



# CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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**BULLETIN OF MAY 6, 2007**

**CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!**

**SUNDAY, MAY 6<sup>TH</sup>**

**SAMARITAN WOMAN SUNDAY**

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

**MONDAY, MAY 7<sup>TH</sup>**

**ST. ALEXIS OF WILKES-BARRE**

9:00a.m. Akathist

**SATURDAY, MAY 12<sup>TH</sup>**

6:00p.m. Vespers; Confessions

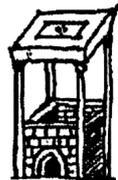
**SUNDAY, MAY 13<sup>TH</sup>**

**SUNDAY OF THE BLIND MAN**

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

## Contemplate the Risen Lord

- ❖ How during the 40 days after the Resurrection He showed Himself to the disciples, confirming them in the Faith;
- ❖ How His Resurrection brought great joy to those who loved Him, but unspeakable bitterness to those who hated Him;
- ❖ How His Second Coming into the world, in glory and power, will evoke different feelings among different people – either joy or bitterness.
- ❖ How by His Resurrection, He destroyed the fear of death in the faithful, confirming the ancient hope of immortality.



## Donors Sought

Frs. Daniel and John are in the process of building five new wooden icon stands for the church. Materials are needed for the project. Please see Fr. John if you would like to make a donation.

## The Cookie Lee Jewelry Fundraiser

raised just over \$200 for our church. Many thanks to Alice Peters, the consultants from Cookie Lee, and all those who helped support our Mission by purchasing items from the sale!

## Order Delivery

The orders for the Cookie Lee Jewelry Fundraiser are available to be picked up. Please see Alice Peters during the Coffee Hour.

## Traveling This Summer?

Be sure to visit the Orthodoxy in America website to find an Orthodox church wherever you are heading be it in the United States, Canada, or Mexico. All the canonical Orthodox jurisdictions (OCA, Greek, Russian, Serbian, Romanian, Bulgarian, etc.) are listed together on this one remarkable site: <http://orthodoxyinamerica.org>



## If You Are Hospitalized

please be sure to let your priest know. Even if you do not want a visit, prayers (private and/or communal) should be offered on your behalf. Your priest is not clairvoyant and will not know that you are in the hospital unless you tell him. When you check into the hospital, be sure to put yourself in the hands of the Divine Physician as well as an earthly one!



## Last Sunday's Bible Study

Fifteen people gathered last Sunday night for the Bible Study on the Resurrectional Appearances of the Lord. In addition to the listed topic we also discussed a variety of things, including the following questions: What happens to non-Christians when they die? How do married people live in Heaven? How will our bodies be reconstructed at the general resurrection? In what practical ways can we tell if we are being saved or not? The next Bible Study will be on Monday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, and the topic will be the Ascension of the Lord.



## A QUESTION ON CLERGY AND LAITY IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

*From the Spring 2007 Issue of Again Magazine*

**Question:** "As a priest, I am concerned that increasing lay involvement in the work of the Orthodox Church might disempower the clergy. Is this a valid concern?"

**Answer:** I don't think you should be worried about increasing lay involvement in the Church. Unfortunately many people think that the clergy, especially the bishops and the priests, conduct the "real business" of the Church and are the only active members while the laity are merely spectators. However, when we look at our Orthodox theology we see a very different model of church life, one based on the sharing of the mutual gifts, talents, and abilities of both clergy and laity. The Church is not comprised of the clergy alone or the laity alone, but both clergy and laity working together for the building up of the Body of Christ

One of the basic descriptions of the Church is that it is a "council." Sometimes we use the Russian word *sobornost*, which means "a unity of persons within the organic fellowship of the Church, each person maintaining his personal freedom and integrity." The notion of conciliarity or *sobornost* stems from the ancient understanding of the Church as being the Body of Christ, with each member having its own function and yet being under the headship of Christ. According to the Orthodox tradition, the bishop maintains the unity of the Church while at the same time encouraging those under his care to live out their baptismal

calling to fully live according to the gospel of love.

