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APOSTLES' FAST—SAINTS PETER AND PAUL

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, Rachele, 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, 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 [7th 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, Robert McKivitz, Cliff Dow, Marjorie Pershing, Robert Paouncic, Tim Monta, Amy Kemerer, Tom Marriott, Joe Farkas, Liz Obradovich, and Daria Masur. **ARNOLD:** Stefania Lucci, Ann Ostaffy, Steve Sakal, Homer Paul Kline, and Steve Ostaffy. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

Please remember David Weaver in Mosul, James John Logue assigned to Iraq, and ALL American servicemen and women in the Middle East in your prayers. May God watch over them and all American servicemen and women—and bring them all home safely!

PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR “BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION” AND CAMPBELL’S SOUP LABELS TO CHURCH. There is a shoebox in the basement for Alex’s Sixth Grade and Matt’s Fourth Grade collections. THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HELP! Love, ALEX AND MATT

REMEMBER—PRAYERS ARE ALWAYS FREE!

Communion Fasting: nothing to eat or drink after midnight, EXCEPT in cases where your doctor tells you to eat or drink something for medical reasons: medication, diabetes, etc. If you have a question, please call Father Bob.

AT ANY TIME—if there is an emergency, if you have questions, or if you just need to talk, please CALL FATHER BOB at [412] 279-5640.

Schedule of Services

Sunday, June 29

Divine Liturgy

10:30 AM

SUNDAY OF ALL SAINTS OF NORTH AMERICA AND UKRAINE

SAINT TIKHON-BISHOP OF AMATHUS IN CYPRUS, MARTYRS TIGRIUS & EUTORPIUS OF CONSTANTINOPLE, VENERABLE TIKHON OF KALUGA, VENERABLE TIKHON-WONDERWORKER OF LUCHOV, SAINT MARK THE JUST OF APOLONNIAS-NEPHEW OF APOSTLE BARNABAS, NEW-MARTYR HERMOGENES-BISHOP OF TOBOLSK

Tone 1

Romans 2:10-16

Matthew 4:18-23

Litany in Blessed Memory of All Deceased Fathers, Grandfathers, etc.—Fr. Bob

Parastas in Blessed Memory of Joe Karas—Rosemary Pavlovich

Sunday, July 6

Divine Liturgy

10:30 AM

3RD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, MARTYR AGRIPPINA OF ROME, MARTYRS EUSTOCHIUS, GAIUS, PROBUS, LOLLIUS, URBAN, & COMPANIONS OF ANCYRA, RIGHTEOUS YOUTH ARTEMIOUS OF VERKOLSK, VENERABLE JOSEPH, ANTHONY, & IOANNICIUS-ABBOTS OF VOLGDA, TRANSLATION OF THE RELICS OF SAINT HERMAN-ARCHBISHOP OF KAZAN, MEETING OF THE VLADIMIR ICON OF THE THEOTOKOS, TRANSLATION OF THE RELICS OF SAINT MICHAEL OF KLOPS MONASTERY-FOOL-FOR-CHRIST

Tone 2

Romans 5:1-10

Matthew 6:22-33

Litany in Blessed Memory of Anna Kitch, Olga Stock, Susan Justina Sredich,

Igumen George [Owen], & Claudia Horvath—Fr. Bob

Parastas in Blessed Memory of Catherine Yakim--Ollie

Saturday, July 12 FEAST OF HOLY APOSTLES PETER AND PAUL

Sunday, July 13

Divine Liturgy

10:30 AM

4TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, SYNAXIS OF THE HOLY APOSTLES: PETER, ANDREW, JAMES, JOHN, PHILIP, BARTHOLOMEW, THOMAS, MATTHEW, JAMES THE SON OF ALPHEUS, JUDE, SIMON

THE ZEALOT, & MATTHIAS, VENERABLE PETER-PRINCE OF ROSTOV, SAINT SOPHRONIUS-BISHOP OF IRKUTSK, NEW-MARTYR MICHAEL OF ATHENS, SAINT ANDREW-PRINCE OF BOGOLIUBSK

