



Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

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GREAT LENT—THE GREAT FAST

ON THE MEND: Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Bishop Robert, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Dragan Filipović, Father Stevo Rocknage, Father Paul Stoll, Father Igor Soroka, Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Cuthbert Jack, Father Elias Warnke, Father Nestor Kowal, Father Paul Bigelow, Father Emilian Balan, Father John Nakonachny, Deacon Dennis Lapushanski, Protopresbyter Peter Hotrovich, Protodeacon Joseph Hotrovich, Pani-Dobrodijka Sonia Diakiw, Joshua Agosto and his family, Mike Holupka, Eva Malesnick, Stella Peanoske, Joe Nezolyk, Nick Behun, Grace Holupka, Virginia Bryan, Joseph Sliwinsky, Linda Mechtly, Mary Mochnick, Evelyn Misko, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachelle, Jane Golofski, Doug Diller, Harry Krewsun, Mary Alice Babcock, Dorie Kunkle, Andrea, & Melissa [Betty O'Masta's relatives], Mary Evelyn King, Stella Cherepko, Sam Wadrose, Isabella Olivia Lindgren, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Erin, Michael Miller, Dave May, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Alverta, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Michael Miller, Liz Stumpf, Theodore Nixon, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Robert Hippert & family, Margaret Vladimir, Luke Emmerling, John Sheliga, George & Mika Rocknage, Robert McKivitz, Liz Obradovich, Halyna Zelinska [Bishop Daniel's mother], Charlotte, Andrew Mark Olynyk, Deborah Finley, Claire Senita, Eleanor Kelly, Bryan, Doris Artman, Nancy Barylak, Patrick Keenan, Khrystyna Chorniy, Anthony Cormier, Nathan Forbeck, Sarah Doyle, Samuel Peters, Jean Stutchell, Charles & Esther Holupka, Wanda Mefford, Lynn (Bush) Gill, David Vallor, Henry Faraly, Betty O'Masta, Julie Eiler, Vince Ferro, Michael Pawlyshyn, Dorothy Lednovich, Bob C., Allie—young girl with leukemia, Heather Kramer, Jane Wartinbee, Matthew—21-year-old with cancer, Nicholas Orlando, Mary Ann Kuznik, Michael Woloschak, Michael Pryhodzenko, Sonia Luciw, Theresa Ditto, Mary Ann Musial, Mary Pelino, Yvonne Christy, Myron & Barbara Spak, Pete Niederberger, Julia Duda, Lisa Pandle, Kris & Julie Hanczar, John Kennedy, Diane McDaniel, Loretta,

Nancy, Carol, & Michael Sheliga, Gaelle Kelly, Irma McDivitt, Robin Young, Mckayla, Rachel, Carl & Margaret Reed, Theodore Demopoulos, Jillian Bowman, Lydia Wilson, Robert Pointon, Walter Cecelia, John Persico, Jeff Miller, Mary Kernick, Glenn Miller, Jean Marie, Donna & Walter McCrackin, Doug Smith [Millie Kerr's son-in-law], Bonnie & Eugene Blair [Pani Gina's parents], Mel & Charlotte Malik, Paula Pasquinelli, David Hoenshell, Barbara Macino, Shelley Hill, Mikaela Kapeluck, Linda Cawley, Gerald Cogley, Helen Bozo, Corey Guich, Robert Vangrin, Juliana Leis, Susan "Billie" Mason, Pauline Witkowsky, Sera White, LuAnne [Mike Horvath's daughter], Donald Griffey, Deborah Smith, Nancy & Eric Dunik, Julian Strozh [child with cerebral palsy], Thomas Stutzman, Dr. Kirsten Ream, Patricia Corey, Michelle, Katie Swarm, Richard Dunst, Michelle, Jamie Gardner, Patrick, Linda Morris, Howard Simpson, Ronald Graham [Evelyn's nephew], Chris, Pastor Ed Bowen, David Hiles, Karen Johnson, Jennifer, Ann Quinn—knee surgery, Cher Mount, Frank & Janet Horrell, Jim Wandling, Susan Bertram, Rita McConnell, Millie Kerr, Stancy Popichak [Fr. Bob's mom], Donna Detweiler, and Daria Masur ARNOLD: Stefania Lucci, Steve Sakal, and Homer Paul Kline. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

PRAYER LIST: Please help update our prayer list. If you or someone you know no longer needs to be on the prayer list or if there is someone who needs to be on the list please let Father Bob know. Remember—Prayers are ALWAYS FREE! Thank you!

