



***SS Peter and Paul Albanian Orthodox Church***  
***9230 Old Bustleton Avenue***  
***Philadelphia, PA 19115***  
***Church Phone: 215-676-3311***

***Pastor: Father Stephen Siniari***  
***Rectory Phone: 856-616-0782***



*Church Bulletin ~ April 2004*

## **Father Stephen's Message to the Faithful**

### **You Are Free to Sing: Christ is Risen!**

During Fr. George's second prison term he had two other experiences of the Light. The first was in 1980 when he was in Aiud Prison in the north of Transylvania. It was an old prison with very bad conditions and he was isolated in a cell for seven months. He saw no one except the guards who were instructed to beat him and insult him all the time. There was one guard who Fr. George said was the most sadistic man he had ever met in his life; he could not accomplish his eight hour shift without beating and torturing the inmates.

It was the night of Pascha, the radiant Feast of Christ's Resurrection. At midnight the bells in the nearby churches started to ring. "The sound of the bells arrived very lightly in my cell," Fr. George recalled. "It was so beautiful - It was like in Paradise. Being alone in the cell, I realized for the first time how beautiful is the sound of bells. That night I did not sleep. I was lying on my bed and remembering Paschas in the past: a Pascha when I was a child, a Pascha when I was a student, a previous Pascha in prison. All the time I was singing, 'Christ is Risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life.' I was so happy.

At seven o'clock the shift changed. Coming into the corridor, the new guards opened the doors. We were obliged to turn our backs to them, to be against the wall and to not look at them until we heard the door close. It was a tradition. But on this day of the joy of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ I did not turn my face to the wall. The young, especially cruel guard came in -- and I looked at him directly into his eyes and said, 'Christ is Risen!' He looked at me, not with anger, and then he looked at the other guards, because it was forbidden not to face the wall. Then he turned to me and said, 'In truth, He is risen!'

I was very shocked. I was not able to move. How could he say to me, 'In truth He is risen?' I understood that it was not him -- it was his angel. He shut the door and I was petrified because of what he had said. And little by little I saw myself full of Light. The board against the wall was shining like the sun, everything in my cell was full of shine. I cannot explain in words the happiness that invaded me then. I can explain nothing. It simply happened."

Fr George Calciu is a Romanian Orthodox priest who endured 22 years in communist prisons and later moved to the United States.

*From **Christ the Eternal***

## **Events & Announcements**

### **Liturgical Schedule - April/May 2004**

**ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM - SUNDAY, APRIL 4** - Divine Liturgy & Blessing of Palms, 10 AM

**HOLY WEDNESDAY - HOLY UNCTION - APRIL 7** - 7 PM

**HOLY THURSDAY - 12 PASSION GOSPELS - APRIL 8 - 7 PM**

**HOLY FRIDAY VESPERS - TAKING DOWN FROM CROSS - APRIL 9 - 3 PM;  
LAMENTATIONS AT TOMB - 7 PM**

**HOLY SATURDAY - VESPERAL LITURGY OF ST. BASIL - APRIL 10 - 9 AM;  
ORTHROS/PASHKAL CANON/LITURGY - 11 PM**

**PASCHA SUNDAY AGAPE VESPERS - GOSPEL IN MANY LANGUAGES -  
APRIL 11 - Noon; Easter Egg Hunt for children following Vespers**

**HOLY ASCENSION THURSDAY - MAY 20 - Divine Liturgy - 9 AM**

### **Church News & Reminders**

**ICON PLEDGES** - A reminder that Icon Pledges can be paid at any time. Please see the treasurer, George Kendro.

**MEMBERSHIP DUES 2004** - Dues are \$100 per person and can be paid at any time to George Kendro, treasurer.

**CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING** - Will be held on Monday, April 19, 7 PM. All Parishioners are welcome to attend.

**SPECIAL SERVICES** - If you are planning to have a special service in the Church, please be considerate and notify either Father Stephen or the Church Committee one week in advance. When you are planning for a Baptism, Wedding, Funeral, or any other Prayer Service in the Church, please speak with Father Stephen in advance to determine if there is any way you can contribute to help the Church in helping others. Thank you.

**NO SMOKING/NO CELL PHONES** - Please remember that SS Peter & Paul has a no smoking policy in the building and that ringers on cell phones should be off during the Divine Liturgy.

### **The Joy of Giving**

**PASCHA FLOWERS DONATIONS** - A special collection for Pascha flowers will be held on **Sunday, April 4**. Please give generously.

**A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE LADIES SOCIETY** - for the wonderful Lenten Luncheon during His Grace Bishop Nikon's visit for the Ordination of Deacon David Fox. Anyone wishing to donate money to help defray the cost of the Luncheon, please see any member of the Ladies' Society.

**A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ELAINE QUIRIAS** - for making and putting together the cheery and beautiful new bouquets for the tables upstairs. The bouquets were right in time for the Luncheon with His Grace Bishop Nikon and the newly ordained Deacon David Fox. Thank you, Eurania!

