

THE MESSENGER

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE ORTHODOX CHURCH
FEBRUARY 2012



THE MEETING OF OUR LORD, GOD AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST

MARK THE DATES

February 2: MEETING OF THE LORD

February 4: Youth Day of Bowling; Vespers

February 11: Slavonic Liturgy

February 18: FEEDING THE HOMELESS

February 26: FORGIVENESS VESPERS

February 27: GREAT LENT BEGINS

March 3: Lenten Retreat at St. Paul's

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

February 2012

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

<p>COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE</p> <p>FEB 5: BICA/OSBURN FEB 12: PAPA FEB 19: BICA, ET AL. FEB 26: BLINI LUNCHEON</p>			<p>1</p> <p>GREAT VESPERS, 6:30 PM BLESSING OF CANDLES</p>	<p>2</p> <p>DIVINE LITURGY, 8:00 AM MEETING OF THE LORD</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p> <p>YOUTH OUTING WILDFIRE LANES, 12:30 PM</p> <p>GREAT VESPERS, 5:00 PM CONFESSIONS</p>
<p>5</p> <p>LITURGY, 9:00 AM HOURS: HOOD EPISTLE: STRANSKY POST-COMM: OSBURN CHURCH SCHOOL PUBLICAN & PHARISEE</p>	<p>FAST FREE 6</p>	<p>FAST FREE 7</p> <p>NON-EVENT MAILING WORKSHOP, 10:00 AM</p>	<p>FAST FREE 8</p> <p>DAILY VESPERS, 6:30 PM ADULT CLASS</p>	<p>FAST FREE 9</p> <p>COFFEE CHAT, 10:00 AM EL RANCHO, PECOS AND RUSSELL</p>	<p>FAST FREE 10</p>	<p>FAST FREE 11</p> <p>RUSSIAN CONFESSIONS, 9 AM SLAVONIC LITURGY, 10:00 AM</p> <p>GREAT VESPERS, 5:00 PM CONFESSIONS</p>
<p>12</p> <p>LITURGY, 9:00 AM HOURS: SAS EPISTLE: JARLSON POST-COMM: DRESKO CHURCH SCHOOL PRODIGAL SON</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p> <p>DAILY VESPERS, 6:30 PM ADULT CLASS</p>	<p>16</p> <p>COFFEE CHAT, 10:00 AM EL RANCHO, PECOS AND RUSSELL</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p> <p>FEEDING THE HOMELESS 10:30 AM</p> <p>PANIKHIDA, 4:30 PM GREAT VESPERS, 5:00 PM CONFESSIONS</p>
<p>19</p> <p>LITURGY, 9:00 AM HOURS: DRESKO EPISTLE: HOOD POST-COMM: SAS CHURCH SCHOOL MEATFARE CAMPBELL WEDDING 4:00 PM</p>	<p>MEAT FAST 20</p>	<p>MEAT FAST 21</p> <p>PARISH COUNCIL 6:00 PM</p>	<p>MEAT FAST 22</p> <p>DAILY VESPERS, 6:30 PM ADULT CLASS</p>	<p>MEAT FAST 23</p> <p>COFFEE CHAT, 10:00 AM EL RANCHO, PECOS AND RUSSELL</p>	<p>MEAT FAST 24</p>	<p>MEAT FAST 25</p> <p>GREAT VESPERS, 5:00 PM CONFESSIONS</p>
<p>MEAT FAST 26</p> <p>LITURGY, 9:00 AM HOURS: JARLSON EPISTLE: SAS POST-COMM: CHURCH SCHOOL FORGIVENESS VESPERS BLINI LUNCHEON</p>	<p>GREAT LENT 27</p> <p>GREAT KANON OF ST. ANDREW, 6:30 PM</p>	<p>28</p> <p>GREAT KANON OF ST. ANDREW, 6:30 PM</p>	<p>29</p> <p>CONFESSIONS, 5:30 PM LITURGY OF THE PRESANCTIFIED GIFTS, 6:30 PM</p>	<p>CHURCH CLEANING SCHEDULE</p> <p>FEB 5: HARVEY FEB 12: DRESKO/SAS/McAULEY FEB 19: FEB 26: BOKRE</p>		



The Messenger

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FEBRUARY 2012

POSTMODERN YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE LITURGY

By V. Rev. Fr. David J. Randolph

*From the Word magazine,
January, 2012*

(This article is an interesting and thoughtful look at how to hold young people in the Church today. It is not an easy read, but worth your efforts as parents, teachers and those who influence the young people in our parish.)

