the bridal-chamber, an image of heaven. The parable reminds us all to be prepared for the Day of Judgment.

THE ABBESS of the Orthodox Monastery of the Transfiguration in Ellwood City, PA, Mother Christophora (Matychak), will lead women in a day retreat devoted to prayer, worship, fellowship, and mutual support from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 11. The retreat, entitled "Preparing for Christ," will examine the life of Princess Ileana of Romania, who became Mother Alexandra and the founder of the monastery. Using the theme of prayer and watchfulness with the biblical book of Nehemiah and the Parable of the Ten Bridesmaids from Holy Tuesday as backdrops, Mother Christophora will offer two 75-minute sessions of instruction and group discussions. A third session will allow participants an additional time for questions and will act to conclude the day. Worship will bookend the retreat with the Memorial Divine Liturgy for the second Saturday of Lent in the morning (9 a.m.) and Great Vespers in the evening (6 p.m.). A schedule for the retreat can be found at holytrinity-oca.org.

Services will take place at Holy Trinity with sessions and meals (a continental breakfast and lunch) taking place at Trinity House. Mother Christophora will be joined by Mother Seraphima, née Sister Helene (Krenitsky), a Penn Statue alumnus (*Mechanical Eng., '05*) and former president of our Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) chapter who joined the monastery in 2009 and was recently tonsured to Little Schema by Archbishop Nathaniel on December 31, 2016.

The retreat is offered to all area ladies free of charge and is sponsored by Holy Trinity's Women's Ministry. Attendance at the ministry's Tuesday night Bible studies this spring will benefit participants, but is not required; all women are welcome to attend one or all the sessions and meals. (Registration is required, however, so an appropriate amount of food and refreshments can be prepared.) Email women@holytrinity-oca.org or call (814) 231-2855 to learn more or to RSVP. ■

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH
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Schedules

	COFFEE HOUR	GREETERS	TELLERS	SERVERS
March 5	Russian Ladies*	M. Thompson and J. Houser	G. Cartell and M. Stevens	Team B
March 12	A.T. Pelikan and J. Miranda*	J. Cadman and B. Haupt**	R. Patel and S. Stevens	Team A
March 19	H. Torbic and M. Thompson*	L. Radomsky and M. Radomsky	B. Haupt and H. Torbic	Team B
March 26	M. Leathers and A. Ashmore*	J. Pertengill and S. Pertengill**	G. Cartell and M. Fedkin	Team A
April 2	J. Cadman and L. Rush	B. Roberts and E. Miranda	R. Patel and M. Stevens	Team B
April 9	A. Legaspi and K. Cartell	J. Fryncko and M. Fedkin	S. Stevens and H. Torbic	Team A

* Denotes Fast
 ** Denotes scotch/change

Team A: A. Evans, N. Pelikan, D. Stickle, J. Torbic, C. Schnauf, 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 Living a Myth?

by Fr. Geoffrey Korz (via <http://asca.ca>)

The [last two] decades have seen the fastest decline in Church attendance in the history of the world. The persecutions in pagan Rome, threats from Muslim sultans, and the Soviet gulag had a slower effect on cutting into Church attendance than life in the comfy, modern world. But why is it happening?

For Orthodox Christians, who believe the old dictum “lex orandi, lex credendi” (the law of worship is the law of belief), this trend has chilling implications: for those who do not worship, belief is eroded, and spiritual strength is snuffed out. Ironically, Church attendance in the West today is not hit by persecution, but by seduction. The sword of the Ottoman janissary has been replaced by the lure of the shopping mall. The fear of starving to death in Siberia has been replaced with the comfort of bacon and eggs for breakfast. The threat of arrest by centurions—the threat that led to the liturgical command to bar “the doors, the doors” before the recitation of the Creed—this threat has been replaced by the fear of missed email or missed sleep.

In some cases, attending church is a reality check that many are unwilling to bear. While the world of spiritual books requires little change in the life of the reader, a conversation or Confession with a spiritual father makes certain demands on our Christian life... In all these cases, the Orthodox soul that endeavours to remain untested in his faith, remains outside actual Christian life. Living in two worlds, Orthodox life becomes the same as modern spiritual life: contrived, subjective, plastic, and fake.

