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THE TRISAGION

The Monthly Newsletter of Holy Trinity Orthodox Church
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LENTEN EPISTLE OF METROPOLITAN JONAH

Lent is the time for repentance. But that repentance does not simply mean feeling sorry for our sins, much less trying to do some kind of penitential acts to atone for them. Rather, the goal of repentance is the transformation of our minds and hearts, our very consciousness. It means a transformation of our whole life. To engage it means that we have to embrace change. This change not only affects our diet for a few weeks, or abstaining from some bad habits. It means a different way of behaving, of perceiving God, ourselves, our neighbors. It means a rejection and renunciation of the ways we have been living and treating others, and the adoption of a new way of life. We have to come to the recognition that how we have been living and behaving does not lead us deeper into communion with God and our neighbors, but rather alienates us from both, and from our very self.

So often we become trapped by our own self-righteousness and pride, thinking that we do not have to change. This is delusion. If we are so sure of ourselves, how have we left room for God to even show us our shortcomings? We fall into the trap of the Pharisee. This is especially the case when we let ourselves criticize and judge our neighbors. If we allow ourselves to judge and criticize, then we can be sure that we have cast God out of our lives. Who needs Him, if I can judge everyone and everything? We pick and pick at our neighbors, from external appearances to deep judgments about their integrity. And in so doing, we destroy our own souls. We project all our own insecurities on those around us, not caring whose feelings we hurt or whose lives we destroy. And in reality, it has nothing to do with that other person; our judgment is only an image of myself and my insecurities, and the sins we don't want to admit to ourselves.

If we judge and criticize our neighbor, our fasting is in vain. Our repentance is hypocrisy. And we make a mockery of Jesus Christ. We receive the Eucharist unto damnation. And we are oblivious to it, in our own self-righteousness.

Repentance, being “transformed in the renewal of our minds,” means that, like the Prodigal, we have “come to ourselves,” and recognized that our minds and hearts have taken the wrong road. We can perhaps see some of

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HTOC'S OWN ANNE SWISHER TO SERVE IN HAITI

Next month, Anne Swisher will have the opportunity to serve on a medical mission team to Haiti through World Hope International (WHI), a faith-based relief and development organization dedicated to alleviating suffering through education, enterprise, and community health. Through Anne's service and medical expertise, WHI plans to mobilize basic nursing care with the goal of benefiting more than 2,000 people per day. Anne's one-week mission trip—the first she has ever served on—begins April 17 and she asks for your prayerful support. Monetary donations are also appreciated. For more information, contact Anne at sooder74@yahoo.com.

SUMMER MISSION OPPORTUNITIES STILL AVAILABLE

Opportunities still exist to serve on an OCMC Orthodox Mission Team in 2010. Volunteers for teams traveling to South Africa, India, Madagascar, Romania and Alaska are needed. The team to Romania will offer a youth camp, while the other teams will focus on teaching and catechism. For more information about OCMC's 2010 mission teams or to apply online visit teams.ocmc.org.

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH BEYOND OUR PARISH

In Orthodox news from around the world:

- **Yonkers, New York** – Fr. Joseph Huneycutt, author of the popular blog “Orthodoxie,” will present at St. Vladimir's Seminary's annual public Lenten retreat on Saturday, March 20. His topic is “Paschal Fire from Spiritual Ashes.” Known for combining wit with wisdom, and satire with sobriety, Fr. Joseph has authored several books reflecting his journey to and through the Orthodox Christian faith. The retreat is free and open to the public. Participants planning to eat a prepared brunch after the celebration of the Divine Liturgy must register for the meal and pay a \$10 fee at the door. For more information, visit svots.edu.
- **Nicosia, CYPRUS** – Last month during an official visit here, Archbishop Leon of Finland described the destruction of Cyprus' religious and cultural heritage in Turkish-occupied areas as “inhumane and regrettable.”

