

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OCTOBER 11, 2009

SUNDAY/OCTOBER 11

Fathers of the 7th Ecumenical Council

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour; Church School; Teen Discussion
12:00p.m. - 2:00p.m. Church Open
12:00p.m. Movie: *The Monastery*

MONDAY/OCTOBER 12

7:00p.m. Compline & Akathist to
Iveron Icon (Oct. 13)

TUESDAY/OCTOBER 13

6:45p.m. Memorial for (+) Emilia Sarchisian
7:30p.m. Movie: *The Monastery*

WEDNESDAY/OCTOBER 14

6:30p.m. Compline
7-8:30p.m. Adult Study Class

SATURDAY/OCTOBER 17

9:30a.m. Akathist; Confessions
5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

SUNDAY/OCTOBER 18

19th Sunday After Pentecost (Tone 2)

St. Luke the Evangelist

St. Peter of Montenegro

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour; Church School
Presentation on Coptic Orthodoxy at the Coffee
Hour in the Conference Room

Fasting Days

Wednesday, October 14

Friday, October 16



Some Instructions of Patriarch Ilia II of Georgia, given on the Feast of the Cross Sept. 14/27, 2009

The Holy Cross is a great mystery. A man must follow vertical and horizontal paths. The vertical path means seeking God, and the horizontal one means serving and loving human beings. A person who forms a cross with his life achieves happiness. Our lives should begin and end with the Cross. The Cross is the greatest holy force against the devil.

I cannot remember a night without praying in our family. This rule of daily prayer should be followed in every single family. Every family should keep holy water and sprinkle it over the corners of the house every day.

Parents should bless their children every day. Children should ask for a blessing from their parents and kiss their hands. Parents should teach their children how to love and serve God. The ability to feel love is grace that God has given us and we pass it on to our children.

Hope is necessary. A hopeless person is poor. If we pray with hope, God will hear our prayer.

Parish Synodicon: Memory Eternal!

Oct. 23 40th Day for Fr. George Breyan
Oct. 11, 1961 Mary Lebedz
Oct. 11, 1969 Anna Evaniec
Oct. 11, 1978 Jacob Barnosky
Oct. 12, 1967 Timothy Zeban
Oct. 12, 1967 Matthew Zeban
Oct. 12, 1981 Andrew Mogilevsky
Oct. 14, 1973 Anthony Bolash
Oct. 17, 1916 Yerzhy Golombus

Sympathy Is Expressed:

To Donna Shafer and Robert Zaeko on the repose of their mother (+) Rose Zaeko, on October 3rd.

A Presentation On Coptic Orthodoxy

On Sunday, Oct. 18th, at the Coffee Hour, Father Antonio of Ss. Mary & Athanasius Coptic Church (presently meeting in the upper hall) will give a brief overview of Coptic Orthodoxy. This is an opportunity for us to get-to-know one another. The first in a series of joint activities being planned.

Memorial Services

For (+) Archpriest George Breyan, Oct. 22nd at 6:30p.m. (40th Day).
For (+) All Departed, Oct. 24th, Demetrius Memorial Saturday at 9:30a.m.
For (+) Joan Filippini, Oct. 29th, at 6:30p.m.
For (+) Helen Chabra, Oct. 30th, at 7:00p.m.

Film Presentation – “The Monastery – Mr. Vig and the Nun”

Sun., Oct. 11th at 12:00p.m. & Tues, Oct. 13th at 7:30p.m. in the Conference Room. All Invited!

Bring a Friend and Neighbor!

This film tells the story of a Danish man living in a dilapidated castle, whose dream has been to turn the castle into a monastery. The Church sends nuns and in the person of Sister Ambrosija, the wills and lives of both Mr. Vig and the nun are changed. This is a heart-warming and often hilarious documentary. Two very different people are thrown together by chance or destiny and become close friends.

Namesday Greetings

St. Zinaida/Oct. 11: Zinaida Neudachin; Many Blessed Years!

Adult Study Classes

Wednesday evenings, Oct. 14, 21 & 28 in the Conference Room from 7-8:30p.m. The topic for Oct. 14 & 21 will be an a reading of an essay entitled: *Secularism and the Mind of Christ and the Church: Some Psycho-Spiritual Reflections*. This is an important article by Fr. George Morelli that delves into the mind-set of secular humanism and the rejection of Christian tradition.

Annual Prayers for Those in the Field of Medicine and Related Healing Disciplines

Will take place on Sunday, November 1st, “the Feast of the Unmercenary Healers.”

Offerings for the Week of October 11

Olive Oil - in memory of Vaschen; for health and blessings on 17th wedding anniversary of Mattei's; for the health and protection of Vera.

Wine - for health and blessings of wedding anniversary of Todd and Jill; in memory of Joan; in memory of Maria.

Flowers - in memory of Emilia; for the health of Justine Dao.