When we are in a position where we might not attend the services of Christ's Church, we should ask ourselves:

- *Would I be staying home if this were a work day?*
- *Will my sickness be better if I stay at home?*
- *Am I further ahead to attend Church late, or not at all?*

Holy Days this Month

THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

Vespers: Friday, Mar. 24, 7pm
(A. Petrick, Icon)
(A.T. Pelikan, Litya Bread)

Liturgy: Saturday, Mar. 25, 6pm
(I. Andrzhievsky, Prospkhora)



Additional Liturgies:

DATE	TYPE	PROSPHORA
Wed., Mar. 1, 6pm	Presanctified	A.T. Pelikan
Wed., Mar. 8, 6pm	Presanctified	A.T. Pelikan
Sat., Mar. 11, 9am	Memorial	I. Andrzhievsky
Wed., Mar. 15, 6pm	Presanctified	I. Andrzhievsky
Wed., Mar. 22, 6pm	Presanctified	A. Stickles
Wed., Mar. 29, 6pm	Presanctified	A. Stickles
Wed., Apr. 5, 6pm	Presanctified	K. Bazilevskaya
Sat., Apr. 8, 9am	Lazarus Sat.	A. Stickles

- *Am I attending Orthodox services for a “taste” of something “spiritual”? (i.e. am I a spiritual dilettante?)*
- *Will not attending the services this week make it easier for me to avoid them in the future?*
- *Am I generally spending more time on mundane things than at prayer or church? (e.g. brushing my teeth, watching television, shopping, drinking a coffee, etc.)*

There are of course many similar questions we can and should ask ourselves. The main point is this: If our Orthodox faith is not actually lived out and strengthened by the holy services, it is nothing more than fakery and self-deception.

There are lots of religious outlets created for the purpose of offering such false spiritual life, and catering to our “felt needs”. The Holy Orthodox Church, the Body of Christ, is not one of them, and if we fail to understand this and to live accordingly, we miss the point of going to church—and the point of the Church. ■

■ NEWS AND NOTES

Roe of Roe v. Wade Dies: She Never Aborted Her Baby and Became Pro-Life

WASHINGTON, DC [*lifeneews.org*] — Norma McCorvey, who was the Jane Roe of the infamous Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court case legalizing virtually unlimited abortions, passed away [last month]. McCorvey never had an abortion, eventually became pro-life, and dedicated her life to overturning the Supreme Court decision that bared her pseudonym.

McCorvey never wanted an abortion—she was seeking a divorce from her husband—but young, pro-abortion feminist attorney Sarah Weddington used McCorvey's case as a means of attempting to overturn Texas' law making most abortions illegal. Weddington took the case all the way to the Supreme Court, which invalidated every pro-life state law in the nation protecting unborn children and the rest is history.

But most Americans don't know that McCorvey, who was “pro-choice” on abortion at the time, became a pro-life advocate. She dedicated her life to reversing the Supreme Court case that bears her fictitious name, Jane Roe....

[McCorvey] claimed then that her pregnancy was the result of a rape, although for [last decade] she has been outspokenly pro-life and publicly admitted that this, and virtually every fact on which her case was built, was a lie.

“Back in 1973, I was a very confused twenty-one-year-old with one child and facing an unplanned pregnancy,” she [once said], “At the time I fought to obtain a legal abortion, but truth be told, I have three daughters and never had an abortion... I think it's safe to say that the entire abortion industry is based on a lie.”

McCorvey died in Katy, Texas. She was 69. ■

IOCC to Hold Prayer Service and Fundraiser for Syria

PITTSBURGH [*iocc.org*] — On Sunday, April 2, the International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) Pittsburgh Metropolitan Committee will hold a prayer service and fund raising dinner to aid IOCC's efforts in Syria. This “Syrian Relief” gathering will be held here at the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral. Planning to attend the pan-Orthodox event are Metropolitan Savas of the Greek Archdiocese, Bishop Thomas of the Antiochian Archdiocese, Bishop Gregory of the Carpatho-Russian Diocese, and our own Archbishop Melchisedek. Several non-Orthodox dignitaries will also be in attendance. During the past four years, the dinners have raised \$201,000, which, because of matching grants, is an equivalent of \$1,407,000 of total aid in Syria from these efforts. To learn more or for tickets, call (412) 417-4706. ■

