

*We would like to welcome all parish visitors and invite you to join us after the Liturgy for Coffee hour.*

# Orthodox Church of the Mother of God

OCA – Diocese of New York-New Jersey

V. Rev. Dr. Matthew Searfoorce, Rector

Sub-Deacon Edward Dawson

Sub-Deacon Vlashi

Parish Council President: Andrew Romanofsky

Parish Council Vice President: Holly Dawson



**Sunday, February 19, 2017**

Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46

**Tone 2**

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2

## *Sunday of Meatfare of the Last Judgment*

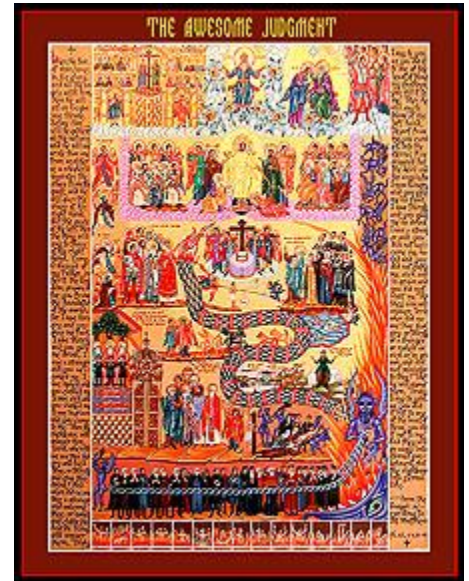
Apostles of the Seventy Archippus (Arkhipp) and Philemon, and Martyr Apphias (1st c.). Martyrs Maximus, Theodotus, Hesychius and Asclepiodota, of Adrianopolis (305-311). Ss. Eugene and Macarius, Presbyters and Confessors, at Antioch (363). Ven. Dositheus of Palestine, disciple of Ven. Abba Dorotheus (7th c.). St. Rabulas of Samosata (ca. 530). Ven. Theodore of Sanaskáry (1791).

### **Troparion – Tone 1**

*When You, O God, shall come to earth with glory, / all things shall tremble / and the river of fire shall flow before Your judgment seat; / the books shall be opened and the hidden things disclosed! / Then deliver me from the unquenchable fire, / and make me worthy to stand at Your right hand, righteous Judge!*

### **Kontakion – Tone 1**

*When Thou, O God, shalt come to earth with glory, all things shall tremble, and the river of fire shall flow before Thy judgment seat; the books shall be opened, and the hidden things disclosed; then deliver me from the unquenchable fire, // and make me worthy to stand at Thy right hand, O Righteous Judge!*



*Sunday of Meatfare of the Last Judgment*

## **Prayer Requests**

### **For Health of:**

**Andrew Romanofsky**, on his birthdays, offered by his wife Maribeth & family..

**Ana Marie Male (Home of Hope)**, on her birthday, offered by Sub-Deacon Vlashi.

### **In Memory of:**

**Dorothy**, offered by daughter-in-law Trudy and her son Phil.

*Liturgical Schedule*

**Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup>**

9:30 am: Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

**Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

**Sunday, February 26<sup>th</sup>**

9:30 am: Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

**Saturday, March 4<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

**Sunday, March 5<sup>th</sup>**

9:30 am: No Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
9:45 am: General  
Confession  
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

**Wednesday, March 8<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm: Liturgy/  
Presanctified Gifts

**Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

**Sunday, March 12<sup>th</sup>**

9:30 am: No Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
9:45 am: General  
Confession  
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

***Bulletin Sponsors***

***Trudy & Phil Ellmore;  
Maribeth Romanofsky &  
family***

***Readings:***

**The Prokeimenon in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tone:**

The Lord is my strength and my song. / He is become my salvation.

*(Psalm 117:14)*

vs. The Lord hath chastened me sorely, but He hath not given me over unto death.

