

January 2020

PARISH LIFE

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A Monthly
Publication
of the
Russian Orthodox Cathedral of
St John the Baptist
Washington, DC.
A Parish Founded in 1949 by
St John of Shanghai and
San Francisco

“REDEEMING THE TIME...” (The Epistle to the Ephesians 5: 15-16)

...The Apostle Paul writes regarding time that we walk circumspectly “...Redeeming the time, because the days are evil...” Thus he concisely said... the days are evil, life is short, and that is something we need to remember, to feel to the depths of our hearts, and to understand how precious is the time allotted to us. Some people think that reflection on the swift passage of time is to contemplate something sad, something that drives us towards anguish and gloomy thoughts. But it is not at all like that. To the contrary, every minute brings us closer to eternity, and asks us, “What have you done [to prepare] for that?”

After all, we are but guests here on this earth. We are guests for a brief span of time, a very brief period that comes out of a mystery and departs into a mystery. But the Lord reveals to us that this brief life is of great significance for us, for it is the school of eternity in which our person, our conscience, all within us that is Divine, grows and becomes educated.

How frightening it is for someone who has wasted his time, spent it on an abyss of trivialities, on miserable, insignificant things. He turns around only to find that his life has already passed, spent in petty concerns, empty fruitless chatter, in things perhaps not even worth contemplating. Time passes.

Time cannot be turned back for even a second, and that is why the Apostle implores us to redeem the time, not waste it, not spend it on idle words and needless works. Remember: every minute is precious. Any hour may cost a person life eternal. When we think about this, we treat life, our responsibilities, our efforts, and everything around us differently. We take more care, knowing that today or tomorrow we can be called to account. Just imagine: today, tomorrow, we may all perish. Half of us, bent over with serious illnesses, are already moving toward life's end. The rest of us can die at any moment.

Once again, I repeat: thinking about proper life, about responsibility, reflecting on what we bring with us when we present ourselves, what we have managed to be able to do in this life with what our conscience, our duty demanded of us - is no cause for despondency. How beautiful, how really fulfilled life becomes when you feel a sense of responsibility. Remaining mindful of what is to come for us should serve to encourage and strengthen us, keeping us from weakening, becoming undisciplined, falling into despondency, idleness, pettiness, and utter insignificance. This is why in days of old it was the custom to keep a human skull as a reminder of death, in one's home; people would even add a sign saying "Memento mori!" — "Reminder of death!" Remember, so as to live properly, self-collectedly, cognizant of all, to live in love, in labors, in understanding that this is all given to us but for a short time.

How many stones there are scattered about! Millions, billions, and we tread upon them without even noticing them. Yet gold is collected in tiny grains, and one gram of gold costs an enormous amount of money, as a single grain is not enough. So here, we also have time, which just like gold, is something precious. Therefore, let each of you keep to a firm rule that we treat it reverently. If we work, work, if we pray, pray, if we rest, rest. But nothing should be done senselessly, stupidly.

"To kill time" is a frightening expression. The words are correct, but also frightening, for time is life. And if we kill time, if we waste it, we kill our own life. Let us test ourselves, think, try to see that nothing ever transpires in vain, in idleness, in futility, in mediocrity.

And finally: when the Apostle tells us, “Redeem the time, for the days are evil,” the words should teach us to distinguish what is the main thing in life, what is the most important, from what is less important. The main thing is what makes us people, what we will carry over to the other side, the characteristics which remain with us when we are old, decrepit, dead in body but eternal in soul. The main things are that which each of us collects as a treasure in this our life. All of the rest but serves that end. We eat, we clothe ourselves, we work – all in order to support life, so that the spirit might grow, for without that goal, how are we any different from any animal or tree that takes nourishment, grows, and multiplies?

