



Crossroads

The Monthly Newsletter of the Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross

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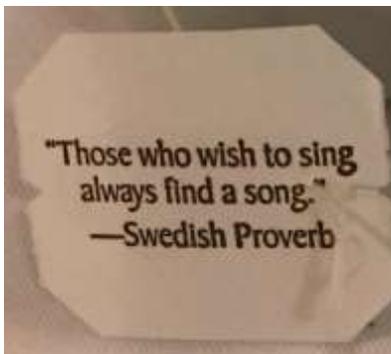
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JANUARY, 2018

***On the Fourth Song: "Alleluia"
and
Wisdom from Tea Bags and Fortune Cookies***

by Fr. John

The Youth Sermon on "*The Fourth Song*" was delivered on Sunday December 24 — Christmas Eve. It began with the following affirmation found on a teabag:



This expression summarizes the theme, hope, and goal of all of this year's Youth Sermons: that the children and adults would come to every service wishing to sing —to participate — and, in so doing, will find the right song: The Nine Songs that we are learning are nine ways that everyone and anyone can join in.

The Fourth Song is: ***Alleluia***. Though like Amen and Hosanna it is a Hebrew word that we don't usually try to translate, it literally means something like, "God is here, Praise Him." Psalms 146-150 all begin and end with Alleluia (or Halleluia). Here's one of the most famous — Psalm 150 (***The Message***):

Hallelujah!
Praise God in his holy house of worship,

praise him under the open skies;
Praise him for his acts of power,
praise him for his magnificent greatness;
Praise with a blast on the trumpet,
praise by strumming soft strings;
Praise him with castanets and dance,
praise him with banjo and flute;
Praise him with cymbals and a big bass drum,
praise him with fiddles and mandolin.
Let every living, breathing creature praise God!
Hallelujah!

It's a song for certain liturgical moments (before the reading of the Gospel, at the end of the Cherubic Hymn as our offering of bread and wine — and really of our lives — is brought to the altar, and at the end of Psalm verses that are used in anticipation and during the reception of Holy Communion), but really can be an expression for any moment of the day. St. Augustine said:

Let us sing Alleluia here on earth, while we are still anxious and worrying, so that we may one day be able to sing it there in heaven without any worry or care.

Fr. Patrick Reardon wrote:

To worship as Christians is to join in at the deepest level of created being, which is the eternal promise of God. This is the bedrock of existence. Heaven and earth will pass away. The praise of God will never pass away. The deepest word of the Christian vocabulary is Alleluia. "Praise the Lord."

The Sermon ended with the playing of probably the most famous setting of "Alleluia/Halleluia," which is often performed especially during Christmas time as part of "*The Messiah*." Written by George Frederic Handel, "*The Halleluia Chorus*," was inspired by the following text from Revelation:

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, **Alleluia**: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth (19:6).

**PREPARING FOR OUR ANNUAL MEETING:
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4**

TWO OR THREE ARE BETTER THAN ONE

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Two are better than one,
Because they have a good reward for their labor.
¹⁰ For if they fall, one will lift up his companion.
But woe to him who is alone when he falls,
For he has no one to help him up.

¹² Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him.
And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

As part of my Report at this past week's Parish Council Meeting I mentioned a recent conversation with the pastor of a NJ Deanery parish. Both the previous pastor and he have needed to work full time while ministering to their community: yet the parish has remained robust and even is growing. I asked him how this was possible. He replied: "It's because the parish has understood that I can't do everything and that everyone needs to be involved. And this works."

I noted my appreciation for those (Carol Ann Curry, Dan Dowiak, Val Olesnovich, and Diana Pasca) who will be retiring from the Council and while acknowledging our need to fill their positions on the Council, I also affirmed that as we continue to expand the various activities of our community we need to encourage more parishioners both to be involved in the Council and in every area of parish life.

Here are some particular areas that can be broken down into many individual functions, where lots of things need to be done, yet no one person needs to be responsible for everything. While, as Archbishop Michael's representative I need to understand, affirm, and be able to present to him what goes on in the life of our parish, I certainly don't need to be the organizer of every Committee either.

As my pastor friend affirmed: when more people are involved — it works!

Projects to Work on Together: 2018

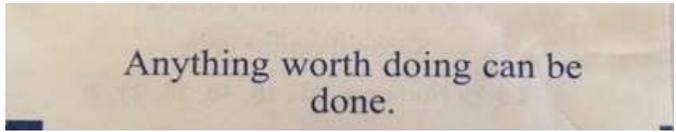
- Events (planning of spiritual and social, ideas for adults and children are welcome)
- Maintenance (in and outside; landscaping; rose bushes; keeping an eye on dated food items in the fridge)
- Coffee Hour (assuming we wish to offer a weekly coffee hour —how can we do this consistently?)
- Meals — (particularly following Special Events like Lenten, Advent Vespers, Retreats, Pascha Night table set up — this includes food organization, setting, and clean up)
- Publishing (Crossroads, Service booklets, Christmas Card, advertising – Fall Festival, Retreats — help with typing, design, proof reading, copying, stapling, mailing)
- Parishioner Needs (food, transportation, communication – calls, notes)

This led to a vibrant conversation on how these things can be encouraged and done. We also understood that participation in the Parish Council itself should be something that is not just intended for certain people, but considered a responsibility, opportunity, and privilege for EVERY PARISHIONER. In fact, EVERY PARISHIONER should be welcomed to serve on the Parish Council.

