SS Peter & Paul Orthodox Church

Volume 19 Issue 7 July 2019

June Council Highlights

- ★ May's Operating Income was \$15,361.77 and Operating Expenses were \$11,483.77, resulting in a net Operating Income of \$3,878.00 for the month.
- ★ Church youth spent a week at All Saints Camp. Pictures on pg. 3.
- Church parking has been resurfaced and restriped.
- ♣ Overflow parking across the street at Bamboo Bakery.



SS Peter & Paul Orthodox Church

1614 E. Monte Vista Rd. Phoenix, AZ 85006 602.253.9515

www.sspeterpaulaz.org www.oca.org www.orthodoxfellowship.org

The Right Reverend DANIEL Bishop of Santa Rosa Rector

480.287.0240 Mobile frdaniel@sspeterpaulaz.org

Archpriest David Balmer Attached Retired

Deacon John Weiss

Andrew Evans Council President 480.948.7929

Barbara Harp Choir Director bharp@vosymca.org

Stephanie A. Homyak Church School Director Newsletter Editor 623.869.0470 Stephanie Homyak@yahoo.com

> Mike Wagner Web Master

Mike@sspeterpaulaz.org

St. Euphemia Gives the Answer

When 630 church leaders gathered at the Council of Chalcedon in the year 451, their meeting place was the cathedral dedicated to Saint Euphemia. When they struggled unsuccessfully to resolve a very serious disagreement they turned to her, in a surprising way, for the solution.

Euphemia was born in Chalcedon to a senator and his wife. From her early years she was determined to dedicate her life to Christ in virginity rather than marrying and having children.

When the pagan governor of Chalcedon demanded that all citizens gather to worship and sacrifice to the gods, some Christians refused, and came together secretly for worship and prayers. One day Euphemia was discovered among a group of Christians worshipping in a house.

The soldiers in charge of arresting the Christians tried to flatter her and to talk her into worshipping the pagan gods. "Don't throw your life away," they told her. "You are young and pretty. Is it such a serious matter to say a few prayers to the temple gods?"

Euphemia answered at once,
"We are not fools. We know
the difference between your
lifeless statues and the true,
living God we worship. Don't
waste your time trying to convince us to change our minds!"

The soldiers saw that Euphemia gained courage from her fellow Christians. She was the youngest of the group. Perhaps, they thought, she would weaken without the others' support. She might then reveal the names of more Christians they could track down and arrest.

So they took Euphemia, alone, to be interrogated. She was cruelly tortured, and died in the arena where Christians often suffered during gladiatorial games. It was about the year 307. Her fellow Christians built a beautiful cathedral over her grave, and that was where the Council of Chalcedon met 144 years later.

The meeting didn't go smoothly because the delegates were divided on a central issue. The Monophysites said that if Christ is one Person, He must have only one nature. The Orthodox insisted that Christ is

one Person having two perfectly united natures, divine and human.

It was finally decided that each group would write a "confession of faith" telling what they believed, on a scroll. The two scrolls were sealed and placed in the tomb of the cathedral's patron, Saint Euphemia. A guard watched over the tomb for three days, while the delegates fasted and prayed.

When the tomb was opened, the scroll detailing the Orthodox position was in Euphemia's right hand, and the other scroll lay at her feet. Euphemia had given the answer: Christ is one Person in two unconfused, undivided and inseparable natures.

In Rovinj, Croatia you can climb to the highest point in the city, the top of the Tower of Saint Euphemia. A statue of the saint revolves on the tower. As it turns, the statue's right hand shows which way the wind is blowing, just as Saint Euphemia's right hand showed the way of belief so many centuries ago.



Message from Our Rector

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Saint Luke portrays a community united in prayer, fraternity, charity and concern for those in need.

