

THE PROPHET

monthly newsletter of

St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church

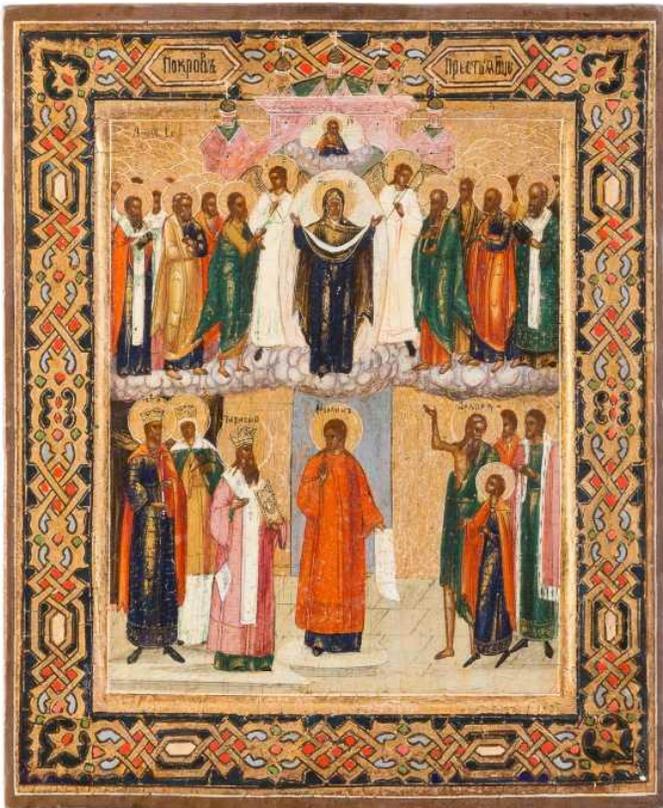
Orthodox Church in America
Archdiocese of Pittsburgh

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October, AD 2019



Protection of the Mother of God (Oct. 1)

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RECTOR'S REPORT:

Glory to Jesus Christ! Slava Isusu Christu!

Dear faithful parishioners, friends, and family of St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church: it is my great pleasure to be here with you, and to greet you as your acting rector. I hope to be a part of your journey into the Kingdom of Heaven for many years to come! My singular prayer is that we will grow in our love for one another, and most especially for our Lord Jesus Christ.

My first month as the acting rector here has been a real blessing, if only because I haven't had to be much of a rector at all: if we look at the literal meaning of the word, it comes from the Latin 'rectus', meaning 'straight', and so the rector is the person appointed by the bishop to, in his absence, keeps the parish aright and on the straight and narrow path to the Kingdom. Thankfully, not much straightening out has been required at all, for I follow a truly great pastor and leader in Fr. Joe. Instead, it has been my joy to get to focus more than anything on performing my pastoral duties as your acting rector: offering up the divine sacrifice of the Eucharist and other sacraments as your priest, guiding us all along the Christian path as pastor, and offering a word here and there as preacher and teacher.

Along these lines, I cannot forget let it go unmentioned how humbled I am by your interest in

Birthdays:

Steven Schenken (10/2) Apr. Joseph Oleynik (10/4)
 Juliana Oleynik (10/4) Michael Pazuchanics (10/6)
 Daniel Cario (10/6) John Petronka (10/11)
 Isabella Petronka (10/15) Daniel Yarosh (10/16)
 John Migyanko III (10/17) Kyra Schenken (10/23)
 Katie Udodow (10/24) Jane Shamitko (10/29)
 Samuel Simko (10/29)

Anniversaries:

Stephen & Julie Simko (10/4/97)
 Bob & Kyra Schenken (10/8/89)
 Greg & Jane Shamitko (10/14/72)
 John & Lianne Migyanko (10/20/91)
 Paula & Joseph Phillis (10/21/89)
 Christopher & Wendy Petronka (10/21/95)
 Jerry & Lorrie Strennen (10/29/95)

*If you or a loved one are missing, please let
 Fr. John know so that he can correct our records!*

PARISH PRAYER LIST:

**We pray for the health and salvation of ALL our
 parish family members, but especially for:**

Met. Theodosius (Lazor)
 Apr. Paul (Lazor)
 Apr. John (Reeves)
 Apr. Stephen & Mat. Emily (Shuga)
 Apr. Gregory (Hatrak)
 Dn. Gregory (Jewett)
 Dn. Mark & Mat. Kelly Elizabeth (Oleynik)
 Mat. Alexandra (Safchuk)
 John (Boschuk)
 Darcie (Burkholder)
 Elaine (Gwen Bushko)
 Eleanor (Comstock)
 John (Petronka)
 Anastasia (Rudolph)
 John (Rusinko)
 Carol (Sweda)
 Dennis (Sweda)
 Justin & Alexis, and the child to be born of her
 (DeArmitt)
 Joseph & Katherine and the child to be born of her
 (Helinski)
 Randy & Katherine and the child to be born of her
 (Udodow-Roberto)
 Alexander & Marissa,
 who are preparing for Holy Matrimony

THIS MONTH'S COMMEMORATIONS:

Oct. 1st, The Protection of the Theotokos: We begin the month of October by commemorating the miraculous appearance of the Mother of God in the Blachernae Church of Our Lady in Constantinople, where her robe, veil, and belt/sash were preserved. On Sunday, Oct. 1, the faithful of the city gathered to beg her protection against a large Russian invasion of the city (this was when the Russians were still pagan). In the middle of the All-Night Vigil, St. Andrew, the Fool-for-Christ and Slav by birth, beheld St. Mary praying for the besieged city, "resplendent with heavenly light and surrounded by an assembly of the Saints: St. John the Baptist and the holy Apostle John the Theologian accompanied the Queen of Heaven. On bended knees the Most Holy Virgin tearfully prayed for Christians for a long time. Then, coming near the Bishop's Throne, she continued her prayer. After completing her prayer she took her veil and spread it over the people praying in church, protecting them from enemies both visible and invisible. The Most Holy Lady Theotokos was resplendent with heavenly glory, and the protecting veil in her hands gleamed 'more than the rays of the sun.' St. Andrew gazed trembling at the miraculous vision and he asked his disciple, the blessed Epiphanius standing beside him, 'Do you see, brother, the Holy Theotokos, praying for all the world?' Epiphanius answered, 'I do see, holy Father, and I am in awe.' The Ever-Blessed Mother of God implored the Lord Jesus Christ to accept the prayers of all the people calling on His Most Holy Name, and to respond speedily to her intercession, 'O Heavenly King, accept all those who pray to Thee and who call upon my name for help. Do not let them go away from my icon unheard.' (taken from www.oca.org/fs). Over time, this became one of the principle feasts of the Russian Church, and known by the name of 'Pokrov', which means both 'protection' and 'veil': it is celebrated like one of the Twelve Great Feasts. More so, it is especially celebrated by the Russians,, in part, because the Church was preserved from their pagan ancestors. It has thus come down to us - our Orthodox Church in America being a daughter of the Church of Russia - as one of the greatest feasts of the Church year. May we all remember that Our Lady Theotokos, the Queen of heaven,

together with all the angels and saints of the Church, who ever protects us from all ills by her most powerful prayers: we need only to call out for her aid. In the icons, such as the one on the cover of this newsletter, **St. Romanus the Melodist**, who composed the original Akathist Hymn to the Mother of God – a hymn so beloved by our Orthodox faithful – is often depicted as leading the faithful in praise of the Theotokos, though he lived over two centuries prior to the event being depicted. This is because, prior to Oct. 1st being the Feast of the Protection, it was the feast of St. Romanus. In this way, his memory is not forgotten in the midst of our celebration of our Heavenly Queen, whom St. Romanus so loved, and whom he credited as giving him the words with which to praise our God.

Oct. 3rd, St. Dionysius the Areopagite: He was an Athenian Judge and one of those converted by St. Paul's preaching at Mars Hill (Acts 17:18-34). However, it was a 5th/6th Century theologian writing in the saint's name (sometimes called 'Pseudo-Dionysius') who lends such popularity to the saint, as these writings about how we come to know the incomprehensible God are foundational to later theological thought. Because we don't know the identity of this great theologian, the Church conflates the two in our celebration.

