

PARISH LIFE: MAY – JUNE 2014



On Saturday 17 May and Sunday 18 May we had services for the Afterfeast of Mid-Pentecost and for the fifth Sunday of Pascha, on which the Orthodox Church commemorates Christ's conversation with the Samaritan Woman by Jacob's Well (John 4:5-42). On this day a Moleben of Thanksgiving was served, it being almost 10 years to the day since the blessing of our church at West Gosford on 16 May 2004 by Archbishop (now Metropolitan) Hilarion. At the dismissal, Father James congratulated long-time parishioner (and our first

Head Sister) Irene Krikunov, on her name-day. Many remained behind afterwards for a festive BBQ lunch. After singing "Happy Birthday to us!" those present shared in a parish birthday cake baked by Olga Petroff (our second Head Sister).

On this day we also farewelled our parishioner and chorister Elena Fauris and her son Roman Blanloueil, with us for the last time before leaving Australia with their family to resettle in France. Elena has been active in parish life and will be greatly missed. She and her husband Jean-Phillipe were married in our church in 2010, and their youngest son Maxim was baptised here. We wish Elena, Jean-Phillipe, Roman and Maxim all the best in the years ahead.

On Wednesday-Thursday 21-22 May Father James participated in services at the parish of Saint Nicholas in Fairfield. Metropolitan Hilarion presided at Divine Liturgy on Thursday, awarding long-serving parish rector and Dean of NSW Archpriest Nikita Chemodakov the right to wear the mitre. We extend warmest congratulations to Father Nikita. Axios!

On the weekend of 24-25 May a number of our parishioners travelled to Newcastle to celebrate the patronal feast of the Wallsend parish, also dedicated to Saint Nicholas. Our friends in Wallsend were greatly encouraged by our presence.

On the afternoon of Sunday 25 May we learned with great sadness of the repose of our parishioner and chorister, Mrs Ella Neal. Father James was able to join her daughter Angela and other family members at her bedside and read the appointed Prayers at the Departure of the Soul. We offer our sincere condolences to Angela, to Ella's son Leo, and to their families, and ask our parishioners and friends to remember the newly-reposed handmaiden of God in their prayers. May God give her rest!

On the evening of Tuesday 27 May, the Eve of the Leavetaking of Pascha, Paschal Matins was served. It is customary on this day to serve Matins in the same way as on the Sunday of Pascha and during Bright Week, with the service fully sung and the sanctuary doors open. As we were unable to have Divine Liturgy on the following day, 'Christ is Risen' was sung for the last time and the church was then prepared for the services for the Great Feast of the Ascension.

On Wednesday 28 May and Thursday 29 May we had services for the Great Feast of the Ascension of the Lord. All-night vigil with the blessing of five loaves and wheat, wine, and oil was served on Wednesday evening, and Divine Liturgy was served on Thursday morning. As it was on the Great

Feast of the Ascension in 2007 that the fullness of brotherly communion within the Russian Orthodox Church was re-established, the Prayer for the Prosperity of the Russian Orthodox Church was read. Mrs Neal's funeral was held in our parish that afternoon, followed by burial in the old Russian Section at Rookwood Cemetery.

On Saturday 31 May Father James baptised Emily, the infant daughter of Victor and Susanna Bendeviski and a baby sister for Philip, Melanie and Daniel. Emily's patron saint is Saint Emilia of Caesarea, and her godparents are Christine Morozoff and Matthew Kirpichnikov. Congratulations to Victor, Susanna, Christine and Matthew. May God grant His newly-baptised handmaiden Emily many years!

On Saturday 31 May and Sunday 1 June we had services for the Afterfeast of the Ascension of the Lord and in honour of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council. After a very quiet service on Saturday evening our small church was full on Sunday, with friends from Sydney and some new faces joining our usual congregation. Receiving Holy Communion for the first time at Divine Liturgy on Sunday was the newly-baptised handmaiden of God Emily Bendeviski. After the dismissal, a collection was taken up for the Serbian people suffering as a result of recent devastating floods, raising a pleasing \$400.05.

