

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, July 10, 2016

Gospel: Matthew 6:22-33

Saints: Matthew 4:25-5:12

Tone 2

Epistle: Romans 5:1-10

Saints: Galatians 5:22-6:2

3rd Sunday after Pentecost; Venerable Anthony of the Kiev Far Caves, Founder of Monasticism in Russia



**Glory to
Jesus Christ!**

**Glory
Forever!**

*Venerable Anthony of the
Kiev Far Caves, Founder of
Monasticism in Russia*

*Having departed from worldly tumults, In leaving the world you followed Christ
According to the Gospel. You reached the quiet refuge of the Holy Mount Athos,
Living there a life equal to the angels. Therefore, with the blessing of the Fathers,
You came to the Kievan hills. There having fulfilled a life loving of labors, You
Illumined your homeland. And having shown a multitude of monastics The pathway
Leading to the heavenly kingdom, You led them to Christ. Beseech him, O Venerable
Anthony, That he may save our souls!*

(Troparion – Tone 4)

*From your youth you gave yourself to God whom you loved above all,
O Venerable One; And in love you followed after him with your whole soul.
Scorning the passing corruption of the world, you made a cave in the earth;
And in it you struggled nobly facing the snares of the invisible enemy, While illumining
The ends of the earth like a bright, shining sun. Therefore, with rejoicing you entered
Into the heavenly chambers. Standing now before the throne of the Master together
with the angels, Remember us who honor your holy memory, That we may cry out
To you: Rejoice, Anthony our Holy Father!*

(Kontakion – Tone 8)

Today's Commemorated Feasts and Saints

3rd Sunday After Pentecost — Tone 2. Ven. Anthony of the Kiev Caves, Founder of Monasticism in Russia (1073). All Saints of Britain and Ireland. Holy 45 Martyrs at Nicopolis in Armenia, including Leontius, Maurice, Daniel, Anthony, Alexander, Sisinius, Meneus, and Belerad (Verelad—ca. 319). The Placing of the Honorable Robe of the Lord at Moscow (1625). Ven. Silvanus, Schema-monk, of the Kiev Caves (Far Caves—13th-14th c.). Martyr Apollonius of Sardis (3rd c.). Martyrs Bianor and Silvanus of Pisidia (4th c.). 10,000 Fathers of the deserts and caves of Scete martyred by the impious Patriarch Theophilus of Alexandria (ca. 398). Martyr Nicodemus of Elbassan (Albanian—1722). Monk Martyr Nectarius of St. Anne Skete (Mt. Athos—1820). The KONEVSKAYA Icon of the Most-holy Theotokos.

Liturgical Schedule

Sunday, July 10th

9:40 am: Hours
9:45 am: General
Confession
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy/
Pannikhida Service: Dallas
Texas Officers

Saturday, July 16th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, July 17th

9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, July 23rd

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, July 24th

9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, July 30th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, July 31st

9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Bulletin Sponsors:

*Andrew & Maribeth
Romanofsky;
The Koss Family*

Weekly Bulletin Sponsors

For Health of:

Amy, on her birthday, offered her parents Andrew & Maribeth.
Those injured in Dallas and all Police Officers throughout the United States.

In Memory of:

Olga Koss, offered by her family.
Dallas Texas Officers **Brent Thompson, Patrick Zamarripa, Michael Krol, Lorne Ahrens & Michael**, who were killed on Thursday July 7th.

Readings:

The Prokeimenon in the 2nd Tone:

The Lord is my strength and my song; He has become my salvation.

(Psalm 117:14)

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

(Psalm 117:18)

Another, Tone 7 (St. Anthony):

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. *(Psalm 115:16)*

Epistle: Romans 5:1-10

Brethren, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us. While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Why, one will hardly die for a righteous man -- though perhaps for a good man one will dare even to die. But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. Not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received our reconciliation.

Saints: Galatians 5:22-6:2

Brethren, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Alleluia in the 2nd 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! (*Psalm 19:9*)

Another, Tone 6 (St. Anthony):

Blessed is the man who feareth the Lord, who greatly delighteth in His commandments. (*Psalm 111:1*)

Gospel: Matthew 6:22-33

The Lord said, "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is not sound, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O men of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows you need them all. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well."

Saints: Matthew 4:25-5:12

Great multitudes followed Him – from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan. And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.



Venerable Anthony of the Kiev Far Caves, Founder of Monasticism in Russia

Saint Anthony of the Kiev Caves was born in the year 983 at Liubech, not far from Chernigov, and was named Antipas in Baptism. Possessing the fear of God from his youth, he desired to be clothed in the monastic schema. When he reached a mature age, he wandered until he arrived on Mt. Athos, burning with the desire to emulate the deeds of its holy inhabitants. Here he received monastic tonsure, and the young monk pleased God in every aspect of his spiritual struggles on the path of virtue. He particularly excelled in humility and obedience, so that all the monks rejoiced to see his holy life.

The igumen saw in St Anthony the great future ascetic, and inspired by God, he sent him back to his native land, saying, "Anthony, it is time for you to guide others in holiness. Return to your own Russian land, and be an example for others. May the blessing of the Holy Mountain be with you.

Returning to the land of Rus, Anthony began to make the rounds of the monasteries about Kiev, but nowhere did he find that strict life which had drawn him to Mt. Athos.

Through the Providence of God, Anthony came to the hills of Kiev by the banks of the River Dniepr. The forested area near the village of Berestovo reminded him of his beloved Athos. There he found a cave which had been dug out by the Priest Hilarion, who later became Metropolitan of Kiev (October 21). Since he liked the spot,

“Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Joy of all the Sorrowful” founded in 1966

Anthony prayed with tears, “Lord, let the blessing of Mt. Athos be upon this spot, and strengthen me to remain here.” He began to struggle in prayer, fasting, vigil and physical labor. Every other day, or every third day, he would eat only dry bread and a little water. Sometimes he did not eat for a week. People began to come to the ascetic for his blessing and counsel, and some decided to remain with the saint.

