

Justified, Illumined, Sanctified



On January 6th, Jim (James) VanDerlin was baptized by Fr. Ignatius Hunter at Holy Trinity. His sponsors were Gary & Karen Cattell. May God grant them all many years!

Orthodox Christianity and Abortion

Every year around the end of the month of January, Americans (in one way or other) mark the anniversary of the immensely consequential U.S. Supreme Court decision *Roe v. Wade*, which effectively legalized the practice of abortion throughout the United States. Although America never was an Orthodox Christian country by adherence, by culture, or by the formal “establishment” of our religion, this is a very sad observance for us, as it is for many traditionally minded Western Christians.

It is first and foremost sad because the action that has been legalized is simply evil. In contrast to ancient Jews and pagans, who held various opinions of abortion, early Christian teachers universally held that the act itself was

deeply wicked and amounted to no less than “murder” (*Didache* 2.2). This teaching is something that is a part of our received tradition; it is a part of the “royal law” that Christ has given to the world. One cannot reason to it from a blank intellectual slate any more than one can reason that prostitution or child sacrifice are evil or that mercy is good. Fundamentally, it is something that is grounded in our religious dogma and its confirmation that our natural internal instincts about abortion are correct: it is something ugly and unworthy of the human being. We are meant for better and for nobler deeds than this.

The legalization and promulgation of abortion throughout the country is also sad because it represents

(continued, see ABORTION, next page)

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Schedules

	COFFEE HOUR	GREETERS	TELLERS	SERVERS
February 6	Summer camp fundraiser	M. Fedkin, K. Bazilevskaya	G. Cattell, M. Fiori	All Servers welcome each Sunday. Altar Server Co-Captains: J. Cadman and S. Oleynik
February 13	Russian Ladies	A. Stickles, J. Carrier	K. Cattell, M. Fedkin	
February 20	H. Torbic & A.T. Pelikan	K. Oleynik, D. Swisher	G. Cattell, M. Fiori	
February 27	Meatfare – HTOC Pizza	J. Houser, B. Haupt	K. Cattell, M. Fedkin	
March 6	Cheesefare – potluck	A. Stickles, D. Swisher	G. Cattell, M. Fiori	
March 13	A. Stickles & J. Miranda	M. Fedkin, K. Bazilevskaya	K. Cattell, M. Fedkin	

■ FROM THE RECTOR’S DESK

Abortion

a significant step in the decoupling of Western civil morality from Christian truth. Again, from the standpoint of the “blank slate,” there is nothing that can logically prove that marriage should be exclusively between two persons (as it still exists in current U.S. law); this is a vestige of Christ’s teaching. Nor is there any way to prove – without adopting them as tenants of faith – such statements as “all men are created equal” or that human beings have “inalienable rights.” These things, proclaimed by Jefferson at the founding of our country, are philosophically derived from Christ and from Christianity, however much he or others might seek to deny it. It is Christ who tells us that biological *homo sapiens* are all “persons” who are unique and unrepeatable and have a sacred and eternal worth. The Romans denied this. Many of the ancient Jews denied this. The quasi-Christian slavers of the American South denied this. Hitler and his Nazis fundamentally denied this. And certainly Margaret Sanger and her eugenicist ilk vehemently denied it as well. It is Christ who gives dignity to the human being and assigns him a worth that cannot be expunged by sin, by law, or by wicked and errant philosophy.

So if such is the case, what are we to do with the world as we find it? How should we live? First of all, we are not to commit abortions ourselves. Nor are we to assist with them or to enter into any professional situation wherein we perform or abet them. Nor are we to counsel others into them either professionally or nonprofessionally.

Furthermore, we must be lovers of those who are tempted and lovers of those who have sinned. We must make it clear in our interactions that regardless of a person’s provenance, he is of sacred worth to God. So if a baby is a child of fornication or adultery or even rape, this child is to be received as a blessing. The beautiful Joseph, lord of Egypt, once said of his brothers’ sins against him, “you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good” (Gen 50:20). Whenever a child is conceived in a potentially scandalous way, we must nonetheless accept the child as a blessing and show mercy to the parents, especially the mother.

Further, if behooves us to be those who laud and support adoption. Marriage is a martyric act. Childbearing is a martyric act. Parenting is martyric. But more than this, adoption is martyric; it is an imitation of Christ, who has adopted us. And adoption takes great courage, both from those who choose to give a child up and from those who choose to adopt. The Yup’ik Alaskans have a most excellent culture in regards to this, far superior to our own. For it is understood that whenever parents feel they cannot raise a child, they should adopt the child out to someone else in the community who can. And this is done without shame and stigma. It is understood as a blessing to those in the community who cannot conceive at the time but want children, and a relief to those who are not in a position to raise the child in a healthy way.

