

ПАНТЕЛЕИМОНСКИЙ ЛИСТОК

A Newsletter for the Russian Orthodox Community of Saint Panteleimon, Gosford

~ Number 15, 29 June 2003 ~

Всехъ Святыхъ, в Земли Россійстей Просиявшихъ All Saints of Russia

On the second Sunday after Pentecost, the Church remembers All Saints of Russia, sometimes referred to as all the saints who have "shone forth" in the Russian land.

On this day, we thank our Lord Jesus Christ for all the Russian saints who are praying to God for us and the whole Russian Church and people. These saints include people who have tried hard to please God, people who have been killed for being Christians, and people who have taught the Christian faith. Some have worked great miracles and others have worked hard to spread the Orthodox faith all over the world. They include kings and queens, bishops, priests and deacons, monks and nuns, and ordinary people, some rich and some poor. One prayer in the church service books mentions over 1150 saints by name! There are many more than this, whose names are known only to God.

Russia was not always a Christian land. Over 1000 years ago, the people of Rus' still worshipped false gods. Then, in 988AD, Grand Duke Vladimir and many of the Russian people accepted Jesus Christ and were baptised, becoming Orthodox Christians. Grand Duke Vladimir told his people that they must now have a completely new way of life, trying in every way to follow God's law. The Russian people from that day started trying to behave like true Christians in everything that they did. They tried so hard that Russia became known as "Holy Russia".

"Holy Russia" means that everything in Russia was based on the Church and God's law. It doesn't mean that everything was perfect, but rather that life was organised in a way that directed people towards God. We call this an "Orthodox way of life". This way of life was followed in Russia until the revolution in 1917, when the communists began to try and turn the Russian people away from God.

Here are the two main church hymns for this feast, the troparion and the kontakion, in Slavonic and in English:

Гл. 8: Якоже плодъ красній твоего спасительнаго сеянiя, земля россiйская приноситьъ ти, господи, вся святыя, въ той просiявшыя. Техъ молитвами въ мире глyбоце церковь и страну нашу Богородицею соблюди, многомилостиве.

Tone 8: As a beautiful fruit of the sowing of Thy salvation, the land of Russia doth offer to Thee, O Lord, all the saints that have shone in her. By their intercessions preserve the Church and our land in profound peace, through the Theotokos, O Greatly merciful-one.

Гл. 3: Днесъ ликъ святыхъ, въ земли нашей Богу угодившихъ, предстоить въ церкви и невидимо за ны молится Богу. Ангели съ нимъ славословятъ, и вси святии церкви Христовы ему спразднуютъ, о насъ бо молятъ вси купно превечнаго Бога.

Tone 3: Today the choir of the saints who pleased God in the land of Russia doth invisibly stand before us in Church and invisibly doth pray for us to God. With them the angels glorify Him, and all the saints of the Church of Christ keep festival with them; and they all pray together for us to the Pre-eternal God.

The troparion likens the saints to beautiful fruits that have grown from the seeds of the Gospel, and asks our Lord to listen to their prayers for Russia and the Russian Church. The kontakion is about how all the Russian saints, together with the angels and the saints of the whole world, are invisibly with us when we pray in church. Just as we celebrate here in church, they celebrate in Heaven and pray to God for us.

The icon of All Saints of Russia, placed today in the centre of our church, is like a story. First of all, it shows the beginnings of Christianity in Russia with the baptism of Grand Duke Vladimir and his people. Then it shows many of the saints of the Russian Church, together with other saints close to Russia, like the Holy Apostle Andrew and Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker. Finally, it shows all the most recent Russian saints. Above all the most recent saints are the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia. Many new martyrs and confessors are shown there, even though you can't see all their faces. This is because many hundreds of thousands - probably even millions - died for their faith in Russia in the 20th Century.

The saints of Russia are the pride and glory of our Russian Orthodox Church. They show us what Russia was able to do when life was based on the Orthodox Christian faith. They also show us what is possible if we, like them, give our lives completely to Jesus Christ our God, and try to behave like Christians in everything that we do. The saints who "shone forth" in the Russian land are an example for us, and helpers for us, in our struggle to live the way that God wants us to.

All Saints of Russia, pray to God for us!

PARISH LIFE: YOUTH BBQ TODAY

Hieromonk John has arranged a fish BBQ for the parish youth group, to be held today after the Divine Liturgy. Fr John and the group will be meeting at the St John's Lookout & Picnic Area in the Katandra Reserve, Toomey's Road, Holgate. Access to Toomey's Road is from either Maiden's Bush Road or Taylor's Road. More information is available from Fr John. All parish youth are welcome!

