

THE TRISAGION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

My Mission Trip to Ukraine by Christopher McNulty

On August 4 through August 21 I was blessed with the opportunity to go on the 2011 Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC) of the USA Mission Trip to Ukraine. We traveled to two orphanages outside of Kiev: one in Puhachiv which houses around 90 girls, most with mental disabilities, and the other in Znamyanka which houses over 100 orphans, most with either physical or mental disabilities.



The mission trip is held twice a year, once in the summer and once over the winter holidays, and the missionaries who go help by engaging in projects to improve the facilities, aiding the staff with physical and massage therapy for the children, and, most importantly, spending time playing with and caring for the children.

hands, sitting next to, or even just smiling at a child brought so much excitement and happiness to them.

This year we were able to accomplish several things in the two orphanages we visited. Besides the important time we were able to spend playing with and working with the children, we were able to be a part of the opening of a Montessori Center in Puhachiv, to take girls from Puhachiv outside of the orphanage to a local park, to paint a mural outside of the children's rooms in Znamyanka, and to take several physically disabled kids from the orphanage in Znamyanka into the town.

The children of these orphanages don't usually get the opportunity to get outside of the complexes and they don't get to experience life outside of the orphanage. The work done on these mission trips is invaluable to these children, and the help of Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development Fund (CCRDF) and UOC of USA has been integral to the improvement of these orphanages from the condition they were in.

My experience in Ukraine was unforgettable: from the moment we arrived at an orphanage to the moment we left, each and every child showed unconditional love for everyone who visited. It was unbelievable that the simple act of holding

The conditions of most of the orphanages in Ukraine were, and some continue to be, poor. Many of the orphanages built under Soviet reign were not built to last and are falling apart, and many of the orphanages obtain minimal amounts of funding from the government. Some orphanages are flooded with large numbers of

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Schedules

	Coffee Hour	Greeters	Altar Servers*
October 9	Mat. Dea Biberdorf and Mat. Kelly Oleynik	Leslyn and Mark Radomsky	Team A
October 16	Russian Ladies	Melody Thompson and Mark Fedkin	Team B
October 23	Karen Cattell and Diana Van Duin	Megan Leathers and David Swisher	Team A
October 30	Mat. Jennifer Cadman and Megan Leathers	Beth Roberts and Ed Miranda	Team B
November 6	Melody Thompson and Jean Miranda	Leslyn and Mark Radomsky	Team A
November 13	Judy Fryncko and Holly Torbic	Melody Thompson and Mark Fedkin	Team B

* Team A: C. Doty, N. Fedkin, A. Miranda, N. Pelikan, S. Oleynik., D. Stickers, and Jo. Stickers
 Team B: M. Doty, P. Doty, K. Kucheravyy, J. Miranda, B. Oleynik, Je. Stickers, and Trainee.

■ SUNDAY SCHOOL SCOOP

Our Sunday Best (Part II) by Deacon Mark Oleynik

One of the questions parents most often ask is, “what do I need to do to teach my children about the Church?” If we look at this question at the macro level, we are overwhelmed. But if this question is addressed in a more reasonable way, we find that the Church has anticipated this challenge. The answer is in fact that the Church has a rhythm and every family must find a rhythm that matches that of the Church.

What is the rhythm of the Church? It is the daily and weekly cycles along with festal cycles (both fixed and movable) and finally the great cycle of life (which embraces a person’s whole life and consists of liturgical actions which are not repeated—Baptism, Chrismation, and Burial). This rhythmic cycle serves as the reference point for all of life’s activities—and it should really be the clock for our sense of time. Most parents know about these cycles but would do well to learn and live them as much as they possibly can so that they may have an effect in their daily family life.

So what prevents us from finding our personal and family rhythm? Sad to say it’s that we often find ourselves marching to the beat of a different drummer—that is to the beat (rhythm) of the world. It is in light of this fact we should realize that the optimum time to consider a family rhythm is before you become family. Oftentimes, when couples are considering marriage and are in their early years together, family patterns seem to be far off thoughts and are considered with an attitude that they will cross that bridge when the children are born. We know, however, many times when this happens a parent is suddenly faced with not only trying to change his/her own life but also those of the children—and even sometimes a spouse.

Extra “Scoops”

IT’S A GO!

We began our new school year with prayers, a blessing, and enthusiasm on September 11. May our students and teachers enjoy a fruitful year of learning and growing in the Lord.

PILLOWS FOR PATIENTS

As a kick-off to our school year, our students and teachers made rice pillows and beautiful cards for hospice patients of our area. These pillows can be either heated or cooled to provide the patient comfort for their various ailments. We pray for the “sick and the suffering” in nearly every service we celebrate—and we should also be remembering and praying for the sick in our personal prayers every day.



