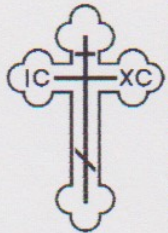


St. Mark Evangelizer

Newsletter for Saint Mark Orthodox Church - 7124 River Road, Bethesda, MD 20817

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April/May/June 2016 Issue



Saint Mark Church is a parish of the Orthodox Church in America, Archdiocese of Washington DC, under the omaphor of His Beatitude, Metropolitan, Tikhon.

Divine Liturgy: Sunday 9:30AM
Weekday Feasts 10:00AM
Confession: Saturday 5:00PM
Vespers: Saturday 5:30PM
Church School: Following Sunday
Divine Liturgy (September - May)
Rector: Archpriest, Gregory Safchuk
Telephone: (301) 229-6300
www.saintmarkoca.org

Paradoxy

"For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake, he will save it." (Lk 9:23) "Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you." (Mt 5:44)

In these and in other places, our Lord indicates the sometimes counter intuitive nature of Christian faith. On this, I offer the following:

The Scripture is very clear: If you want to find yourself, lose yourself; you want to fulfill yourself, empty yourself; you want to be great, be the least; you want to be first, be the last; you want to be rich, become poor; you want to be wise, become a fool. If you want to rule, become a servant...really, Orthodoxy is paradoxy. That's just what it is.
Fr. Thomas Hopko

Receiving Holy Communion

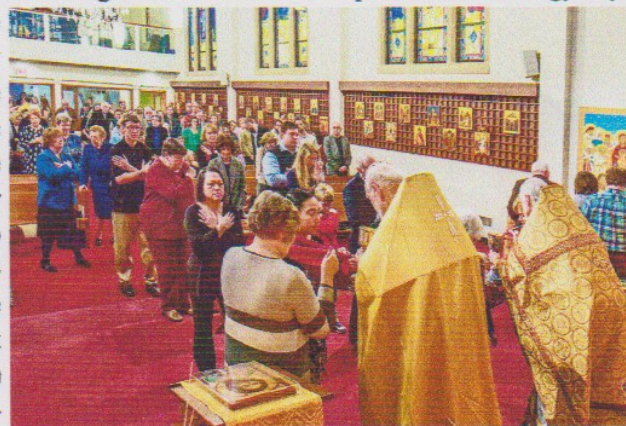
"Take, eat; this is my body.... Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant" (Mt. 26:26-27). Our Lord bids His disciples to commune with Him. What a mystical and profound opportunity and privilege we have in this invitation. So, we approach the chalice as we are encouraged to do so in the Divine Liturgy; when we hear the words: "In the fear of God and with faith and love, draw near." Christ is the Bread of Life having come down from heaven, He gives His very Body for the Life of the World. We realize our membership with one another in the Body of Christ (the Church) through communion of the Holy Eucharist. So understood, it has been normative for all Christians from the time of the Apostles to gather in fellowship and prayer, to prepare for and partake of Holy Communion regularly.

At the request of several people, I'd like to devote this article to the proper understanding of and preparation for Holy Communion. Fortunately, the appreciation of and participation in Holy Communion here at St. Mark is widely embraced. Most of our faithful do so regularly. It's been a while however since we've addressed any questions in terms of how to prepare oneself to receive Holy Communion.

First, be reconciled to one another. If someone has something against you, go and

ask forgiveness. Be at peace and forgive those who have provoked, offended and sinned against you. Likewise, confess your sins, repent and be reconciled with God through regular sacramental confession. If there is an evening service preceding the liturgy, come if possible. A strict fast is prescribed from midnight the night before for a morning liturgy, and at least from mid day on in the case of an evening/vesperal liturgy or presanctified liturgy. By this, it is understood that nothing should be eaten or drunk after waking in the morning before Communion or after a light breakfast or brunch in anticipation of an evening liturgy. This being said, the canons indicate that only those who are able to fast are bound to it. If reasons of health or a physician's directive require one to consume something (perhaps with medication), discuss this with me or Fr. Tim and dispensation may be granted for it. Also, the elderly, pregnant women and nursing mothers may also be allowed to mitigate the fast.

Finally, the prayers in preparation for Holy Communion should be said (page 91 in the Divine Liturgy book), as well as the prayers of thanksgiving after Communion (page 105). All of these things in and of themselves do not make us "worthy" to receive Communion. Only humility and God's love can do that! - Fr. Gregory



THE AGONY OF ALMSGIVING

Submitted by: Matushka Alexandra Safchuk

The disciplines of Lent include prayer, fasting and almsgiving. No news there. Been hearing about those three for years, and even more intensely, during the “ready, set” portion of our calendar called pre-Lent. Each discipline presents its own challenges and stumbling blocks artistically and sometimes monumentally present themselves to impede perusal of these three spiritual pals.

Apparently, the discipline of prayer, a strongly encouraged focus of the Lenten effort, causes us to slice life up into even smaller parts. Just when basketball season hits a peak, cherry blossoms begin to pop and tax forms need to be prepared. Prayer is a sacrificial offering.

Then there is that nagging fasting matter. Really? Octopus is a yes while some sneaky brands of bagels can be a no. What’s that about? And this year we celebrate Pascha five weeks after Western Christians. The good news – cheap Easter candy. The bad news – cheap Easter candy calling me for five weeks. Fasting is a sacrificial action.

Almsgiving can be the sleeper of the Lenten disciplines. Charity, at home and abroad. Kindness. Mercy. Cash pay-outs. Sharing veggie burgers (the number of takers is greatly reduced when the identity of said sandwich is known). It is not the effort that bewilders me. I know we are called to do these things. It’s the limits I wrestle with. There are hands everywhere and the needs are real and great. How much do I give? Do I give to all who ask?



