

*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, November 27, 2016**

Gospel: Luke 13:10-17

**Tone 6 (10<sup>th</sup> of Luke)**

Epistle: Ephesians 2:4-10

## *23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday After Pentecost*

**Greatmartyr James the Persian (421).** Ven. Palladius of Thessalonica (6th-7th c.). St. Jacob, Bishop and Wonderworker of Rostov (1392). Uncovering of the Relics of St. Vsávolod (Gabriel) of Pskov (1192). Seventeen Monk Martyrs in India (4th c.). St. Roman (5th c.). Repose of Ven. Diodorus, Abbot of Yuriev Monastery (Solovétsky Monastery—1633). Commemoration of the Weeping Icon of the Most-holy Theotokos, called “ZNAME NIYE” (“THE SIGN”) at Novgorod in 1170, and the other Icons of the Most-holy Theotokos, “OF THE SIGN”: the “KURSK-ROOT” (1295), “ABALATSKAYA” (1637), and others.

### ***Troparion – Tone 4***

*You astounded all, long-suffering James, by enduring horrible tortures with great patience. / As the evil assembly performed the slaughter, / you uttered prayers of thanksgiving to the Lord. / Through your sufferings you received your crown, / and came to the throne of the heavenly King, Christ God. / Entreat Him to save our souls!*

### ***Kontakion – Tone 2***

*You listened to your faithful wife / and contemplated the judgment of God, holy James; / you despised the threats and commands of the Persians, / accepting the cutting of your body as though you were a vine. / Therefore you were revealed as a martyr worthy of honor.*



*Greatmartyr James the Persian*

## ***Prayer Requests***

### ***For Health of:***

**Marisa Romanofsky** on her 25th birthday, with love from her family.

**Matushka Katherine White**, who will be having kidney surgery on December 1. May the Divine Physician direct her doctors in the surgery, assist her nurses caring for her, and guide her to complete recovery and renewed good health, offered by Archbishop Michael and the Diocese of NY/NJ.

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

**St Basil The Great: Bear With Patience**

“And so let us be glad and bear with patience everything the world throws at us, secure in the knowledge that it is then that we are most in the mind of God.”

### *Liturgical Schedule*

**Sunday, November 27<sup>th</sup>**  
9:30 am: Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

**December 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
6:30 pm: Vespers

**Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup>**  
9:30 am: No Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
9:45 am: General  
Confession  
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

**Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup>**  
6:30 pm: Vespers

**Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup>**  
9:30 am: Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy  
**12:15 pm: St. Nicholas Day  
Celebration**

**Saturday, December 17<sup>th</sup>**  
6:30 pm: Vespers

**Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>**  
9:30 am: Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

### *Bulletin Sponsors:*

***Romanofsky Family***

### *Readings:*

#### **The Prokeimenon in the 6<sup>th</sup> Tone:**

O Lord, save Thy people / and bless Thine inheritance!  
*(Psalm 27:9)*

vs. To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me!  
*(Psalm 27:1)*

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#### **Epistle:** Ephesians 2:4-10

**Brethren,** God who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God: not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

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#### **Alleluia in the 6<sup>th</sup> Tone:**

He that dwelleth in the aid of the Most High shall abide under the protection of the God of heaven. *(Psalm 90:1)*

vs. He will say to the Lord: Thou art my protector and my refuge, my God. In Him will I trust! *(Psalm 90:2)*

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#### **Gospel:** Luke 13:10-17 (10<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Luke)

**At that time,** Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your infirmity." And he laid his hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight, and she praised God. But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be healed, and not on the sabbath day." Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to water it? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" As he said this, all his adversaries were put to shame; and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.



#### ***Greatmartyr James the Persian***

The Holy Great Martyr James the Persian (the Sawn-Asunder) was born in the fourth century into a pious Christian family, both wealthy and illustrious. His wife was also a Christian, and the couple raised their children in piety, inspiring in them a love for prayer and the Holy Scriptures. James occupied a high position at the court of the Persian emperor Izdegerd (399-420) and his successor Barakhranes (420-438).

