

Saint Panteleimon Russian Orthodox Church, Gosford

ПАНТЕЛЕИМОНСКИЙ ЛИСТОК

PARISH NEWSLETTER

~ Number 67, July 2007 ~

OUR FEAST DAY AND VLADYKA'S VISIT ON AUGUST 12th, AND OTHER SERVICES AT GOSFORD AND WALLSEND DURING AUGUST

All of our parishioners and friends are reminded that our usual schedule of services on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month has been varied significantly to accommodate Vladyka Hilarion's visit to Gosford on August 12th. In Gosford, we will have a Sunday service only once in August, the day of Vladyka's visit. God willing, Vladyka will bring with him the wonder-working Kursk-Root Icon of the Mother of God.

The actual day of commemoration of the Holy Great-Martyr and Healer Panteleimon falls on August 9th. There will be a small service on the day of the feast itself, beginning at 9.00 am. It is expected that some of the clergy from Sydney and elsewhere who are unable to visit with Vladyka on the Sunday will visit us on that day. Those of our parishioners who are able to be in church on that day are encouraged to do so, it being an opportunity to prayerfully observe the memory of our patron saint.

On Sunday 12th, there will be a service of blessing of water at 8.15 am. Vladyka will be welcomed at 9.00am, and the celebration of Divine Liturgy will follow. A festive banquet lunch will be held afterwards in a hall ("Building 11") at Mount Penang Parklands up at Kariong, a beautiful garden area a short drive from the church and overlooking Brisbane Water. This venue was chosen as our old "home", the Narara Community Centre, was unavailable.

A number of guests are expected on the day from Sydney and Newcastle, and we look forward to a festive gathering of parishioners and friends, one made all the more special by the presence of the wonder-working Kursk-Root Icon.

There will also be services in Gosford on Monday August 27th and Tuesday August 28th in observance of the Great Feast of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary (Успение Богородицы).

Father James will serve in Wallsend on the 1st, 3rd and 4th Sundays in August. The 3rd Sunday is the Great Feast of Transfiguration. This is also the patronal feast of the men's monastery in Bombala, a place close to the hearts of many here on the Central Coast.

With 2007 passing by so quickly, a Spring 2007 Schedule of Services covering the months of September, October and November will be available in church and on the parish website from Sunday August 12th.

EPISTLE OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS TO THE PIOUS PASTORS AND GOD-BELOVED FLOCK OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA

This epistle was published on the Synodal website following a recent meeting of the Synod of Bishops in San Francisco. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to include the Russian-language version here. Those desiring a copy of the epistle in Russian should speak with Father James.

"Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:2).

Having convened in the God-preserved city of San Francisco, at St Tikhon House, residence of Righteous St John of Shanghai and San Francisco the Miracle-worker, we archpastors, in the days before his feast day, appeal to all with the words that the Resurrected Lord spoke to His beloved disciples: "Peace be unto you."

This session is the first after the ceremonial signing of the Act of Canonical Communion which re-established the unity of the Russian Orthodox Church. Witnessing this great event were not only its participants and the multitude of clergymen and pilgrims who travelled to Moscow for the celebration, but millions of faithful throughout the world, who observed the event on television and through the internet. Indeed, that significant day was hailed all over the Orthodox world: "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalms 118:24).

Still, one cannot but notice that not all the children of our Church, and not all of Her pastors have accepted what occurred in the same way. Some have even left Her, departing for various groupings which have no canonical foundation, or even formulating new pseudo-ecclesial entities. We grieve over every soul that leaves us and pray for their return to the bosom of the Church.

Zealots "not according to knowledge" (Romans 10:2) repeat endlessly that our Church has abandoned Her founders, betrayed Her legacy. It seems useless to debate with those who utter such accusations: such people hear nothing and no one but themselves: "Eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not" (Psalms 135:16, 17).