Among Anthony’s first disciples was St Nikon (March 23), who tonsured St Theodosius of the Caves (May 3) at the monastery in the year 1032.

The virtuous life of St Anthony illumined the Russian land with the beauty of monasticism. St Anthony lovingly received those who yearned for the monastic life. After instructing them how to follow Christ, he asked St Nikon to tonsure them. When twelve disciples had gathered about St Anthony, the brethren dug a large cave and built a church and cells for the monks within it.

After he appointed Abbot Barlaam to guide the brethren, St Anthony withdrew from the monastery. He dug a new cave for himself, then hid himself within it. There too, monks began to settle around him. Afterwards, the saint built a small wooden church in honor of the Dormition of the Mother of God over the Far Caves.

At the insistence of Prince Izyaslav, the igumen Barlaam withdrew to the Dimitriev monastery. With the blessing of St Anthony and with the general agreement of the brethren, the meek and humble Theodosius was chosen as igumen. By this time, the number of brethren had already reached a hundred men. The Kiev Great Prince Izyaslav (+ 1078) gave the monks the hill on which the large church and cells were built, with a palisade all around. Thus, the renowned monastery over the caves was established. Describing this, the chronicler remarks that while many monasteries were built by emperors and nobles, they could not compare with those which are built with holy prayers and tears, and by fasting and vigil. Although St Anthony had no gold, he built a monastery which became the first spiritual center of Rus.

For his holiness of life, God glorified St Anthony with the gift of clairvoyance and wonderworking. One example of this occurred during the construction of the Great Caves church. The Most Holy Theotokos Herself stood before him and St Theodosius in the Blachernae church in Constantinople, where they had been miraculously transported without leaving their own monastery. Actually, two angels appeared in Constantinople in their forms (See May 3, the account of the Kiev Caves Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos). Having received gold from the Mother of God, the saints commissioned master architects, who came from Constantinople to the Russian land on the command of the Queen of Heaven to build the church at the Monastery of the Caves. During this appearance, the Mother of God foretold the impending death of St Anthony, which occurred on July 10, 1073.

Through Divine Providence, the relics of St Anthony remain hidden.



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: ChurchMotherOfGod@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



Away on vacation! Have a good time! Don't forget to send in your contributions. The parish's bills and responsibilities don't take a vacation! ~From your Treasurer, Trudy



NY/NJ Diocese News

With Abp. Michael's Blessing: Announcement from Orthodox Web Solutions

Dear Fathers, and Beloved in the Lord,

With the blessing of Archbishop Michael, the following special offer from Fr. John Parsells of Orthodox Web Solutions is being shared with all of our parishes. Should you wish to avail yourselves of this opportunity to expand your parish's online presence at a discount from OWS' normal pricing, please contact them by September 1, as per the message below.

With love in Christ,
Fr. David

Orthodox Web Solutions will offer all parishes and missions a 25% discount on 360 tours and/or welcome videos during the months of September and October. Please contact us by September 1st so that we can work out a schedule. This special is designed to take advantage of the fall foliage.

The following are some examples of our work:

360 Tours

<http://orthodox360.com/#recent-works>

Welcome Videos

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZd7A5SAmpU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hi2V2EOIDA4>

In Christ,
Fr. John Parsells

Orthodox Web Solutions
<http://orthodoxws.com>
888-697-0020 x710

Bringing the Orthodox Christian Faith to the African-American Community

The diocese will sponsor a seminar-workshop on outreach to African-Americans led by Deacon Turbo Qualls and Father Alexei Altschul of the Brotherhood of Saint Moses the Black. The seminar includes lunch and concludes with Vespers. While designed primarily for clergy, lay ministry leaders and interested laymen are encouraged to attend. The conference is free of charge at **Saints Peter and Paul Church, 605 Washington Avenue, Manville NJ on Saturday, 16 July 2016 ~ 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

Diocesan Youth Day: Thursday, 25 August 2016

The Annual Diocesan Youth Day will take place on Thursday, 25 August, at Six Flags Great Adventure Theme Park in Jackson NJ. Complete information and registration documents are available at <http://www.nynjoca.org/>

The Character of Choir Singing – Saturday, July 23, 2016

**Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church
401 Hamilton Street ~ Syracuse NY 13204
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

Mark Bailey, a leading expert in Orthodox liturgical music, will conduct an interactive session of learning and singing, in which participants will learn the soundscape of liturgical singing; experience vitality through rhythm, pulse, diction, and phrasing; and practice expressing liturgical music liturgically. Mr. Bailey will focus on the specific character of sacred singing and will demonstrate how it is different from every day secular singing, focusing on how and why it is so critical to proper worship of God, how it elevates and unites us to God and how we need to

“sing with understanding.” Information and registration available at http://www.nynjoca.org/liturgical_music.html.

Congratulations:

The clergy and faithful of **Saints Peter and Paul Church, Syracuse NY**, awarded the Synodal Gramota, by His Eminence, Archbishop Michael, on behalf of the Holy Synod of Bishops, in celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Parish, on Sunday, June 26, 2016;

Archpriest John Chupeck, awarded the Synodal Gramota, by Archbishop Michael, on behalf of the Holy Synod of Bishops, in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of his Ordination to the Holy Priesthood, during the Centennial Celebration of his parish, SS. Peter and Paul Church, Syracuse NY, on Sunday, June 26, 2016

Presbyter Michael Speck, awarded the Gold Cross, by Archbishop Michael, during the Centennial Celebration of SS. Peter and Paul Church, Syracuse NY, on Sunday, June 26, 2016

Scott (Alexander) Anderson tonsured to the rank of Reader, by Archbishop Michael, during the Centennial Celebration of SS. Peter and Paul Church, Syracuse NY, on Sunday, June 26, 2016

Grant, O Lord, a prosperous and peaceful life, good health and salvation, visitation and good hastening in all things to Thy handmaiden, the newborn Fiona Catherine; and protect and preserve her for many blessed years! "Mnogaya Lyeta!"

