

Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church Newsletter

Volume 8, Issue 8

July 2008

June Council Highlights

- ✘ May's Operating Income was \$7,953 and Operating Expenses were \$9,961 resulting in a **\$2,008** deficit for May.
- ✘ Council continuing with Dickinson Architects to develop a Preliminary Site Plan with grading and drainage.
- ✘ SS Peter & Paul Semi-Annual Meeting to be held Sunday, July 20, 2008 after Divine Liturgy.
- ✘ Council votes to pay off Promissory Notes from Church Cultural Center construction.
- ✘ Council evaluating new phone service provider.



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The Hope of Glory

Very Rev. Vladimir Berzonsky
"We always thank God, the Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints...."
 (Colossians 1:3-4)

Even as a teenager I would turn to the back part of the Bible to find the epistles of St. Paul, because they are so upbeat and positive. They cheered me up and still do. Yet if we turn to II Corinthians 6:3-13 and read of the many hardships he suffered in his ministry for Christ, we wonder how St. Paul was able to rejoice in the Lord with such optimism.

In writing to the Christians at Colossae he holds a mental photograph in his mind and yet he never visited them in person. He only heard of them from the reports of his helpers Timothy and Epaphras. After his usual greeting of "grace and peace from God our Father" (grace, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and peace, the Hebrew *shalom*), he tells them that he always thanks the Father of Jesus Christ when he prays for them. It's a wonderful feeling to know that somebody is praying for us - providing it's indeed the case and not an empty little fib. As we grow in the Spirit of God, we become attuned to prayers from others. It's

as if an antenna had gone up in our souls, and we even conjure up in our inner vision the name and even the face of the one who loves us enough to be praying for our welfare and salvation.



Then the apostle gives his reasons for thanking the Lord for them. It's the familiar trio of faith, hope and love; however, in a different order that appears random. He thinks that the faith of those in Colossae and the love they send up to Christ for other Christians has much to do with hope—hope that is stored away for them in heaven. Later he explains (v. 27) what he means about hope. He tells them that it is the presence of Christ in their souls, "the hope of glory." He's writing to them as Gentiles; nevertheless, they should not despair, because they are not shut out of God's Kingdom. They and we also are members of Christ's body. As such we have His life in us. It's like knowing that you are going to approach Jerusalem and the gates will be closed, but in your pocket, or rather in your heart, you have an entrance ticket. Home means that the Colossians and we also will share in that glory which is at present hidden from view to the world.

This is a great mystery, but rather than darkness at the center, Christ

is there in the middle and around the edges. When the time comes, it will be shown that His death and resurrection has brought about the fullness of glory. It means that hope is not something out there beyond us, outside of us and ahead in the future, but rather it is in the deepest part of our beings, tucked away within our hearts.

What would be shown if our parish conducted a hope check? Suppose our communicants were measured by the hope we have within us and it could be tested by the faith we have in Christ Jesus manifested by the love we have for "all the saints," meaning not only the many on the walls of our temple, but of all those potential saints who live in these times in our communities and throughout the world. Would it not require somebody with the spiritual vision of St. Paul to see what we ourselves may not be aware of and point out what we don't know is there?

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"Nothing is so characteristically Christian as being a peacemaker."

St. Basil the Great, Letter 114



Message From Our Rector

"... Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

These brief verses from the Gospel of Saint Matthew show us the complete and perfect lifestyle of a Christian. Throughout Holy Scriptures, we find our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ declaring the importance of giving to all who are in need. It is not enough to show love only toward those who love us but to all of the Father's children. Accordingly, we are exhorted to do what we can in ministering to others. We are also reminded that all that we have are gifts from Him. Our times, talents and treasures, literally our very lives were all given to us by our Creator.

Before His crucifixion, Jesus said that we will always have the poor among us. Here in the Valley of the Sun we see poverty, hunger, a growing social assistance or welfare system, an increase in homelessness, and a crime rate that has gone wild. Despite all of the programs at the national, state and local levels to alleviate



these problems, we see that the results have fallen far short of their desired goals.

