



Crossroads

The Monthly Newsletter of the Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross

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On Listening Again to “A Christmas Carol”: *Marley’s Ghost*

from Fr. John

On Christmas eve over the past few years on the way up and back to church, I listen to “A Christmas Carol” by Charles Dickens, read or really performed by Patrick Stewart (perhaps better known from *Star Trek*). We all are no doubt familiar with the story and the characters – Ebenezer Scrooge, Bob Cratchit, Tiny Tim, other family members, and the various spirits of Christmas past, present, and future. But I have become particularly attached to Scrooge’s deceased partner, Jacob Marley, who early on pays him a visit, providing him a warning, and telling him what’s about to happen – Scrooge will never be the same again.

They worked together as bankers or in some kind of professional money lending business, and were known for being difficult, stingy, and unhappy. Marley’s ghost enters Scrooge’s room exactly seven years since his death, carrying a long chain that “wound about him like a tail.” It was made “of cash-boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers, deeds, and heavy purses wrought in steel.” When Scrooge asks, “why do spirits walk the earth, and why do they come to me?” Marley replies, “It is required of every man that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellow men! If it goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death! It is doomed to wander through the world! Oh, woe is me! And witness what it cannot share but MIGHT HAVE SHARED on Earth and turned to happiness!” In response to Scrooge’s question of why he bears a chain Marley says: “I wear the chain I forged in life! I made it link by link and yard by yard! I gartered it on of my own free will and by my own free will, I wore it! “

Then comes my favorite part: Marley reflects on the missed opportunities he realizes now that he should have done during his life. Scrooge, in probably trying to make him feel better, says, “But you were always a good man of business, Jacob.” To which Marley moans, “Business! **Mankind was my business.** The common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence, were, all, my business. The dealings of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business!”

Marley explains about the three upcoming visits that Scrooge should expect for “without their

visits, you cannot hope to shun the path I tread.” Marley’s ghost goes out the window into the night and the “air was filled with phantoms, wandering hither and thither in restless haste, and moaning as they went. Everyone of them wore chains like Marley’s; some few were linked together; none were free... The misery with them all was, clearly, that they sought to interfere, for good, in human matters, and had lost the power for ever.”

No one is claiming much theological accuracy here about the fate of those departed or the afterlife. But the important affirmation for me is that no matter what we do in our jobs – still – “mankind is our business.” We all have the power in limited, but also sometimes significant ways to “interfere, for good, in human matters.”

As we move from the Christmas season to the New Year – let’s not be afraid, while we have the chance and time, to use this power.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

- **COMMUNITY LUNCHEON – SATURDAY JANUARY 2 - 9AM**
- **ST. HELENA’S GUILD MEETING – SUNDAY JANUARY 3, following the Liturgy**
- **10 THINGS WORTH KNOWING ABOUT THE ORTHODOX FAITH: SUNDAYS JANUARY 10, 17, 24, 31** from 9:15 – 9:55.
- **INREACH/OUTREACH MEETING – to be announced**
- **DEADLINE FOR FEBRUARY CROSSROADS – SUNDAY JANUARY 24.**
- **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – MONDAY JANUARY 25 at 7 PM.**

EMMA GABRIELLE LEON was born on December 21, 2009 to Alisha & Peter Leon (7 lbs 6 oz & 21”).

10 THINGS WORTH KNOWING ABOUT THE ORTHODOX FAITH – will be offered by Fr. John on Sundays **January 10, 17, 24 & 31** from 9:15 – 9:55. Confessions will not be heard before the Divine Liturgy on those mornings.

PARISH CHRISTMAS CARD: Our parish card, the opportunity we offer to greet one another at Christmas – sending your savings on to the church, generated a collection of nearly \$1,000.00. Thanks to the general coordinator – Wally Loza, and to Lee Ann Detwiler who coordinated the finished card and printing. The original design came from Ed Clifton and was updated this year by Anastasia Shimchick. Everyone should have received one by now – let Fr. John know if you did not.

DONATION ENVELOPES FOR 2010 are available in the church vestibule. If you have any questions about envelopes see Caroline Graham or Fr. John.

CHURCH LIBRARY: Please take advantage of your library – now open for business. We’ll keep adding materials, especially CD’s. Talk to Bob & Bonnie Flanagan if you have any questions.

UPDATE ON FR. JOSEPH TEDESCO: Fr. Joe is now a member of the Mepkin Abbey in Moncks Corner, SC. His Christmas letter is available on our bulletin board by the kitchen. There he mentions how to receive his monthly update.

