



**"WHOEVER DRINKS OF THE WATER THAT I SHALL GIVE WILL NEVER THIRST!"**

# CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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## BULLETIN OF MAY 17, 2009

### Please Remember in Prayer

Carole Boris (newly-departed), Archpriest Michael, Monk Christian, Nadia, Kathy & Bill Parrish, Diane Evanusa, Marie, Thomas, Judith Kocinski, Jane Koshutko, Robert Evanusa, Nicholas & Linda, Nicholas, Anna, Yvonne, Katherine, Michael, Gregory, Todd & Olga Leisure, Nina Gordon, Constantina & Christos. Requests? Let Fr. John know.

### About Holy Water

The water that was blessed on Tuesday, May 12<sup>th</sup> may be used for drinking (health of soul and body) and for blessing (homes, cars, gardens, etc.). Holy Water is grace-filled and offers health, protection, and sanctification. Often a bottle of Holy Water is kept in the refrigerator for frequent use throughout the year.



### SUNDAY, MAY 17<sup>TH</sup>

#### SAMARITAN WOMAN SUNDAY

8:40a.m. Hours  
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy  
Coffee Hour

### MONDAY, MAY 18<sup>TH</sup>

7:00p.m. Bible Study

### SATURDAY, MAY 23<sup>RD</sup>

6:00p.m. Great Vespers

### SUNDAY, MAY 24<sup>TH</sup>

#### SUNDAY OF THE BLIND MAN

8:40a.m. Hours  
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy  
Coffee Hour



### Bible Study – Monday, May 18<sup>th</sup>

On Monday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00pm, there will be a Bible Study at the church on the events and teachings of the Lord during Midfeast. The relevant New Testament passages are from the Gospel of St. John, chapters 7 and 8. Please read these two chapters in advance, bring your Bible, and, if you like, a friend. All are invited!

### Baptism of Constantine Michael Cook

On Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, Baby Constantine Cook will receive Holy Baptism. The Baptismal-Divine Liturgy will begin at 9:00am. Following the service there will be a luncheon in his honor. All are invited!



### Next Parish Council Meeting

Sunday, June 28<sup>th</sup>, following the coffee hour.

### A Letter from the Parish Council



is available for pickup at the candle stand. Please pick up your letter and write your name down on our list so as to reduce mailing costs. Thank you!

### ReStore

Sussex County Habitat For Humanity ReStore, open to the public, accepts donations from individuals and builders of new or gently used appliances, cabinets, doors, windows and furniture for re-sale to the public. Prices are well below retail. All profits from the ReStore are used to build more houses with county families. Phone: 855-1156. Store hours: Wed, Thu and Fri 10AM-5PM and Sat 10AM-3PM.



### Interested in Hosting Our Annual Picnic?



Please speak with Fr. John. A date has not yet been set but we are currently looking for volunteers to host the parish get-together. Thank you!



### On Meekness and Humility

*Meekness and humility of heart are virtues without which it is impossible to inherit the Heavenly Kingdom, to be happy on earth, or to experience inner calm.*

*St. Antony (Putilov) of Optina*

### READER SCHEDULE

**Sunday, May 24<sup>th</sup>**

Kathy Parrish

**Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>**

Mat. Emily



## OCA DELEGATION RETURNS FROM OFFICIAL VISIT TO CHURCH OF RUSSIA

SYOSSET, NY [OCA Communications] A delegation from the Orthodox Church in America, lead by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah, returned from an official visit to the Church of Russia on May 4, 2009.

Accompanying Metropolitan Jonah were His Eminence, Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada; the Very Rev. Alexander Garklavs, OCA Chancellor; the Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky, OCA Director of External Affairs and Interchurch Relations; and Archdeacon Kirill Sokolov.

Metropolitan Jonah arrived in Russia on Saturday, April 25, and was met at the airport by a delegation headed by His Eminence, Archbishop Hilarion of Volokolamsk, the newly appointed chairman of the Russian Orthodox Church's Department of External Affairs. Later that day, the delegation visited Moscow's Donskoi Monastery, where they prayed before the relics of Saint Tikhon, the Patriarch of Moscow and Enlightener of North America.

The following day, on the Sunday of Saint Thomas, Met. Jonah concelebrated the Divine Liturgy at Christ the Savior Cathedral with His Holiness, Patriarch Kirill, and participated in the consecration of Archimandrite Tikhon (Zaitsev) as Bishop of Podolsk. Met. Jonah also concelebrated the Liturgy with Patriarch Kirill in the Kremlin's Dormition Cathedral on the eve of his return to the US.