Oct. 5th, The Holy Hierarchs of Moscow: We celebrate the memory of those great Metropolitans and Patriarchs of Moscow – Ss. Peter, Alexis, Jonah, Macarius, Philip, Job, Hermogenes, Philaret, Innocent, Macarius, & Tikhon – who saw our Mother Church through countless trials and tribulations, and who ever intercede for the Church of Moscow and its children – including us! We cannot forget that two of our former bishops here in America – Innocent and Tikhon – are numbered among these Holy Hierarch of Moscow.

Oct. 6th, St. Innocent of Alaska: We celebrate St. Innocent for the second day in a row, as Metropolitan of Moscow, Apostle to America, and Enlightener of the Aleuts. In addition to devising written languages for the Aleuts and Tlingits of Alaska, so that they might have the services and scriptures in their own languages (which he himself translated), St. Innocent was also the first Orthodox bishop in

America. After he was made Metropolitan of Moscow (the head of the Russian Orthodox Church), Alaska was acquired by the United States, and he repurposed the Alaska Diocese which he established as the Russian Orthodox Missionary Diocese of North America. Our Orthodox Church in America is the successor to this diocese, with the mission of being the local Church here, for all those who dwell in our lands: both Orthodox and non-Orthodox. We maintain the same mission of that missionary diocese which St. Innocent established, and should remember to ask the aid of our founder – the great missionary, St. Innocent – in this and every missionary effort.

Oct. 9th, St. Tikhon of Moscow: St. Tikhon would follow St. Innocent – first as head of the North American Church (1897-1907) and later as the Prelate of Moscow (1917-25) – and would re-affirm our mission, first established by St. Innocent, here in America. To that end, he established St. Tikhon's Monastery (named after his patron, St. Tikhon of Zadonsk, another great missionary bishop), in order to bring the fullness of the faith here to America, as well as to be a place of spiritual formation for our clergy. In 1907, he was called back to Russia, and as that country underwent the turbulent Russian Revolution, he would be elected – because he was the most loving bishop in the Russian Church – the first Patriarch of Moscow since Tsar Peter I dissolved the Patriarchate in 1721. After refusing to submit the Church to the evils of the Bolsheviks, St. Tikhon would end up being starved to death in 1925.

Oct. 11th, The Holy Elders of Optina: The Optina Hermitage and its numerous saintly elders became the center of a revival of spirituality in 19th Century Russia, influencing men such as the great author Dostoyevsky and many of the men who would become the priests and bishops in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries here in America, when the Church began to explode in numbers due to conversions (such as our parish, made up of converts from the Byzantine Catholic Unia) and immigration. We are indebted to their witness.

Oct. 12th, The Uncovering of the Relics of St. John of San Francisco: In preparation for his planned glorification as a saint in 1994, the Church was

tasked with the necessary examination of the saints' body. On midnight on Oct. 11/12, 1993, the relics of St. John were taken out of their sarcophagus in the crypt under Holy Virgin Mary Cathedral in San Francisco, and found to be miraculously incorrupt (while blackened and without life, the skin and hair of St. John were simply dry like leather, rather than having decomposed). In commemoration of this holy event, St. John is also celebrated on its anniversary: in Seattle (where Fr. John was born and raised), Vespers, Matins, and Liturgy are always served at midnight (like at Pascha) in the room where St. John fell asleep in the Lord on July 2, 1966, which has since been turned into a chapel.

Oct. 13th, The Hawaiian Copy of Our Lady of Iveron:

In October 2007, a simple print of a copy of the miraculous Iveron Icon of the Theotokos – nothing special in itself, but a paper print: a reminder that God can work great miracles through the humblest of things – began to weep fragrant myrrh at the Russian parish in Honolulu, Hawaii. Since then, it continues to miraculously weep myrrh (fragrant oil) and has visited over a thousand parishes around the country, testifying to the love and mercy of our God, and the prayers of His Holy Mother. The beautiful smell completely fills a church after being in it for just minutes. God willing, Fr. John will someday arrange a visit from this icon to our parish, just as Our Lady herself arranged to be present when he and Mat. Janine had their first home together blessed: with no prior planning, her guardian, Sdn. Nectarius, heard about their house blessing and, declaring that Our Lady desired to be there, insisted he and icon be brought, which led to a glorious impromptu Moleben and Akathist before the icon in their home.

Oct. 14th, St. Paraskeva (Petka) of the Balkans:

This young woman from Thrace was a great ascetic, and a woman of prayer; while she died at the age of only 27, with few outwardly remarkable deeds, her relics began to work great miracles, and she soon became one of the most prayed-to saints amongst the Orthodox peoples of the Balkans. Eventually, her relics were brought to the cathedral in Trnovo, the capital of the Bulgarian Empire, and she became a protectress of that realm. Because the Turks wished to destroy her relics after they

conquered Bulgaria in 1391– not understanding that the power did not lie in them, but the prayers of the saint before Almighty God – her body was spirited around the Balkans for the next few centuries to keep them safe from the Turks. This only increased the love of the Christians for St. Paraskeva (or Petka, as the Serbs and Bulgarians began to affectionately call her), through her continued prayers and miracles throughout the Balkans and due to the fact that the peasantry saw the fact that the Turks could not touch her as a sign that they were indeed powerless before God. She first rested in Belgrade, Serbia, until that too fell to the Turks in 1521. Since 1641, her body has been safely kept, from those who wish to see it destroyed, in Jassy, Moldavia (now part of Romania). Due to having spent much time in prayer at her now-empty tomb in Belgrade, and having been ordained to the diaconate on her feast, Fr. John has great devotion to her, joining his Balkan ancestors in asking for her protection and help.

Oct. 16th, The Holy Martyr Longinus: The centurion who stood before Christ at the Crucifixion, and who pierced his side, has a story which continued after the Gospel narrative. After having served an Emperor whom he was told was a god, he came to see that Jesus Christ, whom he scorned, “truly was the Son of God”, rather than the false divinity of earthly kings. So, how could he continue to take an oath to the Emperor as a god? Therefore, he, and two of his fellows who came to see Christ's divinity through the Crucifixion, refused to accept the Jewish bribes to lie that Christ's body had been stolen away: instead, they left their service to the Emperor. Participating in the washing of Christ's body, they received baptism from the Apostles and became themselves Apostles to St. Longinus' native Cappadocia, where their first-hand account of the events of Christ's death and Resurrection caused a great number of souls to accept Christ. However, the fame of their report would cause knowledge of their whereabouts to spread far and wide, and because they had forsaken their military oaths to the Emperor, the Jewish leaders convinced Pilate to send a company of soldiers to kill Longinus and his two comrades. When they arrived at his village, the saint warmly received these would-be assassins into his own home, feeding them and putting them

up. When he revealed that he was the man whom they sought, however, the soldiers begged Longinus to escape, not wanting to repay his kindness with evil, but he and his two companions refused, saying they would not run from death, nor leave the soldiers to be punished for their failure: rather, they would gladly give up their lives for Christ God, who gave Himself up to death for our sake, and told the soldiers that they should carry out their duty. The three were beheaded, while the head of Longinus was sent to Pilate, who had it thrown into a trash-heap. St. Longinus appeared to a widowed and blind Christian woman in a dream, however, and told her where to find his head. The woman obeyed, and found another faithful Christian to guide her to the place. Upon touching the saints' head, her sight was instantly restored, and she glorified God. She then reverently transported the head of the St. Longinus back to Cappadocia to be buried with his body. St. Longinus' story reminds us that God will show mercy on all those who turn to him, showering with grace even those who were engaged in the wickedness of the Crucifixion, and that through our repentance we spread blessings to all of those around us.