Tone 3

Romans 6:18-23

Matthew 8:5-13

BULLETIN INSERT FOR 29 JUNE 2008

**SUNDAY OF ALL SAINTS OF NORTH AMERICA AND UKRAINE
SAINT TIKHON-BISHOP OF AMATHUS IN CYPRUS, MARTYRS
TIGRIUS & EUTORPIUS OF CONSTANTINOPLE, VENERABLE
TIKHON OF KALUGA, VENERABLE TIKHON-WONDERWORKER OF
LUCHOV, SAINT MARK THE JUST OF APOLONNIAS-NEPHEW OF
APOSTLE BARNABAS, NEW-MARTYR HERMOGENES-BISHOP OF
TOBOLSK**

TROPARION—TONE 1

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews;
While the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure Body;
Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior,
Granting life to the world.
The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of life:
Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ!
Glory to Thy Kingdom!
Glory to Thy Dispensation, O Thou who lovest mankind.

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

KONTAKION—TONE 1

As God, Thou didst rise from the tomb in glory, raising the world with Thyself.
Human nature praises Thee as God, for death has vanished!
Adam exults, O Master!
Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage and cries to Thee:
Thou are the Giver of Resurrection to all, O Christ!

PROKEIMENON—TONE 1

READER: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on
Thee.

PEOPLE: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on
Thee.

READER: Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the just!

PEOPLE: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on
Thee.

READER: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us.

PEOPLE: As we have set our hope on Thee.

ALLELUIA VERSES

God gives vengeance to me, and subdues people under me.

He magnifies the salvation of the king, and deals mercifully with His Christ, with David and his seed forever!

The hesychastic father Ephrem of Katounakia's desert (on Mt. Athos), the good teacher of the angelic life who is still living and teaching the athletes of Christ, told us:

Once, a small boat was passing by and I saw Father Dimoklytos, who was the physician at New Skete, and because my geronda was ill I went on board to ask him something about my elder. But I did not say anything to the captain, and he thought that I was going to Daphni also. After all the fathers came on board, the boat pulled away from the dock.

"Kosta," I said to the captain, "I am not traveling."

"Why did you not say anything to me?"

In reply I said, "I just wanted to say a word to the doctor until the other fathers came on board." Kosta took the boat back to the dock and I jumped out.

"Go to hell," he screamed.

I went to my elder and told him about what had happened with Kosta. I realized that I could not celebrate the liturgy. I decided that at noon when Kosta returned I would go to him and beg forgiveness.

At noon I went, "How are things, Kosta?" I asked.

"Everything is ok, Father."

"Blessed one, this morning I was at fault and caused you grief," I said. "Forgive me."

"God forgive you, Father," he replied, "and you forgive me."

"Let God forgive." And after we were reconciled I could celebrate the liturgy.

To the lay people he would say, "You should do the same with your friends and fellow workers; if you say something wrong, do not go ahead and communicate the Holy Mysteries. You are not even able to pray. The prayer cannot reach anywhere. You must be forgiven. Then you can proceed with your prayers and to the Holy Mysteries."

from An Athonite Gerontikon

The Enduring Mystery Of the Weeping Icons By Katie Thomas--Newsday

Pagona Catsounis was kneeling before an icon of the Virgin Mary on March 16, 1960, when she saw something almost unbelievable—a small tear quivering on the cheek of the Blessed Mother.

She waited for almost a week as the tears continued to appear and then told her story. The announcement drew droves of pilgrims, skeptics, and sightseers to her Island Park home.

Catsounis' weeping icon was the first of three that would be discovered on Long Island that year. The second appeared one month later in the Oceanside home of Catsounis' aunt, Antonia Koulis. Four Newsday staff members, including reporter Jim Hadjin, witnessed the event.

