

THE TRISAGION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

On the Lord's Ascension to Heaven

by St. Leo the Great

THE MYSTERY OF OUR SALVATION, valued by the Creator of the universe at the price of His blood, has now been carried out under the conditions of His humility from the day of His nativity, to the end of His Passion. Although many signs of the divinity shown out even in His form of a slave, yet the events of that whole period served particularly to show the reality of His manhood. However, death was defeated in attacking Him who was completely without sin, and after the Passion, the chains of death were broken, weakness was turned into power, mortality into eternity, humiliation into glory. These were demonstrated by many clear proofs which the Lord Jesus Christ showed in the sight of many, up until He carried even into heaven the triumphant victory which He had won over the dead...

With all due solemnity we [commemorate our Lord's Ascension] on which the poverty of our nature was raised in Christ above all the hosts of heaven, above all the ranks of angels, beyond the highest heavenly powers to sit with God the Father. It is upon the providential order of the divine acts that we have been firmly established and built up, so that the grace of God may show itself still more marvelous when, in spite of the withdrawal from men's sight of everything that is rightly felt to command their reverence, faith did not fail, hope did not waver, nor love grow cold. For it is the strength of great minds, and the light of truly believing souls, to put unhesitating faith in what is not seen with the bodily eye and fix their desires on what is beyond experimental knowledge.

(continued, see ON THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST, page 2)



Photo Credit: goarch.org

Three New Catechumens Received

by Rdr. Evan Kerstetter

CHRIST IS RISEN! On Sunday, May 19, the Chapel of the Holy Spirit received three new enrollees into the ranks of the catechumenate: Wesley, Naomi, and Noa Hoffman. Since the fall of last year, this family has been inquiring into the Orthodox Church, and in faith, looking to Christ, took the next step in their spiritual journey. Pray for them! God bless them!

With the addition of these three, the catechumenate of the Chapel now numbers five in total, which is nearly a fifth of our average Sunday attendance. What a blessing, indeed! God is working through his people, by the power of the Spirit, to accomplish great things in our community. Please remember our catechumens in your daily prayers, especially, but also, pray for the boldness, wisdom, grace, and love to share the gospel of our crucified and risen Lord with those we meet and interact with daily. ■

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH
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Schedules

	COFFEE HOUR	GREETERS	TELLERS	SERVERS
June 2	Russian Ladies I	B. Haupt and A. Stickle	M. Anthony and M. Fedkin	Team B
June 9	M. Radomsky & I. Andrzhiievskya	L. & M. Radomsky, and L. Swisher	G. Cattell and B. Haupt	Team A
June 16	PENTECOST (Coffee and Bagels only)	J. Cadman and J. Houser	B. Haupt and H. Torbic	Team B
June 23	A.T. Pelikan and J. Miranda	J. Pettengill and S. Pettengill	M. Fiori and D. McNulty	Team A
June 30	SUMMER POTLUCK	D. Patel and R. Patel	M. Anthony and M. Fedkin	Team B
July 7	L. Georgiou and B. & N. Troyan	E. Bazilevskaya and M. Fedkin	G. Cattell and B. Haupt	Team A

* Denotes fast

** Denotes switch change

Team A: Z. Cadman, B. Oleynik, N. Patel, E. Swisher, J. Swisher, and J. Torbic.
Team B: A. Buyanskiy, J. Cadman, N. McFarland, S. Patel, D. Stickle, and I. Torbic.

Altar Server Captains:
D. Torbic and S. Oleynik

How the Ascension of Christ Saves Us (continued from page 1)

How could a man be justified by faith if our salvation rested only on those things which can be seen? [Our Lord says to those who doubt His resurrection], “because you have seen Me, you have believed; blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed.” (*John 20:29*)

In order therefore that we might be capable of this blessedness, our Lord Jesus Christ, when all things were fulfilled concerning the Gospel preaching and the mysteries of the New Testament, was raised to heaven in the presence of the disciples on the fortieth day after the Resurrection. His physical presence remains at the Father’s right hand until the time for multiplying the sons of the Church is ended and the time come for Him to judge the living and the dead in the same flesh in which He had ascended. For now our Redeemer’s visible presence has passed into the sacraments and our faith is nobler and stronger because sight has given way to doctrine whose authority is accepted by believing hearts, enlightened by rays from above.

