

# THE TRISAGION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

## New Icons Blessed



On January 24, Fr. Ignatius blessed a set of new festal icons for the Great Feasts, Holy Week, and the Paschal Season

## For We Have Beheld the Lord

As I was coming into the Orthodox Church, one of the features of Orthodox liturgical worship which was the most surprising to me was the incorporation of the Prayer of St. Simeon (Lk 2:29-32) into the daily cycle of services. To someone who doesn't know the prayer's scriptural context, it might seem very logical to assume that the prayer is simply a sort of "goodbye" that we say towards the end of Vespers. It's time for us to go now, Lord: "Lord now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace."

But those who know the Scriptural context of the prayer understand that Simeon is not asking for a simple departure: he is actually telling God that he is ready to die. As Simeon is introduced in Luke, he is said to be "righteous and devout" and "looking for the consolation of Israel" and we are told that the Holy

Spirit has promised him that he "should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ" (Lk 2:25-26). Thus, when he takes the Lord Jesus into his arms and beholds the face of the Savior, he utters his beautiful thanksgiving: I have beheld the Savior, Lord, and therefore I stand ready to depart from this life:

Lord now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples; a light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.

In its context in Vespers, St. Simeon's prayer represents the response of the Christian soul to the announcement of the revelation of Christ, the

*(continued, see FROM THE RECTOR'S DESK, next page)*

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## Schedules

TELLERS		SERVERS	
February 7	K. Cattell and M. Fedkin	All Servers welcome each Sunday. <i>Altar Server</i> <i>Co-Captains:</i> <i>I. Cadman and S. Oleynik</i>	
February 14	G. Cattell and D. McNulty		
February 21	K. Cattell and M. Fiori		
February 28	G. Cattell and M. Fedkin		
March 7	D. McNulty and M. Fiori		
March 14	K. Cattell and M. Fedkin		

■ FROM THE RECTOR'S DESK

# For We Have Beheld the Lord

"Gladsome Light... of the Immortal Father." Lord, I have mystically beheld You; I have truly beheld You with the eye of my soul; now I stand ready to depart from this life.

This readiness for death and peaceful resignation to the will of God is a mark of mature Christianity, and something we should all pray to attain. Truly, it is something that we do pray to attain every time we celebrate Vespers and say St. Simeon's prayer.

But this sentiment is also something that we express even more profoundly as we are concluding the Divine Liturgy. In the liturgy, when as the deacon returns to the altar from having communed the people, he says quietly, "Having beheld the resurrection of Christ, let us worship the holy Lord Jesus..." And then we all sing, "We have seen the true light..." As communicants, we are witnesses of Christ by faith. We are illumined by Him. And our witness is in many ways more profound than Simeon's, since Simeon merely saw and touched the Lord's body, but we partake of and are united to His body. Our illumination is actually fuller and deeper than that of Simeon's earthly experience.

Therefore, having been witnesses of Christ and declared our witness to Him with such words, we conclude our participation in the liturgy with the "post-communion prayers," the last major element of which is none other than St. Simeon's prayer. Communion, and really all of our liturgical life, is a preparation for death. Having become communicants and having beheld Christ with the eyes of our souls as far as we are capable, we set our minds on the age to come. All that matters for us now is Christ. We can no longer live like the Gentiles, who obsess over the things of this age and who

## Upcoming Liturgy:

### THE MEETING OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE

VESPERS: Tues., Feb. 1, 6pm  
(A.T. Pelikan, Litya)  
(K. Fedkin, Icon)

LITURGY: Wed., Feb. 2, 8am  
(I. Andzhievskaya, Prosphora)

"through fear of death" are "subject to lifelong bondage" (Heb 2:15). Rather, by faith and trust in God's promises we are given the strength to live like Christians: bold in the face of loss, adversity, suffering, danger, and death.

