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**PARISH LIFE: JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2013**

On January Saturday 19 January, the Great Feast of Theophany, the commemoration of the Baptism of the Lord, Father James served Divine Liturgy in Wallsend. A number of Gosford parishioners were there that morning and on the preceding evening.

On the following day, Divine Liturgy was served at Gosford. In the absence of our regular reader Paul Douriguine, Subdeacon Jason Kaplanez read the Apostol. Subdeacon Jason, from Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral in Strathfield, was visiting the Central Coast with his family. The Great Blessing of Water was served at the end of Divine Liturgy.

That afternoon Father James blessed homes in Narara Valley, on the Woy Woy peninsula, and around the shores of Brisbane Water. The following day he visited homes elsewhere on the Central Coast, and on Tuesday he visited homes in the Hornsby area and in Sydney's north. Anyone who missed out on having their home blessed can still make arrangements with Father James for this to be done before Great Lent begins.

On Saturday 2 February Alexander Zuev-Elbacha, the infant son of John El-Bacha and Maria Zueva from Hornsby, was baptised in our church at West Gosford. Alexander's sponsor at baptism was Tetiana Koldunencko. Our warmest congratulations to John, Maria, Tetiana, and to Alexander's big brother Vladimir!

On Saturday 2 February we learned with sorrow of the repose of George Pinczuk, the son of Nick and Ella Pinczuk and brother of Sue Robinson and Victor Pinczuk, our parishioners. George was a grandson of the late ever-memorable Protopresbyter Victor Lototsky, senior priest for many years at the church of All Saints of Russia in Croydon. The first panikhida was served at our church on the evening of 2 February, and on Thursday 7 February Father James presided at George's funeral at Croydon. We offer heartfelt condolences to George's wife, Catherine, to his children, Michael and Lucy, and to his whole family. May his memory be eternal!

**PARISH LIFE: PARISH COUNCIL NEWS**

Parish Council met for the second time this year on Tuesday 12 February. With three members unable to attend, the meeting was smaller than usual, and finished early. Father James reported on parish life, the details of which are set out above. As usual, the financial position of the parish was reviewed, with all in good order. It was noted that US\$1,200.00 had been paid to the Haiti Orthodox Mission early this month, being payment of US\$100.00 per month to sponsor an Orthodox Christian family in Haiti. In addition, arrangements were made to pay levies of just over \$1,500.00 to the Diocese. This levy, paid on income for the period from July-December 2012, supports the work of the Diocesan and Synodal

administrations. Our Future Fund is now just under \$50,000.00, and will reach and exceed that amount during 2013. With our parish growing and thriving, future plans are likely to be very much on the agenda in the coming months.

### **CHURCH LIFE: COLLECTIONS IN MARCH 2013**

In March 2013 we will have two collections, both of them mandatory for all parishes in our Diocese. The first, to be taken up on Sunday 3 March, should properly have been taken up on the first Sunday in February. This collection will be for **Orthodox Action**, a charitable organisation that operates under the auspices of our Diocese and which assists orphanages, destitute children, and the needy in Russia. The second collection, to be taken up on Sunday 31 March, is to benefit the **Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary** in Jordanville, New York. This collection is customarily taken up on the first Sunday in Great Lent and ensures financial assistance to students from our Diocese. Envelopes will be available in church from Sunday 17 February. Please give generously to these worthy causes!

Our "money-box" collection during Great Lent this year will be for the needs of the **Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem**. There is a mandatory collection for this cause on Palm Sunday each year, and it seems best to work with this rather than against it. As the needs of our monasteries and church institutions in the Holy Land are something that we all agree are worthy of our support, it is hoped that most parish households will take a money-box this year. Those who are unable to do so can still make a contribution to the collection that we will take up in church Saturday 27 April, Lazarus Saturday, the day before Palm Sunday. 30 money-boxes will be available on Sunday 17 March, Forgiveness Sunday.

