



THE FORERUNNER
The Nativity of St. John the Baptist
 Orthodox Church O.C.A.
 420 Laura Street
 Philipsburg, PA 16866
 (814) 342-2011

Very Rev. John Horosky - Priest
 Mark Ammerman - Council President

November 2012
 Glory Be to Jesus Christ!

Service Schedule

November 4

General Confession & Hours @ 9:30 AM
 Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
 Coffee Hour following Liturgy
 Council Meeting

November 11

Hours @ 9:30 AM
 Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
 Coffee Hour following Liturgy

November 18

Hours @ 9:30 AM
 Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
 Coffee Hour following Liturgy

November 25

Hours @ 9:30 AM
 Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
 Pot luck luncheon following Liturgy

For private confession, call Father to make arrangements.

Reader's Schedule

Hours

11/4 Larry Ammerman
 11/11 Tom Demchak
 11/18 Jan Brennish
 11/25 D. Edward Batchko

Epistle

Larry Ammerman
 Tom Demchak
 Jan Brennish
 D. Edward Batchko

Feast Days

11/1 Cosmas and Damian
 11/8 Synaxis of the Archangel Michael, Gabriel & All Heavenly Hosts
 11/13 St. John Chrysostom
 11/16 Evangelist Matthew
 11/21 Entry Into the Temple of the Most-Holy Theotokos
 11/24 Great Martyr Catherine
 11/30 Apostle Andrew



Remember in your prayers: Bishop MELCHISEDEK, Father Adam, Father Ted, Father Paul, Father Michael, Jennifer and Vincent, Larry Ammerman, Mary Ann Ammerman, Karen Blackburn, Chris Conkey, James Crites, Helen Czar, Joe Demchak, Mike Demchak, Steve Demchak, Eileen Donovan, Joe Edwards, Michael Evans, Bonnie Fetcenko, Jeffrey Fetcenko, Randy Fetcenko, Rose Marie Fetcenko, Yvonne Fetcenko, Olga Finlayson, Kenneth Finlayson, Jack Foster, Mary Foster, Harry Horosky, Evan Morgan, Richard Nakles, Anna Pennington, Karen Saupp, Harry Socie, Alexandria Stine, Karen Stine, Eleanor Sura, Holly Thompson, Andrew Tocimak, Irene Tocimak, Louise Tocimak, Walter Varagea, Delores Varagea.

“O Master, the all-sustainer, and Holy King, Who punishes, but reduces not to death, Who strengthens the failing, and raises the outcast, Who remedies the bodily sorrows of men, we pray unto Thee, O Our Lord, visit Thine infirm servants with Thy mercy; forgive them every transgression, voluntary and involuntary. Verily O Lord, send down from Heaven Thy healing power, touch the body, extinguish the fever, lessen the suffering and every infirmity of Thy servants, raise them decumbent, from sickness, and from the bed of evilness, make them whole and all-restored, return them to Thy Church well-pleasing and fulfilling Thy will. For it is of Thine own, to be merciful and to save us, O Lord, and unto Thee we send glory, to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Birthdays		Anniversaries
Veronica Pirow	11/25	none
Doug Donovan	11/27	
Mike Conkey	11/28	
Bonnie Fetcenko	11/30	

Thank you to all who helped make pierogies this Tuesday and Wednesday. A lot of hard work and good camaraderie was had by all. God grant you many years!

From the Desk of Father John Horosky

Galatians 2:16-20 (10/28 or 11/10) Epistle for the Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost

The Life in Christ: Galatians 2:16-20, especially vs 20: *“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”* For many years, the Archpriest John Iliyech Sergieff, better known as Saint John of Kronstadt, kept a journal of “edifying thoughts and feelings that came to [him].” Ultimately these were edited and printed as My Life In Christ. Few works of the Holy Fathers have done more to establish the expression, “the life in Christ,” for English-speaking Orthodox Christians than this treasury of extracts.

The present passage from Saint Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians, with its straight-forward imagery of union with Christ, “it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me” (vs 20), along with the Lord Jesus’ own words, “whoever lives...in Me shall never die” (Jn 11:26), and the experience of the Church since the Lord’s Resurrection - all three attest to the life in Christ as the endowment that exceeds every definition of “life” in this present existence, and this life is available to all who unite themselves to the Master in Holy Baptism, submitting to Him as “King and God.”

In the present passage the Apostle exhibits a parallel to the mystery of uniting to Christ in Baptism. First, a candidate renounces “Satan, and all his angels and all his works, and all his service, and all his pride.” In his parallel, Saint Paul asserts that all our works, when we follow the law, are corrupted at best by the wiles of Satan, and futile, “for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified” (Gal 2:16). Then, as the candidate unites himself “unto Christ,” he does so by “dying,” as Paul says, to all claims of “the law that I might live to God” (vs 19). Afterward, prayers are offered for a candidate that “he may prove himself a child of the Light, and an heir of eternal good things.” Saint Paul makes clear that each of us must “now live in the flesh...by faith in the Son of God” (vs 20). Life in Christ must be lived out.

