Schedules

September 6 October 4 September September 20 September **Fast**  $\frac{1}{3}$ A. Stickles and M. Thompson\*\* Fryncko Files and D. Patel Van Duin and B. Roberts Legaspi and Pelikan and H. and J. Miranda\*\* J. Cadman Torbic\*

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OFFEE HOUR B. Roberts A. Swisher and D. Swisher S. Pettengill and J. Pettengill Fryncko and M. Fryncko and J. Houser\*\* Radomsky and and E. X. Radomsky R. S. Stevens and G. Cattell Cattell and R. Patel Patel and B. Fedkin and G. Cattell Haupt Fedkin Team B Team A Team  $\triangleright$ В  $\triangleright$ В

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH 119 S. Sparks Street

State College, PA 16801

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## September 2015 VOL. 20 NO. 9 holytrinity-oca.org RISAGION

# Fall: A Time to Return to our Roots



New and returning members of the Penn State Orthodox Christian Center gathered on August 30 at their annual BBQ to mark the end of the summer. Prior to the cookout, Fr. John offered a molieben for the beginning of the Fall semester and students enjoyed a variety of activites.

by Fr. John Reeves

ne thing is certain about weather in Happy Valley: fall comes on time. Winter may be long. Spring may never arrive. Summer may be short but fall comes on time.

With autumn's appearance, our lives are eased back in routine. Vacations are over and schools start. We face another cycle of the year, savoring what we harvested and preparing for what lies ahead. It is time to begin the cycle once more, returning to normalcy, predictability, even dormancy but also of death. Fall is a harbinger of winter.

The Church Year is so similar. The dark days of Lent sobriety give way to Paschal springtide. We bask in the greenness, the vibrancy of Pentecost,

(continued, see FROM THE RECTOR'S DESK, last page)

# **Our Auld Lang Syne:** A Look at the Church's **New Year Hymns**

by Fr. Theodore Stylianopoulos

Te are accustomed to think of January 1 as the beginning of the year. But the tradition of computing the start of a new year with autumn was common to the lands of the Bible... The summer harvest was at an end, the crops were stored, and people prepared for a new agricultural cycle... Many of the hymns for the first day of the Church year state that the coming year is God's to give and God's to bless... The Church's prayer is that the coming year will be a year of grace...

(continued, see HYMNS OF BEGINNING, page 3)

### ■ SUNDAY SCHOOL SCOOP

# Making Good Decisions by Dn. Mark Oleynik

In daily life we are called upon to make numerous choices. Some are routine and mundane—What should I wear today? What to make for dinner? Should I go through town or take the bypass?

Other decisions require more thought and are taken with care—Can we afford a new car? What school should our children attend?

And then some decisions are life changing—Should I take a new job or stay at the current position? Am I ready for marriage? Do I really want children?

Our lives are a series of decisions with the latter category being able to change the trajectory of our life—these are real moments of truth. Decisions are good, but good decisions are better.

In Joshua 24:15 we read, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua knew that the service of God and of Baal could not be united and so he gave the peoples "god" options (you can fill in here your "god" options of today). What was Joshua's decision making process; how did he handle his moments of truth?

First, the decision of Joshua was the proper result of his knowledge, experience, and observation. He was well instructed. His observation was extensive. He had seen God's faithfulness to the patriarchs. He had seen the punishment of Egypt. He had seen mercy and judgment exemplified in the history of Israel. He had experienced God's truth in his own case.

Secondly, Joshua's decision was independent of the conduct of others. He spoke for himself in his declaration, "As for me...," making this a clearly a binding duty to God. Joshua didn't go with the flow or what would make him popular. Rather he chose to take a stance based upon what he knew and

### **Sunday School Scoops**

### **Classes Set to Begin**

Sunday School begins Sunday, September 13 at 9am. Many thanks in advance to all the teachers and parents. Parents are encouraged to attend Matins, an opportunity for focused worship and prayer.

#### **Annual Family Picnic**

The Sunday school will have its annual picnic on Sunday September 20 beginning at 4:30 p.m. All families are asked to bring a side dish to share (hot dogs and hamburgers will be provided).

#### **Be Sure to Attend Parents Session**

The next Parents Session will take place on Sunday, September 27 following the Divine Liturgy. Your participation is vital as we will discuss the move to Trinity House, upcoming activities, and special events.

understood and believed. We and our children face the same the same pressures today to be part of the "in" crowd.

Next, the decision of Joshua was publicly avowed. We all must imitate this example to a greater or less extent in that our choice must be public if we would be consistent. Its publicity is a safeguard and protection to ourselves, its publicity is for the good of the world, and its publicity most importantly is for the glory of Christ.

Finally, Joshua decided for his family and household as well as for himself. Leaders speak for their followers and in the same way parents speak for their children when they are part of the household. Good decisions are imperative so let you decision be enlightened.

