



# Crossroads

The Monthly Newsletter of the Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross

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**SEPTEMBER, 2018**

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

by Fr. John

This year's cycle of Youth Sermons will start on September 30 and each month will focus on one of the Beatitudes in the context of a story that highlights the efforts of the *International Orthodox Christian Charities* (IOCC). In connection with this cycle, each month will also feature an adult sermon on that month's Beatitude.

Here's an introduction by Fr. Thomas Hopko:

## **The Beatitudes**

In the Gospel writings, the beatitudes introduce the teachings of Jesus and are traditionally considered to contain the most concise summary of the spiritual life of man. In the Orthodox Divine Liturgy, the beatitudes are chanted when the Book of the Gospels is carried in solemn procession to the sanctuary to be proclaimed as the Word of God to the faithful. Thus it is the clear teaching of the Gospel and the Church that one enters into the mysteries of Christ and the Kingdom of God only by way of following the Lord's teachings in the beatitudes.

*And He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:*

*“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*

*Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.*

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.*

*Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.*

*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*

*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.*

*Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on My account.*

*Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for your reward is great in heaven.”*

(Mt 5.2–12; cf. Lk 6.20–26)

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*“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Mt 5.3). This first beatitude is the fundamental condition for all man’s spiritual progress and growth. Before everything else, if a person wants to live the life of God, he must be poor in spirit.

To be poor in spirit is to recognize clearly that one has nothing which he has not received from God, that one is nothing except by the grace of God. This blessed poverty is called “spiritual” in Saint Matthew’s Gospel because, first of all, it is an attitude of mind and heart, a conviction of the soul. It is the condition of man in total emptiness and openness before God, primarily in relation to the things of the Spirit, that is, to understanding and insight, to will and desire.

To be poor in spirit is to be devoid of all pride and trust in the power of one’s own spirit. It is to be freed from all reliance on one’s own ideas, opinions and desires. It is to be liberated from the “vain imaginations” of one’s own heart (Jer 23.17, Rom 1.21). For as the holy Virgin Mary, the perfect model of poverty in spirit, has sung in her magnificent song:

*God has shown strength with His arm,  
He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts,  
He has put down the mighty from their thrones,  
And has exalted the humble and meek,  
He has filled the hungry with good things,  
And the rich He has sent away empty (Lk 1.51–54).*

Jesus Himself was poor, not only in body but in spirit. Not only was the Lord a poor man, without “place to lay His head” (Mt 8.20) but His physical poverty was the direct result of His perfect poverty of spirit.

*Truly, truly I say to you, the Son can do nothing of His own accord, but only what He sees the Father doing . . . I can do nothing on my own authority . . . (Jn 5.19, 30).*

If a person wishes to embark on the spiritual life, he must abandon all things and follow Christ in poverty of spirit. To be poor in spirit is simply to be wholly set free from the sinful lusts of this world.

*If anyone loves this world, love for the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever (1 Jn 2.15–17).*

The first revelation of the will of God is that His creatures must be poor in spirit. The violation of this spiritual attitude is the original sin and the source of all sorrows.

### **UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS**

- **FRIDAY-SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7-8: STUFFED CABBAGE SESSIONS.**
- **FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7: VESPERAL LITURGY FOR THE NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS – 7 PM.**
- **SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8: COMMUNITY LUNCHEON — 9 AM.**
- **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 13: VESPERAL LITURGY FOR THE ELEVATION OF THE CROSS – 7 PM.**
- **TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18: BORSCHT SESSION — 9 AM.**
- **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20: PARISH COUNCIL MEETING at 7 PM**
- **SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22: FALL FESTIVAL (11 AM – 8 PM)**
- **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7: FALL/WINTER TIME CHANGE – LITURGY – 10:00 BEGINNING OF CHURCH SCHOOL**
- **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.**
- **SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10: ST. HELENA'S FALL BAZAAR**
- **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11: THANKSGIVING LUNCHEON**

**FIRST YOUTH SUNDAY/SERMON/CHURCH SCHOOL KICK-OFF: SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 30**  
— the Divine Liturgy will begin at 9:00.