<http://everygoodandperfectgift.org/>

There can be a dissonance between being a good steward of what God has given me, and being generous. Shall I ask the lone woman outside of Trader Joe’s who shows pictures of her hungry children to produce her 1040 tax form and provide multiple character references, especially if I have frozen octopus and am whisking home for a humble Lenten dinner? Do I answer every charity that sends me address labels with a generous check, the amount of which is selected from their suggested donation list?

There is also the perilous issue of being a woman in this circumstance. In a few weeks (in fact, on April 22nd) we will read about the good wife (the Proverbs one, not the CBS one), from the closing chapter of Proverbs. Proverbs 31: 10-31 (clever) offers the basic recommendations for achieving good wife status. It’s a pretty steep curve, opening with the prophetic question, “A good wife, who can find?” She is trustworthy, faithful, diligent, a good business woman, a good cook, a delegator, physically strong, fashionable, a credit to her family, self-assured, smart, kind, she loves the Lord and is not afraid of snow for her family.

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THE AGONY OF ALMSGIVING

(Continued from Previous)

Since my picture is not included in the sidebar of Proverbs, I know that I am not quite up to snuff here. Maybe it's that snow thing. By the way, I checked around for the proverb about the good husband and curiously I was not able to locate one, especially one so clearly arranged.

But tucked inside the good wife proverb is a helpful guide in my almsgiving dilemma. Though the fathers urge us not to be too selective about those we assist, the good wife is not tossing 401Ks around, giddily distributing possessions. "She opens her hand to the poor, and reaches out her hands to the needy." (Proverbs 31:20) She opens her hand (singular), which points to her ability to be focused on what she is able to offer and to make that offering directly. Here she uses her good sense, bestowed upon her by God. She is not discouraged by the multitude of needs, but addresses those she is best able to care for. And she reaches out her hands (plural), offering as much as she can of herself to lift others. She is making an effort to be generous and kind without being proud and judgmental. Almsgiving is a sacrificial intention.

In all this I realize we must reflect on God, who makes it all possible, who gives us gifts that we may help others, who gives us strength that we may lift others, who gives us breath to live another day, another hour, another minute. And to be that person, intention is not enough. We need to employ our other guides. "Ready, set, GO." Prayer and fasting. They are both at the root and at the flowering of a heart that can open to the poor and reach out to the needy, to give alms.

A blessed Lent. A glorious Pascha.

Matushka Alexandra Safchuk

THE SHROUD OF TURIN

Submitted by: Anelia Rotunda

Peace be with you, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ!

As we have entered into the Season of Great Lent, I wanted to share with you a very humbling and profound experience I was blessed with. Three weeks ago, I attended a fascinating two-hour long presentation on the Shroud of Turin at a local church in Columbia, MD. A dear Catholic friend of mine invited me to go with her and I am so glad that I did. The talk was held at St. Louis Catholic church in Columbia and there was a full size replica (14-foot-by-4-foot) of the Shroud in addition to its history and a discussion of the scientific research that has taken place, hidden images revealed and the evidence for the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

I was deeply moved by what I saw and heard that evening. First of all, the presentation started with a beautiful Orthodox hymn called Noble Joseph (for Joseph of Arimathea). Afterwards, a very profound quote appeared on the screen in the dark room packed with people. "The greatest adventure in life is to seek God. The greatest achievement in life is to find God. The greatest romance in life is to fall in love with God." St. Augustine



Lamentation, Macedonian Icon.

It is difficult to explain with words the feelings that rushed through my heart as I witnessed an exact replica of the cloth, which many believe is the burial cloth of our Lord and Savior. Whether or not this is truly the Shroud of Christ I do not know... only God knows. Encountering mysterious and unexplainable occurrences is not at all unfamiliar to us, Orthodox Christians, and to me particularly as I witnessed with my own eyes a simple paper reproduction of an icon stream fragrant myrrh abundantly in the course of months (now years) in our old Parish in Hawaii. God works in mysterious ways... All things are possible for Him...

This particular experience with the Shroud of Turin was very profound for

me as well. It wasn't the fact that the Shroud is one of the most investigated artifacts of history, or that it is considered one of the greatest mysteries of our human history. It wasn't even the fact that the linen cloth carries an image of a man with wound marks that match the accounts of the Passion of our Lord and Savior. It was seeing the evidence and the marks of wounds that spoke to me... they are countless...it was the blood stains indicative of the greatest suffering one can imagine. As I was trying to prepare my heart for the upcoming Lenten season (my Catholic friend was already in the midst of Great Lent), I could not help it but relive and reimagine the accounts of our Lord voluntarily going through this incredibly humiliating, excruciatingly painful and violent death... shedding his own divine and innocent blood for the sins of the world, for my sins...

(Continued on next page)

THE SHROUD OF TURIN

(Continued from Previous)

To me the Shroud looked like an x-ray of our Lord's tormented, spat upon, beaten, abused, humiliated and crucified body. All I could think about was that it was my body that should have hung on that cross, not His... Seeing the clear marks of the holes in the hands and feet, the marks of blood on his forehead where the crown of thorns was, the open wound on his side where He would have been pierced by the sword and the countless marks of the scourging made me relive that part of the Gospel which is the darkest and most painful to me, yet the same one that brings me hope. There it was--the Passion of our Lord and Savior--right in front of my own eyes. It was almost like seeing the oldest Gospel in the world.