Please remember ALL American service men and women in your prayers. May God watch over them and all American service men 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 Debbie Paouncic's class. THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HELP!

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 ask 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, APRIL 14 **Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great** **10:30 AM**
FOURTH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT—SAINT JOHN CLIMACUS—JOHN OF THE LADDER OF DIVINE ASCENT; SAINT MARY OF EGYPT; MARTYRS GERONCIUS & BASILIDES; RIGHTEOUS ACHAZ; SAINT MACARIUS-ABBOT OF PELECETE; SAINT GERONTIUS THE YOUTH-CANONARCH OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA

Tone 4

Ephesians 5:9-19

Matthew 4:25-5:12

Litany in Blessed Memory of Raymond George—10 years—Fr. Bob
Parastas in Blessed Memory of Walter, Victor, Jacob, Katarina, & Baby Jacob
Burlack—Evelyn Burlack

SUNDAY, APRIL 21 **Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great** **10:30 AM**
FIFTH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT—VENERABLE MARY OF EGYPT; HOLY APOSTLES OF THE 70-ERODION, AGABUS, ASYNCRITUS, RUFUS, PHLEGON, HERMES, AND THOSE WITH THEM; MARTYR PAUSILIPPUS OF HERACLEA IN THRACE; SAINT CELESTINE-POPE OF ROME; SAINT RUFUS THE OBEDIENT OF PERCHEVSKY

LAVRA

Tone 5

Hebrews 9:11-14

Mark 10:32-45

Litany in Blessed Memory of Charles Holupka—40 days—Mike Holupka
Parastas in Blessed Memory of Nicholas & Catherine Behun—Behun Family

SATURDAY, APRIL 27 **OBEDNITZA** **10:30 AM**
LAZARUS SATURDAY

SUNDAY, APRIL 28 **Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom** **10:30 AM**
SIXTH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT—PALM SUNDAY—THE ENTRANCE OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM; APOSTLES ARISTARCHUS, PUDENS, & TROPHIMUS OF THE 70; MARTYR SUCHIAS & HIS COMPANIONS IN ARMENIA

*****PAGE 170 IN THE BLACK DIVINE LITURGY BOOKS*****

Philippians 4:4-9

John 12:1-18

BULLETIN INSERT FOR 14 APRIL 2013

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TROPARION—TONE 1

O Dweller of the wilderness and angel in the body!
You were a wonder-worker, O our God-bearing Father John!
You received heavenly gifts through fasting, vigil, and prayer:
Healing the sick and souls of those drawn to you by faith.
Glory to Him who gave you strength!
Glory to Him who granted you a crown!
Glory to Him who through you grants healing to all!

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

KONTAKION—TONE 4

The Lord truly set you on the heights of abstinence,
To be a guiding star, showing the way to the universe,
O our Father and Teacher John.

PROKEIMENON—TONE 8

READER: Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!

PEOPLE: Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!

READER: Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!

PEOPLE: Let the righteous exult in glory! Let them sing for joy on their couches!

READER: In Judah, God is known; His name is great in Israel!

PEOPLE: Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!

READER: Pray and make your vows.

PEOPLE: Before the Lord our God!

ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 8

Come let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior!

Those planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.



ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN PRISON MINISTRY
AN AGENCY OF THE ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS

A Lenten Reflection from OCPM

Dear Father Robert,

As we journey together through Lent to the death and resurrection of our Lord and God Jesus Christ, we strive to empty our lives of the distractions and busyness of the world in order to focus more clearly on the eternal beauty of our Lord.

Extravagance is replaced with simplicity, the poverty of others takes precedence over our wants and cravings, and special services are added to our weekly schedule to guide us on this Holy Journey. We receive the blessings of our hierarchs and the encouragement of our brothers and sisters in Christ to follow our Lord through the valley of the shadow of death to the Light of Holy Pascha!

