

# SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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## BULLETIN OF JULY 14, 2019

### SUNDAY/JULY 14

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost

St. Nicodemus of Athos (+1809)

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy  
Coffee Hour

### MONDAY/JULY 15

St. Prince Vladimir (+1015)

9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy at St. Vladimir  
Church in Trenton

### TUESDAY/JULY 16

7-8:00p.m. Lemonade & Conversations  
in St. George Gazebo

### THURSDAY/JULY 18

7:00p.m. Parish Council Meeting

### FRIDAY/JULY 19

St. Seraphim of Sarov (+1834)

8:00a.m. Akathist to St. Seraphim  
7:00p.m. Vespers; Confessions

### SATURDAY/JULY 20

Prophet Elias (+9<sup>th</sup> c. BC)

St. Maria Nun-Martyr of Paris (+1945)

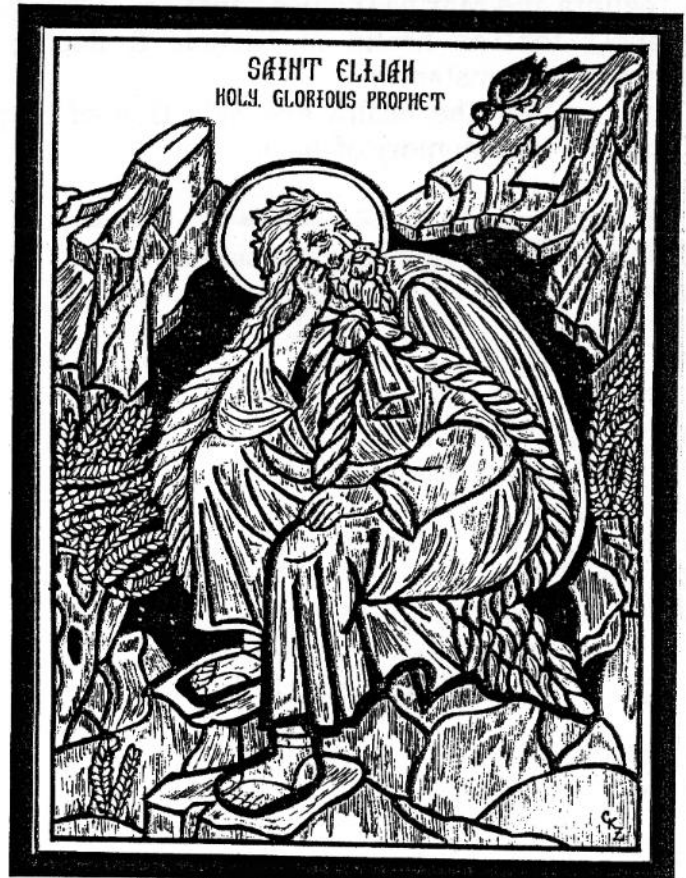
9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy  
5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

### SUNDAY/JULY 21

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost

Prophet Ezekiel (+ 6<sup>th</sup> c. BC)

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy;  
Blessing of Autos & Bikes; Coffee Hour



### Troparion (Tone 4)

An angel in the flesh and the cornerstone of the prophets,  
The second forerunner of the coming of Christ,  
Glorious Elijah sent grace from on high to Elisha,  
To dispel diseases and to cleanse lepers.  
Therefore, he pours forth healings on those who honor him.

### Kontakion (Tone 4)

Prophet Elijah of great renown,  
Seer of the mighty works of God,  
By your command you held back the rain!  
Pray for us to the only Lover of mankind!

### **Offerings Week of July 14**

**Relics candle:** in memory of Ivanna; in memory of Michael, Melania, Justina, Rosalie, Anastasia and Ivanna; in memory of Nicholas, Eleanore, Ann Marie, John and Jerome.

**Olive Oil:** for the health of Vera and in memory of Jan; in memory of John; in thanksgiving, for health, protection and salvation of Mariana, Cregunta and Marina (names days).

