

# THE TRISAGION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

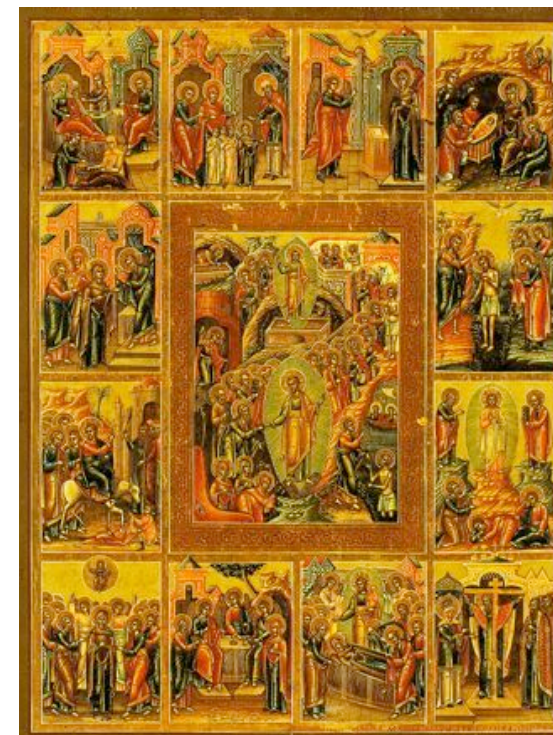
## Observing the Great Feasts by Fr. John Reeves

The last two Great Feasts of the Church year fall just nine days apart, seemingly disconnected from each other. That is, we celebrate the Transfiguration of Christ on August 6, an event which took place some six months prior to His Passion. Then on August 15 we seem to make a quantum leap to celebrate the Dormition (Falling Asleep) of His Most Holy Mother, which took place several years after His death and Resurrection.

Most of the other Great Feasts—Nativity of the Theotokos, her Entry into the Temple, the Nativity and the Theophany of the Lord, the Presentation, Palm Sunday, Ascension, and Pentecost—more or less follow a compressed chronological order, in several “chapters”. These chapters might be called:

- **The Theotokos: Her Birth and Dedication to God**—*Nativity of the Mother of God (Sept. 8) and Her Entry into the Temple (Nov. 21);*
- **The Lord: His Incarnation and Revelation to the World**—*Nativity of Christ (Dec. 25), Theophany (Jan. 6), and Presentation (Feb. 2);*
- **Christ’s Passion: The Road to Resurrection**—*Palm Sunday and Pascha: The Feast of Feasts;*
- **Man’s Call to Glory: Ascension and Pentecost** (*40 and 50 days following Pascha*).

Holy Cross (Sept. 14) and Annunciation (March 25) are the two feasts which prove an exception to the rule. They do relate to other observances, however; but they interrupt the flow of the “chapters” enumerated above.



An early twentieth-century icon depicting the Resurrection and 12 Great Feasts. The Transfiguration and Dormition are above and to the left of the Holy Cross icon in the lower-right corner.

If the overall festal order is followed, one begins to see why the narrative ends with both Transfiguration and the Dormition. Christ’s appearance in radiant glory gave the Apostles assurance that His Passion in the flesh as Man was voluntary, since He was also God in the flesh. In other words, He was not going down to Jerusalem only to fall in a trap unwittingly and get himself tragically killed.

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## Schedules

	Coffee Hour	Greeters	Tellers	Servers*
August 5	E. Files and M. & D. Anthony	M. Leathers and D. Swisher	G. Carroll and M. Stovers	Team B
August 12	D. Patel and K. Olegnik	R. Roberts and E. Miranda	S. Stovers and A.T. Pelham	Team A
August 19	Russian Ladies	L. Radomsky and M. Radomsky	G. Carroll and B. Haupt	Team B
August 26	K. Cahill and D. Van Duhn	M. Thompson and M. Fedkin	M. Fedkin and B. Schauf	Team A
September 2	A. Swisher and C. Swisher	M. Leathers and D. Swisher	M. Fedkin and M. Stovers	Team B
September 9	C. Strauss and P. Doty	R. Roberts and E. Miranda	S. Stovers and A.T. Pelham	Team A

\* Team A: A. Craig, C. Craig, C. Doty, N. Fedkin, A. Miranda, N. Pelham, S. Olegnik, D. Stokols, and Jn. Stokols  
Team B: J. Casman, B. Craig, M. Doty, P. Doty, K. Kucheryavyy, J. Miranda, B. Olegnik, B. Stokols, and J. Swisher.

