



Holy Ghost Orthodox Church  
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**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], Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Charles Mezzomo, Father Anthony Dimitri, 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, Mildred Manolovich, Evelyn Misko, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachelle, Jane Golofski, Doug Diller, Harry Krewsun, 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 7-year-old girl with rheumatoid arthritis, Isabella Olivia Lindgren—a 3-year-old with a brain tumor, Dillon, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Nick Malec [Maxine's brother], Erin, Jim Markovich, Jeff Walewski [thyroid cancer], Carol [Lotinski] Rose, Michael Miller, Dave May, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Alverta, Gary Zurasky, Michael Horvath, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Michael Miller, 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, Marjorie Pershing, Tom Marriott, Joe Farkas, Liz Obradovich, Liz, Halyna Zelinska [Bishop Daniel's mother], Mary Ann, Charlotte, Peter Natishan, Michael Spak, Andrew Mark Olynyk, Deborah Finley, Claire Senita, Brandi Thomas, Eleanor Kelly, Bryan, Ben Bonifield—a classmate of Alex, Peter Special, Amy Boe, Doris Artman, Maureen Sams, Nancy Barylak, Shirley Tkacik, Carol Kowalcheck, Martin Golofski, and Daria Masur. **ARNOLD:** Stefania Lucci, Steve Sakal, Homer Paul Kline, and Steve Ostaffy. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY to our March Babies:** John Paouncic on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sonia Luciw on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, Walter Anthony Burlack on the 7<sup>th</sup>, Mary Shirley on the 9<sup>th</sup>, Judy Previc on the 12<sup>th</sup>, and Mike Holupka on the 25<sup>th</sup>. May God grant them all Many Happy, Healthy, Prosperous, and Blessed Years!

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR: ANNUAL PARISH MEETING—MARCH 22, 2009 AFTER THE OBEDNITZA. We will also elect board officers, if needed!**

Please remember David Weaver in Mosul, James John Logue George Senita, & John Kirkowski assigned to Iraq, Matthew Machak, Tonia Dec, Michael Repasky, 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, March 1**                      **Divine Liturgy**                      **10:30 AM**  
CHEESEFARE SUNDAY, FORGIVENESS SUNDAY, COMMEMORATION OF THE EXPULSION OF ADAM FROM PARADISE, MARTYRS PAMPHILIUS-PRESBYTER, VALENS-DEACON, PAUL, SELEUCUS, THEODULUS, ELIAS, JEREMIAH, ISAIAH, SAMUEL, & DANIEL AT CAESAREA IN PALESTINE, VENERABLE MARUTH-BISHOP OF MARTYROPOLIS IN MESOPOTAMIA, PERSIAN MARTYRS OF MARTYROPOLIS, MARTYR ROMANUS OF MOUNT ATHOS

*Tone 4*  
Romans 13:11-14:4  
Matthew 6:14-21

*Litany in Blessed Memory of John Metrick, Mary Smith, Andrew, Hanczar, Anna Lawrence, Michael Cicio, Charles Shumsky, Terry Reinhart, Joseph Vangrin, & Frank Riznow—Fr. Bob*

**Monday, March 2**                      **GREAT LENT BEGINS**

**Sunday, March 8**                      **Divine Liturgy**                      **10:30 AM**  
**SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY**  
HIEROMARTYR POLYCARP-BISHOP OF SMYRNA, VENERABLE JOHN, ANTIOCH, ANTONINUS, MOSES, ZEBINAS, POLYCHRONIUS, MOSES, & DAMIEN-ASCETICS OF THE SYRIAN DESERT, VENERABLE ALEXANDER-ABBOT OF THE MONASTERY OF THE “UNSLEEPING ONES,” SAINT GORONIA-SISTER OF SAINT GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN, SAINT DAMIAN OF ESPHIGMENOU SKETE ON MOUNT ATHOS, SAINT MOSES-MONK OF THE WHITE LAKE, SAINT POLYCARP-MONK OF BRIANSK, NEW-MARTYR DAMIAN OF MOUNT ATHOS WHO SUFFERED AT LARISSA

