



# Crossroads

The Monthly Newsletter of the Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross

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## October, 2008

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

- ST. HELENA'S GUILD MEETING – SUNDAY OCTOBER 5, 9:15.
- SPECIAL PARISH MEETING, SUNDAY OCTOBER 5, to Discuss Continuation of OCA Withholding, FOLLOWING THE LITURGY
- COMMUNITY LUNCHEON - SATURDAY OCTOBER 11 at 9AM
- TEEN CANOE OUTING – SATURDAY OCTOBER 11
- PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 15
- INREACH/OUTREACH MEETING – SUNDAY OCTOBER 26, after the liturgy
- CAREGIVERS' MEETING – to be announced

**THE BEGINNING OF OUR FALL/WINTER TIME SCHEDULE WILL TAKE PLACE ON SUNDAY OCTOBER 5, with the Divine Liturgy starting at 10:00. This will also mark the beginning of Church School at 9:15. ADULT EDUCATION WILL BEGIN ON SUNDAY OCTOBER 12 at 9:30.**

**OUR ADULT EDUCATION CURRICULUM, beginning on Sunday October 12<sup>th</sup> and continuing into early November,** will be the Bible Study prepared for the All American Council: *Members of One Another in Christ - Four Bible Studies on Ephesians 4:25-32*. Hard copies will be available and it will be distributed online next week as well.

After this we will be reading *Christ in the Psalms* by Fr. Patrick Reardon. Copies are available from Bob Flanagan.

**MARCY DURSO** fell asleep in the Lord on Saturday September 20. He and Mary have been living with their daughter Susan in Rochester, NY. Mary can be reached at:

237 Rutgers Street  
Rochester NY 14607  
585-461-3957

Memorial donations can be sent to:

Saint John the Baptist Orthodox Church  
9 West Railroad Street  
Nesquehoning, PA 18240

**THANKS FROM ANTHONY ALLEN PLUTH:**

Dear Fr John and Parishioners,

When I received your recent letter and

gift, I was stunned and overwhelmed by your kindness and generosity. I give you my profound thanks. Indeed, the gift arrives at a time of special financial “challenge” for us, and it will be gratefully utilized to help with our mortgage payments!

During the time I was privileged to serve Holy Cross Parish, by accomplishing – often with Linda’s assistance – the various tasks you enumerated, I felt I was only performing my expected duties in establishing a new parish. Moreover, in this joint effort, I had the blessing of working with many talented and dedicated parishioners who made things possible through cooperation with the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Eventually, I was able to leave my position with the certain knowledge that you, Fr. John, would continue in the ministry of guiding the parish into a new stage of spiritual growth, expansion, development, and maturity. You would find an already strong foundation, and build on it, fulfilling the parish’s potential as a truly Christian community, striving to realize the Kingdom of God through loving service to others. All this has indeed taken place, thanks be to God. Although I cannot say I know most members of the parish any longer, I know that the same family spirit has been maintained, and the Linda and I would always be warmly welcomed by all.

Although certainly undeserving of it, I would still be ungrateful not to accept the gift that comes as an expression of your feeling of gratitude. For I am more and more convinced of the central importance of gratitude in the Judeo-Christian tradition, from the celebration of the Passover meal to its ultimate expression in the Eucharistic Anaphora of the Divine Liturgy: “Let us give thanks to the Lord.” As even the secular Roman orator, Cicero, profoundly acknowledge, “A grateful heart is not only

the greatest virtue, but the parent of all other virtues.”

Thank you also for your ongoing prayers, which help me continue to do God’s work of providing emotional healing, psychological growth, and spiritual guidance to clients. As you know, God has blessed me with a little skill to perform face to face counseling, and I feel that I can still do some good in this particular aspect of the priesthood of all believers, serving God’s presence in others by nurturing souls and helping them grow into God’s image, first realizing, then achieving, their unique potential. It turns out to have been providential that I moved to receive specialized training in psychotherapy, in that my physical limitations, for a considerable number of years now, would have made it impossible to perform as a liturgical priest. I am very fortunate to have Linda’s assistance in driving me and helping me get into the office, now on a part-time basis.

On my desk at home is the festal icon of the parish, and a pectoral cross with a depiction of the Resurrection of Christ. Both are treasured gifts from the parish, and intense reminders that if we, like Our Lord, bear our sufferings and limitations in patience and submission to God’s will, they will ultimately transform our inner selves and deepen our spiritual lives. “For by the Cross, joy has come into all the world.”

May God grant Many Years to you, Fr. John, and to all the faithful and beloved members of the Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross!