*(Psalm 117:18)*

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**Epistle:** 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2

**Brethren**, food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. Only take care lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if any one sees you, a man of knowledge, at table in an idol's temple, might he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? And so by your knowledge this weak man is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. Thus, sinning against your brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of my brother's falling, I will never eat meat, lest I cause my brother to fall. Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my workmanship in the Lord? If to others I am not an apostle, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

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**Alleluia in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tone:**

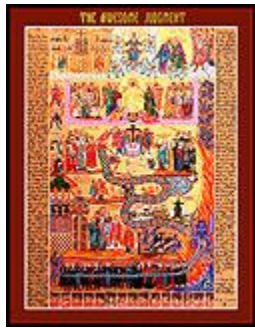
May the Lord hear thee in the day of trouble! May the Name of the God of Jacob protect thee! *(Psalm 19:2)*

vs. Save the King, O Lord, and hear us on the day we call to Thee!  
*(Psalm 19:10)*

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**Gospel:** Matthew 25:31-46

**The Lord said**, "When the Son of man comes in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.' And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."



### *Sunday of Meatfare of the Last Judgment*

Today's Gospel reading is Matthew 25:31-46, the parable of the Last Judgment. It reminds us that while trusting in Christ's love and mercy, we must not forget His righteous judgment when He comes again in glory. If our hearts remain hardened and unrepentant, we should not expect the Lord to overlook our transgressions simply because He is a good and loving God. Although He does not desire the death of a sinner, He also expects us to turn from our wickedness and live (Ezek. 33:11). This same idea is expressed in the prayer read by the priest after the penitent has confessed his or her sins (Slavic practice).

The time for repentance and forgiveness is now, in the present life. At the Second Coming, Christ will appear as the righteous Judge, Who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Rom. 2:6). Then the time for entreating God's mercy and forgiveness will have passed.

As Father Alexander Schmemmann reminds us in his book GREAT LENT (Ch. 1:4), sin is the absence of love, it is separation and isolation. When Christ comes to judge the world, His criterion for judgment will be love. Christian love entails seeing Christ in other people, our family, our friends, and everyone else we may encounter in our lives. We shall be judged on whether we have loved, or not loved, our neighbor. We show Christian love when we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit those who are sick or in prison. If we did such things for the least of Christ's brethren, then we also did them for Christ (Mt.25:40). If we did not do such things for the least of the brethren, neither did we do them for Christ (Mt.25:45).

Today is the last day for eating meat and meat products until Pascha, though eggs and dairy products are permitted every day during the coming week. This limited fasting prepares us gradually for the more intense fasting of Great Lent.



**Bulletin Sponsor:** Use the sign-up sheet at the candle stand for the health of, eternal memory of or a Pannikhida for a loved one or friend, for a donation of \$10. Sponsors will be remembered during Divine Liturgy for the day/week that you signed up for.

**Memorial Candles:** Candles be purchased at the candle stand, suggested donation of \$10 for a large one.

**Private Confessions:** Can be heard a half hour before any service. See Father Matthew for other times.

**General Confession:** Will be at 9:45 am on the first Sunday of the month.

**Pannikhida Service:** The third Sunday of each month there will be a Pannikhida after Divine Liturgy. If you would like your loved ones to be remembered please give a list of names to Father Matthew before that Sunday for those to be remembered in the month.

**Special Announcements** for the bulletin can be submitted by E-Mail:

[OrthodoxChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com](mailto:OrthodoxChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com) ; [reader.charles@hotmail.com](mailto:reader.charles@hotmail.com) or [rsub-deacon.vlashi@outlook.com](mailto:rsub-deacon.vlashi@outlook.com)

**The Living Clean Group** of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Friday from 8-9:15 pm downstairs in the community room.

**The Grey Book Step Meeting Group** of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Tuesday from 7-8:00 pm downstairs in the community room.



### *Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Parish News*

**Church Directory:** Did you get yours? Find them at the candle desk. Now you'll have your own listing of church members' contact info.

