
PARISH LIFE: AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2013

On Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 August we had services in honour of the Holy Martyr Eusignius of Antioch and the Forefeast of the Transfiguration. At the end of the service on Sunday morning a quantity of organic honey from the Wollombi Valley - a gift from friends of our parish - was blessed, the jars of which were then distributed to the faithful. Also blessed on this day were a number of beautiful new white vestments for our altar servers, the work of the Saint Elizabeth Convent in Minsk, Belarus. The purchase of these new vestments was made possible by the hard work of our Ladies' Auxiliary.

On Tuesday 27 August and Wednesday 28 August we celebrated the Great Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God. All-night vigil with the blessing of five loaves, wheat, wine and oil was served on Tuesday evening, and Divine Liturgy on Wednesday morning. Our choir for the festive services was conducted by Matushka Marie Carles as our regular conductor, Olga Ivanovna Itsikson, was prevented by illness from being with us. Both services were well-attended. This was the first time since 2007 that there had been services in our parish for the Great Feast of the Dormition.

On Saturday 31 August and Sunday 1 September we had services for the Afterfeast of the Dormition and in honour of the Holy Martyr Andrew Stratelates and the 2,593 soldiers martyred with him in Cilicia, c. 284-305. Praying in church on Saturday evening were Priest Seraphim Slade and his wife Matushka Helen of the Saint John of Shanghai and San Francisco Chapel in Gunning, NSW, and the Australian Orthodox Indigenous Mission. Father Seraphim concelebrated at Divine Liturgy on Sunday morning. Matushka Marie again conducted the choir at Divine Liturgy. Following the service on Sunday there was a Father's Day BBQ, organized by the Ladies' Auxiliary. Later that day Father James baptised Alina Lisnyy, the infant daughter of Serg Lisnyy and Shantle Merrick. Alina was given the name Elena in baptism in honour of Saint Elena the Empress. Her godparents were Andrei Lazebnyk, Bianca Merrick and Torey-Ann Parkes. May God grant his newly-baptised handmaiden many years!

On 2 September 2013 we learned with joy of the birth of a baby girl, Emelia, to our parishioners Ivan Zagvozkine and Natasha Belova of Berowra. Emelia is a baby sister to Ivan, Anton and Alexander. Our warmest congratulations to the whole family! Is it expected that Emelia will be baptized in our church in mid-October.

On 7 September 2013 Father James baptised Myles Daniel Walton, the infant son of Jason and Melanie Walton and baby brother to Will. In baptism Myles took the name Daniel in honour of the Holy Prophet Daniel. His godparents were Naomi Agius and Scott Mayer. May God grant his newly-baptised servant Daniel many years!

On Saturday 14 September our parishioner Katerina Korelkevich-Rubbo launched her Russian-English childrens' book, *The Little Bird Told Me*, at her home in Avoca Beach. A lively

and diverse group gathered for this event, amongst whom were Father James and a number of our parishioners. Initially written and illustrated almost 20 years ago for Katerina's daughter Ellen, its publication is the realisation of a long-cherished hope. Congratulations to Katerina on the publication of her beautiful book! Information about the availability of copies in print and e-book format can be obtained from Katia, or found online at <http://www.gondorwriterscentre.com/the-little-bird-told-me.html>.

On Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 September we had services in honour of the Holy Martyr Mamas and Saint John the Faster, Patriarch of Constantinople. As the Sunday before 19 September (6 September according to the old style) is also a day of commemoration of the Holy Right-Believing Peter and Fevronia, Wonderworkers of Murom, the heavenly patrons of love, faithfulness and family life, a moleben was served at the end of Divine Liturgy for the married couples of our parish and all who were present on the day. It was with joy on this day that we welcomed Olga Ivanovna back to conduct the choir.

Following Divine Liturgy that day, the 2013 Annual General Meeting (AGM) of our parish was held. Further information about the AGM can be found elsewhere in this edition of the newsletter.

On Friday 20 September and Saturday 21 September we had services for the Great Feast of the Nativity of the Mother of God. All-night vigil with the blessing of loaves and wheat, wine and oil was served on Friday evening, with a number of the faithful taking the opportunity to confess in preparation to receive Holy Communion the following day. Following Divine Liturgy on Saturday morning, a moleben was served for Reader Christopher Dowling and Olga Petroff, both of whom were due to depart on a Diocesan pilgrimage to the Holy Land on Monday 23 September. May God protect them as they travel!

On Monday 23 September it was the twelfth anniversary of Father James' ordination to the priesthood. After serving as a deacon in the Fairfield parish from 1998-2001, he was ordained priest and transferred to the Holy Protection parish in Cabramatta, serving as an assistant to the rector. He was also assigned to serve the small community on the Central Coast, at that stage just taking its first steps. How much has happened in our small parish since then!

On the evening of Friday 27 September, the Great Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, at the invitation of the abbot Father James visited the Greek Orthodox Monastery of the Mother of God, "Pantanassa" ("Queen of All"), in Mangrove Creek. The occasion was the tonsure of one of the members of the Pantanassa community, Brother Constantine, as rassophore monk. Beginning at 7.00pm, all-night vigil was served: Vespers with litia, the monastic tonsure, Matins with the veneration of the monastery's relics, and Divine Liturgy, finishing in the early hours of Saturday morning. The young monk, a third-generation Greek-Australian, was given the name Theodoros in monasticism. Particularly edifying was the large number of young men accomplished in traditional Byzantine chant who formed two choirs for the services. May God bless the monastic path of the Monk Theodoros, Abbot Eusebios and the whole brotherhood of the Pantanassa Monastery!