**CASSEROLES FOR THE HOMELESS** - Please continue to help feed the hungry. Frozen casseroles are collected on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month by Harry Halkedis. A \$10 donation for casseroles can be given at any time. *Thank you! Please go to page 5 for a current update.*

**POOR BOX DONATIONS** - Please continue to remember those who are less fortunate than we are.

**COLLECTION FOR THE POOR** - A special collection for the poor will be held on the 1st Sunday of every month. Please plan to give generously every month to those whose lives are less fortunate than ours. Donations can also be placed in the **Poor Box** at any time.

**DONATIONS OF WINE & OIL** - Altar wine and virgin olive oil for the altar lamps are always needed. The name of the altar wine is **Mavrodaphne of Patras** and it is available at most PA State Stores. Please help make sure that we always have a plentiful supply.

**PASTORAL FUND COLLECTION** - Collections for the Pastoral Fund will take place every 3rd Sunday of the month. Please donate generously. "Pastoral Fund" donation envelopes are found in the Church foyer, on the left side of the glass partition, should you wish to donate at another time.

## **Ladies' Society News**

**MEETING** - Sunday, **April 18**, after Divine Liturgy

## **Events**

**BUS TRIP TO ST. TIKHON'S MONASTERY - After Pascha 2004** - The bus will be leaving St. John Chrysostom's at 9 AM. Lunch, tour of Museum and Monastery, spiritual talk by Monk Nickodemos, Vespers, etc. Reservations are \$20. Please contact Nick Naum at 856-429-2099 for information and/or reservations.

## **Miscellaneous**

**WEB PAGE/E-MAILS** - SS Peter & Paul Webpage: <http://homepage.mac.com/alicaj17/sspeterpaulhome1.html>. New Bulletins can be viewed the Saturday before distribution by 7 PM (just click on the tip link "**Church Bulletin**"). If you would like to be kept up-to-date by e-mail or to be removed from our "paper" mailing list, please send me an e-mail at: [alicaj17@mac.com](mailto:alicaj17@mac.com)

**ANNOUNCEMENTS/NEWS ABOUT PARISHIONERS** - If you have any items to include in next month's Bulletin, please see Alicia or call her at **215-742-0492** or e-mail: [alicia17@mac.com](mailto:alicia17@mac.com). The deadline for the next Bulletin is **Sunday, April 25**. Thank you! Parishioners will be able to pick up the Bulletins at the Church on **Sunday 5/2/04**. Bulletins will be mailed to any Parishioners unable to attend.

**Thank You** to all members of the Parish who have helped out or volunteered in any way with their time and efforts, and a very special **thank you** to anyone whose name was inadvertently omitted from the Bulletin.

**PLEASE RECYCLE YOUR BULLETIN ENVELOPES** in either of the two wire baskets. Thank you!

## **Parishioner's Corner**

**A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY** is wished to the following parishioners and friends who are celebrating **April** Birthdays: **Belinda Mentzer, Rose Shaloka, Sharon Spause, Margaret Vesho, Jim Zallie**

*May God grant them all many, many years!*

**A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU** to **Mary Jaxheimer** for continuing her tradition of coming back to SS Peter & Paul to help us with the palm crosses last Wednesday evening.

### **Casseroles for the Homeless Update**

Under the guidance of Harry Halkedis, the Casseroles for the Homeless Program continues to feed those less fortunate than ourselves with your kind assistance.

**IN MARCH, 29 CASSEROLES WERE DELIVERED TO ST. JOHN'S HOSPICE. ALSO DELIVERED: A FROZEN TURKEY, TOWELS, PILLOW CASES, A COAT, SOCKS, T-SHIRTS, JARS OF PASTA AND A 3 LB. CAN OF COFFEE**

***From November through March, we delivered a total of 84 casseroles plus miscellaneous food and clothing.***

*Thank you all for your generous donations!*

### **May +Fr John Rachko's Memory Be Eternal**

PORT ST. LUCIE, FL [OCA Communications] The Very Rev. John Rachko, who in retirement was attached to Saint James Mission here, died on Sunday, February 29, 2004.

Born July 17, 1926 in Maizeville, PA, Father Rachko received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Great Lakes College, Detroit, MI before enrolling in and graduating from Saint Tikhon Orthodox Theological Seminary, South Canaan, PA. On September 2, 1950, he married the former Irene Papinsick. Prior to his ordination to the Holy Diaconate and Priesthood in 1950 he served as choir director at Saint John the Baptist Church, Signac, NJ.

From 1950 until 1956 he served as rector of Holy Ghost Church, Detroit, MI. He also served Holy Ghost Church, Ambridge, PA from 1956 until 1962 and Saint John the Baptist Church, Edwardsville, PA from 1962 until 1970, when he took a leave of absence to work as a vocational rehabilitation counselor with addicts, alcoholics, the mentally impaired and the physically handicapped. During this time he also served as a supply priest in various parishes throughout Pennsylvania, Ohio and Connecticut.

