



Crossroads

The Monthly Newsletter of the Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross

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MAY, 2013

DARKNESS AND LIGHT

by Fr. John

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (John 1:5 – *Paschal Liturgy*)

In Ernest Hemingway's story, "*A Clean-Well Lighted Place*," an impatient younger waiter tries to encourage his older co-worker to close their café:

"I am of those who like to stay late at the cafe," the older waiter said. "With all those who do not want to go to bed. With all those who need a light for the night."

"I want to go home and into bed."

"We are of two different kinds," the older waiter said. He was now dressed to go home. "It is not only a question of youth and confidence although those things are very beautiful. Each night I am reluctant to close up because there may be some one who needs the cafe."

For many people the evening, with all it represents, is a difficult time. I have heard it said, especially by those who are ill that: "The days are difficult, but the nights are even harder." A search through a Bible website (like biblegateway.org) on words like "darkness," "night," and "evening" will show expressions of both emotional challenge, even death itself and yet also sustenance and strength:

- When I lie down I say, 'When shall I arise?' But the night is long, and I am full of tossing till the dawn. (Job 7:4)
- I am weary with my moaning; every night I flood my bed with tears; I drench my couch with my weeping. (Psalm 6:6)
- O my God, I cry by day, but You do not answer; and by night, but find no rest. (Psalm 22:2)
- O Lord, my God, I call for help by day; I cry out in the night before thee. (Psalm 88:1)

- I bless the Lord who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me. (Psalm 16:7)
- Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning. (Psalm 30:5)
- By day the Lord commands his steadfast love; and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life. (Psalm 42:8)
- I commune with my heart in the night; I meditate and search my spirit. (Psalm 77:6)
- You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day. (Psalm 91:5)
- Is there anyplace I can go to avoid your Spirit?
to be out of your sight?
If I climb to the sky, you're there!
If I go underground, you're there!
If I flew on morning's wings
to the far western horizon,
You'd find me in a minute—
you're already there waiting!
Then I said to myself, "Oh, he even sees me in the dark!
At night I'm immersed in the light!"
It's a fact: darkness isn't dark to you;
night and day, darkness and light, they're all the same to you. (Psalm 139:7-12)

This week, Holy Week, is the time for all of us “who need a light for the night.” In a sense, from the brilliance of Lazarus Saturday with its Resurrectional and Baptismal Joy and Power (made special this year by being able to receive James, Leigh Ann, Yazariah, and Yosef Best during the Liturgy through Baptism and Chrismation) through each day of the week, the time becomes heavier and darker. On Holy Friday after we have come and reflected on the iconographic image of the Crucified Jesus (the *Epitaphion* or *Plaschanitsa*) during Vespers and into the Matins of Holy Saturday we will even carry it out of the church into the darkness of night, liturgically “accompanying” Christ’s soul into the darkness, uncertainty, and terror of death itself (singing the processional hymn used at funerals, “Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal have mercy on us.”) Upon its return to the church the Epitaphion is held in such a way that we all will pass beneath it, being incorporated into all that it represents.

Then at the end of the Complines service on Pascha night we will begin in nearly complete darkness and the Paschal light, the light of Christ which “illumines everything,” will be extended to everyone and then brought out into the darkness. At the liturgy, in the now fully lit church, we will read from the first chapter of the Gospel of St. John, which in its own way, is a retelling of the act of creation found in the opening of Genesis, the first book in the Bible:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God; ³all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (John 1)

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ²The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was

moving over the face of the waters.³ And God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.⁴ And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. (Genesis 1)

So, into the night and darkness of Holy Friday and Saturday we will gather and process once again, bearing within us our own dark places and uncertainty. Yet, it will be there in the darkness of night that we will once again be “immersed in the light” (Psalm 139) of the resurrected Christ, singing the hymn:

Your resurrection, O Christ our Savior,
the angels in heaven sing:
Enable us on earth
to glorify You in purity of heart.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