So, redeem the time for the sake of your soul, and in your life, treat it as a great gift from God. I know several people who were gravely ill, and then found that the Lord had granted them additional time. How they treasured it, how they were thankful to God for allowing them another year, two years, or some other indeterminate span. It was then that they were sharply aware of time, as one should be. So why should we wait for some grave danger or sickness? How much better to hearken today to the Apostle's words, “Redeem the time, for the days are evil.”

THE MOTHER OF GOD

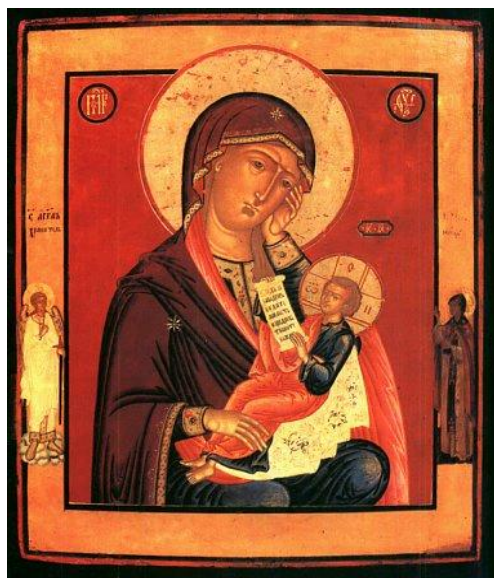
The “Assuage my Sorrows” Icon January 25 / February 7

Before every iconographic image of the Most Holy Theotokos we pray to the Queen of Heaven about our spiritual and temporal needs; we ask her to console us in our misfortunes, and to give us spiritual joy.

However, among the many miracle-working icons of the Most Pure One, there is one that is actually called "Assuage my Sorrows."

The most ancient of the icons that carries this name was in Shklova in Mogilev Province. Where this miracle-working Icon was painted is unknown: perhaps it was in the Russian Monastery on Mt. Athos or perhaps somewhere else. In a battle that took place in 1640 near Shklova, the soldiers of Tsar Michael Fyodorovitch defeated the Poles. In honor of this victory a copy of the miracle-working Image was translated by the

Cossacks to Moscow and placed in the Church of St Nicholas in Zamoskovoretchi (since demolished).



Apparently due both to a fire and to the many renovations of the church, the icon was forgotten for a time. Greatly neglected, it was carelessly left lying, in the bell tower. But the plentiful mercies manifested through it by the Mother of God forced [the people] to remember the forgotten icon.

Tradition relates that the first time this Icon was glorified was in the second half of the 18th century. The miraculous power of the "Assuage my Sorrow" Icon of the Theotokos was revealed in the following manner: a certain woman of noble extraction had long suffered from weakness in her hands and feet. In this case, physicians were of no help. In a vision, she was told to go to Moscow and pray before the icon of the Mother of God bearing the inscription "Assuage my Sorrow;" in the same vision, she was shown the Icon. Not finding that Icon in the church, she turned to the priest for help, who then brought all of the ancient icons down from the bell-tower. One of the icons actually bore the inscription "Assuage my Sorrow." As soon as the woman saw the Icon she exclaimed:

"It is she! It is she!"

After a moleben the ailing woman felt so much stronger that she was able to stand and leave the church unaided.

This miracle occurred on January 25th (Julian calendar), 1760. Since then, a Feast day in honor of the "Assuage my Sorrow" Icon has been observed. In the church of St Nicholas, the icon was installed in an appropriate place, and an altar was dedicated in its honor.

From all over the city, the faithful and suffering came to Zamoskovorechie to bow down before the newly-revealed icon, and God's power was

revealed in many other miracles. An especially great number of miracles happened during the plague epidemic of 1771. Many copies of the miraculous Icon were made and distributed throughout all Russia; in Moscow alone, four other icons bearing the same name were glorified by miracles.

Today, the miracle-working "Assuage my Sorrows" Icon rests in the Church of St Nicholas-in-Kuznetsy in Moscow.

