

PARISH LIFE: NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2011

On Saturday 26 November Natasha Moyle, the infant daughter of Adam Moyle and Marina Melnikoff and baby sister to Anastasija, was baptised in our church at West Gosford. Natasha's godparents were her maternal aunt, Louise Melnikoff, and her uncle, Kris Ross. A festive meal was shared in the church hall afterwards by family and friends. May God grant many years to His newly-baptised handmaiden Natasha and to her parents and godparents. God willing, Natasha will receive Holy Communion for the first time on Sunday 18 December 2011.

On the weekend of 3-4 December, we had our sixth parish camp, the fourth at Crosslands in Galston Gorge. Although a much smaller camp than usual, all present had a wonderful time. After canoeing on the Berowra Creek on Saturday morning, a number of the older children and the dads took the "Leap of Faith" on the high ropes – a jump off a platform some six metres off the ground. In the afternoon, eleven month-old Haylee Fitzsimons was baptised in our camp chapel. Haylee, the youngest daughter of Olena Fitzsimons and a baby sister to Brianna and Emily, was given the name Sarah in baptism. Her godparents were our parishioners Nikolay and Evgenia Druganov. May God also grant many years to His newly-baptised handmaiden Haylee-Sarah, and to her mother, sisters and godparents.

The service on Saturday evening, the Eve of the Great Feast of the Entry of the Mother of God into the Temple, was simply Great Vespers with the blessing of five loaves, wheat, wine and oil. A moleben to the Mother of God was then served, and afterwards those present received the blessed bread and were anointed with the oil. A small choir sang under the direction of Maria Zaitseva, the conductor from the Centennial Park parish. After the evening meal, all walked to the campfire site and spent some time singing and toasting marshmallows.

On Sunday morning the customary prayers were read together in the camp chapel by all who were preparing to receive Holy Communion. Father Martin, although unable to be present for the whole weekend, was able to be there for Divine Liturgy. As is generally the case at camp, many people received Holy Communion. Clouds gathered as the service proceeded, breaking in a great storm of hail early that afternoon, just as many of the children were in the pool. The rain continued that afternoon, and that –

together with Russian school commitments – saw most people leave, with just a few staying on until Monday.

On Tuesday 6 December and Wednesday 7 December we had services at church in honour of the Great Martyr Katherine, the heavenly protector of quite a number of our parishioners: Kate Marcotrigiano, Katya Lugovoy, Katya Rubbo, Katia Waters, Katya Yakimov, and Katie Carles. May God, through the prayers of Saint Katherine, bless each one of them!

On Thursday 15 December Father James received a hand-painted icon, ordered some time ago, of the Holy Martyr Irene, commemorated on 1 October. This Saint Irene is the heavenly-protector of our parishioner Irene Claydon, who reposed in the Lord in July 2010, and the icon was painted in her memory by well-known Sydney iconographer Dimitri Lihachov. It is expected that the icon will be blessed after Divine Liturgy on Sunday 18 December, our final service for 2011.

PARISH LIFE: PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The December meeting of our Parish Council was held on Tuesday 13 December. In a meeting lasting just over two hours, the Parish Council decided to increase to \$300.00 the disappointing \$87.00 collected in November for the ROCOR Fund for Assistance; discussed the payment of levies to support the Diocesan and Synodal authorities; and considered various matters relating to parish accounting.

Reports were given by Rick Golovin concerning building-related matters; by Paul Pereboeff in relation to the charitable work of the parish; by Father James in relation to the summer camp and various Diocesan and parish administrative matters; and by Paul Douriaguine – a clear and detailed report - in relation to child-safe and child-friendly organisations. This latter report followed on from Paul's attendance on behalf of the parish and the Hornsby Russian School at a seminar organised by the NSW Commission for Children and Young People. More information about steps being taken to ensure that our parish is child-safe and child-friendly will be forthcoming soon. Parish Council will now take something of a break, with the next meeting scheduled for 24 January 2012.

PARISH LIFE: SERVICES IN JANUARY 2011

January will be a busy month! God willing, we will have the following services:

Saturday 31st December - Matins at 6pm

Sunday 1st January (Holy Fathers) - Divine Liturgy at 9am

Thursday 5th January - Matins at 6pm

Friday 6th January (Eve of Nativity) - Divine Vespers with Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great at 9am

Saturday 14th January – Matins at 6pm

Sunday 15th January (Righteous Seraphim of Sarov) – Divine Liturgy at 9am

Wednesday 18th January – All night vigil at 6pm

Thursday 19th January (Theophany) – Divine Liturgy and Greater Blessing of Water at 9am

Saturday 28th January – Matins at 6pm

Sunday 29th January (Sunday of Zaccheus) – Divine Liturgy at 9am

Services for the Nativity of our Lord will be at Wallsend this year. All night vigil will commence at 6pm on Friday 6th January, and Divine Liturgy will be at 9am on Saturday 7th January. There will be a lunch after church on Christmas Day at Wallsend for all who wish to attend. To assist with catering, anyone planning to stay for Christmas lunch at Wallsend should let Father James or the Head Sister, Anna Pavlovna Morhun (4963-1814), know.

