



## Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

714 Westmoreland Avenue

PO Box 3

Slickville, PA 15684-0003

[724] 468-5581

[www.holyghostorthodoxchurch.org](http://www.holyghostorthodoxchurch.org)

Rev. Father Robert Popichak, Pastor

23 Station Street

Carnegie, PA 15106-3014

[412] 279-5640 home

[412] 956-6626 cell

## GREAT LENT

**ON THE MEND:** Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Metropolitan Constantine, Patriarch Pavle, Metropolitan Theodosius, Bishop Robert, Father Peter Natishan, Father Gerald Olszewski, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Dragan Filipović, Father Elias Katras, Father Stevo Rocknage, Father Paul Stoll, Father Igor Soroka, Father Michael Mihalick [MS], Ollie Pendylshok, Walt & Evelyn Burlack, Joshua Agosto and his family, Harley Katarina Rahuba, Mike and Hilda Holupka, Eva Malesnick, Helen Likar, Stella Peanoske, Joe Nezolyk, Nick Behun, Grace Holupka, Virginia Bryan, Joseph Sliwinsky, Maria Balo, Linda Mechtly, Mary Mochnick, Mary Pekich, Mildred Manolovich, Evelyn Misko, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachelle, Jane Golofski, Doug Diller, Harry Krewsun, Sandy Gamble, Glen Lucas Burlack, Bernie Vangrin, Mary Alice Babcock, Dorie Kunkle, Andrea, & Melissa [Betty O'Masta's relatives], Mary Evelyn King, Stella Cherepko, Sam Wadrose, Khoruia Joanne Abdalah, Cameron [a boy in Matt's class], Faith—a 6-year-old girl with rheumatoid arthritis, Isabella Olivia Lindgren—a 2-year-old with a brain tumor, Dillon, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Nick Malec [Maxine's brother], Erin, Jimmy Fennel [7<sup>th</sup> Grader], Jim Markovich, Jeff Walewski [thyroid cancer], Carol [Lotinski] Rose, Michael Miller, Dave May, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Alverta, Margaret Mueller, Gary Zurasky, Michael Horvath, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Rita Very & family, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Mildred Walters, Michael Miller, Mike Pelchar [Liz's brother], Jim Logue—throat cancer, Liz Stumpf, Ester Tylavsky, Ed Jamison, Theodore Nixon, Charles Johnson, Amy Forbeck, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Gloria Prymak [Liz's niece], Robert Hippert & family, Margaret Vladimir, Luke Emmerling, John Sheliga, Sabrina, George & Mika Rocknage, Elizabeth Mitchell, Amari Clark, Robert McKivitz, and Daria Masur. **ARNOLD:** Stefania Lucci, Kay Tomson, Ann Ostaffy, Steve Sakal, Homer Paul Kline, and Steve Ostaffy. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

**Our Annual Parish Meeting will be after the Obednitsa TODAY! There will also be a Soup and Bread Luncheon. See Debbie, Liz, Evelyn, or Pani Gina for details.**



Hebrews 9:11-14

Mark 10:32-45

*Litany in Blessed Memory of Bernie O'Masta—40 Days—Fr. Bob  
Parastas in Blessed Memory of Edward Pytlak—Mike & Katherine Behun*

## **BULLETIN INSERT FOR 30 MARCH 2008**

### **VENERATION OF THE MOST HOLY AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS**

**VENERABLE ALEXIS—MAN OF GOD, MARTYR MARINUS-VENERABLE  
ABBOT & WONDERWORKER OF KALYAZIN, MONK-MARTYR PAUL OF  
CYPRUS, SAINT PATRICK-ENLIGHTNER OF IRELAND**

**\*\*\*\*\*ANNUAL MEETING and SOUP & BREAD LUNCHEON\*\*\*\*\***

#### **TROPARION—TONE 3**

Let the Heavens rejoice! Let the earth be glad!  
For the Lord has shown strength with His arm!  
He has trampled down death by death!