With love,
+ vm

Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News

Youth, pastoral conferences reflect growth of Mexican Diocese



Two significant events in the life of the Orthodox Church in America’s Diocese of Mexico occurred during the month of June 2016.

Nearly 100 youth and young adults gathered on June 1 for the diocese’s youth conference. Representing several parishes and missions, the youth enjoyed worshipping together, engaging in discussions and inspiring talks, and sharing fellowship with their peers. His Eminence, Archbishop Alejo addressed them on the essentials of Christian life and the challenges they face in today’s world. The gathering also served to network the younger faithful, some of whom are from remote areas of the country.

One week later, on June 9—the Great Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord—the diocese’s clergy gathered at Mexico City’s Cathedral of the Ascension for their seventh pastoral conference. After the celebration of the festal Divine Liturgy marking the cathedral’s patronal feastday, Archbishop Alejo welcomed the diocese’s clergy and monastics while encouraging them “to boldly proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the land.”

The clergy spoke enthusiastically of the growth experienced in their respective communities and shared ideas for ongoing missionary work and the strengthening of the diocese’s mandate. In response, the clergy fully embraced the establishment of a Department of Pastoral and Liturgy Life, chaired by Archbishop Alejo, to respond to the ongoing pastoral and liturgical needs of the diocese’s faithful. Also established was a Department of Administration, comprised of an administrator and treasurer, in part to ensure the ongoing economic growth of the diocese. A third body—the Department of Vocational and Spiritual Life—also was established to oversee the vocational, educational and psychological needs of the diocese. This department will be headed by priests who will oversee the educational needs of the diocese and attend to the psychological wellbeing of the faithful in a confidential manner. Archbishop Alejo stressed the importance of vigilance “to respond quickly and decisively to matters dealing with sexual abuse or impropriety, which will not be tolerated.”

The OCA’s Diocese of Mexico traces its origins to an early 20th century movement to establish a faith community distinct from the nation’s Roman Catholic Church. The community continued as an “Old Catholic” body until Father José Cortes y Olmos was appointed its bishop in 1961. He and his clergy gradually became convinced, through study and reflection, that the Old Catholic ecclesiological principles did not conform to the criteria of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

In 1965, Bishop José and his clergy contacted the then-rector of Saint Seraphim Church in Dallas, TX, Father

Dmitri Royster, who had been instrumental in converting many Mexicans to Orthodoxy and translating Orthodox liturgical services into Spanish. After Father Dimitri’s consecration to the episcopacy in 1969 and the granting of autocephaly the following year, Bishop Dimitri presented the case of the Orthodox Church in Mexico to the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America. As a result of numerous exchanges and visits, the members of the Holy Synod asked Bishop Dimitri to visit Mexico officially and to report on his findings. This report was studied by the OCA’s Department of Canonical Affairs, which recommended acceptance of the Mexican communities into the Orthodox Church.

In 1971, Bishop José petitioned to be accepted with his flock into the Orthodox Church in America. He and other priests of his community, together with an estimated ten to twenty thousand faithful, were received into the Orthodox Christian faith. After completing studies at Saint Vladimir’s Seminary, Yonkers, NY, Father José was consecrated as Bishop of Mexico City at Holy Virgin Protection Cathedral, New York, NY on April 22, 1972. Despite countless obstacles, what had become the Exarchate of Mexico continued to grow through the establishment of additional missions and conversions.

On January 28, 1983, Bishop José fell asleep in the Lord after a relatively brief bout with cancer. Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas and the South continued to oversee the life of the Mexican Exarchate until 2005, when a successor to Bishop José was found. On May 28 of that year, in services celebrated at Saint Tikhon’s Monastery, South Canaan, PA, Archimandrite Alejo [Pacheco-Vera] was consecrated as an Auxiliary to Archbishop Dmitri. On October 16, 2008, he was elected as the Exarchate’s ruling Bishop. He was enthroned, in the presence of the entire Holy Synod of Bishops, at Mexico City’s Ascension Cathedral on January 18, 2009. The Exarchate subsequently was granted full diocesan status.

In recent years, missionary efforts have intensified in the Diocese of Mexico, especially with the organization of short-term mission trips to San Esteban, Pisaflores and other remote communities. An excellent video presentation on the life of the Diocese of Mexico was produced for and aired during the 18th All-American Council, which was convened in Atlanta, GA in 2015.

In Memoriam:

Elizabeth Walens, 94, fell asleep in the Lord at Jefferson Hospital, Pittsburgh, PA on Wednesday, July 6, 2016. The widow of the late John Walens, Elizabeth was the beloved mother of Archpriest Michael Hatrak [Matushka Valeria], Rector of Saints Peter and Paul Church, Minersville, PA, and grandmother of Deacon Gregory Hatrak of Three Hierarchs Chapel, Saint Vladimir’s Seminary, Yonkers, NY, Matthew Hatrak and Natalie Hatrak. She is further survived by several nieces and nephews. May Elizabeth’s memory be eternal!

Matushka Anna is the beloved wife of Deacon Elias Union of the same parish. She peacefully fell asleep in the Lord on Monday, July 4, after a lengthy battle with cancer. May Matushka Anna’s memory be eternal!



OCMC News - Support the Training of Priests at Orthodox Seminaries Across the Globe

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

You could hardly imagine two men worse for the job.

But that’s not how God saw things. He chose St. Peter and St. Paul to build His Church and spread it to new places. He knew what He was doing!

Now we celebrate the feast day of these missionary saints who helped build the foundation of our Orthodox Church. I encourage you to honor St. Peter and St. Paul and their missionary work in a special way: By sending a donation today...

Because their work goes on. And it needs your support.

Any amount — in honor of Saints Peter and Paul (June 29) will help continue the work that they began. And you’ll help lead more people into our Holy Orthodox Church.

Saints Peter and Paul are close to my heart. Their example inspires me. Not only because of the scope of what they accomplished...

