

# THE ST. GEORGE Grapevine

Mar/Apr 2010 • Vol. 14, No. 4

St. George Orthodox Cathedral • Charleston, WV

## Pastor's Corner

By Fr. Olof Scott



(repeat Mar/Apr 2002)

I've often characterized the process of aging as "a one-way street with no turnoffs."

All of us travel this street and there are no detours and no turning back.

Recently, I have modified my definition of aging by adding another dimension. As we age the one-way street begins to develop into a downhill grade. With each passing year the percentage of incline increases. Remember the first time you encountered the steep incline on I-64, eastbound out of Beckley at Sandstone Mountain? Your car took on a life of its own! Brake-pads, don't fail me now!

But, when traveling the "Road of Life" there are no brake-pads. Each passing year finds the one-way street increasing it's downhill grade at least one percentage point. Not only are there no turnoffs, there are no escape ramps. This year seems to be going faster than last year! Didn't we just celebrate the New Year, and now it's the beginning of March?

Often our life seems out of control. We see ourselves as "twigs carried along in a swift moving stream," or "leaves being blown in an ever-increasing wind-storm." How can we get control of our lives which become ever more busy, demand coming upon demand, while the

amount of time needed to accomplish all of these tasks remains the same?

What we first need to realize is that all of these feelings are an "illusion," in all of these circumstances we can take control! We are not "twigs" or "leaves." We are human beings, created in the "image and likeness of God!" And, as Christians we have been united to God the Father, through His only begotten Son, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

When life appears to be chaotic and controlling, the Holy Orthodox Church gives us the opportunity to regain perspective and to refocus on our true identity—Great Lent! In fact, we encounter these lenten opportunities several times a year.

From Meat Fare Sunday to Great Saturday of Holy Week, we must make every effort to use this time effectively. The Church calls us to fast, to pray, to give alms! In this we can reorient our lives! A half-hearted attempt will not gain us anything. Nothing short of an all-out assault against the "illusion" of time controlling us can be made, and participation in Great Lent is that assault.

Yes, our life and the time we live in may appear to be moving faster as we age. But, what we do with that time is our decision to make. Does time control us or are we in control? May we all enter into the fullness of Great Lent! ✝

## Pan-Orthodox Services for Lent

The southern West Virginia Orthodox parishes are hosting three Vespers services to bring our faithful together during Great Lent. Each service begins at 6:00 P.M. followed by a presentation and a lenten food reception. The remaining services are:

Sunday, Mar. 7: St. John Greek Orthodox Church, Charleston, Fr. Mark Tyson speaking.

Sunday, Mar. 21: St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, Beckley, Fr. Mark Elliott speaking. ✝

## Basic Class in Orthodoxy

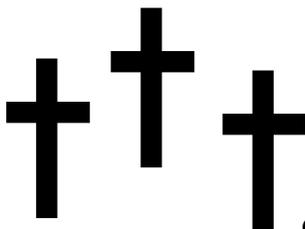
Another Basic Class in Orthodoxy is underway with Father Olof during Great Lent on Tuesday evenings at 7:30 PM. Topics remaining starting with March 2 are Great Ecumenical Councils, Church Doctrine and Sacraments.

The class is open for everyone to refresh their knowledge of Orthodoxy or for those who are interested in becoming members of the Orthodox Church. ✝

### RADIO PROGRAM

## "Come Receive the Light"

Don't forget that our church sponsors the national Orthodox Christian Network's radio program, "Come Receive the Light" every Sunday morning at 8:00 A.M. on WCHS, 580 AM on your dial. Get out of bed early every Sunday morning and tune in to experience our Orthodox heritage and spirituality. ✝



## Traditional Easter Greetings

Christ Is Risen. Truly He Is Risen  
Al Maseeh Qam - Ha' An Qam (Arabic)  
Kristos Anesti - Alithos Anesti (Greek)  
Christos Voskrese - Vo Istinu Voskrese (Slavonic)



