



russian orthodox
church of
saint panteleimon
gosford

ПАНТЕЛЕИМОНСКИЙ ЛИСТОК PARISH NEWSLETTER

~ Number 139, February 2016 ~

PARISH LIFE: BLINI ON SUNDAY 6 MARCH



With Great Lent approaching, our parish Ladies' Auxiliary has made arrangements to serve blini (pancakes) following Divine Liturgy on Sunday 6 March, Meatfare Sunday. The cost will be \$5.00 for three blini with sour cream and jam. Serves of smoked salmon will be available for an additional \$5.00. It will be possible to order a larger quantity to take away. As the ladies plan to cook 240 blini, there should be plenty for everyone. Please join us!

PARISH LIFE: JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2016

On Saturday 30 January and Sunday 31 January, the fifth Sunday of that month, we had our regular weekend services. Following Divine Liturgy on the Sunday copies of our January 2016 newsletter and 2016 magnetic calendar were distributed to those present. Copies were posted out to others in the week that followed.

On the evening of Friday 5 February we had a moleben and akathist to Blessed Xenia of Saint Petersburg, the heavenly protector of our parish Ladies' Auxiliary. At the moleben all our parishioners were commemorated by name. Holy Blessed Xenia pray to God for us!

On Saturday 6 February and Sunday 7 February we had services in honour of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia. Receiving Holy Communion for the first time at Divine Liturgy was the newly-baptised handmaiden of God Mila Sidorkina. After Divine Liturgy a collection was taken up for Orthodox Action, a charitable organization operating under the auspices of the Australian-New Zealand Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia, raising \$300.00.

Following the service that day, our Child Safety Contact Person Matushka Marie spoke about child safety to those parish children under the age of 12 who were present. Using some dolls to illustrate her points, she talked about appropriate behavior, safe play around the church, and her role as the Child Safety Contact Person. The children were asked to think about how they behave towards each other, towards adults, when in church, and when in the common area outside church. The information session was a positive one that the children participated in enthusiastically. A session for older children will be organised soon, and a follow-up session for the younger children will be organised in the second half of 2016.

On Wednesday 10 February and Thursday 11 February we had unscheduled services in honour of All Saints of Yekaterinburg, Father James having visited some of the holy

places of that region - Yekaterinburg itself, Ganina Yama, Alapayevsk, Verkhoturye and Merkushino – when he was in Russia in October 2015. All-night vigil with the blessing of wheat, wine, oil and five loaves was served on Wednesday evening and Divine Liturgy was served on Thursday morning. For perhaps the first time ever, the greater part of the evening service for these saints was sung and read in English, the Slavonic service having been recently translated by NY-based Reader Isaac Lambertsen especially for the occasion. At the litia all sixty-three of the saints were commemorated by name, together with a sixty-fourth, the newly glorified Passion-bearer Evgeny (Botkin) the physician, one of the companions of the Royal Martyrs. At the end of Divine Liturgy a brief moleben was served and a prayer to the saints was read. All Saints of the land of Yekaterinburg, pray to God for us!

On Sunday 14 February and Monday 15 February we had services for the Great Feast of the Meeting of the Lord. All-night vigil with the blessing of wheat, wine, oil and five loaves was served on Sunday evening and Divine Liturgy was served on Monday morning. It being a working day, only a small number of people gathered for Divine Liturgy. At the end of the service Father James blessed candles and fruit, as is customary, together with a beautiful new set of embroidered green velvet covers for the sacred vessels, a gift to our parish from the Novo-Tikhvinsky Convent in Yekaterinburg, Russia. At the end of the service a memorial litia was served for the ever-memorable Archbishop Paul (Pavlov)(+1995), the fourth Ruling Bishop of our Diocese, and Archpriest Nicholas Grant, his loyal friend and secretary. Vladyka Paul reposed on this feast-day twenty-one years ago and Father Nicholas reposed less than twenty-four hours later. Prior to the litia Father James spoke about the character of these two men and their great contribution to the Diocese. May their memory be eternal!

During the week that followed, our new ducted air conditioning was installed in the church and hall. For some time now the old units have been inadequate for our needs. The new system was used for the first time on the weekend of 20-21 February and proved most effective. The old units will be removed in due course. Thanks are due to Rick Golovin, Michael McInnes and Craig Koppman for their work in preparing the church for this work to be done and in tidying up afterwards.

On Saturday 20 February and Sunday 21 February we had our regular weekend services. Following the service there was a meeting of the Ladies' Auxiliary to discuss ongoing arrangements for cleaning the church and plans for serving blini on Sunday 6 March.

PARISH LIFE: THE AUTUMN 2016 SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

A new Schedule of Services covering the Autumn months – March, April and May – was distributed in church on the weekend of 20-21 February. This schedule covers all the services for Great Lent, Holy Week and Pascha. Copies have since been posted online and will also be distributed by post with this newsletter. The schedule is a full one – we will have a total of forty-five services over the next three months.

