



# HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX Parish Church RESTON Newsletter

Future Site: Potomac View Road (behind NoVa). January 2013

ΤΑ ΦΩΤΑ—"I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD." *Jn. 8.12; cf. Luke 1.78*

JANUARY 2013—DAY 10 HOURS, NIGHT 14: A.D. 313: Edict of Milan, 1700 YEARS

- 6 Sun<sup>31•VI•Lk16</sup> **THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST (Mark 1.1–11)**  
10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Morrow**
- 13 Sun<sup>32•VII•Lk17</sup> **SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY — HIERARCHICAL VISITATION**  
10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Smith**
- 19 Sat *Food Pantry Leesburg — 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.*
- 20 Sun<sup>33•VIII•Lk18</sup> 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Wayland**
- 27 Sun<sup>34•I•Lk19</sup> 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Williams**  
*Annual Parish Meeting will follow the Liturgy — weather permitting.*

FEBRUARY—DAY 11 HOURS, NIGHT 13

- 2 Sat ↓ **MEETING OR ENCOUNTER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**
- 3 Sun<sup>35•II•Lk20</sup> 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Busenserg**
- 10 Sun<sup>36•III•Lk21</sup> 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Doyle**
- 16 Sat *Food Pantry Leesburg — 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.*
- 17 Sun<sup>37•IV•Lk22</sup> 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Ellmore**
- 24 Sun<sup>38•V•Lk23</sup> **GOSPEL: PUBLICAN AND PHARISEE (Begins the Triodion)**  
10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Geoghegan**

MARCH—DAY 12 HOURS, NIGHT 12

- 3 Sun<sup>39•VI•Lk24</sup> **GOSPEL: PRODIGAL SON**  
10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Hawkins**
- 10 Sun<sup>40•VII•Lk25</sup> **GOSPEL: LAST JUDGMENT**  
10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Honshul**
- 16 Sat *Food Pantry Leesburg — 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.*
- 17 Sun<sup>41•VIII•Lk26</sup> **GOSPEL: FORGIVENESS**  
10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Krisa**
- 18 Mon *Begin the Great Forty Days*

## Regarding our upcoming Annual Parish Meeting.

Matters before us this year: approve an annual budget that funds pursuit of a sewer solution (we have arrived at the denouement, it is time for Loudoun Water to act). In 2013 we must also move to extend our Special Exception for as many years as the County will allow (our application is on hold). We will also elect three to the

Parish Council; the terms of Gregory Honshul, Matthew Lepnew, and Susan Matyuf are expiring. In 2012 rent for the Glade Room took a steep rise (from \$555/month to \$694/month); this year no change. (We must arrange for extra hours for Holy Week and Christmas separately.) Last year there was a not-unexpected falloff in financial support; this year the falloff is a tad larger, but should be able to manage.

## Renewal:

**Fr. Alexander Schmemmann writing to his Bishop 40 years ago: "In this dark situation there appear here and there some signs of hope."**

Your Beatitude [*his addressee is Archbishop Ireney—Ed.*]: Do I have to prove the fact that our Church finds herself today in a sad situation? That its financial bankruptcy only reveals and reflects its spiritual state—a state of apathy and demoralization, of distrust and petty rivalries, of parochialism and provincialism, of creeping secularism, of abysmal ignorance of the very foundations of our faith? Do I have to inform you, or any other of our Bishops, what formidable obstacles—spiritual, liturgical, pastoral—each priest encounters daily if he tries to be a true pastor of his flock, to please God and not men? It is no accident that so many of them go through a deep crisis of confidence in the hierarchy, that some progressively sink into an almost cynical indifference, that some others begin to be attracted by the spiritual dead-end and doubtful emotionalism of "Pentecostalism."