"I had to be convinced. I was skeptical," said Hadjin, who retired from Newsday in 1986. But after a priest allowed him to examine the lithograph icon, he changed his mind. "Miracle is a pretty strong word, but I don't see what else it could have been," he said.

Chemists, engineers, art experts, and others were unable to explain the phenomenon. Skeptics dismissed the tears as the result of condensation. One team of chemists tested a sample and concluded the liquid did not contain enough salt or nitrogen to be human tears.

The first two icons are now enshrined at St. Paul's Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Hempstead, and draw more than 3,000 visitors a year, according to Rev. Nicholas J. Magoulias, who arrived at the church shortly after the icons were discovered.

"Tearing icons are not unusual. They happened before the fall of Constantinople, before the fall of France in the Second World War...The '60s were turbulent times," Magoulias said, explaining why he believes the weeping icons appeared at the dawn of the decade.

The third icon, discovered by Koulis shortly after the second, is still in her family's home. Although all three icons continue to perform what Magoulias called "miracles"—helping to heal the sick—only the third shows physical signs of its paranormal past.

According to Catsounis, who now lives in Oceanside, "If you go and pray with all your heart, sometimes the eyes open and close."

With regard to receiving the brethren, Abba Apollo said that one should bow before the brethren who come, because it is not before them, but before God that we prostrate ourselves. "When you see your brother," he said, "you see the Lord your God." He added, "We have learnt that from Abraham. When you receive the brethren, invite them to rest awhile, for this is what we learn from Lot who invited the angels to do so."

SOME THOUGHTS on the Holy Consecration of the Chapel of Saint Thomas at All Saints Camp in Emlenton.

Saturday evening, just prior to vespers, the Holy Relics of Saint John Chrysostom, the Archbishop of Constantinople, and one of the Three Holy Hierarchs, was carried in procession by His Grace, Bishop Daniel, from the Pavilion to a small table in front of the Icon of Christ in the chapel.

Sunday morning, the consecration service began with prayers and another procession—this time the chapel was emptied and the relics led a procession of all the faithful around the outside of the building one time, this time carried by His Eminence, Archbishop Antony. His Grace, Bishop Daniel, blessed the outside of the building with the sprinkling of Holy Water and prayers. The procession ended at the closed front doors of the chapel. His Beatitude, Metropolitan Constantine, in imitation of the Paschal Nocturnal Procession, prayed before the closed doors, then opened them after placing the sign of the cross on them with his Archiepiscopal Staff.

Upon entering the church, the bishops and vested clergy proceeded through the Holy Doors and proceeded to prepare the Holy Altar. The relics were placed in the prepared cavity and sealed with a mixture of beeswax, mastic, incense, and other blessed ingredients. The chamber was then sealed, followed by the sealing of the altar with four wooden nails.

The altar was then baptized with water and wiped with new sponges, wiped with rose water and wine, then Chrismated by His Beatitude. A plain white linen garment was placed over the altar and tied with a cord, representing the winding cloth of our Crucified Savior. Finally the altar was vested in new brocade cloths and the objects for the Divine Liturgy placed on them: seven-branched candle stand, tabernacle, hand cross, gospel, and Antimens.

The building itself was also Chrismated for the purpose of holy prayer and sacrifice.

During the Divine Liturgy, Deacon Ihor Machlay was elevated to the honor of Protodeacon—he was the organizer and facilitator for the event.

After the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, the beauty of the newly-consecrated chapel shone in the brilliant sunlight—another sign of God's pleasure. It had been cloudy and stormy all weekend, while the services were all blessed with beautiful sunshine.

Palm resurrected from 2,000-year-old seed

Scientists eager to study the medicinal uses of the 'Methuselah Tree'

Guy Eisner / Courtesy of Science Magazine

The resurrected Methuselah, shown at age 26 months when it had reached a height of about four feet, is named after the oldest person in the Bible.

