

THE MESSENGER

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE ORTHODOX CHURCH
SEPTEMBER 2011



“IVERON” ICON OF THE MOST-HOLY THEOTOKOS

MARK THE DATES

September 1: CHURCH NEW YEAR

September 4: Visit of Miraculous Iveron Icon of the Theotokos of Hawai'i

September 7-8: NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS

September 13-14: EXALTATION OF THE CROSS

September 14: Adult Faith Forum resumes

September 18: Prayer Service for the Beginning of Church School

September 25: Church School Classes Begin

Send email addresses and corrections to: frjohn@lasvegasorthodox.com

SEPTEMBER 2011

St. Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church • Las Vegas, Nevada

<p><i>COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE</i></p> <p>SEP 4: OSBURN SEP 11: HOOD SEP 18: BASSO/BICA SEP 25: MCAULEY</p>		<p><i>CHURCH CLEANING SCHEDULE</i></p> <p>SEP 4: JOLEVSKI SEP 11: SEP 18: SEP 25:</p>		<p>1</p> <p>CHURCH NEW YEAR</p> <p>COFFEE CHAT, 10:00 AM EL RANCHO, PECOS AND RUSSELL</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>VESPERS, 5:30 PM CONFESSIONS</p>
<p>4</p> <p>LITURGY, 9:00 AM HOURS: JARLSON EPISTLE: DRESKO POST-COMM: HOOD</p> <p>VISIT OF IVERON ICON AKATHIST/ANOINTING, 4 PM</p>	<p>5</p> <p>LABOR DAY</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p> <p>VESPERS/LITIYA, 6:30 PM CONFESSIONS</p>	<p>8</p> <p>DIVINE LITURGY, 8:00 AM NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>SLAVONIC LITURGY, 10:00 AM</p> <p>VESPERS, 5:30 PM CONFESSIONS</p>
<p>11</p> <p>LITURGY, 9:00 AM HOURS: STRANSKY EPISTLE: BASSO POST-COMM: FEDEROFF</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p> <p>VESPERS/LITIYA, 6:30 PM CONFESSIONS</p>	<p>14</p> <p>STRICT FAST DIVINE LITURGY, 8:00 AM EXALTATION OF THE CROSS</p> <p>DAILY VESPERS, 6:30 PM ADULT CLASS BEGINS</p>	<p>15</p> <p>COFFEE CHAT, 10:00 AM EL RANCHO, PECOS AND RUSSELL</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>VESPERS, 5:30 PM CONFESSIONS</p>
<p>18</p> <p>LITURGY, 9:00 AM HOURS: SAS EPISTLE: STRANSKY POST-COMM: OSBURN</p> <p>PRAYERS FOR CHURCH SCHOOL YEAR</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p> <p>CHOIR REHEARSAL 6:30 PM</p>	<p>21</p> <p>DAILY VESPERS, 6:30 PM ADULT CLASS</p>	<p>22</p> <p>COFFEE CHAT, 10:00 AM EL RANCHO, PECOS AND RUSSELL</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p>VESPERS, 5:30 PM CONFESSIONS</p>
<p>25</p> <p>LITURGY, 9:00 AM HOURS: M. FEDEROFF EPISTLE: JARLSON POST-COMM: BASSO</p> <p>CHURCH SCHOOL CLASSES BEGIN</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Parish Council, 6:00 PM</p>	<p>28</p> <p>DAILY VESPERS, 6:30 PM ADULT CLASS</p>	<p>29</p> <p>COFFEE CHAT, 10:00 AM EL RANCHO, PECOS AND RUSSELL</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>Oct 1</p> <p>DIVINE LITURGY, 9:00 AM PROTECTION OF THE THEOTOKOS</p> <p>VESPERS, 5:30 PM CONFESSIONS</p>



The Messenger

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“WE MUST THINK DIFFERENTLY...”

Excerpts from an interview with Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom) of Sourozh with Russkaia Mysl August 1, 2000

Published by *Sourozh*, August, 2000

I have a very clear or rather gloomy feeling that as we enter the third millennium we are entering some obscure and complex and, in a certain sense, unwelcome period. As for devotion to the Church, our faith must certainly retain its integrity, but we must not be afraid of thinking and expressing ourselves openly. Everything will eventually settle into order, but if we keep just endlessly reiterating what has been said long ago, more and more people will drift away from their faith (I mean not so much Russia as the world as a whole), not because everything that was stated before is erroneous, but because the approach and language being used are all wrong.

