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NATIVITY OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST Birth of the Holy Prophet and Forerunner-June 24

Father Joseph Bertha, Ph.D.



The Nativity of John the Baptist

On June 24, we commemorate the birth of Saint John the Forerunner, Baptizer, and Prophet of the Lord. Each Tuesday of the liturgical week is given over to his memory. The Gospel of Saint Mary describes the appearance of Saint John the Baptist: “John was clothed in camel’s hair, and wore a leather belt around his waist. His food was grasshoppers and wild honey.” (Mark 1:6)

Saint Luke portrays the preaching of repentance of Saint John the Baptist as prefigured in the Old Testament prophecy of Isaiah: “A herald’s voice in the desert, crying, ‘Make ready the way of the Lord; clear Him a straight path. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be leveled. The



Saint John the Baptist and Forerunner

windings shall be made straight and the rough ways smooth, and all mankind shall see the salvation of God.” (Luke 3:4-6)

Depictions of the birth of Saint John the Baptist are rare, and usually date from the last three hundred years. In the lower right-hand corner of this enigmatic icon, the birth of Saint John the Baptist can be found. Included in the scene is the Virgin Mary, as she was present with her cousin, Elizabeth, as she gave birth, since she had stayed there for three months after the Visitation.

Otherwise, in numerous other icons of the Holy Forerunner, he is depicted in a variety of ways: he is included among the righteous in Hades preaching the Resurrection of Christ; he baptizes

Our Lord in the Theophany icon; and the portrait icon with scenes of his life depicts him as an angel with wings. Additionally, Saint John is found in a pos-



The Deisis: Our Lord in the center, with the Holy Theotokos and Saint John the Baptist

ture of entreaty at the left side of Christ (viewer’s right) in the *Deisis* icon. The *Deisis*, which means “prayer,” is an arrangement of three figures: Christ seated in the center, the Holy Theotokos to His right, and the Baptizer on His left. Both the Virgin and Baptizer now bow their heads and hold both hands parallel to Christ in a gesture of intercession on behalf of all mankind.

Saint John is typically depicted wearing a greenish-gold *himation* (cloak) is over his camel hair shirt, which is next to his skin. He has the long, unruly, and uncut hair of a desert dweller and monk. His beard falls down in long braids from his face.

His elongated face belongs to that of a person who is a preacher of penitence.

The mournful and intense gaze of the eyes of the Prophet is truly distinctive and exceptional. They peer with the magnitude of what is called, in Eastern Christianity, *penthos* — extreme contrition for one’s sinfulness. Beneath his eyes, tear channels seem to be carved into his flesh. These are a result of the copious tears the prophet shed in repentance for his sins and for others as well! Occasionally, these tear channels will be used in depictions of other later monastic saints as well, all in imitation of this great ascetic!

Typically, his entire body is bent to one side, as he bows to Our Lord at the center of the *Deisis* composition. His entire demeanor is given over to the service of God, requesting repentance from all.

His long and slender nose reminds the believer of the merciful nature of God, for a long and slender nose is the iconic translation of Jonah 4:2, “I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger.” These very same words in Hebrew, also have the double meaning of the person who is slow to anger, and, therefore, merciful like God.

However, the entire mission of Saint John the Baptist is expressed in his portrait icon. He is bent over in intercession before Our Lord pleading for the repentance of all sinners. The expression of his face indicates the long-suffering forbearance of the preacher of God’s mercy, which is intended for all through the beseeching of this prophet and saint! **ECL**

SUBDEACON ROBERT KNAPP ORDAINED TO THE SACRED DIACONATE

The Byzantine Catholic Church of the Holy Resurrection in Smithtown, NY, served by Father Vladyslav Budash, proudly announces that Subdeacon Robert Knapp was ordained to the the Diaconate in Christ by Bishop Kurt, on January.

Deacon Bob has been a vital part of our parish for forty years. He first became a Byzantine Catholic when he was invited to attend by his high school sweetheart, Lisa. The Knapps have been married for thirty-five years. They have three children and a grandchild.

Deacon Bob says that he has always felt a calling to serve our church and its parishioners. It was Father Jack Custer who urged him to follow his calling to become a deacon. Although he had felt

the urge to find ways to serve Christ’s Church and help His people, “Father Jack was the person who really caused me to listen to those promptings and eventually come to recognize them as a potential calling to the diaconate.”

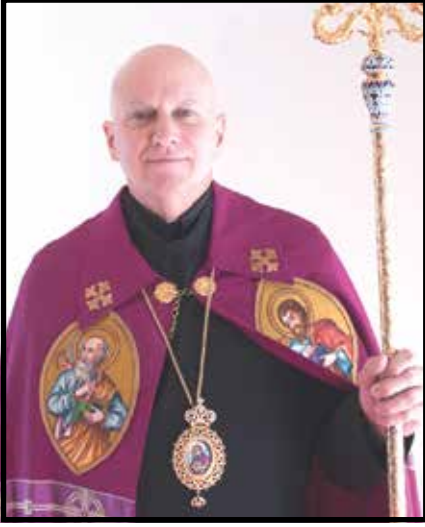
“Formation included five years of academic instruction, which consisted of two weeks in residence at our seminary in Pittsburgh each June, and then continued as distance learning assignments throughout each year. Our studies included Church History, Moral Theology, Eastern Spirituality, Homiletics, Theology of Liturgy, and many more. Formation also included personal spiritual formation working with my spiritual advisor, and formation in ministry working with our then-pastor, Father Tyler Strand.”



The newly-ordained Deacon Robert Knapp with his family and Bishop Kurt

Deacon Bob says that his ordination is a result of answering God’s call and that he will devote his work to Him and for what he is called to do. Deacon Bob hopes and pray to accomplish God’s will in his ministry. He believes in providing Eastern Catholic Formation education for both children and adults; in serving the people in need, especially the homebound or sick; and, finally, in evangelization, in sharing the joy and beauty of our Church and her message of salvation to those who are currently not being served by or part of the Church.

“I also have found great joy and happiness in visiting our parishioners at home and in the hospital. Spending time with them in pleasant conversation and time in mutual prayer. I am both humbled by and find great joy when someone tells my sermon gave them something to think about or a perspective they had never considered before.” Deacon Bob is a true blessing to our parish! May God grant him many years! *Na mnohaja i blahaja l’ita!*



I LIFT UP MY EYES...

Pastoral Reflections of Bishop Kurt



TO THE TOMBS OF THE APOSTLES

Only eight weeks ago, we were running around in planes, trains, and automobiles, living our lives. It seems like a different life now. Three months ago, I described the trip to Italy by your eparchial leadership to pray at the tombs of the apostles, and to pay our respects to the Holy Father. Indeed, we did have the opportunity to pray the tombs of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, but also at many other important early Christian leaders including the Apostles James and Philip, and Saint Ignatius of Antioch, and most dear to us Saints Cyril and Methodius, but more on those later.