They remind me how God works. Look at the facts: Peter — he vowed he’d stand with Christ no matter what. But when things got tough, he loudly denied even knowing who Jesus was. Not once, but three times. And Paul! A Pharisee. An active enemy of the tiny new Church. Involved in the murder of St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr.

If you or I had looked at those two résumés, I doubt we’d have seen any reason to give them the job!

But God knows better. God used those two flawed men. Boy did He ever use them! And that tells us he can use me. And you.

God uses ordinary people like you and me to do the most important jobs on Earth!

We’re in this together! You are as much a part of the Church’s mission work as I am, or as Saints Peter and Paul are, or any of our missionaries in the field. Today, in this moment, you can send financial support. And you can pray.

That’s why I feel comfortable asking you for a donation today.

Think of the places your gift will go to work...

In the desert of Kenya, we’re working with pagan tribal people. They’ve never even heard of Jesus Christ or His Church. Yet they are responding. Forming small but growing Orthodox Church communities that meet under the shade of trees.

But they need your help right now. Who will teach people like the Turkana about Christ and His Church? I just visited a seminary in Kenya that trains future priests from all over Africa. But they are running at ½ capacity due to lack of funds. There’s hardly even enough funding to feed the students who are there! The seminary and others like it around the world need our help now!

The work of sharing the Faith must go on. Priests and catechists must be trained. In Guatemala, Indonesia, Alaska, Albania, Kenya, and beyond, people like Saints Peter and Paul must be raised up and sent!

Will you send a gift today? People are waiting to hear the Good News. They’re ready to respond. We just need to follow God’s call and be there.

Your giving makes it possible. Thank you!
Still Building the Church — with YOUR Help,
Fr. Martin Ritsi
Executive Director



ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN PRISON MINISTRY
AN AGENCY OF THE ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS

Seeing the Beauty Within

Christ is Risen!!

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Recently I came across this wonderful quote from Metropolitan Anthony Bloom of Sourozh:

Unless we look at a person and see the beauty there is in this person, we can contribute nothing to him. One does not help a person by discerning what is wrong, what is ugly, what is distorted. Christ looked at everyone he met, at the prostitute, at the thief, and saw the beauty hidden there. Perhaps it was distorted, perhaps damaged, but it was beauty none the less, and what he did was to call out this beauty.

These words remind us that no matter how “unlovely” or “damaged” a person is in our own judgmental view, there is beauty within. As Orthodox Christians we are called to look at everyone with the eyes of Christ. When we see the beauty in others, we recognize them as living icons of Christ, as brothers and sisters whom we are called to love.

We ask each one of you to join with us in sharing the love of Christ with those whom society often chooses to ignore—those precious souls who are living in prisons and jails across the country.

We have many hopes for expanding OCPM’s ministry – publishing new Orthodox books, study guides and icons to reach more people than ever before. But we need you to join us, to become personally involved in making our vision a reality. Your gift of any amount will make you an instrumental part of OCPM and our outreach. Please

prayerfully join us in seeing the beauty of those in prison, and in doing something tangible to help call out that beauty through the Holy Orthodox Faith.

In our Risen Lord Jesus Christ,
Fr. Stephen



Orthodox Christian Community Rallies To Support IOCC Flood Relief Efforts For West Virginia Families

Baltimore, MD (IOCC) — As torrential rain pummeled parts of West Virginia and threatened a new round of flooding, International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) remains on the ground providing emotional and spiritual care and deploying IOCC volunteer clean-up crews to the hard hit towns of Clendenin and Rainelle.

His Grace Bishop Thomas of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Diocese of Charleston, Oakland and the Mid-Atlantic visited the affected area to offer encouragement to parishioners impacted by the floods and called upon the Orthodox faithful to extend a helping hand to their neighbors in need by supporting IOCC's flood relief efforts. "From the very beginning of Our Lord's ministry, the Church has existed both as a community and within a community," stated Bishop Thomas. "In these roles, there are a variety of activities that the parish Church undertakes, both in terms of liturgical services and in charitable work and outreach. If there is liturgy without outreach, then we fail, since "faith without works is dead," but if we have outreach without liturgy, we also fail, since "man is not justified by works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ."

In addition, a generous gift of \$25,000 from the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, presented to IOCC at the Philoptochos National Conference yesterday in Nashville, will provide further support for flood relief to affected families. IOCC Frontliners, a team of trained emergency responders, will continue assisting FEMA and the local Red Cross by providing crisis counseling to survivors at the FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers and relief distribution centers. IOCC volunteers, in collaboration with Mennonite Disaster Services, will spend the weekend removing debris from homes and addressing immediate needs during the clean-up and recovery stages. IOCC is also participating in early stages of the long-term recovery committee being established by community leaders in Greenbriar County and the West Virginia Voluntary Agencies Active in Disaster (VOAD).

Reverend Father Andrew Lentz, an IOCC Frontliner from Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church in Akron, Ohio, is among the early responders providing emotional and spiritual comfort to flood victims. He also blessed the firetrucks used in the rescue of the residents in the hardest hit flood zones. "I was reminded by the FEMA head of the Disaster Recovery Center in Rainelle that, "While every disaster has its own character, this one is very personal; these are very close communities and nobody is left untouched by the devastation,"" Father Andrew stated. "Many people we met wanted to know, "Why me? Why did this happen?" All we can do as Frontliners is be present with them and help them carry their burden in that moment."

How Can You Help

Make a donation. You can help the victims of disasters in the United States, like the West Virginia floods, by making a financial gift to the United States Emergency Response Fund. Your support will provide immediate relief as well as long-term support through emergency aid, recovery assistance and other support to help those in need. To make a gift, please visit ioccc.org, call toll free at 1-877-803-IOCC, or mail a check or money order payable to IOCC, P.O. Box 17398, Baltimore, MD 21297-0429.

Assemble emergency kits. IOCC also anticipates the need for Emergency Clean-Up Buckets which are in low supply. For directions on how to assemble Emergency Clean-Up Buckets, please visit ioccc.org/kits.



