

THE TRISAGION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Not-So “Lazy, Hazy Days” of Summer

We enter the fifth month of 2010 with so many things happening. It won't be a lazy, hazy summer at Holy Trinity at all. Of course, the big item on the Reeves' calendar—and the biggest shift for the parish—is that long-awaited Clergy Renewal Sabbatical which begins May 25 and concludes around October 1.

It is the purpose of my sabbatical to connect with St. Herman's missionary trek both spiritually and geographically by approximating his original route as nearly as possible today, roughly one quarter of the circumference of the globe.

I will travel first to Finland and spend a few days in prayer at an Orthodox monastery there before crossing the border into Russia en route to Valaam Monastery on Lake Lagoda. Valaam Monastery was the spiritual home of St. Herman of Alaska and the other missionaries who accompanied him to North America on their ten-month journey in 1793-94. It already was in existence for centuries prior.

My pilgrimage will take me on to Tikhvin, Novgorod, St. Petersburg and Moscow, before heading further eastward on the Siberian Railway to Kazan, Perm, Ekaterinburg, and Irkutsk—all missionary outposts of Orthodoxy at one time or another. Then I will veer northward near Lake Baikal, the world's deepest and largest fresh water lake. Yakutsk, only four degrees south of the Arctic Circle, is my last stop before resuming my eastward course towards the Pacific.

Want to follow Fr. John?

Although he will be half a world away this summer, you can still track Fr. John along his route. Here's how:

- *At the conclusion of the Vespers of Pentecost on Sunday, May 23, **pick up your very own “travel brochure,”** complete with maps and information on the Orthodox missionaries to America Fr. John will follow and the places he will visit.*
- *Fr. John will report back periodically **through his new Blog,** which will be launched this month. It will be easily accessible by means of the parish Web site: **holytrinity-oca.org.** There you will be able to post comments and questions for Fr. John to answer upon his return in October.*

Along my way, I will be remembering the saints who have trod this path before me, both those who preceded St. Herman in Russia and Siberia, as well as those who came afterwards. Many martyrs under the Soviet regime offered their lives to Christ in our more recent history on this path of missionaries: bishops and other clergy, nobility and peasants, women, children.

Once I finish the Russian portion, I will “jump” that rather large pond, the Pacific, in order to arrive in Kodiak, Alaska in time for the annual commemoration of St. Herman's glorification on August 9. As well, I plan to spend time in Sitka where St. Innocent (Veniaminov) was first Orthodox bishop in the Americas, on the Kuskokwim River where St. Jacob (Netsvetov) America's first indigenous priest evangelized the

(continued—see THIS SUMMER, page 3)

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH
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Schedules

	Coffee Hour	Greeters	Altar Servers*
May 9	Eileen George & Matt Kelly-Olynyk	Megan Leathers & David Swisher	Team A
May 16	Anne-Therese Peisan & Cathy Norrisov	Andreas Artemou & Rachel Cattell	Team B
May 23	Mrs. Dea Ebersdorf & Matt Jennifer Gadsman	Both Roberts & Ed Miranda	Team A
May 30	Russian Ladies	Leslyn & Mark Rademsky	Team B
June 6	Karen Cattell & Dana Van Duin	Melody Thompson & Mark Fedin	Team A
June 13	Leslyn Rademsky & Megan Leathers	Megan Leathers & David Swisher	Team B

* Team A: D. Anderson, C. Day, N. Fedin, M. Heide, A. Miranda, S. Olynyk, and Jo. Stokas
Team B: J. Carmel, M. Day, P. Day, J. Miranda, S. Peisan, and Jo. Stokas

■ CHAPEL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Being in Christ and Being the Church

The faithful of the Holy Trinity Orthodox Church have committed themselves to “building up the Church beyond our parish.” It is a blessing to be among those who have taken on such an outward-looking vision of the Faith, especially since we, as descendants of Abraham, are called to be a blessing to all nations (*Gen. 26:4*). We have received this blessing ourselves in the holy water of Baptism, and we earnestly desire to share that blessing with others. But how do we act on that desire?

After all, most of us have grown up in congregations of Christians that already exist: a community of friends and family, regular services, and an established pattern of church life. Critically for some, there is a church building that sets the context for this church life, the place we meet, talk, worship, and pray. For us to step out of this very familiar circle is both uncomfortable and disorienting. How can we worship if there is no one to worship with us, or if there is no place to do it? How would I communicate to others that I am an Orthodox Christian, having no response at the inevitable question: “Where is your church?” (By which they mean, “Where is your church building?”)

What it means is that, like Abraham, there must be a willingness to leave our comfort zones of place and people, to get ourselves “out of [our] country, and from [our] kindred” (*Gen. 12:1*) in order to share the fullness of the Gospel with those who haven’t heard it: the unbeliever, the unchurched, the “de-churched,” and those who simply want to hear the Gospel once again.

