

# THE MESSENGER

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE ORTHODOX CHURCH

MAY 2012



**CHRIST IS RISEN!! INDEED HE IS RISEN!!  
THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD**

## MARK THE DATES

May 2: Daily Vespers and Adult Faith Forum resumes, 6:30 PM

May 9: MID-PENTECOST, Divine Liturgy, 8:00 AM

May 12: Russian Confessions, Slavonic Liturgy, 9:00 AM

May 19: Feeding the Homeless Project, 10:30 AM

May 22-30: FATHER JOHN OUT OF TOWN

May 23-24: THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD

May 28: Memorial Day (Civil Holiday)

Send email addresses and corrections to: [frjohn@lasvegasorthodox.com](mailto:frjohn@lasvegasorthodox.com)

# May 2012

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

<p><b>COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE</b></p> <p>MAY 6: SAS/McAULEY/DRESKO MAY 13: MEN (MOTHERS DAY) MAY 20: CLANTON MAY 27: JOLEVSKI</p>		<p><b>1</b></p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>ERITREAN SERVICE</p> <p>DAILY VESPERS, 6:30 PM ADULT FAITH FORUM</p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>COFFEE CHAT, 10:00 AM</p>	<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>GREAT VESPERS, 5:00 PM CONFESSIONS</p>
<p><b>6</b></p> <p>DIVINE LITURGY, 9:00 AM HOURS: PLUTA EPISTLE: NORVILLE POST-COMM: BROPHY CHURCH SCHOOL</p>	<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>9</b></p> <p>DIVINE LITURGY, 8:00 AM MID-PENTECOST</p> <p>DAILY VESPERS, 6:30 PM ADULT FAITH FORUM</p>	<p><b>10</b></p> <p>COFFEE CHAT, 10:00 AM</p>	<p><b>11</b></p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p>RUSSIAN CONFESSIONS, 9 AM SLAVONIC LITURGY 10:00 AM</p> <p>BAPTISM, 3:30 PM GREAT VESPERS, 5:00 PM CONFESSIONS</p>
<p><b>13</b></p> <p>DIVINE LITURGY, 9:00 AM HOURS: JARLSON EPISTLE: DRESKO POST-COMM: C. SAS CHURCH SCHOOL MOTHER'S DAY GHEBREAB/GHERMAY WEDDING</p>	<p><b>14</b></p>	<p><b>15</b></p>	<p><b>16</b></p> <p>DAILY VESPERS, 6:30 PM ADULT FAITH FORUM</p>	<p><b>17</b></p> <p>COFFEE CHAT, 10:00 AM</p>	<p><b>18</b></p>	<p><b>19</b></p> <p>FEED THE HOMELESS 10:30 AM</p> <p>GREAT VESPERS, 5:00 PM CONFESSIONS</p>
<p><b>20</b></p> <p>DIVINE LITURGY, 9:00 AM HOURS: DRESKO EPISTLE: STRANSKY POST-COMM: E. SAS</p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p>PARISH COUNCIL 6:00 PM</p>	<p><b>22</b></p> <p>FATHER JOHN OUT OF TOWN, MAY 22-30, 2012</p>	<p><b>23</b></p> <p>VESPERS/LITIYA, 6:30 PM CONFESSIONS</p>	<p><b>24</b></p> <p>DIVINE LITURGY, 8:00 AM ASCENSION OF THE LORD</p>	<p><b>25</b></p>	<p><b>26</b></p> <p>GREAT VESPERS, 5:00 PM CONFESSIONS</p>
<p><b>27</b></p> <p>DIVINE LITURGY, 9:00 AM HOURS: STRANSKY EPISTLE: HOOD POST-COMM: NORVILLE CHURCH SCHOOL</p>	<p><b>28</b></p> <p>MEMORIAL DAY</p>	<p><b>29</b></p>	<p><b>30</b></p> <p>FATHER JOHN RETURNS</p>	<p><b>31</b></p> <p>COFFEE CHAT, 10:00 AM</p>	<p><b>CHURCH CLEANING SCHEDULE</b></p> <p>MAY 6: AKEZA MAY 13: SARA MAY 20: TEKESTE NEGASI MAY 27: BEA</p>	



# The Messenger

St. Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church  
5400 Annie Oakley Drive • Las Vegas, Nevada 89120  
702.898.4800 • [www.lasvegasorthodox.com](http://www.lasvegasorthodox.com)

MAY 2012

CHRIST IS RISEN!! INDEED HE IS RISEN!!

