
W^{the}onderworker

Saint George Orthodox Church

September — November, 2014

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

You may have noticed that *The Wonderworker* did not appear in July as it usually has. It will now be published in September, December, March and June — still quarterly, but aligned with the Church year and more in tune with when things happen in our community.

In addition to the information to be found in the pages of this issue of *The Wonderworker*, there are a couple of items that I need to bring to your attention.

The first has to do with the air conditioning system in the Church building. After 35 years of (mostly) faithful service, it gave out at the beginning of the summer! At a special meeting held on July 20th, the parishioners overwhelmingly voted to replace it. After examining a number of proposals, the Parish Council decided to accept one that will cost us a little more than \$19,000.00, by far the lowest bid received.

Through a generous loan, we were able to make the 50% down-payment requested by the company to order the system, but we need your help to finish the job! Several people have already made donations, ranging from \$5,000 to \$250.

Won't you consider joining them in making a donation to the **Air Conditioning Fund**? There is a donation/pledge form inserted in this issue (printed on "cool blue" paper). Please take a moment to fill it out and send it, along with your check or instructions, to St. George Albanian Orthodox Church, 5490 Main Street, Trumbull, CT 06611, as soon as possible. All donations (which are tax-deductible) will be gratefully received and acknowledged.

The second item is to inform you about a special guest who will be visiting our Parish. Dr. Albert Rossi, will be here on Wednesday evening, October 8th, to speak about "Prayer and Intimacy with Christ." Dr. Rossi is Director of Field Education at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in Crestwood, NY, and his brief, bi-weekly podcast, *Becoming a Healing Presence*, is available on Ancient Faith Radio. He is popular as a speaker and retreat leader around the country. It will be an honor to have him with us!

The evening will begin in Church at 6:30 p.m. with the singing of the Akathist Hymn, "Glory to God for All Things." In the Church Hall at 7:00 p.m., Dr. Rossi will speak, with time allowed for questions and answers. Refreshments will also be served.

Please join us for this wonderful opportunity to expand your spiritual life.

In Christ,



The Church

The new and abundant life given by God to man through Christ and the Holy Spirit in creation and redemption is the life of the Christian Church. The life of the Church is the life originally willed for man and his world by God. It is the life of God Himself originally given in creation. It is the spiritual life.

One should not think of the spiritual life of the Church as some particularly special kind of “religious life” different from life itself as we have received it in our creation by God. There are not “two lives,” one “natural” and one “religious.” There is only one life that is real, genuine and true. It is life with God, the life of the Church. Any other life is not life at all; it is the way of death.

What differentiates the life of the Church from the life of “this world,” also called life “according to the flesh,” is only evil and sin. Everything positive is created life, which God has called “good ... very good,” is what is saved and sanctified in the life of the Church. Only falsehood and wickedness are excluded — certainly not creation itself.

In the Orthodox tradition, the Church is called the Kingdom of God on earth, “the re-creation of the world.” (*Saint Gregory of Nyssa, 4th c., On the Canticles*) In the New Testament it is also called the “new creation” (*2 Corinthians 5:17*), the Body and Bride of Christ Himself. (*Romans 12:5; 1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 5:23ff; Revelation 21:1ff*)

...God has put all things under the feet of Christ and has made Him the head over all things for the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. (*Ephesians 1:22-23*)

The Apostle Paul also refers to “the household of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth.” (*1 Timothy 3:15*)

Genuine life, true and real life in perfection and abundance, is found only in the Church of Christ. People who are not formally in the Church are living truly and genuinely only to the extent that they follow the law of God “written on their hearts” by the Spirit on God in creation (*Romans 1:12-16*), which is the same law clearly revealed and given in Christ and the Church. And those people who are formally members of the Church are living truly and genuinely only to the extent that they actually live the life of the Church. For the sad fact exists that one may be formally a member of the Church and still live according to the law of the flesh, the law of sin and death, and not of Christ. The spiritual life, therefore, consists in actually living the life of the Church.

from *The Orthodox Faith*,
by Fr. Thomas Hopko



Kisha

Jeta e re dhe e bollshme, dhënë njeriut nga Perëndia nëpërmjet Krishtit dhe Shpirtit të Shenjtë në krijimin dhe shpëtimin, është jeta e Kishës së Krishterë. Jeta e Kishës është jeta e dëshiruar fillimisht për njeriun dhe botën e tij nga Perëndia. Ajo është jeta e Vetë Perëndisë e dhënë fillimisht në krijimin. Ajo është jeta shpirtërore. Nuk duhet menduar jeta shpirtërore e Kishës si një lloj i veçantë i “jetës fetare”, e ndryshme nga vetë jeta që ne kemi marrë në krijimin tonë prej Perëndisë. Nuk ka “dy jetë”, një “natyrale” dhe një “fetare”. Por ka vetëm një jetë që është reale, e pastër dhe e vërtetë. Ajo është jeta me Perëndinë, jeta e Kishës. Çdo jetë tjetër nuk është aspak jetë: ajo është rruga e vdekjes.

