
С РОЖДЕСТВОМ ХРИСТОВЫМ И НОВЫМ ГОДОМ!

Father James and the Parish Council extend to all members and friends of our parish greetings and best wishes on the feast of the Nativity and Baptism of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ. May He richly bless you in this festive season and throughout 2013!

NATIVITY EPISTLE OF HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN HILARION OF EASTERN AMERICA AND NEW YORK, FIRST HIERARCH OF THE RUSSIAN CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA

Most Reverend fellow archpastors, most honorable fathers, God-loving monastics, dear brothers and sisters, faithful children of the Russian Church Outside Russia!

With heartfelt love I greet all of you with the great, all-joyous Feast of the Nativity of Christ!

All that took place in the sacred cave of Bethlehem on that joyous night of the coming into this world of the Son of God bears a deep imprint of humility. The Omnipotent God Himself, the Creator of the world, the One who holds all in the palm of His hand, becomes a creature, one of us. He humbles himself even *"unto death upon the cross,"* all in order to save man. The most blessed Virgin, contemplating the mystery of our salvation, humbly accepts the prophecy of St. Simeon, who foretells the pain her motherly heart would endure, pierced by the double-edged sword.

Unknown by the world, the greatest blessing to mankind, the birth of Christ the Saviour, was known by the angelic world and was glorified by them in their song: *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill among men!"* The dwellers of heaven were first to proclaim of the fulfillment of the promise given to our fallen fore-parents: *"the seed of the woman shall crush the head of the serpent."* Hearing from the angel of the birth of the Savior of the world, the shepherds of Bethlehem traveled to the blessed cave — the cave that became highly venerated by all Christendom — in order to, like the Magi from the east, hasten to humbly pay homage to Him.

Contrary to a common understanding in the secular world, humility is not weakness of character. It is quite the opposite: only those who are unshakably convinced of higher truths

can be truly humble in the Christian sense. Such were the Christian martyrs and venerable ones, who showed loving tolerance to those around them, but were immovable when it came to defending divine truths. Let us remember the great Elder Ambrose of Optina, who was born 200 years ago. For many years he endured severe illness. Yet through his spirit of humility, love and meekness, he healed the souls of all who came to him, ameliorating their sorrows. A feeble old man, he comforted the young and healthy, directing them to the blessed spring from which they could draw new strength.

As we venerate the manger of Bethlehem in spirit, let us entreat the Divine Child for spiritual peace, brotherly love and a genuine Christian existence, in order to become a source of comfort, support and joy for those who are close to us.

With love in Christ Who is born,
*†Hilarion, Metropolitan of New York & Eastern America,
First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia*

*Nativity of Christ
2012 /2013*

**РОЖДЕСТВЕНСКОЕ ПОСЛАНИЕ ИЛАРИОНА
МИТРОПОЛИТА ВОСТОЧНО-АМЕРИКАНСКОГО И НЬЮ-ЙОРКСКОГО,
ПЕРВОИЕРАРХА РУССКОЙ ЗАРУБЕЖНОЙ ЦЕРКВИ**

Собратья-архипастыри, всечестные отцы, боголюбивые иноки и инокини, дорогие братья и сестры, верные чада Русской Зарубежной Церкви!

С любовью и добрым сердцем приветствую всех с великим и всерадостным праздником Рождества Христова!

Все, что совершилось в священной пещере Вифлеемской в эту радостную ночь пришествия в мир Сына Божия, все это носило глубокую печать смирения. Сам Всемогущий Бог, Творец мира, содержащий все в Своей длани, становится тварью, одним из нас, смиряет Себя «*даже до смерти крестной*» (Флп. 2, 8), чтобы спасти человека. Препоблагословенная Дева, созерцая духовно тайну нашего спасения, смиренно принимает то проречение Симеоново, которое предвозвещало ей боль обоюдо острого меча, поражающего Ее материнское сердце.

Неведомое миру величайшее благодеяние человечеству, рождение Христа Спасителя, было прославлено ангельскою песнью: «*Слава в вышних Богу и на земли мир, в человецех благоволение*» (Лк. 2, 14). Небожители своим чудным хором впервые возвестили об исполнении обетования: «*семя жены сотрет главу змия*» (Бытие 3, 15), которое было дано согрешившим прародителям. Вифлеемские пастыри, услышав от ангела о рождении Спасителя мира, также спешат в эту пещеру, ставшую с того времени особо чтимой всем христианским миром, чтобы, как и восточные мудрецы, смиренно поклониться Ему.