Today's people and the time they live in are different; today we think differently. I believe one must become rooted in God and not be afraid of thinking and

feeling freely. 'Freely' does not imply 'free thinking' or contempt for the past and for the Tradition. However, God does not need slaves. 'I no longer call you servants, I call you my friends...' I think it is extremely important that we think and share our reflections with Him.

There is so much we could share with Him in this new world we live in. It is so good and so important to think openly without time-serving. Intellectuals with great receptivity must come to the fore by their thinking and writing.

The Church, or rather clergymen and some of the conscious churchgoers, are afraid to do something wrong. After all these years when people could not think or speak openly with each other and thereby outgrow, as it were, the nineteenth century, there is much fear, which leads people to be content with mere repetition of what has been adopted by the Church long before and what is known as Church language and Church doctrine. This has to change sooner or later.

It seems to me that today the Church is in a period when on the one hand it is trying to remain particularly traditional; and on the other -- first, people are not ready for this, and secondly, some of them are beginning to think, while not being supported or encouraged in this. (All this is generally speaking and without any individuals in mind). Are we not losing momentum and the chance to turn eventually from being a church organisation into being the Church?

I myself have reached the point where I am unable to increase my erudition or theological knowledge and I would rather speak about that which has come to maturity in my soul. While the form in which I speak may well be unacceptable to some, in essence, however, I believe it is not unacceptable. I hope that I do not deviate from the spirit of the Church or that of the Fathers. I do use, though, a different language and address different people.

I think some Church fathers were accused of exactly the same thing; let alone Cyril of Alexandria, many were said to introduce

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'novelties' and 'inventions'. The same words were not used, but the approach was the same. In my opinion the Church today is going through a protracted crisis...

When the communist era as such was over I wrote in a letter either to the Patriarch or to someone else not to expect rapid changes in people's mindset. What happens today is exactly the same as happened when the Jews fled Egypt. They found themselves free and this freedom proved to be not what they wanted. Everyone kept asking 'Why did we have to leave? Where are those bowls full of meat and other food? There is nothing but sand around us.' This is one thing, but there is more to it.

They should have reached the Promised Land within a few days, within a week at the most. Yet they wandered about for forty years. Why? Because God had determined that they would have to roam around until the entire generation brought up in slavery died out and that nurtured at large and in savage conditions where nothing but belief in God mattered would come to the fore.

Along the way they found themselves on Mt Sinai where they received the Ten Commandments, but the whole generation of slaves still had to fade away. I think it is the same for the Church today. Undoubtedly, after all these years when the only means of its existence was utmost faithfulness to the form, thinking and posing questions turns out to be a frightening experience.

Remarkably, asking questions was the only work that preoccupied the Church fathers of old times. Even if some answers came from them, so did the questions. And the answers did not just appear from nowhere in response to non-existent questions. Mind you, the questions they asked were addressed to people surrounded by paganism, i.e. by an absolutely alien experience and outlook. And this must be taken into account.

Nobody lives in a Christian country today. Certainly there are still people devoted and faithful to the spirit of Gospel, but we can no longer suggest there is a difference between Christian and non-Christian countries; just as it is wrong to talk about "Russian" Orthodoxy.

For example, here in London a certain group (not very large) reproaches me with 'betraying Russian Orthodoxy', accusing me of 'building up a Church that is not Russian'... Mind you, I have been saying from the very beginning that we shall be trying to build a Church as similar as possible to the original ancient Church, where people with nothing in common were united by Christ and their faith. Masters and slaves, and people of different ethnic origins and tongues stood next to each other. This is exactly what I have been striving for -- to make it possible for everyone coming here to say: 'Indeed, we have one thing in common, God ...'

And I believe this solves the problem, because when we advocate just Russian, or Greek, or some other particular form of Or-

thodoxy, we start to lose people. And it's not about us as parishes, losing churchgoers. I recall a conversation over forty years ago with the bishop James of Apameia, a very good person and a very good priest. He said they were losing about 150 young parishioners every year because they couldn't understand Greek. When I asked him why they did not refer them to us, the bishop replied: 'No, we would rather they vanish from sight than go to a "foreign" Church...'

This is what I have been fighting against and shall fight against in future, because it is nothing but believers that we need, people who have encountered God. I am not talking about things in some grandiose sense, because not everyone can be like St Paul. I am rather talking here about those who, even if to a very small degree, can say that they know Him. And he, and she, and they know something similar, and we can stand next to each other, even if we come from different traditions.