PARISH LIFE: THE MONTH AHEAD

The month ahead is a busy one, with fifteen separate services scheduled for March 2016. The increase – we usually have between six and eight services a month – is because of the extra services for Great Lent. These services are highly distinctive and very much set the tone for this season in church life: solemn, prayerful and penitential. The month will begin with regular services on Saturday-Sunday 5-6 March and pancakes after Divine Liturgy on the Sunday. At 5.00pm on Sunday 13 March we will have the services of Vespers with the rite of asking forgiveness. During this service the church

vestments change from gold to black and we begin to sing the Lenten melodies. At the end of the service it is customary to make prostrations before the main icons before asking forgiveness of everyone present. On Monday 14 March, the first day of Great Lent, we will have Matins, the Hours and Vespers beginning from 8.00am. These services are very long and generally finish after 12.00pm. It is important to note that there will be no Divine Liturgy on this day. On the first evenings of that week we will have Great Compline with the reading of the Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete. These four services will begin at 7.00pm and finish at around 8.15pm. In all of these services there is a great deal of reading to be done and all present are welcome to assist with this. On Sunday 20 March, the Sunday of the Triumph of Orthodoxy, we will have a moleben "For the conversion of those in error" and a collection to benefit the Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary (Jordanville, NY). Envelopes for this collection will be available in church from 5-6 March and will also be distributed by post with this newsletter. A shorter form of Great Compline – lasting around forty-five minutes – will be served at 7.00pm on most Wednesdays during Great Lent. On Sunday nights during Great Lent we will also have Vespers with the Passia. These services are around an hour in length. Those attending on Sunday evenings are encouraged to bring their own Bibles with them so as to better follow the long Gospel readings at each of these services.

NOTE: It is customary during Great Lent for people to confess and receive Holy Communion at least once. Those wishing to confess are asked to do so at the evening services as there is simply insufficient time on Sunday mornings. Exceptions will only be made for those prevented by age or infirmity from being in church in the evening.

PARISH LIFE: CONFESSION FOR CHILDREN

At 5.00pm on Saturday 19 March, the first Saturday in Great Lent, Father James has scheduled a special "confession for children". This service has been planned to help those children who are making their confession for the first time or who feel a little unsure about it. Father James will explain confession before the service begins. The children will be able to sing and to help read the various prayers before taking it in turns to confess. As the children make their confessions, the others will read some of the prayers of preparation for Holy Communion. Some reading material to help the children and their parents prepare for this service will be distributed in church on Sunday 6 March. Father James plans to have similar services during each of the four fasting periods.

PARISH LIFE: PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Our Parish Council had its first meeting for 2016 on Tuesday 9 February. Making use of equipment installed since the last meeting, two members of the Parish Council participated via Skype. The usual pastoral, administrative and financial reports were presented. Attention was then given to a number of important matters: Orthodox Christian education, the future and the direction of the parish, and priorities in charitable work. It was agreed that the parish would in 2016 once again sponsor Haiti Orthodox Family Relief and provide one full-year and two half-year scholarships to Saint Seraphim Community Russian School, Hornsby. Decisions were also made to proceed with the installation of new air-conditioning in the church and hall, serve blini on Sunday 6 March, and celebrate the parish's patronal feast-day of Saint Panteleimon on Friday 5 August and Saturday 6 August 2016. The Parish Council is scheduled to meet next on Tuesday 8 March 2016.

PARISH LIFE: FATHER JAMES RETURNS TO FULL-TIME SECULAR WORK

Readers of this newsletter may recall that in April 2014 Father James reduced his full-

time secular work commitments by three days per fortnight in order to better attend to his liturgical commitments and other pastoral and parish responsibilities. The Gosford and Wallsend parishes together put arrangements in place to make this financially possible. After almost two years, Father James has decided to return to full-time secular work with effect from 1 March 2016. Although the change should not mean any reduction in the number of scheduled services, it may impact on the time that Father James has available for services of need and for pastoral and administrative work. He thanks the parish for its support over the past two years and asks for patience as he adjusts to the new arrangements.

DIOCESAN LIFE: GREAT LENTEN CLERGY RETREAT

Each year during Great Lent the clergy of our Diocese gather in Sydney to confess, serve the Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts together, and discuss matters of mutual concern. In 2016 the Diocesan Pastoral Conference will be held on Thursday 24 March and Friday 25 March. These dates have been chosen as Friday 25 March is Western Good Friday, a public holiday, thus making it easier for the clergy who have secular work commitments to attend. The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts will be served at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral in Strathfield on Friday 25 March from 8.00am. This solemn and moving service occurs only on certain days during Great Lent. Lay people are most welcome to attend the service. Indeed, as those of us in small parishes rarely see this service, attendance is encouraged. Gosford parishioners who are planning to be there and who would like to receive Holy Communion on the day should discuss the matter with Father James beforehand.

THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL ARE ASKED FOR:

The sick: Mitred Archpriest Michael (Li), Mitred Archpriest Michael (Klebansky), Mitred Archpriest George (Larin) (from Nyack, NJ), Protodeacon Christopher (Henderson), Elena (Metlenko), Nun Euphrosyne (Kobelev), Leonid (Snopov), Vera (Roudenko); and our parishioners Ludmila, Olga, Vladimir, Tatiana, and Tatiana.

Newly-departed: Maria (Panov)

Travelling: Vladimir and Nina, Ksenia

Prisoners and those in custody: Igumen Christopher (Vakhabov)

Departed: Our former parishioners and benefactors Sophia (Kfoury), Tatiana (Elgin-Borodin), Michael (Grigorieff), Irene (Claydon), Victor (Manjetny), Vladimir (Dmitrieff), George (Fomin), Irina (Kamenev), Nun Maria (Gafu), George (Kraihin), Theodore & Antonina (Tialshinsky), Lyubov (Smieska), Victor (Pulkownik), Olga (Timohina), Alexander (Dikan), Elena (Yakupova), Lydia (Ustimko), Nikolai (Pinczuk), Tatiana (Venttsel), and John (Gordeyeff). **Non-Orthodox departed:** Bill (Claydon)



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