Смирение не есть бесхарактерность, как это можно иной раз слышать среди светского общества. Наоборот, истинно смиренными, в христианском смысле этого слова, могут быть только люди, твердо убежденные в высших истинах. Таковы были все

христианские мученики и преподобные, которые в отношении к другим были и снисходительны и любвеобильны, а в отношении исповедывания божественных истин были непреклонны к какому-либо отступлению или умалению таковых. Вспомним великого Оптинского старца Амвросия, родившегося 200 лет назад. В течение многих лет он находился в болезненном состоянии, но своим духом смирения, любви и кротости растворял скорби приходивших к нему, врачевал их души. Немощный старец утешал молодых и здоровых, указывая им тот благодатный источник, из которого они могут почерпнуть новые силы.

Мысленно лобызая священные Вифлеемские ясли, будем благоговейно молить Богомладенца о даровании нам душевного мира, братской любви и истинно христианской жизни, чтобы быть для тех, кто находится рядом, утешением, помощью и радостью.

С любовью во Христе Родившемся,
+ Иларион,
Митрополит Восточно-Американский и Нью-Йоркский,
Первоиерарх Русской Зарубежной Церкви.
2012/2013

**CHRISTMAS MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS
PATRIARCH KIRILL OF MOSCOW AND ALL RUSSIA**
*To the Archpastors, Pastors, Monastics and All the Faithful Children of the Russian
Orthodox Church*

Your Eminences the archpastors, honourable fathers, God-loving monks and nuns, dear brothers and sisters!

Today the Holy Church radiantly and with joy glorifies the mystery of the birth from the Most Pure Virgin of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The Creator, in loving his creation, 'was manifest in the flesh', 'became man' and 'like as we are, yet without sin' (see: 1 Tim 3:16; Heb 4:15). The Infant lay in a manger in Bethlehem. He did this in order to save the world from spiritual and moral decay, to liberate the human person from fear of death. The Maker lays before us the greatest gift of all: his divine love and the fullness of life. In Christ we can find hope that conquers fear, we can attain holiness and immortality.

He comes into our world torn apart by sin in order that, through his birth, life, sufferings, death on the cross and glorious resurrection, he may establish a new law, a new commandment – the commandment of love. 'A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another' (Jn 13:34). The Lord addressed these words to his disciples and through them to the whole world: to those who lived then, to those who live now and to those who will live after us, right until the end of time.

Each person is called upon to respond to this commandment through his own deeds. In the way that Christ showed to us true mercy and unbounded forgiveness towards our faults, so too we are to be merciful and forgiving towards people. We must care not only for our own and for our neighbours, although we are to care for them in the first instance (see: 1 Tim 5:8),

not only for our friends and for those who think like us, but also for those who have yet to find oneness with God. We are called to imitate the Saviour in love, to pray for those who oppress and despise us (see: Mt 5:44), to have always in our thoughts the good of our people, the homeland and the Church. Each of us, in accomplishing good works, can change for the better, if only to a small degree, the reality which surrounds us. It is only in this way that we can become stronger together, for lawlessness can never vanquish love as the darkness can never engulf the light of true life (see: Jn 1:5).

The history of our homeland knows many examples whereby our people has placed its hopes in God and has overcome tribulations, has emerged from the most difficult trials with dignity.

We have recalled many of these events in the past year. We celebrated the four-hundredth anniversary of the end of the Time of Troubles, culminating in the invaders being driven from Russia and the restoration of national unity. We marked too the two-hundredth anniversary of the Patriotic War of 1812 during which our forefathers rebuffed the invasion of the 'twelve nations' – the huge army gathered by Napoleon from all the ends of conquered Europe.

The year 2013 will be marked by the 1025th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus' by the Holy and Equal-to-the-Apostles Prince Vladimir. The acceptance of the Christian faith was the beginning of a new era in the life of our nation. The light of Christ's truth that once shone forth upon the blessed hills of Kiev today illumines the hearts of those who live in the countries of historical Rus', teaching us the way of accomplishing good works.

