

Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church

1723 E. Fairmount Avenue, Baltimore, MD. 21231
410-276-6171 www.HolyTrinityOrthodox.com



28th Sunday after Pentecost

Tone 3

December 7 / 20, 2020

Holy Hierarch Ambrose, Bishop of Milan (397); **Venerable Nilus, monk, of Stolben Island (1554)**; Venerable Anthony, abbot of Siya Monastery (Novgorod) (1556); Venerable John, faster of St. Sabbas' monastery; Martyr Athenodorus of Mesopotamia (304); Venerable Paul the Obedient; Martyr Philothea of Turnovo (1060), whose relics are in Arges, Romania; Venerable-martyrs Sergius and Andronicus (1917); Hieromartyr Antony, priest (1918); Hieromartyrs Sergius, Michael and Sergius priests, Nicephore deacon and Venerable-martyr Galaction and Gurius, Martyr John (1937); Hieromartyrs Peter and Basil, priests (1941). "Seligersk" (Vladimirsk) Icon of the Mother of God.

Today's Scriptural Readings:

Colossians 1: 12-18 / Luke 17: 12-19

This Week's Liturgical Calendar – All Services in Church

The Nativity Fast (St. Philip's Fast) continues through January 6

Saturday, December 26 th	6:00 PM	Vigil Service
Sunday, December 27 th	10:00 AM	Divine Liturgy <i>General Confession – 9:30 AM</i>

Divine Services at Holy Trinity are live-streamed at
<https://www.youtube.com/user/HolyTrinitySermons>

Panikhida Today

Today we will serve a panikhida for the servants of the God +Anna (9th Annual), grandmother of Olga Mychko and for +Valery (47th Annual), father of Alexey Shevelkin.

2020 Annual Parish Meeting – Results

We offer our sincere congratulations to the elected officers of the parish council for 2021: Victor Marinich – *President*; Vadim Radchenko - *Vice-President*; Albert Blaszak – *Treasurer*; Andrei Burbelo - *Recording Secretary*; Zumrat-Anna Shkurba - *Stewardship Chairwoman*; Alexey Shevelkin - *Member-at-Large*. Audit Committee: Daniel Walsh.

Cemetery Committee – Elections – January 3, 2021

On Sunday, January 3rd the Cemetery Committee will hold a very brief meeting in the church hall after Divine Liturgy to conduct the annual election of officers for calendar year 2021. To receive the call-in information for the teleconference call Victor Marinich 443-910-3562

Online Christmas Bake Sale

This year we are conducting a Christmas Bake Sale, featuring homemade exquisite cakes, Russian-themed and Holiday-themed cookies, sweet bread and rye bread, as well as gifts from our Parish Kiosk. The sales opened to the public starting December 1st. When you make your purchase, you will select your pickup time from 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM for any of these days: Sundays, December 13, 20, 27 and January 3. **Sisterhood members**, please inform [Natallia Makarava](mailto:Natallia.Makarava@parish.org) 443-625-8470 or [Tania Masiuk](mailto:Tania.Masiuk@parish.org) 443-742-7048 on what baked goods you will make for this bake sale.

Yolka / Talent Show – January 10, 2021

This year's Christmas Yolka will be live-streamed online. This live event will feature a short presentation of our previous Yolka shows, a compilation of video-recorded talent show performances from our children and a special appearance by St. Nicholas. Parents, make a short video of your child playing a musical instrument, singing, reciting poetry, dancing, etc. We will compile all the performances into a presentation integrated into the other elements of the Yolka event. Very soon we will announce more details on registering your children and helpful information on how best to participate. Kids, start thinking about how you will participate in this special talent show. This year is certainly a challenge. But, we will all do our best to make sure that the Yolka will be fun for our kids and memorable for our parents.

Book Discussion in December

Starting in early December we will conduct a weekly book discussion via Zoom. We will discuss the book “The Winter Pascha” by Fr. Thomas Hopko. It is a book of meditations on preparing for the feast of the Christ's Nativity. This book is available at the following bookstores: [St. Vladimir Press Bookstore](http://www.stvladimirpress.com), [St. Tikhon's Press Bookstore](http://www.sttikhonpress.com), [Ancient Faith Bookstore](http://www.ancientfaith.com), and Amazon. If you are interested in participating, please send [Fr. John](mailto:Fr.John@parish.org) an email to register.

