



SS Peter and Paul Albanian Orthodox Church
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Church Bulletin ~ May 2003

Father Stephen's Message to the Faithful

Two young monks went down to the city to sell their baskets. They separated for a while and during this period one of them fell to a serious sin of the flesh. Afterwards, darkened by despair, he wished under no circumstances to return to the desert.

"Go back alone. I will remain here," he told the other monk as soon as they met again.

"Why, my brother? What happened to you?" the other monk asked him kindly, without having an inkling as to the reason for his fellow monk's decision not to return to the desert.

"Ah, since you insist on knowing, when we separated I went to a woman. Now I have just lost my soul. What is there for me in the desert?"

The pure monk was shaken on hearing of the sin to which his friend had fallen. However, he did not show this. Indeed, to save his friend from the rapacious clutches of despair, he pretended that the same thing had also happened to him.

"Let us return to the desert, brother," he said with tears in his eyes, "and let us both struggle together. God, a Father who loves people, will see our repentance and will forgive us."

With these and other words of comfort, he convinced the truly guilty monk to follow him to the desert. When they reached the skete, they both confessed and were put under severe penance by the Fathers.

For an entire year the innocent monk repented and struggled for the sake of his guilty brother, taking upon himself all of the shame for a sin that he had not even contemplated. God accepted his offering and rewarded the monk in the following way:

One night, as one of the great Fathers of the skete there prayed, he heard a voice tell him,

"Because of the great love of the innocent monk, I forgive the guilty one."

After this, the Fathers granted a release from their penance to the guilty monks, never knowing which one was indeed the guilty person.

— From **LOVE**, by Bishop Chrysostomos

*** **Note:** This is not a commentary on "woman as temptress or woman as evil." The story could just as easily have begun, "Two young nuns..." It is rather a commentary on God's love and forgiveness when we falter in our particular calling and obedience, and fall into despair. Additionally, it reminds us of Christ's taking on our sins, and our call to do the same for one another, sharing each others burdens in the Lord.

Events & Announcements

Church News & Reminders

HIS GRACE BISHOP NIKON is scheduled to come visit SS. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church on **Sunday, June 29**, the Feast Day of our Church.

ICON PLEDGES - Your Icon Pledges for 2003 are being accepted by George Kendro every Sunday. Please begin fulfilling your pledges as soon as possible.

MEMBERSHIP DUES 2003 - Dues have been raised to \$100 per person and they can be paid starting now.

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETINGS - Held the 1st Monday of every month, 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 POLICY - Having sought guidance from our Bishop regarding the limited space in our Church building, Father Stephen and the Church Committee ask, for the sake of our children and the health of everyone, that we cease all forms of smoking: cigarettes, cigars, pipes, etc. as of Pascha 2003. Thank you.

CELL PHONES - Please be respectful of the Divine Liturgy and courteous to Father Stephen and other members of the congregation and turn off the ringer of your cell phone. Thank you.

The Joy of Giving

CASSEROLES FOR THE HOMELESS - Let us continue our tradition of giving. Please bring in your casseroles on any Sunday and give them to **Debbie Krimetz**. Recipes and pans are available in the hall. Debbie is also accepting \$10 donations and she will buy the casseroles herself. Thank you, **Debbie and Bob**, for your time and effort! A sincere **thank you** to everyone who donated casseroles.

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

COLLECTION FOR THE POOR - On the 1st Sunday of every month SS. Peter & Paul will hold a special collection for the poor. Please plan to give generously every month to those whose lives are less fortunate than ours.

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.

Sunday School News

BREAD BAKING - The Sunday School Bread Baking class is scheduled for **Sunday, 5/25**.

GRADUATION - A Graduation Ceremony will be held on the last day for Sunday School, **Sunday, 5/25/03**.

VOLUNTEER TEACHERS - Priftesha Margot Siniari is looking for a few good people to volunteer to be teachers for next year's Sunday School. No one would have to commit to every Sunday, but if you feel that you may have a special talent for sharing the Orthodox faith with young people, please see Priftesha Margot and volunteer! Any ideas for the Sunday School are always welcomed.

Events

PILGRIMAGE SCHEDULE - Anyone wishing to have a copy of the schedule for the 99th Annual Pilgrimage at Saint Tikhon's Monastery on **May 23 through 26, 2003**, with a map of how to get there on the reverse, please see **Alicia**.

