



Crossroads

The Monthly Newsletter of the Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross

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THE THINGS WE CARRY

by Fr. John

In presenting the first of this year's Youth Sermons several weeks ago, I began by discussing the book bag that most children have, comparing the things they probably bring to and take home from school to that which each of us carries within our hearts and minds into every Divine Liturgy and what we might possibly take home with us. The children seemed to understand that we all bring to the Liturgy something: most notably, our concerns and prayers for ourselves, those we love, and for our world. Hopefully, we also come with the expectation that we can and will take at least one thing home with us from the liturgical texts, the Scriptures, the Sermon, or from a conversation with someone.



The Sermon that day introduced what will be the theme for the whole year: "*The Nine Songs*" – nine liturgical responses that the community is assigned to offer during the Liturgy (and other services). The first Song was the word, "*Amen.*" It basically means, "Yes." "I agree." So be it." When offered at the beginning of the Divine Liturgy as a response to: "Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..." it affirms that, indeed, our goal is to experience to the extent possible the reality of God's Kingdom in our lives and in the life of our community. As expressed throughout particularly the Scriptures

the response of "Amen, So be it," comes from individuals, prophets, Jesus himself, and "all the people." It was noted that a priest can not even serve a Divine Liturgy unless there is at least one person present to say, "Amen." Finally, "Amen," is one of the names of Jesus Christ: In the Letter to the Laodiceans, found within Revelations, it says that "these are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation" (3:14). And in St. Paul's 2nd Letter to the Corinthians, "All the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory" (1:20).

The next Youth Sermon will be on Sunday October 15 and will focus on the "Song" – "*Lord, have mercy.*" It will also be our "*Planting of Seeds Sermon,*" given the Gospel story of that day (Luke 8:5-15).

Having reviewed all of the above I have come to appreciate that what we also carry with us as we approach and depart from the Liturgy, even how we respond throughout the Liturgy, probably depends on how we have prepared and lived our lives throughout the week. Our Orthodox spiritual tradition provides us with some direct and simple advice: what we carry within us will depend on how we start each day! Here is the advice of St. Theophan the Recluse:

As soon as you wake up in the morning take care to collect yourself inwardly, and to kindle a feeling of warmth within. Consider this as your normal condition. **As soon as it ceases to be so, you may be sure that your inner self is not in order.** When in the morning, you have brought yourself to a warm and collected condition, you must fulfill all your obligations in such a way as not to destroy your inner order, and, when you have the choice, do what supports this condition. In no circumstances do anything that destroys it, for this would mean being your own enemy. Only make it a rule to maintain collectedness and warmth, standing in your mind before God. This in itself will then show you what you must do, and what you should deny yourself. (*The Art of Prayer*, 161-162).

For those looking to development a morning or evening prayer rule, here is the advice of Fr. Sergius Bowyer, the Abbot of St. Tikhon’s Monastery. Fr. Sergius recommends not being a slave to the rule, but in doing as much as one can, without rushing, and with attention. Copies of the “*Prayer Rule*” are in the vestibule or see me for more help or materials:

- Begin with the “Trisagion Prayers”: O Heavenly King...Our Father
- Read Psalm 50/51: “Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your great mercy...”
- Read the Creed
- Recite the “Jesus Prayer – Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me.” (5-10 times)
- Prayers for our ourselves, our loved ones, or those with whom we are at enmity, crossing ourselves each time.
- Reciting the “Jesus Prayer” – 5 to 10 minutes.
- Prayers from a Prayer Book/Prayers before the Reception of Holy Communion/Prayers for Intercessions of Others.
- A chapter from the Gospels and from a small portion of Orthodox spiritual material.
- He offers a specific prayer for the morning and evening.
- Conclusion

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UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

- **COMMUNITY LUNCHEON: SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 30: COOKIES FOR OUR COLLEGE STUDENTS WILL BE MADE!**
- **INREACH/OUTREACH MEETING: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1, after the Liturgy**
- **ST. HELENA’S GUILD MEETING: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1, after the Liturgy.**