In this dark situation there appear here and there some signs of hope, **renewal**, and new inspiration. One of the most hopeful among them is certainly the return to the liturgical life as the very focus of the parish, as the means of its respiritualization and revitalization. Parish life again begins to be centered on the Eucharist and the sacraments, on liturgical cycles. The Church begins again to be experienced as the Body of Christ. This process inevitably raises new questions, creates new difficulties. Mistakes no doubt are made, wrong or questionable steps taken. Yet at least the motivations, the zeal, the intentions are pastoral, aimed at priceless human souls and their communion with God. It is in such parishes that the statutes are not opposed, all financial obligations

are gladly met, all Church projects—national, diocesan, charitable, educational, missionary—are gladly and enthusiastically supported, new, confident and truly loving relations with the Bishop established and nurtured. It would not be difficult to prove that **this renewal is rooted in a genuine interest in the true Orthodox Tradition, in the Holy Scriptures, the Fathers, the Liturgy, and above all in a deep concern for the religious and not merely “ethnic” or “social” orientation of the Church.**

—“On the Question of Liturgical Practices: A Letter to My Bishop” (Epiphany, 1973), St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly (1973), pgs. 230, 231

### **For Egypt’s Christians, A Coptic Christmas in Times of Trouble**

Christmas Eve Liturgy will be held in churches all across the country on Jan. 6, as it has been for centuries. Pope Tawadros [Theodore] II will travel from his home in the coastal city of Alexandria to lead the main service at the Coptic Orthodox Cathedral in Cairo. On the same date two years ago, in 2011, the Cairo worshippers were clothed in black. That was just weeks before Egypt’s Arab Spring revolution would begin, but the Copts’ attitude of mourning had little to do with politics. It was instead a reaction to a New Year’s Day bomb that had just killed 23 people at a church in Alexandria. Islamist extremists were suspected, but no one has ever been tried for the crime. Last year, the ceremony was more hopeful. It was the first time ever that members of the Muslim Brotherhood, a pan-Arab Islamic organization, were openly in attendance. Even still, there was unmistakable tension in the air, and the area surrounding the cathedral was thick with security officials. This time around, Egypt’s Christians are hoping for another peaceful mass. But the situation is far from stable as a new government, led President Mohamed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood, struggles to calm unrest despite a faltering economy and deficient security forces. Coptic Christians make up about 10 percent of Egypt’s population, but they have been victims of discrimination—and often violence—for centuries. In post-revolution Egypt, many Copts are dismayed to find that they are even less empowered today than they were under the autocratic former President Hosni Mubarak. But that hasn’t stopped them from advocating for justice, in Egypt and from expatriate communities all around the world. A Volatile Mix The Coptic Church maintains an official distance from political affairs, but in practice the two cannot be separated. Christians have long faced some degree of persecution in Egypt, and their safety depends partly on the ability of the state to protect its minority citizens. “Under Mubarak there was discrimination, but there was some level of security in the country,” says

Michael Meunier, a Coptic Christian who is in Cairo to attend the pope’s Christmas Eve service. “Right now, people don’t have security anymore. Churches are being attacked.” Meunier heads the liberal political party al-Haya, which will compete in upcoming parliamentary elections—but only if the electoral rules have improved since the last round, which saw a sweeping victory for Islamists one year ago. The lower house of parliament was later disbanded by the courts. Al-Haya is focused on economic recovery and domestic security. And although Meunier asserts that the party represents people of all religions—not just Copts—those are two issues that affect Egypt’s Christians directly. The national economy is sputtering as Egypt struggles to cobble a new government together. Its pound is sliding precipitously against the American dollar. The cost of living is becoming untenable for Egyptian citizens, more than one-fourth of whom live in poverty. And Coptic Christians, who rely heavily on private enterprise after decades of public sector discrimination, are feeling the pinch. As for security, it is clear from protests that erupted only last month that the streets are as mean as ever. Thousands of Copts, liberals and secular Egyptians gathered in Cairo and Alexandria to protest a controversial new constitution that enshrined Islam as a source of inspiration for its legislation. Supporters of the draft also showed up in force. Clashes erupted, and police forces sprayed tear gas in a vain attempt to impose order. The constitution passed a public referendum on Dec. 23, reminding the opposition that most of the population favors an Islamist government. Now, it’s one day at a time for Meunier and like-minded liberals. He only hopes that the Copts who gather en masse for Christmas Eve this year can celebrate the holiday in peace. “There is a worry that somebody will go crazy and do something violent; that concern is always there,” he said. “But we understand that the majority of Muslims in Egypt are not fanatics, and we hope that common sense will prevail.”

