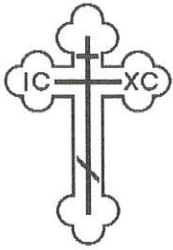


St. Mark Evangelizer

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

Volume 19 - Number 1

January - March 2019 Issue



Saint Mark Church is a parish of the Orthodox Church in America, Archdiocese of Washington DC, under the omophor 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

Turning to the Way of Repentance

"In spite of our sinfulness, in spite of the darkness surrounding our souls, the Grace of the Holy Spirit, conferred by baptism in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, still shines in our hearts with the inextinguishable light of Christ ...

and when the sinner turns to the way of repentance the light smooths away every trace of the sins committed, clothing the former sinner in the garments of incorruption, spun of the Grace of the Holy Spirit. It is this acquisition of the Holy Spirit about which I have been speaking."

St. Seraphim of Sarov

Cheap Grace Revisited

Why pay more? Get it for less! After having been pummeled by the forces of merchandizing during the holiday season, I'm prompted to write about the "discount" concept that sometimes threatens to resonate from that into our spiritual lives. The term "cheap grace" can be traced back to a book written by German theologian, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, called *The Cost of Discipleship*, published in 1937. In that book, Bonhoeffer defined "cheap grace" as "the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline.

Communion without confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ." Notice what is emphasized in Bonhoeffer's definition of cheap grace and what is de-emphasized. The emphasis is on the benefits of Christianity without the costs involved; hence, the adjective "cheap" to describe it. Contemporary versions of this thinking have lead to what I've often heard in conversations by those who declare that they are "spiritual" but not religious. Some say that they "believe in God", but don't see the necessity to "congregate", be bound by doctrine, or participate in any particular religious rites, rituals, ceremonies or sacraments.

We might think that since the concept of cheap grace and the debate about it arose very late in history and outside of the Orthodox mindset, that it doesn't apply to us and our thinking. Yet, as is the case with most temptation in it's subtlety and pervasiveness,

we can find it all of a sudden "in us" without ever having noticed how it got there.

We can go back much further in history - past Dietrich Bonhoeffer, all the way to the Bible and find the underpinnings of this thought in direct opposition to Christ Himself. Jesus is asked by a ruler/rich young man (depending on which Gospel version the account appears - Mt. 19:16, Mk. 10:17 or Lk. 18:18), "Good Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?" Implied in the question seems to be a certain minimalism. But in our Lord's answer, He takes the question far past a minimal "good deed". At first, He replies by saying to keep the commandments. When these have been satisfied, He then says: "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."

Quite apart from one's financial state, this advocates a maximum or absolute commitment of the heart.

Up until the 4th. century of the Christian era, many deadly and violent persecutions arose causing anguish, suffering and claiming the lives of thousands of believers. For 300+ years, the cost of discipleship was high. The establishment of the Byzantine Imperial Church changed that. Slowly and subtly, the perception that the Christian faith would not demand your life emerged.

How much is Christ worth to us? Though the Grace of the Holy Spirit is freely given, we must still take up our cross in order to follow Christ and labor to acquire it.

- Fr. Gregory



YOU HAVE PRAYED FOR ME

Submitted by Matuskha Alexandra Safchuk

When I posted to the St. Mark Friends List that I had been diagnosed with breast cancer, I knew that I would get helpful support and positive thoughts. I did, and it has been very welcome and valuable. Thank you for that. Your ministry to me and to each other brings a shining light to the dim and scary room of illness and disease.

Ministry offered to one another is enormous, both for those who offer and for those to whom it is offered. Because of your ministries, I (and others) have been able to watch the services when my white count was low. We have eaten well. We have been warmly supported. The impact has been immeasurable. It is a gift.

What I was not prepared for (well, who prepares? My instincts told me that it was not cancer, so not trusting them anymore) was the ministry others have shown by sharing their stories and their prayers. Women, whose own breast cancer diagnoses were unknown or only little known to me, told me of their truly amazing struggles. Others with battles, both health and personal, have opened wide their arms and their hearts. And in these ensuing months I have been with you while you prayed for me on your vacations. I have rested in your prayers when I could not bring forth my own. I have been comforted. I have been strengthened. I have been encouraged. They have carried me.

There are those who treat the offer of prayer with some suspicion and currently the suggestion of prayer has even been scorned. Secular humanists may devalue and disparage prayer. Not me, thank you. I welcome your “thoughts and prayers” and I am hopeful that those who offer them know that this is not the “least”

we can do, but a true sacrifice of life and time, an actual offering of ourselves. In this we recognize that we are essentially NOT in control. We acknowledge that there is a greater power than ourselves. Imagine that!