**Wine:** for the health of Nichole & Jacob; in memory of Constantin.

**Flowers:** for the health and salvation of Sergio (birthday); in memory of Jacob.

### **Parish Synodicon: Memory Eternal!**

July 15, 1951 Wojciech Bogusiewsky

July 16, 1968 Pelagia Holovach

July 17, 1982 Stephen Kulina

July 17, 1928 Elias Kozich

July 17, 1958 Elias Bartushak

July 17, 2005 Barbara Tutolo

July 18, 1960 Vladimir Fedarka

July 19, 1989 Louise Chabra

July 19, 2004 Anna Lebedz

July 20, 1925 Maria Simonovich

July 20, 2007 Ronald Kavchok

July 21, 1922 Luke Maximovich

July 21, 1925 Theodosius Horbel

### **Coffee Hour Schedule**

July 21 Chirnoaga, Moldoveanu, Vajda & Sue

July 28 Peterson, Bakaletz, Mattei, Erkman & Stone

### **Counters Schedule**

July 21 Irina S. & Lisa K.

July 28 Larissa M. & Paulina N.

### **Ushers Schedule**

July 21 Dennis F. & Robert E.

July 28 Edward S. & Kahka K.

### **Reader's Schedule**

July 21 Ciprian C./ July 28 Daniel T.

**A Disciple:** is always learning, growing, sacrificing, and steadfastly committed.

### **Names Day Greetings**

St. Julia/July 15: Julia Manolache

St. Margaret(Marina)/July 17: Margaret Ploof, Marianna Vajda, Cregunta Marina Chirnoaga and Marina Khuzaurashvili

### **The Uganda Collection for Flood Victims**

May the Lord bless your offerings. A total of \$3,550 is being sent. The average household income in Uganda is \$130 per year. Your offerings represent a year's income for about 27 households. There were some 66 people in the village that whose homes were destroyed. Thank you Zachary for your labor of love in Uganda, and informing us of this tragedy.

### **Tuesdays of July – Lemonade & Informal Conversations – 7:00p.m. to 8:00p.m.**

These evenings are an opportunity for informal conversations about various topics and subjects you may wish to discuss, We meet in the St. George Gazebo (depending of number of people and weather) or in the rectory or hall. We end sharply at 8:00p.m. Bring nothing. Enjoy some lemonade and fellowship. All are welcome!

### **Parish Social Media Venues Up-Dated**

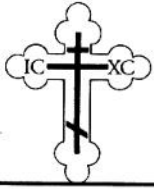
In the past few weeks, three areas of our social media have been up-dated. Our parish website: [www.ssppoc.org](http://www.ssppoc.org) has been completely re-designed. A new 360 view presentation (featuring our new flooring) of the church and another 360 view presentation of the cemetery have also been done. Our thanks to Fr. John Parsells, for his free offering of time and labor to accomplish these up-dates.

### **Appreciation is Expressed to Those Who Participated in the June "Open Church Doors" Ministry.**

May your offering of time be blessed. In the month of September we plan another Sunday series of Open Doors, with new volunteers forth-coming.

### **Sunday Coffee Hour Hosts – Please remember**

All setting up needs to be completed before Liturgy starts. Only after the time of Communion should you leave the church for further preparations.



# St. Maria Skobtsova

Venerable Nun-Martyr, St. Mary of Paris, Ravensbruck

Would you be willing to hide young children in trashcans to provide them with a safe place to live? This was one of the many unselfish acts of Mother Maria of Skobtsova. Elizaveta Pilenko was born into a very rich family on December 8, 1891 in Riga, Livonia, present day Latvia. At the age of 15, after the unexpected death of her father, her mother moved the family to St. Petersburg. Elizaveta was so distraught after his death that she became an atheist, and aimlessly wandered the streets of St. Petersburg. A cousin took Elizaveta to her first poetry reading, in an effort to help her deal with feelings of anger and grief. It was during this time that she wrote her first two free verse poems, which resulted in the publication of her first volume of poetry, *Scythian Potsherd*s, four years later.

At the age of nineteen, in 1910, she married her first husband, Dmitri Vladimirovich Kuzmin-Karavaev, but in a short time the marriage ended. (Many years later, Dmitri would become a **cardinal** in the Roman Catholic Church.) By 1913, the marriage had collapsed, and Elizaveta's mother moved the family to Anapa, in Southern Russia. In the fall of 1913, her first child, a daughter, Gayana, was born. When Elizaveta was twenty-seven, she became mayor of Anapa. During her mayoral term, she was arrested and tried for being a Bolshevik. During the trial she met Daniel Skobtsova, who presided as judge. After her acquittal, she fell in love, and married Daniel. Due to political turmoil, her family decided to flee the country. The first stop in their journey was the country of Georgia, where their first son, Yuri, was born. The journey continued to Yugoslavia, where a daughter, Anastasia, was born. After five years, their journey culminated in Paris, France.

