

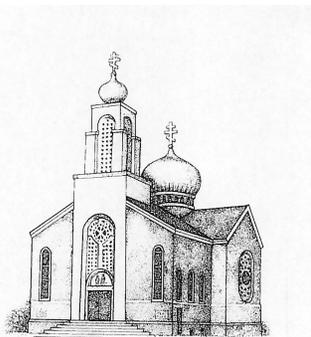
Financially, we have been blessed with a substantial bequeath from the estate of the late Helen Augur (Parfen Family). Thanks be to God. Once the estate is settled, we will share the final figure.

This year has been very busy and productive. Personally, I would like to thank the members of the Parish Council for the many contributions they have made to our parish throughout the year. Each has served tirelessly, and each has offered their thoughts which they believe to be in the best interest of our parish.

Soon, the Nominating Committee will be asking voting members to join the 2023 Parish Council. In addition to the Council, there is several committees—the Mission Building Team, Building and Property, Liturgical Support, Growth and Outreach, Coffee Hour, Cemetery, Endowment committees, and the Council of Neighborhoods. The variety of committees each has the goal of doing God's work, serving our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, our parish, and the community. Each committee needs parishioner participation and support. Please consider how you will serve the Lord and contribute to our mission.

In Christ,

Donna Leonowich
Parish Council President



Rector's Letter, October, 2022

Dear brothers and sisters:

Martyrdom is one of the most important ideas in Christianity, but perhaps hard for us to fully understand today.

“Martyr” literally means witness. To die for one’s faith in God is the most powerful witness possible. Above all, our Lord Jesus Christ is “the Faithful Witness [martyr]” (Revelation 1:5). Christ’s whole life, up through his life-giving death on the Cross, embodies his witness to the power of God’s love. The apostles’ preaching is nothing other than putting Christ’s witness into words. The apostles also put that witness into action, dying for the sake of Christ’s Gospel. We call St. Stephen the First Martyr (or “Protomartyr) because he is the first of the apostles to be killed while preaching the Gospel (Acts 7).

After the apostles, the world was turned upside-down by the martyrs that followed, because they gladly suffered death rather than go along with the demands of the ungodly world around them. And their persecutors were frustrated again and again that the more they put Christians to death, the more compelling the witness of the Christian faith became.

We, however, should not be surprised by the power of this witness. As we heard just a couple of weeks ago from the Gospel, our Lord tells us: “who-

ever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it" (Mark 8:35). The martyrs follow this teaching at its most fundamental, literal level. Why fear death if we follow the One who overcame death and turned it into the doorway to everlasting life? Or, to put it the other way, why follow the Crucified Savior if we insist on fearing death?

Often we are content to be grateful for the martyrs at a distance, giving thanks that they died in some far-away land in a barely remembered era, while we worship in peace and safety today. But if our circumstances are different from the martyrs, our faith is not. In a real sense, every saint is a martyr — a witness — and every Christian is called to be: "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15). All of us can do this much, to dedicate our hearts entirely to the Lord God, and to be a good witness to the hope that is in us.

We are not usually threatened with physical abuse for our faith, but our witness still costs us something. At the very least, our way of life will be perceived as a direct challenge by many around us.



showing signs of age. Last year, we approved the refurbishing of our stained glass windows. The project is well on its way. Radu Alecsandru researched the possibility of replacing the current heating system with natural gas and converting to a ductless air conditioning unit. Our current HVAC system is functioning. With such economic instability and uncertainty, the Council has decided to maintain our current system.

Ephraim Mosher is chairing the Mission Building Team Committee to assess and cleanup our properties and make recommendations going forward. The apartment basement, the garage and the exterior property have been cleared. Thanks to all the parishioners that assisted in completing this monumental task. Repairs, new pipe installation, and cleanup work have been performed on our apartment house. We have three outstanding tenants all of whom respect our property and maintain their homes. We need to prayerfully and seriously consider what to do going forward.



