

Saint Panteleimon Russian Orthodox Church, Gosford

ПАНТЕЛЕИМОНСКИЙ ЛИСТОК

PARISH NEWSLETTER

~ Number 86, July-August 2009 ~

PARISH LIFE IN JULY

July was another positive month in the life of our parish, albeit a quiet one. We had only one Sunday service at West Gosford this month, on Sunday July 5, the second service taking place at our parish camp on Sunday July 19. On Sunday July 5 both Father James and Father Martin were absent, Father James at the Serbian Orthodox Church in Broadmeadow (Newcastle) for the celebration of its "slava", or parish feast-day, and Father Martin in Canberra for Metropolitan Hilarion's visit and Chris Dowling's tonsure as a reader. Hieromonk John (MacPherson) and Indian-born Deacon Adrian Augustus served at Gosford in place of Father James and Father Martin that day. Accounts of Chris' tonsure and our camp can be found elsewhere in this issue of the newsletter. Also in July, a small bible study began in our parish, with the study being led by Ian Michie, a parishioner of the All Saints of Russia church in Croydon and a teacher with postgraduate qualifications in Orthodox theology. The study group is a small one, and is trialling a course that Ian has put together for use in parishes of our Diocese. The group meets on Thursday nights and is reading through the Gospel of Saint Mark, planning to complete study in December this year. Those participating have been very pleased with the study so far, and it is hoped that in time, such studies will become a regular feature of parish life.

PARISH LIFE: A BABY AND A BAPTISM

On Sunday June 21, the feast of All Saints of Russia and the day of commemoration of the Holy Great-Martyr Theodore the General, a baby boy - and their first child - was born to our parishioners Brian and Kira Barry. He was named Theodore, in honour of the saint on whose day he was born. On Saturday July 11 - the day before the feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul - baby Theodore was baptised in our church. He received Holy Communion for the first time the next day in Newcastle. We extend warm congratulations to Brian and Kira, and wish the newly-baptised infant Theodore many years.

PARISH LIFE: OUR 2009 WINTER CAMP



Our 2009 winter camp took place at Crosslands Convention Centre, Galston Gorge, over the weekend of July 18-19. Beginning on Friday night and finishing on Sunday afternoon, the camp was a great success, with over 70 people from our parish and others in the Sydney Deanery participating. The camp gave Russian Orthodox Christians of all ages an opportunity to relax and build friendships in a beautiful natural environment. Highlights included the team challenge on Friday night; the high ropes activity on Saturday morning - with some mums and dads even harnessing up and taking the "leap of faith" from high in the trees; a BBQ lunch on Saturday; a campfire with singing and marshmallows to toast on Saturday night; and a play about the Royal Martyrs of Russia on Sunday after lunch. We had services at the camp on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning, with Fathers James and Martin being joined for these by Protodeacon Alexander Kotlaroff from the Strathfield Cathedral, who attended the camp with his family. On Sunday morning, the choir was conducted by Subdeacon Stephen McKay from the English-language congregation that gathers in the All Saints church in Kentlyn, near Campbelltown. All enjoyed the campsite at Galston, and the success of this camp has inspired us to book the site for a second summer camp, this one to be on the weekend of December 12-13, 2009. The site is well-suited for a summer camp, offering a large in-ground swimming pool, and canoeing on Berowra Creek. Further information about the summer camp will be made available to parishioners and friends in due course.

PARISH LIFE: OUR FEAST DAY

This year, we celebrated our patronal feast over the weekend of Saturday August 8 and Sunday August 9. The major services were on Saturday August 8, allowing many of the clergy of the Sydney Deanery of our Diocese to be present. On this day, the Orthodox Church keeps the memory of the holy Hieromartyr Hermolaus, the priest who baptised the Great-Martyr Panteleimon.

All-night vigil was served on the evening of Friday August 7 by Father James. Concelebrating were Archpriest George Lapardin, the senior clergyman of the Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral in Strathfield, Sydney; Priest Quentin de Castelbajac, Rector of the church of Saint Jean le Russe in Lyon, France (visiting Australia with his Australian-born Matushka, Marina, Paul Pereboeff's sister); and Hieromonk John (MacPherson) of the Holy Trinity Monastery in Monkerai, NSW; together with Protodeacon German Polorotov of the parish of Saint Nicholas in Fairfield, Sydney, and the parish deacon, Father Martin Naef. It was Father George's and Father Quentin's first visit to our church.