History shows us that the Orthodox Church, has had a very illustrious, successful history in the area of ministering to those in need. You might recall that in the early Church, all things were held in common, and that the first deacons were appointed to assist the poor. At the time of Constantine the Great, the Church was finally "legalized" within the Roman Empire. Christianity became the Empire's principal and predominant faith. Constantine understood that the foremost administrators who could be relied upon not only to get the job done, but also in terms of personal integrity and sincerity were the Christians. The Empire began to be built around their beliefs.

The poor, the elderly, and even the incarcerated were ministered to by the Church. Institutions such as the schools, hospitals, orphanages, libraries, and many others were administered by the Church, and not merely by the state. The ministries were, of course, highly successful. The poor, the naked, and the hungry were well cared for, and the institutions were well run.

In reading Matthew 25, vs. 31-46, we see our Lord and Savior focusing in on the Last Judgment. This passage teaches us to show our love through good works, such as feeding the hungry, giving shelter to the stranger, clothing the naked, visiting the imprisoned, and so on—in short to do all we can for others who are in need. Jesus promises us the reward of eternal life if we do it "even unto the least" of His brethren. Failing to carry out His commandments of love "even unto the least" of His brethren when we have the capabilities of doing so, we can only look to everlasting punishment. These are the promises (and warning) of God Himself.

We read in the Epistle of James, Chapter 2, "... show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works" and that, "... faith without works is dead." He also says, "... that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." We see here that we must always keep our attention focused upon the good works that our Lord Jesus Christ intended for us to do—as individuals and as a parish community—even unto the least of His brothers.

With love in the Lord,

Father David

From the Fathers . . .

"God is a fire that warms and kindles the heart and inward parts. Hence, if we feel in our hearts the cold which comes from the devil - for the devil is cold - let us call on the Lord. He will come to warm our hearts with perfect love, not only for Him but also for our neighbour, and the cold of him who hates the good will flee before the heat of His countenance."

St Seraphim of Sarov



"If you cannot be merciful, at least speak as though you are a sinner. If you are not a peacemaker, at least do not be a troublemaker. If you cannot be assiduous, at least in your thought be unlike a sluggard. If you are not victorious, do not exalt yourself over the vanquished. If you cannot close the mouth of a man who disparages his companion, at least refrain from joining him in this."

St Isaac of Syria



"A righteous person who is wise resembles God: he never disciplines anyone in order to take vengeance upon a wrongdoing, but only so that the person may be set aright, or that others may be deterred. "

St Isaac of Syria

Equal of the Apostles Great Prince Vladimir

Few names in the annals of history can compare in significance with the name of St Vladimir, the Baptizer of Rus, who stands at the beginning of the spiritual destiny of the Russian Church and the Russian Orthodox people. Vladimir was the grandson of St Olga, and he was the son of Svyatoslav (+ 972). His mother, Malusha (+ 1001) was the daughter of Malk Liubechanin, whom historians identify with Mal, prince of the Drevlyani. Having subdued an uprising of the Drevlyani and conquered their cities, Princess Olga gave orders to execute Prince Mal for his attempt to marry her after he murdered her husband Igor, and she took to herself Mal's children, Dobrynya and Malusha. Dobrynya grew up to be a valiant brave warrior, endowed with a mind for state affairs, and he was later on an excellent help to his nephew Vladimir in matters of military and state administration.



The "capable girl" Malusha became a Christian (together with Great Princess Olga at Constantinople), but she preserved in herself a bit of the mysterious darkness of the pagan Drevlyani forests. Thus, she fell in love with the austere warrior Svyatoslav, who against the will of his mother Olga made her his wife. The enraged Olga, regarding as unseemly the marriage of her "housekeeper" and captive servant to her son Svyatoslav, heir to the Great Kiev principality, sent Malusha away to her own native region not far from Vybut. And there in about the year 960 was born the boy with the Russian pagan name Volodimir, meaning peaceful ruler, ruling with a special talent for peace.