Warm Clothing Drive

We are collecting donations of small warm clothing items – scarves, hats, gloves, socks, etc. – for the city's homeless. Volunteering as a chaplain for the Baltimore City Police, Fr. Deacon Michael will bring the items to the Police for them to distribute the warm clothing items to the homeless on December 25. For more information, please contact Fr. Deacon Michael 410-563-0472.

Christmas Appeal – Bethany Orthodox School for Girls

The Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR) collects donations to help support the Bethany Orthodox School for Girls in Bethany, Palestine. This woman's monastery and girls school depend in large part upon the donations received from pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Because of COVID there are no pilgrimages. The school needs donations to cover their expenses. Please consider making a donation. **All information is located here:**

Honey on sale

We have harvested a lot of fresh honey produced by the beehives in our cemetery. \$10 a jar. Please contact [Albert Blaszak](mailto:Albert.Blaszak@rocor.org): 410-799-3226

Installation of Parish Council Officers

Sunday, January 10th at the end of the Divine Liturgy we will conduct the installation of the Parish Council Officers for the Year 2021. May God bless their work for our parish.

Cleaning Group – Group #3 / Join a Group – Help your brothers and sisters

Group #3 will clean the week of Dec. 21-26: Anca and Catalin Frujinoiu, Natalia Makarava, Mikhail Merzliakov. Please join a group. We always need more members. Thank you!

Vigil Candles: On the Altar and near St. Barbara

December 20-26: Candles offered by Angelina Sapojnik for the health/salvation of the servants of God: Irina, Angelina, and Leonid; and for the repose of the souls of the servants of God: +Elizaveta, +Georgiy and +Leonid. A \$15 donation will keep all three candles lit for one week. Schedule your candle offering with Elena Loyko 443-537-8978.

Birthday / Anniversary Celebrations: December 20-26

We offer our best wishes and birthday congratulations to Sue Reshetiloff (12/23) Monika-Anastasia Handley, and Natalia Volkova (12/25), May God bless them with health, prosperity and many years. To include your birthdays/anniversaries in the bulletin contact Fr. John.

Challenge Grant – Matching Donations

The Lisowsky and Mickel families have pledged to match all donations for the new front doors on a 1:1 ratio. For every dollar you donate, they will match one dollar, up to \$10,000 towards the new front doors. Double the value of your donation: \$20 becomes \$40, \$50 becomes \$100, and \$100 becomes \$200! **Donation forms are attached to this email bulletin.** Send in your donation today!

NEW ATTENDANCE RESTRICTIONS – 25%

We must limit the total attendance at Divine Services to **46 persons, including** clergy, altar servers and choir in the church and **30 persons** in the hall watching Divine Liturgy on the TV, all following social distancing and wearing masks. This is 25% total capacity, based on updated calculations.

Please Remember in Your Prayers...

Archpriest George Konyev; Deacon Michael Bishop; Mat. Myra Kovalak; Mat. Klavdiya Burbelo; Kh. Jocelyn Mathewes; Mat. Natalia Kosich; Mat. Catherine Kowalchik; Marie Vass; Charles Snipes; Arthur-Stephen & Evelyn-Evanthia Lisowsky; Yelena Radchenko; Lydia Zorina; Katherine Plaskowitz; Philip Plaskowitz; Bernadine Borawick; Julia Aymold; Lilli Ann Hoffman; Lara Marinich; Ioann and Galina Zernetkin; Monika-Anastasia & Stephanie Handley; Blanche-Julia Stolkovich; Ekaterina Koroleva; Nina and Glen-Gregory Lewis; Lyudmila, Anton & Aleksander Karnup; John Alexander Bylen; Katherine Garrett; Kenneth Pukita; William and Ann Ferkile; Irina Kononova; Petr and Lyudmila Borodkin; Svetlana & Aleksey; Alla; Anna; Alla; Raisa, Zinaida; Pavel, Vladimir, Valentina, and Maria; Maria Pappas; Bonnie Duke; Diana Radchenko; Aleksey & Lidia Potapov; Oleg and Andrei; Vitaliy, Tatiana, Olena & Nicholas Berchuk; Cynthia and Bill (Basil) Popomaronis; Andrei, Marina, Valentina and Vladimir; Valentina Shultieva; Katherina Shultieva; Shanna, Stephen, Trent-Michael, Grant-Alexander, Adalynn, Rosalyn Lisowsky; Julie Smith; Tayisia Solvieva; Leonid and Zoya; Jayne Sudol; Rita and Richard Herber, Mary Orzolek, George Matassov; Nikolai, Janice & John DesLauriers; Nicholas Rodzianko; Alexandra; Armen Nostrant; Vasilii; Elizabeth Wright; Shane-Michael Sierakowski; Samantha-Xenia Tate; Natalia Gerachenko; George Materewicz; Arezoo-Emilia Pavuk; Joanne Pavuk; Daria Artemova; Natalie Masiuk-Gardner; Katherine Masiuk; Yelena, Tatiana, infant Maya and Oxana; Cyril Reshetiloff.

