



Crossroads

The Monthly Newsletter of the Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross

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March, 2018

***On the Sixth Song:
"Holy, Holy, Holy"***

by Fr. John

The "Sixth Song" — "*Holy, Holy, Holy*" — was delivered during the Youth Sermon on Sunday February 25. Though it is sung several times in various forms throughout the Liturgy, we learn it not from human Tradition, but from the vision of the Prophet Isaiah as the example of how heavenly beings respond to being eternally around God's presence, which is unlike that of any other. The repetition of this single word condenses and amplifies everything else that can be said. Here's the vision (Isaiah 6:1-8):



In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. ² Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³ And one cried to another and said:

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
The whole earth is full of His glory!"

⁴ And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.

⁵ So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;

For my eyes have seen the King, The Lord of hosts."

⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar. ⁷ And he touched my mouth with it, and said:

"Behold, this has touched your lips; Your iniquity is taken away,
And your sin purged."

⁸ Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying:

"Whom shall I send,
And who will go for Us?"

Then I said, “Here am I! Send me.”

In the Youth Sermon the expression from the Cherubic Hymn was presented:

“Let us who mystically represent the Cherubim and who sing the thrice holy hymn to the life-creating Trinity, now lay aside all earthly cares.”

As this particular Sunday in Great Lent marks the historical restoration of iconography it’s good to remember that the expression “we who mystically represent the Cherubim” describes literally in Greek how we are “mystically ‘icons’ of the Cherubim.” Though different to them in having visible bodies (the angels are known as “bodiless hosts”) we are called to be like them in likewise being capable of offering the “thrice holy hymn – Holy, Holy, Holy” to the life-creating Trinity: we are invited to pray and sing in the ways done by them.

All of this is again summarized in the language of the Anaphora Prayers of St. John Chrysostom and particularly that of St. Basil, used during Great Lent: “with two they cover their faces, with two they cover their feet, and with two they fly, crying one to another with unceasing voices and ever-resounding praises: Singing the triumphant hymn, shouting, proclaiming and saying: Holy, Holy, Holy. Lord of Sabaoth (Lord of Hosts).”

Here’s how St. John Chrysostom explains this “song”:

Do you not recognize this cry? Is it from us or from the seraphim? It is both from us and from the seraphim on account of Christ’s removal of the dividing wall and making peace between things in heaven and things on earth, on account of his making the two groups one. At first, you see, this hymn was sung only in heaven; but when the Lord deigned to come on earth, he brought this music to us as well. Hence this great high priest, too, having, taken his place at this holy table, offering the rational worship and performing the bloodless sacrifice, does not simply invite us to this praise-giving; having first mentioned the cherubim and recalled the seraphim, he then bids all offer up the awesome chant, urging us to lift our thoughts from earth to heaven by reference to our fellow choristers, and as it were crying out to each one of us in the words, You sing with the seraphim: take your place with the seraphim, with them spread the wings of your mind, with them fly around the royal throne (*Sermon Six on Isaiah*).

Two other aspects from Isaiah’s vision were shared: the first was how the angel took the living coal with the tongs, and touched Isaiah’s lips. This has rich liturgical meaning for the same Greek word “*labis*”



describes both the tongs used

by the angel and the Eucharistic spoon utilized at every Divine Liturgy by the priest or bishop.

The words, “Behold, this has touched your lips; Your iniquity is taken away, And your sin purged,” are likewise recited by the priest after everyone has received Holy Communion.



Finally, every Divine Liturgy raises the question asked by the Lord:

“Whom shall I send,
And who will go for Us?”

Isaiah’s words, “Here am I! Send me,” hopefully is the same response we are prepared to offer.

[**Note:** *Those who have attended a Funeral Service or Mass in a Catholic Church might be familiar with the following hymn by Dan Shutte which is a reflection of the themes of Isaiah’s vision.*]

Here I Am Lord

Dan Shutte

I the Lord of sea and sky
I have heard my people cry
All who dwell in dark and sin
My hand will save

I who made the stars of night
I will make their darkness bright
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?

**Here I am Lord, Is it I Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night
I will go Lord,
If you lead me,
I will hold your people in my heart.**

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

- **SUNDAY MARCH 4 — WE WILL HOST THE LENTEN DEANERY VESPERS AT 4:00. The guest homilist will be Fr. Joseph Gall.**
- **SATURDAY MARCH 10: ST. HELENA’S GUILD SPRING BAZAAR — 11-3:00.**
- **SATURDAY MARCH 10: CONFESSIONS FOR CHURCH SCHOOL CHILDREN — 3:30. Fr. John will explain the Sacrament and hear the children’s confessions. Preparatory material has been sent out and is available in the vestibule.**
- **SATURDAY MARCH 17: RETREAT WITH DRS. MARY AND DAVID FORD, professors from St. Tikhon’s Seminary. See the attached poster – a Daily Lenten Reader is available in the vestibule and is being sent to everyone on our email list..**
- **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING —THURSDAY MARCH 22 at 7 PM.**