PHILADELPHIA ORTHODOX YOUNG ADULTS (POYA) meets every 3rd Saturday of every month at St. John Chrysostom Albanian Orthodox Church in Center City at 6:30 PM for vespers, followed by dinner and discussion. For more information or to suggest topics of discussion, please contact **Katia** at **215-776-1162** or e-mail her at: **ekatarina2000@msn.com**

Miscellaneous

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**. The deadline for the next Bulletin is **Sunday, May 25**. Thank you! Parishioners will be able to pick up the Bulletins at the Church on **Sunday 6/1/03**. 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 an effort to help conserve paper, please leave the envelope from your Bulletin in either of the two wire baskets. This way I can use them again and again. Thanks very much from Alicia.

Parishioner's Corner

A **VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY** is wished to the following parishioners and friends who are celebrating **May** Birthdays: **Pat Bergey, Niqui Coco, Letitia Desloges, Olga Gorskaya, Haralambos Halkedis, George Kendro, Helen Zallie**

May God grant them all many, many years!

GREAT LENT, HOLY WEEK AND PASCHA SERVICES were very well attended: a **sincere thank you** to all those who participated. We especially appreciate **Father Stephen** for all he has done during this Paschal Season and throughout the year.

A **SINCERE THANK YOU** to **Christina Murianka and the entire Church Choir** for all of their hard work during the Paschal Season and throughout the year.

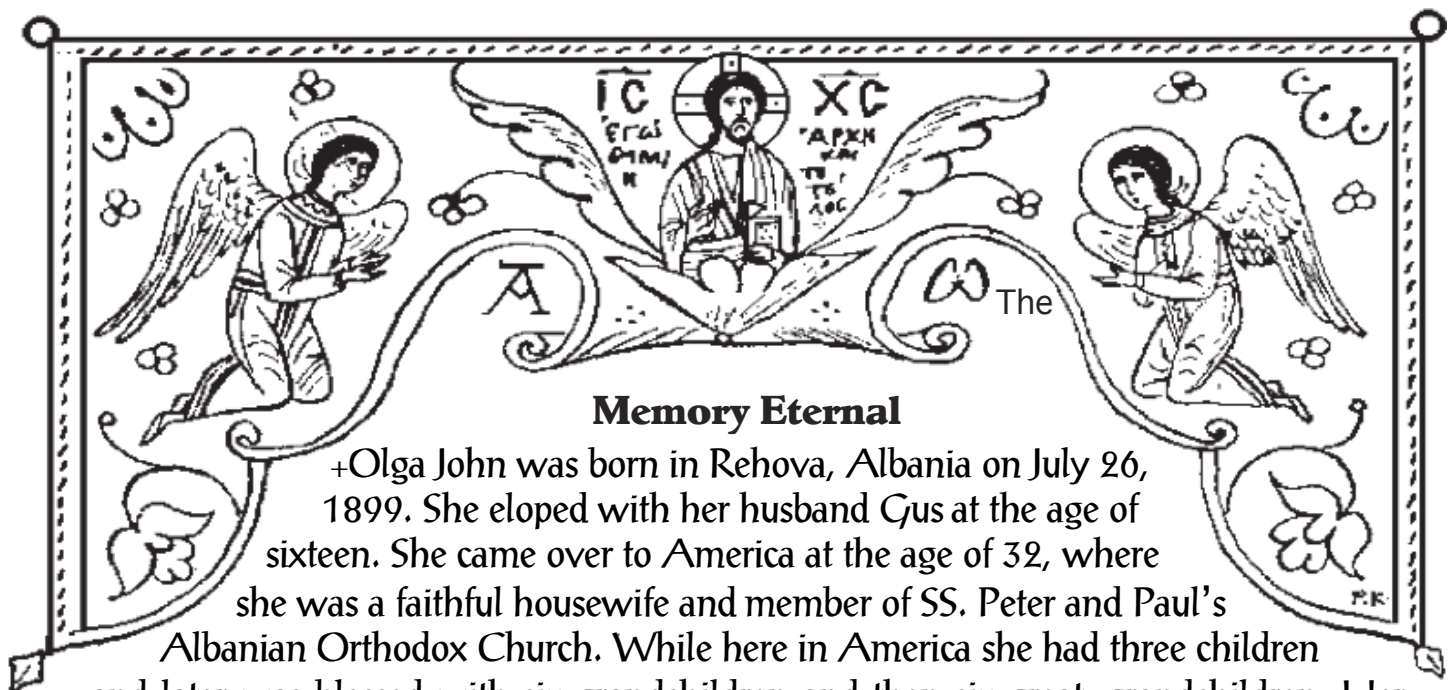
OUR SINCERE THANKS to **Belinda Mentzer, Jim Bachelor, and Janet Bachelor** for their time and energy in beautifying our Church for Holy Week and Pascha. Jim and Janet also wish to thank **Elizabeth**, who came especially to help with the decorating.

A SINCERE THANK YOU to **Stephen Murianka** for all his services and time during the Paschal Season and throughout the year.

