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This Newsletter has been donated:

In Loving Memory of
Michael Ciko and Deanna Rosenberg
By
Their Family
May their memory be eternal!

Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church
305 Main Rd
Herkimer, NY 13350

May 2010
Christ is Risen!
Greetings from the Rector

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

Who did Christ die for? How often do we entertain this question in our minds and in our prayer lives? As we heard on Pascha, Christ died for those who prepared for their whole lives, and He also died for those who completely disregarded the fast. He offers eternal life to everybody – no matter how much they love Christ in return.

Christ died so that we Orthodox Christians may be blessed to find our way into the Church. Let us never take this for granted. We are not here by some birthright, or ethnic association, but because we have been chosen by God Himself to do His work in our various communities.

Simply put: We are a different race. We are the New Israel. We are not necessarily born of earthly parents, but are reborn as Christians, with God alone as our Heavenly Father. As St Paul wrote in his Epistle to the Galatians, “You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

As a convert, there was a time when I had to stop referring to myself as a former Episcopalian, but to identify myself solely with the fullness of the Orthodox Church. Christ died so that we may continue to grow into the faith he has given us. He has died so that we will move from our former ways into the blessed life in the Kingdom of Heaven. As another Orthodox priest has written, “Nostalgia is defined as attachment to the past. It is not Christian, however natural and human we all find it to indulge ourselves from time to time. The problem with it is that it distracts us from living in the present reality which is what we are supposed to do.” Our present reality is that we have a neighbors that need the love of Christ brought to them. It needs to hear that Christ died for them, because he loves them. It needs to be made Orthodox. It needs to fully understand that Christ died for them – whether they are Egyptian, Greek, British, Russian, Native American, Korean, or any other nationality.

So how do we define ourselves in this community? We are challenged to ultimately say “I am an Orthodox Christian.” Because Christ died, we find a new mission: to bring the Gospel to Judea, to Samaria, and then to the whole world. In the Committee for Church Growth and in the Parish Council, we have begun to put our mission in words – a mission statement by which we will judge all of our actions. Every statement offered mentions our devotion to Christ – to growing spiritually, to loving the community and worshipping as one Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Here are some of the rough drafts:

- To be a worshipping orthodox community that grows in personal piety, engages in worship as the body of Christ and is a faithful witness to our local community.

- To be a welcoming place of worship and spiritual inspiration to all - adults and children.

(Continued on Page 4)
NEWS: Post-Pascha Conversation

Here is an extract from a news item that appeared on our website, cnyorthodoxchurch.org, recently. After the celebration of the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, April 25th, there was a pre-planned conversation about the successes of the Paschal Season, as well as the opportunities that arose. I want to thank everyone who stayed for the discussion, and those who were there for a bit of it. I hope that in the future, more voices will remain to take part in the life of the Church.

Among the plusses, the following were noted.

- Good quality of the Paschal Liturgy
- Uneventful, in that it all went well and according to plan. (Fr will do his best to stay healthy next year)
- Good marks for the Agape Meal, though the attendance was small.

Pascha Minuses

- Paschal Dinner attendance on St Thomas Sunday. The conversation turned to this question: What is the purpose of dinner? Is it a fundraiser or a social event?
- There was a severe lack of attendance at non-Sunday Divine Liturgy services.
- There was a severe lack of volunteers to participate in processions, and to make the Church ready for Pascha
- Concerning the 1PM Agape Vespers, the following comments were made. We could reconsider the timing, since it could conflict with Easter Dinner in many households. And we need to better define the reason to hold this Liturgy. What and who benefits, and why do they come?
- We also discussed the Paschal Bazaar. Most notably, we recognized a need for more time to cook/create for Bake Sale. And also a need more cookies, and perhaps more ethnic cookies
- Consider Freezing bread ahead of time, but then we would need another freezer (and the cost was initially thought to be worth it).
- It would be good for the parishioners place orders for bread, so that more is available to sell.

As the conversation progressed, we turned toward the food preparation, and fundraising efforts of the parish. Points made in this area were:

- We should engage the help of a health inspector to teach food safety principles, and so that we can be in line with the health code.
- If we are to increase our sales, we may need to acquire more freezer space. Should we buy a commercial grade freezer or just a couple more residential models?
- There is a friend of a parishioner who might be able to put on a Greek Dinner as a benefit, but it must be done this summer.
- Maybe we could host an ethnic cooking class, or a “Pierogie Fest,” modeled after Riggie Festival.