By Clara Moskowitz

updated 2:50 p.m. ET, Thurs., June. 12, 2008

Scientists have grown a tree from what may be the oldest seed ever germinated.

The new sapling was sprouted from a 2,000-year-old date palm excavated in [Masada](#), the site of a cliff-side fortress in Israel where ancient Jews are said to have killed themselves to avoid capture by Roman invaders.

Dubbed the "[Methuselah Tree](#)" after the oldest person in the Bible, the new plant has been growing steadily, and after 26 months, the tree was nearly four-feet (1.2 meters) tall.

The species of tree, called the Judean date, (*Phoenix dactylifera* L.), is now extinct in Israel, but researchers are hoping that by reviving the plant they may be able to study its [medicinal uses](#).

"The medicinal plants from this region are very important because they are historically mentioned in the Bible and the Koran," said Sarah Sallon, director of the Louis L. Borick Natural Medicine Research Center at the Hadassah Medical Organization in Jerusalem, which initiated the experiment to grow the tree as part of its Middle East Medicinal Plant Project.

"The Judean date was very valuable and very famous, not just as a source of food but as a source of medicine," Sallon said. "When I heard there were ancient seeds found in the archeological dig, I thought it would be interesting to see if we could try to grow them."

Carbon dating of [the seeds](#) found at Masada revealed that they date from roughly the time of the ancient fortress' siege, in A.D. 73. The seeds were found in storage rooms, and appear to have been stockpiled for the Jews hiding out against the invading Romans.

"They were buried under mounds of debris on the top of the archaeological site of Masada," Sallon told LiveScience. "The Jews all committed suicide rather than give in to the Romans, and the Romans pretty much destroyed the site after that. It was more or less left for the next 2,000 years."

Ancient seeds and skeletons found

The seeds were excavated about 40 years ago, along with skeletons of those who died during the siege. Since then, the seeds had been languishing in a drawer until Sallon and her team decided to attempt to grow them anew.

They turned the project over to plant specialist Elaine Solowey at the Arava Institute of the Environment in Kibbutz Ketura, Israel. She pretreated the seeds in fertilizers and hormone-rich solution, and then planted them. So far, Methuselah is the only one to sprout.

Though a few trees have been planted from seeds that are rumored to be older than the Masada ones, the Methuselah tree holds the record for the oldest directly-dated seed to be germinated. Scientists determined its age from control seeds taken from the same batch, and from shell fragments from the sprouted seed itself.

Beyond being exciting as a piece of history literally come to life, Sallon said, the new date plant may hold the key to rediscovering ancient healing techniques.

"When we look at ancient sources and Hebrew texts, the dates were used for all kinds of things — pulmonary problems, tuberculosis, dysentery, cancer. We think of it today as just a food. But in fact the date wasn't just a food."

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Two wolves. One evening an old Cherokee told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside people.

He said, 'My son, the battle is between two 'wolves' inside us all. One is Evil. - It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego. The other is Good. - It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith.' The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather: 'Which wolf wins?'

The old Cherokee simply replied.....'The one you feed.'

"The Church, though dispersed through our the whole world, even to the ends of the earth, has received from the apostles and their disciples this faith: [She believes] in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them; and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who became incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, who proclaimed through the prophets the dispensations of God, and the advents, and the birth from a virgin, and the passion, and the resurrection from the dead, and the ascension into heaven in the flesh of the beloved Christ Jesus, our Lord, and His [future] manifestation from heaven in the glory of the Father "to gather all things in one," and to raise up anew all flesh of the whole human race, in order that to Christ Jesus, our Lord, and God, and Saviour, and King,

according to the will of the invisible Father, "every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess" to Him, and that He should execute just judgment towards all; that He may send "spiritual wickednesses," and the angels who transgressed and became apostates, together with the ungodly, and unrighteous, and wicked, and profane among men, into everlasting fire; but may, in the exercise of His grace, confer immortality on the righteous, and holy, and those who have kept His commandments, and have persevered in His love, some from the beginning [of their Christian course], and others from [the date of] their repentance, and may surround them with everlasting glory."

