



CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

10315 Carey Road; Berlin, MD 21811
 302-537-6055 (church) / orthodoxdelmarva.org /
 frjohn@orthodoxdelmarva.org

BULLETIN OF MARCH 23, 2014

A Warm Welcome!

We warmly welcome all of our visitors, especially Fr. Mark Koczak, chair of the Missions' board for the diocese. We thank him for worshipping and sharing fellowship with us, and we likewise express our appreciation for his words of counsel in the homily. It's good to have Fr. Mark and all of today's visitors with us!

Annunciation – Monday, March 25th

On this day, we celebrate the visit to the Virgin Mary by the Archangel Gabriel, who announced to her the good news that, if she so willed, God Himself would take up His abode within her womb. Annunciation is one of the Twelve Great Feasts, for which we seek to be present at the services. In celebration of this great event, we are permitted to eat fish.



Choir Practices

March 23: For those who would like to and can stay.
 March 30: Main rehearsal for Pascha – all asked to please attend.
 April 6: Rehearsal as a carryover from March 30, if needed.

The Mysteries of Confession and Communion

should be received by all Orthodox Christians on a regular basis and at the very least during the Great Fast and Pascha. If you have not availed yourself of these life-giving sacraments, please be sure to do so. Likewise, frequent communicants should make a confession during this and all lenten periods, as well as whenever the conscience is burdened. To schedule a confession, please just ask Fr. John.



Don't Wait Until It Is Too Late

Start arranging your schedule now for Holy Friday through Pascha. Put God first: take off work and stand by the Cross of Christ.

Coffee Hour Clean up Schedule

A schedule is posted on the bulletin board in the hall for cleaning up after coffee hour with a list of items that require attention. All supplies are provided. Please take time today to commit to assist in this community effort by signing up for one or more days.

Post-Communion Prayers

As we quietly make our way to venerate the Cross, please be attentive to the reading of the Post-Communion Prayers. Adults are kindly asked to save conversation for the coffee hour and help the children respectfully exit the church.

Did You Know?

Usually children make their first confession around age 7 or 8. If you have any questions about this, please just ask Fr. John.

SUNDAY, MARCH 23RD

Sunday of the Holy Cross

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

MONDAY, MARCH 24TH

7:00p.m. Matins

TUESDAY, MARCH 25TH

Annunciation

One of the Twelve Great Feasts

9:00a.m. Vespers & Divine Liturgy

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26TH

6:00p.m. Pre-Sanctified Liturgy
 Potluck Lenten Meal

SATURDAY, MARCH 29TH

5:15p.m. Memorial
 6:00p.m. Great Vespers

SUNDAY, MARCH 30TH

Sunday of St. John Climacus

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

READER SCHEDULE

Sunday, Mar. 30th

Joanne Patrick

Sunday, Apr. 6th

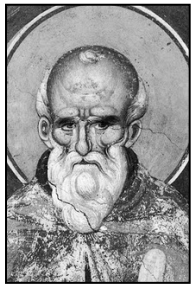
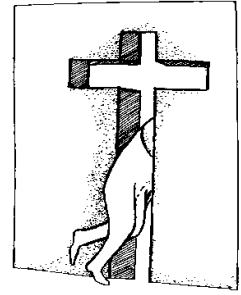
Alexis Oleynik



| CASH FLOWS THROUGH 2/28/14 | | | | | CASH FLOWS IN MARCH 2014 | | | | | FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT | | |
|----------------------------|---------|--------|---------|--------|--------------------------|---------|--------|---------|-------|-----------------------------|---------|----------|
| OPERATING | | OTHER | | ALL | OPERATING | | OTHER | | ALL | ASSETS & LIABILITIES – 3/23 | | |
| Income | Expense | Income | Expense | Net | Income | Expense | Income | Expense | Net | Checking | Overdue | Mortgage |
| 11,272 | 13,411 | 2,200 | 2,348 | -2,287 | 5,987 | 2,912 | 750 | 2,000 | 1,825 | 10,439 | 0 | 362,993 |

HAVING COME TO THE MIDPOINT OF THE 40 DAY GREAT AND HOLY FAST... LET ME REFLECT...

- ❖ Have I accepted Great Lent as a "gift" from God, with thanksgiving?
- ❖ Have I spent the last three weeks in a meaningfully different way?
- ❖ Have I participated in the lenten services that are held during the week, Monday through Friday?
- ❖ Have I used the lenten prayer of Saint Ephraim in my morning and evening prayers, and at other times throughout the day?
- ❖ In addition to the Holy Scriptures, what kind of spiritual reading have I done? Have I learned more about my Faith? Have I read spiritual works which can help me in my prayers, dealing with others, and spiritual faults and needs?
- ❖ Am I preparing myself to make a good, honest, and humble Confession? Do I really believe that I am confessing my sins to Jesus Christ? Am I aware that the Lord sees my inner heart and will know if I only recite my sins, instead of being truly sorrowful and deeply committed to avoid repeating them?
- ❖ In what ways will I struggle in the second part of Great Lent that I have so far left unattended?
- ❖ Am I willing to die to my old self in order to live in Christ? Am I willing to trade the earth for heaven? Am I willing to deny myself, take up my cross and follow Him to His heavenly Kingdom?