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

Holy Hierarch Sylvester, Pope of Rome January 2 / 15

St. Sylvester, Pope of Rome (314 - 335) was born in Rome to two Christians, Rufinus and Justa. Soon after the child's birth, his father reposed, and the Saint was left in his mother's care. Sylvester's teacher, the presbyter Quirinius, imparted to him a good education and raised him to be a true Christian. On reaching adulthood Sylvester began to fulfill the Lord's Commandment to serve his neighbor. He took particular care to afford hospitality to travelers, offering them shelter and rest in his own home. During periods of persecution of Christians, Sylvester was not afraid to take in the Holy Confessor Bishop Timothy, who lived in his house for over a year and with his preaching brought many to Christ. After Timothy's martyrdom, Sylvester secretly retrieved the Saint's body and with due honor committed it to the earth. When that fact became known to Tarquinius, prefect of the city, the Saint was seized and brought before the Court. Menacing Sylvester with torments and death, Tarquinius strove to coerce him into renouncing Christ. However, not frightened by such threats, St. Sylvester remained firm in confessing the Faith, and was then cast into prison. When Tarquinius suddenly died shortly after the conclusion of the trial, the Saint was given his freedom, and fearlessly began to proclaim the Gospel to the pagans, and converted many to Christianity. At the age of 30, St. Sylvester was received into the clergy of the Roman Church. He was ordained a deacon, and then a presbyter, by Pope Marcellinus (296 - 304). After the death of Pope Melchiades (311 - 314) St. Sylvester was chosen Bishop of Rome. He zealously took care to

see that his flock led a chaste way of life, made sure that the presbyters strictly carried out their service, without being burdened with secular matters.



Holy Hierarch St. Sylvester was known for his great knowledge of Sacred Scriptures, and for being an unshakeable defender of the Christian Faith. During the reign of Emperor Constantine the Great, after the time of persecution against the Church had ended, the Jews held a debate about the True Faith. Holy Equal-to-the-Apostles Emperor Constantine, his mother the Empress St. Sophia, and their large retinue attended the debate. Pope Sylvester represented the Christian side, and a multitude of learned rabbis led by Zambres, a student of the black

arts and a wizard, represented the Jews. St. Sylvester used the books of the Old Testament to convincingly prove that all of the prophets had prophesied Jesus Christ's Nativity, of a Virgin — a maiden who had known no man — as well as his voluntary Passion and death for the redemption of the fallen human race, and His glorious Resurrection. The Holy Hierarch was declared the winner of this oral competition. Then Zambres tried to resort to sorcery, but the Saint opposed the evil by calling on the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Zambres and the rest of the Jews then believed on Christ, and asked to undergo Holy Baptism. The Holy Pope St. Sylvester directed the Roman Church for over 20 years, and was held in great respect by the Christians. Attaining a very old age, he peacefully reposed in the year 335.



LESSONS FROM THE FATHERS

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

The Lord came to the Jordan, and was baptized of John not because he was in need of that cleansing, but so that He might fulfill all that was attributable to human nature, which He had assumed, and to show that He had a true body and that he truly was an actual man. He did not want to transgress the law, and so answered: "for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." (Matthew 3:15) It was for this reason that He entered into the waters of Baptism. But in so doing, He gave them incomparably more than He could receive from them, for he was in need of nothing. For with His light He illuminated those very waters, and gave them a certain special power by which those who believe on Him, entering the waters of Baptism, are clothed in this power, and are illuminated by Him.

Holy Hierarch Epiphanius of Cyprus

The waters of Baptism would never have had the ability to cleanse human sins, had they not been blessed by the touch of the Savior's Body. Immersing Himself in the water, the Savior blessed the waters - the deep, and the source of all springs.

Holy Hierarch Ambrose of Milan

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION: Every day, I try to read the morning and evening prayers, along with prayers for children and the sick. However, in the Gospels, it says that we are not to be like the pagans, but to be brief. After all, God knows what we need. Please put me on the salvific path.

