



# FOLLOWING THE STEPS OF CHRIST

## Quarterly Bulletin of Saint John the Baptist Russian Orthodox Church

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Diocese of the West - Orthodox Church in America

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Rev. Edward Henderson

### **Beauty Will Save the World**

The great Russian author, Fyodor Dostoevsky, in his novel *The Idiot*, wrote that beauty will save the world. The Prophet David proclaims: “Lord, I have loved the beauty of Thy house, and the dwelling-place of Thy glory.” (Ps. 25:8, LXX). As Christians, we closely associate beauty with truth and goodness. Thus, beauty is not simply what the individual perceives, rather there is an absolute beauty revealed to us by God, just as He has revealed truth and goodness to us. To create anything truly beautiful requires training, discipline, discernment, and dedication. Even an artistic genius must abide by these principles.

The Russian *Primary Chronicle* records that when Prince Vladimir’s emissaries beheld the beauty of the worship at the Hagia Sophia Cathedral in Constantinople, they did not know whether they were in heaven or on earth. Such beauty planted the seeds of the baptism of Rus’.

Over the past seven years, our parish has undergone a gradual beautification. We have strived to serve the divine services according to their proper order, in obedience to our

Archbishop's directives, and remaining faithful to the traditions of the Russian Orthodox Church. We have created a balance between Church Slavonic and English in the divine services in order to minister to the needs of all our parishioners so that they may more deeply encounter the beauty of the Church's hymnography. We have worked intensely to improve our parish choir so that the singing is executed prayerfully, clearly, and beautifully. This beautification has also been carried out on our physical space. We replaced the floor in our church, commissioned new icons, restored the Romanov Memorial shrine, purchased new rugs, runners, altar covers, and altar-server robes. On the practical side, we replaced our paraffin candles with oil lamps, which are far cleaner. We renovated all the bathrooms, both in the church and in the parish hall. We have cleaned up the side room adjacent to the church. Our current and previous choir directors have made and are currently making our kliros a more orderly space. Most recently, we refinished the floor in the parish hall.

Last year, our parish council decided to undertake two major projects: the replacing of the roof on our church building and the exterior repainting of our church and parish hall. The lockdowns due to COVID-19 delayed these projects, however, in June of this year, we replaced the roof on our church. We are hoping to complete the exterior painting project in the spring of 2021. The project will not be simple. We are hiring professionals, who will use the highest quality paint suitable for exterior buildings. This project will also require making extensive repairs to the exterior of our buildings. The estimated cost will be \$25,000.00. However, the result, God-willing, will greatly enhance the beauty of our parish property. A church that is beautiful on the outside invites people to enter and see what is inside.

God has blessed our parish with many wonderful people who consider our church to be their spiritual home. We are asking for your generosity in helping us to fund this project. If everybody contributes as best they can, we should have little difficulty raising the necessary funds to complete this project. The Holy Apostle Paul reminds us: "let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Cor. 9:7)

2020 has been a difficult year for us. Nevertheless, the Church still stands, the divine services continue, and our doors remain open. With your help, we can look back at this year as time in which we greatly raised up the beauty of God's House. Please pray for our humble parish and discern how you can contribute to this great work for God's glory.



## **Namesdays, Birthdays, and Anniversaries**

November 1- Birthday of Mariana Katich

November 7- Namesday of Tabitha Lewis

November 21- Namesday of Valeriy Okulov

November 27- Birthday of Michael Temerin and Sofia Katich

December 5- Namesday of Michael Temerin

December 8- Birthday of Joseph Katich

December 17- Namesday of Barbara Roquemore

December 19- Namesday of Nikolay Lukoyankov and Nicholas Timokhin

January 6- Birthday of Arseny (Arnold) Kloian

January 25- Namesday of Tatyana Lukoyanova

January 27- Namesday of Nina Kloian

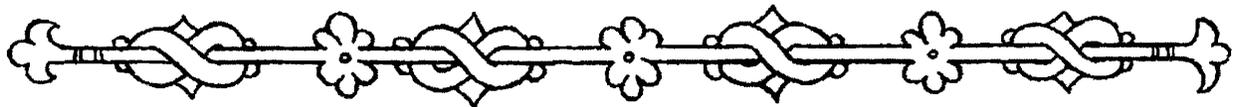
*If you would like your namesday, birthday, and/or anniversary included in the future, please contact Fr. Edward at [revedwardhenderson@gmail.com](mailto:revedwardhenderson@gmail.com).*

## **Memory Eternal**

On October 13, our beloved brother in Christ and former choir director (2012-2018), Nikolai Massenkoff, reposed in Lord. Funeral and burial services were held at the Serbian Cemetery in Colma on October 19. On October 19, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius, who served as primate of the Orthodox Church in America from 1977-2002, reposed in the Lord. His funeral service took place on October 22 at Saint John the Baptist Orthodox Church in Canonsburg, Pennsylvania and he was buried at the cemetery of Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Ellwood City, Pennsylvania. May their memories be eternal!

## **Special Announcement**

On October 27, our parish choir, Caleb Lewis, successfully defended his doctoral dissertation and has been awarded a Doctor of Music degree from the Jacobs School of Music of Indiana University. We offer our heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Lewis and his family.



# Schedule of Services

**Sundays:** Divine Liturgy at 10:00am

**Saturdays:** Vigil *or* Great Vespers at 5:00pm

## November, December, January services

Thursday, December 3		Vigil	6:00pm
Friday, December 4	Entrance of the Theotokos	Liturgy	10:00am
Friday, December 18		Great Vespers	6:00pm
Saturday, December 19	Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker	Liturgy	10:00am
Wednesday, January 6	Christmas Eve*	Vesperal Liturgy	6:00pm
Thursday, January 7	Nativity of Christ (Christmas)*	Matins Liturgy	9:00am 10:00am
Wednesday, January 13		Great Vespers	6:00pm
Thursday, January 14	Circumcision of the Lord Saint Basil the Great	Liturgy	10:00am
Monday, January 18		Vesperal Liturgy Vigil	10:00am 6:00pm
Tuesday, January 19	Theophany	Liturgy Blessing of Waters	10:00am

More detailed service schedules are available on the parish website and at the candle desk.

\* Due to restrictions in connection with COVID-19, we ask that parishioners reserve a place in church for the feast of the Nativity of Christ, choosing to attend either the Vesperal Liturgy on Christmas Eve or Matins and Liturgy on Christmas day. Fr. Edward will be available for confessions ONLY on Christmas eve, from 10:00am-12:00pm and 4:45pm-5:45pm.

**Upcoming Events:** November 1: Daylight Saving Time Ends

November 28: Nativity Fast Begins