#### **Candle Desk Supplies Needed:**

- Sandwich Bags for Holy Bread
- Stamps – 1<sup>st</sup> Class
- Memorial Candles: 8" tall glass pillar candle



### ***The Protection of The Mother of God Sisterhood News:***

The Sisterhood members are planning two upcoming pre-Lenten luncheons. On Sunday, February 19th we will hold our annual Meatfare luncheon. The luncheon will offer a variety of delicious meaty entrees. Please look for a sign-up sheet posted in the community room to include your own specialty. Our annual Cheesefare luncheon will be held on Sunday, February 26th. Included on this menu will be traditional non-meat items such as blini and pierogies. Again, there will be a sign-up sheet posted in the community room, so please add something you would like to contribute! The cost for each of these luncheons will be \$5.00 per adult.

A Paschal basket raffle is also being planned. A large basket filled with traditional Paschal foods will be raffled off on Palm Sunday, April 9th. Tickets for the raffle are \$1.00 each, and we are requesting that each church member sell ten tickets. Tickets will be available soon.

Also being planned for this Lenten season is a pysanky (Ukrainian egg decorating) class. This class will be held on Sunday March 5th after coffee hour, from 12 to 2 PM. The class is free for church members. Non-parishioners are invited as well, but are asked to pay \$5.00 for supplies. See Holly Dawson for more information. .

#### **From the Treasurer:**

An excellent question was asked at our recent Annual Parish Meeting; what is the difference between "Restricted" and "Unrestricted" income? Here is a simple and concise answer:

Donors to a non-profit organization may designate or "restrict" the use of their donations to a particular purpose or project. An example is a gift to a special scholarship fund at a university.

"Unrestricted" funds are donations the non-profit may use for any purpose. Unrestricted funds usually go toward the operating expenses of the organization or to a particular project that the non-profit picks.

Only the donor can determine if a donation is restricted or not. The designation can be made by a letter from the donor or through an explicit agreement with the non-profit.

What Are the Legal Obligations of a Restricted Gift? There are good reasons to be entirely clear about how the charity plans to use the gift when making a solicitation. There is not only a moral obligation for non-profits to honor a donor's wishes, but they are also required by law to do so.

If a donor restricts a donation to a particular purpose and the non-profit does not comply, the donor can demand a refund. The donor can take legal action if needed and report the charity to the Office of the Attorney General in the state where the charity resides.

The Balance. What Are Restricted and Unrestricted Funds for a Non-profit? By Joanne Fritz. Updated January 09, 2017 <https://www.thebalance.com/restricted-unrestrictednonprofit-funds-2502167>

### **Services of Great Lent 2017**

February 19	Sunday: 10 am Divine Liturgy, Meatfare
February 26	Sunday: 10 am Divine Liturgy, Cheesefare Sunday
March 5	Sunday: 10 am Divine Liturgy, Sunday of Orthodoxy
March 8	Wednesday: 6:30 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts St. Gregory: with potluck to follow
March 11	Saturday: 6:30 pm Vespers
March 12	Sunday: 10 am Divine Liturgy, St Gregory Palamas Sunday
March 15	Wednesday: 6:30 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts with potluck to follow
March 18	Saturday: 6:30 pm Vespers
March 19	Sunday: 10 am Divine Liturgy, Sunday of the Holy Cross
March 22	Wednesday: 6:30 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts with potluck to follow
March 25	Saturday: 6:30 pm Vespers
March 26	Sunday: 10 am Divine Liturgy, celebrating Annunciation and St. John Climacus

*"Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Joy of all the Sorrowful" founded in 1966*

