

September 14, 2008 – 13th Sun. after Pentecost. Tone 4. Universal Exaltation (Elevation) of the Precious and Life-giving Cross. Repose of St. John Chrysostom (407 A.D.). Monk Martyr Macarius of Dionysiou (Mt. Athos – 1507). Monk Martyr Joseph of Dionysiou (Mt. Athos – 1819). **Epistle:** 1 Corinthians 1:18-24. **Gospel:** John 19:6-11, 13-20, 25-28, 30-35.

Next Sunday, September 21 – 14th Sun. after Pentecost. Tone 5. Leavetaking of the Elevation of the Cross. Epistle: 2 Cor. 1:21-2:4. **Gospel:** Matthew 22:1-14.

SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK OF September 14, 2008

TODAY

5:00 PM Teen Group

TUESDAY

6:00 PM Vespers
6:30 PM Parish Council

WEDNESDAY

9:30 AM Divine Liturgy: Reading from the Prologue

SATURDAY

6:00 PM Great Vespers

SUNDAY (September 21)

9:30 AM Divine Liturgy: Leavetaking of the Elevation of the Cross
11:15 AM Church School & Adult

Offerings: 09-07-08: \$2,705.00; Attendance: 09-07-08: 120; Candle Commemorations: 09-14-08: Theotokos: blessed memory of Leon and Christina Kobasiar. Altar: anniversary of Paul and Anna Mae Stehnach. Christ: birthday of Ann Dayner (93rd).

Please pray for the following: Albert DiGiacobbe (Fred's brother); Mike Haley (back at Shepherd of the Valley, Niles)

"For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." (1 Corinthians 1:22-24)

COMING EVENTS CALENDAR

Sept. 23 Feast of the Conception of St. John the Baptist

Oct. 6-7 Midwest Diocese Diocesan Assembly (South Chicago)

Path to Salvation Class: the Tuesday evening class will begin the study of the *Epistle of St. Jude* on September 23. All are invited and encouraged to join the class which begins about 6:30 PM following Vespers.



ADULT CLASS AFTER SUNDAY LITURGY: Church School is for everyone; as the children join their classes, parents and adults have one too! Come into the Hall after Liturgy, enjoy some refreshments, and participate in the study of our Faith and Practice.



Next Fish Dinner: September 26. All help is needed and welcome. About 25-30 desserts are needed for each Dinner. See Barb McKenzie for more details.

TEEN GROUP – meets at 5:00 PM this evening:

All teens of the Parish (those who will be 13 by Dec. 31 to 19 yr.-olds) are invited to join together next Sunday evening for dinner, discussion, and plans!!!

CONGRATULATIONS VADIM AND THANK YOU!

Last Sunday following Liturgy we recognized the 25 years of service of our Choir Director Vadim Stehnach who reached this milestone last month. We thank God for Vadim as he continues to lead the parish in our praises of the Holy Trinity. May God grant him many more years of prosperity, peace, health, and salvation.

The *Preliminary Report of the Special Investigating Committee* of the Orthodox Church in America has been published; this is the report outlining the financial abuses which have occurred in the OCA over the course of the last decade and more. Fr. Jonathan has copies for you to read. Please request a copy for your own information, or access a copy at www.oca.org.



Today is the Feast of the Exaltation (Elevation) of the Cross.

In the early fourth century, St. Helena, mother of Emperor Constantine, uncovered the True Cross on which our Savior died. She oversaw the construction of churches in Jerusalem and, along with the Patriarch Macarius, elevated the Cross as *the* instrument of salvation. We commemorate that event today especially as we venerate the Holy Cross and carry the Cross of Christ in our daily lives to live for God in the victory over sin and death.

Interested in an Exercise Class? - contact Fr. Jonathan ASAP if you would like to participate in a class here at Church.

