

SOBORNOST

St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church

(301) 638-5035 Church

4419 Leonardtown Road

Waldorf, MD 20601

Rev. Father Joseph Edgington, Pastor

(703) 380-9673 Cell

fredgington@gmail.com

www.apostlethomas.org

American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

SERVICES

Saturdays: Confession 5:00 PM,

Great Vespers 5:30 PM

Sundays: Matins (Orthros) 8:45 AM

Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM.



**January 31, 2016 – 35th Sunday After Pentecost
Unmercenary Healers Cyrus & John**

Saint Cyrus was a noted physician in the city of Alexandria, where he had been born and raised. He was a Christian and he treated the sick without charge, not only curing their bodily afflictions, but also healing their spiritual infirmities. He would say, “Whoever wishes to avoid being ill should refrain from sin, for sin is often the cause of bodily illness.” Preaching the Gospel, the holy physician converted many pagans to Christ. During the persecution by Diocletian (284-305), St Cyrus withdrew into Arabia, where he became a monk. He continued to heal people by his prayer, having received from God the gift to heal every sickness.

In the city of Edessa at this time lived the soldier John, a pious Christian. When the persecution started, he went to Jerusalem and there he heard about St Cyrus. He began to search for him, going first to Alexandria and then to Arabia. When St John finally found St Cyrus, he remained with him and became his faithful follower.

They learned of the arrest of the Christian woman Athanasia and her three young daughters. Theoctiste was fifteen; Theodota, was thirteen; and Eudoxia, was eleven. Sts Cyrus and John hastened to the prison to help them. They were concerned that faced with torture, the women might renounce Christ.

Sts Cyrus and John gave them courage to endure what lay before them. Learning of this, the ruler of the city arrested Sts Cyrus and John, and seeing their steadfast and fearless confession of faith in Christ, he brought Athanasia and her daughters to witness their torture. The tyrant did not refrain from any form of torture against the holy martyrs. The women were not frightened by the sufferings of Sts Cyrus and John, but courageously continued to confess Christ. They were flogged and then beheaded, receiving their crowns of martyrdom.

At the same place they executed the Holy Unmercenaries Cyrus and John. Christians buried their bodies in the church of the holy Evangelist Mark in Alexandria. Their tomb became a renowned shrine in Egypt, and a place of universal pilgrimage. It was found in the area of the modern day resort near Alexandria named Abu Kyr. In the fifth century the relics of Sts Cyrus and John were transferred from Canopis to Manuphin by St. Cyril of Alexandria in order to displace the idolatrous cult of Isis there. Miracles and healings multiplied and the sanctuary became one of the greatest places of pilgrimage in Christendom. Later on their relics were transferred to Rome, and from there to Munchen (Munich) (the transfer of their relics is celebrated on June 28).

In the seventh century, St. Sophronius of Jerusalem was healed of an eye complaint by an apparition of the two saints: Cyrus healed one of his eyes with the sign of the Cross and shortly afterwards John restored his sight completely by kissing the other eye. To show his gratitude, St. Sophronius wrote a detailed account of their miracles. Sts Cyrus and John are invoked by those who have difficulty in sleeping. *(from oca.org and johnsanidopoulos.com)*

Today's Epistle Lesson – St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians 3:12-16
Brethren, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint Matthew 25:14-30
The Lord said, "*the kingdom of heaven is* like a man traveling to a far country, *who* called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who

had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, *there* you have *what is* yours.' But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give *it* to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

AMAZONSMILE

The on-line shopping store, Amazon.com will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Diocese of the USA whenever you shop on AmazonSmile. AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know – same products, same prices, same service. Simply go to the home page of our Diocesan website (www.acrod.org) and click on the AmazonSmile button in the far left column and then shop as usual.

Thank You for Your Support

Our Tenth Anniversary Celebration was wonderful! Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, thank you very much for your generous contribution to our 10th anniversary program book... When you travel to central Florida, please come and join us in worship. (*see* www.StNectarios.com)

Wishing many blessings to you and your families,

Nancy Ruth Frishe, St. Nectarios Mission Anniversary Committee

ACRY CHAPTER #25
POTOMAC, MARYLAND
TRUTH T-SHIRTS FUNDRAISER FOR 2016 ACRY CONVENTION



Glory be to Jesus Christ!

