Schedules

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	Courte broth	STREET, STREET	Contract of the last
April 3	Julianne Vaughan and Beth Roberts	Megan Leathers and David Swisher	Team B
April 10	Ellen George and Maria Stevens	Both Roberts and Ed Miranda	Team A
April 17	Anne Swisher and Corene Swisher	Leslyn and Mark Radomsky	Team B
April 14	*** PASCHA ***	All Ausliable Greeters	All Servers
May 1	Russian Ladies	Melody Thompson and Mark Fedkin	Team B
May 8	Mat. Dea Biberdorf and Mat. Kelly Oleynik	Megan Leathers and David Swisher	Team A
* Team A: C. Dog Team B: J. Cats	Team & C. Dog; N. Fedkin, M. Haupt, A. Miranda, S. Diejmik., and Js. Stickles Team & J. Cattell, M. Dog; P. Doţ; J. Miranda, S. Pelikan, and Js. Stickles.	Js. Stickles Stickles.	

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH
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The Final Words of Christ by Fr. Patrick Reardon

vidently there were several "final words" of Jesus on the cross, some recorded in Matthew and Mark, others in Luke and John. Only Luke narrates the conversation with the thief. Luke alone, likewise, records the two times Jesus cries out to God as Father: "Father forgive them for they know not what they do," and "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." (Luke 23:34, 46).

John, an eyewitness to the Savior's death, tells how the dying Jesus committed to him the future care of his mother (*John 19:26-27*).

As for Matthew and Mark, they both testify that "Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit" (*Matthew 27:50; cf. Mark 15:37*), but neither author relates what the "loud voice" said. One justly conjectures that Matthew and Mark are alluding to Jesus' final words as they are recorded in Luke and/or John.

Let us begin, then, with the "second to last" sentence of Jesus, as transmitted by Matthew and Mark, who cite it in the Aramaic/Hebrew mixture that apparently preserves Jesus' very words: "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?" (Matt. 17:46; cf. Mark 15:34).

This anguished cry of the Savior has frequently been misunderstood in recent years. In particular, there has arisen the notion that God the Father actually did forsake His Son hanging on the Cross. In fact, Jesus' factual abandonment by his Father is sometimes understood to be the very price of salvation. Let me say that this theory presents—to say the least—a rather nasty picture of God.

Against this recent theory, the biblical evidence supports the councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon. For those who follow the doctrinal guidance of those councils, it was not possible for God the Father to forsake His Son in any real—factual—sense, because the Father and the Son are of "one being" (homoousios). The godhead is indivisible.

(continued—SEE LAST PAGE)

■ SUNDAY SCHOOL SCOOP Family Pascha Guide

As we draw near to Pascha, our journey becomes more intense and our anticipation of the Great and Saving Night grows. The anticipation is particularly acute in children and parents should be prepared to take advantage of their curiosity. Below are some notes and tips to assist parents in guiding their children during the Paschal weekend (April 22-24).

Matins of Holy Friday (Thursday, 7pm)

This service features the reading of the 12 Passion Gospels. The first gospel relates Christ's discourse with His disciples at the Last Supper, the next ten gospels relate the Lord's sufferings, and the last gospel describes His burial and the sealing of the tomb. These readings provide the narrative for the events that take place while the accompanying

(continued—SEE PAGE 2

Family Pascha Guide (continued from page 1)

hymns sung throughout the service clarify and give deeper meaning to the text. Between the fifth and sixth gospels there is a solemn procession with the large wooden cross from the sanctuary into the center of the nave. We find additional clarity when visible actions are added to the gospels and hymns.

PARENT TIPS

- This is a lengthy service so give your children advance notice (so you can limit the number of times the question of "how much longer?" is asked.)
- Focus your children on how the text advances the events or provides additional detail in each subsequent lesson. If possible, read these gospels with your children prior to the service.
- > As always, everyone should stand or kneel during the gospel readings.
- Explain to your children that although Matins is a morning service, this service is "anticipated" and is celebrated on Thursday evening.