Applications for Student Leadership Positions Open

Students: Are you interested in getting more involved in OCF by taking a leadership role in the larger organization? Applications for the national OCF Student Leadership Board for 2017-2018 are now available at *ocf.net*. If you would like to serve on the regional or district level, contact Rachel Howanetz (*midatlanticstudent@ocf.net*) or our own Kali Godshall (*kag5831@psu.edu*), respectively. ■

Archdiocesan Catechetical Program Begins this Month

NEW KENSINGTON [*ocadwpa.org*] — The Archdiocese will conduct a 12-week catechetical program with “The Bible” as its focus. Under the direction of Fr. Paul Ziatyk, classes will meet on Tuesdays at 7 p.m. from March 14 through June 6 here at St. John Church. (There will be no class on April 11 or 18.) The program costs \$125 and is open to any interested person (no prerequisites to attend). To register, call (724) 895-3592. ■

■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

If We Were a True Christian Community...

by Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom)

In a secret prayer read by the priest at the beginning of the Liturgy during one of the short litanies it says, using the words of St. John Chrysostom, that if two or three agree together in all things, the grace, the power and the presence of God will be in their midst.

What is it then, what are the words that are so decisive in this prayer? I think it is not that two or three may agree from time to time, when they have a common interest, the same feelings, but that they are prepared to be in agreement, that is in harmony in all things, making the concerns of one the concerns of all; considering the sins of each one as being their own responsibility and not only the responsibility of those who sin; because if we were a true Christian community, how much support, how much help would every member of it receive in the struggle for integrity and life! So it is agreement, harmony in all things that is the precondition of the presence of God with power and grace, with exulting joy and love.

Already in his own time St Paul said: "Alas, there are divisions among you." And these divisions destroy the unity which could be the place where God can act. We must reflect on this very attentively because we cannot naturally, spontaneously love everyone; we find it very difficult to understand one another; we find it very difficult to bear one another's burdens, to endure each other; we find it almost impossible to consider the sins of one or another person as our own. And yet, if we respond to the shortcomings, the sins, indeed the evil there may be in someone by rejecting that person, we find ourselves separated from God, because God does not reject any one of us. God became one of us at the cost of His incarnation, at the price He paid for the love of us; not of the righteous ones—did He not say, "It is only the sick who need a physician, not those who are whole"? He came to share with that very sinner,

Our Lord's Prayer for Unity

[O Father,] the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given [to the Church]; that they may be one, even as We are one. I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved Me.

— John 17:22-23

with that unbearable person whom we reject, with the very people we are at variance; He came to share not only our common humanity, but their destiny, their agony, their struggles. It is not in vain that Isaiah speaking prophetically of Christ says that the weight of the sin of the whole world was upon Him.

Let us reflect on this, because if we want to become what we are not—a Christian community, a community of people who love one another earnestly, if necessary sacrificially, whose love is prepared to go as far as crucifixion, then we must learn a great deal about our attitudes to each other. How can we contemplate the vision of the Cross if we are not prepared to carry one another's burdens, to identify in sympathy and compassion with each other? How can we face the fact that God in His love gave His life for the lost, while we reject those for whom He died, ignore them, would like to rule them out of our life because it would be so easy to live only with those people who are no problem for us? By doing this we become alien to God, not by any action of anyone around us, but by our own free choice because we cannot accept those for whom Christ lived and died.

Let us reflect on this, let us conquer everything in us that prevents us from being at one with God, and through this unity with God let us accept one another even if it be at the cost of our lives. Amen. ■

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Metropolitan Anthony (1914-2003) was a bishop in Great Britain and Ireland. He wrote many books on prayer and the spiritual life, including God and Man.*

Matthew 25 and Sunday School Come Together this Lent in Support of Prison Ministry

Every Lent, Holy Trinity's *Matthew 25* outreach conducts a special drive to help others according to our Lord's commandment to minister to the hungry, naked, homeless, and imprisoned. In the past, we conducted food and clothing drives and supported the local homeless shelter, but we have struggled to visit someone in prison in order to see Christ: This part of our Lord's commandment is virtually impossible to keep today. That is why we are supporting the **Matthew 25:26 Fellowship** of the Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry (OCPM) this year.