*Tone 5*  
Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2  
John 1:43-51

*Litany in Blessed Memory of Helen Pytlak—Darlene Santia*  
*Parastas in Blessed Memory of Charles Batch—Harry Batch*

Thursday, March 12

Ecumenical Service—First Presbyterian Church  
Rev. Linda Steward speaker

7:00 PM

Sunday, March 15

Divine Liturgy 10:30 AM

SAINT GREGORY PALAMAS-ARCHBISHOP OF THESSALONICA

SYNAXIS OF THE VENERABLE FATHERS OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA, HIEROMARTYR THEODOTUS-BISHOP OF CYRENIA,  
VENERABLE AGATHON-MONK OF EGYPT, MARTYR TROADIUS OF NEO-CAESAREA, VIRGIN-MARTYR EUTHALIA OF  
SICILY, 440 MARTYRS SLAIN BY THE LOMBARDS IN ITALY, VENERABLE SABBAS & BARSANUPHIUS-ABBOTS OF TVER,  
SAINT ARSENIUS-BISHOP OF TVER, ENLIGHTENER JOB [BORECKJI] METROPOLITAN OF KIEV AND ALL RUS'

*Tone 6*

Hebrews 1:10-2:3

Mark 2:1-12

## **BULLETIN INSERT FOR 29 FEBRUARY 2009**

### **CHEESEFARE SUNDAY—FORGIVENESS SUNDAY**

COMMEMORATION OF THE EXPULSION OF ADAM FROM PARADISE,  
MARTYRS PAMPHYLIVS-PRESBYTER, VALENS-DEACON, PAUL, SELEUCUS,  
THEODULUS, ELIAS, JEREMIAH, ISAIAH, SAMUEL, & DANIEL AT  
CAESAREA IN PALESTINE, VENERABLE MARUTH-BISHOP OF  
MARTYROPOLIS IN MESOPOTAMIA, PERSIAN MARTYRS OF MARTYROPOLIS,  
MARTYR ROMANUS OF MOUNT ATHOS

#### **TROPARION—TONE 4**

When the women disciples of the Lord  
Learned from the angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection;  
They cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the apostles:  
Death is overthrown! Christ God is risen,  
Granting 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 6**

O Master, Teacher of Wisdom, Bestower of virtue,  
Who teaches the thoughtless and protects the poor;  
Strengthen and enlighten my heart.  
O Word of the Father, let me not restrain my mouth from crying to Thee:  
Have mercy on me, a transgressor, O Merciful Lord.

#### **PROKEIMENON—TONE 4**

**READER:** O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made  
them all.

**PEOPLE:** O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast Thou  
made them all.

**READER:** Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, Thou art very great!

**PEOPLE: O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.**

**READER:** O Lord, how manifold are thy works!

**PEOPLE: In wisdom hast Thou made them all.**

#### **ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 4**

Go forth and prosper and reign, because of truth and meekness and righteousness.

You love righteousness and hate iniquity.

#### **OPEN THE DOORS**

##### *Some Thoughts on the Beginning of Great Lent*

One of the most famous and most beautiful ecclesiastical compositions by a Ukrainian composer is Artem Vedel's Pokayaniya—"Open to me the Doors of Repentance." We began singing these words last Sunday after Psalm 50 at Matins in place of the usual Resurrectional hymn. With poignant melodies and harmony Vedel took the following words and through the instrumentality of the choir and his gift of musical talent calls our souls to cry to God:

Open to me the doors of repentance, O Life-Giver, for my spirit rises early to pray towards Your holy temple, bearing the temple of my body all defiled. But in Your compassion purify me by the loving kindness of Your mercy.

As we prepare for and then actually celebrate Great Lent, we ask God in His mercy to allow us to enter a new spirit and attitude—that of repentance—the complete change of mind and heart from evil to good, from this earth to heaven.