### **OUR HERITAGE: THE SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REPOSE OF ARCHBISHOP SIMON OF PEKING**

This year is the sixtieth anniversary of the repose of Archbishop Simon of Peking and China, the head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission and a meek, humble and loving archpastor. The son of a priest, he lost both parents at a very young age. Raised by his grandfather, the future Archbishop Simon studied at the Kazan Theological Academy from 1898 until 1902. He was then assigned to the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Peking. A man of pious life, a gifted preacher, and a kindly shepherd of souls, the faithful in China loved him. In 1922 he was consecrated Bishop of Harbin, transferring to Shanghai in 1926, and in 1931 he was elevated to the rank of archbishop and appointed to the Peking Diocese. He reposed in the Lord in Shanghai on 24 February 1933 and was buried in the crypt of the Church of the Holy Martyrs in Peking (destroyed by the Soviet authorities in 1957) alongside the Chinese Martyrs of the Boxer Rebellion and his predecessor, Metropolitan Innokenty. When his remains were removed from their burial place in 1940 they were noted to be incorrupt. May his memory be eternal! In Gosford, we will serve a panikhida for his repose following Divine Liturgy on Sunday 3 March.

### **PARISH LIFE: DONATIONS FOR NEW CANDLE STANDS**

Readers are asked to consider making a contribution toward the purchase of four new gilded candle-stands (like the two in the middle of our church), ordered from Russia to replace the remaining wooden stands. Made by for our parish George Kraiuhin back in 2002 – when we still had services in the Narara Community Centre - the wooden ones are becoming a little rickety with age, and are also a fire hazard. The cost of each new one is approximately \$1180.00 each. Contributions, small or large, are welcome. Already, one family has offered to

cover the cost of one new stand. Donations can be made at the candle desk at any morning service.

### **PARISH LIFE: 2013 CALENDARS**

Several parishioners are yet to collect their calendars from the candle desk. Father James is endeavouring to contact people and deliver as many as he can in person, but if anyone has not received one, collecting them from church would be helpful. These beautiful wall calendars show both fast and feast days, list Bible readings, and note major holy days. The background to the calendar is an icon of St Panteleimon, and includes contact information for the parish. Together with each wall calendar there is a small magnetic calendar that shows the Sundays on which we will have services in Gosford during 2013.

### **PARISH LIFE: AUTUMN SCHEDULE OF SERVICES**

The Schedule of Services for the Autumn months is now available, with over 40 services planned during the three months ahead. The greater than usual number of services is because of Great Lent. Some services of note include Vespers with the Rite of asking forgiveness following Divine Liturgy on Forgiveness Sunday on Sunday 17 March, and a General Panikhida on Saturday 30 March at 5pm prior to Matins. On the weekend of Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 April, we will have services for the Veneration of the Holy Cross and Annunciation of the Mother of God. The Service of General Anointing (or "Soborovanie") will take place on Sunday 21 April at 5pm. As mentioned in past newsletters, we will have services for Lazarus Saturday on Friday 26 and Saturday 27 April, and the midnight Paschal services for the Resurrection of Christ on Sunday 5 May.

Readers are encouraged to take the time to carefully plan church attendance during Great Lent. This is the richest and most beautiful season of the church year, and one that we should each ensure we make the most of. It is important to understand that keeping the strict Lenten fast – something that should also be planned! – will be much easier if we support ourselves with prayer, especially liturgical prayer. Confession during this time of repentance is important, too. Mark your calendars so as not to miss the main services, and also make time to be at some of the smaller, typically Lenten, services. If you have any questions about what a particular service involves please ask Father James.

### **CHURCH LIFE: RESOLUTIONS OF THE COUNCIL OF BISHOPS OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**

The Council of Bishops of the whole Russian Orthodox Church meets periodically in Moscow to discuss matters of importance to the whole church. Since 2007, the bishops of our Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia have also participated in these Councils. Matters discussed at this year's meeting include the increase in number of dioceses in Russia, issues relating to seminaries and ecclesial educational systems, monasteries and monasticism, the veneration of Saints, publishing, autonomous and self-governing dioceses, universal Orthodox cooperation, inter-religious relations, and international activity. Of interest to many given issues being debated in public life in Australia at present will be the news that the Russian Orthodox Church has suspended all dialogue with those Christian organisations that purport to bless same-sex unions or ordain persons who have entered into such unions. Amongst the recipients of Patriarchal awards at the Council was Metropolitan Hilarion, who on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday received the Order of St Seraphim of Sarov, II Degree. The epistle of the Council of Bishops follows.

