

PARISH LIFE IN SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER

September was a busier month than August, with seven services over the course of the month and a number of other events of note.

On Saturday September 1 a young man from Woy Woy, Philip Clarke, was received into the Holy Orthodox Church at our parish by Holy Baptism. Bill Reid was his sponsor. A small celebratory gathering was held at the church afterwards, and Philip received Holy Communion for the first time at Divine Liturgy the next day. May God bless his newly-enlightened servant Philip and grant him many years!

For almost all of September our church was resplendent in the new blue vestments made by Katya Lugovoy. After Divine Liturgy on Sunday September 2nd Father James presented Katya with a "Certificate of Thanksgiving" («Благодарственная Грамота») for her work in preparing all the beautiful vestments that adorn our small church, the choir sang "Many years" for her, and our head sister Olga Petroff presented her with a beautiful bouquet of flowers.

All-night vigil and Divine Liturgy were served for the Great Feast of the Nativity of the Mother of God on Thursday September 20th and Friday September 21st. A number of parishioners attended these services, which were particularly prayerful.

On Sunday September 30th Divine Liturgy was served in English, as is our custom when we have services on a third Sunday in a given month. We were joined on the day by Subdeacon Martin Naef from the Croydon parish along with his family and a number of other visitors. Our English-language choir sang beautifully, and afterwards we venerated the Holy Cross, it having been the Great Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross on the previous Thursday.

On Monday October 1st we held our annual Family Picnic at Heazlett Park in Avoca Beach. A number of parishioners and friends (including Protodeacon Alexander Kotliaroff from Strathfield and his family) gathered for what was a most enjoyable day.

On Saturday October 6th an infant, Christopher Tohadze, was baptized here at West Gosford. Congratulations to Christopher and his parents Vlad and Jasmin, his big brother Alexander (also baptized here back in 2005), and his godparents.

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The Parish Council met on Tuesday September 4th and again on Tuesday October 2nd. At the September meeting reports were heard on our feast-day celebrations in August and on plans to purchase some new church items from Russia. This has become possible as Father Alexander Korjnewski is traveling there in September and October and offered to purchase any such items for those parishes desiring them. The Ladies' Auxiliary agreed to purchase two new gilded candle-stands, a set of wedding crowns, a vessel for holding holy water during services and processions, vessels for the washing of hands during Divine Liturgy, and four sets (white, blue, gold, and red) of priestly vestments. Father Alexander will also arrange for the bulk shipping of the items purchased, and we hope to have them later this year. At the October meeting Father James sought and obtained the approval of the Parish Council for funding to expand the small parish kiosk, with the first new order to be a number of spiritual books and DVDs from Russia. The expanded kiosk will be administered by a young parishioner, Christopher Dowling, and will, God willing, grow in time to include a range of books and DVDs in English and Russian, icons, baptismal crosses, and other items. The Parish Council also reviewed a draft of the Annual Report that will be presented to the parish Annual General Meeting in early November. The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Tuesday November 6th.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Previously, two different dates for our Annual General Meeting (AGM) have been given: Sunday October 21st and Sunday November 4th. The likely date is now yet another date, Sunday November 18th, delays in preparing the necessary reports having necessitated the change. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause, but emphasise the importance of presenting accurate financial reports for the AGM to consider. Once again, parish members are reminded that membership dues should now be paid. Those wishing to become members are welcome to apply for parish membership at any time, although new members are ineligible to vote at an AGM until they have been members for at least 6 months.

ETERNAL MEMORY!

In the last issue of this newsletter it was reported that one of our parishioners, Alexander Dikan, had passed away. His funeral was served at the Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral in Strathfield on Monday August 27th by Archpriest George Lapardin, Father James, and Protodeacon Boris Evstigneev. Father James and Mr Dikan's wife Bridget met at church on Saturday September 29th for a panikhida marking the 40th day of his repose. May God grant him rest!

On Tuesday August 28th - the Great Feast of the Domition of the Mother of God - we learned with sadness that one of our parishioners, Antonina Tialshinsky, had passed

away that morning. The "Office at the Departure of the Soul from the Body" («Последование по исходе души от тела») was read in church immediately, with Mrs Tialshinsky's son Val present. Mrs Tialshinsky had been unwell for some years, and had not been able to attend church since our days at Narara. Her funeral was served at the church of Saint George in Carlton on Friday August 31st by Father James and Protodeacon Boris Evstigneev. May the Lord grant her rest! Our sincere condolences are offered to Val, his wife Kim, and their daughter Alexandra. A panikhida marking the 40th day of her repose was served at church on Saturday October 6th.