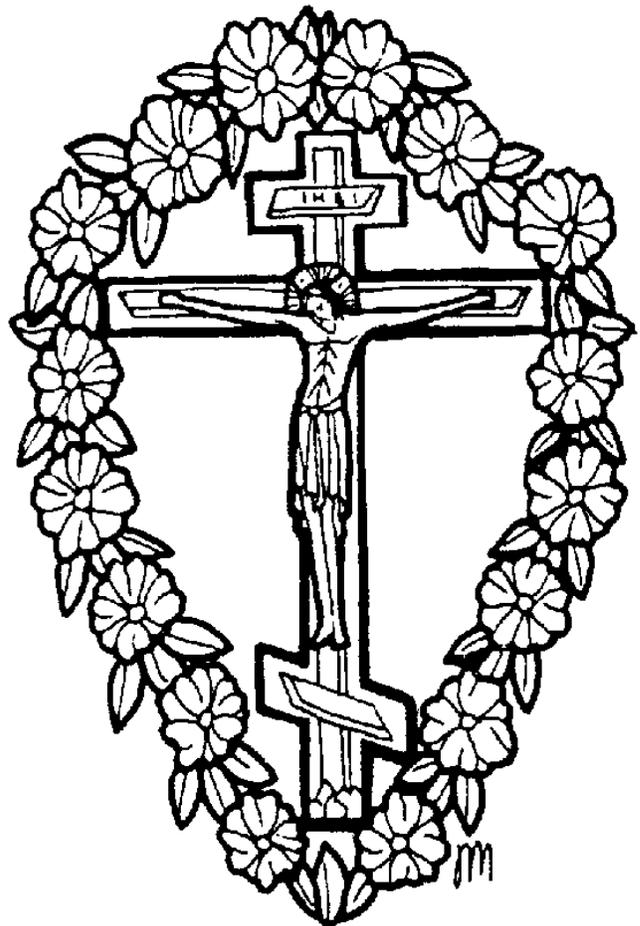
Ajo që e bën të ndryshme jetën e Kishës nga jeta e “kësaj bote”, e quajtur, gjithashtu, jeta “sipas mishit”, është vetëm mëkati dhe e keqja. Çdo gjë pozitive është jetë e krijuar, të cilën Perëndia e ka quajtur “të mirë ... shumë të mirë”, është ajo që është shpëtuar dhe shenjtëruar në jetën e Kishës. Vetëm fallsiteti dhe ligësia përjashtohen — sigurisht jo vetë krijimi. Në traditën orthodhokse, Kisha është quajtur Mbretëria e Perëndisë në tokë, “rikrijimi i botës” (*Shën Grigori i Nisës, shek. 4, Mbi Kantikët*). Në Dhiatën e Re është quajtur, gjithashtu “krijimi i ri” (2 *Korinthianët* 5:17), Trupi dhe Nusja e Vetë Krishtit (*Romanët* 12:5; 1 *Korinthianët* 12:27; *Efesianët* 5:23 e vazhdim; *Zbulesa* 21:1 e vazhdim).

...Perëndia vuri çdo gjë nën këmbët e Krishtit, edhe e bëri Atë kreun përmbi çdo gjë kishës, e cila është trupi i tij, plotësia e atij që mbush çdo gjë në të gjithë (*Efesianët* 1:22-23).

Apostull Pavli i referohet, gjithashtu “shtëpisë së Perëndisë, që është kisha e Perëndisë së gjallë, shtylla dhe mbështetja e së vërtetës” (1 *Timotheu* 3:15).

Jeta e vërtetë dhe reale në përsosje dhe begati, gjendet vetëm në Kishën e Krishtit. Njerëzit që nuk janë zyrtarisht në Kishë, po jetojnë me të vërtetë vetëm përse ata ndjekin ligjin e Perëndisë “të shkruar në zemrat e tyre” nga Shpirti i Perëndisë në krijimin (*Romanët* 1:12-16), që është i njëjti ligj i zbuluar qartësisht dhe i dhënë në Krishtin dhe Kishën. Dhe ata njerëz që janë zyrtarisht anëtarë të Kishës, po jetojnë me të vërtetë, vetëm përse ata po e jetojnë aktualisht jetën e Kishës. Sepse ekziston fakti i trishtuar që dikush mund të jetë zyrtarisht anëtar i Kishës dhe të jetojë ende sipas ligjit të mishit, ligjit të mëkatisht dhe vdekjes dhe jo sipas atij të Krishtit. Prandaj, jeta shpirtërore, qëndron në përjetimin aktual të jetës së Kishës.

nga *Besimi Ortodoks (The Orthodox Faith)*
i At Thomas Hopko



Coming Events

September

- 1: Church New Year
- 8: Nativity of the Virgin Mary
10:00 a.m. — Divine Liturgy
- 14: Elevation of the Holy Cross
10:00 a.m. — Divine Liturgy and Church
School Opening Day
- 26: St. John the Theologian
- 26/ Archdiocesan Assembly
- 27: SS Peter & Paul, Philadelphia, PA