Let it be free. Let it be public. Let it affect all of your family and all your relationships. Your choice is for eternity. ■

The worship of the Orthodox Church is rich in the Word of God. For the first day of the Church year a total of eight readings are designated, three from the Old Testament which are read during Vespers, and five from the New Testament which are read during the Matins and Liturgy...

The main Bible reading from the Divine Liturgy of September 1 is Luke 4:16-22, a passage which marks the beginning of Jesus' public ministry in St. Luke's Gospel... [I]n the synagogue and proclaims to the world that Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled in Him.

According to Orthodox liturgical tradition, Jesus came to Nazareth to preach the good news of His mission on September 1! This is of course not verifiable, but it is spiritually significant that the Church in its worship has joined the first day of the liturgical year with the first day of Jesus' public preaching. In this fashion the Church has Jesus speaking to us today just as He did to His contemporaries in the synagogue at Nazareth. Will we reject Him or accept Him? Will we rebel against His Word actively, will we ignore it, or will we respond to it positively?

Christ's good news demands our faithful response of mind, heart, soul and body. The unconditional love of God, shown by the most precious gift of His Son who shed His blood on the Cross for our salvation, requires a total response on our part...

### 12 Reasons a Priest Quit Attending Sporting Events

- 1. The coach never came to visit him.
- 2. When he went to a game, they asked him for money.
- 3. The people sitting in his row didn't seem very friendly.
- 4. The seats were very hard.
- 5. The referees made a decision he didn't agree with.
- 6. He sat with hypocrites—they only came to see what others were wearing!
- 7. Some games went into overtime that made him late.
- 8. The band played songs he had never heard before.
- 9. The games were scheduled on his only day to sleep in and run errands.
- 10. His parents took him to too many games when I was growing up.
- 11. He once read a book on sports, and felt he know more than the coaches, anyway.
- 12. He didn't want to take his children because he wanted them to choose for themselves what sport they like best.

— adapted from cybersalt.org

There is no merrymaking or party revelry on the eve of the beginning of the new Church year. It is an eve which does not call for wine and song but for contemplation, reflection and prayer. It is a time to pause and refresh the spirit and meditate on the new year before us. It is also a suitable time for us as Orthodox Christians to recommit our lives to Christ our God.

# On God's Creation and Stewardship

[Every September] the Church again seeks to remind us, as Mary reminded Martha, of the one needful thing—life and unity with Our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ. [The late Ecumenical] Patriarch Demetrios I reminds us that the holy fathers of the Church teach that, "Man is the prince of creation, endowed with the privilege of freedom. Being partaker

simultaneously of the material and the spiritual world, he was created in order to refer creation back to the Creator in order that the world may be saved from decay and death."

In St. Ephrem the Syrian's work
"Hymns on Paradise" we are given
yet another guide to how we might
come into that unity and life in
Christ. St. Ephrem tells us that
God's two witnesses, or pointers, are,
"Nature, through man's use of it, [and]
Scripture, through his reading it."

As the summer draws to a close and children go back to, or away to school for the first time, and begin again a new academic year ecclesiastical year, let us, being reminded by the pointers to Christ as mentioned by St. Ephrem, take a moment to turn to the one needful thing in praise, worship and thanksgiving for the creation and all the blessing bestowed upon us by our merciful Creator.

+ Tikhon Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada

#### ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY: ON THE CHURCH NEW YEAR

## From the Rector's Desk (from pg. 1)

punctuated with lesser fasts. Without these latter we might lose sight of what lies ahead: transfigured life and at the last, Christ's eternal embrace not merely of His mother but of us.

Then completed, we begin the ecclesiastical course again: its rhythms, its cadences, predictable. Our lives measure the steps, or rather the Church Year measures ours. We return to our roots, as surely as sap falls and leaves drop. Trees need that. So do we, as long as there is hope of spring, of summer.

The Church has always associated this time of year with the Creation of the world and consequently with a Garden. In that original garden, God's provision had been taken for granted. Man's actions in response to a snake's deceit would cause a rupture with God. Leaves would fall and hardship await, until the promised time of Redemption: a man would be born to a woman to restore all things (Gen. 3:15). That Serpent would be laid low.

Thus, the story begins again for us, a story of God's providence. God's time enters ours, the seeming futility of predictable cycles of birth and death are challenged. A second Eve is promised to the world. Her Seed will undo the curse of death and futility. History moves toward culmination not meaningless repetition. The natural circuits of years and lives are no longer meaningless. They brim with prophecy and fulfillment, if we embrace the narrative.

So, let me challenge you to begin this year by celebrating both Holy Days this month. The Nativity of the Theotokos begins the cycle once more, as God's fulfills his promise to Eve. The Exaltation of the Holy Cross, which brings joy to all the world, sums up the message of Redemption.