As the speaker pointed out, one of the Shroud's most compelling mysteries is that the image it holds has characteristics of a photographic negative, with the lights and darks reversed. It wasn't until 1898 when an amateur Italian photographer by the name of Secondo Pia, took a picture of it and reversed the image. The result was astonishing. I won't go into all the science (my mind is not very scientific anyways), but studies have identified the blood appearing on the cloth as human blood (Type AB positive). How the photonegative image appeared on the Shroud remains a mystery--once again, a topic not at all unfamiliar to us Orthodox Christians.

After the presentation, my friend and I waited around so we could greet and thank the presenter. His name is Will Wingard, a 71 year old with more energy and enthusiasm than most people I know, including myself. I could tell he was a bit tired after all the questions and answers and the two-hour long presentation. When I introduced myself as an Orthodox Christian, however, his eyes lit up. He perked up and looked straight at me. He said he had always wanted to do a talk like this in front of an Orthodox audience (he also wants to do one in a prison). He very humbly stated his belief that the Shroud belongs to the Orthodox Church (it was stolen from Constantinople by the Crusaders along with other countless valuable religious relics) and if it wasn't for the Orthodox Church to safeguard it for centuries, we would not have it today. This man possessed such humility and zest for Christ. I felt truly blessed to be able to hear him speak for over two hours.

As we struggle through our own individual journeys this Lenten Season and we try to overcome our own passions and crucify our own earthly desires, may we remember the infinite and divine love that our God holds for us in his heart--a love so great to give us His only begotten son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who suffered and died for us, but also rose on the third day and gave us hope that we, too, may have life everlasting! May we believe! May we meditate and pray! May we sit in awe and ponder on that love--the greatest love this world has ever known! May we dare to love Him back the way He loves us--selflessly, unconditionally, sacrificially! May you all have a blessed, peaceful, and spiritually beneficial Great Lent, leading you to the Bright Pascha of the Lord!

With love in Christ, who loves us
Anelia, a sinner

“THE UPPER ROOM”

Submitted by: Alice Krenitsky and Karen Phinney

My mother and I have been subscribing to the bi-monthly publication, "The Upper Room" now for several years. It is an international publication that promotes world-wide prayer, believing that it is an essential practice of one's faith, that prayers are powerful and uniting; thereby connecting us all to God. It gives a daily scripture reading, combined with a one-page story that relates to scripture.

I first came to know this publication, at Suburban Hospital, where I work and have it on our unit. Both patients and staff are free to take a copy. During this Lenten season, we wanted to share this treasure with you, as there are so many Christian publications out there, but we find this one easy to understand and relate to. The stories told are so relevant, that rarely a day goes by that I can not identify with some facet of its content. My mother and I have selected several, as a sampling. Each one, we think, is a gem.

WELCOME A STRANGER

READ Hebrews 13:1-3

Jesus said, "I was a stranger and you welcomed me."

— Matthew 25:35 (NRSV)

My wife and I are greeters at Sunday worship and specifically look for those who are visitors. Remembering what Jesus said about welcoming strangers, we greet each visitor as we would welcome Christ. Many in our congregation make a

special effort to offer hospitality to visitors. A man who visited our church several years ago and is now a member said to me: "That first visit I had a knot of fear in my gut as I entered the front door. I kept

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY
Welcoming strangers in our midst opens the door to entertaining Jesus.

asking myself, 'Will they accept me?'" He had not attended worship for many years, having left with the bitter taste of rejection because of his sexual orientation. He went on to say, "That first Sunday was amazing. A number of people warmly greeted me with Christian love. As I left church, I felt an inner peace — as if I had come home after a long absence."

Sometimes we who have been part of a local church for years forget how scary it can be to walk in as a stranger. We may also forget the importance God places on hospitality. even so, it is relatively easy to greet strangers at church. The more difficult challenge is to be open and loving to people we encounter every day.

Prayer: Dear Lord, help us to see everyone through your eyes of love and then to put our love into action. Amen.

THE GOLDEN RULE

READ Matthew 7:7-12

In everything do to others as you would have them do to you.

— Matthew 7:12 (NRSV)

The voice of the catalog clerk on the phone was heavily accented. She seemed nervous and unsure as she requested my details — name, address, billing information. She left me on hold without warning me first. I became increasingly annoyed, and when she asked me several times to repeat details of my order, I finally lost patience, told her to cancel my order, and hung up (intending to phone back and get someone more competent to take my order). Then a thought struck me: *Maybe she is a new immigrant, and this is her first day on her first job.* Perhaps if I had been more patient I could have given her some self-confidence and helped her learn how to do the work without being so nervous.

Then I remembered what Jesus said about what we do to one of the least of his sisters or brothers. (See Matt. 25:31-40.) I thought: *What if this had been Jesus that I'd been talking to and I had behaved like that toward him?*

It was too late to make amends to the clerk, knowing it would be impossible to reach the same person on the phone again. All I could do was to ask God to forgive me for my insensitivity and pray that in the future I would remember to treat others as members of Jesus' family.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY
Who needs my patience today?

Prayer: Loving God, help us to treat others kindly no matter what the circumstances, remembering that whatever we do for the least of your children, we do for you. Amen.

(Continued on next page)

“THE UPPER ROOM”

(Continued from Previous)

WED
FEB 17
2016

STILL CHANGING HEARTS

READ Acts 9:1-6

*[God] changes times and seasons,
deposes kings and sets up kings.*

— Daniel 2:21 (NRSV)

When our small church has a prayer meeting, the concerns vary widely — from global threats to the challenges faced by our members. One evening as we voiced our petitions, one woman named the controversial leader of a war-torn nation that was often in the headlines.