Oct. 18th, The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke: St. Luke was a physician by trade, trained in Greek medicine; we know he came from Antioch, in Syria, but tradition is unclear as to whether he was a Greek or Hellenic Jew (a Jew who spoke the language and lived among the Greeks). Regardless, whether he was a Jew or Gentile, upon hearing about the preaching of the Saviour he left his life behind and sought the Lord Jesus, becoming one of the Seventy Apostles sent to preach the Kingdom of Heaven during our Lord's earthly life. More so, it to Luke and his companion Cleopas that Christ appeared on the road to Emmaus after His Resurrection. St. Luke accompanied the Apostle Paul from the time of the latter's second missionary journey, and remained with him until his martyrdom at Rome. While with Paul at Rome and under his guidance, St. Luke composed his account of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Compared with the other Evangelists – perhaps due to his great education – St. Luke was concerned with setting the Gospel account in correct chronological – rather than narrative – order, and felt the greatest need of the Four

Evangelists to find the witnesses to these events, in order to interview them directly. The greatest of these was Our Lady Theotokos herself, whose account of the Nativity is only found in St. Luke's Gospel, for he had interviewed her while he and St. Paul were travelling through Ephesus, where Our Lady and St. John the Divine dwelt. At Rome, St. Luke also composed the Acts of the Holy Apostles. After his compassion Paul's martyric beheading, he continued to spread the Gospel: journeying to Achaea, Libya, and Egypt, and ending his earthly ministry in martyrdom at the city of Thebes, in Greece, where his relics remained until they were transferred to Constantinople in 357. With the fall of the Byzantine Empire, his body ended up in Padua, Italy, and his head in Prague, Czechia. In the 1990s, forensic analysis confirmed that both body and head were from the same individual, and that they were the bones of a Syrian male who lived in the early First Century. A rib has since been returned to Thebes, and now rest in the original tomb of the saint.

Oct. 19th, The Holy Prophet Joel: One of the Twelve Minor Prophets, Joel – whose name means 'the one for whom the Lord (Yahweh) is God': a worshipper of Yahweh – was the author of the Prophecy bearing his name. We are unsure as to when he lived and wrote, but tradition holds that he was either the second (during the 9th Century BC) or fourth (during the 8th Century BC) in order of the Minor Prophets. He called Judah to repentance, and prophesied that repentance would lead to the Holy Spirit being poured out on all flesh through the Saviour of the world: as St. Peter indicated at Pentecost, this has been fulfilled through Christ's sending of the Holy Spirit on that day.

Oct. 21st, St. Alexis (Kabalyuk): In the early 20th Century, many Ruthenian Catholics (AKA Byzantine, or Greek, Catholics: ancestrally Orthodox Slavs from what is today the Ukraine, southern Poland, and eastern Slovakia, but who had been forced under the Unia by the Unions of Brest and Uzhorod, which meant submission to the Pope while being able to continue to use the Byzantine Liturgy) began to reject Uniatism, and to desire to return to the Orthodox Church. In America, and led by men such as St. Alexis Toth, a quarter of a million Ruthenian-Americans – mainly Carpatho-

Russians and Ruthenians from Galicia – returned to the Orthodox Church of their ancestors. The founders of our parish – most of whom were Lemkos, a subgroup of the Ruthenians and Carpatho-Russians from Western Galicia (today's southern Poland) and eastern Slovakia – were part of this movement. The Lemkos, both here in Europe and here in America, were inspired in particular by the martyric witness of St. Maxim Sandovich, a Lemko priest who was put to death during the First World War due to Austro-Hungarian fears that a return to Russian Orthodoxy would mean a desire to separate from the Hapsburg Empire and join with Russia instead. The ethnic “cousins” of our parish founders – the Carpatho-Russians of Subcarpathian Ruthenia (the modern day province of Transcarpathia in the Ukraine) – have their own great apostle to thank for a mass return to Orthodoxy: St. Alexis Kabalyuk, who had gone to Pochaev, Kiev, the Holy Land, Mount Athos, and Jablochinsky Monastery in Poland to study Orthodoxy, coming back as a monk, priest, and apostle to his people. In the two years before World War I (1912-14), he established dozens of Orthodox parishes and brought tens of thousands back to the Church. What's more, he also worked through letters: encouraging similar efforts beyond Subcarpathia, including here in America. Perhaps even our own community, which was established in 1918, might have been influenced by him? Regardless, St. Alexis would suffer terribly under the Austro-Hungarian authorities, but continued to confess the Orthodox Faith. Once Subcarpathian Ruthenia became part of Czechoslovakia between the Wars, he began to missionize his Slavic cousins – the Czechs and Slovaks – and brought many to convert, which would eventually lead to the establishment of the Czechoslovakian Orthodox Church. Through his efforts, the Church in his native Subcarpathia went from being nearly non-existent to numbering 127 parishes, 138 priests, and 140,000 faithful. However, WWII again put a stop to his efforts, and he again suffered greatly. However, once the war came to its end, peace did not reign for him and the Subcarpathian Church as it had after the First World War: with the end of World War II, Carpatho-Russia was freed from Nazism but was soon to fall under another yoke – the Communists. Just as they had acted in

Russia after the 1917 Revolution, the Communists began the systematic closing of Orthodox and Byzantine Catholic Churches and monasteries throughout the Carpathians. Weak from his suffering during the war, seeing his life's work disintegrate before his eyes seemed to have been the final straw for the saint's health, and he fell asleep in the Lord on December 2, 1947. Yet, despite such terrible persecutions, faithful Orthodox Christians still populate Subcarpathia and Czechoslovakia, and parishes he helped and encouraged here in America still stand. Thus, the wonders of God, worked through this man, have proved themselves more powerful than any earthly evil. May the prayers of the “Apostle of Carpatho-Russia”, St. Alexis, ever continue to support the descendants of those whom he so loved and supported in his life here on earth.

Oct. 22nd, Our Lady of Kazan: One of the most popular images of the Theotokos amongst the Russians, the Kazan Icon, was held as the **Protectress of Russia:** Russia's salvation from the Polish (1612), Swedish (1709), and Napoleonic (1812) Invasions was credited to vigils and multi-day fasts before this wonderworking icon. Accordingly, it is the icon which normally adorns Russian Orthodox processional banners of the Mother of God, including the one in our parish. This shows us that Our Lady of Kazan is to guide us in spiritual combat as our banner of victory. Sadly, the original Kazan Icon was destroyed in 1904: thieves wanted it for the gold covering around the edge of the icon, and simply tore up and burnt the icon itself. This impious act was seen as a sign for Russia, and a portent of the things which would come: Russia's disastrous defeat in the Russo-Japanese War, the Revolution of 1905 in its aftermath, and the terrible Bolshevik Revolution itself. Only a nation which had fallen so far into sin, it was said, would treat such a holy icon in such a way. Let this be a lesson for us, and of how we ought to treat the holy things of God.

Oct. 23rd, St. James the Just, Brother of the Lord and First Bishop of Jerusalem: St. James was the youngest child of St. Joseph the Betrothed (who would take the Holy Virgin Mary into his charge), and the only one still under his father's roof at the time of Christ's Nativity. While he was not present at the birth of Christ, he did accompany his father,

the Holy Virgin Mary, and the Christ Child into Egypt. A faithful disciple of his “little brother”, he was renowned for his righteousness: accordingly called ‘the Just’, and appointed by the Apostles as the first bishop of Jerusalem. It was he who thus presided over the first council of the Church, that of the Apostolic Council of Jerusalem as related in Acts 15. Tradition also holds that St. James, having been party to his father’s perspective at the time of the Nativity of Christ, was the one to relay Joseph’s account to the Apostle and Evangelist Matthew, who mainly resided in and preached to the people of Jews of Palestine. In either 62 or 69 AD, he was thrown from the roof of the Temple by Jews who wished to persecute the Church; however, this did not kill the saint immediately: gathering his final strength, he prayed to the Lord for his enemies while they were stoning him and beating him with clubs. May this righteous man who knew Christ so intimately ever pray for us and our salvation before the Throne of our God.

