

THE BASIL LEAF



St. Basil The Great Orthodox Church

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Parish Happenings:

January was no time to slow down. First we celebrated the feast of St. Basil. A big thanks to Elena Fritts who made wonderful vasilopita for our patronal feast. And even though we did have to contend with snow days, we managed to bless water for Theophany, and house blessing ensued. We blessed over thirty homes this year!

Last month also brought us into the Lenten Triodion, which is the period of preparation before Great Lent. (continued on p. 2)

What is going on!?

Fr. James Purdie

Violence takes many forms. As a culture we are very fixated on it. Think about. We have to run anti-bullying campaigns in our schools, Hollywood began the “Me Too” movement, racial violence in various forms persists, inner city crime continues, incarceration rates remain high, and wars are on-going. In 2018 we have seen 18 school shootings. Most recently we have witnessed the high profile horror of the school shooting in Parkland, Florida. Moreover, we do violence to unborn children, and violate the sanctity of our bodies’ gender. We twist words and ideologies that do violence to our thoughts, worldview, and faith. (Continued on p. 3)

A time is coming when men will go mad, and when they see someone who is not mad, they will attack him, saying, ‘You are mad; you are not like us. –*St. Anthony The Great*

Church Etiquette and How To:

Due to popular demand, we are including a second part to last month’s article “Church Etiquette and How To.” Now we will address additional questions that have since come up from both converts and “cradle” members alike. Like last article, we will be following, paraphrasing, and quoting from Fr. David Barr’s article entitled, “Church Etiquette Or Some Things You Should Know While In Church.”

Who is my patron saint? How do I get one, and do I have to change my name?

It is custom to either be baptized, or chrismated under a saint’s name, or to simply be given a saint’s name as your birth name. A patron saint is someone who prays for you, and whose intercessions you may ask for. Typically, if your birth name is that of a saint’s then that saint would be your patron. For example, I (Fr. James) was named, in part, for James the Brother of the Lord. I kept that name at my chrismation and recognize that St. James as my patron, although I could have chosen another saint. In many cultures when people undergo a radical change of identity they would take a new name. For example, Sojourner Truth was born Isabella Baumfree, but changed her name to reflect the charge God had given her. Likewise someone might receive a new name when they’re ordained, take monastic vows, are baptized, or chrismated. For example, one’s given name may be Colt, but there is no “St. Colt.” So when Colt comes into the Church he may choose a patron saint. Perhaps Colt will choose a saint whose feast day is on his birthday, or he’ll choose someone whose saintly life mirrors his own, or that he wants to emulate. Colt may even pick a saint he has some sort of connection with, or whose writings inspire him. What if he chooses St. Nektarios, does he have to be called Nektarios from now on? He can, but that might seem too strange to him and others, but he could. Perhaps he will simply refer to himself as Nektarios when he receives the sacraments, or when he is with his parish family. If you’re not sure what to do, ask your priest.

How do I receive communion?

First and foremost, we receive communion “with fear of God, faith, and love.” Work to forgive your enemies, those who hurt you, be reconciled (as much as you can) with those you’ve offended, and practice the virtues. Next, be prepared. We prepare ourselves with prayer, fasting (from the previous midnight) and confession. (continued on p. 3)

Parish Happenings...The Triodion puts on souls on the Lenten path by reminding us to desire God, advance in humility, live repentantly, and to forgive one another. The period also eases us into fasting by meatfare and Cheesefare weeks.

And so we have now begun Great Lent. The first week of which we held services every evening. On the subsequent Wednesdays and Fridays we will celebrate pre-Sanctified Liturgy and Akathist respectively. Remember, our fasting must be joined with prayer and almsgiving. If you have any questions, please see Fr. James.

The Antiochian Women's next meeting will be March 18th. The ladies recently enjoyed an outing at a local Indian restaurant, where they enjoyed fellowship, revealed to each other who their "secret sister" was, and reviewed their various projects.

Terry Slezak of the Stewardship Ministry has been in touch with Sts. Constantine and Helen regarding our participation in their Greek festival. Last year we assisted in the festival and raised \$2,000 for our parish. We hope duplicate this again, so mark your calendars. The Greek festival is May 31-June 3.

Due to time constraints the Sacred Arts Festival has been moved to the April 20th & 21st. The two days will consist of Choral music, icon demonstrations and displays, and discussions about the place of beauty within our Orthodox faith. Bookstore items will be available, as well as refreshments. We will need your help, so please see James Crawford.

