

J U L Y / A U G U S T 2 0 0 6

# ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

NEWSLETTER

Dear in Christ Parishioners and friends,

May God bless you!

## FROM THE HOLY FATHERS . . .

### On Going to Church

When you are in church, remember that you are in the living presence of the Lord God, that you are standing in living presence of the Mother of God, of the holy angels, and of the firstborn of the Church—our forefathers, the prophets, the apostles, hierarchs, martyrs, monastic fathers, the righteous, and all the saints. Always keep the remembrance and consciousness of this when you are in church: stand with devotion and take part willingly, with all your heart, in the Divine Service.

*St. John of Kronstadt*

It is beautiful summertime, and mild weather so far—glory to God! I hope that all of you will be able to take a break from work to enjoy His beautiful creation. While you are traveling on vacations, may the Lord protect and bless you. Remember to look (on the internet or in the phone book) for an Orthodox church near your destination. May we never stop praying and giving glory to Him in His holy church, according to His commandment: *Pray without ceasing, and, Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.* God never takes a vacation from caring for us. We must not take a vacation from Him!

### *Weekday services in July and August.*

**Friday**, July 7 – the Feast of the Birth of St. John the Baptist and Forerunner of the Lord.

**Wednesday**, July 12 – the great Feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul, marking the end of the Apostles' Fast.

**Monday**, July 17 – the Royal New-martyrs of Russia. Tsar Nicholas II and his family are celebrated on the 88<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their martyrdom, which took place on July 4/17, 1918, in Ekaterinburg.

**Friday**, July 28 – the feast of the Holy Equal of the Apostles Prince Vladimir, Enlightener of Rus, marking the conversion of the Russian Orthodox land.

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## PARISH NEWS

### Russian Church Bells . . .

Imagine the glorious sound of seven beautiful bronze bells announcing the services of our Orthodox church. St. John's has officially commenced fundraising efforts for a set of such bells. They are to be cast at the Podorojny Foundry in Voronezh, Russia

and then shipped to the United States. The total cost is estimated to be \$13,000, of which \$3,671.58 had been collected as of the end of June. Please help us by sending donations to the church with "bells" written in the memo section of your check.

### Support the Church...

Thank you to everyone who has supported the church this year with both time

and money. Please remember that the church continues to need the financial support of its members and friends in order to meet the many expenses that occur every month. If you can donate monthly it would be a great help. We are enclosing an envelope for your convenience. Either bring it to church or send it to us in the mail. Our church depends upon your generous help.

## **ABOUT THE GREAT FEASTS**

### ***The Transfiguration of the Lord***

(Read Matthew 17:1-13; Mark 9:2-13; Luke 9:28-36)

In order to strengthen the faith of His disciples when they would see Him on the Cross, Jesus Christ took three disciples, Peter, James and John and led them up onto a high mountain (Mt. Tabor) to pray. As the Saviour was praying, the disciples were tired and fell asleep. When they awoke, they saw Christ “transfigured” before them: His face and clothing shone with brilliant, blinding white light. Appearing with Him in glory were two prophets, Moses and Elijah, speaking with Jesus about the suffering and death He would undergo in Jerusalem. Extraordinary fear and joy filled the hearts of the disciples. Then a bright cloud overshadowed them, and they heard the voice of the God the Father saying, *This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well-pleased.* At this the disciples fell on their faces in fear. Christ, comforted them, and told them to tell no one about this revelation until after His Resurrection. The light which appeared was not the normal light from the sun: it was uncreated, divine light—a manifestation of Divine energy, as the holy Fathers explain. The halo visible in icons around the head of Christ and of the saints consists of this same light, for the saints were transfigured by Christ Who dwelt in them. Through profound repentance for our many sins, may we also be granted to dwell in this Light.

Adapted from: *The Law of God*, Holy Trinity Monastery

#### ***Troparion of Transfiguration***

**Thou wast transfigured on the mountain, O Christ our God, showing to Thy disciples Thy glory as each one could endure; shine forth Thou on us, who are sinners all, Thy light ever-unending through the prayers of the Theotokos. O Light-giver, glory to Thee.**

### ***The Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos***

#### ***Troparion of Dormition***

**In giving birth thou didst preserve thy virginity; in thy Dormition thou didst not forsake the world, O Theotokos. Thou wast translated unto life, since thou art the Mother of Life; and by thine intercessions dost thou deliver our souls from death.**

After the Ascension of Christ, the Theotokos continued to live on earth for several years. The Apostle John took her into his home and cared for her until the end of her life. She also became a mother for all twelve of the apostles. One day while she was praying on the Mount of Olives, the Archangel Gabriel appeared to her with the joyful news that in three days she would end her earthly life and the Lord would take her to Himself. The Theotokos rejoiced, told the Apostle John, and began to prepare. At that time the other apostles were dispersed in many countries, preaching about the Saviour. So that they could all bid farewell to her, the Lord by His almighty power miraculously gathered them all to Jerusalem, except for Thomas. They grieved when they said farewell to her, and she comforted and blessed them, promising to pray for them all. When she died, an

extraordinary light filled her room and Christ Himself appeared, surrounded by angels, to receive her pure soul.