With my love, prayers, and gratitude always,

Allen Anthony Pluth

**VISIT OF CHRISTINA SEMON:** Last year our donations to the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) will be directed toward the missionary effort of Christina Semon, a young Orthodox woman preparing to do work in Romania. Christina grew up in Eastern Pennsylvania. While attending Binghamton University in New York, she played Division 1 softball. The aggressive training schedule removed her from the rich liturgical life of the Church, and she knew that changes needed to be made. As that door closed another opened, and Christina spent her junior year studying in St. Petersburg, Russia. She also began to read articles by students who had participated on short-term mission trips, which compelled her to contribute her labors to missions.

She is dedicating her experience and passion to assisting the efforts of the *St. Dimitrie Program and Protection of the Theotokos Family Center*. According to the UNICEF, over 9,000 children are abandoned in Romania each year. Alcoholism and substance abuse are increasingly pervasive; reported cases have doubled in the past 4 years.

On the weekend of **November 29-30**, she will be visiting our parish and make a presentation following the Divine Liturgy on that Sunday. To learn more about OCMC go to: **ocmc.org**

### **REPORT ON THE FOURTH DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY:**

The Fourth Diocesan Assembly for the Diocese of New York and Washington was held at the Church of Sts Peter and Paul on September 15, 2008. With the very recent retirement of Metropolitan Herman, and the great distance of the temporary diocesan administrator, Archbishop Seraphim, Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia and Eastern

Pennsylvania was the “hierarchy in attendance.” Diocesan business was attended to by our chancellor, Fr Joseph Lickwar, and the meeting was chaired by Fr David Garretson, pastor of the host parish.

Much of the official reports, of chancellor, deans, and diocesan departments and institutions had been sent out in advance of the assembly and so were quickly dispatched with little questioning. An exception was the report of the lay diocesan representative to the Metropolitan Council, Bob Kornafel who gave a lengthy report on the recent meetings of the Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council which resulted in the retirement of the Metropolitan.

Presentation of the Financial Report for 2008 was incomplete because of the early date of the assembly, but it was announced that the Metropolitan would receive his salary and benefits until the end of the year, at which time his pension would begin. It was also announced that the Diocesan Residence on Martin Drive was available with the eviction of Bishop Peter’s personal assistant. It is estimated that it will take about \$10,000 to bring the building to a usable condition, at which time it could become the residence of the diocesan hierarchy, and diocesan offices.

The most important piece of new business was a motion from the New Jersey Deanery with a recommendation that the Diocese of New York and Washington revert to its former existence as two dioceses, with Washington again being the Metropolitan See, and New York and New Jersey having its own bishop. After some confusion about the wording of the resolution, it was passed overwhelmingly. This is a decision that can only be made by the Holy Synod and so it will be passed to them for action. Bishop Tikhon did say that he was part of a small

subcommittee of the Synod that is to examine diocesan territorial boundaries, but that was temporarily laid aside for more pressing business before the Synod.

[In personal conversations with a few members of the assembly, it was noted that the Orthodox Church in America is notably lacking in suitable candidates for bishop. With the canonical requirement that bishops be monks, and the poor state of monasticism in the Church, it seemed that change is necessary in either the state of monastic life in the OCA, or a change in the canons allowing married clergy to be bishops – “A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well...(for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?).]

During the section of the meeting devoted to new business a resolution was made to thank Metropolitan Herman for his long service to the diocese and the OCA. The motion was defeated by a voice vote.

There was a notable reduction in tension at this year’s Diocesan Assembly compared to those of the last two years. This was remarked upon early on in the meeting and stayed that way all the way through. That is not to say that the serious issues before us were not in evidence. They were, but instead of high tension there was a sense of working together to accomplish the tasks before us. It can be a dangerous time, this period without formal leadership, with great opportunity for groups with their own agendas to make great headway. But this meeting of the Assembly gave little evidence of that. Instead, the majority of the

delegates were concerned for the health of the OCA and the diocese and gave indication that, as time goes forward, we will grapple with the difficult issues before us in a timely and responsible way.

***Bob Flanagan, Lay Delegate***  
Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross  
Medford, NJ

**TEEN CANOE OUTING** – weather permitting, will take place on SATURDAY OCTOBER 11 in the Batsto area. Let Tim Rommen or Fr John know if you are interested.