Oct. 24th, Our Lady, the Joy of All Who Sorrow:

Perhaps the most beloved of all Russian iconography types of the Mother of God, the Joy of All Who Sorrow icon is named after one of the hymns of the Church: “Joy of all who sorrow art thou, and protectress of the oppressed, feeder of the hungry, consolation of travelers, haven for the tempest-tossed, visitation of the sick, protection and aid for the infirm, staff of old age. O all pure Mother of the Most High God, hasten, we pray, to save thy servants.” It depicts Our Lady standing, crowned in the center in an ellipse of light: a mandorla, indicating a window/gateway into heaven. Sometimes she is alone, while in other images she holds the crowned Christ Child on her left arm. She often holds a scepter in her right hand, or she may gesture toward the Child (from <https://russianicons.wordpress.com/tag/joy-of-all-who-sorrow/>). As she is depicted as the Queen of Heaven, she is surrounded by all manner and ranks of saints and angels, each uttering praises to her (the praises being taken from various hymns to the Mother of God). The type first appeared in Moscow in 1688, when Our Lady appeared in a dream to the Patriarch’s sister, who suffered from an incurable disease, and told her to go to the Church of the Transfiguration in Moscow: there she would find an icon titled “the

Joy of All Who Sorrow”, which would heal her. Despite this type being unknown and unheard of, she followed the words of the Theotokos and was healed. A most beautiful Akathist Hymn – of the highest poetic quality – was composed to the image, and it thus became one of the most popular devotions and images of the Mother of God. In the Orthodox Church in America, this devotion remains – she is the patron of our New Jersey Deanery, for example – and the Joy of All Who Sorrow Akathist is commonly used by mission parishes seeking to build their first church. What’s more, Fr. John and Mat. Janine attribute their prayers before this icon with playing a major part in their having come to Canonsburg. For that, they are ever grateful to our Holy Lady Theotokos!

Oct. 26th, St. Demetrius of Thessalonica: While Christianity was never officially made legal in the Roman Empire until the Edict of Milan (313) under St. Constantine, persecution of Christianity would go through active and passive phases, with some Emperors actively trying to destroy it and others merely ignoring the Christian Faith. Despite this persecution, it had certainly spread far and wide by the beginning of the Fourth Century, and so the Emperor Diocletian, who held Christianity as one of the chief causes of the destabilization of the Empire which he was trying so fervently to reform and draw back together, launched the final Roman, Great Persecution of Christianity: from 303-313, Christians were stripped of all legal rights and universal sacrifice to the Roman gods (including the Emperor himself) was mandated under pain of death. In the midst of this, the Emperor Maximian – Diocletian’s lieutenant in the East, who thoroughly despised the Christians – had selected the famed and high-ranking soldier Demetrius to succeed his father as Proconsul (Governor) of Thessalonica and Macedonia, with the task of eradicating the Christians there. However, Demetrius had been secretly raised as a Christian by his parents, and so instead of eradicating the Christians from the city in which St. Paul had first established the Church, St. Demetrius openly professed his faith in Christ and became a second Paul, overthrowing pagan idols and drawing countless souls to Christ. Knowing that this would mean his death, St. Demetrius spent his final days in prayer and fasting,

distributing his earthly possessions and wealth to the poor. The enraged Emperor returned and did just as the saint expected: after imprisoning St. Demetrius and trying to convince him to betray Christ, the wicked Emperor had him run through with 306 spears in a fit of rage. The blood-soaked Imperial ring and robe (the sign of his Proconsulship and dignity) became sources of countless miracles, and when a new majestic church was built to house his relics, they were found to be incorrupt and gushing myrrh, as they still do to this day. Over time, together with St. George, St. Demetrius became one of the great warrior saints of the Church. Thus, it was to his prayers that the souls of those slain at the Battle of Kulikovo were commended (1380: the first time a Russian army managed to win a victory over the Tartars, and the beginning of the end of their dominion over Russia), for they had given their lives in order to safeguard the freedom of the Church and its people. Since that date, the Saturday before St. Demetrius' Day has been kept as a **Memorial Saturday** for fallen soldiers. Because Fr. John will be away on that Saturday, we will be transferring it to a week later: to the Saint's feast itself. Please consider bringing the names of fallen soldiers, as well as any others, as this year the Liturgy for the Departed will also serve to make up for the fact that we will not have our monthly General Pannikhida, due to Fr. John's absence.

Oct. 26th, St. Alfred, King of England: As King of Wessex, St. Alfred was the first to unite all of the Anglo-Saxon Realms together: accordingly he is called "King Alfred the Great", the first King of England. He primarily sought to unite the Anglo-Saxons in order to better defend the Church against the attacks of the pagan Vikings. As was common amongst the Kings of Wessex, he was quite pious, and he himself undertook the first translations of the Bible and Christian writings into English, deeming that texts ought to be known by all men. Included in his translations are various writings from the Church Fathers, such as St. Gregory the Great's "Pastoral Care" (a worn copy of which was left to Fr. John by Fr. Joe), and the first fifty Psalms. More than anything, he valued learning for the Church: to this end, he established schools and sought out scholars to be the bishops and abbots of

his realm. Unfortunately, he died quite young (of what may have been Crohn's Disease; he is thus the patron of those with such digestive sufferings), but St. Alfred left a more unified, pious, and educated realm behind, laying the groundwork for the great spiritual and monastic revival under St. Dunstan of Canterbury. Sadly, his relics were lost when the Protestant Revolt came to England under the wicked Henry VIII, as the Winchester Monastery which held St. Alfred's relics was destroyed so that its land and assets could be seized by the avaricious Crown.

Oct. 28th, St. Job of Pochaev: As a secondary patron of our parish, we cannot forget St. Job of Pochaev: that great beacon of Orthodoxy, and furthermore a beacon for the founders of our parish. Born into a Ruthenian family in Galicia with the name of John (after the Baptist) in 1551, St. Job received his new name upon taking monastic vows in Volhynia at the age of 12, being named for the long-suffering Job of the Old Testament. As his Troparion states, he was certainly made worthy of both these names. Having spent his youth in prayer as a great ascetic, the Unia - whereby Orthodox Christians were forced under the Pope by the Polish and Hungarian states - had its advent in his native and adoptive lands of Galicia and Volhynia in 1596. To defend the Church against this threat, St. Job acquired the first Russian printing press, and began to publish many works and texts, including the first printed Slavonic Bible (the Ostrog Bible). However, he fell into disagreement with his patron, Prince Constantine Ostrogsky, for this Ruthenian noble wished to use Protestant material against the Catholics, and Catholic material against the Protestants, while St. Job felt that only Orthodox material should be published. So, he instead went to live as a hermit in a cave by the monastery on Mount Pochaev located in southern Volhynia, just outside of Galicia and in the center of the historic Ruthenian Kingdom of Galicia-Volhynia (which had fallen to the Poles in 1349). However, his fame soon caused him to be elected abbot around the year 1604, and for a large brotherhood to develop around him, as well as pious layfolk in the village at the foot of the mountain. The Great Pochaev Monastery thus came into existence as we know it today, as well as allowing for the renewal of St. Job's publishing work, for a

pious widow offered him a printing press. Facing terrible persecutions from the Polish state and Ruthenians who had accepted the Unia, St. Job labored for nearly 50 years, building up his monastery and distributing printed material therefrom. By the time of his death at the age of 100 in 1651, the Monastery of Pochaev had become a great beacon of Orthodoxy for those Ruthenians of Galicia and Volhynia who struggled to remain true to the faith of their ancestors. In fact, it was seen as so troublesome by the Polish state that it was seized and handed over a Uniate brotherhood (the Basilians) in 1720. When Volhynia was returned to Russian rule after nearly four centuries of under Polish Catholic domination in 1795, many parishes and monasteries enthusiastically rejoined the Orthodox Church, though the Uniate Brotherhood of Pochaev chose not to do so: it was free to do this, as the Russian state was not forcing reunion on Uniate institutions. However, because the the Greek Catholics (Uniates) of Volhynia had supported the Polish “November Uprising” of 1830-31, the Monastery of Pochaev, among other institutions, was forcibly taken from the Basilians and returned to the Orthodox Church. Whether we can conscious this state action or not, God blessed the resurrected Orthodox brotherhood of the Pochaev Monastery with stupendous growth: it soon became once again a beacon against the Unia, drawing countless converts back to the faith. Thus, when the people of our parish founders – the Ruthenians of the Carpathian Mountains, or Carpatho-Russians – began to seek reunion with the Church, it was to the Pochaev Lavra (Monastery) that they turned: it educated these priests and layfolk and sent them back to establish Orthodox communities in Galicia (under Austrian rule since 1795) and Subcarpathian Ruthenia (under Hungarian rule since the 14th Century). For example, St. Maxim Sandovich – a Lemko Carpatho-Russians/Ruthenian from Western Galicia, whom we celebrated last month – received his Orthodox formation at Pochaev before returning to his fellow Galicio-Ruthenians and re-establishing the Orthodox Church in his homeland. The founders of this parish – Lemkos from Galicia – were undoubtedly influenced by the missionary efforts of Pochaev in their choice to reunite with the Orthodox Church and establish St. John’s here in