In the year 970, Svyatoslav set out on a campaign from which he was fated not to return. He had divided the Russian Land among his three sons. At Kiev, Yaropolk was prince; at Ovrucha, the center of the Drevlyani lands, was Oleg; at Novgorod was Vladimir. In his first years as prince, we see Vladimir as a fierce pagan. He headed a campaign, in which the whole of pagan Rus is sympathetic to him, against Yaropolk the Christian, or in any case, according to the chronicles, "having given great freedom to the Christians", on July 11, 978 he entered into Kiev, having become the "sole ruler" of the Kiev realm, "having subdued the surrounding lands, some by peaceful means, and the unsubmitive ones by the sword."

Though Vladimir indulged himself in a wild, sensuous life, he was far from the libertine that they sometimes portray him as being. He "shepherded his land with truth, valor and reason", as a good and diligent master, of necessity he extended and defended its boundaries by force of arms, and in returning from military campaigns, he made for his companions and for all Kiev liberal and merry feasts.

But the Lord prepared him for another task. Where sin increases, there, in the words of the Apostle, grace abounds (Rom. 5: 20). "And upon him came visitation of the Most High, and the All-Merciful eye of the Good God gazed upon him, and shone forth the thought in his heart, of understanding the vanity of idolous delusion, and of appealing to the One God, Creator of all things both visible and invisible." The matter of accepting Baptism was facilitated through external circumstances. The Byzantine Empire was in upheaval under the blows of the mutinous regiments of Bardas Skliros and Bardas Phocas, each of whom sought to gain the imperial throne. In these difficult circumstances the emperors, the coregent brothers Basil the Bulgar-Slayer and Constantine, turned for help to Vladimir.

Events unfolded quickly. In August 987, Bardas Phocas proclaimed himself Emperor and moved against Constantinople, and in autumn of that same year the emissaries of Emperor Basil were at Kiev. "And having exhausted his (Basil's) wealth, it compelled him to enter into an alliance with the Emperor of the Russians. They were his enemies, but he besought their help," writes one of the Arab chronicles of events in the 980s. "And the Emperor of the Russians consented to this, and made common cause with him."

As a reward for his military help, Vladimir asked for the hand of the emperors' sister Anna, which for the Byzantines was an unheard of audacity. Princesses of the imperial lineage did not marry "barbarian" rulers, even if they were Christians. At the same time the emperor Otto the Great was seeking the hand of Anna for his son, and he was refused. However, in Vladimir's case Constantinople was obliged to consent.

An agreement was concluded, according to which Vladimir had to send the emperors six thousand Varangians, and to accept holy Bap-

tism. Under these conditions he would receive the hand of the imperial daughter Anna. Thus, in the strife of human events the will of God directed the entering of Rus into the grace-filled bosom of the Ecumenical Church. Great Prince Vladimir accepted Baptism and sent the military assistance to Byzantium. With the aid of the Russians, the mutineers were destroyed and Bardas Phocas killed. But the Greeks, gladdened by their unexpected deliverance, were in no hurry to fulfill their part of the bargain.

Vexed at the Greek duplicity, Prince Vladimir "hastened to collect his forces" and he moved "against Korsun, the Greek city," the ancient Chersonessos. The "impenetrable" rampart of the Byzantine realm on the Black Sea fell. It was one of the vitally important hubs of the economic and mercantile links of the empire. This blow was so much felt, that its echo resounded throughout all the regions of Byzantium.

Vladimir again had the upper hand. His emissaries, the commanders Oleg and Sjbern soon arrived in Constantinople for the imperial daughter. Eight days passed in Anna's preparation, during which time her brothers consoled her, stressing the significance of the opportunity before her: to enable the enlightening of the Russian realm and its lands, and to make them forever friends of the Byzantine realm. At Taurida, St Vladimir awaited her, and to his titles there was added a new one: Caesar (Tsar). The haughty rulers of Constantinople had to accede also in this, to bestow upon their new brother-in-law the imperial insignia. In certain of the Greek historians, St Vladimir is termed from these times as a "mighty basileios-king", he coins money in the Byzantine style and is depicted on it with the symbols of imperial might: in imperial attire, and on his head the imperial crown, and in his right hand the sceptre with cross.