**WEDDING BANNIS: CASSANA WALLACE AND CHRISTOPHER WOOD, SATURDAY NOVEMBER 8.**

**ST. HELENA’S GUILD: COFFEE HOUR - Back to the Basics** – We are asking everyone to please keep it simple when you are hosting. We greatly appreciate all that you do- but please stick to the basics. Bagels/bread/cookies/veggies/fruit – it’s just to help us refuel our bodies after the fast-it’s not meant to be a full meal. We don’t want anyone to feel put out and or feel they have to compete. Contact **Marie Clifton (856-482-1059)** if you want to host one of those week or if there has been a change in your coffee hour. **\*\*Special note:** we have a few parishioners that are highly allergic to nuts, please label items if possible or keep all ingredient labels if purchased. Please don’t be offended if we ask you to remove certain items from the table.\*\* As always your generous donations are greatly appreciated as they help defer the cost of the supplies for coffee hour. Please take home items after the coffee hour if not used other than the juice and coffee.

- **Meetings:** October 5, November 2, and December 7, 9:15 a.m. .

- **MINI BAZAAR**: November 8 & 9; Plan for the Holidays (see enclosed flyer for details)
- **PIEROGIE SESSION**: Tentative Dates: October 24 & 25.

**PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES:**  
*Summary of the 09-17-08 Parish Council Meeting*

The Parish Council meeting occurred on September 17<sup>th</sup> and was held in the Church social hall. The meeting convened with the singing of “O Heavenly King.” The monthly financial report was presented by Assistant Treasurer Caroline Graham, and indicated church income is low due to a decrease in donations, which was attributed to decreased attendance. However churches bills are being paid as the expenses are also under budget. Now that residual construction costs are behind us, such as the EJH steel settlement and street repair to Wilkins Station Road, we hope our finances will be easier to manage.

Father John and Gary Mosser signed paperwork for the new mortgage. The new mortgage interest rate will be 6% locked-in for 5 years and a 25 year term. The new mortgage will save Holy Cross approximately \$365 per month. An anonymous donor donated \$15,000 to the mortgage fund that will reduce the new mortgage and save \$25,000 in interest payments over 25 years. Our community is extremely grateful for this generous donation. Mark Skuby reported to the Parish Council that a profit of approximately \$1,500 was realized from the Golf Fund Raiser, and also reported that the church may receive an additional donation of \$2,000. We are grateful to Mark Skuby for his work.

Our church will soon obtain five new exterior benches for our property (4@ 6 foot and 1@4 foot). The new benches are made from recycled plastic and their color will be brown. Recycled plastic benches were chosen because of their high quality and long term durability. Two of these benches are donated in memory of George Lane, from the Lane Estate, two are from the Church Choir, and the final bench will be donated by Gene Dubagio. Our community is very grateful to the Lane Family, the Church Choir and Gene Dubiago for their generosity.

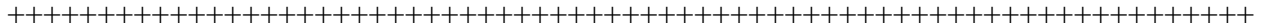
Father John and Bob Flanagan attended the Diocesan Assembly and reported that it was better organized and less tense than last year. The Diocesan Assembly voted to ask the Holy Synod to restore the Diocese to its previous status; that is, restore the former Diocese of New York-New Jersey and make it independent from the Metropolitan See of Washington. Bob Flanagan expressed concern about the lack of good candidates for Bishop in light of the many vacancies that now exist in the OCA.

The OCA crisis was discussed. OCA news reported that Metropolitan Herman secretly took a mortgage with Honesdale Bank in June 2008 on St Tikhon’s Monastery for \$152,000 without prior approval, an apparent violation of OCA statutes. The Metropolitan’s reason for obtaining this mortgage is unknown. This new development will be monitored and discussed further as more information is revealed. Two out of four conditions for restoring payment of our OCA assessment, as stated in “The Decision from Our Special Parish Meeting Regarding the Financial Crisis in the Orthodox Church in America” have been met, and the Parish Council will recommend to our parish that 50% of our funds be released to the OCA. A Special

Parish Meeting will be held on October 5<sup>th</sup> to discuss this development further with our parish.

It was also reported that Paul Giovanni, who is currently serving on the Parish Council as a Trustee, will soon take a temporary assignment in Canada for six

months and will not be able to attend Parish Council meetings. The Parish Council thanks Paul for his service. A person is needed to replace Paul on parish council. The next parish council meeting is scheduled for October 22<sup>nd</sup>.