A HUGE "THANK YOU!" to all those who donated their time, services, food, and/or money during the entire Lenten Season and through Holy Week and Pascha.

THE CHRIST ON THE CROSS ICON used this year on Holy Thursday Evening was donated to our Church in memory of Mrs. Helen Bojazi Hosack.

CHRISTIAN SPEERO, 11 year-old grandson of Lester & Sandy Speero, won 3rd Place in a Poetry Contest sponsored by the Catholic Daughters of the Americas in April. The theme was "The Stars that Guide Me." In July, Christian will be traveling to 4 European countries as a Junior Ambassador from the U.S. with a program called "We the People". The Speeros must be very proud!



Memory Eternal

+Olga John was born in Rehova, Albania on July 26, 1899. She eloped with her husband Gus at the age of sixteen. She came over to America at the age of 32, where she was a faithful housewife and member of SS. Peter and Paul's Albanian Orthodox Church. While here in America she had three children and later was blessed with six grandchildren and then six great-grandchildren. Her children learned the love of God through her. Even after her husband's death, she remained faithful to him and looked forward to the day she would be reunited with him. In her final years, she spent most of her time singing hymns to the Theotokos. She reposed peacefully in the Lord on Sunday, April 6, 2003. She was 103 years old.

**40 day Memorial Service for +Olga John
will be on Sunday, May 11**

Let Us Keep Them in Our Prayers

*** Please continue your prayers for the full recovery of **Matushka Katherine Toroney**.

*** Please continue your prayers for the full recovery of **Presbytera Cleopatra Gregory**.

A Prayer for the Sick

**O holy Father, heavenly Physician of our souls and bodies,
Who has sent Thine Only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ
to heal all our ailments and deliver us from death:
do Thou visit and heal Thy servant (name),
granting him/her release from pain
and restoration to health and vigor,
that he/she may give thanks unto Thee and bless Thy holy name,
of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit:
now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.**

St Tikhon's Monastery 99th Annual Memorial Day Pilgrimage Icon of Tikhvin Mother of God begins journey to Russia at St Tikhon Monastery Pilgrimage

SOUTH CANAAN, PA - As its first stop on what is projected to be a year-long journey to its original home at the Dormition Monastery in Tikhvin, Russia, the wonder-working icon of the Tikhvin Mother of God will be available for veneration during the 99th annual Pilgrimage to Saint Tikhon Monastery here May 23-26, 2003.

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, Primate of the Orthodox Church in America, and members of the Holy Synod of Bishops will welcome the icon at the monastery entrance at 3:00 p.m. on Friday, May 23, marking the pilgrimage's formal opening. Following the celebration of Vespers and Matins, a procession with the icon will make its way around the monastery church and the Akathist Hymn in honor of the icon will be sung.

"Tradition holds that the icon is one of several ascribed to the Evangelist Luke," according to the Very Rev. John Matusiak, OCA Communications Director. "In the fifth century, the icon was transferred from Jerusalem to Constantinople, where it was enshrined in the Blachernae church built in its honor. It miraculously appeared over Lake Ladoga in northern Russia in 1383 and was ultimately enshrined in Tikhvin's Dormition Monastery."



The late Archbishop John [Garklavs] of Chicago became the icon's guardian in 1944, while he was stationed in Riga, Latvia.

"Archbishop John brought the icon to the US in 1949, and it has remained in Chicago ever since," Father Matusiak adds. "After Archbishop John's death in the early 1980s, the Very Rev. Sergei Garklavs, the Archbishop's adopted son, was entrusted with the icon's care, with the provision that it be returned to the monastery in Tikhvin after the demise of the Soviet regime."

According to the Very Rev. Alexander Garklavs, Archbishop John's grandson and rector of Holy Trinity Church, East Meadow, NY, "Archbishop John always believed that the fate of the icon was in God's providence and that the Theotokos herself was responsible for its miraculous journeys. It is our humble sense of that divine providence that we now feel that the time has come for the icon to be returned to the Tikhvin monastery, where it had been for over five centuries."

At the recent Spring Session of the OCA's Holy Synod of Bishops, Father Garklavs briefed the hierarchs on details of the icons return to Tikhvin, which is slated to coincide with the celebration of the icon's feastday on the new calendar, June 26, 2004.

Faithful will have the rare opportunity to venerate the icon throughout the pilgrimage to Saint Tikhon Monastery. In addition, several Services of Thanksgiving will be celebrated before the icon. On Monday, May 26, a Service of Thanksgiving in the icon's honor will be followed by the anointing of the sick, infirm, and all pilgrims.