Certainly, by now you may be thinking that this seems to make sense but your days are already filled—work, appointments, cooking, cleaning, fixing, community activities, etc.; not to mention the kids activities that overlap: school, homework, practices, games, clubs, social events, etc. And we can’t forget to include some much needed “down time” just to catch our breath from the whirlwind. Yes, the world’s beat is deafening and unrelenting (believe me, I know) and before you know it your

(continued—see FAMILY RHYTHM, last page)

Photo Credit: St. Herman’s Seminary

Finding Your Family Rhythm (continued from page 2)

Time Is Not Our Own

C. S. LEWIS MAKES A PROFOUND POINT ABOUT TIME:

He says that we usually regard time as our own: We start our day with the curious assumption that we are the lawful possessors of the upcoming 24 hours. With that hazardous assumption we then plot a matrix for our day, filling in time slots with tasks or restful moments. We might hope that we are managing our time in a way that will somehow please God. But when we begin with the assumption that time is ours, inconveniences and unexpected interruptions become intrusions into “my time.” By contrast, we can begin with the assertion that time is not our own. Time belongs to the Lord and He has a plan for time that He desires us to accept for our own peace and joy.

family is playing in a new band to whole new beat. The most alarming thing is that your children have learned this new rhythm also. Oh, we have rhythm, but it’s the rhythm of the world.

The good news is that it’s never too late (or early) to incorporate the cycles of the Church into the fabric of your family life. You must begin by first making a commitment to do so—and then lead by example. If you decide not to attend Vespers on a regular basis, you can almost bet your children will do the same (“Mom and Dad don’t go; why should I?”). If you don’t pray, do really expect your child to pray? If you gossip or talk bad about others guess what you can expect to hear from your children. The point is (and it cannot be underestimated) that you must show children the proper way to live. Simply, you must live the Faith in the presence of your children. It is imperative to instruct them **every** day of how to live a Christian life by example in every thought, word and deed. It’s a daunting task but it’s our responsibility. (Think about it: if parents don’t do it, someone else will.)

Now change doesn’t necessarily come easy but it can be done if the changes are introduced with reason and clarity (and some good timing). Here are some tips you may want to consider:

- You don’t need to know everything about the Church (doctrine, Traditions, etc.): just be honest and learn with your family the things you don’t know.
- Get serious about saying your morning and evening prayers—this is precisely the foundation needed.
- Pray and repent in the presence of your children.
- Read the Bible in the presence of your children and with your family. There are prescribed readings for every day of the year that can be found in your “This Week” email (subscribe at holytrinity-oca.org) and on the printed wall calendars we provide each year.
- Sing or read the appointed troparion/kontakion before or after meals throughout each festal period.
- Use icons on feast days and saints’ days to remind your family of the celebrations (place the icon in a prominent place such as the dining table.)
- Fast on the appropriate days each week (Wednesday and Friday) and during the appointed fast periods. (We tend to focus on the Great Lent fast but the discipline can be reinforced **every** fast day. Discuss with your children why we fast, starting with the fact that Jesus fasted and we are called to be like Him.)
- Discuss getting prepared and going to church on Sunday. It **is** the big day of the week and we should be preparing ourselves each day of the week. This is what it means to wear “our Sunday best”; to do our best to serve the Lord every day (cf. Joshua 24:15).

In all things, the progress and success of developing your familial rhythm will rely on your ability to maintain a steady beat—hourly, daily, and weekly. You don’t need to do this all at once with your family; instead ease them into it. The most important things are to do it **and** to be consistent. Pray to God Almighty to help you, and if you do miss a beat just jump back in! ■

■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

The Church's Essential Norm

by Fr. Alexander Schememan

The well-established and undisputed fact is that in the early Church the communion of all the faithful at every Divine Liturgy was a self-evident norm. What must be stressed, however, is that this corporate and regular communion was understood and experienced not only as an act of personal piety and sanctification, but above all as an act stemming from one's membership in the Church, as precisely the fulfillment and the actualization of that membership.

The Eucharist was both defined and experienced as the Sacrament of the Church, the Sacrament of the assembly, the Sacrament of unity. "He mixed Himself with us," writes St. John Chrysostom, "and dissolved His Body in us so that we may constitute a wholeness and be a body united to the Head." In fact, the early Church knew no other sign or criterion for membership save participation in the Sacrament: "it was commonly held that the one who did not receive Communion for a few weeks had excommunicated himself, had anathematized himself from the Body of the Church." Communion with the Body and Blood of Christ was the self-evident fulfillment of Baptism and Chrismation, and there existed no other conditions for receiving Communion.