**FALL/WINTER TIME OF LITURGY & BEGINNING OF CHURCH SCHOOL: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7 — DIVINE LITURGY AT 10:00.**

**INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE CLASSES:** Professor Ed Siecienski will lead 3 classes on

**THURSDAYS (7:30-9:00): SEPTEMBER 27 / OCTOBER 4, / and OCTOBER 11**

Posters have been sent out online and are available in the vestibule. Please come and invite your friends!  
**THE INREACH/OUTREACH COMMITTEE BABY ITEMS COLLECTION:** Honoring our Most Holy Theotokos during the Dormition Fast, the Committee held an alms-giving project of collecting baby items for layettes to donate to *Helpers of God's Precious Infants*. The parish response was overwhelming! The goal of six (6) complete layettes was surpassed by two for a total of 8 layettes. Additionally, the remaining items of over 20 “Onesies”, 30+ pairs of infant socks, and two small bags of clothes specific for boys and girls was also collected. The project was a huge success! Thank you to all who participated in this worthwhile project.

**WOMAN2WOMAN ACTIVITIES:**

Tuesday, Sept. 25, 7-9 p.m.: Woman2Woman meeting (details to follow)

Thursday, Sept. 27, 12 noon: Ladies’ Luncheon at Allora Restaurant, Rt. 73 in Marlton

Contact: **Genie Skuby** at 856 802 1664 or [skubydoo81@comcast.net](mailto:skubydoo81@comcast.net)

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**PARISH COUNCIL MEETING:** Thursday, August 23, 2018 by Phyllis Prichard.

- I. **Treasurer’s Report:** Michelle will have the report at our September meeting. Mark mentioned that the Capital Improvement Fund was down \$10,000 due to payment for the ramp and that any additional monies for the siding and pavement will be coming out of that account. Mark said this account will need to be replenished. He mentioned that the mortgage balance is encouraging.

The account balances for **July** are as follows:

**General Fund** \$19,681.84, **Memorial Fund** 49,695.04, **Capital Improvement Fund** \$41,211.26,  
**Food Coupon Fund** \$7,187.67, **Choir Fund** \$4,149.48, **Father’s Supplemental Checking** \$305.69  
**Fundraising Account** \$1,613.94

The **Mortgage Balance** as of 8/22/18 was \$77,966.15

## II. Maintenance Update: Gary

- A) **Carpet in the Church:** The carpet in certain areas is beginning to fade and may need to be replaced. Joe Pritchard also suggested tinting the windows to help limit this problem.

## III. Open Action Items: Old Business

- A) **Ramp:** Gary will look into sealing the ramp and painting the top of the railing.
- B) **Siding:** Several estimates have been received - more information is needed.
- C) **Iconographic plan:** Though the Hardie Plank has been inserted into the area where the icon will be located, questions remain about the process and time table.
- D) **Additional Hardie Plank Repairs:** The material has been ordered, but not received. Phyllis will assume communications with the Hardie Plank contractor.
- E) **Landscaping:** Top landing is done. Landscape in the “islands” within the parking lot need to be trimmed. Gary will have Joe look at it.
- F) **Church Sign:** Gary will see if “Greg the Painter” is available.
- G) **Parking lot sealing:** Gary to follow up for a date to complete.
- H) **Standing Rules correction/submission to Bishop Michael:** Council to review at next meeting.
- I) **Pest Control:** Mark will follow up.
- J) **Exterior lighting update:** Gary/Mark- Mark has calls in to the electricians.
- K) **Fall Festive (September 22nd):** Mark is working with the Township on a plan for the signs. The Fall Festival will be a one day event.
- L) **New Tables for the Social Hall:** Kathy Pierman sent Mark a source for the new tables and he will follow up.
- M) **Covenant House Donations:** Phyllis gave Mark all the reported donations to the Covenant house from 2017 to present.

## IV. New Business

- A) **In-reach/outreach:** Fr. John reported that the collection for *God’s Precious Infants* was a success.
- B) **St. Helena’s Guild:** Balance is \$16,897.96, Planning for the mini Bazar was discussed at the Guild meeting. Next pierogi session will be in October. Next Guild meeting will be September 8th.
- C) **Youth Activities:** See upcoming events.
- D) **Stewardship Pledges/Committee:** Mark and Michelle will get information out for September.
- E) **Choir:** Mark Skuby reported that the Choir will start to integrate the older kids into the choir, possibly rehearsing on Sundays after Liturgy. August 25th Baptism of Charlotte Marie Skuby Chassen (Mark and Genie’s Granddaughter)
- F) **Calendar:** Phyllis Pritchard will be updating. Please see Calendar event in the social hall.
- G) **Custodial Service:** Mark reported that Tom Gibbons is doing a great job.
- H) **Church School:** Judy Clyde will take over for Barbara Mosser. Fr. John will review with Jessica, Diana and Parents for the other school grades. Church School will start October 7th.
- I) **St Tikons 80th Anniversary Donation:** Mark-donation for \$100.00 . Phyllis made a motion to accept. All In Favor.

