

Saint Panteleimon Russian Orthodox Church, Gosford

ПАНТЕЛЕИМОНСКИЙ ЛИСТОК
PARISH NEWSLETTER

~ Number 85, June 2009 ~

PARISH LIFE IN MAY AND JUNE

A number of interesting things happened in parish life during May and early June. On Sunday May 17, we were visited by Mother Irina and Sister Irina from the Convent of Saint Elizabeth in Minsk, Belarus. They arrived early that morning, having been driven here by Diocesan Secretary Archpriest Michael Boikov. It was Father Michael's first visit to our parish, and he left having formed a most favourable impression of our small church. Upon their arrival, the sisters set up a stall offering for sale a range of items: icons, handcrafts, souvenirs, cards, jewellery, and vestments. They prayed in church during Divine Liturgy, received Holy Communion, and - after our customary "cup of tea" - showed a brief documentary about their work, something that many of us found profoundly moving. The sisters also spoke a little about their work, and answered questions. A number of us bought beautiful items for ourselves, and Father James took the opportunity to purchase some things for the church: green chalice covers; red, white, and green bookmarks for the Holy Gospel; communion cloths; and an embroidered towel for use at hierarchical services. A collection to benefit the convent had been taken up in church after the service, and the proceeds were given to the sisters. They then spent the afternoon with Father James and family - climbing Mount Ettalong to look out over Pearl Beach towards Sydney - before travelling back to the convent in Kentlyn, where they are staying. This was a most edifying visit, and many have expressed interest in continuing to support the work of the Saint Elizabeth convent. Further information about the convent can be obtained from its' website, www.obitel-minsk.by.

On Sunday May 31, we had our first English-language Divine Liturgy in some months. Despite threatening weather, a number of families gathered afterwards at The Entrance for our kids' fishing day. Thankfully the rain held off, and although not many fish were caught, all had an enjoyable afternoon. The prize for the biggest catch went to Tamara Howe. Photos of Tamara with her prize catch and trophy should be on our website soon. Congratulations to Tamara, and many thanks to Paul Pereboeff for organising this event.

Besides our regular services, we also had special services during May for the feast of Mid-Pentecost (the day half-way between Pascha and Pentecost); the feast of the "Leave-Taking" (or «отдание») of Pascha (the last day on which "Christ is Risen" is sung); and the Great Feast of the Ascension of the Lord (celebrated on the fortieth day after Pascha). Although these were quiet services held during the week, they were beautiful and uplifting.

Having had services for the Great Feast of the Ascension, we were also fortunate to have services for the Great Feast of Pentecost, or «Троица», 10 days later. The church was beautifully vested in green, and on the morning of the feast Matushka Tania Naef and Katya Lugovoy decorated it with green branches and flowers. Our Head Sister, Olga Petroff, had prepared bunches of fresh flowers for the faithful to hold. The church was full during Divine

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Liturgy and Vespers with the kneeling prayers, and many stayed afterwards to enjoy the piroshki cooked by our Ladies' Auxiliary.

In mid-June, Rick Golovin worked to build shelves in the vestry - the small room to the right-hand side of the altar in which the vestments for clergy and altar-servers are kept - so as to allow for the better storage of our ever-increasing number of service books and other items used during the divine services.

And so ended yet another positive few weeks in the life of our small parish!

PARISH LIFE: A BAPTISM

Readers of this newsletter will recall last month's news that Victor and Susie Bendeovski had been blessed with a new baby boy, Daniel, born on April 29. On Saturday June 6 - Soul Saturday, the day before Pentecost - Daniel was baptised in our church. He received Holy Communion for the first time the next day. As this was the fortieth day from Daniel's birth, Susie was also welcomed back into the congregation. Congratulations to Victor and Susie, big brother and sister Phillip and Melanie, and to Daniel's godparents.

PARISH LIFE: BOOKSTORE NEWS

Readers are again reminded of our parish bookstore, and of the new items covering such topics as prayer and spiritual life, Orthodox beliefs and practices, and church history. We also have copies in English of the 'Prologue', a set of books that includes short lives of saints and spiritual readings for each day of the year. Just the thing to keep one focused during this period of fasting! Those wishing to purchase items or simply browse should talk to Father James or Matushka Marie.

PARISH LIFE: OUR 2009 WINTER CAMP



Leaflets with details of our parish camp were available in church from Sunday June 7, and can also be downloaded from our website. The camp will be at Galston Gorge from the evening of Friday July 17 until after lunch on Sunday July 19. There will be divine services, activities, a BBQ, a campfire with singing, and plenty of time to relax. The cost is \$85.00 per person over 10, and \$45.00 for children aged 5-9. Under 5s are free. The cost includes all meals and activities. RSVP to Fr Martin or wintercamp@gosfordrussianchurch.org.au by 30 June 2009.

PARISH LIFE: FEAST-DAY ARRANGEMENTS

It was advised in the May 2009 newsletter that our feast-day services would be held on Saturday August 8 (in the evening) and Sunday August 9 (in the morning) this year. Unfortunately, it has been impossible to find a suitable venue for our festive banquet on the Sunday, and so Parish Council has agreed that our main festivities will now be on Saturday morning. What this means is that there will be two additional services: All-Night Vigil at 6.00pm on Friday August 7, and Divine Liturgy at 9.00am on Saturday August 8, preceded by the Lesser Blessing of Water. Our festive banquet will be at the Narara Community Centre on Saturday after Divine Liturgy.