Royal Hours (Friday, 10am)

There is no liturgy on Holy Friday since the Divine Liturgy is always a celebration of communion with the Risen Lord. We do however read the Royal Hours on Friday morning. This service takes its name from the fact that it used to be officially attended by the Emperor and his court in Constantinople.

PARENT TIPS

- ➢ If you cannot attend, you can teach your children the significance of each of the hours: First—when Christ was led into the Praetorium (i.e., the palace of the governor) before Pilate (~7 a.m.). Third—when the Holy Spirit came down upon the apostles on Pentecost and Christ was condemned by Pilate (~9 a.m.). Sixth—when Christ was released to the Jews, condemned, and nailed to the Cross (~12 noon). Ninth—when He died on the Cross (~3 p.m.).
- This is the strictest fast day of the year. Help your child as much as possible to refrain from eating other than minimally.

Unnailing Vespers (Friday, 4pm)

At Vespers on Holy Friday, the shroud (a large icon depicting Christ lying in the tomb) is lifted by the priest from the altar table and then carried in procession out of the altar to the specially prepared tomb in the middle of the church.

PARENT TIPS

- > The service's structure is like Saturday Vespers so children should be able to recognize most parts.
- > The Gospel reading tells the story of the Christ dying on the cross. Don't be afraid to discuss with your children (of all ages) that Christ really died and this is the story of how He died.
- > The most moving and solemn part is the carrying of the shroud to the special tomb. Children quickly understand this movement just as the children understood Jesus' entry into Jerusalem.
- You can show your child that the same words ("The Noble Joseph...") sung during the carrying of the shroud are embroidered on the edge of shroud.
- > Ask your child what Joseph of Arimathea (i.e., the "Noble Joseph") may have been thinking as he carried the lifeless Body of our Lord to the tomb.

Lamentations (Friday, 7pm)

During Matins of Holy Saturday, the tone and theme gradually changes from lamentation to victory over death. We stand before the tomb—but it is revealed to us as the life-giving tomb. The shroud is carried in a procession around the church while all the people (including children) carry lighted candles and sing "Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal have mercy on us..." Upon returning to the entrance of the church we walk under the shroud reminding us that we must pass through death to the Resurrection. While the church is softly illuminated with the faithful's candles, we hear the Ezekiel's dry bones prophecy and words of Pascha: "Let God arise..." As the day ends, we are left with a sense of anticipation.

The Final Words of Christ (continued from page 1)

The message of Jesus' cry, therefore, in no way suggests God's actual abandonment of him. This prayer conveys, not an objective, reified condition of Jesus, but, rather, his human experience of distance from God. The abandonment was psychological, not ontological. God never abandons His friends and loyal servants—much less His Son. Nonetheless, it often happens that they feel abandoned... When Jesus expressed this painful experience in prayer, the opening line of Psalm 22 arose to his lips—"My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?"—He could hardly have prayed this unless He knew the Father was still "my God."

In making this prayer his own, Jesus was not expressing a sentiment unique to himself. He was, rather, identifying himself with every human being who has ever felt himself to be at a great distance from God. Perhaps this prayer best expresses what we mean when we speak of "the days of his flesh" (*Hebrews* 5:7). It was in this deep sense of dereliction that we perceive that "the Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us" (*John* 1:14)...

[D]id Jesus go on to finish that psalm, silently? Christians have always suspected that this was the case. I wonder, however, if we should stop with Psalm 22. Indeed, why would we? Let us imagine, rather, that Jesus, as he was dying, continued praying the next several psalms after Psalm 22.

If he went on, quietly praying the subsequent psalms, Jesus' next words were: "Adonai ro'i, lo' 'ehsar—"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." It is not difficult to think of Jesus going on with the other psalms in this sequence:

"Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in... Show me Your ways, O Lord Teach me Your paths.... The Lord is my light and my salvation Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life Of whom shall I be afraid?"

If Jesus did pray this short sequence of psalms, it took only a few minutes for him to reach Psalms 31:5, which Luke identifies as his final words on the cross: "Into Your hands I commend my spirit" (*Luke 23:46*) ■

EDITOR'S NOTE: Fr. Patrick Reardon is a well-known author and homilist. His article appears courtesy of the Preachers Institute (preachersinstitute.com).

