

THE TRISAGION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

Men's Mission to Alaska Confirmed

The Orthodox Christian Mission Center has confirmed that a construction team from Holy Trinity will travel to Marshall, Alaska to improve St. Michael's Church this summer.

The Team will depart Sunday evening, July 22, and return August 4. Although the participant cost has increased slightly to \$1,195 per person, this now includes travel from Anchorage (additional travel is estimated to run about \$700-900 per person), as well as room/board, orientation (which will be done in advance at State College), and an OCMC administrative fee. Each member is responsible for raising his own funds.

The Men's Fellowship will be holding several fundraisers this spring to help members go. The first will be on Annunciation (Sunday, March 25), with a mission luncheon after Liturgy. On the menu will be Russian-Alaskan *pirok*, a delicious fish pastry dish.

There will be no charge but a free-will offering will be received. Our goal for this dinner is \$2,000. Please make plans to attend, enjoy a wonderful taste-treat, and help our missionaries get to Alaska.

Pray for our missionary team members: Nikita Fedkin, Michael Haupt, Konstantin Kucheryavvy, Sam Leathers, Ed Miranda, Jonathan Miranda, Michael Pelikan, Mark Radomsky, Michael Stickles, David Swisher, and Deacons Alexander and Mark. Fr. John, who served Marshall on his Sabbatical, will serve as the team's leader.

A Prayer for Preparation

If it is to be first you desire, be last. If to rule, be the servant. If to be heard, be silent. You desire to have, then give. If you desire to buy, then save... If honor, love those around you. If you desire they love you, suffer long, be amiable, do not get angry, nor exaggerate, nor boast. Love your neighbors and you, too, will be loved. If you desire to be God's, do good for life...

If it is the grace of the Holy Spirit you desire, think with God, live with God, piously. Paul came from Saul. All that you desire is attained through effort... You are on sand and it is marshland beneath your feet. In a moment you fall and become filthy. In a moment you lose all you have attained...

O Lord of the hosts, be the Commander of my life! Thou alone givest to those undeserving and love where there is no love and heal where faith has been lost, and are merciful to those filled with hate and heal those who ridicule Thy Name. Thy love is inexhaustible, it rejoices the heart and gives hope. Without Thee, O Creator, there truly is no meaning and life turns to the darkest of nights. With Thee is fullness, without Thee only an empty nothing. Be, then, our power, help and strength...

If it is to have that you desire, then fill your hearts and minds with the Lord. All will be yours. He is the "All and Everything" and beyond all things and in all things, Whom we desire and to Whom we hasten. It is Him that my soul thirsts for. To Him be glory: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

— Fr. Simon J. Turkic
(courtesy of frmilovan.wordpress.com)

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Schedules

	Coffee Hour	Greeters	Altar Servers*
March 4	Arye Swisher and Coene Swisher	Melody Thompson and Mark Fedkin	Team B
March 11	Carol Strauss and Jean Miranda	Megan Leathers and David Swisher	Team A
March 18	Judy Fryncko and Holly Terbic	Beth Roberts and Ed Miranda	Team B
March 25	Eben George and Maria Stowers	Leshyn and Mark Radomsky	Team A
April 1	Bob Schruel and Leshyn Radomsky	Melody Thompson and Mark Fedkin	Team B
April 8	Elaine Files, M. & G. Anthony, and Dee Pytel	Megan Leathers and David Swisher	Team A

* Team A: C. Doby, N. Fedkin, A. Miranda, N. Avilan, S. Olyenik, D. Swisher, and J. Swisher
Team B: M. Doby, P. Doby, K. Kucheryavvy, J. Miranda, B. Olyenik, J. Swisher, and J. Swisher

■ SUNDAY SCHOOL SCOOP

Those Little Slips of Paper

by Dn. Mark Oleynik

In the narthex of our church, there are several small lined tablets of paper distinguishable from each other by the color of ink used—*red* for names of the living and *black* for the departed. These little slips of paper are then taken into the altar so that the priest may remember in prayer the people listed. Parents should share with their children what it means to "commemorate" our loved ones and to participate in the preparation of the Liturgy.

Though we prepare separate lists, they are quite similar: both contain the special people in our lives—mothers, fathers, grandparents, brothers, sisters, family members, and friends. We particularly want to remember those who are sick or suffering; and praying for the departed has been the Church's teaching since apostolic times. St. John Chrysostom wrote regarding these prayers: "Let us assist them according to our power. Let us think of some advantage for them, small though it be, but let us assist them. How and in what way? By praying for them, by asking others to pray for them, and by constantly giving (alms) to the poor in their behalf!" (Homily on Phil. 3, 4). Please use baptismal names; those who are not Orthodox should be identified with an asterisk (*).