On Saturday 7 June Father James baptised Harper, the infant daughter of Michael and Melissa Benson. Harper was given the name Angelina in baptism, taking as her patron saint the Righteous Angelina of Serbia. Her godparents are Mark and Jodie Benson. Congratulations to Michael, Melissa, Mark and Jodie. May God grant his newly-baptised handmaiden Angelina many years!

On the weekend of 7-8 June, the Great Feast of Pentecost, Father James served in Wallsend, with a number of our parishioners travelling there for the festive services. On the Monday of Pentecost – the Day of the Holy Spirit – Father James participated in the services at the Holy Trinity Monastery in Monkerai (near Dungog) established by Hieromonk John (Macpherson).

Later that week we learned with joy of the arrival, both on Thursday 13 June, of two baby girls. The first was born to Vova and Masha Belonogoff, old friends of our parish, and has been named Antonina. Vova is the grandson of our founding Starosta, Alexander Yakimov. The second, the daughter of Michelle Blazek and her husband – and so a great-granddaughter of the newly reposed Ella Neal – has been named Indiana. We offer warmest congratulations to both extended families.

PARISH LIFE: FATHER JAMES NOW WORKING PART-TIME

As readers of this newsletter will know, parish life has become increasingly busy over the past year or so. After a period of careful deliberation, Father James reduced his full-time secular work commitments by three days per fortnight as of 1 April this year, with the three days set aside in order to attend to liturgical commitments and other pastoral and parish responsibilities. Our parish and the Wallsend parish are together making up the shortfall in his net salary. Those wishing to assist the parish to offset this new expense are able to do so by placing donations in the donation box at the candle desk in church. The arrangements will be reviewed early in 2015, with Father James and the Parish Council at that time making a decision concerning their ongoing viability.

PARISH LIFE: PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

A meeting of the Parish Council was held on Wednesday 11 June. The usual reports were heard and preparations were made for the end of the financial year on 30 June and for our parish feast-day on 9 August. It was agreed that a charitable collection would be taken up during the Apostles' Fast (16 June – 11 July) with the proceeds to be passed to the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church (that is, the UOC led by Metropolitan Volodymyr (Sabodan)) for the relief of those throughout Ukraine suffering as a result of the turmoil there. The Parish Council also

discussed plans to establish a 'Building and Property Fund' with the intention of raising funds for the building of a permanent church, but with four members absent from the meeting no final decision was made. The Parish Council will next meet on Tuesday 8 July.

PARISH LIFE: CONFESSION

Our parishioners and friends wishing to confess in order to receive Holy Communion are asked to do this – to the extent possible – on the preceding evening rather than in the morning before Divine Liturgy. This is because there is very limited time available to Father James to hear confessions before Divine Liturgy, there being a number of other things to attend to at this time, and the hearing of confessions often delays the start of the service. Those who have no alternative but to confess in the morning should prepare carefully, organising their thoughts beforehand for the sake of brevity. Anyone wishing to confess but not receive Holy Communion may confess after Divine Liturgy. Children under seven years of age do not need to confess. Please see Father James if you have any questions or concerns.

PARISH LIFE: COMMEMORATION AT DIVINE LITURGY

In the Russian Orthodox Church it is customary to submit lists of names of the living and the departed for commemoration at Divine Liturgy, together with the small loaves of bread – prosfora – from which small pieces are cut for those commemorated. Ideally, these lists should be submitted early in the service, allowing sufficient time for the names to be read and the prosfora to be cut. The more lists and prosfora submitted late in the service – that is, after the reading of the Holy Gospel – the greater the interruption to the flow of the hymnody and prayers. Those who are unable to be in church early may put their lists up and order prosfora on the preceding evening. As with confession, anyone with questions or concerns should speak with Father James.