- **ST. MOSES THE BLACK CONFERENCE**, “CLOSER TO CHRIST, CLOSER TO EACH OTHER.” STARTS AT NOON ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6 AND CONCLUDES AT NOON ON SUNDAY OCTOBER 8.
- **SERVICE FOR THE BLESSING OF ANIMALS**: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7 -- 10 AM.
- **CHURCH SCHOOL BEGINS**: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8.
- **WOMAN2WOMAN MEETING**: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19, 7 PM. (LOCATION – TBD)
- **RETREAT WITH DR. ALBERT ROSSI**: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21
- **LECTURE BY FR. PATRICK REARDON**, “*HOW DOES GOD SAVE US? ATONEMENT: AN ORTHODOX THEOLOGY OF REDEMPTION*,” MONDAY OCTOBER 23, 7 PM, at ST. STEPHEN’S ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL, PHILADELPHIA.
- **WOMAN2WOMAN: NOON LUNCHEON**, TUESDAY OCTOBER 24, AT HARVEST SEASONAL GRILL, MOORESTOWN MALL. Please RSVP with Genie at 856 802 1664 or skubydoo81@comcast.net
- **PIROHI SESSIONS**: FRIDAY & SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27 & 28, 9 AM.
- **INTRO TO ORTHODOXY CLASSES BEGIN** with Dr. Edward Sicienski, during Coffee Hour (other classes: November 12 and December 10.)
- **IOCC DINNER ON SUNDAY OCTOBER 29 at ADELPHIA’S**: see Diana Pasca for ticket information.
- **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**: MONDAY, OCTOBER 30 at 7 PM
- **ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL’S VISIT**: SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 4-5:
Saturday — Men and Boys in the Bible (2:00-4:00) / Healing Service — 5:00
Sunday — Thanksgiving Meal.
- **ST. HELENA’S GUILD FALL BAZAAR**: SATURDAY NOVEMBER 11, FROM 11:00-3:00. Plan to have lunch or to shop for your holiday Babkas and kolachi (nut, poppy seed, and fruit rolls). Pre-orders must be in by October 30.

FR. JOHN WILL BE ON VACATION FROM SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 30-SUNDAY OCTOBER 1. Fr. Gregory Rubis will be serving the Divine Liturgy.

INTERNATIONAL FOOD / FALL FESTIVAL: These are the preliminary financial numbers from Dan Dowiak. There will be additional expenses and income (the raffle is obviously not included).

Thanks again to everyone who helped in any way in making our Festival a success and a meaningful experience for our guests!

Income - \$9,625.05
Expenses - \$3,506.92
Net profit - \$6,118.13

FRIENDS HELPING FRIENDS: Tuesday, October 17: St. Helena's Guild is selling **\$5.00** shopping passes for this event. Shopping time: 9AM to 11PM. See any St. Helena Guild member for passes and passes to sell. This is all profit for the organization.

RETREAT WITH DR. ALBERT ROSSI — “*Becoming a Healing Presence*,” SATURDAY OCTOBER 21 from 9:30-4:00. Copies of Dr. Rossi’s book, “*Becoming a Healing Presence*,” are available for \$10.00 from Fr. John. A 30 Day Reader of passages from his book can be found in the vestibule and on our website: holycrossmedford.org.

Please sign up on the bulletin board if you'll be coming. This would be a great opportunity to invite non-Orthodox friends. Though the Retreat is free, we will have a free will offering to help cover our expenses.

“IF YOU BRING KIDS TO CHURCH...” Our book of last year's Youth Sermons with photos of our children is now complete and ready to go to the printer's. One copy will be given to each family and additional copies can be purchased for \$5.00. Sign up on the bulletin board and send Fr. John an email: deadline is October 8. Make checks out to our church.