In 1972 he was assigned rector of Saint John the Baptist Church, Alpha, NJ. The following year he was transferred to the pastorate of Saints Peter and Paul Albanian Orthodox Church, Philadelphia, PA, which he served until 1983, when he was assigned rector of Holy Trinity Church, Charleroi, PA. In 1991 he retired from active ministry and relocated to Port St. Lucie.

Father Rachko received numerous awards during his ministry, including elevation to the rank of archpriest in 1965 and the right to wear the palitza in 1984.

Funeral services will be held at 6:00 p.m. at Saint James Mission, Port St. Lucie, FL on Wednesday, March 3. Additional services will be held at 10:00 a.m. at the Monastery Church of

Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk, South Canaan, PA on Saturday, March 6, followed by interment in the monastery cemetery.

Father Rachko is survived by his wife, Irene, children, and grandchildren.

### **Letter from Father Deacon David Fox**

Annunciation, 2004

Dear SS. Peter & Paul Albanian Orthodox Church:

What a day you gave us!

We were overwhelmed by everything, the service, your endurance, the “axios” you offered. The luncheon afterward was a true gift: you treated us like royalty.

It was hard for our parents to feel the separation of not sharing the Chalice, but they said later that they had never felt as welcomed by a church before. Not only this, but you provided a care package for our children, which they loved. Added to this, you gave Kerri and I such a generous gift! Thank you so much!

To everyone who made something, who worked so hard to set up, to serve, then to clean up afterward, to each person who provided for our gift or who signed the personalized card, and to the ladies who provided an extra gift, to the Carpenters, who photographed and sent us digital pictures of the ordination, to Stephen Murianka, who took time on a Saturday away from his family to deliver the care package, and of course, to Fr. Stephen and Priftesha Margot, who have given us so much over so many years:

**THANK YOU. MAY GOD BLESS YOU FOR YOUR AMAZING KINDNESS.**

Please continue to pray for me.

It will be a great honor to serve you as Deacon.

Your brother in Christ,

Fr. Dn. David Rodney Fox

**Ordination of Seminarian David Fox ~ March 14, 2004**



## Holy Days and Name Days in April

- April 2 - Martyr Polycarp
- April 3 - Lazarus Saturday
- April 4 - Palm Sunday
- April 6 - St Methodius, Apostle to the Slavs
- April 7 - Holy Wednesday; Repose of St Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow
- April 8 - Holy Thursday
- April 9 - Holy Friday; Monk Martyr Vadim of Persia
- April 10 - Holy Saturday
- April 11 - Pascha - Feast of Feasts
- April 14 - St Martin the Confessor, Pope of Rome
- April 16 - Virgin Martyrs Agape, Irene & Chionia
- April 22 - Apostles Nathaniel, Luke & Clement
- April 23 - Holy Great Martyr, Victorybearer & Wonderworker George
- April 25 - Holy Apostle & Evangelist Mark
- April 28 - St Jason & St Sosipater
- April 30 - Holy Apostle James, Brother of St John; St Ignatius Brianchaninov

### ***The Entrance of Our Lord Jesus Christ into Jerusalem***

The feast of Christ's triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, Palm Sunday, is one of the 12 major feasts of the Church. The services of this Sunday follow directly from those of Lazarus Saturday. The church building continues to be Vested in resurrectional splendor, filled with hymns which continually repeat the Hosanna offered to Christ as the Messiah-King who comes in the name of God the Father for the salvation of the world.



The main troparion of Palm Sunday is the same one sung on Lazarus Saturday. It is sung at all of the services, and is used at the Divine Liturgy as the third antiphon which follows the other special psalm verses which are sung as the liturgical antiphons in the place of those normally used. The second troparion of the feast, as well as the kontakion and the other verses and hymns, all continue to glorify Christ's triumphal manifestation "six days before the Passover" when he will give himself at the Supper and on the Cross for the life of the world. *Today the grace of the Holy Spirit has gathered us together. Let us all take up Thy cross and say: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!* (First Verse of Vespers). *When we were buried with Thee in baptism, O Christ*



*God, we were made worthy of eternal life by Thy resurrection. Now we praise Thee and sing: Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord! (Second Troparion). Sitting on Thy throne in heaven, and carried on a foal on earth, O Christ God, accept the praise of angels and the songs of children who sing: Blessed is he who comes to recall Adam! (Kontakion).*

At the vigil of the feast of Palm Sunday the prophecies of the Old Testament about the Messiah-King are read together with the Gospel accounts of the entry of Christ into Jerusalem. At Matins branches are blessed which the people carry throughout the celebration as the sign of their own glorification of Jesus as Saviour and King. These branches are usually palms, or, in the Slavic churches, pussy willows which came to be customary because of their availability and their early blossoming in the springtime.

~ Reading courtesy of OCA Webpage ~

~ Icon Courtesy of Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Webpage ~