But let us ponder, beloved flock: what do these legacies consist of? Practically all the bishops of Russia during the epoch of troubles and persecutions, both in the Fatherland and abroad, never stopped saying: everything that the Lord has permitted to happen now with the Russian Church, and all that which was undertaken during those terrible times by the representatives of the holy hierarchy, will ultimately be brought to judgment and final decision by an All-Russian Pomestny [Local] Council. This pertains to the problem of ecumenism, and the relationship between the Church and state under the totalitarian regime. This is precisely what is stated in the Resolution of the All-Diaspora Council, and we do not depart from it by one iota.

But in order to commence preparing for such a Council, it is necessary for all the parts of the once-unified Russian Church to be in brotherly relationship with each other, standing together at one Chalice; it must be clear that it would otherwise be unimaginable to convene such a Council: there is no Council without conciliarity, conciliarity which is given to us only in Eucharistic and canonical brotherly communion. That is why the document signed in the "pervoprestol'ny" [reigning] city of Moscow envisioned not the "end of the Church Abroad" as some maintain, but the opposite, the beginning of the grace-filled process of the final healing of the wounds inflicted upon the Russian Church. In this sense, the Act of Canonical Communion may be viewed as the first pre-Council measure. Only now has it become possible to take practical steps towards convening an All-Russian Pomestny Council, which was desired by the New Martyrs of Russia and the hierarchs of the Russian Church Abroad of blessed memory, beginning with Blessed Metropolitan Anthony. The need for such a Council following the reestablishment of normal conditions of church life in Russia is stated in Patriarch Tikhon's Ukase No 362, that is, the very same Ukase which became the canonical basis for the creation of the separate administration of the Church Abroad.

The effort to re-establish the unity of the Russian Church after the abolishment of the godless state is the very essence of the legacy of our Church Abroad - the primary reason for Her origin and Her preservation to this day.

Again and again we remind you, beloved ones: our Church remains independent in "pastoral, educational, administrative, management, property, and civil matters." This means that any effort to seize our church property by the Moscow Patriarchate, which the false zealots constantly frighten people with, is a figment of their imagination. In fact, such intentions were to be feared more before the signing of the Act, which distinctly outlines property matters.

We cannot forget that the Church Abroad always considered the absence of canonical and Eucharistic communion with the Church in the Homeland as an extreme and temporary situation, justified only until the liquidation of the godless regime in Russia, as is stated in Paragraph 1 of the Regulations of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. After the liquidation of the god-battling state and the cessation of brutal persecutions and enslavement of the Church by atheists, the artificial self-isolation of the Church Abroad would not only be canonically unfounded, but sinful, for this would be a violation of the law of love. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (1 John 4:20).

Let us fulfil the greater laws of Christ, laws of love for God and neighbour, and first of all for those of our own blood, our brothers and sisters of our own faith in the much-suffering Homeland who had endured so much in the years of cruel persecutions.

The actions of individuals persons, whether hierarchs or simple laypersons, in the face of the Red Terror, should be left for the judgment of God, Who is "slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy" (Psalms 103:8).

We call upon all of our beloved children in the world to peace and unity of mind, to stand within Divine truth and love.

"Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love" (2 John 1:3).

San Francisco, June 30, 2007

EPISTLE OF HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN LAURUS ON THE DAY OF ALL RUSSIAN SAINTS

This epistle was published on the Synodal website on the Feast of All Saints of Russia. As we had no service in Gosford on that day, and as it has not been possible to read it at a service since, it is printed here in English and in Russian.

Dear in the Lord Fathers, Brothers, Sisters and Children!

Today the Russian Orthodox Church celebrates the memory of our holy compatriots, those who devoted their lives to serving God and neighbour.

To be a believer is to confess ones faith through deeds of love for God and for neighbour. The entire host of saints whom we celebrate today served as examples of such faith "which worketh by love" (Galatians 5:6). In faith is the blessedness of the Christian. To acquire faith is a treasure in and of itself: man cannot believe in the mercy of God without making the decision to serve not himself, but God and his neighbour. Love for others begins with the belief that repentance and requited love are possible within them. "He who says 'I love God' yet hates his brother is a liar," says Apostle John the Theologian.