In the February issue of the ECL, we flew across the Alps from Frankfurt, Germany, and landed in Rome at Fiumicino Airport on a Sunday evening. There was an orientation for all the Eastern bishops, which I missed because of my plane flight, but I was happy to see Father Ron Barusefski. As described in the previous issue, our own Father Ron is a senior administrator at

ing along every day. The Acts of the Apostles, after the first chapters might as well be called the adventures of Saint Paul. If you have not read it, I encourage you to read it for yourself in a modern English translation. Many parts of the Bible are slow and difficult, but the Acts of the Apostles reads like an action movie. (I always try to convince people to read it for themselves when I preach on it. A few years ago, I was telling people that in Florida, and on my next trip a woman thanked me. She was part way through and said it was just as exciting as I told them.) As you know, Saint Paul was present at the martyrdom of Saint Stephen. On his way to Antioch to have Christians arrested, he was struck blind by Jesus who explained his errors to him and told him where to find Baptism and a Christian teacher in Antioch. The Bible even gives the address, at least the name of the street. In my last parish, there were people from Antioch, and they knew the location of the man whom Saint Paul went to meet, and to have his sight miraculously restored. The street named in the Bible is still there.

The Acts of the Apostles begins with the Ascension of Our Lord, and then the election of the first “successor to the apostles”, Matthias, who takes the place of Judas. There was a medieval tradition that associated gemstones with

ry, explaining to the astonished crowd, each in their own language, that not only are they present for the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, but explains that the recent events in Jerusalem, the arrest, execution, and resurrection of Jesus, are fulfillments of the messianic prophecies throughout the Old Testament. Three thousand people accepted baptism and faith in Jesus Christ—now that’s a good sermon!

The Acts of the Apostles is not all sermons though, most of it is action: arrests, beatings, riots, traveling, sailing in a storm for two weeks on a crowded little ship, shipwreck, and even a venomous snake bite. If you listen carefully, you can tell when Saint Luke is describing his own eyewitness experience. I promise you, you will not be bored if you read the Acts for yourself. And when you are finished, you will know who you are. If you don’t know your own history, then you don’t know who you are. And if you haven’t read the Acts of the Apostles, then you don’t know your own history.

The Acts ends with Saint Paul arriving in Rome under house arrest. The martyrdoms of Saint Peter and Saint Paul are not described in the Acts, although the first martyrdom of a Christian is described, and the first martyrdom of an Apostle. If you do read the Acts, and I

celebrated by Bishop Jacob Angadiath, who is the Syro-Malabar bishop of the United States and Canada. He is from Kerala, a region of southern India where there are millions of Christians whose ancestors were taught the Gospel of Jesus Christ by Saint Thomas the Apostle. Bishop Jacob is the vice president of our Eastern Bishops Association. All the priests and bishops concelebrated, but at the altar Bishop Jacob was joined by his brother bishop who is the Syro-Malabar bishop in Rome. There were altar servers and singers supplied by the local Indian community.

Usually that vast basilica is noisy with pilgrims, not so many tourists out there, but since our Liturgy was at 7:00 AM, the basilica was empty and silent. There are many beautiful things to see everywhere in Italy, and especially in the great churches, but the exciting spot in this church is the place under the high main altar where the bones of Saint Paul are kept. We were allowed to go down the stairs into that area and pray there for awhile. I prayed for all of you while I was there. I prayed that Saint Paul would teach all of you the true faith about God and about Jesus Christ, just as he taught his own flocks two thousand years ago, and protect you all from wolves, as he warned his people of Ephesus at his last meeting with them.



We arrived at Rome after dark on Sunday night. In this photo, you can see the Archangel Michael sheathing his sword. At the end of a plague in 590, Saint Michael appeared on Hadrian’s Tomb sheathing his sword. Since then Hadrian’s tomb has been called Castel Sant’Angelo.

the Pontifical North American College, a real honor for him and for our Ruthenian Church.

Early the next morning before sunrise, the Eastern bishops climbed onto a bus, and headed out of Rome to visit the tomb of Saint Paul. His great basilica is called Saint Paul outside the Walls or, in older times, Saint Paul without the Walls. It is located at the place where he was martyred by beheading, and his relics are kept under the main altar. Perhaps it’s better to be writing about that visit now, because we just finished reading the Acts of the Apostles in our church from Easter to Pentecost. I hope you have been read-

each apostle based on the description of the heavenly Jerusalem in the Book of the Apocalypse (the last book in the Bible). In that tradition, Saint Matthias is associated with the gemstone, amethyst, and that is why Western bishops have the custom of wearing a ring with an amethyst, or sometimes on their pectoral crosses. Amethyst is actually quartz (silicon dioxide) with impurities of iron that give it the purple color. After the election of Matthias as the first successor to the apostles, the followers of Jesus experience the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, fifty days after the Resurrection, fulfilling the ancient prophecies of the prophet Joel. Saint Peter then preaches the first sermon in histo-



The great basilica of Saint Paul outside the Walls was built on the location of the execution of Saint Paul the Apostle. You can see he is holding a sword which is the symbol of his martyrdom.

hope you will read it or reread it, be sure to follow along on a map the journeys of Saint Paul.

Welp, getting back to our own journeys, the Eastern bishops and priests were piled onto a bus riding through the streets of Rome before sunrise. Here in the United States, there are some fifteen different Eastern eparchies: four Ruthenian, four Ukrainian, two Maronite, two Chaldean, one Melkite, one Syriac, and one Armenian. When we were planning the trip, we requested to visit certain of the most important churches in Rome, and we took turns celebrating the Eucharist according to our own traditions. This first day, the Eucharist was

The Romans were generally civilized towards each other, compared to many other people of the time. They created a Republic when they got rid of their kings, and we model our own Republic after theirs to a large extent, that is, an orderly transition of power to elected officials after fixed terms of office, and laws that apply equally to all of us, instead of being ruled by hereditary aristocrats or the strongest bully who can seize power by bloodshed. In our national constitution it says, “The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government,” which means a government modeled after the Roman Republic.