Canonsburg (by splitting from the Ruthenian Catholic parish in town, St. Michael’s). While Fr. John hasn’t been able to ascertain much about our early priests, many of the clergy which were first sent from Russia to help these newly-reunited parishes had been formed at Pochaev and nearby institutions: they were sent here due to their natural affinity with their Galician and Carpatho-Russian ethnic cousins. Because of all this, it was his relics which we sought out to be placed in the altar when it was consecrated. Thus, St. Job has become a secondary patron of our parish, for his earthly efforts – not to mention his heavenly ones before God – have had a direct impact on our parish’s foundation and continued health. More so, St. Job’s influence in America didn’t stop with our parish founders and those of similar parishes: St. Tikhon’s Monastery – that beacon of Orthodoxy in America for the past 104 years – was initially populated from monks from Pochaev, and in the 1950s much of the Pochaev Brotherhood – together with the remnants of the Printshop of St. Job of Pochaev – settled at Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville, Upstate New York, in order to escape Communist persecution. Both of these institutions have become New Pochaevs here in America: beacons of Orthodoxy and treasuries of published works. Let us always remember to ask St. Job to pray for us, and to continue to allow our parish to be a beacon for the Orthodox Faith; a beacon not only for the Ruthenian and Carpatho-Russian peoples who made up the foundation of this parish, but also all those in our broader community. Just as St. Job’s legacy, the Pochaev Monastery, has remained a beacon of Orthodoxy from the Uniate persecutions, through the Soviet persecutions, and even until our present day, may St. Job also strengthen us to be a shining light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ here in Canonsburg, the Chartiers Valley, Washington, and beyond!

Oct. 31st, St. John Kochurov of Chicago, Protomartyr of the Bolshevik Yoke: St. John was one of a number of young, highly-educated priests sent from Russia to help in the reunion of Ruthenian emigres from Carpatho-Russia and Galicia, who had desired to use their new-found political freedom in America to reunite with the Church of their forefathers: the Church they had so loved

before they were forced under the Unia (Union with Rome) in 1596. In 1895, at just the age of 24, the zealous young man was ordained and sent to establish the first parish in Chicago: St. Vladimir's, which would go on to become Holy Trinity Cathedral. After its construction was completed in 1902, he went on to found numerous other parishes in the Chicago area, throughout Illinois, and even a parish in Oklahoma and another in Buffalo. He also helped to translate our services into English, so that our Church could serve not only our immigrant core, but also missionize the English-speaking Americans which surrounded our parishes. After helping to organize the First All-American Council at Mayfield, PA, in 1907, both he and St. Tikhon (who, as Archbishop of North America, presided over the Council) departed to Russia: St. Tikhon to become the Archbishop of the large Bishopric of Yaroslavl (and later Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia), and St. John to become the dean of the Cathedral in Tsarskoye Selo ('the Village of the Tsar', where the Tsar's summer palace was). When the Bolsheviks first arose in St. Petersburg in 1917, and began to approach Tsarskoye Selo, the faithful began to flock to the Cathedral in order to entreat our God for salvation; in response, St. John began to lead them in an all-night Cross Procession. As the Bolsheviks began to enter the city, the troops who opposed them fled and told the priest and his flock to cease their procession. In response, St. John and his fellow clerics simply replied, in the face of those soldiers fleeing from their duty, who implored them to flee with them: "We shall carry our duties to completion." They thus continued with their procession. The Soviets entered the city unopposed, and took the clergymen of the Cross Procession into custody. As St. John alone stood up to the wicked Bolsheviks - by protesting their actions and by appealing to their humanity and the bonds of brotherhood with their fellow Russians - he alone was taken out and shot (allegedly for organizing the procession as an anti-Soviet activity, which was a spurious justification for what was in fact simply a wicked act). He thus became the Protomartyr (first priest-martyr) of the Bolshevik Yoke. When news of St. John's martyrdom - a martyrdom suffered, in the words of St. Tikhon, "while zealously fulfilling the obligations of his rank" -

reached the Great All-Russian Church Council of 1917-18, then in session, loud lamentations arose. Patriarch St. Tikhon - St. John's friend from their missionary days together in America - declared that the Russian Orthodox Church had gained a new martyr, sending assistance and encouraging words to his widow and children: "Joining our prayers with those of the Holy Council for the repose of the soul of the slain Archpriest John, we share your great grief, and we do that with a special love, because we knew well the deceased Archpriest, and have always held his inspiring and strong pastoral activity in high estimation. We bear in our hearts the sure hope that the deceased pastor, adorned with the wreath of martyrdom, now stands at the Throne of God among the elect of Christ's true flock." May St. John pray for us all before that very Throne, remembering especially our Orthodox Church in America, which he helped to establish.

Thoughts About Parish Life

by Apr. Victor Potapov, Dean of St. John the Baptist ROCOR Cathedral, Washington, D.C.

The earth today represents a great field, given to man for cultivation. This field is divided among many nations, to each its own parcel. A plot is also given to us, to our parish. Its good cultivation depends upon us, acting with God's help. The Church and the parish is not merely our personal, private matter. Through them we join in the overall life of mankind.

If our parish life flows peacefully and well, if we possess the spirit of truth, good will and love, then through these we participate in the betterment of life on earth.

We have a church, a parish, parishioners. What can we do, that we may also have life?

All around us is a sea of evil. However, every person is a treasury of good. Often that goodness is hidden, unused, forgotten, covered with dust. We must uncover that goodness, gather it, use it, and with it inundate the sea of evil.

The Church, the parish, must be the center and expression of that goodness. Each of us must strive to uncover his own treasury of goodness. Each of

us must strive to see and uncover the treasury within his brother.

Let each of become a seeker and doer of good. Let the Church be its center. Then the concepts: faith, church, parish - will become life to the parishioner.

In external appearance, the church building resembles a ship. Why is this so? Our life, especially today, is a turbulent sea. The waves of our worldly life buffet us from every side. Where can we turn? Where is salvation? The external appearance of the church has already shown us: Here is the ship, here is salvation. Truly, this is salvation for every believer.

Living within the Church, we, even without realizing it, draw nourishment from the spring of living water. Why then does it sometimes happen, that someone abandons the House of God, leaves the Church?

There are many reasons for this. Among them are the following: "I heard something bad about the priest, or he intentionally or unintentionally wronged me. I am offended, and will no longer go to church". Or: "I am offended by one of the parishioners. Being in his presence interferes with prayer - so I have left the Church.

In this there is great error. For we come to the Church of God, not to the priest, not to the warden, not to the parishioners. We come to pray to our Lord God, to receive His blessed help. After all, this is the most important thing. The priest, the warden, the parishioners are all secondary. We enter the Temple of God in order to board the ship of our salvation. If we are drowning, and are seeking salvation on a ship, we don't ask ourselves who is the captain, who are the sailors; we only know that this is the ship of salvation.