VISIT TO AUSTRALIA OF PATRIARCHAL DELEGATION AND THE MIRACLE-WORKING 'DERZHAVNAYA' (OR 'REIGNING') ICON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

In the last issue of the newsletter it was reported that a delegation from the Moscow Patriarchate would be visiting Australia, along with the "Derzhavnaya" Icon of the Mother of God and the 42-voice Stretensky Monastery Choir. On Sunday September 23rd approximately 15 of us from this parish travelled to the Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral in Strathfield for Divine Liturgy in the presence of the Icon. Presiding at Divine Liturgy were Metropolitan Onuphry of Chernovtsy and Bukovina, Archbishop Hilarion, and Archbishop Evgeny of Verey, the Rector of the Moscow Theological Academy. Concelebrating were various clergymen of our diocese (Father James included) together with visiting and local clergymen of the Moscow Patriarchate. The Stretensky Monastery choir sang, and nearly one thousand of the faithful gathered to venerate the Icon and greet the visitors. The service was beautiful and extraordinarily moving. Those present were given a small copy of the icon and a leaflet with some history of the icon and the reunification of the Russian Orthodox Church. This was an historic event, and one that those of us who were able to be present will long remember.

AN EXHIBITION: ICONS AND ICONOGRAPHERS

Beginning on Tuesday October 9th, the Australian Catholic University National Gallery in Strathfield will hold an exhibition entitled "Icons and Iconographers: A survey exhibition and contemporary experience of the icon tradition in Australia". To be opened by ABC Radio National "Religion Report" presenter Stephen Crittenden, the exhibition will consider the work of six leading iconographers, some of whom are well-known to us: local resident and worshipper at our church, Michael Galovic; Antonina Ganin; Dimitri Lihachov; Archimandrite Alexis of the Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Bombala; and Christina and Dimitri Sladescu. The opening will be between 6.00pm and 8.00pm on Tuesday evening, with the exhibition continuing until Saturday October 27th. The gallery is at Gate 3, 25A Barker Road, Strathfield, and opening hours are 11.00am-4.00pm Monday-Saturday.

VALAAM ENSEMBLE TO PERFORM IN NEWCASTLE

On Wednesday October 10, 2007, at 7.00pm, the Russian Male Voice Ensemble of the Valaam Monastery, Saint Petersburg, will be performing a selection of sacred and folk choral items at our neighbouring parish, Saint Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church, 3 Irving Street, Wallsend.

Tickets are \$15.00 with a concession price of \$10.00. The ensemble will perform for approximately one and a half hours. Tea, coffee and a light supper will be served. CDs will be available for purchase on the night.

Father James and parish councillor Paul Pereboeff had the opportunity to hear this ensemble sing in Melbourne's new Holy Protection cathedral when they visited for a Diocesan conference in late 2005. The five-voice ensemble sings beautifully, and show how much can be accomplished with just a few voices. All who are able to make the trip to Wallsend (only 1 hour from West Gosford!) are encouraged to do so. It may be possible to provide transport to some who wish to attend but are otherwise unable to get there. For further information talk to Father James or call him on 0428-639156.

THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL ARE ASKED FOR:

Traveling abroad: Deacon Christopher and Matushka Julie

The sick & suffering: Our parishioner Victor (Manjetny); and also for Vasili, Vera, Eugenia, Olga, Galina, Tatiana and Daniel

Expectant mothers: Matushka Marie, Ethel

Preparing for baptism: Shannon

Newly-baptised: Infant Christopher

Preparing for marriage: Shannon & Olga

Newly-married: Philip & Anastasia, Paul & Maria

Newly-departed: Antonina (Tialshinsky), a parishioner at West Gosford; Gennady (Zdanowicz)

Departed: Metropolitan Vitaly, and former parishioners Irina (Kamenev), Nun Maria, George (Kraihin), Theodore (Tialshinsky), Lyubov (Smieska), Victor (Pulkownik), Olga (Timohina), Alexander (Dikan)



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