Pilgrimage at the Monastery of St. John the Theologian (in Hiram):

- **Vigil Service – Thursday, September 25, at 6:00 PM**
- **Divine Liturgy – Friday, September 26, at 10:00 AM** (Hours at 9:30)
- **A luncheon will follow Divine Liturgy.**

A Weekend with Father Peter Gillquist in Lorain, OH (September 20-21):

Fr. Peter is an Archpriest in the Antiochian Archdiocese and the chairman of their Department of Missions and Evangelism. An author of numerous published books, Fr. Peter has witnessed the Orthodox Faith to thousands through his personal experience of converting to the Orthodox Church.

Saturday, Sept. 20 – St. George Serbian Orthodox Church, 12:00 PM

Sunday, Sept. 21 – Ss. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church (OCA), 9:30 AM

For more info: call 440-277-5821 (see the flyer on the bulletin board)

Parish Dinner, September 21, following Church School (to celebrate Fr. Jonathan's installation as Parish Priest); **Menu:** Chicken, Rigatone and meatballs, potatoes, vegetable, salad, bread, and a cake. **Please come and enjoy this time together as a Parish community.**



Classic Literature Reading Group

Current Book: *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, by Harriet Beecher Stowe

at Borders Café (Hwy. 46 near the Eastwood Mall)

every Wednesday from 11:00 AM to Noon

The group is facilitated by Fr. Jonathan.



Hierarchy vs. Anarchy

The Orthodox Church is a *hierarchical* Church. We have *hierarchs* who govern the Church. A *hierarch*, literally, is a "Priest-ruler." "Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you...Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls..." (Heb. 13:7, 17). These rulers are Bishops and Priests, those who serve in the Priesthood of Christ.

In the Church, the alternative to *hierarchy* is *anarchy*. *Anarchy* means "lack of rule, lack of leadership," which is not the same thing as lawlessness. Lawlessness describes a condition of society when no one listens to or obeys the laws of God. *Anarchy* describes a condition when no one follows, or is led by, the God-given ruler(s).

In the Orthodox Church in America today, we suffer from a lack of leadership. By their own admission, our Hierarchs have failed to lead the Church. Instead, some have used their positions of leadership to take advantage of the people of the Church for their own gain. Some have simply adopted a completely passive stance towards their duties as Bishops, which in the end is not leadership and an abuse of their positions as rulers of the Church of God.

What are we to do? First, we cannot resort to anarchy. We cannot use abuses of hierarchs to justify dispensing with hierarchy, or to set up the rule of anything other than the hierarchs. After all, we are a hierarchical Church because God the Holy Trinity is a Hierarchy – the Father is the Leader/Source (Gk., *arche*) from Whom the Son is begotten and the Holy Spirit proceeds. Bishops, Priests, and Deacons are images of the Divine Hierarchy: “Be eager to do everything in God’s harmony, with the bishop presiding in the place of God and the presbytery (i.e., priests) in the place of the council of the apostles, and the deacons, most sweet to me, entrusted with the service of Jesus Christ” (St. Ignatius, *Magnesians* 6.1). We certainly cannot substitute anything else for the rule of God and hope to be saved in His Kingdom.

Second, we must affirm this God-given hierarchy in the Church by seeking out true Bishops and Priests who fulfill the duties of their governance. “And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. Be at peace among yourselves” (1 Thes. 5:12-13). We must find Bishops and Priests who will *actively* lead the Church; indeed, we should find those who have already *demonstrated* their ability to lead, not simply honoring those who happen to bear a title of leadership regardless of their works.

May God have mercy on us! During our crisis of leadership, revolution and/or rebellion are not options, neither is thoughtless submission to godless tyranny. Somewhere in the midst of all this is the narrow and difficult way of Christ (Matt. 7:13-14). This is the way of the Cross and patient endurance, but it is also the hard road of speaking and practicing the Truth. This is the way of following our Leader Christ.

St. Paul’s advice to Timothy is: “Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people’s sins; keep yourself pure” (1 Tim. 5:22). Let us keep ourselves pure by what we say and do, here and now, and let us *fearfully and carefully* promote faithful Bishops and Priests who fear God and do what is right in His Church. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.