

PARISH LIFE DURING AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 2008

Nearly two months have passed since our last parish newsletter, and a great deal has happened in that time. August was a very busy month liturgically, with a total of nine services! These were on the weekend of Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd; for our feast-day on Friday August 8th and Saturday 9th; on Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th; on Monday 18th and Tuesday 19th, for the Great Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord; and finally on Sunday 31st, our first English-language Divine Liturgy in nearly a year.

Our feast-day was a most enjoyable and encouraging day. The services were very beautiful, and despite the fact that Metropolitan Hilarion could not be with us, Fathers James and Martin were joined by a number of visiting clergy: Priest Alexander Filchakov (Newcastle), Priest Alexander Korjenewski (Carlton), Hieromonk John (Holy Trinity Monastery, Monkerai), Protodeacon German Polorotov (Fairfield), and Protodeacon Christopher Henderson (Centennial Park). There were a great many people in church, including friends from Newcastle and all the Sydney parishes. The choir sang beautifully under Olga Itsikson's direction, and Father Alexander gave a thoughtful sermon on Saint Panteleimon. We returned afterwards to our old "church", the Narara Community Centre, and there enjoyed a banquet prepared by Olga Petroff and the parish sisterhood. At lunch, Father James spoke briefly and noted that it was already the fifth time that we had celebrated our feast-day at the church in West Gosford (!), the first having been in 2004. The Ladies' Auxiliary raised a total of \$5,300: \$4,000 through their raffle, \$1,150 through the cake auction, and \$150 on sales.

Our English-language service on August 31st was well-attended and proceeded smoothly, despite it being almost a year since our English-language choir, conducted by Matushka Marie, has sung together. Although it is recognised that English-language services are not a priority for the parish as a whole, they will remain a regular, albeit occasional, feature of parish life for the foreseeable future. We will have another English-language Divine Liturgy in late November.

There were fewer services in September, with only the services for the Exaltation of the Cross in late September being added to our regular Saturday and Sunday services. A nice event in parish life, though, was a trivia and pizza afternoon on Sunday September 14th. A number of parishioners met at church at around 3.00pm that day, a Sunday on which we did not have a service. Forming four enthusiastic teams, they tested their knowledge of religion, politics, geography, Australian history, and other

topics. The victorious team included Anna Carles, Elizabeth Carles, and Chris Dowling. All stayed for pizza afterwards. Many thanks to Paul Pereboeff for organising this enjoyable afternoon! Our next social activity will be the annual parish picnic day on October 6th, the Monday of the October long weekend, a leaflet concerning which is enclosed. We hope to have some more social events for parishioners and friends over the summer months.

Parish Council met early in August and September. It was reported in the August newsletter that Parish Council had decided to reduce regular mortgage repayments to the minimum possible for the foreseeable future. As it turned out, this was not possible without renegotiating the loan, and so some serious thought was given to the possibility of a debt elimination appeal, a not overly-ambitious task given the fact that less than \$36,000 now remains to be paid. Further information concerning this appeal will be forthcoming shortly.

PARISH LIFE: OUR 2007-08 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

From 2003 onwards, it has been our practice to hold the parish Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the beginning of November. This did not occur in 2007, with our 2006-07 AGM taking place in early 2008. The delay was in part to ensure that our financial reporting was accurate.

There has been a great deal of work done since then to ensure that our financial record-keeping and reporting remains accurate and accessible. Work has recently commenced to put in place clear guidelines and procedures for parish administration, particularly financial administration, and to ensure that the auditing process at the end of every year is thorough and meaningful. An inventory of fixed assets has also commenced. As this work will take some time to complete and as an audit report is a necessary feature of the AGM, the 2007-08 AGM will again be held over until early in the New Year, probably some time in February. Further information will be provided to parish members in due course.

PARISH LIFE: SPRING SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

The Spring (September, October and November) 2008 Schedule of Services has now been available in church for some time. As of September 23rd, it was also available on the website. October and November will be quiet months, with no services apart from those regularly scheduled.