- ***CONFESSIONS will be heard:*** before each Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts (from 6:00-7:00); following Great Vespers on Saturday evenings (later during Lent time will be available before Great Vespers); Sunday mornings (from 9:15-9:55). ***PLEASE do not wait until the last minute. ALL Confessions should be made before Holy Week.***
- **SATURDAY MARCH 24:** Church Outside Clean-Up (9:00) / Family Fun Night – 5:00

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: THURSDAY FEBRUARY 15 – by Phyllis Pritchard.

Treasurer’s Position and Report: As was addressed at the Annual Parish Meeting, Mark Skuby is currently assuming the positions of Warden and Treasurer, with the support of new Council member, Michelle Zissimos, and Council members who will help in counting the weekly collection. Fr. John noted that he and Mark had met with a representative from the Medford area CPA firm, Padden Cooper, to examine our use of the Quickbooks financial software. They are reviewing our documentation and will make some suggestions, offering us training as well. The January Financial Report was not available, as Mark did not yet have access to our online banking records.

In addition to the responsibilities of the Treasurer and matters related to financial documentation, it was agreed that an emphasis this year would be on preparing our community for leadership roles within the Council and other parish activities. This would include: a checklist, policy and procedure book for all positions, sub roles for those not on the Council, putting teams together from the Council, forms for reimbursement, and collection guidelines.

Old Business: **Ramp Repair:** Mark will meet with several contractors to obtain additional bids for the job. **Financial Investments:** being coordinated by auditor, Greg Stosuy. **Water for coolers:** We have been purchasing water ourselves, but a delivery service is being considered. **Diocesan Review of Bylaws:** We have still not heard back from the Diocese – Fr. John will inquire.

New Business: Gary will coordinate getting the floors waxed and other maintenance projects.

St Helena’s Guild: December balance \$16,990.00 - working amount \$13,250.00. **Parish Committees:** Council members were encouraged to get involved in the coordination of Parish Committees and in supporting the involvement of others. **Hospitality:** Phyllis will work on this. **Church Cleaning:** Mary Denko and Paul will be stepping down over the next month from the church cleaning position. Several options are being considered. Background checks will be needed. **Outside Clean Up:** Gene Dubiago will coordinate this on Saturday March 24th. **Adult education Classes:** There is a growing interest in expanding classes and presentations. **Communication box/ talent board:** Phyllis will look into these.

The next Meeting will be on Thursday March 22 at 7:00.

WOMAN2WOMAN ACTIVITIES:

Tuesday, March 27, 12 noon, Ladies’ Luncheon at Blue Fig Restaurant in Moorestown (across from Centerton Square shopping center). Please let me know if you plan to attend.

Thursday, March 29, 7 p.m., W2W will have its regular social meeting at the home of Diana Bisinger, in Marlton. We’ll be collecting ideas for activities/meetings for the balance of the year, so please join us! More details to follow. Any questions, please call Genie Skuby 856-802-1664.

PROFITS FROM THE IMPORT BOUTIQUE DONATIONS FOR 2017:

Credit Card Sales at the Fall Festival:	\$288.75
Additional check donation – Fall Festival	300.00
Total to our church	588.75
Donation to St. Helena’s Guild	700.00
2017 Donation Total	\$1288.75

COVENANT HOUSE SLEEP OUT at St. Mary of the Lakes Church, Medford, Friday April 27th at the SCHOOL GYMNASIUM located at 196 Rt 70. The back lawn of the school property will be used the children will have all night access to the GYM for bathrooms, breaks and adults etc.

From Sister Vassa (Saturday, March 3)

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. Truly, truly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself, and has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man. Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment.” (Jn 5: 24-29)

This is the reading for today, the first Lenten “Memorial Saturday,” on which we commemorate those who have already passed on, to the afterlife. But in this passage the Lord is also talking about “the dead” in the here and now, the walking dead, who hear His word and believe, and thus “pass from death to life”; to true and new life in Him.

Let me live today, in Christ’s life-creating Spirit, according to the will of the One Who sent Him, that I may have faith instead of fear; humble honesty instead of wishful thinking; humble self-acceptance instead of morbid self-judgment; communion instead of self-isolation; grace-filled discipline instead of chaos; gratitude instead of self-pity; self-offering instead of self-centeredness; and light instead of darkness. Let me rest, in Him, on this Memorial Saturday, as we offer Divine Liturgy for us and for our beloved deceased, that together with them I may live in, and celebrate, “the resurrection of life.” It is already breaking into my here and now, particularly in this season of renewal that is Lent, when I choose to pick up its helpful tools for healthy living. “Do not marvel at this,” says the Lord. ...But I must admit, I am “marveling” at this. Thank You, Lord, for speaking to me, and all of us, even when we are “in the tombs,” and bringing us back to life, rather than judgment, again and again. Glory be to You.