Guided by the testament of love and resolving to satisfaction all questions which hindered the fullness of brotherly communion within the one Russian Orthodox Church, our Synod of Bishops, following the decision of the Council of Bishops of May of last year, finally confirmed the Act of Canonical Communion and decided to send a delegation to Moscow to participate in the celebrations of the reestablishment of church unity. What we experienced on this holiday in Christ the Saviour Cathedral on the day of the Ascension of the Lord, reminded me of the joy felt by the "author of the canons," St Theophanes, on the reconciliation that the Church achieved at the 7th Ecumenical Council, when the Church of Christ defeated iconoclasm. "Let us and all the faithful cry aloud and leap with joy today; How marvellous are Thy works, O Christ! How great is Thy might! For Thou hast made us of one mind and brought about our agreement," writes St

Theophanes in the first ode on the Triumph of Orthodoxy. Further in the same ode we read: "Seeing the great blessing we have received: how the divided members of Christ have been brought to unity, let us clap our hands for joy and praise God who has granted us peace!" This joy was felt by those who awaited this day with trepidation, this day "that the Lord hath created," as did those who joined our pilgrimage with doubts.

Besides the joint prayer in Christ the Saviour Cathedral, we prayed in Moscow at the relics of St Tikhon, All-Russian Patriarch and Confessor, who is so dear to the faithful of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia; during the great consecration of a new church built on the site of mass executions in Butovo; at the burial place of the Moscow Hierarchs in the ancient Uspensky Cathedral in the Kremlin, where His Eminence Metropolitan Anastassy (Gribanovsky) of blessed memory loved to serve; in Kiev, at the crypt of Holy Hieromartyr Metropolitan Vladimir (Bogoyavlensky) and the holy fathers of the Near and Far Cave of Kievo-Pecherskaya [Kiev Caves] Lavra; in Pochaev, where St Job and the Abbot of our monastic brethren, Archbishop Vitaly (Maximenko) laboured; and on the site of the appearance of the "Kursk-Root" Icon of the Mother of God. In each of these holy places we raised our prayers for our archpastors and pastors, for the parishioners of our Church, for our families and our children. To these prayers we added the prayer which never ceased in every single church of the Russian diaspora throughout the terrible godless years - the prayer for the much-suffering Russian people.

Our ancestors gave us our love for the holy sites and holy things of our Fatherland - they are not just monuments to the past. They are bound with the fate of living persons, and today, as in the past, the people of God in Russia live in sacrifice, with faith and with love they are now restoring these holy places, they build churches and monasteries, they strive to follow in the footsteps of those whom we remember today.

Our love cannot be directed only at the past - it must live and act in the present itself, in the time and place where the Lord has put to serve Him and our neighbour.

Dear in the Lord fathers, brothers, sisters and children, before us lies the difficult and thorny path of confirming and strengthening our church unity through the confession of our faith - turning our faith into good works and deeds, manifesting in life the legacy of our holy ancestors, building our Fatherland and calling others towards serving God and our people. The Lord calls us to eternal life, where His peace and His love reign. But in order to enter this blessed existence, we must here, on earth, achieve unity, understanding, trust, brotherhood and love for all.

"Fear not," teaches St Ephraim the Syrian, "to set out upon the good path which leads to Life." May they not fear, those who do not doubt the decisions of the Hierarchy, nor those who have left the Church, remembering that the strong and omnipotent Hand of

God guides us, protecting us from all crises and dangers. Let us protect ourselves with the "food for the soul," what the Holy Fathers called humility. Holy Hierarch Philaret (Drozdov, +1867) of Moscow, whose remains lie in Christ the Savior Cathedral, considered humility the "salt of good deeds," for just as salt strengthens the flavour of food, so does humility strengthen a person in his good works. Without humility, the spiritual podvigi [or efforts - ed.] of man disintegrate in pride, in self-importance, in aggravation, and they lose their value. An example of this is the Pharisee who had no humility and thus rendered meaningless all his other good deeds (Luke 18:11, 12). So let us pray the Lord that He teach humility to those who brothers and sisters who have left us, not for their Phariseism and for their unlawful departure from their Hierarchy, but towards obedience to the Church, towards devotion, patience, peace-making, striving for Him, and for love. "But to this man will I look," said the Lord, "even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Isaiah 66:2).