## CHANGE

### The Sin of the World

By Subdeacon George M. Damous

Change is an event that is quite stressful for people. Most people in general do not like change. Those who do like change may often not be anchored and are searching for something to hold onto and there may be other reasons. We must not confuse change with evolution or development; a progression. We grow up to be an adult from infancy. This is a development not a change. If we lose our sight or an arm, God forbid, this is a change not a progression. God created man to develop, to become one with Him. He placed man and woman in the Garden of Eden with everything needed for this progression, theosis, to become one with God. However, man was given free will which allowed him to choose to continue on the righteous path or to "change" paths. Unfortunately, Adam and Eve decided to change, not develop as God had intended. Their choice cost them eternal life in Paradise, living in harmony with heaven and earth, with all of nature. Adam and Eve were given dominion over nature so that they would live peacefully with the animals; manage the forces of nature; to not fall ill or die a physical death; and to not be ashamed. When tempted by Satan, Adam and Eve consciously decided to disrupt this God inspired progression by disobeying His commands. Now the perfect harmony in God's creation had changed, not progressed. Man and nature were in conflict. Creation was now corrupted.



Man and animals were a danger to each other; man became ill from nature and would die a physical death; and now man was ashamed of his "nakedness" which is the guilt of his disobedience to God.

In the Old Testament, the Israelites, God's Chosen people, are ruled by God in a theocracy. The Israelites demand a king like those around them. The prophet Samuel warns the people of Israel that this is offensive to God and would be a mistake. Samuel speaks the words of the Lord explaining the ways of the king:

"the king....will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen and to run before his chariots.....appoint for himself commanders of thousands and some to plow his ground and reap the harvest....He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers...He will take the best of your fields...and give them to his servants... he will take a tenth of your flocks and you shall be his slaves." (1 Samuel 8:10-13)

Here again we see a change, not the development that God wanted. Instead of being ruled by God, Israel will be ruled by a king, a monarchy; which will develop to be a hierarchy which we see throughout the Jewish temple worship and even in our current Christian worship.

God also made covenants with man to bring creation back to order. However, no man kept God's covenants, all were broken. Now God Himself becomes man to save or recreate his creation. The Perfect Man, Jesus Christ, to give the Perfect Sacrifice so that man may once again be able to enter Paradise and to continue on the progression to being one with God once. This of course is Holy Pascha. Through the crucifixion and resurrec-

tion of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the gates of Heaven are once again opened to mankind. The Son of God becomes man **with no change to the Trinity!!** Although the Second Person of the Trinity is on earth, the Three Persons of the Trinity is unchanged. The Son did not leave the Trinity to become Man. Jesus is Perfect God and Perfect Man.

So we see God's intent for His creation was development or growth to Him. The stress of change is seen everywhere in our lives. A loved one becomes sick; an earthquake occurs killing thousands; nations go to war and our young men and women return with loss of limbs and other injuries that change their lives. Our family structures change due to the loss of our heads of our families and other members and the children must take up those roles. We cry out for the "good old days." Sometimes we even feel cheated when a special family member dies before we enjoy their company to the fullest. Traditions change even in Church with our services. People become fearful and insecure when things change. This is an important lesson to Church leaders. Yet some will say "Well things change."

The one constant in the world, God does not change; God's love never changes. Here is where we find stability, refuge and sanctuary; we find it in God. Yes we will suffer change in our life. Great Lent is a time to prepare to come to God. Change ourselves back so we may once again receive eternal life and enter the Garden of Paradise. Come to meet God in His House so that we can all look forward together to the great Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ so all that changed will be put back together as it was intended. Then we will not miss our loved ones and can know Eternal Peace with God. Prepare for the Great Feast of Holy Pascha. ✝



#### THE ST. GEORGE Grapevine

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<http://www.stgeorgecharleston.org/>  
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You are cordially invited to honor the Patron Saint of our Church at our annual **St. George's Day Luncheon**