Mark Nixon and the Youth Group met this past month. The kids made



Our own Emily Robinson and Jared Emry faceoff in an intense battle of "rock, paper, scissors" at the OFC retreat as Geoff Saur, Emily Franks and other students cheer them on.

prayer ropes, cookies, and enjoyed each other's company. The kids also assisted in moving items into the sheds to make room for our library. Afterward they all attended Vespers. Their next gathering will be March 31 at the Church from 5-7:30pm. They will have activities and discussions about Holy Week.

During the first weekend of February, college students from around the

mid-Atlantic, including several of our young adult parishioners, attended the annual Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) retreat at William & Mary. Students gathered with the local clergy and focused on the topic of "What's next?" We are all in transition, especially college students and young adults. It's important to consider the next chapter of their lives in light of the faith, rather than the pressures of the world. Over sixty students participated! You may have seen some of them at Church that Sunday. And did you know that our parish, along with the other local Orthodox churches, provides financial support to the retreat at W&M? Our aid helps defray the cost of hotel accommodations, food, and registration. Thank you.



Garland, Misty, and their children await Holy baptism. Welcome home!

Sacrament Report

1/14/18 Baptism of Jane Barnard, daughter of Kane and Cassidy Barnard.

1/21/18 Baptism of Garland Harris, Misty Nibecker, and their children Jayden, Cora, and Cyanna.

1/27/18 Marriage of Garland and Mistry Harris (Nibecker).

What is going on!?!... Then people react violently to perceived violence real or unreal. We tear families apart in the name of science, and the earth cries out under our feet. It seems like we are crumbling as a society, disintegrating as a culture, and destroying one another. What is going on!?!

What is going on is that we are fractured. We are alienated from each other, and we have become strangers even to ourselves. We are rapidly redefining our past, our traditions, our values, our sexuality, indeed what it means to be human. And we are doing all of this at an exponential pace with technological advances we can scarcely keep up with. That is what is happening. That is what is going on, but do we know why? In whose name are we progressing? What is the end game?

We are certainly not becoming fractured, alienated, and strangers in the name of God. We are not redefining in the image and likeness of the Divine. If we are “progressing” it is not toward holiness, but neither are we regressing. There is a movement toward perhaps what C.S. Lewis described as the *Abolition of Man*. A moment toward a dystopia in which we hardly resemble humanity. A humanity unrecognizable to itself, unable to discern for itself, incapable of thought or communication.

If that is the case, “senseless” violence would be an expression, or manifestation, of a humanity that no longer recognizes itself and thus is incapable of seeing humanity in others. Violence would be an expression of the angst and confusion in the heart of such a “humanity.” This undergirds much of modern violence, especially seen today in school shootings, sexual identity issues, and various redefinitions of values and traditions. What then is the solution?

Solutions are not to be found in the laws and courts of government. It is not to be found in another technological advancement, or platform. Nor is the solution in science or medicine. Those things may have their place and purpose, but will not provide a total or foundational solution to what ails us and causes violence.

The answer, you may have guessed, must be found in God, in faith, and in some level of objectivity and common moral law. Only then will we be able to speak with each other, understand each other, and recognize humanity in ourselves and in each other. Is it possible to stem-the-tide? Is it possible to avoid the abolition of man? I don't know. Maybe all we can do is hope to keep our humanity as the world around us loses it. In either case, we will need all the faith we can muster if we hope to offer any Light to the world.

Church Etiquette And How To Part II...

(How do I receive communion con't)

Not all of us can, or even should, do a total fast (no food or drink) from the previous midnight on. Children under seven, the aged, and sick may not be able to do so. In such cases speak with your priest on how best to proceed. Often I am asked, “Do I have to go to confession every single time I take communion?” No, however, we encourage frequent communion *and* frequent confession. Confess on a regular basis. Once or twice a year is not regular. Confession is an important sacrament that allows us to progress spiritually and receive the Eucharist in a holy manner that is not to our condemnation.

Ok Father, but how do I *take* communion?

At the appropriate time, get in line, cross your arms over your chest and approach the chalice. When it is your turn it's common to say “The servant of God *name*.” This is a perfect time to use your saint's name! Here it gets tricky: Do you close your mouth on the spoon or not? I *suggest* closing your mouth. It ensures the Eucharist gets into your mouth and doesn't fall out. Often the Eucharist can get stuck on the spoon, so unless you close your mouth the priest has to shake it off. That leads to a metal spoon smacking your teeth.

Children in Church...