People obey the authority of the bishop since he is the symbol of unity in the Church, and is tasked with rightly teaching the gospel and proclaiming the truth of

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Christ to the world. The bishop's authority is not to be lorded over people but is ultimately for the building up of the Body of Christ, each member fully living out his or her call, all helping and assisting one another for the glory of God and the Church. The bishop cannot make decisions by himself, nor can the laity make decisions without consulting the bishops. Both the bishops and laity work together. Within conciliarity there is room for debate, discussion, and common decision-making.

There is a basic equality among the people of God. This does not mean that the Church is a democracy where one group or

party with the majority of votes wins or loses. There is no place for winners and losers in the Church. The Church maintains a hierarchical structure – bishop, priest, and people – in order to maintain peace and order in the church body. However, we shouldn't think that power and authority "trickle down" from the clergy to the laity, but that the only source of power and authority in the Church is Christ Himself, who is a model of love, humility, and sacrifice.

Thus the Church is a community of the baptized persons who work together to build up the Body of Christ one person at a time through the exercising of the variety of gifts and charisms that are distributed to each by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The Body only exists because it is Christ's Body and is held together by a continual outpouring of love.

Therefore, if both the clergy and laity are truly seeking to live according to the will of God, even among a fallen humanity full of human sinfulness and arrogance, there must be an expression of love based on the example of Christ Himself. Jesus gave us the supreme example of love through His Passion and Crucifixion on the Cross, giving up His life for others. His life was an example of loving and serving others, not imposing power and authority over His disciples or anyone else in His life. Thus, clergy are not called to have power and authority over the laity, nor are the laity called to increase their power or authority over and against the clergy. Rather, all are called to work together for the common good of all members of the Church.

## SAINT SILOUAN ON THE LOVE OF GOD EXPERIENCED THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT

No man himself can know what God's love is unless he is taught by the Holy Spirit; but God's love is known in our Church through the Holy Spirit, and so we speak of this love.

The sinful soul which does not know the Lord fears death, thinking that the Lord will not forgive her her sins. But this is because the soul does not know the Lord and how greatly He loves us. If people knew this, then no man would despair, for the Lord not only forgives but rejoices exceedingly at the return of a sinner. Though you be at death's door, believe firmly that the moment you ask, you will receive forgiveness. The Lord is not like us. He is immeasurably meek, and merciful, and good; and



when the soul knows Him she marvels greatly and exclaims: "O what a Lord is ours!" The Holy Spirit gave our Church to know how great is God's mercy.

The soul cannot know peace unless she prays for her enemies. The soul that has learned of God's grace to pray, feels love and compassion for every created

thing, and in particular for mankind, for whom the Lord suffered on the Cross, and His soul was heavy for every one of us.

The Lord taught me to love my enemies. Without the grace of God we cannot love our enemies. Only the Holy Spirit teaches love, and then even demons arouse our pity because they have fallen from good, and lost humility in God.

I beseech you, put this to the test. When a man affronts you or brings dishonor on your head, or takes what is yours, or persecutes the Church, pray to the Lord, saying: "O Lord, we are all Thy creatures. Have pity on Thy servants, and turn their hearts to repentance," and you will be aware of grace in your soul. To begin with, constrain your heart to love your enemies, and the Lord, seeing your good will, will help you in all things, and experience itself will show you the way. But the man who thinks with malice of his enemies has not God's love within him, and does not know God.

If you will pray for your enemies, peace will come to you; but when you can love your enemies – know that a great measure of the grace of God

dwells in you, though I do not say perfect grace as yet, but sufficient for salvation. Whereas if you revile your enemies, it means there is an evil spirit living in you and bringing evil thoughts into your heart, for, in the words of the Lord, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts" or good thoughts.

The good man thinks to himself in this wise: everyone who has strayed from the truth brings destruction on himself and is therefore to be pitied. But of course the man who has not learned love of the Holy Spirit will not pray for his enemies. The man who has learned love from the Holy Spirit sorrows all his life over those who are not saved, and sheds abundant tears for the people, and the grace of God gives him strength to love his enemies.

If you cannot love, then at least do not revile or curse your enemies, and things will already be better; but if a man curse and abuse his enemies, it is plain that an evil spirit lives in him, and if he does not repent, when he dies he will go to the place where evil spirits dwell. May the Lord preserve every soul from such adversity!