ANSWER: If one were to take literally Jesus' words regarding "vain repetitions" and "much speaking" in prayer [see Matthew 6:7], none of our Divine Church Services would seem necessary, and the monastic practice, dating from antiquity, of lengthy prayers, reading the Psalter for many

hours at a time, would be in vain. Yet, we also have the Apostle Paul's admonition to pray without ceasing (I Thessalonians 5: 17). Following the same logic, should such prayer be considered vain repetitions and much speaking? Obviously, it is not the lengthiness of prayers that renders them such. Rather, the question is in the manner, quality and focus of prayer. If prayer proceeds constantly, in various ways (Divine Services, personal reading, and various reflections invoking the Name of God), all in order to be in union with God, to always be in touch with Him, that is the ideal [practice]. If prayers are used for other purposes, i.e. to achieve something external, something earthly, or are as some kind of service to be rattled off as a duty needed to assuage the conscience, that would be vain repetition, much speaking and invocation of God's Name in vain.

Do you have questions regarding the church and religious life? Send them to us by email at vpotapov@comcast.net or by conventional mail at the address of our church: 4001 17th St. NW, Washington, DC 20011.

A DIARY OF THE VISIT BY THE RUSSIAN DIASPORA'S 'INDICATOR OF THE PATH' TO THE CAPITAL OF THE USA

For nine days, from November 27-December 5, the Kursk Root Icon of the Mother of God, one of the most ancient icons of the Russian Orthodox Church (1295), visited St. John the Baptist Cathedral in Washington, DC as well as other parishes and communities of ROCOR in our vicinity. Parishioners labored long in preparing for the greeting of the wonderworking icon. News of the forthcoming visit was announced early, informing as many parishioners as possible of the opportunity to pray before the icon.

Five years ago, the First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, Metropolitan Hilarion of Eastern America & New York, appointed Thanksgiving Day and the following week as the period of the annual visitation of the Kursk Root Icon to Washington

His Grace, Bishop Nicholas, guardian of the wonderworking icon since 2010, arrived in the capital on Wednesday evening, November 27.

The following day, the American holiday of Thanksgiving, the people of God arrived at 11:00 AM for the triumphal greeting and first moleben and akathist before the Kursk Root Icon. The service was held in Church Slavonic and English. Co-serving with Bishop Nicholas were the cathedral clergy: rector Archpriest Victor Potapov, Archpriest David Pratt, Priest Damian Dantine, and Protodeacon Leonid Mickle, as well as Archpriest Serge Kotar (cleric of the Western American Diocese) and Archpriest Nectarios Trevino (rector of Holy Innocents & St. Nina Church in Bristol, VA). Praying in church were Archpriest Alexei Kotar (cleric of the Western American Diocese), Archpriest John Johnson (rector of St. Thecla Mission in Kensington, MD), Hieromonk Felipe (Balingit; ROCOR cleric), and Deacon Nicholas Kotar (cleric of Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville, NY).

Booklets with the text of the akathist to the Mother of God in two languages were distributed to all, in order to follow and respond with the choir.

Friday, November 29, began with the baptism of infant Michael, Fr. Serge Kotar's newest grandchild, whose daughter recently moved to Washington with her husband for work. After lunch, the icon visited infirm and elderly parishioners who were not able to come to the church to venerate the icon..

The next day, November 30, Archpriest Ion Barbus (rector of Holy Transfiguration Church in Baltimore, MD) brought the icon to his parish, where the Orthodox faithful were awaiting it in the large city north of Washington. A moleben and akathist was served there. The icon returned that evening to Washington, where Bishop Nicholas led the All-Night Vigil in St. John the Baptist Cathedral.

On Sunday, December 1, Bishop Nicholas brought the icon to Holy Apostles Church in Beltsville, MD, where he celebrated Divine Liturgy. After the service, Bishop Nicholas returned to New York in order to prepare for the upcoming meeting of the ROCOR Synod of Bishops. The icon remained in Washington, at the home of Archpriest Victor Potapov.