Our Church clearly shows this in the Lenten practice of prostrations—poklony—by which we make the sign of the Cross, descend with knees and forehead to the ground and then rise again. With the help of God, we rise from the old self of sin and stand up to face our loving Master. We ask Him to open up the all-important door of repentance and allow us to enter.

There is another very compelling "door" image in the Bible. In this case it is Jesus who asks us to open the door of our hearts to Him: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me." [Revelation 3:20] We, too, must open ourselves up to God and his grace. He will not force it on us. He is there, standing and waiting, as are we.

Let's have an "Open Door Policy" this Lent and every day of our lives—with us open to God and God open to us!

*--Archpriest Charles A. Mezzomo*

## MIND YOUR OWN PLATE

Lent is fast approaching. Soon our minds and hearts will turn to fasting, prayer and charitable works for others. In the Gospel lesson today, the Lord Jesus separates the good from the bad, the blessed from the damned, on the basis of their charitable works towards “the least of His brethren, “(Matt. 25: 40.) that is to say, the poor, the disenfranchised, those in need of our help and consideration.

In the Epistle lesson (1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2) Paul speaks of fasting in secret, that is to say, doing penance so that only God can see it, while avoiding any scandal to others who might have a weak conscience.

Next Monday, 23 February, is a strict fast day. We will avoid meat and dairy; we will also limit the amount of what we eat. We should give good example to those around us by our quiet unobtrusive keeping of the fasting laws, while at the same time not making our fasting an occasion of prideful boasting, or doing it so that others can see us and praise us. As St. Paul writes: “But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse.” (1 Cor.8:8.) And Jesus says: “But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.” (Matt. 6: 17.)

Lastly, “Mind your own plate,” that is to say, don’t look to see and criticize how others are, or are not, observing Lent. They have to answer to God for their deeds as do you for yours. Perhaps they have medical or other reasons for not fasting strictly. That is between them, their physician and God.

During this last week before Lent set a reasonable and doable program for Lent—and observe it faithfully! When Pascha arrives and there is no more fasting or other penitential practices, because Christ, the Bridegroom of the Church is risen and is with us (Matt. 9:15) we can enjoy all the delights of our Heavenly Banquet in Holy Communion and the early banquet of our blessed Paschal food.

*--Archpriest Charles A. Mezzomo*

## **House Unanimously Passes Resolution Congratulating Steeler Nation**

Today [Friday, February 13, 2009], the House of Representatives unanimously recognized the six-time Super Bowl champion Pittsburgh Steelers as the “most successful franchise in NFL history.”

Resolution 110, which was introduced by Representatives Mike Doyle and Tim Murphy congratulated the Steelers, the Rooney family ownership, head coach Mike Tomlin, and the fans of Pittsburgh for the thrilling 27-23 victory in Super Bowl XLIII. The Resolution also noted that with the win, the Steelers had set “a new championship standard for the entire NFL.”

From the well of the House floor, Congressman Murphy addressed his colleagues with a Terrible Towel draped across the speaker’s podium.

“The six pack, Six-burgh, six Lombardi trophies, six Super Bowl wins, six Super Bowl rings, the only team to have achieved that landmark status,” said Congressman Murphy.

“The Steelers’ success derives from three attributes,” continued Murphy, “It is their determined attitude, the loyalty and trust that permeates all levels of the organization, and finally a mystique that bonds the players and fans.”

“The Steelers aren't just a team, and it's not just a game. They represent the people and our hearts. They aren't some players on the field that we passively watch. We are there on the field with them, and they are with us. During that couple of hours every autumn Sunday, we can dream and we know that all together, we can make dreams come true. This isn't fantasy football. It's the real thing. It's what we believe in. It's what we expect. It's what we all do. And that's why they win.”