Remember in Prayer

Mary Holovach, Mary Rosocha, Theodora Combs and Charles Kachek (please let Fr. James know of other in our parish family especially needful of extra prayers.)

Some Things You Should Know While in Church – Church Etiquette

Please take the time to read this handout that explains how we behave in church. Copies are available on the vestibule stand.

Guidelines For Christian Burial

This handout may be picked-up on the vestibule stand (gold colored cover sheet). We should be familiar with “the Liturgy of Death.” What do we do at the time of death, kinds of burial, cremation, body organ donations, repast meal, the 9th and 40th day commemorations, etc. Worth reading and saving.

Fall Bake Sale – Sunday, Nov. 1st

Bakers and volunteers are sought, please speak with Maria Torrisi (732-545-2044)

DISEASE AND HOLY COMMUNION

By Archbishop John Breck



A huge amount of controversy has arisen recently over the way Christians receive Holy Communion, particularly in the wake of what some are calling the "H1N1 pandemic."

The issue involves not only Christians. In July of this year, ministers of health from Muslim countries met with specialists of the World Health Organization and issued a statement recommending that children under the age of twelve, together with the aged and the infirm, refrain from making the pilgrimage to Mecca during Ramadan (this after several cases of H1N1 appeared among Iranian pilgrims). Jewish leaders are debating whether the practice of touching the *mezouza* (venerating a symbol of the Law upon entering a pious Jewish home) should be abandoned. And Christians of many confessions are questioning traditional methods of distributing the Eucharistic bread and wine to their faithful.

For the Orthodox, this is a particularly sensitive concern, since we receive Holy Communion on a common spoon, dipped into the one chalice. Then, once the faithful have received, the deacon or priest consumes what remains. Little or no precaution is taken to wipe the spoon or to take other measures out of concern that the chalice and its contents might transmit some potentially lethal disease. This traditional Orthodox practice elicits no little dismay among many (non-Orthodox) medical professionals. Since the outbreak of the AIDS crisis in the early 1980s, even many of our own faithful have been raising the question, intensified by the present media focus on "Swine flu": "Can infectious disease be transmitted by our Eucharistic practice?"

The dean of the Romanian archdiocese in France recently published a document that brought this question to a head. Taking into consideration recommendations made by several medical professionals, he urged that communion be given without touching the lips of the communicant, who would simply hold his or her head back a little so the priest could drop the particle into the open mouth. The dean also recommended that the priest, with the deacon's help, wipe the spoon after each person had received.

Reaction to this proposal was swift and unequivocal. The French Orthodox theologian Jean-Claude Larchet published a letter, addressed to the local Romanian Metropolitan, sharply criticizing the dean's proposals. They would, Larchet argued, sow worry and doubt in the minds of our faithful, and for no good reason. As support for his position, he quoted an encyclical recently issued by the highly respected (Harvard and MIT educated) Metropolitan Nicolaos Hadjinikolaou, founder of the bioethics institute in Athens.

The gist of their argument, which I believe is accurate and very much to the point, is that Orthodox life and faith are essentially "Eucharistic," and that we commune in the very Body and Blood of the glorified Son of God, the true Physician of our souls and bodies. Metropolitan Nikolaos stressed the point that today's society is militantly anti-Christian and, throughout Europe and in the United States, is using the H1N1 scare to further undermine the faith and traditional liturgical practices of the Church. Do not let 2000 years of experience, he urged, be put into question by "the rationalism and superficiality" of the present times. For there is no evidence at all that illness has ever been transmitted through Eucharistic communion. (Were that the case, we might add, there would have been throughout history a much higher death-rate among clergy, who consume the chalice after all the people have had communion, than there has been among the general populace or among Christian faithful. Empirically, this is simply not the case.)

The Metropolitan concluded with a pertinent observation: the real problem is not the virus H1N1, nor is it world-wide panic; it is rather "the virus of impiety and a lack of faith," for which the best remedy is precisely frequent communion.

Several people who have written on this subject have pointed out that a fundamental problem, the mystery of sickness and suffering. To declare that disease cannot be transmitted via Holy Communion is an article of faith; it cannot be proved to the satisfaction of everyone (it would in fact amount to proving a negative). Yet as Orthodox Christians, we have two millennia of experience that goes a very long way to confirm what we believe to be true regarding the "real presence" of Christ in the Eucharist, a presence that is actually and ontologically real, true and accessible.

Our life in Jesus Christ is nourished and sustained by our sacramental participation in his sanctifying, life-giving Body and Blood. Insofar as we dwell in his presence, fortified by the traditional faith of the Church, our communion will be not to our judgment or condemnation – nor to our physical detriment because of some transmitted disease. It will be to the healing of our soul and body as a "medicine of immortality," venerated and received as the "bread of heaven" and source of eternal life.



