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Holy Trinity Orthodox Church
119 S. Sparks Street
State College, PA 16801

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THE TRISAGION

The Monthly Newsletter of Holy Trinity Orthodox Church
119 S. Sparks Street, State College, PA 16801 814-231-2855
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IS FASTING FROM FOOD ENOUGH?

Too often we limit our Fasting to food alone, but in truth fasting is multifaceted, we fast from food to subdue the flesh in order to strengthen the heart that we might be more attuned to keeping a pure Fast through fasting from the sin, hatred, and other evils.

Some of the other things we should be fasting from as well as meat and dairy products are the following:

- **Fast from anger and hatred.**
Giving your family, friends, and co-workers and extra dose of kindness and love daily.
- **Fast from judging others.**
Before making any judgments, recall how Jesus has forgiven our faults and do likewise.
- **Fast from discouragement.**
Hold on to Jesus' promise that He has a perfect plan for your life and trust Him to have one for your neighbor's life as well.
- **Fast from complaining.**
When you find yourself about to complain, close your eyes, pray, and recall some of the little moments of joy Jesus has given you.
- **Fast from resentment and bitterness.**
Work on forgiving those who may have hurt you.
- **Fast from spending too much money.**
Try to reduce your unnecessary spending by ten percent and give those savings as alms to the poor and to charities that need assistance.

(Adapted from *The Light of Orthodoxy*, a publication of the OCA Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania.)

**THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA:
VISION, VOCATION, MISSION, IDENTITY**

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This is the fourth of a four-part series on Metropolitan JONAH's vision for the Orthodox Church in America. This article was first published in Divine Ascent, the journal of the Monastery of St. John of San Francisco.*

Part IV: The Role of Autocephaly

The unity, sanctity, catholicity, and apostolicity of the Orthodox Church cannot be the exclusive possession of Middle-Eastern, Mediterranean and Slavic countries and peoples. The Orthodox Church in America has the vocation to manifest all the fullness of Christ's Church here in America. Her autocephaly was sought and granted in 1970 precisely to facilitate this. Many today look on that event as a grave mistake, the sad fruits of which we are now forced to reap. But if we make the effort to build up and not to tear down (1 Corinthians 3:10), a more constructive approach to our autocephaly becomes apparent.

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For, in fact, the greatest strength of the Orthodox Church in America is that in her we have taken full responsibility for the life and integrity of our Church and do not rely on anyone anywhere else. Of course, we preserve sisterly relations and Eucharistic communion with the other Orthodox Churches. But we elect our own bishops, we oversee our own finances, and we support our own ministries. None of the other Orthodox communities in America can say that. Thus we are responsible for our own mistakes, as well as our own victories. And when we are faced with a problem, we are responsible, as a single Body in Christ, to deal with it in a Christ-like manner. Yes, we sin; and the sins of one, ultimately, belong to all of us—the healing and reconciliation of those who have been hurt by sin are the responsibility of us all.

Therefore, our problems will not be solved by someone from the outside. No one overseas can come to the rescue. No one will impose one more set of foreign ecclesiastical bureaucrats answerable only to a distant despot somewhere in the Old World. Thank God! This is the beauty and the responsibility of autocephaly. It is our great strength. We simply need to put aside the distractions of our passions and accept this responsibility given by God: to be the Orthodox Church in this country; to reveal the presence of Jesus Christ here in America to souls perishing in darkness, ignorance, and despair; to give them hope; and to lead them to repentance in the knowledge and love of God.

MATTHEW 25

Just one week before our Lenten journey began we heard the sobering parable of the Last Judgment. The message of the parable was clear: Christ’s criterion for judgment is love and we will be judged on whether we have loved, or not loved, our neighbor: Did we truly love Christ by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, or visiting those who are sick or in prison (cf. Matthew 25:35-36)?

To foster a heart of service and to give us confidence before the dread judgment seat of Christ, *Matthew 25* is sponsoring several activities and programs during Lent. To address the “sick” in our community, there will be a food drive; for the “naked,” a clothing drive; for the “prisoner,” a book drive; and finally for the “stranger,” a parish-wide Work/Service Day on Saturday, March 21 to assist several area charitable organizations directly.

See Richard Nakles, contact Deacon Alexander (814-321-4473), or check the Sunday bulletin for more information on how you can donate your time, treasure, and talents to those in our immediate community who are in need.

SNYDER COUNTY MISSION NEWS

In addition to Holy Trinity’s regular monthly outreach with the celebration of Daily Vespers by Father John, the Snyder County Mission will have several opportunities to gather together for prayer and fellowship in March. The schedule is as follows (all meetings are at Pastor David and Brenda Smith’s residence—350 Old Orchard Road in Beavertown—unless noted):

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| Sunday, March 1
Forgiveness Vespers @ HTOC, 7pm | Monday, March 16
Daily Vespers, 6:30pm |
| Wednesday, March 4
Readers’ Vespers w/ Canon of Repentance, 7pm | Sunday, March 22
Readers’ Service, 10am |
| Sunday, March 8 and 15
Matins and Divine Liturgy @ HTOC, 9am | Sunday, March 29
Readers’ Service, 10am |

THANK YOU, THON CONTRIBUTORS!