Those in church leadership always hope that they will be blessed with a praying people. There is no way to take the “vitals” on prayer. We don’t know if it is truly offered or only vaguely referenced when there seems so little to say. We preach it and practice it and then wonder ourselves about its validity, expediency and success. In prayer we all reach into a realm that is always around us and yet is in so many ways unknown to us. In prayer there is



(Continued on next page.)

YOU HAVE PRAYED FOR ME

Continued from Previous

mystery, there is a connection that we cannot quantify and there is a cost.

Who pays that cost? We do. When we pray we offer to place our trust outside of what we can see and measure. We look beyond the obvious. We take risks. Prayer is an act of courage.

I worry about my prayer. My mind often wanders. My words seem inadequate. I wonder if I am using the “right” prayers, at the “right” time and with the “right” mindset. Do I pray enough? (Really, that’s the most ridiculous concern of all. What constitutes enough?) But I forge ahead and I encourage you to as well.

We must keep that avenue of communication with God open and continue to offer ourselves in the initiation and action of prayer. In it our support and positive thoughts take on an eternal and holy dimension. Thank you for your prayers.

With love in Christ,
Mka. Sasha



FAIRFAX MISSION STATION UPDATE

Submitted by Dn. Matthew Prentice

The Fairfax Orthodox Mission Station continues to be blessed. Saturday evening Vespers and Vigils have been held most weeks for over 11 months and are at the historic St Mary of Sorrows Catholic Church. On average about 20 people attend with some staying for a pot luck meal and bible study. One Saturday evening a month, after Vespers, we have choir practice.

August 25th was the first Sunday Divine Liturgy. The mission station is holding Liturgy

now one Sunday a month. There were 63 people at the first Liturgy and it was a joyous event. Many of the regular parishioners attended and there were even some who had not visited before. Thanks to Victor Lutes there are several pictures of the morning.



Our next Divine Liturgy is Sunday, Sept 29th and Metropolitan Tikhon will be with us. The schedule has been set for the next several Sunday Liturgies and in 2020 the plan is to have a regularly scheduled Sunday. Since St Mary of Sorrows church is not available Sunday mornings, Liturgies are being held at the Fairfax Station Railroad

Museum, another beautiful and historic building, just down the road.



Many parishes, families, and individuals have been generous and supportive of the mission station. Several liturgical items were donated and available for use at the first Liturgy and more items have been donated since. With St Mark's 50 anniversary approaching, several original families have commented on how the new mission station is reminiscent of when St Mark was starting out.

(Continued on next page.)

FAIRFAX MISSION STATION UPDATE

Continued from Previous

Previously Metropolitan Tikhon and the Archdiocese Mission Board had approved the mission station creating a leadership council and By-laws, incorporating, and opening our own bank account(s). The Archdiocesan Council also approved the actions at their meeting in August.

We ask that you continue to pray for the success of the Fairfax Orthodox Mission Station that it may grow and eventually become a “St Mark in Virginia.”



Photos by Victor Lutes

MANY YEARS FR. GREGORY AND MKA. SASHA!!

On Sunday September 1, 2019, Fr. Gregory and Matuska Sasha celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary (actually on September 2nd.) All couples were invited up front as Fr. Joseph Woodill led a short prayer asking God's blessing on all their marriages. May God grant them many years!



Photo by Victor Lutes



BAZAAR 2019

Submitted by Tina Burpee

BAKING FOR THE BAZAAR

Since it was decided not to have vendors at the bazaar this year, we are opening up the double room to expand the bakery. We will need more baked goods than ever! As in past years, copies of some suggested recipes can be found on the table near the sign-up sheets. These are only suggestions - specialty baked goods of any nationality are welcome. These are the same recipes that have been made available other years, so if you have taken copies in the past, please leave these for others.

NOVEMBER 1st, 2nd, & 3rd



BAZAAR FOOD/DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSONS:

HOT FOOD: Halupki: Chris Cacic; Piroshki: Matushka Sasha & Martha Vance; Blini: Sharon Carter; Pirog: Kathy Petro & Pat Ihnat; Chicken Kiev: Mat. Ann & Dcn. Matthew Prentice & Jane Cessna; Spanakopita: Marsha Zelman; Beef Stroganoff: Mary Ann & Doug Fitzgerald; Piroghi: Daniella Mihailov & Helen Kerch; Mititei: Rodica Cipu.

BAKED GOODS ROOM: Ginny Albert & Paula Zabela

DESSERT TABLE: Nancy Stanton

BEVERAGES: Justin & Katie Barber

LUCKY DRAW: Vicky Jacobsen

ADVERTISING: Nina Bilyeu

Remember that the cost of food ingredients and donations can be written off of your income taxes.

Teenagers! Did you know that working at the bazaar can be counted as part of your community service requirement for graduation? (You must be 14 years of age to work at the kitchen order window.)