Katherine Eastland, an assistant editor at *The Weekly Standard*, chronicled the devastation in a recent article: “Over a fifth of the northern [Orthodox] churches, like roofless St. Andronikos, have been skinned of their [icons] and left to the elements and foraging animals. About 80 other churches still have a religious use as mosques... Most of the churches have been cast in new, secular roles as garages, luxury hotels, granaries, storage rooms for furniture or potatoes or hay, classrooms, bars, cafés, and art studios. One is a morgue... Of the Christian buildings in the occupied north, [only] three are kept, at least in appearance, as churches. But restrictions on their use and maintenance prevent Christians living in the north from worshipping in them regularly without interruption by Turkish officials...”

“Until the island is one again...its two sides will continue to diverge, becoming more lopsided, with a Turkish culture taking root in the north amid the continuing collapse of its [Orthodox] heritage.”

SUNDAY SCHOOL SCOOP: BUILDING HOMES

It is well understood that a house is not necessarily a home. It is a great thing to be a land owner and to have stocks and bonds; it is a great thing to be a successful business person and to contribute one's share in the production of human necessities, food, clothes, and shelter, but the greatest thing is to be a home builder, where minds are trained, characters developed, and destinies of men and nations fixed.

A Christian homebuilder is the only hope of the world. If we can get our homes right our churches will be right and society will be right. With our multiplied national, civic, economic, educational, and social machinery we often spend too much time outside of the home and not enough time inside it. Indeed, there will be struggles and unwelcome rough times but building projects (or almost any other project) never quite go as smoothly as planned or hoped.

To build a home one needs food and the food for a Christian is Christ—the bread of life, and God's word is the water of life. None of us can grow in grace toward becoming a perfect man or woman if we do not conscientiously and constantly give ourselves a regular diet of the bread of life and living word of God.

Our Sunday School exists to help parents build homes and our parish's “home building” lessons for children take place each week in the classroom. One of tasks of the Sunday School is to give parents assistance in raising their children by feeding them the word of God and the teachings, practices, and traditions of the Church. Please pray that we may succeed at achieving this task and that our children may truly be raised in beautiful homes.

OYA PLANS ANNUAL END-OF-WINTER OUTING

On Sunday, March 14, the Orthodox Youth Association (OYA) will hold its annual winter outing by going tubing at Tussey Mountain. Rides will depart from the church at 6:30pm; tubing takes place from 7-9pm, with pick-up back at the church at approximately 9:20pm. OYA is a fellowship open to all middle- and high-school aged youth in the parish and their friends.

YOUNG ADULTS TO ATTEND “REEL JESUS FILM FESTIVAL”

The Young Adult Fellowship will be participating this month in a unique series to study the motifs and messages in film as a source of theological reflection. The screening of each movie takes place at the State Theatre in Downtown and includes a pre-film introduction and post-film discussion led by local scholars, clergy, and community members. For more information, titles, and show times, view Holy Trinity's online calendar at holytrinity-oca.org.

For the Record

BAPTISM

- **Lucia Nicole Swisher**, daughter of Brandon & Corene Swisher, baptized February 7, sponsored by Dn. Theophan & Miriam Warren.

ANNUNCIATION, HOLY WEEK, AND BRIGHT WEEK SCHEDULE

Wednesday, March 24	6pm	Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts for the Forefeast of Annunciation
Thursday, March 25	6pm	Vespers and Divine Liturgy for Annunciation
Friday, March 26	6pm	Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts for the Afterfeast of Annunciation
Saturday, March 27	9am 2pm 6pm	Divine Liturgy for the Raising of Lazarus Baptism of Elena Stevens Great Vespers for Palm Sunday
Sunday, March 28	9am 7pm	Matins & Divine Liturgy for Palm Sunday Bridegroom Matins of Holy Monday
Monday, March 29 — Wednesday, March 31	9am 7pm	Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts Bridegroom Matins of Holy Tuesday-Thursday
Thursday, April 1	10am 7pm	Divine Liturgy of St. Basil Matins of Holy Friday with the 12 Gospels
Friday, April 2	10am 4pm 7pm	Royal Hours Vespers of Holy Friday (Unnailing) Matins for Holy Saturday (Lamentations)
Saturday, April 3	10am 4pm 11:30pm	Vespers with the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil Adult Baptisms and Chrismations Nocturns
Sunday, April 4	12am 4pm	Matins & Divine Liturgy for Holy Pascha Agape Vespers
Monday, April 5	10am	Divine Liturgy for Bright Monday
Monday, April 5 — Friday, April 9	5:30pm	Paschal Daily Vespers with the Catechetical Lectures of St. Cyril of Jerusalem