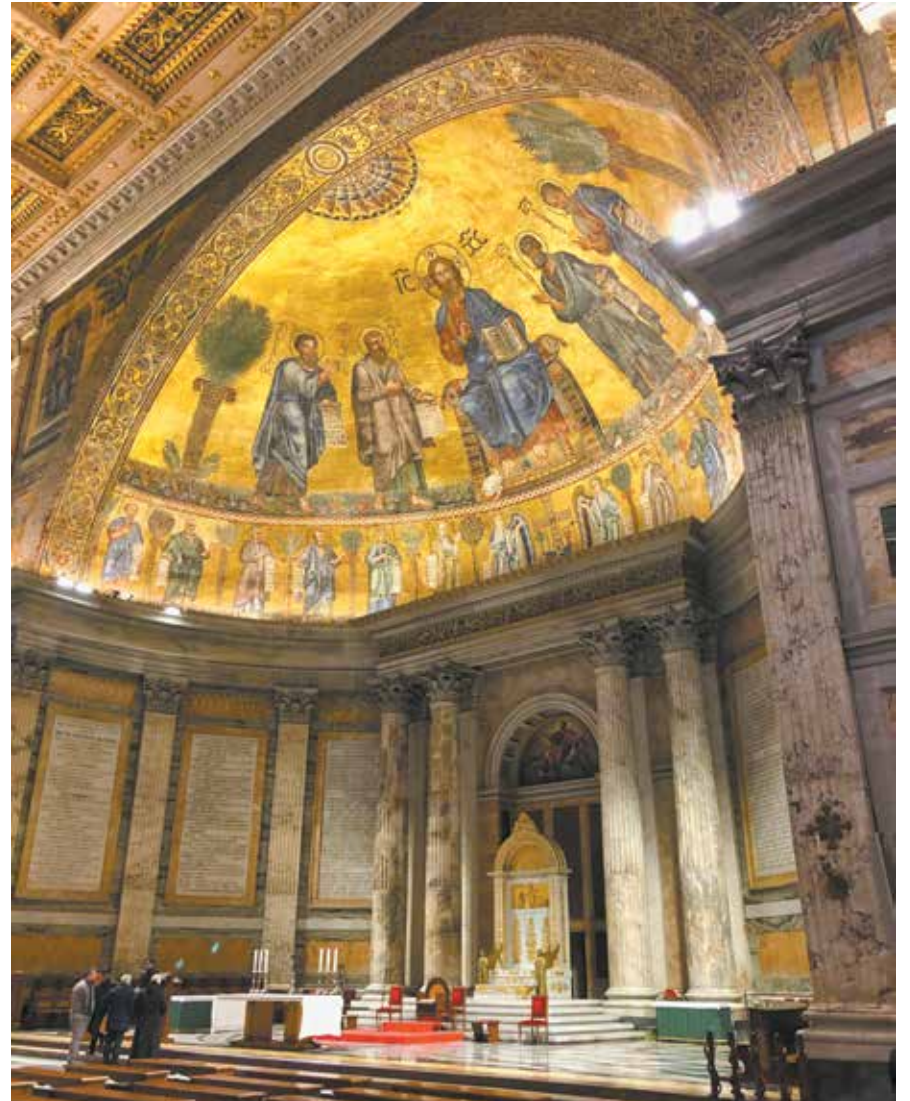
The Romans respected their laws, and if someone committed a serious crime, execution followed swiftly. The Romans executed in their republic by tying a man to a stake and beating him severely before severing his head. For this reason, the symbol of the highest executive authority, for example in the Consul, was a bundle of rods with an axe in the middle of the bundle. You have probably seen this symbol somewhere; it is called the *fascis*. A consul was accompanied by a retinue of tough guys called *lictors* and the *fascis* were carried in front of them. Actually, the Romans had some exotic executions for special crimes, but those aren't relevant to the lives of the Apostles. Since you might be curious, I will mention that the traditional execution for parricide consisted of putting the criminal in a bag with a dog, a rooster, and a snake, and throwing the bag in the river. In the case of Saint Paul, because he was a Roman citizen and Rome had not yet had all its institutions overturned by emperors, he was beheaded for being a Christian. Crucifixion was much crueler and intentionally humiliating and it was used for slaves and non-citizens, like Jesus and Saint Peter.

After the Liturgy, and our precious time at the tomb of Saint Paul, we reloaded our bus and headed off to the area around Saint Peter Basilica for our first meetings with officials. Most of the offices are located on a big street called the Via della Conciliazione. No doubt that looks to you like the "Way of Conciliation" and you are correct. The large open streets of Rome didn't exist only a hundred years ago. Mussolini built them so he would have a place to have rallies and marches. The big open street that leads from the River Tiber up to Saint Peter, which you have seen in many photos, was built by Mussolini after he signed a concordat with the Pope. After the Italian revolutionaries took the papal states in 1870, the popes stayed in the Vatican in voluntary exile from Italy as a protest. Mussolini signed a treaty that recognized the Vatican as a sovereign nation inside Italy. He paid the Pope reparation in exchange for

renouncing his property interests in the papal states, and many other rights were recognized by the government, including the inclusion of a crucifix in every classroom, and the power of the church tribunals over civil marriages in Italy, for example. I read in an old guidebook that before Mussolini built this avenue, you had to wander through a maze of narrow crooked streets, and suddenly Saint Peter appeared before you when you emerged at the piazza. The man who wrote this guidebook said it was a much more dramatic effect than we experience now.

Our first visit was to the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization. The New Evangelization is a concept that goes back to Pope Saint Paul VI and the Council. It is a realization that our western culture has lost its close identity with Christianity, which I don't have to tell you, and the people now must have the Good News taught to them all over again as our pagan ancestors were. People nowadays are taught that they are a chemical accident with no immortal soul and that their happiness lies in worldly wealth or aping the glamor of the entertainment industry. No wonder they want to kill themselves when things go wrong or they get old! We have to begin again telling people about the immortal God Who made the universe, and how He made each of us in His own beauty and love and image and likeness. We have to teach people that they have the power to become children of God, and that the moral choices they make have infinite consequences. Who cares about earthly wealth or glamor after we learn that? The leader of the Council, Archbishop Fisichella, did not show up to meet with us, but the officials who met with us led a lively discussion of the challenges of today's agnostic self-centered culture. Our leader for our meeting at the Council for New Evangelization was Bishop Bohdan of the Ukrainian Eparchy of Parma.

Our next meeting was with the Congregation for Oriental Churches. You may well ask, what is a Congregation, and



In the apse of the Basilica of Saint Paul outside the Walls is a great mosaic of the Pantocrator, Jesus Christ enthroned. The pope who built this is seen kissing the toe of Jesus. I think the pope's chair or "cathedra" must be the largest ever. That is the altar where your Eastern bishops celebrated the Eucharist together this year.

why was the first one called a Council? Congregations are the chief governing offices of the Roman Curia. They are called "congregations" because at heart each one is a committee or congregation of Cardinals and the like. There is the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which used to be called the Office of the Holy Inquisition. Old habits die hard—church insiders still call it the "Holy Office" even though it hasn't been called that for fifty-five years. There is also the Congregation for Bishops which is where most of the Latin rite bishops of the world are chosen. As you can imagine, a lot of ambitious people try to make friends there. There is the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith that is in charge of mission countries. The United States is no longer considered mission country for a very long time, but actually there was one diocese in Alaska that was still under that congregation until around last year. There is the Congregation for Clergy, which is supposed to look out for the welfare of priests and deacons, and also to supervise all the seminaries in the world. There is another Congregation that supervises sacraments and worship for the Latin Rite. Although there are these different Congregations in Rome, most of them do not supervise us at all, but rather the Congregation for Oriental Churches does everything for us. It is kind of nice in a way because it is one stop shopping. The head of each Congregation is called a prefect, and the Prefect of the Oriental Congregation is Leonardo Cardinal Sandri, a career Vatican diplomat from Argentina. Some of our younger readers might think that he was named for one of the teenage mutant ninja turtles, but I don't think they were around yet when he was born in 1943. He is now 76 years of age, so perhaps he will retire soon. Our own Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla is a member of

the Oriental Congregation, so he was the leader for our discussions when we met with this office. In more recent news, Bishop George Gallaro was promoted to Archbishop and named as the secretary of the Oriental Congregation. The Secretary is the official in charge of the day to day affairs. Many of you may know Archbishop Gallaro. Although he is from Sicily, he served his entire priesthood here in the United States, most of it as a priest with the Melkite Eparchy of Newton. He was vice rector and acting rector of our own seminary in Pittsburgh. He was named the Greek Catholic Bishop of Sicily and all the Islands of Italy a couple of years ago. Anyone who knows him is joyful for his new assignment and grateful to God that a good man is in that position.