OCF: A Year of Celebrating College Student Ministry

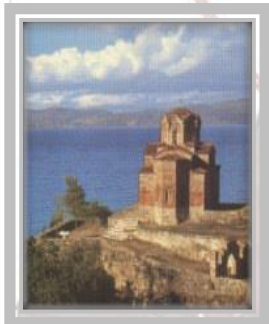
The upcoming 2016-2017 academic year marks the 15th Anniversary of Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) as an official agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops and the 51st year since the national campus ministry's inception in 1965.

“OCF 15|51” will commemorate the organization's past accomplishments and also look to its bright future as thousands of students, clergy, faculty advisors, and volunteers make up a growing network of more than 300 active and emerging chapters on campuses across the country.

OCF develops young leaders in the Orthodox faith and for service to the Orthodox Church and the broader community. Each August, OCF prepares a selected team of student leaders at its Summer Leadership Institute to develop an exciting agenda of local and regional retreats, national conferences, international philanthropic missions, and technology-based and social media applications that connect Orthodox college students in worship, witness, education, fellowship, and service throughout the year.

The “OCF 15|51” anniversary year will kick-off with a Student Advisory Board / Student Leadership Board alumni reunion from August 19-21, 2016 in Chicago, Illinois, and continue with several other special events, including a dinner banquet in December 2016 in Boston, Massachusetts, to confirm that OCF is and will remain On Campus Forever.

On behalf of all of the students, clergy, faculty advisors, volunteers and jurisdictions which it represents, the OCF Board of Trustees invites you to partner with OCF and to join in supporting this yearlong celebration. Details for the SAB / SLB alumni reunion are available on the OCF website, and a full schedule of events related to the OCF 15|51 Anniversary will be released in the coming months.



Prayers by the Laker, St. Velimirovich, LXIV:

How marvelous is the true Son of God! The One who is not of shadow but of light. The One who represents the existent Triad and not the nonexistent triad.

How He has supported His wisdom with blessed virginity and powerful light, like the dome of a church with walls of marble!

The Dominions, Powers, and Authorities never take their eyes off Him. The Principalities, Archangels and Angels are His servants.

Like the milk and honey that flow in the Promised Land,¹ so wisdom flows from His lips.

"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.² I do not ask you what you have but what you are. If you are children of light to such a degree that there is no darkness in any member of your body, then your possession is the Father of Light.

"Blessed are you in your treasure, if everything you possess is in the Father of Light. I say to you, even your essence will be in Him. You who have extensive holdings in earthly real estate, beware, lest you become the property of your own real estate.

"Beware lest that which you have been from the beginning becomes that which you have possessed since yesterday. Truly I tell you, you will become slaves of darkness and light will forget you.

"Possessions and close relatives are your enemies. They tie you to this world, and they close the gates of heaven to you.

"Do not bury your heart in earthly property, for beneath the earth it will decay. Offer up your heart to God -- as a gift to the Gift-Giver, and your possessions will become your harmless slave instead of your harmful master.

"Do not give your whole heart to relatives, for they will devour it -- and will remain hungry.

"Instead give your whole heart to the Holy Spirit, and He will nourish your relatives with richer nourishment. In this way your relatives will be related to you, not only because flesh and blood bind you, but because the Holy Spirit binds you. And the Spirit has no bonds except everlasting ones."

O my penitent soul, choose! Do you prefer to exist or to possess? If you prefer to exist, your possessions will amount to no less than God. If you prefer to possess, your existence will be no greater than the moonlight in the depths of the lake.

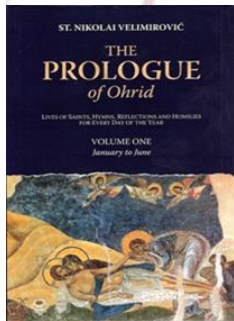
O Son of God, help my soul not to err and not to choose destruction.

Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, LXIV:

**II. The Realities of the Spiritual World
Holy Tradition**

Do not undertake to explain the Gospels or the other books of Holy Scripture yourself. The Scriptures were not expressed arbitrarily by the prophets and apostles, but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. How mindless then is it to explain them arbitrarily? The Holy Spirit, having expressed the Word of God through the prophets and apostles, explained it through the Holy Fathers. Both the Word of God and its explanation are a gift of the Holy Spirit. The holy Orthodox Church and its true children accept only this patristic interpretation!

-- St. Ignatius Brianchaninov, On Reading the Gospel



*The Prologue of Ohrid: Lives of Saints, Hymns, Reflections and Homilies
for Every Day of the Year*

1. The Holy Forty-Five Martyrs: Leontius, Maurice, Alexander, SISINIUS, and Others

During the reign of the wicked Emperor Licinius, who ruled the eastern half of the Byzantine Empire, there was a great persecution of Christians. In Armenian Nicopolis, St. Leontius, with several of his friends, appeared before Lysius, the representative of Emperor Licinius, and he declared that they were Christians. "And where is your Christ?" Lysius asked. "Was He not crucified and did He not die?" To this St. Leontius replied: "Since you know that our Christ died, know also that He rose from the dead and ascended into heaven." After a lengthy discussion about the Faith, Lysius scourged them and threw them into prison, where they were given neither food nor drink. A highborn Christian woman, Vlassina, brought them water, handing it to them through the window of the prison. And an angel of God appeared to them to comfort and encourage them. When the time came for sentencing, two jailers appeared before Lysius as Christian converts, and many others as well, numbering forty-five in all. The judge sentenced all of them to death, ordering that their arms and legs be severed with an axe and their torsos then be thrown into the fire. This horrible punishment was carried out, and the souls of the holy martyrs took flight to their Lord, entering into eternal life. They honorably suffered and inherited the Kingdom in the year 319 A.D.