Three years after they arrived in Paris, Anastasia died of **influenza**. The stress of her daughter's death caused Elizaveta to dedicate her life to the needs of others. With the advice of her bishop, in order to take her monastic vows, she asked Daniel for a divorce. An ecclesiastical divorce was granted, and she professed her monastic vows in 1932 with the guarantee that she would not live in a monastery. She took the name Maria, after St. Mary of Egypt. Being keenly aware of the needs of society, she founded a social service group called Orthodox Action, which met the needs of the "whole" person. She opened a house for the less fortunate and lonely of Paris. This was just the beginning of her many unselfish acts of kindness. The house provided rooms for the homeless, and many times Mother Maria, because of the lack of space, would sleep by the boiler. One of the rooms was used as an Orthodox chapel, in which Mother Maria painted the icon screen. Divine Liturgies were held on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays. So many needy people flocked to the house that it soon became too small, and another building was acquired in 1935, serving more than 22,991 meals that year to those less fortunate.

In World War II, when the Nazis took Paris, the house founded by Mother Maria on the rue de Lourmel became a shelter for many Jews. She was assisted in her work by a young priest, Fr. Dimitri Klepinin, as well as her son Yuri and her mother Sophia. They helped Jews escape, and provided them with necessary documents. On one terrible occasion, the Nazis gathered a huge crowd of Jews into a stadium with little food or water. Mother Maria worked with local trash collectors to get a few children into trash cans and out of the stadium to safe places.



## Quote

At the Last Judgment I will not be asked whether I satisfactorily practiced asceticism, nor how many bows I have made before the divine altar. I will be asked whether I fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited the sick, and the prisoner in his jail. That is all I will be asked.

- Mother Maria Skobtsova

## Date Died

March 31, 1945

## Commemoration Date

July 20

Because her selfless acts went against the extermination plans the Nazis had for all Jews, Mother Maria - prisoner 19263 - was arrested, and along with two hundred other women spent the last two years of her life in the Ravensbruck concentration camp. In order to record the deaths at the camp, she would **embroider** the names of those tortured on a special cloth, to be displayed in the church at Lourmel. Many times she would trade the bread she received so she could have the thread she needed for her embroidery. She never complained, and often she would bargain for the other prisoners. She believed the daily Eucharist gave her the strength she needed to help others.

Two months before her death, on January 31, 1945, Mother Maria was transferred to Jugendlager, Youth Camp, a kilometer away from Ravensbruck. It was here that no fewer than 50 people died of "natural" causes on a daily basis. The camp was also equipped with a gas chamber that had a capacity of 150 prisoners. Even in the midst of death, Mother Maria worked on her last embroidery project. It depicted the Mother of God with a crucified child in her arms. Mother Maria felt it would help her to leave the camp alive. On Good Friday, in 1945, Mother Maria was selected for death. (Some say she offered herself in exchange for another prisoner.) On the eve of Easter, Mother Maria died in the gas chamber as a martyr.

## References

- Sergei Hackel, *Pearl of Great Price - Life of Mother Maria Skobtsova 1891-1945*.
- Jim Forest, *Silent as a Stone: Mother Maria of Paris and the Trash Can Rescue*
- Bonnie Michal, *Mother Maria Skobtsova - A Saint of Our Day* - St. Nina Quarterly - Volume 2
- Skobtsova <http://www.orthodoxwiki.org/Maria>.
- Grigori Benevitch, *The Saving of the Jews: The Case of Mother Maria Skobtsova*
- Icons of Mother Maria  
<http://incommunion.org/articles/resources/st-maria-skobtsova/icons>

## Troparion (Tone 4)

You became a bride of Christ, O venerable Mother,  
And offered your body and soul to Him as a living sacrifice.  
You exposed the evil side of humanity's ways  
By allowing the light of the Resurrection to shine forth from you.  
We celebrate your memory in love.  
O Martyr and Confessor Maria  
Pray to Christ our God that He may save our souls.