## **CHURCH LIFE: EPISTLE OF THE COUNCIL OF BISHOPS**

MOSCOW: February 5, 2013

Epistle of the Holy Council of Bishops to the Clergy, Monastics, Laity and Flock of the Russian Orthodox Church

Beloved in the Lord Reverend Father Presbyters, Honorable Deacons, Pious Monks and Nuns, Dear Brothers and Sisters, Eternal Flock of the Russian Orthodox Church:

The Holy Council of Bishops, convening in Christ the Savior Cathedral in Moscow on February 2-5, 2013, appeals to all its flock with the words of Apostolic greeting: "Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth" (2 Thessalonians 1:2).

The main task of the Church is the salvation of man. Everything that is occurring in the life of our Church and the relationship between the Church and society and the state should be subjected to this goal. Our missionary, educational, charitable and other efforts should be in the end directed towards the salvation of each human soul. The call of the Savior: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20), remains vital for us in our time. Remembering this, the members of the Council of Bishops discussed many matters in church and social life, adopting Conciliar decisions and other documents addressed today to the Fullness of our Church.

Tending to the good order of Church life, the members of the Council have determined the future procedure for the election of a Patriarch at a Pomestny [Local] Council, delineated the authority of the Local Council and Council of Bishops, approved the establishment by the Synod of Bishops of metropolitanates and new dioceses. They also proposed resolutions for important challenges facing society.

In particular, the Holy Council expressed the position of the Church on developing technology and the processing of personal data. Standing guard for human freedom, the Church calls upon the state not to force people to accept those technologies which might hinder them in freely confess their faith in Christ and follow it in their personal and public lives. The consent of Christians to various legislative, political or other ideological acts must depend on the latter's compatibility with a Christian way of life.

The Church continues to care for the strengthening of the family unit, for protection against improper intrusion into its life, the support of strong bonds between children and their parents, the security of children, including safety against violence, cruelty and perversion. With regard to these matters, the Council of Bishops evaluated reforms in the areas of family rights and juvenile law being made in many countries.

The Church harbors serious concern about our present ecology. The exhaustion of resources and environmental pollution are raising the stark question of the preservation of the many forms of life, and the thoughtful use of nature's gifts. The members of the Council elucidated

the position of the Russian Orthodox Church on real ecological issues, reminding society of its responsibility for the preservation of God's creation.

The pastors and flock of the Russian Orthodox Church are called upon to carefully study the documents adopted by the Council of Bishops, most of which were prepared over the course of three years of discussions led by the Inter-Council Presence, with the participation of hundreds of bishops, clergymen, monastics and laypersons.

Our Lord and God Jesus Christ warned His disciples: "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15:19). Ever since Apostolic times, the historical path of the Church has been bound to witness, which consists of earnest confessing of the truth. The abuse directed against Christians by the spirit of this world (1 Corinthians 2:12), throughout the entire history of the Church has used various means to turn man away from his Creator and Saviour. This abuse has not only taken the form of efforts to lure people into sin, but in outright persecutions of the followers of Christ. But the crucible of deprivation and sufferings has only strengthened the faith and stoked the hearts of the faithful children of the Church. St Dalmat of Isetsk, canonized in 2004 as a local Siberian saint, serves as an example of patience in suffering. His veneration throughout the Church was confirmed by the present Council. St Dalmat often witnessed the destruction of the monastery he established, but he rebuilt it every time, staunchly defending his faith and Church rules, and preserving his profound humility before his neighbours.

The events of last year have shown that Orthodoxy is enjoying a rebirth as the foundation of the people's self-awareness, uniting all healthy forces of society—those forces which strive to transform life on a solid foundation, upon the spiritual and moral values which entered the flesh and blood of our peoples. This is why wicked people have chosen the Church as its victim, by means of lies, slander, blasphemy, the destruction of churches and desecration of holy things.

The Holy Council recalls that the proper response to such actions must be prayer, preaching and confirmation of Divine truth, peaceful civil actions by Orthodox Christians and the multiplication of deeds of love and mercy. We must remain the light of the world and the salt of the earth, so that people who behold our "chaste conversation coupled with fear" even "they also may without the word be won by the conversation" for Christ (1 Peter 3:1-2). Defending the faith, one must always remember the words of Christ the Savior: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35).