Have a blessed beginning of this Church New Year.

— Fr. Iohw

### **Holy Days this Month**



# NATIVITY OF OUR MOST-HOLY LADY, THE THEOTOKOS

Vespers: Monday, Sept. 7, 7pm Liturgy: Tuesday, Sept. 8, 8am



## EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS

Vespers: Sunday, Sept. 13, 7pm Liturgy: Monday, Sept. 14, 9am.

## Hymns of Beginning (from pg. 1)

The prayers and hymns of the Orthodox Church not only recite the wonderful works of God in creation and history for our salvation but also frequently offer guidance about how to make each year a year of grace, a year of the Lord.

For example, the very first hymn of the new liturgical year, chanted at Vespers in the joyful first tone, reminds us that prayerful daily dependence on God is the basic attitude of the Christian and Christian life. This hymn is also interesting because it refers to the...Lord's Prayer, the "Our Father..."

Both the Vespers hymn and the Lord's Prayer set down three anchors, three great principles, necessary to make the coming year a year of the Lord, a year of grace:

- > The teachings of Christ are the source of truth....
- ➤ Our Father in heaven is a personal God who provides for all our material and spiritual needs as we ask Him by faith.
- ➤ Daily prayer is the way of ongoing communication and a vital relationship with God.

Prayerful daily dependence on God sanctifies every moment of the day, whether we are at work, at play, at rest or in difficulty; it fills it with the presence of God and makes it God's moment.

### Women's Book Study Set to Start

The Women's Book Study kicks off on Thursday, September 10, at the rectory (562 Lanceshire Ln.) at 10 a.m. The group will be studying the life of Mother Maria Skobtsova and reading *Pearl of Great Price* by Sergei Hackel. The books can be purchased in the bookstore for \$12. Mka. Linda Reeves will lead a discussion on Chapters 1 and 2 at the first meeting. For more information, email *women@holytrnity-oca.org*.

### **Altar Society Looking for Help**

The Holy Trinity Altar Society is to serve God through the maintenance and beautification of the church, its vestments, altar cloths and baking of prosphora throughout the changing liturgical seasons. We can always use more help. Ladies, attend the meeting on September 5 at 10 a.m. in the Parish Hall if you would be interested in helping beautifying the church.

### **Icon Painting Workshop**

From November 8-14, Bethany Retreat Center is offering an opportunity to learn about and create an icon written in the ancient Byzantine style, as taught through the Prosopon School of Iconology. Mary Kay Laplante will lead the class in creating an icon of the Archangel Michael using ancient techniques and natural materials. The cost is \$800 per person, which includes overnight, meals, class instruction, & all icon materials. Previous artistic experience is not necessary. For information email *mklaplante11@gmail.com*.

### Take the Choir Poll

The Choir is polling current and prospective members to find the best time for a standing rehearsal schedule. Email *choir@holytrinity-oca.org* with your preference.

### For the Record

#### BAPTISM

➤ Jacob Leathers, son of Rdr. Samuel and Megan Leathers, baptized August 21, 2015, sponsored by Brandon and Corene Swisher. Many years!



PLEASE JOIN US FOR REFRESHMENTS AND HORS D'OEUVRES TO CELEBRATE

the GRAND OPENING of the

## Trinity House

PARISH AND CAMPUS MINISTRY CENTER

and DEDICATION of the

ARCHPRIEST ALEXANDER ATTY MEMORIAL STUDENT LOUNGE

SUNDAY THE FOURTH OF OCTOBER 2 P.M. — 5 P.M.

123 South Sparks Street • State College, Pennsylvania

### **Back-to-School Drive a Success**

"School days, school days, good old Golden Rule days...."
Did you ever wonder about the connection between school days and the Golden Rule in this old song? I never did until recently, when a group from the *Matthew 25* ministry spent part of an afternoon purchasing over \$1,300 worth of school supplies for children in our community whose parents can't afford them.

This activity, financed by generous donations from the faithful of our parish, was this ministry in action: not only "doing unto others as we would like them to do unto us," but more specifically serving Christ Himself: "inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to me." Please prayerfully consider joining and otherwise supporting the Mt. 25 Ministry. There are exciting opportunities for serving Christ in the months ahead! For more information see Dn. Alex or me.

