

SS Peter & Paul Orthodox Church Newsletter

Volume 9, Issue 5

May 2009

April Council Highlights

- ✘ March Operating Income was \$11,149 and Operating Expenses were \$8,867, resulting in a net income of \$2,282 for the month of March. We have a year-to-date balance of \$1,453.
- ✘ Parking Lot Restricted Funds total \$45,989.25. Bids have been evaluated and consideration now being given to contract for Construction Documents and solicit new Bids. Fund raising continues.
- ✘ Preparations for Pascha discussed.
- ✘ FOCA planning a Spaghetti luncheon on May 17 and a Piroghi Workshop on May 29-30, 2009.



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Finding Courage

On this Sunday we remember the Myrrhbearing Women, and also read about Joseph of Arimathea, who asked for and buried the body of Jesus Christ. Risk and courage are the outstanding elements of their stories.

Picture the women on the way to the tomb of Christ that very early, still-dark morning. It wasn't the safest time of day for unaccompanied females to be on the road under any circumstances. But on this particular morning the Jewish authorities were hyper-vigilant and suspicious, and a detail of guards had been posted at the tomb. There were plenty of reasons for the women simply to be too afraid to go and anoint the Lord's body.

Yet the Gospels tell us that they expressed only one concern: "Who will roll away the stone?" They were intent on doing what was proper for a beloved person who had died, and so they found their courage. Nor did they run away from the angel at the tomb, of whom they were indeed afraid, as Mark 16:8 tells us. They stayed, heard the angel's command, and rushed to carry it out by giving the apostles the good news of the resurrection (Luke 24:9).

Joseph of Arimathea was a disciple of the Lord, but a secret one.

The Gospels give us a few facts about him. He was a rich man, prominent in the community, and a member of the Sanhedrin, the council of Jewish leaders. It was due to his public visibility and his position as a council member that he kept his discipleship secret.

So Joseph was probably not a person of great courage. Like many people with much to lose, he was not going to risk his place and possessions readily. Yet, while the disciples fled and hid, Joseph stepped forward and declared himself a loving friend of the Lord at the moment when it was most dangerous to do so.

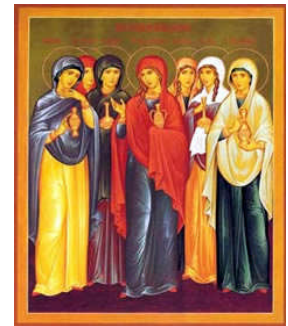
Pontius Pilate had just condemned Jesus Christ to death. There had been no public outcry of protest; His followers were demoralized, fearful, and silent. Even Pilate—perhaps especially Pilate, with his self-protective and hesitant nature—must have been impressed by the bravery of this man coming forward, alone, to ask for the body of the executed preacher.

The Gospels tell us that Joseph was a good and just man, and had not consented to the Sanhedrin's decision to condemn Jesus. This was an act of fortitude. But asking

for the body was even more of a risk, because it brought him to the notice of the Romans and of his fellow Jewish leaders, most of whom had wanted Jesus to die. Only by "taking courage," as Luke writes, could Joseph make such a request.

The danger faced by the Myrrhbearing Women as they walked to the tomb was real. So was the fear of loss of position and security faced by Joseph. But they all found their courage, because they were "waiting for the Kingdom of God" (Mark 15:45). They saw that Kingdom in Jesus Christ, and fear could never really hold them back again.

This weekly bulletin insert complements the curriculum published by the Department of Christian Education of the Orthodox Church in America. This and many other Christian Education resources are available at <http://dce.oca.org>.



Message From Our Rector

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
Christ is risen! Indeed He is risen!

For many “cradle Orthodox,” their most beautiful memories of growing up are associated with the celebration of Holy Pascha. The special customs, from pussy willows to blessed eggs, to special breads, meats, and cheeses, and candlelight processions, all have a special place in the minds and hearts of those who, from the tenderest of ages, were raised in the Church and are long familiar with the year’s ebb and flow of fasting and feasting.



look to our “cradle Orthodox” brothers and sisters, we follow their example, seek their advice and counsel, and embrace their customs and traditions as our own.