On the recent Feast of Holy Pentecost, we In every age, the Church has been called to

read from the Acts of the Apostles and heard related its account of the beginning of the Church's public preaching ministry. Having received the Holy Spirit, preached the Church's first sermon, preaching to those who had gathered throughout from world and proclaiming all that God had accomplished in and through His Son, Jesus. In Acts we also see that, with the

beginning of the work of preaching the we pray that our parish community, like the Gospel "to the ends of the universe," the Church began to form into communities as follow the Way of Jesus Christ.

After first describing the Apostles' post-

Resurrection counters with the Risen Lord and the awesome events of Pentecost, the Book of Acts goes on to also describe the form of life lived by those first Christians. Saint Luke. the author of Acts, presents the Church

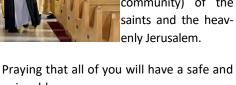
of Jerusalem, gathered in response to the Apostles' preaching, as the paradigm and model of all Christian communities. Saint Luke tells us that, as brothers and sisters in Christ, the first believers "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). Here we see that

-live that paradigm and through its life of prayer and charity to be the light, salt, and leaven of humanity and to be a foreshadowing of a world of authentic justice and peace. In this way, the Church is enabled to live an authentic life based on its common prayer in the Liturgy, experiencing the Risen Lord's presence in prayer and in the Eucharist, in order then to bring that saving love to the world. As we continue

our shared sojourn on earth,

early Church gathered around the Apostles, may increasingly become a place where we people by the thousands were called to experience deep prayer, encounter the Lord in His Word and in the celebration of the Sacred Mysteries, and remain a safe haven of peaceful and loving fellowship with our

> brothers and sisters. May our "house" have doors that welcome the world to join in our journey so that we may all one day be part of the communion (and community) of the saints and the heav-



enjoyable summer,

With love in the Lord,

+Bishop Daniel

SPIRITUAL VITAMINS

"And so you must not become despondent in your illness and weakness, but on the contrary, rejoice in spirit, being comforted with the thought that the Lord has come closer to you now, and later will adopt you as His own children, if you will remain faithful to Him to the end and bear without grumbling all the sorrows that He finds necessary to send you. He that endureth to the end shall be saved (Matt. 10:22)."

+Abbot Nikon Vorobiev

"Married life, no less than the life of a monk, is a special vocation, requiring a particular gift or charisma from the Holy Spirit; and this gift is conferred in the Mystery (Sacrament) of Holy Matrimony."

Timothy Ware, The Orthodox Church

"The correct spiritual approach is to forget the good you do to others and to remember the good others do to you. When someone reaches this state of spiritual being, then he is indeed human, a man of God."

+St. Paisios of Mount Athos

"It is God, Who is merciful and grants everyone what he needs, Who is building him up when He gives him more than he needs; in doing so He shows the abundance of His love for men and teaches him to give thanks. When He does not grant him what he needs, He makes him compensate for the thing he needs through the working of the mind and teaches him patience."

+Venerable Abba Dorotheos of Gaza

All Saints Camp - Prescott, AZ



Ye are Witnesses of These Things

Then Jesus said to them, "These are my "making the world a better place." words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written Has the Church, Father Alexander implies about me in the law of Moses and the by question in this final chapter, abanprophets and the psalms must be ful-doned her primary vocation as martyr—as filled." Then he opened their minds to witness, understand the scriptures, and said to things?" them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ since Christianity is "a major world relishould suffer and on the third day rise gion," and squelched the Apostolic convicfrom the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:44-49).

work, For the Life of the World, finishes with push reset in our own ecclesiastical life, the chapter, "Ye are Witnesses of These return to the basic premise of the Gospel, Things." In that powerful conclusion, he and recommit ourselves to the vocation of summarizes and sends. He summarizes the the Faith that "once overcame the seductive and destructive power secularism world." We can today, recommit ourselves ("living as if God did not exist"), and he to the vision of the Book of Acts, that lifesends his faithful reader "out" into the accompanied by the divine power to acworld, with a renewed vigor, enlivened by complish it—to which our Lord called us, the Holy Spirit, to take his or her place on that missionary witness for which every the salvific ship of souls, the Church. There, illumined Orthodox Christian is empowered he or she must honor the Lord's call in the by the Holy Spirit to bear, can we not? vital Christian work: "witness."