Let us pray, beloved in the Lord pastors and flock of the Russian Church Abroad, to all those whom we celebrate today, who joined their faith in Christ in this life with love and podvigi, so that through their prayers we all may overcome the sin which defeats us, and that we inherit the eternal life of bliss. Amen.

With love in the Lord, and a plea for your prayers,

+ Metropolitan Laurus

First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia

2nd Sunday of Pentecost 2007

ПОСЛАНИЕ ВЫСОКОТРЕОСВЯЩЕННЕЙШЕГО МИТРОПОЛИТА ЛАВРА К ПРАЗДНИКУ ВСЕХ СВЯТЫХ В ЗЕМЛЕ РОССИЙСКОЙ ПРОСИЯВШИХ

Возлюбленные о Господе отцы, братья, сестры и дети!

Сегодня Русская Православная Церковь празднует память святых сродников наших - всех тех, кто отдал свою жизнь на служение Богу и ближним.

Быть верующим - значит исповедовать веру свою делами любви к Богу и ближним. Весь сонм святых, празднуемых сегодня, являет нам пример такой веры, «действующей любовью» (Гал. 5, 6). В вере - все блаженство христианина. Приобрести веру - уже само по себе есть сокровище: веровать в милость Божию человек не может иначе, как только при решении служить не себе, а Богу и ближнему. Любовь к другим начинается верой в то, что они способны к покаянию и ответной любви. Веря людям и проникаясь любовью к ним, мы во всей полноте выражаем нашу веру в Бога. «Кто говорит: «я люблю Бога», а брата своего ненавидит, тот лжец», - говорит апостол Иоанн Богослов.

Руководствуясь заповедью о любви и благополучно разрешив все вопросы, препятствовавшие полноте братского общения в единой Русской Православной Церкви, наш Архиерейский Синод, следуя решению Архиерейского Собора, прошедшего в мае минувшего года, окончательно утвердил «Акт о каноническом общении» и постановил направить в Москву делегацию для участия в торжествах восстановления церковного единства. Переживания, которые мы испытывали на этом празднике, прошедшем в Храме Христа Спасителя в день Вознесения Господня, мне напомнили радость «творца канонов» преподобного Феофана, в связи с примирением, которое было достигнуто на VII Вселенском Соборе, когда Церковь Христова восторжествовала над иконоборчеством. «Плещущи с веселием днесь вернии возопиим: коль чудна дела Твоя, Христе, и велика сила, наше единомыслие и согласие соделавый», - пишет преподобный Феофан в первой песни канона на Торжество Православия. Дальше, в той же песни, читаем: «Превеликое благодеяние видяще, руками восплещим: разстоящияся уды Христовы, совокуплены во единство, и Бога похвалим, мир подаваго». Таковую радость испытывали как те, кто со трепетом ждал этого дня, «егоже сотвори Господь», так и те, кто с сомнениями в сердце приступал к нашему паломничеству.

Помимо совместной молитвы в Храме Христа Спасителя, мы в Москве молились у мощей дорогого всем верным Русской Зарубежной Церкви святителя Тихона, Всероссийского Патриарха-Исповедника; на великом освящении нового храма, построенного на месте массовых расстрелов в Бутово; у московских святителей в древнем Успенском соборе Московского Кремля, где любил совершать богослужения приснопамятный Блаженнейший митрополит Анастасий (Грибановский); в Киеве у ново-священномученика митрополита Владимира (Богоявленского) и преподобных отцов Ближних и Дальних Пещер Киево-Печерской Лавры; в Почаеве, где подвизался преподобный Иов и авва нашей монастырской братии архиепископ Виталий (Максименко), и на месте явления Курско-Коренной иконы Божией Матери. В каждом из этих святых мест мы возносили молитвы о наших архипастырях и пастырях, о прихожанах нашей Церкви, о наших семьях и детях. К этим молениям мы присоединяли молитву, которая в течение безбожного лихолетия не прекращалась в каждой церкви русского рассеяния - молитву о многострадальном русском народе.

