

THE TRISAGION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

Our Thoughts Determine Our Lives

For a long time, I've wanted the parish to have more opportunities for adult education. Fellowship (OCF) for students, an integral part of our parish's campus ministry. And there is Orthodoxy 101 for inquirers, and Orthodoxy 2.0 for catechumens in their last stage of preparation before baptism. But we've needed more. I've needed more: a time for those of us who are already Orthodox to grow spiritually. This fall and next spring will provide that very occasion.

Here's the pitch: Beginning September 6 and continuing on first and third Tuesdays through December, we will begin the study of a fascinating book: *Our Thoughts Determine Our Lives*. It is a collection of the sayings of a modern elder, Fr. Thaddeus of Serbia. (Fr. Thaddeus reposed in the Lord recently, in 2006.) Much of his early monastic life was spent under the tutelage of monks from Valaam Monastery who had taken refuge in Serbia in the 1920s.

Elder Thaddeus covers many topics of ordinary life: not just the typical "prayer and fasting" but reconciliation with enemies and purity of heart. Each session will deal with a different topic based on the short chapters in the book—"On Thoughts," "On Family Life," "On Humility," "On Serving God and Neighbor," to name a few. And because it will be one chapter per session, if you happen to miss a night, you won't "fall behind." (If you are wondering, Part II will begin in February, after our usual "Theophany break.")



Books will be available for purchase. Additionally, copies will also be available for those who want to borrow them for the duration.

The new ministry doesn't have a name, yet. It may never have one. I do think that "Adult Education," while accurate, may be a bit off-putting. "Fellowship," I always like, because that typically means food for the stomach as well as the soul.

So join me in what promises to be an excellent way to deepen our commitment to and life in Christ. Tuesday, September 6, 7-8:30 p.m.

- Fr. John

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH
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Schedules

	Coffee Hour	Greeters	Altar Servers*
September 4	Russian Ladies	Beth Roberts and Ed Miranda	Team B
September 11	Eileen George and Maria Stevens	Leslyn and Mark Radomsky	Team A
September 18	Eulalie Fila and Dee Pizol	Melody Thompson and Mark Fedin	Team B
September 25	Auburne Vaughan and Beth Roberts (Peducci)	Megan Leathers and David Swisher	Team A
October 2	Ariee Swisher and Corinne Swisher	Beth Roberts and Ed Miranda	Team B
October 9	Mal. Dea Bendorf and Mal. Kelly Olyrik	Leslyn and Mark Radomsky	Team A

* Team A: C. Dory, N. Fedin, M. Haupt, A. Miranda, N. Puzan, S. Olyrik, D. Scobie, and Jo. Stokles
Team B: J. Carrel, M. Dory, P. Dory, K. Ruchternyy, J. Miranda, B. Olyrik, S. Puzan, and M. Scobie

■ SUNDAY SCHOOL SCOOP

Our Sunday Best (Part I) by Deacon Mark Oleynik

For many there is a well known phrase, “wear your Sunday best” that when uttered one knows exactly what is expected. This phrase, mostly from bygone years, refers to putting on your very best clothes when going to worship on Sunday.

And there was a time when many people had only one “very best” set of clothes so if a function called for the most proper of attire—be it going to church, attending a wedding, or baptism, or funeral or even a dance or dinner—they knew what to do. It was understood that wearing your “Sunday best” meant that the function you were attending was of the utmost importance.

Parents often struggle within themselves and with their children regarding the Church and being in church. (What parent has not experienced the heartbreak and frustration of preparing and taking their children to church only to find themselves spending almost the entire service in the fellowship hall or outdoors cooling their heels?)

At the infant age it is a concern about the baby crying or fussing; at the toddler and elementary age it is about their “wandering” around in the church. As the child grows older it becomes more about making sure they understand the Church (and its relevance to their lives) and then eventually it becomes a “hopefulness” that all of the formative work has sunk into their heart, mind and soul. As every parent knows, this life-long process is no easy task and it becomes even more difficult without the love and support of family, friends, and the entire Church.

As part of a “Sunday School Scoop” series running in the *Trisagion* over the next few months, the

Extra “Scoops”

NOW IS THE TIME

We resume Sunday School on September 11. All students and parents are asked to be in attendance on that day as we will begin the year with special prayers for the beginning of instruction immediately following the Divine Liturgy.

EVERYONE SAY “CHEESE!”