Liturgical life has resumed. Father Joshua shepherded us through a complete a full cycle of Lenten and Pascha services and celebrations. Our choir, under the capable direction of Tom Crosby, and Tim Tassmer, substitute, are once again a full complement and singing very beautifully. M. Jenny has offered several creative activities for our Church School children, and the Growth Committee distributed Easter baskets to neighborhood families.



Membership has held steady with Father Joshua reporting 65 members to the Diocese. Several new folks are interested in learning more about our Orthodox faith. Coffee hours have resumed and people are enjoying fellowship with each other. We are optimistic that we will once again sponsor our annual Thanksgiving Feast and look forward to events such as the Chili Cook-off and other events.

Under the guidance of Father Joshua, the parish has approved a complete revision of our Parish Bylaws and the Endowment Committee Bylaws. The Cemetery Committee is finalizing their Bylaws which will soon be shared with parishioners for approval.

Our temple is over 65 years old. The grounds are well maintained. Structurally, it is very sound but is

We will stand out, and perhaps suffer embarrassment or estrangement. Why? Because, as Saint Peter goes on to say, if we share the mind of Christ who suffered for our sake, then we will live not for human passions but to the will of God: “For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you” (1 Peter 4:3-4).

We can recognize in St. Peter’s description some of the destructive temptations of our own age. The powers of this world have erected altars to frenzied consumption, celebrity idolization, sexuality in the service of sales, and incessant grievances. These powers can still persecute those whose lives are a witness to the true God. But we need to have the courage to be witnesses: God has already won the victory, but our neighbors need to witness that reality reflected in our lives.

Yours in Christ,

F. Joshua S. Mosher



Around the Parish

On Sept. 6, **His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman fell asleep in the Lord.** Metropolitan Herman was the retired primate of the Orthodox Church in America. He had served previously as Archbishop of Eastern Pennsylvania and acted in numerous administrative capacities in the OCA. His full obituary is available on the OCA website.

Our parish will serve a **panakhida for Metropolitan Herman** on Saturday, Oct. 15, at 4:15 PM. May His Beatitude's memory be eternal!

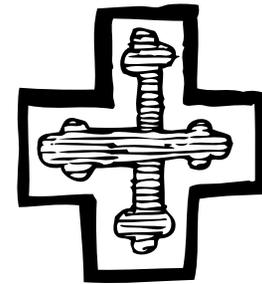
We rejoice as, on Sunday, Oct. 9, at 3 PM, **Christine Shanahan and Trevor Starks** will be united in Holy Marriage.

Everyone soon should be receiving a **Stewardship Packet for 2023** in the mail. Please read it through carefully and consider how to faithfully respond. We rely on your support to carry out the work God has entrusted to us.

We have begun a bi-monthly series **Exploring Our Faith.** Sessions will take place online via Zoom. We will explore your questions about the Orthodox Faith. On Wed., Oct. 5, at 6:30, we conclude **“Wise as Serpents and Innocent as Doves: How to Engage Faithfully and Charitably in Political Matters.”** The next session is planned for Wed., Oct. 19. If you have been wondering how our faith connects with a particular aspect of life, or you would like to learn more about a point of scripture, history, the saints, prayer or worship, submit your suggestion to Fr. Joshua.

We are preparing for our annual **Diocesan Assembly**, Oct. 28–29, hosted by Holy Trinity Church, Springfield, VT, and Holy Resurrection Church, Claremont, NH. Please pray for all of us (including several from our parish) who will be participating.

On Sunday, Nov. 6, we will celebrate the annual **Endowment Fund Thanksgiving and Memorial Service** at the conclusion of the Liturgy.



From the Parish Council President

October 2022

Dear Parishioners,

Christ is among us! Since returning from Covid, our primary focus has been that of engaging our current parishioners, and attracting new members. It is important for us to update you on Parish Council activities for the year.