



CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF FEBRUARY 10, 2013

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 10TH **36th Sunday of Pentecost**

8:40a.m. Hours
 9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
 Coffee Hour

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16TH

5:00p.m. Bible Study
 6:00p.m. Great Vespers

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH **Zacchaeus Sunday**

8:40a.m. Hours
 9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
 Coffee Hour

On Hell and God's Love

"As for me I say that those who are tormented in Gehenna are tormented by the invasion of love. What is there more bitter and violent than the pains of love? Those who feel they have sinned against love bear in themselves damnation much heavier than the most dreaded punishments. The suffering with which sinning against love afflicts the heart is more keenly felt than any other torment. It is absurd to assume that the sinners in Gehenna are deprived of God's love."

St. Isaac the Syrian, 7th century

READER SCHEDULE

Sunday, Feb. 17th
 Gabriela Jones
Sunday, Feb. 24th
 Kathy Parrish



A Warm Welcome!

We warmly welcome all of our visitors. We are very pleased to have you with us today! Please consider staying after the service for fellowship at our coffee hour in the hall.

Catechumen Meetings

are being held twice a month following the coffee hour. Meetings for the month of February are on the 10th and the 17th.

The Parish Council – Sunday, Feb. 24th

will be blessed to assume their duties at the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, February 24th. Following the coffee hour on this same day, the new council will meet to elect officers. All council members are reminded to prepare themselves for this high calling and important day with prayer, a recent confession, and Holy Communion.



The New Directory of Parishioners and Friends

is at the candle stand in draft form. Please review it to see if there are any mistakes or omissions. Final revisions are being made in the next few weeks before it goes to print.



The Sacrament of Confession

Parents with children, age 7 or older, are asked to speak with Fr. John about scheduling confession for their children. Likewise, adults who have questions about confession or would like to schedule an appointment for themselves are asked to speak with Fr. John. All Orthodox Christians should regularly avail themselves of this holy mystery, especially if they are frequent communicants.

Altar Servers Meeting – Sunday, March 3rd

A meeting of altar servers will take place on Sunday, March 3rd, following the coffee hour. All those who already serve in the altar or have interest in doing so are asked to be present for this important meeting. We need volunteers for this important ministry/privilege. Questions, please see Fr. John.



Have Something on Your Mind?

Feel free to talk to your priest. Fr. John can be reached any time: 302-537-6055 or frjohn@orthodoxdelmarva.org.

Living: Fr. Alexander Atty, Fr. Christian, Mat. Dunia, Hayley, Tyler Pelesh, Wallace & Michelle, John Trax, Maleah Morsey, Victoria Kokkinos, Karen Nichols, Denise Royal, Jane Koshutko, Nina Gordon, Mirela & Chris, Bruce Eckerd, Stella, Ari, Nedelina, Liliana, Nada and child, Jess and child, Irene Clenney, **Departed:** Fr. Michael Mihalick, Kathryn, Avramia.

CASH FLOWS									FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT		
OPERATING THRU 12/31/12			RENOVATION THRU 12/31/12			FEBRUARY OPERATING			ASSETS & LIABILITIES – 2/10/13		
Income	Expense	Net	Income	Expense	Net	Income	Goal	Difference	Checking	Overdue	Due 2/2014
69,126	59,676	+9,450	73,436	95,780	-22,344	890	4,858	-3,968	+1,119	0	-29,725

WHAT CAN SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST?

By Bishop Michael of New York and New Jersey

I grew up in Binghamton, New York, in a parish where the church was the center of my life. I served as an altar boy and went to the Church School, which was huge! We had a teenage Bible Study group; the church had a basketball team (which I was not very good at). I ran the parish library. We had altar boy practice every Saturday – we sang the Liturgy and learned about serving the services – there were as many as 36 altar boys at a time! So, almost every weekend, I was in church for Saturday Liturgy, Vespers, Matins, and Sunday Liturgy... plus holy days, baptisms, weddings, funerals and everything else that came with life in the Church.

After high school, I went to college nearby and lived at home. I never had the problem of wondering, "What do I do when I'm on my own?" I worked out my class schedule so I could be at the Liturgy during the week when there was one. Church was the place to be.

I loved being in church, and I loved what I was doing in church – especially serving in the Altar and learning about the Faith. So it was only logical for me to want to become an imitation of my parish priest, Fr. Stephen Dutko of blessed memory, so that I could have, and give, that same kind of experience. I wanted to be like Father Stephen.