- **COMMUNITY LUNCHEON: SATURDAY MAY 11 at 9 AM**
- **ST. HELENA’S GUILD MEETING: SUNDAY, MAY 12, following the liturgy.**
- **40th ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE MEETING: MONDAY MAY 13, 7 PM.**
- **INREACH MEETING : SUNDAY MAY 19, following the Liturgy.**
- **WOMAN2WOMAN GATHERING: THURSDAY MAY 23, more info.**

ROSE BUSH PLANTING AND OUTSIDE MAINTENANCE EFFORTS: Thanks to Rosie Moore and all who helped in digging and planting 35 rose bushes (5 more will be coming!), cleaning, trimming, and caring for our grounds on Saturday, April 20!

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE: Fr. John and the Parish Council are very grateful to everyone who has committed to our Stewardship program and to ALL who continue to support our parish regularly. Recently, a quarterly statement was prepared and made available (those who did not pick them up in the church will receive them shortly in the mail). Some have noted that while all donations are acknowledged, the section on the statement that presents a “Pledge Summary” is incomplete. We are working at understanding our accounting software better in order to make this possible.

If you have any questions, please contact Fr. John or any Stewardship Committee member (Mark Skuby, Wally Loza, Dan Dowiak or Leslie Lane).

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: MONDAY APRIL 15 by Carol Ann Curry:

TREASURER Dan Dowiak presented the financial report. The account balances are as follows: **General Fund** \$24,295.00; **Memorial Fund** \$98,005.35; **Capital Improvement Fund** \$26,334.37; **Food Coupon Fund** \$ 685.08; **Choir Fund** \$3,763.34.

TIFFIE RITZHEIMER BEQUEST: OCHC received a second bequest from the Tiffie Ritzhimer estate in the amount of **\$74,272.00**. Because paying down the mortgage and iconography were important to Tiffie, Council voted to place \$60,000.00 of the Bequest on

mortgage principal and the remaining \$14,272.00 will be placed in the Memorial Fund designated for iconography.

The **Total amount** of Tiffie's donation to our Parish was: **\$110,772.00**.

We remember with great fondness her generosity as one of our "builders and benefactors" and encourage others to consider remembering our community in their wills.

HOLY SPIRIT ORTHODOX CHURCH – The church, which is located in Wantage, NJ, is celebrating their 25th Anniversary. To support their celebration, OCHC will place a ½ page ad in their commemorative book at a cost of \$80.00.

CHANDELIERS – Council voted on replacing the 2 front ceiling fans (which are not used due to candle stands and lighting issues) with chandeliers. Council agreed on a style and will obtain estimates on the installation. This project would be completed before the 40th Anniversary Celebration. The Chandeliers were donated by **Phyllis and Joe Pritchard** in memory of their mothers, **Phyllis and Carmella**.

SPRING AUCTION – The date for the auction has been changed to Saturday, June 8th, 2013 because of issues concerning the raffle license required by Medford, Township. The doors will open at 6:30 PM with the live auction scheduled to begin at 7:30 PM. Leslie Lane will continue to provide updates.

PARKING LOT SEALING & RE-STRIPING - Council reviewed several estimates and selected Northeastern Pavement Technologies to do this project. NPT will clean entire area, fill all cracks, seal-coat proposed area, re-stripe all traffic lines, clean and re-paint all parking bumpers. The cost of the project will be \$4,500.00. Northeastern Pavement Technologies will issue a 2 year guarantee on material and workmanship. The work will be done after Pascha, preferably to begin on Tuesday, May 21st. The money to pay for this project will come out of the Capital Improvement Fund.

MAINTENANCE ISSUES- (1) The emergency lights have been checked for April. All are working. (2) The sprinkler system has been set-up for use this year and will most likely be turned on in May. (3) The A/C units have been turned on and working for the summer months. (4) Timers have been set for the outside lighting/landscape lights and the parking lot lights. (5) The rose bush planting is scheduled for Saturday, April 20th.

The next Council Meeting is scheduled for **Monday, May 20th at 7:00 PM**. [Note: This date will be rescheduled].