Welp, I meant to spend more of this article on the spirituality of Saint Paul, but it seems it turned into a travelogue. I'll have to leave you here at our last Monday meeting, and pick up on Tuesday morning with our Liturgy at Saint Peter Basilica. We were free for the rest of Monday, and I bought gifts for people here in the United States and saw a few tourist attractions like the Piazza Navona and the Pantheon. I want to leave you all with something spiritual: Monsignor Robert Senetsky has been a priest for sixty years! He received a doctorate in Rome back when the classes were still taught entirely in Latin. At a recent meeting, I asked him to share some wisdom with the rest of us priests, many of whom were not born when he was ordained. His spiritual advice was this: "Become closer to Jesus every day." So, I close this column during this time of plague with this spiritual advice from Monsignor Robert Senetsky, "Become closer to Jesus every day."

+Kurt Burnett



Fourteen of the eastern bishops from the United States met with Cardinal Sandri at the Oriental Congregation.

Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate announce that the 66th Holy Dormition Pilgrimage, which was scheduled for August 8—9, in Sloatsburg, has been cancelled.

We had hoped that this year's pilgrimage would have been a place of sanctuary where all of us could gather to replenish our souls after the devastating effects of this pandemic. This difficult decision was made in light of the uncertainty of when travel and large gatherings will be safe again. The Sisters Servants will keep you in prayer, and look forward to hosting the 66th Holy Dormition Pilgrimage in Sloatsburg, NY, on August 14 & 15, 2021, exactly on the feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God.

IN THE MIDST OF COVID-19 CRISIS, SEVEN COMMUNITY CHURCHES CONTINUE TO REACH OUT

By Marge Modelewski

How fortunate we are that there is an Emergency Food Pantry in Smithtown, NY. The realization of the need for the pantry began in March, 1984, almost 36 years ago. At the outset, Father Daniel Bitsko, pastor at the time, and parishioners, joined six other local church leaders and their communities. They observed that there was a need to assist residents that were having a difficult time feeding their families. Wanting to give them aid, the pantry was formed. Its motto was and still is, "To aid residents in an emergency food crisis, giving to all who come, just by telling us they are in need." Thus began the amazing "ecumenical project of seven community churches working together as one."

The Smithtown Food Pantry is in the Parish House at Saint Thomas of Canterbury Episcopal Church, directly west of Holy Resurrection Byzantine Catholic Church on Edgewater Avenue served by Father Vladyslav Budash. It is open year round from 9AM-12AM, Monday-Friday. Clients are welcome to get food and supplies once a month. But for those homeless or poorer clients with inadequate living conditions, they may return as often as they need.

Food distribution encompasses the whole Township of Smithtown. If a client is from out of the area, they will still receive assistance. Lists of other pantries and food banks are given to help them find services nearer to their own homes. No client is ever turned away without getting help. Churches and current church coordinators alternate and volunteer every seven months. The seven churches, clergy and church coordinators taking part in this effort are:

+Byzantine Catholic Church of the Resurrection, Father Vladyslav Budash, Marge and Len Modelewski

+First Presbyterian Church of Smithtown,

Pastor Ron Wood: interim, Marge Dudleyston

+Smithtown United Methodist Church, Pastor Lynda Bates Stepe, Sam Newman

+Saint Andrew Lutheran Church, Pastor Susan Shelhart, Mary Ellen Sconzo

+Saint James Episcopal Church, Rev. Ian Wetmore, Jeff and Karen Smith

+Saint James Lutheran Church, Rev. Neil Mittelstaedt, John Edwards and Liz Wagner

+Saint Thomas of Canterbury, Father John Jeffrey Purchal, Valerie Billi

The pantry's executive coordinator since 2008 is Patricia Westlake. She has expressed her appreciation for the endless donations and contributions in saying, "Without the community's generosity and help, we would not have been able to maintain the ministry as well as we have over the years." Pat is a true example of the following quote; "Let us not become weary in doing good." Her determination in spending endless hours for the pantry is an example to follow.

The Smithtown Food Pantry is also recognized for the annual Thanksgiving Drive. It is an immense undertaking for the seven churches, residents, social organizations and the executive herself. Each year, the pantry relies on donations of butter, gravy, cranberry sauce, stuffing, apples, potatoes, carrots, yams, green beans, and corn. Along with a turkey or a ham, juice, candy, pie, roasting pan, and napkins are distributed. A Thanksgiving prayer is tied to each package. Homemade pumpkin breads are baked and donated by the Smithtown Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary. The Rotary Club donates turkeys and vegetables. Local schools and sport teams, along with scouting

organizations, are just some of the volunteers supporting this endeavor.

The 2019 Thanksgiving Drive served complete dinners to 148 families. Aside from the holiday event, the pantry is busy all year long. On the monthly average, the pantry serves 130 families. This totals approximately 450 family members per month.

This non-profit charitable organization utilizes ongoing monetary, food, toiletry, and cleaning supply donations. Dog and cat food is even on the shelves for the needy. Food drives, boy/girl scouts, school sports teams, fire departments, historical society, religious organizations, and employees of local businesses, hospitals, town, and school districts, are just a few of the major contributors keeping the pantry doors open. An added inspiration is that some donors were once clients themselves. They are grateful for the years they received assistance and remember the pantry now that they can contribute.

As the current pandemic situation continues affecting our daily lives, procedures of the food distribution had to be modified for the safety of the volunteers and clients. Since distancing was now essential, it was decided to just leave the bags of food on the outside porch steps as clients drove by. No signing in, no showing license or no conversation was possible. As the concerns became even more serious, the pantry building was completely closed down. Pat Westlake, with her dedication to the pantry, was determined to find a way to get food to the community, in more need of help now than ever.

After brainstorming with clergy and coordinators, a solution was found. Pat pulled out of the file drawers all the client-signature cards. They divided them between volunteers to call clients from the safety of their own home. After cli-



Lenny and Marge Modelewski, food pantry leaders

ents verify their current address, a grocery store gift card is mailed to them. Their appreciation expressed in receiving this gift makes it all worthwhile. Thanks again to the overwhelming generosity of the community because their donations make the purchasing of the gift cards possible.

The Smithtown Food Pantry is a true blessing and unique example of caring for the less fortunate in our community. The continued collaboration of the seven churches, for the past 36 years, is truly and outstanding example of God's love and protection. It is especially a small miracle to be able to still assist the needy, especially during this pandemic.

The following is a prayer displayed on the Smithtown Food Pantry wall for volunteers to read before serving the needy. Let us pray.

Heavenly Father
Watch over us as we come together to do your work.
Guide our hearts and minds as we assist those in need.
Let us be moved with compassion and let our hearts be tender.
When people see us, may they know you, because we carry your love to them.

ROSWELL PARISH OFFERS DIVINE LITURGY OUTDOORS

Photos by Brian Weaver

On Sunday, May 3, Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church in Roswell, GA, offered its first public Divine Liturgy since public services were suspended in the Eparchy. The reopening was met with great success as many parishioners



Deacon John Reed proclaims the Gospel.



Parishioners look towards the outdoor Altar in the Church parking lot.

and friends of the parish were able to attend the Divine Liturgy, confess their sins to a priest, and receive Our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ again in the Holy Eucharist. The clergy took great pains to make sure the reopening was done in accordance with the guidelines set out by the CDC, as well as the Governor of GA. All attendee households kept their distance from each other as they participated in the liturgy and as they approached to receive Communion. Epiphany of Our Lord is administered by Father Lewis Rabayda, and served by Deacon James Smith, and Deacon John Reed.