He has delivered us from the depths of hell,  
And has granted the world great mercy!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, Now and ever, and  
unto ages of ages. Amen.

#### **KONTAKION—TONE 3**

On this day Thou didst rise from the tomb, O Merciful One!  
Leading us from the gates of death.  
On this day Adam exults as Eve rejoices;  
With the prophets and patriarchs  
They unceasingly praise the divine majesty of Thy power!

#### **PROKEIMENON—TONE 3**

**READER:** Sing praises to our God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King,  
sing praises!

**PEOPLE:** **Sing praises to our God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King,  
sing praises!**

**READER:** Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy!

**PEOPLE:** **Sing praises to our God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King,  
sing praises!**

**READER:** Sing praises to our God, sing praises!

**PEOPLE:** **Sing praises to our King, sing praises!**

## ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 3

In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped; let me never be put to shame!

Be Thou a God of protection for me, a house of refuge, in order to save me!

IC|XC  
NI|/KA

The “Petrified Church” in Kosovo  
By Archimandrite Nektarios Serfes

You may well ask: what in the world am I talking about here? “Petrified Church”, indeed!

Recently, I was reading about a little-known lecture delivered during Great Lent 1916 in England – in the middle of the Great War – by an Orthodox prelate who was examining the written commentary of a German professor who had described the Orthodox Church of the East as a “petrified” church.

As the Archbishop pointed out nearly 100 years ago, our church knew then (as we know today) what this German scientist was sarcastically referring to. The Venerable Archbishop’s insightful words strike a dramatic chord with us today and we can easily detect the parallels between his time of crisis, violence and tragedy – and the conflicts that we face in 2008. His commentary simply resonates!

“Comparing the unchangeable image of Christ, fixed in the East once for all, with the confusing thousand *opinions* of Christ in Protestant Germany, he was quite justified in calling our Church by a striking name, so differentiating her from his own. I am *glad* he invented the name ‘petrified’”. (!)

Later he says that, “if ‘petrified’ means *intact*, or *whole*, or *undestroyed* or *living in the same dress*, but *still living*, then the famous professor may be right. Yet this ‘petrified church’ has always come victorious out of any test to which she has been put.”

The term “petrified church” could well apply to 2008 and the crises that challenge our world and our Holy Orthodox faith. To my way of thinking, “petrified church” could have at least two relevant meanings today:

The first meaning refers to the long and glorious history and legacy of Orthodox Christianity – which is the same today as it was in 1916. Our Holy

Church has not changed with the tides and trends that have afflicted other religions; we are the same church with the same faith and the same culture today that we were more than 2000 years ago! We have truly stayed the course, and this amplifies what St. Nicolai Velimirovic said in 1916.

The second meaning – and somewhat different from the first – could well refer to the apprehension and concern of all Eastern Orthodox Christians around the world with respect to the conditions in Serbia and Kosovo. We are **correct** in feeling *petrified or afraid* about the growing humanitarian crisis that currently confronts our brothers and sisters in both Serbia and Kosovo.

**Sanity** requires that we be *petrified*; our **Holy Orthodox Faith** requires that we continue to do something about it!

These are times for all of us, as pious and Orthodox Christians being the period of Great Lent to pray for our struggling and suffering brothers and sisters in Christ our Lord in the region of Kosovo/Metohija.

Recently many kind loving souls and good hearts offered their donations towards the Decani Monastery Relief Fund and more than fifteen thousand dollars were raised to help ameliorate the difficult situation faced by our brothers and sisters in Kosovo.

The matter is going to get worse day by day and we will have an unbelievable humanitarian crisis very soon.

Kindly send your tax deductible donations to the following address:

***Decani Monastery Relief Fund***  
***C/O Very Rev. Archimandrite Nektarios Serfes***  
***2618 West Bannock Street***  
***Boise, ID 83702***

Thank you and may our Lord God always bless you!