October

- 1: Protection of the Theotokos
- 3: St. Dionysius the Areopagite
- 5: FORCC Scholarship Banquet
St. Nicholas Church, Bridgeport
- 18: Holy Apostle Luke
- 23: Holy Apostle James, Brother of the LORD
- 25: Teuta Bazaar
- 26: Great Martyr Demetrius

November

- 8: Archangel Michael
- 9: St. Nectarios of Aegina
- 14: Holy Apostle Philip
- 16: Holy Apostle Matthew
- 21: Entrance of the Theotokos
10:00 a.m. — Divine Liturgy
- 26: Thanksgiving Eve
7:00 p.m. — Service of Thanksgiving
- 27: Thanksgiving Day
- 28: Albanian Flag Day (*Ditë e Flamurit*)
- 30: Holy Apostle Andrew

Looking ahead...

- December 6: St. Nicholas of Myra in Lycia
- December 13: St. Herman of Alaska
- December 25: The Nativity of our LORD
- January 1, 2015: St. Basil the Great
- January 6: Theophany
The Baptism of our LORD
- February 2: The Meeting of our LORD in
the Temple
- February 23: Great Lent begins
- March 23: Martyr Nikon
and his disciples
(*Archbishop Nikon's Nameday*)
- April 5: Western Easter
- April 12: Pascha
The Resurrection of our LORD
- April 23: Great Martyr George
- May 21: Ascension of our LORD
SS Constantine and Helen
- May 31: Pentecost
The Descent of the Holy Spirit

Spiritual Book Club to continue

On Tuesday, September 16th, the **Spiritual Book Club**, a part of our Natural Church Development program, will hold its next session at the home of *Jim and Vi Bowe*, starting at 7:00 p.m.

The group will begin reading *The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming* by Henri J. M. Nouwen. The book is available at a cost of \$12.00 from *Laura Chadwick*.

Everyone is invited, and friends are most welcome.

News from Teuta

The annual **Teuta Bazaar** will be held on Saturday, October 25th from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Please put it on your calendar.

A letter requesting donations towards the Program Booklet will be sent out within the next few weeks. We are also looking for volunteers to work on the day of the event.

Please see *Viola Bowe* for more details.

Bible Study

On September 10th, the Wednesday-evening **Bible Study Group** will resume its regular meetings.

As in the past, **Akathist Hymn "Glory to God for all things"** will be celebrated in Church at 6:30 p.m. Then, at 7:00 p.m., **Bible Study** will be held in the Church Hall, lasting until about 8:30 p.m. The discussions are lively and interesting and are not strictly limited to the scripture text, but can go wherever the interest of the group directs.

At the first meeting, we will decided which book of the Bible we will read next.

The Bible Study group is open to anyone with an interest in the Bible and the Orthodox Faith.

Please join us!



FORCC Banquet

The **21st Annual FORCC Benefit Dinner** will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 5th. This year's event will be held at *St. Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Church* on Park Avenue in Bridgeport. Father Timothy Lowe will be the guest speaker.

Menu options include chicken or stuffed fish fillet. Tickets are \$35 per person for adults and \$10 per person for children and must be purchased by September 20th (*no tickets sold at the door*).

See Father Dennis or Bob Lazar for information.

NCD update

For more than two years, the members of our Parish have been working through the **Natural Church Development** program. *Fervent Spirituality* was identified as our minimum factor in a survey taken in January, 2012, and a number of efforts have been undertaken to improve our "score" in that area.

At a recent meeting, the members of our **Church Health Team** (the group that is coordinating this effort) decided that it was time to take stock of our progress by repeating the survey.

They have scheduled two dates: Sunday, September 28th, and Tuesday, September 30th. They will give complete details during the Coffee Hour they're sponsoring on September 21st.

Coffee Hour Sign-up Poster

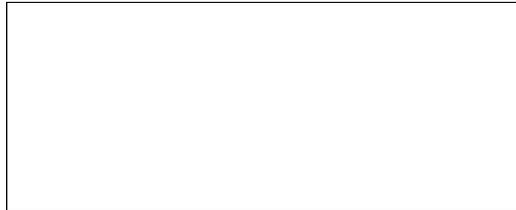
Hanging on the bulletin board in the Church Hall again this year is a poster where people can sign up to host **Coffee Hour** on Sunday mornings.

This is a way for us all to see if there are available Sundays and to plan ahead for any special occasions we might want to share with our Parish family: birthdays, namedays, memorials, etc.

Be sure to take a look at it and put your name down to host in the near future.

Saint George Orthodox Church
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FORWARD AND ADDRESS CORRECTION



The Wonderworker

The Wonderworker
is a quarterly publication of
Saint George Orthodox Church,
Trumbull, Connecticut
a parish of the
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Archpriest Dennis R. Rhodes,
Rector
James Bowe
Council President