*After the Divine Liturgy on September 25 the Sunday School will take our annual group picture. **Every student’s smile is needed!***

FEASTING OPPORTUNITIES

*This month the Church celebrates two (2) **major feasts**. On September 8, we commemorate the Nativity of the Theotokos followed by the Elevation of the Cross on September 14 (which in addition to being a “feast” is also a **Strict Fast day**). It is understood that these days are school days but state law allows for absence for religious holidays (an signed excuse form is available in the nave of the church). If attendance at the Liturgy is not possible, plan to attend Vespers as a family on the eve of the feast (September 7 and 13, respectively, at 7 p.m.).*

notion of putting on our “Sunday best” will be examined from a practical perspective. We will come to discover that this should not be only about the clothes we wear but rather of how us parents (and all of us) can begin to prepare ourselves and our children to be at our “Sunday best” each and every time we come to the Lord’s Table.

Put more simply, we are expected to wear our “Sunday best” everyday. The choices we make have their roots at home and reflect the prophet Joshua’s words, “as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD” (*Joshua 24:15*). ■

■ NEWS & NOTES

The Orthodox Church Beyond Our Parish

Photo Credit: St. Herman’s Seminary



Leading Orthodox Bioethicist To Speak at Bucknell

LEWISBURG – Orthodox Christian bioethicist and physician Dr. Tristram Engelhardt will speak on “Bioethics after Christendom” at Bucknell University on Friday, September 9 at 4 p.m. in Trout Auditorium, with discussion afterward.

In his talk, Engelhardt will explore ethical concerns in health care and western culture from a distinctly Orthodox Christian point of view. His visit through our region is being sponsored by the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania (Orthodox Church in America); the Orthodox Christian Fellowship at Bucknell is one of the lecture’s co-sponsors.

Dr. Engelhardt (who is both a Ph.D. and an M.D.) is a professor of philosophy at Rice and emeritus of medicine at Baylor. He is also the senior editor of the *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy*, *Christian Bioethics*, among others. Perhaps his most notable work is entitled “Foundations of Bioethics” (Oxford), which was reviewed by *The New England Journal of Medicine* as “one of the most brilliant books to appear in the field.”

The talk will be followed by a time of discussion.

ANNUAL ORTHODOX EDUCATION DAY TO HONOR SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN

YONKERS [via *svots.edu*] – On Saturday, October 1, St. Vladimir’s Orthodox Theological Seminary here will honor military chaplains and service personnel at its annual open house, Orthodox Education Day. Activities will center on this year’s theme, “For God and Country” and will feature several liturgical services (including a memorial for departed veterans), ethnic food, discussion panels, and military-related exhibits courtesy of St. Tikhon’s Monastery Museum. Admission to the grounds and all activities is free.

The Rev. Dr. Philip LeMasters will deliver the keynote address, “Orthodox Perspectives on Peace, War, and Violence” and US Army chaplain trainer Dr. Stephen Muse will lead a workshop exploring the emotional, physical, and psychological support we can offer veterans and their families.

TURKEY TO RETURN ORTHODOX PROPERTY

ISTANBUL [via *AsiaNews.it*] – In a sudden twist... [Turkey] will return all property to religious foundations that the administration with various subterfuges has seized in the past, after the census of 1936...

The decree was published within a few days of [Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch] Bartholomew I’s request for the return of unjustly usurped properties to minorities... According to an initial calculation, the decree provides for the restitution of 1,000 properties to [Orthodox Christians].

[In an address attended by the Patriarch, Turkish Prime Minister] Erdoğan said: “Times that a citizen of ours would be oppressed due to his religion, ethnic origin or different way of life are over.”

■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

On the Exaltation of the Cross

by St. John Maximovitch

This month, we will sing the well-known hymn, "O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. Grant victory to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries, and by the virtue of Thy Cross, preserve Thy habitation." St. John of Shanghai (+1966) explains its meaning.

The beginning of this prayer is taken from the twenty-seventh Psalm. In the Old Testament the word "people" designated only those who confessed the true faith, people faithful to God. "Inheritance" referred to everything which properly belonged to God, God's property, which in the New Testament is the Church of Christ. In praying for the salvation of God's people (the Christians), both from eternal torments and from earthly calamities, we beseech the Lord to bless, to send down grace, His good gifts upon the whole Church as well, and inwardly strengthen her.

The petition for granting "victory" ... (i.e., to the bearers of Supreme authority), has its basis in Psalm 143:10 and recalls the victories of King David achieved by God's power, and likewise the victories granted Emperor Constantine through the Cross of the Lord.

This appearance of the Cross made emperors who had formerly persecuted Christians into defenders of the Church from her external enemies, into "external bishops," to use the expression of the holy Emperor Constantine. The Church, inwardly strong by God's grace and protected outwardly, is, for Orthodox Christians, "the city of God." Heavenly Jerusalem has its beginning.