Fulfilling our ecclesial service, working the harvest-fields of Christ, we are called not in word but in deed to strengthen "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3), conciliarly, together: archpastors, clergymen, monastics and the laity. Mainly, we must strive to guide our lives according to the Gospel. This is the sole path to the transfiguration of each person and of all of society.

May Our Lord Jesus Christ, Chief of eternal life, strengthen us and give us wisdom in the tasks we face.

МОСКВА: 5 февраля 2013 г.

Послание Освященного Архиерейского Собора клиру, монашествующим, мирянам и чадам Русской Православной Церкви

Возлюбленные о Господе всечестные отцы пресвитеры, досточтимые диаконы, боголюбивые иноки и инокини, дорогие братья и сестры — верные чада Русской Православной Церкви!

Освященный Архиерейский Собор, состоявшийся в Москве, в Храме Христа Спасителя 2-5 февраля 2013 года, обращается ко всем вам со словами апостольского приветствия: «Благодать вам и мир от Бога, Отца нашего, и Господа Иисуса Христа. Всегда по справедливости мы должны благодарить Бога за вас, братья, потому что возрастает вера ваша, и умножается любовь каждого друг ко другу между всеми вами» (2 Фес. 1:2).

Главная забота Церкви — спасение людей. Все, что происходит в нашей церковной жизни и во взаимоотношениях Церкви с обществом и государством, всегда должно быть подчинено этой цели. Наши миссионерские, образовательные, благотворительные и иные труды следует в конечном итоге направлять на спасение каждой человеческой души. Призыв Спасителя: «Идите, научите все народы, крестя их во имя Отца и Сына и Святаго Духа, уча их соблюдать все, что Я повелел вам» (Мф. 28:19-20), — остается самым насущным и в наше время. Памятуя об этом, члены Архиерейского Собора обсудили многие вопросы церковной и общественной жизни, приняв Соборные определения и иные документы, обращенные ныне к Полноте нашей Церкви.

Забываясь о благоустройении церковной жизни, члены Собора определили на будущее процедуру избрания Патриарха на Поместном Соборе, уточнили полномочия Поместного и Архиерейского Соборов, одобрили совершенное Священным Синодом создание митрополий и новых епархий. Они также предложили решения важных задач, стоящих перед обществом.

В частности, Освященный Собор выразил позицию Церкви в связи с развитием технологий учета и обработки персональных данных. Стоя на страже человеческой свободы, Церковь призывает государство не принуждать людей к принятию тех технологий, которые могут помешать им свободно исповедовать веру Христову и следовать ей в делах личных и общественных. Согласие христиан с различными законодательными, политическими или идеологическими актами также зависит от их совместимости с христианским образом жизни.

Постоянной заботой Церкви остается попечение об укреплении семьи, о защите от недолжного вмешательства в ее жизнь, о поддержании крепких связей между детьми и родителями, о безопасности детей, в том числе перед лицом насилия, жестокости, разврата. В связи с этим кругом вопросов Архиерейский Собор вынес суждение о проводимой ныне во многих странах реформе семейного права и о проблемах ювенальной юстиции.

Церковь серьезно обеспокоена нынешним состоянием природы. Истощение ресурсов и загрязнение окружающей среды остро ставит вопрос о сохранении многообразия жизни, о рачительном использовании даров природы. Члены Собора выразили позицию

Русской Православной Церкви по актуальным проблемам экологии, напомнив обществу об ответственности за сохранность Божиего творения.

Пастыри и паства Русской Православной Церкви призываются внимательно изучить принятые Архиерейским Собором документы, в большинстве своем подготовленные в ходе трехлетних дискуссий, проведенных Межсоборным присутствием с участием сотен архиереев, клириков, монашествующих и мирян.