LIFE, LOVE, AND THE HUMAN PERSON

By Ann M. Koshute, MTS

HOLD FAST WHAT IS GOOD

“...test everything; hold fast what is good...” 1 Thessalonians 5:21

Saint Paul’s warning in the first century to the Church in Thessalonica regarding their spiritual lives and welfare is just as relevant to the Universal Church today. In a world where “my truth” often overrides or erases objective Truth, and feelings are facts, it’s more important than ever for Christians to “test everything.” It’s going to sound strange, but I feel as if Paul’s words were somehow directed to me a few weeks ago as I embarked on a quarantine-inspired organizing binge. You never know what you’ll find once you start looking. As I pulled boxes and bins from shelves I came across letters from an old boyfriend, photographs I hadn’t seen in years that caused memories long forgotten to flood my mind and take me back to another time. I also found some papers I wrote in college, which I decided to save in case I need a laugh. Among the boxes were old purses, cords, and plugs that long ago became detached from whatever gizmo they’d belonged to, and clothes that no longer fit my body, or any current standard of fashion. Sorting through this time capsule of my life, I was struck (and a little embarrassed) by how much *junk* I’d accumulated. I know many of you can relate to this experience as you embark on similar organizing projects, or shut the door and pretend all that *stuff* doesn’t actually exist. So often we possess things we should let go of, yet we hold on for dear life, for... what?

Test everything; hold fast to what is good. Just as we need to “test everything” in our closet, basement or garage to make sure it’s a necessity, or still functional, we have to “test” those thoughts, ideas,

and desires that enter our minds and shape us for good or ill. We’re bombarded with information (both factual and false) from a myriad of sources. Add to that our own desires, our sinfulness and selfishness, and we can quickly enter into spiritual overload, and perhaps some confusion about what is actually good to *hold fast*, and what needs to go into the dumpster. This process is just as difficult spiritually as it is when we clean out a room in our home. We look through boxes, recognizing what’s old, broken and no longer needed, and yet that little voice gnaws at us, “But, what if...?” *What if I throw this away and I need it later; or I find out it was valuable (it almost never is); or if someone is looking for just this item, and I’ve thrown it away?* When sorting through all we’ve accumulated we search for reasons – excuses – to either avoid addressing it altogether or justify keeping those things we no longer need. We may do the same as we sort through the “spiritual boxes” within us. Perhaps we don’t think our “spiritual closets” need to be cleaned or reorganized. We love God, we pray, we don’t miss Divine Liturgy (even when it’s live streamed), and we follow all the rules. But is that enough? Have we piled up spiritual practices, attitudes about religion and the place of faith in our lives, without opening the boxes they’re in, dusting them off and “testing” them to be sure they are for our spiritual good and not just taking up space?

It’s easy to allow distortions of the Truth that are pervasive in the culture to negatively influence us and perhaps change our long-held beliefs, even in

matters of the Faith. We gravitate toward labels (liberal or conservative, traditional or modern, and the like), often without really looking at what they stand for or if they even fit us. Political discussions aside (way off to the side!), when it comes to belief in Jesus Christ and the Church, He left us as our guide and our refuge, there is no label that’s adequate. If you are holding onto “spiritual boxes” with labels that identify with this tribe or that, consider throwing them away. Replace them with ones that contain the words of the Creed that we recite at every Divine Liturgy, and which affirms not only verbally but with the consent of our will what we believe, and who we are.

In your “spiritual reorganization” look in your *prayer box*, pulling out the practices and routines you’ve developed over time. If that box is empty, fill it up! If you don’t have a certain time each day set aside for prayer, decide on a time when you’ll be fully engaged, not too sleepy or when a project or some obligation takes your attention. Look at your prayer routine closely. Does it still “work,” or is it so worn out that it’s ineffective? You needn’t throw away the prayers and practices you grew up with, but it might be time to reorganize and refresh them. Think about adding new ones to your routine, if only temporarily to rejuvenate your prayer time. Pray the Psalms, the Hours, or even a devotional Moleben once in a while. Take these devotions out of their box once a month, or during one of the four fasting periods in our Byzantine Tradition (Philip’s Fast, the Great Fast, the

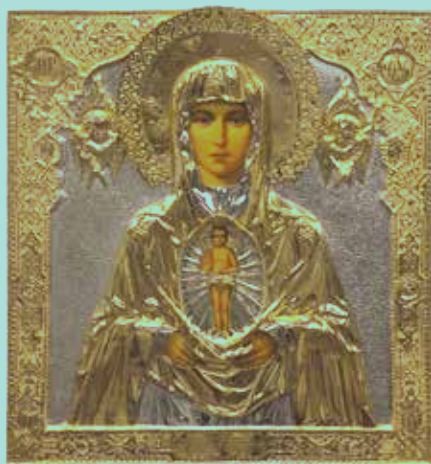
Apostle’s Fast and the Dormition Fast.) *Test* your prayer routine and your engagement in it regularly, keeping in mind that prayer is not just what we *do*, but how we maintain a relationship of love with God.

One last “spiritual box” you might peer into is the one you may keep hidden in the very back of your heart, that you may try to ignore, but which definitely should be thrown away: the things, big and small, old and new, that keep you from living charitably, loving generously, forgiving easily, and being in friendship with God. That box is filled differently for each of us and trying to justify or distract from our own “junk” by pointing to another’s doesn’t help us get cleaned up. There may be things in this box that you cling to and don’t want to part with: anger with someone, jealousy, or pride. Perhaps your box contains certain sins that you just don’t want to stop committing or can’t figure out how to stop. Does your box hold grudges so old you forgot they were in there? Whatever this *spiritual junk box* contains, the first step to getting rid of what’s inside is digging it out, taking a good look at it, and *resolving to let it go*. If you’re cleaning out the garage or basement you may call in waste management or bring in a service to haul away what you don’t need anymore. *Spiritual junk* can only be removed by acknowledging it, going to Confession (the best junk removal ever!) and keeping yourself spiritually clean through prayer, fasting, the Holy Mysteries – and by *holding fast what is good*. **ECL**

MIRACULOUS “MARY, HELPER OF MOTHERS” ICON

Services will resume
when permitted
All Services at 7:00PM

- June 4-June 18: Nativity of our Lord, East Brunswick • Service on June 16
- June 18-July 2: Saint Michael, Perth Amboy • Service on July 1
- July 2-July 16: Saint Nicholas, Perth Amboy • Service on July 15
- July 16-July 30: Saint George, Linden • Service on July 22



NEW BYZANTINE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY FORMING IN GREATER CHARLOTTE, NC, AREA

Divine Liturgies at the Byzantine Catholic Mission of Fort Mill, SC for the month of June will be broadcast online. Please contact Ron Somich by email at ron.somich@gmail.com for the link and dial in information. <https://carolinabyzantine.com/>

June: 6, 13, 20, 27

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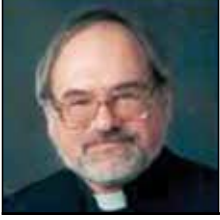
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THE BYZANTINE LITURGY