“This is not just the Pittsburgh Steelers. They're the Steelers that are symbolic of our Nation. Being behind doesn't mean you give up. Losing a game doesn't mean you slink off in the sunset and write off the season. Like our Nation, we will keep at it and fight, time and time over again until we win. That's when we play as a team, all with the same goal and determination. We can, we do, we will. Not just champions for the City of Pittsburgh, but for our Nation. Taking a page from their playbook, we will all come from behind, we will all be stronger, better, smarter , and, as a Nation, just like the Pittsburgh Steelers, we will win.”

The resolution honored Head Coach Mike Tomlin for becoming the youngest coach to win a Super Bowl, and continuing in the legendary tradition of head coaches Chuck Noll and Bill Cowher by bringing a Super Bowl Championship to Pittsburgh.

“Steeler Nation” was recognized for being ranked in August 2008 as the best set of fans in the NFL, citing their current streak of 299 consecutive sold out games going back to the 1972 season.

*The Steelers went 15-4 this season against the hardest-ranked schedule in the NFL. The resolution honors the Steelers defense for allowing the fewest points scored this season, the lowest average passing yards per game, and the least overall yards per game in the entire NFL.*

*Congressman Murphy eagerly awaits the Steelers' victorious visit to the Capitol and the White House.*

## **THE GREAT-LENT EPISTLE OF THE PERMANENT CONFERENCE OF UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX BISHOPS BEYOND THE BORDERS OF UKRAINE**

To the Reverend Clergy, the Diaconate in Christ, the Venerable Monastics and Faithful Laity of our church commissioned to our Archpastoral care.

Christ is among us!

“The soul desires admission to paradise, but its sins keep it out” (Ukrainian proverb)

Dearly Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus,

The Nativity of Christ and the Holy Theophany festal period came and ended quickly. We celebrated these great and joyous feast days through numerous traditions fostered by our fore bearers throughout many centuries. Their beauty expresses our joy and gratitude to the Most High that He, “...so loved the world that He gave His Only-Begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”(John 3:16)

Following the baptism by John the Baptist in the Jordan, Jesus Christ sets out to preach to the people and teaches them about love towards God and one's neighbour. With every day and every step He gets closer to Golgotha, where for the sake of our salvation, He endures terrible suffering, humiliation and ultimately gives His life, “...as a ransom to death, in which we were held captive and sold under sin. Descending through the Cross into Hades – that He might fill all things with Himself – He loosed the pangs of death. He arose on the third day, having made for all flesh a path to the resurrection from the dead...”. (Liturgy of St. Basil the Great)

Conquering death through His Holy Resurrection, Christ opens the door to eternal salvation to everyone who believes in Him, denies himself, takes up his cross and follows Him. God draws closer to His creation by delivering-up His own Son to torture and death. He came to seek the “lost coin” (Luke 15:8-10 – the sinner who repents), so that, the one, which had died was alive again, what was lost was found. But He also calls us to draw nearer to Him. He

encourages us to choose the path of salvation voluntarily because no person can be saved against his or her own will. "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." (Matthew 11:29)

Not all heard the Lord's call, but those who did hear Christ's preaching during the time of His earthly sojourn or hear it today could not and cannot achieve a greater intimacy with Christ. Not all who listen to the word of God do so with an open heart that they may understand it. Others, though understanding, refuse God's invitation because they have other earthly priorities. Still others, even if they desire salvation, cannot, because of their sinfulness, enter into a closer relationship with God.

The Holy Church at this time of Great Lent calls us, the faithful, to reflect upon our spiritual life. After comparing our life with the teachings of God's Ten Commandments, the Lord's sermon about "the blessed" and the highest standard of love – the commandment to "love your enemies" – we are called to condemn our deeds and to repent. This process requires a spiritual rebirth, sighing and tears. It is not easy for one who is supposed to be a leader in the family, at work and in society to demonstrate such humility as to ask forgiveness from one's neighbour for one's transgressions. To aid us the Holy Church offers us parables and teachings from the Holy Scriptures that help us to overcome our pride, change the course of our life and having come to terms with God and our neighbour, enter into a state of blessedness. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:3). We are called to fast. The restriction of quality and quantity of foods helps the soul subjugate the flesh and dull its passions. A true fast demands modesty and restricting all aspects of our life to the minimum. A true fast encourages us to share our wealth with those in need.

