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BULLETIN OF SEPTEMBER 14, 2008

SUNDAY/SEPTEMBER 14th
13th Sunday After Pentecost (Tone 4)
ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS
(One of the "12 Great Feasts")
9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour; Church School Classes
Teen Discussion

Today, Sept. 14th is a Fast Day. We do not eat meat, dairy or fish products. Wine and oil are permitted.

MONDAY/SEPTEMBER 15th
Diocesan Assembly at Ss. Peter & Paul Church in South River

WEDNESDAY/SEPTEMBER 17th
7:00p.m. Compline & Akathist

THURSDAY/SEPTEMBER 18th
7:00p.m. Parish Council Meeting

SATURDAY/SEPTEMBER 20th
9:30a.m. Akathist to the Holy Cross; Confessions
5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

SUNDAY/SEPTEMBER 21st
14th Sunday After Pentecost (Tone 5)
Leave-Taking of the Holy Cross
9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour; Church School Classes

Fasting Days
Wednesday, September 17th
Friday, September 19th



Tropar Tone 1

O Lord save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by virtue of Thy Cross, preserve Thy habitation.

Kontakion Tone 4

As Thou wast voluntarily crucified for our sake, grant mercy to those who are called by Thy Name; make all Orthodox Christians glad by Thy power, granting them victories over their adversaries, by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, Thy weapon of peace.





THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS

On September 14th, the Church commemorates two events in connection with the Honorable Cross of Christ: first, the finding of the Honorable Cross on Golgotha and second, the return of the Honorable Cross from Persia to Jerusalem.

Visiting the Holy Land, the holy Empress Helena decided to find the Honorable Cross of Christ. An old Jewish man named Judah was the only one who knew where the Cross was located, and, constrained by the empress, he revealed that the Cross was buried under the temple of Venus that Emperor Hadrian had built on Golgotha. The empress ordered that this idolatrous temple be razed and, having dug deep below it, found three crosses. While the empress pondered on how to recognize which of these was the Cross of Christ, a funeral procession passed by. Patriarch Macarius told them to place the crosses, one by one, on the dead man. When they placed the first and second cross on the dead man, the dead man lay unchanged. When they placed the third cross on him, the dead man came back to life. By this they knew that this was the Precious and Life-giving Cross of Christ. They then placed the Cross on a sick woman, and she became well. The patriarch elevated the Cross for all the people to see, and the people sang with tears: "Lord, have mercy!" Empress Helena had a silver case made and set the Honorable Cross in it.

Later, the Persian Emperor Chozroes conquered Jerusalem, enslaved many people, and took the Lord's Cross to Persia. The Cross remained in Persia for fourteen years. In the year 628 the Greek Emperor Heraclius defeated Chozroes and, with much ceremony, returned the Cross to Jerusalem. As he entered the city Emperor Heraclius carried the Cross on his back, but suddenly was unable to take another step. Patriarch Zacharias saw an angel preventing the emperor from bearing the Cross on the same path that the Lord had walked barefoot and humiliated. The patriarch communicated this vision to the emperor. The emperor removed his raiment and, in ragged attire and barefoot, took up the Cross, carried it to Golgotha, and placed it in the Church of the Resurrection, to the joy and consolation of the whole Christian world.



FROM THE COUNSELS OF ELDER PAISIOS

If you want to grab God's attention so He'll hear you during prayer, turn the dial to humility, for God always works in this frequency; then humbly ask for His mercy.

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If we haven't got control of our mind during the hour of spiritual study we are not benefited at all. We simply yawn and tire ourselves without a goal, for we cannot remember anything. In the same way, when the printer doesn't have his mind on his work and forgets to put ink in, the printing presses work without printing anything.

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There are no people more blessed than those who have made contact with the "heavenly television station" and who are piously connected to God. In the same way, no people are more wretched than those who have cut contact with God and wander, dizzy, around the world, flipping through the world's many television stations so as to forget, if only for a short time, the anguish of the derailment of their lives.

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In the hour of prayer, when our mind wanders to thoughts of bad things, of if these thoughts come without our wanting them, we shouldn't wage an offensive war against the enemy; because, even if all the lawyers in the world joined together, they wouldn't make any headway with a little demon. Only through ignoring these thoughts can one chase them away. The same holds true for blasphemous thoughts.