Father John

The term postmodern culture is used in many different ways, and cannot be grasped except in contrast to its predecessor, modernism, to which it is in reaction. Modernism displayed a high level of confidence in the abilities of humanity. Rooted in the Enlightenment, modernists attempted to rid themselves of the mystery of religion and things spiritual so as to focus purely on the empirical facts of science. Some believed that humanity could build a perfect society founded on human principles and structures. The movement was idealistic, and its breakdown was painful to the

generation that experienced it. This reaction took different forms. For many people of the 1960s, 70s, and 80s, pop culture became a kind of rebellious religiosity. Many were from broken families, and they concluded that all commitments are fragile. Some also experimented with different “spiritualities,” having a distinct distaste for “institutional religion.” Theirs was a time of political turmoil, growing up amid the anxiety of the cold war, and through the period of Vietnam, Desert Storm, and the war in Iraq. The results for many were confusion, depression, and loneliness.

Postmodernism is the cultural reaction to the perceived failures of modernism. Youth ministers today face five challenges related to the postmodern stance.

First, postmodern young people give primacy to personal experience. Logic and arguments do not work with youth now, as they did in the earlier period. If we wish to reach them, we must provide meaningful, engaging experience of Christ. This

suggests a need for meaningful relations and personal contact with the Christian tradition. Liturgy can provide a balance that meets both the need for personal encounter and challenges youth to move into the fullness of community life.

Second, this generation prefers authenticity to relevance. The term postmodern culture is used in many different ways, and cannot be grasped except in contrast to its predecessor, modernism, to which it is in reaction. Modernism displayed a high level of confidence in the abilities of humanity. Postmoderns are hungry for authenticity, for personal and meaningful connections with sources of deep and substantial wisdom. Our Eucharistic liturgy holds primacy of place in our lives as Orthodox; it is the source and summit of our faith, and as such provides the heart of our theology and spiritual knowledge. There is no more authentic mode of existence, or deeper source of meaning in the universe, than the life-giving, formative encounter with the Trinity in the Eucharist. It can hold primacy

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of place in the lives of postmodern young people as well.

Third, postmodern young people put great trust in people's authentic stories, though not in claims of overarching narratives. Therefore, they will hear and believe personal witness rather than assertions of an objective and exclusive Truth. Although this distrust often leads to a relativistic agnosticism, it is in fact another point of contact for liturgy and Christian education. For example, the story of salvation history, proclaimed as God's own Word to us, speaks of God's action in different peoples and cultures throughout history. Our liturgical catechesis, homilies, and other forms of evangelization can speak to the heart of this generation by subtly weaving young people's life stories into the story of God's love for us. Liturgies of the Word, both inside and outside of Divine Liturgy, could emphasize this connection.

Fourth, as opposed to the modern scientific and objective outlook, postmodern young people display a surprising openness to personal, spiritual, and mystical experiences. This can take the form of interest in the sacraments, devotions, and other ascetical practices as new ways to pray (provided they're not gimmicky or transparently trying to be relevant), and in authentic, heartfelt communal worship. Unfortunately, young people often seek to fulfill their desire for such experiences in risky behavior or in non-Christian religious traditions.

They also seek such experiences

in Protestant mega-churches that cater to individual experiences of God.

Finally, because of their distrust in truth-claims and their tendencies to relativism, this generation hungers for clarity and solid answers to life's problems. Our heritage has much to offer: liturgy is indeed the ultimate in spiritual and mystical experiences, the mystery in which we commune with the Holy One. With our long history and rich, deep traditions, we can offer that kind of solidity. The presence of the Church throughout two millennia can speak volumes to this generation, provided that the tradition is presented as active and alive. Youth ministry and Christian education can provide stability through a liturgical catechesis that cultivates a liturgical spirituality or sacramental view of life, helping young people find the presence of God in all of creation.