Наши предки передали нам любовь к отечественным святым и святыням - эти святыни не просто памятные места прошлого. Они связаны с судьбой живых людей и сейчас, как и прежде, в России народ Божий жертвенно, с верой и любовью восстанавливает эти святыни, строит храмы и монастыри, стремится в своей жизни следовать стопам празднуемых ныне святых.

Наша любовь не может быть обращена лишь к прошлому - она должна быть живой и действенной именно в настоящем, в том самом времени и месте куда Господь нас поставил служить Ему и другим.

Дорогие о Господе отцы, братие, сестры и дети, перед нами трудный и тернистый путь утверждения и укрепления церковного единства посредством исповедания нашей веры - претворения ее в добрые дела и поступки, воплощения в жизнь заветов наших святых предков, строивших наше Отечество и призывавших к служению Богу и своему народу. Господь призывает нас к вечной жизни, где царствуют Его мир и Его любовь. Но, чтобы войти в эту блаженную жизнь, мы должны здесь, на земле, достигнуть единства, понимания, доверия, братства и любви ко всем людям.

«Не убойтесь, - учит преподобный Ефрем Сирийский, - положить начало доброго пути, вводящего в Жизнь». Пусть не боятся ни сомневающиеся в решениях Священноначалия, ни ушедшие от Церкви, помня, что крепкая и всесильная десница Божия направляет нас, охраняя от всех бед и опасностей. Вооружимся же все «пищей души», как называли смирение святые отцы. Святитель Московский Филарет (Дроздов; + 1867 г.), почивающий в Храме Христа Спасителя, считал смирение «солью добродетелей», ибо как соль придает вкус пище, так смирение укрепляет человека во всех добродетелях. Без смирения духовные подвиги человека растлеваются гордостью, тщеславием, раздражительностью и теряют цену. Пример тому - фарисей, не стяжавший смирения и тем погубивший все прочие добродетели (Лк. 18, 11, 12). Итак, будем умолять Господа, чтобы ушедших от нас братьев и сестер Он научил смирению не за фарисейство и незаконное отложение от своего Священноначалия, а за послушание Церкви, за преданность, терпение, миротворчество, стремление к Нему и любовь. «На кого воззрю, - говорит Господь, - только на кроткого и смиренного, трепещущего словес Моих» (Ис. 66, 2).

Помолимся, возлюбленные о Господе пастыри и чада Русской Зарубежной Церкви, всем празднуемым ныне святым, которые веру во Христа в сей своей жизни соделали любовью и подвигом, чтобы их молитвами мы все победили одолевающий нас грех и наследовали вечно-блаженную жизнь. Аминь.

С любовью о Господе и просьбой о молитвах,

+ Митрополит Лавр,
Первоиерарх Русской Зарубежной Церкви.

Неделя 2-ая по Пятидесятнице 2007 г.

ADDITIONAL CHANGES IN THE PRAYERS AT DIVINE SERVICES

In the June issue of our parish newsletter it was advised that the Synod of Bishops had decided on a number of minor changes in the prayers for Russia and for the civil authorities at Divine Services in the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia. On the Feast of All Saints of Russia advice was received from the Diocesan authorities of some further changes that reflect the canonical status of the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia following the signing of the 'Act of Canonical Communion' in May 2007.

The following forms of words have been used in the Great Litany and the Augmented Litany up until now:

For the Orthodox episcopate of the Russian Church, for our Lord the Very Most Reverend Metropolitan Laurus, First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, for our Lord, the Most Reverend Archbishop Hilarion, the venerable priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord; and

Again we pray for the Orthodox Episcopate of the Russian Church, for our Lord the Very Most Reverend Metropolitan Laurus, First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, for our Lord, the Most Reverend Archbishop Hilarion, and for all our brethren in Christ.