In summing up the past year we give thanks to God for his great and rich mercies and for the afflictions which he allowed us to endure. Throughout her entire history the Church has never known long periods of well-being: after times of peace and tranquility there have inevitably come times of discord and tribulations. Yet in all circumstances the Church has, in word and deed, proclaimed God's truth; she proclaims it today, testifying that a society built on the principles of gain, moral chaos, unlimited freedom, disdain for eternal truths and the rejection of authority is morally sick and threatened by many dangers.

I call upon all people to have that patience which is commanded to us by God and pray for the Mother Church, for the people of God and for our native land. Have in mind always the words of the apostles to the nations: 'Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with charity' (1 Cor 16:13-14).

In expressing my heartfelt congratulations on today's feast, I prayerfully entreat for all of us from the Divine Infant Christ spiritual and bodily strength so that each of us through his personal example may testify to the world that our Lord and God who has now been born is love (see: 1 Jn 4:8). Amen.

+ KIRILL
PATRIARCH OF MOSCOW AND ALL RUSSIA
The Nativity of Christ
Moscow
2012/2013

РОЖДЕСТВЕНСКОЕ ПОСЛАНИЕ
СВЯТЕЙШЕГО ПАТРИАРХА МОСКОВСКОГО И ВСЕЯ РУСИ КИРИЛЛА
архипастырям, пастырям, диаконам, монашествующим
и всем верным чадам Русской Православной Церкви.

Возлюбленные о Господе Преосвященные архипастыри, всечестные пресвитеры и диаконы, боголюбивые иноки и инокини, дорогие братья и сестры!

Ныне Святая Церковь светло и радостно прославляет таинство рождения от Пречистой Девы Марии Господа и Спасителя нашего Иисуса Христа.

Создатель, любя Свое творение, *явился во плоти*, стал человеком, во всем подобным нам, *кроме греха* (см. 1 Тим. 3:16; Евр. 4:15). Младенец возлег в яслях Вифлеема. Он сделал это, чтобы спасти мир от духовного и нравственного упадка, освободить человека от страха смерти. Творец предлагает принять нам величайший из всех даров: Свою Божественную любовь, полноту жизни. Во Христе мы становимся способными обрести надежду, побеждающую страх, достичь святости и бессмертия.

Он приходит в наш истерзанный грехом мир, чтобы Своим рождением, жизнью, страданиями, крестной смертью и славным воскресением утвердить новый закон, новую заповедь — заповедь любви. *«Заповедь новую даю вам, да любите друг друга; как Я возлюбил вас, [так] и вы да любите друг друга»* (Ин. 13:34), — эти слова Господь обратил к своим ученикам, а через них ко всему миру: к тем, кто жил в то время, кто живет ныне, и к тем, кто будет жить после нас, вплоть до конца времен.

Каждый человек призван ответить на эту заповедь своими делами. Подобно тому, как Христос явил нам подлинную милость, безмерное снисхождение к нашим недостаткам, так и мы должны быть милосердны и снисходительны к людям. Следует заботиться не только о наших родных и близких, хотя о них нужно заботиться в первую очередь (см. 1 Тим. 5:8), не только о наших друзьях и единомышленниках, но и о тех, кто пока еще не обрел единство с Богом. Мы призваны подражать в любви Спасителю, молиться за притесняющих и обижающих нас (см. Мф. 5:44), постоянно иметь в своем помышлении благо всего народа, Отечества и Церкви. Каждый из нас, совершая добрые дела, способен изменить хотя бы в малой мере окружающую действительность к лучшему. Только так мы вместе станем сильнее. Ибо беззаконие неспособно победить любовь, как тьма не может поглотить свет истинной жизни (см. Ин. 1:5).

В истории нашего Отечества немало примеров того, как наш народ, возложив свое упование на Бога, преодолевал трудности, достойно выходил из самых непростых испытаний.

Многие из этих событий мы вспоминали в минувшем году. Мы отпраздновали 400-летие преодоления Смуты, которая завершилась изгнанием интервентов и восстановлением национального единства. Была отмечена также 200-я годовщина Отечественной войны 1812 года, во время которой наши предки дали отпор нашествию «двунадесяти язык» — огромной армии, собранной Наполеоном со всей покоренной Европы.

