

ПАНТЕЛЕИМОНСКИЙ ЛИСТОК

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

~ Number 19, 19 October 2003 ~

PARISH LIFE: UPDATE ON PROPERTY PURCHASE

In the last newsletter it was reported that we were still waiting on approval from our bank, Westpac, of our application for finance to purchase the West Gosford property. Thankfully, this was approved during the week after our last service. The bank offered us two options: a larger amount with higher repayments over a 10-year period, or a slightly lesser amount with lower repayments over a 15-year period. The majority view of the parish council was that the latter was the preferable option, and it is this that was accepted. We will have repayments of just over \$1200 a month to make, beginning in late December. Although we can do this comfortably, it is in our interest to raise money and pay as much as we can as quickly as possible. We also need to pay for the necessary internal building and fitting-out. Our financial focus is something that will need to be discussed at our AGM on 2 November 2003.

Following the approval of finance, contracts have been exchanged, and we will now negotiate through to final settlement, something likely to take place by late November. Although access to the property for storage of building materials may be granted earlier, it is unlikely that our building and fitting-out could take place earlier than December. Allowing two months for the necessary internal building and fitting-out, & taking into account the Christmas & New Year break, our first services there will probably be in February 2004. As Great Lent (Великий Пост) begins on February 23rd, either Sunday February 1st or Sunday February 15th (the feast of Сретение, or The Meeting of the Lord) are perhaps the most likely dates for our "opening day", which Vladika Hilarion has promised to attend.

This is a great step for our young parish and one that will allow us to develop and enhance parish life. Thanks be to God that things have proceeded so smoothly to date!

2003 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Общее Годовое Собрание Прихожан

Please note that our first parish Annual General Meeting will be held this year on November 2nd, following Divine Liturgy. The Annual General Meeting hears reports from the Rector, Starosta, and Treasurer, and elects the parish council for the year to come. Only parish members are entitled to vote. All regular worshippers at Gosford are encouraged to take up parish membership prior to the meeting.

FROM THE HOLY FATHERS

About alms

"If you give alms to the poor, know that as much as you do good works for your fellow man so much you do for yourself and even more for yourself. St. Anthony says: "Both life and death comes to us from our fellow man." St. Peter Damascene writes: "As the poor should give thanks

to God and love the rich who do them good, so even more should the rich should give thanks to God and to love the poor because they are saved by the Providence of God both now and in the life to come because of their charity. For without the poor, they not only cannot gain salvation of their souls but they cannot avoid the temptations of wealth." Alms which are given out of vanity or with disdain do not benefit anything. In earlier times, the wealthy ones brought gold to the hermits and begged them to accept it. It is a rare occurrence that the hermits gladly accepted alms and, when they did accept it, they accepted it out of compassion toward the wealthy ones giving it. The most destitute of men received alms out of compassion!

About the poor and needy

"Give thanks to the Lord but do not forget His great men, the poor and the needy, for they can accomplish much with God the Lord." These are the words of the illustrious Russian ascetic of the nineteenth century, Father Nazariah, the abbot of Valaam Monastery. He spoke these words to the wife of a high-ranking official in St. Petersburg who fell into disfavor with the Tsar because of certain serious accusations. The accused official became ill from worry and lay in bed. Hearing that Father Nazariah arrived in St. Petersburg, the wife of this official hurriedly sought him out and related the misfortune which had befallen them and implored him to pray to the Lord for her husband. "Do you have any copper or silver coins in change?" Father Nazariah asked her. The woman brought the coins and gave them to him. And so, Father Nazariah left. The same evening Nazariah again returned and gladdened the wife with this news: "Glory to God, all those close to the Tsar [God, the King] have promised to pray for you." Naturally, the wife thought of Tsar Alexander Pavlovitch and his courtiers, while the spiritual father was thinking about the beggars on the streets to whom he had distributed the coins and sent them to pray to God for the husband of this woman. And surely the news arrived that the emperor ordered that the matter concerning this official be taken up again and reviewed. And, it was just what the official wanted. When the woman began to thank Father Nazariah, he said: "Give thanks to the Lord but do not forget His great men, the poor and the needy, for they can accomplish much with God the Lord."