Various calamities have shaken the world, entire peoples have disappeared, cities and states have perished, but the Church, in spite of persecutions and even internal conflicts, stands invincible; for the gates of hell shall not prevail against her (*Matt. 16:18*). Today, when world leaders try in vain to establish order on earth, the only dependable instrument of peace [is the Cross]... "the guardian of the whole world." Before the time of Christ, the cross was an instrument of punishment; it evoked fear and aversion. But after Christ's death on the Cross it became the instrument of our salvation.

Through the Cross, Christ destroyed the devil; from the Cross He descended into hades and, having liberated those languishing there, led them into the Kingdom of Heaven. The sign of the Cross is terrifying to demons and, as the sign of Christ, it is honored by Christians.

— Brenda Smith



First Service Held on New Land

On Sunday, August 21, the faithful of the Chapel of the Holy Spirit processed from our home where we currently meet to our newly purchased property a block away. It had been a gloomy morning but the skies cleared just in time. We gathered on the land for a service of Thanksgiving led by Father Basil. This was a very special day for us as we gave God thanks for blessing us with this piece of property, which in the future will be the home of the first Orthodox Church in Snyder County. We also give thanks to God for the prayer and support of all of you at Holy Trinity who helped make this a reality for us at the Chapel.

New Church Year Brings New Ministries

Ever since our Lord entered the synagogue to announce His mission to mankind, September has been a time of new beginnings for Christians. Following suit here at Holy Trinity, this New Church Year brings with it several new ministries:

- *The **Adult Study Group** meets first and second Tuesdays, 7 p.m. in the Parish Hall (see story, page 1).*
- *The **Cantors** ministry will conduct monthly workshops (Second Saturdays, 4 p.m.) to give liturgical readers a dedicated time for training and fellowship.*

- *To give everyone in the parish an opportunity to eat together, we will have a **Parish Potluck** after the last Sunday liturgy of the month. Bring a dish or dessert to share. (Coffee Hour hosts will furnish drinks.)*
- *A new ministry for 18- to 35-year-olds, the **Young Adult Fellowship** will kick off with a picnic lunch on Saturday, September 17 at noon at Circleville Park. There will be volleyball, badminton, Ultimate Frisbee, and soccer. No need to bring anything; kids welcome.*

Visit holytrinity-oca.org for more information.

Altar Servers' Retreat and Lunch

All boys eight years of age and up are invited to attend Holy Trinity's annual altar servers' retreat on Saturday, September 17 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the church. In addition to rehearsing the movements for liturgy, our acolytes will enjoy a refresher in fire safety, a time for fellowship, and a lunch together. This is an excellent opportunity for boys who have never served to discover if this ministry would be a good fit for them. Fathers are also welcome to bring their sons early for breakfast (9 a.m.) and stay for Men's Fellowship during the retreat.

Orthodoxy 101 Returns

Want to know more about the Apostolic Faith? If so, Orthodoxy 101 is for you. Join us second and fourth Tuesdays at 7 p.m. beginning September 27.

OCF Announces Fall Events

The Penn State Orthodox Christian Fellowship announced last month their event schedule for Fall 2011. In addition to their weekly dinner meeting on Thursdays at 6 p.m. in 212 Pasquerilla, the schedule includes a Labor Day BBQ dinner at Spring Creek Park, a hayride on October 23, and three "Stump-the-Priest Nights" featuring Fr. John. The group also committed to participate in THON next year. Visit clubs.psu.edu/orthodox for more information.

Annual Meeting Scheduled

The Parish Annual Meeting will occur on Sunday, November 13. The later date better accommodates our delegation to the 16th All-American Council: Fr. John, Fr. Basil, Dn. Alex, and Michael Stickle. The triennial sobor begins October 31 in Seattle.

For the Record

FAREWELL

- ***Joshua Cattell**, Homeless Ministry Coordinator and Altar Server, joined the Air Force and moved to Lackland, Texas to attend Boot Camp.*
- ***Stasia Roberts**, Choir member, moved August 3 to Kirksville, Missouri to attend medical school at A.T. Still University.*
- ***Rebecca Ziegler**, Choir member and Orthodox Christian Fellowship staff advisor, left to pursue a dream of living and working in New York City.*

YOUR GENEROSITY

- ***Approximately \$800** in supplies were donated to underprivileged children in our area through the annual **Matthew 25** Back-to-School Drive. Your gifts also produced the longest receipt this Wal-Mart employee (pictured right) had ever seen!*