2013 год будет ознаменован празднованием 1025-летия Крещения Руси святым равноапостольным великим князем Владимиром. Принятие православной веры стало началом новой эры в жизни нашего народа. Свет Христовой истины, воссиявший некогда на благословенных Киевских холмах, и ныне просвещает сердца жителей стран исторической Руси, наставляя нас на путь добродетели.

Подводя итоги минувшего года, вознесём благодарение Богу и за Его великие и богатые милости, и за те скорби, которые Он попускал нам претерпеть. На протяжении всей своей истории Церковь не знала длительных периодов благоденствия: за временами мира и спокойствия непременно наступали времена невзгод и испытаний. Но во всех обстоятельствах Церковь словом и делом возвещала правду Божию, возвещает она ее и сегодня, свидетельствуя, что общество, построенное на принципах наживы, вседозволенности, неограниченной свободы, пренебрежения вечными истинами, отрицания авторитетов, нравственно нездорово и ему угрожают многие опасности.

Я призываю всех к богозаповеданному терпению и молитве о Матери-Церкви, о народе Божием, о родной земле. Всегда помните слова апостола языков: *«Бодрствуйте, стойте в вере, будьте мужественны, тверды. Все у вас да будет с любовью»* (1 Кор. 16:13-14).

Сердечно поздравляя вас с нынешним торжеством, молитвенно испрашиваю всем нам у Богомладенца Христа духовных и телесных сил, дабы каждый из нас мог личным примером свидетельствовать миру, что родившийся ныне Господь наш и *Бог есть Любовь* (см. 1 Ин. 4:8). Аминь.

+КИРИЛЛ,
ПАТРИАРХ МОСКОВСКИЙ И ВСЕЯ РУСИ
Рождество Христово
2012/2013 г.
Москва

PARISH LIFE: DECEMBER 2012 - JANUARY 2013

The service on Sunday 16 December was very well attended. Many people received Holy Communion, amongst them the newly-baptised Victoria Korotaeva, receiving the Holy Mysteries for the first time. This was the first Sunday after the tragic events in Newtown, Connecticut (USA), and after Divine Liturgy Father James read the following statement from Metropolitan Hilarion:

Statement from the Office of the First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, in connection with the Attack on the Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut

Dear brethren, sisters and children!

With horror I followed the tragedy that unfolded yesterday [that is, on 14 December 2012 – ed.] in a school in the state of Connecticut, during which a murderer spared neither children nor even his own mother; and I hasten to express unto all my deepest sympathy amid your common sorrow. I am praying for the repose of the children and

those who suffered with them, and for their bereaved parents, relatives, classmates, teachers and friends. May the Lord give His people strength and bless their hearts with His heavenly peace. May Jesus Christ our God bless the self-sacrificing teachers who saved the terrified children and showed them an example of Christian love. With all my soul I desire that the consolation of Christ and help from heaven be granted you!

With this statement, I call upon the rectors of our parishes and the superiors of our monasteries to insert the following petition in the Augmented Litany of the Divine Liturgy:

"To Thee, O Lord, Who art in heaven, we raise up the eyes of our soul, and lift our hands, and sigh from the depths of our heart, and praying with our speech we cry out: give rest to the blest infants and to those who suffered with them in the present trouble and sorrow: hearken to those who weep and are pained, and await Thy consolation, asking Thy goodness; we ask Thy mercy and seek to obtain grace before Thee, and we knock upon Thy doors: open to us the doors of Thine abundant kindness, and abandon us not to the end, for Thy name's sake. Let us say: Lord, hearken soon and have mercy upon all."

Yesterday's tragedy again reminds us that we must cherish the sacred gift of life and one another, following the commandments of God, and thus bring forth the light of Christ in this fallen world, rendering it less dark.

In accordance with Vladyka's request, the special petition was intoned during the service that morning.

Following the service we had a fish BBQ organised by Kate Marcotrigiano and our hard-working Ladies' Auxiliary in honour of special guests, George and Alla Karmadonoff and their children Christopher and Monica, visiting us from Perth, Western Australia. The Karmadonoff family was very active in parish life at the time that our West Gosford parish centre was established. Monica was the first child baptised in the new church, and George – a reader tonsured in Jerusalem by then Archbishop Laurus – was a member of the Parish Council for a time. It was a great joy to have them amongst us again.