It is wrong to substitute the secondary for the primary. Of course, it is nice to have a good priest, but, should a priest in some way offend us, or should he be taken from us and be replaced by another, we should not cast ourselves into the turbulent sea. Should a priest in some way offend us, we should not judge him; rather, we should more fervently pray for him. St. Theophanes the Recluse tells of a woman who noticed something bad about her priest. Returning home, and standing before the Icons, she told the Lord that she would not

cease fasting and fervent prayer until the Lord corrected the priest's shortcomings. This is how one should behave upon

being offended by a priest or by any person in the Church. Not by leaving the Church, not by casting oneself into the worldly sea.

Let us remember: We enter the Temple of God in order to pray and to participate in the blessed life of the Church. This priest or that priest, these failings or those failings or insults, should not confuse us and become conditions for our attendance or non-attendance of Church.

We would like to serve our Lord and the Church. But what can we do in the setting in which we live, in this vanity, fatigue, in this environment so often far from God and even inimical to Him?

First of all, we must not pose ourselves any great problems. We must strive to do the littlest of things, those most possible. In our attitudes to our personal lives, we must clearly determine our direction: toward good or evil, toward sin or piety.

With respect to Church life: we must acknowledge ourselves to be members of the Church family, not guests of the Church, or visitors when in the mood or when misfortune occurs, but truly members of the Church family, for whom nothing in the family is alien, who take responsibility for the life of the family, who help it when possible, and who, when misfortune strikes them, calmly and simply accepts its help.

How good to be a member of the Church family! How simple it then is to help and receive help. For you to God and receive from Him.

A Hymn to the Lesser Good

by +Abp. John (Shahovskoy), (1902-1989), the former Archbishop of the Orthodox Church in America's Diocese of San Francisco and the West (r. 1950-79); not to be confused with Abp. John's friend, St. John (Maximovitch) of San Francisco, who was ROCOR's bishop of San Francisco from 1962 until his death in 1966.

Many people believe that to live according to the faith and to fulfill the will of God is very difficult. Actually - it's very easy. One needs only attend to details, to trifles, and try to avoid evil in the slightest and most trivial things. This is the simplest and surest way to enter the world of the spirit and draw near to God. A man often thinks that the

Creator demands great things of him, that the Gospel insists on complete self-sacrifice, the abolition of one's personhood, etc., as a condition of faith. A man is so frightened by this that he begins to be afraid of becoming acquainted with God, of drawing near to God, and hides himself from God, not even wishing to look into God's Word. "If I can't do anything important for God, then I'd just better stay away from things spiritual, stop thinking about eternity, and live 'in a normal way'."

There exists at the entrance to the spiritual realm a "hypnosis of great deeds": one must either do some big thing or do nothing. And so people do nothing at all for God or for their souls! It is very strange — the more a man is devoted to the little things of life, the less he wishes to be honest or pure or faithful to God in those same little things. And, moreover, each one must adopt a correct attitude toward little things if one wishes to come near to the kingdom of heaven.

"Wishes to come near" ... In this is summed up all the difficulties of the religious life. Often one wishes to enter into the kingdom of heaven quite unexpectedly, in some miraculous and magical way, or, by right — through some kind of great feat. But neither the one nor the other is the right way to find the higher world. One does not enter God's presence in some wondrous manner while remaining indifferent on earth to the needs of the kingdom of God and its bright eternity, nor can one purchase the treasures of the kingdom of God by some kind of eternal act, however great that act might be. Yet good deeds, holy deeds are necessary for one to grow into a higher life, a bright will, a good desire, a heavenly psychology, a heart that is both pure and fair...

"Verily, verily I say unto you that whosoever offers one of the least of these but a cup of cold water, in the name of a disciple, shall not lose his reward." In this saying of the Lord is the highest expression of the smallness of the good. "A glass of water" — this is not much...

In every communication between people there must without fail be a good spirit. This spirit is Christ, openly manifest or hidden.

"In the name of a disciple" — this is the first step in communicating with another person in the name of Jesus Christ Himself. Many people, not as yet

knowing the Lord and the wondrous fellowship in His Name still have among themselves an unselfish, pure and human fellowship which brings them ever closer to the Spirit of Christ...

As a matter of fact, the lesser good is more necessary for mankind than the greater. People can get along with their lives without the greater good; without the lesser they can not exist. Mankind perishes not from a lack of the greater good, but from an insufficiency of just this lesser good. The greater good is no more than a roof, erected on the brick walls of the lesser good.

The lesser, easier good was left on this earth for man by the Creator Himself, who took all the greater good upon Himself. Whosoever does the lesser, the same creates — and through him the Creator Himself creates — the greater good. Of our little good the Creator makes His Own great good. For as our Lord is the Creator who formed all things from nothingness, so is He more able to create the greater good from the lesser...

Through such lesser, easy work, done with the greatest simplicity, a man is accustomed to the good and begins to serve it with his whole heart, sincerely, and in this way enters into an atmosphere of good, lets down the roots of his life into new soil, the soil of the good. The roots of human life quickly accommodate themselves to this good earth, and soon cannot live without it... Thus is a man saved: from the small comes the great. "Faithful in little things" turns out to be "faithful in the greater."

Lay aside all theoretical considerations that it is forbidden to slaughter millions, women, children, and elderly; be content to manifest your moral sense by in no way killing the human dignity of your neighbor, neither by word, nor by innuendo, nor by gesture.

Do not be angry over trifles "against your brother vainly" (Matthew 5:22) or in the daily contacts of life speak untruth to your neighbor. These are trifles, small change, of no account; but just try to do this and you will see what comes of it.

It is hard to pray at night. But try in the morning. If you can't manage to pray at home than at least as you ride to your place of employment attempt with a clear head the "Our Father" and let the words of this short prayer resound in your heart.

And at night commend yourself with complete sincerity into the hands of the Heavenly Father. This indeed is very easy.

And give, give a glass of cold water to everyone who has need of it; give a glass filled to the brim with simple human companionship to everyone that lack it, the very simplest companionship...

O wondrous path of little things, I sing thee an hymn! Surround yourselves, O people, gird up yourselves with little works of good – with a chain of little, simple, easy and good feelings which cost us naught, a chain of bright thoughts, words and deeds. Let us abandon the big and the difficult. That is for them that love it and not for us for whom the Lord in His Mercy, for us who have not yet learned to love the greater, has poured forth the lesser love everywhere, free as water and air...

Not a Single Individual Will Be Saved

by Apr. Stephen Freeman, Rector of St. Anne Orthodox Church (OCA) in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and author of the Ancient Faith Blog, "Glory to God for All Things"

Perhaps the most striking thing about human beings is that we don't actually come into existence by ourselves. There are parents (two of them when the laws of biology are allowed to work). The parents themselves are points of contact to a much larger world of the family and the culture itself. Human beings do not come without cultures. In a relatively short time, we acquire language and a host of other things from this culture around us. Concepts, beliefs, understandings will all be engaged only in a cultural context. There is something individual about us, but mostly in the abstract. It is not just other humans that we need: we cannot exist without bacteria. We have more of them in our gut than the number of cells in our bodies. We do not exist alone. In the story of our creation, we were told, "It is not good for the man to be alone." And so we are "male and female." How is it that our lives exist only in such a shared manner and yet many want to image that our salvation is entirely individual?

No one is saved as an individual.

There is no historical account of a Christianity that is not also the Church. Christianity must be the Church because that alone truly reflects the truth of

our humanity. Jesus never taught a salvation that was individualized. Instead, He prays:

"That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us..." (Joh 17:21)

The "one" that we are to become is not a property that can belong to an individual. Alone, we are not one. Alone, we are not yet anything.

The language we use with regard to God bears a similar understanding. Christ reveals the Father by a name that can have no meaning by itself. "Father" is always "Father of..." The same is true of the name "Son." "Spirit" is always "Spirit of" (particularly in the original languages). God makes Himself known to us in the mystery of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Nothing is more bothersome in our existence than the existence of others. Jean-Paul Sartre famously said, "Hell is other people," (indicating that you would not want to invite him to a party). Both love and hate require other people. We do nothing alone. We might imagine ourselves to be doing something alone, but within us are the presence of many others. The voice in our head speaks a language, learned only from others. When we speak, they speak as well. Our existence is never truly individual.