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

But on one of the military campaigns James, seduced by the emperor’s beneficence, was afraid to acknowledge himself a Christian, and so he offered sacrifice to idols with the emperor.

Learning of this, James’ mother and wife wrote him a letter, in which they rebuked him and urged him to repent. Receiving the letter, James realized the gravity of his sin. Faced with the horror of being cut off not only from his family, but also from God Himself, he began to weep loudly, imploring the Lord for forgiveness.

His fellow-soldiers, hearing him pray to the Lord Jesus Christ, reported this to the emperor. Under interrogation, St James bravely confessed his faith in the one True God. No amount of urging by the emperor could make him renounce Christ. The emperor then ordered the saint to be put to death.

They began to cut off his fingers and his toes one by one, then his hands and his feet, and then his arms and legs. During the prolonged torture St James offered prayers of thanksgiving to the Lord, Who had granted him the possibility of redemption from his sins by enduring these terrible torments. Finally, the martyr was beheaded. Christians gathered up the pieces of his body and buried them with great reverence.



**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)

**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*

*Our annual St. Nicholas Day celebration will be held on Sunday December 11th after the Divine Liturgy. There will be Christmas tree decorating for the children, and a visit from St. Nicholas. Please see Maribeth Romanofsky or Linda Dantinne for more information.*



*NY/NJ Diocese News*

**Pentecost Pilgrimage to the Holy Land with Archbishop Michael: June 4-17, 2017**

**The Department of Evangelization of the Orthodox Church in America, together with Archbishop Michael (Dahulich) and the Diocese of New York and New Jersey announce a first annual Pilgrimage** -- this year to the Holy Land, beginning in Nazareth and ending in Jerusalem, with an optional additional trip to Petra in Jordan, **June 4-17, 2017**. The pilgrimage begins on the Monday of Pentecost, in Israel. The itinerary includes the following cities and major sites: Capernaum, Nazareth, Bethlehem, Mar Sabba, Jerusalem (Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Garden of Gethsemane, Mount Zion), and Petra (in Jordan).

*“It is my joy to be able to lead this inaugural pilgrimage to the Holy Land. As an Archbishop and as a Professor of New Testament at St Tikhon’s, I cannot overstate the value of the living connection between the Scriptures and the Holy Sites where our Lord took flesh, grew up, was tempted; where he taught, where he*

*healed; where he was crucified and where he arose from the dead. We will walk on those paths, we will stand in those hallowed sites, we will sit in those holy places, we will pray where he prayed, as we trace the Lord’s ministry in the Holy Land,”* said His Eminence, Archbishop Michael.

*“My experience in the Holy Land,” added Priest John Parker, Chair of the Department of Evangelization, “indeed brought the Scriptures to life. For my whole life I had read about the Sea of Galilee, but to sail on it puts it in perspective. How many times did I play the role of the inn-keeper in the Nativity Play as a child? But touching the very cave where Jesus was born brings his Holy Nativity into a whole new focus. And indescribable is the opportunity to kneel at the very tomb of our Lord Jesus Christ (still empty!) and to pray for my family, my parish, and the salvation of the world. These are some of the gifts of a pilgrimage of this nature.”*

In addition to the usual sites one would expect on such a pilgrimage, we will also have the opportunity to visit significant archeological sites, not to mention Petra, an ancient city that is literally carved into rock cliffs.

The Pilgrimage will offer a remarkable opportunity for us to get back to our roots, and to make life-changing connections between the words of our Faith, and the Living Word, Jesus Christ.

**Invite a friend! Come and see!**

Space is limited and offered on a first-come, first-served basis.

The pilgrimage is organized by  
Diocesan Archpriest Ilya Gotlinsky.