But what does one do if he or she resides in an often negative and hostile environment without the benefits of encouragement and guidance that come from our Orthodox Christian Faith and way of life? What can a person do if he or she is a product of prison and this is the only lifestyle familiar to that person?

A gentleman in prison recently wrote to Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry offering sincere thanks for a paper Icon prayer card he received from us, free of charge, in the mail. It was an Icon of the Theotokos; or, as he described it, "a simple little picture to look at that really helps." For this man, this simple Icon prayer card is



equivalent to the blessing of being refocused and encouraged as described above, that we in the "free world" receive from our connection to the Church.

Without realizing it this gentleman has begun a Lenten journey that can also produce the fruit of peace and stillness. He continues in his letter, "When you're in your cell getting frustrated, worked up, and your eyes catch the picture of Mary, you kinda get focused and take some deep breaths." The clutter of the loud, negative, hostile environment of prison where he lives is being overtaken by the beauty he beholds in the Icon of the Theotokos. "Thank you for caring. I would appreciate any other special icon cards you may have. Pray for my strength."

On behalf of this gentleman and the thousands who OCPM ministers to throughout the year, please accept my sincere gratitude for making this ministry possible through your prayers and support. During this solemn Lenten season please pray for this man and the many who write to us for encouragement and strength as we journey together to the joy of Holy Pascha.

Your servant,
Patrick Tutella, Chaplain
Executive Director, OCPM

HAVING ENDURED THE CROSS

The Martyric Death and Posthumous Miracles of Archpriest Constantine Podgorsky (†1918)
By Nikolai Kolchurinsky (Translated from the Russian-language journal *Pravoslavnyaya Beseda* [Moscow], no. 6, 2004)

The Transvolgan land is a land of varied peoples and varied speech: Mordvinians, Chuvash and Russians; and, like peas in a field, Tartar villages are scattered everywhere. But all are of one house—all are under the protection of the Most Pure One, and the Grace of God is everywhere, especially where there is faith in God and faithfulness to Him to the end....

Ever so quietly and brightly shines the August morning, but it does not seem so much like a summer day. All around is the broad, free expanse of the forested Mordvinian steppe.¹ And amidst the meadows, amidst the fields and groves, is a village, in which there stands a wooden church. I enter and hear the singing of the Liturgy—it is our Slavonic Liturgy, but the melody is unusual. It's similar to Mordvinian folk music, but so beautiful that it seems marvelous, even to one who is familiar with it... Three elderly women are singing, but their voices sound so heartfelt, so pure. Inside the church it's quiet—there is only a barely audible, soft conversation in Mordvinian between some elderly women parishioners by the candle-box.

¹ The Mordvinian Republic is located approximately 220 miles southeast of Moscow.—Ed.

This is the village of Bolshoye Ignatovo, and the Church of Archangel Michael. What has brought me to this remote settlement at the junction of the Mordvinia, Chuvash and Gorky (Nizhni Novgorod) provinces, where it seems as though the din and the nervous race of the twenty-first century cannot be felt; where it seems as though you're living in another time; where in the whole large village (even though it's the regional center) there is only one two-storied house, and the rest are single-storied, simple, rural homes?

In this place, far away from large cities, amazing events have occurred and continue to occur, which at the present time are attracting masses of pilgrims from the neighboring Transvolgan provinces. Why are so many striving to get to this village, to this small wooden church?

Here are the relics of a New Martyr. At the beginning of the twentieth century Archpriest Constantine Podgorsky lived and served as a pastor in the neighboring village of Kirzhemany. He was a zealous shepherd and benefactor: though he possessed agricultural lands and income, the benefits from them did not go to his family, despite the fact that he had ten children. With this money he built schools in the neighboring villages, where he himself taught reading and writing to the children.

His matushka likewise taught school, and in addition they both headed the Temperance Society. Fr. Constantine and his matushka were respected and loved by the local residents, and it has come down to us that Batiushka possessed the special gift of being able to see a person's secret sins and, revealing them, to skillfully bring him to repentance....

The revolution came to Transvolga. The straightforward and honest Fr. Constantine remained the same man under the new authorities, and when the terrible news of the death of the Royal Family reached him, he, "without respect of persons," began to serve Pannikhidas (memorial services) for them. The "comrades" quickly took notice of him: such a man obviously hindered those who wanted to "level the churches and prisons to the ground" (though, as we know, things turned out quite the opposite as far as prisons were concerned).