### **Deep Roots, Wide Branches**

Amid the upheaval of the past couple years, the number of Egyptians fleeing the country has swelled. Asylum seekers have doubled since 2011, according to figures from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Millions of Coptic Christians now live outside of Egypt, forming expatriate communities in countries as diverse as Kuwait, South Africa, Switzerland and Australia. The majority of Coptic Christians outside of Egypt are residing in the United States. John Estafanous is one of them. Though he was born in Egypt, he has lived outside its borders for most of his life. Today he is a member of Chicago Copts, a nonprofit organization dedicated to Coptic culture. “We’re under the auspices of the Holy Church in Alexandria, and we follow the Coptic Pope,” said Estafanous. He explained that in Chicago, as in a myriad of other cities around the

world, Coptic Christians will attend a church service on Jan. 6. The tradition has deep roots, since the history of Christianity in Egypt goes back to the very first days of anno domini. Jesus himself was taken to Egypt as a child to escape the wrath of King Herod in Jerusalem, according to the Gospel of Matthew in the New Testament. Just a few decades later, Mark the Apostle is said to have traveled to Alexandria to lay the foundation for the growth of Christianity along the Nile River. The proselytization was successful. Christianity was the major religion in Egypt for centuries until Islamic forces swept the region during the 600s. Saint Mark is now considered the first leader of the Coptic Church; the 117 popes that have come after him are his successors. Pope Tawadros II was ordained last November, following the death of the much-beloved Pope Shenouda III in March. In the 20 centuries since it was first established, things have clearly changed for the Alexandria papacy. Unlike Mark the Apostle, Tawadros II has a Twitter account. What hasn't changed is the feeling of isolation that many Copts have felt since Islam swept the country so many years ago. This is a trying time for the religious minorities of Egypt—but trying times are nothing new. Asked whether Tawadros II was shaping up to be an effective leader for the Coptic Church in this time of turmoil, Estafanous was succinct. “Each Pope has their own personality,” he said. “The Church has been going through turmoil since the Crusades.” The Good Word The more things change in Egypt, it seems, the more things stay the same. Egyptian society has seen a sea change in recent years, but Coptic Christians are still fighting to stake their claim in the land they call home. Political figures like Meunier know that now is a time of great opportunity to demand protection for minority rights. As Egypt's fledgling government finds its way, the rules of governance are still malleable. “The Coptic community is under a great deal of pressure,” Meunier said, adding that Pope Tawadros II has already shown himself to be a capable leader in times of trouble. “He has been forceful for the rights of Christians for the short time he has been in office ... His first statements have made it quite clear that Christians in Egypt are suffering. I expect he will probably run the church in a sophisticated and professional way.” Meanwhile, activists abroad endeavor to increase awareness worldwide. “Of course we are worried, so we do what we can here to help out our brothers overseas,” said Estafanous from Chicago. “We talk to congressmen and arrange demonstrations. We do the best we can, but it's hard to do something when you're thousands of miles away.” As another new year brings another tense Christmas for Egypt's Christians, the Copts still hope for peace against all odds. “It will be another difficult Christmas for sure,” says Meunier. “Every Christmas is just one more difficult Christmas.”

### **Fur trading, grave-robbing: Chronicling company's Alaska past.**

New book explores maritime history in Alaska's Aleutian Islands tracking the elusive (and mythical) wolverines of Chugach State Park.

Names such as Golodoff, Stepetin, Shaiashnikoff, Kudrin, Bereskin, Gromof, Galaktionof, Snigarof, Prokopiuf, Tutiakoff, Shelikov, Berikof, and Diakonof fill the pages of the ledger books of the Alaska Commercial Company that ran sea-otter hunting operations out of the Aleutian Islands in the late nineteenth century. They are also the names of families that, generations later, still populate the town of Unalaska, which had been the headquarters for company agents in the region. Links to this Aleutian past have relied on memory and family lore until a remarkable discovery at the bottom of a Nordstrom's shopping bag opened a window onto what life was like for the Tutiakoffs, Kudrins, and others who were there more than a hundred years ago.

