

A Tale of Two Weeks

by Fr. Lawrence Farley

“A tough week.” This is how President Obama described the week of April 14—a week that saw acts of terrorism in Boston and a tragic fire and explosion in Texas compounding the other challenges with which life is often filled. Boston also experienced the emotional roller-coaster of lockdown, manhunt, shoot-out, and arrest. A tough week indeed.

These words, however, could also be used to describe another week, long ago, that also was filled with emotion, fear, and death. I refer, of course, to the last week of our Lord’s earthly life... The week was filled with danger, since it was well known that Jesus’ foes had recently tried to stone Him, a fate which He narrowly escaped (*John 11:8*). For this reason, His entry into the city had to be secretly pre-arranged, as did the place in the city where He would eat the Passover meal (*Mark 11:1f, 14:12f*), for if He left the safety of the public crowds, He risked arrest and execution (*Mark 14:1-2*).

That Passover meal, eaten with the Twelve in secrecy, was marked by fear. He predicted that one of them would betray Him, that He would have to leave them, that they would all deny Him and leave Him alone.

As they ate the bread at the beginning of the meal, and as they drank the cup of wine afterward, He declared the bread and wine to be His body and His blood, broken and poured out. They did not know what it all could mean, but they knew talk of death when they heard it.

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If Christ Be Not Risen, Our Faith Is Vain

by Fr. John Reeves

A few weeks ago for Western Easter, Marianne Budde, the Episcopal Bishop of Washington, DC, opined that if someone were to discover a tomb with Jesus’ remains in it, “the entire enterprise would not come crashing down.” (*virtueonline.org*) This isn’t a new notion. In fact, Jehovah’s Witnesses believe it as doctrine. But it’s been around a lot longer than that.

The belief that Jesus did not rise bodily from the dead is part of the Gnostic family of heresies, this one in particular being called “docetism”, (from Greek, *δοκεῖν*, to appear). In other words, Jesus would only have *appeared* as man. This would make Him a divine spirit masquerading in human form

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Schedules

	Coffee Hour	Greeters	Tellers	Servers**
May 5	GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA	All Available Greeters	R. Patel and B. Haupt	All Servers
May 12	L. Rush and D. Van Duin	M. Thompson and M. Fedkin	S. Stevens and G. Cattell	Team A
May 19	Russian Ladies	M. Leathers and D. Swisher	M. Fedkin and M. Stevens	Team B
May 26	K. Oleynik and J. Miranda	B. Roberts and E. Miranda	R. Patel and B. Haupt	Team A
June 2	E. George and M. Stevens	L. Radomsky and M. Radomsky	S. Stevens and G. Cattell	Team B
June 9	J. Vaughan and B. Roberts	M. Thompson and M. Fedkin	M. Fedkin and B. Schrauf	Team A
* Denotes Fast ** Team A: C. Doty, A. Miranda, N. Pelikan, S. Oleynik, D. Stickle, Jo. Stickle, J. Torbic, and J. Swisher Team B: J. Cadman, M. Doty, P. Doty, N. McFarland, J. Miranda, B. Oleynik, L. Torbic, and Je. Stickle.				

■ SUNDAY SCHOOL SCOOP

Running the Race. Going the Distance. by Deacon Mark Oleynik

There are different ways that writers, songwriters, and poets tell the story of life. Some describe life as a tempestuous sea in need of a pilot. Others describe it like a battlefield full of danger and threat. Yet others describe life as a journey to be traveled.

But life is also a race. That is the way St. Paul looks at it in 1 Corinthians: “Do you not know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Well, I do not run aimlessly, I do not box as one beating the air; but I pommel my body and subdue it, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.” (9:24-27)

A phrase from St. John’s gospel helps us to picture St. Paul’s race when he writes that Jesus, “enlightens every man that comes into the world” (1:9) When life begins, God lights the torch. It is ours to live and run, keeping the torch burning. It was said that the ancient torch race was a symbol of all life. This torch is inside: in the same place where the still small voice speaks, a flame is burning. That flame is the light of life. On the altar of the soul, there is a fire which must not go out. Keeping the inner fires burning is about the hardest task in life and St. Paul suggests some ways to do it.

First, he says, “run that you may obtain it.” That is to say, get to the goal without letting anyone or anything else put out your light. Obtaining a worthwhile goal is attaining life. Rain and floods and wind come to extinguish the flame within the body’s temple where the Spirit dwells and must guard it.

Second, note that Paul also writes, “Every athlete exercises self-control in all things.” If the first goal is to get to the goal without letting anyone or any-

Vacation Bible School 2013

*Life is like a race (a long race) that has been set before us. Children may struggle and face many obstacles, but they have a great crowd of witnesses who are cheering them on. That is why this year’s Vacation Bible School (VBS) theme is “**Running the Race. Going the Distance.**” Throughout the week there will be services, stories, activities, and sports-related games to demonstrate that running with and for Christ can be compared to the life of an athlete.*

*VBS will be conducted **June 17-21 from 5:15 p.m. until 8 p.m.** for children in Pre-K (one year before enrolling in Kindergarten) through “rising sixth graders” (entering sixth grade in Fall 2013). Each day will begin with dinner. Parents are encouraged to attend Daily Vespers with their children on both the Wednesday and Friday (starting at 5 p.m. each day) of VBS week.*

*If you have any questions or can help fill staff positions (**adult help is needed for a successful VBS**), please see Dn. Mark or email dnmark@holyltrinity-oca.org.*

thing else put out your light, the second appeal is to “get there” *without* putting out your own light.