We have, it must be admitted, a use for anger excellently implanted in us for which alone it is useful and profitable for us to admit it, viz., when we are indignant and rage against the lustful emotions of our heart, and are vexed that the things which we are ashamed to do or say before men have risen up in the lurking places of our heart, as we tremble at the presence of the angels, and of God Himself, Who pervades all things everywhere and fear with the utmost dread the eye of Him from Whom the secrets of our hearts cannot possibly be hid." *St. John Cassian*

*From St. Mark the Ascetic (The Philokalia Vol. 1; Faber and Faber pg. 112): "Our future reward is made manifest through the impulses of the heart. A merciful heart will receive mercy, while a merciless heart will receive the opposite."*

"But even those who have fallen from the state of righteousness into evil actions must not despair because behold the Prophet is sent to the Transmigration at Babylon. And the Lord says through another Prophet: 'And to Babylon you shall go. There you shall be delivered' (Mic. 4:10). For often someone, after he has fallen in the confusion of vices, ashamed of the evils which he has committed, returns to penitence and raises himself by a good life from his failings. What therefore is this but that he came even unto Babylon and was there delivered?" *St. Gregory the Great*

An Irishman moves into a tiny hamlet in County Kerry, walks into the pub and promptly orders three beers. The bartender raises his eyebrows, but serves the man three beers, which he drinks quietly at a table, alone.

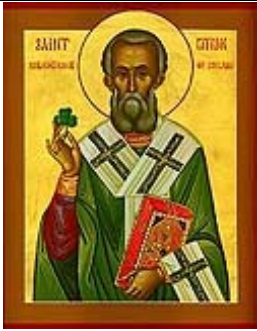
An hour later, the man has finished the three beers and orders three more. This happens yet again. The next evening the man again orders and drinks three beers at a time, several times. Soon the entire town is whispering about the Man Who Orders Three Beers.

Finally, a week later, the bartender broaches the subject on behalf of the town. "I don't mean to pry, but folks around here are wondering why you always order three beers?" "Tis odd, isn't it?" the man replies. "You see, I have two brothers, and one went to America, and the other to Australia. We promised each other that we would always order an extra two beers whenever we drank as a way of keeping up the family bond."

The bartender and the whole town were pleased with this answer, and soon the Man Who Orders Three Beers became a local celebrity and source of pride to the hamlet, even to the extent that out-of-towners would come to watch him drink.

Then, one day, the man comes in and orders only two beers. The bartender pours them with a heavy heart. This continues for the rest of the evening. He orders only two beers. The word flies around town. Prayers are offered for the soul of one of the brothers. The next day, the bartender says to the man, "Folks around here, me first of all, want to offer condolences to you for the death of your brother. You know- the two beers and all.

The man ponders this for a moment, then replies, "You'll be happy to hear that my two brothers are alive and well. It's just that I, meself, have decided to give up drinking for Lent."



### **Saint Patrick the Bishop of Armagh and Enlightener of Ireland**

Saint Patrick, the Enlightener of Ireland was born around 385, the son of Calpornius, a Roman decurion (an official responsible for collecting taxes). He lived in the village of Bannavem Taberniae, which may have been located at the mouth of the Severn River in Wales. The district was raided by pirates when Patrick was sixteen, and he was one of those taken captive. He was brought to Ireland and sold as a slave, and was put to work as a herder of swine on a mountain identified with Slemish in Co. Antrim. During his period of slavery, Patrick acquired a proficiency in the Irish language which was very useful to him in his later mission.

He prayed during his solitude on the mountain, and lived this way for six years. He had two visions. The first told him he would return to his home. The second told him his ship was ready. Setting off on foot, Patrick walked two hundred miles to the coast. There he succeeded in boarding a ship, and returned to his parents in Britain.

Some time later, he went to Gaul and studied for the priesthood at Auxerre under St Germanus (July 31). Eventually, he was consecrated as a bishop, and was entrusted with the mission to Ireland, succeeding St Palladius (July 7). St Palladius did not achieve much success in Ireland. After about a year he went to Scotland, where he died in 432.