Father Alexander argued that in his day, reminding us that "the Church is mission," hood and solidarity, justice, abnegation," properly be called a Christian? and the like. The latter would be the adoption of the secularist view, finished with a religious veneer, which offers not the Truth

Priest John Parker or even "more truth," but rather some "whenever there is a 'therefore' in the bland aim at "improvement," "self-help," or Scriptures, you should always ask yourself,

> "witness these Have we taken the easy way, tion that Orthodox Christianity is the only True Faith, that it is for all people?

Father Alexander opens For the Life of the World by clearly stating that he is not writing a "systematic theology," and it is also clear in "Ye are Witnesses" that he is not writing a "how to" manual for evangelism. "There exist no answers in the form of Father Alexander Schmemann's timeless practical 'recipes." And yet we can, indeed,

Father Alexander opened this chapter "witness" had either steered off course, or and "to be mission is its very essence, its had been simply redefined by the secular very life." Archbishop Anastasios of Albaman as "the new and better course." The nia, in his own words, echoes Father Alexformer would today be called the "New ander's from so long ago, in the form of a Ecumenism"—the partnering of various question, "Can a church not engaged in "faith groups," including the Orthodox, to this mission properly be called a church?" fight for "values" common to all of And for the sake of this essay, can we not them. Father Alexander names a few: personalize this: Can a Christian, not en-"Ethics, concern for truth, human brother- gaged in personal witness ("Go and tell...")

ing biblical interpretation, taught us always, replied, "Indeed He is risen!" makes this

what is the 'therefore' there for?'" Similarly, in the passage from Luke's Gospel, for which Father Alexander's seventh chapter is titled, we must also ask questions. If the title is "Ye are witnesses of these things..." then what are the "these" of "these things" of which we are witness?

Let's begin apophatically, with what "these things" are not. "These things" are not "religious practices," like fasting on certain days and hours. Fasting is indeed a vital spiritual medicine, but it is not an end in and of itself. God, for example, doesn't need our fasting.

"These things" are not moralistic virtues, "common" to all religions, like "love" and "peace" and "kindness." They are not religious rules—"thou shalts" and "thou shalt nots." The apostles, Father Alexander so capably argues, were not the practitioners of the newest and best self-help program. "Be nice" is not a summary of the Gospel. Remember—as I heard once from Father Stephen Freeman—"Jesus didn't come to make bad men better; he came to make dead men live."

Here are the words of Jesus Christ to which "these things" refer: "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). "These things" are the cross and resurrection, repentance and forgiveness.

There is not an Orthodox Christian on the planet—including those who only annually dip a toe into the waters of the Church on Pascha or the Nativity—who does not have a personal testimony? Everyone who has A mentor of mine, as a message for teach- even one time shouted, "Christ is Risen!" or

(Continued on page 5)

Ye are Witnesses of These Things

(Continued from page 4)

witness in the Church, and is both capable, and called, to do so to the world.

The Paschal Sundays are devoted to all sorts of witnesses. There are those who were first witnesses of the Resurrection the Myrrhbearing Women. And there were those who saw and believed—the disciples. And there is one who doubted and believed—Thomas. The paralytic, 38 years by the poolside, also bore witness, though not to the Resurrection, but rather to those who asked, for Jesus having healed him by a word only. And the Samaritan Woman also bore witness to Jesus, first in the form of a question, "Could this be the Christ?" and second by her testimony: "Come see a man who told me all things that I ever did!" And the blind man gave witness by his question, "Who is He sir, that I might believe in Him?" and by his response, "Yes, Lord, I believe!"

