

## Rector's Letter, May, 2018

Dear brothers and sisters:

Christ is risen! We have passed through the efforts of Great Lent and Holy Week, and now it is time to rejoice in the brightness of our Lord Jesus Christ's resurrection. As we celebrate, though, it is good to reflect on what we *gained* during the Fast. We usually think about Great Lent as a time when we give up things, but its real purpose is to practice living by the strength of the Lord and according to his ways. So all the Lenten efforts — the fasting, the prayers, the repentance and reconciliation, the alms giving, and participating more frequently and deeply in the life of the Church — these are all the basic ingredients of Christian life all the year round.

We may be disappointed in ourselves, that we did not follow through with all our intentions or perhaps we did not keep the right spirit, but if in any way we were faithful to the Lord's invitation at the beginning of the Fast, then in that way we have taken a real step toward the Lord and the joy of his Kingdom.

And now we should consider how to hold on to what we have gained. Obviously, fasting itself has its season, and now is the time for feasting. But our feast is in the name of the Lord who gave his life for us; we should not lapse into forgetfulness. Did we manage to come to church more

often? Why not then come to Saturday Vespers and feast days more frequently during the year? Did we pay closer attention to what we heard and saw in the services? Why not keep that attention alive? Did we pray more? Why not bring your cares to the Lord in prayer at all times? Did we encourage someone? Why not seek out others to encourage? Did we restrain ourselves from unkind or idle words? Why not leave those words unsaid at any time? There is no day when forgiveness, or generosity, or thankfulness are unwelcome.

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ left us one great commandment: to love even as he loved us and gave himself for us. It is a very difficult thing to live by the standard set by our Lord, but he is glad to help us in every small way that we try to do it. Little by little, Lent after Lent and Pascha after Pascha, we can put that command into action in our life.

Yours in Christ,



### **Around the Parish**

Many years to **Sophia Helen Uliase**, who was baptized on April 21.

We are looking for **contributions toward a new Tomb and Cross**, which would be placed in the center of the church during Holy Week.

Our current Crucifixion icon is large and showing signs of strain; we intend to keep it at the side of the church year-round. We have been using a temporary tomb in recent years, and we would like to build one that would serve as our memorial table during the rest of the year. We will have costs and design details to share soon, but if you would like to donate, please speak with Fr. Joshua.

After forty days, the Paschal Season concludes with the **Ascension of Our Lord**, on May 17, when our Lord completed the instruction of his disciples and ascended bodily to heaven, promising the gift of the Holy Spirit. We will celebrate on Wednesday, May 16, with Vespers and Liturgy at 6 PM.

**The Feast of Pentecost** follows ten days later, on Sunday, May 27. On that day, we celebrate the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples, when the apostles began their public preaching and the Church was revealed to all. Until that day, we honor our Lord's rising from the grave by remaining standing in prayer, but at Kneeling Vespers of Pentecost (immediately after the Divine Liturgy that Sunday), we kneel for the first time.

We are once more holding a **parish game night** on first Friday of the month, starting May 4. All are welcome, and several non-gamers bring a craft project to enjoy during the same time.

2018 **Vacation Church School**: July 9-13; Three Saints Park, 112 Miller Road, Bethany. Daily 9

AM to 4 PM with Family Night on Friday starting at 5 PM. Cost: \$40 per child, for a week-long Vacation Church School for ages 5-15. Your child will experience fun, faith, friendship, swimming, bible study, religious education, worship and song. This year's theme will be "The Living Word—the Bible in our lives." For more information: Mary Pagliaro at 203-513-2049 or Fr. Patrick Burns at 203-734-3988.

**Youth Rally 2018 is set for August 13-18.**

Youth Rally is our annual diocesan summer camp for youth who have completed 5th grade and have not reached their 18th birthday. It takes place at the Campgrounds of the Greek Orthodox Saint Methodios Faith and Heritage Center, Contoocook, New Hampshire. We have had many enthusiastic participants in Youth Rally over the years, whether as kids or adult volunteers, and more are always welcome! For further information and to request registration materials, please call or email Fr. John Hopko, Youth Rally Director, at phone number (860) 582-3631, or email [terryvilleorthodoxchurch@gmail.com](mailto:terryvilleorthodoxchurch@gmail.com).

**More Youth Rally volunteers are urgently needed.** We need active, healthy and committed adult men and women who are able to serve as cabin staff. Volunteers must be of legal adult age who are Orthodox Christians in "good standing." If you know of any person appropriate to serve as a Youth Rally volunteer staff member, ask them to contact Fr. John: (860) 582-3631 or email [terryvilleorthodoxchurch@gmail.com](mailto:terryvilleorthodoxchurch@gmail.com).