As you may or may not be aware, ACRY Chapter #25 of Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church, Potomac, Maryland will be hosting the 2016 ACRY Convention. They are currently running a fundraiser for this event in the form of inspirational "TRUTH" T-Shirts, pictured above. What better way to celebrate the upcoming holidays but to offer a special stocking stuffer sale!!!!

YOUTH – Small, Medium and Large = \$10.00

Colors: Irish Green and Black

WOMEN – Small, Medium, Large = \$12.00 (XXL = \$15.00)

Colors: Kelly Green and Navy Blue

MEN – Small, Medium Large, XL = \$12.00 (XXL, XXXL = \$15.00)

Colors: Black and Royal Blue

Free shipping on bulk orders of 10 shirts or more.

Individual orders shipping is \$2.00 per shirt.

Our parish will be placing ONE order and submitting ONE check (**next week**), so anyone wishing to order needs to fill out a form and make checks payable to St. Thomas. All order forms and questions can be directed to Shannon McNeil.

A Word From the Holy Fathers

Pay attention carefully. After the sin comes the shame; courage follows repentance. Did you pay attention to what I said? Satan upsets the order; he gives the courage to sin and the shame to repentance.

– St. John Chrysostom

Individual Assessments for 2016

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

Thanks be to God, we have reached the New Year, and with that comes our responsibility to be good stewards of all that He has entrusted to us; our environment, our parish and our Diocese.

To support our Diocese, each individual age eighteen and older (except for high school and undergraduate college students) is asked to contribute \$68.00 in 2016.

We (St Thomas Parish) have paid the 2016 assessments in full for each parishioner when we received the bill from the Diocese. We trust that each person in turn will re-pay us during the year. If you do not pay your assessment, you are taking funds from our operating income. Last year we had to take \$1,055.00 from our operating income and that created most of our shortfall for 2015. Your assessment are used to support the following basic needs of our Diocese:

- Our Diocesan Bishop Gregory. We are an Apostolic Church; without a Bishop whose Ordination and teachings are directly traceable to our Lord's Apostles, we cannot exist as a parish of the Holy Orthodox Church!
- The General Administration of our Diocese, its apostolates and charities;
- Christ the Savior Seminary for the formation of the future Priests of our Diocese;
- The Church Messenger - the production and distribution of our monthly Diocesan Newspaper (If you are not receiving the Messenger, please let us know);
- The Mission Fund, which assists in the establishment and support of new mission parishes (We at St. Thomas have been the beneficiaries of this fund on more than one occasion – most recently in the form of a generous interest-free loan toward the construction of our new church building), and;
- The maintenance of our Diocesan Cathedral church in Johnstown, PA, the home parish of our Diocesan Bishop and Chancellor.
- If you are unsure whether your 2015 Assessment has been paid in full, please see or call Dana Dewey, Trustee, at (301) 481-3445.

Thank you in advance for your timely and generous support of our God-saved Diocese.

Yours in Christ,

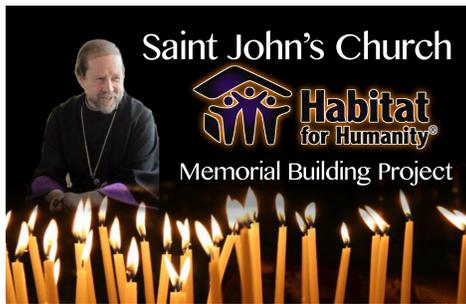
Kari David, Treasurer

Dana Dewey, Trustee

ANNUAL PARISH RETREAT, SKI TRIP TO WEST VIRGINIA



THINK SNOW! Mark your calendar for **11-13 March 2016** to join our annual parish retreat to Davis, West Virginia, for a weekend of fellowship, skiing and fun at Timberline Resort and Blackwater Falls State Park. All families and guests are welcome. **PLEASE ATTEND A SHORT ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING AFTER LITURGY ON 14 FEBRUARY.** *See Dana Dewey if you are interested, but cannot attend this meeting.* This very affordable trip has been planned for those who have never skied before, and for experienced skiers, too. It's also a great opportunity for any non-skiers to get away for a relaxing weekend in the scenic Canaan Valley area of wild and wonderful West Virginia! We'll stay at Canaan Valley Baptist Church in Davis, WV. We'll have use of their fellowship hall, kitchen, Sunday school rooms, and bathrooms, including showers. Timberline resort has a great family style atmosphere, and several recent improvements. It has a 1,000+ foot vertical drop, with trails for accomplished skiers and beginners alike – from the double diamond "Drop" to the gentle, two mile long "Salamander," and lots of intermediates in between. We'll ski 9AM to 4:30PM on Saturday and on Sunday morning we'll conduct our own worship service at our host Church, and have an optional tour of nearby Blackwater Falls State Park before returning home. All first time skiers must take a lesson before getting on a lift! We want a perfect safety record, and this is where it starts! You can get a free lesson from our certified instructor, Al Harvey, and his crew of helpers. They will also help you throughout the day - ask them to watch you, and to offer helpful tips that can make your skiing easier, safer, and more enjoyable. Experienced skiers will only need a quick safety check run on the beginners' slope before hitting the slopes with their buddies. Spread the word and THINK SNOW!