Tradition is something that cannot be instantly re-made. I would love to be able to give my Russian talks for one more year, just to return to some basics. I appreciate that certain points that might arise in those basics may not be met with approval ... Fr. George Florovsky once said to me, 'there has been no Church father whose writings are free of heresy altogether, apart from Gregory the Theologian, of course, who was so careful as not to have said anything unnecessary or untrue.' One can always find something unorthodox in each father's works. So it's

possible to find something wrong with anybody.

If this is the case, then make a note of what you believe to be erroneous, and ponder over it, and have your say about it. And one does not necessarily have to be hyper-critical. Why not simply say: 'Well, I think this and that, based on what I have just heard', and let us see then how your ideas correct or supplement those of your opponent. I believe it is extremely important that we start thinking and sharing our ideas, even at the risk of falling into error. Someone will always correct us, that's all.

I remember my embarrassment fifty years ago when Nicholas Zernov said to me: "The whole tragedy began with the Ecumenical Councils when they started putting into shape what still required some flexibility.' He was quite right -- at least I think so now. At that time, however, I was shocked. This does not mean that Ecumenical Councils were wrong. Their formulations merely reflected the point they had reached. Since then theologians have also reached something... For example, while there were times when Fr Sergei Bulgakov was considered a heretic, today many people regard him differently. Both approaches are wrong. His writings contain certain points that are unacceptable, but some are quite acceptable. . .

Translated by Timothy Okroev
Editor's Note: On 18 June 2000 the Paris-based weekly Russkaia Mysl published excerpts from an interview given by Metropolitan Anthony in London ten days earlier. The choice of material, from a long

conversation, is that of the editor of the Paris paper.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

As of this printing, our treasurer is holding approximately \$15,000 in bills, including three months of our fair share to the Church and the assessment for the All-American Council, because we cannot pay them.

September is "Stewardship Month" at St. Paul's — please reexamine your financial support of the parish. If you are not tithing in fulfillment of the Scriptural command, we ask that you prayerfully consider doing so and then witness God's blessings on your effort!

This church is OUR church!

FEASTDAYS

Please join us for the following festal celebrations during September.

The Nativity of the Theotokos
September 8

Vespers/Litiya, 6:30 PM (WED)
Divine Liturgy, 8:00 AM (THUR)

Exaltation of the Life-Giving Cross
September 14

Vespers/Litiya, 6:30 PM (TUES)
Divine Liturgy, 8:00 AM (WED)

COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE

Sept 4: Osburn, Jr.

Sept 11: Hood

Sept 18: Basso/Bica

Sept 25: McAuley

CHURCH CLEANING SCHEDULE

Sept 4: Jolevski

Sept 11:

Sept 18:

Sept 25:

VISIT OF ICON

The miraculous Iveron Icon of the Theotokos of Hawai'i will be at St. Paul's on Sunday, September 4. She will be present for liturgy and we will serve the **Akathist to the Theotokos at 4:00 PM**. Everyone will be anointed with the myrrh (oil) that streams from the icon. All Orthodox in the valley have been invited. Many miracles have been ascribed to this icon and myrrh. Join us!

IVERON ICON

Commemorated on Feb 12

During the reign of Emperor Theophilus (829–842) the Byzantine Empire raged with the heresy of iconoclasm. In accordance with the emperor's command, thousands of soldiers pillaged the empire, searching every corner, city, and village for hidden icons.

Near the city of Nicaea there lived a certain pious widow who had concealed an icon of the Most Holy Theotokos. Before long the soldiers discovered it, and one of them thrust his spear into the image.

But by God's grace his terrible deed was overshadowed by a miracle: blood flowed forth from the wound on the face of the Mother of God. The frightened soldiers quickly fled.

The widow spent the whole night in vigil, praying before the icon of the Most Holy Theotokos. In the morning, according to God's will, she took the icon to the sea and cast it upon the water. The holy icon stood upright on the waves and began to sail westward.

Time passed, and one evening the monks of the Iveron Monastery on Mt. Athos beheld a pillar of light, shining upon the sea like the sun (ca. 1004). The miraculous image lasted several days, while the fathers of the Holy Mountain gathered together, marveling. Finally they descended to the edge of the sea, where they beheld the pillar of light standing above the icon of the Theotokos. But when they approached it, the icon moved farther out to sea.