To help parishioners and friends remember which days our regular services are on, a magnetic 2012 parish calendar has been prepared. It includes parish contact details and has the Sundays highlighted on which there will be services in our church. A calendar for each household is included with this issue of the newsletter. If you receive the newsletter by email only, please ask for a calendar at the candle desk.

PARISH LIFE: PRE CHRISTMAS CLEAN UP – MONDAY 2 JANUARY 2011

Our usual pre-Christmas general clean-up day at church will be held on Monday 2 January, beginning at 9.00 am. This will be a major clean-up, with everything in the church and hall being thoroughly washed, scrubbed and polished in preparation for our Christmas Eve services on 5-6 January. All those who are able to spare a few hours are asked to attend. A list of tasks will be prepared to ensure that everyone has something to do. As is customary, a light Lenten lunch will be served afterwards for all those working.

PARISH MEMBERSHIP

All parish members are now asked to renew their membership, and regular worshippers are invited to consider becoming members. Parish membership is something quite distinct from church attendance, or even participation in the sacramental life of the church. Membership makes it possible for a person to be involved in formal parish decision-making at various levels. A person cannot serve on the Parish Council, for example, without first becoming a parish member.

The rules governing parish membership are set out in the Normal Parish By-Laws or the "Нормальный Приходской Устав" ("the By-Laws") of the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia (ROCOR). A person may become a member of a ROCOR parish if they are an Orthodox Christian, have reached the age of 18 years, pay the established membership dues, make their confession and take Holy Communion not less than once a year, and tend to the moral and economic welfare of the parish.

There is no obligation upon any person to become a parish member. A person might regularly attend one or more parishes in our Diocese and participate in the sacramental life of the church and yet feel no desire to seek formal parish membership. This is entirely a decision for each individual. There are certainly no adverse consequences for not seeking parish membership. Pastorally, no distinction is made between members and non-members.

It is nevertheless the policy of this parish to encourage all regular worshippers and friends of the parish to consider membership. The reason for this is that it helps ensure that parish decision-making is representative of the broadest range of people who attend and take an interest in the welfare of the church. It also increases the pool of people from which a Parish Council and an Auditing Committee can be drawn.

In our parish, the annual membership fee is \$30.00. Membership is granted for a calendar year; that is, from January to December. New members gain the right to vote only after 6 months of membership. Those new members who transfer membership from another ROCOR parish may vote immediately. Paragraph 12 of the By-Laws requires any person wishing to become a member of a parish to make a written application to the Parish Council. To make this easier for everyone, our parish has developed an 'Application for Parish Membership' form. A copy of this form is enclosed with this newsletter.

If required, additional copies of this form can be made, or downloaded from our website. Some forms are also available at church. Please ask at the candle desk! Parish members are asked to complete the 'Application for Parish Membership' form upon annual renewal of membership. This helps ensure that parish records are up-to-date, that personal details remain correct, and that the conditions for membership continue to be met. Any questions or concerns regarding formal parish membership should be raised with Father James. Completed membership forms may be handed in at the candle desk.

THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL ARE ASKED FOR:

The sick: Nun Euphrosyne; our parishioners Nestor, Natalia, Michael, Tatiana, Nina, and Boris.
Families with new babies: Daria, Evgeny and baby Evelyn; Peter, Anastasia and baby Elisabeth, with big brother Isaac
Expectant mothers: Svetlana, Maria, Natalia, Marije, Elena, Elise, Lydia.
Departed: Patriarch Alexis, Metropolitan Vitaly, Metropolitan Laurus, infant Ekaterina, and former parishioners and benefactors Irene (Claydon), Victor (Manjetny), Vladimir (Dmitrieff), George (Fomin), Irina (Kamenev), Nun Maria, George (Kraihin), Theodore & Antonina (Tialshinsky), Lyubov (Smieska), Victor (Pulkownik), Olga (Timohina), Alexander (Dikan), Elena (Yakupova), Lydia (Ustimko).



4/7 Comserv Close
West Gosford NSW 2250
PO Box 3356
Erina NSW 2250
www.gosfordrussianchurch.org.au
info@gosfordrussianchurch.org.au
newsletter@gosfordrussianchurch.org.au