Why distinguish between the Orthodox and non-Orthodox? It does not mean that we do not pray for the non-Orthodox; in fact, we pray for them (often) throughout many of our services. However, during the Liturgy of Preparation (Prothesis) only the Orthodox faithful are placed on the *diskos*. During this service the priest prepares the Lamb (which becomes the Body of Christ) and places around it particles representing the Mother of God and the saints. Finally, particles of bread are cut for Orthodox Christians, each by name according to the paper slips. (Prepare your lists early—Vespers is a great time—so your names are included. In fact,

Extra "Scoops"

WERE YOU READY... SET... FOR LENT?

The nearly twenty children who participated in our pre-Lenten Retreat were ready. It was journey-filled day learning about fasting, prayer, charity, reconciliation, and confession. You can see many of signs they discovered along their journey hanging in the Hall.



Photo Credit: Dn. Mark Oleynik

SOUP-ER SUNDAY

Our Sunday School will once again host a Lenten luncheon for the parish immediately following the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, March 11. All proceeds from the free-will offering collected at Holy Trinity will be for the benefit of Housing Transitions of State College. Soup will be served at the Chapel as well. It promises to another delicious meal and time of fellowship!

when there is a delay to the start of the Great Entrance it is because the priest is commemorating names received *after* the Liturgy has started.)

Thus, the entire Church—Christ, the Theotokos, the saints, and the faithful (living and departed)—are symbolically present. All the members of the Church (which includes us who partake of the chalice) are thus bound together by one Faith, one mind, and by common love. Through we may be separated, the living stand united with the departed through the Body and Blood of Christ. ■

Contribute to Matthew 25 Drive

This Lent, *Matthew 25* is organizing a gift card drive to benefit Housing Transitions. Grocery and department store cards of no more than \$25 each will be accepted. Cash offerings, which support an ongoing mission of helping the needy in our area, may be placed in the alms box. (Clothing donations should be made directly to St. Vincent DePaul Society on Westerly Parkway this year.) See Diana Van Duin, Lenten Drive Coordinator, for details. "You have and eat; give each day to someone who is poor to eat also." (St. Raphael of Lesbos)

Seminary Men's Choir to Visit

The St. Vladimir's Seminary Men's Choir will be singing at Holy Trinity this month at the Sunday evening (Deanery) Vespers on March 11 at 5 p.m. The choir is under the direction of Hierodeacon Herman (Majkrzak) and will be accompanied by Archpriest Chad Hatfield, chancellor/CEO of the seminary, who will offer the homily. A catered pasta dinner will be served with salad and Lenten desserts provided by the parish. Several books and CDs from the SVS Bookstore will be available. For information, contact info@holytrinity-oca.org.

Orthodoxy 2.0 Begins

Please pray for our catechumens, Charles, Jennifer, Joseph, Stephen, and Corielle, who will be taking "Orthodoxy 2.0" on March 12, 19, 26, and April 2, from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Parish Hall. The group will study Baptism and Chrismation; the Eucharist and Liturgy; and Preparing for One's Life Confession.

Library Continues to Grow

Looking for something to read for Lent? About 200 new items have been added to the Lending Library over the last few months. At holytrinity-oca.org there is now a link available for each title that leads to a page with book reviews and more information. You can request the book directly from the web page or through the catalog in the Parish Hall.

■ NEWS AND NOTES

Egyptian Christians Deported from their Village

EGYPT [via cbn.com] – On January 27, a Muslim barber named Toemah in the village of El-Ameriya alleged that a 34-year old Coptic tailor named Mourad Samy Guirgis possessed several illicit photos of a Muslim woman on his cell phone... Violence ensued as 5,000 Muslim villagers went on a rampage, burning and pillaging the homes and shops of innocent Copts. This reportedly occurred even though the accused man turned himself in to police and no photos were found on his phone. Many of the 62 Coptic families fled for their lives.

After Copts endure such attacks, their leaders usually attend "reconciliation meetings" with Muslim elders. When the Christians of El-Ameriya recently attended one such meeting, Muslims demanded the eviction of all Coptic residents of the village because "Muslim honor had been damaged."

The Coptic Christians demanded compensation of £2 million (\$331,000) to repair the damaged homes and businesses. The Muslims refused.

As the talks proceeded, another attack occurred as militant Muslims torched three Coptic homes in the same village. Again—according to the Assyrian International News Agency—security forces looked on and did nothing to stop the attack...

Egyptian Christians worry this settlement will result in additional acts of thuggery and injustice against them and they warn it will open the door for an avalanche of forced evictions.

— Reported by Gary Lane

For the Record

FAREWELL

➤ **Christopher Reeves**, former co-director of the Choir, moved to Columbus, Ohio, in February to pursue a new job opportunity. Many years!

■ CHAPEL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Mission and Lent

by Fr. Basil Biberdorf

At the beginning of the Great Fast, our minds are often focused on the rigors of the season, whether food, services, prayer, or the overall simplification of life. The real purpose of Great Lent is nothing less than the acquisition of Christ: His forgiveness, redemption, and resurrection. For catechumens, this is vividly accomplished in the waters of Baptism, where sins are washed away and union with Christ's death and resurrection is achieved. For the already-baptized, we make the journey to those waters anew, seeing the sins that would drag us into the abyss flushed away once again.