As we enter into the month of February, and we prepare ourselves for the liturgical commemoration of Simeon and the blessing of candles, let us remember that the blessing of these physical objects is a symbol of spiritual illumination: the knowledge and noetic sight of Jesus Christ. If, like Simeon, we approach Christ with faith, then, by God's grace, we can approach death with an attitude of trust and hope. Glory to Jesus Christ! — Fr. Ignatius

## His People Did Not Know

In all truth, all the elements bore witness that their Creator has come. Indeed, to speak of them in a human way: The Heavens knew that He was God, because they immediately sent forth a Star; The sea knew Him, because it allowed Him to walk upon it; The earth knew Him, because it trembled when He died; The stones and walls of houses knew Him, because they were broken at the time of his death; The lower world recognized Him, because it gave up the dead it was holding...And yet the hearts of His people remained full of unbelief, and did not know that He was God, although all the dumb elements perceived Him as Lord. — St. Gregory Dialogos' *A Christmas Homily*

■ NEWS & NOTES

## Online Bible Study: Genesis 1-5

At 7pm on Tuesdays from February 2 to March 2, Fr. Ignatius will lead a Bible study on Genesis 1-5, covering the topics of Creation, the Fall of Man, Cain and Abel, and the antediluvian genealogies. To participate by Zoom, please see the contact information on the church website or in "This Week at Holy Trinity." For manual entry into Zoom, the Meeting ID is: 999 1648 3414 and the Passcode is 815295.

## New Parking Coordinator

Maria Fiori has graciously stepped into the role of parking coordinator for the parish. If you (or anyone you know) have questions about parking space rental or concerns about an illegally parked car in our lot, please contact her at [parking@holyltrinity-oca.org](mailto:parking@holyltrinity-oca.org)

## Goodbye to the Radomskys!

It is with great sadness that Holy Trinity bids adieu to Mark & Leslyn Radomsky. They have been faithful parishoners since 1988, but will be re-locating to live closer to their daughters and newly-born grandson, Ian George. Thank you for your many years of faithful service to our community, and know that you will be greatly missed!

## OCF Begins for Spring Semester

Orthodox Christian Fellowship @ PSU began its Spring Semester program on January 21st. Despite PSU's restrictions on in-person events, OCF is still quite active and would love to have new students join in! Please contact Mat. Seraphima ([seraphima@holyltrinity-oca.org](mailto:seraphima@holyltrinity-oca.org)) or Hannah Oleynek for details.

## New Icons Blessed

The parish council recently purchased a new set of 16 icons for use on the central amvon. These will replace the worn set that had been previously used. Come to the Great Feasts and see them all!

## Coffee Hour Set to Return in March

After a full one-year hiatus, we are pleased to announce that following Sunday morning Divine Liturgy, coffee hour will return starting on Cheesefare Sunday March 14! The new coordinator, Megan Leathers, is looking for families willing to bring a dish to share once every few months. If you are interested in details or in sharing food, please contact Megan at [fellowship@holyltrinity-oca.org](mailto:fellowship@holyltrinity-oca.org).

# Love Between Spouses

for her; but she had her friends over all the time. During this entire time, I tried to help her through various means by caring for her, loving her and giving her advice; I tried to make her think of the children who missed her, but she remained unmoved. In the end, she took a great deal of money from me and disappeared. I searched and asked for her everywhere, but it was in vain. I had completely lost track of her. One day, I learned that she had come to Greece and was living in a house of ill repute. I just can't describe how upset I was by her sorry state. In my utter grief, I knelt down to pray. 'My Lord,' I said, 'please help me find her and do whatever I can to help her not to lose her soul. I can no longer bear to think of her utterly fallen state of being.' It was then that the light flooded my room and my heart was filled with peace." "My brother," I told him, "God took notice of your patience, your forgiving spirit and your love, and brought you consolation in this manner."



# Love Between Spouses

*Saint Paisios is a contemporary (1924-1994) Greek ascetic who struggled on the Holy Mountain for much of his life. His glorification was recognized by the Orthodox Church in 2015, with a feast day of June 29.*

*The following is an excerpt from Elder Paisios of Mount Athos Spiritual Counsels IV, Family Life. Holy Monastery "Evangelist John the Theologian." Souroti, Thessaloniki, Greece. 2012. pp. 46-8.*

Someone asked me, "Geronda, what is it that most unites husband and wife?" "Gratitude," I answered, "They love each other for what they give as a gift to one another, The wife offers her husband trust, devotion, obedience, The husband offers his wife assurance and security that he can protect her. The wife is the noble lady of the household, but also the mature servant. The husband is the captain of the household, but also the lowest laborer.