## Kontakion (Tone 6)

You became an instrument of divine love, O holy martyr Maria,  
And taught us to love Christ with all our being.  
You conquered evil by not submitting yourself into the hands of the destroyer of souls.  
You drank from the cup of suffering.  
The Creator accepted your death above any other sacrifice  
And crowned you with the laurels of victory with His mighty hand.  
Pray fervently that nothing may hinder us from fulfilling God's will  
Because you are a bright star shining in darkness!

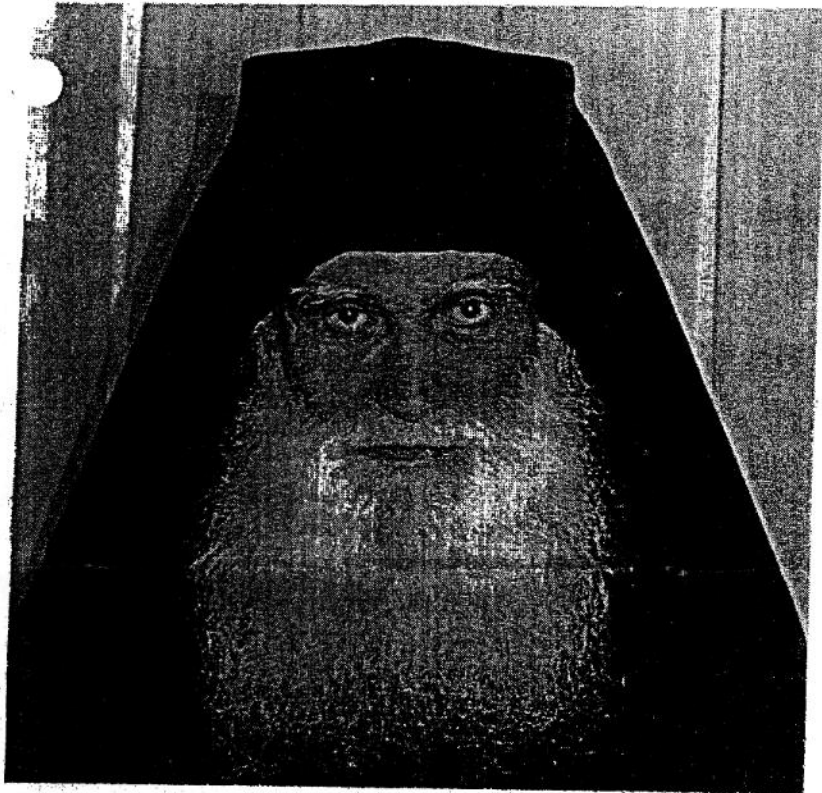
## Key Terms

**Embroider:** To decorate fabric or other materials with designs stitched in strands of thread or yarn using a needle. Embroidery may also use other materials such as metal strips, pearls, beads, quills, and sequins.

**Cardinal:** A senior ecclesiastical official, usually a bishop, of the Catholic Church

**Influenza:** Commonly known as the flu; an infectious disease





## A LETTER TO A SPIRITUAL CHILD FROM A MONK OF MOUNT ATHOS

This letter is from Elder Ephraim of Katounakia on Athos. The Elder spent 65 years on Mount Athos, reposing on February 14, 1998, at the age of 86.

Like many elderly people, he was afflicted with illnesses - ulcers on his legs, loss of eyesight, severe eczema, ischaemic strokes and allergies. In the last years of his life, no standing, lying or sitting position gave him comfort.

Yet, as we see in the letter, the Elder was able to profit from his suffering.

May we also learn to be strong when we are weak and see God's love at work.

You wrote to me that you pray to God to relieve me from all my pains and so, I want to ask you to not pray for me like this. Instead, I want you to plead with God to give me patience, not relief. The Holy Fathers teach us many things but our poor experience teaches us much more, and more powerful things.

So, I confess to you:

Six years ago, I was in the Clerical Hospital in Athens due to my eczema. When I was released I went on a pilgrimage to St. Nektarios, in Aegina. When I knelt and kissed his holy skull I sensed a fine scent emanating from it and I took it to mean that many more afflictions awaited me and this is exactly what happened.