Pascha Guide (continued from page 3)

enters into a fully lit church where there is no darkness and we celebrate Matins and the Divine Liturgy in the middle of the night.

PARENT TIPS

- ➤ Although it may be difficult, try to get your child to rest or take a nap on Saturday. Every kid wants to stay up late...this is their big chance!
- > Dress your child warmly and perhaps bring a blanket to wrap them in to keep the chill away.
- > Younger children will probably fall asleep at some point—this is to be expected. They will still probably remember many things about the night.
- "Gently" rouse your child for communion several minutes before they will receive the Body and Blood.
- ➤ Teach your children the Paschal greeting (Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!) in different languages. They will like to respond out loud to these greetings—especially in church.

Although the services are somewhat longer than usual, you can/should bring your children and prepare them to participate. Please be considerate and aware of your children's whereabouts, actions, movements, etc., at all times during the services so those around you can also fully experience the joy of the Feast. - Dr. Mark

■ SOCIAL OUTREACH

Serving Christ this Lent by Melody Thompson

This Lent, *Matthew* 25 is coordinating four almsgiving opportunities: A **food drive**, with donations going to the State College Area food bank; a **clothing drive**, with donations going to the St. Vincent de Paul Society; a **gift card drive** (grocery/gas/etc.) so Housing Transitions (the local homeless shelter) can purchase items they need to help residents be clean and comfortable in their temporary housing; and a **coin collection** so these residents can do their laundry.

How is this serving Christ? Surely He doesn't need canned food or clothes or gift cards... or quarters!

Or does he? Christ Himself tells us, "...inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." (*Matt.* 25:40)

Even in an apparently well-to-do community like ours, there are many of Christ's (and our) brethren who need us to reach out to them. Please consider responding to Christ's words through one of these opportunities. Collection receptacles will be available in the Narthex and Parish Hall, and the Church School has made a special poster on which to place the gift cards. For more information about these activities, please see me or Dn. Alex.

From the desk of deacon alexander Sanctifying Technology in Parish Life

We cannot escape technology. Handheld devices give us access to more information than can be contained in any library, social networks reinvent the world and how we interact... even the simplest automobile has more computer power than the system that guided men to the moon.

Earlier this semester during our weekly OCF dinner and discussions, we explored the effects of technology on this generation and its relationships, noting true friendship is based on self-sacrifice and suffering with our neighbor, sharing trials until death. The all-too sanitized glimpse we get into the lives of others from Facebook, though neither "Pandora's Box" nor "Prometheus' Gift," can't provide the saving bonds we long for. We all committed to sanctify it by praying through our friend lists and status updates, and giving thanks to God for the many connections He provides.

In the parish as a whole, we are discovering new ways to bless electronic resources, like the weekly This Week email (contact the Parish Office to subscribe) and "digital" bulletin (i.e., "HTOC-TV"), video conferencing at ministry meetings, and mobile scheduling (on Fr. John's iPhone, no less!). In April we look forward to further enhancements, including a totally redesigned *holytrinity-oca.org* and the transmission of audio from the *amvon* and Choir into the Narthex. ■



Anne Cramer joins Orthodoxy 2.0, Holy Trinity's ministry for those preparing for Holy Illumination at Pascha, by Skype.

PARENT TIPS

- Children love processions and they like to hold candles—here they can do both. Tell them they are a very important part of the service.
- Ask them (especially older children) to listen to the music for "changes" (tone, rhythm, etc.), what they were, when they happened, and what was being sung at the time. Teens and preteens listen to a lot of music with their iPods: get them "into" the music and how the Church uses it to help us.
- As you drive home, discuss how we are dependent on light (car lights, street lights, etc.) and how we could not function without it. Use this as a transition to discussing the light of Christ.

Vesperal Divine Liturgy (Saturday, 10am)

Saturday is called the "Blessed Sabbath." For the Jews, this was a day of rest, but for us it is when Christ worked and our sorrow is transformed into joy. During Vespers, there are 15 Old Testament readings! After these readings, and during "Arise, O Lord" (which is sung in place of the "Alleluia" verses), the dark (purple) clerical vestments are exchanged for bright (white) ones. The votives and coverings and are also changed at this time—this is an exciting moment for kids. The "light" of Resurrection is really made visible to us as the Liturgy of St. Basil continues in this joyful light.