“Lord,” she prayed, “turn his heart to you.” My immediate (and fortunately unspoken) reaction was, “That will never happen! Let’s pray for things that are possible!”

As prayer continued, I was struck by the shallowness both of my faith and of my understanding of God’s power. God desires that all people repent. Does God not have the power to change any heart?

More than 2,000 years ago, a man named Saul was traveling to Damascus to imprison followers of Jesus. Instead, he was confronted by the Lord — an encounter that changed the face of Christianity forever. Once an enemy of the church, Saul, now known as Paul, became a powerful evangelist, whose letters form much of the New Testament.

I wondered as our prayer meeting continued whether some saint in Damascus centuries ago had prayed that Saul’s heart would be turned toward Jesus. Imagine her joy upon learning that God had granted her request! And imagine the joy of those who thought as I did — that such a change was impossible. They too witnessed the mercy and power of our God.

Prayer: Almighty God, grant us a true understanding of your power to touch the lives of all people. Amen.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY
When have I underestimated
God’s power?

DIVINE INTERRUPTIONS

READ Matthew 25:31-46

*Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did
for one of the least of these brothers and
sisters of mine, you did for me.”*

— Matthew 25:40 (NIV)

Late on a Saturday night, I stopped to see the Duke University Chapel with its flying buttresses supporting a roof some 80 feet above the floor. All too soon, my few moments of solitude and prayer were interrupted by a conversation with the caretaker. Discovering that I was in town for a conference of orthopedic trauma surgeons, she told me that she was slowly recovering from injuries sustained after being hit by a car. Immediately I thought, *Can’t I ever get a break from work?* My dismay quickly turned to peace as I realized that God had a different idea of how to meet me in this awe-inspiring place.

Many times Jesus visits us in a form that we don’t expect — and because I forgot this truth, I almost missed the opportunity for such a visit. This experience reminds me that to stop, listen, and offer myself to a person is just as much an experience of worship as meditating in a majestic chapel. The next time someone interrupts my solitude, I want to remember: that person just might be Jesus.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY
Interruptions may be visits
from Christ.

Prayer: Thank you, God, for opening our eyes to see your people and your purposes in the world. May we offer our gifts in thankful service to those we meet today. Amen.

THUR
FEB 18
2016

THANK YOU!

Submitted by: Hannah Lefors

Thank you to everyone who donated to support my mission trip to Alaska over spring break! The trip was very successful, filled with spiritual growth and hard work supporting several areas in Alaska. Our group volunteered at the Kids Kitchen Pantry serving and spending time with the kids there, who were from elementary through high school. We also spent a day clearing Eklutha's Historical Park, and cleaned the cemetery at the Holy Assumption of the Virgin Mary Church in Kenai. We were hosted by St. James Cathedral in Eagle River, and were able to spend time and grow with the community there. It was an unforgettable and invaluable experience!

Thank you again for all your support!

In Christ,
Hannah



RUMMAGE SALE 2016

Submitted by: Marsha Zellem

JUNE 11TH, 2016 8AM -2PM

Saint Mark's annual rummage sale is quickly coming upon us. There are lots of things to do BEFORE that date. The most critical time is two weeks before the sale when collecting, sorting and pricing the items is labor intensive. Paula Zabela has agreed to be a coordinator with me, and we could benefit if someone else volunteers to head the sale as a coordinator with us. Marti Badila has volunteered to do all advertising, since Marge German wanted to pass the baton. Marge had advertised the sale for countless years. Thank you Marge!

HISTORY

Our rummage sale has been held for over 20 + years, and is gaining momentum every year, with more volunteers, and producing more income. In the beginning, the rummage sale started as "Babba's Attic" and was held in a rented tent in the parking lot during the annual Fall bazaar activities. Marti Badila, Barbara and George Freimann and a host of other "angels" led the activities of the sale.

Rental of the tent became prohibitive, and it was decided to hold the sale in the Spring, as a separate fund raising activity and INSIDE the Church classrooms. Marge German, Larisa Looby, Julie Flick, Vera Bumbak, Pat Ihnat and so many other helping hands kept the sale going. Forgive me if I have not mentioned everyone's name, the Lord knows who you are.

Again, this year we have scheduled a two week "lead time" between the end of Church School, and the sale, in order to allow workers to complete their tasks.

WHERE TO THE UNSOLDE "TREASURE'S" GO?

NOTHING USEABLE GETS THROWN OUT!

Although the recipients of our unsold items have changed from time to time, this year we have planned on the following groups to receive them:

- Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Bethesda receives the men and women's clothes since they have a program called "Dress for Success". This program gives job applicants and new hires business clothes to wear on interviews and new jobs. A representative from that program comes and picks up all boxed clothing, except children's items.
- "Boutique" clothing is taken to the consignment shop in Virginia.
- Coffee mugs are taken to the Seven Locks Fire and Rescue station.
- Pat Ihnat volunteers at a consignment shop which donates the money earned for the new Inova Center for Personalized Health (newly opened).
- Pat and daughter Jane Cessna take the books, tapes, videos to the Good Shephard in Sterling, the Salvation Army in Leesburg, and the Hospice Thrift Shop and lastly, Goodwill.
- Vera Bumbak will contact the Habitat for Humanity to come and pick up the unsold

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RUMMAGE SALE

(Continued from Previous)

furniture and house wares, and the remaining items will be taken to The Wider Circle in Silver Spring.

A list of acceptable items for the sale will be provided at a later date.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

Start your Spring cleaning now, and save all CLEAN and usable clothing.