The "faith that once overcame the world" is not a set of rules. Neither is it a conglomeration of religious principles. It is not a self-help program; it is not the quest for an earthly utopia. The "faith that once overcame the world" is a conviction about a person— Jesus Christ—that He is Savior and Redeemer, that He was crucified and buried, that He descended to the dead and freed death's captives, that He arose on the third day and ascended to heaven, whence He will come again to judge the living and the dead. The Christian Conviction—"I believe this is the Christ!"—is borne of a three-chambered font. The first issues forth from those faithful witnesses who beheld Jesus, risen from the tomb, with their own eyes. We could call this "dogmatic witness." The second emerges from those have heard from others-like the Samaritans who heard from the Samaritan Woman-and had their lives changed as a result. We could call this "second hand" witness. The third proceeds from one's self, like those from the Samaritan woman's town, who eventually believed not only because of Photini's witness, but because of their own encounter with Jesus. This is, by definition, "personal." Even the most nominal of Orthodox Christians "is a witness to these things." He has beheld the crucifixion—on Holy Friday. She has see the empty Tomb on Pascha. The Lord has, in some way worked, noticeably in his or her life.

The question before us is, "what will you do with that encounter?" You could keep it to yourself. You could ignore it. You could be struck dumb by it. Or you could share it. If you keep it to yourself, you show yourself an ungrateful servant and further disobey the Lord, Who commands, "Go home and tell all the good God has done for you." How could you expect to be "entrusted with much" from the Lord when, with the talent given, you have buried it? If you ignore your encounter with Jesus, you become the very secularist Father Alexander devoted his life to exposing—one who lives life "as if God does not exist." Ironically, this secularist almost always eventually winds up trying to bargain with God under the most trying of circumstances: "Lord, if You'll just... then I'll..."reducing the Lord to a religious talisman or a divine ATM machine, the very sort of "dead religion" that was buried with Christ in the tomb. This same bargainer, not understanding the very nature of the Lord with whom he is trying to bargain, often also makes himself to be a liar. Being delivered miraculously from his horrible circumstance, in a grace-filled God-moment, he becomes like nine of the ten cleansed lepers, and goes back to "business as usual" without any further consideration for what God has done for him.

It is possible to be struck dumb by one's encounter with Jesus Christ—at least temporarily. Was this not the case with

Saul? He was blinded for three days, and then by God's goodness burst forth from his darkness, having seen the light, and became the Apostle of the Apostles. Was this not also the case with the first Apostles—the Myrrhbearers—who "said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid?" Eventually, though, joy and excitement must overcome fear: Christ is Risen!

The last option is our calling: to be witnesses of the Christ. He has shown Himself to be the Son of the Living God, Who came into the world to save sinners, of whom we each dare to profess, "I am first." And He sends us out-to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth—to your home, your town, your nation, to the world! Think of it-the Myrrhbearers bore witness, as did the paralytic, the Samaritan woman, the blind man, and the Apostles. If Barnabas and Paul hadn't, there'd be no Christian in Antioch. If James hadn't, there'd be no Christian in Spain. If Philip hadn't, there'd be no Christian in Ethiopia. If Cyril and Methodius hadn't, there'd be no Christian in the Slavic Lands. If Herman hadn't, there'd be no Christian in Alaska. If your parents or godparents or priest hadn't borne witness, you wouldn't be a Christian. Could you really just keep it to yourself or ignore it, and let the Good News die not just on the Cross, but on the vine, too? No-The Lord is saving you! He is blessing you. He has granted you to see Him face to face! He fills you with joy! And this joy must transform all your human plans and programs, your goals and dreams, your decisions and actions, making "your mission the sacrament of the world's return to Jesus Christ, the Savior, Who is the life of the world.