From the Prologue of Ochrid by Saint Nikolai of Zicha

September Month – Cheesecake & Jewelry Fundraiser

You are invited to participate in this annual fundraiser. Extra materials with menu and catalog may be found both on the vestibule stand and on the “Free” table in the lower hall. Our sale ends on September 28th. Thanks for your support. Questions? Please speak with Lisa Keller.

September Month – Poor Basket earmarked for refugees in Georgia and Ossestia

Please be mindful of the more than 155,000 refugees (mostly Orthodox Christians) who are in need due the military conflict in August. Funds collected will be handed to the IOCC which will disperse them through the Orthodox Churches in Georgia and Russia.

Sunday September 28th - Parish Outreach Meeting at Coffee Hour

The Parish Outreach Committee has a number of suggestions in the ministry of Outreach and Evangelization that they wish to share with you. During the Coffee Hour we will meet in the Conference Room.

On Behalf of the Clergy of the NJ Deanery

Thanks to all that helped out for the luncheon for the clergy this past week. Our visitors were impressed by the wonderful hospitality, good foods and order of the church and property.

The OCA Special Investigation Report

May be found on line at the Orthodox Church in America website: www.oca.org/news/1628

The Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross

Is celebrated thru the “leave-taking,” which will be Sunday, Sept. 21st. During this time the tropar and kontakion of the feast (page 1 of the bulletin) is sung or said at the daily prayer rule of evening and morning prayers. The tropar before all meals and the kontakion after all meals. In being observant of this prayer rule we extend the feast into our homes and our souls.

Parish Synodicon – Memory Eternal!

Sept. 27, 2008	Sophie Wassel (40 th Day)
Sept. 15, 1966	Theodore Mivonuk
Sept. 16, 1980	Mary Lukasik
Sept. 17, 1960	Katherine Sedorkewicz
Sept. 17, 1988	Raymond koslosky
Sept. 17, 2003	Mila Seidal
Sept. 18, 1974	Stephen Zydiak
Sept. 18, 1993	Johanna Godleski
Sept. 19, 1964	Olga Dutka
Sept. 20, 1940	Peter Chapan
Sept. 20, 1976	Sophie Demjanow
Sept. 20, 2006	Eugenia Fetchko

Namesday Greetings

St. Vera (Faith)/Sept. 17th; Vera Wilhousky
St. Sophia (Wisdom)/Sept. 17th: Sophie Olszyk,
Sophie Barna, Sophie Bakaletz;
Many Blessed Years!

Seeking a Contact for professional plaster work at church property

Do you know someone? Please speak with Austin Kachek.

Parish Council Meeting – Thursday, September 17th, 7:00p.m.

Parishioners are invited to attend. Reports will include parish, deanery, diocesan and national church activities.

Sympathy is Expressed

To Mary Rosocha and Tessie Nevitt on the repose of their sister, (+) Julia Warcola of Manville on Sept. 5th. May she rest in peace.

Offerings for the week of September 14th
Olive Oil – in memory of Michael and Justina; for the health of Jason (birthday); in memory of Joseph and Loretta; in memory of Joan.
Wine – thanksgiving to God by Mariana and Stefan (wedding anniversary).

Orthodox Education Day – St. Vladimir’s Seminary, Saturday, October 4th

A day of worship, education, fellowship, music, tours, fine ethnic foods, and special sales on religious items and books. Go! And offer a ride. See posted flyer for schedule of events.

OCA Holy Synod of Bishops, Metropolitan Council issue joint statement regarding Special Investigating Committee report

Posted 09/05

SYOSSET, NY [OCA Communications] – On Friday, September 5, 2008, the Holy Synod of Bishops and Metropolitan Council of the Orthodox Church in America unanimously approved the following joint statement for publication.

“The Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council, acknowledging the report of the Special Investigating Committee and the facts made clear therein, humbly apologize to the Church and all those who were harmed by these events.

“We recognize our failure to act upon information provided to us, and to demand accountability and openness from each other and from those in our employ.

“We commit ourselves to building a culture within the Church which fosters communication, transparency and personal responsibility.

“We also wish to offer our profound apology to Mr. John Kozey, former Chair of the OCA Audit Committee. We commend his tireless attempts to bring the facts of this matter to light. For his efforts, he was rebuffed, marginalized and mistreated. We are deeply sorry for this mistreatment.