- Pack clothing in boxes and paper shopping bags. NO BLACK TRASH BAGS.
- All electric appliances must be in working condition, as they are tested before the sale.
- Household wares must be useable and CLEAN not chipped, cracked or broken.
- Volunteer your time to sort and price during the critical period before the sale.
- Volunteer to help pick up items from homes as needed
- Volunteer your time during the sale. Each room must have at least 2-3 sales people since we have had multiple thefts during the sale.
- Be a cashier and bagger.



FR. BASIL'S 90TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATED!

+ St James the Confessor
Bishop of Cantabria
21 March 2016

Dear Father Gregory
and Parishioners of St Mark Church,

Thank you so very much for all the
generous gifts in celebration of my 90th Birthday.
I have ordered some vestments of colors I
do not have (green + purple) in which your gifts
have made possible.

Also, thanks for the wonderful photos of my
visits, they are awesome!!!

Love in Christ Jesus always,
Father Basil

On February 21st, 2016, Fr. Basil celebrated his 90th birthday with his "home" parish. A wonderful time was had by all! Special thanks to all who contributed to make his day extra special!

May God Grant Him Many Years!

Above is a handwritten Thank You note from Father Basil.

View the Photo Gallery Photo gallery (Provided by Victor Lutes) Here:

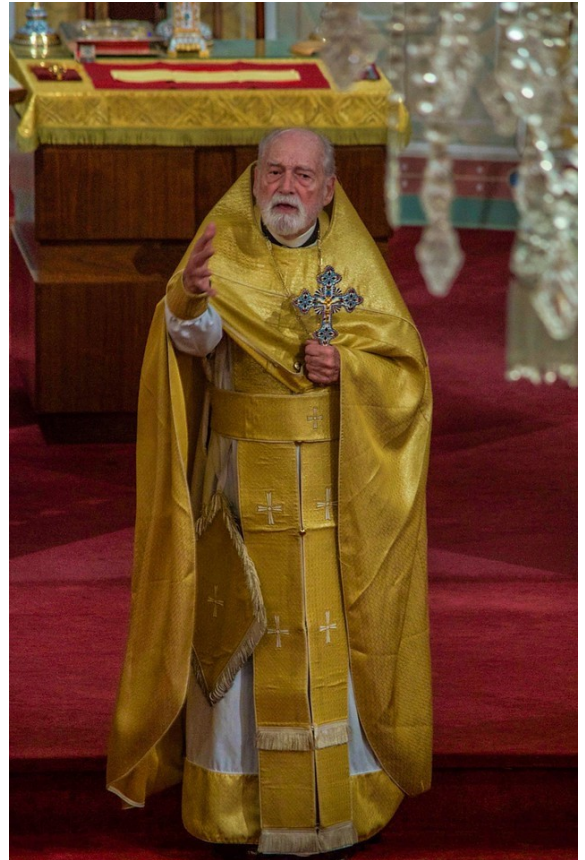
- <https://victorsphotos.smugmug.com/Test1/Fr-Basil-Summer-visits-for-his/n-pVMJc8/>
- Password: OW2V6TL31T

View the slideshow (Compiled by Steve Sekellick) here: <https://youtu.be/198HWMe7mT0>

(See Photos-Continued on next page)

FR. BASIL'S 90TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATED!

(Continued from Previous)



UPDATE ON PETE SIELINSKI

Submitted by: Sharon Sielinski

Many of you have asked how my Dad is doing and I thought an article in the Evangelizer would be the perfect platform to let you all know just that.

My sister, Susan, managed to convince Dad to stay at Friendship Retirement Community (<http://friendship.us/>) in Roanoke, VA, on a permanent basis. This facility is run by the VA and has excellent reviews on care, staff and activities. He has been there for almost six months now. This makes his daily care a lot easier on my Mother. He has help whenever he needs, he can fold his laundry how he pleases and watch his TV as loud as he likes! They take field trips, as well as eat out at local restaurants, once a week. The facility shuttles the residents to the grocery store, Walmart or Target once a week as well. They have a lot of activities in-house, game nights, concerts, and holiday parties. He has as many people to talk to as he can find. This is his ideal social situation. He gets out and does more now than he did here in Virginia!

He attends Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church with Susan, her husband Clint, and my nephew Kieran. Dad is finding his niche there, as he did with St. Mark. He has always been very good at that!

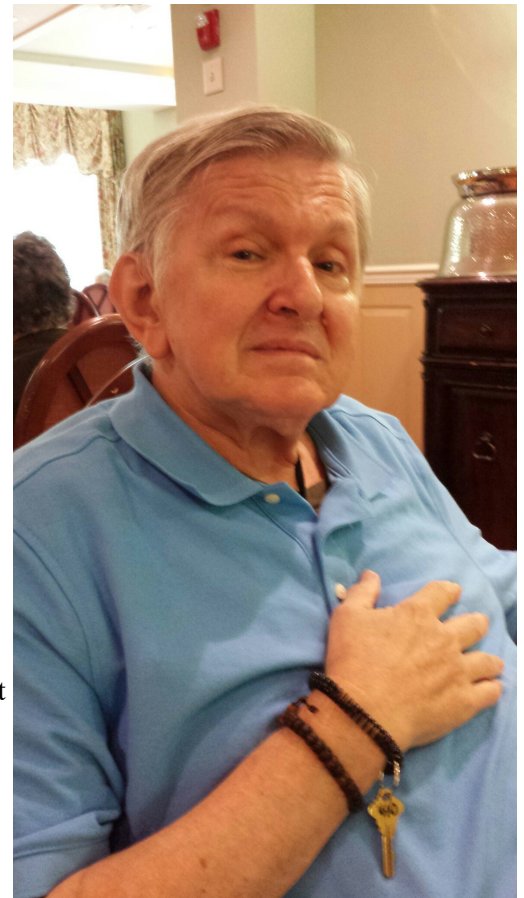
He walks almost everywhere now, he hardly uses the wheel chair anymore. He walks to the cafeteria for all meals and because the cafeteria is not VERY close, he has gotten a lot better at planning ahead. He makes shopping lists and keeps track of all his appointments himself.