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION

+Fr Michael Rosco Memorial Build Project
IOCC TEAM BUILD REGISTRATION LINKS

January 26, 2016

Those wishing to volunteer for the building portion of the project may do so through the following link:

https://www.iocc.org/giving/giving_volunteer-orthodoxactionteam.aspx

After clicking on the link you will be directed to the specific page for registration. This page is for *registration only*. (Payments are made via direct links from the registration page.) Participants must:

1. Fill out the registration page with all the required information.
2. Select the desired week(s) of service. **Please note:** the first week currently list only 5 open slots as this was done to reserve spots for the perceived participation by college students. If this is the week you want to go, please select it in the appropriate checkbox.

In order to fully staff these weeks and close them off to the general public, we need 15 PEOPLE per week to staff the site. Those who are unable to make these weeks but would like to participate are asked to contact Fr. Michael Chendorain. Clergy who wish to participate but are unable to do so because of obligations are asked to contact Fr. Michael as well.

IOCC requires final/full payment for the mission trip 30 days before deployment. This will be the responsibility of the volunteer to complete. The links on the page provide various methods to accomplish this aspect.

COST/LOGISTICS: The volunteer contribution is **\$450 per person** which includes local transportation, room & board, materials, supplies, tools and site supervision. Volunteers must be **18 years of age or older**, but 16 and 17 year olds are accepted if they are accompanied by their parent, legal guardian or an adult with a power-of-attorney to act on their behalf for the duration of the deployment. Individuals (or groups) are responsible to travel to the build city on their own, but ground transportation will be provided from the local airport(s) to the housing site.

SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABILITY: Unfortunately, we have been unable to secure funds to offer scholarships to our young people who would like to participate fully. We do encourage you to seek sponsorships from other fraternal or community organizations or groups/individuals within the church community. If future funding becomes available, we will promptly notify those interested.

Negotiations are still underway for airfare out of Newark, NJ with a commercial carrier. Given the nature of the work we are hopeful for an accommodation. However, this is not a guaranteed prospect and we will keep everyone apprised.

Anyone with additional questions may contact Fr. Michael Chendorain at fathermikec@verizon.net or (732) 826-4442.

On Stewardship and the Orthodox Life – Parts 51-53: Stewards and the Poor



“For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you will, you can do good to them...” (Mark 14:7 RSV)

Between the 9th and 15th centuries in Europe, society was structured around a three-fold division of members of that society. Those three were lords, vassals, and peasants. The relationship between the three was determined by the lords, the highest of these “classes” of people. The lords were the landowners who granted parcels of land to the vassals in exchange for their military or other service to the lords. A peasant, the lowest of the three “classes” could move up by offering his service to a lord (as well as his everlasting loyalty) and receiving land in return. Among the peasants were the serfs who provided the labor on the land. The lands and titles were passed on from generation to generation as time went by. Omitted from this list of society’s “classes” were the poor. Not only were the poor not permitted to own land, they were kept on the fringe of society, and thus were without possibility of moving up the social ladder.

It is said that this “feudal” system was eliminated with the coming of a free society, dominated by capitalism. Thus, anyone with sufficient education, motivation and skill could amass any amount of “capital” (money) as possible. Hardly did this new idea of a free society eliminate feudalism. It only re-arranged the classes of society. Now, instead of lords, vassals, and peasants, there are the super rich, the very rich, and the rich.

Still eliminated from society are the poor. They are kept on the fringe of society because (it is said) they lack the education, motivation and skill to become part of one of the three classes of the rich. History has changed little. Pride of rank or class or social standing and the resultant oppression of the poor have always been with us. Unfortunately, it is also this way among Christians.