Yes! Jesus said, “Let the children to come unto Me, and do not forbid them; for such is the Kingdom of Heaven.” If the parents feel they need to use the cry room they can take them, but otherwise we want them in the liturgy where they learn and worship as they can. They are baptized members after all. They will of course make kid noises, and children about three and under may have snacks, or something to keep their hands occupied while being courteous to other members. They should be encouraged to be in Church. We learn patience from their simplicity and take joy in their presence. They are a sign of our vibrant and familial community.

When should my child start fasting before communion?

Most children should be able to make it through a liturgy without a snack by about four years of age. Fasting before communion should start around age seven, although it may be later for many children. Parents should themselves model this practice, and speak with their child as to why we fast before communion. Some phrases to use are: “Communion is so special, we want it to be the first thing we eat,” “God, Mary, and the saints will help you to fast. Ask for their help,” “Fasting and confession are how we prepare for communion. Like a warm up before a game.”

How old should my child be before he or she goes to confession?

This is somewhat different for each child, but a solid rule of thumb is again seven. It depends on their maturity and level of comfort. Of course they become comfortable with confession by going to confession. Mom and Dad should also model this practice and age appropriate things to confess. Your priest is happy to help answer any questions and work with your child.

Final thoughts on Church etiquette.

Fr. David Barr has pointed out how today in America we are “rather casual in our approach to life. Don't allow this prevailing attitude to enter into your Orthodox Christian piety...Much of church etiquette is based on common sense and showing respect for God and others. Always remember that you are in church to worship God, the Holy Trinity. The priest says, ‘With the fear of God and faith and love, draw near.’ Let this be the way you approach all of worship. If you do, you will probably have good church etiquette.” To this I would add that patience, humility, and forgiveness toward one another should also be guiding principles.

Dates to Remember

Great Vespers, Saturdays 6:30 PM. Matins, Sundays, 9:25 AM.
Divine Liturgy, Sundays, 10:30 AM.

Sunday School & Adult Ed, Sundays following Liturgy.

Feb. 28 Pre-Sanctified Liturgy, 6:30pm

Mar. 2 Akathist, 6:30pm

6 Bible Study, 11am in Poquoson

7 Pre-Sanctified Liturgy, 6:30pm

9 Akathist, 6:30pm

13 Bible Study, 11am in Poquoson

14 Pre-Sanctified Liturgy, 6:30pm

16 Akathist, 6:30pm

20 Bible Study, 11am in Poquoson

21 Pre-Sanctified Liturgy, 6:30pm

23 Akathist, 6:30pm

27 Bible Study, 11am in Poquoson

28 Pre-Sanctified Liturgy, 6:30pm

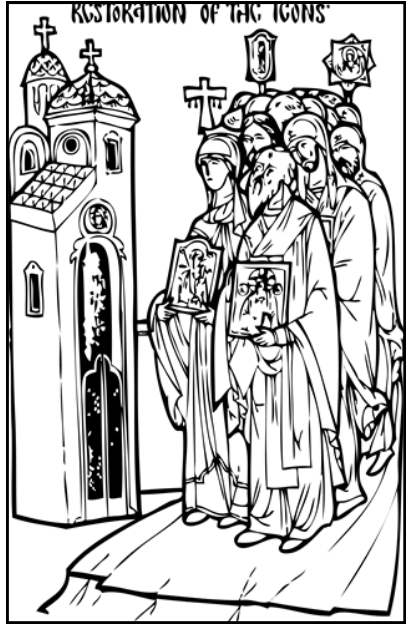
29 Canon of Repentance w/ life of St. Mary of Egypt, 6:30pm

30 Canon of St. Lazarus, 6:30pm

31 Lazarus Saturday

Matins, 9:30am

Divine Liturgy, 10:30am



Holy Week & Pascha

April. 1 Palm Sunday

Sunday morning services as scheduled

Bridegroom Matins, 6:30pm

2 Holy Monday- Bridegroom Matins, 6:30pm

3 Holy Tuesday- Bridegroom Matins, 6:30pm

4 Holy Wednesday- Holy Unction, 6:30pm

5 Holy Thursday

Vesperal Liturgy for the Mystical Supper, 9:30am

Reading of the 12 Gospels, 6:30pm

6 Holy Friday

Royal Hours & Typica, 9:30am

Decorating of the Bier & Pot-luck, 11:30am

Vespers of the Un-nailing, 4pm

Lenten Pot-luck, 5:30pm

Lamentations, 6:30pm

7 Holy Saturday

Vesperal Liturgy for the Descent in Hades, 9:30am

Midnight Office, Rush Service, Pascha, 10:30pm

Meal to follow.

8 Great & Holy Pascha

Agape Vespers, 12pm

Easter Egg Hunt, 1pm