While we were very enthusiastic about this realization we also understood that it has been sometimes difficult to share the information and review of Parish Life at our often poorly attended Annual Meeting. With that in mind, we agreed to invite one representative in the following areas to share some thoughts on the involvement of their group within our parish life and the opportunities for participation. Two of these presentations would take place during the Sermons on Sundays January 28 and February 4:

- Parish Council
- Inreach/Outreach
- Choir
- St. Helena's Guild

It was recommended, however, that the representative not be the chair or leader of that group. We will look forward to exploring the possibilities for all of us to work more closely together in those areas that are “worth doing.”



[From a Recent Fortune Cookie!]

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

OUR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING WILL BE ON SUNDAY FEBRUARY 4, following the Divine Liturgy. The Minutes, Financial, and other written Reports will be available in advance. PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND!

ON JOHN HOLOWIAK: Barbara, Fr. John, and the Shimchick family are grateful for the kind letters, cards, emails, calls, and donations in support of her father, John. A Parastas will be served for him on Saturday January 20 at 4:30.

WOMAN2WOMAN ACTIVITIES: Thurs., Jan. 25, 6:30 p.m.: **Pizza Night at the Skuby's**, 234 Belaire Drive, Mount Laurel...let's get together and plan our 2018 calendar...need hosts and ideas.

Tues., Jan. 30, 12 noon: Ladies' Luncheon at King's Palace Restaurant in Marlton (Whole Foods Shopping Center).
Please RSVP (if yes) with Genie at 856 802 1664.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: Tuesday, January 2, 2018.

Fr. John's Report: He began by expressing his appreciation to those who would be retiring from the Council: Carol Ann Curry, Dan Dowiak, Valerie Olesnovich, and Diana Pasca — noting their long commitments both to the Council and in the work of our parish.

While acknowledging the need to fill their positions on the Council, he also shared some thoughts on the need to encourage the involvement of more parishioners in the expanding activities and life of our community. This led to a vibrant conversation of ways to do that in preparation for our Annual Parish Meeting on February 4.

See the plan that emerged from this conversation at the end of his article above (pages 2-4).

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

General Fund \$35,981.96, **Memorial Fund** \$47,608.34, **Capital Improvement Fund** \$48,364.43, **Food Coupon Fund** \$5365.49, **Choir Fund** \$4,146.80, **Father's Supplemental Checking** \$213.69, **Special Fundraising Account** \$1628.94

The Mortgage Balance as of 12/1/17 was \$140,818.14

Parish Committee Updates – (1) **Stewardship Committee** – pledges for 2018 are beginning to come in. (2) **Inreach/Outreach** – Holiday collection for Covenant House Christmas Stocking was completed on til Dec. 17th when 50 stockings were assembled, Community Luncheon was joined by our Cooking with Anna youth group on Dec. 2nd. They prepared soup for Community Luncheon and fresh pasta and cookies for their lunch. We visited several homebound parishioners on December 16th with the help of choir members and the Youth group singing Christmas Carols. Inreach is planning to host Souper Bowl Sunday on Feb. 4th collecting non-perishable items/cash donations for Community Luncheon and offering Soup at our Coffee Hour (3) **Youth Activities** – Coordinator is scheduling a meeting with parents soon to prepare for 2018 and hopefully plan a skating outing for January or February, Cooking with Anna was held on 12/2, Caroling 12/16, Nativity Pageant 12/24. (4) **Choir** - has met to discuss the space behind the choir. Parishioners are being redirected down the main aisle rather than going behind the choir to find seating. In addition some stanchions were purchased by the choir to set the area apart.

5) **St. Helena's Guild** - Pirohi sessions for January 19th + 20th, Spring Bazaar March 10th.(6)

Woman2Woman group-luncheon at King's Palace Restaurant on January 30th at noon. December 11th they met at Church for a Christmas Cookie Exchange that also provided cookies to a few of our local charities and homebound parishioners.

Ongoing Council Activities – Council set the date for the **Annual Meeting for Sunday February 4th**, is planning, updating and posting the Church Calendar and Church Directory, updating and maintaining our website, maintaining ,repairing, and exploring ongoing issues of the property, looking into ways to improve our signage and exposure in the community, exploring investment funds as a way to improve our current accounts, and developing an Iconographic plan.

The next Council Meeting is scheduled for **Monday, February 12, 2018** at 7:00 PM.

