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**PARISH LIFE: MAY – JUNE 2013**

After a busy period in parish life during Great Lent, Holy Week and Bright Week, the past few weeks have been relatively quiet. This was certainly so on the weekend of 18-19 May 2013. Things became a little busier than that over the following two weeks, with services for Mid-Pentecost on 28 May, the Leave-taking of Pascha on 11 June, and the Ascension of the Lord on 12-13 June.

On Wednesday 22 May Father James served at the parish of Saint Nicholas, Fairfield, on the occasion of that parish's feast-day, the commemoration of the translation of the relics of Saint Nicholas from Myra in Lycia to Bari. Also serving were the rector, Archpriest Nikita Chemodakov; Archpriest Boris Ignatievsky (Cabramatta); Priest Alexander Filachakov (Blacktown); Priest Alexander Korjenewski (Carlton); and the parish deacon, Protodeacon German Polorotov.

Although 22 May was also the patronal feast of the Wallsend parish, its' celebrations were transferred to Sunday 26 May. That day, a small number of Gosford parishioners travelled to Newcastle to participate in the festive services, procession, and lunch.

On Sunday 2 June, to our great joy, George and Alla Karmadonoff and their children were in church, having returned to live on the Central Coast after some years in Canberra and Perth. George, a tonsured reader, resumed his duties on Sunday 16 June 2013. He and Paul Douriaguine will share reading responsibilities from now on.

On Thursday 6 June we learned that our parishioners Anton and Aksana Sidorkin had been blessed with the arrival of a baby girl, Sophia, a younger brother to 2 year-old Michael. Our warmest congratulations to the Sidorkin family!

On 11 June we learned with sadness of the repose of our parishioner, Nicholas Pinczuk. The first pannikhida was served for him that evening, immediately following the service for the Leave-taking of Pascha, and his funeral was served at Croydon the following week. We offer heartfelt condolences to Nicholas' widow, Alefina, to his children Victor and Sue, and to the whole Pinczuk family. Parishioners are asked to remember the newly-departed servant Nikolai in their prayers.

On Friday 14 June 2013 Father James served the funeral of Olga Demidov, a former Head Sister of the parish of Saint Nicholas, Adelaide, in the cemetery chapel in Frenchs' Forest. Mrs Demidov passed away on 8 June after a short illness. Readers are also asked to remember the newly-departed Olga in their prayers.

## **DIOCESAN LIFE: VISIT OF BISHOP GEORGE OF MAYFIELD**

On 20 June 2013 Metropolitan Hilarion advised the clergy and faithful of the Diocese of Sydney, Australia and New Zealand that circumstances beyond his control would prevent him from visiting the Diocese in late June and in July. In view of this, he has asked His Grace, Bishop George of Mayfield, a vicar bishop in the Eastern American Diocese, to visit Australia in his place and to celebrate the divine services in our churches throughout the Diocese, especially those that will be celebrating their parish feast days. Bishop George, who arrived in Australia on Thursday 27 June, is a much respected and loved hierarch of our Church in the United States. He lived for many years in the Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville and is well known to many of our clergy who studied at our seminary at the monastery. Vladyka George now heads the Holy Cross Monastery in West Virginia (<http://www.holycross-hermitage.com/>). Parishioners and friends are encouraged to be present at some of the divine services at which Vladyka George will preside, the complete details of which are available online at the Diocesan website, [www.rocor.org.au](http://www.rocor.org.au).

## **CHURCH LIFE: THE MONTH AHEAD**

Although the beginning of July this year coincides with the beginning of the Apostles' Fast, it is also a month of many significant feast-days. On Saturday 6 June the community of Saint John of Shanghai and San Francisco in Gunning, NSW, will celebrate its' patronal feast. On 7 July, a Sunday on which we will have a service in Gosford this year, it will be the day of commemoration of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist, the patronal feast of the Russian Orthodox parish in Canberra. On 12 July, a Friday, it will be the day of commemoration of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, the patronal feast of our cathedral in Strathfield. On Sunday 14 July it will be the day of commemoration of All Saints of Russia, the patronal feast of the Croydon parish. And on 28 July, a Sunday on which there will be no service in Gosford, it will be the day of commemoration of the Holy Equal-to-the-Apostles Saint Vladimir, the patronal feast of the Centennial Park parish and – this year – the 1025<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Baptism of Rus'. Other lesser feast-days in July include that of the "Akhtyrka" Icon of the Mother of God on 15 July; the Royal Martyrs of Russia on 17 July; and that of Saint Olga on 24 July. As has already been noted, Bishop George of Mayfield will be presiding at a number of these services: in Gunning on Saturday 6 July, in Canberra on Sunday 7 July, in Strathfield on Friday 12 July, and in Croydon on Sunday 14 July. Vladyka George's visit to Centennial Park will be on Sunday 21 July as he leaves Australia on Thursday 25 July. Our parishioners are strongly encouraged to visit other parishes on their feast-days, in order both to share in the joy of the occasion and to add to it by their presence.