Finally, as Christians, we must be those who preach forgiveness to our neighbors. If someone is guilty of abortion, or of encouraging abortion, or of abetting it, they are still loved and desired by God. We must continue to maintain that everyone can be forgiven and that God “desires not the death of a sinner, but that he should turn from his way and live” (cf. Ez 33:11). The font of Baptism or its renewal through the Sacrament of Confession are always open to us, and all things can be forgiven, if we approach God with faith.

In all of these things, whatever the scenario may be, we should remember the words which adorn so many of Matuskha Olga of Alaska’s icons: “God can create great beauty from complete desolation.” Many things which begin in deep sin end in righteousness and extreme godliness, so we should never lose hope. St. Theodora of Alexandria’s eventual path to sainthood began in adultery, rejection of spiritual counsel, and deception. St. Moses the Ethiopian began his path to sainthood as a murderer and a robber. St. Paul began his path to sainthood as a murderous religious fanatic. Truly, God can create beauty from complete desolation. Let us never loose hope and never cease to pray for our own continued repentance and for the repentance of the world around us. ■

■ NEWS & NOTES

Parish Ministry Leaders

Thank you to those who spoke at the Ministry Faire, and especially those who signed up to join one of our many ministries. For those who are interested but did not get a chance to sign up, feel free to contact the head of any of these ministries to ask questions or get involved!

- 1. Pdn Mark Oleynik - Altar servers; Sunday School
- 2. Rd Michael Stickles - tellers
- 3. Matuskha Kelly Oleynik – rides (giving or needing)
- 4. Karen Cattell - choir
- 5. Megan Leathers - Coffee Hour
- 6. Michael Pelikan - website
- 7. Orthodox Christian Fellowship – Evan Ashmore /Matushka Seraphima Hunter
- 8. Anna Stickles - Altar society, bookstore, library; meals & cares for sick/elderly; Matthew 25
- 9. Justin Houser - greeters
- 10. Anne Therese Pelikan - grounds
- 11. Corene Swisher – meals for new moms

If you are unsure how to contact any of these people, email Matushka Seraphima at seraphima@holytrinity-oca.org.

February Adult Ed: Preparation for Confession

At 7pm on Wednesday, February 23, Holy Trinity will be blessed to host Fr. Timothy Hojniki of Holy Apostles in Mechanicsburg, on how to prepare oneself for the Mystery of Confession. Preparing for confession can be difficult – while we can and do ask our friends about how to prepare for the other Mysteries, we can’t exactly ask them what they did in Confession! Therefore, we should take advantage of this opportunity to hear from an experienced priest what to say when we confess. This second lecture in our continuing adult education series is free and open to all, and we encourage all parishioners and friends of the parish to come and learn with us about this crucial tool in the Orthodox Christian spiritual life. All lectures will be recorded for those who cannot attend in person.

Names for Memorial Liturgy

If you would like your departed loved ones to be commemorated on Memorial Saturday, Feb 26th, please submit their names to Protodeacon Mark Oleynik (dnmark@holytrinity-oca.org) by Feb 20th.



■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

Act Differently

it enters into its third year and people’s passions are raw when it comes to masks, vaccines, boosters, quarantining and the good of our neighbor. Has this pandemic made us more sympathetic toward our neighbor or has it led us to judge the other, get angry at the other, argue and condemn the other? Has it helped us try to understand and empathize with the other or divided us from our neighbor and former friend and even family member and left us too self-righteous and quite furious at the other?

Our politics, combined with the propaganda of our news outlets, have created an atmosphere which instills fear, anger and even hatred toward the other side. The other is no longer our family member, our friend, or our neighbor with whom we have different political views but we have caricaturized the other into something different, our enemy whom we must despise and defeat.

We could give plenty of other scenarios but my focus is on whether followers of Jesus Christ, whether we Orthodox Christians, act differently than people who claim no faith in these and other situations?

Think about what you post on social media? Think about how you talk with those whom you disagree? Think about your emotions and feelings and how you control, or don’t control, them? Think about what you are contributing to this dissolving of society?

Jesus told His followers that “YOU are the light of the world... let your light shine before others that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” We are called to be the salt of the earth that gives flavor to society. Jesus called us the yeast that impacts and leavens the entire dough of society. What contribution are we making to society?