Jesus said, "I am the bread of life"

**TASTE AND SEE
HOW GOOD
THE LORD IS**

Creation and ecology: how does the Orthodox church respond to ecological problems?

Ecumenical Review, The, July, 2002 by Tamara Grdzeldze

St Augustine's theology emphasized the rationalistic aspect of the human being: the privilege of man among the other creatures was found in his ability to think. Consequently, the sacraments of the church, baptism and the eucharist, did not imply sanctification of the material creation but aimed at preservation only of the soul.

Thus the roots of Cartesian philosophy, as well as of the Enlightenment, lie in Augustinian theology. The assumptions that the purpose of science is utilitarian, and that the material world exists for personal satisfaction and for attaining sensory pleasure, have also resulted from the Augustinian understanding of the human being.

The Protestant church of the 17th and 18th centuries interpreted the biblical passages of Genesis 1:26 and 28 ("Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth... Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it") in a utilitarian way, and encouraged the unlimited exploitation of the material world. Influenced by this teaching, Western economies based on the pursuit of gain fostered the modern technological development, which is utilitarian and exploitative.

The Orthodox church finds a direct link between today's ecological crisis and the belief that the imago Dei consists in the rational element of human beings, that reason means an intellectual activity which allows us to "use" nature as an object. This belief lacks the capacity for seeing the world as a harmonious whole; it sees it as a collection of "useful" things. But nature is meant to "serve" human beings only on the condition that humanity protects nature and respects the relevant laws regarding its use. We are to use but not abuse nature.

The roots of the extreme individualization of modern civilization should be seen in this same light of an estrangement from God's creation: the relations between creatures are reduced, or lost altogether, and human beings fail to look for their identity in relationship with other beings.

The Orthodox tradition sees the human being more as a minister than as a ruler. It is a privilege to be a priest and to offer back to God, with gratitude and humility, what He has given to us; this is a privilege of one who was created in the image and likeness of God.

Human beings have a crucial role to play in the survival of creation: only through our priestly attitude towards creation is it going to survive. As priests offer bread and wine to God on behalf of all the people, similarly human beings should offer gratefully to God his own creation, offering back with love what is given with love. Our responsibility before God's creation gives full credit to the limitations placed upon our exploitation of the material world. Humanity's role as mediator is even more clear when we become a cause of the destruction of God's creation. The human being has a unique place in creation in terms of manifestation, mediation and taking a leading place in praising God.

The Orthodox perspective on the sanctification and transformation of the material world brings us to the liturgical dimension of creation, and its expression in the eucharist. God's constant giving of the world, and the world's constantly being referred back to God, has been expressed very well liturgically: "Thine own, of thine own, we offer unto Thee, on behalf of all, and for all," proclaims a priest; and then a deacon, crossing his hands, lifts up the holy paten and the holy chalice and, making with them a sign of the cross, he himself makes a humble reverence. (12)

In this eucharistic prayer we are offering back to God fruits of his own creation, bread and wine, the elements that, through the invocation of the Holy Spirit, the Orthodox church believes are changed into the body and blood of Christ. Through the liturgical action, the fruits of nature are offered back--not in their initial form, but as they have been changed by human labour: wheat is transformed into bread, grapes are transformed into wine. The ability to change the material world "towards good" is another unique characteristic of humankind. Every form of matter which passes through the hand of a Christian is harmonious with the natural environment, and is transformed into a means of communion with one another and with God. By teaching that the eucharist is a foretaste of the age to come, the Orthodox church proclaims a strong eschatology: it is through the eucharistic celebration that human beings attain their ultimate destiny of becoming divinized.

This offering back to God of the fruits of his creation takes place with a great sense of gratitude. Indeed, thankfulness is, in general, one of the dominant themes of all Orthodox services: to praise God and give thanks to him.

What shall we offer Thee, O Christ, who for our sake was seen on earth as man? For every thing created by Thee offers Thee thanks. The angels offer Thee their hymns; the heaven, the stars; the Magi, their gifts; the shepherds, their wonder ... (hymn from Christmas vespers service).

The heart of the Orthodox worship lies in the eucharist.

The eucharist is also the most sublime expression and experience of creation transformed by God the Holy Spirit through redemption and worship. In the form of bread and wine, material from creation moulded into new form by human hands is offered to God with the acknowledgment that all of creation is God's and that we are returning to God that which is his.... Just as the priest at the eucharist offers the fullness of creation and receives it back as the blessing of grace in the form of the consecrated bread and wine, to share with others, so we must be the channel through which God's grace and deliverance is shared with all creation. (13)

When celebrating the eucharist a priest speaks the language of offering together ("we offer" and not "I offer"), implying that offering is a collective action, a result of a certain relationship between individuals. According to "an agreement" between those who together offer the sacrifice, it is a reverential action completed with thankfulness.