The Holy Church facilitates a deeper level of communication with God through the theme of repentance in our liturgical services and the minor musical mode of our Lenten chants. If we wish to be closer to God and our neighbour and attain eternal life in the mansions of the Lord we cannot allow secular responsibilities and any form of entertainment in this world to squeeze God out of our lives. The cares of this world, great and small, require our attention and we have an obligation to work for the greater good. But, we should not forget that God is above all and without Him we cannot achieve anything worthwhile.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, we greet you with the beginning of Great Lent and hope that you would avail yourselves of all the possibilities and opportunities to cleanse yourselves of your sins and embark on a new, more-meaningful life, through which your treasure will be gathered in heaven. Let us remember that the Lord accompanies us in time of war, economic crisis or in the complex circumstances of family life. He understands our tribulations and helps us to meet the challenges of everyday life. He assures us with these



words, "...and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."(Matthew 28:20)

When we have completed our Lenten journey we wish that you meet the Glorious Resurrection of Christ with a radiant heart and deep faith and hope in God.

We remember you always in our prayers. May the mercies of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ be with all of you in the Diaspora and in our native Ukraine! Amen.

Great Lent 2009

+ **Constantine**

Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA and the Diaspora

+ **John**

Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada

+ **Antony**

Archbishop of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA

+ **Ioan**

Archbishop of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the Diaspora

+ **Yurij**

Archbishop of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada

+ **Jeremiah**

Archbishop of the South American Eparchy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church

+ **Ilarion**

Bishop of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada

+ **Andriy**

Bishop of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada

+ **Daniel**

Bishop of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA

### **Just Stay**

A nurse took the tired, anxious serviceman to the bedside. "Your son is here," she said to the old man. She had to repeat the words several times before the patient's eyes opened.

Heavily sedated because of the pain of his heart attack, he dimly saw the young uniformed Marine standing outside the oxygen tent. He reached out his hand. The Marine wrapped his toughened fingers around the old man's limp ones, squeezing a message of love and encouragement.

The nurse brought a chair so that the Marine could sit beside the bed. All through the night the young Marine sat there in the poorly lighted ward, holding the old man's hand and offering him words of love and strength. Occasionally, the nurse suggested that the Marine move away and rest awhile.

He refused. Whenever the nurse came into the ward, the Marine was oblivious of her and of the night noises of the hospital - the clanking of the oxygen tank, the laughter of the night staff members exchanging greetings, the cries and moans of the other patients.

Now and then she heard him say a few gentle words. The dying man said nothing, only held tightly to his son all through the night.

Along towards dawn, the old man died. The Marine released the now lifeless hand he had been holding and went to tell the nurse. While she did what she had to do, he waited.

Finally, she returned. She started to offer words of sympathy, but the Marine interrupted her. "Who was that man?" he asked.

The nurse was startled, "He was your father," she answered.

"No, he wasn't," the Marine replied. "I never saw him before in my life."

"Then why didn't you say something when I took you to him?"

"I knew right away there had been a mistake, but I also knew he needed his son, and his son just wasn't here. When I realized that he was too sick to tell whether or not I was his son, knowing how much he needed me, I stayed."

The next time someone needs you...just be there. Stay.  
Regarding swearing: When Lemkos swear, they use Polish.

A girl from Ruski Kerestur, in the Vojvodina, gave virtually the same answer: "I'm not even sure whether Rusyns have or had "original" swear words—I think that most of them were sort of nicely said descriptions."

In the Vojvodina, Rusyns use Serbian when they want to swear. This is a common practice throughout the former Yugoslavia, where Serbian was prized for the colorfulness and intensity of its profanities. As one Slovene journalist wrote: Even though Yugoslavia was a land often characterized by inter-ethnic tension, swear words were one thing the national groups freely borrowed from one another. Serbs serving with Albanians in the federal army loved to swear at their girlfriends in Albanian. When Vojvodinan Slovaks, Rusyns, and Hungarians swear, they only swear in Serbian, saving their own languages for more noble expression.