All other Sacraments were also "sealed" in the partaking of the Holy Gifts. And so evident was this connection between membership in the Church and Communion that in an early liturgical text we find the dismissal, before the consecration, of those "who cannot partake of this Divine Mystery." And it must be clear that however obscured and complicated it became later, this initial understanding and experience of Communion has never been discarded and forever remains the essential norm of the Church's Tradition.

One must ask, therefore, not about this norm but about what happened to it. Why did we forget it so fully that a mere mention of more frequent (not to speak of regular) communion appears to so many (and especially to the clergy) an unheard of novelty shaking and, in their opinion, even destroying the foundations of the Church? How is it possible that for centuries nine out of ten Liturgies were Liturgies without communicants? Why is it that this incredible fact provokes no amazement, no trembling, while the desire to communicate more often raises fear, opposition, resistance?

How could the strange doctrine of a once-a-year Communion appear in the Church and be considered a "norm" any departure from which could be but an exception? How, in other terms, did the understanding of Communion become so deeply individualistic, so detached from the doctrine of the Church as the Body of Christ, so deeply contradictory to the Eucharistic prayer itself: "and all of us partaking of the one Bread and one Cup unite one to another in the Communion of the one Spirit..."? ■

Frequent Communion: Tradition or Innovation?

The Church calls us to Holy Communion frequently because the Holy Spirit has taught Her that "Unless you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink his Blood, you have no life in You" (John 6:53)... Is this an "American innovation?" Rather, the "innovators" are those who perpetuate the "original sin" of "Orthodox" spirituality... that by fasting enough, saying enough prayers, abstaining enough, and receiving an "absolution" one can at last be "worthy" of Holy Communion one time. There are times when one might feel it necessary to abstain from Holy Communion, but these should be the exception rather than the rule.

- American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

Mission Trip to Ukraine

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mentally or physically handicapped orphans that were left there either because their parents couldn't afford to take care of them or because it was recommended by a physician. Because many of the orphanages are understaffed, the living conditions in these places were horrendous: many of the children were given minimal amounts of care, there was little to no sanitary measures taken, and many children died.

However, with the aid of the CCRDF and the UOC of USA, living conditions have improved greatly. In Znamyanka alone, the death rate has

declined from 20 children in 2000, to none this year. Money goes toward improving facilities and funding necessities like diapers and baby wipes. It is also used for emergency situations: for instance, funds paid for heating an orphanage during a particularly harsh winter, which most likely saved many children's lives.

With the help of those who support this cause, the living conditions in these orphanages will continue to improve, and the lives of the children who live there will greatly improve as well. ■

Join Us for Coffee and Tea

The Holy Trinity clergy wives (Linda, Dea, Kelly and Jennifer) will host a "Women's Coffee and Tea" social for all the women of the parish on Saturday, November 5 from 10 a.m. to 12 noon at the Rectory (562 Lancashire Drive in Park Forest). For more information or to see a photo gallery of last year's event, visit holytrinity-oca.org.

TLC-2 Ministry to Expand

As the TLC-2 ministry gears up this Fall to assist more mothers of newborn babies with prepared meals, the group is partnering with Students for Life and OCF to support Penn Staters who make the choice to keep their infants. This month, representatives from TLC-2 will participate on a pregnancy resource panel on campus to offer pro-life solutions to pregnant students. To join the TLC-2 mailing list, email tlc-2@holytrinity-oca.org.

New Arrival at the Bookstore

This month, the Bookstore is featuring *Crazy John* about a contemporary fool for Christ from Athens. Visit *News & Notes* on our website to learn more.

Young Adult Group Kicks Off

Food, soccer, Frisbee and volleyball were enjoyed last month when Holy Trinity's newly reestablished Young Adult Fellowship had its inaugural event at Circleville Park. Reaching out to parishioners aged 18-35, the ministry is planning approximately 2-3 activities a month to ensure even the busiest of people can still come together and have some fun. In October, there will be a fall-themed potluck and campfire at the Leathers' house (4789 Buffalo Run Road) on Sunday, October 16 starting at 5 p.m. (Email youngadults@holytrinity-oca.org to RSVP.) There will also be a "Game Night" in the Parish Hall on Sunday, October 23. Hope to see you there!

For the Record

BAPTISM

➤ **Owen Malinowski**, baptized September 3.

MARRIAGE

➤ **Nika Polozkova and Owen Malinowski**, crowned in marriage September 4, sponsored by Dn. Alexander Cadman and Alina Pospelava.

DEATH

➤ **Gennady Ivanov**, father of **Olga Shimelis**, reposed on September 29. Memory eternal!