CHURCH LIFE: JUNE-JULY 2014

On Sunday 22 June, the Sunday of All Saints of Russia, it will be the patronal feast-day of the Archbishop's Chapel in Croydon. As we will have no service in Gosford, our parishioners are encouraged to visit the Croydon parish and to share in the festivities there. Other important patronal feast-days during the month ahead are that of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist on Monday 7 July, the feast-day of the Canberra parish, and that of Saints Peter and Paul, the feast-day of the Strathfield Cathedral, on Saturday 12 July. Although Canberra is a little far for many of us to travel, Strathfield is not, and our parishioners are encouraged to join the festivities at the Cathedral on 12 July. If for no other reason, it is at least important that we attend on such occasions so as to reciprocate the great kindness other parishes show us by visiting on our feast-day each year.

PARISH LIFE: ARE YOUR CONTACT DETAILS UP TO DATE?

MailChimp, the service that our parish now uses for the distribution of bulk emails, provides us with information that helps us assess how successful we are at keeping in touch with people on our mailing list. For example, it shows that although all our messages are delivered to the intended email addresses, on average only 50 per cent of them are opened. We would like to improve on this, and ask that our parishioners and friends ensure that we know their preferred email address. Those who are not currently receiving email messages from our parish can go to our parish website and subscribe online, or alternatively email us at info@gosfordrussianchurch.org.au. Please help us keep in touch!

PARISH LIFE: DATES TO REMEMBER

Our parishioners and friends are asked to keep the following two Saturdays free: Saturday July 26, a day on which we will have a clean-up of our church in preparation for our feast-day services; and Saturday 9 August, the day of our feast-day itself. God willing, Bishop George of Mayfield will preside at Divine Liturgy on this day, helping us celebrate ten years of parish life in our church at

West Gosford. Lunch afterwards will be at our old church, the Narara Community Centre. Please do not forget!

PARISH LIFE: FEAST-DAY RAFFLE

As usual, our parish will have a fundraising raffle to be drawn on our patronal feast in August. This year, the ten prizes will be:

1. 10" Samsung Galaxy Tablet with 16GB microSD
2. Basket of wine
3. 7" Samsung Galaxy Tablet with 8GB microSD
4. \$100.00 gift voucher
5. Wireless speakers for smartphone or tablet
6. Electronic scales and potato ricer
7. Stereo headphones for MP3 player or tablet with 1.2m cord
8. Chromecast device to send video or music from phone or tablet to TV
9. Compact Digital Video Camera with waterproof casing, helmet mount and handlebar mount
10. Cupcake making and decorating kit

Printed raffle tickets will be available in books of 25 from the week beginning Monday 16 June. Tickets are \$2.00 each. Please help our parish by purchasing tickets, or by taking a book to sell. More information is available from our Head Sister, Kate Marcotrigiano, on 4368-4637.

DIOCESAN LIFE: RUSSIAN ORTHODOX KIDS' CAMP, 14-19 DECEMBER 2014

A group of young families associated primarily with the Protection of the Holy Virgin parish in Cabramatta, NSW, is organising a camp for children and young people aged 7-17 to be held at Camp Lutanda in Toukley, NSW - here on the NSW Central Coast - in December 2014. For those interested, leaflets are available in church and from our parish website. Registration is required by the end of June. It should be noted that this year the Diocesan Teen Retreat - for young people aged 15-18, or in Years 9-12 - will be held in Victoria from 19 December-24 December.

THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL ARE ASKED FOR:

The sick: Nun Euphrosyne; Leonid; and our parishioners Vladimir, Michael, Tatiana, and Tatiana.

Travelling: Ekaterina (Rubbo).

Mothers and babies: Masha & baby Antonina, Michelle & baby Indiana, together with their families.

Newly-departed: Ella (Alla) (Neal).

Departed: Patriarch Alexis, Metropolitan Vitaly, Metropolitan Laurus, 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), Nikolai (Pinczuk), Tatiana (Venttsel), and John (Gordeyeff).



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