The faithful of Holy Trinity are doing just that with our outreach in Snyder County, the Chapel of the Holy Spirit. For many of us here, this is

totally new, even for the founders of Holy Trinity, who may already be beginning to forget the challenges and blessings of those early days.



It’s new because we don’t remember or have never experienced the pioneering spirit of holding church services in a home, just like the earliest Christians did (*Acts 5:42, 20:20; Romans 16:5, 1 Cor. 16:19, and many others*). Saul, prior to his conversion, had to go “house to house” in order to drag the new Christians off to prison (*Acts 8:3*). It’s new because it reminds us that being the Church—the Body of Christ (*1 Cor. 12:27*)—is first and foremost about being in Christ and sharing his word with others. Being the Church rather than being in a church is our calling, and that’s far more important than our discomfort.

I encourage each member of Holy Trinity to come to at least one service at the Chapel of the Holy Spirit (visit holyspirit-oca.org for directions and schedule) in order to remember what it means for us to build up the Church beyond our parish. Come and see for yourself the fruits of our labor and learn what you can do to support this vital work. *- Fr. Basil*

P.S. – *I close with the exciting news that our Chapel of the Holy Spirit is negotiating right now to purchase a property to support an expansion of the Gospel work in Snyder County, with a final decision dependent upon an affirmative vote of Holy Trinity parish and the bishop’s blessing. Please pray for God’s will to be done.*

Parent-Student Retreat to Convey Christian Ideals of Sex

On Saturday May 8 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Holy Trinity will host a half-day retreat for students ages 10-13 and **all** parents. It is entitled “Sex: What’s Love Got to Do With It?” and will be led by parish clergy. The retreat aims to convey the Church’s understanding and teaching on human sexuality, explaining its God-given purpose and proper context. The program also hopes to remove some of the taboo associated with the subject stressing to children that it is all right for them to discuss their feelings with parents and clergy. Registration is requested by sending an email to Dn. Mark at dnmark@holytrinity-oca.org. Refreshments and free childcare will be provided.

Iconography Commissioned for Iconostasis and Sanctuary

New iconography has been commissioned for the iconostasis and the rear wall of the sanctuary. The work is being done by renowned iconographer Dmitry Shkolnik, who has written over 2,000 icons, and completed more than a dozen iconostases since immigrating to the United States in 1981.

The icons that will be written include large icons of the Theotokos and the Savior; Ss. Stephen and Romanos for the two deacon’s doors; the Annunciation and the Four Evangelists for the Royal Doors; as well as the Platytera (the Mother of God), flanked by Seraphim, for the sanctuary wall. Should you wish to donate any one of these icons, or partial funds toward completion of the project, please see the diagram in the narthex.

Phase I of the project, including all the icons listed above, will be completed by August. As funds become available, Phase II will begin, featuring a large icon of Pentecost that will complete the altar and another large icon of the Dormition that will be placed over the rear doors.

Many Attend Festal Services

Holy Trinity was blessed with record attendance at Palm Sunday and Pascha this year. “Official” counts were 189 and 235, respectively. Glory to Jesus Christ!

OCF Wraps Up Successful Year with Retreat to Chancery

Building on momentum gained from returning to a focus of evangelism and outreach, the Orthodox Christian Fellowship at Penn State, with the support of Holy Trinity, provided several food and fellowship opportunities for their fellow students this year. Dozens of Orthodox and non-Orthodox alike attended PSU Suppers and weekly dinners and discussions geared to developing an Orthodox spirituality on campus. The year was capped with a day retreat last month to the Archdiocesan Chancery where participants learned practical advice from Bishop Melchisedek for discerning God’s Will in whatever vocation He leads them. Look for more on OCF in next month’s *Trisagion*.



For the Record

BAPTISM

➤ *Lyrix William Mokluk, son of Mark and LeeAnna Mokluk, baptized April 17, sponsored by Byron Parizek and Melissa Urland.*

DONATED

➤ *\$700 was raised and many suitcases full of supplies were given for Anne Swisher’s medical mission trip to Haiti, which took place last month. Thank you for your generosity!*

■ SUNDAY SCHOOL SCOOP

Who's Feeding Your Family?

"If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?"

– Luke 11:11

Jesus recognized that good parents want to give their children good things. He assumed we would not intentionally give our children the wrong things. Interestingly enough, however, there are plenty of people who will feed our families with or without our permission. More astonishing, we often allow our families to be fed the wrong things by sitting back and doing nothing about what they are fed. If we want our family to have the right things, we cannot be passive about their spiritual and intellectual diet.

Although there are many things that have bearing on us, a primary influencer to our families is society itself; that is, society feeds our family ideas, values, and concepts. Society teaches all who will listen: "Get what you can, where you can, in any way you can." It teaches us that other values are more important than spiritual values. It feeds our families on the idea that spiritual values add little if anything to a person's life, teaching them in a hundred ways that the Church is unimportant. Instead of receiving the bread of truth from society, your family is given a stone of selfishness.