MATTHEW 25 PROVIDES SEVERAL SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

To help foster a heart of service and to give us a good defense before the dread judgment seat of Christ, *Matthew 25* is sponsoring several activities during Lent. To address the “hungry” in our community, there will be a food drive; for the “naked,” a clothing drive; for the “prisoner,” a book drive; and for the “stranger,” a parish-wide work/service day on Lazarus Saturday, March 27. Please see Richard Nakles or Deacon Alexander, 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.

YOUTH PASCHA WORKSHOP: FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

On Lazarus Saturday (March 27) at 3:30pm, our Sunday School will conduct a Pascha preparation workshop for children of *all* ages. There will be a variety of activities (extra “helping hands” are welcome), including baking, crafts, and singing. Bring the whole family—you won’t want to miss it!

LENTEN EPISTLE OF METROPOLITAN JONAH (continued from page 1)

the damage we are causing to ourselves and others. We recognize that our minds are filled with angry, suspicious, judgmental, and self-righteous thoughts, and that we have no inner peace.

How do we repent? The first thing we must do is withdraw from the stimulus: to stop exposing ourselves—temporarily—to the issues and people that bring up these angry thoughts and judgments. We have to stop ourselves from rehearsing the wrongs done to us (and hence our judgment and condemnation of the person who wronged us), and realize this is just our own self-justification rooted in pride and vainglory. Then we need to pray that God will forgive us for our anger and pride, and forgive the other for what he or she has done. Then we can let it go. So long as we are provoked by thoughts of the remembrance of wrongs (resentments), and react with anger, we have not worked it through. But when the remembrance of something no longer disturbs our peace, we know that God has worked in our hearts.

A LOOK AHEAD...

Mark your calendars for the following April events and be sure to look for more details in the new and redesigned *Trisagion* due out next month!

- **Fr. Peter Gillquist**, renowned author and mission director of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese, will be visiting our area next month. After giving the homily at Holy Trinity on Thomas Sunday, April 11, he will also address and consult two of our own evangelical outreaches, the *Chapel of the Holy Spirit* and the *Orthodox Christian Fellowship*, the following Monday and Tuesday.
- Plan to join us at the church for an evening of beautiful sacred music performed by the **Konevets Russian Quartet** on Tuesday, April 27. Founded by graduates of the St. Petersburg Music Conservatory in 1992, the ensemble travels around the world with the goal of sharing the rich Russian vocal tradition with its audiences. The quartet takes its name from and sings to support the Konevets Monastery, located 100 miles northeast of St. Petersburg on Lake Ladoga.

MARCH SCHEDULES

	Coffee Hour	Greeters	Altar Servers*
Mar. 7	Leslyn Radomsky Megan Leathers	Beth Roberts Ed Miranda	Team A
Mar. 14	Melody Thompson Jean Miranda	Mark Radomsky Leslyn Radomsky	Team B
Mar. 21	Judy Fryncko Holly Torbic	Melody Thompson Mark Fedkin	Team A
Mar. 28	Mike & Jenny Anthony Bob Schrauf	Megan Leathers David Swisher	Team B

* **Team A:** D. Andresen, C. Doty, N. Fedkin, M. Haupt, A. Miranda, and S. Oleynik.
Team B: J. Cattell, M. Doty, P. Doty, J. Miranda, S. Pelikan, and J. Stickles.