Couples should have a purified love for one another, so that they can experience the mutual consolation needed to carry out their spiritual obligations, In order to live harmoniously, couples need from the very start to set their love as the foundation of their life, a true and genuine love, one that is found in spiritual nobility, in sacrifice, and not in fake, worldly and carnal love. If there is love, if there is sacrifice, one will always arrive at the standpoint of the other, understand the other, have compassion for the other. And when we take our neighbor into our suffering heart, then we take Christ Himself into our heart, and he fills us with His ineffable exultation.

When there's love, even if one is required to be far away from the other in certain circumstances, they will still be close because the love of Christ cannot be separated by distance. But if, God forbid, there is no love, the two may be physically close, but in reality are miles apart. This is why they must always strive to preserve their love

throughout their life; they should sacrifice themselves for each other.

Carnal love unites worldly people externally only as long as there are worldly attributes present; and it separates them when these attributes are gone and, in turn, drives them to a sense of loss. When there is spiritual, true love between a couple, and if one spouse loses his or her worldly attributes, not only will this not separate them, but it will unite them all the more. When only carnal love is present, then, for example, if the wife learns that her partner has looked at another woman, she will angrily throw some vitriol and blind him. Whereas, if there is pure and true love, she will have all the more compassion for him and try, in a good way, to lead him to what is right. This is how the Grace of God abides in them.

One time a Greek-American doctor came to my [monastic cell]. Noticing that his face was bright, I asked discreetly about his life. "Father," he told me, "I am Orthodox, but until recently I didn't keep the fasts, nor did I go to Church frequently. One night I had kneeled in my room to pray to God about something that concerned me, and the room suddenly filled with a pleasant and sweet light. For a while I couldn't see anything but this light, and I felt an inexpressible peace within me." I marveled, realizing that this man had been made worthy to see the Uncreated Light, and I asked him to tell me what had preceded this. "Father," he went on, "I'm married and have three children. We had a good family in the beginning. But later on my wife didn't want to stay home with the children; she wanted us to go out with her friends. I went along with her wishes. After some time she said that she wanted to go out with her friends alone, without me. I accepted this, too, and stayed home with the children. Later, she didn't want us to go on vacation together and asked for money to go by herself. Finally, she asked for a separate apartment to live alone. This, too, I did

*(continued, see LOVE BETWEEN SPOUSES, next page)*

## Many Years!

Those who were blessed to attend the Liturgy of Theophany witnessed the baptism of Karen Rath, who took as her patron saint the Grand Duchess Elisabeth. May God grant many years to his newly illumined handmaiden, Elisabeth!



## On Prayer

It is not enough for you to have the prayer: we have to become prayer, prayer incarnate. Every deed, gesture, or smile is a hymn of praise, of sacrifice – a prayer...We need, most importantly, people who experience the prayer, not people who say prayers – more or less frequently. And who can really claim that he or she is truly 'advanced?' We are all beginners in spiritual matters.

The heart is not just emotions and feelings, but the whole of the human person. The heart is the first organ of our identity. The heart is our hidden being, 'our deepest inner person,' and more truly, that which cannot be attained except by sacrifice and death. It is the center, not just of our conscience but also of our consciousness, not just of the soul but also of the body, not just of the understandable but also of the incomprehensible; more succinctly, it is the absolute center. Understood like this, the heart is much more than a material organ in the body. The physical heart is an outer symbol of the boundless spiritual potential of the human being, created in the image of God and called to attain His likeness. To

complete the inner descent and attain true prayer means to enter this absolute center.

We are called to descend, not from the mind, but with the mind. The goal is not the 'prayer of the heart,' but the 'prayer of the mind in the heart,' as the different forms of understanding, including the reason, are gifts from God, and they have to be used in His service, not rejected.

This 'union' of the mind with the heart means the restoration of our fallen and fragmented being, the restoration of our original righteousness. The prayer in the heart is a return to Paradise, a deposit for and in anticipation of the age to come, which in this age is never fully attained.