This faith, increased by the Lord’s Ascension and strengthened by the gift of the Spirit, would remain unshaken by fetters and imprisonment, exile and hunger, fire and ravaging beasts, and the most refined tortures ever devised by brutal persecutors. Throughout the world women no less than men, tender girls as well as boys, have given their life’s blood in the struggle for this faith. It is a faith that has driven out devils, healed the sick and raised the dead. Even the blessed apostles, though they had been strengthened by so many miracles and instructed by so much teaching, took fright at the cruel suffering of the Lord’s passion and could not accept His resurrection without hesitation. Yet they made such progress through His ascension that they now found joy in what had terrified them before. They were now able to raise the whole thought of their mind to the Godhead of Him who sat at the right hand of His Father. What was presented to their bodily eyes no longer hindered them from turning all

Feast Days this Month

ASCENSION OF OUR LORD
 GR. VESPERS: Wed., June 5, 7pm
(A.T. Pelikan, Litiya Bread)
(E. Loukachkina, Icon)




LITURGY: Thu., June 6, 8am
(I. Andrzhevskaya, Prospkhora)

PENTECOST
 MEMORIAL SATURDAY...
 VESPERS: Fri., June 14, 7pm
 LITURGY: Sat., June 15, 10am @ **CHS**

GR. VESPERS: Sat., June 15, 6pm
(A.T. Pelikan, Litiya Bread)
(K. Bazilevskaya, Icon)

MATINS/LITURGY/“KNEELING” VESPERS:
 Sun., June 16, 9am

Apostles Peter and Paul
 GR. VESPERS: Fri., June 28, 7pm
 LITURGY: Sat., June 29, 10am
 @ **Nevsky Cathedral**
 1600 Guyton Rd., Allison Park, PA

their attention to the realization that he had not left his Father when he came down to earth, nor had he abandoned his disciples when he ascended into heaven.

At that time therefore, the Son of Man who was Son of God, made known a more excellent sacred mystery, when in an ineffable manner, having recovered the glory of the Father’s majesty, He began to be nearer to the Father in respect of His divine qualities, after having become farther away from us in his human qualities... Thus we see the Lord saying to Mary Magdalene (representing the Church) as she hastened to approach and touch him, “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father. (*John 20:17*)... [That is, I do not want you to know Me] through the senses of the flesh... [When I have ascended] you shall handle Me more perfectly and truly, for you shall grasp what you cannot touch and believe what you cannot see...”

Reflecting Back, Looking Forward

This has been a wonderful ecclesiastical year for the *Matthew 25* ministry. The Thanksgiving food collection, the St. Nicholas Tree appeal, and the Lenten project to support Centre Volunteers in Medicine were wonderful opportunities to show our love for Christ through support of those in need in our community. We have one more project to look forward before the end of this church year: In July and August we will be sponsoring the back-to-school collection for children of clients at Strawberry Fields, the local mental health agency. More information will be provided in upcoming notices in the *Trisagion* and the weekly bulletins. Want to get involved? Contact Melody Thompson at matthew25@holyltrinity-oca.org.

Ministry Has New Name, Location

The Holy Trinity Knitters/Crocheters’ Group has a new name: “Hats and Hugs Made with Love.” The fellowship of volunteers meets first Mondays from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m., alternating locations between Trinity House and Wyndtree Court Commons in Bellefonte. The church supplies yarn and needles as needed. Previous skill is helpful, but not a necessity as ministry leaders will gladly teach! Contact Leslyn Radomsky at 814-234-3038 with any questions.

Celebrate Peter & Paul with +Mel

On June 29, faithful of the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh will gather on the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul (June 29) to honor His Eminence Archbishop Melchisedek’s 10th anniversary of consecration to the Holy Episcopate. In lieu of a service at Holy Trinity, there will be a 10 a.m. Divine Liturgy at Nevsky Cathedral in Allison Park followed by an open buffet lunch. If you wish to carpool (drivers wanted!), contact the Parish Office at 814-231-2855 or info@holyltrinity-oca.org.