At that time a Georgian monk named Gabriel was laboring at the Iveron Monastery. The Theotokos appeared to the fathers of the Holy Mountain and told them that Gabriel alone was worthy to retrieve the holy icon from the sea. At the same time, she appeared to Gabriel and told him, "Enter the sea, and walk out upon the waves with faith, and all will witness my love and mercy for your monastery."

The monks of Mt. Athos found Gabriel at the Georgian monastery and led him down to the sea, chanting hymns, and censuring with holy incense. Gabriel walked out upon the water as though upon dry land, took the icon in his arms, and obediently carried it back to shore. This miracle occurred on Bright Tuesday.

While the monks were celebrating a paraklesis of thanksgiving, a cold, sweet spring miraculously gushed forth from the ground where the icon stood. Afterwards they took the icon to a church and set it down in the sanctuary with great reverence.

But the next morning one of the monks came to light a lamp and discovered that the icon

was no longer where they had left it; now it was hanging on a wall near the entrance gate. The disbelieving monks took it down and returned it to the sanctuary, but the next day the icon was again found at the monastery gate. This miracle recurred several times, until the Most Holy Virgin appeared to Gabriel, saying, "Announce to the brothers that from this day they should not carry me away. For what I desire is not to be protected by you; rather I will overshadow you, both in this life and in the age to come. As long as you see my icon in the monastery, the grace and mercy of my Son shall never be lacking!"

Filled with exceeding joy, the monks erected a small church near the monastery gate to glorify the Most Holy Theotokos and placed the wonder-working icon inside. The holy icon came to be known as the "Iveron Mother of God" and, in Greek, Portaitissa. By the grace of the miraculous Iveron Icon of the Theotokos, many miracles have taken place and continue to take place throughout the world.

SLAVONIC LITURGY

The monthly Slavonic Liturgy will be held on the second Saturday of the month, September 10th.

Confessions begin at 9:00 AM. Liturgy will begin at 10:00 AM.

CHURCH SCHOOL

Registration for the school year is now underway. Prayers for the Beginning of Church School will be served at the end of liturgy on September 18. Classes begin on September 25.

The Adult Faith Forum resumes on Wednesday, September

14. Students are asked to obtain a copy of *The Great Divorce*, a spiritual classic by C.S. Lewis, for use in the class.

NEW SECURITY MEASURES

Following the break-in and extensive damage to our hall and kitchen, the following actions were taken by our parish council:

The locks on all doors have been changed and deadbolts added. The new keys are high security keys that cannot be duplicated and have been given to those whom the parish council has determined have a need to have unlimited access.

All groups not connected to our parish that been asked to leave. The high security keys will not be given to anyone outside of our parish (save the Romanian parish meeting in our church) and the alarm system in the hall and office will be reactivated.

All gates on the parish property will now be locked and we have approved the purchase of a motion-detecting, infrared camera to monitor the courtyard when we are not on the property. We will revisit this as needed, and a sign will be posted explaining these actions.

FEED THE HUNGRY

Our parish continues preparing lunches and distributing them to the hungry in downtown Las Vegas. On Saturday, October 15th, we will gather at 10:30 AM to prepare lunch bags and then at noon distribute them. We need help assembling the sandwiches and the bags — please remember that Jesus said, “when I was hungry, you gave me food...” Join us!

We are asking for assistance in doing this project. If you can

donate any of the items needed for the lunches, it would be appreciated. **We also have a need for basic toiletries: toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, etc.** If you have any *travel* size items, leave them in the bin in the church vestibule. Thank you!

CHURCH CLEANING

Our schedule for the weekly clean-up of the church needs volunteers. The duty is easy, takes two hours at the most, and you can do it at your convenience as Father will provide a key and entry instructions. Please consider offering some time and talent to the Lord in the care of His Church. A sign-up list is available in the church.

COFFEE CHAT

We are continuing a “coffee chat” group to meet, socialize, have a cup of coffee and discuss any issues that come up. There is no prepared “class” or agenda. **We meet on Thursdays, at 10:00 AM at El Rancho on Pecos and Russell (small building behind the Starbucks).**

SCRIPTURE READING PROJECT

We renew our project to read the entire Orthodox Study Bible over the course of the Church Year, **beginning on September 1st.** You can download the schedule on our website.

PRAYER FOR OUR PARISH

We ask everyone to remember our parish in daily prayer:

Lord, God and Savior of all, we thank You for the blessing of St. Paul parish in our lives. May Your word become alive in each and every one of us who strive to follow

You. Please bless and multiply all the gifts — time, talent and treasure — which are given in thanks to benefit our mission and glorify Your name. Bless and multiply the givers and help us all to make present Your Kingdom. For You are the Giver of all that is good, O Christ our God, and to You we give glory, together with Your Father who is without beginning and Your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

CHARITY

Our normal collections of food for Friends of the Desert continue. *Special needs at this time: jelly, jam, peanut butter, canned fruit, canned tuna/chicken.* Thank you!