The last drop that overflowed the cup of patience of the new authority's representatives was the Liturgy served by Fr. Constantine on November 7, 1918.¹ This was the day on which the revolutionaries, who had come to Kirzhemany to conduct the requisitioning of farm produce (the "delegates," as they were later called in the village), were trying to organize a festive meeting in honor of the first anniversary of the October revolution. But for some reason the anniversary of the new authority did not call forth the anticipated enthusiasm from the local residents. The "delegates," having finished the agricultural requisitioning, came for the grain and cleared away everything, including what belonged to those whose sons were fighting in the Red Army.

For the most part, the people did not go to the meeting, but went to church and celebrated the feast of Great-martyr Demetrius of Thessalonika. Also on that day in the village, according to a customary old pious tradition, the people shared grain with those who had had a poor harvest. They shared voluntarily: *He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack* (II Cor. 8:15).

The next day the militant proletariat burst into the church during services and, tearing the priestly vestments from Fr. Constantine, dragged him out into the street in his underwear and began to beat him cruelly. They beat him for several hours, as the old residents of Kirzhemany later told their children and grandchildren. Fr. Constantine, who was fairly strong, could perhaps have put up some resistance—if not to save his life then at least to save himself from terrible sufferings—but he resolved to endure everything to the end.... Later, after the beating, they harnessed the priest to a light carriage and drove him through the

whole village. The villagers, stricken with fear, locked themselves in their homes and did not dare show themselves on the street. When the sufferer had no more strength to pull the carriage, they put a horse-collar on his neck and led him throughout the village, not ceasing to beat him with a whip and with whatever else came to hand. (Fr. Constantine's body showed signs of the beating: a fractured skull, a broken-off finger, and the marks of the whipping.) At the end, they dragged the now weakened priest by the hair to the high church porch and crucified him on the church doors....

¹ October 25 according to the Julian Calendar, which was still in effect in Russia in 1917.—Ed.

The next morning the church warden and the guard took Fr. Constantine's body down and, dressing him in priestly vestments, laid him in a pine coffin into which they placed, along with the Gospel, the nails with which Fr. Constantine had been affixed. The "delegates" did not permit them to bury the priest in the cemetery, and Fr. Constantine was buried in a vacant plot of land. God's punishment did not wait long: on the return trip to the city both "delegates" died when they fell through the ice along with the cart on which they were traveling....

With time this horrible story was almost erased from the people's memory. The majority of the witnesses were afraid even to hint at what had happened. But all the same, some passed on the truth about the crucified sufferer to their children and grandchildren, and showed them his burial site where, as local inhabitants affirmed, several healings had taken place during the Soviet years. At the place of his burial people had placed Orthodox crosses, but each time the authorities removed them, and in the end the spot was forgotten.

In 1992, Fr. Alexander Nikitin, the superior of the Archangel Michael Church in Bolshoye Ignatovo, situated a few miles from Kirzhemany, wanted to locate the grave site of Fr. Constantine, about whose sufferings the local residents had informed him. But he only succeeded in finding the site in 2001, when the niece of one of Fr. Constantine's spiritual daughters pointed out the approximate location of the grave.

Despite the fact that Fr. Constantine's grave site was only approximately known, on the morning of June 13 Fr. Alexander along with several local inhabitants decided to carry out the transfer of the martyr's remains. As amazing as it might seem, when they began to dig after serving a Pannikhida, they immediately discovered the grave and became witnesses to something extraordinary. "I was bewildered in soul; there was a panic within me"—this is how Fr. Alexander subsequently described his feelings, and with good reason. Barely had they removed the turf from the surface of the ground when everyone present immediately began to sense an amazing fragrance. At a depth of about six feet they found the coffin, entirely whole, with straw beneath it, which was also intact. (It was a local custom to spread grass or straw in a grave and then place the coffin on top of it.) When they opened the coffin they saw within it the priest's body, dressed in incorrupt gold vestments, and a Gospel with a bookmark in it. The Gospel could be leafed through and read. The body itself, from which proceeded the amazing fragrance, was likewise incorrupt and light-colored. There were signs of the terrible beatings on his body, and on his hands were the wounds from the nails. In the coffin were four large forged nails, obviously the ones with which Fr. Constantine had been affixed. The body was so well preserved that a forensic expert who was present at the disinterment of the body was even able to determine the cause of death (after eighty-three years!), which was loss of blood. When the relics were brought up to the surface, several springs of pure water began to flow in the grave, where the coffin had been.