Together with the empress Anna, there arrived for the Russian See Metropolitan Michael ordained by holy Patriarch Nicholas II Chrysoberges. He came with his retinue and clergy, and many holy relics and other holy things. In ancient Chersonessos, where each stone brings to mind St Andrew the First-Called, there took place the marriage-crowning of St Vladimir and Blessed Anna, both reminiscent and likewise affirming the oneness of the Gospel of Christ in Rus and in Byzantium. Korsun, the "empress's dowry", was returned to Byzantium. In the spring of 988, the Great Prince and his

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Equal of the Apostles Great Prince Vladimir *cont'd*

(Continued from page 3)

wife set out through the Crimea, Taman and the Azov lands, which had come into the complex of his vast realm on the return trip to Kiev. Leading the princely cortege with frequent Services of Thanksgiving and incessant priestly singing they carried crosses, icons and holy relics. It seemed that the Ecumenical Holy Church was moving into the spacious Russian land, and renewed in the font of Baptism, Holy Rus came forth to meet Christ and His Church.

Then followed an unforgettable and quite singular event in Russian history: the morning of the Baptism of the Kievans in the waters of the River Dneipr. On the evening before, St Vladimir declared throughout the city: "If anyone does not go into the river tomorrow, be they rich or poor, beggar or slave, that one shall be my enemy." The sacred wish of the holy Prince was fulfilled without a murmur: "all our land glorified Christ with the Father and the Holy Spirit at the same time."

It is difficult to overestimate the deep spiritual transformation of the Russian people effected by the prayers of St Vladimir, in every aspect of its life and world-view. In the pure Kievan waters, as in a "bath of regeneration", there was realized a sacramental transfiguration of the Russian spiritual element, the spiritual birth of the nation, called by God to unforeseen deeds of Christian service to mankind.

"Then did the darkness of the idols begin to lift from us, and the dawn of Orthodoxy appear, and the Sun of the Gospel illumined our land." In memory of this sacred event, the regeneration of Rus by water and the Spirit, the Russian Church established the custom of an annual church procession "to the water" on August 1. Later, the Feast of the Procession of the Honorable Wood of the Life-Creating Cross of the Lord, which Russia celebrated with the Greek Church, was combined with the Feast of the All-Merciful Savior and the Most Holy Theotokos (established by St Andrew Bogoliubsky in the year 1164). In this combination of feasts there is found a precise expression of the Russian theological consciousness, for which both Baptism and the Cross are inseparable.

Everywhere throughout Holy Rus, from the ancient cities to the far outposts, St Vladimir gave orders to destroy the pagan sanctuaries, to flog the idols, and in their place to clear land in the hilly woods for churches, in which altars would be consecrated for the Bloodless Sacrifice. Churches of God grew up along the face of the

earth, at high elevated places, and at the bends of the rivers, along the ancient trail "from the Variangians to the Greeks" figuratively as road signs and lamps of national holiness. Concerning the famed church-building activity of St Vladimir, the Metropolitan of Kiev St Hilarion (author of the "Word on Law and Grace") exclaimed: "They demolished the pagan temples, and built up churches, they destroyed the idols and produced holy icons, the demons have fled, and the Cross has sanctified the cities."

From the early centuries of Christianity it was the custom to raise up churches upon the ruins of pagan sanctuaries or upon the blood of the holy martyrs. Following this practice, St Vladimir built the church of St Basil the Great upon a hill, where a sanctuary of Perun had been located, and he built the stone church of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos (Desyatinnaya) on the place of the martyrdom of the holy Varangian Martyrs (July 12). The magnificent temple was intended to become the cathedral for the Metropolitan of Kiev and All Rus, and thus the primal altar of the Russian Church. It was built in five years, and was richly adorned with frescoes, crosses, icons and sacred vessels, brought from Korsun. The day of the consecration of the church of the Most Holy Theotokos, May 12 (in some manuscripts May 11), was ordered by St Vladimir to be inserted into the Church calendar as an annual celebration. This event was linked with other events celebrated on May 11, and it provided the new Church a twofold sense of continuity. Under this day in the calendar is noted the churchly Founding of Constantinople "dedicated by the holy emperor St Constantine as the new capital of the Roman Empire, the city of Constantine is dedicated to the Most Holy Theotokos (330). On this same day of May 11, the church of Sophia, the Wisdom of God was consecrated at Kiev (in the year 960 under St Olga). St Vladimir, having had the cathedral church consecrated to the Most Holy Theotokos, followed the example of St Constantine in dedicating the capital city of the Russian Land (Kiev) to the Queen of Heaven.