**Next Council Meeting: Thursday, January 14 – 7:00 PM in the Church Hall
To receive the call-in information for the teleconference
call Victor Marinich 443-910-3562**

Fr. John Vass, Rector 443-527-7067	Fr. Deacon Michael Bishop:	410-563-0472
Victor Marinich, <i>Council President:</i> 443-512-0985	Vadim Radchenko, <i>Vice President:</i>	410-465-6172
Andrei Burbelo, <i>Recording Secretary:</i> 732-598-5187	Albert Blaszak, <i>Treasurer:</i>	410-799-3226
Anna-Zumrat Shkurba, <i>Stewardship Chair:</i> 443-857-8541	<i>Member-At-Large:</i>	Vacant
Natalia Makarava <i>Sisterhood President:</i> 443-625-8470	Michael Mickel, <i>Cemetery Manager:</i>	410-666-2870

The Nativity Fast Continues... *During this fast period we abstain from meat, eggs and dairy products. This lenten period, for Orthodox Christians is a special time when we prayerfully and with fasting prepare for the feast of the Nativity of Christ – to be cleansed of our sins, to strengthen our spiritual powers by fasting and to open our spiritual eyes wider through increased prayer. All of this we do so that we can partake of the bright joy of the coming of the Messiah.*

**Excerpt from the Diary of the
Holy Righteous John of Kronshtadt (+1908)**

The goal of our life is union with God: specifically in this life, union with God is in faith, hope and love; in the future life it is in all perfect love. Take a look at how the enemy and we ourselves distort this goal. We unite our hearts with various things as determined by our passionate attachments. Sometimes – O, how terrible – our love is directed toward money, food, drink, clothing, home, decorations, in the manner that we should toward people – to the point of forgetting about God. Sometimes we are prideful, resentful, we hate and lie – and then we directly unite ourselves with the devil, who is the personification of evil, falsehood, pride, resentment –

and in this is how we offend our Master, Who created us according to His image and likeness, and subsequently how we distort the God-created image and from God Himself the created likeness. But, we think far too little about this, we are too ignorant about this, about what is the most existential task for us – union with God.

Luke 17:12-19

Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner? And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

St. Theophan the Recluse: *Thoughts for Each Day of the Year*

Luke 17:12-19 Ten lepers were healed, but only one came to thank the Lord. Isn't there generally a similar proportion of people who are grateful after receiving benefactions from the Lord? Who has not received good things; or, rather, what do we have in us, or what ever happens to us that is not good for us? Even so, is everyone grateful to God, and does everyone give thanks for everything? There are even those who permit themselves to ask, "Why did God give us existence? It would be better for us not to exist." God gave you existence so that you would be in eternal bliss; He gave you existence as a gift, as a gift He has furnished you with every means for attaining eternal bliss. The job depends on you: you need only to labor a bit for this. You say, "But I have only sorrows, poverty, diseases, and misfortunes." Well, these are also some of the ways to attain eternal bliss. Be patient. Your entire life is less than a moment compared with eternity. Even if you had to suffer unceasingly your entire life, against eternity it is nothing; and you still have moments of consolation. Do not look at the present, but at what is prepared for you in the future, and concern yourself with making yourself worthy of that; then you will not notice the sorrows. They will all be swallowed up by unquestioning hope in eternal consolations, and your lips will never cease to utter thanks. <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/>

Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh (+2003)

Healing of the Ten Lepers

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The Gospel - all the Gospel is a gift of God to us, and although we are not continuously reminded of the need to be grateful, how can we not respond with gratitude to what the Gospel brings to us? God has so loved the world that He has given His only begotten Son that the world may be saved; and the Son has given Himself freely, in the sovereign freedom of His Divinity to us; no-one has taken His life from Him - these are His own words; He gave His life willingly, freely, that we may live.

And today we have in the Gospel a short example of the way in which we, most of the time, receive the gifts of God. Ten men came, covered with leprosy, condemned to a cruel death by illness, but also rejected ritually by their own people for the impurity of this infectious disease. They came to Him, stood at a distance, because they knew that according to the Jewish Law they had no right

even to come near Him to touch Him. And they asked for mercy. And God send them to the priests to bring forth the sign of their gratitude for the healing which they had not received; and they believed, and they went, and they were healed before they reached their goal... We might have expected that they rushed back to fall to the feet of Christ, to touch Him in gratitude - no... Nine of them went their way; it was enough for them to have been healed: it's all they needed of God. One, however, turned round, and came to thank the Lord.

Isn't it an image of the way in which so often we also behave? We pray; we ask the Lord for something that matters to us: it may not be life and death, it may just be that we need so much, one thing or another; or that we don't even need it so much, but that we long so much for it. And then it is given us; and we receive the gift, and we rush into life with this gift in our hearts, this gift in our hands, we rush to life because it is enough for us that our prayer was fulfilled. How seldom it is that we come back, leaving our gift to be used later, but first of all turning to God and saying: What wonder! What is Your love! How great, how compassionate, how humble - that You have responded to my prayer... One out of ten came back to the Lord Jesus Christ: how many of us have ever come immediately, before they took advantage of the gift, to turn to God with a smile, like a child turns and say 'Thank you!', even with a smile, without words, before taking advantage of what is given. And we loose so much at not being grateful; because if we learned to be grateful for the obvious gifts of God, we would gradually discover that we can be grateful for a great deal more, for everything that Providence puts in our way: not only things we rejoice in, not only the wanders of life, but even the challenges of life, the things that claims from us courage, greatness, nobility, the things which we are afraid of. And how often we could overcome vanity by gratitude! Because vanity consists in looking at ourselves, and think: how wonderful we are, forgetting that all that we are, all that we have is a gift of God. If we only, every time we have said the right thing, done the right thing, been worthy of our human quality, human greatness and nobility, and also of the name of the disciples of Christ - if every time we turned to God and said, 'Yes! How wonderful are the words I have spoken, how good is the action I have performed - and everything was of You: the occasion was given by You, o Lord! I was able to perceive the need because You whispered in my heart: Look!... I could understand because I had my mind enlightened by the Gospel! My heart responded because You touched it, and from the heart of stone which I carry in my bosom most of the time it became a heart of flesh full of compassion and of understanding! And You gave me the means of meeting the need, and the joy of meeting this need!

If we could respond to everything this way, we would discover that life is made into an act of worship and of gratitude.

Let us reflect on this because we are coming within a few weeks, a few days now to a day when our heart should be aflame with gratitude: God has loved us so much as to become one of us; while we were strangers, alien to Him, often inimical to Him, He came, and He gave His life for us that we may live!.. We must prepare for it: joy, gratitude, faith, openness to God does not happen of a sudden; we must prepare for it. Let us reflect on what is going to happen; the thing that happened nearly 2000 years ago that we shall remember as an actual event now, in a few weeks; and be ready, with a heart tilled, deeply furrowed by faith, by reflection, having thought out all our life, ready to receive the Lord like a shepherd, in the simplicity and purity of our hearts, or like the Wise Men in the deep understanding of wisdom. Amen! <http://www.metropolit-anthony.orc.ru/eng/>