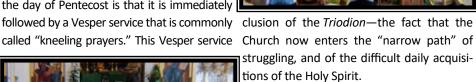
Reprinted from the Orthodox Church in America web site, https://oca.org/reflections/misc-authors/ ye-are-witnesses-of-these-things **

. . immediately after the *prokemin*, people

Pentecost Kneeling Prayers



The peculiar characteristic of the Liturgy on the day of Pentecost is that it is immediately followed by a Vesper service that is commonly



Therefore, in this first prayer, we bring to God our repentance and augmented pray-





for forgiveness of sins—the first condition for entering into the kingdom, the perfect joy. In the second prayer, we pray to the Holy Spirit for help, that He

would teach us to pray and to follow the true path, that He would enlighten us in the dark and difficult night of our life. Finally, in the third prayer, we remember our fathers

brethren who have departed, who have finished earthly journey but who are united with us in the eternal love of the Church.





signifies the transition from the first major theme—the joy of the coming of the Spiritto the second—the prayer for the abiding of the Spirit in us, for His help in our earthly life.

Around SS Peter & Paul

JULY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

- July 14 Barbara Harp Azuriah Merriwether
 - 16 John Yavornitzky
 - 17 Mark Andrews Sophia Anderson
 - 20 Wesley Holmes Matushka Mary Balmer Fr David/Matushka Mary Balmer
 - 22 Nadya Moriarty Jarrod Zaremba
 - 23 Nicholas Enoch Sr.
 - 25 Sbdn. Rodion Pfeiffer
 - Phil O'Brien Tammy Lynn Horton
 - 29 David Homyak
 - 31 Sammy Valencia

Многая лета! Many Years!

CONGRATULATIONS!

July 1st marks

Bishop Daniel's

thirteenth anniversary at

SS Peter and Paul!

Many years!

Многая лета!

PRAYER LIST

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

> Patricia Starkey Jamie Arango Ann Garza Marilyn Bezkorovainy Rose Kurowski Anna Michkofsky Frank Kulik Vickie Kulik

May Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Physician of our souls and bodies, reach out his healing hand and bless these, His servants.

If you know anyone else in need of our prayers, please contact Bishop Daniel.

Bits and Pieces

PARKING It is great having so many new people attending services at our Par-With more people come more cars. Please be aware that there is no double parking or blocking other vehicles when parking on church property. Please only park in parking spaces. Please do not park in the access lanes since this is also for Emergency vehicles, if needed. Please be advised that there is a sign for "Additional Church Parking" directing cars into the Bamboo Bakery parking lot located across the street from our Parish. Please be cognizant of driveway access if parking on the street. Thank-you for your assistance in this matter.

TYAL HIGHLIGHTS In the beginning of June, TYAL went on an Escape Rooms adventure together. We had to use team work to solve a series of puzzles and riddles, in a certain amount of time to win the game and "escape" the room. Well, we won with a minute to spare! Everyone had a blast and enjoyed a celebratory ice cream from Mesa's Lost Dutchman cafe. We continue to enjoy getting to know our

church family and feel privileged to spend time with each individual! Keep your eyes open for the next TYAL event on the bulletin board in the church hall as well as through email. If you would

like to be on the TYAL email list, contact Anne and Eli at eaferbrache@gmail.com.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION Please join us for an adult study group being led by Father Thomas on the book "Building and Orthodox Marriage: A Practical Commentary on the Eastern Orthodox Marriage Rite" by Bishop John Abdalah. Meetings will take place on Wednesdays, 6:00-7:30 p.m. Attendees will find it helpful to have a copy of the book. If you have any questions, please contact Eli at elijah.ferbrache@gmail.com.

PROGRAM The Parish will be

undertaking a summer outreach program for the neighborhood children. It is the 2nd

annual "Back-to-School' event where we will be supplying school supplies to children in the Palms apartments down the street. Please be generous as you always have been, and give your monetary donations to David Bieber or Bill Weiss. Make checks payable to Sts. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church. The event will be held on Saturday morning. July 20, from 10 to 11:30 in the Fellowship Hall. All parishioners are welcome to attend. Light refreshments will be provided.

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. We invite you to visit our website at www.sspeterpaulaz.org.