Several years ago, I attended the Easter service in a major protestant cathedral in this country. The service was filled with pomp and circumstance. The pews were filled to capacity with the front several rows reserved for those who arrived in the best automobiles driven with the finest chauffeurs. The setting was beautiful. And if you came in off the street, without proper attire? You were ushered to the side chapel, where you would not be seen. This even in what was called a House of God. In Western medieval society, the local church, often a monastery church, was the place for the poor to attend services. The lords and their vassals usually had their own priests who served the religious needs within the lord’s house, without ever having to go “outside” and even see the poor peasantry.

Given my experience that Easter morning, it was obvious that the poor were made to feel that it is too costly a thing for them to attend the service of God. Such a service as I saw that Easter Day was more of an indulgence of pride and love of show than an invitation to raise praise and song to the Son of God risen from the dead for the salvation of *all mankind*. Were it not for the fact that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ revealed his love for the poor and lowly who are contrite in heart, this world would be an even sadder place for the poor. Christ Himself was the son of poor parents. Remember when the child Jesus made His Entrance into the temple, His mother could only bring the offering appointed for the poor: a pair of turtle doves or two small pigeons. Christ's was the most precious gift to our world from the Father, a Gift beyond all gifts, yet it was acknowledged only by the smallest of offerings. Jesus as He made His way around the earth shared the lot of the poor and lowly. His life was characterized by self-denial and sacrifice.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was *rich, yet for our sake He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich* (1 Corinthians 8:9 RSV). He wants all who have been entrusted with His blessings to follow His example. After all, ministering to the poor and afflicted is the ideal of service: *"Is not this the fast that I choose?...to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?"* (Isaiah 58:6-7 RSV). Remember: *"Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me"* (Matthew 25:40 RSV). There are many that complain that it is not right that God allows the world to be so full of suffering and want. But our kind God, through us, His representatives whom He has entrusted with His goods, would have all the needs of His creatures supplied. God has made abundant provision for the needs of all – none need suffer from want.

In some far Eastern cultures, the lowest poor of society are called "untouchables." They are the lowest of the orders of society. The system that calls such lowly poor "untouchable" is often called the "caste" system. If one is an "untouchable" one is in the lowest "caste" – hence comes our English word "outcast." Our Creator did not create human beings with any distinction of rank. In God's sight, human beings are simply human beings. All are striving to become once again as God created them – in full union with God, walking with God in His garden at the cool of the day. In the day of final judgment, God will not look at rank, caste, riches, or poverty. God will judge by what each person is in purity and in love for His Son whom he sent for the salvation of the world.

In our Lord's first sermon in Nazareth, He proclaimed, quoting Isaiah: *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor"* (Luke 4:18 RSV). That good news ("gospel") that is preached to the

neglected and those abandoned by the world is that in Christ they have been raised up to become sons and daughters of the Most High. And it is likely the poor will be the first to inherit the kingdom, along with those who are poor “in spirit” (the Beatitudes). For the poor and those who are poor in spirit are those who put no stock in earthly treasures. They know that attachment to the “mammon” (the riches) of this world is like a great weight attached to the body. This weight does not allow any movement in any direction.

Good stewards are those who recognize that mammon, riches, have a place in our world. What place? Jesus told us clearly: *“The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it”* (Matthew 13:45-46 RSV). Stewards are merchants, constantly searching for the pearl of great value. Stewards are merchants who, having found that pearl, are willing to give up virtually all of their riches to have that pearl. Stewards put their faith, their hope in that pearl. Stewards put their entire lives and the riches that come with that life into the service of Christ, the pearl of great value. *“For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you will, you can do good to them...”* (from acrod.org)

Also Commemorated Today: St. Arsenius of Paros

Saint Arsenius was born on January 31, 1800 in Ioannina, Epirus of pious Orthodox parents. In holy Baptism he was given the name Athanasius. His parents died when he was quite young. He was only nine years old when he made his way to Kydoniai, Asia Minor, where he was received by Hieromonk Gregory Saraphis and enrolled in his school. His humility and piety endeared him to Fr Gregory and also to the other teachers. The boy remained at the school for five years, surpassing the other students in learning and in virtue.