As you all know, no one can convince Pete to do something he doesn't want to do. Hah! He is happy there and fully on board with this decision. (I think it's because he can fold his socks how he likes and no one tells him otherwise...but that's my opinion!) He enjoys his time at Friendship with his fellow Veterans and the many activities the facility provides.

He dearly misses all of you, his St. Mark family. I always give him a report about what's going on here and who asked about him, and of course I give him all of your love as well. We even send him a bulletin, just so he can still feel like he's apart of things, even so far away.

Many of you have asked how you can contact Pete. I know he would LOVE to hear from any of you. Below is his updated contact information. Please don't hesitate to reach out, give him a call, send him a text, or send him a note. He sometimes has difficult hearing the phone so he may not answer right away if you call. Please leave a message and he will call you back!

Peter Sielinski
C/O Susan Sielinski



(Continued on next page)

UPDATE ON PETE SIELINSKI

(Continued from Previous)

981 Lynchburg Turnpike

Salem, VA 24153

Email: peter.sielinski@yahoo.com

Cell: (703) 509-0826

Now that Dad is down in Roanoke, Susan is able to help my Mother care for him. She is only about ten minutes away from Friendship. She looks in on him often and Dad is thrilled to get to see more of his grandson, Kieran.

My Mother is in the process of moving down to Roanoke herself. Rent in retirement facilities can be expensive, so she opted to rent outside of the community, in a small house close to Friendship. This will end up saving her a little bit of money each month. The house is very nice, and coincidentally, has a wheel chair ramp built into the front porch. Dad will be able to visit and walk up the ramp rather than risk the stairs.

Currently, some repairs are being made to their house in Centreville. We hope to have the house on the market by the beginning of April, and sold within the next few months. But do not worry, friends, Dad will be back to visit St. Mark! Once things settle down and my Mother's move is complete, we will plan a trip for him to come up here. Perhaps for his birthday in June! You all will definitely be seeing him again soon!

I know he misses all of you and loves you all very much. He misses his beanie baby and candle gifts to the St. Mark children. I think he's trying to start that ministry down at Holy Trinity, but there aren't as many children there as there are at St. Mark.

I want to personally thank everyone who has helped Dad over the last three and a half years. To all those who gave him rides, got him coffee or food, helped him to the chalice during communion, I want you to know that you have a special place in my heart, as well as in the heart of my family.

Thank you all!

With Love in Christ,
Sharon Sielinski

WHY GO TO CHURCH

Submitted by: Kathy Petro

“If you're spiritually alive, you're going to love this!

If you're spiritually dead, you won't want to read it.

If you're spiritually curious, there is still hope!

A Church goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday.

‘I've gone for 30 years now,' he wrote, ' and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons, but for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time and the preachers and priests are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all.'

This started a real controversy in the 'Letters to the Editor' column.

Much to the delight of the editor, it went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher:

'I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this:

They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given

me these meals, I would be physically dead today. Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!'

When you are DOWN to nothing, God is UP to something!

Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible and receives the impossible!

Thank God for our physical and our spiritual nourishment!”



BOOKSTORE AND LIBRARY NEWS

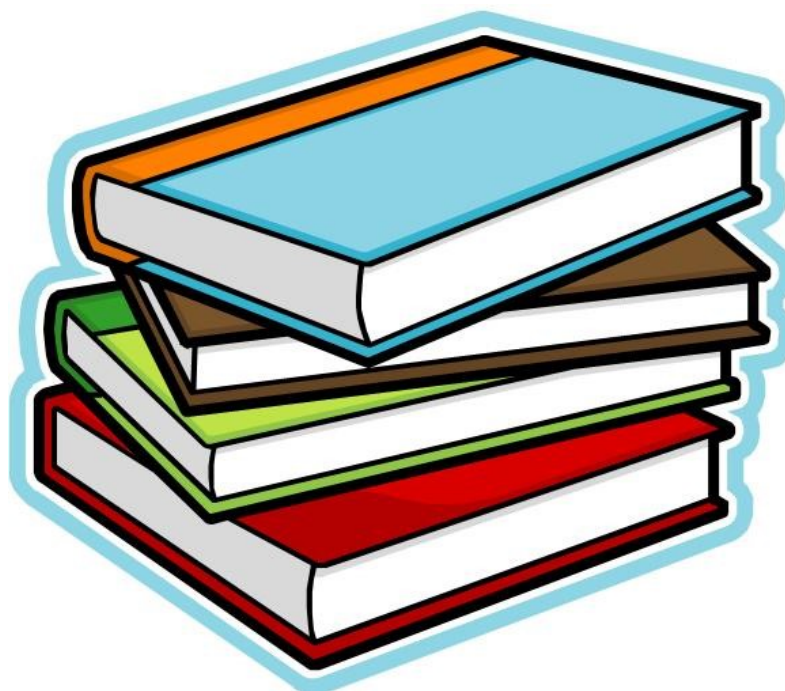
Submitted by: Joan Mitchum

I'm sorry to report that the library is very underused. As we get new books, I put them on the table. A month later when we get more new books, I shelve the first lot. Most are never checked out. Please visit the library during Lent, check out something and read it. If you don't have much time, just read one chapter. We have books about icons, saints, theology, etc. Also consider finding a book for your teenager to read for a book report. Your teen will learn something and maybe the teacher will too!