Vacation Bible School: Save the Date

Mark your calendars: The 2019 Vacation Bible School (VBS) “Fruits of the Spirit” will appropriately take place the evenings of Monday, August 5 through Thursday, August 8—the first day of VBS coincides with Great Vespers and the Blessing of Fruit for Transfiguration.

Book Review: Keeper of the Light

Bookstore Volunteer Maria Finke writes about *Keeper of the Light: St. Macrina the Elder, Grandmother of Saints* by Bev Cooke, available in the Parish Bookstore. “This book takes place at a time when many Christians are being martyred. The martyrs in heaven are full of light, yet there are saints at that very time living on earth. St. Macrina the Elder is one of these. She takes her husband, Basil, and her son into the wilderness in search of a safe home. Full of teachings about Saint Gregory her spiritual father, her saintly grandchildren, and herself, Saint Macrina truly keeps the light burning when it comes to being such a steadfast confessor of the faith. I am excited to find out how many people will take an interest in *Keeper of the Light*, our featured book this month. It is a great joy to help our Bookstore.”

Summer Recommended Reading

The teachers of the High School class recommend *I Don’t Have Enough Faith to be an Atheist* by Norman Geisler and Frank Turek and *God and Stephen Hawking—Whose Design is it Anyway?* by John Lennox. The books expound on the themes the high school explored this year.

Join the Security Team

First responders and volunteers interested in making Holy Trinity a safer place are invited to join a forming ministry: the Security Team. Call 231-2855 for info.

For the Record

- BAPTISM**
- **Elliot Ashmore**, son of Evan (John) and Amber (Mary) Ashmore, baptized May 11, sponsored by Rdr. Matthew and Jill (Anna) Finke. **Many years!**
- BIRTH**
- **Vivienne Arina Chawla**, daughter of Tarun and Erica Chawla, born May 25. weighing 9 lbs., 6 oz. and measuring 20½ inches long. **Many years!**
- ELECTION**
- **Stacey Gleeson** was elected to the Board of Directors of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC). She attended her first meeting May 20. **Many years!**

■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

On Knowing the Will of God

Three among our parish family will graduate High School in June: Nicholas McFarland, Samuel Oleynik, and Nikolai Pelikan. To help them—and us—discern which path to walk down (or not walk down), or make a major decision on how to proceed, here is some advice from Orthodox pastors:

How to know the will of God? Primarily through Scripture, continually training yourself in reading it, and studying patristic commentaries and teachings. It's also necessary to pray a lot and to ask the Lord to teach you His will.

— Fr. Igor Shumilov

The question about how to learn the will of God is, perhaps, one of the most important of our lives. You will agree that the will of God is the most precise and faithful criterion for what to do. In order to learn or feel the will of God in this or that situation many things are needed, including a good knowledge of Scripture, deliberateness in decision-making, and the advice of a spiritual father.

In order to properly understand the Holy Scriptures, firstly, they should be read with prayer, that is, not read as a text for deliberation, but as a text to be understood through prayer. Secondly, to understand Holy Scripture, we must, as the apostle says, "be not conformed to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of our minds" (cf. Rm. 12:2). The Greek verb for "conformed" means to have a framework in common with this age: that is, as they say: "everyone thinks so nowadays"—it's a kind of framework, and we must not comply with it. If we want to know the will of God, we must deliberately reject and ignore what one of the seventeenth century's wise men, Francis Bacon, called the "idols of the crowd," that is, the opinions of those around us. . . the will of God can only be discovered through personal communion with Him. Therefore, a close relationship with Him, prayer, and service to Him are prerequisites for seeking the answer to our question.

— Fr. Peter Guryanov

Desire the will of God, and not your own.

The will of God can be discovered in various ways—through the advice of a confessor or the blessing of your parents, by reading the word of God or by casting lots, and so on. But most important is to have the desire to know the will of God—it's the readiness to unquestioningly follow it in your life. If there is such readiness, then the Lord will of course open His will to man, and possibly in unexpected ways.