March 29	Wednesday: 6:30 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts with potluck to follow
April 1	Saturday: 6:30 pm Vespers
April 2	Sunday: 10 am Divine Liturgy, St. Mary of Egypt
April 5	Wednesday: 6:30 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts with potluck to follow,
April 8	Saturday: 6:30 pm Vespers, Panikhida for the departed to follow
April 9	Sunday: 10 am Divine Liturgy, Sunday of Entry into Jerusalem
April 12	Wednesday: 6:30 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts Sacrament of Holy Unction – Healing Sacrament, open to all Orthodox Christians
April 15	Friday: 7 pm Holy Friday Matins
April 16	Saturday: 11:30 pm Holy Pascha Vigil Nocturns, Matins, Divine Liturgy

*For those who wish to attend the Canon of St. Andrew the first week of Lent, the following parish will be holding that service (updates will be provided as they are known).*

*Holy Cross Orthodox Church, Medford, NJ*

**7:00 p.m.: Monday (2/27), Tuesday (2/28), Wednesday (3/1), Thursday (3/2)**

***Missionary News:***

*Dear Friends and Family in Christ,*

*It is with great excitement to announce that I will be going on a mission trip to Albania in June 2017. I'll be helping to administer a youth program at the Children's Home of Hope in Shen Vlash, Albania. Ever since my trips in June of 2014, 2015 and 2016, my heart keeps pulling for me to go back. I'm so excited that my time has come again! Please keep my team and myself in your prayers. If you are able to support with a donation, please see attached form.*

*Thank you,  
Sub-Deacon Vlashi (Charles Gallagher)*

***NY/NJ Diocese News***



**ANNUAL LENTEN TEEN RETREAT: 10-12 MARCH 2017**

The **Annual Diocesan Lenten Teen Retreat** is scheduled for **10-12 March 2017 at Saint Basil Academy located at 79 St. Basil's Rd, Garrison NY 10524**. Teens in grades 7-12 are encouraged to attend! There is no charge to participate in this three day event. Participants may begin arriving for check-in on Friday, 10 March, beginning at 6:30 PM. The theme will be **"The Challenge: Who Are We Called To Be?"** Guest speaker Greg Fedorchak will have candid discussions addressing participants' aspirations and suggest ways in which they can keep God and the Church in their lives while in pursuit of their goals. Additionally, as a Diocesan sponsored event, Archbishop Michael will be in attendance for part of the weekend. Saint Basil Academy sits on the Hudson River across from West Point Military Academy, approximately an hour north of New York City. During their free time participants will be able to take advantage of the center's indoor gym/basketball court and quaint chapel. See **"Upcoming Events"** on the Diocesan webpage for information, details, and registration.

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE: Brotherhood of Saint Moses the Black**

The annual **Conference of the Brotherhood of Saint Moses the Black** will be convened on **6-8 October 2017 in Princeton NJ**. The theme is: **"Closer to Christ, Closer to Each Other."** The Brotherhood is a pan-Orthodox organization committed to making the Orthodox faith available to the African American community in America.



## ***Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News***



### **Save the Date! Fourth Small Parish Forum to be held July 13-15**

The Orthodox Church in America’s Archdiocese of Western Pennsylvania and Diocese of the Midwest will co-sponsor the fourth annual Small Parish Forum at Saint John the Baptist Church, New Kensington, PA July 13-15 2016.

“The Forum will focus on specific parish situations common to the numerous ‘small’ parishes throughout the OCA and other Orthodox jurisdictions,” said Joseph Kormos, Forum co-chairperson and Parish Development Ministry leader for the Archdiocese of Western Pennsylvania. “Workshops and presentations will explore ways to assist parishes with memberships of 75 or fewer souls to achieve stability, build a positive self-image, and accept their calling to live a life in Christ without necessarily becoming ‘big’.

“Most Orthodox parishes are small, yet just as a clinic is not a large metropolitan hospital with fewer beds, so too small churches are not immature, mini-versions of larger parishes,” Mr. Kormos continued. “Small parishes can bring people to Christ in intimate and exciting ways often unavailable to larger parishes.”

The theme of the 2017 Forum is “Becoming a Community of Engagement—On Behalf of All”.