### DID YOU KNOW?

**Q:** What is the shortest chapter in the Bible?

**A:** Psalms 117

**Q:** What is the longest chapter in the Bible?

**A:** Psalms 119

**Q:** Which chapter is in the center of the Bible?

**A:** Psalms 118

**Fact:** There are 594 chapters before Psalms 118

**Fact:** There are 594 chapters after Psalms 118

Add these numbers up and you get 1188.

**Q:** What is the center verse in the Bible?

**A:** Psalms 118:8

**Q:** Does this verse say something significant about God's perfect will for our lives?

The next time someone says they would like to find God's perfect will for their lives and that they want to be in the center of His will, just send them to the center of His Word!

**Psalms 118:8**

"It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man."



## SAINT ALEXIS OF WILKES-BARRE

Saint Alexis (Toth) was born in Austro-Hungary on March 18, 1854, to a poor Carpatho-Russian family. He was married and they had a child. He was ordained to the priesthood in the Uniate (Eastern Rite Catholic) Church on April 18, 1878. His wife and child died shortly after that, while he was serving as a parish priest. In October 1889, Alexis was appointed as priest of a Uniate parish in Minneapolis, Minnesota. When he presented his credentials to the American Catholic archbishop, he was treated with open hostility. He knew his rights under canon law, so he convened a meeting of eight of the ten Unia priests in America at Wilkes-Barre who petitioned the bishops of Eastern Europe to aid them, but they would not. He feared deportation and told his congregation that he should just return to Europe. They said "No". They had been under foreign domination long enough. They told Father Alexis to go to the Russian Orthodox bishop for help. Bishop Vladimir came to Minneapolis and on March 25, 1891, received Father Toth and 361 parishioners into the Orthodox Church of their ancestors. The parishioners regarded this event as a new Triumph of Orthodoxy, crying out with joy: "Glory to God for His great mercy!" That is St. Mary's OCA. The Saint went on to form or lead back to Orthodoxy 16 additional communities. He traveled to southern New Jersey to try to regain his health in late 1908. Then he returned to Wilkes-Barre where he was confined to bed for his last months. He reposed on Friday, May 7, 1909. His relics were laid to rest at St. Tikhon's Monastery in South Canaan, Pennsylvania. His tablet reads: "This is your Faith. Hold to it."



### FOR CONSIDERATION

*By St. Nikolai Velimirovich*

Abba John the Dwarf asked his monks: "Who or what sold Joseph into slavery?" One of them answered: "His brethren." To this the staretz said: "Not his brothers, but his humility." Joseph could have revealed that he was their brother, and thus opposed the sale. But he kept silent. By humility, then, was he sold, and this same humility later made him ruler of Egypt. We guard ourselves too carefully from the outward difficulties encountered in giving ourselves over to the will of God, and so we lose the good fruits that are reaped in difficult circumstances endured with humility.



During a period of unrest in Constantinople in the time of Emperor Constantine, some embittered men knocked the nose and ears off the statute of the Emperor of the city. Some hurried to the Emperor and, as though with great disgust, informed him of how rebels had done this thing, asking the Emperor to punish the miscreants with the harshest punishments. But this great Emperor touched his nose and ears, and then said to the petitioners: "I can feel my nose and ears whole and untouched." The petitioners were shamed and removed themselves. With such kingly greatness of soul must we endure insults from others. And more: to listen with particular care to criticism from others, passed on to us by those who flatter us. It is always essential to confess before God and ourselves that, because of our sins, we deserve much greater insult from others than we do, in fact, receive.



### MAY CONGRATULATIONS!

#### Anniversaries:

- 5/6 Stanley & Jennifer Alexion
- 5/12 Donna Anderson

#### Birthdays:

- 5/10 Michael Kurinij
- 5/26 Elisabeth Parsells
- 5/29 Irene Clenney
- 5/30 J. Michael McFarland

#### Namesdays:

- 5/5 *St. Irene the Great Martyr*  
Irene McKee  
Irene Clenny
- 5/8 *St. Emilia*  
Mat. Emily Parsells  
Jodi McElwee
- 5/21 *St. Helen*  
Alena Shoshava  
Ellen Gunderson
- 5/23 *St. Alexander Nevsky*  
Alexander Royal  
Robert Dodge

*If your name is not on this list and it should be, please see Fr. John, as soon as possible!*