Saint Paul strongly asserts that living by external rules is futile (vs 16). When we acknowledge that it is impossible to be justified before God, we may actually find the gateway to the life in Christ, to the true faith “in the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me” (vs 20). As Father Nadim Tarazi says, “This recognition of the necessity of faith is then the prologue to faith.” One who is grasped by the limited usefulness of living by rule-keeping is ready to “unite himself unto Christ” and to receive the life in Christ.

Saint Paul emphasizes this hope: “the Son of God...loved me and gave Himself for me” (vs 20). Thus, in the words of Father Tarazi, the Apostle reminds us that the love of God is “the origin of everything that brings about our salvation.” Life in Christ requires us, every day, every hour, and in every circumstance and relationship, to love in the same manner that Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us (vs 20); given this, we have to rely on God’s forgiveness.

The Apostle Paul uses the verb “to live” in vs 19 and 20, reframing it to include action: to “live to God.” Thus, the life in Christ is to behave as the Lord does: “I no longer live” means I give up my self for others; saying that “Christ lives in me” reminds me to be His obedient servant; to “live in the flesh” requires embracing pain, toil, and struggle; to “live by faith” allows others to see the Son of God in me and through me.

O Lord, my God, may I ever remember Thy grace and henceforth live not unto myself, but unto Thee, our Benefactor, in the hope of eternal life and of unutterable joy.

The Hanging Vigil above the Royal Doors of the iconostasis is supported by Irene Pollock in loving memory of her sister and brother-in-law Margaret and Robert Stefanko.

The Vigils on the Tetrapod are supported by Irene Pollock in loving memory of her parents, sisters, brothers, husband, nephew and stepfather.

The votives in front of the iconostasis, on the candlestands and in front of the icons in the nave are supported by Andrew & Louise Tocimak in loving memory of George Tocimak.

The Goodness of Life

From DOXA, A Quarterly Review, Serving the Orthodox Church Winter 2011 Issue

We all want to feel good about ourselves. I find it difficult to imagine people who desire to be known as those dedicated to misery, despair, or ugliness. There is something deep in us (if we learn to listen) that wants to reaffirm the goodness of life, even in the most wretched of conditions. Yet when that desire to taste the dignified goodness of our humanity is translated into our broken world, it can sometimes come out sideways: namely, *"I make myself good by making others look bad."*

The Desert Fathers, the Orthodox monastic tradition, and life itself, teach us that by learning to embrace each others' brokenness, we will find peace in our communities and our hearts. First, we learn to love those closest to us, whose foibles and follies are well known to all, and live in great patience. *"Thou art my Patience, O Lord"* King David sings. When our brother sins, we forgive, we live in peace, and we let it rest. Broadcasting the struggle another is going through has no life in it at all, though it seems so easy to cast the first stone.

I have always loved the story of Abba Ammonas:

"Abba Ammonas came one day to eat in a place where there was a monk of evil repute. Now it happened that a woman came and entered the cell of the brother of evil reputation. The dwellers in that place, having learned this, were troubled and gathered together to chase the brother from his cell. Knowing that Bishop Ammonas was in the place, they asked him to join them. When the brother in question learned of this, he hid the woman in a large cask. The crowd of monks came to the place. Now Abba Ammonas saw the situation clearly but for the sake of God he kept the secret; he entered, seated himself on the cask and commanded the cell to be searched. Then when the monks had searched everywhere without finding the woman, Abba Ammonas said, 'What is this? May God forgive you!' After praying, he made everyone go out, then taking the brother by the hand he said, 'Brother, be on your guard.' With these words, he withdrew."

Stories like this immediately warm my heart towards the Desert Fathers. Another Father has this said of him... *"They said of Abba Marcarius the Great that he became, as it is written, a god upon earth, because, just as God protects the world, so Abba Marcarius would cover the faults which he saw, as though he did not hear them."*

At our monastery, we do not follow the "news". It seems that most of it is simply another manifestation of humanity's brokenness. Such "news" items are rarely done in a healing context. It is an enormous amount of energy wasted on, again, making our ego feel good about itself. We know we are all broken, and how it manifests itself ultimately does not matter. When others manifest, it, we need compassion before exploitation. Elder Paisios of Mount Athos witnesses to this vision in our own day:

"When we see something unseemly, it is better to cover it rather than make it a matter of public scorn and ridicule. It is wrong to publicize moral transgressions. If some foul smelling waste material is found along a path, a prudent person will make some effort to cover it with a stone to prevent any further disgust. But an impudent individual, instead of covering it, may begin stirring it and spreading its foul smell even more. By the same token, when we indiscreetly publicize the sins of others, we bring about greater harm."

