



Crossroads

The Monthly Newsletter of the Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross

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OCTOBER, 2018

**“Nine Stories from the Beatitudes and IOCC that Can Bring
and Hold Us Together”**

The First Story:

***“Blessed are the Poor in Spirit, for Theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven”:
Building Schools in Uganda***

by Fr. John

Over the past several years the monthly Youth Sermons have tried to share the possibilities of what we can experience when worshipping as Orthodox Christians: what we can hear and learn, so that we can understand what we should do when we enter back into the world. It can be helpful to think of this effort as an elliptical orbit in which we move out and in — the only difference is that with our movements we will keep going further out and deeper within throughout our lives and into eternity.

So, no matter how old we are, we are encouraged when coming to any liturgical service and especially the Divine liturgy to believe that there are words, stories, and hymns that will continually provide more and more meaning and knowledge (and knowledge in this case is not theoretical, but implies an ever expanding experience of “knowing God and Jesus Christ whom [He] has sent” – John 17:3).

The primary words and stories that we hope to understand more fully would be those of Jesus Christ. This Sermon, delivered on Sunday September 30, began by showing the children a colored drawing of the Encounter with Jesus — “*On the Way to Emmaus*” — a project that the iconographer, Seraphim O’Keefe, is preparing for the area above the awning over the front steps to our church’s entrance. It depicts the



risen Christ explaining to the disciples, Luke & Cleopas, how the Old Testament Scriptures speak about Him and how He was revealed to them in “the breaking of the Bread” (Luke 24:13-35). Jesus Christ — revealed in the words of Scripture and in the Eucharist – this is primarily what we as a Christian and Orthodox community have to share with ourselves and all who come to our parish.

Then in addition to the Old Testament Scriptures, we are drawn to Christ’s own words as presented to us in the Gospels. Throughout this year we will focus on His message as delivered in “*The Beatitudes*” (Mt 5:3-12). These are found in the beginning of what is known as “*The Sermon on the Mount*” (Mt 5-7). Each month a particular Beatitude will first be delivered a week in advance as part of an adult sermon and then the same theme will be offered to the children during the monthly Youth Sermon – combining it with an example from the work of IOCC (*International Orthodox Christian Charities*).



Our first Beatitude was: “*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*” To be “blessed” is more than just being “happy.” It implies a sense of depth that comes from knowing that we are guided and connected to God’s presence in our lives, but also that we are empty without realizing this presence. When understood this way, we are led to acknowledge that no matter what we have or do we are limited or incomplete if we think that we can do or have it “on our own” or “in our own way.” We are always, as stated by St. Paul in his epistle read several weeks ago, trying to “work together” with God and not accept His grace in vain (2 Cor 6:1): knowing this, directs us to the path of the Kingdom of Heaven.

It was affirmed that Christians everywhere are trying to understand this same message. A map of the world was shared and the focus was drawn to Orthodox Christians living in Africa. An example of how the Paschal hymn, “*Christ is Risen,*” is sung in the African country of Ghana was played. You can see the video that was shown:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s1qYQQEwPUU>

We then discussed the efforts of IOCC in the country of Uganda whose people have suffered from years of war, disease, civil unrest, and pollution (see the link below: “*where we work/Uganda*”). Many children have lost their parents and have been unable to attend schools that have necessary materials and are located in safe areas. IOCC has helped in building schools, and provided wells, water pumps, and rain harvesting equipment (this allows for the re-use of rain water that would just run the ground).

Several of the school children currently being helped in an IOCC school were introduced: *Abdul, Dorothy, Julet, and Kerren* (see the link below: “*dreaming big rural Uganda*”). The Holy Cross children understood that these students want the same things that they desire: learn, to imagine a kind of job that they might like to do, to be happy, safe.



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The children were reminded that today is the “kick off” to our Church School Program and that at the end of this Divine Liturgy we will have a short Service that will remind and encourage the teachers, students, parents, and actually the whole parish that everyone is involved in teaching and learning how to be a Christian. During the Service, each of us will be asked in various way to commit to helping one another learn and that the response to each of the questions will be: “*I will with God’s help.*”

This is what the students at the IOCC schools are learning as well and this is what it means to “*be poor in spirit*” — to know that what we have and can do, we will accomplish with “God’s help.”

LINKS TO THE WORK OF IOCC IN UGANDA:

- <https://www.iocc.org/where-we-work/uganda>
- <https://www.iocc.org/blog/dreaming-big-rural-uganda>

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UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

- **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13: *BLESSING OF ANIMALS SERVICE — 10 AM.***
- **SATURDAY-SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20-21: *VISIT OF ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL.***
- **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21: *IOCC BENEFIT DINNER:* See Diana Pasca for tickets.**
- **THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25: *PARISH COUNCIL MEETING at 7 PM***
- **FRIDAY-SATURDAY OCTOBER 26-27: *PIROHI SESSIONS***
- **SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10: *ST. HELENA’S FALL BAZAAR***
- **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11: *THANKSGIVING LUNCHEON***

MEMORY ETERNAL TO MELANIA ABDALLAH: Cards can be sent to Imad and his family at:

39 Babbitt Lane
Willingboro, NJ 08046

The family has requested that any memorial donations be sent either to our parish’s Iconography Fund or to St. Tikhon’s Seminary, PO Box 130, South Canaan, PA 18459.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE CLASSES: We are grateful for Professor Ed Siecienski’s efforts and look forward to other classes and presentations.

ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL WILL MAKE HIS ANNUAL VISIT OVER THE WEEKEND OF OCTOBER 20-21.