Then a tithe or tenth was bestowed on the Church; and since this church had become the center of the All-Russian collection of churchly tithes, they called it the Tithe church. The most ancient text of the grant, or church rule by holy Prince Vladimir spoke thus: "For I do bestow on this church of the Holy Mother of God a tenth of all my principality, and also throughout all the Russian Land from all the princely jurisdiction a

tithe of squirrel-pelts, and from the merchant, a tithe of the week, and from households each year, a tenth of every herd and every livelihood, to the wondrous Mother of God and the wondrous Savior." The grant also specified "church people" as being free from the jurisdictional power of the prince and his "tiuni" (officials) and placed them under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan.

The chronicle has preserved a prayer of St Vladimir, with which he turned to the Almighty at the consecration of the Dormition Tithe church: "O Lord God, look down from Heaven and behold, and visit Your vineyard, which Your right hand has planted. And make this new people, whom You have converted in heart and mind to know You, the True God. And look down upon this Your church, which Your unworthy servant has built in the name of the Mother Who gave birth to Thee, the Ever-Virgin Theotokos. And whoever prays in this church, let his prayer be heard, through the prayers of the All-Pure Mother of God."

During the time of St Vladimir, the Kiev Metropolitan See was occupied successively by the Metropolitan St Michael (September 30), Metropolitan Theophylactus, who transferred to Kiev from the See of Armenian Sebaste (991-997), Metropolitan Leontius (997-1008), and Metropolitan John I (1008-1037). Through their efforts the first dioceses of the Russian Church were opened: at Novgorod (its first representative was St Joachim of Korsun (+ 1030), compiler of the Joachimov Chronicle), Vladimir-Volyn (opened May 11, 992), Chernigov, Pereslavl, Belgorod, and Rostov. "And thus throughout all the cities and villages there were set up churches and monasteries, and the clergy increased, and the Orthodox Faith blossomed forth and shone like the sun."

To advance the Faith among the newly enlightened people, learned people and schools were needed to help prepare them. Therefore, St Vladimir and the holy Metropolitan Michael "commanded fathers and mothers to take their young children and send them to schools to learn reading and writing." St Joachim of Korsun set up such a school at Novgorod, and they did the same in other cities. "And there were a multitude of schools of scholars, and of these were there a multitude of philosophers."

With a firm hand, St Vladimir held in check enemies at the frontiers, and he built fortified cities. He was the first in Russian history to set up a "notched boundary," a line of defensive

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Equal of the Apostles Great Prince Vladimir *cont'd*

(Continued from page 4)

points against nomadic peoples. "Volodimir began to set up cities along the Desna, along the Vystra, along the Trubezha, along the Sula and along the Stugna. And he settled them with the Novgorodians, the Smolyani, the Chuds and the Vyatichi. He made war against the Pechenegs and defeated them." But the real reason for his success was the peaceful Christian preaching among the pagans of the steppes.

In the Nikol'sk Chronicles under the year 990 was written: "And in that same year there came to Volodimir at Kiev four princes from the Bulgars and they were illumined with Divine Baptism." In the following year "the Pecheneg prince Kuchug came and accepted the Greek faith, and he was baptized in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and served Vladimir with a pure heart." Under the influence of the holy prince several apparent foreigners were also baptized. For example, the Norwegian "koenig" (king) Olaf Trueggvason (+ 1000) who lived several years at Kiev, and also the renowned Torvald the Wanderer, founder of a monastery of St John the Forerunner along the Dneipr near Polotsk, among others. In faraway Iceland the poet-skalds called God the "Protector of the Greeks and Russians."