“With this theme as a framework, we will explore how small parishes with limited resources can worship well, care for one another, teach, serve their community, communicate the parish to the neighborhood and share Christ’s love with others,” added Archpriest Daniel Rentel, Forum co-chairperson.

“Previous forums held in Byesville OH, Weirton WV and Canton OH were successful because people left with actionable ideas, tips and good practices valuable to clergy and lay leaders,” Mr. Kormos said. “The agenda for the fourth Forum will include an array of speakers, case studies, interactive workshops, sessions focusing on worship, and parallel sessions for clergy and laity.”

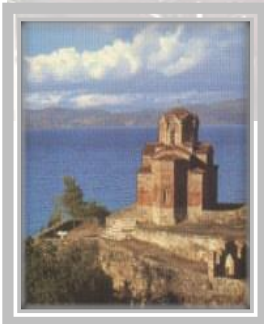
Past Forums attracted attendees from seven OCA dioceses and four other Orthodox jurisdictions.

“The 2017 New Kensington, PA location is just a two-hour drive from Cleveland, four and a half hours from Detroit, less than four hours from Buffalo, and five hours from Philadelphia,” Mr. Kormos concluded. “Over half of the OCA’s parishes are within a manageable drive of the site.”

Registration will open May 1. To maintain an atmosphere of fellowship and dialogue, registration will be limited to 65 persons. Sessions will begin at 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 13 and conclude at noon on Saturday, July 15. Blocks of rooms will be reserved at local hotels. The \$100 per person registration fee will include meals, breaks, a hospitality reception and forum materials. Attendees from the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and the Diocese of the Midwest are eligible for tuition rebates and grants to assist with travel costs. Many other OCA Dioceses offer scholarships to small parishes desiring to send attendees.

Additional information will be posted as it is received.

### ***Prayers by the Laker, St. Velimirovich, XCV:***



*Children and saints* cling to You, O Lord, the rest rebel against You.

Children and saints are the boundary between the Kingdom of existence and the shadow of nonexistence.

Guardians call themselves parents and cast Your children off crags into chasms.

Guardians presume that they are parents, and so they direct Your children as though they were their own property. Truly, they are directing nothing but aberrations and disruptions.

The children, whom you guardians have abducted, belong to another, and you will answer for theft and banditry.

You own neither the life that is in you, nor the life for which you served as a channel. Everything belongs to another, except for the wickedness within you, and you will answer for theft and banditry.

You will answer for theft, because you have been calling those who belong to another, your own; and you will answer for banditry, because you have mutilated and butchered those who belong to another.

On earth there are only guardians; and this is a very great honor.

You have been entrusted with the guardianship of the most precious treasure that God has. And this is a very great honor.

One, who was never even born and was never entrusted with the guardianship of anything, will be more blessed than you, if your guardianship is an abomination and a mortification of souls.

Why do you rejoice in children, unless you intend to keep watch over them as though they were angels from heaven? Why do you grieve for them, when they leave you early and flee to the angels in heaven? You were rejoicing in what belongs to another, and you are grieving for what belongs to another.

Do not care only about keeping the bodies of your children safe, for even foxes do the same for their foxlings. But care about God in your children. Once God is cared for He will take care of all the rest. And what you have been accumulating for your children so strenuously, He will effortlessly gather for them quickly and easily.

Do not drive God out of your children, for you will deprive them of their peace, their happiness, their health, and their prosperity.

Even if you leave the entire world to those whom God has left, you will have left it to starving people, who will devour it all and still die of hunger.

Do not ensure a piece of bread for your children, but a piece of the soul and the conscience. Your children will be ensured and you will be blessed in two worlds.

Care for this property of another better than your own, and your reward will be immense.

Royal children have been entrusted to your guardianship. Truly, the King will give no small reward to those who guard His princely progeny, and have not erased the Father's name from those children's memory.

Through children the King is looking at you with amazement, and is awaiting your responses. If your responses are deathful, you will be taking care of corpses.