Господь и Бог наш Иисус Христос предупредил Своих учеников: «Если бы вы были от мира, то мир любил бы свое; а как вы не от мира, но Я избрал вас от мира, потому ненавидит вас мир» (Ин. 15:19). С апостольских времен исторический путь Церкви был связан с исповедничеством, которое заключалось в нелицемерном свидетельстве истины. Брань, воздвигаемая против христиан духом мира сего (1 Кор. 2:12), на протяжении всей истории Церкви имела целью разными способами отвратить человека от своего Создателя и Спасителя. Эта брань состояла не только в попытках соблазнить людей на грех, но и в гонениях, воздвигаемых против последователей Христовых. Но горнило лишений и страданий только укрепляло веру и закаляло сердца верных чад Церкви. Примером терпения в скорбях является преподобный Далмат Исетский, канонизованный в 2004 году в лике местночтимых сибирских святых. Его общецерковное почитание было установлено нынешним Собором. Преподобный Далмат неоднократно был свидетелем разрушения созданного им монастыря, но всякий раз воссоздавал его, строго защищая свою веру и церковные правила и сохраняя при этом глубокое смирение перед ближними.

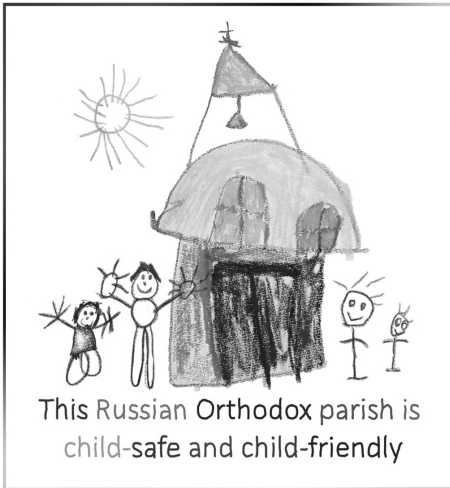
События прошлого года явственно показали, что Православие возрождается как основа народного самосознания, объединяющая все здоровые силы общества — те силы, что стремятся к преобразованию жизни на основе прочного фундамента, духовно-нравственных ценностей, вошедших в плоть и кровь наших народов. Именно поэтому людьми недоброй воли Церковь была избрана объектом борьбы, в которой используются ложь, клевета, кощунство, погромы храмов, осквернение святынь.

Освященный Собор напоминает, что ответом на подобные действия должны быть молитва, проповедь и утверждение Божией правды, мирное гражданское действие православных христиан, умножение дел любви и милосердия. Мы должны оставаться светом миру и солью земли, чтобы люди, видя наше «чистое, богобоязненное житие», даже «без слов приобретаемы были» для Христа (1 Пет. 3:1-2). Отстаивая веру, нужно всегда помнить слова Христа Спасителя: «По тому узнают все, что вы Мои ученики, если будете иметь любовь между собою» (Ин. 13:35).

Осуществляя церковное служение, работая на ниве Христовой, мы призваны не на словах, а на деле укреплять «единство духа в союзе мира» (Еф. 4:3), соборно, все вместе: архипастыри, клир, монашествующие и миряне. Главное при этом — стремиться поверять жизнь Евангелием. Это единственный путь к преображению любого человека и всего общества.

Господь наш Иисус Христос, Начальник жизни вечной, да укрепит и умудрит всех нас в предстоящих трудах.

## PARISH LIFE: CHILD SAFE, CHILD FRIENDLY POLICY



Our parish strives to be child-safe and child-friendly. That is, we want children and young people involved in the life of the parish to have a safe, happy and spiritually beneficial experience. To ensure that this happens, the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of parish members held in September 2012 adopted a 'Child-safe, child-friendly' policy.

The policy is also a statement of the commitment of our parish to the appropriate participation of children and young people in parish life.

In giving effect to the policy, we will do everything that we can to ensure that the parish church, hall and grounds are places in which sources of harm are eliminated or positively managed. We ask that parents, grandparents and

guardians help us with this by carefully supervising children and young people in their care.

The policy will be reviewed at least every two years. Information relating to this policy is currently being prepared for children, young people, their parents, and all parishioners. Concerns about child safety can be raised with the two Child Safety Contact Persons elected at the AGM, Paul Douriaguine and Katia Waters. The email address is [childsafety@gosfordrussianchurch.org.au](mailto:childsafety@gosfordrussianchurch.org.au).

### THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL ARE ASKED FOR:

**The sick:** Nun Euphrosyne; Leonid; and our parishioners Vladimir, Michael, Tatiana, Tatiana, and Boris.

**Expectant mothers:** Jacqueline.

**Newly-baptised:** infant Alexander.

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

**Newly-departed:** George.

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



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