A person who lacks self-control puts out his own light. For each light that is blown out by somebody else, there probably are many more which are put out by one’s own self. We are both our own best friends and worst enemies. What people say about us often hurts more than what they do against us, but the thing that hurts most is what we do against ourselves.

It is important to understand that the more intense one’s life and light, the stronger the temptation will be to burn it out quickly. The higher the ideals, the keener the conscience, the finer the soul, greater are the temptations. If you have much light, you need much control. To be set free by Christ means

Christ. If the Resurrection is not true, in what then do we place our hope? St. Paul says that his preaching, and our faith, would then be vain, pointless. He does not talk about the moral teaching of Jesus. He does not exhort the Corinthians merely to live ethical lives. He is blunt: Christ’s resurrection is our hope of resurrection. Without His victory over sin and death, we are all losers.

The story is told of a young man arrested during Soviet days for shouting “Christ is risen!” in front of Lenin’s tomb. Upon being interrogated, he was asked why he was “disturbing the peace.”

He asked his questioners simply, “Is there a body in Lenin’s tomb?” “Of course, young man! Everyone knows that!” was the brusque reply. “Christ’s tomb is empty! Christ is risen!” was his retort.

VBS 2013 (continued from page 2)

that one’s own light will never be put out. Rather it will see us through.

Finally, this passage encourages us to choose a worthwhile goal in life and move toward it; to really to keep our eyes on the goal. Losing sight of a worthwhile goal frequently causes us to take the short view of life, which makes pessimists and spreads the feeling of defeat. Our faith enables us to see the present (that’s the short view) as only a page in the large volume of life (that’s the long view). One page may be splattered with tragedies, defeats and heartbreak, but it is the whole volume that matters.

To be a successful athlete it takes more than just showing up on game day or at race time. It takes preparation, discipline, sacrifice, smart choices, desire to win, and confidence. In St. Paul’s Corinth, a competitor trained and avoided all the things that might hurt his chance for victory. If he did this, he would win the prize of a pine wreath placed on his

On Pascha night, at Orthodox churches around the world, bishops, priests, deacons, and laymen will wait for the “Light of Christ” to pierce the darkness, believing in the Resurrection. We know Christ’s tomb is empty. We fill the night skies with the cry which makes devils tremble: “Christ is risen!”

And we will say it, not merely because it is our tradition, but because it is the truth, a truth we believe down to the core of our being, down to the marrow in our bones. That in a nutshell is Orthodoxy: the Truth about God, the Truth about Man, and the Truth about Christ—God’s rising from the dead to save Man from sin and death. Otherwise, why bother? “And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.” (1 Cor. 15:14)

Christ is risen! Truly, He is risen! ■

Extra “Scoops”

EGG HUNT

On St. Thomas Sunday (the Sunday after Pascha), there will be an egg hunt following the Divine Liturgy at Holmes Foster Park (weather permitting). The hunt is for children through fifth grade but there will be treats for older children as well. Bring your baskets!

END OF SCHOOL YEAR

Since September our Sunday School has been meeting (and growing); students have been learning, and music has filled the Parish Hall. It has been a terrific year because of our parents and students. A special thank you to our teachers for sharing their time and love of God with the children: Ravi and Dee Patel, Rebecca Oliver, Samar Al Maalouf, Holly and Darren Torbic, Anna Stickles, Ann Therese Pelikan, Megan Leathers, and Gary Cattell. May 19 will be the last day for class.

head—it was one of the greatest honors a Greek could receive. Likewise Christ wants us to endure, to fight to the end and beyond, to stand steady when all others have run for cover, and to hold aloft the banner of righteousness. ■

Two Tough Weeks (cont. from page 1)

Then came the catastrophic night of betrayal and arrest, when one of their own inner circle acted as guide to His enemies, and when they all forsook Him and fled. Peter, initially trying to prove himself brave, tagged along later at a distance, only to find himself denying Christ over and over again, as the Lord had predicted. While the disciples scattered and cowered, their Lord was being tried and mocked and beaten by His own people at an illegal all-night trial. When daybreak came, He was handed over to Pilate.

By three o'clock in the afternoon it was all over. Jesus hung dead on the cross, beaten, disgraced, abandoned by almost all. His adversaries were triumphant. For them it was the most satisfying Passover in a long time. But not for the disciples of the Lord. For them, it was a tough week.

This review of the first Holy Week can help us through our own tough weeks, for it teaches us that God does not save us from fearful suffering and death, but reveals His salvation in the midst of it. The fear-suffused and dark Passover supper would be later revealed as the eternal and joyful Mystic Supper, as the meal of death became the meal of life. The moment of supreme defeat and disgrace on Golgotha would become the cosmic victory of God, when He worked salvation in the midst of the earth.