An apologist like C.S. Lewis could easily have persuaded a young person from the modern period, like myself, to live the Christian life, through sound logic and argumentation. In this view of things, faith was something to which one could be led by reason, and, once persuaded, there was no longer reason to argue. It was true or false: you simply gave assent with your mind, and you followed through with the rest of life.

In contrast, the postmodern young person needs to experience God before he or she will believe that God is real. You can argue and reason all you like, but the response will be the same:

“That might work for you, but not for me.” Instead, what works with this generation are encounters with Christ.

The postmodern young person’s desire for authenticity, mystical experience, meaning, and a sense of awe all suggest his or her predisposition to ritual in general. Orthodox educators can use Scripture and the teaching and practices of the Church in creative ways that do not violate the spirit of the Tradition to help connect a young person’s experiences of Christ to becoming part of the Body of Christ in daily life. The late Father Alexander Schmemmann said, “It is in the liturgy that the sources of faith – the Bible and tradition – become a living reality” (“Theology and Liturgical Tradition,” in Massey Shepherd, ed., *Worship in Scripture and Tradition*, p. 166). In fact, liturgy enacts revelation in such a way that those who “do” liturgy also “do” theology (Christology, pneumatology, theological anthropology, and ecclesiology). Liturgy is where the Tradition of the church is enacted and lived. So if today’s young people are looking for meaning, liturgy is indeed the place to find it – where we live the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Young people need to understand that conversion is a lifelong process, and liturgy facilitates that conversion. We need to help them grasp this liturgical asceticism, or metanoia (conversion), that is, the process by which a baptized person, through regular participation in liturgy, receives the necessary formation to order one’s life habitually such that one comes to know and experience God in one’s life. It is the disci-

pline required for our theosis (deification). Baptized persons experience the Paschal Mystery and are transformed and strengthened by it to love their neighbor as themselves. As part of the Body of Christ, they enter into the divine mutual participation, and reflect the image and likeness of the Trinity. In sum, liturgical asceticism is the Christian life, lived through, in, and with Christ and his Body, the Church.

Young people may grasp the beauty of vespers, orthros, the hours of prayer and divine liturgy, and discover a hunger to participate in them. We want to do what we can to give them a positive understanding of the meaning of these services. From an Orthodox perspective, liturgy, like the Church itself, is an icon of Christ (who, in turn, is the icon of the Father).

Young people must grasp that liturgy slowly transforms us. Through the Eucharist, we come not simply to the knowledge of God, but to the living God. We are empowered to live as disciples in the world. We are perfected over time by the work of grace through contact with the Trinity in liturgy, and in this way we are able to live as Christian disciples. Young people need to learn to live the liturgy in their daily lives in practical ways, dealing with moral and other issues common to their age group.

We no longer live in a “churched” culture. In contrast to the church culture of the 50s, say, the values of the church are not those of society. Far too many people do not seek out the Church on their own

initiative. Moreover, the Church, the sacraments, its teachings and practices, life as a koinonia, a communion of love – these things are not understood generally; our society as a whole has no knowledge of life in and as the Church. We live in a society that focuses on one’s individual life, independent of others. This is true not only of adolescents, but also their parents.

The “mega-church” is one response from Protestant Christians to our unchurched society. We should note that most attendees at these mega-churches (eighty-two percent) come at the invitation of a friend, family member, or co-worker. While we might fault these mega-churches for a number of things, they are clearly addressing the felt needs of the post-modern generation: Sixty-two percent of attendees said that they experienced much spiritual growth. This should be a wake-up call for us as Orthodox educators.

To meet post-modern young people where they are, as educators we need to present the Church as a living organism that offers Truth without compromise and sacraments in which they may meet God. Most of all, young people need to grasp the beauty, the richness, the majesty and the practical reality of the Divine Liturgy in their lives.

(This article was adapted from a presentation at the Education Forum at the Antiochian Village.)

FEASTDAYS

Please join us for the following festal celebrations during February.