PARENT TIPS

- On your way to church talk with your child about what they have experienced in the Church during the past few days. Certainly, they will remind you how long the services have been but you may be surprised by other things they may have noticed.
- Perhaps you can dress your child in white/light colored clothes and have them wear a dark sweater or jacket as a top layer. During the changing of the vestments, have them remove the top layer.
- ➤ Tell your children that catechumens were originally baptized and received into the Church during the Old Testament readings. (Later in the day, some of our Holy Trinity catechumens will be received into the Church as well.)

Extra "Scoops"

MANY THANKS

Thank you to all of those who attended and supported our recent Soup-er Sunday luncheon for the homeless and hungry of our community. We also extend our gratitude to everyone who purchased Gertrude Hawk candy (and especially to Mark and Leslyn Radomsky for once again chairing the fundraiser).

SSHHH... LEARNING GOING ON!

Our Parish Hall is used for many activities and the hour before the Sunday liturgy is a busy time down there. This can sometimes distract the students and make it difficult to hear. If you are in the hall during class time, please be considerate. You may want to consider going upstairs to the Matins service for quiet prayer and worship in preparation for the Eucharist.

FIRST CONFESSION

After nearly eight weeks of preparation, six of our young Christians will be making their first confession on Lazarus Saturday. Please pray for Julia Rush, Joelle Rush, Daryel Stickles, Sophia Biberdorf, Nicolai Pelikan, and Benjamin Oleynik as they enter into this sacrament for the first time.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL DATES SET

The week of June 13-17, 2011, will be a week of learning, fellowship and fun for our students as we conduct our annual Vacation Bible School. Mark your calendars!

Great and Holy Pascha (Sunday, 12am)

Finally, we arrive at the Paschal night: the most joyous celebration in the Orthodox Church. After the shroud is carried into the altar and placed on the altar table, the Church is dark. As midnight approaches, the clergy begin to sing, "Thy Resurrection, O Christ our Savior, the angels in heaven sing..." Suddenly, the priest exits the Sanctuary with a lighted candle and by this candle all the people light theirs—one by one. We go in procession around the church until we arrive at the closed doors of entrance to the church. It is now that we hear for the first time "Christ is Risen!" After the doors are opened, everyone

(continued—SEE LAST PAGE)

■ ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

The Journey by Konstantin Kucheryavyy

Saint John Climacus wrote that, when a person decides to [do] a good deed, the devil puts three pits before him/her. The first pit is external circumstances that prevent the deed from being done. The second pit is concerns about personal gains when doing the deed. Finally, the third pit is a feeling of vanity when/if the deed is done... Very often I [couldn't] even jump over the first pit.

[I] suddenly realized... I am doing so little to help people from the town I currently live in. Of course, I might always say that [it is because] I am a foreigner in this town and this country, and helping people is not my primary concern. I will not be honest, though. Even when I lived in Russia, I was not doing much to help the people around me. Of course, I had an excuse for that too... For any other argument I [had] tons of other excuses readily available.

Up until recently I felt reluctant to publicly express my Orthodox beliefs. At first I thought it was because I felt uncomfortable just in the US because people here are generally unaware of Orthodoxy. But last summer, when I travelled home, it was the same story. I felt as if I was leaving two different lives: in one life I was attending church, participating in sacraments, praying every morning and evening, keeping fasts, etc.; in the other life I was sort of concealing my religion.

Even when I was planning to go to this mission trip, I kept telling people that I am going to travel to the Appalachian Mountains just for the sake of sightseeing. Possibly, I was afraid that people would think that I am a fanatic. I was afraid to be misunderstood. Or, maybe, I was ashamed. This duality of my life was causing discomfort inside of me. The discomfort was near to unbearable when

OCF Challenge!