**Sun. April 25, 2010**

(immediately following the Divine Liturgy)  
**St. George Conference Center Ballroom**

**Mark your calendar and make plans to attend!!**

#### Troparion of St. George

*As deliverer of captives, and defender of the poor, healer of the infirm, champion of kings, Victorious, Great Martyr George; intercede with Christ our God, for our soul's salvation.*



## Do you know the 12 Disciples?

- \_\_\_ 1. Simon Peter
- \_\_\_ 2. Andrew
- \_\_\_ 3. James
- \_\_\_ 4. John
- \_\_\_ 5. Bartholomew
- \_\_\_ 7. Thomas
- \_\_\_ 8. Matthew
- \_\_\_ 9. James
- \_\_\_ 10 Thaddeus
- \_\_\_ 11. Simon the Zealot
- \_\_\_ 12. Judas Iscariot

- a. Name means "God is gracious.": Son of Zebedee, brother of James. Jesus called them "sons of thunder: because of their fiery tempers.
- b. Name means "Gift of God" worked for King Herod Antipas but left his post to follow Jesus. (tax collector)
- c. Name means "God hears." May have belonged to group of freedom fighters.
- d. Name means "holds tight." Son of Alphaeus. May have been Matthew's brother.
- e. Name means "God hears" and "the Rock" Fisherman in Galilee but not always a loyal disciple.
- f. Name means "Loving, compassionate." Also called Judas, son of James.
- g. Name means "brave." First one of disciples to meet Jesus He found the boy with loaves of bread and fish for Jesus' miraculous feeding of 5,000.
- h. Name means "Praised." Betrayed Christ for 30 pieces of silver.
- i. Name means "He grasps, holds tight.": Brother of John and a fisherman.
- j. Name means "Lover of horses." From town of Bethsaida and believed immediately Jesus was the Messiah.
- k. Name means "twin"; the doubting disciple.
- l. Name means "son of Ptolemy." Referred to in John's Gospel as Nathaniel, a passionate Israelite and accepted that Jesus was "the son of God."



## St. George Foundation News

By Dr. Edward Howard, President, The St. George Foundation

The St. George Conference Center provided the setting for approximately 60 parishioners attending the complimentary "Estate and Trust Planning" seminar hosted by our St. George Foundation on the evening of February 4th. Noted Charleston tax attorney John Hussell of Dinsmore and Shohl, LLP, provided an excellent presentation and forum relative to estate and trust planning for individuals, families, and groups of all ages. Mr. Hussell's informative presentation detailed preparations that should be made in order to have an effective and efficient estate planned for ongoing generations at minimized tax consequences.

Following his presentation, Mr. Hussell opened the seminar to a Question and Answer forum where various situations were presented for his advice. Many questions were answered and it seemed as though the evening could have gone on longer.

Refreshments were served and available throughout the evening and those attending found time following the seminar for some one-on-one Q & A with Mr. Hussell. ✝

## Kid's Corner - Q & A

### Q: How could the Angel unlock Peter out of jail without keys?

**A:** The angel freed Peter through God's power. Herod wanted to kill Peter to make some of the other leaders happy. He had Peter arrested and sentenced to death. The night before he was going to be killed, God sent an angel to rescue Peter. He woke Peter up, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists. Then Peter and the angel walked away from the soldiers without waking any of them up. God made the iron gate open up when they walked up to it. The angel left him when they got outside. Peter could hardly believe what had happened—and neither could his friends who were praying for him! (Acts 12:12-16)

**KEY VERSE:** *The night before he was to be killed, he was asleep. He was chained between two soldiers. And others were standing guard by the prison gate. But suddenly there was a light in the cell! And an Angel of the Lord stood beside Peter! The Angel slapped him on the side to wake him up. Then he said, "Quick! Get up!" And the chains fell off his wrists! (Acts 12:6-7)*