Patrick had a dream in which an angel came to him bearing many letters. Selecting one inscribed "The Voice of the Irish," he heard the Irish entreating him to come back to them.

Although St Patrick achieved remarkable results in spreading the Gospel, he was not the first or only missionary in Ireland. He arrived around 432 (though this date is disputed), about a year after St Palladius began his mission to Ireland. There were also other missionaries who were active on the southeast coast, but it was St Patrick who

had the greatest influence and success in preaching the Gospel of Christ. Therefore, he is known as "The Enlightener of Ireland."

His autobiographical Confession tells of the many trials and disappointments he endured. Patrick had once confided to a friend that he was troubled by a certain sin he had committed before he was fifteen years old. The friend assured him of God's mercy, and even supported Patrick's nomination as bishop. Later, he turned against him and revealed what Patrick had told him in an attempt to prevent his consecration. Many years later, Patrick still grieved for his dear friend who had publicly shamed him.

St Patrick founded many churches and monasteries across Ireland, but the conversion of the Irish people was no easy task. There was much hostility, and he was assaulted several times. He faced danger, and insults, and he was reproached for being a foreigner and a former slave. There was also a very real possibility that the pagans would try to kill him. Despite many obstacles, he remained faithful to his calling, and he baptized many people into Christ.

The saint's Epistle to Coroticus is also an authentic work. In it he denounces the attack of Coroticus' men on one of his congregations. The Breastplate (Lorica) is also attributed to St Patrick. In his writings, we can see St Patrick's awareness that he had been called by God, as well as his determination and modesty in undertaking his missionary work. He refers to himself as "a sinner," "the most ignorant and of least account," and as someone who was "despised by many." He ascribes his success to God, rather than to his own talents: "I owe it to God's grace that through me so many people should be born again to Him."

By the time he established his episcopal See in Armagh in 444, St Patrick had other bishops to assist him, many native priests and deacons, and he encouraged the growth of monasticism.

St Patrick is often depicted holding a shamrock, or with snakes fleeing from him. He used the shamrock to illustrate the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. Its three leaves growing out of a single stem helped him to explain the concept of one God in three Persons. Many people now regard the story of St Patrick driving all the snakes out of Ireland as having no historical basis.

St Patrick died on March 17, 461 (some say 492). There are various accounts of his last days, but they are mostly legendary. Muirchu says that no one knows the place where St Patrick is buried. St Columba of Iona (June 9) says that the Holy Spirit revealed to him that Patrick was buried at Saul, the site of his first church. A granite slab was placed at his traditional grave site in Downpatrick in 1899.





## Venerable Alexis the Man of God

St Alexis was born at Rome into the family of the pious and poverty-loving Euphemianus and Aglais. The couple was childless for a long time and constantly prayed the Lord to grant them a child. And the Lord consoled the couple with the birth of their son Alexis.

At six years of age the child began to read and successfully studied the mundane sciences, but it was with particular diligence that he read Holy Scripture. When he was a young man, he began to imitate his parents: he fasted strictly, distributed alms and beneath his fine clothing he secretly wore a hair shirt. Early on there burned within him the desire to leave the world and serve God. His parents, however, had arranged for Alexis to marry a beautiful and virtuous bride.

On his wedding night, Alexis gave her his ring and his belt (which were very valuable) and said, "Keep these things, Beloved, and may the Lord be with us until His grace provides us with something better." Secretly leaving his home, he boarded a ship sailing for Mesopotamia.

Arriving in the city of Edessa, where the Icon of the Lord "Not-made-by-Hands" (August 16) was preserved, Alexis sold everything that he had, distributed the money to the poor and began to live near the church of the Most Holy Theotokos under a portico. The saint used a portion of the alms he received to buy bread and water, and he distributed the rest to the aged and infirm. Each Sunday he received the Holy Mysteries.