These petitions will now be said as follows:

For our Great Lord and Father His Holiness Patriarch Alexis, for our Lord the Very Most Reverend Metropolitan Laurus, First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, for our Lord, the Most Reverend Archbishop Hilarion, the venerable priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord; and

Again we pray for our Great Lord and Father His Holiness Patriarch Alexis, for our Lord the Very Most Reverend Metropolitan Laurus, First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, for our Lord, the Most Reverend Archbishop Hilarion, and for all our brethren in Christ.

At the Great Entrance, the following form of words has been used up until now:

The Orthodox Episcopate of the Russian Church, our Lord the Very Most Reverend Laurus, Metropolitan of New York and Eastern America, First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, and our Lord, the Most Reverend Hilarion, Archbishop of Sydney, Australia and New Zealand, may the Lord God remember in His kingdom, always, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

This will now change to:

Our Great Lord and Father His Holiness Alexis, Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, our Lord the Very Most Reverend Laurus, Metropolitan of New York and Eastern America, First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, and our Lord, the Most Reverend Hilarion, Archbishop of Sydney, Australia and New Zealand, may the Lord God remember in His kingdom, always, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

His Holiness Patriarch Alexis of Moscow and All Russia will now be commemorated at all times in the Divine Services when the more general expression "the Orthodox

Episcopate of the Russian Church" was previously used. These new petitions have been used at Divine Services in our parish from June 17th onwards. Father James is happy to answer any questions that parishioners and friends may have concerning these changes.

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS AND PARISH LIFE IN JULY

The Parish Council last met on a cold evening on Tuesday June 5th, with only a few members being present. Accordingly, the meeting was one of the shortest in memory! Father James gave updates on aspects of church and parish life, financial information was tabled, and correspondence was noted. The Parish Council next meets on Tuesday August 7th, with planning for our feast-day the main agenda item.

We have had three Sunday services in July, with all of them fairly quiet, coinciding as they have with school holidays, cold weather, and sickness. We have nevertheless had a number of visitors in the course of this month. On the first Sunday service in July (1/7) we were visited by Subdeacon Martin Naef, together with his wife Tania and their children. Subdeacon Martin, who usually serves in the church of All Saints of Russia in Croydon, assisted in the altar and also read the Epistle (the appointed reading from the "Letters" in the New Testament) that day. Our most recent Sunday service (29/7) was the English Divine Liturgy that we customarily serve on the fifth Sunday of the month. A number of visitors from Sydney enlarged and enhanced our English-language choir. Father John presided at the service and gave the sermon, and the Epistle was read by Ian Michie, a long-term friend of our parish who has recently returned to Australia after completing postgraduate theological studies at Saint Vladimir's Seminary in the US.

Receiving Holy Communion for the first time on Sunday July 15th were three children: Anna (8 years old), John (4) and Maria (3) Rezk. Baptised by Father James on the preceding day, these three are the children of Rafail and Alona Rezk of San Remo. May God bless these three newly-illuminated children, granting them good things in this world, and in the age to come!

Another new face in the congregation is that of Philip Clarke, a young man who was raised locally and who lives on the Woy Woy peninsula. Philip has travelled to Russia and has been reading about the Orthodox faith, and is now preparing to be received into the Orthodox Church by Holy Baptism. God willing, Philip's reception will occur towards the end of August, shortly before he leaves to travel abroad.

PARISH LIFE: WEBSITE AND PARISH EMAIL ADDRESSES

Regular visitors to our parish website will note that there has been little change in recent months apart from the posting of service schedules and newsletters. Hopefully this will change soon, the Parish Council having purchased a digital camera to ensure that photographs are taken of significant events in parish life. Father James has planned for

some time to thoroughly review the website, reorganising the photo album and updating all information. Suggestions for changes are welcome.

Part of the package that we receive in paying for the use of the "gosfordrussianchurch.org.au" domain is the ability to create email addresses linked to that domain. These addresses have the format "name@gosfordrussianchurch.org.au". At a recent Parish Council meeting Father James recommended that all Parish Council members be given such an email address for use in their official duties (contact with the Diocese, for example, or in fundraising). These email addresses have since been created and instructions given to Parish Council members on their use. The address info@gosfordrussianchurch.org.au was also created as a general enquiry or contact address. A list of these email addresses is available to parish members upon request from the Parish Council Secretary, Kate Marcotrigiano.