**RELATED VERSES:** *Psalm 68:6; Acts 5:12-29*



**RELATED QUESTIONS:** *Why did Peter go to jail? Why did the angel let Peter out of jail?*

From 102 Questions Children Ask about the Bible. ✝



# Family Activity Night

The parish council youth committee is very excited about having established a fun learning environment for all members of our church. We, as a congregation, are united through Christ as a parish family. Therefore, we have been holding Family Activity Night once a month. These late afternoons consist of fun activities, a brief religious interactive session and refreshments. Our goal is to bring together people of all ages so that we may bond with each other and bring spiritual enlightenment to all who attend. We consider ourselves a youth committee because the program is simply stated enough for our youth, but interesting enough for adults. In the past year, we have learned about self respect and respect for others. We've taken a walk through our Orthodox church and learned about its parts, the priests' vestments and had the Divine Liturgy explained to us. We've made holy bread and prayer candles. We have also learned about why we fast during the Advent season and read the Nativity icon. We are currently learning about preparing for the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Our activities consist of crafts, games, and making cards for loved ones and shut-ins, open gym activities and more. We mustn't forget all the food and drinks we enjoy at the end of the day, relaxing and enjoying the social aspect of the afternoon. ALL,

young and older, married or single, with or without children, are welcome to attend these events. We hope you do. All we ask is that you let us know you will be attending by contacting Laura Ede at 304-346-3585 or emailing her at Buzzy63@AOL.com, or seeing her or Mark Choueiri during coffee hour after Divine Liturgy. Your response allows us to prepare enough materials and food for you!

Our next event is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, March 14<sup>th</sup>. Also, please save the date for our summer vacation Bible school week. It is scheduled June 13-18<sup>th</sup>. We hope to see you then!

As co-chairmen of this committee, Laura and Mark would like to thank the committee for all of their time and efforts in making this program such a great and growing success. Father Stephen DeYoung is our spiritual leader and advisor. Our committee members are John Asseff, Bernarda Bandak, Emily Bsharah, Kevin Abdalla, Phil Michael III, Diane Nester, John Haddy, Anne Marie Haddy, and Doug Skaff Sr. Also, and just as important, we want to thank everyone who has attended, pitched in and helped out with activities and donated food. Lastly, we want to thank Julia Cassis for keeping the memories alive with the pictures placed with this article and on Facebook. God grant all of you many years. ✝

# The Symbolism of the Easter Egg

In the early Christian Church, it was customary to bless and give colored eggs to the people gathered together for the Resurrection Services. This traditional custom is still practiced in the Eastern Orthodox Church.

At the conclusion of the Holy Easter Divine Liturgy in the Orthodox Church, colored boiled eggs are blessed and distributed by the priest to the congregation. Thus everyone receives a personal gift and blessing of the Feast.

The worshippers then go about greeting one another in a very jubilant manner and crack the eggs by hitting them one upon the other. Upon the cracking of one of the eggs, the beautiful ancient Orthodox greeting: "Christ Is Risen!" is said by the one whose egg was cracked, whereupon the other replies: "Truly, He Is Risen!"

The cracking of the egg means the seal of the tomb is broken and Christ is Risen! The blessing and eating of eggs at Easter is symbolic of breaking fast since eggs are a forbidden food during Lent.

No egg of the Feast should remain unbroken to symbolize emphatically that Christ has truly conquered Death and is Risen, thereby granting New Life to all believing Christians.





## Congregational Meeting Results

Our annual congregational meeting was held on Sunday, Jan. 24. Thank you to the Choir for providing a delicious lunch of soup, sandwich and dessert before the meeting!

The following parishioners elected to the Parish Council for 2010 were: Nick Cassis, Mark Choueiri, Adam Edstrom, Makhoul Ghareeb, Bob Haddy, John Haddy, Andre Haikal, P. Alex Skaff and Steve Summers.