The parents sought the missing Alexis everywhere, but without success. The servants sent by Euphemianus also arrived in Edessa, but they did not recognize the beggar sitting at the portico as their master. His body was withered by fasting, his comeliness vanished, his stature diminished. The saint recognized them and gave thanks to the Lord that he received alms from his own servants.

The inconsolable mother of St Alexis confined herself in her room, incessantly praying for her son. His wife also grieved with her in-laws.

St Alexis dwelt in Edessa for seventeen years. Once, the Mother of God spoke to the sacristan of the church where the saint lived: "Lead into My church that Man of God, worthy of the Kingdom of Heaven. His prayer rises up to God like fragrant incense, and the Holy Spirit rests upon him." The sacristan began to search for such a man, but was not able to find him for a long time. Then he prayed to the Most Holy Theotokos, beseeching Her to clear up his confusion. Again a voice from the icon proclaimed that the Man of God was the beggar who sat in the church portico.

The sacristan found St Alexis and brought him into the church. Many recognized him and began to praise him. The saint secretly boarded a ship bound for Cilicia, intending to visit the church of St Paul in Tarsus. But God ordained otherwise. A storm took the ship far to the West and it reached the coast of Italy. The saint journeyed to Rome and decided to live in his own house. Unrecognized, he humbly asked his father's permission to settle in some corner of his courtyard. Euphemianus settled Alexis in a specially constructed cell and gave orders to feed him from his table.

Living at his parental home, the saint continued to fast and he spent day and night at prayer. He humbly endured insults and jeering from the servants of his father. The cell of Alexis was opposite his wife's windows, and the ascetic suffered grievously when he heard her weeping. Only his immeasurable love for God helped the saint endure this torment. St Alexis dwelt at the house of his parents for seventeen years and the Lord revealed to him the day of his death. Then the saint, taking paper and ink, wrote certain things that only his wife and parents would know. He also asked them to forgive him for the pain he had caused them.

On the day of St Alexis' death in 411, Archbishop Innocent (402-417) was serving Liturgy in the presence of the emperor Honorius (395-423). During the services a Voice was heard from the altar: "Come unto Me, all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28). All those present fell to the ground in terror.

The Voice continued: "On Friday morning the Man of God comes forth from the body; have him pray for the city, that you may remain untroubled." They began to search throughout Rome, but they did not find the saint. Thursday evening the Pope was serving Vigil in the Church of St Peter. He asked the Lord to show them where to find the Man of God.

After Liturgy the Voice was heard again in the temple: "Seek the Man of God in the house of Euphemianus." All hastened there, but the saint was already dead. His face shone like the face of an angel, and his hand clasped the paper, and they were unable to take it. They placed the saint's body on a cot, covered with costly coverings. The Pope and the Emperor bent their knees and turned to the saint, as to one yet alive,

asking him to open his hand. And the saint heard their prayer. When the letter was read, the righteous one's wife and parents tearfully venerated his holy relics.

The body of the saint was placed in the center of the city. The emperor and the Pope carried the body of the saint into the church, where it remained for a whole week, and then was placed in a marble crypt. A fragrant myrrh began to flow from the holy relics, bestowing healing upon the sick.

The venerable relics of St Alexis, the Man of God, were buried in the church of St Boniface. The relics were uncovered in the year 1216.

The Life of St Alexis, the Man of God, was always very popular in Russia.

Hi Father Bob,

It's that time of year again for us! It's time for the 3rd Annual Auction for Autism that our family's team puts together to help raise awareness and funds for autism research through Autism Speaks. We hope that you can post the attached flyer in your bulletin or even at your work place. Please let everyone know how important this is! A few important autism facts:

- \*\*\* 1 in 150 children is diagnosed with Autism
- \*\*\* 1 in 94 boys is on the Autism Spectrum
- \*\*\* 67 children are diagnosed per day
- \*\*\* A new case is diagnosed almost every 20 minutes
- \*\*\* Boys are four times more likely than girls to have Autism
- \*\*\* More children will be diagnosed with Autism this year than with AIDS, Diabetes & Cancer combined.
- \*\*\* Autism is the fastest-growing serious developmental disability in the US

Our auction is scheduled for Saturday, April 5th from 7-9pm at SS Peter & Paul's Church at 220 Mansfield Blvd, Carnegie. Please see attached flyer for details. I appreciate your help in this matter, Fr. Bob. Hope to see you and your family on the 5th down at the Hall. Thanks again!