SACRAMENTS/SPECIAL SERVICES

Please follow these guidelines.

• **Baptisms.** A date and time must be requested at least three weeks in advance. In addition, a personal meeting scheduled with Fr. John will be necessary.

• **Matrimony.** A date and time for weddings must be requested at least six months (preferably twelve) in advance. There will be premarital sessions for both bride and groom to attend.

• **Memorials (Panikhida).** Requests for a memorial must be made at least one week in advance. If possible, the service should not be served on Sunday, the Day of the Resurrection, when all departed have already been remembered in the Liturgy.

PARISH COUNCIL SYNOPSIS AUGUST 23, 2011 MEETING

Rector's Report:

- The Myrrh Streaming Ives

ron Icon of the Theotokos of Hawai'i will be in our church September 4 for Liturgy.

There will be an Akathist with anointing at 4:00 PM.

- Okaloosa house: The owner of the property adjacent to ours has contacted us again about water coming onto her property from ours. Alan and Father have prepared a letter to her informing her that it is not our responsibility.
- Council Replacements: Some members have been unable to attend meetings. Father will approach them.
- Security: the break-in and destruction of the hall and kitchen was discussed. Measures were agreed upon. Harry spoke about buying an infrared camera for the property. Approved.
- New keys will be distributed. There will be only 10 keys distributed. Father John will provide a key to cleaners.
- Closed Session Matter

Vice President: Laura Drascovic reported that the yard has been cleaned by the person completing his hours of community service.

Treasurer's Report: Karen Short gave the July 2011 report. Income for the month was \$17,534.88 and expenses were \$20,680.60 for a net **deficit** of **\$3,145.72**.

2011 YTD Inc \$ 136,934.49
2011 YTD Exp \$ 148,063.64
Exp over Inc **\$ 11,129.15**

We have \$15,101.38 in bills due that HAVE NOT BEEN PAID.

Buildings and Grounds: Email was sent regarding the trailers. It was agreed that we will allow the trailers to remain on the

property in exchange for owner's assistance in yard clean up.

LV Metro Police Dept Crime Report for a 1 mile radius area around our church in the past 60 days was discussed.

Harry is preparing "work projects information" to post in the hall – High/Medium/Low Priority.

Side doors of the church need an inside security bolt and Southwest window of the church needs to be secured.

Church School: set for the new year, classes start on 9/25.

Charity: Catherine Wilkalis reported that the feeding the homeless project held on August 13 was very successful. Over 200 lunches were given out. Need more hygiene products and socks.

Eritrean/Ethiopian: no report.

Outreach/Website: new site will go live on September 1st.

Russian: Discussion about the Russian community needing to clean up the church and hall when done.

Stewardship: September will be "Stewardship Month." Father John will speak to the subject in a 4 part presentation which will include a lay person speaking as well. Pledge forms will be distributed at the end of September.

OLD BUSINESS

Bell Tower: no report.

Wine tasting/Cook-off Fundraiser: Status quo.

Iconography Project: Vladimir Krassovsky plans to come no later than December.

NEW BUSINESS

All-American Council: we need to pay our assessment or we will be disallowed from participation.

Food Festival: Dates are Nov 5-6. We are discussing adding Friday evening, Nov 4, to the schedule.

Next Meeting: September 27, 2011, 6:00 PM.

PARISH DIPTYCHS

This list of parish departed is to remind us all of those whom we love and miss and to spur us to remember them in our daily prayers. They will be remembered in the proskomedia before each liturgy.

MONTH OF SEPTEMBER

Oscar Thomas Abdoulah
September 3, 2001

John Vukmanovich
September 9, 2006

Milana Popovich
September 10, 1998

Darinka Janjic
September 12, 1994

Lucian Stefanescu
September 14, 1999

Theodore Shimsky
September 15, 2002

Dawit Kahassai
September 16, 2001

Yekaalo Gebremeskel
September 16, 2010

Tatiana Paul
September 17, 2003

Ruslan Zhgenti
September 17, 2010

Christina Manteris
September 25, 1992

Valentina Petrovna Demchenko
September 25, 2001

Norman Daniel Kuka
September 26, 2001