## ■ SUNDAY SCHOOL SCOOP

# It's All in the Name

by Dn. Mark Oleynik

*Christian* is a much-used word, and like most much-used words it has had a varied significance. It has been (and is!) a term of honor and a term of contempt depending to whom you are speaking. It is known that the name *Christian* was given at first as a term of reproach, of scorn, or of ridicule and is found only three times in the New Testament.

The first followers of Christ had been calling themselves by other names—all appropriate, all meaningful. They called themselves “brethren,” “the disciples,” “the saints,” “the faithful,” “the elect,” and “the way,” but not *Christians*. Like their teacher they were called names—often times names that hurt. Yet the title Jesus’ early followers gave Him—Christ—stuck to them. Whether in ridicule or in earnest, they continued to be called Christians.

Many years later we find the Church fathers and followers accepting the name. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, writes: “*Pray that I may not only be called a Christian, but also be found one.*” Upon ascending the throne, Constantine was called a Christian, and as the first Christian emperor, made the Church a world power. Everything that Christianity touched soon became called Christian.

Then there were “Christian” wars and “Christian” crusades and persecutions. There was also “Christian” arrogance and intolerance. Still there were always men and women who were not only called Christians but were found to be true Christians. As parents, we pray that our children will be true Christians. They may be recognized as good organizers, good story tellers, witty conversationalists, fine musicians, independent thinkers, model citizens, or diplomats. These are all good things. But hopefully with our help, they will be called Christians first. There really is nothing more worthy that can be said of any man or woman.

### Extra “Scoops”

#### TEACHERS—NOW IS THE TIME!

*We are rapidly approaching the new school year and are in need of loving workers of the Lord for our Sunday School instructional staff (particularly the younger grades). Please prayerfully consider offering your skills and talents and knowledge to the youngest of our parish. Contact Deacon Mark as soon as possible if you are interested or have questions.*

#### SUNDAY SCHOOL FUN DAY

*To help kick-off the new school year, our Sunday School is planning a day in August at one of our local amusement parks. Check your e-mail for more info.*

#### BACK TO SCHOOL

*Our first day is September 9. We will start the year with special prayers for all of our students and teachers for the beginning of instruction.*

The men and women at Antioch endured ridicule, scorn, and contempt and still genuine Christian characteristics and attributes shown through. Barnabas was described in this way: “He was a good man, full of the holy spirit and faith.” Christ shone through Barnabas in that he was selfless, considerate, thoughtful of others, and willing to give others the benefit of the doubt. He did not despair of anyone nor was suspicious of anyone. What made Barnabas a Christian wasn’t a theology or a philosophy. It is Jesus Christ.

We are living in a world that often disparages the name, but there is nothing nobler than to be called a Christian—one that in life, in character, in conduct, always keeps “Christ” in this name. As parents, let us pray for our children the prayer which Ignatius prayed for himself, that they may not only be called a Christian but they may be found to be one. ■

there were no city lights, he remarked he could see the stars more clearly than he had ever seen them before. That night we talked about God’s creation. As adults, most all our six children have said, “Dad, some of my favorite times were those trips I got to take with you.”

If you’re busy, find a way to compensate. I made appointments with my children. If your time is in heavy demand and you don’t block out time for the kids, you’ll never see them. If someone calls and has to see you, you say, “You know, Joe, I’ve got an appointment. I can see you tomorrow.” You decide to prioritize your family. ■

EDITOR’S NOTE: *Fr. Peter E. Gillquist (1938–2012) was an evangelist, publisher, and author of numerous books. The continuation of his article, reprinted courtesy of Conciliar Press, will appear in subsequent issues of this newsletter.*

### Back-to-School Drive Kicks Off

Each year, Holy Trinity provides school supplies for underprivileged children through **Matt. 25**. Monetary donations are also appreciated since we purchase all outstanding items for our sponsored children. Contributions will be accepted through August 26; those interested in volunteering their time may attend an organizational meeting on Monday, August 13 at 4:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall.