In addition to the Christian preaching, there were the renowned feasts of St Vladimir. After Liturgy on Sundays and Church Feasts there were put out abundant feasting tables for the Kievans, they rang the bells, choirs sang praise, the "transported infirm" sang bylini-ballads and spiritual verses. On May 12, 996, for example, on the occasion of the consecration of the Tithe church, the prince "made a bright feast." He distributed goods "to many of the poor, and destitute and wanderers, and through the churches and the monasteries. To the sick and the needy he delivered through the streets casks and barrels of mead, and bread, and meat, and fish, and cheese, desiring that all might come and eat, glorifying God". Feasts were likewise celebrated in honor of the victories of Kievan warriors, and the regiments of Vladimir's retinue: of Dobrynya, Alexander Popovich, Rogda the Bold.

In the year 1007, St Vladimir transferred the relics of St Olga to the Tithe church. Four years later, in 1011, his spouse and companion in many of his undertakings, the Blessed Empress Anna, was also buried there. After her death the

prince entered into a new marriage with the young daughter of the German Graf Kuno von Enningen, granddaughter of the emperor Otto the Great.

The era of St Vladimir was a crucial period for the formation of Orthodox Rus. The unification of the Slavic lands and the formation of state boundaries under the domain of the Rurikovichs resulted from a strenuous spiritual and political struggle with neighboring tribes and states. The Baptism of Rus by Orthodox Byzantium was a most important step in its self-definition as a state. The chief enemy of Vladimir became Boleslav the Brave, whose plans included the extensive unification of the West Slavic and East Slavic tribes under the aegis of Catholic Poland. This rivalry arose back when Vladimir was still a pagan: "In the year 6489 (981). Volodimir went against the Lakhs and took their cities, Peremyshl, Cherven, and other cities, which be under Rus." The final years of the tenth century are likewise filled with the wars of Vladimir and Boleslav.

After a brief lull (the first decade of the eleventh century), the "great stand-off" entered into a new phase: in the year 1013 a conspiracy against St Vladimir was discovered at Kiev. Svyatopolk the Accursed, who was married to a daughter of Boleslav, yearned for power. The instigator of the conspiracy was Boleslav's cleric, the Kolobzheg Catholic bishop Reibern. The conspiracy of Svyatopolk and Reibern was an all-out threat to the historical existence of the Russian state and the Russian Church. St. Vladimir took decisive measures. All the three involved were arrested, and Reibern soon died in prison.

St Vladimir did not take revenge on those that "opposed and hated" him. Under the pretense of feigned repentance, Svyatopolk was set free. A new misfortune erupted in the North, at Novgorod. Yaroslav, not yet "the Wise," as he was later to be known, in the year 1010 having become ruler of Novgorod, decided to defect from his father the Great Prince of Kiev. He formed his own separate army, moving on Kiev to demand the customary tribute and tithe. The unity of the Russian land, for which St Vladimir had struggled all his life, was threatened with ruin. In both anger and in sorrow St Vladimir gave orders to "secure the dams and set the bridges," and to prepare for a campaign against Novgorod. His powers were on the decline. In the preparations for his final campaign, happily not undertaken, the Baptizer of Rus fell grievously ill and surrendered his soul to the Lord in

the village of Spas-Berestov on July 15, 1015. He had ruled the Russian realm for thirty-seven years (978-1015), twenty-eight of these years after his Baptism.

Preparing for a new struggle for power and hoping for Polish assistance, and to play for time, Svyatopolk attempted to conceal the death of his father. But patriotically inclined Kievan nobles, by night, secretly removed the body of the deceased sovereign from the Berestov court, where Svyatopolk's people were guarding it, and they conveyed the body to Kiev. At the Tithe church the coffin with the relics of St Vladimir was met by Kievan clergy with Metropolitan John at the head of the procession. The holy relics were placed in a marble crypt, set within the St Clement chapel of the Dormition church beside the marble crypt of Empress Anna.

The name and deeds of the holy Equal of the Apostles St Vladimir, whom the people called the Splendid Sun, is interwoven with all the successive history of the Russian Church. "Through him we too have come to worship and to know Christ, the True Life," testified St Hilarion. His deeds were continued by his sons, and grandsons and descendants, rulers of the Russian land for almost six centuries, from Yaroslav the Wise, who took the first steps towards the independent existence of the Russian Church, down to the last of the Rurikovichs, Tsar Theodore Ioannovich, under whom (in 1589) the Russian Orthodox Church became the fifth independent Patriarchate in the dyptichs of Orthodox Autocephalous Churches.