ST. MAXIMOS THE CONFESSOR ON LOVE

Fight the good fight until you reach the end, clinging fast to those qualities that will assure your passage to love's goal. I mean: love of humankind, brotherly and sisterly love, hospitality, love of the poor, compassion, mercy, humility, meekness, gentleness, patience, freedom from anger, long-suffering, perseverance, kindness, forbearance, goodwill and peace towards all. Out of these and through these the grace of love is fashioned, which leads one to God who deifies the human being that He Himself fashioned.

Through Isaiah the Lord has told us: 'I am the Lord your God, Who leads you in the way of righteousness, in which you should go, and you have heard My commandments.' Therefore, 'your peace has become like a river and your righteousness like the waves of the sea' (Isa. 48:17-18)."

ABOUT MAKING THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

1) The three fingers symbolize the three Persons of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

2) The two fingers symbolize the two natures of Jesus Christ: divine and human.



We make the Sign of the Cross on our 1) forehead, 2) waist, 3) right shoulder, and then 4) left shoulder, thereby offering our whole mind, heart, and strength in service to the Lord.



A REFLECTION FROM ST. NIKOLAI VELIMIROVICH

Even in His pain on the cross, the Lord Jesus did not condemn sinners but offered pardon to His Father for their sins saying, "They know not what they do!" (St. Luke 23:34). Let us not judge anyone so that we will not be judged. For no one is certain that before his death he will not commit the same sin by which he condemns his brother.

Saint Anastasius of Sinai teaches, "Even if you see someone sinning, do not judge him for you do not know what the end of his life will be like. The thief, crucified with Christ, entered Paradise and the Apostle Judas went to Hell. Even if you see someone sinning, bear in mind that you do not know his good works. For many have sinned openly and repented in secret; we see their sins, but we do not know their repentance. That is why, brethren, let us not judge anyone so that we will not be judged."

AN EXPLANATION OF THE ORTHODOX THREE-BAR CROSS

By Fr. Theodore Jurewicz

The Top Bar - The Explanation:

The top bar is the title-board, which Pilate ordered to be hung in mockery over Christ's head on the Cross. On this board was inscribed: "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin (abbreviated to the Greek initials 'INBI' or the Latin initials 'INRI' in the Western tradition). This is replaced with the Christian inscription: "King of Glory" – below the knees of the angels. On the title-board is inscribed the initials 'IC XC', being the first and last letters of Christ's name in Greek. In addition, just above Christ's arms we see the inscription: 'NIKA', which in Greek means: "He conquers" or "He is victorious." Frequently, we see these last two inscriptions together: 'IC XC NIKA', meaning: "Jesus Christ is victorious" (over death and sin).



The Middle Bar - The Explanation:

The middle bar is that on which the Lord's hands were nailed. On either top corner we see the depiction of the sun (left) and the moon (right), for "The sun hid its light, and the moon turned to blood." (Joel 2:31)



The inscription: "Son of God" is placed on both sides of Christ's head, and below His arms we read the inscription: "Before Thy Cross we bow down, O Master, and Thy holy Resurrection, we glorify". The halo of Christ is inscribed with three Greek letters meaning "The Being" or "He Who Is", to remind us that Christ is the same God Who identified Himself with those words to Moses in the Old Law.

The Bottom Bar - The Explanation:

The slanted bottom bar is the footrest. There is some question of whether it was actually on the Cross of Christ, but it is acknowledged to be a necessary attribute of the Cross, worthy of veneration and prophetically alluded to in the words [Let us] worship the footstool of His feet... (Ps. 98:5). In prayers for the Ninth Hour, the Church likens the Cross to a type of balance of righteousness: "Between two thieves Thy Cross did prove to be a balance of righteousness: wherefore one of them was dragged down to Hades by the weight of his blasphemy whereas the other was lightened of his transgressions unto the comprehension of theology. O Christ God, glory to Thee." The meaning of this prayer is as follows: the Cross of Christ stood for a scale of justice between the two thieves: for one of them sank in to hell, dragged down by his blasphemous words; and the other, the wise thief, ascended into heaven, because of his repentance. The church fathers attempted to render tangible the thought of the unfaithful thief going to hell for his blasphemy through the just judgment of God (the lower end of the bar), and of the wise thief going to heaven for his repentance and his praise of God (the upper end).