### Take the Feast Day Liturgy Poll

During the month of August, Holy Trinity will be soliciting opinions from all parishioners regarding the start time of weekday liturgies. Using response cards located in the Narthex, please indicate your current attendance level and how it would change if weekday liturgies began at 8 a.m. instead of 9. Be sure to vote, but only once per person, please!

### For the Record

#### BIRTH

➤ *Ekaterina Shimelis, daughter of Sisay and Olga Shimelis, born June 25. Many years!*

### The Great Feasts *(continued from page 1)*

The fact of Christ’s voluntary suffering and death would not be fully grasped until after He rose from the dead. Hence, He cautioned the eyewitnesses to the event, Ss. Peter, James, and John, to tell no one until He was risen. Without confirmation by the Resurrection, the Transfiguration would have only seemed an illusion to disappointed disciples.

Just like His followers, we can only come to understand the events that happened on Mt. Tabor after His Resurrection on Mt. Calvary. This is precisely why our liturgical narrative places the Transfiguration *after* Pascha. Yet at the same time, it orients us to the Passion which *follows* as we repeat the stories and chapters during the next liturgical year.

Ultimately, the Great Festal cycle concludes with the Dormition of the Theotokos. The connection with Transfiguration and Mary’s translation from death to Life eternal is clear: What was vouchsafed the apostles on Mt. Tabor is realized in her person. Transfigured in body and soul, she rests in the arms of her Son as He welcomes her into eternal Life.

The liturgical cycle is an ongoing opportunity to relive these saving events in the lives of Christ and His mother, reliving what has happened for our salvation. Our devotion is deepened and our comprehension is enhanced. Bit by bit, our lives begin to change as we participate more and more in the saving work of God.

So, let’s conclude this Church Year by endeavoring to be more observant, more faithful in the liturgical cycle next year, which begins in September. The Great Feasts are each tremendous occasions for rejoicing for we see the love of God at work in and through humanity to return the human race to Himself. Without these celebrations, our theological understanding of God’s providence in human history is hampered. In celebrating the Great Feasts, we participate in the redemption of the world and claim it for our own. ■

## ■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

# Raising Children with Christ, Part I by Fr. Peter Gillquist

When I was eight, my mom passed away, and my dad remarried when I was ten. One summer evening when I was about fourteen, I was sitting on the front steps of our home in Minneapolis, thinking about how much I missed my mom. That night I decided that if I were to have nothing else in life, I wanted a great marriage and family. I put it above education, above a successful career, above my standing in the community.

My wife Marilyn and I both committed our lives to Christ while we were students at the University of Minnesota. One evening Dr. Bob Smith, a professor at Bethel College in St. Paul, talked on marriage and the family. Somewhere during his talk he created a picture that was indelibly etched in my mind. He said, “One day I’m going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ as a father, and my goal is to have my wife and children by my side, saying, ‘Lord, we’re all present and accounted for...’” That night, I prayed, “Lord, that’s what I want when I get married and have children—that we might all enter Your eternal Kingdom intact.”

Through college, seminary, and [fifty-plus] years of marriage, my commitment to have a great family and to bring them into the Kingdom with me has never wavered. My wife and I have kept our marriage healthy and have striven to be godly parents and grandparents. I want to outline for you five specific things Marilyn and I tried to do and, by the grace of God, mostly succeeded in doing, to build up our family in Christ and His Church.

### 1. Make Your Family Your Priority

More important than anything other than the Kingdom of God is our family. I believe if we’re going to raise Orthodox Christian families, our spouses and children have to be our highest priority, next to Christ and His Church.

For the believer, our journey with Christ and His Church always comes first. On that matter, the Scriptures are clear, the Fathers are clear, and the Liturgy is clear. At least four times each Sunday morning we call to mind our holy and blessed God-bearer and all the saints, saying, “Let us commit ourselves and each other and all our life to Christ our God.” Our relationship with God comes first, our commitment to our family comes next, and our dedication to our work is third. As parents, we need to make a vice-grip-firm commitment that above job, above our social life, above all the things that vie for our time, we will prioritize our families.