However, in doing that, all of us, “cradle” or converts, all acknowledge that the customs with which we surround Pascha and the other Church holidays, are not only a beautiful way of celebrating, but are, first and foremost, an expression of our Faith in Jesus Christ. It’s not a matter of what foods we eat, but a matter of faith—that we believe in the first place.

In American Orthodoxy at the beginning of the 21st century, we are just as likely to encounter Christians who embraced the Orthodox Faith as adults as we are to meet those who were received into the Orthodox Church as infants. Since we are not blessed with the heritage of so many others, those of us who are converts to Orthodoxy are called to establish our own customs associated with Pascha and the other holidays of the Church year. And we gladly

A fine example of the customs surrounding our celebration of Pascha—the Feast of Feasts—is our traditional greeting, “Christ is risen!” and its response, “Indeed He is risen!” We greet one another with this joyous announcement not only on Pascha night and not only in Church, but throughout the entire forty days during which we celebrate Pascha. This greeting is not merely a quaint practice that was received from times past but is a here-and-now public profession of

our faith. When we greet someone with the words, “Christ is risen!” we are announcing our belief that Christ, the pre-eternal Son of God, conquered sin and death by His Resurrection. When we greet one another with these words, we are confessing that we believe in the Lord Who, through His death, burial, and resurrection, put an end to death. “Christ is risen from the dead, **trampling down death by death**, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life.”

It is my hope that our traditional practices as Orthodox Christians may find new meaning and greater significance for all of us—for those who were raised with and them and for those who have accepted them as our own as adults. May the remainder of our forty-day celebration of Pascha be filled with many opportunities to celebrate the reality of the Lord’s Resurrection and its meaning in our own lives, as well as many opportunities for us to share the good news of Christ’s Resurrection and its meaning for all the world.

With love in the Risen Lord,

Father David

All Saints Camp



ALL SAINTS CAMP



Sunday, June 7th - Friday, June 12th

For campers entering 4th grade through Senior in High School.

(Entering 3rd grade may be added depending on interest.)

All Saints Camp is a sleep-away camp in Flagstaff, Arizona that offers volleyball, basketball, archery, a tree-top ropes course, Capture-the-Flag, hiking, nightly bonfires, games, arts and crafts, organized Olympics and more—all within an Orthodox setting with daily Matins, Vespers and Christ-centered lessons.

6 days, 5 nights, all meals and transportation* for only \$250 per camper!

*Transportation to and from Flagstaff is from either St. Katherine Greek Orthodox Church in Chandler or the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Phoenix.

Camper and Staff Applications are available in the church’s narthex.

Supported by the Arizona Council of Eastern Orthodox Churches

The Christian's Best Friend

Very Rev. Vladimir Berzonsky

*"Lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age"
(Last words of Christ in St. Matthew's gospel)*

The glorious promise comes to us as the last words of Jesus Christ in the gospel of Matthew. All who are baptized in His name shall never be alone. This guarantee gives meaning to the theology of covenant. In a gospel written by a Jew about a Jew, the message is to the Jew and Gentile alike—whether you grasp the meaning or not, nevertheless, it is something you can rely on. The loving Lord never will impose His will upon those who want nothing to do with Him; but for those who do, here is the ultimate insight.

If you wish to shut God out of your life and do it your way, and if you don't open the door of your heart, even at times of grief, confusion and alienation from others and yourself, it is possible to live like this for all your life; yet you are still His guest on the earth He created, enjoying the very life you assume, which He goes on giving to you. But if or when you realize that something is missing in the deepest part of your existence, you may discover that all true meanings come through accepting Jesus Christ the Son of God and surrendering your whole self to Him totally. You will come to know God as a friend.