For more information  
and/or to reserve your spot,  
please visit:

<http://orthodoxtours.com/itinerary-june-4-17-2017-pilgrimage-holy-land-eminence-michael-dahulich/>



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

**It’s not too late to FOCUS on Thanksgiving!**

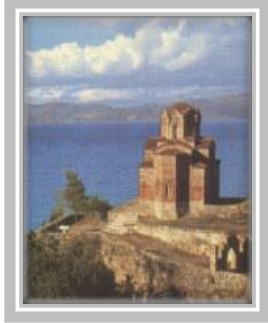
As announced in a letter from His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon dated November 20, 2016; the Stewards of the Orthodox Church in America [SOCA] and FOCUS North America have partnered to address the problem of hunger in the US by launching a special appeal during this Thanksgiving season.

And, while Thanksgiving Day is already behind us, it’s not too late to make an on-line donation if you have yet to do so.

FOCUS North America is a national movement of Orthodox Christians united in faith and joined by a desire to provide action-oriented and sustainable solutions to poverty in communities across America. FOCUS has operations and youth volunteer experiences in more than 20 US cities. A special produced video explains the ever-expanding extent of FOCUS’ good work in feeding the hungry—children and adults alike—across the US.

In the words of Metropolitan Tikhon, “let us keep in mind those who are less fortunate, and most importantly those who will go hungry this week. “In our nation of abundance nearly 14.5 million children live in poverty and in food-insecure households. One hundred percent of gifts received through this special appeal will be given to FOCUS North America’s feeding programs.”

As we enter into the Nativity season, there will be many opportunities to respond to an endless array of worthy causes but, as Metropolitan Tikhon wrote, “I can think of none more worthy of our treasures than the children of our nation who are hungry and in need. Please consider a gift today to help children who are hungry and in need of your help.”



*Prayers by the Laker, St. Velimirovich, LXXXIV:*

*Those who educate* by blinding rather than by enlightening --what will You do with them, O Lord?

They turn Your children away from You, and prevent them from approaching Your Grace, for they say: "The Lord' is an archaic term of your dead grandparents. It is an old amulet, which your grandparents used to wear but they have died off. We shall teach you how to till the earth, how to fatten the body, and how to dig for gold, which shines more brilliantly than the dead Lord." What will You do with these corrupters of Your children, O Lord?

"I shall do nothing to them, for they have done everything to curse their own seed and breed. Truly, they have prepared a worse judgment for themselves and their people than the scribes and Sadducees. For they had the example of these latter, and failed to learn from it.

"In their old age, they will hear sabers rattling at their threshold, and will be dying of hunger, bald and gaunt, and they will not dare to poke their heads out of their door to warn their students. How will they warn them, when My name has been expelled from their brigand hearts? What will they even say to warn them, since they prepared their students for this in their own abysmal stupidity, which accompanies everyone whom I do not accompany?" What will happen to them, O Lord?

"It will be worse for them than for the Babylonians, when in their might they used to worship blood and gold, and used to teach their children to worship them also.

"First will come hunger, such as even Babylon never knew. And then war, for the sake of plundering bread, from which they will return defeated. And then an internecine slaughter and burning of cities and towns. And then diseases, which the hands of physicians will not dare to touch. And the teachers will be flogged with whips and goaded to be the gravediggers of their students, whose stenchful corpses fill all the road-ways."

Those who lead the people are not leading the people, but are misleading the people -- what will You do with them, O my Lord? "They are leading the people astray for the sake of their own profit, and once the people arise and rise up; these leaders will step down from power and consume their ill-gotten gains in peace. They accuse their adversaries, and yet follow in their steps. Their clamor prevents a wise man from getting a word in edgeways.

"They flatter idiots and bullies just to attain the first places. They write books daily and expose the wickedness of their kinsmen, in order to conceal their own wickedness.

"They do not teach the people the truth, but feed them lies the year round.

"They are incapable of doing the people justice, so instead they intimidate them by scaring them with a worse injustice of times past.

"They pillage for themselves and their friends, for they know that they are not long for this world."

What will You do with them, O righteous Lord?