— Fr. Michael Gaponenko

I like patristic advice. As a rule, we are eager to know the will of God when we stand at a crossroad—facing a decision, or when we want events to develop one way, but they go another less appealing to us. First, we must try to have the same attitude to any path or course of events, that is, to internally prepare ourselves for any outcome, not getting attached to any one option. Second is to sincerely and fervently pray that the Lord would arrange everything according to His good will and do all that would be useful for us in the plan of our salvation in eternity. And then, as the holy fathers affirm, His Providence for us will be revealed.

— Fr. Svyatoslav Shevchenko

Be attentive to yourself and your conscience.

It's easy enough to find the will of God: if after examining your conscience with a period of prayer it does not "rebel," if your decision in this or that circumstance does not contradict the Gospel, and if your spiritual father is not against your decision, it means the will of God is in that decision. We must examine our every step through the prism of the Gospel and accompany it with prayer—even the very shortest one: "Lord, bless."

— Fr. Paul Konkov

Many years to our graduates! ■

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article originally appeared on pravoslavie.ru. It was compiled by Novice Nikita Popov and translated by Jesse Dominick.

And so, dearly-beloved, let us rejoice with spiritual joy, and let us with gladness give God thanks and raise the eyes of our hearts unimpeded to those heights where Christ is. Minds that have heard the call to be uplifted must not be pressed down by earthly desires; they that are appointed for things eternal must not be taken up with the things that perish; they that have entered on the way of Truth must not be entangled in deceptive snares. The faithful must travel through these temporal things remembering that they are only sojourning in this world. Thus even though they meet with some attractions, they must not sinfully cling to them, but bravely pass through them. To this type of devotion the Apostle Peter arouses us, entreating us with that loving eagerness which he conceived for feeding Christ's sheep when he gave the three-fold profession of love for the Lord. He says to us, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2:11).

These fleshly pleasures wage war on the side of the devil whose delight it is to fetter souls that strive after things above. He draws them away through the enticements of corruptible goods from those abodes from which he himself has been banished. Against his plots every believer must keep careful watch, that they may strike down the power of the enemy. And there is no more powerful weapon, dearly-beloved, against the devil's wiles than tender mercy and an abundance of love, by which every sin is either escaped from or vanquished. However, this height is not attained until that which is opposed to it is overthrown. There is nothing so hostile to mercy and works of charity as covetousness which is the root of all evils. Unless it is destroyed by lack of nourishment, there will grow in the ground of the heart in which this evil has taken root, the thorns and briars of vices rather than any seed of true goodness. Let us then dearly beloved, resist this troublesome evil and follow after love without which no virtue can flourish, that by this path of love whereby Christ came down to us, we too may mount up to Him, to whom with God the Father and the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is due for ever and ever. Amen. ■

■ NEWS & NOTES

Pilgrimages to Alaska in 2020 to Mark Anniversaries

SYOSSET [via oca.org] — The year 2020 marks the fiftieth anniversaries of the granting of Autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in America (OCA) and the Glorification of Saint Herman of Alaska. To mark these historic occasions, a number of pilgrimages to Alaska are being planned by the dioceses of the OCA.

His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin of San Francisco and the West will lead the first pilgrimage, which will take place June 7-14, 2020. Pilgrims will depart Seattle by cruise ship for Alaska, where they will visit a variety of Orthodox Christian historic sites with stops in Sitka, Ketchikan and Juneau.

On board educational talks will highlight the Church's historical roots in Alaska within the context of the anniversary celebrations. Reservations are now being accepted online.

Similar 2020 pilgrimages will be sponsored by the Romanian Episcopate (June 17-23); the Dioceses of the South and New England and the Albanian Archdiocese (July 1-7); our Archdiocese of Western Pennsylvania and the Bulgarian Diocese (July 8-14); and the Diocese of the Midwest (August 19-25).