After the body had been placed on the ground it continued to emit the fragrance and, despite all apprehensions, was not subject to any corruption whatever for a significant length of time; it only quickly began to darken, and soon became a dark brown color, which is often

the case with holy relics. Soon afterwards, with the bishop's blessing, Fr. Constantine's body was re-buried in the altar of the Archangel Michael Church in Bolshoye Ignatovo. (There had been a large wooden church in Kirzhemany, but it had been totally destroyed in the 1970s, and the remains had been carried off for firewood. However, to this day pious residents have preserved pieces of the doors on which the martyr had been crucified.) The broken-off finger, which became separated when Fr. Constantine's body was exhumed, was permitted to be preserved separately. It was placed in a special small shrine which is carefully kept in the altar of the Archangel Michael Church in Ignatovo.

Fr. Alexander brought the finger out of the altar for me. Seeing it, I fell to my knees. "What are you doing? He hasn't been glorified yet," I heard from Fr. Alexander. Such is the unalterable norm of Church discipline: if he has not been glorified, then this is not a holy relic, and only Pannikhidas can be served. But all the same I bowed down and kissed that holy object, feeling with my lips that the finger was soft, like that of a living man, and sensing the wondrous fragrance that proceeded from it. (According to Fr. Alexander, neither the strength nor the nature of the fragrance has changed since the day the relics were exhumed.)

But even all of these soul-shaking facts do not exhaust the astounding and glorious events connected with Fr. Constantine Podgorsky. After the uncovering of the relics healings began to take place, and from such illnesses before which medicine is powerless: childhood cerebral palsy, epilepsy and cancer.... Fr. Alexander related something that took place before everyone's eyes: a child suffering from cerebral palsy was brought to the coffin so he could kiss the relics. After this the wheelchair was rolled back, but the child got on his feet and went over to the coffin himself to kiss the relics a second time.... And the two singers, whose voices sounded so beautiful in the church, turned out also to have been healed after both had been told they needed surgery.

The body of the Hieromartyr is hidden beneath the earth, but people come and ask for simple Pannikhidas to be served. They leave, and then send letters of gratitude to Fr. Alexander—letters in which they inform him of their healings. Fr. Alexander is a thorough man. "The truth has no need of embellishment; it speaks for itself," is his thought. He asks all those who have received healings through prayer at the relics of the New Martyr to send him medical statements testifying to the veracity of the healing.

"How many of these statements have you received, Fr. Alexander, over the past three years," I asked him, thinking to myself that he would probably say several dozen. "Well, as it turns out just yesterday Fr. Andrew and I counted them—there are 1,024. And there is a whole pile of letters without certification—but those are, for the most part, letters about healings from demonic possession, and doctors don't issue medical statements for those." The truth speaks for itself.

The only thing holding back the canonization of Fr. Constantine is the absence of documentation witnessing to the fact that he had actually been a victim of repression in 1918. Information on the tragedy that took place on November 8, 1918, in Kirzhemany has as its source only the oral tradition of the local inhabitants. The times were such that a scrupulous system of shadowing and monitoring was still a long way off for the NKVD, and everything was decided "situationally," without trial or investigation, according to the principle: "Silence, you orators! You have the floor, Comrade Mauser!"

¹ One couldn't say it more accurately than did the poet (Mayakovsky).

But Fr. Alexander is at peace: "How long did it take before St. Seraphim was glorified? When it's pleasing to God, it will all work out...." The truth speaks for itself.... If we recall the Lives of the ancient Martyrs, we will find an abundance of instances of the incorruption of their relics and a great multitude of striking miracles connected with them. As regards the

Russian New Martyrs of the twentieth century, incorrupt relics are rarely encountered (the holy relics of Nun-Martyr Elizabeth being one of the few exceptions). Likewise, one does not hear about a multitude of remarkable miracles from their holy relics, as is the case with the relics of the martyrs of the first centuries. And perhaps the thought will slither into the heads of some: “Were they really martyrs?” But the events at Kirzhemany and Ignatovo put the dot on the “I,” and it remains for the most faultfinding of skeptics to agree.