Love,  
Sue, Joe, Juliana and of course, Sebastian Leis



You are cordially invited to

**Sebastian's Stormers**

(previously known as Sebastian's Steamers)

**3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Auction for Autism!**

**When: Saturday, April 5, 2008**

**Where: SS Peter & Paul Church  
220 Mansfield Blvd.  
Carnegie, PA**

**Time: 7:00pm - 9:00pm**

All proceeds benefit Autism Speaks for autism research.

**Auction includes:**

- Silent Auction**
- Themed Basket Raffle**
- Bake Sale**
- Refreshments**
- Face Painting**

For more info, please contact Sue Leis (412) 216-3346



*A Giant Eagle  
Food or Fuel Gift Card!*

*Autographed Martina McBride  
And  
Alan Jackson pictures!*

*A family membership to  
The Carnegie Museums!*

*3 months of Tang Soo Do Karate  
plus uniform!*

*An autographed Freddy Sanchez baseball  
and other  
Sports Memorabilia!*

*Gift cards to  
local restaurants!*

*Lots, Lots More!!!*

Orthodoxy cannot be truly experienced in our heads or in isolation from real people. Real parishes have real people. Some are saints and some are sinners. Some are faithful some are not, most are merely lukewarm. This is not new. The Church is a spiritual hospital, its work is to cure us thereby producing saints. The clergy. However, the treatment do us no good if we don't stay with it. We cannot BE church by living in our heads but in a real Community. As St Gregory the Great told us, "One Christian is no Christian." The worst evil was always in the Church. The most harm to the church came from within the church, as we read through the Scriptures, though we are told, too, that where sin abounds, grace can often much more abound. To those that say Christians are 'nice', read the Bible. To those that expect only perfect people in the Church, read the Bible. To those who say the Church isn't the Church unless the people are perfect, read the Bible. What the Church teaches is, the Church is perfect, the people in it are not ... yet. Those that are not with the program, may often be formally cast out or are, as St Paul said, "rewarded by the Lord according to their works." Awesome and humbling words.

The first was Herod, who sought the death of the Child. Then Herodia who had the Forerunner killed because she wanted power and no consequence for her sin of murder and incest. Then there was Judas who betrayed the Lord. Then there was the ethnic club which skimmed the best for themselves and deprived the others, which lead to the formation of the diaconate. Then there were the Pharisees, who caused disunity between bishops. We read of Ananias and Sapphira who withheld money from the church. Alexandar the Coppersmith who was antagonistic against the bishop. Simon Magus, a charmer who claimed for himself power that was rightly only God's and demanded money for sacraments, and was put outside the Church (Acts 8). Demas (III John) who was disloyal and loved the world first. Diotrefes who put himself first. The Scriptures recognize this and console and guide us. We can do nothing without God. All we can strive for is humility.

Parents are the primary religious educators for our children. The first attack against this holy work is to divide the family from the church. Stay strong, challenge evil, trust in the bishop's guidance. Teach the children well.

Hello Slickville,

So happy to report that Baba has been very comfortable and well cared for in her new home.

Jon Simon and Sheila will be coming in this weekend for Dido's memorial at St. James Orthodox Church near the Port St. Lucie Community Center on Airoso. There will be a brief service beginning at 2:00, then we're having a wake at TGI Friday's in the private room in the back.

I wish I could think of somewhere where there could be dancing...you know I'd ask Sheila and Austin and any of her friends to perform. There could be dancing in the aisles. It's been known to happen.

Baba will be at the wake, too. She'll enjoy the party...to that she can still relate!

Much love,  
Marilyn