— Melody Thompson

# **Holy Trinity Calendar**

All events take place at 119 South Sparks Street in State College, unless where noted. Events listed at **Trinity House** take place at 123 South Sparks Street, in State College.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Matins, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am Penn State Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) BBQ and Molieben, 4pm @ Spring Creek Park, Houserville (Rides depart from HUB at 3:45pm.)	31	September 1 St. Simeon the Stylite (Church New Year)	Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions	Raising Orthodox Christian Kids (R.O.C.K.) "Thursdays in the Park," 10am @ Orchard Park Penn State OCF: Dinner and Discussion, 6pm @ 122 Pasquerilla Center		Altar Society Meeting, 10am Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
6 Matins, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am	7 Great Vespers with Litiya, 7pm	NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS Divine Liturgy, 8am Homeless Ministry, 4pm @ Centre House, 217 E. Nittany Ave. Parish Council Mtg., 7pm	Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions Sunday School Teacher Meeting, 6:15pm	R.O.C.K. "Thursdays in the Park," 10am @ Sunset Pk. Women's Study, 10am @ Rectory Penn State OCF: Nittany Mtn. Hike, 6pm (Rides depart from Pasquerilla)	11	Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
Sunday Before the Elevation Matins/Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am Combined OYA (Orthodox Youth Association, gr. 9-12) and Jr. OYA (gr. 5-8) Dinner Outing, 4pm Great Vespers with Litiya, 7pm	ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS Divine Liturgy, 8am (Hours, 7:40am)	15 Clergy Staff Meeting, 11:45am Adult Study Group, 7pm- 8:30pm	16 Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions	R.O.C.K. "Thursdays in the Park," 10am-12pm @ Circleville Park Penn State OCF: Dinner and Discussion, 6pm @ 122 Pasquerilla Spiritual Center	18 OCF Mid-Atlantic Regional Retreat: Miraculous Myrrh-Streaming Icon in Taylor, Pa. departs, 5pm (returns Saturday, 6pm)	Breakfast, 9am
Sunday After the Elevation Matins/Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am Sunday School Family Picnic, 4:30pm @ Circleville Park—Pavilion 2 (200 Little Lion Dr., Park Forest) Inquirer's Class, 6:30pm		Adult Study Group, 7pm- 8:30pm	Conception of St. John the Forerunner Great Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions	New Martyrs of Alaska Women's Study, 10am @ Rectory Penn State OCF: "Orthodoxy Encounter" for PSU Spirituality Awareness Week, 6pm @ Pasq. Ctr.	25	26 Sunday School Teacher Meeting, 5:15pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
Matins/Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am All-Parents Session with Dn. Mark, 12pm	28	29 Clergy Staff Meeting, 11:45am Adult Study Group, 7pm- 8:30pm	Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions	Protection of the Theotokos Penn State OCF: Dinner and Discussion, 6pm @ 122 Pasquerilla Spiritual Center	2	Archdiocesan Leader's Day, 10:30am-2:30pm @ St. John the Baptist, Black Lick, PA Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
October 4 Sunday School, 9am Matins with Episcopal Greeting, 9am Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, 10am Trinity House Grand Opening/Atty Student Center Dedication and Reception, 2pm @ Trinity House Inquirer's Class, 6:30pm	5 Annual Women's Night Out, 6pm-8pm @ Hoss's Steak and Sea House, 1450 N. Atherton St.	6 <b>St. Innocent of Alaska</b> Adult Study Group, 7pm- 8:30pm @ <i>Trinity House</i>	Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions	Women's Study, 10am @ Rectory Penn State OCF: Dinner and Game Night, 6pm @ 122 Pasquerilla Spiritual Center	9 St. Tikhon, Enlightener of North America	Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions

# **Chapel Calendar**

All events take place at the Middlecreek Area Community Center (MACC), 67 Elm St. in Beaver Springs., unless where noted.

Tuesday 1	Tuesday 15 Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm @ <i>Lyter Home</i>			
Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm @ Lyter Home (845 Center Ave., Beaver Springs)				
Q	Saturday 19			
Saturday 5 Vespers, 6pm	Vespers, 6pm			
	Sunday 20			
Sunday 6	Hours, 9:40am			
Hours, 9:40am	Obednitsa with			
Obednitsa with Holy Communion, 10am	Holy Communion, 10am			
Book Study: "The Tools of Spiritual Warfare,"	Book Study, 12:30pm @ Smith Home			
12:30pm @ Smith Home (350 Old Orchard Dr.,	Tuesday 22			
Beavertown)	Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm @ Lyter Home			
Tuesday <b>8</b>				
NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS	Saturday 26 Selinsgrove Market Street Festival Outreach, 8am-4:30pm			
(Hours/Divine Liturgy <b>@ Holy Trinity</b> , 7:40am)				
Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm @ Lyter Home				
w Lyter Home	Sunday 27			
Sunday 13	Confessions, 9am			
Hours, 9:40am	Hours, 9:40am			
Obednitsa with Holy Communion, 10am	<b>Divine Liturgy</b> , 10am			
Book Study, 12:30pm	Tuesday 29			
@ Smith Home	Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm @ Lyter Home			
Monday <b>14</b>				
ELEVATION OF	Saturday 3			
THE CROSS (Hours/Divine Liturgy	Great Vespers, 6pm			
	1			

# September 2015