“We know that trust must be re-built, and pray you will be encouraged by our actions from now as we move decisively to correct the mistakes of the past and ensure they do not take place again.”

St. Daniel's bells triumphantly returned to the native monastery

Moscow, September 10, Interfax – Historical bells of St. Daniel's monastery have returned to the native abode after 80 years of "emigration" to the USA.

The bells were delivered from New York to the port of St. Petersburg on September 4. They visited Novgorod and Tver on their way to the capital. Representatives of authorities, clergy and processions with cross welcomed the shrine in all cities and towns.

The bells in a road train accompanied by road police arrived at the Serpukhovskaya Zastava Square. Several hundreds of believers and St. Daniel's brethren welcomed the bells at the square with icons and church banners. When the road train came into sight, professors and students from Harvard University, where the bells had been preserved, started embracing and congratulating each other on return of the shrine and parishioners of the monastery thanked them in English.

The road train slowly moved from the square to St. Daniel's monastery while modern bells welcomed it with their ringing.

The bells arrived from New York to St. Petersburg port in the morning on September 7 and visited Novgorod and Tver on their way to the capital. Representatives of authorities and clergy welcomed the shrine in all cities and believers organized processions with cross.

A road train with the bells accompanied by road police cortege arrives in Moscow from Tver on Wednesday at about 04.00 p.m. The procession with cross from St. Daniel's monastery is to meet the motor column at the Serpukhovskaya Zastava Square.

Ringings of contemporary bells will welcome historical bells in the monastery, then they are to be placed at the monastery square.

St. Daniel's monastery will conduct a festival ceremony of consecrating historical bells, which are to be conveyed to the monastery. Then all arrived bells will ring in the monastery for the first time.

The bells hardly survived the 1930s and were sold abroad. Member of the American charitable mission in Moscow and Harvard University Professor Thomas Wittemore saved the bells from total loss. He persuaded American manufacturer Charles Richard Crane, who was interested in Russia, to buy the bells.

Several buildings of the Harvard University campus were adjusted to have the bells installed on them.

First attempts to bring the unique bells back to Russia were taken in the mid 1980s. After talks with Harvard University organized by Alexy II and Svyaz Vremyon foundation and final agreement on their return to Russia signed in March 2007 the Society of Church bell ringers made their exact copies in Voronezh. It was decided to gift two more bells to Harvard. They won't be a part of the university complex.

War splits Orthodox churches in Russia and Georgia

By Sophia Kishkovsky

Friday, September 5, 2008

MOSCOW: While leaders and generals quarrel over the strategic map of Georgia and Russia's future relations with both its neighbors and the West, the Christians of both nations have fretted over the worrisome loss of Orthodox unity.

Post-Soviet Russia has re-embraced Orthodoxy, as has Georgia, and has used it to stir support on a range of issues - for Serbia, particularly when NATO bombed Serbia in 1999, or in claims against Ukraine, whose western territories are dominated by Uniates, or Eastern Rite Catholics, long at loggerheads with the Orthodox Church.

But the prospect of two Orthodox nations at war did nothing to deter Russia, or Georgia, from war in August. The patriarchs of both the Russian and Georgian Orthodox churches issued strong and immediate appeals for peace. In the case of the Russian Orthodox patriarch, Aleksy II, this was all the more unusual for putting him at odds with the Kremlin.

"Today, blood is being shed and people are perishing in South Ossetia and my heart deeply grieves over it," the patriarch said in a statement published as fighting raged on Aug. 8. "Orthodox Christians are among those who have raised their hands against each other. Orthodox peoples called by the Lord to live in fraternity and love are in conflict."

Two days later, Patriarch Ilia II of the Georgian Orthodox Church gave a sermon in Tbilisi, noting that "one thing concerns us very deeply - that Orthodox Russians are bombing Orthodox Georgians."

According to a translation on the Web site of the Georgian church (www.patriarchate.ge), he added: "This is an unprecedented act of relations between our countries. Reinforce your prayer and God will save Georgia."

Despite the alarm, Orthodox ties proved strong enough to offer some relief to civilians swept up in the conflict. The Georgian patriarch made a pastoral visit, bringing food and aid, to Gori, a central Georgian city that was occupied by Russian forces.

Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department of External Church Relations, said the Russian church facilitated this visit and conveyed letters from Patriarch Ilia to President Dmitri Medvedev and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin. Like other Russian politicians since the end of communism, both men have made much of their Orthodox faith.

In the letters, Patriarch Ilia noted that "Russian air forces have been bombing Georgian cities and villages, Orthodox Christians have been killing each other," according to his patriarchate's Web site. He expressed sorrow at Georgian and Ossetian deaths, and rejected Russia's charges of Georgian genocide as "a pure lie."

The Georgia conflict marks the first war between countries with majority Orthodox Christian populations since the Second Balkan War in 1913 pitted Serbia, Greece, Montenegro and Romania against Bulgaria in a prelude to World War I.

Priests and others close to the Orthodox churches, studying their role in post-Soviet society, have voiced anxiety that, while religion has recovered its stature, calls to prayer could not avert bloodshed between two peoples who share Orthodoxy, and centuries of deep cultural, political, economic and social ties.

"What these events show is the collapse of the myth of unity of Orthodox peoples and the collapse of the myth of the supreme peacemaking ability of Orthodox civilization," said Anatoly Krasikov, director of

the Center for Religious and Social Studies of the Institute of Europe in Moscow.

"Of course it is not Orthodoxy that is to blame for this collapse, but concrete people, functionaries of the church administrative structures of Russian and Georgian Orthodoxy. They, for all practical purposes, remained aloof and did nothing to end a war that was unjust from all sides."

Russia has the world's largest Orthodox Christian population, with an estimated 75 percent of its over 140 million people identifying themselves as Orthodox (although only 10 percent are regular churchgoers), according to a poll last year by the Russian Public Opinion Research Center. The Moscow Patriarchate is vying with the smaller Patriarchate of Constantinople for predominance in the Orthodox world.

Georgia has fewer than five million people, but is one of the most ancient Christian countries in the world. Its church dates back to the fourth century, far outpacing the Russian church, which dates its founding to the Baptism of Rus in 988, when Prince Vladimir of Kiev brought Orthodoxy to the banks of the Dnieper River.

Russia annexed Georgia, which was seeking protection from Persia, in 1801, absorbed its church and abolished its Patriarchate, which was restored - in name, at least - only after the Bolsheviks came to power.

In Soviet times, Georgia became something of a refuge for persecuted Orthodox monks from Russia, said Nikolai Mitrokhin, a specialist on the Orthodox Church in the former Soviet Union. From Czarist times through the Soviet era, Georgian clergy trained in Russia and Kiev.

"For Georgia, Russia is this love-hate relationship," said Tamara Grdzelidze, an Oxford-trained theologian from Georgia who works at the World Council of Churches headquarters in Geneva and has edited an English-language history of the Orthodox Church of Georgia.

"Our patriarch was educated in Russia, and this is the best he knows and he respects it highly," she added. "This is a very complicated and long history of relationship between the churches. When Russia annexed Georgia in the beginning of the 19th century, it abolished the king, it abolished the patriarch in 1811, it persecuted the Georgian language at all levels, including the church."

The latest conflict has stirred those memories on both sides, ranking each.

Last week, Patriarch Ilia appealed to Medvedev and Putin to end the confrontation and not to recognize South Ossetia and Abkhazia. "This will give rise to separatism in your country, and in the future you will have many more problems than we have in Georgia today," he said, according to the Interfax news agency. "This is worth meditating upon."

The next day, Medvedev said in a televised speech that events compelled him to recognize the enclaves' independence.

"This is an especially painful situation for us because four Orthodox peoples are in conflict," said Deacon Andrei Kuraev, an outspoken Russian Orthodox missionary who is famous for his Web site, books and sermons at rock concerts by bands that have turned to Orthodoxy.

Parts of South Ossetia's and Abkhazia's populations are Orthodox and do not want to be under the Orthodox Church in Georgia, Kuraev said. Ossetia and Abkhazia also have strong pagan elements, said Mitrokhin. Islam is also present there.

The Russian church was surprisingly tepid about Medvedev's recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, saying it did not necessarily mean that their Orthodox communities would come under Moscow's jurisdiction.

"The Moscow Patriarchate must take political realities into account," said the Reverend Nikolai Balashov, the church's secretary for inter-Orthodox relations. But in resolving canonical jurisdiction over the territories, he added, "dialogue with the Georgian church" is more important.