The bottom line on many of these things was the need for manpower. With a parish of our size, we should be seeing more participation from the laity, including the young adults. This has increased somewhat recently, but needs to be taken much more seriously if we are to be successful in our efforts.

Among other things discussed was a need for a yearly calendar of events so that all events are well known to the community. This may be agenda item for the November Parish Election Meeting.
Thanksgivings and Celebrations

Birthdays:
The blessing that comes with birth is the promise that God will be faithful, and grow a community so that it will be a holy place for years to come. As you say your daily prayers, remember those parishioners who are celebrating their birthdays this month.

3 – Olga Hubiak
5 – Eva Ignafol
   Samantha Kinzey
6 – Sandra Brelinsky
12 – Melissa Leigh
13 – Susan Moore
15 – Helen Gachowski
16 – Natalie Ptasznik
26 – Samuel Kinzey
27 – John Kowansky
30 – Nancy Richards
31 – Anastasia Hawranick

Coffee Hour Hosts and Hostesses

May 2 Margaret & Nick Keblish
May 9 Walter Tirenin and Steve Leve
May 16 Barb Daley and Cindy Sobolowski
May 23 Martha Shust and Rose Gala
May 30 Maria Drobot & Family

Names Days:
I have tried to find the Names Days for everyone. This is a very special event in a year. It connects us to a friend in Heaven, and Jesus Himself. If any of these dates are wrong, just let me know.

12 – Ted Alexanderowicz
18 – Julia Todd
21 – Helen Ciko
   Helen Gachowski
   Helen Homyk
   Helene Keblish
   Stevie Helen Kinzey
   Helen Kowansky
   Helen Sokol
23 – Alexander Chlus

Anniversaries:
12 – Nick and Margaret Keblish
15 – Fr James and Liane Worthington
   John and Rebecca Hawranick
31 – Ted and Milie Alexanderowicz
Growing flourishing and nourishing Orthodox community in Central NY State.

So when we become Orthodox, (and when we continually recommit to this way of life at Confession) “We come to the Church and we remain in the Church in order to save our souls, and nothing else. Church is not a hobby, a game, a private interest, a pretence, or even a community. It is our soul's salvation. We achieve this by first being ourselves and then being the best of ourselves. If there is anything else, it is all secondary.”

We are not a fundraising machine, or an ethnic enclave, or even a small inner circle of workers. We are no less than little Christ’s sent out into the world as witnesses to his Crucifixion and Resurrection. We must learn to be the hands of Christ in the world.

St Andrew’s Camp for Orthodox Youth

Camp History
St. Andrew’s Camp was founded in 1954 by a small group of Orthodox Christians who felt it necessary to have Pan Orthodox education centers for youth. We continually strive to be a service to Orthodox Christians of all jurisdictions, and a valuable youth ministry resource for the Orthodox Church in America (OCA) Diocese of New York & New Jersey. Our facilities can accommodate up to 40 campers, and a full time staff. The spacious campground features 30 acres of wooded area, open recreational fields, and lake front.

Activities include: arts and crafts, swimming, sports, boating, archery, horseback riding, music, religious discussion, liturgical life, and additional electives that vary from year to year.

Camp Location
St. Andrew’s Camp is located in Cleveland, NY, just north of Syracuse, NY and sits on the North Shore of Oneida Lake.
1280 State Rte. 49, Cleveland, NY 13042
Phone: (315)675-9771

2010 Program
Week 1 July 11 – 17 Camping & Ecology Week (Ages 7 -14)
Week 2 July 18 –24 Music Week (Ages 7-14)
Week 3 July 25 – 31 Horse Week (Ages 7-14)
Teen Week Aug 1 - 7 (Minimum age is 13) Bp Michael will be visiting the camp each week.
Tuition: $300 Per week
Registration Fee: $50 (Non Refundable)
To register, visit our website at standrewscamp.org
Memory Eternal!

Here are our brothers and sisters who have reposed during the month of May.

2 – Paul Nadiak (1975)
   Anna Corman (2001)
   Helen Nawoski (2004)
4 – Leon Lepkowski (1985)
7 – Harry Homyk Jr (1988)
   William Steckler (2007)
9 – Harry Palyga (1976)
11 – Catherine Foley (2002)
   Susan Moore (2008)
15 – Walter Senyk (1991)
   Edmund Mamrosch Sr (1994)
16 – Panos Jarosz (1981)
   Mary Boguski (1983)
22 – Anne Williams (1988)
24 – Kazmir Harpowich (1978)
   John Mezick (1988)
   Metro Hrynda (1995)
   Nicholas Tynda (1996)
31 – Mary Pupcheck (1976)

Praying for the Dead:
Light of Christ Illumines All

A little while ago, Nick Keblish finished a Panikhida Table that was donated in memory of Vera Prawlocki. You may notice, if you stay in the sanctuary for the Panikhida service, that it is brought out into the center of the Church, and several candles are lit on it.

