

Rector's Letter, July–August, 2017

Dear brothers and sisters:

Last month, we heard from the Gospel:

“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? ... But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” (Matthew 6:22–33)

It is terribly hard to stop worrying. We spend so much effort and anxiety on things utterly beyond our control and strength—especially when it comes to our loved ones. But when we truly consider, we realize that when we calm ourselves and let go of our worries, we actually accomplish more. God does know what we need!

During Lent, we are invited to read the Book of Proverbs. One passage struck me this year:

There are those who by distributing their livelihood increase it, and there are others who gather, yet have less.... As for him who puts his trust in wealth, he will fall, but as for him who supports the righteous, he will flourish. He who does not deal graciously with his own household will inherit wind, and the fool will be a slave to

the insightful one. From the fruit of righteousness grows a tree of life, but the souls of transgressors are cut off untimely (Proverbs 11:24–30).

“From the fruit of righteousness grows a tree of life”! The Lord tells us in so many different ways that he will bless us abundantly, if only we will trust him. If only we will stop frantically gathering to cover our own needs. If only we will be generous with others. If only we will seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

It is so hard to begin, when we know this is not the way the world works. But, as the Proverbs remind us, there are many things we know that aren't necessarily so! Those who are most resilient, most at peace, most full of joy, are those who are generous, gracious, and thankful.

Try the Lord's way this summer, and see how good the Lord is.

With love in Christ,



Around the Parish

Alexander Kischkum and Caroline Pentsak departed this life at the end of June. Both were buried in our parish cemetery. Memory eternal!

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the celebration of our **feast day of Saints Peter & Paul**. It took much energy and dedication, from the parish council, the choir, the altar servers,

Valerie Wigglesworth and those preparing hospitality, those who worked to clean and beautify the church, and everyone working behind the scenes. May the Lord bless you!

Thank you to everyone who participated in the **Multicultural Dance Class**. Many thanks to our wonderful volunteers, Nicole Milner, Melanie Russell, Mihaela Alecsandru, Sarah Massaro, and Valerie Wigglesworth, for dedicating their time, sharing their talent, and enriching the lives of our young parishioners through the art and tradition of dance.

Help us prepare for the next phase of church restoration work! The Brotherhood of SS. Peter & Paul has planned a work day on Saturday, July 8, beginning 10 AM, to move pews from the left side of the church.

The Brotherhood of SS. Peter & Paul is planning its annual picnic at Paul Leonowich's cottage in Westerly, RI, on Saturday, July 15 (July 22 rain date), starting at 10 AM. For more details, speak with Andrew Bobik (203-302-7675).

We will be **blessing vehicles** after the Liturgy on Sunday, July 16, as a celebration of the Prophet Elijah, who was carried up to heaven in a fiery chariot. (You can find the account in the Bible: 2[4] Kings 2:1-14.) On a Sunday close to St. Elijah's feast (July 20), we go out from the church to our vehicles to pray that the Lord would keep us safe as we travel.

Looking ahead to August, the **Dormition Fast begins on Aug. 1**. It always lasts two weeks, in preparation for the Feast of the Dormition (Falling-Asleep) of the Theotokos on Aug. 15.

We will celebrate the **Transfiguration of the Lord** on Aug. 6. We remember how the Lord took three of his disciples, Peter, James and John, up to Mount Tabor. There he was transfigured, revealing his divine glory to them as far as they could bear it.

We will celebrate the **Dormition (Falling-Asleep) of the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary** on Aug. 15. On the eve, Monday, Aug. 14, we will also celebrate Great Vespers, and on Tuesday, the Divine Liturgy at 9:30, both services followed by the blessing of flowers. The Dormition is a foretaste of the universal hope of life following death. In the feast's icon (which we can see on the ceiling of our church), we see the Theotokos laid out upon her funeral bier, but her Son bearing her up to heaven, as a new-born babe. We glorify her, and pray that, on the last day, all of us may be carried into new life!

The Brotherhood is once again holding a **Winter Clothing Drive**. Please donate gently used winter clothing—coats, hats, gloves, boots, shoes, blankets—especially coats for young children. Monetary donations are very welcome, as well. The Brotherhood plans to hold its give-away on Saturday, Nov. 4. For more detail, speak with Andrew Bobik (203-302-7675).