Yes, we live in the twenty-first century but, as it turns out, events have taken place now that are similar to those that took place in the first centuries of Christianity. When I left Ignatovo, I thought, “Is there another place like this anywhere else on earth?” I don’t know...

1 From the poem “Left March” by Vladimir V. Mayakovsky (1918).—Ed.

Strive to increase from day to day your faith in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist, and never cease to wonder at the miraculous mystery of it, reflecting on how God manifests Himself to you in the guise of bread and wine, and becomes essentially present in you, to make you more holy, righteous and blessed. For blessed are they who do not see, yet believe; according to the words of the Savior (cf. Jn. 20:29). Try to set alight in yourself a warm desire for this sacrament and to make progress every day both in your fervent readiness to do only God's will, and in spiritual wisdom, making it the queen and ruler over all your actions of the spirit, the soul and the body. Every time you take communion, while partaking of this bloodless sacrifice, offer yourself as a sacrifice to God, that is, profess your complete readiness to endure every affliction, every sorrow and every wrong you may meet in the course of your life, for the sake of the love of God, Who sacrificed Himself for us. *Lorenzo Scupoli*, **Unseen Warfare**; SVS Press pg. 234

Learn from your own experience to sympathize with those in trouble, and never to terrify with destructive despair those who are in danger, nor harden them with severe speeches, but rather restore them with gentle and kindly consolations and as the wise Solomon says, ‘Spare not to deliver those who are led forth to death, and to redeem those who are to be slain, (Prov 24:11) and after the example of our Savior, break not the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax (cf Matt 12:20), and ask of the Lord that grace, by means of which you yourself may faithfully learn both in deed and power to sing, ‘the Lord has given me a learned tongue that I should know how to uphold by word him that is weary (Isaiah 50:4): for no one could bear the devices of the enemy, or extinguish or repress those carnal fires which burn with a sort of natural flame, unless God’s grace assisted our weakness, or protected and supported it. *St. John Cassian*

"But even then, the Devil does not have power to put our thoughts into action. Woe to us, if such were the case; for he would not spare us, but

would force us to always have in mind all manner of evil thoughts and imaginings; and would never permit us to think anything good. The only power he has is to insinuate evil things in our minds, simply and under the cover of innocence, in order to test - through temptation - where our inner disposition inclines: towards submission to him, or towards the commandments of the Lord. These two states are always contending with each other." *Abba Mark*

By accepting a suspicion against the neighbor, by saying, 'What does it matter if I put in a word about my suspicion? What does it matter if I find out what my brother is saying or what a guest is doing?' the mind begins to forget about its own sins and to talk idly about his neighbor, speaking evil against him, despising him, and from this he falls into the very thing he condemns. Because we become careless about our own faults and do not lament our own death, we lose the power to correct ourselves and we are always at work on our neighbor. *St. Dorotheos of Gaza, Discourses and Sayings*, Cistercian Publications, pg. 131

Our life and our death is with our neighbor. If we gain our brother, we have gained God, but if we scandalize our brother, we have sinned against Christ. *St. Anthony the Great, The Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, Cistercian Publications, pg. 3

This is the great work of a man: always to take the blame for his own sins before God and to expect temptation to his last breath. *St. Anthony the Great, Sayings of the Desert Fathers*; Cistercian Publication, pg. 2

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU to our multi-talented and extremely hard-working Parish Council President John Paouncic! John has done some EXTREME spring cleaning in the church basement which included rearranging the tables, moving the cases and cases of vigil candles, and even making a new and improved area for counting the donations—he added additional lighting to make it easier to see!

We often overlook the hard work that many individuals donate to make our church beautiful—both inside and outside. This time, the changes left me speechless [and everyone knows how hard that is to do!] when I walked into the basement last week. On behalf of our entire parish family—THANK YOU JOHN! May God reward you a thousand-fold for your hard work to keep our parish beautiful and working more efficiently! Fr. Bob