***Holiday Mini Festival***  
 Import Boutique and Homemade Baked Goods  
 brought to you by St Helena's Guild  
 Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross, Medford, NJ

<p>Babka in 10 delicious varieties!  <b>CHOOSE FROM:</b> Cinnamon, Cheese, Chocolate, Raspberry, Prune, Apricot, Chocolate Chip, Raspberry Cheese, and Chocolate Cheese          \$9.50 single, \$10.00 double flavor  <b>ALSO:</b> Nut Rolls, Poppyseed Rolls, Apricot Rolls, Seedless Raspberry Rolls and Baklava, each \$13.00  <b>You MUST preorder ALL babkas and rolls.</b></p>	<p>To place an order, for more information, or directions, please call:          Daytime (8-4)          Ann Plescia (856) 983-4441          Evenings (4 - 10)          Kathy Pierman (856) 845-7656          OR e-mail: <a href="mailto:kats@snip.net">kats@snip.net</a>          Diane Vozdovic (609) 288-6833          Diana Pasca (609) 953-4705</p>	<p><i>Discover beautiful, unique and intriguing gifts for everyone you know! This remarkable Boutique specializes in rare social, cultural, and artistic items from Eastern Europe and Asia, including Jewelry, Nesting Dolls, Icons, Baltic Amber, Ornaments and much more!</i></p>
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**Visit Us: Saturday, November 8, 10:00 am – 2:00pm**  
**Sunday, November 9, 12 noon – 2:00 pm**  
**Location: Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross**  
**Wilkins Station Road, Medford, NJ**  
 From Route 70, turn north onto Medford-Mt. Holly Rd, Route 541.  
 Turn at the first right, Wilkins Station Rd and then make the first left into the Church parking lot.  
**Look for us on the web at : [www.holycrossmedford.org](http://www.holycrossmedford.org)**

*Best Wishes for a Joyous Holiday Season!*



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**DIOCESE OF WASHINGTON, NEW YORK ( and NEW JERSEY)**  
 will offer a  
**WORKSHOP FOR CHURCH MUSICIANS**  
**LOCATION: ORHTODOX CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS**  
**MEDFORD, NJ**  
**OCTOBER 18**

The Art of the Liturgy  
 A Workshop for Church Singers, Directors and Readers

**Primary Instructor:** Professor Aleksei V. Shipovalnikov  
**Date:** Saturday, October 18, 2008  
**Place:** Church of the Holy Cross, 11 Wilkins Station Road, Medford, NJ 08055

**Time:** 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
**Fee:** \$20.00 (includes workshop materials, breakfast and lunch)

**Workshop Description:** This workshop will explain, explore, and demonstrate five critical musical elements of effective liturgical services: 1) Tonality, 2) Rhythm/Meter/Tempo, 3) Stability, 4) Creativity, and 5) Altar/Kliros/Congregation. Prof. Shipovalnikov will discuss each element and how it relates to the others and will demonstrate each element with “hands-on” exercises. There will be handouts and ample opportunity for singing, but singing skill is not required for participation.

**Aleksei V. Shipovalnikov** was born and educated in Russia. He served as Artistic Director and Manager of the Moscow State University Symphony Orchestra and Academic Choir. After emigrating to the United States, he served as Music Director of Slavyanka Men’s Slavic Chorus and recorded the world premiere of Shvedov’s “Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom” for Harmonia Mundi.. He has served as Professor of Liturgical Music at St. Tikhon’s Seminary, South Canaan, PA. He is currently Music Director at Sts. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church, Jersey City, NJ, and Director of The Spirit of Orthodoxy Choir, a group that he founded in 1997 dedicated to performing Orthodox liturgical music chiefly in the English language.

**Special Guest:** . Josef Gulka, Music Director, Church of the Holy Cross, will lead participants in exploring new materials for the Advent season, Predanctified Liturgy and the literature of the the prophetic Canticles.

For further information and directions, please see the

Holycrossmedford.org

Or

Contact Josef Gulka at [jgulka@pil.net](mailto:jgulka@pil.net), or [jgulka@ccat.sas.upenn.edu](mailto:jgulka@ccat.sas.upenn.edu)

Checks should be made payable to the Diocese of Washington and New York and mailed with registration forms to AVS Workshop, c/o 38 Pearl Street, New Hyde Park, NY 11040.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES for October, 2008**

### **COFFEE HOUR:**

October 5: Maureen Sapnar  
12: Marianne Sobotka  
19: Barbara Hehre  
26: Lee Ann Detwiler

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### **READERS**

October 5: Diana Pasca  
12: Don Dercole  
19: Mark Skuby  
26: Greg Sapnar  
November 2:

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### **ALTAR SERVERS**

October 5: Eli Nugent & Paul Abdallah  
12: Stephen Shimchick & Brendan Detwiler  
19: Matthew Brook & Ethan Detwiler  
26: David Hamaty & Robert Graham  
November 2: Paul Clifton & Anatoly Lane

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**COMMUNION USHERS**

October 5: Julia & Lauren Mosser  
12: Kristina Zanghi & Faye Nugent  
19: Sierra & Miranda McCleery  
26: Alexandra & Magdalena Plachuta  
November 2: Julia Mosser & Lauren Mosser