Do our daily words and social media posts and actions reflect light or do we contribute to the darkness? Do our words build up and bring grace to the hearers, as Saint Paul commanded us to do, or do our words tear people down, create walls of hostility, and turn others into enemies? Do people see in us kindness, understanding,

and empathy as we listen to those with whom we disagree and do they see us trying to understand their fears and concerns, even if we may think they seem irrational?

Do our words and actions and example glorify God and go counter-cultural to what’s happening in society or are we simply adding to the darkness? As our world seems to be self-destructing from the bottom up, how do we act differently than others in providing an example of self-sacrificial love, in boundless mercy, in amazing grace, in actions and words that can change the trend of society?

It doesn’t matter if the majority of Americans no longer are members of church communities and it doesn’t matter if authentic followers of Jesus Christ make up only a small minority of our society, it doesn’t matter IF WE ARE AN ENLIGHTENED MINORITY, if we are a minority ENLIGHTENED AND INSPIRED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.

We act as true ambassadors of Christ by imitating Him and following His teachings to love our enemy, to forgive those who seek to harm us (forgiving them countless times), to show mercy and compassion to those around us. Saint Paul tells us that when “when we are cursed, we are to bless the other; when we are persecuted, we endure patiently, and when we are slandered, we even answer back kindly.”

We hear similar words from Saint Paul, when he challenges us to “Put to death what is earthly in you... anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth... put off the old nature with its practices in which you once walked and put on the new nature, which is being renewed in our knowledge of God.”

Let’s seriously take a self-examination and reflect on what others see in us, in how others see our words and actions, and on whether our example is contributing to the negativity and destruction of the social fabric of our society or to the building up and healing of our society.

Do followers of Jesus Christ act differently during these challenging times than people who claim no faith? What do people see in us?!? ■

■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

Do We Act Differently Than Others?

Fr. Luke Veronis is currently the Director for the Missions Institute of Orthodox Christianity, and served the Church for ten years as a missionary in Albania. This article was taken from Pravmir.com, written on January 23, 2022.

Do followers of Jesus Christ act differently than people who claim no faith? Think about that. When followers of Jesus discuss politics, do they act in a more understanding way? When Orthodox Christians discuss with someone who disagrees with them about masks and vaccines, do they respond differently? When someone attacks people of faith, criticizes them, ridicules their point of view, or seriously offends them, do they respond differently? Or do they act like everyone else?

What I really want to ask is DO YOU and DO I act differently than our friends who don’t follow Jesus Christ and don’t call themselves Orthodox Christians? Can our friends see a difference in the way YOU and I USE OUR WORDS, in OUR ACTIONS, and in OUR REACTIONS to people with whom we disagree?

This is a serious question we need to soberly reflect on today. DO WE ACT differently than those who don’t believe or is there no difference between us and them? And if there is no difference, WHY? If a bystander would observe us throughout the day, what would they see?

I read an article on Friday by David Brooks in the NY Times entitled “America is Falling Apart at the Seams.” He notes how all kinds of bad behavior is on the rise. Reckless driving and accidents have increased. The number of altercations on airplanes has exploded. Nurses say patients are getting more abusive. Teachers are facing a rising tide of disruptive behavior. Hate crime reports have surged to the highest level in 12 years. The murder rate is increasing in cities. Mental illness, depression and suicides are at epidemic levels. The drug and addiction crisis continues to get worse as we all know people who have overdosed.

Brooks notes that “Americans’ hostility toward one another seems to be growing while care for one another

seems to be falling.” One example is how charitable donations have decreased from 66% of American families giving to charities in 2000 to less than 50% giving any type of charitable donations. Half of Americans offer no support to charities!

All this negativity may be symptomatic of the terrible disconnect people feel toward one another. People are lonelier than ever, feeling isolated, feeling like they don’t belong to any meaningful or life-giving community and having few, if any, healthy relationships. Thus, people don’t feel a responsibility for one another and don’t feel the need to be kind or supportive to their neighbor. They see little responsibility to build up and bring light in the darkness.

Brooks doesn’t offer any solutions but simply comments that it feels like we are living “in a society that is dissolving from the bottom up as much as from the top down.” He does suggest that this is a spiritual and moral problem at the core of our society and even notes how we now live in a nation where the majority of our population are no longer members of a church.



So, we return to my opening question. Do followers of Jesus Christ, do we Orthodox Christians, act differently than people who claim no faith in our behavior and contribution to society, or do we contribute to this dissolving and destruction of our society?