“I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU ALONE”

The Orthodox Church has often been referred to as the “Paschal Church.” This compliment, which refers to our deep and abiding understanding and reliance upon the resurrection of the Lord in our worship, while true, hardly sums up the “paschal existence” of the Church. No matter how much we would like to stress Pascha, it only receives its fulness and depth of meaning when we also understand and connect the Ascension of the Lord and His sending of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles (Pentecost) with the paschal celebration. The Resurrection must be followed by the Ascension and Pentecost.

The Great and Holy Feast of the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ commemorates the ascent of the resurrected Christ into heaven forty days after the Resurrection. His ascension took place after forty days to show that the time for His sojourning among His disciples was complete and full. The number forty has many instances of use in the Scriptures and has come to mean “completeness” in the sense that

even if the exact time were not forty days (i.e., like the churching of a new mother in contemporary practice), the number is used to show us that the time is complete and the action which follows (like the ascension or even the churching of a mother) fulfills and completes the time of preparation. Forty days becomes very important for our understanding of the ascension, then, to assure us that Christ’s earthly mission was indeed completed and His ascension to the Father was the fulfillment of that mission.

Beyond that, however, what does the Ascension of Christ have to do with us? We would answer that by saying that although His earthly mission was completed, His divine mission in accomplishing our salvation was not. He goes to the Father to resume His place in the Council of the Trinity and to do two more things for His creation. First, the verses of the feast make it quite clear that the Holy Spirit is to be sent to the faithful and that Christ is the One to send the Comforter:

The Lord ascended to heaven

to send the Comforter into the world! The heavens prepared His throne, the clouds His royal mount! The angels were amazed, seeing a Man exalted! The Father awaits His co-everlasting Son, the Holy Spirit commands the angels! Lift up your heads, O you gates! Clap your hands all you nations, for Christ has ascended to where He was before!  
*(Lord I Call, Feast of Ascension)*

The Comforter must be sent to give the Breath of Life to the Body (the Church) which Christ left on earth in place of His physical body, which has ascended to heaven. He never would simply leave the disciples (or us!) alone:

“I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world will see me no more, but you will see me; because I live, you will live also... it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.”  
*(John 14:18-19; 16:7)*

## St. Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

5400 Annie Oakley Drive  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89120  
702.898.4800  
www.lasvegasorthodox.com

### RECTOR

Archpriest John J. Dresko  
1747 Crystal Downs Ave  
Las Vegas, NV 89123  
702.485.3810 (Home)  
860.833.4921 (Mobile)  
frjohn@lasvegasorthodox.com

### ATTACHED

Archpriest James Bertolini  
Archpriest John Bruchok  
Priest Aaron Oliver

### CHOIR DIRECTOR

Juliana Dresko

### PARISH COUNCIL

Laura Draskovic, Vice-President

Karen Short, Treasurer

Virginia Hood, Secretary

Harold Anagnostopoulos

James Brophy  
Alan Buttell

Robert Conductor  
Stephen Osburn  
Catherine Wilkalis

### SUB-COMMITTEES

Building & Grounds  
Harold Anagnostopoulos  
Nikolai Melnikov

Eritrean & Ethiopian Outreach  
Genet Bokre

Russian Outreach  
Natalia Minkoff

Church School  
Nadine Wood

Secondly, the mission of Christ was precisely to return US to the Father. When man sinned, death and corruption entered the world and disconnected us from the Father. Christ took upon Himself all of fallen humanity when He came to redeem man. By assuming ALL of humanity, even unto death, Christ restores fallen mankind to communion with God - which was the original creation of God anyway (paradise) - and completed that action by taking our humanity, now re-created in the risen Christ, back to the Kingdom (our true home) and the right hand of the Father. The first Adam has been restored by the second Adam.