Why then ignore His constant presence and intention to find you and make you His own? I've encountered those who feel that all religion is for the immature. They feel themselves above and beyond the "need" for a personal deity. Once when Napoleon asked Pierre-Simon Laplace why there is no reference to God in his treatise on the universe, the renowned scientist said, *"I have no need of that hypothesis."* Such atheists like Laplace are called humanists. In general terms, they believe that humans have evolved intellectually in progressive stages: At first by magic they thought to control what they feared, then by prayer and sacrifice they appealed to the deities, and finally they have

graduated to atheism—awareness that there are no gods, nothing beyond human consciousness. It's not 20th or even 19th century science. It's thousands of years old. To convince them under their conditions, from a purely scientific perspective is possible, but difficult and challenging. Like St. Thomas, they will believe only by sight, not by insight. It begins by proving they have a soul—not from beyond, but from within.

Why if God loves them as He does us, doesn't He prove He exists? The answer lies in freedom. Even to believers He is present incognito.

"He waits to be found, welcomed and received into our hearts. He never imposes. He understands how and why we ignore His ever-presence. We must first find our true selves before we find the Lord."

He waits to be found, welcomed and received into our hearts. He never imposes. He understands how and why we ignore His ever-presence. We must first find our true selves before we find the Lord. He recognizes the instinct to discover who we are

by separating ourselves from all who we are not, including parents, siblings, relatives and friends—at least for a while. Before we surrender ourselves to God, we must take possession of our true selves. If we are connected to others, to fantasies, illusions and to sin, we have no true self to offer Him. Watch a toddler squeeze fat fingers from a parent's hand and wobble off away—it's a basic instinct. We all do it in other ways through stages of growth.

We Americans especially take pride in our individualism. We cherish our independence. In our schools we are trained to assume nothing, believe nothing without testing, and challenge tradition. We reflect on all relationships. In an interesting irony, we are obsessed with love in all forms. We insist that each of us has the right to fall in love with whomever we please, even contradicting what is considered by traditional religions as unnatural, including homosexuality and the natural affection of a pregnant woman for her unborn child. Many demand that the government endorse the experiments in pseudo-love that humanists consider moral, while true believers insist these to be contrary to instincts of affection and aberrations of traditional values of a normal society blessed by the

Almighty.

And all the while Jesus is waiting to be received into the hearts of both believers and humanists.

Reprinted from "Thoughts in Christ", April 26, 2009, Bulletin 26, Volume XLVI, Orthodox Church in America, <http://www.oca.org/CHRIST-thoughts-article.asp?SID=6&ID=346>

From the Fathers . . .

"When one man helps another by word or deed, let them both recognize in this the grace of God. He who does not understand this will come under the power of him who does."

St Mark the Solitary

"There is nothing we can offer to God more precious than good will. But what is good will? To have good will is to experience concern for someone else's adversities as if they were our own, to give thanks for our neighbour's prosperity as for our own; to believe that another person's loss is our own, and also that another's gain is ours; to love a friend in God, and bear with an enemy out of love, to do to no one what we do not want to suffer ourselves, and to refuse to no one what we rightly want for ourselves; to choose to help a neighbour who is in need not only to the whole extent of our ability, but even beyond our means. What offering is richer, what offering is more substantial than this one? What we are offering to God on

Holy Week and Pascha at SS Peter & Paul



Dorothy Yost greets Nancy Tarasevich with palms and pussy willows on Palm Sunday



Father David blesses the plaschanitza or tomb of Christ.



At midnight, Father David and the altar servers begin to light the candles of the faithful with the light of Christ.



Holding palms and pussy willows, Father David delivers his Palm Sunday sermon.



The evening procession around the church begins .



Sterling tries to keep his candle lit.



The Paschal procession begins . . .



Father David reads the Passion Gospels on Holy Thursday evening.



The faithful re-enter the church after the procession.



The faithful walk around the church three times with their lit candles.



As incense rises, Father David places the body of Christ in the tomb during Holy Friday Vespers.



Father David reads the Gospel on Holy Saturday.



After the procession, the faithful re-enter the church.

Holy Week and Pascha at SS Peter and Paul



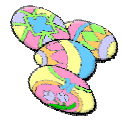
Baskets wait to be blessed . . .



The church is beautifully adorned for Pascha. Christ is Risen! Indeed He Is Risen!



Trinity searches the bushes for an Easter egg.



Accompanied by Mike Wagner, Father David blesses the Easter baskets.