2. The Venerable Anthony of the Monastery of the Caves in Kiev

The founder and father of monasticism in Russia, Anthony was born in the small town of Lyubech near Chernigov. At an early age he left his home and went to Athos, the Holy Mountain, where he was tonsured a monk and lived in asceticism in the Monastery of Esphigmenou. In obedience to a heavenly apparition, the abbot sent Anthony to Russia to establish monasticism there. Anthony chose a cave near Kiev. When those who were desirous of a monastic life gathered around him, he appointed Theodosius abbot, and he himself remained in the cave as a hesychast (silentary). Through the blessing of God, the monastery grew and became the mother of Russian monasticism. Anthony endured much evil from men and from demons, but he conquered all by his humility. He possessed the great gift of clairvoyance and of healing the sick. He reposed in the Lord in the year 1073 A.D., at the age of ninety, leaving his spiritual seedbed (nursery) to bring forth good fruit throughout the ages for the Orthodox people of Russia.

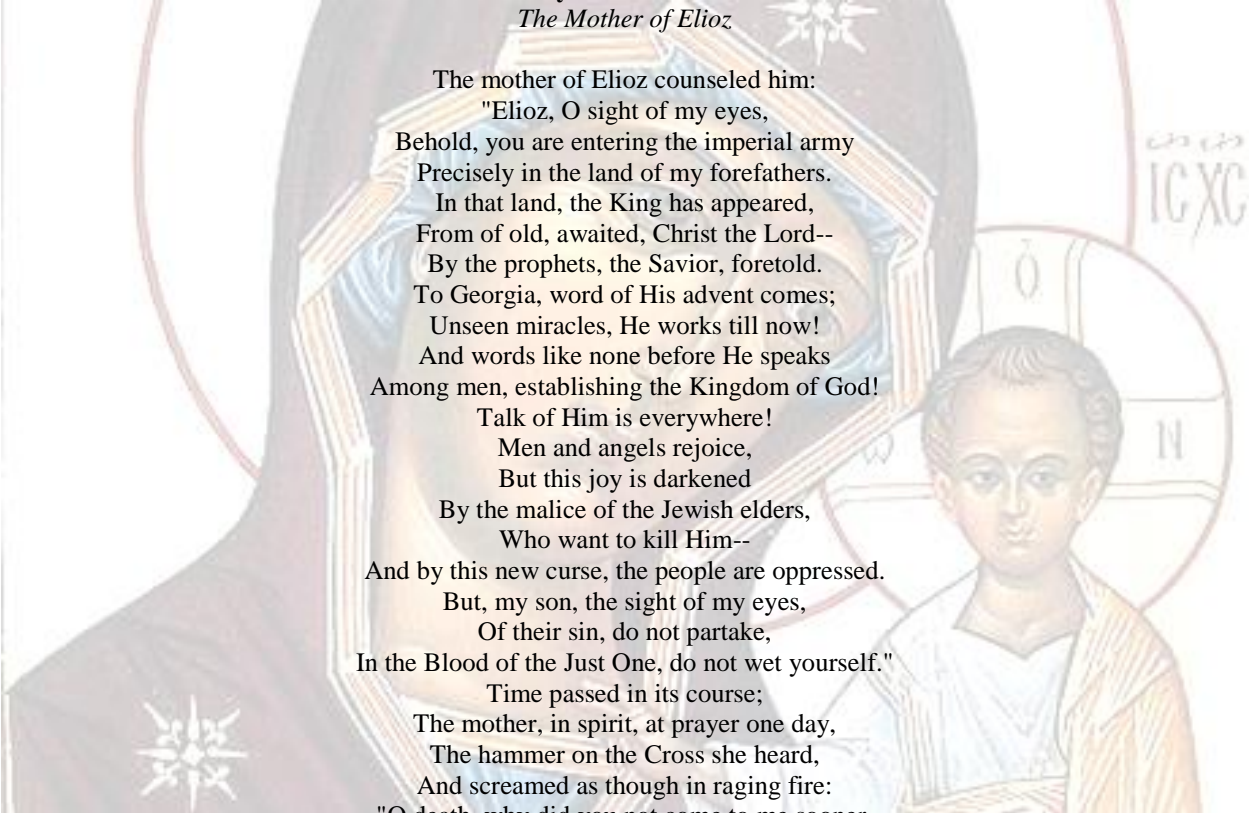
3. The Translation of the Honorable Vesture [Robe] of our Lord Jesus Christ

At the time of the suffering of our Lord Jesus for mankind, there was among the ranks of the Roman army in Jerusalem a Georgian named Elioz from the town of Mtskheta. His mother had heard of Christ, and believed in Him in her heart. Seeing her son off to the army in Palestine, she had counseled him not to do anything against Christ.

When the Lord was nailed to the Cross, the sound of the hammer on Golgotha reached the ears of Elioz's mother in the town of Mtskheta. Hearing this sound, she cried out: "Woe is me, that I did not die before this time. Death would have rescued me from this dreadful sound!" And saying this, she fell dead. At that time Elioz was beneath the Cross, and with the other soldiers he was casting lots for the tunic [robe] of Christ. He won the vesture, and brought it to Mtskheta, giving it as a gift to his sister Sidonia. Hearing about the death of the Lord, and that her brother had been a participant in the shedding of innocent blood, she fell dead, holding the tunic of the Lord firmly in her hands, such that no one was able to tear it away and they were compelled to bury the tunic with her. A cedar tree sprouted from her grave and it poured forth a sweet-smelling healing myrrh. In time, the cedar tree was cut down and carved into a pillar. At St. Nina's prayers an angel raised this pillar, which blazed like a column of fire, over the grave, and it came to rest on the pedestal carved from the stump. King Mirian, upon being baptized, erected a church there, dedicating it to the Holy Apostles. In the year 1625 A.D., Shah Abbas took the tunic and sent it to Moscow as a gift to Prince Michael Fyodorovich and Patriarch Philaret, and it was placed in the Cathedral Church of the Dormition [Assumption] of the Blessed Virgin in Moscow.