During the early years of our marriage, I worked with Campus Crusade for Christ. After that, I spent three years working at the University of Memphis, and then eleven years at Thomas Nelson Publishers in Nashville. At each juncture the battle for balance—work vs. family—raged. I would like to report that winning it is easy, but it’s not. I cannot tell you the number of friends and acquaintances I have had—Christian people—who lost their families because, by their own admission, their career came first. They were absentee dads and moms, and their jobs ate them up.

In most of my work over the years, I’ve traveled... gone about half the time. When the airlines some years back started offering frequent-flyer miles, I thought, “Wait a minute, there’s a way I can beat this problem. I’ll take my kids along.” So in those years at Thomas Nelson, I began to take one child at a time with me on some of my trips. On a trip out East with one of my daughters, we rented a car in New York City and drove to Harrisburg. I think we had the best talk we ever had together during that drive. Another time I had to drive all night from Chicago to Atlanta, and I had my son Greg with me. When we got out into the country where

## ■ NEWS & NOTES

# Status of Religious Student Groups is Challenged by Supreme Court Ruling

NASHVILLE [via [desnews.com](#)] – More than a dozen on-campus religious groups here have refused to change their leadership requirements [to allow *any* student to be able to lead *any* club regardless of his beliefs] and are no longer officially recognized by the school. The scandal has prompted the [S]tate Legislature to threaten to halt millions of dollars of state funding to the private university unless the clubs are reinstated.

Vanderbilt is just one example of a university that is rethinking its nondiscrimination policies following a landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision in 2010 that ruled that a University of California law school was justified in denying a Christian group recognition on campus because of an “all-comers” policy. Since then, a rash of universities have considered or adopted all-comers policies that have threatened the status of religious student organizations...

Since the [5-4] decision, Christian clubs have been challenged at other universities based on the same rationale... [Alliance Defense Fund attorney Jeremy Tedesco] worries the Supreme Court’s decision, and all those that follow after, will open the door

for other religious groups outside of the university setting to be excluded from public forums. That is cause for even greater alarm, Tedesco says. And reason enough to fight the little battles of each case in the mean time.

“If your local school has a policy that allows organizations to use their facilities, if they attach a non-discrimination policy to that and say we don’t allow churches that discriminate who their leaders are to use this facility, then all churches are excluded,” he says. “That’s a dangerous avenue for us to go down in this country.”

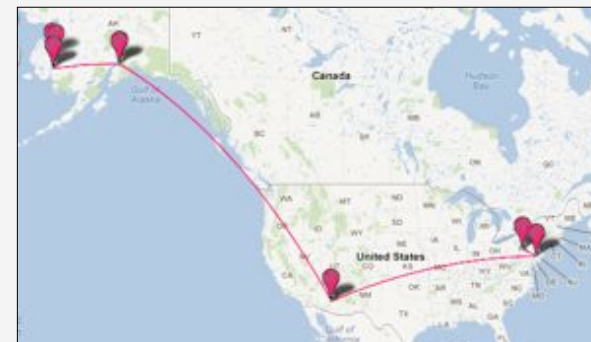
### CATHEDRAL OPENS IN ALBANIA

TIRANA [via [ocmc.org](#)] – After 8 years of construction, the new Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ, the main temple of the Albanian Orthodox Church, was opened here on June 24. It is the third largest Orthodox Church in Europe. The date also marked the 20 year anniversary of the enthronement of His Beatitude Anastasios as Archbishop of All Albania.

### PRE-BUY HEATING OIL TO SUPPORT HTOC

Parishioners are invited to participate in a church pre-buy program through Nittany Oil Company. Those who sign up will be entitled to the same rate as Holy Trinity, which will be capped at the quoted price and lowered if it ever drops. In turn, NOC will donate 5¢ per gallon to the church for every gallon you purchase. Call 237-4859 for more information.

## After Twelve Days of Service, Men’s Mission to Return Aug. 3



Following the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, July 22, ten men from Holy Trinity departed for Marshall, Alaska. While temporality increasing the population there by three percent, the team insulated the village’s church, installed a handicap ramp, and made repairs to the rectory while sharing the love of Christ to the community. The men will begin the return trip of their 10,000-plus mile journey on Thursday evening. After five more layovers, they will arrive home on Friday, August 3 at 9:55 p.m. Please pray for the team and check out [holytrinity-oca.org/mission](http://holytrinity-oca.org/mission) to see reports from the mission field!