DOGS IN HOSPITAL BEDS: Have you ever wondered if you and your dog would be good at visiting children in hospitals? These children are maybe a little frightened, lonely, bored, don't feel very well, and not having a lot of fun. When someone knocks on the door and asks "Would you like to meet my dog?" it's possible for all those things to go away for a while.

Come join us in Pedata Hall at Saint Joan of Arc, 100 Willow Bend Rd, Marlton NJ on Monday January 4th, at 7 pm to learn a little about the topic, and to discuss the formation of a team of people and pets to visit hospitalized children. Mr Phil Arkow, renowned expert and pioneer in the field of Animal Assisted Activities, will speak to us. Taking your pet visiting is a very effective, pleasant, easy way to help people. Come find out what you can do. If you come to the meeting it doesn't mean you'll sign a contract. Just check it out. It may be just the thing for you.

Please spread the word about this meeting through emails to your friends and co-workers, through Twitter, facebook, and any other way you can.

Contact Patricia Lucas at bluelilycp@hotmail.com or at 856 983 2390 with any questions.

Come one, come all!

SUMMARY OF THE DECEMBER PARISH COUNCIL MEETING (12/14/09):

First on the agenda was a parish calendar update session. Anticipated dates of parish events for first three months of 2010 were discussed and noted on the parish calendar. This calendar will be kept at a convenient location for everyone to see. Diana Pasca and Diane Vozdovic attended the parish council meeting and were very helpful with planning 2010. Results of this calendar update session were also noted on the attached Schedule of Parish Events for 2010. The schedule of events is new and will become a permanent part of Cross Roads in hope that it will enable everyone to be aware of what's happening at Holy Cross. After the parish calendar update session, a discussion ensued regarding which charities Holy Cross will make contribute to during 2010. Many charities were named, but Holy Cross will likely narrow this list. A final list of charities will be determined later.

The monthly financial report was presented by our treasurer Caroline Graham. The financial report indicated shortfalls for the general fund, mortgage fund and the OCA assessment. Caroline also reported an issue with the accounting program, "Quick Books," which may have lead to some inaccuracies in the financial report. Gary Mosser will be contacting someone who is experienced with Quick Books to help resolve this problem.

Bob and Bonnie Flanagan have completed our Parish Library and it's now open for our parishioners. The parish council thanks Bob and Bonnie for their effort. The next parish council meeting was scheduled for January 25th.

DONATIONS TO THE CHURCH: Please note that donations, particularly of liturgical items (icons, etc) for use in our church, should be reviewed in advance with Fr. John before being brought to the church for placement.

OUR COLLEGE STUDENTS: **Alexander** (Abdallah),/ **Anastasia** (Shimchick), **Andrew** (Abdallah), **Antonio** (Chong), **Bryan** (Thompson), **Christine** (Lane), **Christopher** (Abdallah), **Christopher** (Shimchick), **Danielle** (Giovanni), **Matthew** (Brook), **Ethan** (Detwiler), **Gianluca** (Keeler), **Jacquelyn** (Chong), **John** (Pierman), **Joshua** (Dowiak), **Julia** (Skuby), **Katherine** (Lane), **Kristin** (Little), **Martha** (Skuby), **Michael** (Shimchick), **Nikolas** (Tranchik), **Peter** (Abdallah), **Rachel** (Tranchik), **Stefan** (Keeler)

Schedule of Parish Events for 2010 (as of December 14, 2009)

- This schedule will be updated monthly.
- TBA: To be announced

January

- Community Luncheon – 2nd
- St. Helena’s Guild Meeting – 3rd
- Theophany – 5 & 6th
- Family Fun Night at 6 PM – 16th
- Sites and Sounds – 31st

February

- Meeting of Our Lord at the Temple – 2nd
- Memorial Liturgy – 6th
- St. Helena’s Guild Meeting – 7th
- Pre-Lenten Lunch – 7th
- Community Luncheon – 13th.
- Great Lent Begins – 14/15th
- Annual Parish Meeting – 21st
- Pre-Sanctified Liturgies – 26th

March

- Community Luncheon – 6th.
- St. Helena’s Guild Meeting – 7th
- Wednesday Pre-Sanctified Liturgy – 10th
- Pierogie Session – 13th
- Spring Bazaar – 20th.
- Annunciation – 25th
- Palm Sunday – 28th

April

- Good Friday Retreat – 2nd.
- Pascha – 4th
- Community Luncheon – TBA.
- Covenant House Benefit Concert – TBA

May

- Community Luncheon – TBA.
- Ascension Thursday – 13th
- Pentecost Sunday – 23rd
- SS. Peter & Paul fast begins – 31st

June

- Beginning of 9 AM Divine Liturgy – TBA
- Parish Picnic – TBA

July

- Church Cleanup – TBA.