The festal celebration of the holy Equal of the Apostles Vladimir was established under St Alexander Nevsky, in memory of the intercession of St Vladimir on May 15, 1240, for his help in gaining the renowned victory by Nevsky over Swedish crusaders.

But the first veneration of the holy prince began in Rus rather earlier. The Metropolitan of Kiev St Hilarion (+ 1053), in his "Word on Law and Grace," spoken on the day of memory of St Vladimir at the saint's crypt in the Tithe church, calls him "an apostolic sovereign", like St Constantine, and he compares his apostolic evangelization of the Russian Land to the evangelization by the holy Apostles.

Reprinted from the Orthodox Church in America web site, <http://ocafs.oca.org/FeastSaintsLife.asp?FSID=102031>✧

Vacation Bible School



Ahoy there, matey!

2008 Vacation Bible School
AUGUST 4 – 8
9:00am – 12:00pm

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church
 8202 E. Cactus Road, Scottsdale
 480.991.3009

Preschool (includes potty-trained 3 year olds through children entering kindergarten)

Elementary (includes children entering 1st grade through children entering 5th grade)

Crew Captains (includes children entering 6th grade through children entering 12th grade)

*“I can do all things through Christ because he gives me strength, “ **Philippians 4:13***

Registration forms are available in the Church Vestibule.

Around Ss. Peter & Paul

JULY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Wesley Holmes
July 20

Helen Malecki
July 22

David Homyak
July 29



Mnogaya Leta!
Many Years!

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to Father David as he celebrates his second anniversary at SS Peter and Paul. Although his official start date was July 1, 2006, Father David actually served his first Divine Liturgy on June 29, 2006, celebrating the feast of SS Peter and Paul. We look forward to many more years with Father David as our Rector.



Fr David served his first Divine Liturgy at SS Peter & Paul on June 29, 2006.

Mnogaya Leta!
Many Years!

PRAYER LIST

“I was sick and you visited me.”
Matt 25:36

We offer prayers to all of our parishioners who are ill or unable to attend services:

Anna Brinkman
 Charles Sherbow
 Peg Linderman
 Pauline & Dan Vinay
 Helen Malecki
 Beatrice Washington

If you know of anyone else in need of our prayers, please contact Father David.

Bits and Pieces

BLESSING OF VEHICLES

It is a well-established custom to bless vehicles on the Feast of the Holy Prophet Elijah, July 20. This practice is based upon Elijah's association with modes of transportation, most specifically the chariot—(read 2 Kings 2 and the story of Elijah being taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire.) This year, Prophet Elijah's feast falls on a Sunday. Vehicles will be blessed immediately after the Divine Liturgy.

SEMI-ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Our semi-annual parish meeting will take place on Sunday, July 20, after coffee hour. Reports on parish life and activities will be presented, a review of the budget will take place, and an update will be given on Phase II of the parking lot project.

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES

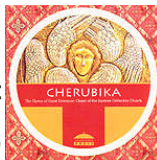
A four-week series of adult education classes will be held on Wednesday evenings in July, beginning July 9 and concluding July 30. The topic of discussion will be "The Jesus Prayer," the practice of personal and family prayer, and prayer within the Orthodox Tradition. Classes will begin at 7:00 p.m. and conclude by 8:30 p.m. For more information, please speak with Father David.

BOOKSTORE UPDATE

There is new music at the bookstore! The first selection is by a female trio called Eikona. Their CD is called **Paraklesis: The Mother of Light**. From the back of the CD "In the beautiful poetic-hymnography which is characteristic of Byzantine Chant in the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Theotokos, the Mother of God is honored and esteemed for her unique role in the salvation of the human race.... During the Paraklesis Service, we ask the Most Holy Theotokos to save us just as those drowning reach out to those on dry land." \$17.

