



Crossroads

The Monthly Newsletter of the Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross

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Come Read with Me this Summer

by Fr. John

One book, one Philadelphia. Cities across the country have encouraged their residents, like Philadelphia has done over the last few years, to spend a year and read the same book together. Next year (starting in the fall) we likewise are hoping to work through as a parish – *Sweeter than Honey: Orthodox Thinking on Dogma and Truth* by St. Vladimir's Seminary professor Peter Bouteneff. In his book, Professor Bouteneff, helps us consider what we as Orthodox Christians believe to be true and why we think so. We hope to develop discussions through our educational programs and other events during the year, including retreats for our adults and young people (ideally including Professor Bouteneff). But that's the topic for next fall.

During this summer I'd like to prepare us for next year by encouraging each one to join me in reading St. Paul's epistles as assigned to us by our liturgical calendar. I ask myself and you as well to believe that there is always a particular message, expression, idea, or simply a word that we are given the possibility of understanding in a new way – every time we encounter God, whether it be in worship, private prayer, the reading of Scripture, or in activities with others.

My assignment for myself and I invite you to join in this assignment with me as I hope to utilize the discoveries in various sermons throughout the summer will be to observe and jot down what St. Paul has to say about – **prayer and praying**. Right now we are working through the Epistle to the Romans and already he has said:

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed throughout the world. For God, whom I serve with my spirit by announcing the gospel of his son, is my witness that **without ceasing I remember you always in my prayers**, asking that by God's will I may somehow at least succeed in coming to you. For I am longing to see you so that I may share with you some spiritual gift to strengthen you – or rather **so that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine.** (1:8-12)

We may not be able to pray for each other "without ceasing," but certainly we can remember and pray for each other if not each day, than once each week. We certainly can believe that we are able to be "mutually encouraged by each other's faith." Now that we may our picture directories, which include a member directory, we can easily do all that.

So, over the course of this summer let's explore and write down in a notebook or folder what St.

Paul has to say about prayer in his epistles. You can find the texts on the church calendar that was handed out or even on the website of the Orthodox Church in America. We have a direct link to the OCA website, entitled *Daily Scripture Readings*, from our church homepage www.holycrossmedford.org . If you're still not sure, let me know and I'll give you a copy.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- **ST. HELENA'S GUILD MEETING – SUNDAY JUNE 3 at 8:30.**
- **SIGHTS AND SOUNDS – SUNDAY JUNE 10, after the Divine Liturgy.**
- **COMMUNITY LUNCHEON - SATURDAY JUNE 16**
- **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – WEDNESDAY JUNE 20, 7 PM, at the church.**
- **SPECIAL PARISH MEETING – SUNDAY JULY 8, to discuss OCA Financial Crisis**
- **CAREGIVERS' NIGHT OUT – TUESDAY JUNE 26 at Bertucci's on Rt 70, Marlton**
- **INREACH/OUTREACH MEETING – SUNDAY JULY 15, after the liturgy.**

SUMMER TIME SCHEDULE will begin on **JUNE 3** with the Divine Liturgy beginning at 9 AM.

PARISH DIRECTORY COMPLETED: The directory was handed out on Sunday May 27. While a number of people contributed activity photos (special thanks to Maureen Sapnar), the layout and editing were done by Fr. John, Elizabeth Gibbons, and Donna Woodhull. Elizabeth Hatib helped in the planning and during the photo sessions.

Another aspect of the project is the design of a full color parish brochure, which we hope to complete this summer. Please see Fr. John if you would like to be involved in the design of this brochure.

ON RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION: Please remember that the Eucharistic discipline for our parish (it may be different in each Orthodox parish) is that as long as one is attending church services regularly and receiving Holy Communion regularly then one need not come to Holy Confession before each reception of the Eucharist. However, if one is away from services and/or Holy Communion for a while (more than 3 consecutive Sundays) then one should come first to Holy Confession before receiving Holy Communion. If you have any questions about this, please see Fr. John.

FR. JOHN WILL BE AWAY from **THURSDAY JUNE 21 until TUESDAY JUNE 26**, attending the national gathering of the of the *Pastor-Theologian Program*, which will be held at Montebello, Quebec. This will be the final session of the three year ecumenical study program.

CONGRATULATIONS to **Ella and Alex Plachuta** on the birth of their son, **Matthew**, born on May 11. Matthew will be baptized at our church on Saturday June 9.