"As I have already observed, the Church, having received this preaching and this faith, although scattered throughout the whole world, yet, as if occupying but one house, carefully preserves it. She also believes these points [of doctrine] just as if she had but one soul, and one and the same heart, and she proclaims them, and teaches them, and hands them down, with perfect harmony, as if she possessed only one mouth. For, although the languages of the world are dissimilar, yet the import of the tradition is one and the same. For the Churches which have been planted in Germany do not believe or hand down anything different, nor do those in Spain, nor those in Gaul, nor those in the East, nor those in Egypt, nor those in Libya, nor those which have been established in the central regions of the world. But as the sun, that creature of God, is one and the same throughout the whole world, so also the preaching of the truth shineth everywhere, and enlightens all men that are willing to come to a knowledge of the truth. Nor will any one of the rulers in the Churches, however highly gifted he may be in point of eloquence, teach doctrines different from these -- for no one is greater than the Master; nor, on the other hand, will he who is deficient in power of expression inflict injury on the tradition. For the faith being ever one and the same, neither does one who is able at great length to discourse regarding it, make any addition to it, nor does one, who can say but little diminish it."

Irenaeus, Against Heresies 1.10. 1-2
St. Irenaeus of Lyons (AD c.115-202), commemorated 23 August

Dead Greek Orthodox monk baffles scientists 15 years after burial Agence France Presse

ATHENS (AFP) - Medical experts in the town of Lamia, central Greece, are puzzling over the body of a Greek Orthodox monk that was allegedly found intact 15 years after his burial.

"I believe this to be a sign from God," Bishop Nikolaos of the local prefecture of Fthiotida told a press conference in Lamia. "Even the monk's soft parts are intact," he added according to the semi-state Athens News Agency (ANA).

The story of the deceased monk, Vissarionas Korkoliakos, has raised a media stir following his recent exhumation at Agathonos monastery.

Four local doctors summoned by Church authorities were unable to explain the alleged phenomenon. A fifth expert, an Athens coroner, wrote in his report that he has never seen such a case in his entire career, ANA said.

The church had also requested an opinion from head Athens coroner Philippos Koutsaftis, who declined to examine the body as the monk's death was not crime-related.

Hundreds of faithful are already flocking to the site where the monk's body was disinterred, ANA reported, but the local church is currently advising self-restraint.

"We do not intend to declare (this man) a saint, or to summon people to pray before him," Bishop Nicholas said.

The monk's body will be placed in isolation in the monastery chapel "to let God speak through the passage of time," the bishop said.

A good grape picker chooses to eat ripe grapes and does not pluck what is unripe. A charitable and sensible mind takes careful note of the virtues it observes in another, while the fool goes looking for faults and defects. It is of such a one that it was said, "They have searched out iniquity and died in their search" (Ps.63:7).

Do not condemn. Not even if your very eyes are seeing something, for they may be deceived.

St. John Climacus, The Ladder of Divine Ascent, 10

Hempstead, NY Weeping Icons at St. Paul's Greek Orthodox Church



The History of the Weeping Icons

Mrs. Pagona Catsounis was praying before her Icon at her home in Island Park on the evening of March 16, 1960 she noticed a tear drop sourcing from the left eye and rolling down her cheek. On March 18th she called Fr. George Papadeas, the pastor at St. Paul who drove to her home that evening. After seeing the tears himself he called Archbishop Iakovos who arrived at the home on March 21st. By then a small tear crystallized in the corner of the eye. She was in tears for three days and then stopped.