A large part of the responsibility for a person's spiritual state lies with the family. For children to be released from their various inner problems it is not enough for them to receive good advice, or to be compelled by force; nor do logical arguments or threats do any good. These things rather make matters worse. The solution is to be found through the sanctification of the parents. Become saints and you will have no problems with your children. The sanctity of their parents releases the children from their problems. Children want to have saintly people at their side, people with lots of love who will neither intimidate them nor lecture them, but who will provide a saintly example and pray for them. You parents should pray silently to Christ with upraised arms and embrace your children mystically. When they misbehave you will take some disciplinary measures, but you will not coerce them. Above all you need to pray.

#### PART 2

What saves and makes for good children is the life of the parents in the home. The parents need to devote themselves to the love of God. They need to become saints in their relation to their children through their mildness, patience and love. They need to make a new start every day, with a fresh outlook, renewed enthusiasm and love for their children. And the joy that will come to them, the holiness that will visit them, will shower grace on their children. Generally the parents are to blame for the bad behaviour of the children. And their behaviour is not improved by reprimands, disciplining, or strictness. If the parents do not pursue a life of holiness and if they don't engage in spiritual struggle, they make great mistakes and transmit the faults they have within them. If the parents do not live a holy life and do not display love towards each other, the devil torments the parents with the reactions of the children. Love, harmony and understanding between the parents are what are required for the children. This provides a great sense of security and certainty. *+Elder Porphyrios*

### **SCOBA**

The Standing Conference of the Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas  
8 East 79th Street, New York, NY 10075

March 1, 2009

Sunday of Cheesefare and Mission Sunday

The Lord has commanded us: I have set you as a light to the Nations, that you should be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. (Acts 13:47)

To the Most Reverend Clergy, Venerable Monastics and  
The Devout Faithful of the Holy Orthodox Churches in the Americas

Dearly Beloved in the Lord,

We greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, as we set our eyes on the coming celebration of Christ's glorious Resurrection through our joyful participation in the Great and Holy Lent. The Sunday preceding our Lenten journey has been designated by the Hierarchs of SCOBA as Mission Sunday. For 2000 years, Christians have worked to share Christ's message of hope and His promise of salvation with the world by serving as living lights and witnesses to His truth among all nations, even unto the ends of the earth.

In 1994, the Hierarchs of SCOBA sanctioned the Orthodox Christian Mission Center to provide the Orthodox Faithful in the Americas with the resources and opportunities they needed to answer the call to mission. Orthodox Christians have served in 34 countries by preaching, baptizing, and teaching the newly illumined; supporting and educating priests, and helping the Church to minister to the spiritual and physical needs of Her people through the many ministries of the OCMC. Through this work, guided by the Holy Spirit, thousands of people who were once in darkness are now embraced by the eternal light of Christ.

This year the doors of the new Archbishop Anastasios and Archbishop Demetrios Missionary Training and Administration Building will open. This building, the first permanent building of a SCOBA agency, will facilitate the continued growth of our Holy Churches' worldwide missionary efforts. It will be a resource for the training up of new missionaries and the coordination of international mission ministries, and it will allow the Orthodox Faithful of North America to share the light of Christ with even more people.

This Mission Sunday, and throughout the Lenten season, let us embrace our call to shine as lights in the darkness. Let us re-commit to pray for those who have yet to hear the Gospel. Let us soften our hearts, that the Holy Spirit may guide our response to the command to be light to the Nations, to be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. Let us, as God's children, shine brightly with the light of Christ before others.

May our hearts be filled with hope and love as we prayerfully anticipate the triumphant Resurrection of Christ our God; and may we be given the strength and courage to share this glorious promise with our brothers and sisters around the world.