A friend of our parish has gifted our OCF with a challenge grant of up to \$500. That is, the donor will give our OCF up to \$500 for their programs and activities, if others will match it. That makes a total of \$1,000. That's a wonderful and generous offer!

Are there any takers? One person does not have to match the entire sum. Just mark your contributions "OCF Challenge" in the memo line by May 1. This will go a long way toward helping OCF be ready for another year of ministry at Penn State this next

I was recalling Mark 8:38: "If anyone is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when He comes in His Father's glory with the holy angels." Still I could not do anything about it.

I believe that this trip helped me to overcome the fear of being misunderstood... Maybe one of the evening talks—which we were having every evening during the trip—contributed to that. I remember that at some point we were discussing problems we encountered during the day and how we were able to resolve them. The leitmotif of this discussion was the phrase "So what?"...

So, [if] I am afraid that people will not understand or share my religious views—as a matter of fact, a lot of people *do not* understand [or] share my religious views—so what!? There is nothing extraordinary about this fact. Christianity has been dealing with misunderstanding from the very beginning.

If magical things can happen to me, the Appalachian Mountains mission trip was one of

■ NEWS & NOTES

The Orthodox Church Beyond Our Parish

MUSLIM EXTREMISTS TORCH ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCHES, HOMES

EITHIOPIA – Thousands of Christians have been forced to flee their homes in Western Ethiopia after Muslim extremists set fire to roughly 50 churches and dozens of Christian homes.

At least one Christian has been killed, many more have been injured and anywhere from 3,000 to 10,000 have been displaced in the attacks that began March 2 after a Christian in the community of Asendabo was accused of desecrating the Koran.

The violence escalated to the point that federal police forces sent to the area two weeks ago were initially overwhelmed by the mobs.

The string of attacks comes on the heels of several reports of growing anti-Christian tension and violence around the country where Muslims make up roughly one-third of the total population but more than 90 percent of the population in certain areas, 2007 Census data shows.

One of those areas is Besheno where, on November 9, all the Christians in the city woke up to find notes on their doors warning them to convert to Islam, leave the city or face death, a Christian from Besheno told FoxNews.com on condition of anonymity...

Later that month three Christians in Besheno were assaulted in religiously-motivated attacks and three others were forced to flee the city after being told that Muslim leaders had commissioned hit men to kill them, one of the exiled Christians told *FoxNews.com*.

— Diane Macedo, FoxNews.com

IN JAPAN, CLERGY SAFE; MOST CHURCHES MIRACULOUSLY STILL STANDING

TOHOKU, JAPAN – The magnitude 9.0 earthquake and resulting 30-foot tsunami that struck northeast Japan on March 11 ravaged an active Orthodox community here. One bishop, five priests, and two deacons serve an Orthodox population numbering more than 1,500 in this region. As of March 25, all but four parishioners have been accounted for including all of the clergy. According to the Eastern Japan Diocese, five Orthodox reposed in the Lord from the tragedy. *May their memories be eternal!*

Of the five churches in the region that were located along the coast, miraculously all but one were spared: Two churches escaped damage from the tsunami, the waters stopping within meters of the temple; two other churches were flooded but experienced no structural damage. Only Annunciation Chapel in Yamada was completely destroyed.

International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) and the Orthodox Church in Japan continue to serve an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 people who have been displaced by the earthquake and tsunami in coastal areas that remain largely inaccessible because of the damage and lack of fuel.

ANNUAL SUMMER CONFERENCE TO EXPLORE WOMEN'S VOCATIONS

YONKERS, NEW YORK – "Women Disciples of the Lord" is the theme for St. Vladimir's Seminary's annual summer conference to be held June 17-19. The gathering—which seeks to foster a creative, and inspiring encounter through lectures, panel discussions, and workshops—is especially for women, laity, and clergy interested in broadening lay vocations and ministries in the Church. Email *tpenkrat@svots.edu* for more information.

■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

The Passions and Our Tribulations by Abbot Nikon

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following are excerpts from letters Abbot Nikon wrote to his spiritual children in the 1940s and '50s while suffering in exile in a Russian prison camp.