The complete pilgrimage schedule is posted in .pdf format at St. Tikhon Pilgrimage on the OCA web site and appears in the March-April issue of "The Orthodox Church" newspaper. Historical notes on the icon are also posted on the web site at History of the ICON OF TIKHVIN MOTHER OF GOD and appear in the same issue of TOC.

Holy Days and Name Days in May

- May 1 - Bright Thursday; Prophet Jeremiah; St Tamara of Georgia
- May 2 - Bright Friday; St Athanasius, the Great, Patriarch of Alexandria
- May 3 - Bright Saturday; Repose of St Theodosius of Kiev
- May 4 - St Thomas Sunday
- May 5 - Martyr Irene of Thessalonica
- May 6 - Righteous Job the Longsuffering
- May 7 - Repose of St Alexis Toth of Wilkes-Barre
- May 8 - Holy Apostle John the Theologian
- May 9 - Prophet Isaiah
- May 10 - Apostle Simeon the Zealot
- May 11 - Sunday of the Myrrhbearing Women; SS Cyril & Methodius
- May 14 - Martyr Isidore of Chios; St Isidore of Rostov, Fool-for-Christ
- May 15 - St Pachomius the Great
- May 18 - Sunday of the Paralytic

- May 20 - Relics of St Aleksy, Metropolitan of Moscow
- May 21 - SS Constantine & Helen, Equal-to-the-Apostles
- May 25 - Sunday of the Samaritan Woman
- May 28 - St Germaine of Paris
- May 29 - Blessed John of Ustiug

***Holy, Glorious, Great, God-Crowned and Equal to the Apostles,
Emperor Constantine and Helen***

This great and renowned sovereign of the Christians was the son of Constantius Chlorus (the ruler of the westernmost parts of the Roman empire), and of the blessed Helen. He was born in 272, in (according to some authorities) Naissus of Dardania, a city on the Hellespont. In 306, when his father died, he was proclaimed successor to his throne. In 312, on learning that Maxentius and Maximinus had joined forces against him, he marched into Italy, where, while at the head of his troops, he saw in the sky after midday, beneath the sun, a radiant pillar in the form of a cross with the words: "By this shalt thou conquer." The following night, our Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him in a dream and declared to him the power of the Cross and its significance. When he arose in the morning, he immediately ordered that a labarum (a banner or standard of victory over the enemy) be made in the form of a cross, and he inscribed on it the Name of Jesus Christ. On the 28th Of October, he attacked and mightily conquered Maxentius, who drowned in the Tiber River while fleeing. The following day, Constantine entered Rome in triumph and was proclaimed Emperor of the West by the Senate, while Licinius, his brother-in-law, ruled in the East. But out of malice, Licinius later persecuted the Christians. Constantine fought him once again, and utterly destroyed him in 324, and in this manner he became monarch over the West and the East. Under him and because of him all the persecutions against the Church ceased. Christianity triumphed and idolatry was overthrown. In 325 he gathered the First Ecumenical Council in Nicaea, which he himself personally addressed. In 324, in the ancient city of Byzantium, he laid the foundations of the new capital of his realm, and solemnly inaugurated it on May 11, 330, naming it after himself, Constantinople; since the throne of the imperial rule was transferred thither from Rome, it was named New Rome, the inhabitants of its domain were called Romans, and it was considered the continuation of the Roman Empire. Falling ill near Nicomedia, he requested to receive divine Baptism, according to Eusebius (The Life of Constantine. Book IV, 61-62), and also according to Socrates and Sozomen; and when he had been deemed worthy of the Holy Mysteries, he reposed in 337, on May 21 or 22, the day of Pentecost, having lived sixty-five years, of which he ruled for thirty-one years. His remains were transferred to Constantinople and were deposited in the Church of the Holy Apostles, which had been built by him.

As for his holy mother Helen, after her son had made the Faith of Christ triumphant throughout the Roman Empire, she undertook a journey to Jerusalem and found the Holy Cross on which

our Lord was crucified. After this, Saint Helen, in her zeal to glorify Christ, erected churches in Jerusalem at the sites of the Crucifixion and Resurrection, in Bethlehem at the cave where our Saviour was born, another on the Mount of Olives whence He ascended into Heaven, and many others throughout the Holy Land, Cyprus, and elsewhere. She was proclaimed Augusta, her image was stamped upon golden coins, and two cities were named Helenopolis after her in Bithynia and in Palestine. Having been thus glorified for her piety, she departed to the Lord being about eighty years of age, according to some in the year 330, according to others, in 336.



Troparion for Saints Peter and Paul

**O Leaders of the Apostles
And Evangelizers of the World
Intercede with Christ our God
To grant Peace to the World
And Salvation to our Souls**