MEETING OF OUR LORD

February 2

Vespers/Litiya, 6:30 PM (WED)

Divine Liturgy, 8:00 AM (THUR)

BLESSING OF CANDLES AFTER EACH SERVICE.

COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE

Feb 5: Bica/Osburn

Feb 12: Papa

Feb 19: Bica, et al.

Feb 26: Blini Luncheon

CHURCH CLEANING SCHEDULE

Feb 5: Harvey

Feb 12: Dresko, Sas, McAuley

Feb 19:

Feb 26: Bokre

FAST FREE/MEAT FAST

As we move ever closer to Great Lent, the Church modifies her fasting rules. The week of February 5-11 is a **fast-free** week in the Church. Those who follow the calendar strictly begin a **meat-fast** February 20-26 (all other foods allowed). Then Great Lent begins on February 27, with the strict rule of fasting that we choose to follow.

FORGIVENESS VESPERS

The liturgical beginning of Great Lent is the celebration of Forgiveness Vespers following the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, February 26th. This moving and beautiful service is a rite that every Orthodox Christian attends. **All parishioners should make every effort to be with us on that morning!**

HOUSE BLESSINGS

A sign-up list is available in the

vestibule of the church if you wish to have Father come. **No houses will be blessed after February 24th!** Please make note of any special requests such time of day and if would like to plan a meal, etc., around the visit.

YOUTH ACTIVITY

A youth day of bowling has been scheduled for Saturday, February 4th, at Wildfire Lanes on Sunset Road. We will gather to bowl at 12:30 PM, ending with Vespers at 5:00 PM. Our brothers and sisters from St. John's have been invited to join us. Please contact Stephen Osburn (521-6988) or Christina Sas (686-4507) for more information about attending these events.

SLAVONIC LITURGY

The monthly Slavonic Liturgy will be held on February 11th. **Russian Confessions begin at 9:00 AM.** Liturgy will begin at 10:00 AM.

NON-EVENT FUNDRAISER

In lieu of our annual fundraising dinner, we will be having a "Non-Event." You all will receive a "non-invitation" to the non-event on February 14. The invitation will ask for a \$50 (or any amount you want to share) donation. This is a cute and innovative way to offer a special little something to the parish! Look for your invitation in the mail.

FEED THE HUNGRY

Our next scheduled date is Saturday, February 18th. 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!

GREAT LENT

- Great Lent 2012 begins on Monday, February 27th. During Lent, all Orthodox Christians make the journey to the Sacrament of Confession. Father will be available before each Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts and after Vespers on Saturday evenings. As usual, Father does not mind making appointments!
- Fasting for the Wednesday and Friday Liturgies of the Presanctified Gifts is no food, drink, etc., all day if your health permits it, but at least from the noontime meal.
- We will be hosting the annual Lenten Retreat for the Las Vegas Valley Orthodox communities. This will be held on March 3rd, and the speaker will be Father Meletios from St. John's Monastery in Mantion, California. Flyers are coming soon. Please try to join us!

SUNDAY LENTEN SERVICES

All services are held on Sunday evenings at 6:00 PM. **This year, we will hold a join Holy Unction Service on April 1st.**

March 4: St. John's

March 11: St. Paul's

March 18: St. Simeon's

March 25: St. Michael's

April 1: St. John's (UNCTION)

ICON FUND

Work on the dome will begin in February. This will be the most costly part of the icon project. If

you have thought about it, **now** is the time to make a special donation to our restricted Icon Fund to help pay for the project.

PLEDGE FORMS PAST DUE

2012 Pledge Forms were due by the end of November. Please take time to prayerfully and seriously consider your commitment to the parish and God's holy Church by making a generous gift to our work. There are also various tasks needing attention for which you can volunteer.

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 meet on Thursdays, at 10:00 AM at El Rancho on Pecos and Russell.

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 JANUARY 17, 2012 MEETING

Rector's Report:

- Father John will be away at the end of January (24-31) for a personal trip.
- Lent begins on February 27th.
- St. Paul's will be hosting the Lenten Retreat on March 3, 2012. The guest speaker will be Father Meletios from St.

Johns Monastery, Manton, California.

Vice President: no report.