## **CHURCH LIFE: A LITURGICAL QUESTION**

Readers of the newsletter may be aware that the first Sunday after Pentecost has, from the early centuries of church life, been a day of commemoration of All Saints. At a later stage the second Sunday after Pentecost came to be a day of commemoration of All Saints in Mount Athos. In 1917-18, however, the Council of the Russian Orthodox Church determined that the second Sunday after Pentecost would henceforth be, for the Russian Orthodox Church, a day of commemoration of All Saints of Russia – or,

more correctly, of All Saints who had Shone Forth in the Russian Land. As a number of parishioners have noted, though, in 2013 the feast of All Saints of Russia is to be celebrated on the third Sunday after Pentecost. The reason for this is that in 2013 the feast of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist falls on the second Sunday. So, rather than overshadow or displace the church's commemoration of the birth of Saint John, the feast of All Saints of Russia, already a moveable feast, is moved to the following Sunday.

### **PARISH LIFE: A READER TO BE TONSURED**

Parishioners and friends will recall the news, given in the last newsletter, of plans for Paul Douraguine's tonsure as a reader. Originally planned to take place at Croydon on the feast of All Saints of Russia, Sunday 14 June, the tonsure will now take place at Strathfield on the feast of Saints Peter and Paul, Friday 12 July. The tonsure of a reader takes place during the reading of the Sixth Hour, after the meeting and vesting of the Bishop but prior to the beginning of the Divine Liturgy. All Gosford parishioners are encouraged to be present at Strathfield on this day to witness Paul taking this important step in serving the Holy Orthodox Church, and to pray for him as he does so.

### **PARISH LIFE: PARISH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING IN SEPTEMBER**

With the end of the financial year now upon us, planning for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of our parish has commenced. God willing, the AGM will be held after Divine Liturgy on Sunday 15 September 2013. This AGM is a significant one – as our first parish AGM was held in September 2003, it comes at the completion of ten years of parish life. The Parish Council will consider the text of the 2013 Annual Report at its meeting on 9 July 2013. The parish accounts will then be audited externally and, when the audit report is to hand, copies of the report in English and Russian will be printed and distributed. At the AGM we will consider the future of our parish and the celebration, in May 2014, of ten years of parish life at West Gosford. In relation to this celebration, it is hoped that a special committee can be formed to plan and organise events. A Parish Council for 2013-14 will then be elected. Parish members are encouraged to renew their membership as soon as possible so as to be able to participate fully in the work of the AGM. New members are also welcome, but the Normal Parish By-Laws stipulate that new members cannot vote until six months have passed.

### **PARISH LIFE: SAINT PANTELEIMON'S DAY 2013**

Our patronal feast-day, the day of commemoration of the Great-Martyr and Unmercenary Healer Panteleimon, is on 9 August, and falls this year on a Friday. In accordance with our usual custom, the festive services will be transferred to the closest Friday night and Saturday morning, thereby allowing not only our own parishioners, but also our many friends from Sydney and Newcastle, to be present. All-night Vigil will be served at 6.00pm on the evening of Friday 9 August. On Saturday 10 August there will be a blessing of water at 8.15am, followed by the Hours, Divine Liturgy and a moleben to Saint Panteleimon, beginning at 9.00am. Our festive banquet will be held this year at the Narara Community Centre, the place where our parish held divine

services from 2001 until the opening of our church in West Gosford in May 2004. Please mark these times and dates in your diaries! Those willing and able to help with preparations are encouraged to talk to Kate Marcotrigiano, our Head Sister, or to Rick Golovin.

### **PARISH LIFE: PARISH COUNCIL NEWS**

Parish Council met on Tuesday 18 June 2013. The usual financial reports were considered in addition to a number of important standing items on the agenda: risk management, membership, and child safety. A revised 'child-safe, child-friendly' policy was adopted at the meeting, together with a parish Code of Conduct for those working with children. Plans for the September 2013 AGM and for the external audit of parish finances were discussed. Father James reported that the Saint Elisabeth Convent in Minsk, Belarus, had commenced work on new white vestments for our altar-servers, and that these were likely to be received in mid-August. Agreement was also given to the engagement of Orthodox Web Services to redevelop our parish website, further details concerning which are given elsewhere in this newsletter. The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on 9 July 2013. At its July meeting, the focus of the Parish Council will be on the draft Annual Report and on preparations for our parish feast-day.

### **PARISH LIFE: WEBSITE REDESIGN**

Our parish website, [www.gosfordrussianchurch.org.au](http://www.gosfordrussianchurch.org.au), has remained substantially unchanged since it was first published in 2004. Steps were taken in 2012 to redevelop the website to give it a fresh look, make it easier to update, to better link in with social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter, and to obtain better information about the use of the site. As has been mentioned elsewhere in the newsletter, the Parish Council decided at its June 2013 meeting to engage a US-based company, Orthodox Web Solutions, to redevelop and support the website. For those interested, information about Orthodox Web Solutions is available at the company's website, [www.orthodoxws.com](http://www.orthodoxws.com). Father James is now working with Orthodox Web Solutions on the design and content of the new site, which will have both English and Russian versions. The plan at this stage is to have a "blog" style site with news and photographs together with basic information about the parish such as contact details, service times and directions for finding our church. It is hoped that the new website will be up and running by August 2013.



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