And so I did. I went to seminary right after college. I got married and ordained at 22 years old. I was assigned to my first parish, Saints Peter and Paul Church in Homer City, PA, and I was raring to go.

Then it all changed. After 29 days of marriage, my wife and I were in a car accident. She was killed instantly. I was in the hospital – in a coma. I came out months later, confused and bitter, guilt ridden and doubting. I was feeling all those kinds of things that a person would feel in that horrific situation. Why did God let this happen? It had to be somebody's fault. All the confusion, all the anger, definitely made me think about not being a priest anymore.

However, I couldn't conceive of not serving at the Altar. I could not conceive of living my life outside

of that experience that I had had all those years. I just could not imagine that.

So, rather than walk away from the Church, I did what I really needed to do – and what I have counseled so many people, of all ages from the youngest to the oldest, to do when we have these terrible, tragic experiences. And that is to draw closer to Christ in the face of pain and agony and loss. When I did that, it was not just an inner, "me and Jesus" kind of experience. The Lord came to me, and began to heal me through the faces, the words, the embraces, the love of His people: the Church.

My spiritual father was one of them. He was tough on me. He told me, "Your faith just has to kick in." One of the questions I raised was, "Where was God



when all this happened?" And he said, "He was in the same place the day that Debbie died that He was on Great and Holy Friday, when His Son died." He told me that even though that particular Tuesday when we had the accident might have been a Good Friday to me... still, Good Friday is not

the end of the story... Pascha is. He reminded me that Christ triumphed over death – and I had to believe that my wife was a sharer in that victory and in the Resurrection.

So, I never left the Church. I never walked away from the priesthood. My first parish as a priest became a replica of what I had experienced in my home parish as a young person... and those people who I served as a young widowed priest helped me nurse back to spiritual health – as well as me helping them in their dark moments and in their difficulties. It wasn't just me, as their priest, taking care of them. Guided by God, as His family, we cared for each other.

A famous Christian writer named Tertullian, who lived less than 200 years after Jesus, wrote that "A Christian alone is no Christian." He meant that no one is saved alone... it takes the Church to save a soul. Whenever I look back on that incredibly painful time in my life, I am more and more deeply convinced that I never would have survived – not

spiritually, and maybe not literally – without the Church. I do not mean just the Church as a building, although that is the place where we meet and pray and even play together. I mean, the Church as a community; the constant presence of the people of God – my spiritual father, my parishioners, my brother priests and their families, with all of the guidance, the prayers and the love that they have to share.

Even though my hope for you who read this is that you never have to go through what I went through, I pray that somehow, whenever you do experience difficulties, doubts, and obstacles, by

God's grace, your faith will "kick in." I pray that you will seek, and find, the healing and the love that Our Lord offers us in the faces, the embraces, and the prayers of others — the love of Christ Jesus, shown within the community of His Church.

One of my favorite quotes in the Bible is from St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, in which he asks the question, "What can separate us from the love of Christ?" (Rom. 8:35). And he answers that neither height nor depth... nor life nor death... nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Thanks to the Church, I am living proof that this is true.

FEBRUARY CONGRATULATIONS!

Birthdays:

2/6	Andrew Hageman	2/21	Beth Keller
2/10	Christopher Morse	2/23	Natalia Korovina
2/14	Alma Linda Hageman	2/25	Constantine Cook
2/17	Daria Parsells	2/25	Pearl HopeAnne Stewart
2/18	Titus Samuel Stewart	2/26	Londy Kokkinos
2/20	Isabella Morse	2/28	Ana Lucia Hageman



CLARIFYING OUR GOALS

by Father Lawrence Margitich

"...be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Romans 12:32). These words of St. Paul tell us that if we conform to the moral, ethical, spiritual and philosophical norms of "this world" and how it understands things, we will lose the way in our struggle to reach our goal. What is that goal? Our Savior prayed these words: "...that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." (John 17:21-23) The Lord prays that His glory may be given to us, that we may be united in Him with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Everything in the Church is appointed so that may happen:

Baptism, Chrismation, the Liturgy, priesthood, Confession, the scriptures, prayer, fasting, prostrations, monasticism and marriage—are all both means of the cleansing of the heart as well as direct experiences of Kingdom, and an entrance into the glory. The liturgical, spiritual and moral path of the Orthodox Church is not based on theory or ideas. It's a well-marked path, producing Apostles, saints, the holy bishops, monks and nuns and holy laypeople. If we conform ourselves and the Church to this world we will replace the tried and true methods of experiencing God's Kingdom, and the result would not be the making of saints, but a tragic loss: the Holy Mysteries would become empty gestures, the Church would become a social institution based on moralistic, humanistic and situational ethics open to all kinds of currents, and we will have nothing at all to say to the world about the Kingdom of God and it's ultimate destiny. Society, and in fact most Christian denominations, long ago forgot that although God created all things good, we live in a fallen world



warred upon by demonic powers, broken with evil, sin, death, anarchy, pride, human will, suffering, the rebellion of nature, and man's ignorance of God's loving presence.

However, "we proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ..." (1 John 1) We can only witness that in the fallen world we have come to know the love, healing, power and holiness of God's Kingdom by the Cross of Christ. We are not defensive, nor do we go on the offensive; we do not deprive others of their civil rights; we are not here to judge, condemn or change anyone, but to love everyone, including enemies.

What we do, as Father Thomas Hopko pointed out in a recent podcast, is simply to witness to what we have seen and heard and are becoming, and often, there is nothing we have to say. For example, while the world talks about re-defining marriage, we ought to re-discover what marriage is, and how it may become a witness to the Kingdom: being "from the beginning" when God created "male and female" (Gen. 1:27) the Mystery of Marriage may rise to the glory of being an image of Christ the Bridegroom and the Church, His bride. Joining and blessing the complementary nature of the man and the woman, husband and wife, together into one—physically and spiritually—

marriage may lead to the begetting and bearing children, which cooperates with the creative energy of God Himself. One could go on concerning other issues.

Here is the crux of the matter as I see it: the goal of the fallen world—especially as it is seen in politics, TV shows and universities—is the "transvaluation of all values," (Nietzsche) in which the old sins become virtues, and the old virtues, sins, the meaning of one thing into another, especially when it comes to gender, personhood and sexuality. In western protestant churches where the moralistic/ethical modernists take power, the Holy Trinity is replaced by a trio of bogeymen: racism, sexism, and homophobia, as one writer put it. We do not fear any of this. For we know that the Church is a spiritual hospital, and the therapies are effective, if "taken as prescribed," which heals us to be witnesses of God Kingdom of love and transformative power in the fallen world. So we treasure what we have been given because it is effective. Finally, let us affirm at least something in our culture, for everything has its source in God. Let us at least affirm that all desires and need for love, acceptance and union—no matter how worldly, carnal, strange or passionate, are at root the desire for the love of God, a desire gone astray. And so we do not lose heart.

ON THE POWER AND INFLUENCE OF GOOD DEEDS

By St. Nikolai Velimirovich

It is difficult, my brethren, to dispute with an atheist; it is difficult to converse with a stupid man; it is difficult to change an embittered man. It is only with the greatest difficulty that you will convince an atheist, a stupid man or an embittered man with words. Firstly, you must sway them by your deeds. They will come, "by your good works, which they shall behold, to glorify God" (1 Pet. 2:12). Do good to him who would quarrel with you, and you will win the argument. A single act of compassion will penetrate to a stupid man and soften a bitter man more quickly than hours of discussion. If atheism and stupidity and bitterness proceed from ignorance, that ignorance is like a fury that is most easily bridled by the influence of good deeds. If you argue with an atheist on his own diabolical terms, you simply strengthen the demon of atheism. If you converse with a stupid man in a spirit of derision, the darkness of stupidity will be made the greater. If you think to change a bitter man by anger, you will merely add more fuel to the fire of bitterness. But a meek and well-intentioned act is like throwing water on the flames. Always remember the holy apostles and their behavior towards men. If an atheist challenges you, then it is not the man that challenges you but the devil, for man is by nature devout and tends Godwards. If a stupid man scoffs at you, then it is not the man who scoffs but the devil, for man is by nature intelligent. If a bitter man persecutes you, it is not the man that is doing this but the devil, for man is by nature good and well-disposed. It is the devil that challenges us in lengthy debates and fruitless discussions, but he flees from the power of good deeds. Do good in the name of Christ, and the devil will flee. You will be working with men, men who are devout and intelligent and good. Everything, therefore, that you do, be sure that you do it in the name of Christ.