PLANNING AHEAD: PARISH LIFE IN 2009

A number of people have asked about services in 2009. God willing, we will have services for the Great Feast of the Nativity of Christ, or Christmas, on Tuesday January 6th and Wednesday January 7th. Some thought has been given to the possibility of a Christmas party or "yolka" on Saturday January 10th or thereabouts. There will be a two-week break without services before Orthodox Christmas: our last service for 2008 will be on

December 21st, and our first service for 2009 will be on the evening of January 3rd. In all likelihood, there will be a pre-Christmas clean-up that morning. We plan to have the Greater Blessing of Water on January 18th, the Eve of Theophany, with Father James blessing homes that afternoon and throughout the following week. Great Lent begins on Monday March 2nd, and we hope to have blini (pancakes) and Forgiveness Vespers the preceding day. Pascha falls on Sunday April 19th 2009, and this year it will be our turn to have the full midnight service, followed by a festive meal together. Please mark these dates in your diaries!

METROPOLITAN HILARION'S MOVEMENTS

In early September, Metropolitan Hilarion departed Sydney for San Francisco. He had spent a busy two months in the Australian and New Zealand Diocese, having visited most parishes with the relics of Grand Duchess Elizabeth and Nun Barbara. In San Francisco he participated in a meeting of the Synod of Bishops, and presided at the consecration of a new vicar bishop for the Western American Diocese, Bishop Theodosius of Seattle. Metropolitan Hilarion has since traveled to the East Coast, actively participating in the life of the Eastern American Diocese. Significant coming events include the consecration of two new bishops, and the liturgical commemoration of the centenary of the repose of Saint John of Kronstadt. Vladyka Hilarion will return to Australia in late December in time to be present at the Diocesan Youth Conference and a concurrent Pastoral Conference to be held on the Gold Coast. We hope to have him visit our parish early in 2009.

REPOSE OF PRINCE MICHAEL ROMANOFF

Prince Michael Andreevich of Russia (15 July 1920-22 September 2008) was a descendant of the House of Romanov that ruled Russia from 1613 to 1917. A long-time Sydney resident, he reposed on 22 September 2008.

Prince Michael was born in Versailles, the second child and eldest son of Prince Andrei Alexandrovich of Russia and Donna Elisabetha Ruffo (1886-1940). He was a grandson of Grand Duke Alexander Mikhailovich and Grand Duchess Xenia Alexandrovna of Russia and a great nephew of Tsar-Martyr Nicholas II, the last Emperor of Russia.

Michael lived with his parents and his grandmother Grand Duchess Xenia in exile at Frogmore Cottage on the grounds of Windsor Castle and later at Wilderness House until he enlisted to serve in the Royal Navy during World War II. During the war Prince Michael served in Australia with the Fleet Air Arm. He moved here permanently following the conclusion of the war and became an aviation engineer.

Prince Michael was protector of the Sovereign Order of the Orthodox Knights Hospitaller of Saint John of Jerusalem which was formally under the protection of his father Prince Andrei and uncle Prince Vasili. He was also vice president of the Romanov Family Association.

Prince Michael He is survived by his wife Giulia, Princess Michael. He had no children. May God grant him rest!

The funeral is scheduled to begin at 10.00am on Tuesday September 30th at the Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral in Strathfield. The Very Reverend Mitred Archpriest Michael Protopopov will preside, assisted by the clergy of the Sydney Deanery.

DIOCESAN LIFE: FORTHCOMING SPIRITUAL TALKS

At 7.30pm on Wednesday October 1st there will be a talk at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral, Strathfield, entitled 'The Eucharist and the Liturgy'. The speaker, a guest from the USA, will be Igumen John (Magram). Father John is at present leading the services at Strathfield while Archpriest George Lapardin is travelling abroad.

On the afternoon of Saturday, November 29th, there will be a seminar in Sydney arranged by the Sydney Orthodox Theological Association (SOTA) entitled 'Asceticism - An Inspiration for Renewal'. The Seminar will finish in time for All-Night Vigil that evening. The location and speakers are still being finalised. Those interested in the topic and wishing to know more can contact SOTA by email at sydneyorthodoxtheology@gmail.com.

THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL ARE ASKED FOR:

The sick & suffering: Priest Simeon; our parishioner Victor (Manjetny); and also for Vasili, Vera, Eugenia, Olga, Margaret, Galina, Tatiana, Nun Euphrosyne, Hans

Traveling or living abroad: Archpriest George and family, Protodeacon Christopher and family, Anastasia

Expectant mothers: Anastasia, Natalia

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



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Our parish newsletter is published monthly. If you wish to receive it by post or email, please talk to Father James (0428-639156) or Katya Marcotrigiano, the parish secretary (katya.marco@gosfordrussianchurch.org.au).