By Archpriest David Petras, SEOD

THE ANAPHORA OF SAINT BASIL: THE MISSION OF OUR LORD

The Anaphora of Saint Basil tells us of the meaning of the incarnation, why God became a human being named Jesus in the womb of the holy Theotokos Mary. The Anaphora does this by quoting Saint Paul's Letter to the Philippians 2:7 and 3:21, "In becoming incarnate from the holy Virgin, He emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, conforming Himself to the lowliness of our body, that He might conform us to the image of His glory." This can only have happened because God, the Creator of all, loved us in an infinite and eternal way, for God is, by nature unbound by space and time. Saint John tells us, "God is love" (1 John 4:8). He immediately adds, "In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent His only Son into the world so that we might have life through Him" (1 John 4:9). Saint John says the same thing in his gospel, which is quoted in the Anaphora of Saint John Chrysostom, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him should not perish but have life everlasting" (John 3:16). He does this by a humble descent into our limitedness, an infinite act of humility. Again, Saint Paul expresses this, "For you know the gracious act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that for your sake He became poor although He was rich, so that by His poverty you might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9). Moreover, we see that in both the Anaphora and in the Letter of Saint Paul, God did this for our

sake, so that, as Saint Athanasius wrote, "He was made man that we might be made God." Saint Irenaeus said the same thing as early as the second century: "The Son of God became the Son of Man to the end that man too might become the Son of God." (Against the Heresies 3.10)

The Anaphora addresses how Jesus achieved his mission to make us God-like. Because we were created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26), this is how we become the human beings we are meant to be. The Anaphora therefore says, "Living in this world, He gave us precepts for salvation, turned us away from the deceit of idols, and brought us to know You, true God and Father." Jesus is the Word of God, and he is our Teacher. He rebuked the devil, "One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). The precept for salvation that he gives us is, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27). The practical way to manifest this love is by service to others, which is the Christian way of life. Therefore Jesus teaches, "Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; but whoever humbles himself will be exalted" (Matthew 23:12), and again He teaches, "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love

your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:43-44), and again, "You know that those who are recognized as rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones make their authority over them felt. But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all" (Mark 10:42-44). This is how we become like God.

The Anaphora proclaims that our Lord "turned us away from the deceit of idols." We do not have usually have formal idols today, though celebrities are often called "idols," and political systems become our ideologies. Jesus, in fact, warned us, "No one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon" (Matthew 6:24). Mammon is the code word for money. It is easy to make money into a kind of idol, and so Jesus again teaches, "Amen, I say to you, it will be hard for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God" (Matthew 19:23-24). Jesus, therefore, rebukes the evil one, "You shall worship the Lord, your God, and him alone shall you serve" (Luke 4:8). This is the teaching of our Lord.

If we follow our Lord's teaching, He promises us, "Remain in Me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in Me ... (John 15:4) You are My friends if you do what I command you" (John 15:14). The Anaphora of Saint Basil proclaims what happens to us if we hear the Lord's words and follow His precepts, by quoting the First Letter of Saint Peter: "He purchased us for Himself as a chosen people, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation, cleansing us with water and sanctifying us with the Holy Spirit" (3:9). All who accept the word of God are His chosen people. He purchased all humankind as his people by the love manifested to us in the cross. When we hear his words in an authentic and genuine way, then we are "sanctified with the Holy Spirit," the fullness of God's wisdom. This is sealed physically by our baptism in water, our "cleansing with water." This unites us to the Trinity, and we are "sanctified," becoming a "holy nation," which is sealed continuously by partaking of the holy Body and Blood of the Lord in Communion. This is why we sing after Communion, "We have seen the true light; we have received the heavenly Spirit; we have found the true faith; and we worship the undivided Trinity, for the Trinity has saved us." When we pray the Anaphora with the priest by our "Amen," we are the "royal priesthood," offering the true sacrifice of praise. **ECL**

SEASONAL REFLECTIONS

Father Ronald Hatton



"GO THEREFORE AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL THE NATIONS..."

Our Rites of Initiation and Holy Matrimony call to mind the final words of Jesus to His disciples in the Gospel according to the Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew. In these Holy Mysteries we have concrete affirmation that this is the vocation to which we are called, each and every one of us.

Matthew 28: 16-20, is the Gospel reading appointed for the Baptismal service. It is not only to show us His command to "[baptize] them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," but also that, as a result of our initiation into the Body of Christ (baptism, sealing of the Holy Spirit, and receiving the Body and Blood of Christ), we have been given, by Jesus Christ, the mandate to do so! As Christians, as the Church, it is our vocation to "go therefore and make disciples..." In our baptism, we are given the vocation to preach the Gospel.

In our marriage ceremony, we read a portion of the letter of the Holy Apostle

Paul to the Church at Ephesus, where he points out that marriage is "a great foreshadowing... it refers to Christ and the Church" (Eph. 5: 32). The joining of a man and woman in Holy Matrimony is a sign of the relationship between Christ and the Church. The Gospel reading, John 2: 1-11, is appointed for the marriage ceremony. Not only does the Church see this as Christ blessing Holy Matrimony, but it is also a sign of His power in our life. During what we call the *Dance of Isaiah*, we sing a troparion to the holy martyrs. Unless we understand that the primary meaning of the word "martyr" is not someone who has died for a cause—in our case, died for the Faith—but means witness. A martyr is a witness to the Faith. Because of this, we invoke the holy martyrs to bless the man and woman as they become witnesses to the world of the relationship between God and Mankind. We also invoke the holy Apostles, "who proclaimed the consubstantial Trinity." This makes no sense unless we see in marriage a witness of

the Catholic Faith to the world. That is why marriage is one of the Holy Mysteries. Marriage is not a civil ceremony or a social formality, but it is consecrating the union to God, and giving marriage a new and higher purpose. In Holy Matrimony, the couple is given the vocation to preach the Gospel!

With the coming of the Descent of the Holy Spirit, human beings are given the mandate to spread the Gospel, to *live* the Gospel, every day of our lives! Each of us has a new reason for living, a new reason for getting up in the morning, a new reason for interacting with family, friends, and co-workers. Each of us have been consecrated by God to be His ministers to the world. We are called to live the Gospel in our single life, in our married life. We are called to pass the Gospel on to our children and our children's children.

Also, during the month of June, we celebrate the birth of the great prophet, forerunner, and Baptist of the Lord,

John, and the pre-eminent apostles Peter and Paul. Again, we are reminded of three great witness of Christ to the world, three great martyrs to the Faith. So, even though the great feasts—the Nativity, the Theophany, the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord, and the Descent of the Holy Spirit—are now behind us for a season, it is not a time to relax. In fact, it is a time for us to be witnesses to the world, to be martyrs. It is the time for the Church—you, me, and all of us baptized into Christ—to "go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you..." And as you do this, remember His final words to us: "and, lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." **ECL**



SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

Father Jack Custer, S.S.L., S.T.D.

LEAVING ALL TO FOLLOW JESUS

On the second Sunday after Pentecost, we hear how Jesus recruited His first disciples (Matthew 4:18-23). As Saint Matthew tells it, all Jesus needed to do was to “call;” all He said was “Follow me and I will make you fishers of men,” and two pairs of brothers, Peter and Andrew, James and John, “immediately” left everything to follow Him. It sounds too simple, no? Perhaps it was not quite so simple.