One day the renowned Spiritual Father Daniel of Zagora, Thessaly came to the school to hear confessions. Athanasius became Daniel’s disciple, remaining with him until the latter’s death.

Not long after this, Fr Daniel decided to go to the Holy Mountain for quiet and spiritual struggles. Athanasius begged his Elder not to leave him, but to take him with him. He expressed the desire to travel to Mt. Athos, the Garden of the All-Holy Virgin, and to become a monk.

Fr Daniel instructed Athanasius in the monastic life, which is called “the art of arts, and the science of sciences.” The holy Elder was a perfect teacher who was accomplished in the spiritual life, and Athanasius was an attentive student. After a time Fr Daniel tonsured his pupil, and told him he had to learn three important lessons. First, he must cut off his own will. Secondly, he must acquire humility. Finally, he must learn obedience. “If you cut off your will, if you become humble,

and if you practice perfect obedience, you will also make progress in the other virtues, and God will glorify you.”

After a further period of testing, Fr Daniel tonsured Athanasius into the Great Schema and gave him the name Arsenius. The saint remained on Mt. Athos with his Elder for six years. Then they had to leave the Holy Mountain because of the agitation against the so-called “Kollyvades,” who called for a strict adherence to Holy Tradition. The name comes from the kollyva (boiled wheat) used in the memorial service. Part of the controversy involved the debate on whether it was proper to serve memorial services for the dead on Sunday. The Kollyvades believed that these services were inappropriate for the Day of Resurrection, but should be served on Saturday. The Kollyvades advocated frequent Communion, rather than the practice of receiving the Holy Mysteries only a few times during the year. When Fr Daniel and St Arsenius left Athos, it was probably due to the animosity of those who opposed the Kollyvades.

Early in 1821, before the Greek War of Independence, they went to the Monastery of Pendeli near Athens. Their stay was a brief one, for Fr Daniel foresaw the destruction of the monastery by the Turks. The two made their way to the Cyclades Islands in the southern Aegean Sea. First they stopped at Paros, perhaps because some of the Kollyvades had settled there. Eventually, they decided to live on the island of Pholegandros. Since there were no teachers for the children, the inhabitants entreated Fr Daniel to allow St Arsenius to instruct their children. The Elder agreed, and had Arsenius ordained as a deacon. Then he was appointed to the teaching post by the government. The saint remained there as a teacher from 1829-1840. He taught the required subjects in school, but he also helped his students to form a good character, and to live as pious Christians. In 1840 St Arsenius entered the Monastery of St George on the island of Paros. Elder Daniel had passed away in 1837. Before his repose, he asked his disciple to take his remains to Mt. Athos after two years. St Arsenius left Pholegandros in obedience to Fr Daniel’s request, planning to stop on Paros then continue to the Holy Mountain. On Paros the abbot of St George’s Monastery, Fr Elias Georgiadis, told St Arsenius that it was God’s will for him to remain on Paros. This was providential, because Mt. Athos was undergoing great difficulty after the Greek War of Independence. 3,000 Turkish soldiers occupied Athos, resulting in the departure of 5,000 of the 6,000 monks. St Arsenius joined the community at St George’s Monastery on the northern end of Paros. There he found spiritual strivers of true wisdom and excellent conduct, who were worthy models for him to follow.

When he was ordained to the holy priesthood at the age of forty-seven, St Arsenius intensified his spiritual efforts. Every day he studied the Holy Scriptures and the writings of the Fathers, and became adept at the unceasing prayer of the heart. He

also began to show forth the gift of tears. In this, he resembled his patron St Arsenius the Great (May 8), who continuously wept tears of contrition. Gradually, the inhabitants of Paros came to recognize him as an outstanding Father Confessor and spiritual guide. Whenever he stood before the holy altar, he felt that he was standing before God. He served with great compunction, and his face often became radiant like the face of an angel. As his virtues became known to people, they flocked to him from near and far. He received all with paternal affection, treating each one with the proper spiritual medicine which would restore their souls to health.