Children and saints cling to You, my Lord, the rest rebel against You. Children and saints are Your way of testing the world.

Be careful, my soul, be careful and make no mistake.

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### *Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, XCV:*

#### **III. Us and Our Neighbors How to Relate to the Sins of Others**

Love sinners, but hate their deeds, and do not disdain sinners for their failings, so that you yourself do not fall into the temptation in which they abide... Do not be angry at anyone and do not hate anyone, neither for their faith, nor for their shameful deeds... Do not foster hatred for the sinner, for we are all guilty... Hate his sins, and pray for him, so that you may be made like unto Christ, who had no dislike for sinners, but prayed for them.

**St. Isaac the Syrian, Homily 57, 90**



### *The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration by Abbott Tryphon*

#### **Sharing Our Faith**

*Sharing the truth in a world devoid of hope*

If you wish to share the truth of the Orthodox Faith, and Christ Who is her head, you must give witness to the love of Christ by loving everyone. Without Christ, Orthodoxy is just another religion, devoid of the power to transform and deify the human heart. Without Christ the Church is nothing but a human institution, no different than a political party. For the Church to be herself, Christ must be visible in the love of her bishops and priests. Christ must be seen in the love of her people, and the charity and kindness that is displayed by all who call themselves Orthodox.

Without Christ our world is devoid of hope, and for others to know this Christ, they must be able to see Him in us. The light of this very Christ must shine forth through the love of His Church and be made manifest in the works of His people. Without this love there is only darkness upon the face of our world, and the world will remain without hope.

Others cannot know they need Christ if they do not see Him in us. They do not know this Christ fills hearts and transforms lives if they do not see transformation in us. If we are fearful, angry, judgmental, arrogant or aloof, the world will see nothing in our Christian faith worthy seeking.

If others do not see in you a forgiving heart, how will they know there is forgiveness in Christ? If others do not see in you a heart filled with joy, how will they know they need the very Christ whom you proclaim as your Lord and



Savior? If others see in you a judgmental, narrow minded, unhappy person, why would they be drawn to the Orthodoxy you claim is the true faith?



### *Daily Reflection* **The Doors of Repentance**



*“Open to me the doors/gates (πύλας) of repentance, O Giver of Life: for early in the morning my spirit seeks Your holy temple, bearing a temple of the body all defiled. But in Your compassion cleanse it by Your loving-kindness and mercy.” (Byzantine Hymn at Sunday Matins before and during Lent)*

This pre-Lenten (and Lenten) hymn reminds me of “doors” that are presently closed. Otherwise I would not be asking for them to be opened. The fact is, I have closed the way leading to change, or “change of mind” (“metanoia” or repentance), having stagnated in certain, habitual patterns that “defile” (from “defouler,” to trample down) or “trample down” my growth in God, the Giver of Life. And I need help, when it comes to making a change and opening those “doors” again, leading to change.

So this is an exciting time, this pre-Lenten season, which speaks primarily of change; a change I can enter into, when I pick up the simple tools laid out before me in the prayers, discipline, and atmosphere of Lent. It reminds me of the exciting time when John the Baptist first proclaimed a great change that was coming, as he “prepared the way of the Lord” and “went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins...” (Lk 3: 3) So let me join in and embrace this season of change; a change I can believe in.

### *Holy Orthodox Quotes*

“Christ is the only exit from this world; all other exits—sexual rapture, political utopia, economic independence—are but blind alleys in which rot the corpses of the many that have tried them.”

**+Fr. Seraphim Rose**

#### **John 14:6**

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.†

#### **Acts 4:12**

Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”†

**'4:12** The name of Christ is not simply a verbal pronunciation, but indicates His will, His life, His person, His very presence. Salvation in the name of Christ indicates salvation in His eternal being. As Christ is the one and only Son of God, salvation can only be found in Him.'

(The Orthodox Study Bible - Thomas Nelson)

#### **2 Peter 2:18-22**

For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage.† For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: “A dog returns to his own vomit,” and, “a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire.”