With paternal blessings and love in Christ,

**†Archbishop DEMETRIOS**

**Chairman**

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

**†Metropolitan PHILIP**

**Vice Chairman**

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

**†Metropolitan CHRISTOPHER**

**Secretary**

Serbian Orthodox Church in North

**†Metropolitan NICHOLAS of Amissos**

**Treasurer**

American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox

And South America

Diocese in the USA

**†Archbishop NICOLAE**

Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese  
In the Americas

**†Metropolitan JOSEPH**

Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church

**†Metropolitan JONAH**

Orthodox Church in America

**†Metropolitan CONSTANTINE**

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA

**†Bishop MERCURIUS of Zairaisk**

Representation of the Moscow Patriarchate  
In the USA

**†Bishop ILIA of Philomelion**

Albanian Orthodox Diocese of America

a word from the desert

Amma Theodora said, "It is good to live in peace, for the wise man practices perpetual prayer. It is truly a great thing for a virgin or a monk to live in peace, especially the younger ones. However, you should realize that as soon as you intend to live in peace, at once evil comes and weighs down your soul through accidie (listlessness/boredom/despondency), faintheartedness, and evil thoughts. It also attacks your body through sickness, debility, weakening of the knees, and all the members. It dissipates the strength of soul and body, so that one believes one is ill and no longer able to pray.

But if we are vigilant, all these temptations fall away. There was, in fact, a monk who was seized by cold and fever every time he began to pray, and he suffered from headaches too. In this condition, he said to himself, "I am ill, and near to death; so now I will get up before I die and pray." By reasoning in this way, he forced himself and prayed. When he had finished, the fever abated also. So, by reasoning in this way, the brother resisted and prayed, and was able to conquer his thoughts.

Dogs vs. Cats view of life as a pet

**Dog Diary**

8:00 am - Dog food! My favorite!

9:30 am - A car ride! My favorite!

9:40 am - A walk in the park! My favorite!

10:30 am - Got rubbed and petted! My favorite!

11:00 am - Went to the vet. Bummer.

12:00 pm - Lunch! My favorite!

1:00 pm - Played in the yard! My favorite!

5:00 pm - Milk bones! My favorite!

7:00 pm - Got to play ball! My favorite!

8:00 pm - Wow! Watched TV with the people! My favorite!

11:00 pm - Sleeping on the bed! My favorite!

## Cat Diary

Day 983 of my captivity.

My captors continue to taunt me with bizarre little dangling objects. They dine lavishly on fresh meat, while the other inmates and I are fed hash or some sort of dry nuggets. Although I make my contempt for these rations perfectly clear, I never-the-less must eat something in order to keep up my strength. The only thing that keeps me going is my dream of escape. In an attempt to disgust them, I once again vomited on the carpet.

Today I decapitated a mouse and dropped its headless body at their feet. I had hoped this would strike fear into their hearts, since it clearly demonstrates what I am capable of. However, they merely made condescending comments about what a "good little hunter" I am.

There was some sort of assembly of their accomplices tonight. I was placed in solitary confinement for the duration of the event. However, I could hear the noises and smell the food. I overheard that my confinement was due to the power of "allergies". I must learn what this means, and how to use it to my advantage.

Today I was almost successful in an attempt to assassinate one of my tormentors by weaving around his feet as he was walking. I must try this again tomorrow - but at the top of the stairs.

I am convinced that the other prisoners here are flunkies and snitches. The dog receives special privileges. He is regularly released - and seems to be more than willing to return. He is obviously retarded.

The bird has got to be an informant. I observe him communicating with the guards regularly. I am certain that he reports my every move. My captors have arranged protective custody for him in an elevated cell, so he is safe.

Why do we judge our neighbors? Because we shun knowing ourselves. Someone busy trying to understand himself has no time to notice the shortcomings of others. Judge yourself - and you will stop judging others. Judge a poor deed, but do not judge the doer. It is necessary to consider yourself the most sinful of all, and to forgive your neighbor every poor deed.  
*St. Seraphim of Sarov*