God has gone up with a shout! The Lord with the sound of a trumpet, in order to raise the fallen image of Adam, and to send the comforting Spirit who will sanctify our souls! (*Lord I Call, Feast of Ascension*)

The ascent of Christ into heaven is our assurance that He will send the Holy Spirit to us, to enlighten us, guide us, and lead us to the Kingdom of God, where Christ has gone to "prepare a place for us."

The descent of the Holy Spirit is known to the Church as the feast of Pentecost. Pentecost was an ancient Jewish feast which celebrated the giving of the Ten Commandments to Moses by God. The reception of the Law was a great moment in the salvation history of Israel, but even the Law was to be fulfilled by the Messiah Who was to come. The feast of Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ is transformed

from the feast of the reception of the Old Testament Law to the feast of the New Law in Christ - the life of grace in which the Holy Spirit gives breath to our new life in Christ. All has now been revealed and the only task left to Christians is to learn and live the revelation through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

We have seen the true Light!  
We have received the heavenly Spirit! We have found the true Faith, worshipping the undivided Trinity, who has saved us! (*Verse from the Aposticha, Feast of Pentecost. This is also sung following Holy Communion at every Divine Liturgy between Pentecost and the next celebration of Pascha.*)

The feast of Pentecost is also known as "Trinity Sunday." The Trinity is manifested throughout the Scriptures and in many of the feasts of the Orthodox Church, but Pentecost is the feast of the Trinity "par excellence." The full revelation of the Holy Trinity occurs with the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the People of God.

Come, O people, let us worship the Godhead in three Persons: the Son in the Father, with the Holy Spirit. The Father timelessly begets His co-reigning and co-eternal Son; the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and is glorified in the Son; one Power, one Essence, one Godhead! Let us all worship Him, professing our faith: Holy God, who made all things through the Son, with the Holy Spirit's cooperation. Holy Mighty, through Whom we know the Father, through Whom the Holy Spirit came into the world.

Holy Immortal, the Spirit and Comforter, proceeding from the Father and resting in the Son. O Holy Trinity, glory to You! (*Lord I Call, Feast of Pentecost*)

The confusion of tongues that occurred at Babel (Genesis 11:1-9), the result of pride and the fallenness of man, is overcome on Pentecost. The Holy Spirit descends as tongues of fire on the Apostles and the Theotokos, and they began speaking in different tongues, and those who heard them each heard their words in their own native language, and speech becomes a sign of the Holy Spirit made manifest in man. Because of sin, words became the source and sign of confusion and separation between God and man and between different peoples. With the descent of the Holy Spirit, words (by the Word) become the source and sign of the triumph of Christ over sin. The Word is the source of communion and the Holy Spirit enlightens the faithful to knowledge of God.

The arrogance of those building Babel's tower caused men's languages to be confused in days of old, but now the tongues are gloriously enlightened by the knowledge of God. There God punished infidels for their sin, but here Christ enlightens fishermen with His Spirit. There the confusion of languages was done in vengeance; here they are joined in unison for the salvation of our souls! (*Aposticha Verse, Feast of Pentecost*)

**P**ascha. Ascension. Pentecost. The events of all three are essential for our salva-

tion. All three reveal the victory of Christ in His Incarnation. But all three are inseparable. It is impossible to imagine the resurrection of Christ without His returning to the Father, and it is impossible to imagine Christ returning to His Father while leaving the faithful without the Holy Spirit. It is essential for the faithful of the Orthodox Church to be a "Paschal Church," but to remember that a "paschal" Church does not forget faith in the ascension of Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit. Rather, it includes and depends on that faith.

*Father John*

#### FEASTDAYS

Please join us for the following festal celebrations during May.

*Mid-Pentecost*

*May 9*

Divine Liturgy, 8:00 AM (WED)

*THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD*

*May 24*

Vespers/Litiya, 6:30 PM (WED)

Divine Liturgy, 8:00 AM (THUR)

#### COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE

May 6: Sas, Dresko, McAuley

May 13: MEN (Mothers Day)

May 20: Clanton

May 27: Jolevski

#### CHURCH CLEANING SCHEDULE

May 6: Akeza

May 13: Sara

May 20: Tekeste Negasi

May 27: Bea Makunen

#### ADULT CLASS

The home stretch before summer break is now upon us. The adult discussion group will resume meeting on **Wednesday, May 2**, with Daily Vespers beginning at

6:30 PM. We will be discussing *The Screwtape Letters*, a classic of Christian spirituality by C. S. Lewis. Everyone interested is asked to have read before we meet. Please join us!