CHURCH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Photos Courtesy of Victor Lutes



Vacation Church School 2019



Church School Year 2019-2020



TEEN GROUP 2019

Photos Courtesy of Victor Lutes

The Teen Group had their first team building event on Saturday, September 14th. The event took place at GO-Adventures Team Building & Adventure in Darnestown, MD.



EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT

Photos Courtesy of Luke Prentice

Luke Prentice finished his Eagle Scout Project in July! See the before and after pictures below. Thank you to everyone who donated money or plants to the project. Your generosity was fantastic. Luke raised \$715 for my project which covered all the costs and allowed him to buy extra plants to cover more area than planned. Over the course of two days of work, about 20 people per day and a total of 142 hours worked by everyone who came. The project was completed within the planned time frame and all the needed materials were obtained. Thank you for all your support!



FOCA ART CONTEST

Submitted by Kelly Malkin

2019 FOCA Celebration of Faith Art Competition

FOCA hosts an annual creative arts contest, which is open to all Orthodox youth, nationwide. Submissions are accepted in literature, musical composition, photography and visual arts. The topics are announced at the beginning of the year, with the deadline set for late spring or early summer. Awards are presented at the F.O.C.A. National Convention, where all entries are displayed.

This year's theme was: "What does Jesus see when he looks at me?"

Kaitlin Meyers, age 8, heard about the contest from Nancy Stanton and was very excited to create something. She recently received a \$20 participation prize from FOCA.



The poem on the bottom reads:

He sees a lover
a savior a healthy
eater. A friend
a believer a more
faithful people.

Title of Work: Pop-up poem praying person

Artist Statement: I chose to make this because I could not decide between doing an art project and a poem and this way I could do both.

What inspired you to do this work and how was it done? My art teacher inspired me because she worked really hard on her project and I wanted to do the same. I chose the words to the poem because that's what a person should be like.

Congratulations Kaitlin!

FOCA NEWS & NOTES

FOCA sponsored On Top of Spaghetti event took place on Saturday, September 21st.
The event was a success and fun was had by all!



St. Mark FOCA Upcoming Meetings

Mark your calendars!

Following Vespers, 3rd Saturday

- **October 19th**
- **November 16th**
- **December 21st**
- **October 12th - FOCA Colonial District Convention**



HIGHLIGHTS

Submitted by Joan Mitchum

Konevets Quartet - St. Petersburg, Russia



Each year a quartet comes from St. Petersburg, Russia and performed concerts in the United States. I am lucky that Greenspring, where I live in Springfield, is one of the venues. The first part of their concert is liturgical music and the second is Russian folk music. These four men have tremendous voices. This year they will be performing at our chapel on Thursday, December 19th at 7pm. The concert is free, but there is a basket for freewill donations.

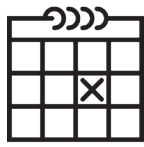
They also sell CD's and Russian craft items. If you are interested in hearing them, let me know and I will give you directions.

By entering this church it may be possible that you hear “the call of God”.

However, it is less probable that He will call you on your mobile.

Thank you for turning off your phones. If you want to talk to God, enter, choose a quiet place and talk to him.

If you want to see him, send him a text while driving.



UPCOMING EVENTS

GROCERY CARDS

Please consider donating grocery cards for the needy all, and especially, through-out Lent! Please see Father Gregory or John Bilyeu 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.

ANNUAL MEETING

Our annual parish meeting will take place on Sunday, November 17th, following Liturgy. Read-ahead materials will be available in print and online on Sunday, November 3rd. For security reasons, the treasure report will not be available online.

ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS

We will celebrate Divine Liturgy for the Entrance of the Theotokos on Sunday, November 21st at 10:00 am.

SHADY GROVE PREGNANCY CENTER BANQUET

This year's fundraiser banquet will be held on Sunday, October 20th at the Rockville Hilton Hotel. We'd like to have our usual table of at least ten people from St. Mark. Please let Marcella Hydock know if you will attend. Thank you!

WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB MEETINGS

The women's book club meets on the fourth Sunday of the month, following Liturgy, in the Library for discussion. Here are the upcoming books and dates:

October 27 - The Radium Girls by Kate Moore

November 24 - Beneath a Scarlet Sky by Mark Sullivan

December 22 - Story from Chicken Soup for the Soul (see Joan Mitchum)

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, OCT 1st, 10:30 AM
- TUESDAY, NOV 5th, 10:30 AM
- TUESDAY, DEC 3rd, 10:30 AM

Akathist Dates & Times:

- TUESDAY, OCT 15th, 10:30 AM
- TUESDAY, NOV 19th, 10:30 AM
- TUESDAY, DEC 17th, 10:30 AM

New Address

Michael & Aurora Thompson
3489 Frances Berkeley
Williamsburg VA 23188-1334

The Thompsons moved to Williamsburg, VA, in September. They will be greatly missed!