BAPTISMAL LITURGY: We will have the joyous opportunity of baptizing Bob and Bonnie Flanagan's granddaughters, **Sierra and Miranda**, during the liturgy on Sunday June 10.

LIFT INSTALLATION PROGRESS: While the mechanical features of the list are in place, the doors needed to be reordered. We are very close to having final inspections which should come in several weeks.

SIGHTS & SOUNDS: OUR PARISH'S CELEBRATION OF ART AND MUSIC will take place on **SUNDAY JUNE 10 right after the liturgy**. See Margaret Little if you would like to participate.

SO, WHAT'S IT LIKE? – A GATHERING FOR OUR COLLEGE AND HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENTS will take place on **Sunday June 10 from 5 PM – 7PM** at our church. Our college students are representatives of various schools, majors, and paths. Some have known from the beginning what they've wanted to do and where they've wanted to go, others have made changes in their majors and their schools; some live on campuses and others commute. Some attend large universities, or live in urban settings, others go to smaller schools or at least live in more specifically identified college areas. We hope they'll be willing to share some of their college experiences with our high school kids. There will be music (Josh Dowiak and his friends will be playing some acoustic music) and food – pizza and desserts by Jackie Chong (who's pursuing a culinary career).

We welcome all our college and high school kids and those who will be entering high school this fall.

PLEASE SIGN UP ON THE BULLETIN BOARD SHEET.

NOTE FROM WARREN CAPRONI'S SISTER, DONNA: Donna recently visited our parish and she was able to join with the choir in singing a parastas and blessing Warren's grave:

Joe,

It was wonderful to see you and so many from your church. I will always remember the kindness shown to me and to Warren's memory by so many of you. I had a wonderful trip all around.

Love, Donna

CAREGIVERS at Holy Cross--is an informal support group which meets occasionally for an evening meal or workshop. Our group began with a few individuals who were caring for aging parents or other loved ones and has grown to include single parents, those who care for family in nursing homes or even long-distance, and also those "angels" who seem to always be there for others. If you find yourself in one of these categories, we would love to have you join us. **The next Caregivers' night out will be on Tuesday June 26, at the Bertucci's on Rt 70 in Marlton.**

LANDSCAPING PLANS:

- **WEEDING AREAS:** The prime areas which need to be regularly weeded have been identified on a map found on the bulletin board next to the kitchen. About half of the areas have been chosen by either individuals or families. Please consider signing up and helping with the other areas.
- **THE BIBLICAL GARDEN, IN MEMORY OF JOHN PHILLIPS:** The area for the garden has been prepared – to the left side of the church. Peat moss and new soil has been added, lillies of the valley have been added. Hyssop is growing at Diana Pasca's home. Lillies, mint, and rose of sharron, will soon be added. Please talk with **Diana Pasca** or **Gene Dubiago** about contributions of plants or donations towards this garden. We look hopefully forward to a June "blessing" of the garden.

FROM MARK SKUBY, PARISH WARDEN:

THANK YOU!!

- To the Men of Holy Cross for coming through on Mothers Day to offer a fabulous coffee hour in honor of the mothers of our parish. We received some very nice comments from the ladies.

Great job!

- To all parishioners who donated food, cooked, set-up and cleaned for the Parish Picnic on Sunday May 20th. Special thanks to **Gary Mosser** for the use of his gas grill. For future reference we will continue to schedule our parish picnic for the Sunday prior to the Memorial Day weekend.
- To **Gene Dubiago** for coordinating the yard work party on Saturday, May 12th and for setting up the maintenance schedule. If you have not signed up to mow or weed the various planting beds, please consider doing so over the next few weeks. See Gene Dubiago if you have any questions.
- To **Kathy Pierman** for securing 40 + bags of mulch for use on the berm and planting beds. We still need to finish this mulching activity, so watch out for notices on the next yard party.
- To **St. Helena's Guild** for their generous food donation during the spaghetti dinner held on April 28th. We realized a profit of \$700. Thanks again to **Diana Pasca** and those who helped make this a successful event.
- **Lawn Sprinkler System** - We are getting bids from landscaping contractors for installation of a lawn sprinkler system (thanks to the generous donation of **Dorothy Philips**, in John's memory). We will keep you posted as we finalize the bidding process and award a contractor.
- **Storage Shed** - An additional storage shed is being purchased for our miscellaneous items, now that the lift is nearly completed and we lost a closet in the downstairs hall. The parish council has approved a 12' x 20' pre-built shed, similar in style to the one we have for the lawn supplies. A \$3000 donation from Ellie's Boutique has been designated toward this purchase. Thank you Ellie Kuzma! Estimated cost is between \$3500 and \$4000.
- **Fall Festival** - Our fall festival is set for the weekend of September 29-30. Contact **Bonnie Flanagan** or **Valerie Olesnovich** if you have ideas or wish to help with the planning.
- **Golf Outing** - Our 3rd annual golf outing is scheduled for Saturday, September 15th at Indian Springs Golf Club. Flyers for golfers and sponsors will be forthcoming shortly. Contact Mark Skuby for further details.
- **New Parish Council Member** - We welcome **Caroline Graham** as a new trustee and assistant treasurer to the parish council for the year 2007. She responded to the ad in the last issue of Crossroads and is eager to offer her help to our parish community.
- **Announcement of a Special Parish Meeting** - A special parish meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, July 8th** following Liturgy to discuss the status of the OCA financial crisis and action taken / pending to date. The Metropolitan Council will meet on June 12-14 and we hope to have some up date information on what is or is not going on at the national level.
- **Shop Rite and Acme Gift Cards** - If you have been purchasing the food gift cards THANK YOU!! We have approximately \$12,000 in the church account, to date. If you have not been