The apostles buried the pure body of the Mother of God in the Garden of Gethsemane on the side of the Mount of Olives. At her funeral many miracles were performed: the blind received their sight, illnesses were cured, and demons were driven away. Three days after her burial, the Apostle Thomas arrived, saddened that he had not arrived in time to bid her farewell. He desired to venerate her most pure remains and so the other apostles took him to her tomb. When they rolled away the stone, her most holy body was nowhere to be seen. Only one piece of burial shroud was there. The amazed apostles returned to the house and prayed that God would reveal to them what had become of her body. That evening, during prayer after dinner, they heard angelic singing and looking up they saw the Mother of God, surrounded by angels in the radiance of heavenly glory. She said to them, “Rejoice! I am with you always, and will pray for you before God.” The apostles exclaimed to Her in joy, “Most-holy Mother of God, help us!”

Thus the Lord Jesus Christ glorified His Most-holy Mother. He resurrected her and took her most pure body to Himself and set her higher than all His angels.

Adapted from: *The Law of God*, Holy Trinity Monastery.

*Services continued . . .*

**Wednesday**, August 2 – the commemoration of the great and holy Prophet Elias (Elijah) is celebrated, to whom we pray for rain during a drought.

**Monday**, August 14 – the Procession of the Holy Cross marks the beginning of the Dormition Fast. No Liturgy on this day, but we will have Matins the evening before with the Procession of the Cross.

Two of the Great Feasts conclude the month of August:

**Saturday**, August 19 – the **TRANSFIGURATION** of the Lord, with the blessing of grapes and fruits. Bring a basket of grapes or other fruit to Liturgy to be blessed.

**Monday**, August 28 – the **DORMITION** of the Most Holy Theotokos, ending the Dormition Fast.

*Parish News continued . . .*

**A GROWING CHURCH . . .**

Congratulations to Jeffrey and Alexia Slauson who were married at St. John's on May 28th.

The newest addition to the parish arrived in June. Nadejda Andreevna Loban was born to Andrey and Yelena Loban on June 8th. She weighed 6 pounds, 12 ounces. Mother and baby are doing very well.

The following baptisms took place in April and May:

- April 1st - 6 month old Grace Sophia Helfgott, daughter of Eric and Eugenia Helfgott. Her godmother is Margarita Levandovskaya.
- April 15th - Jeffrey Michael Slauson. His godfather is Rdr. Nathaniel Brown.
- April 29th - 4 month old Aissa (Agape) Botnar, daughter of Alexiy and Marina Botnar. Her godparents are Svetlana Reznichenko and Valerin Siretann.
- May 9th - Anna Nicole Johnson, daughter of Dimitry Pisarev and Yekaterina Johnson. Her godmother is Vera Loukhine.

**FUTURE NEWSLETTERS . . .**

Questions or comments about this, or future issues of St. John Chrysostom Church's newsletter may be sent to the church office, attention Kristen Vogt. Ideas for articles, or news that would be of interest to the parish at large may be sent to the church via e-mail at [info@chrysostompress.org](mailto:info@chrysostompress.org), or by mail to PO Box 536, House Springs, MO 63051. Suggestions will be greatly appreciated.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

***Rummage Sale . . .***

The church will be holding a rummage sale on Saturday, July 8th in the church hall. Proceeds from the sale will go toward the Bell fund. We will happily take any re-usable goods off your hands. Please bring donations to the church basement. We also need volunteers to help on the day of the sale. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer to help, call Matushka Mary at (636) 274-1478; or if you need to drop off items during the week, call Kristen Vogt at (636) 376-3039.

***Cleaning . . .***

If you have an hour or more to spare, please consider donating some of your time to helping with the cleaning and grounds work at the church. If you have a penchant for weeding or polishing, please call the office at (636) 677-4333. Help us keep the church beautiful.

***Choir . . .***

The choir would love to have a few more people join them up in the cliros, especially men. Choir practices are held at the home of choir director, Catherine Shawki, on Thursday evenings from 6:30-8:00 pm. Please contact Catherine at (314) 842-0958 if you are interested or have any questions. Everyone will be welcomed with open arms!

***Maintenance Help . . .***

Two property projects which need attention this summer are the sealing of cracks in the parking lot blacktop, and tuck-pointing the chimney of the office building. Anyone who has a few hours to help Mark Wiebenga with these projects may contact him at (314) 610-8858.