There is another group of people who feed us – friends and associates. These small groups become all the more important to us since we tend to adopt the values and styles of life to which we are most often exposed. Children and young people are especially vulnerable to pick up from their friends and associates contrary values and ideas.

Schools are another where our children are being fed. Indeed, we want our children to be fed here but parents have a responsibility to know what their children are learning and to be as involved as they can be in the education of their children. The writer of Proverbs (23:7) recognized the importance of what we feed our minds: "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

My concern here is not to say our families should not be fed, but for us to be aware that they are being fed and how. With so many others feeding our families, then, how do we go about feeding them, too? The real clue is not to isolate our families, but to help them evaluate what they are receiving. This means we must give them a Christian frame of reference which becomes theirs and which they can use. This is of the utmost importance to all families.

It is hoped that we (the Church) can help them find standards for evaluating what they are fed from the aforementioned sources. – *Dn. Mark*

Church School News

PICTURE DAY

Parents and students are reminded that we will be taking a group photograph on Sunday May 16 immediately following the Divine Liturgy. This is the last day of classes for the spring semester.

OCMC COIN BANKS

Students are asked to bring their OCMC coin banks (filled hopefully!) to Sunday School on May 16.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (VBS)

Our VBS for children ages 4-14 will be conducted August 16-20 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Volunteers for all positions (teachers, helpers, musicians, crafts, etc.) are welcomed and needed. Please see Dn. Mark if you would like to offer your time and talents.

This Summer *(continued from page 1)*

Athabaskan peoples. If time and weather permit, I will also travel to Atka, St. Jacob's home village. It is one of the westernmost of the Aleutian Islands, almost back in Russia!

Matushka will travel with me for portions of the journey (Finland to Moscow and Alaska to Kodiak). In fact, we'll spend our 40th anniversary together in Moscow before she heads back stateside. Ka'ren Israelian, son of Alla Israelian, will join me in Moscow and be my "official" escort and interpreter through Siberia.

I do ask for your prayers. And I will be praying for you. Our parish owes it own life in a missionary sense to St. Herman and his original mission to America. It helps define who we are and continues to guide our purpose for the future. Let us all pray that I return home renewed, not merely physically but spiritually. (Indeed, were I wanting only physical renewal I doubt that I would choose to do it this way. Perhaps four months in Hawaii would have been that ticket!) Instead I sought the spiritual renewal that only comes with some sort of rigor and the appreciation of what others have done—concretely in human history—to make our life in Christ possible.

Moreover, part of the purpose of the clergy renewal grant is to enable the parish to develop more ministry skills of its own during the time that the pastor is away. Indeed, you shall. In fact, since so many things are going to be happening here this summer (see sidebar), I'm actually looking forward to being in Siberia and Alaska for a while, despite the need to fight off the very large mosquitoes! I'm quite worn out simply thinking about what you will be up to. So, don't worry about me. I'll be fine, and so will you.

I commend you all to God's mercy and care this summer and beyond. – *Fr. John*

A Busy Summer, Indeed!

Here are some of the many things that will take place in the life of Holy Trinity while Fr. John is away:

- *Deacon Alexander will move his "office"—currently a backpack and laptop computer—to the Pasquerilla Spiritual Center on campus. For the first time in our history, we will have a physical presence at Penn State. The goal is that this will lead to a full-time ministry position in the future.*
- *The Chapel of the Holy Spirit, having received permission from the Parish Council and the blessing of the bishop, is preparing an offer to purchase a building in Middleburg (the county seat) to serve as its permanent location. Fr. Basil will continue his oversight of the Chapel while serving as Holy Trinity's pastoral leader while Fr. John is gone.*
- *Deacon Mark will conduct Vacation Bible School this summer using a brand-new curriculum entitled "Retracing St. Herman's Journey," designed to mirror Father's travels. His eyewitness experience at 2009's St. Herman Pilgrimage will prove invaluable.*
- *Iconography has been commissioned for the entire iconostasis and the sanctuary's rear wall, which will be completed and installed by August. (For more information on the project and to learn how you can contribute, see the blurb on page 5.)*
- *Gennady Ivanov, father of Olga Shimelis, has drawn a cupola design for us. Mr. Ivanov is an engineer from Ekaterinburg who has been involved in the reconstruction and restoration of churches in Ukraine and Russia since the fall of Communism. Chris Kunes, who served as the contractor for our remodeling, will give us an estimate over the summer for its cost and installation.*
- *Finally, the long-awaited consecration of our new altar has been officially scheduled for Saturday, October 16. It will be held on a Penn State Football "Bye" Saturday to enable as many members of the community and neighboring clergy to attend as possible. There will be many ways—both small and large—you can help ready the temple for the big event. So, save that date—Saturday, October 16, 2010—and be sure to look for more information in upcoming editions of The Trisagion.*



For the Record

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- **William** ?, son of ? and ? ?, baptized April 17, sponsored by ? and ? (filler for space this should go three lines.)

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