A similar passage in Saint Luke’s Gospel (5:1-10) may describe the same moment or may reflect another encounter between Jesus and the four fishermen. In any case, here we see a more complicated interaction. Reacting to the miraculous catch of fish he has made simply by following Jesus’ command, Simon Peter “fell down at Jesus’ knees saying, ‘Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord’” (Luke 5:8). Clearly, Peter recognized that remaining with Jesus would change his life completely, and at first he resisted that change. In the end however, Peter and the others did take the risk of following Jesus.

Midway through Jesus’ three-year ministry, the Apostles’ commitment to Jesus was challenged. When Jesus revealed Himself as the “Bread of life” and “the living Bread come down from heaven,” Saint John reports that many of His followers turned away from Him (John 6:66). In response to Jesus’ question to the Twelve Apostles, “Do you also want to go away?” Simon Peter answered, “Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of everlasting life. And we have come to believe and know that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (John 6:67-69).

Peter’s words are a perfect confession of faith but how firm was his commitment? All the disciples fled when Jesus was arrested (Mark 14:50), and Peter famously denied Jesus (Mark 14:66-72) on the night of His Passion. Even after the Resurrection, the Gospels admit that the eleven remaining Apostles still had to be convinced.

The final chapter of Saint John’s Gospel preserves a memory that may have been swept under the rug in the Apostles’ lifetime: that Peter and An-

drew, James and John, and a few other Apostles actually left Jerusalem after Jesus’ crucifixion and returned to their fishing business in Galilee (John 21:1-14). The similarities between John 21 and Luke 5 suggest that Jesus had to repeat His initial call to follow Him all over again.

We should be suspicious of the simplicity and enthusiasm of the disciples when Jesus calls them in Matthew 4. In His parable about the sower, Jesus warned about just how long such enthusiasm lasts: the seed that fell on stony ground represents someone who “hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself and endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises...he stumbles” (Matthew 13:20-21). It took three years of following Jesus, hearing His words and witnessing His signs and wonders for the Apostles’ faith to really take root. That faith had to survive the “scandal” of the Cross (1 Corinthians 1:23). It needed to be strengthened by the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2). We should beware of that same enthusiasm in our

own relationship with the Lord. Long after the warm feelings and first fervor subside, it will be the discipline of daily prayer, weekly fasting, Sunday worship, active practice of virtue and especially the regular sacramental confession of our falls and failures that will truly root us in Christ.

So when did the disciples actually abandon their boats? As the cliché goes, “it’s complicated.” They seem to have a boat or two handy throughout Jesus’ time in Galilee: Jesus taught from one, slept in one, calmed the sea in one and walked on water while the disciples sailed across the Sea of Galilee. After Pentecost, however, we never see Peter, Andrew, James or John in a boat again.

These fishermen’s boats, when they were put at Jesus’ disposal, became tools the Lord could use. We are invited to ask what resources we have that the Lord could use if we put them at His disposal. More important than when and to what degree the Apostles abandoned their boats is the answer to the question Jesus asked Peter over breakfast on the shores of the Sea of Galilee after His resurrection: pointing no doubt to the boats and the nets and the fish, He asked, “Simon Peter, do you love me more than these?” (John 21:15). Is there anything we love too much to surrender to Jesus or to abandon for Jesus? **ECL**

Theosis in Action 2020 events Save the dates!

July 31-August 2
summer retreat (location TBD)

November 15
Philip’s Fast afternoon of recollection

December 12
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic
Church in NYC; Christmas social

Open to all young adults ages 18-35.

Facebook.com/theosisinaction

attheosisinaction@gmail.com



SCHOOL OF PRAYER

Father G. Scott Boghossian

ALLELUIA!—PRAISE GOD!

When we say or pray “Alleluia,” we are saying, “praise God!” “Alleluia” is the Greek form of the Hebrew “Hallelujah,” which means “praise God!” or “praise the LORD.” Let us dedicate ourselves to praising, thanking, and worshipping the Lord. We were created to glorify God (Is. 43:7). We were redeemed “to the praise of His glorious grace” (Eph. 1:6). We give Him thanks for He says that “the one who offers thanksgiving as his sacrifice glorifies me” (Ps. 50:23). If we don’t praise God, it’s a sign that we are (spiritually) dead, for “the dead do not praise the LORD” (Ps. 115:17).

To worship and adore God is to recognize that He alone is worthy of supreme honor because of His infinite perfections. To thank God is to express our gratitude to Him for His constant help and innumerable blessings. To praise God, says Father Faber, is “something more than thanksgiving. It is blessing God for His goodness, His power, His purity, His beauty. It is congratulating Him that He is what He is, and that there is none like Him.”

The Divine Liturgy is the Sacrifice of Praise. The very word “Eucharist”

means “thanksgiving.” Vespers, Matins, the Canonical Hours are the Divine Praises that David foretold, saying, “Seven times a day I will praise You” (Ps. 119:164). The Divine Praises or Divine Office of the Church is primarily composed of the Psalms. Psalms or “psalms” means “songs” in Greek. In the original Hebrew, the Psalms are called “Tehillim,” which means “praises.”

“It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praises to your name, O Most High” (Ps. 92:1). As we worship, thank, and praise the Lord, we reap many benefits. As mentioned above, we are doing that which we were created and redeemed to do. How can any created being be happy and fulfilled unless it is doing what it is designed to do?

When we give God thanks and praise, we are fulfilling the command of Sacred Scripture. Colossians 3:16-17 says, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord

Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.” Ephesians 5:19-20 tells us to “address one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

God manifests Himself on our behalf when we give Him glory, honor, thanks, and praise. “Thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel” (Ps. 22:3 ASV). God is “enthroned” on the praises of His people. In Acts 16, Paul and Silas were beaten and thrown into prison. “About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, and suddenly there was a great earthquake so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone’s bonds were unfastened.” When Paul and Silas gave praise, honor, and glory to God amid the darkest circumstances of life, the prison doors were opened, and the chains fell off. That is the power of worship, thanks, and praise.

In 1 Chronicles 20, Judah was threatened by the armies of Moab and Ammon. King Jehoshaphat “appointed those who were to sing to the LORD and praise Him in holy attire” to go out in front of the army, and say, “Give thanks to the LORD, for His steadfast love endures forever.” At this point, the enemy armies turned against each other and destroyed themselves. God’s people triumphed over their enemies without having to fight, because God fought on their behalf as they gave Him thanks and praise.

Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael were thrown into the fiery furnace by King Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 3). Instead of being consumed in flames, they were preserved and accompanied by the pre-incarnate Son of God. But what were they doing all the while, and why this tremendous miracle? While they were immersed in the flames, they were singing hymns of praise to God, “praising and exalting Him above all forever!”

When the Israelites, led by Joshua, entered the promised land (Joshua 6), they were confronted by the walled city of Jericho. The priests of God led a procession with the Ark of the Covenant around the walls for seven days. God told Joshua that “when they make a long blast with the ram’s horn, when you hear the sound of the trumpet, then all the people shall shout with a great shout, and the wall of the city will fall down flat.” And so it happened. But what did the Israelites shout? The Bible doesn’t tell us. That shout must have been: “Alleluia! - Praise God!” **ECL**

EPARCHIAL PARISHES LIVE-STREAM THE DIVINE SERVICES

Below are just a few examples from around our Eparchy

Below is a list of many of the Parishes of the Eparchy of Passaic which are Live streaming Divine Liturgy on Saturday, Sunday, and Holy Days. You may access the links to their streaming sites (Facebook, Youtube, etc,) on our website: www.eparchyofpassaic.com.