Hymn of Praise

The Mother of Elioz



The mother of Elioz counseled him:
"Elioz, O sight of my eyes,
Behold, you are entering the imperial army
Precisely in the land of my forefathers.
In that land, the King has appeared,
From of old, awaited, Christ the Lord--
By the prophets, the Savior, foretold.
To Georgia, word of His advent comes;
Unseen miracles, He works till now!
And words like none before He speaks
Among men, establishing the Kingdom of God!
Talk of Him is everywhere!
Men and angels rejoice,
But this joy is darkened
By the malice of the Jewish elders,
Who want to kill Him--
And by this new curse, the people are oppressed.
But, my son, the sight of my eyes,
Of their sin, do not partake,
In the Blood of the Just One, do not wet yourself."
Time passed in its course;
The mother, in spirit, at prayer one day,
The hammer on the Cross she heard,
And screamed as though in raging fire:
"O death, why did you not come to me sooner,
That I would not, that awful sound, hear?
It peals forth the death of the sinless Savior,
And on the Jewish nation, a curse!
O Son, O Elioz,
Your mother, why did you ignore?
The Blood of the Just One, why did you help shed?"
Having said this, the lamenting mother
To the ground fell, and to God her soul gave.

Reflection

The thought of death is like a downpour of cold rain that extinguishes the fire of passions. The Psalmist David says: For when he dies he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him (Psalm 49:17). Who would not be ashamed when he sometimes sees among the unbelievers a better comprehension of our earthly nothingness than

among some Christians? When Caliph Saladin died, in accordance with his last testament, a crier [Telal] went before his coffin with a spear in his hand and with one of the emperor's shirts on the spear, and he cried out: "The great Saladin, who conquered all of Asia, causing many nations to tremble before him, and who was victorious over emperors: behold, of all his glory and all his subjects, he takes nothing with him but this miserable shirt."

Contemplation

To contemplate the miraculous appearance of God to Moses on Mt. Sinai (Exodus 19):

1. How Moses climbed to the top of Mt. Sinai and entered the darkness where God was: I am coming to you in a dense cloud [Exodus 19:9];
2. How the light of God is so great that, before it, all of nature and her light become darkness;
3. How the heart of man is like Mt. Sinai: in the darkness of the heart, there God encounters man.

Homily

About the duties of spiritual shepherds

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint but willingly [in God]; not for filthy lucre but of a ready mind [good heart]; neither as being lords over God's heritage but being examples to the flock" (1 Peter 5: 2-3).

Here are the precepts for shepherds of the flock of Christ! In a few words, the holy Apostle Peter exposes the three terrible passions that can turn shepherds [of the flock of Christ] into wolves: the passion of pride (not by constraint), the passion of greed (not for filthy lucre), and the passion of power (neither as being lords over God's heritage). In opposition to these pernicious passions, the apostle points out the three virtues which must adorn a shepherd of God flock: the virtue of the fear of God (willingly), the virtue of zeal (of a ready mind), and the virtue of service (being an example to the flock). The apostle gave these precepts not only as a teacher but also as a prophet. For the centuries have revealed two main types of shepherds: some, in their high position in the Church, have been guided by their passions: pride, greed, and lust for power; and others have been guided by the fear of God, by zeal, and by the model of service. The Church has suffered from the former, but has not perished, while they themselves have perished. From the latter, the Church has grown and advanced and shone forth in the world. The former are wolves and the latter are shepherds. The former are enemies both of man and of God, and the latter are friends both of man and of God. Christ the Chief-Shepherd will seek an accounting from the former and the latter concerning every sheep, i.e., every human soul, and He will justly recompense each according to his deeds. Pride, greed and lust for power in the so-called shepherds will be rewarded with eternal fire, while the fear of God, mercy and service of the true shepherds will be rewarded with eternal rejoicing.

O Lord Jesus, the Chief-Shepherd, help the shepherds of Your spiritual flock that, to the end, they may fulfill the commandment of Your holy apostle.

To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.

The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration by Abbott Tryphon



A Child of God

God's invitation to be His child

We have been praying most of our lives, but do we ever think about what that means? Have we ever thought how incredible it is that our Creator God has invited us to speak with Him at any time? That the Lord of the Universe has given us the right to speak with Him, to ask for help, to seek His mercy?

There is no greater honor given to humanity than the gift of being able to approach our God in prayer, any hour of the day or night, in every circumstance. In every season we can speak to Him. We can call upon God in our joy or in our anger, and from the depths of despair, we can speak to Him.

It is beyond our human understanding that we have been assured that our God is always listening to us, yet it is true. Our Creator even condescended to join His Divinity with our humanity, becoming incarnate in the flesh, that we might see His face. In Christ, He has revealed Himself to us, and invited us to commune with Him forever.



Daily Reflection
Being Watchful In Gratitude



“Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it in gratitude;” (Col 4: 2)

How, in practical terms, does one go about prayerfully “being watchful,” – and not only “watchful,” but “in gratitude”? In practice, I find that the two are connected. When I am “watchful,” I take note of the ups and downs of my day, jotting these down in a notebook for just a few minutes before I go to sleep. And in connection with prayer this little exercise brings me gratitude, because I begin to see my life as God’s work in progress, as a journey in Him, rather than letting it pass me by meaninglessly. So for me, “life” is not, as John Lennon sadly noted, “what happens to you while you’re busy making other plans.”

Today let me take a few minutes to “be watchful,” because I know that this brings me gratitude, - and gratitude changes everything. Lord, open my eyes today, that I may see what You have to show me, in the circumstances, failures or successes You send my way this summer day.

The Philokalia: Daily Readings

In each of us the energy of the Spirit is made manifest according to the measure of his faith (Rom 12:6). Therefore each of us is the steward of his own grace and, if we think logically, we should never envy another person the enjoyment of his gifts, since the disposition which makes us capable of receiving divine blessings depends on ourselves.