### ***The Philokalia: Daily Readings***

It is by means of thoughts that the spirits of evil wage a secret war against the soul. For since the soul is invisible, these malicious powers naturally attack it invisibly.

- St Philotheos of Sinai, 40 Texts on Watchfulness

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### ***Ancient Christian Wisdom***

Let this always be the aim of your conduct: to be courteous and respectful to all.

+ St. Isaac the Syrian

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### ***Wisdom of the Church Fathers***

"When you are weary of praying, and do not receive, consider how often you have heard a poor man calling, and have not listened to him".

+Saint John Chrysostom  
(347-407)

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### ***Through the Grace of God – Orthodox Christianity***

#### **Mother Gavrilia: God's Will**

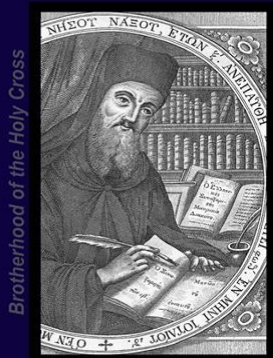
"When you wish deeply to act always according to the will of God, He will reveal It to you. This is what He asks. He wants us to reach out our hand for His Grace, so that His Grace may guide us and His Holy Spirit may shine on us. And then, it is Paradise on Earth! Have no doubts whether it is or it isn't the Will of God. Because when you doubt about what is to be done, it will not be done properly. Don't forget that when it is not the Will of God, He makes it quite clear, for then He shuts all the doors. When you go here and there and find obstacles everywhere, change course, don't insist on your own will. Make your Prayer and change your mind."

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### ***Orthodox Quote of the Day***

Boredom is the grandson of depression, and laziness is the daughter. To send her away, labor actively—do not be lazy in prayer, then boredom will pass and zeal will come. And if you add to this patience and humility, then you will escape much evil.

St. Ambrose of Optina  
Elder Ambrose of Optina p.252



***Make no plans for yourself,  
except one—  
always seek to please God  
by obedience to His will.***

***Unseen Warfare***

Dear Family and Friends in Christ;

This summer from June 13 to June 27, the opportunity has once again been given to me to join the Orthodox Christian Mission Centers (OCMC) on a Youth Outreach Mission trip to Shen Vlash, Albania. We will be working with the children at the Children's Home of Hope, which is located on the grounds of the Shen Vlash Monastery and Resurrection of Christ Theological Academy in Durres. Team members will share life experiences and fellowship, and provide a visible witness of the Holy Orthodox Christian Faith.

I am very excited about this opportunity provided me by God, to go back to Albania and work with the children once again, God willing. This will be my 4<sup>th</sup> trip to the Children's Home of Hope, where I and the other team members will be providing a visible witness of the faith to the youth, visit ministries of the Church of Albania and meet other OCMC missionaries.

As with every dream, there is an associated cost, not just financially but spiritually as well. That is where you come in. First and foremost, I covet your prayers for me and all who will be traveling to Albania and for those who await our arrival. Secondly, your financial support is also needed. The cost that is required is \$3,500 and due by June 1, 2017. May I count on your prayer and / or financial support? If so, please use the following link: <http://bit.ly/2k0TzP4> or please fill out the below form and return it to me at 132 Lenape Avenue, Mays Landing, NJ 08330 by May 31, 2017. Your financial donations are tax deductible when made payable to Orthodox Christian Mission Center. Any and all money raised over the necessary \$3,500 will be donated to Children's Home of Hope.

I sincerely hope you will be a part of this awesome opportunity, for I know that you too will be blessed. Thank you and God bless.

In Christ,  
Charles Gallagher (Sub-Deacon Vlashi)

Yes, I will support Charles Gallagher on this mission trip to Albania in the following ways: Please check the appropriate box.

- ☐ I will pray for you as you prepare, travel and minister.
- ☐ Enclosed is my financial, one time, donation support in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_