When we returned to Kallithea, Athens, I lay down on the bed to rest and I told Father J. who was with me: 'I feel as exhausted as if a hundred men have thrashed me.'

Ever since, all these years, I have been bedridden; you know all of this.

Many years ago I suffered from a cyst on the coccyx, which was unbearably painful. Due to my long stay in bed my behind hurt very much, they were stinging, which was a sign that sores were about to open.

Those sores were even more painful than the first ones.

I couldn't lie down on my right; the pain was horrible. The wound on my leg, the eczema, was at its worst.

And while in this ocean of affliction, at this dead end, I saw myself completely alone, fighting desperately against those bitter and unbearable waves. I realized that despair had gotten hold of me and suffocated me. Even thinking about this makes me tremble with horror.

I couldn't lie down on my left; the pain was terrible. I tried to lie on my back I couldn't; it hurt too much. 'What should I do? What will become of me? How will I end up?'

I was disturbed and pressed by disgraceful thoughts, terrible ones.

I even thought that God abandoned me.

I said nothing to my brotherhood. Outwardly, I appeared to be calm and peaceful but inside I was experiencing hell itself. That's what I had been taught by my elder: whether we experience heaven or hell we should never externalize it; we should appear impassive.

I was in this state for about six or seven minutes and then it was as if I heard a faint voice, that could barely be heard, telling me: 'That's how God wants you to be' and at once I came to my senses.

I replied to that voice: 'Since this is God's will, let this be blessed. Just give me the patience needed to deal with it.'

I then went, feeling more dead than alive, up to a small oil-lamp hanging in front of the icon of the Theotokos, I took some oil and smeared it twice or three times on the places that hurt most and I was healed.

However, the years went by and I was constantly in pain. Many times I clenched my teeth and stifled my groans of pain. I try to bear the pain, and I cannot sleep.

I believe this was an ordeal sent by God.

And now I move on to my main theme—listen to what I have to say carefully, my dear little teacher.

It's been seven or eight months now since God approached me from the right side. He opened the eyes of

my soul and I realized how much profit I have gained from this wound, how much reward is waiting for me, how much I have gained.

'I thank you God a thousand times.

I will never cease praising You as long as I live in this world; I will never stop chanting to You, kneeling before You, thanking You for this wound that You gave me.

Your boundless love, inconceivably deep and high, was revealed to me by this wound.

Thanks to Your glory - thanks to Your love - thanks to Your compassion - thanks to Your infinite mercy.

Thanks to You - Thanks to You - Thanks to You.

You are hidden there, in that wound.

Did you really love me, this dirt and stink, that much? Me, this dirt, this stink?

What good did I do to make you love me so much that you gave me this wound as a token of Your great love?'

This wave of gratitude lasted three days and three nights and then disappeared. After that I was soared with unutterable joy, I was in an ocean of spiritual happiness and other such feelings.

This I keep as a cornerstone, as a bedrock in my various sorrows, in the various afflictions of this bogus earthly life.

And so I tell you that whenever I am in pain, I am always happy deep down inside me. And when my pains are lessened I feel sad. Still, I am not indifferent to their cure.

It's only now that I understand why all the saints were happy about their sorrows. And I also now realize why the highest of the Apostles boasted of his sufferings, his illness, his cross.

And I also realize why St. John Chrysostom praises Job more when he suffered all the ordeals and while he was patient during his afflictions than when in his earlier life when he was righteous and pious and charitable and hospitable.

Now I understand by experience why all the saints suffered various ordeals of affliction and were tested through these whether they love God. God himself says: 'For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life' (Mt. 7:14).

.....  
Our late elder used to tell us that his entire life was a daily martyrdom. He was seldom happy; he was in sorrow night and day, and he was sad, and he cried.

Let me tell you something else as well. I think—at least this is what has been revealed to me—that God offered me a great gift by giving me this wound and these pains. Because the joy has no rewards, but sorrow does. 'Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things' (Lk. 16:25).

So, aiming at that reward, I am patient with the help of God. It's true, physically I might suffer, hurt, be in pain, but deep in my soul joy is what I feel.