using the cards, this is an easy way for the church to make money. We sell them during coffee hour each week in denominations of \$100, \$50, \$20 and \$10. Use them like cash when you shop at either store and the church makes 5%. Think about it, as you do your regular food shopping for your family, the church is making money!! Get in the habit, as many of us already are, in buying regularly (weekly, bi-weekly or monthly). Forgot your checkbook or cash? We accept IOU's.

Contact Mark or Eugenia Skuby to order food cards or if you have any questions.

ST. HELENA'S GUILD:

- **MOTHER'S DAY PENDANT** – Another huge success, approximately 950 tickets were sold. Bob and Judy (co-workers of Kathie Pierman) won the Faberge styled egg pendant, 2nd prize amber pin was won by our own Alla Jillons and 3rd prize was won by Anne M. Plescia, sister-in-law of Ann Plescia. Thanks for all those who helped sell and bought – especially Kathie Pierman and Ann Plescia who coordinated the project. This is one of the Guild's yearly projects and we do appreciate all that helped.
- **COFFEE HOUR DONATIONS** – Your generous donations are greatly appreciated as they help defer the cost of all the supplies for coffee hour. Please contact **Donna Woodhull (609-654-7093)**- if you cannot find a replacement for your coffee hour. There are a few openings during the year. If you would like to host one of those weeks contact Donna Woodhull. Please remember to keep it simple when you are hosting. ****Special note:** we have a few parishioners that are highly allergic to peanuts, 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.**
- **QUARTERLY KITCHEN CLEANING** –Spring/Pre-Summer cleanup will be in June. Diane Vozdovic will coordinate after the pancake breakfast. Please see Diane for details and date. Thanks to those of you who have volunteered to help.
- **PANCAKE BREAKFAST/CAR WASH/BAKE SALE** – *Saturday, June 2- 8 am -11am and Sunday, June 3, after Divine Liturgy.* Come have breakfast with us.
- **ACME GROCERY RECEIPTS** – Remember to save your grocery receipts from **ACME only**. Place them in the little bag on the bulletin board. We do all the leg work and get “cash” back from participating ACME stores.
- **FESTIVAL PREPARATION** - Mark your calendars – Stuffed Cabbage Session July 27 & 28; Pierogi Session August 10 & 11.
- **NEXT MONTHS GUILD MEETING** – **July 1 at 8:30 am.** Please mark your calendars and plan to attend – no cost – just your warm friendly spirit.

SUMMER CAMP INFORMATION for St. Tikhon's, St. Andrew's Camp, and Antiochian Village are available on the bulletin board near the back stairs (that lead to the altar area).

The Holy Spirit and Baptism by Mark the Monk

Everyone who has been baptized in an orthodox manner has received secretly the fullness of grace; and if he then goes on to perform the commandments, he will become consciously aware of this grace within him;

However far a man may advance in faith, however great the blessings that he attains, he never discovers, nor can he ever discover, anything more than what he has already received secretly through Baptism. Christ, being perfect God, bestows upon the baptized the perfect grace of the Spirit. We for our part cannot possibly add to that grace, but it is revealed and manifests itself to us increasingly, in proportion to our fulfillment of the commandments. Whatever, then, we offer to him after our regeneration, was already within us and came originally from him.