The first half of Monday, December 2, included visiting infirm parishioners. At lunchtime, the icon was brought to the parish of the Holy

Myrrhbearers in Harrisonburg, VA. The next day, December 3, the icon was brought to where the future church will be built. At sunrise, a prayer before the Mother of God was said, entreating help in the proposed project. At 11:00 AM, the icon returned to Washington, and Fr. Victor continued to visit sick parishioners with the icon.

On December 3-4, the great feast of the Entry of Theotokos into the Temple, the All-Diasporan icon was present for the divine services in St. John the Baptist Cathedral.

On the evening of Dec. 4, the holy icon visited the new mission dedicated to Holy Great-Martyr Thecla in Kensington. A moleben and akathist were served at this new ROCOR mission, led by Archpriest John Johnson, former cleric of the cathedral.

That same evening, Bishop Nicholas returned to Washington to bring the icon back to New York.

On December 5, Bishop Nicholas, guardian of the holy icon, departed for the home of the Mother of God – the Synodal Cathedral of the Sign in New York City.

Thus concluded the fifth annual visit of the Protectress of the Russian Diaspora to the capital of the United States. It is hoped that this joyous, grace-filled tradition will continue yearly.

O Most Holy Theotokos, come to our aid!

Archpriest Victor Potapov

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR JANUARY

Sat 4 Vigil – 5:00 PM. 7th Resurrection Gospel: John **20**: 1-10.

Sun 5 **29th Sunday after Pentecost**, *Sunday before the Nativity of Christ, Sunday of the Fathers. Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ.* English Liturgy – 7:40 AM; Slavonic Liturgy – 10:10 AM. Scripture: Hebrews **11**: 9-10, 17-23, 32-40; Matthew **1**: 1-25.

Mon 6 *Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ.* Royal Hours, Vespers and Liturgy of St. Basil the Great - 8:00 AM. Scripture (at Liturgy): Hebrews 1: 1-12; Luke 2: 1-20.

Mon 6 Vigil – 6:30 PM. Gospel: Matthew 1: 18-25.

Tue 7 **NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.** English Liturgy - 7:40 AM; Slavonic Liturgy – 10:10 AM. Scripture: Galatians 4: 4-7; Matthew 2: 1-12.

Wed 8 Moleben and Akathist to the Most-holy Theotokos - 7:00 PM.

Sat 11 Vigil - 5:00 PM. 8th Resurrection Gospel: John 20: 11-18.

Sun 12 **30th Sunday after Pentecost** *Sunday after the Nativity of Christ. Holy Ancestors – Saints Joseph the Betrothed, David the King, and James the Brother of the Lord.* АНГЛ. English Liturgy – 7:40 AM; Slavonic Liturgy – 10:10 AM. Scripture: For the Sunday after Nativity: Galatians 1: 11-19; Matthew 2: 13-23.

Mon 13 Vigil – 6:30 PM. Gospel: John 10: 9-16.

Tue 14 **CIRCUMCISION OF THE LORD and commemoration of St. Basil the Great. New Year's Day according to the old calendar** Hours and Liturgy of St. Basil the Great – 6:40 AM. Scripture: Colossians 2: 8-12; Luke 2: 20-21, 40-52; for the Holy Hierarch: Hebrews 7: 26 – 8: 2; Luke 6: 17-23.

Wed 15 Moleben and Akathist to St. Seraphim of Sarov - 6:30 PM.

Fri 17 *Forefeast of Theophany.* Royal Hours – 8:00 AM.

Sat 18 *Eve of Theophany.* Hours, Liturgy, Vespers and Greater Blessing of the Waters - 8:40 утра. Fast day. Scripture (at the Liturgy): I Timothy 3: 14 - 4: 5; Matthew 3: 1-11.

Sat 18 Vigil – 5:00 PM. Gospel: Mark 1: 9-11.