Still, I don't neglect the care of my wound, with the help of various medicines, and doctors, and diets, and any reasonable way I think I might be cured.

Yesterday, while the Divine Liturgy was being celebrated, a first-class cantor came to our church and chanted. While he was chanting I said to myself: 'Father, you chant and this you offer to God and thus you are happy. I, on the other hand, have nothing but my pain and suffering to offer to God in order to be shown His mercy'.

Whatever each one of us has to offer, this he will offer to God. Still, joy is very different to sorrow, health from illness, day from night.

Since you claim that you love God, wait for the proof of His love, meaning His Cross. This He will give you during this life, this gift, which is His love.

That is how you understand that God loves you: from the sorrows He gives you.

If we truly want to be His disciples, not only in word but also in deed, we must ascend the Cross just as He, our leader, did.

'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me' (Mt. 16:24).

By the cross He means afflictions and tears.

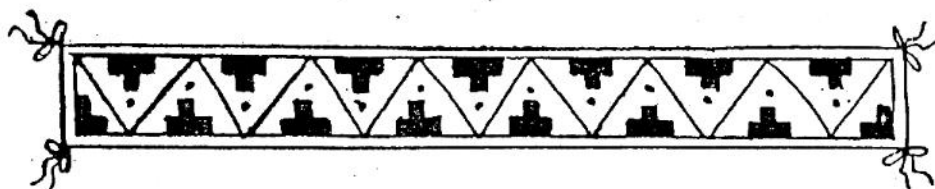
Whatever each one of us has suffered in his earthly life for Christ's sake, will be revealed on Judgement Day.

And blessed will be he who has many sufferings and a heavy cross to reveal.

May God forgive me for this verbosity of mine.

Blessed be His name now and forever.

With paternal wishes,  
Father Ephraim from Katounakia  
July 20<sup>th</sup>, 1989





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Prot. No. 01-004/2019  
July 3, 2019

To: All the Clergy of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey  
Re: Saint Andrew's Camp New Building Project

Beloved Brothers of the Altar:  
Christ is in our midst!

As you will recall, at our 2018 Diocesan Assembly, held in Brick, New Jersey, it was decided that each of our parishes would take up a special collection for the New Building Project (a new kitchen, dining room, and activities center) at Saint Andrew's Camp in Jewell, New York – as our diocesan charity for 2019.

On March 11 of this year, I wrote an appeal to you to take up this collection during Great Lent and forward the donated funds to the Chancery to be recorded and sent on to the Camp. **By this letter, I ask that you please forward the funds collected to the Chancery at this time.**

If you have not as yet requested that collection, please do so immediately ... so that we may have the support of all of the parishes of our Diocese. Likewise I would ask that you encourage the organizations and benefactors of your parish who have been especially blessed by GOD to make a generous offering for the new facility at our youth camp in gratitude for His many blessings.

By this letter, I also ask that you announce in your parish a **Special "Matching Pledge" for Camp:**

**An Anonymous Donor has offered a Matching Pledge: For every dollar donated for the new building in the month of July, the Anonymous Donor will match each of the contributions – up to \$10,000!**

**Our diocesan parishes, organizations and faithful are urged to help the Camp Building Project by donating this month, and having their contribution matched by this Anonymous Donor.**

**All contributions should be made out to "Saint Andrew's Camp," earmarked for the "New Building Project," and mailed to: Diocesan Chancery, 33 Hewitt Avenue, Bronxville, NY 10708.**

**May God bless all those who contribute toward this new facility at our youth camp – with all the good things that come from His hands.**

With love and prayers,

*+ Archbishop Michael*

# PROJECT PEARL RIVER

Monday, July 22 – Friday, July 26, 2019

Church of the Holy Transfiguration

35 Sickletown Road, Pearl River, NY

- Come help a deanery parish beautify and maintain its temple.
- Willing and able members of our New Jersey Deanery parishes (and all others who wish to help) will prepare and apply fresh paint to the interior walls and ceiling of the church's nave.
- All tools and materials will be supplied.
- Lunch, dinner, and refreshments will be provided each day.

Contact: Archimandrite Joseph (Hoffman), Rector,  
at [fr.joseph@holytransf.org](mailto:fr.joseph@holytransf.org) or (845) 548-3170