The choir sings during the vespers of Pascha.



Sterling races to find another Easter egg.

Father David watches as the children hunt for eggs.



The faithful watch as their baskets are blessed.



All dressed up for her first Easter Egg hunt. So many eggs . . . So little time.



Sterling and Tristan Sourk are beaming as they look through their Easter eggs to find their treats!



After the baskets are blessed, the Blichak family and friends sit down to eat their blessed food.



The kids compare their baskets to see who has the most eggs.



The Easter Egg Hunt is over, and the kids gather for a picture with Father David.

PRAYER: The Basis of Our Christian Life

"Would that you were hot or cold!" we read in Revelation 3: 16. Zeal—ardent dedication—is a good quality for Christians to have. We are meant to be zealous and "on fire" for Christ, rather than lukewarm and half-hearted. Today we remember one of the twelve apostles, Simon, called "the Zealot" because he was so dedicated to preaching the Gospel that he traveled to Africa, and later accepted martyrdom.

Like Simon, the apostle Peter did great things. We read today how he carried on the work of Christ, who healed the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda, by raising the paralyzed Aeneas, and then bringing back from the dead Tabitha (Dorcas in Greek), who was a model of generous service.

Prayer is the basis of our efforts to emulate Simon the Zealot, Peter, Tabitha, and many others. A resource to help our teens build their own prayer life, and to be zealous for God, is always welcome, and a recent book is such a resource.

Hear Me: A Prayerbook for Orthodox Teens, compiled and edited by Annalisa Boyd, has



only 87 pages, but they offer thought-provoking and enlightening guidance. The first part of the book contains daily prayers for morning, midday and evening. They are not so lengthy as to be overwhelming, but are long enough to require concentration and effort.

The daily prayers include, along with Orthodox texts, prayers of Saint Patrick and Saint Augustine. These will remind our teens that many Western saints, whose names may be familiar to them, appear in the Orthodox calendar.

There is also an invitation to add personal "prayers, praises and requests" and space for filling in names of people to be prayed for.

The next part of the book, "Declaration of Dependence", gives readers something to think about for each of the Ten Commandments, as a way of preparing for Confession. For example, the first Commandment that "You shall have no other gods before Me" is followed by these words: "Many of us have gods in our lives that we don't even know about: money, popularity, fashion, possessions." Then there is a series of questions to

consider. The author might have done more, in her treatment of the fourth Commandment, to define "Sabbath" in the Orthodox understanding.

The book lists seven deadly sins as "poisons" with a list of synonyms for each one. Teen readers will probably understand better what "anger" is when they see the words tantrum, impatience, blowing up and violence associated with it. As "weapons" against anger and other sins, virtues with their own synonyms are listed next. The book gives guidance in praying with Scripture, and suggests asking for the intercession of particular saints in problems that teens might face.

There are also suggestions for talking to others about Orthodoxy (gently but, we may hope, with zeal) and a final section offering brief but thoughtful and compassionate discussions of common teen issues. Hear Me is available from Conciliar Press Ministries at <http://www.conciliarpress.com> or 1(800)967-7377.

This weekly bulletin insert complements the curriculum published by the Department of Christian Education of the Orthodox Church in America. This and many other Christian Education resources are available at <http://>

Around SS Peter & Paul

MAY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Vi Wasilenko
May 17
Katiya Golowatsch
May 24
Amy Blischak
May 25
Ann Garza
May 26
Marty Gala
May 27
Rose Kurowski
May 28
Katie Enoch
May 31

Many Years!
Mnogaya



Leta!

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Joseph Gala on his appointment as a member of the Saints Peter and Paul Parish Council. He replaces Jim Baker, who resigned because of his move to California.



CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations and Many Years! To the newly-christmated Servant of God, Mark, and the newly-christmated Servant of God, Charity. May the Lord grant them many years of blessed and fruitful service as member of the Holy Orthodox Church.