An early bird price of \$2,295 per person is available until June 15, 2019 (the regular price is \$2,525). Further information is available by visiting oca.org. ■

OCCM Mission Trips Need Volunteers Like You

SAINT AUGUSTINE [via ocmc.org] — Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCCM) Mission Teams need volunteers in 2019. There are openings for hard workers in Albania, Colombia, Ghana, Guatemala, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, Sweden and Alaska (our very own Chris Howe is going on the latter this summer). Details are available at ocmc.org. ■

Holy Trinity Calendar

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

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2 Sunday of the Blind Man Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Third & Sixth Hours, 9:40am)</i>	3 "Hats and Hugs Made with Love" Knitting Group, 1pm-2:30pm @ <i>Trinity House Conference Room</i>	4	5 Leave-taking of Pascha Great Vespers with Litiya for Ascension, 7pm	6 ASCENSION OF OUR LORD Divine Liturgy, 8am <i>(Hours 7:40am)</i>	7 3-Day CHOIR WORKSHOP: "One Mouth and One Heart" with Benedict and Maria Sheehan Begins, 7pm	8 CHOIR WORKSHOP Continues, 9am-7pm Great Vespers, 6pm
9 Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Third & Sixth Hours, 9:40am)</i> CHOIR WORKSHOP Concludes with a Celebratory Coffee Hour, 11:45am	10	11 Homeless Ministry, 4pm @ <i>Housing Transitions, 217 E. Nittany Ave.</i>	12 Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions, following Parish Council Meeting, 7pm @ <i>Trinity House Conference Room</i>	13	14 Vespers, 57pm	15 <i>(Memorial Divine Liturgy, 9am @ Chapel of the Holy Spirit, Beavertown)</i> Altar Society Decorating for Pentecost, 4:30pm Great Vespers w/ Outdoor Litiya for Pentecost, 6pm
16 PENTECOST: FEAST OF THE HOLY TRINITY Festal Matins, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am "Kneeling" Vespers of Pentecost, 12pm Annual Parish Picnic/Patronal Feast 1pm-4pm @ <i>Holmes-Foster Park</i>	17 Day of the Holy Spirit	18 Two-Year Memorial for Chuck Beechan, 12pm	19 Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions, following	20	21	22 Baptism of Marina McNulty, 11am Great Vespers, 6pm
23 All Saints Sunday Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Third & Sixth Hours, 9:40am)</i>	24 Nativity of St. John the Baptist Knitting/Crocheting Ministry, 1pm-2pm @ <i>Trinity House Conference Room</i>	25 Choir Rehearsal, 7pm	26 Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions, following	27	28 Great Vespers, 7pm	29 HOLY APOSTLES SS. PETER AND PAUL <i>(Divine Liturgy, 10am @ Archdiocesan Cathedral, Allison Park, PA)</i> Great Vespers, 6pm
30 All Saints of America Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Third & Sixth Hours, 9:40am)</i>	July 1	2	3 Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions, following	4 <i>Independence Day</i> <i>(Trinity House and Parish Offices Closed)</i>	5	6 Great Vespers, 6pm
7 Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Third & Sixth Hours, 9:40am)</i>	8 "Hats and Hugs Made with Love" Knitting Group, 1pm-2:30pm @ <i>Wyndtree Court Commons, Fox Hill Apartments, Bellefonte</i>	9 Homeless Ministry, 4pm @ <i>Housing Transitions, 217 E. Nittany Ave.</i>	10 Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions, following	11	12	13 Great Vespers, 6pm

Chapel Calendar

All events take place at 145 North Kern Street in Beavertown, unless where noted.

Saturday 1 Flower Planting, 9am-12pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions	Sunday 16 PENTECOST Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> Kneeling Vespers, 11:30am
Sunday 2 Sunday of the Blind Man Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> Fellowship, following	Tuesday 18 Choir Rehearsal, 6pm
Saturday 22 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions	Sunday 23 All Saints Sunday Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> Chapel Picnic, 12pm
Tuesday 4 Choir Rehearsal, 6pm	Monday 24 "Hats and Blankets for Babies", 6:30pm
Wednesday 5 Reader Vespers for the Feast of Ascension, 6pm	Tuesday 25 Choir Rehearsal, 6pm
Saturday 8 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions	Friday 28 Great Vespers with Litiya for Ss. Peter & Paul, 6pm
Sunday 9 Fathers of the 1st Council Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> Fellowship, following	Saturday 29 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
Tuesday 11 Choir Rehearsal, 6pm	Sunday 30 All Saints of America Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> Fellowship, following
Saturday 15 Memorial Saturday Hierarchical Memorial Divine Liturgy, 10am Fellowship, following	

June 2019