"They have done everything themselves, and I have nothing to do, except to leave them to themselves. Truly, they will not consume their gains in peace, but will spend it on the funeral feasts of their relatives.

"They will be impoverished, and mice will scurry through their torn shirts. They will dream of rebellions by those who have been deluded and looted, and they will arise at midnight, terrified and soaked with sweat. Their life will be long, so that their punishment may be longer.

"They will live to see their house in flames, and will flee their own land, hungry and sickly, and will not dare to utter their own names in the presence of anyone.

"They will see foreigners in their land, and will beg them for a piece of bread.

"It will be worse for their country than it was for the Roman Empire. For they had Rome for an example, and did not learn from it.

"It will be worse for their nation which was born of them, than it was for the Jewish nation. For they had the example of the Jewish nation, and did not learn from it.

"They will hear their names being cursed, and will not dare to poke their heads out the window.

"They will see their people; being led away bound in columns, and will be afraid for themselves.

"And they will hear, both when asleep and when awake, their name being cursed, and they will shiver -- they will shiver but will be unable to die."

O Great and Fearful Lord, all Your ways are grace and truth. What will You do with those who were blinded, misled, deceived and despoiled?

"I wait, to see who will cry out to Me -- and I will respond.

"As long as there is crying out on earth, there will also be an echo in heaven.

"I am the One who is closest to everyone on earth. I give Myself to everyone who desires Me; I withdraw Myself from everyone who does not acknowledge Me. Without Me the world is a pile of ashes. And without Me people are feebler than ashes."

*Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, LXXXIV:*

**III. Us and Our Neighbors  
Relationships With Other People**

A Christian must be courteous to all. His words and deeds should breath with the grace of the Holy Spirit, which abides in his soul, so that in this way he might glorify the name of God. He who regulates all of his speech also regulates all of his actions. He who keeps watch over the words he is about say also keeps watch over the deeds he intends to do, and he never goes out of the bounds good and benevolent conduct. The graceful speech of a Christian is characterized by delicateness and politeness. This fact, born of love, produces peace and joy. On the other hand, boorishness gives birth to hatred, enmity, affliction, competitiveness, disorder and wars.

+ **St. Nektarius of Aegina, The Path to Happiness, 7**

*The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration by Abbott Tryphon*



**Collaborators**

*We must become collaborators with God*

If we are to be healthy spiritually, we must cooperate with God’s divine grace. The nous, as the center of our being, refers to the noetic energy that functions in the heart of every spiritually healthy person. Only the Holy Spirit can bring about the healing of the nous, but such healing requires our cooperation. We must collaborate with God’s grace if we are to be healed, and made whole. Healing takes place when our nous is made “free of conceit and evil” according to Saint Gregory Palamas.

When we immerse ourselves in the Life of the Church, we become collaborators with the action of the Holy Spirit, and the road to healing is opened to us. Our life in Christ changes us, and we become the children of the Most High. This is a gift of God because of His great mercy, but because He has created us with free will, our cooperation is necessary.



*Daily Reflection*  
**Our Doubt vs. His Faith**

*“Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him they worshiped him; but some doubted (ἐδίστασαν). And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.’” (Mt 28: 16-20)*



Even as the risen Lord is there before the disciples, in the flesh, and as they “worshipped” Him, “some” of them “doubted.” And yet, all of them receive this Great Commission to go and teach, as well as the assurance of His exclusive authority and presence among them. So, He goes ahead and believes in them, even while some of them are doubting Him.

God has faith in us, even when we don’t have faith in Him. He is “with us always,” even when we doubt, either explicitly or subtly. The subtle kind of “doubt” (from “dubitare,” to hesitate, to question) is one that can cripple my daily connection with Him, when I hesitate to go ahead and ask Him for help, because I don’t quite believe that He is all that interested in me. As a result, I don’t really let Him into my relationships and various situations, and try instead to carry the world on my own shoulders. This leads to all sorts of anxiety and self-doubt, because of course the burden is too much for the self. But in Him, and with Him, I am called to make a difference to “all nations,” by

sharing Him with my world. So let me embrace my Lord’s faith today, as I re-connect with Him, Who is with us always, without a doubt.