Those members remaining on the Parish Council for another year are: David Cassis, Mary Dooley, Laura Ede, Harvey Ghiz, Beverly Howard, Ganim Howard, Alex W. Skaff, Doug Skaff, and M.G. Skaff.

Representatives of the Parish Organizations are: Church School - Laila Khoury; Ladies Guild - Anne Marie Haddy; Choir - Loretta Haddy; FSJD - Becky O'fiesh.

The officers for this year are: Chair-

man - Bob Haddy; Vice-Chairman - P. Alex Skaff; Secretary-Mary Dooley; and Treasurer-Doug Skaff.

We hope all the parish council members will attend the meetings on the first Wednesday of each month and support the officers in serving St. George.

Several amendments were voted upon and passed. The St. George Foundation Board of Directors filled two vacancies with the election of Geoffrey Haddad and P. Alex Skaff II. The remaining members of the Foundation Board for 2010 are: Edward Howard-President.; Mahib Tarakji; David Cassis - Secretary; Alex W. Skaff; Nicholas Cassis - Vice-President; and Ronald Murad - Treasurer.

We thank you, the parishioners for attending the meeting, and we thank the past officers and members for a job well done. May the new officers and members strive to continue to serve St. George and do God's will! ✠

## Antiochian Women (Ladies Guild)

We hope you'll take a break away from building snowmen (or/ladies), taking walks in the glistening snow and drinking hot chocolate to attend our next Guild meeting on Monday, March 1st at 7:30 p.m.

March is women's month, and many of our guild members will be participating in the services passing the offering trays, reading the Epistle and serving as communion ushers. We will have our annual Basketball Luncheon in April, so watch the bulletin for details.

We hope the April 5th meeting will bring April showers and a rainbow of sunshine. We will be planning for an annual St. George's Day luncheon on Sunday, April 25 and hope everyone will attend to honor our patron saint.

Sub-deacon George gives very informative and inspirational short talks before each meeting, so plan to attend the March 1st and April 5th meetings and support President Anne Marie Haddy and our projects! ✠

*"Love and self-control free the soul from passions; spiritual reading and contemplation deliver the intellect from ignorance; and the state of prayer brings it into the presence of God Himself."*

--Saint Maximos the Confessor

## Senior Fellowship

Seniors who could not attend our last get-together with the Gospel group, Brothers in the Cross, really missed a spiritually uplifting evening.

This local group wrote their own songs and performed these inspirational hymns in beautiful harmony and "do-wop" tempo. We will have to have them back in the near future!

Due to Lenten services in March we will not plan anything until April. Check the bulletin for details and hopefully we can celebrate spring arriving, finally, that second or third week of April. ✠

### Christ Is Risen

Christ is Risen from the dead,  
(O Christ is Risen from the dead),  
Trampling down death by death,  
And upon those in the tombs,  
Bestowing life.

Kristos aneste ek-nek-ron,  
Tha-na-to tha-na-ton pa-tee-sas,  
Kay-tois-en-tois mnee-ma see-zo-een,  
Khar-i-sa-may-nos.

Al-ma-sih Qam-minby-ni l-am-wat,  
Wa-wa-ti-a l-mowt bil-mowt,  
Wa-wa-ha-ba l-hay-ya,m  
Lil-la-dhi-na fil-qu-bur. ✠

## Fasting Guidelines for Great Lent

Many of us ask each year, so the following fasting criteria is presented: Meat (beef, lamb, pork, veal, chicken, etc.)—total abstinence from Monday after Meatfare Sunday until Pascha; Dairy (milk, cheese, butter, eggs, yogurt, cream, etc.)—total abstinence from Monday after Cheesefare Sunday until Pascha; Fish (any fish with a backbone; shellfish and crustaceans not included)—abstinence but allowed on Annunciation and Palm Sunday; Wine (includes all alcoholic beverages)—abstinence but permitted on Saturdays, Sundays, Annunciation and Great Thursday; Olive Oil—abstinence but permitted on all Saturdays (except Great Saturday), Sundays, Annunciation and Great Thursday.