**J) Audio Speakers for Vestibule:** Needs more follow-up.

**IX. Next Meeting:** The next Council meeting - Thursday, September 20<sup>th</sup>

**COFFEE HOUR ASSIGNMENTS:**

|              |                                    |
|--------------|------------------------------------|
| September 2  | Kathie Pierman                     |
| September 9  |                                    |
| September 16 | Nellie Kuzmenchuk & Barbara Mosser |
| September 23 | Fall Festival Weekend              |
| September 30 | Phyllis Pritchard                  |
| October 7    | Barbara Hehre                      |
| October 14   | Liz Gibbons and Alexandra Lilly    |

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**Fall Calendar  
2018**

**September-November**

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Friday September 7    | Nativity of the Theotokos – Vespers Liturgy  |
| Friday-Saturday 7-8   | Stuffed Cabbage Sessions (Guild Meeting on Saturday)                                     |
| Thursday September 13 | Elevation of the Cross – Vespers Liturgy   |
| Tuesday September 18  | Borscht Session  |
| Saturday September 22 | Fall Festival (11AM – 8 PM)  |
| Sunday September 23   |  |
| Tuesday September 25  | Woman2Woman Meeting  |
| Thursday September 27 | W2Woman Luncheon at Allora Restaurant, Noon  |
| Thursday September 27 | Intro to the Bible Class (Ed Siecienski) — 7:30  |
| Sunday September 30   | Time Change — 10:00 Liturgy<br>Youth Sunday: First Youth Sermon / Church School Kick Off |

**October**

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Thursday October 4        | Intro to the Bible 2 <sup>nd</sup> Class (Ed Siecienski) — 7:30                             |
| Sunday October 7          | Church School Begins<br>St. Helena's Guild Meeting  |
| Thursday October 11       | Intro to the Bible 3 <sup>rd</sup> Class (Ed Siecienski) – 7:30                             |
| Saturday October 13       | Blessing of Animals – 10 AM   |
| Sunday October 14         |   |
| Saturday-Sunday Oct 20-21 | Visit of Archbishop Michael<br>(Saturday – Healing Service – 5 PM<br>Sunday Liturgy – 9:30) |
| Sunday October 21         | Benefit Banquet for IOCC (Adelphia, Deptford)   |

Thursday October 25 Woman2Woman Meeting (7-9 PM)  
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

**Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross – SEPTEMBER, 2018**

| Sunday   | Monday | Tuesday                                    | Wednesday   | Thursday   | Friday   | Saturday   |
|--|--------|--|---|--|--|--|
|  |        |  |   |  |  | 1<br><br><i>Great Vespers: 5</i>   |
| 2 <i>DIVINE LITURGY—9:00</i>   | 3      | 4  | 5 <i>Fr. John at Diocesan Clergy Retreat (Wappingers Falls) 9/5-9/6</i> | 6  | 7 <i>Stuffed Cabbage Session</i><br><br><i>Vespers Liturgy: Nativity of the Theotokos —7PM</i> | 8 <i>Community Luncheon – 9 AM Stuffed Cabbage Workshop</i><br><br><i>Great Vespers: 5</i> |
| 9 <i>DIVINE LITURGY—9:00</i>   | 10     | 11   | 12  | 13 <i>Vespers Liturgy for the Elevation of the Cross — 7 PM</i>                                      | 14   | 15<br><br><i>Great Vespers: 5</i>  |
| 16 <i>DIVINE LITURGY – 9:00</i>  | 17     | 18<br><br><i>Borscht Making Session</i>    | 19  | 20<br><br><i>Parish Council Meeting – 7 PM</i>   | 21<br><br><i>Fall Festival Set Up</i>  | 22<br><br><i>Fall Festival (11 AM – 8 PM)</i>  |
| 23 <i>DIVINE LITURGY—9:00 Inreach/Outreach</i><br><br>30 <i>DIVINE LITURGY —9:00</i> | 24     | 25<br><br><i>Woman2Woman Meeting (7-9)</i> | 26  | 27<br><br><i>Woman2Woman Luncheon, Noon</i><br><br><i>Intro to the Bible at the Church 7:30-9:00</i> | 28   | 29<br><br><i>Great Vespers: 5</i>  |