Sun 19 31st Sunday after Pentecost. HOLY THEOPHANY (BAPTISM OF THE LORD). English Liturgy - 7:40 AM; Slavonic Liturgy – 10:10 AM. Scripture: After each Liturgy – Greater Blessing of the Waters. Scripture (at the Liturgy): Titus **2**: 11-14, **3**: 4-7; Matthew **3**: 13-17

Wed Moleben and Akathist to the Most-holy Theotokos - 7:00 PM.

Sat 25 Vigil - 5:00 PM. 10th Resurrection Gospel: John **21**: 1-14.

Sun 26 32nd Sunday after Pentecost, Sunday after Theophany. English Liturgy - 7:40 AM; Slavonic Liturgy – 10:10 AM. Scripture: For Sunday after Theophany: Ephesians **4**: 7-13; Matthew **4**: 12-17; for the day: I Timothy **1**: 15-17; Luke **18**: 35-43.

Wed 29 Moleben and Akathist to the Most-holy Theotokos - 7:00 PM.

BEGINNING OF FEBRUARY

Sat 1 Vigil - 5:00 PM. 11th Resurrection Gospel: John **21**: 15-25.

Sun 2 33rd Sunday after Pentecost. Venerable Euthymius the Great. English Liturgy - 7:40 AM; Slavonic Liturgy – 10:10 AM. Scripture: I Timothy **4**: 9-15; Luke **19**: 1-10.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Thu 2 English Choir rehearsal – 7:00 PM.

Fri 3 "MatreshkiDC" dance group rehearsal Younger group – 6:00 PM, intermediate group – 6:45 PM.

Sat 4 Meeting of the Scouts - 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM.

Mon 6 The Sisterhood invites everyone to come to the Parish Hall after the Nativity Vigil for our traditional meal including *kutia-uzvar* (boiled wheat and fruit compote).

Tue 7 Following each Festal Liturgy, there will be a Nativity Festal Meal in the Parish Hall. The Sisterhood requests all participants to bring a dessert and a bottle of wine to the meal.

Fri 10 "MatreshkiDC" dance group rehearsal Younger group – 6:00 PM, intermediate group – 6:45 PM.

Sat 11 The Scouts will be going caroling. If you know of elderly people who would like to be visited by our youth, please contact the head of our Sisterhood, Marina Zakharin at: 301-787-5739.

Sun 12 Following the festal meal after the early Liturgy, there will be traditional American caroling.

Sun 12 Parish Yolka - 1:30 PM.

Tue 14 Slavonic Choir rehearsal – 7:00 PM.

Wed 15 Meeting of the Parish Council – 7:30 PM.

Thu 16 English Choir rehearsal – 7:00 PM.

Fri 17 "MatreshkiDC" dance group rehearsal Younger group 6:00 PM, intermediate group – 6:45 PM.

Fri 17 Meeting of the ROCOR clergy of Greater Washington (St George House) - 7:00 PM.

Tue 21 Slavonic Choir rehearsal – 7:00 PM.

Tue 21 Class on Orthodoxy with Metropolitan Jonah – 7:30 PM.

Thu 23 English Choir rehearsal – 7:00 PM.

Fri 24 The Tatiana Benefit Ball - 7:00 PM. (See special announcement below.)

Sat 25 Annual meeting of the Holy Protection Sisterhood - 2:00 PM.

Tue 28 Slavonic Choir rehearsal – 7:00 PM.

Tue 28 Class on Orthodoxy with Metropolitan Jonah – 7:30 PM.

Thu 30 English Choir rehearsal – 7:00 PM.

Fri 31 "MatreshkiDC" dance group rehearsal. Younger group – 6:00 PM, intermediate – 6:45 PM.

MEMORY ETERNAL

On December 3, **Natalia Antonovna Khristofovich**, who has been a parishioner for many years, departed to the Lord. Several days before her death, she was able to receive the Mystery of Holy Unction.