THANKSGIVING DINNER & HONORING OUR VETERANS: On **Sunday, November 5**, following Liturgy, we will be having our 5th annual Thanksgiving Dinner as a Parish family. Sign-up sheets will be posted on the bulletin board in the social hall. We have made the list more specific so we can avoid duplicating items. Start thinking now about what delicious, family favorite dish you can bring to share with all of us! Also on that Sunday, we will be honoring our veterans during Liturgy. Archbishop Michael will be with us for the weekend. Mark your calendars now so you can be a part of a great weekend of activities.

INTRODUCTION TO ORTHODOXY CLASSES: If you're interested in learning more about Orthodox history, belief, and practice, parishioner **Ed Siecienski** (Pappas Professor of Byzantine Culture and Religion at Stockton University) will be offering a 3 part adult education course based on his upcoming book *Orthodox Christianity: A Very Short Introduction* (OUP, 2018).

Classes will take place after liturgy on **SUNDAYS OCTOBER 29, NOVEMBER 12, AND DECEMBER 10** and run for approximately 45 minutes during Coffee Hour.

If you are interested contact Fr. John so that Ed can send along a draft of the book via e-mail.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: Monday September 18, 2017: prepared by Diana Pasca.

Treasurer Dan Dowiak presented his report for the month of September. The account balances for September are as follows:

General Fund \$34,081.45, **Memorial Fund** \$47,242.93, **Capital Improvement Fund** \$48,328.27, **Food Coupon Fund** \$3877.87, **Choir Fund** \$3,836.80, **Father's Supplemental Checking** \$377.53, **Anniversary Account** \$622.94. In the future this last account will be called **Special Fundraising Account**

The Mortgage Balance as of 9/17/17 was \$146,248.88

Parish Committee Updates – (1) **Stewardship Committee** – no update. (2) **In-reach/Outreach** –Thank you for the collection of school supplies and gift cards to assist Homeless students in Lenape Regional Schools was received from Principal of Lenape High School. Blessing of Animals Sat. Oct. 7th, Crop Walk in Medford Sunday Oct. 15th 1 p.m., retreat with Dr. Al Rossi on Sat. Oct. 21st on “Becoming a Healing Presence”- books are available now, committee is selling tickets to 25th Annual IOCC dinner Sunday Oct. 29th at Adelphia Restaurant-see Diana for tickets. Veteran's Day remembrance will take place after Liturgy on Nov. 5th when Archbishop Michael is visiting our parish. (3) **Youth Activities** – Committee has planned many activities for the Fall and they are posted on calendar. Youth participated in Rock climbing event this month. (4) **Choir**- is working on new material. (5) **St. Helena's Guild**-no update(6) **Woman to Woman**

group-luncheon at Blue Fig on September 26th at noon. September 20th they will meet at the Ceramic Barn in Medford (7) **Fall Festival Festival** this Saturday Sept. 23rd (8) Golf Outing-Friday Saturday September 29th at Ramblewood Country Club in Mt. Laurel. This is a combined effort of 3 Orthodox Churches as a Fundraiser for St. Tikhon's Seminary. Council agreed to sponsor one of the holes at \$100 donation.

Ongoing Council Activities – Council is updating and posting the Church Calendar, and Church Directory, coordination of our Fall Festival, updating and maintaining our website, looking into ways to improve our signage and exposure in the community, investment funds as a way to improve our current accounts, and developing an Iconographic plan.

The next Council Meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 30, 2017 at 7:00 PM.

READERS WELCOME FOR THE HOURS AND EPISTLES: We would like to encourage additional readers and create a monthly schedule. It is not necessary to be a member of the choir. Please see Fr. John or Josef Gulka.