Evelyn Leleck
3701 International Drive #404
Silver Spring, MD 20906
Phone: 301-598-3697

Address Correction

The directory has Linda Weir's address incorrectly listed. It should be:

Linda Weir
1633 Wesleyan Dr. Cottage 134
Macon, GA 31210

Memory Eternal!



Jennifer Malatesta



Eunice Gilgen



Ann Groner

Deaths



Migs Damiani

- 7/01/19 - Jennifer Malatesta
- 7/03/19 - Ellen, Rob Hottle's mother.
- 8/13/19 - Eunice Gilgen, grandmother of Matthew Nimmer
- 8/18/19 - Jim, Julia Flick's husband
- 8/25/19 - Migs Damiani
- 9/01/19 - Ann Groner



May Their Memory Be Eternal!

Happy Birthday!

October

1	Michael Joseph Ruzila	1
2	Michael Lungociu	2
4	Warren Miller	3
	Matthew Tucker	5
	Amelia Safchuk	
	Paula Zabela	
5	John McCamant	
	Alyssa Pedersen	7
6	Nicholas Antich	
	Alexander Barge	
	Paul Dean	
	Philip Hydock	
7	Mark Needham	9
	Greg Yakubik	
8	Ionel Baleanu	10
9	John Petro	
	Julia Wickard	11
10	Edward Aseev	12
	Marie Petro-Jenkins	13
11	Frank Dellermann	14
12	Aleksandra Cacic	15
13	Matthew Lobas	
14	Betselot Bezuneh	
15	Cristin Kumar	16
	Tammy Jacobsen	
	Yeshimebet Samara	17
16	Oleg Jankovic	
17	Martha Baxtresser	18
18	Dean Balamaci	21
	Nikolay Korokhov	22
	Barbara Mersereau	
23	Lori Hottle	23
	Aaron Steinberg	24
	Erika Steinberg	
24	William Hardy	25
	Francisco Salas	
	Jack Ryan Ruzila	28
26	Andrew Yakubik	
27	Pierce Berry	
	Steven Kreta	30
29	Nina Bilyeu	
31	Wayne Tatusko	

November

Diana Haverlack	1
Christina Sokich	
Jessica Fitzgerald	3
Jane (Ihnat) Cessna	
Mat. Ann Prentice	5
Alexander Jankovic	
Susie Needham	6
Catherine Dillon	
Dn. David Phelps	7
Karen Phinney	
Patricia Rodak	8
Brian Zabela	
Zachary Firestone	9
Christian Shimer	
Sonya LeFors	10
Alexander Safchuk	
Andrea Phelps	11
Abigail Dean	13
Michelle (Rodak) Weaver	
Mark Lungociu	14
Adrian Ahmadi	
Devon Burns	
David Holovac	15
Bill Dove	16
Kaitlin Brooke Meyers	
John Jr. Bilyeu	17
Connor Alexander Ruzila	
Claire German	
Matthew Balamaci	18
Gregory Mitchum	
Calla (Catherine) Steinberg	19
Deborah Firestone	
Sarah Borger	20
Dn. Matthew Prentice	21
Andrew Dillon	
John Thomas Sedor	22
Virgeil Carstea	
Jessica Humphries	
Samantha Pearson	
Alexis Christine Freimann	23
Helen Kerch	

December

Tatyana Gleason	26	Marina McKee
Nino Japaridze Henning	28	Cristian Ciubotaru
Daniel Nakshin	29	Alexander Sokich
Tina Parrish	31	Wayne Cessna
Lucy Moser		Charles Datch
Theresa Sekellick		
Rebekah Barber		
Victor Lutes		
David Burpee		
Lucas Lindsay		
Kyla Prentice		
Marie Wickard		
Linda Marie Jackson		
Gale Rutan		
Ransom Berry		
Olga Uritskaye		
Simeon Tatusko		
Ivan Borissov		
Micah Needham		
Mat. Helen Kuchta		
David Markovich		
Timothy Petro		
Howard Guba		
Patricia Koopersmith		
Evelyn Leleck		
Christopher German		
Jesse Japaridze Henning		
Catherine Steger		
Jenifer Calomiris		
Darren Tucker		
Elizabeth Sedor		
Marsha Zelle		
Olan Sheppard		
Anne Tucker		
Nicholas Masick		
Steven Sekellick		
Caroline German		
Elaine (Petro) O'Halloran		
Mat. Christina Perry		
Eugene Borissov		
Audrey Henning		
Alexander Landsburg		
Matthew Tatusko		
Andrew Tucker		
Sophie Christine Balan		
Mat. Janet Koczak		
Margaret McCamant		