We would like to extend our sincere condolences to her daughters Elizabeth and Barbara, and to their husbands, children and grandchildren.

The Panikhida for the 40th Day will be served after the Slavonic Liturgy on January 12. May she be heir to the Heavenly Kingdom!

On December 23, parishioner **Michael Mazo** tragically passed to the Lord. His funeral service was held in our church on December 26. Internment at Rock Creek Cemetery took place the next day. Our heartfelt condolences go out to his mother Nina, wife Natalia and her daughter Esme. A ninth day panikhida for Michael will be held on December 31 at 7 PM. May God give Michael life eternal!

OUR CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

In late November and early December, during the visit to our Parish by the Kursk-Root Icon of the Mother of God, a total of \$2,000 was collected for the maintenance of the Holy Icon.

In memory of our parishioner Natalia Antonovna Khristofovich, who reposed on December 3, \$1,500 was collected for the House of Mercy in the village of Karabanova in the Kostroma District. That institution is under the care of the famous Russian priest Fr. Georgi Edelshtein.

From our Sisterhood: Over 400 Toys, plus numerous Children's Books were donated by Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church, Holy

Cross Antiochian Orthodox Church, Orthodox Church of Saint Matthew and St. John The Baptist Russian Orthodox Cathedral to the Central Booking and Detention Center in Baltimore, just in time for the children of the incarcerated to visit their moms before Christmas. Small cards were also provided to each child explaining why we celebrate the Birth of Jesus Christ, and that we give gifts out of love for each other. Hand-crafted blankets and items of clothing were also distributed. Your kindness and generosity will brighten a child's Christmas. Thank you!

REGARDING THE NATIVITY APPEAL

In December, we sent our parishioners and many other readers of "Parish Life" greetings on the Nativity of Christ, along with an appeal for them to donate towards the needs of the church. With each appeal, we included an Orthodox Calendar. This was a gift made to our parish by Philip D. Rinaldi Funeral Service. We offer our heart-felt thanks to everyone who has responded to our appeal, and express our hope that those who have not yet responded will do so in the near future. Dear brothers and sisters, let us not forget that the well-being of our Parish depends entirely upon us.

A BENEFIT EVENING

On January 24, in the Great Golden Hall of the Russian Embassy, and under the patronage of His Excellency, Ambassador of the Russian Federation in the United States, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Anatoly Ivanovitch Antonov, an initiative group of young people from the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist will hold the sixth annual Tatiana Benefit Ball. Additional information, and tickets for the Ball are available at the website: tatianaball.com

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE PARISH

At 12:00 PM on February 2, following the Liturgy (there will be only one Liturgy on that date), the Annual General Meeting of the Parish will take place. In the absence of a quorum at that time, a second meeting will be convened at 1:30 PM, and constitute a lawful and competent meeting

regardless of the number of parishioners in attendance. Lunch will be served by the Sisterhood before the meeting.

You are reminded that only those parishioners who have paid their dues for 2019 and who have been to Confession and have Communed of the Holy Gifts of Christ may cast a vote. Many parishioners have paid only a portion of their dues for the past year, and others have not paid any dues at all.

Parish dues are: \$35 per month for people who are employed; \$15 per month for pensioners.

Anyone who wants to become a member must fill out an application, which may be obtained at the candle stand. Upon completion, the application should be returned to the *Starosta* [church warden], who will present it at the next regular meeting of the Parish Council. Those admitted to membership in the parish will subsequently receive a letter from the parish secretary advising them of the Council's decision regarding their acceptance into our church community.

MARCH FOR LIFE AND AGAINST ABORTION

On Friday, January 24, the 47th annual march for life and against abortion will take place in Washington. Participants in the march will gather at the Washington Monument at 11:45 AM and then will all go up Constitution Avenue to the Supreme Court Building. At the conclusion of the march, Orthodox clergy will serve a prayer service for Orthodox participants. You may read further details about this event a <https://marchforlife.org/national-march-for-life/>

REGARDING MONUMENTS AT "ROCK CREEK" CEMETERY

The administration of Rock Creek Cemetery demands that anyone having a wooden Cross on the grave of a loved one for more than 6 months replace it with a permanent stone Cross or marker. A list of monument companies with experience in dealing with Rock Creek Cemetery was printed in the August issue of Parish Life.