The second selection is called **Cherubica: The Hymn of Great Entrance**. This CD contains 11 versions of the "Cherubic Hymn" a central piece of the Orthodox liturgy. This "soulful chant" offers centuries-old traditional melodies from Romania, Russia, Bulgaria, Georgia and Serbia, all performed in English. Includes 8 page insert explaining the historical development of each melody. \$18

Katrina Delsante



CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Lydia Osolinsky, daughter of Bill and Rosemarie, and to her fiancé, Michael Davis, who will be crowned in Holy Matrimony in Holy Trinity Cathedral, San Francisco, on Sunday, July 20. We offer our congratulations to the new couple as well their parents. May the Lord God crown the newly-married couple with glory and honor and grant them many happy years together!

MYRRH BEARERS ALTAR SOCIETY



Thank you to all who attended the Sts Peter & Paul Luncheon. All donations received were donated to the church since all expenses were borne by the Myrrh Bearers Altar Society. A special *Thank You* to Elena Kerr who chaired the

event and to Jane Evans, Pat Starkey, Marty Gala, Elizabeth Michel, and Dorothy Yost—who helped with the food and set up, and to all who helped to clean up.

Elizabeth Michel

CHURCH FUND RAISERS

If you haven't already done so, please be sure to purchase a Fry's gift card. Once purchased, the gift card can be recharged at your local Fry's store for any amount up to \$500. You can pay for your 'recharges' with cash, check, and debit/credit cards. Please contact Jane Evans to purchase your new Fry's gift card.

PARISH LIBRARY

Our parish library has many resources to assist you in your spiritual journey throughout the year. Stop by after services and pick a book (or two!) to read as part of your spiritual exercises. There are hundreds of titles for you to choose from.

WELCOME

We welcome all visitors to SS Peter & Paul. We hope your visit was enriching and enlightening.

Please join us in the Cultural Center, behind the church, for our Fellowship Hour. It's a chance to meet some of our members, other visitors, and enjoy some coffee and fellowship. It's also a great time to take a look at our bookstore.



SS PETER AND PAUL LUNCHEON

Despite the blistering temperatures, we had a wonderful turnout for our feast day luncheon. The Myrrh Bearers Altar Society worked hard to decorate and prepare the luncheon. Thanks to all who helped our parish celebrate our feast day—especially those who prepared the meal!



Father David takes time to chat with some parishioners before the meal is served.



Protodeacon Alexis spends the afternoon catching up with the Bezkorovainy's, old friends from Illinois.




Dorothy, Elena, and Marty serve the guests.



It was an afternoon to relax, celebrate . . . and to let someone else do the cooking!!!

July 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
 <p>Adult Education Prayer Within the Orthodox Tradition Wednesdays, July 9-30, 2008</p>			1	2	3 Milk-Giver Icon at Mt. Athos	4 Galatian Icon	5 Relics Ven. Sergius of Radonezh Ven. Athanasius-Athos 5:00pm Great Vespers
6 8:40am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy	7	8 6:00pm Council Meeting	9 Kolochskaya Icon 7:00pm Adult Education	10 Ven. Anthony of the Kiev Caves	11 Rzhetskaya Icon	12 "Three Hands" Icon 5:00pm Great Vespers	
13 Fathers of the 1st 6 Ecumenical Councils "Axion Estin" Icon 8:40am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy	14	15 Great Prince Vladimir, Equal to the Apostles, Enlightener of the Russian Lands	<p>We welcome all of our guests and visitors. Please join us in the Cultural Center for Fellowship Hour following Divine Liturgy</p>			19 Relics Ven. Seraphim of Sarov 5:00pm Great Vespers	
20 Holy Prophet Elijah Abalatskaya Icon 8:40am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy Blessing of Vehicles SS Peter and Paul Semi-Annual Meeting	21 Amatia Icon	22	23 Pochaev and Joy of All Who Sorrow Icons 7:00pm Adult Education	24 Martyrs Boris & Gleb Passionbearers	25	26 St. Jacob Netsvetov, Enlightener of the Peoples of Alaska 5:00pm Great Vespers	
27 Greatmartyr and Healer Panteleimon 8:40am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy	<p>SS Peter and Paul Semi-Annual Meeting Sunday, July 20, 2008 Following Fellowship Hour</p>		30 7:00pm Adult Education	31 Forefeast Procession of the Life-giving Cross	1 Procession of the Life-giving Cross	2 5:00pm Great Vespers	
	28 Smolensk-Hodigitria Icon	29					