PARISH LIFE: HELPING WITH FEAST-DAY PREPARATIONS

As one would imagine there is a great deal of work involved in preparing for the celebration of our parish feast-day. This work includes the cleaning of the church, setting up the hall at Mount Penang Parklands on the evening of Saturday 11th, and the preparation of food (particularly cakes!). Those wishing to help with any aspect of this work should contact either Nestor and Olga Petroff on 4342-4241 or Rick and Nina Golovin on 4382-2307. Many hands make light work!

PARISH LIFE: CHARITABLE WORK

Previous editions of this newsletter have mentioned Parish Council plans with regard to charitable work, and the appointment of Paul Pereboeff as the co-ordinator of this aspect of parish life. The link between charitable work and periods of fasting, and the importance of work benefiting the broader community as well as the parish, the Church and those in Russia have also been discussed.

For the fasting period in preparation for the feast of Saints Peter and Paul ("the Apostles' Fast") Paul made available a number of collection tins that individuals and families could take home, filling them as best they could, and returning them at the end of the fast. The proceeds of this particular collection were to be directed to Gosford Hospital. On July 29th 10 of the 14 tins had been returned with a total of \$268.20 collected. Those still to return tins are encouraged to do so as soon as possible. In due course, Paul will contact Gosford Hospital to pass on the monies collected.

This is a worthy task and one that we hope will become a regular feature of parish life during Great Lent and the Apostles' Fast. Consideration will also be given to the preparation of food baskets and gifts during the Nativity Fast.

DIOCESAN PUBLICATIONS

The June-July 2007 issue of the Russian-language Diocesan journal, «Церковное Слово» ("Word of the Church"), is now available. It contains a great deal of information concerning the signing of the 'Act of Canonical Communion' in May 2007; an account of Metropolitan Laurus' subsequent visit to the Ukraine; historical information about the Kursk-Root Icon of the Mother of God; an account of the 25th anniversary of the Russian Orthodox Community of Saints Cyril & Methodius on the Gold Coast; a short article about the recent repose of 110 year-old Protopresbyter Ilia Wen, a clergyman of the Western American Diocese, and more. Copies can be purchased in church for \$2.00.

Also available is the June 2007 issue of the English-language Diocesan journal, "The Voice". Articles include an account of a visit to Russia of the relics of the Holy Apostle Luke; the life of Saint John the Romanian (+1960), a saint of the Holy Land; an explanation of the purpose of oil lamps before icons; a lovely letter concerning "A Christian Understanding of Chastity"; and more. Copies are also available in church.

THINKING AHEAD: PARISH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our parish Annual General Meeting (AGM) is generally held each year on the first Sunday in November. For various reasons, this year it is likely that the AGM will be convened on Sunday October 21st. Parish members should keep this date free so as to attend the meeting, an important event in parish life, and should ensure that membership dues are up to date. Friends of the parish who wish to become members are also welcome to apply for parish membership, although new members are ineligible to vote at an AGM until they have been members for at least 6 months.

THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL ARE ASKED FOR:

Traveling abroad: Deacon Christopher and Matushka Julie

The sick & suffering: Our parishioners Antonina (Tialshinsky) & Victor (Manjetny); and also for Vasili, Vera, Eugenia, Olga, Galina, Tatiana and Daniel

Newly-baptised: Children Anna, John and Maria **Expectant mothers:** Matushka Marie, Phillipa

Preparing for baptism: Philip **Preparing for marriage:** Paul and Maria

Departed: Metropolitan Vitaly, Irina (Kamenev), Nun Maria, George (Kraihin), Theodore (Tialshinsky), Lyubov (Smieska), Victor (Pulkownik), Olga (Timohina)



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Our parish newsletter is published monthly. If you wish to receive it by post or email, please talk to Father James (0428-639156) or Katya Marcotrigiano, the parish secretary (4369-1765). Alternatively, email us at info@gosfordrussianchurch.org.au