A certain girl from Syros came to the Convent of the Transfiguration to visit her sister, who was a nun. The nun had previously been informed that her sister had fallen into a serious sin. When she learned that the girl was outside the doors of the convent, the nun screamed at her, "Go far away from here. Since you are defiled, you will defile the convent and the nuns." Instead of feeling pity for her sister, and trying to lead her to repentance, the nun and some of the other nuns struck the poor girl and told her to go away. The wretched girl cried, "I have made a mistake. Forgive me!" The nun shrieked, "Go away, or I will kill you to wash away the shame you have brought to our family." "Have you no pity, my sister, don't you share my pain?" "No," the nun shouted, "you are not my sister, you are a foul harlot." "Where shall I go?" she sobbed. "Go and drown yourself," was the heartless reply. The poor girl fled from the convent, bleeding and wounded, intending to kill herself.

At that very moment, St Arsenius was on his way to visit the convent. Seeing the girl in such a state, he asked her what was wrong. She explained that she had been led astray by corrupt men and women. Realizing her sin, she went to the convent to ask her sister for help. "See what they have done to me, Elder. What do you advise me to do?"

St Arsenius led her to the convent, consoling her and encouraging her to repentance and confession. After hearing her confession, he made her a nun. Then he called all the nuns into the church and severely rebuked those who wounded the girl. He reminded them of the parable of the Prodigal Son, and of how Christ had come to save sinners. He often associated with sinners, showing them great love and mercy. "You, however, have done the opposite. Though you knew that her soul had been wounded by the devil, you did not feel sorry for her. You did not embrace her and try to save her from further sin, but you attacked her and beat her. Then you urged her to kill herself. Now I, your Spiritual Father, tell you that you are not nuns, you are not Christians, you are not even human beings. You are devoid of compassion, affection, and sympathy. You are murderesses! Therefore, I forbid you to receive Holy Communion for three years, unless you recognize

your sin. Repent and confess, weep and ask forgiveness from God and from me, your Spiritual Father, and from the other nuns who did not participate in your sinful behavior.” The nuns began to weep bitterly and they repented. Thus, he lessened their penance and forgave them. He gave the girl’s sister the penance of not receiving Holy Communion for a whole year. Because the other nuns had shared in this sin, he did not permit them to receive Communion for six months.

St Arsenius foresaw his death a month before it occurred. At the Liturgy for the Feast of St Basil, he announced that he would soon depart from them. With great effort, he was able to serve for the Feast of the Theophany. After the service, he told some nuns that this had been his last Liturgy. News of the saint’s illness and approaching death spread quickly to all the villages of Paros. People wept because they were about to lose their Spiritual Father, and they hastened to bid him farewell and to receive his blessing. On the eve of his repose, he called the nuns of the convent to come to him. He told them that the next day he would leave this temporary life and enter into eternal life. On January 31, 1877 St Arsenius received Holy Communion for the last time and fell asleep in the Lord. For three days, people came to kiss his body, then they followed the funeral procession to the burial site which he himself had selected. St Arsenius of Paros was glorified by the Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1967. He is also commemorated on August 18 (the uncovering of his relics). *(from oca.org)*

Parish News

- ❖ Holy Water was consecrated on Theophany. Please contact Fr. Joseph or Pani Stacey if you would like your house blessed.

In Your Prayers – Please Remember... His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW, His Grace Bishop GREGORY, Fr. Joseph & Family, Greek Orthodox Archbishop Paul Yazigi of Aleppo, Syriac Orthodox Archbishop Yohanna Ibrahim of Aleppo, Fr. John & Pani Betty Jean Baranik, Fr. Vincent Saverino, Presbytera Katie Baker and family, Alicia Barosio and family, Millie Borys, Jeffrey Carey, Xenia Chilkowich, Jon Church, Ramius Connour, Curtis Cooper, Tina Crull, Ron Dominiecki, Linda A. Georgiev, Heather Himler, Alex Holthus, Cameron Houk, Helen Janowiak, John M. Janowiak, Deanna Jarrett, Tucker Karl and family, Robert Karpin, Andrew Kinn, Kopan family, Brian, Helen, and Luke Mahony, Alex & Valentina Makowelski, Anna Meinhold, Dn. Henry Middleton, David & Kathryn Newman, Bobby Nutter & Family, Henry & Lisa Osborne, Westin Perry & Parents, Mary Reed, Chris & Kaitlin Rixey, Jerry Von Ronne, Anne Rosario, James, Theodore and Christina Ristas, Samson Family, Sharon Sheptak, Daria Virvan, Lydia Vita, Christine, Marshall, Nathaniel, the Syrian Christians displaced by war, Mother Virginia Marie and the Carmelite Nuns of Port Tobacco, and all those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)