The prices of granite monuments vary widely, depending upon their size, design, and color. Parishioners seeking a less expensive alternative to granite for their loved ones at Rock Creek Cemetery might consider

purchasing a cast stone monument made by Renaissance Cast Stone of Oklahoma. The ranges from \$1,400 to \$1,835, including a Cross bearing a [sand-blasted] engraved name and dates, a base for the Cross, delivery to Rock Creek, installation, and perpetual care. The Crosses come in 5 different colors, are 4 feet tall, and rest on a 6 inch thick foundation. A detailed brochure with color samples to help you make a selection will soon be posted on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall.

To have a cast-stone monument installed, please contact Sergei Uralov at 917-703-8830 or by email at: uralov777@gmail.com. His company, Our Service, is ready to help with ordering and installation of a monument.

By the way, Rock Creek has advised us that at the beginning of next year, prices for burial plots may rise by 10 %. If you would like to purchase a plot in our section of the Cemetery, you can do so before the price increases, by contacting Ms. Stephanie Nolan at 202-726-2080 or snolan@stpaulsrockcreek.org.

If you have any questions regarding the cemetery, you may contact our cemetery warden, Michael Nazaretz, at 703-521-5873 or nazaretz@msn.com.

SUNDAY LUNCHEONS

The luncheons prepared and served to our parishioners after each Sunday Service depend entirely upon the efforts of volunteers. Such meals not only afford the faithful the opportunity to break their Fast after the Liturgy and to enjoy rest and fellowship, but also further our charitable endeavors.

After the English Liturgy. The English volunteer teams have undergone a reorganization. Now Nathaniel Sweigart has replaced *matushka* Anastasia Dantine as coordinator. The Sisterhood would like to thank *matushka* for skillfully exercising her responsibilities as coordinator over the course of the last 3 years. Please support Nathaniel in taking on his new role. He may be reached by telephone at 434-329-6060 or by email at jnsweigart@gmail.com.

If you stay for lunch after the English Liturgy on a regular basis, please help others by signing up for one of the teams. Currently, there are 6 teams, which means that each team is responsible for a luncheon every 6 weeks; if more teams can be formed, each given team would see a lessening in the frequency of having to prepare meals. Usually the menu consists of a main dish, a side dish, salad, bread, dessert and beverages, and meals for about 60 people need to be prepared. Information about specific team responsibilities is under review, and will soon be announced by Nathaniel.

After the Slavonic. If you regularly come to lunch after the Slavonic Liturgy, help out by volunteering, using “sign up genius,” <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0c4caaac23abfd0-pokrova>

Usually the menu consists of a main dish, a side dish, salad, bread, dessert and beverages; meals for about 100 people need to be prepared. Should that number seem intimidating, rest assured that we will help you with planning and food preparation. There are a number of different ways to help: You can prepare just one of the dishes, or bring the ingredients and have us find someone ready to prepare them, or you can simply donate coffee, bread, juice, or wine.

We appreciate any kind of help, as the funds yielded by the luncheons go to cover expenses, including clean-up, and also go to support the Sisterhood's charitable activities both in the Parish and beyond, e.g. helping out monasteries and orphanages. Thank you for your help! If not for YOU, we would be unable to help others,

For the past three years, Theodosia Kydyrova has been coordinating the luncheon schedule. She needs our help, and is looking for a replacement. Please contact Theodosia (Jyldiz) Kydyrova by phone at 240-755-7373 or by email at jysakma@yahoo.com , or contact Marina at 301-787-5739, or almazi@aol.com.

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Parishioners! Remember our parish in your wills!