On Monday, April 27, the delegation visited Trinity-Sergius Monastery and the Moscow Theological Academy, where Metropolitan Jonah distributed copies of the Orthodox Study Bible sent by the OCA to three Russian theological schools. Archimandrite Zacchaeus, OCA Representative in Moscow, had distributed Study Bibles at the Kyiv and St. Petersburg theological academies earlier in the year.

While in Moscow, Metropolitan Jonah and the delegation also visited the Novospassky Monastery, where they venerated the wonder-working "Vsetsaritsa" Icon of the Mother of God, and the Stretensky Stavropegial Monastery and Seminary.

In St. Petersburg, Metropolitan Jonah was received at the St. Petersburg Theological Academy by the school's rector, His Grace, Bishop Amvrossy. He and the delegation also visited Saint John of Rila

Monastery, where they prayed before the relics of Saint John of Kronstadt, the chapel of the Blessed Saint Xenia of St. Petersburg in the Smolensk Cemetery, and the Saint Alexander Nevsky Lavra.

Metropolitan Jonah and the delegation spent two days visiting the Valaam Monastery and surrounding sketes as the guest of His Eminence, Archbishop Pankraty of Troitsa, the monastery's superior. It was at the Valaam Monastery that Metropolitan Jonah received his monastic formation during the year he spent in Russia after completing theological studies at Saint Vladimir's Seminary in the early 1990's.

Returning to Moscow, Metropolitan Jonah celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the OCA's Representation Church of Saint Catherine

the Great Martyr on Saturday, May 2, where he was welcomed by Archimandrite Zacchaeus and the parish faithful. That afternoon, he visited the Saint Tikhon Orthodox Institute, where he presided at the annual Saint Innocent Readings and delivered a paper on the life and missionary activities of Saint Innocent during his time in America. Metropolitan Jonah and the delegation also were

guests of Archbishop Hilarion at the Church of the Resurrection in central Moscow, in which the wonderworking Icon of the Mother of God "The Joy of All Who Sorrow," is enshrined.

In addition to their formal visits, Metropolitan Jonah and delegation members met informally with several Church and secular leaders, including the US Ambassador to Russia, Mr. John Beyrle, and Russian State Deputy Sergei A. Popov, Chairman of the Committee for Public Associations and Religious Organizations of the State Duma of the Russian Federation.

The highlight of the visit was Metropolitan Jonah's meeting with Patriarch Kirill.

"One of my main goals was not only to serve together with the Patriarch, but to become acquainted with him personally, but to establish a working relationship with him and with Archbishop Hilarion, the head of the Department for External Church Relations," Metropolitan Jonah said in an interview with the Russian religious news agency Blagovest-Info.



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## **VANDALS CUT PAGAN GRAFFITI INTO LAWN OF ORTHODOX CHURCH**

*From DirectionsToOrthodoxy.org*

Tuesday, May 12, 2009: Massillon, OH — Members of St. George Greek Orthodox Church were shocked to find someone had cut a large pentagram into a one-acre plot adjacent their church. The Very Rev. Constantine Valantasis, pastor, said his parish's plans for a community garden there will not be derailed by the weekend vandalism that has desecrated the space. Members discovered the pentagram following Saturday evening worship services at 364 First St. SE.

"Initially, I was disappointed," said Valantasis, pastor at St. George since 2005. "However this was intended, it's a satanic symbol." "I couldn't believe it," longtime church secretary Elizabeth Schrock said. "We've had this land for a very long time."

The encircled pentagram appears to have been created by someone using a reel mower, which is quieter than its gas-powered counterpart. Undaunted, Valantasis said the ground at the southeast corner of Albright Avenue and South Street SE will be broken for the garden at 6 p.m. Thursday following a "Blessing of the Ground." "It's sort of a spiritual cleansing," said Valantasis, who will be assisted by other area Orthodox clergymen.



### **What is a Pentagram?**

A five-point star, the pentagram is one of humankind's earliest known symbols, with long history of varied meaning and usage. The word itself comes from the Greek term "Pentagrammos" meaning "five lines." Its earliest known usage was by ancient astronomers as far back as 4,000 B.C., for tracking the trajectory of Venus. It also was used in the worship of the goddess Venus. The pentagram, believed by some to hold magical powers, also has been embraced over the centuries by various pagan religions, occultists, magicians, Rosicrucian Christians and Freemasonry, and was once an early symbol of the five wounds of Jesus on the cross. Satanists adopted the inverted pentagram, which is usually accompanied in illustrations by a goat's head. Today, the pentagram is most commonly associated with the Wiccan religion. For Wiccans, the pentagram represents fire, air, water, earth and spirit.