The message seems clear. Expectations of others creates idols. We do not have relationships with idols, we find love in being at peace with one another's brokenness. Then we don't have to worry about casting stones... or breaking windows.

OLD FOLKS ARE WORTH A FORTUNE

Anonymous

Old folks are worth a fortune: With silver in their hair, gold in their teeth, stones in their kidney, lead in their feet and gas in their stomachs. I have become a lot more social with the passing of the years; some might even call me a frivolous old gal. I'm seeing five gentlemen every day.

As soon as I wake, **Will Power** helps me get out of bed. Then I go to see **John**. Then **Charley Horse** comes along, and when he is here he takes a lot of my time and attention. When he leaves **Arthur Ritis** shows up and stays the rest of the day. (He doesn't like to stay in one place very long, so he takes me from joint to joint.) After such a busy day, I'm really tired and glad to go to bed - with **Ben Gay**. What a life!

P.S. The preacher came to call the other day. He said that at my age I should be thinking about the hereafter. I told him I do - all the time. No matter where I am - in the parlor, upstairs, in the kitchen or down the basement - I ask myself, "No, what am I here after."

THANKSGIVING
http://www.pluggedin.com

Setting the Record Straight

The truth of the matter is that, after two months at sea, the Mayflower's 102 passengers arrived in Massachusetts in late November 1620. On Dec. 11 they signed the Mayflower Compact, stating that their purpose was "the Glory of God, and the advancement of the Christian faith." Although a harsh winter took the lives of half of the community, the summer's farming efforts yielded a bountiful crop, due in part to assistance from friendly Indians.

On Dec. 13, 1621, the Pilgrims began a three-day feast to thank God and celebrate with the Indians. The words of Pilgrim Edward Winslow give insight into the meaning of the event: "Our harvest being gotten in, our Governor sent four men on fowling so that we might, after a special manner, rejoice together. Many of the Indians came amongst us, and their greatest king, Massasoit, with some 90 men, who for three days we entertained and feasted. And although it be not always so plentiful as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodness of God we are far from want."

God's gracious provision prompted other American leaders to call for days of Thanksgiving. Gov. William Bradford proclaimed Nov. 29, 1623, an official day of thanks. He wrote, "I do proclaim that all ye Pilgrims, with your wives and little ones, do gather at ye meeting house, there to listen to ye pastor and render thanksgiving to ye Almighty God for His blessings."

Days of Thanksgiving to God were declared and passed into law as the years went by. As governor of Virginia, Thomas Jefferson pronounced Nov. 11, 1779, a day of "public and solemn Thanksgiving to Almighty God." In 1785, New Hampshire Gov. John Langdon set aside Nov. 24 to "testify our gratitude to the Author of all our Mercies, and to confess our manifold transgressions." Langdon's official decree also asked God to "bless our seminaries, and spread the Gospel over all the earth." Other states passed Thanksgiving decrees carrying similar sentiments.

With the unanimous approval of Congress, George Washington proclaimed that a national day of Thanksgiving be observed on Thursday, Nov. 26, 1789. In his official declaration, the president wrote that America was to thank God for His many blessings, ask forgiveness for national and personal sins, and pray that God would "promote the knowledge and practice of the true religion." In 1863, Abraham Lincoln passed a Thanksgiving resolution that quoted Psalm 33:12 and stated, "It is announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations are blessed whose God is the Lord."

From the Vespers Service for Thanksgiving....

Come, ye thankful people,* and let us raise a hymn of grateful praise to God,' our Benefactor and Creator,' the bounteous source of all our blessings,' the riches of our earthly life,' and the glory of the world to come,' for in His great mercy and love for us His children,' He has granted us salvation.

Come, 'ye thankful people,' and let us praise the Father,' who in His goodness' created heaven and earth,' and all that is in them,' endowing us His creatures,' with reason to worship Him,' who in His great mercy and love for us His children.* has granted us salvation.

Come, ye thankful people,' and let us praise the only-begotten Son,' who for our sakes did clothe Himself in mortal nature,' deigning to suffer and die for us,' trampling down death and raising us with Himself,' who in His great mercy and love for us His children,' has granted us salvation.

Come, ye thankful people,' and let us praise the Holy Spirit,' who descended upon the Apostles,' making them fishers of men,' through whom the earth has received,' the knowledge of the Holy Trinity,' who in His great' mercy and love for us His children,' has granted us salvation.

PSALM 100

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.
Worship the Lord with gladness;
come before him with joyful songs.
Know that the Lord is God.
It is he who made us, and we are his
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.
Enter his gates with thanksgiving
and his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and praise his name.
For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;
his faithfulness continues through all generations.