FROM THE HOLY FATHERS

Do not ever violate the fast on Wednesday and Friday. This fast is commanded by the Church and is well explained. If you have ever in your life violated this fast, pray to God that He forgives you and sin no more. The holy and pious men do not consider themselves dispensed

from this fast either during a journey, much less even in sickness. St. Pachomius met some men carrying a corpse and he saw two angels in the funeral procession. He prayed to God to reveal to him the mystery of the presence of the angels at the burial of this man. What good did this man do that the holy angels of God accompanied him in procession to the grave? According to God's Providence, both angels approached Pachomius and, in this manner, explained to him: "One of us is the angel of Wednesday and the other is the angel of Friday. Seeing how this man always, even until death, fasted on Wednesdays and Fridays, so we are honorably accompanying his body. As he, until death, kept the fast, so we are glorifying him".

About the justification of almsgiving

*"Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of your hand to do it"
(Proverbs 3:27).*

The Lord does not deny you that which you need, neither should you deny the man whom the Lord has sent to encounter you in order to test your heart. If a beggar extends his hand to you for help once in your life, give to him and do not refuse. Remember how many years there are in your life and how many are the hours in a day and how many are the minutes in an hour-every minute of so many, many thousands of days you extend your hand to the Lord and the Lord gives and does not refuse. Remember the mercy of God and your lack of mercy will burn you as a live coal and it will never give you any peace until you repent and soften your heart.

Do not ever say: "These beggars annoy me!" So many millions of men live on earth and all are beggars before the Lord; emperors as well as laborers, the wealthy as well as servants, all are beggars before the Lord and the Lord never said: "These beggars annoy me!" O man, give thanksgiving to God that someone seeks something good from you, be it material, or spiritual! This means that you are a man of God's trust: God has entrusted some of His goods to you because all goods belong to God. Show yourself worthy of this trust, show yourself worthy in lesser things so that you may be entrusted with greater things.

O Lord, most rich, soften our hearts and enlighten our understanding that we may be merciful in the goods which You, the All-merciful, have entrusted to us. To You be glory and thanks always. Amen.

Saint Nikolai Velimirovic, The Prologue of Ochrid

IMPORTANT CHURCH DATES IN JULY

Although there are no Great Feasts, July is a busy month on the church calendar. Today is the feast-day of the Church of All-Saints of Russia, Croydon. Next Saturday, July 5th, is the commemoration of our father among the saints, Saint John the Wonderworker of Shanghai & San Francisco. On Sunday July 6th the Parish of St John the Forerunner in Canberra will celebrate its feast-day. Vladika Hilarion will be serving there on Saturday (all-night vigil at 5pm) & Sunday (Hierarchical Divine Liturgy will begin at 9am). Saturday 12th July is the feast-day of the Holy Apostles Peter & Paul, and the parish feast-day of our cathedral in Strathfield, which is at presently being painted for the occasion. The cathedral this year celebrates its' 50th anniversary.

Tuesday July 15th is the feast-day of the wonder-working "Akhtyrskaya" icon of the Mother of God, & services will be held at Croydon - the icon's home - to mark this occasion. Thursday July 17th is the feast-day of the Holy Royal Martyrs of Russia. Thursday July 24th is the feast-day of the Holy Equal-to-the-Apostles and Grand Duchess of Russia, Olga. And Monday July 28th is the feast-day of Sydney's oldest Russian Orthodox church, Saint Vladimir's at Centennial Park. Please mark these important days on your calendars!

GOSFORD SERVICES IN JULY & AUGUST

Note: Unfortunately, Vladika Hilarion will be overseas in early August and will not be able to be with us on our feast-day. We hope to have him serve with us later in the year.

20-го юля	воскресенье	Божественная литургия	9.00 ч.у.
8-го юля	пятница	Всенощное бдение	6.00 ч.в.
9-го юля	суббота	Великомученика и целителя Пантелеимона Престольный праздник Малое освящение воды Божественная литургия	8.00 ч.у. 9.00 ч.у.
24-го августа	воскресенье	Божественная литургия	9.00 ч.у.
20th July	Sunday	Divine Liturgy	9.00 am
8th August	Friday	All-night vigil	6.00 pm
9th August	Saturday	Holy Great-Martyr & Healer Panteleimon Patronal feast of our community Lesser blessing of water Divine Liturgy	8.00 am 9.00 am
24 August	Sunday	Divine Liturgy	9.00 am

THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL ARE ASKED FOR:

The sick & suffering: Metropolitan Vitaly, Fyodor, Ioann

Special needs: Katherine, David, Marina, Paraskeva

Preparing for marriage: Peter & Svetlana, Gregory & Heather

Newly-married: Adrian & Kasey, Yuri & Alexandra

Newly-reposed: Abbess Barbara (Epova), Vladimir (Sideroff)

Father James tries to prepare this newsletter to coincide with each service at Gosford. Let him know at least a week in advance if there is anything that you would like included (prayer requests, news, announcements). You can call him on 02-9721-2659 or email him at fr.james.carles@rocor.org.au.