Christ is Risen! (continued from page 1)

His death was only an appearance, as well as his Resurrection. If that is the case, the Resurrection would be superfluous.

Such errant preaching and teaching led me from the Episcopal Church to Orthodoxy almost forty years ago. It is sad to see how the denial of the Trinity, the Virgin Birth, the Miracles, and *oh yes*, the Resurrection, have been multiplied over the past five decades.

This shows that all our suffering can be transmuted into joy, if we wait on God. Dark days may tempt us, calling us to despair, to give up on God. Judas gave up: he took a rope and hanged himself. We must not give up. Despair called to Peter too, for after he denied his Lord time and again, he went out and wept bitterly (Mark 14:72). But, in the end, he did not heed the call to despair. Despite his almost unbearable pain, he persevered, and waited and did not give up.

With God it is always worth the wait. Christ came to Peter and restored him, accepting his repentance and calling him to once again take up his apostolic calling and leadership. He came to all the disciples, forgiving them, gathering them, healing their hearts and breathing His Spirit into them.

Holy Week may have ended with the Cross on Friday and the Tomb on Saturday. But it gave way to the Resurrection on Sunday, the first day of the week and a sign of the timeless eighth day of eternity. As we go through our lives and endure tough weeks, let us continue to wait on God. When day dawned that first Resurrection morn, all the pain of the past week faded with the passing darkness.

So it will prove for us. ■

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Fr. Lawrence Farley is the priest in Langley, B.C., and is the author of many books and Ancient Faith Radio podcasts. This article originally appeared on oca.org.*

Either Christ rose from the dead, or death is not conquered. If death is not conquered, we are still in our sins, to borrow from St. Athanasius (cf. *On the Incarnation*). Either Christ was and remains God in the flesh, before, during, and after his Passion and Resurrection, or all that we are about to celebrate is simply play-acting, a myth, a drama without much to compel it.

In writing to the Church in Corinth, this is St. Paul's point: our faith, our life, and our eternal salvation are all based upon the Resurrection of

“Thursdays in the Park” Return

Moms, dads, caregivers and kids: Beginning May 9, join us weekly for *Thursdays in the Park*, an outreach of Holy Trinity's Raising Orthodox Christian Kids ministry. The playgroup runs from 10 a.m. to noon; locations vary. For information or directions, contact Dee Patel at rock@holytrinity-oca.org.

Smith Ordination Date Set

Reader David Smith of the Chapel of the Holy Spirit will be ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Bishop Melchisedek during the Divine Liturgy for Ss. Peter and Paul (June 29). The service begins at 8:30 a.m. with the greeting and vesting of His Grace. Look for more information in the June issue of the *Trisagion*.

Support Moms and Life this May

In addition to the Mother's Day 5k Run/Walk on Saturday, May 11, Bridge of Hope will host mentor training for all volunteers on May 16 (location TBD, email bridgeofhope@holytrinity-oca.org if interested). In addition, you can express your respect for life and gratitude to mothers by listing your name in a CDT Mother's Day ad sponsored by Concerned Citizens for Human Life. A sign-up sheet will be in the Narthex through Pascha.

Parking at Holy Trinity

As a reminder, the parking spaces immediately behind the church (numbered 10-18; accessible from Calder Way) are available for parishioners and visitors every Sunday until 1 p.m. In addition, the 2 to 6 a.m. street parking ban has been lifted for Pascha.

Another March for Morality

I was humbled to participate in the March for Marriage in Washington, D.C. last month, with a small group of Orthodox Christians from around the country. The march, which was organized on relative short notice to coincide with the hearings at the U.S. Supreme Court on same-sex marriage, was much smaller than the more established March for Life. However, organizers said that it too could become an annual event.

We marched past the Supreme Court where a large contingent of same-sex marriage proponents were chanting loudly as we passed. Our small Orthodox group offered a silent witness; I held an icon of the Ancestors of God with the young Theotokos while marching. A counter-protestor made fun of the icon, calling us “haters.” I replied we were witnessing to our beliefs, not hating or ridiculing. It was a worthwhile experience to offer a presence for our Tradition and cultural rights in the public square, but also to get a sense of the need for more effective ways to articulate caring messages about traditional marriage and Christian views of sex.

Participating with other members of Holy Trinity in the recent March for Life provided an example to me of how, over the years, the pro-life message has become increasingly appealing to young people, who formed the majority of marchers in that very large event. God willing, the same hopefully can be done for traditional marriage in the future.

— Alfred Kentigern Siewers

For the Record

BIRTH

- **Bridget Marie**, daughter of Megan and Andre Wagner, born April 16, weighing 8 lbs. 8½ oz., measuring 19 oz. long. Many years!

NEW MEMBERS

- **John and Angela Petrick** and family. Welcome!

DEATH

- **Vasilios Arampatzis**, former Holy Trinity cantor and sacristan, reposed April 18. Memory eternal.

ELECTION

- **John Carpenter, Evan Bittner, Katie Carpenter, and George Economides** were elected officers of the Penn State Orthodox Christian Fellowship for 2013-14. Congratulations!