CROSSWALKS

The Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross Youth Ministry Newsletter
March 2018



In February, our kids enjoyed an Ice Skating Party at Igloo Ice Skating Rink in Mt Laurel NJ

+ + + Sunday March 25 - Feast of the Annunciation of the Holy Theotokos + + +

Saturday March 10 - **Preparation for Confession** starting at 3:30. Fr John will have a session to help prepare and to hear our children's Confessions. Printed materials are in the vestibule. If this time doesn't work, please bring the children at another time or talk with Fr John.

Saturday, March 24 - **Family Fun Night** beginning at 5 p.m. Everyone/all ages welcome. See 'Sign Up Genius' invite for details and sign up list for food.

Friday, April 27 - **Covenant House Sleep Out** at St. Mary's Catholic Church, Medford. Participate or sponsor someone to help area homeless teens!

Saturday, May 5 - **Cooking with Anna** watch for more info!

Other Community Service Opportunities

Monthly Community Luncheon with Diana Pasca to help prepare food for a shelter in Mt. Holly, NJ. They are usually about 2 hours on a Saturday morning. All dates are listed in Crossroads on the church calendar. (eligible for community service hours)



*When the Foundations Are Shaken:
Scriptural and Patristic Wisdom from
the Book of Revelation
and the Letters of St. John Chrysostom to St. Olympia*



**A Retreat led by Drs. Mary
and David Ford**
Saturday March 17, 2018
**Orthodox Church of the Holy
Cross**
11 Wilkins Station Rd.
Medford, NJ
Free Will Donation

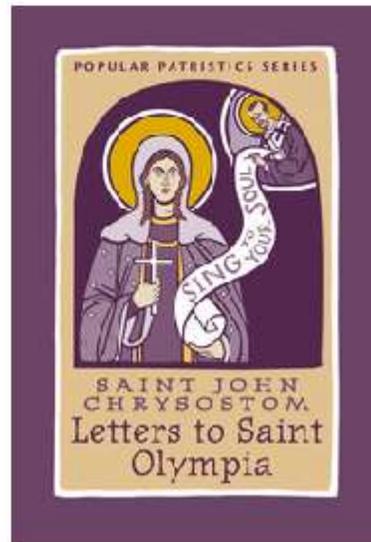
Schedule

9:30-10:00	Registration & Welcome
10:00 – 12:00	First Session
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00-3:00	Second Session
3:30-4:30	Great Vespers
4:30-6:00	Women's & Men's Special Sessions

Register at:

frjohn@holycrossmedford.org

More info & Daily Lenten Reader:
holycrossmedford.org



Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross – MARCH, 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 <i>Woman2Woman at Diana Pasca's 7:00</i>	2	3 <i>Community Luncheon – 9 AM</i> <i>Great Vespers: 5</i>
4 <i>DIVINE LITURGY – 10:00</i> <i>St. Helena's Guild Meeting</i> <i>Lenten Vespers Here – 4:00</i>	5	6	7	8	9 <i>Confessions: 6-7</i> <i>Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts 7 PM</i>	10 <i>St. Helena's Spring Bazaar</i> <i>Children's Confessions – 3:30</i> <i>Great Vespers: 5</i>
11 <i>DIVINE LITURGY—10:00</i>	12	13	14 <i>Confessions: 6-7</i> <i>Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts 7 PM</i>	15	16	17 <i>Retreat - 9:30 – 6:00</i> <i>Great Vespers: 3:30</i> <i>Women's & Men's Sessions</i>
18 <i>DIVINE LITURGY – 10:00</i> <i>Inreach Meeting</i> <i>Baptism of Alexander Burdzy 2:00</i>	19	20	21	22 <i>Parish Council Meeting – 7 PM</i>	23 <i>Confessions: 6-7</i> <i>Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts 7 PM</i>	24 <i>Church CleanUp – 9:00</i> <i>Confessions: 3:00</i> <i>Great Vespers: 4</i> <i>Family Fun Night- 5:00</i>
25 <i>DIVINE LITURGY—10:00</i>	26	27 <i>Woman2Woman Luncheon, Noon</i> <i>Blue Fig Restaurant</i>	28	29 <i>Woman2Woman Meeting at Diana Bisinger's, 7:00</i>	30 <i>Confessions: 6-7</i> <i>Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts 7 PM</i>	31 <i>Lazarus Saturday Liturgy 9 AM</i> <i>Confessions: 4:00</i> <i>Great Vespers: 5</i>