Later that day, Father James visited the Saint Seraphim Russian Community School in Mount Colah and served a Thanksgiving Moleben to mark the end of the school year. He congratulated the Principal, Paul Douriaguine, and all the teachers and students on the completion of the first full year in the life of the school, commending them for their dedication.

On Wednesday 19 December, the feast of Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker, Father James served in Wallsend. A number of Gosford parishioners made the journey to Newcastle to be present at Divine Liturgy.

That afternoon, the Diocesan Teen Retreat commenced at Elanora Heights on Sydney's Northern Beaches. This Teen Retreat was only the second one held, the first having been held in 2011 to cater for young people unable to attend the over-18s Diocesan Youth Conferences. Approximately 60 teens aged 15-18 participated in the 2012 retreat, amongst whom was Nick

Carles from our parish. Father James visited the retreat on the evening of Sunday 23 December.

On Thursday 27 December Father James travelled to Brisbane to attend a Pastoral Conference of priests and deacons of the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia from across Australia and New Zealand. Metropolitan Hilarion, having arrived in Australia a few days earlier, was also present. Matters discussed included child protection, youth work, and Diocesan policy. On Friday 28 December Father James participated in the first day of the annual Diocesan Youth Conference, returning home that evening.

In the course of that week Rick Golovin, assisted by his son Vlad, repainted the church hall and installed new cupboards for the parish bookstore. The upstairs storage area was also cleared out, and a number of other maintenance tasks undertaken.

On Sunday 30 December, the day of commemoration of the Holy Forefathers, Divine Liturgy was again well-attended. At the end of the service sixteen new gold-red sticharia – the vestments worn by altar servers – were blessed for use. These sticharia, the work of the Saint Elisabeth Convent in Minsk, Belarus, were purchased with funds raised by the Ladies' Auxiliary.

On Monday 31 December Father James and Rick Golovin undertook an inventory of items in the church: icons, furnishings, vessels and vestments. This work was necessary a necessary step in establishing that the parish is appropriately insured.

On Saturday 5 January we held our usual church clean-up before Christmas. This was perhaps the best-attended clean-up that we have ever had, with over 20 adults and around 15 children and young people helping. There were so many people that we had effectively finished the work before lunchtime! As usual, Olga Petroff prepared a wonderful meal for everyone to share.

Anna Kourbatov, our bookstore manager, took the opportunity to move books and icons from the old cabinets into the new ones. The new cabinets are taller and far more conveniently placed, and items are set out beautifully within them. On the wall above the cupboards is an icon of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk, the heavenly patron of our bookstore. Saint Tikhon was a great missionary and educator of the Russian Orthodox Church.

On Sunday 5 January we had Divine Liturgy and Vespers for Christmas Eve. Again, many people received Holy Communion. Not everyone was able to stay for the whole service, which was a very long one, with Vespers augmented by eight readings from the Old Testament.

That afternoon Father James baptised Aleksander Terjohin, the infant son of Dmitrij Terjohin and Natalia Konnova and a little brother to Ksenia. Aleksander's godfather was Evgeni Bryanstev. May God grant his newly-baptised servant Aleksander many years!

That afternoon the Christmas tree was placed in church and the vestments were changed from red to green. A great many people gathered in church that evening for the Christmas vigil, so many that there was insufficient room for everyone. It is perhaps only on our

patronal feast of Saint Panteleimon, when people visit from other parishes, that there has been as many people in our small church.

The church was full to overflowing again the following morning, with many people from Newcastle joining us for the Christmas service. Once again, there were many communicants. At the end of Divine Liturgy a Thanksgiving Moleben was served on the occasion of the two-hundredth anniversary of the deliverance of the Russian Church and Empire from the French and twelve other nations under the command of Napoleon. It was on Christmas Day in 1812 that the last remnant of the invading army was driven from Russia. At the end of the service, Father James spoke of the enduring significance of this momentous event.

A great number of people, our own parishioners and friends from Newcastle, remained behind afterwards for a festive lunch. The Christmas raffle organised by the Ladies' Auxiliary was drawn at lunch. Many thanks to all who supported the work of the Ladies' Auxiliary by buying tickets!