CONNECTICUIT

Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church—Danbury, CT

NEW JERSEY

Cathedral of Saint Michael the Archangel—Passaic, NJ
Assumption of the Virgin Mary (Saint Mary)—Trenton, NJ
Our Lady of Perpetual Help—Toms River, NJ
Our Lady of Perpetual Help—Toms River, NJ—Radio
Saint Michael Byzantine Catholic Church—Perth Amboy, NJ
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Hillsborough, NJ
Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church—Dunellen, NJ
Saints Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church—Somerset, NJ
Saint Mary Byzantine Church—Jersey City, NJ
Saint John Byzantine Catholic Church—Bayonne, NJ
Nativity of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church—East Brunswick, NJ

NEW YORK

Saint Andrew Byzantine Catholic Church—Westbury, NY
Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church—White Plains, NY
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—New York, NY
Holy Spirit Byzantine Catholic Church—Binghamton, NY

PENNSYLVANIA

Saint Michael Byzantine Church—Mont Clare, PA
Saint Mary Byzantine Church—Wilkes-Barre, PA
Saint Mary Pokrova—Kingston, PA
Saint John Byzantine Church—Wilkes-Barre, PA
Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church—Lansford, PA
Saint John Byzantine Church—Wilkes-Barre, PA
Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church—Bethlehem, PA
Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church—Old Forge, PA
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Taylor, PA
Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church—Minersville, PA
Saint Michael Byzantine Catholic Church—Dunmore, PA
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Hazleton, PA
Saint John Byzantine Catholic Church—Hazleton, PA
Holy Dormition Friary—Sybertsville, PA
Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church—Jessup, PA
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Byzantine Catholic Church—Levittown, PA
Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church—Scranton, PA
Saint Ann Byzantine Catholic Church—Harrisburg, PA

GEORGIA

Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church—Roswell, GA

VIRGINIA

Ascension of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church—Williamsburg, VA
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Byzantine Catholic Church—Virginia Beach, VA
8:00 AM
Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church—Annandale, VA

FLORIDA

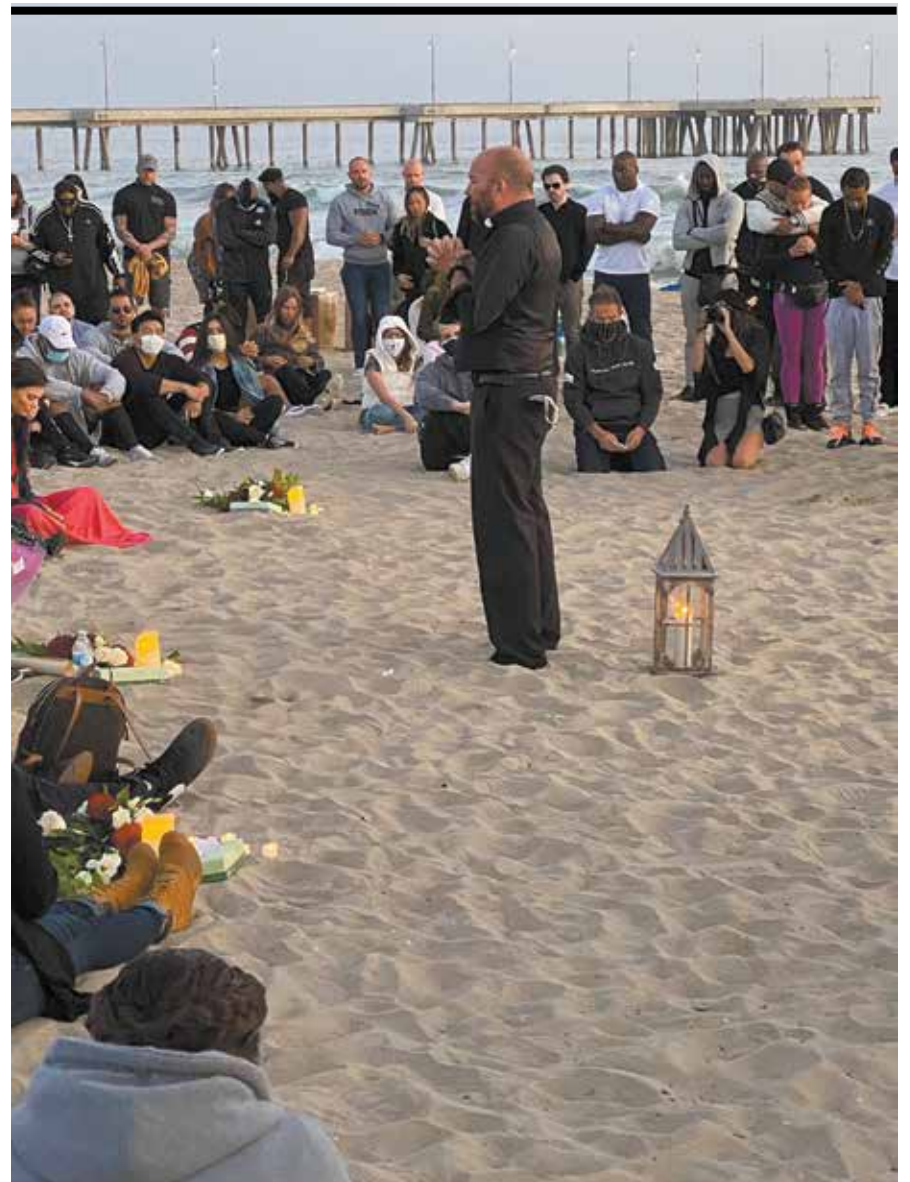
Saint Nicholas of Myra Byzantine Catholic Church—Orlando FL
Saint Anne Byzantine Catholic Church—New Port Richey, FL
Saint Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Church—Fort Pierce, FL
Our Lady of the Sign Byzantine Catholic Church—Coconut Creek, FL

SOUTH CAROLINA

Saints Cyril & Methodius Byzantine Catholic Church—Cary, SC
Charlotte, NC, Byzantine Catholic Mission at Fort Mill, SC

MARYLAND

Patronage of the Mother of God—Arbutus, MD
Saint Gregory of Nyssa—Beltsville, MD



Faith in the time of Covid:

Father Michael O'Loughlin, rector of Saint Mary Proto-Cathedral in Sherman Oaks, CA, conducts a memorial service for Shad Gaspard, who perished in the Pacific Ocean saving his 10 year old son

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UPCOMING EPARCHIAL AND PARISH EVENTS

JUNE, 2020

- 1 Pentecost Monday
- 7 Sunday of All Saints
- 8 Beginning of Apostles' Fast/Petrovka
- 24 Nativity of John the Baptist
Solemn Holy Day
- 29 Holy Prime Apostles Peter and Paul
Holy Day of Obligation • Chancery closed

JULY, 2020

- 3 Independence Day Observed
Chancery closed
- 4 Independence Day
Civic holiday • Happy Fourth!
- 20 Holy Great Prophet Elias
Simple Holy Day • blessing of cars and trucks

THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF PASSAIC
subscribes to the

Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People

adopted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The Eparchy, within all its parishes, institutions and programs, is committed to assuring a safe environment in ministry for its children and young people that conforms to Charter requirements. For further information regarding the Eparchial Safe Environment Program please contact:

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