The root of the season is about far more than food or exertion. It's about entering in to salvation in Christ. This is no occasion for sadness. The exhortation from Christ in Matt. 6:16-17 is to avoid being like the hypocrites, "with a sad countenance" when fasting, but rather to "anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting." The outwardly pious Jews of the day were actually not being hypocritical in this instance. Their faces, sad and disfigured, mirrored their inward spiritual state, which was sad and disfigured in pride and self-justification.

Our fast should be an occasion to experience an inner joy, and, in turn, to display an outward happiness. This is only possible if our thoughts are focused on pursuing Christ, and being willing to be pursued by him, rather than on our hunger, fatigue, boredom, or resentment. In a parallel to the caution against showing sad faces to the world in a display of piety, our Lord says in Matthew 5, "You are the light of the world...Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

It is in our inner joy from seeking after Christ that we can become the light of the world. Those who

sit in darkness and the shadow of death (*Isaiah 9:2*) do not experience the light if it comes wrapped in sadness, anger, or indifference. Rather, it is being the light of the world, earnestly seeking after Christ, that those in darkness can experience the light. That's right: they experience the light of Christ *through us*. Our repentance becomes their salvation. Consider David's repentance in Psalm 50, "Restore to me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners will return to Thee." Thus we know the importance of killing off our sinful desires and our false gods (money, pleasure, etc.) in favor of clinging to the hope we have in Christ.

The gifts of repentance and joy are not given for us alone to receive the benefits, but so that, through us, the world might receive them also. May Christ bless our strivings this Lenten season, so that the Holy Spirit would work in us in order to draw transgressors back to Himself. ■

Chapel News Briefs

- **BISHOP MELCHISEDEK SERVED LITURGY** at the Chapel for the first time on February 26 and remarked that more people need to come and experience worship as it was when the Church first got started. His Grace had an opportunity to tour the new property before returning home.
- **FAITHFUL CONTINUE TO STUDY** "Called to Serve," which examines the interconnectedness of Holy Scripture. The group meets Sundays at 6 p.m. During Lent, Friday Akathists are also sung at 6:30 p.m. Check the calendar for locations.
- **FR. JOHN GUIDED CHAPEL TEAMS** in a thorough assessment of a variety of construction options last month. He will return on March 18 at 6 p.m. for part two of the process. The goal is to determine needs and sketch out a building footprint.

For the Kids

by Becky Oliver

During this school year, our Penn State Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) took an active role in the fight against pediatric cancer. We started off knowing what "THON" was but did not know the details of how to be an active organization. It was only a short amount of time until OCF learned of the many ways to help out.

We started off by traveling to Media, Pa. on our first fundraising trip. Although we only "canned" on one day of the weekend, our eight participants were able to raise \$1,020. We had a great weekend of fellowship and we were all inspired to do more. Another one of our earlier events was sending three people to the THON 5K. Our next project was reaching out to our friends, family, and members of our home parishes. After holding a "THONvelope" workshop, we sent out a total of 250 letters. We were so happy to return from school breaks and see so many donations in our mailboxes. Before leaving for Winter Break, a pasta luncheon was held at Holy Trinity, raising \$700 in just a few hours.

We had some great success during the first semester, but faced hardships after returning from Break. For the third canning weekend, we planned to travel to N.J. We were really looking forward to this trip because there was only a short amount of time left to credit our organization in consideration for dancers. Our members attended the new safety workshops and were ready to go until God graced us with a weekend of snow. Unfortunately, the overall committee decided to cancel the canning weekend. We were all very disappointed but continued to fundraise. We made personal pledges, continued e-mailing, and raised awareness on our social network pages. THON was soon and we were not going to let anything ruin it for us.

After raising the required \$2,600, OCF had the great opportunity to enter a lottery to have dancers for THON. We never thought we would raise



Becky Oliver (second from the right) and fellow OCF members stand in support of children afflicted with cancer at the 2012 Penn State IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon. The group contributed a part of the record \$10.7 million raised this year.

enough to even think about this possibility. Unfortunately, there were many organizations and we were not selected to participate. Although we were disappointed, we still attended THON as a group and had a great time. Being on the floor or in the stands with thousands of families, students, and alumni made us realize our hard work had paid off. We ended the season raising \$7,000.

Penn State OCF is a small group compared to other campus organizations. However, we accomplished so much and cannot wait to start up again next season. We are so thankful to everyone who supported us and we hope one day we can dance in celebration rather than dancing for a cure. ■

Young Adults to Attend Retreat

OCF members will join the Young Adult Fellowship in traveling to Holy Apostles in Mechanicsburg for the 7th Annual Young Adult Retreat on Saturday, March 17. Our own Fr. John will speak on the topic "Lord, Increase Our Faith." The day begins with a Memorial Service and will include a free Lenten luncheon (bring money for dinner afterward). Our van will depart from Holy Trinity at 8 a.m. To register, contact youngadults@holytrinity-oca.org.

Photo Credit: Rebecca Oliver / © Facebook