PRAYER LIST

*"I was sick and you visited me."
Matt 25:36*

We offer prayers to all of our parishioners who are ill or unable to attend services:

Protodeacon Alexis
Helen Malecki
Dorothy Yost
Mary Maul
Marie Yevin
Joe Kurowski
Peg Linderman
Pauline & Dan Vinay
Beatrice Washington
Anna Michkofsky

If you know of anyone else in need of our prayers, please contact Father David.

Bits and Pieces

THANK YOU!

Thank you to each and everyone of you who have helped during Holy Week and Pascha. You all make such a difference! If you haven't thanked those who make our community's life so full, enjoyable, and such a wonderful source of mutual support, please do so!



WELCOME

We welcome all visitors to SS Peter & Paul. We hope your visit was enriching and enlightening. Please join us in the Cultural Center, behind the church, for our Fellowship Hour. It's a chance to meet some of our members, other visitors, and enjoy some coffee and fellowship. It's also a great time to take a look at our bookstore.

PUNCTUALITY AND THE DIVINE SERVICES

"Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." These words mark the beginning of the Divine Liturgy and invite us to enter into the Kingdom of God as we celebrate the Divine Mysteries. Please make an effort to be present at the beginning of the Liturgy so that you may have time for quiet prayer before the Liturgy begins and are present for the entire celebration of the Liturgy. People very rarely arrive late for business meetings, for movies, for dinner parties, etc. Prompt arrival for the Liturgy even more important, for when we come to Church our "appointment" is with none other than the Lord Himself.



FOCA

The Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America is starting off a new year with renewed energy. Some of our upcoming events are: a spaghetti dinner on May 17th, a piroghi workshop on May 29th and 30th, a bowling date to be set for June or July (when it's hot outside), a pig/lamb roast in the fall, and a few others too early to mention. If you have an idea about an activity that you would like to see come to fruition, please contact any of the FOCA members or the officers: Pat Starkey, John Hecht, Stephanie Homyak, Peter Radjenovich, or David Homyak.

Besides supporting our own parish, we donate funds for scholarships and other worthwhile causes throughout the United States and other countries. It is only because of your support that we are able to continue these projects. Thanks!

Pat Starkey
President

MYRRHBEARERS ALTAR SOCIETY



Thank you to those Myrrh Bearers who helped with the Easter Bake, Pre-Sanctified meals, Pan-Orthodox Vesper Services, preparations for Palm Sunday, Dyeing of Easter eggs, and for the beautification of the Tomb on Good Friday and Pascha. We cannot forget Joe Gala and Father David for helping with all the Easter Bakes and to Peter Radjenovich for assisting in the preparation of the tomb.

Elizabeth Michel
President

PIROGHI WORKSHOP

The FOCA will sponsor a Piroghi Workshop on Friday, May 29 at 8:00am, and Saturday, May 30, 2009 at 8:30am. All are invited: from seasoned 'professionals' to serve as mentors, to novices whose only experience with piroghis is heating them for dinner! Rollers, boilers, peelers, pinchers: WE NEED YOU! We will be taking orders for potato piroghi. To sign up for the workshop and/or donate ingredients (e.g., flour, potatoes, cheese, eggs, margarine, sour cream), contact Stephanie Homyak at 623.869.0470. To place your order, contact Jane Evans.

COFFEE HOUR

April has been a busy month and I want thank everyone who participated to make it a great month.

April 5 John Hecht and crew,

April 12 - Palm Sunday and the Eritrean crew (they also had a luncheon after their Saturday service - double work)

April 19 - Pascha pot luck - We expected about 35 to 40 and we ended with about 75.

There was plenty of food for all the guests. It was awesome.

Thank you everyone!

April 26 - Barbara Peterson and Marie Yevin

I know many of you have enjoyed the special treats each week, but it's up to you to keep it going. I have several dates in May (24th and 31st) available for someone. Contact me at 623-512-2021 or see me during coffee hour.



Pat Starkey

BOOKSTORE UPDATE

Christ is Risen! Indeed, He is Risen!

The bookstore has recently been restocked with a small selection of icons and a few new gift items such as . . .