Having our festive services on the Saturday will provide an opportunity for the clergy and faithful from other parishes to join us. There will still be services on Saturday evening and

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Sunday morning, as scheduled, although these will now be somewhat quieter and less festive than planned.

Parishioners and friends will be reminded of these changes at each service in July, and in a mail-out late in July.

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Our Parish Council met on Tuesday 9 June 2009. Father James reported on parish life; arrangements for our parish winter camp and our feast-day were discussed; and the parish finances were reviewed. It was noted that \$4250.00 has already been deposited into our parish 'Future Fund'. At the meeting, Father James read aloud a letter from Metropolitan Hilarion, the text of which was as follows:

19 May 2009

№ 5-31

RATIFICATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This is to confirm that the decisions and election of parish officers at the Annual General Meeting of the Russian Orthodox Church of Saint Panteleimon in West Gosford, held on Sunday, 15 February 2009 and presided by the rector, Father James Carles, are hereby approved.

We render thanks to God for His blessings to this parish which has successfully repaid its mortgage in full and we express our sincere gratitude to all who have laboured for the growth and well-being of the parish and have made offerings for its needs.

May God's richest blessings be upon Father James, Father Deacon Martin and all the faithful of Saint Panteleimon Church.

(signed)

Metropolitan Hilarion

Archbishop of Sydney, Australia & New Zealand

The Parish Council will next meet on Tuesday July 14.

PARISH LIFE: SCHEDULE OF SERVICES DURING WINTER 2009

A schedule of services has been prepared for the Winter months - June, July and August - and is now available in church and on our website. The schedule currently available does not include the additional feast-day services explained above. Something of particular importance to note is that our services during August will be on the 2nd and 4th Sundays, and not, as usual, on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays. As was explained in last month's newsletter, this is to make allowance for Saint Panteleimon's day, which falls this year on the 2nd Sunday in August. Readers are asked to remember this, so as not to arrive at church on the wrong Sunday in August!

On Sunday July 5 Father James will be absent, having agreed to join the Serbian Orthodox Church in Broadmeadow (Newcastle) for the celebration of its "slava", or parish feast-day. The priest there studied at the Russian Orthodox Seminary in Jordanville NY, and the Serbian and Russian Orthodox parishes in Newcastle have developed close bonds. Hieromonk John (MacPherson) will serve at Gosford in Father James' place that day.

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PARISH LIFE: NEW ICONS

Attentive parishioners will note a number of new icons in church. On the left-hand side - when facing the altar - there are beautiful new icons of Great-Martyr Panteleimon (on the icon stands), Blessed Xenia of Saint Petersburg, Saint John of Kronstadt, Great-Martyr Anastasia The-Deliverer-from-Potions, and of the Mother of God (all on the wall). On the right-hand side there is a new icon of the Holy Tsar-Martyr Nicholas, and in the sanctuary there is a new icon of All Saints. Framed by Protodeacon Basil Hadarin of Blacktown at the request of the Parish Council, these icons were donated at different times by Katya Rubbo, Hieromonk Joachim of Saint John the Baptist Skete in Kentlyn, and Christopher Dowling.

CHURCH LIFE: A NEW READER TO BE TONSURED

On Sunday July 5 this year, God willing, our former parishioner, altar-server, reader and bookstore manager, Christopher Dowling, now living in Canberra, will be formally tonsured a reader by Metropolitan Hilarion. Vladyka Hilarion will be serving in Canberra that day as the Canberra feast-day, the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist, falls the following Tuesday. Chris has also been reading and serving in his new parish, and the clergy there were most supportive of Father James' recommendation that he be tonsured. Chris will be appointed a reader for both parishes - Canberra and Gosford - and so we hope to see him here again soon. It is also hoped that a delegation of parishioners will be able to travel to Canberra for the occasion so as to congratulate Chris on behalf of our parish. Readers are asked to remember him in their prayers as he prepares for this step.

THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL ARE ASKED FOR:

The sick: Priest Simeon; Protodeacon Christopher; our parishioner Victor (Manjetny); and also for Vasili, Eugenia, Olga, Margaret, Galina, Nun Euphrosyne, Nikita, Kirsten, Sergei

Preparing for tonsure as a reader: Christopher

Expectant mothers: Kira, Mary, Svetlana, Olga, Tamara, Svetlana

Departed: Patriarch Alexis, Metropolitan Vitaly, Metropolitan Laurus, and former parishioners and benefactors Irina (Kamenev), Nun Maria, George (Kraihin), Theodore & Antonina (Tialshinsky), Lyubov (Smieska), Victor (Pulkownik), Olga (Timohina), Alexander (Dikan), Elena (Yakupova), Lydia (Ustimko)



4/7 Comserv Close
West Gosford NSW 2250
PO Box 3356
Erina NSW 2250
www.gosfordrussianchurch.org.au
info@gosfordrussianchurch.org.au