And so, our salvation is never truly individual. The modern world caters to an imaginary individual, something invented by its own mythology. It speaks of liberty without responsibility and freedom without communion. Various contemporary Christianities have unintentionally become purveyors of this concept, and have created an account of salvation that isolates the believer, who is told that they can have Christ without sacrament and without the Church. They offer something that Christ Himself never offered.

God has united Himself to our humanity and become a partaker of our history and our culture. There is no Jesus of Nazareth who is not a Jew, who does not speak Aramaic, who was not born of Mary. The Second Person of the Holy Trinity enters time at the word of an angel to the Virgin. Not until God enters her womb (taking flesh of the Virgin) can we say His name is "Jesus." That name is now exalted because it is now the name of the Son of God. But the Son of God now remains and abides

fully human as well as fully God. To be fully human is to have a context.

Christ is not some sort of “transcendent man,” incarnate in all places, times and cultures. To know Him is also to know a Jew, a male, a Galilean. All those things (as do all things human) have a shared characteristic within them and have no meaning except in reference to other humans.

The human life is always a corporate life. Though each person has some measure of freedom, we remain dependent upon others. That someone should become a hermit and have no more contact with others does not erase the fact that their existence remains dependent. We are not self-creating nor self-sustaining.

The interdependent reality of our lives has traditionally been expressed in the communion of saints within the historic Christian Church. We cannot speak of Christ’s humanity apart from the Virgin Mary, and so (as a representative of us all) she is always honored in the life of the Church (just as she is honored within the gospels).

The unchurched, non-sacramental evolution of contemporary Christianity follows the track of modern culture’s portrayal of human beings as atomistic individuals. Catholics and Orthodox frequently hear others assert, “I don’t need a priest. I can go straight to God.” Of course, neither Catholics nor Orthodox say that you cannot “go straight” to God. However, they both know that no one goes alone. We are assisted by the heavenly hosts, our guardian angels, the saints, our brothers and sisters in Christ, and, yes, the sacramental priesthood of the Church who exist in the line of the Apostles. That is the universe and the faith as God gave them to us. Modernity imagines that everything can be improved, including God.

This, however, is anti-human, a re-imagining of our nature and a re-configuration of salvation. Letters written to Churches are taken as personal mail from God. In ignorance, contemporary readers remove the Scriptures from the Church, from history and from the tradition that produced them and turn them into texts that justify modernity and every bizarre turn of the culture.

The gospel is not the story of individual salvation. It is, above all, the “gathering together into one all things in Christ Jesus.” The drive towards

independence and the diminishment of our common life is a drive that is moving in a direction opposite from the “mystery of [God’s] will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself” (Eph 1:9).

Modernity is on a collision course with the universe. My money is on the universe.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Oct. 5, Saturday – Groundskeeping Work Party:

Please join Kevin Rudolph (724-579-5975) at 8 AM to do some work around the grounds, including building a small retaining wall at the back of the rectory and clearing the fallen tree in our right-of-way. Backup due to rain will be Oct. 12.

Oct. 6, Sunday – Operation Christmas Child (Shoe Box) Collection Begins

Through Nov. 10; please see Marcie Killmeyer for more information!

Oct. 8, Tues – Regional IOCC Meeting

7 PM at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church, 123 Gilkeson Rd, Mt. Lebanon. Please consider getting more involved in the efforts of our regional International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) Committee by attending! See Kevin Reck for details: 724-344-5610, kevinsreck@gmail.com.

Oct. 10 & 11, Thurs/Fri – Greek Food Festival

Support our neighbouring parish in Canonsburg, **All Saints Greek Orthodox Church**, by attending their food festival; 11:00am to 8:30pm both days!

Oct. 11 & 12, Fri/Sat – Homestead Fall Festival

St. Nicholas Carpatho-Russian Church, 903 Ann Street, Homestead, is having their fall festival with a Rusyn grill, 50/50 raffle, church tours, and bingo!

Oct. 12, Saturday – Ambridge Slavic Food Festival

Holy Ghost Orthodox Church in Ambridge (where our Archdiocesan Chancellor is the rector) is having their annual food festival from **11:00 AM to 6:00 PM at their Youth Center: 405 Maplewood Ave, Ambridge.** Come for stuffed cabbage, Chicken Kiev, kielbassi, pierogis, halushki, a variety of baked goods, an auction, and live music: the Russian Balalaika Orchestra of Pittsburgh at 3 PM, and the Strolling Balalaikas of Pittsburgh at 4 PM.

Oct 12, Saturday – McKees Rocks Slavic Food Fest
St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, 320 Munson Ave, McKees Rocks, is having their annual food festival from **11:00 AM to 7:00 PM**. Come and enjoy all your Slavic food favorites!

Oct 12, Saturday – Ukrainian Food Festival
St. Vladimir’s Ukrainian Hall, 73 S 18th St, South Side Pittsburgh, is hosting a food festival from **11:00 AM to 4:00 PM**, with stuffed cabbage, pierogies, cabbage & noodles, kobasa, borscht, and baked goods. Eat in or take out!

Oct. 12 & 13, Sat/Sun – Weirton’s 100th Anniversary Celebration

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in Weirton, WV, will be celebrating their centennial. Just as with ours last year, Met. Tikhon and Abp. Melchisedek will be serving. Fr. John and Mat. Janine will be attending their Centennial Banquet after Liturgy that day. While we would greatly miss you here, all are encouraged to attend Vespers and Divine Liturgy in Weirton that weekend.

Oct. 13, Sunday – Spring House Hay Ride

The Church School is having their annual visit to the Spring House Market for a hay ride and other goodies. Join the fun at **2 PM at 1531 Route 136, Washington, PA 15301**.

Oct. 14 & 15, Mon/Tues – Ladies’ Altar Society Bread Baking for Christmas

Please consider joining Shirley Brookman and the Ladies’ Altar Society to bake our Christmas breads to sell; 7 AM both days. **Also Nov. 11 & 12.**

Oct. 17, Thurs – IOCC Cognac Tasting Fundraiser

7 PM at Leaf & Bean, 3525 Washington Rd, McMurray. Tickets are \$50 and include a Leaf & Bean gift, three cognac samples, and light hors d’oeuvres. Please contact Kevin Reck for more info or to RSVP: 724-344-5610, kevinsreck@gmail.com; if paying by check, send to Nick Terezis, 306 Marberry Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15215.

Oct. 17 (Thursday) through Oct. 21 (Monday) – FR. JOHN AWAY

Fr. John and Mat. Janine will be away in order to attend the wedding of Fr. John’s brother; Fr. David Vernak will be serving that Sunday’s Divine Liturgy in Fr. John’s place.

Oct. 19, Saturday – Schenken Wedding

Marissa Markee and Alexander Schenken will be wed by Fr. Bob Prepelka 3:00 PM, as Fr. John will unfortunately be out of town. Please keep them in your prayers and prepare for this holy sacrament!

Oct. 25-27, Fri-Sun – Young Adult Fall Retreat

In conjunction with the Greek Orthodox Metropolis (GOA – Pittsburgh) and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA (UOCUSA), the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese (ACROD) is hosting a Young Adult Retreat at their Camp Nazareth Retreat Center in Mercer, PA, for ages 19-35. The registration fee is \$75, but scholarships are available. Register at tinyurl.com/YoungAdultsFall2019; call 724-662-4340 or 442-621-8543 for more info, or email youngadultretreats@gmail.com.

Oct. 29 & 30, Tues/Wed – Fr. John at St. Tikhon’s

Fr. John and Mat. Janine will be away from Tuesday morning through Wednesday afternoon for a brief spiritual retreat and in order to attend a lecture by the Chancellor of the OCA, Fr. Alexander Rentel, on Autocephaly (Ecclesiastical Independence) and the Canonical Tradition.