Joining us on Saturday morning were Archpriest Michael Boikov, the Diocesan Secretary and senior clergyman of the All Saints of Russia Church in Croydon, Sydney; Priest Alexander Korjenevski, Rector of the church of Saint George in Carlton, Sydney; Priest Seraphim Slade, of the Australian Orthodox Indigenous Mission; Protodeacon Basil Hadarin of the church of the Holy Archangel Michael in Blacktown, Sydney; Protodeacon Christopher Henderson of the church of Saint Vladimir in Centennial Park, Sydney; and Deacon Constantine Moshegov of the All Saints of Russia Church in Croydon. Father Michael and Father Seraphim were also serving with us for the first time. Such a large number of clergymen - seven priests and five deacons - had not previously been seen in our small church at one time!

Archpriest Michael Boikov presided during Divine Liturgy. More than 200 people were present, among whom were our own parishioners and many visitors from Sydney and Newcastle. A great number of people received Holy Communion. Before the dismissal, Father Michael gave a sermon on the life of Saint Panteleimon.

Divine Liturgy was followed by a moleben to Saint Panteleimon, served for the first time outside, before the church doors. Afterwards, as is customary, "Many Years" was intoned, and "Eternal Memory" was sung for the departed hierarchs of the Australian and New Zealand Diocese, together with the newly-reposed Bishop Ambrose (Cantacuzene). Father Michael then warmly congratulated Father James, Father Martin, and all present on the occasion of the feast.

Approximately 180 people then gathered in the Narara Community Centre for a festive banquet, prepared under the able direction of our Head Sister Olga Petroff, and with the assistance of our parish ladies and friends. Father James spoke during lunch, welcoming the visiting clergy and all the faithful. He spoke of the achievements of our small parish, particularly in making our final mortgage payment in late 2008, and thanked the many friends of the parish for their generous spiritual and material support. The other priests spoke in turn, all with great kindness and warmth, congratulating our parish on its success in establishing Russian Orthodox church life on the Central Coast.

A small number of people gathered in church again that evening for Great Vespers. On Sunday August 9, the actual day of commemoration of Saint Panteleimon, the church was again full, with many present who had been unable to attend on the previous day. Again, a great many received Holy Communion, and almost all present gathered in the church hall afterwards for a festive meal. These two days were indeed an occasion of great joy in the life of our parish. Through the prayers of the Holy Great-Martyr and Healer Panteleimon, may the Lord continue to watch over us and bless us!

PARISH LIFE: PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Parish Council has met twice since the last newsletter: on Tuesday July 21, and again on Tuesday August 11. The July meeting was a relatively brief one, with a number of Parish Council members unable to be

present. The main items of discussion at this meeting were our successful winter camp and arrangements for the forthcoming feast-day of Saint Panteleimon. The August meeting was somewhat longer, with all members present. The June and July financial reports were examined, reports were given on various aspects of parish life, and plans for the October long weekend BBQ and a summer camp were discussed. The August meeting was a particularly positive one, the Parish Council being encouraged by the success of feast-day celebrations, the healthy financial position of our parish, and a number of positive developments in parish life, the details of which are given elsewhere in this newsletter. The Parish Council will next meet on Tuesday September 8, 2009.

PARISH LIFE: SCHEDULE OF SERVICES DURING SPRING 2009

A schedule of services has now been prepared for the Spring months - September, October and November - and will be available in church from Sunday August 23, and on our website at around the same time. The schedule returns to normal during these months, with services on the first, third and fifth Sundays. Major commemorations in our parish during this period include the Moscow Hierarchs on October 18, Saint John of Kronstadt on November 1, and Apostle Matthew on November 29.

PARISH LIFE: NEW ICONS

We have recently been given four new icons that will be framed by Protodeacon Basil Hadarin and placed in church thanks to the hard work of our Ladies' Auxiliary. Three of them are gifts to our parish from our parishioner Katya Rubbo, who always brings us back something nice whenever she travels to Russia. One is an icon of Saints Peter and Fevronia, wonderworkers of Murom in Russia. They lived in the 13th century AD, and are considered to be a model of love and faithfulness in marriage. By their prayers many blessings are given to those entering into married life, and it is hoped that this icon will lead married couples in our parish to seek the prayers of Saints Peter and Fevronia.

The other two icons are of the Mother of God. One is called "Helper in Childbirth", and the other "Milk-Giver". These icons respectively depict the Holy Virgin with the infant Christ in her womb, and nursing Him. It is hoped that they will be a blessing to the many young mothers in our parish. Katya also gave another set of these icons to Father James, in order that he can take them to the hospital when visiting mothers and new-born babies to read the appointed prayers.