+ *St Maximus the Confessor, 500 Various Texts*

Daily Readings with Early Church Fathers and Mothers
"Fight Against Your Passions" by St. Anatoly

Are you fighting against your passions? Fight, fight, and be good soldiers of Christ! Do not give in to evil and do not be carried away by the weakness of the flesh. During the time of temptation, flee to the Physician, crying out with the Holy Church, our mother: “O God, number me with the thief, the harlot, and the publican (i.e., with the repentant), and save me!

Through the Grace of God – Orthodox Christianity
Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica: Preach From The Heart

“One should preach not from one’s rational mind but rather from the heart. Only that which is from the heart can touch another heart. One must never attack or oppose anyone. If he who preaches must tell people to keep away from a certain kind of evil, he must do so meekly and humbly, with fear of God”

Collected Sayings of Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica

Our God came down among us people in order to return us to our original state, the state He had created us in. He did everything so that man could understand His will. He could have saved mankind in a different way, but fallen mankind disturbed the fine apparatus of the human mind and became incapable of good. It fell under the power of the spirits of evil, and voluntarily subjected itself to them.

JULY – 2016

Sunday Resurrection	Monday Holy Angels	Tuesday St. John the Baptist	Wednesday Most-Holy Theotokos	Thursday Holy Apostles	Friday Life-giving Cross	Saturday Departed
					1 Unmercenary Wonderworkers Cosmas & Damian 8:00-9:15pm Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	2 <i>19 June O.S.</i> <i>St. John Bp. Of S.F.</i> Robe of the Theotokos St. John, Bp. Of Shanghai & San Francisco 6:30pm Vespers
3 <i>All Saints of America</i> All Saints of Russia Martyr Hyacinth Relics Hieromartyr Philip, Metr. Of Moscow 9:40am Hours 9:45am Gen'l Confession 10:00am Divine Liturgy / Social	4 <i>Galatian Icon</i> St. Andrew of Crete Ven. Martha	5 <i>Ekonomissa Icon</i> RELICS VEN. SERGIUS OF RADONEZH VEN. ATHANASIOS OF MOUNT ATHOS 7:00-8:00pm The Grey Book Study NA Grp Mtg.	6 Ven. Sisoës the Great Virgin Martyr Lucia	7 <i>Blachemae Icon</i> Ven. Thomas of Mt. Maleon Ven. Eudoxia	8 <i>Kazan', Sitka- Kazan' Icons and Others</i> Greatmartyr Procopius 8:00-9:15pm Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	9 <i>Kolochskaya Icon</i> Hieromartyr Pancratius, Bishop of Taormena 6:30pm Vespers
10 <i>Konevskaya Icon</i> 45 Martyrs at Nicopolis VEN. ANTHONY OF THE KIEV CAVES 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy / Social	11 <i>End Ss. Peter & Paul Fast O.S.</i> Greatmartyr Euphemia BL, Princess Olga	12 <i>Three Hands Icon"</i> <i>29 June O.S. Ss. Peter & Paul</i> Martyrs Proclus & Hilary of Ancyra 7:00-8:00pm The Grey Book Study. NA Grp Mtg.	13 <i>"Axion Estin/Dostonio est'" Icon</i> Synaxis of the Archangel Gabriel Ven. Stephen Sabbaita	14 Apostle Aquila of the 70 Repose Ven. Nicodemus the Hagorite	15 <i>Fish, Wine & Oil</i> GREAT PRINCE VLADIMIR, EQUAL-TO-THE- APOSTLES, ENLIGHTENER OF THE RUSSIAN LANDS 8:00-9:15pm Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	16 Hieromartyr Athenogenes, Bp. Of Heracleopolis 6:30pm Vespers
17 <i>Fathers of the 1st Six Ecumenical Councils</i> <i>4 July O.S. Royal Passionbearers</i> Royal Passionbearers Greatmartyr Marina (Margaret) 9:40 Hours 10:00 Divine Liturgy / Social	18 Nun Martyrs Gr. Duchess Elizabeth & Barbara	19 RELICS VEN. SERAPHIM OF SAROV 7:00-8:00pm The Grey Book Study NA Grp Mtg.	20 <i>Fish, Wine & Oil Abalatskaya Icon</i> HOLY PROPHET ELIJAH	21 <i>Armatia Icon</i> Prophet Ezekiel Ven. Simeon of Emesa, Fool-for- Christ	22 Holy Myrbearer Mary Magdalene, Equal-to-the-Apostles 8:00-9:15pm Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	23 <i>Pochaev & Joy of All Who Sorrow Icons</i> Martyrs Trophimus, Theophilus & Their Companions 6:30pm Vespers
24 Martyr Christina MARTYRS BORIS & GLEB. PASSIONBEARERS 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy/ Social	25 Dormition of Righteous Anna, Mother of the Theotokos	26 <i>Emvolon Icon</i> ST. JACOB, ENLIGHTENER OF THE PEOPLES OF ALASKA 7:00-8:00pm The Grey Book Study NA Grp Mtg.	27 GREATMARTYR & HEALER PANTELEIMON St. Clement, Bishop of Ochrid	28 <i>Smolensk Hodigitria</i> <i>156 July O.S. St. Vladimir</i> Apostles of the 70 Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon & Parmenas	29 Martyr Callinicus Virgin Martyr Seraphima 8:00-9:15pm Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	30 Apostles of the 70 Silas, Silvanus & their Companions 6:30pm Vespers
31 <i>Forefeast Procession of the Life-giving Cross</i> Righteous Eudocimus St. Germanus, Bp. Of Auxerre 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy/ Social	<i>What is the source of greatest joy in my life now? Have I begun to intentionally seek to be present in my life more often? Do I still live in my thoughts longing for life to begin 'tomorrow'? How much time do I waste in front of the TV, on the internet in a dull state of consciousness? Who in life helps me awaken? Who do I seek out in my life in order to have a dialogue from the heart about the search for God and what really matters" Do I have a spiritual confessor and guide and make regular confessions? Do I worship or sit as a spectator? – Dn. Stephen Muse, "Being bread."</i>					