We can set up plenty of scenarios in which we see people react with passion and anger and even vitriol, but I will simply mention two of the most prevalent these days. This pandemic has tired the entire world as

(continued, see ACT DIFFERENTLY, next page)

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
<div>30</div> <div>Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am LIVE <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i></div>	<div>31</div>	<div>February 1</div> <div>Vigil for The Meeting of our Lord in the Temple, 6pm</div>	<div>2</div> <div>Divine Liturgy for The Meeting of our Lord in the Temple, 8am Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following</div>	<div>3</div> <div>OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126</div>	<div>4</div>	<div>5</div> <div>Great Vespers, 6pm LIVE Confessions, following</div>
<div>6</div> <div>Zacchaeus Sunday Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am LIVE <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> Summer Camp fundraiser luncheon, 12 noon</div>	<div>7</div>	<div>8</div>	<div>9</div> <div>Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Parish Council Meeting, 7pm</div>	<div>10</div> <div>OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126</div>	<div>11</div>	<div>12</div> <div>Men's Fellowship Breakfast, 9am Altar Society Meeting, 10am Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm LIVE Confessions, following</div>
<div>13</div> <div>Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am LIVE <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i></div>	<div>14</div>	<div>15</div>	<div>16</div> <div>Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following</div>	<div>17</div> <div>OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126</div>	<div>18</div>	<div>19</div> <div>Great Vespers, 6pm LIVE Confessions, following</div>
<div>20</div> <div>Sunday of the Prodigal Son Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am LIVE <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i></div>	<div>21</div>	<div>22</div>	<div>23</div> <div>Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Adult Ed: "Preparing for Confession," 7pm</div>	<div>24</div> <div>OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126</div>	<div>25</div>	<div>26</div> <div>Memorial Divine Liturgy, 9am Matthew 25 Organizational Meeting, 10:30am Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm LIVE Confessions, following</div>
<div>27</div> <div> Sunday of the Last Judgment (Meatfare) Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am LIVE <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i></div>	<div>28</div> <div></div>	<div>March 1</div> <div></div>	<div>2</div> <div></div>	<div>3</div> <div></div>	<div>4</div> <div></div>	<div>5</div> <div></div>
<div>6</div> <div> Forgiveness Sunday (Cheesefare) Divine Liturgy, 10am LIVE <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> Forgiveness Vespers, 6pm</div>	<div>7</div> <div></div>	<div>8</div>	<div>9</div>	<div>10</div>	<div>11</div>	<div>12</div> <div> Men's Fellowship Breakfast, 9am Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm LIVE Confessions, following</div>
	<div>Great Canon, 6pm</div>	<div>Great Canon, 6pm</div>	<div>Confessions, 4pm-6pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm</div>	<div>Great Canon, 6pm OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126</div>	<div>Confessions, 5pm-6pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm</div>	

Chapel Calendar

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

<div>Tuesday 1</div> <div>Meeting of the Lord Vesperal Divine Liturgy, 6pm</div>	<div>Saturday 26</div> <div>Memorial Saturday Divine Liturgy; Hours 9:40am</div>
<div>Saturday 5</div> <div>Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm</div>	<div>Saturday 26</div> <div>Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm; Akathist for the Repose of the Departed served at 5:15pm</div>
<div>Sunday 6</div> <div>Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm</div>	<div>Sunday 27</div> <div>Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm</div>
<div>Tuesday 8</div> <div>Choir rehearsal, 6pm</div>	<div>Monday 28</div> <div>"Hats and Blankets for babies" Knitting/Crocheting, 6:30pm</div>
<div>Saturday 12</div> <div>Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm + PRE-LENT BEGINS +</div>	<div>March 1</div> <div>Choir rehearsal, 6pm</div>
<div>Sunday 13</div> <div>Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm</div>	<div>Saturday 5</div> <div>Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm; Akathist for the Repose of the Departed Monastic Righteous served at 5:15pm</div>
<div>Tuesday 15</div> <div>Choir rehearsal, 6pm</div>	<div>Sunday 6</div> <div>Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm</div>
<div>Saturday 19</div> <div>Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm</div>	<div>Sunday 6</div> <div>Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm</div>
<div>Sunday 20</div> <div>Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm</div>	<div>Sunday 6</div> <div>Forgiveness Vespers, 6pm + THE FAST OF GREAT AND HOLY LENT+</div>
<div>Tuesday 22</div> <div>Choir rehearsal, 6pm</div>	

February 2022

† to join remotely, visit holytrinity-oca.org/zoom.

LIVE this service will be livestreamed on YouTube (visit holytrinity-oca.org/YouTube).