Many books are donated to the library (thank you), but some are duplicates, some are in Russian or Greek and can't be cataloged. I am putting these on the wooden bookshelf between the bookstore and the gift shop. They are FREE for the taking. Please help yourself. If you want to make a small donation, there is a box hiding behind the books. Leave it there; I will check it regularly.

If you have tried reading Ladder of Divine Ascent and found it daunting, try instead the new book Thirty Steps to Heaven: The Ladder of Divine Ascent for All Walks of Life. It's now available in the bookstore. We sold out Fr. Tom Hopko's last book, The Names of Jesus, based upon his many podcasts. There are, again, copies in the bookstore.

Please leave the post-it note with your payment. Checks can be left in the envelope. Cash should be given to Joan Mitchum, Pat Ihnat, or Father Gregory.



FOCA HAPPENINGS

Submitted by: Barbara Freimann

The FOCA Colonial District Bowling Tournament was held on Sat. March 5th at the Shirley Bowl America in Alexandria, VA. Mens' and Womens' Teams from St. Stephen in Philadelphia, St. Vladimir in Trenton, NJ and from St. Mark competed for the coveted plaque! Our St. Mark Women won the Women's Plaque! Bowlers were Pat Ihnat, Tammy Jacobsen, Marcella Hydock, and Barbara Freimann. The Men's Plaque went to St. Stephen. St. Mark Men bowlers were Michael Hydock, Gene Jacobsen, George Freimann and John Ihnat.

Other winners were:

High Series Men:

1st Alex Cox, **2nd** John Ihnat.

High Series Women:

1st Barbara Freimann, **2nd** Pat Ihnat.



High Game winners for each game were: #1 Tammy Jacobsen, Alex Cox, #2 Connie Skvir, Mark Skuby. #3 Barbara Freimann, Nick Cox. A wonderful banquet was organized by Kim, Michael and Adrian Ahmadi, Diana Haverlack, Marilyn Macht, Nancy Stanton and others. Score keeping was done by Stacy Jacobsen and Gene Jacobsen. Thanks to John Ihnat for securing the lanes and advising protocol. Congratulations Winners!

FOCA Stock AWARDS George Freimann has District Stock Awards Tickets for sale. \$2 each or get a booklet of 5 for \$10. Winners can receive 200 shares (\$200), 100 shares (\$100) or 50 shares (\$50). The drawing is to be held following Vespers on May 7th. Winners need not be present. See George ASAP to get your winning ticket!



EAGLE SCOUT

Submitted by: Paula Zabela & Brian Zabela

On February 9th, 2016 Wyatt Zabela passed his board of review and earned the rank of Eagle Scout in Troop 1159. Wyatt's project included construction of a portico, lighting and two paver paths at VFW Post 1177 in Leesburg. We are extremely proud of Wyatt's enthusiasm and accomplishments.

Way to go Wyatt!!!



Congratulations!

OCN LAUNCHES MOBILE APPS

The Orthodox Christian Network is thrilled to announce the launch of Spark OCN and Orthodox Prayerbook. Their new mobile apps for iPhones and iPads!

OCN Spark: OCN Spark is an Orthodox Christian News portal that allows you to take action. Spark provides daily devotions, live Bible study, and you can read and learn about events going on in the Orthodox Christian world and persecuted Christians. In addition to making it easy to share news and articles with friends, Spark allows you make prayer requests for those who are suffering. Take action with Spark by writing your bishop regarding Christian rights, persecution and humanitarian aid.



To Download: You may visit this URL: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/orthodox-news-spark-ocn/id1061861239?mt=8>
OR Go to iTunes or App Store on your device. Click the search button and type in “OCN Spark.”

Orthodox Prayerbook: Orthodox Prayerbook is the ultimate prayer assistant for Orthodox Christians. Not only does it allow you to carry your prayers around, it was designed from the ground up for the iPhone to allow you to pray in



the least distracting manner possible.. Carry with you all the prayers, information about daily saints and fasting schedules. Keep a list of people you want to pray for and have them automatically embedded into the prayers. Orthodox Prayerbook currently supports the Antiochian, Greek and OCA specific saints and daily variables. The Orthodox PrayerBook has been developed tirelessly by the Spark OCN team that include: Johanna Phillips, Michael Otte, Kali Godshall, Kyra Godshall, Nicholas Kachur and Juan Gabriel Quinodoz. This project also could not have come about without the support of the Orthodox Christian Network (www.myocn.net) and the Spark OCN executive team in-

cluding Charles Lelon, Joanna Read, Nick Mavrick and Garry Paxinos. A special thanks to all the beta testers, especially the ever-vigilant Mat. Irene Phillips.

To Download: You may visit this URL: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/orthodox-prayerbook/id594375892?mt=8>
OR Go to iTunes or App Store on your device. Click the search button and type in “Orthodox Prayerbook.”

UPCOMING EVENTS

FOOD FESTIVAL AND BAZAAR

Save the Date: St. Mark Annual Food Festival and Bazaar - Nov. 4, 5, 6, 2016. We need everyone's help to make this successful!

Bazaar Christmas/Gift Table - We would be happy to accept upscale homemade gifts for this table. If you do embroidery, knitting, woodworking, candle or soap making, etc. please consider making items for this table to help support St. Mark. Items can be given to Tina Burpee or Chris Cacic the week before the bazaar.