Historian and journalist (and former king-crab processor) J. Penelope Goforth had been doing research for many years on the Alaska Commercial Company, the successor to the Russian-American Company that had hunted the Alaskan waters until 1867. Rummaging in a Seattle basement in 2004, Goforth came across a silver shopping bag with a mailer envelope inside. What she found were the company's ledger books for the Aleutian district between 1875 and 1897—700 pages detailing transport, merchandise, building, personnel, fur prices, hunting seasons, marriages, deaths, and illnesses. Now, thanks to a grant from the Alaska Humanities Forum, those ledgers have been transcribed, scanned, digitized, and distributed to research repositories throughout Alaska. Goforth's project, called “Bringing Aleutian History Home: The Lost Ledgers of the Alaska Commercial Company,” was given the 2012 Alaska Historical Society Pathfinder Award for making previously inaccessible materials available. Goforth also received a letter of recognition for her work from the Alaska State Historical Records Advisory Board. Church records in Russian “We didn't have anything like this,” explains Goforth. “In the other ledgers and log books that exist there is hardly anything on the Aleutians, because of World War I, World War II, weather, successive waves of people coming through. We don't have much from the Aleutians, much less a list of who went hunting on this particular hunt in 1877, and what village they came from.” Some of these villages don't exist anymore, such as Tegalda or Makushi. After the native population had been interned by the U.S. during World War II, the government would take the displaced villagers back only as far as Unalaska, where they had to settle. “Church records are the only other solid source of information that we have, and, of course, they are writ-

ten in Russian.”The ledgers owe their detail in part to the company’s management, which instructed agents to “take note of everything that happened, what boats came in, who got married, who died,” says Goforth. In 1867, the Alaska Commercial Company, formed of businessmen scattered across the American West Coast, bought the interests of the Russian-American Company, with all its assets and duties included. Along with the rights and means to hunt around the Aleutian Islands, they also acquired the Russian employees and native hunters and the responsibility to the people who lived there. “The U.S. government made no provisions for the indigenous tribes anywhere in the territory, so it was up to the company,” says Goforth. “And it was in their interest to make sure their hunters were healthy, had food, were warm, had clothes. The Alaska Commercial Company pretty much did everything. They built houses, they brought teachers, they brought physicians. They did all the civil functions that a government would do, including banking.” The company relied on the native hunters for their knowledge of the local waters to determine when the pelts were at their best and where they were best hunted.

### **Sanctioned grave robbing**

But otter and seal pelts were not the only commodity that the company desired. Detailed in the ledgers is the story of government-sanctioned grave robbing. On Sept. 12, 1877, agent Greenbaum, with help from a local guide, transported a small cargo vessel, the *Bella*, to an ancient burial cave. “The cave, being covered with rocks, required

considerable labor to gain access to the corpses, which in the composed condition we secured a good specimen of the skull,” recorded Greenbaum. The mummies had been buried in the traditional Aleut way—folded up in a crouching position, wrapped in woven mats, and placed in the caves. The buyer for these bones and artifacts was the Smithsonian, which besides enlisting independent agents was sending its own scientists around the globe to collect specimens of indigenous peoples and artifacts for its collection in Washington, D.C. “That was really the mindset of the time, although it seems really grisly to us,” says Goforth.

Many of those artifacts have been repatriated to Alaska tribes, and the sea-otter populations have come back from near decimation. The Alaska Commercial Company still exists in name, although it is now owned by a Canadian company and no longer hunts the pelts that once made it a global, multimillion-dollar enterprise. And the residents of Unalaska have a record of another time, when their tiny villages controlled one of the most expensive materials in the world. Goforth explains that although there isn’t the frenzied market there was in the 19th century for fur, “If you’ve touched a sea-otter pelt, you’ll understand the greed—and the effort, and the money and everything that went into capturing them.”

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