After a long silent By then a small tear crystallized in the corner of the eye. She was in tears for three days then stopped. After a long silent contemplation Archbishop Iakovos directed that the Icon be taken to St. Paul to be enshrined. On March 23rd a procession of many cars, carrying parishioners and Clergy, drove the Icon to the Church and upon reaching it's front walk, three white doves appeared swooping over the limousine and multitude of people who had gathered at the entrance. After the Divine Liturgy, Fr. George remarked that "A Great Sign, and a Special Blessing from above has come to us...and to the world". St. Paul then became a Church crowned with a "Special Blessing", and a steady stream of visitors came from near and far to venerate the Icon.

On April 12, 1960 Mrs. Antonia Koulis of Oceanside noticed that her lithograph of "Panagia Portraitissa" began to cry. Fr. George, along with the parish Council president, drove to the home. Archbishop Iakovos arrived in the evening and instructed the Icon to be taken to St.Paul on Holy Thursday, April 14. Again thousands of people flocked to witness the tears of the second Icon. Archbishop Iakovos wrote to the Patriarch about the events, and his reply gave an official pronouncement that the Manifestation of the Weeping Icons were "Divine Signs".

To pacify the doubters, reporters, and non-believers the second Icon was removed from its frame to see where the tears were emanating. There was no source of tears or moisture on the back of the lithograph. A major New York paper called and asked to have the tears analyzed at a laboratory. The results showed that "the tears were of a oily nature which couldn't be classified among the known elements".

On May 7, 1960 Mrs. Antonia Koulis called to say that the Icon which was given to her by Bishop Athenagoras of Elaias on behalf of the parish to replace the one she gave to the Church, was tearing profusely. This Icon, also known as "panagia the Hodegetria", was placed next to the other at St. Paul. This Icon, is now in possession of the Koulis daughter, but its tears, too, had been examined and unexplained.

Some years later St. Anna's Philoptochos Society of St. Paul raised and donated funds to create a mosaic masterpiece to enshrine our two Weeping Madonna's. In addition to the shrine area itself, the entire Northeastern wall is covered with magnificent mosaic scenes depicting the life and dormition of the Virgin Mary. They are a sight to behold and a fitting tribute to the three manifestations. St. Paul Church, proclaimed a Cathedral in 1988, was founded on the cardinal virtues of faith, love, and hope, and there family of devoted parishioners and Clergy, Fr. Nicholas Magoulisa and Fr. Joakim Valasiadis, continue to possess a vibrant spirit worthy of being chosen as caretakers of their beloved Weeping Madonna.

'Daddy, Jesus Just Told Me To Touch The Picture And Pray' - Reported in Spirit Daily.com online newspaper. By Michael H. Brown

A month ago, on the way out to an event on Long Island, we stopped to see two miraculous icons. They are in Hempstead at St. Paul's Greek Orthodox Church. You can feel the grace. You can also feel the presence of Mary. Our prayers seemed so strong.

The most touching moment came when our seven-year-old tugged at my sleeve and whispered, "Daddy, Jesus just told me to touch the picture and pray." This is most uncharacteristic of her. She's not prone to such things. She was anxious to get going on our trip -- anxious to get out of a church that was celebrating its Good Friday (May 3) and drive to the hotel (where there was a swimming pool).

But suddenly here she was with this tremendously serious and pious countenance. I watched in astonishment as she stepped to a large wall mosaic of the Virgin -- not the miraculous ones, but a mosaic behind the two miraculous icons -- and touched the image that dwarfed her and closed her eyes. Meanwhile, with no urging from us, our six-year-old son, who's even more rambunctious, had silently fallen to his knees, closed his eyes, and clasped his hands in angelic prayer.

We stood with a wonderful member of the parish, Thecla Johnides of Manhasset Hills, who showed us around the incredible church -- one of the most beautiful we have seen in the United States -- and spoke about the weeping icons, which represent Our Lady of Perpetual Help and the Lamenting Mother of God. You can see the stains where the icons wept back in the 1960s, making headlines around the world. There are still graces. People see the eyes slowly open and close and there are reports of miraculous healings. A third icon was taken to Florida.