FANTASY AUCTION – UPDATE – SATURDAY JUNE 8, 6:30 – 9:00 PM:

We still need help soliciting local businesses for donations – see sign-up sheet or *JUST DO IT!* All live and silent auction items with completed donation form are needed by **Sunday, May 26th**. All gently used and new items for "Draw ticket raffle" will be collected **May 26th** and **June 2nd**.

We are half way to our goal of 60 items for auction. If you haven't already signed up, please consider donating a themed basket or gift card or cash and we'll build a basket for you.

Donation of your time and talent is welcomed as well, such as:

I'll wrap all of your Christmas presents, I'll host your next dinner party,
I'll clean/organize your basement or garage, I'll rake your leaves,
Donate 4,6,8 ? hours as a handyman, computer guru, tutor, babysitter or pet sitter

Bring your friends and family - We're planning a fun filled evening with several ways to win:

- 1) Live Auction – item awarded to the highest bidder via auctioneer
- 2) Silent Auction – item awarded to highest written bid
- 3) Draw ticket raffle (aka Tricky Tray) and door prizes – item won by drawn ticket
- 4) 50/50 raffle – cash won by drawn ticket, Church portion goes to Building Fund

Jessica Siragusa will coordinate serving of light refreshments and dessert during the event. Sign-up sheets will be posted for helpers for set-up and clean up on day of Auction.

Thank you in advance for your help in making our spring fundraiser a success! If you have any questions or wish to volunteer to help, please contact co-chairs Leslie Lane at (609) 790-3470 glane5@verizon.net or Val Olesnovich at (856) 381-9771 voles09@gmail.com.

ANNE NOVITZKY REHAB INFORMATION: After falling and breaking her hip recently, Anne has needed some rehabilitation. She is receiving this over the next few weeks at:

CareOne at Evesham
870 East Route 70
Marlton, NJ 08053

FOOD GIFT CARDS – We have cards *in* denominations of \$10, \$20, \$50 and \$100 for **Shoprite and Acme**. The church realizes a profit of 5% on all gift card sales. If anyone has any questions about this program, please contact: **Mark Skuby 610-348-2132 (cell) / 856-802-1664 (home) skubydoo81@verizon.net / Leslie Lane 609-790-3470 / glane5@verizon.net**

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COFFEE HOUR RESPONSIBILITIES FOR MAY

- 5 Pascha (Please bring dyed eggs to the Paschal Liturgy – Saturday evening)
- 12 Mother's Day ----- Hosted by Men of Holy Cross
- 19 Andrea Burns
- 27 Natalka Weismantel

Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross – MAY, 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	29 April <i>Bridegroom Matins</i> 7 PM	30 <i>Bridegroom Matins</i> 7 PM	1 MAY <i>Bridegroom Matins & Healing Service</i> 7 PM	2 <i>Vespertal Liturgy</i> 4:00 <i>Matins of Holy Friday</i> – 7 PM	3 HOLY FRIDAY <i>Youth Retreat 1-3 Vespers – 3 PM</i> <i>Matins of Holy Saturday</i> – 7 PM	4 <i>Vespertal Liturgy 10 AM</i> PASCHAL SERVICES: 11:30 PM
5 PASCHAL VESPERS Noon	6 Bright Monday <i>Divine Liturgy 9 AM</i>	7	8 <i>Burlington Nursing Home – 1:30</i>	9	10	11 <i>Community Luncheon – 9 AM</i> <i>Parastas for Helen Dowiak:</i> 4:30 Great Vespers: 5
12 <i>Liturgy: 10:00</i> <i>St. Helena's Guild</i>	13 <i>40th Anniversary Committee Meeting – 7 PM</i>	14	15	16	17	18 <i>Wedding of Mick Overgard & Megan – 2 PM</i> Great Vespers: will follow
19 <i>Liturgy: 10:00</i> <i>Inreach Meeting</i>	20	21	22	23 WOMAN2WOMAN	24	25 Great Vespers: 5
26 <i>Liturgy: 10:00</i>	27	28	29	30	31	1 JUNE Great Vespers: 5