Thank you to everyone who supported the Penn State Orthodox Christian Fellowship in raising money for the 2009 Penn State IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon, or simply “THON.” Your contributions helped OCF to far surpass its goal and be able to receive its own family to personally support next year. In just its first year of raising money, OCF contributed a very respectable \$4,483.83 to the overall record grand total of \$7,490,133.87. THON is a yearlong effort to raise funds and awareness for the fight against pediatric cancer and is the largest student-run philanthropy in the world,

HOLY DAYS AND FASTS DURING MARCH

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| Sunday of Forgiveness
Liturgy, March 1, 10am
Vespers, March 1, 7pm
<i>Omit dairy & fish beginning Mar. 2</i> | Liturgies of the Presanctified Gifts
March 4, 6, 11, 13, 18, 20, & 27, 6pm |
| Canon of St. Andrew of Crete
Great Compline, March 2, 7pm
Great Compline, March 3, 7pm
Great Compline, March 5, 7pm | Memorial Divine Liturgies
March 14 & 28, 9am |
| | Annunciation of the Theotokos
Great Vespers, March 24, 7pm
Vesperal Liturgy, March 25, 6pm |

SEE WHAT’S NEW AT THE BOOKSTORE!

At Holy Trinity, we are blessed to have holy icons of the Saints of North America situated on our north and south walls. If you have ever wanted to learn more about their lives, a wonderful resource is now available in the Holy Trinity Bookstore. *Portraits of American Saints* by George A. Gray contains the lives of all the saints of North America and a few that have not yet been canonized. The book is being sold at the parish bookstore at a discounted price of only \$10.

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

If you would like to schedule an appointment with Fr. John or Dn. Alexander, contact Judy in the Parish Office on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 11am to 2:30pm. Fr. John reserves Tuesdays through Fridays for appointments and Dn. Alexander reserves Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, but other times may be available. Call 231-2855 or visit the parish Web site for more details.

CAN YOU SING?

If you are interested in singing in the Choir, please contact Dr. Bob Roberts (*rfr3@psu.edu*) and come practice with them during their rehearsals for Lent and Pascha on Thursdays from 7-9pm and Saturdays from 4-6pm:

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| Thurs., March 5 <i>No rehearsal</i> | Sat., March 21 4-6pm |
| Sat., March 7 4-6pm | Thurs., March 26 7-9pm |
| Thurs., March 12 7-9pm | Sat., March 28 4-6pm |
| Sat., March 14 4-6pm | Thurs., April 2 <i>No Rehearsal</i> |
| Thurs., March 19 7-9pm | Sat., April 4 4-6pm |

CATECHESIS AND ORTHODOXY 101 BEGIN MARCH 17

Beginning Tuesday, March 17 at 7:30pm in the Parish Hall, catechesis classes will begin for those in the catechumenate preparing for their reception into Orthodoxy. Concurrently, Orthodoxy 101—having just completed its study of the Epistle of James—will also resume on March 17 with an examination of the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. All are welcome to attend.

FROM THE DESK OF DEACON ALEXANDER

Perhaps the most often-used metaphor in the Bible employed to describe the relationship between Christ and His people is marriage. The Old Testament prophets described Israel as God’s spouse; later St. Paul uses the same imagery to exhort husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the Church. Throughout Scripture, marriage is shown to be the foundation for all of social life, a permanent bond between a man and a woman joined together by God.

It is no wonder that the evil one continually strives to undermine marriage. Not only is the divorce rate alarming, but equally tragic is the increasing number of couples foregoing marriage in favor of cohabitation. When these couples do eventually marry, studies show they are twice as likely to end in divorce.

Even in today’s secular society, 75 percent of all marriages still take place in houses of worship. And because this is a community-wide problem, Holy Trinity is a founding partner in joining several local Christian churches in signing the State College Community Marriage Covenant, a set of guidelines for premarital preparation and mentoring with the intent of strengthening existing marriages and lowering the rates of divorce and cohabitation.

In other communities where covenants like these have been established (now numbering more than 200 cities and towns in all), divorce rates have fallen an average of 18 percent and cohabitation by a third, and graduates of the premarital preparation program have seen a 90% success rate in forming lifelong partnerships. Part of our participation will be to identify three mentor couples who will be formerly trained to help new couples go the distance.

The program officially kicks off with a formal signing of the marriage policy on Friday, April 24. More information will follow in next month’s *Trisagion*.

MARCH SCHEDULES

Coffee Hour

- March 1 — Jean Miranda, Holly Torbic, and Jenny Anthony
- March 8 — Judy Fryncko and Ellen George
- March 15 — Russian Ladies
- March 22 — Anissa Ilie, Anne Swisher, and Corene Swisher
- March 29 — Karen Cattell and Melody Thompson

Greeters

- March 1 — Anne Swisher and David Swisher
- March 8 — Beth Roberts and Ed Miranda
- March 15 — Mark Radomsky and Leslyn Radomsky
- March 22 — Melody Thompson and Mark Fedkin
- March 29 — Anne Swisher and David Swisher