It is the duty, responsibility and joy of the Church to pray for anyone when asked. Therefore, if you ever want one of your reposed loved ones prayed for, tell the priest the name, and place a candle in one of the holders on the Panikhida Table. These will then be lit when we sing the prayers for the Reposed. It would also be a good thing if you stayed for the service on that day.

The candles represent our faith that Jesus Christ, the light of the world, takes away all sickness, sorrow and sighing from our loved ones who have reposed. It is this light that reminds us of the promise of the Resurrection.
The Knowability of God in Saint Gregory Palamas: Traditionalist or Innovator? Part VIII

By the grace of God, the life of the ascetic will enlighten the world through the prayers of the righteous man, since “withdrawal from the world is not out of self love or timidity about taking up worldly responsibilities, but from a worldly desire for a heart purified of passions. Men withdraw from the world in order to remove themselves from what incites passions, for through that comes the death which separates them from God...It is not a matter of living in a place, but of a way of life.”

The Hesychast leaves the world and joins to God because of his great love for God and Creation. The Hesychast wishes to intercede with God for the salvation of the world. He does this by going within himself, where God is present and waiting. The Hesychast “looks on [the heart] as the principal centre of man’s spiritual life, as the organ by means of which the mind controls the whole body and even as the source and guardian of man’s intellectual activity.” The heart is where the Lord meets the man. The heart is liberated from the shackles of the secular world through a life of prayer. And the prayer works through the grace of the Holy Spirit, eventually moving beyond remembrance of sins to actual communion.

“According to this tradition (Hesychasm), the noetic faculty is liberated by the power of the Holy Spirit from the influences of both the body and the discursive intellect and engages uninterruptedly and ceaselessly with prayer alone. The fascinating thing about this state of actual prayer, as described very clearly by Palamas, is that, although the physical and intellectual faculties no longer exercise any influence whatsoever on the noetic faculty, they are themselves, however, dominated by the noetic faculty’s unceasing prayer in such a fashion that they are spiritually cleansed and inspired at the same time may engage in their normal activities.”

The Hesychastic life leads one to a vision of the light, as was experienced by the three Apostles at Mt Tabor. This light is the energy of God, and is also God Himself. The contrary theologically of Barlaam held that it was a created phenomenon. “Having been opposed by Barlaam’s contention that the light of the Transfiguration flashed from the body of Christ and travelled through the air to the senses of the apostles, Palamas retorts by going to great trouble to prove that the light in question is not subject to the sense (nor for that matter to the intellectual) experience of man and neither travels through, nor is visible by means of the air.” The proximity of the Apostles to Christ and His deifying power allowed the light to shine from within themselves. “The body of Christ illumined the apostles from without only because the same illuminating light of the body was already illuminating them from within.” At that moment the Apostles had achieved the end that was intended for man, and they would have to cultivate and maintain it. “That is what is meant to be created in the image of God: to have the God-given capacity of containing and living the divine life.”

Divine life is complete, and incorporates the entire Trinity. So when the divine life seems to be manifest to the Hesychast through Christ, it is equally true that the other Persons of the Trinity were present. “Palamas climaxes his arguments by pointing out that it is not by any created means that the apostles saw the glory of Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration, but by the power of the omnipotent Spirit. Thus the elect apostle saw the light on Mount Thabor, ‘not only flashing from the flesh bearing within itself the Son, but also from the Cloud bearing within itself the Father of Christ.’”

The completeness of God is evident here, and therefore, a complete union with God, antinomically speaking, is available to the man who finds the light within himself. And when this light is found, it leads to the life which was intended for man, a life in Christ, acting for the world on behalf of Him Who is united to the man.
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Words from the Divine Liturgy

To unscramble each of the clue words, you may have to look through your Prayer Book or Divine Liturgy Book. All of these answers will be found in there. Take the letters that appear in boxes and unscramble them for the final message.

Created by Puzzlemaker at DiscoveryEducation.com
Pentecost – this happens 40 days after Pascha and is the day on which the Disciples received the Holy Spirit. Thousands of people became Christians on this day when, the Apostles preached to them.