The new St. George Liturgical Calendars have these restrictions symbolically noted during the fast so there is no need to memorize them.

Be reminded that the purpose of fasting is to focus on the things of God's Kingdom and be freed from dependence on worldly things. Fasting in itself is not a means of pleasing God. Fasting is not a punishment for sins. Nor is fasting a means of suffering and pain to be undertaken as some kind of atonement. Christ already redeemed us on His Cross. Salvation is a gift from God that is not bought by our hunger or thirst.

We fast to be delivered from carnal passions so that God's gift of Salvation may bear great fruit in our lives. We fast and turn our eyes toward God in His Holy Church. Fasting and Prayer are meant to go together.

Most of all, it is important that we do not "eat" each other. We ask God to "set a watch and keep the door of our lips."

Fasting is not irrelevant, is not obsolete, is not something for someone else. Fasting is from God, for us, right here and right now.

We fast faithfully and in secret, not judging others and not holding ourselves up as an example.

Finally, do not fast if you are pregnant or nursing a newborn. And, do not fast during any serious illness or if your medication requires that it must be taken with a certain amount of food. ✠



March:

CALENDAR

- 1: Ladies Guild, 7:30 PM
- 2: Basic Class, 7:30 PM (every Tues. to Mar. 23)
- 3: Presanctified Liturgy/Cover Dish Supper, 6:30 PM (every Wed. to Mar. 17); Parish Council, 7:30 PM
- 4: Foundation Seminar, 7:00 PM
- 5: World Day of Prayer at CCUM, 9:30 AM; Little Compline/Akathist Hymn, 6:30 PM (every Fri. to Mar. 19)
- 6: Baptism, 1:30 PM
- 7: Third Sunday of Lent, Creative Workshop, 2:00 PM; Pan-Orthodox Vespers, 6:00 PM (see article)
- 8: CCRA Pastors Lunch, Noon
- 13: All Souls Liturgy, 10:00 AM; St. Ignatius Social, 6:30 PM
- 14: Fourth Sunday of Lent; Vespers, 6:00 PM
- 15: Pastoral Mtg, 7:00 PM

MAR 2010						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	30	31				

APR 2010						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

- 18: Communion for Shut-ins
- 21: Fifth Sunday of Lent, Pan-Orthodox Vespers, 6:00 PM (see article)
- 24: Annunciation Matins, 5:30 PM; Liturgy, 6:30 PM, Cover Dish following
- 27: Lazarus Saturday Liturgy, 10:00 AM
- 28: Palm Sunday Services
- 28: Holy Week begins evening (see mailed schedule)
- 28-31: Holy Week (see mailed schedule)

April:

- 1-3: Holy Week (see mailed schedule)
- 4: Easter-Pascha
- 5: Ladies Guild, 7:30 PM
- 7: Parish Council, 7:30 PM
- 10: Hafli, 7:00 PM
- 11: Basketball Luncheon after services
- 15: Communion Shut-ins
- 16-18: Spring Mtg., S. Plainfield, NJ
- 17: Marriage Blessing, 1:00 PM
- 18: Mike Barnhouse Concert, 3:00 PM
- 22: Evening Liturgy-St. George, 6:30 PM
- 25: St. George Day Lunch after services
- 22: Evening Liturgy-St. George, 6:30 PM
- 26: Thomas Sunday, St. George Day Luncheon, 12:30 PM

**Deadline for next issue:**  
**April 15, 2010.**  
 Place articles in box outside  
 Church office or  
 email ritakee@aol.com

*Answers to Matching Game: 1-e; 2-g; 3-i; 4-a; 5-f; 6-l; 7-k; 8-b; 9-d; 10-f; 11-c; 12-h*

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