Saint Nikolai Velimirovic, from "The Prologue of Ochrid"

SCHEDULE OF THE VISIT TO THE AUSTRALIAN & NEW ZEALAND DIOCESE OF HIS EMINENCE, METROPOLITAN LAURUS

On Friday, 17 October 2003 Metropolitan Laurus arrived in Australia for a pastoral visit of a little over two weeks. His schedule is as follows:

Saturday, 18 October & Sunday, 19 October: 50th anniversary festivities at the Sts Peter & Paul Cathedral, Strathfield. Departure for Queensland.

Wednesday, 22 October: St Seraphim Church, Brisbane. Vigil service for the Optina Elders.

Thursday, 23 October: Divine Liturgy at St Nicholas Cathedral, Brisbane, in the morning, with an akathist at the Rocklea parish in the evening.

Friday, 24 October: Return to Sydney.

Saturday, 25 October & Sunday, 26 October: Visit to the church school at Protection of the Theotokos Church, Cabramatta. Lunch at the Russian Sports Centre, organised by the Russo-Chinese Orthodox Missionary Society in Sydney. 50th anniversary festivities at Cabramatta.

27-30 October: The Metropolitan will be in Sydney.

Wednesday, 29 October: Pastoral conference of diocesan clergy in Croydon.

Friday, 31 October: Departure to Melbourne. Evening service at Dormition of the Theotokos Church, Dandenong, on the feast of St John of Kronstadt.

Saturday, 1 November: Divine Liturgy in Dandenong. Vigil service at Protection of the Theotokos Cathedral in Collingwood.

Sunday, 2 November: Divine Liturgy at the Protection of the Theotokos Cathedral, Collingwood. Return to Sydney.

Monday, 3 November: Name day of Archbishop Hilarion. Divine Liturgy at All Saints of Russia Church, Croydon. Vigil service at Our Lady of Kazan Convent in Kentlyn (monastery feast).

Tuesday, 4 November: Divine Liturgy & moleben at Our Lady of Kazan Convent, Kentlyn, followed by festive trapeza.

Wednesday, 5 November & Thursday, 6 November: Flight to Melbourne. Church feast day and 50th anniversary celebrations at Joy of All Who Sorrow Church in Geelong.

Friday, 7 November: The Metropolitan departs for the U.S. (from Melbourne).

Metropolitan Laurus has brought to Australia with him the "Harbin" Icon of the Mother of God "Joy of All Who Sorrow". Here is some information about this holy icon:

In the 1920's in the Far East, in the city of Harbin a young Bishop Nestor, through his labors and efforts established the "House of Mercy," a charitable institution/hostel, both for the elderly and sick and for orphaned children. At this House of Mercy, Bishop Nestor set up and consecrated a church in honour of the Icon of the Mother of God "Joy of All Who Sorrow." Learning of this, one of the Bishop's close assistants, a deeply-religious Russian woman, Ekaterina Ivanovna Kurney, donated her own icon of this type. The ancient icon had already darkened so much from time that it was almost impossible to discern the faces of the saints, let alone reading the inscriptions. One day, the rector of the church, now deceased, Fr. Julian Sumnevich (particularly revered by the Orthodox residents of Harbin for his spirituality and irreproachable life) noticed that the old icon began to lighten and renew itself...Not believing his eyes, he decided to wait some time; but the renewal was progressing quickly, and in a few hours the icon was so bright that the miracle was undoubtable and apparent to everyone who saw it and knew its previous condition. Within a day, the holy Icon was absolutely bright, the faces of the saints and the inscriptions were distinct and so clear that one could believe that the Icon had only just been painted. This stupendous miracle of God's grace roused the entire city. Old residents of Harbin remember this event well. Believers from all over began coming to the new holy Icon to venerate it and pray-and the renewed Icon became one of the most important holy objects not only of the church, but of all of Orthodox Harbin. When the last rector of the church of the House of Mercy, Archimandrite Philaret (later the third First-Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia), also left Harbin for Australia after great difficulty, and then on to the USA, the renewed Icon remained in this church, along with other holy objects. The church was closed after its rector had left, and its holy objects and items became the property of the Chinese government. After many strenuous and difficult efforts, the acting warden of the church of the previous several years, Z.L. Tauz-Zvereva managed to gain permission to export the holy Icon. Only in the fall of 1965, during Vladyka Metropolitan Philaret's trip to Europe, was the renewed Icon, after a lengthy stay in Hong Kong, sent to the USA to the Synodal Cathedral of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, where it remains in the lower church of St. Sergius of Radonezh. The present clergy of the Synodal Cathedral bear witness to the fact that occasionally, myrrh appears on the surface of the Icon.

THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL ARE ASKED FOR:

The sick & suffering: Metropolitan Vitaly, our parishioners Fyodor & Antonina Tialshinsky, Ioann, Alexander, Nina, Alexandra, child Ksenia

Special needs: Katherine, David, Helen, Marina, Paraskeva, Antonina

Expectant mothers: Tatiana, Tatiana, Anastasia, Irene

Families with new babies: Victor, Susie & baby Phillip (Bendevski); Andrew, Mila & baby Alexei, with big sisters Larissa, Katya & Marina (Pucovski); Paul, Anna & baby, with big brother & sister Timothy & Nika (Morozov)

Preparing for marriage: Michael & Silvia, Gregory & Heather

Newly-reposed: Tatiana (Krauhin), Sviyeta (Maksimovic)

CHURCH NEWS: CHURCH DESTROYED AFTER 'GAY' WEDDING

A priest has been sacked, his church bulldozed and the wreckage burnt after he allowed the building to be used for a gay marriage last month. Church officials in Nizhni Novgorod, west Russia, said that the chapel in which the men were married had been destroyed because the marriage ceremony had "desecrated" it. Father Andriy, spokesman for the Nizhni Novgorod eparchy told the 'Komsomolskaya Pravda' newspaper: "Father Vladimir Enert, who married the gay couple, committed a sin in doing so. He desecrated the place. We therefore needed to destroy the chapel." He added that Vladimir Enert had been defrocked by Russian Orthodox Church officials. Source: Covenant News 10/10/03 www.covenantnews.com

GOSFORD & NEWCASTLE SERVICES IN NOVEMBER

Services in Gosford are now always on the 1st & 3rd Sundays of each month. Services in Newcastle are on the 2nd & 4th Sundays of each month. The only additional service scheduled for either parish in October or November is on Saturday 22nd November. On this day, Divine Liturgy will be served in Wallsend at 8.00am for the repose of the soul of the ever-memorable Archpriest Ioann Lupish, the founder of the Wallsend parish. A graveside pannikhida at Sandgate Cemetery will follow.

50-YEAR JUBILEE OF THE HOLY PROTECTION PARISH IN CABRAMATTA CELEBRATION PROGRAM

Saturday 25 October 2003: 5.30 pm - Greeting of His Eminence Metropolitan Laurus at Holy Protection parish in Cabramatta and a memorial service (panikhida) for all of the founders, archpastors, pastors, builders and all those who worked for the benefit of the Holy Protection Church. 6.00 pm - Festive Sunday Vigil.

Sunday 26 October 2003: 8.30 am - Divine Liturgy celebrated by His Eminence Metropolitan Laurus and His Grace Archbishop Hilarion together with the concelebrating clergy. After the Liturgy a festive moleben and procession around the church will be held. 1.30 pm - Celebratory Jubilee Lunch in the hall of the Crystal Palace, 219 Canley Vale Road, Canley Heights. Tickets are free however the number of places is limited. To reserve your place phone: Michael and Kira Shevchenko - 9629 8353, Vera Paramonov - 9604 2831, or Tatiana Shvetz - 9809 4925.

Father James tries to prepare this newsletter to coincide with each service at Gosford. You can call him about it on 02-9721-2659 or email him at fr.james.carles@rocor.org.au.