The Jesus Prayer helps us see Christ in every man and everyone in Christ, it makes each one 'a man for the others.' The path of the Name is open, generous – not limited by rigid and immutable rules. The prayer is work; to pray means to be at the highest level of engagement, and our breath becomes one with the Divine Breath, which sustains the universe." – Fr. Arsenie Papacioc, "Eternity in the Moment," (p. 222-3)

# Holy Trinity Calendar

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

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
31 Divine Liturgy, 10am <b>LIVE</b> (Hours, 9:40am) or Typika @ Home	February 1 Great Vespers with Litya, 6pm	2 <b>MEETING OF THE LORD IN THE TEMPLE</b> 8AM Divine Liturgy Bible Study, 7pm <b>ZOOM</b>	3 ✠ Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	4 ✠	5 ✠	6 Great Vespers, 6pm <b>LIVE</b> Confessions, following
7 Divine Liturgy, 10am <b>LIVE</b> (Hours, 9:40am) or Typika @ Home	8	9 ✠ Bible Study, 7pm <b>ZOOM</b>	10 ✠ Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Parish Council meeting, 7pm	11 ✠	12	13 Choir rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm <b>LIVE</b> Confessions, following
14 <b>Zaccheaus Sunday</b> Divine Liturgy, 10am <b>LIVE</b> (Hours, 9:40am) or Typika @ Home	15	16 ✠ Bible Study, 7pm <b>ZOOM</b>	17 ✠ Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	18 ✠	19	20 Great Vespers, 6pm <b>LIVE</b> Confessions, following
21 <b>Publican and Pharisee</b> Divine Liturgy, 10am <b>LIVE</b> (Hours, 9:40am) or Typika @ Home	22	23 OCF w/Ohio State OCF, 7pm <b>ZOOM</b> Bible Study, 7pm <b>ZOOM</b>	24 Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	25	26	27 Archdiocesan Assembly, 9am, at St. Nicholas, Dubois Choir rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm <b>LIVE</b> Confessions, following
28 <b>Prodigal Son</b> Divine Liturgy, 10am <b>LIVE</b> (Hours, 9:40am) or Typika @ Home	March 1	2 ✠ Bible Study, 7pm <b>ZOOM</b>	3 ✠ Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	4 ✠	5	6 Great Vespers, 6pm <b>LIVE</b> Confessions, following
7 <b>Sunday of the Last Judgment</b> Divine Liturgy, 10am <b>LIVE</b> (Hours, 9:40am) or Typika @ Home	8 🧀	9 🧀 Vespers of Cheesefare Wednesday, 6pm	10 🧀 Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Parish Council Meeting, 7pm	11 🧀 Vespers of Cheesefare Friday, 6pm	12 🧀	13 🧀 Choir rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm <b>LIVE</b> Confessions, following

# Chapel Calendar

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

Monday 1 Vespers, 6pm Choir Rehearsal, 6pm	Tuesday 16 Choir Rehearsal, 6pm
Tuesday 2 Choir Rehearsal, 6pm	Saturday 20 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following
Saturday 6 Great Vespers, 6pm, Confessions, following	Sunday Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) † Catechesis, 1:30pm via Zoom†
Sunday 7 Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) † Catechesis, 1:30pm via Zoom†	Monday 22 "Hats and Blankets for Babies" (social distancing in force), 6:30pm
Tuesday 9 Choir Rehearsal, 6pm	Tuesday 23 Choir Rehearsal, 6pm
Saturday 13 Great Vespers, 6pm, Confessions, following	Saturday 27 Great Vespers, 6pm, Confessions, following
Sunday 14 Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) † Catechesis, 1:30pm via Zoom†	Sunday 28 Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) † Catechesis, 1:30pm via Zoom†



\* If you have candles to be used in your icon corners and would like them blessed, please bring them with you

† to join remotely, visit [holytrinity-oca.org/zoom](https://holytrinity-oca.org/zoom).

**LIVE** this service will be livestreamed on YouTube (visit [holytrinity-oca.org/YouTube](https://holytrinity-oca.org/YouTube)).

February 2021