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***Holy Orthodox Quotes***

“Do not let your intellect be taken prisoner by lust through assenting to sexual thoughts, defiling yourself inwardly.”  
+**St Mark the Ascetic**

**Matthew 5:27-30**

“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ † But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

**2 Timothy 2:20-22**

But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor.† Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

**Psalms 100:2-4**

I will sing and understand in a blameless way; When will You come to me? I walked in the innocence of my heart in the midst of my house. I have not set any lawless thing before my eyes; I hated those who commit transgressions; a crooked heart shall not cleave to me; As for the evil man who turned away from me, I did not know him.

**1 Peter 2:11-12**

Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul,† having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

**Romans 13:11-14**

And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.† Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts

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***The Philokalia: Daily Readings***

He who patiently endures unsought trials becomes humble, full of hope and spiritually mature.

+ *St Thalassios the Libyan, 400 Texts on Love and Self-Control*

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***Ancient Christian Wisdom***

Let us give thanks to God continually. For it is outrageous that when we enjoy His benefaction to us in deed every single day, we do not acknowledge the favor with so much as a word; and this, when the acknowledgment confers great benefit on us. He does not need anything of ours, but we stand in need of all things from Him. In point of fact, thanksgiving adds nothing to Him, but it brings us closer to Him. For if, when we recall the benefactions of men, we are the more warmed by affection for them; much more, when we continually bring to mind the benefits of the Master towards us, shall we be more earnest with regard to His commandments.

+ **St. John Chrysostom**

**The Monastery of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk  
175 St. Tikhon's Road, Waymart, PA 18472  
(570) 937-4390**

***ANNUAL NATIVITY LETTER***

Beloved of the Lord,

With the Birth of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, St. Gregory Palamas tells us that we now have perfect equality between heaven and earth for nothing done by God from the beginning of time was more beneficial to all or more Divine than Christ's Nativity which we celebrate during this Holy Season. One of the great mysteries that our Lord reveals to us through His incarnation is our own divinization and precisely the value of our person in Christ and how our salvation is accomplished. To believe in the God-man Jesus Christ is to believe in one's own possibility of sharing in the Uncreated eternal life of God forever. Christ's incarnation reveals man's potential: that he is meant to become the dwelling place and temple of God (I Cor 3:16.) The greatest lie of our modern age is the deception that Jesus Christ is a mere creature, a good man, but not God. To accept this is to debase the potential in man to embrace the fullness of God's Uncreated life. Our call is "to become partakers of the Divine Nature (II Pet 1:4)." This call is great indeed and its true import is revealed only through the Cross: "If anyone will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his Cross." Christ is "the lamb slain before the foundation of the world". He comes to us again this Nativity to remind us of another world, another way, another life which is eternal that we must make our own before this temporal life ceases. Our call is to embrace eternity which is the deepest need in the human heart. Nothing less than Christ can fill this void. Nothing less than God's eternal existence can answer the question of death and give us life. The hymns of the feast proclaim: "The middle wall of partition hath been demolished, the fiery sword is removed, the cherubim withdraweth from the gate of life, and I partake of the food of paradise, from whence I was driven away because of disobedience; for the immutable Image of the Father, the Image of His eternity, doth assume the guise of a servant, issuing forth from the Mother who knew not wedlock, without undergoing change, yet He remained what He was before, our true God; and He hath received what He was not, becoming man in His love for mankind. To Him let us cry aloud: O God Who wast born of the Virgin, have mercy on us!" With thanksgiving to God and to you all for your love for God and this Holy Monastery, let us rejoice again in God's love for us and in this greatest of mysteries of the Nativity of our Lord. Asking God's blessing upon us all during this Holy Season, I remain,

In the new born Christ,  
Archimandrite Sergius  
Abbot of St. Tikhon's Monastery