### **Good People**

Valantasis said the church never has experienced such an incident, but added he received anonymous, threatening letters when St. George began its outreach ministry. The parish operates a monthly food pantry as well as a free monthly community dinner. "There are good people here. This is a good community," he said. "They're feeling the pangs of the economy just like everyone else. They're excited about the garden." In addition to a vegetable garden, Valantasis said the church will plant flowers and install park benches. "It's a sacred space," he said. "This is for the community. Our prayer is that this (garden) will be a little symbol of hope." Valantasis acknowledged the pentagram may be a prank, but noted that "it took a while and a lot of preparation." "In other words, they knew what they were doing."

### ***OCA delegation returns from official visit to Church of Russia continued from page 2...***

"First and foremost, I wish to express my respect for our Mother Church and personally to Patriarch Kirill. He renders very great support to the Orthodox Church in America; we have identical views on many things, not only in America, but in the Orthodox world in general."

Prior to his return to the US, Metropolitan Jonah and the delegation members visited at Moscow's Epiphany Patriarchal Cathedral, where they venerated the relics of Saint Alexis of Moscow and the wonderworking Icon of Our Lady of Kazan. Metropolitan Jonah also celebrated a panikhida for the repose of the late Patriarch Aleksy of Moscow and All Rus, who is entombed in the cathedral.

This visit to the Church of Russia marked Metropolitan Jonah's first visit to a sister Orthodox Church since his election as Archbishop of Washington and New York and Metropolitan of All America and Canada at the OCA's 15th All-American Council in November 2008.

## THE CLOUD OF UNKNOWING

By VRev. Vladimir Berzonsky

***"The Lord said to Moses, 'I am going to come to you in a dense cloud, so that the people will hear Me speaking with you and always put their trust in you'....The people remained at a distance, while Moses approached the thick darkness where God was" (Exodus 19:9; 20:21)***

Moses alone was spiritually prepared to meet the Lord. The people were caught up with their immediate concerns, the trauma of having left everything behind in Egypt to follow Moses to a place that he himself was not sure he would find. Nobody can blame them; in fact, they're much like us. At the moment, our nation is plunged into economic mire that has captured the attention of every adult in the land. It's normal. But to come in touch with the Lord, one must transcend the cares of daily living. God is beyond time and space, and to be in touch with the Almighty is to rise above the immediate situation and overcome the obsession with here and now. God would meet Moses only when he went up through the cloud and beyond the people. Later Moses would move his tent from the center of the camp to the margin, to be alone with the Lord.

In the early stages of Christianity, believers understood that requirement. The Hebrews before Jesus Christ obeyed that commandment from the Almighty to honor the Sabbath and keep it holy. Some may remember the time when America honored that commandment and instituted laws to see that God's Law was enforced. A vestige of that era is the Sunday sale of alcoholic beverages only after noon. To many, it's little more than an annoyance. "Time is money," says the money worshipper. No time to spare for God thoughts.

The purpose of the Sabbath rule is much like the reason for God to meet Moses above whatever went on below the dark cloud. It was to place the prophet in the atmosphere of silence, stillness and the foretaste of eternity. To speak with God in prayer, one must shut down the noise of the world, turn off the concerns that whirl around in the mind, and imbibe the nourishment of the soul. Here is the heart's longing -  
- the voice of silence in the presence of the holy. The Sabbath was not a time to wash the family car, or sprawl out in front of the television watching anything and everything that distracts a person from his problems, although that is a sort of therapy. The Sabbath had always been the day of

opportunity to consider life from a distance, gazing at one's style of existence as though it were a motion picture, seeing oneself on the screen. Many just don't want to think about where they are on their journey through this world, how they got here, if they are fulfilled, and what else they could do in the unknown time they have before the end.

Ask Orthodox Christians why they attend the Divine Liturgy Sundays, and they likely will say it's to receive the Holy Gifts of Jesus Christ, or more honestly to be with the family, not disappoint parents or spouse, to take the children to Church School, or maybe even to listen to the homily. All are valid, especially the first; but equally important is to have an opportunity to capture the essence of Sabbath, even for a few minutes of the week. The heavenly Father sent His Son and the Holy Spirit to enter time and space in order to elevate the consciences of all human beings, raising them to the mystical mountaintop within their souls, so that they can experience God's presence and discover that part of them which lives on after their bodies are placed in the grave. When the choir sings the hymn: "Let us mystically represent the cherubim," they are calling on us to do the impossible. We are not angels, much less the highest order of angels. Yet they invite us to represent them at the sacred liturgy; i.e., take their place at this sacred altar the way they surround the throne in heaven. Mystically, because it is a mystery, but it can only happen when we "lay aside all earthly cares." Like Moses on Mt. Sinai entering the cloud, we can in the holy temple rise like him above what demands our constant attention and just for an hour put all those thoughts, regardless of their importance, into a mental closet so that we might make a space in our souls for the Lord to come into us, abide in us, and fill us with spiritual gifts that God knows may become so precious that we will want them always.