The Images - The Explanation:

On the Cross is our Savior, Jesus Christ. Note that He does not wear a crown of thorns, and that His feet are nailed with two nails. Behind the body of Christ, on either side, are a lance (which pierced Him) and a sponge (which was soaked with gall and offered to Christ to drink) on a pole made of reed or cane. On the body of Christ is depicted blood and water flowing forth from His side. Below the feet of Christ is four Slavonic letters meaning: "The place of the skull became Paradise". Hidden in a cave under the earth is 'the skull of Adam'. We are thus reminded that Adam our forefather lost Paradise through the tree from which he wrongly partook; Christ is the new Adam, bringing us Salvation and Paradise through the tree of the Cross. The city of Jerusalem is depicted in the background, for He was crucified outside the city walls.

THE ANNUNCIATION – CELEBRATED MARCH 25TH

From the Prologue of St. Nikolai Velimirovich

When the All-Holy Virgin completed the fourteenth year after her birth and was entering her fifteenth year, after having spent eleven years of living and serving in the Temple of Jerusalem, the priests informed her that, according to the Law, she could not remain in the Temple but was required to be betrothed and enter into marriage. What a great surprise to the priests was the answer of the All-Holy Virgin that she had dedicated her life to God and that she desired to remain a Virgin until death, not wanting to enter into marriage with anyone! Then, according to Divine Providence, Zacharias, the high priest and father of the Forerunner, under the inspiration of God, and in agreement with the other priests, gathered twelve unwed men from the Tribe of David to betroth the Virgin Mary to one of them to preserve her virginity and to care for her. She was betrothed to Joseph of Nazareth who was her kinsman. In the house of Joseph, the All-Holy Virgin continued to live as she did in the Temple of Solomon, occupying her time in the reading of Sacred Scripture, in prayer, in Godly-thoughts, in fasting and in handiwork. She rarely went anywhere outside the house nor was she interested in worldly things and events. She spoke very little to any-

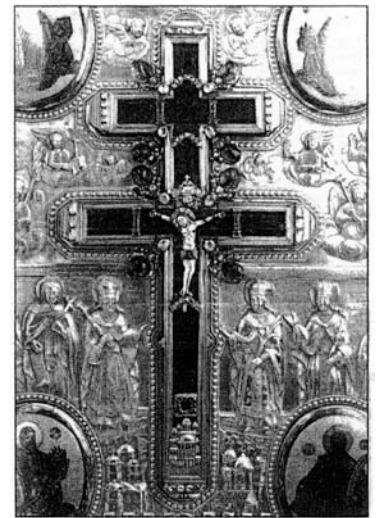


one, if at all, and never without special need. More frequently she communicated with both of Joseph's daughters. When the fullness of time had come, as prophesied by Daniel the Prophet, and when God was pleased to fulfill His promise to the banished Adam and to the Prophets, the great Archangel Gabriel appeared in the chamber of the All-Holy Virgin and, as some priestly writers wrote, precisely at that same moment when she held open the book of the Prophet Isaiah and was contemplating his great prophecy: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son!" (Isaiah 7:13). Gabriel appeared in all of his angelic brightness and saluted her: "Rejoice, highly favored one! The Lord is with you" (St. Luke 1:28), and the rest in order as it is written in the Gospel of the saintly Luke. With this angelic annunciation and the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Virgin, the salvation of mankind and restoration of all creation began. The history of the New Testament was opened by the words of the Archangel Gabriel: "Rejoice, highly favored one" This is to imply that the New Testament was to signify joy to mankind and to all created things. It is from this that the Annunciation is considered not only a great feast, but a joyful feast as well.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CROSS ITSELF?

St. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, in a letter written around 350 AD to Emperor Constantius, the son of Constantine the Great, states that the true Cross was found in Jerusalem during the reign of Constantine. From the beginning of the fifth century, church writers and historians attribute the finding of the true Cross to St. Helena, the mother of St. Constantine. In his *Catecheses*, theological discourses which Cyril delivered in Jerusalem beginning in 347 AD, he frequently mentions the sacred Cross. St. Cyril briefly describes a tradition that was followed in Jerusalem on the morning of Holy Friday. The bishop, the clergy and the faithful would gather in the Chapel of the Cross which had been constructed by Constantine near Golgotha, and there they would venerate a large relic of the true Cross which was kept in a beautiful silver and gold reliquary.

St. Cyril is the first writer to comment on the fact that relics of the true Cross had been distributed all over the world. By the beginning of the fifth century, fragments of the true Cross were found in churches, monasteries and even in homes. In fact, St. John Chrysostom (d. 407) observed that many individuals in his day wore small gold reliquaries containing particles of the Cross around their necks. The expression "knock on wood" comes from the time Christians touched their reliquary crosses in times of trouble.



The largest fragment of the True Cross in existence – Mount Athos, Greece

The expression "knock on wood" comes from the time Christians touched their reliquary crosses in times of trouble.