August

- Transfiguration – 6th
- Dormition – 15th
- Summer Church School – TBA.

September

- Nativity of the Theotokos – 8th
- Golf Fundraiser – TBA.
- Elevation of the Cross – 14th
- Fall Festival – TBA.

October

- Beginning of 10 AM Divine Liturgy – TBA.
- First day of Sunday Church School for children and young adults - TBA.
- First day of Adult Education – TBA.

November

- Holiday Mini-Festival – TBA.
- Presentation of the Theotokos – 21st
- Thanksgiving Ecumenical Service – TBA.

December

- St. Nicholas Vespers – TBA
- Parish Nativity Pageant – TBA.
- Nativity of Our Lord – 25th

2010 HOUSE BLESSING SCHEDULE

The Great Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord / the Epiphany (or Manifestation) will be celebrated on Tuesday evening January 5 with Great Vespers and the Blessing of Water and the Divine Liturgy on Wednesday January 6 (9 AM). A second blessing of water will take place on Sunday January 10, at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

As has been the usual practice, Fr. John will assume that he will be visit and bless the homes of all parishioners. If, for any reason, someone would not like their home to be visited please give him a call or leave a message in the church office.

Each home will be called in advance and those who are home during the day may be called on a different day. Homes not included in the general areas listed below will be contacted to set up a time.

January	6-8:	Cherry Hill / Maple Shade / Pennsauken / Somerdale
	9-10:	Medford/Tabernacle
	12:	Haddonfield/Deptford/Collingswood
	14:	Leisuretown
	16-17:	Moorestown / Marlton/Mt. Laurel
	18:	Cinnaminson / Delran
	20:	Elm/Folsom/Atco
	21:	Willingboro/Burlington
	22-ff:	Makeup

Here are some ways of preparing for the blessing of your home:

- * Set aside a place for the service (usually a table in the dining room or kitchen).
- * On the table place an icon, a candle, a bowl for Holy Water, and a list of the names to be remembered - divided into two lists, living and departed.
- * A person holding the candle may lead Fr. John throughout the home.

TROPARION

When You, O Lord, were baptized in the Jordan
the worship of the Trinity was made manifest.
For the voice of the Father bore witness to You
and called You His beloved Son.
And the Spirit in the form of a dove
confirmed the truthfulness of His word.
O Christ, our God, who have revealed Yourself
and have enlightened the world, glory to You.

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RESPONSIBILITIES for January, 2010

COFFEE HOUR:

January 3: Maureen Sapnar
10: Barbara Mosser
17: Bonnie Flanagan
24: Jessica Siragusa

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READERS

(Epistle Readers are expected also to read the “3rd Hour” which precedes the liturgy, starting around 9:50, after the adult class)

January 3: Genie Skuby
10: Don D’Ercole
17: Gene Dubiago
24: Natalka Weismantel
31: Leslie Lane

ALTAR SERVERS

January 3: Stephen Shimchick & Leo Weismantel
10: David Hamaty & Brendan Detwiler
17: Anatoly Lane & Eli Nugent
24: Andrew Abdallah & Paul Giovanni
31: Paul Abdallah & Nicholas Zanghi

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COMMUNION USHERS

January 3: Kristina Zanghi & Faye Nugent
10: Natalia Rommen & Elisabeth Graham
17: Sierra & Miranda McCleery
24: Alexandra & Magdalena Plachuta
31: Lauren Mosser & Faye Nugent

Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross – January, 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 <i>Community Luncheon: 9 AM</i> Great Vespers: 5
3 St. Helena's Guild Meeting Divine Liturgy – 10:00	4	5 Epiphany Vespers & the Blessing of Water 7 PM	6 Epiphany Divine Liturgy 9:00 AM	7	8	9 Great Vespers: 5
10 10 Things: Fr John Church School & Adult Ed 9:15 Divine Liturgy 10:00	11	12	13 Burlington Nursing Home 1:30	14	15	16 Great Vespers:5
17 Zacchaeus Sunday 10 Things: Fr John Church School & Adult Ed 9:15 Divine Liturgy	18	19	20	21	22	23 Great Vespers: 5
24 10 Things: Fr John Church School & Adult Ed 31 Divine Liturgy 10:00	25 Parish Council Meeting – 7 PM	26	27	28	29	30 Great Vespers: 5
			8			

						Saturday