The fourth icon was a gift from Eugenia Papusheva, a parishioner of the Holy Protection church at Cabramatta and a long-term friend and benefactor of our parish. This icon is also of the Mother of God, and is called "Azovskaya", or the "Azov" icon. This icon dates from the Russo-Turkish Wars in the 1600s and the war on the Sea of Azov in the 1700s. It depicts the Mother of God and a number of Russian saints protecting Russia by their prayers.

May the Lord bless his servants, Ekaterina and Eugenia for their kindness, and our parish ladies for their hard work and support for the adornment of our small church! More information about the icons will be provided in this newsletter when they have been framed and placed in church.

CHURCH LIFE: A NEW READER TONSURED

Readers will remember an item in the last newsletter concerning the planned tonsure of our former parishioner, altar-server, reader and bookstore manager, Christopher Dowling, now living in Canberra. This occurred, as planned, on Sunday July 5, when Vladyka Hilarion served in Canberra that day in anticipation of the parish feast-day, the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist, which falls on July 7. In accordance with Father James' request, Chris has been appointed a reader for both parishes, Canberra and Gosford. A delegation of parishioners, headed by Father Martin, was present. After the service, Father Martin presented the newly-tonsured Reader Christopher with a gift from our parish: an English-language Apostol, the book containing the New Testament epistle readings for Divine Liturgy. It had been inscribed with the following words in Russian and English beforehand:

"Этот Апостол преподносится в дар Христофору Доулинг по случаю его посвящения в чтецы. С любовью во Христе, От Прихода Святого Великомученика Пантелеимона в Госфорде. 5-го Юля 2009 г".

"This Apostol is presented to Christopher Dowling on the occasion of his tonsure as a reader. With love in Christ, From the parish of Saint Panteleimon, West Gosford. 5 July 2009".

We hope to see Chris back at Gosford for visit sometime during August.

CHURCH LIFE: A COLLECTION FOR THE SAINT VLADIMIR MEMORIAL CHURCH (USA)

Late in July, it was made known that the Synod of Bishops, having received a petition early in June 2009 from the Saint Vladimir's Society, had decreed that all churches of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad carry out special collections on the nearest Sunday to Saint Vladimir's Day this year and in 2010. The proceeds of these collections will go toward the repair work at Saint Vladimir Memorial Church, dedicated to the Millennium of Russian Orthodoxy, in Jackson, New Jersey, USA. This year's collection will take place in our parish on Sunday August 23, 2009, an earlier collection having been impossible.

DIOCESAN LIFE: SYEZD 2009

This year, the Annual Russian Orthodox Youth Conference will be held in Melbourne from Saturday December 26 to Wednesday December 30, the conference coinciding with the Holy Protection Cathedral's 60th anniversary celebrations. The theme of this year's Syezd - the forty-fifth - is "Our Faith: Relevance?", and will focus on Orthodoxy in the modern world, with particular reference to the "Bases of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church". Adopted at the Sacred Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church in 2000, this document sets out the basic provisions of her teaching on church-state relations and a number of socially significant problems today. It reflects the official position of the Russian Orthodox Church on relations with state and secular society, and gives a number of guidelines to be applied in this field by the episcopate, clergy and laity. Those wanting further information about the syezd have a range of typically twenty-first century options. One can send an email message to MelbSyezd09@live.com, join the "Syezd 09- Melbourne" group on Facebook, or visit the blog page at <http://syezd.wordpress.com>. The traditionally minded should not despair, however; one can still make a telephone call to the Secretary, Sofia Dalinkiewicz, on (03) 9362 1289 or 0431 545 856.

THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL ARE ASKED FOR:

The sick: Priest Simeon; Protodeacon Christopher; our parishioners Victor (Manjetny) and Natalia; and also for Helen, Vasili, Eugenia, Olga, Margaret, Nun Euphrosyne, Nikita, Christopher, Kirsten, Sergei

Expectant mothers: Olga, Tamara, Svetlana

Departed: Patriarch Alexis, Metropolitan Vitaly, Metropolitan Laurus, newly-reposed Bishop Ambrose, and former parishioners and benefactors Irina (Kamenev), Nun Maria, George (Kraihin), Theodore & Antonina (Tialshinsky), Lyubov (Smieska), Victor (Pulkownik), Olga (Timohina), Alexander (Dikan), Elena (Yakupova), Lydia (Ustimko)



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