Saints of North America Icon, \$24
Theotokos "Tender Mercy" Icon, \$18
Our Lord Jesus Christ Icon, \$18
Auto dashboard/desk crosses, \$5
Wooden Sarov Neck Crosses with cords, \$8
St. Olga and 3-Bar Cross 1" Pendants, \$8

Also, there still remains a wonderful selection of hand crafted egg pendants, earrings and chains. Better get them now before they leave us after Pentecost!

And finally, the bookstore has replenished its supply of the larger sized Divine Liturgy Books. Beautifully bound and printed, they are reasonably priced at \$16.

CHURCH FUND RAISERS

If you haven't already done so, please be sure to purchase a Fry's gift card. The gift cards replace the old Fry's certificates. Once purchased, the gift card can be recharged at your local Fry's store for any amount up to \$500. You can pay for your 'recharges' with cash, check, and debit/credit cards. See Jane Evans to purchase your new Fry's gift card.

The next time you use your Bashas' card, please give them our account number: **28880**; remember to use your card each time you shop. For those with a Safeway card, please give Jane Evans your card number. Ss. Peter & Paul will receive a percentage of your purchase at these stores. Thanks for your support.



THANK YOU FROM VI

A special thanks to all of you who brought soup, fruit or bread to our Wednesday suppers during Great Lent. Your generosity and support is truly appreciated!

Vi Wasilenko

NEWSLETTER

We would appreciate donations of 11x17 paper for the newsletter.

May 2009

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| | <p>Piroghi Workshop Friday, May 29 and Saturday, May 30, 2009 Sponsored by the FOCA To place your order, see Jane Evans To sign-up to help, see Stephanie Homyak</p> | | | | <p>1 Icon "Unexpected Joy"</p> | <p>2 5:00pm Great Vespers</p> |
| <p>3 Ven Theodosius of the Kiev Caves Holy Myrrhbearing Women 8:40am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy Church School FOCA Meeting</p> | <p>4 Starorusskaya Icon</p> | <p>5 Icon "Inexhaustible Cup"</p> | <p>6</p> | <p>7 St. Alexis Toth, Confessor & Defender of Orthodoxy in North America</p> | <p>8 Holy Apostle John the Theologian</p> | <p>9 5:00pm Great Vespers</p> |
| <p>We welcome all of our guests and visitors. Please join us in the Cultural Center for Fellowship Hour following Divine Liturgy each Sunday.</p> | | | | | | |
| <p>10 Paralytic 8:40am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy Church School Mother's Day MBAS Meeting</p> | <p>11 SS Cyril and Methodius, Apostles to the Slavs</p> | <p>12 6:00pm Council Mtg</p> | <p>13 Midfeast Pentecost</p> | <p>14</p> | <p>15</p> | <p>16 5:00pm Great Vespers</p> |
| <p>17 Samaritan Woman 8:40am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy Church School FOCA Spaghetti</p>  | <p>18</p> | <p>19</p> | <p>20 Leavetaking Midfeast</p> | <p>21 Equals-to-the-Apostles St. Constantine & His Mother, Helen</p> | <p>22</p> | <p>23 5:00pm Great Vespers</p> |
| <p>FOCA Spaghetti Luncheon Sunday, May 17, 2009 Adults \$12.00 Children \$6.00</p> | | | | | | |
| <p>24 Blind Man 8:40am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy Church School</p> | <p>25 3rd Finding of the Head of St. John the Baptist</p> | <p>26</p> | <p>27 Leavetaking Pascha Forefeast Ascension 6:00pm Great Vespers</p> | <p>28 The Ascension of Our Lord 9:00am Divine Liturgy</p> | <p>29 Icon "Surety of Sinners" 8:00am FOCA Piroghi Workshop</p> | <p>30 8:30am FOCA Piroghi Workshop 5:00pm Great Vespers</p> |
| <p>31 Fathers of the 1st Ecumenical Council 8:40am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy Church School</p> | <p>FOOD DRIVE Please bring in your nonperishable food donations for St. Mary's Food Bank. Collection boxes are in the church narthex and Cultural Center.</p>  | | | <p>4</p> | <p>5 Leavetaking of Ascension</p> | <p>6 5:00pm Great Vespers</p> |