If you sincerely want to follow Jesus Christ, then there is no other way but the one He indicated—the path of external sorrows, physical illness and never-ending battle with the passions which reveal themselves in many different ways. There are obvious passions: hedonism, despondency, anger, vanity, pride, disbelief, jealously, judgment of others, etc. The disciple of Christ must fight against each one of these passions in succession, to be vindicated and to vindicate.

This requires great effort and patience. It is often a real trial, a cross from which one cannot run away. There are only two choices--either a person succumbs to the passions and betrays Christ, preferring the world and the life it offers, or he fights and suffers, and through this process spiritually he matures.

The demons, although their minds were darkened by their fall, retained much of the reasoning powers and other capabilities endowed to angels. They have a masterful knowledge of both the physical and psychological aspects of human nature, and they have access to the body, nervous system, and brain of a person; always acting on behalf of evil, they also work upon the characteristics and manifestations of the soul, trying to destroy it.

Since a person is aware of obvious passions, and the harm which can result from them, the devils try to confuse everything, trying to belittle the significance of some passions, and making others seem very attractive. There is no end to their craftiness, malice, lies and countless methods of tricking and subverting a person. As inexperienced beginners lacking spiritual guides, we must know one thing: we alone are not able to conquer the passions and the demons. We must, however, fight them according to our strength, and cease not to ask for the Lord's help when they attack us (*cf. Psalm 117:11*). You cannot overcome them by your own strength; still less can another person do it for you. The Lord alone can provide the help you need.

Consequently, you must pray more with reverence, with a contrite heart, confessing before the Lord yours sins, your passions, your weakness, asking for forgiveness and help. By doing this you will quickly feel calm and peace enter your soul, along with a measure of humility and the resolve to endure everything for the sake of the Lord and your salvation...

On Enduring Through Grief

When a person—crushed with grief—sins, then what benefit does he receive from this grief? The point is that the reason why we sin is because we are impatient and do not want to endure anything that goes against our will. However, God would never send us anything beyond our strength, just as the Apostle says: "God is faithful, Who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able" (1 Cor. 10:13). But we do not have patience, do not want to endure even a little, do not attempt to accept everything with humility and therefore become overburdened. And the more we attempt to avoid these attacks, the more we suffer from them, get exhausted and are unable to rid ourselves of them. When a person endures temptation with patience and humility, it passes by without harming him. If he starts to be fainthearted, agitated and begins to blame others, then he will be burdened needlessly, inflicting upon himself even greater temptations without receiving any benefit.

- Abba Dorotheos of Gaza

them. Could I ever imagine a better beginning of Great Lent: Wonderful people around me, thrilling views of Appalachian Mountains, devoted prayer, thought provoking discussions, and a lot of fun and fooling around?

I was unplugged from my normal routine with all its economic models, news reports, deadlines, and rush. I was unplugged only to touch reality. The feeling of the reality was so acute, that for long periods during the trip I was able to release all those pains, silly fears, and guilt of the past and the future. Maybe that is why it was so incredibly hard to get back to "normal" life upon returning...

Truly, it takes a long trip to start noticing obvious things in one's backyard. Thank God right now nobody is trying to torture me for my beliefs. It is my love for Christ in people which should motivate me in my public expression of my beliefs. It should be my tiny mission to show people the right way.





TOP: Konstantin, pictured top-left, and fellow Penn State OCF member Jennifer McClure rebuild a collapsed rock wall for a North Carolina resident with their fellow team members. BOTTOM: Konstantin attempts to teach some Russian phrases to newfound friends from the Detroit area.



Members of Holy Trinity's Church School line up to serve drinks to generous parishioners during "Soup-er Sunday."

For the Record

BAPTISM

Arissa Victoria, baptized March 5, daughter of Gregory and Raquel Arampatzis, sponsored by Mark and LeeAnna Mokluk

FAREWELL

➤ **Rebecca Toroney**, now in Chicago after receiving a Doctorate in Chemistry from PSU.

YOUR GENEROSITY

\$1350 to IOCC for Japan relief; \$690 for Housing Transitions and the Food Bank of the State College Area through "Soup-er Sunday"; \$291 for foreign and domestic missionaries. Thank you!