Nov. 2, Saturday – Archdiocesan Assembly

Beginning with Divine Liturgy at 9 AM at St. Andrew Orthodox Church, **100 Summit Ave, Mingo Junction, Ohio**. Our parish must send a lay representative along with our acting rector, Fr. John. The Parish Council will be electing this representative at our next parish council meeting, on October 24th. Fr. John strongly encourages all active and dedicated members of our parish to consider standing as our lay representative, ESPECIALLY if you haven’t been involved with archdiocesan and national-level church activities, as it is a great way to understand how the Church functions and operates. Such an event can also help to expose us to the broader Church, helping us to see that the Church is much larger in scope than our wonderful parish. If you are interested in helping St. John’s stay connected and in dialogue with our Archdiocese, gathered around our beloved archbishop, please see Fr. John. If transportation would be an issue, our lay representative could likely carpool with Fr. John and Mat. Janine.

Nov. 3, Sunday – Altar Server Ice Cream Social

Fr. John would like to get to know our acolytes (altar servers) better, so we'll be having an ice cream social after coffee hour, followed by a small workshop in the church, to go over some differences in the way Fr. John would like things done. Parents of our younger servers are highly encouraged to join us, as well as former servers who are now adults who might want to start serving in the altar again.

Nov. 7, Thursday – St. Michael's Day Party

After Vespers for the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels, Michael Galis will be hosting a pizza in the parish hall. Please come and fellowship with us and help Michael to celebrate his nameday! This is a great idea, and one which Fr. John would greatly encourage others to emulate. It is not only a wonderful way to celebrate your heavenly patron, but also to help build up our love for one another!

Nov. 9, Saturday – Basket Party

Our annual Basket Party is coming November 9! If you are interested and able to donate a basket (or part of a basket), please see Julianna Cario for ideas and basket contents forms. Basket value should be around \$50, and baskets need to be returned **by November 3rd**.

Nov. 10, Sunday – Annual Parish Assembly

After Liturgy we will be having our Annual Parish Assembly; please make sure to mark your calendars and try to be present for this very necessary part of our shared parish life. Also, note that **any submissions for business, per our bylaws, must be in by Oct. 10th**!

Nov. 11 & 12, Mon/Tues – Ladies' Altar Society Bread Baking for Christmas

Please consider joining Shirley Brookman and the Ladies' Altar Society to bake our Christmas breads to sell; 7 AM both days.

Nov. 16, Saturday – Readers' Workshop

From **10 AM to 1 PM**, Fr. John will be hosting a workshop for church readers, focusing on volume, pitch, articulation, and diction, in order to better prepare us for reading the Hours, the Epistle at Divine Liturgy, and for the services of Christmas. Please consider taking advantage of this opportunity to improve our ability to prayerfully hear the words of our Scriptures and hymns!

Nov. 23, Sat. – Ladies' Altar Society Bake Sale

Our Ladies' Altar Society will be having their first of two bake sales for Christmas goodies. Please invite your friends as well!

Nov. 29, Fri. – Black Friday Charity Opportunity

After a day of giving thanks, the Outreach Committee would like to invite you to put that thanksgiving into action by giving back to those in need.

Please consider joining them in helping to pack over one million meals for the hungry at the third annual "Amen to Action", from **9am to 12:30pm** downtown at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, 1000 Fort Duquesne Boulevard. Registration is required, and slots fill up quickly: www.amentoaction.org. Please see Marcie Killmeyer (412-445-8482; map_turtle@hotmail.com) for more information.

Dec. 6 & 7, Fri/Sat – Canonsburg Old-Fashioned Christmas & Outreach Opportunity

From 4pm to 9pm on Friday, and noon until 9pm on Saturday, our Outreach Committee will be manning a hot cocoa booth at our borough's Christmas festival. Please consider volunteering to be a part of this opportunity to witness our love for our community!

Dec. 6 & 7, Fri/Sat – St. Anna Icon & Retreat

The myrrh-streaming and miracle-working icon of St. Anna will be coming to our Archdiocesan Cathedral. A Moleben and Akathist to St. Anna will be celebrated before the icon on Friday evening, followed by Liturgy and a retreat led by the abbot of St. Tikhon's Monastery, Fr. Archimandrite Sergius, on the topic of "Acquiring the Mind of Christ" on Saturday morning and early afternoon.

Dec. 8, Sunday – Christmas Concert TENTATIVE

Our regional men's choir, Prayer Arise, led by Belle Vernon's choir director, Rd. Peter Merella, is hoping to hold a Christmas Concert at 4 PM on this Sunday evening at our parish, followed by a meal in the parish hall. Fr. John is hoping to get enough support to make this happen, and Peter is trying to rally the choristers. Please see Fr. John if you would be able to help. If we decide to go ahead with these plans, we are hoping to really get the word out!

Dec. 15, Sunday – Ladies’ Altar Society Bake Sale

Our Ladies’ Altar Society will be having their second and final bake sale for Christmas goodies. Please invite your friends as well!

Dec. 15, Sunday – Men’s Group Kielbasa Sale

Our Men’s Group will be selling our home-made kielbasa (fresh, hot, and smoked). Make sure to come and get ‘em!

Dec. 22, Sunday – Christmas Caroling

Diane and the choir will be caroling around to different homes and nursing homes. Fr. John and Diane should have more details about this shortly, but in the meantime mark your calendars and please consider joining!

Jan. 3, Fri. – St. John’s Community Night

St. John’s, led by the Outreach Committee, will be hosting a parish community night on this FAST FREE Friday, from 6-9pm. Details are still in the works, but it will likely involve a movie and activities for the kids, and a mini-retreat for the adults. All with food, of course! Mark your calendars!

If you would like anything corrected or added to this list of events, please contact Fr. John!

GREETERS:

Sunday	Individual/Family
Oct. 6	Mrs. Loretta Matyuf
Oct. 13	Yarosh Family
Oct. 20	VOLUNTEER(S) NEEDED
Oct. 27	Helene Emerick
Nov. 3	Susan Horosky

Please find a replacement or see Mat. Myra Oleynik (724-366-0678) if you are unable to make your scheduled Sunday.

READERS:

Sunday	Hours:	Epistle:
Oct. 6	Mat. Janine K.	Richard Blaha
Oct. 13	Layla Killmeyer	Chris Weber
Oct. 20	Rd. John T.	Rick Pierce
Oct. 27	Evan Petronka	Christ Petronka
Nov. 3	Leah Stockman	Tony Cario

Please find a replacement or see Fr. John (425-503-2891) if you are unable to make your scheduled Sunday.

CANDLE HOLDERS:

	Troitsa:	
Oct. 6	Alex Schenken Bob Schenken Nick Schenken	Kevin Rudolph Nick Schenken Stephen Schenken Don Marsico
Oct. 13	Troitsa: Mike Killmeyer Todd Geer Steve Simko	Chris Webber Lee Klingensmith Rich Eismont Joseph Helinski
Oct. 20	Troitsa: David Stockman Steve Udodow Chris Petronka	Kip Yarosh Even Petronka Jerry Strennen Mark White
Oct. 27	Troitsa: Jn. Migyanko III Jn. Migyanko, IV Joseph Havrilak	Mike Pazuchanics M. Pazuchanics, Jr. Joe Migyanko Joe Migyanko, Jr.
Nov. 3	Troitsa: Dan Basso Dr. Dennis Davis Greg Matyuf	Al Davis Cirio Signorini Tom Fudala Michael Tarbuck

The Troitsa holder is the ‘team leader’ and is responsible for organizing the candle holders and/or finding replacements for those absent.

COLLECTION BASKETS:

Oct. 6	Luke Ruffing Eric Bell	Gabe Ruffing Gideon Rufing
Oct. 13	Andrew Davis Ethan Davis	Lydia Davis Evan Davis
Oct. 20	Aubrie Eismont Analise Eismont	Megan Geer Sarah Simko
Oct. 27	L. Killmeyer M. Killmeyer	Stephen Schenken Nick Schenken
Nov. 3	Bridget Onest Nina Onest	Luke Phillis Katie Pazuchanics

ATTACHMENTS:

Included with this month’s issue of the Prophet are the following attachments:

- **October Parish Calendar**
- **IOCC Cognac Tasting Flyer**
- **Camp Nazareth Youth Adult Retreat Flyer**
- **Archangel Michael Party Flyer**