Treasurer's Report: Karen Short distributed reports to council members earlier via e-mail. The painting of the interior of the church should be around \$2800.

We have \$14,367.50 in outstanding bills that have not been paid to date.

Income for December was \$24,891.50, expenses: \$17,300.80 for surplus of \$7,590.70.

YTD 12/31/11

2011 YTD Inc \$ 232,810.67

2011 YTD Exp \$ 232,410.18

Inc over Exp \$ 400.49

Buildings and Grounds:

The dumpster is being filled with construction materials from an outside user. There is no way to stop it, but Father John and Harry will keep an eye on it.

Church School/Youth: Stephen Osburn attended the hockey event Saturday, January 14th with St. John's youth. He reported that none of our youth attended, but he observed that it seemed to be a social event for the parents as well. He suggested we try to get the parents more involved in the youth events to help foster relationships with the adults. The details for bowling are done. Flyers with parental permission slips will be distributed on Sunday, January 22nd. Bowling will take place on Saturday, February 4th, from 1:00PM – 3:30PM. The cost will be \$6.75 for bowling and shoe rental. It is suggested that

the youth bring \$10.00 to cover snacks. The group will return for Vespers.

Charity: Cathy Wilkalis reported that the next "Feeding the Homeless" would take place on February 18th. This is a tentative date until Father John has spoken to Jason Basso. The IOCC would like us to schedule an event sometime during Lent. Discussion followed.

Eritrean/Ethiopian: no report.

Outreach/Website: Stephen Osburn reported that the office finally has a functioning computer. His goal for the future is to put our bookstore online. Discussion followed.

Russian: no report.

Stewardship: Father John reported to date 40 pledges (53 adults) have been received. The total dollar amount pledged (annually) is: \$103,396.00. Our budget for parishioner gifts (stewardship, assessments, donations, etc.) is \$152,196.00. Our pledges to date represent 67.9% of the total parishioner giving budgeted for 2012. Father John and Karen Short continue to receive pledges.

OLD BUSINESS

Bell Tower: Harry reported the bell tower is usable. He is waiting for the inspector and permit. In the spring he suggested a cleaning of the bells in the bell tower.

Wine tasting/Cook-off Fundraiser: Father John will talk to Bishop Benjamin about doing this event in April.

Iconography Project: will follow

when the interior painting is complete (February). Father John has received 4 Seraphim canvases with 2 on the way.

Interior Paint Project: is progressing. It is 50% completed as of January 17th. A large church cleaning will have to take place to remove the paint dust before the icons can be re-hung. Painting the patches on the outside of the church is projected for the spring. The next interior project will be replacing electrical outlets. The windows will need to be replaced in the next several years.

Money Procedures: Volunteers to help count the money are needed. Several have checked to help on their pledge form. Father and Karen will work on a schedule.

Greeters: Harry worked with Fern Bica on Sunday, January 15th. Jim Brophy will be working with Litsa Osburn on Sunday, January 22nd. Lindsey Osburn has also expressed an interest in greeting.

"Non-event" Fundraiser: The invitations are at the printers. Everyone will receive an "uninvite" to a "non event". There are 300 being sent out with a \$50 dollar ticket or a donation of your choice. This is replacing the annual parish dinner for this year.

NEW BUSINESS

25th Anniversary: St. Paul's will be celebrating its 25th Anniversary in 2013. A committee is needed to spearhead this event. Pam Campbell will be asked to coordinate.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 21, 2012, 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 FEBRUARY

Antonina Stark
February 2, 1994

Amelia Zalo
February 8, 2008

Peter Lazadoff
February 10, 1993

Samuel Berhe Tella
February 13, 1991

Gurii Miroshnicenco
February 13, 2010

Edward Grudzina
February 14, 2010

Mary Maviglia
February 18, 1998

Raicevich Harrison
February 18, 1999

Milica Primaky
February 25, 1995

Fred Leo Bell
February 25, 1996

Christina Hollis
February 26, 1998

Bekure Hailu Fesehaye
February 28, 1992

James Mezilson
February 28, 1998

Maria Jamieson
February 28, 2002

Irene Wadhams
February 28, 2002

Melvin Stokich
February 28, 2003