Each Sunday of Lent, a collection will be taken after the Divine Liturgy to support the pan-Orthodox ministry's flagship initiative that trains clergy and lay visitation volunteers, and supplies inmates and prison libraries with icons, Study Bibles, prayer books, and devotional materials. The ministry also provides guidance to people coming out of prison. In addition, proceeds from the freewill offering accepted at the Sunday School's annual "Soup-er Sunday Charity Luncheon," a meal prepared and served by our youth, will also be donated to OCPM. The dinner takes place on Sunday, March 19 at noon in the Parish Hall, with food prep taking place the day before at 4 p.m. Email dnmark@holytrinity-oca.org for details.

Men's Chorus Records Album

The Holy Trinity Men's Chorus recorded an album containing selections from the Divine Liturgy and is for sale for \$10 in the Bookstore (located in the lower level of Holy Trinity). Musical settings are primarily from the old Russian chant tradition and feature Znamenny and Kievan Chant, as well as a few chants of the Georgian tradition. Settings were taken from the newly published *A Common Book of Church Hymns* edited by Benedict Sheehan (also for sale in the Bookstore) and the Georgian settings were arranged into English by our own Joseph Nakpil. All proceeds will go to support the work of *Matthew 25*.

■ CHAPEL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT New Catechetical Series to Begin this Month

Fr. David Smith will conduct a study on the fourth volume ("Spirituality") of the late Fr. Thomas Hopko's series, *The Orthodox Faith*, each Sunday of Great Lent beginning March 5. It will immediately follow the fellowship hour after the Divine Liturgy. It is open to all members of the community and is especially geared to inquirers and catechumens.

Chapel Expands its Outreach to Community

The Chapel of the Holy Spirit has been busy lately with outreach to the community. On January 29, the group traveled to Best Bowl in Selinsgrove for a couple hours of bowling and pizza. On February 12, the first quarterly Family Fun Night event of 2017 was held at the Middlecreek Area Community Center (MACC). More than 30 attendees enjoyed extra hours at the popular facility, participating in a fun game of kickball and in making Valentine crafts. There was plenty of food and fellowship around the table and many new faces. The next Family Fun Night will be in May. ■



Chapel members pose for the 2017 Directory to be released next month. It will include portraits and addresses from the 125 families that consider Holy Trinity or the Chapel home.

For the Record

DEATH

➤ **Robert Gleeson, father of Stacey Gleeson, reposed in the Lord on January 29. He was 76 and resided in Centre Hall. May his memory eternal!**