- **On Saturday**, he will lead a HEALING SERVICE at 5:00. We would like to have refreshments following the Service. A sign-up sheet will be available on the bulletin board.
- **On Sunday**, the Divine Liturgy will begin with our greeting of His Eminence at **9:30**.

COLLECTION FOR THE DDB (DISTINGUISHED DIOCESAN BENEFACTORS): In lieu, of a personal gift or honorarium, Archbishop Michael prefers that any donations be directed to the DDB which benefits Diocesan seminarians, mission parishes, and clergy and parishes in need. We will have collections for the DDB throughout October.

ANNUAL THANKSGIVING DINNER – SUNDAY NOVEMBER 11: It is that time of the year again! Our Annual Thanksgiving Dinner will take place on Sunday, November 11th after liturgy. Everyone is invited. Please check out your recipes and bring a delicious side dish or dessert to share with everyone. We will be placing a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the social hall so check it out and let us know what you plan to bring. Look forward to seeing everyone there.

WOMAN2WOMAN ACTIVITIES:

- Woman2Woman support group meeting on Thursday, October 25, 7-9 p.m., at the home of Diana Bisinger, 45 Stone Mountain Lane, Marlton 08053. Please let Diana know if you plan to attend (609-471-0052)
- Ladies' Luncheon, Tuesday, Oct. 30, 12 noon, at Harvest House Restaurant in the Moorestown Mall. Please RSVP with Genie by Sunday, October 28. 856-802-1664

Contact: **Genie Skuby** at 856 802 1664 or skubydoo81@comcast.net

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: The September Meeting was cancelled. The next Meeting will be on Thursday October 25.

CHURCH SCHOOL AND YOUTH EVENTS

SATURDAY OCTOBER 13 — BLESSING OF ANIMALS — 10:00

SUNDAY OCTOBER 14 — HAYRIDE at Indian Acres Tree Farm, 111 Tuckerton Rd, Medford
(5:30-8:45)

SATURDAY OCTOBER 20 — HEALING SERVICE WITH ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL

SUNDAY OCTOBER 21 — LITURGY & CONVERSATION WITH ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL
(starting at 9:30!)

FRIDAY OCTOBER 26 — HALLOWEEN PARTY (6-9 PM)

OUR MIDDLE SCHOOL AND TEEN CLASS in addition to their regular classes will have each month a guest presenter who will speak about their life and work and how being a Christian has made a difference.

Here's Dr. Jeffrey Carpenter, a surgeon, talking to the class on Sunday October 7.



COFFEE HOUR ASSIGNMENTS:

October 7 Barbara Hehre / October 14 Liz Gibbons and Alexandra Lilly
October 21 Carol Ann Curry (Special Coffee Hour) / October 28 Ellie Kuzma & Daughters
November 4 Judy Clyde / November 11 Annual Thanksgiving Dinner (See Posted Sign Up Sheets)

Fall Calendar 2018

October-November

Saturday October 13	Blessing of Animals – 10 AM
Sunday October 14	Barbeque Hayride
Saturday-Sunday Oct 20-21	Visit of Archbishop Michael (Saturday – Healing Service – 5 PM Sunday Liturgy – 9:30)
Sunday October 21	Benefit Banquet for IOCC (Adelphia, Deptford)
Thursday October 25	Woman2Woman Meeting (7-9 PM)
Friday October 26:	Halloween Party (6:00-9:00)
Friday-Saturday Oct 26-27	Pirohi Sessions
Sunday October 28	
Tuesday October 30	Ladies Luncheon
Tues-Wed October 30-31	Diocesan Assembly (Brick, NJ)

November

Sunday November 4	
Wednesday November 7	Vesperal Liturgy for the Archangel Michael — 7 PM
Thursday November 8 -10	OCAMPR Conference (Somerset, NJ) http://ocampr.org/2018-conference/
Saturday November 10	Walk to End Alzheimer's – Philadelphia St. Helena's Fall Bazaar
Sunday November 11	Parish Thanksgiving Luncheon
Wednesday November 14	Beginning of Advent
Wednesday November 14	Woman2Woman: Advent Talk with Fr John (7-9)
Sunday November 18	
Tuesday November 20	Vesperal Liturgy for the Entrance of the Theotokos —7 PM
Sunday November 25	
Tuesday November 27	Woman2Woman: Luncheon

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4 <i>Intro to the Bible: 7:30-9:00</i>	5	6 NO <i>Great Vespers:</i>
7 <i>DIVINE LITURGY—10:00</i>	8	9	10	11 <i>Intro to the Bible: Final Class 7:30-9:00</i>	12	13 <i>Blessing of Animals – 10 AM</i> <i>Great Vespers: 5</i>
14 <i>DIVINE LITURGY—10:00</i> <i>Barbeque Hayride</i>	15	16	17	18	19	20 <i>Healing Service with Archbishop Michael – 5 PM</i>
21 <i>DIVINE LITURGY with Archbishop Michael – 9:30</i> <i>IOCC Benefit 3:30</i>	22	23	24	25 <i>W2Woman at Diana Bisinger's – 7 PM</i> <i>Parish Council Meeting – 7 PM</i>	26 <i>Pirohi Session (9:00)</i> <i>Halloween Party (6:00-9:00)</i>	27 <i>Pirohi Session (9:00)</i> <i>Great Vespers: 5</i>
28 <i>DIVINE LITURGY—10:00</i> <i>Inreach/Outreach</i>	29	30 <i>DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY (Oct 30-31 Brick, NJ)</i> <i>Woman2Woman Meeting (7-9)</i>	31	1 <i>November</i>	2	3 NO <i>Great Vespers</i>