What a shame that Catholics and Orthodox are split. They are so similar. They both love the Virgin so much. It was a joy, just a couple weeks hence, to watch as the Pope visited an Orthodox church in Sofia, Bulgaria, and prayed. It's only when we extend hands out to each other with love that the gap between denominations will be bridged. It is not bridged when we disdain each other. It's not bridged when we have spiritual pride. It is not bridged when we think we and we alone are loved by God. When we die, God is less likely to give us a theology test than to evaluate how much and who we have loved.

Does that mean we compromise? Does that mean theology isn't important? Of course not. It means we pray. And we prayed before those two miraculous icons. So did our kids. To them, there was no divide; there was no antagonism; there was only a voice that brought them and then us to our knees.

Update May 25, 2003 - Church near New York City with tearing Icons reports alleged healing of tumor

Reported in [Spirit Daily.com](http://SpiritDaily.com) online newspaper. A church near New York City that has reported phenomena in association with weeping icons for the past four decades has informed its congregation that another "miracle" has taken place, this time the apparent healing of a young boy.

In its March 30 bulletin the church, St. Paul's Greek Orthodox in Hempstead on Long Island, said that the pastor, Father Nicholas J. Magoulas, was approached by the cousin of an eight-year-old boy named Brian who was suffering from serious head tumors. The encounter took place during a tour of the church by six graders from a nearby school.

According to the official bulletin, which withheld the name of the youngster, Father Magoulas presented the cousin with a vial of oil from lamps that burn near icons of Our Lady of Perpetual Help and the Lamenting Mother of God that shed tears in the 1960s. She in turn gave the holy oil (available at the church) to the child's mother, who waited two days, apparently because the boy resisted, but then started putting it on him at night while the infirm youngster was asleep.

"A week later the doctors told them that another tumor was growing in the top of his head," the cousin related to parish authorities. "They said they saw it for a while, but thought it was scar tissue until they realized it was growing. So, three weeks after his last operation, he was now [going to undergo] another surgery. The morning of the operation the doctor took one last x-ray. To his amazement the tumor had shrunk considerably, in fact, it was almost completely gone. The doctor told them that he cannot explain it medically and was quite confused that the tumor should shrink so much as to almost completely disappear. He even suggested that he might not even operate. He chose to go ahead anyway. When he opened him up, the tumor was almost entirely gone and what was left were tissues."

Priests at the church, which is Greek Orthodox, told Spirit Daily they receive on average at least two credible reports of similar miracles each year. The miracles originally involved three icons that shed tears in private homes in the vicinity and were given to the church. Two remain at the church, while a third is now in Florida. It all began on March 16, April 12, and May 7 of 1960. In addition to tears, the eyes on one of the icons were seen moving for hours—garnering world attention (even that of future president Richard Nixon)—and when the first icon was processed to church, "a trinity of white sea gulls, soaring against the blue sky over Island Park, heralded the enshrinement of the Madonna of the Tears," reported the New York Journal American - - escorting a procession of thirty cars and circling over the church as services were conducted. Hundreds of thousands began to visit the beautiful church on Long island just east of New York.

St. Paul's Greek Orthodox Church, 110 Cathedral Ave Hempstead, NY. 11550

The entire day Father Ioakim from St. Anne's Skete (on Mt Athos) would pray without stopping. Whether at work or sitting or conversing with anyone, he managed to keep always in contact with God. He would say sweetly, "If you take away from a monk his prayer, then you deprive him of the right to feel that he is truly a child of God."

Frequently he would visit us while we were working our obedience tasks and would ask us if we were praying the Jesus Prayer or saying the salutations to Panagia. He rarely talked, and only then if it were necessary. But he was constantly praying. He had found a peaceful spot in a small forest behind his hut where he could raise his hands to heaven for hours at a time and so with joy communicated with Jesus privately in prayer. And if anyone were to ask him where he had been delayed, he would reply, "I was at Gethsemane's garden, that's where I was."

from An Athonite Gerontikon