DONATION OF FLAGS: Anyone who has a US Flag they would like to donate to the church and have flown on our flag pole can drop it off at the church office. Please leave with the flag the Veteran's Name, Branch of Service and Rank at time of separation from the Military. Any questions may be directed to Rob Alford via robb@hotmail.com and put "Veteran's Flag" in the subject line. Your donated flag will be flown in the order it is received. I will need to know if you wish to have the flag returned afterwards or if you wish for me to see to its proper retirement afterwards. I will be glad to discuss all this with you if you contact me. Thank you for your donation. Sincerely, Robert Alford US Navy Retired. Christ has Risen!

PARISH DIRECTORY UPDATE: As everyone knows, we are in the process of updating our Parish directory. Please review your information in the current directory posted on the bulletin board in the Social Hall and make any necessary changes. If you are not in the directory and would like to be listed, please enter all of the necessary information on the blank pages attached to the current directory. Our goal is the have the directory updated with copies made for parishioners by October. Thank you for your help.

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COFFEE HOUR LIST: October & November 2017:

October 1	Barbara Hehre
October 8	Liz Gibbons & Alexandra Lilly
October 15	Carol Ann Curry
October 22	Ellie Kuzma & Daughters
October 29	Phyllis Pritchard
November 5	Annual Thanksgiving Dinner
November 12	Judy Clyde
November 11	Holiday Bazaar (St. Helena's Guild)





CROSSWALKS

The Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross Youth Ministry Newsletter
October 2017

The Kids corner at our Fall Festival was a fun and popular attraction!



Saturday October 7 - **Blessing of Animals Service** 10:00 am.

Sunday October 8 - **Beginning of Church School** following Liturgy.

Saturday, October 15 - **CROP Walk for Hunger (daytime), and Church Hayride (evening)**. More information will be included in the Sign Up Genius note that will be sent the first week of October.



Saturday, October 28 - **Halloween Party** More information will be included in the Sign Up Genius note that will be sent the first week of October.

Saturday, November 4 - **'Boys and Men in the Bible' with Archbishop Michael** (2:00 - 4:00 pm)

Sunday, November 5 - **Archbishop Michael visit and Thanksgiving Meal** (following liturgy)

Saturday, November 11 - **Alzheimers' Disease Walk** More information will be included in the Sign Up Genius note that will be sent the first week of October.

"If You Bring Kids to Church" book

We will give a free copy to each family and can make additional copies available to anyone for \$5.00 each.



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)

Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross – OCTOBER, 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>1 DIVINE LITURGY – 10:00 Inreach Meeting</i>	2	3	4	5	<i>6 St. Moses the Black Conference at Mother of God Church, Princeton (from noon – Sun)</i>	<i>7 Service for the Blessing of Animals – 10 AM Great Vespers: 5</i>
<i>8 DIVINE LITURGY – 10:00 Church School Begins!</i>	9	10	11	12	13	14 <i>Great Vespers: 5</i>
<i>15: DIVINE LITURGY—10:00</i>	16	17	18	19 <i>Woman2Woman Meeting (Location- TBD)</i>	20	<i>21 Retreat with Dr. Albert Rossi 9:30-4:00 Great Vespers: 4</i>
<i>22 DIVINE LITURGY – 10:00</i>	<i>23 How Does God Save Us? Lecture by Fr. Patrick Reardon St. Stephen's in Philly – 7 PM</i>	<i>24 Woman2Woman Noon Luncheon at Harvest Grill, Moorestown, Mall</i>	25	26	<i>27 Pirohi Session 9 AM</i>	<i>28 Pirohi Session 9 AM Great Vespers: 5</i>
<i>29 DIVINE LITURGY—10:00 Intro to Orthodoxy Class – during Coffee Hour IOCC Dinner</i>	<i>30 Parish Council 7:00</i>	<i>31 Fr. John at the Diocesan Assembly, Endicott, NY (10/31-Nov 2)</i>	1 November	2	3	<i>4 Boys and Men in the Bible with Archbishop Michael (2:00-4:00) Healing Service 5:00</i>