PARISH LIFE: 2013 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

As has already been noted, the 2013 AGM of our parish was held after Divine Liturgy on Sunday 15 September. Of 35 financial parish members, 19 attended. The meeting accepted the 2013 Annual Report without discussion or debate, and the 2012-2013 Parish Council – Rick Golovin, Kate Marcotrigiano, Bill Reid, Sophia Kfoury, Anna Kourbatov, Ivan Teliatnikov and Reader Paul Douraguine – was re-elected unopposed. Congratulations to the members of the re-elected Parish Council! Of the seven members, four have now served the parish as

office-bearers for ten continuous years: Rick, Kate and Bill as Parish Council members, and Sophia as a member of the Auditing Committee and the Parish Council.

The AGM also appointed a committee to plan the celebrations, in 2014, of the tenth anniversary of the opening of our parish centre at West Gosford. The members of the committee are Rick Golovin, Reader Paul Douriaguine, Reader George Karmadonoff, Alla Karmadonoff, Sebastian Reid, Gail Wood, Anna Kourbatov, and Kate Waters. It is expected that the committee will meet in October and November to consider and formulate plans before submitting a proposal to the Parish Council in December 2013.

The 2013 Annual Report was distributed to financial parish members before the AGM. Others who wish to read it will be able to view or download it from our new website by early October. The layout and design of this year's Annual Report was done by Elena Douriaguine. Many thanks to Elena for her work!

PARISH LIFE: PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The 2012-2013 Parish Council met for the final time on Tuesday 10 September. In addition to the usual reports concerning parish life and finances, attention was given to last-minute arrangements for the AGM and to plans for the October Long Weekend BBQ and the celebration, in 2014, of ten years at West Gosford. It was also decided that a \$250.00 donation would be given to the Central Coast's Serbian Orthodox community on the occasion of its feast-day on 15 September 2013.

God willing, the 2013-2014 Parish Council will meet for the first time on 15 October 2013. The Annual Report outlined the priorities for the incoming Parish Council: continued improvements in parish administration, an appropriate and sustainable distribution of responsibilities, overseeing our ten-year anniversary, and work towards the eventual building of a permanent church.

PARISH LIFE: OCTOBER LONG WEEKEND BBQ

As in previous years, we will have a parish BBQ this year at Heazlett Park, Avoca, on the Monday of the October Long Weekend, falling this year on 7 October. It will be between 10.00am and 3.00pm, and the cost will be \$5.00 for children, \$10.00 for adults, or \$25.00 for a family. The day is always an enjoyable one, and parishioners and friends are warmly encouraged to join us. Rick Golovin is again taking responsibility for the BBQ this year. If you will be attending, please make contact with him by telephone on 0402-631472 or by email at rick.golovin@gmail.com. Those planning to attend are advised that we will be setting up our BBQ and tables further to the east than in previous years, between the tennis courts and the boat hire vendor. This is because of construction work at the western end of Heazlett Park.

PARISH LIFE: UPCOMING SERVICES

The month of October will be a quiet one liturgically for our parish, with services only scheduled for the weekends of 5-6 October and 19-20 October. The only major feast-day in October is that of the Protection of the Mother of God on 14 October, falling this year on a Monday. Although Father James customarily serves in Newcastle on this feast-day – the first Russian Orthodox church in Newcastle was dedicated to the Protection of the Mother of God – he will this year, God willing, be participating in the festive services at the Holy Protection church in Cabramatta. Our small parish has had close links with the Cabramatta parish over the years – many of the young families active in our parish in the early years at West Gosford came from the Cabramatta parish, and our friends and family there assisted us greatly with fund-raising at that time. Furthermore - as noted above – it was to the Cabramatta parish

that Father James was first assigned when he was ordained priest in September 2001. This year, the Cabramatta parish is celebrating 60 years of parish life, and our parishioners and friends are strongly encouraged to visit and share in this festive occasion.

PARISH LIFE: WEBSITE NEWS



Work on our new website is continuing, with the new site likely to be published early in October 2013. The new site, which will replace the old site at www.gosfordrussianchurch.org.au and so be available at that address, has a completely new look and feel to it. The image to the left is a sneak preview! It will have regular news updates, lots of photographs of parish life now and over years past, links to important parish documents and church websites, service timetables, information about our parish, and helpful material about occasional services like weddings and baptisms. Updates on the new site will automatically be published on Facebook and Twitter, saving us work in doing so, and it will also have an online subscription form for those wishing to receive news and information from our parish. The new site will also have a Russian-language version, the success of this depending on us forming a team of translators able to quickly prepare material for publication. Any readers wishing to assist with this project should contact Father James. It is expected that the usual requirement will be the translation of a paragraph or two each week from English to Russian.

THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL ARE ASKED FOR:

The sick: Nun Euphrosyne; Leonid; and our parishioners Ludmila, Vladimir, Michael, Natalia, Tatiana, and Tatiana.

Expectant mothers: Inez, Kathrine, Cathy.

Newly-baptised: Elena, Daniel.

Families with new babies: Natalia and Ivan, with baby Emelia and big brothers Ivan, Anton & Alexander

Travelling: Olga, Elizabeth, Reader Christopher

Studying and working abroad: Michael; Deacon Martin, Tatiana, Xenia, Alexander and Sebastian.

Departed: Patriarch Alexis, Metropolitan Vitaly, Metropolitan Laurus, and former parishioners and benefactors Irene (Claydon), Victor (Manjetny), Vladimir (Dmitrieff), George (Fomin), Irina (Kamenev), Nun Maria, George (Krauhin), Theodore & Antonina (Tialshinsky), Lyubov (Smieska), Victor (Pulkownik), Olga (Timohina), Alexander (Dikan), Elena (Yakupova), Lydia (Ustimko), Nikolai (Pinczuk).



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