SUMMER STEWARDSHIP
Throughout the summer
months, many of our parishioners will be taking
vacations, seeking cooler

vacations, seeking cooler climes, or visiting family and friends throughout the country and world. It is also during the summer, when

church attendance decreases because of vacations, that our parish expenses rise, due to the greater use and higher cost of electricity in the heat of the summer. However, the life and work of your parish community continues even when you are traveling and away and enjoying your vacation. You are asked to kindly remember this and

to maintain—and even increase—your stewardship during the summer months. May the Lord bless your travels and bring you safely home.



our parish custom to bless vehicles on the Sunday nearest to the Feast of the Holy Prophet Elijah. This year, that commemoration falls on Sun-

year, that commemoration falls on Sunday, July 21. Cars and other vehicles will be blessed that day, following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

MID-YEAR STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS

through June 30, 2019 will be available on the table at the back of the church later this month.

"For they gave according to their means... and beyond their means, of their own free will." 2 Cor 8:3

THE MYRRH BEARERS ALTAR SOCIETY would like to thank everyone who brought potluck items for Archbishop Benjamin's visit on June 9 and for the Saints Peter and Paul celebration on June 30. We appreciate everyone's help in making these celebrations special.

FOCA is taking orders for personalized coasters. They are \$12 for a set of 4 and make great shower, wedding and housewarming gifts. A set will be on display in social hall. This is an ongoing fundraiser so remember us for the holidays.

WHEN USING CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES clearly write your

assigned ID number and name on the envelope. Your ID number can be found on your past contribution statements. Still not sure, ask the Treasurer. If you use an envelope that depicts an ID number that is not assigned to you, you run the high risk of having your contribution attributed to someone else. Please help by writing your assigned ID number on your contribution envelope with the date.

A/C REMINDER When running the Hall's A/C remember to keep all doors closed and returning thermostats to their original setting after use. Run away A/Cs costs!

July 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30 All Saints of America	I	2	3 Milk-Giver Icon at Mt. Athos	4 Galatian Icon	5 Ven. Athanasius of Mt. Athos	6
8:30am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy	_	, July 20, 201 <i>9</i>	Mt. Atnos		Relics Ven. Sergius of Radonezh	
SS Peter & Paul Feast Day Pot Luck Luncheon		m—11:30 am :k-To-School Eve	ent			
			6:00-7:30pm Adult Study Group			5:00pm Vespers
7 Blachernæ Icon8:30am Hours9:00am Divine Liturgy	8 Sitka Icon and other Kazan Icons	9	Ven. Anthony of the Kiev Caves	Greatmartyr Euphemia	12 "Three Hands" Icon	_
					St. Elijah—Bless Vehicles will be bless following Divine Sunday, July 21	ed immediately Liturgy on
		6:00pm Council Mtg	6:00-7:30pm Adult Study Group			5:00pm Vespers
14 Fathers of the 1st Six Ecumenical Councils 8:30am Hours	I 5 Great Prince Vladi- mir, Equal to the Apos- tles, Enlightener of Lands	16	Passionbearers	18 Tolga Icon	19 Relics Ven. Seraphim of Sarov	20 Holy Prophet Elijah
9:00am Divine Liturgy MBAS Meeting	of Rus					I0:00am—II:30 am Community Back-To-School Event
			6:00-7:30pm Adult Study Group			5:00pm Vespers
21 Amatia Icon 8:30am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy	22	23 Pochaev & Joy of All Who Sorrow Icons	24 Martyrs Boris & Gleb, Passionbearers	25 Dormition of Righteous Anna, Mother of the Theotokos	J	27 Greatmartyr & Healer Panteleimon
Panikhida for First Anniversary of Harold Homyak	We welcome all of our guests and visitors. Please join us in the Cultural Center for Fellowship Hour following Divine Liturgy each Sunday.					
Blessing of Cars			6:00-7:30pm Adult Study Group			5:00pm Vespers
28 Smolensk- Hodigitria Icon 8:30am Hours	29	30	31 Forefeast Procession of the Lifegiving Cross	I Procession of the Lifegiving Cross Beginning of	2	3
9:00am Divine Liturgy				Dormition Fast		
			6:00-7:30pm Adult Study Group			5:00pm Vespers