WOMAN2WOMAN ACTIVITIES: **Thurs., Jan. 25, 6:30 p.m.: Pizza Night at the Skuby's**, 234 Belaire Drive, Mount Laurel...let's get together and plan our 2018 calendar...need hosts and ideas.

Tues., Jan. 30, 12 noon: Ladies' Luncheon at King's Palace Restaurant in Marlton (Whole Foods Shopping Center).

Please RSVP (if yes) with Genie at 856 802 1664.

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 rrobb@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.

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. Thanks.

2018 HOUSE BLESSING SCHEDULE

As has been the usual practice, Fr. John will assume that he will be visiting all parishioners. If, for any reason, someone would not want to be visited please give him a call or leave a message in the church office.

Each home will be called in advance and those who are home during the day may be called on a different day. Homes not included in the general areas listed below will be contacted to set up a time.

Jan 7: Medford/Tabernacle
8: Cherry Hill
9: Moorestown
10: Haddonfield/Collingswood
11: Voorhees
12: Folsom
13: Bordentown
14: Marlton/Mt. Laurel/Atco
15:
17:
18:

Here are some ways of preparing for the blessing of your home:

- * Set aside a place for the service (usually a table in the dining room or kitchen).
- * On the table place an icon, a candle, a bowl for Holy Water, and a list of the names to be remembered - divided into two lists, living and departed.
- * A person holding the candle may lead Fr. John throughout the home.

TROPARION

When You, O Lord, were baptized in the Jordan
the worship of the Trinity was made manifest.
For the voice of the Father bore witness to You
and called You His beloved Son.
And the Spirit in the form of a dove

confirmed the truthfulness of His word.

O Christ, our God, who have revealed Yourself / and have enlightened the world, glory to You.

2018

Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross

February

- 1 Meeting of the Lord in the Temple
- 4 Annual Meeting, Souper Bowl Sunday
- 11 Meatfare: Pre-Lenten Lunch
- 16 & 17 Pirohi Sessions
- 18 Forgiveness Sunday
- 25 Sunday of Orthodoxy: Service in South River with Archbishop Michael

March

- 4 St. Gregory Palamas: **OUR LENTEN DEANERY SERVICE**
- 10 Spring Mini-Bazaar
- 11 Sunday of the Cross:
- 17: Saturday: Retreat with Drs. Mary and David Ford
- 18 St. John of the Ladder
- 25 St. Mary of Egypt

April

- 1 Palm Sunday
- 8 PASCHA
- 15
- 22
- 29



**SOUPER
BOWL
OF CARING
SUNDAY, FEB. 4TH**

THE IN-REACH/OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Is asking parishioners to participate in the Souper Bowl of Caring by bringing a non-perishable food item and a small monetary contribution to Liturgy on Sunday February 4th.. In doing so we are joining with hundreds of Orthodox Christian parishes around the country demonstrating our concern for the hungry.

Members of In-reach will be collecting the food / monetary donations at the back of the Church.

Donations will be delivered to the Community Luncheon Program in Mt. Holly, who we have supported for many years, on February 5th.

During Coffee Hour members of In-reach/Outreach and our Youth will be serving Homemade Soup to thank parishioners for their generosity in helping our neighbors with their participation in the Souper Bowl.



CROSSWALKS

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



above and left,
Caroling for the
Orthodox Residents of
the Masonic Village in
Burlington (Marie Pezza
and Fifi Perris) and to
Ted Coutumas.



below and right,
Christmas Program.

**Youth Activities
Planning Meeting**
Sunday January 14
Please join us!



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 – JANUARY, 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6 <i>Community Luncheon – 9 AM</i> <i>Great Vespers: 5</i>
7 <i>EPIPHANY DIVINE LITURGY – 10:00</i> <i>Blessing of Water</i>	8	9	10	11	12	13 <i>Great Vespers: 5</i>
14 <i>DIVINE LITURGY—10:00</i> <i>Litia for Mary Adamek</i> <i>Youth Activities Meeting</i>	15	16	17	18	19 <i>Pirohi Session (9:00 -)</i>	20 <i>Pirohi Session (9:00 -)</i> <i>Parastas for John Holowiak – 4:30</i> <i>Great Vespers: 5</i>
21 <i>Zacchaeus Sunday</i> <i>DIVINE LITURGY – 10:00</i> <i>Youth Sermon</i> <i>Inreach/Outreach</i>	22	23	24	25 <i>Woman2Woman – Pizza at the Skuby’s – 6:30</i>	26	27 <i>Baptism of Elias Dahdal – 1:00</i> <i>Great Vespers: 5</i>
28 <i>DIVINE LITURGY—10:00</i> <i>Two or Three are Better Than One</i> <i>Sermon (1 of 2)</i>	29	30 <i>Woman2Woman: Luncheon at Noon – King’s Palace, Marlton</i>	31	1 FEBRUARY <i>Vesperal Liturgy for the Meeting of the Lord – 7 PM</i>	2	3 <i>Great Vespers: 5</i>