#### SLAVONIC LITURGY

The monthly Slavonic Liturgy will **resume on May 12**. Fr. Alexander will be available for Russian confessions at 9:00 AM, with liturgy set for 10:00 AM.

#### FEED THE HUNGRY

Our next scheduled date is Saturday, May 19<sup>th</sup>. 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!

#### FATHER AWAY/PRAYERS

Father John will be out of town from May 22 through 30. Father Aaron will be serving for the Feast of the Ascension of our Lord and the weekend on May 26-27. If you have an emergency during Father John's absence, please contact Fr. Aaron at 823-8077.

Matushka Elizabeth will be having shoulder surgery back in Connecticut during this visit. Please remember her in your prayers for a full and speedy recovery before she returns to us!

#### 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. We will resume the chats on May 3<sup>rd</sup>.**

### LOOKING AHEAD

As we look ahead into June, we remind everyone of the Great and Holy Feast of Pentecost on Sunday, June 3. As customary in the Orthodox Church, we will celebrate the Kneeling Vespers of Pentecost after liturgy on that day. The week following Pentecost is **fast-free** in the Orthodox Church.

Church School will end with final classes on Sunday, June 10. We will have Prayers of Thanksgiving and graduation remembrances following the liturgy on June 17.

Our final adult discussion group meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 20. All classes (children and adults) will resume in September.

### 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 APRIL 24, 2012 MEETING

*Rector's Report:*

- San Francisco Diocesan Council Meeting; April 25-26, 2012. Father John will be out of town for those meetings.
- May 22: Father will be out of

town for a week. Matushka Liz will be having shoulder surgery. Father Aaron will conduct the services.

- Many thanks to everyone for the beautiful Holy Week and Pascha celebration. Also to everyone who pitched in and made the bishop's visit very nice.
- The OCA has made new certificates available for baptisms, chrismations, marriages and recognition. They are beautiful and will be used for our parish.

*Vice President:* Laura Draskovic reported that everything was very smooth around the Paschal services. Candles sales and income were up substantially from last year.

*Treasurer's Report:* Karen Short distributed reports to council members earlier via e-mail. Everything is going well. The Non-Event seems to have concluded with gifts totaling \$3130.00.

**We have NO outstanding bills!**

Income for March was: \$17,182.74, and expenses of \$18,730.64 for **deficit of \$1,547.90.**

<b>YTD 3/30/12</b>	
<b>2012 YTD Inc</b>	\$ 60,441.93
<b>2012 YTD Exp</b>	\$ 56,917.93
<b>Inc over Exp</b>	\$ 3,524.00

*Buildings and Grounds:*

- Harry will be doing a number of odd jobs around the church.
- The hall floor will be stripped and waxed on Friday, April 27.
- Teresa Pechonis is going to

take over the cleaning of the hall, offices and rest rooms. She will determine charges after cleaning. Council unanimously agreed to try for a month and review costs, etc. at May meeting.

*Church School:* None.

*Youth:*

- Youth Retreat at St. John's Greek Orthodox Church went real well. The teens are talking about a basketball challenge with the teens from St. John's.

*Charity:* Status quo on the food pantry.

Feeding the Homeless is still slated for Saturday, May 19, 2012. Father will get information about logistics from Jason Basso, who has not been attending St. Paul's for personal reasons. We will determine if the duties can be given to new people to continue the project.

*Eritrean/Ethiopian:* A separate Pascha service held elsewhere was well attended and received. Father wanted the council to know that there seems to be a gradual, organic movement of the Eritrean community towards their own parish. They have filed for a 501c3 certificate. This is nothing that is immediate, but we will support them in any way we can.

*Outreach/Website:* Stephen Osburn reported that the sermons are up to date, and Paschal pictures will be posted soon.

*Russian:* Regular service in May will be held.

*Stewardship:* Father John reported no new pledge forms.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

*Bell Tower:* status quo. Harry Anagnastopoulos would like to clean the bells when the weather is more conducive. Mary Jolevski has started to ring the bells with Cathy Wilkalis.