2015 Totals

The final figures are in! St. Mark Food Festival and Bazaar 2015 net profit are: **\$28,833.69**
Thanks again to everyone who make this big event possible!

GROCERY CARDS

Please consider donating grocery cards for the needy all, and especially, through-out Lent! Please see Father Gregory, Skip Mersereau for questions or donations. Thank you!

STEPPING STONES MEAL DELIVERY

Please sign up for monthly food preparation and delivery to Stepping Stones shelter in Rockville, MD. The sign-up sheets are on the Outreach bulletin board outside the fellowship hall. Delivery dates are as follows, with deliveries taking place after Liturgy:

- **SUNDAY, APRIL 3RD** - Lamb
- **SUNDAY, MAY 1ST** - Hamburgers



BLESSED MAT. OLGA OF ALASKA WOMEN'S PRAYER GROUP

The Blessed Matushka Olga of Alaska Prayer Group meets regularly on the 1st Tuesday of the month at 10:30 AM in the church nave for intercessory prayer. In addition, the group meets regularly to pray varying Akathists on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 10:30 AM in the church nave.

Please join us as you can and please remember us in your prayers. All prayer requests may be given to Debbi Dillon, Mat. Alexandra or Marcella Hydock. Also, there is a prayer request email address on the St. Mark website. We hope you can join us on:

Intercessory Prayer Dates & Times:

- **TUESDAY, APRIL 5TH**, 10:30 AM
- **TUESDAY, MAY 3RD**, 10:30 AM
- **TUESDAY, JUNE 3RD**, 10:30 AM

Akathist Dates & Times:

- **TUESDAY, APRIL 19TH**, 10:30 AM
- **TUESDAY, MAY 17TH**, 10:30 AM
- **TUESDAY, JUNE 17TH**, 10:30 AM

WOMENS BOOK GROUP

- St. Mark Women's Book Group meets on the last Sunday of each month in the parish library after Liturgy. The next few meeting dates are:
- **SUNDAY, APRIL 17TH**
- **SUNDAY, MAY 29TH**
- **SUNDAY, JUNE 28TH**

CHURCH SCHOOL

Please join us at 3pm for our annual Church School Pascha and Pysanky workshop on Saturday, April 23RD. We'll bake individual loaves of bread for our Easter baskets and learn the traditional art of Ukrainian Easter egg decorating called pysanky. We'll also fold fresh palm leaves into crosses for Palm Sunday. There will be some crafts for the little kids as well as a light Lenten supper. Hope to see both the young and the young at heart there!

- **APRIL 23RD** - First Confessions, 2 PM
- **APRIL 23RD** - Pascha Workshop, 3 PM
- **JUNE 5TH** - Church School Picnic, following Liturgy

UPDATER

NEW ADDRESSES

Peter Sielinski
C/O Susan Sielinski
981 Lynchburg Turnpike
Salem, VA 24153
Email: peter.sielinski@yahoo.com
Cell: (703) 509-0826

Yeshimebet Samara
Cell: (301) 237-6845
Email: simmssamara@aol.com

Nicole Johnson
200 N. Maple Ave.
Falls Church, VA 22046

New email for Barbara Freimann: befreimann@gmail.com

Please note that the city listed for Joanne Yurchak in the directory is incorrect. Here is her corrected address:
Joanne Yurchak
252 Hudson Street
Jermyn, PA 18433

Sharon Sielinski
(formerly Spaulding)
21854 Goodwood Terrace
Ashburn, VA 20147
Email: sharon.spaulding@yahoo.com
Phone: (540) 222-3469

Michael and Tamara Karas
10701 Ox Croft Court
Fairfax Station, VA 22039
Home Phone: (703) 426-8719

Births

May God Grant Them Many Years!

01/04/16

— Samuel Clark, son of Neal and Cristin Kumar.

02/17/16 —
Cramer, and

(See next page for photos)

Johnny & Isabella, children of Rebecca and John
new grandfather Jim Orban.

Baptisms/Chrismations

May God Grant Them Many Years!

02/28/16 — Sarah Borger

03/12/16 — Samuel Clark Kumar, son of Neal and Cristin Kumar.

Deaths

May Their Memory Be Eternal!

01/07/16 — Tillie Badila, Mother of John Badila

01/21/16 — Valentina, Aunt to Marina Mckee

02/03/16 — Ben Crawford, friend of the Rudin family

02/05/16 — Claudia Olenyik, Aunt to Dn. Mark Olenyik

02/07/16 — Alexy, Brother-in-law of George & Barbara Freimann

02/19/16 — Logan Tucker, Son of Zachary Firestone & Bekka Bleinberger

02/21/16 — Terry, Niece of Marge German

02/24/16 — Arvid Daniel, friend of Olga Skenderska

03/04/16 — Valery Nakshin, Father-in-law to Anna Kronick

03/20/16 — Chirste Jacobsen, Mother of Gene Jacobsen

UPDATER

NEW BABIES!



Above: Samuel Clark Kumar
January 4th, 2016
Neal and Cristin Kumar



Above: Samuel was Baptized and Chrismated
March 12th, 2016.
Many Years!

May God Grant Them Many, Many Years!



Left: Proud grandfather, Jim Orban, holds his newborn grandchildren: Johnny and Isabella Cramer.

Congratulations and Many Years!

PHOTOS FROM SNOWZILLA 2016

Winter Storm Jonas - January 2016



Look at all that snow!!!



*Beautiful winter day, after the storm!
Thanks be to God!*