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
26 Forgiveness Sunday (Cheesefare) Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Blini Luncheon, 12pm Forgiveness Vespers, 7pm OCF National Day of Prayer Service (Hour 5 of 24), 10pm-11pm	27 LENT BEGINS St. Raphael of Brooklyn Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete, 7pm	28 Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete, 7pm	March 1 Confessions, 5pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm	2 Penn State OCF: "Stay to Pray" Dinner at Holy Trinity, 6pm Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete, 7pm	3 Salutations to the Theotokos, 6pm	4 St. Theodore of Tyre (No Liturgy this year.) Great Vespers, 6pm (No Confessions)
5 Sunday of Orthodoxy Divine Liturgy of St. Basil, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Children's Icon Procession, 11:45am Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers, 4pm @ St Mary's Antiochian Church, 111 Alberta Ave., Johnstown	6 Women's Bible Study, 7pm @ Trinity House Conference Room	7 Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, 6pm (No Confessions) Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm	8 Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste Parish Council Meeting, 6:30pm @ Trinity House Conference Room	9 Vespers, 5:30pm Salutations to the Theotokos, 6:15pm	10 Memorial Saturday Mem. Divine Liturgy, 9am Women's Day Retreat on Prayer with Mother Christophora, 10:30am-4pm @ Trinity House Great Vespers/Conf., 6pm	11 St. Gregory Palamas (Daylight Saving Time begins 2am) Sunday School, 9am EDT Divine Liturgy of St. Basil, 10am EDT (Hours, 9:40am)
12 St. Gregory Palamas (Daylight Saving Time begins 2am) Sunday School, 9am EDT Divine Liturgy of St. Basil, 10am EDT (Hours, 9:40am)	13 (Trinity House Open Late for Students, 7pm-11pm)	14 Homeless Ministry, 4pm @ Centre House, 217 E. Nittany Ave. Women's Bible Study, 7pm @ Trinity House Conference Room	15 Confessions, 5pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm	16 Penn State OCF: Dinner and Discussion, 7pm @ 122 Pasquerilla Center	17 Salutations to the Theotokos, 6pm	18 Men's Fellowship Breakfast, 9am Church School "Soup-er Sunday" Food Prep., 4pm Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm (No Confessions)
19 Veneration of the Precious Cross Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Annual "Soup-er Sunday" Charity Luncheon, 12pm Archdiocesan Lenten Vespers, 5pm @ Nevsky Cathedral, Allison Park	20 (Trinity House Open Late for Students, 7pm-11pm)	21 Women's Bible Study, 7pm @ Trinity House Conference Room	22 Confessions, 5pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm	23 Penn State OCF: Dinner and Discussion, 7pm @ 122 Pasquerilla Center	24 Great Vespers with Litiya for Annunciation, 7pm Confessions	25 THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE THEOTOKOS Divine Liturgy, 9am (Hours, 8:40am) Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
26 St. John Climacus Synaxis of the Archangel Gabriel Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy of St. Basil, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Parent's Session, 12pm @ Trinity House Lower Level	27 (Trinity House Open Late for Students, 7pm-11pm)	28 Women's Bible Study, 7pm @ Trinity House Conference Room	29 Confessions, 5pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm	30 Penn State OCF: Dinner and Discussion, 7pm @ 122 Pasquerilla Center	31 St. Innocent of America Penn State OCF Spring Service Trip, departs 5pm (returns Sunday, 4pm) @ Ocean City, New Jersey Akathist to the Theotokos, 6pm	April 1 Annual Parish Work Day, 9am-1pm Great Vespers, 6pm (No Confessions)
2 St. Mary of Egypt Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy of St. Basil, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Deanery Lenten Vespers, 4pm @ St. Michael's Church, Irvona	3 (Trinity House Open Late for Students, 7pm-11pm)	4 Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, 6pm (No Confessions) Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm	5 Penn State OCF: "Stump the Priest Night" with Fr. Timothy Hojnicky, 7pm @ 122 Pasquerilla Center	6 Vespers, 5:30pm	7 Lazarus Saturday Divine Liturgy, 9am (Hours, 8:40am) Altar Soc. Decorating, 11am First Confessions, 3:30pm Youth Pascha Wksp., 4pm Vespers/Litya/Conf., 6pm	8 Great Vespers, 6pm

Chapel Calendar

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

Saturday 4 St. Theodore of Tyre Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions	Sunday 19 Veneration of the Cross Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Fellowship & Study of Ch. 3 of <i>The Orthodox Faith—Spirituality</i> , following
Sunday 5 Sunday of Orthodoxy Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Fellowship & Study of Ch. 1 of <i>The Orthodox Faith—Spirituality</i> , following	Tuesday 21 Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm
Monday 6 Monthly Women's "Hats and Blankets for Babies" Knitting/Crocheting Outreach, 6:30pm (Rescheduled from 2/27)	Sunday 26 St. John Climacus / Synaxis of Arch. Gabriel Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Fellowship & Study of Ch. 4 of <i>The Orthodox Faith—Spirituality</i> , following
Tuesday 7 Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm	Monday 27 Monthly Women's Knitting Outreach, 6:30pm
Sunday 12 St. Gregory Palamas Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Fellowship & Study of Ch. 2 of <i>The Orthodox Faith—Spirituality</i> , following	Tuesday 28 Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm
Tuesday 14 Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm	Saturday April 1 Great Vespers, 6pm
Saturday 18 Great Vespers, 6pm	Sunday 2 St. Mary of Egypt Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Fellowship & Study of Ch. 5 of <i>The Orthodox Faith—Spirituality</i> , following

March 2017