On Tuesday 8 January, the second day of the feast of the Nativity of Christ, Father James served at the Archbishop's Chapel in Croydon, dedicated to All Saints of Russia. Metropolitan Hilarion presided at Divine Liturgy. In addition to Father James, a number of clergy from the smaller parishes concelebrated: Mitred Archpriest Michael Li, Abbot Joachim (Ross), Priest Alexander Filchakov, Priest Daniel Metlenko, Priest Alexander Korjenewski, Deacon Constantine Moshegov, Deacon Samouil Vishnevskii, and Hierodeacon Tikhon (a visitor from Saint Petersburg currently assisting the Metropolitan), together with four priests from the Indonesian Deanery: Priest Dionysios Halim, Priest Boris Setyawan, Priest Barnabas Van Basten, and Priest Athanasios Muzendi. Afterwards, Vladyka welcomed the clergy and faithful into his home.

That afternoon the National Organisation of Russian Scouts commenced its Annual Camp. Held in Loftus in Sydney's south, this camp was a "Jubilee Camp" marking 60 years of NORS in Australia. Five children from our parish attended: Nick Carles, Liza Carles, Katie Carles, Nick Shchelokov, and Ksenia Terjohina. An interesting aspect of this camp was the participation of a group of Scouts from Irkutsk, Russia. Congratulations to Chief Russian Scout, Nikita Gileff, and all involved with NORS in Australia over the past 60 years!

On Friday 11 January family and friends of our parishioner, the ever-memorable Tatiana Venttsel, gathered at church to pray for her on the fortieth day of her repose. May God give her rest where there is no sickness, sorrow, or sighing, but life everlasting!

PARISH LIFE: FEAST OF THEOPHANY & BLESSING OF HOMES

This year, the Great Blessing of Waters for the feast of the Theophany will be served in our parish on Sunday 20 January, the day of commemoration of the Holy Forerunner, Prophet and Baptist John. As is customary, Father James will be blessing parish homes at this time. This is not the full blessing performed when residence is taken up in a new home – in which the four walls of the home are anointed with oil, as in the consecration of a church – but the simple blessing by sprinkling the Holy Water that is blessed on the feast of Theophany. This annual blessing is a way that the Church comes to us and becomes a part of our home life. The service takes around ten minutes, with Holy Water being sprinkled throughout the house as

everyone sings the troparion and kontakion for Theophany. Prayers for the health and salvation of all who live there are then read, and finally all are sprinkled with Holy Water as they kiss the Cross.

Father James is planning to visit homes on the Peninsula and around Gosford on Sunday 20 January, elsewhere on the Central Coast on Monday 21 January, and around Hornsby on Tuesday 22 January. Those wishing to have their homes blessed can make a note of it on the list at church, or contact Father James directly. If these times are inconvenient, other arrangements can be made.

PARISH LIFE: PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The Parish Council met for the first time in 2013 on Tuesday 15 January. Administrative and organisational priorities for the year ahead were considered, and Father James presented a plan for services for the whole of 2013. The many encouraging events in parish life over the past month – reported in detail elsewhere in this newsletter – were discussed. After considering the parish financial reports it was agreed that the parish would in 2013 again provide US\$100.00 a month to Haiti Orthodox Family Relief, the third consecutive year that we have sponsored an Orthodox Christian family in that poorest of countries. Attention was given to the need for all – but especially parents, grandparents and guardians – to ensure the safety of children in and around the church. The Parish Council will next meet on Tuesday 12 February 2013.

PARISH LIFE: NEW ICONS

Early in 2013, two new icons were placed in church, both on the wall behind the choir stands. One, a new icon of the Holy Equal-to-the-Apostles Saint Elena, was a gift to the parish from Katya Rubbo. The other, an old icon of the Martyr Tatiana (apparently the work of Archimandrite Mefody (Shlemin), an iconographer who trained at Valaam Monastery and who served parishes across our Diocese from 1929 until the 1950s) has been in the care of a parish family for many years. In the late 1990s this icon was partially burned in a fire that started in a home icon corner but inexplicably – and mercifully! – stopped. Both icons are in beautiful wooden cases, the work of Protodeacon Basil Hadarin, and paid for by a good friend of our parish.

PARISH LIFE: 2013 CALENDARS

To help parishioners and friends remember which days our regular services are on, a small magnetic 2013 parish calendar has been prepared. It includes parish contact details and has the Sundays highlighted on which there will be services in our church. In addition, the Parish Council has arranged for larger wall calendars to be distributed to each family in our parish. 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. The magnetic calendars and wall calendars will be handed out in church on Sunday 20 January, with the remainder delivered to homes by the end of January.