*Wine tasting/Cook-off Fundraiser:* status quo.

*Iconography Project:* Status quo.

*25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary:* Pam Campbell will mail out "Save the Date" cards after Pascha.

*Lenten Retreat:* Our parish will host the annual Lenten Retreat for the Las Vegas Valley Orthodox Churches. Fr. Meletios Webber will speak on "Finding Silence in a Noisy World."

*"Non-event" Fundraiser:* Book closed on the event.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

*Seminary Funding:* Stephen and Lindsey Osburn are heading to St. Vladimir's in August for Stephen to begin attending seminary classes. St. Vladimir's now has a new tuition free plan. One quarter of the tuition comes from the parish. Or, we match the tuition 50% to St. Vladimir's. How do we do this? Pam Campbell has graciously stepped forward to try and organize this. It was suggested that Pam Campbell attend the next parish council meeting to discuss money for Stephen Osburn and the 25th Anniversary celebration.

*Next Meeting:* Monday, May 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 MAY**

Bagdan Kerkez  
May 1, 1996

Jakov Kaganovitch  
May 2, 1999

Ana Nestor  
May 2, 2009

Irene Stump  
May 5, 1990

Michael Kor  
May 5, 2006

Barbara Stokich  
May 7, 2000

Fautine Papamoros  
May 8, 2002

Holly Ann Lowey  
May 11, 1989

Mary Skreagin  
May 14, 2003

Alexander Townsend  
May 16, 2008

Wesley Kabbush  
May 18, 1993

Milan Zatezalo  
May 19, 2007

Victor Sokoloff  
May 23, 2006

Nathalie Novic  
May 27, 2005

Nadezda Ashuts  
May 30, 2008

## A MEDITATION FOR TODAY'S YOUNG PEOPLE

### On Cohabitation

*A recent article in the New York Times (The Downside of Cohabiting Before Marriage, by Meg Jay, April 14, 2012) highlighted the difficulties young people face today. Cohabitation is a commonly accepted way of life today, but has terrible consequences. Fr. Dimitri Cozby of Victoria, Texas, wrote the following thoughts on the issue. They are worth reading.*

The reality that cohabitation was a poor “try out” for marriage has been known for decades. Most of the “explanations” that floated around in the secular culture were really attempts to justify continuing the practice in the face of the evidence.

Referring to the problem as “cohabitation” is still an attempt to avoid the real issue. My experience in counseling is that the

problem is not “living together”, the literal meaning of cohabitation. The real issue is pre- or extra-marital sex. This always began long before the “cohabitation”, which is only a way to facilitate sex. It seems from my experience that a relationship simply “freezes” and ceases to mature at the point where physical sex begins. Unless a conscious effort is made to overcome this, the relationship will not grow any deeper than it was at that time. It will not progress into the true communion of minds and hearts necessary for a successful marriage. Good sex, rather than a true relationship, becomes the goal. And indeed, sex then becomes destructive - it is like a “painkiller” which masks problems and prevents the couple from dealing with situations which threaten the relationship. Take enough pain pills and you can continue to walk on a broken leg; have enough good sex and you won't understand that your relationship with your partner is dying.

Physical sex now enters most relationships at an extremely early stage. Thus the relationship gets stuck at a very imma-

ture level. The couple learns how to deal with each other in bed, but have only limited ability to deal with each other elsewhere. When the couple then decides to enter into the commitment of marriage, they discover that they have no basis to support it in their common emotional and spiritual development. Tragically, they don't usually realize what the true source of their dilemma is. They haven't learned how to deal with each other as human beings, only as sex partners.

The prohibition of pre-marital sex is not just an arbitrary rule thought up by puritanical kill-joys. It is a necessary ingredient in the maturing of the relationship between the man and the woman. This maturity will not occur once the physical becomes the focus of the relationship. Even the explanations for the ineffectiveness of “cohabitation” in the article avoid facing the real issue. The secular culture still wants open, free and unrestrained physical sex, without acknowledging its detrimental effects on building a strong and lasting relationship, a true marriage of minds, souls and hearts as well as bodies.



## MID-PENTECOST WEDNESDAY, MAY 9

LITURGY 8:00 AM