PARISH LIFE: SERVICES DURING 2013

As mentioned above in Parish Council news, Father James has prepared a plan for services for the whole of 2013. The plan includes services at Gosford and in Wallsend. At this stage, it is expected that the following Great Feasts will be celebrated in Gosford: Annunciation, Ascension, the Dormition of the Mother of God, the Nativity of the Mother of God, and the Entry of the Mother of God into the Temple. In addition, we will services on Lazarus Saturday, Holy Thursday and Pascha itself. Anyone wanting a copy of the plan can obtain one from Father James.

On the following days Father James suggested to the Parish Council the possibility of arranging joint activities with the Wallsend parish:

- The Day of Youth of the Russian Church Abroad – Sunday 30 June, a Gosford Sunday;
- The 1025th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus' – Sunday 28 July, a Wallsend Sunday; and
- The commemoration of Saints Peter and Fevronia, a day of celebration of love and faithfulness in marriage – Sunday 15 September, a Gosford Sunday.

On the day of commemoration of the Baptism of Rus', a possibility is an outdoor Divine Liturgy in a park by one of the lakes between Gosford and Newcastle, followed by an outdoor blessing of water and a BBQ or picnic lunch. Anyone interested in being involved in the organisation of activities in connection with these three days should speak with Father James.

CHURCH LIFE: THE 400TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROMANOV DYNASTY

In 2013 the Russian Orthodox Church and people will mark the four-hundredth anniversary of the establishment, in 1613, of the Romanov Dynasty. The accession of 16 year-old Mikhail Romanov to the throne brought to an end the Time of Troubles and marked the beginning of a period of stability for Russia, and many events and activities to commemorate it are being planned throughout the world. In church life, the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia has resolved as follows:

- That abbots and abbesses and rectors of the monasteries and parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia are to commemorate the Royal Passion-Bearers during the dismissal of Liturgies in the following manner: "The Holy Righteous Passion-Bearers Tsar-Martyr Nicholas, Tsarina Alexandra, Tsarevich Alexei, Tsarevna Olga, Tatiana, Maria and Anastasia; Holy Martyrs Grand Duchess Elizabeth and Nun Barbara and those martyred with them," to commence on 14 January (that is, 1 January on the Julian Calendar) until the end of 2013; and
- That before the veneration of the cross on the first Sunday of Great Lent, "Eternal Memory" is to be sung to the Righteous Tsars and Tsarinas of the Romanov Dynasty and to "all members of the family of the All Russian Imperial House," in accordance with the Rite of the Triumph of Orthodoxy.

In Gosford we will begin to commemorate the Royal Passion-Bearers as of Saturday 6 January. As we will not have a service in Gosford on the first Sunday of Great Lent, we will sing "Eternal Memory" on the second Sunday of Great Lent, 31 March. Information about commemorative activities in Sydney and elsewhere will be made available in due course.

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, Nicole.

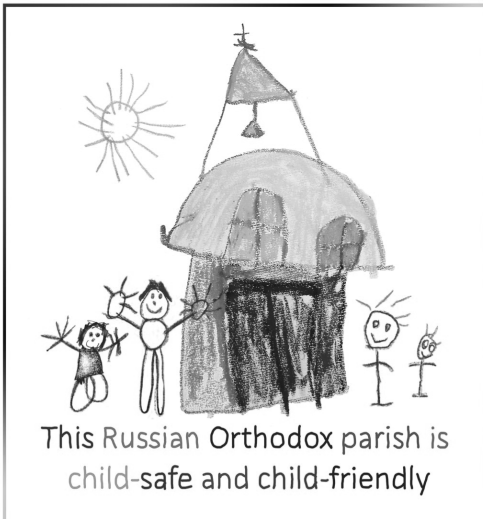
Preparing for marriage: Matthew and Maria.

Newly-baptised: infant Aleksander.

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

Newly-departed: Vasily

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



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 this end, we welcome and facilitate the appropriate participation of children and young people in parish life.

We strive to ensure that the parish church, hall and grounds are places in which sources of physical harm to all 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.



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