

# THE ST. GEORGE Grapevine

Jul/Aug 2011 • Vol. 15, No. 6

St. George Orthodox Cathedral • Charleston, WV

## Pastor's Corner

By Fr. Olof Scott



“saints.”

But, what I'm talking about is SAINTS, those people who were so holy that they had visions of Jesus and Mary, visitations by angels and had conversations with them. I'm certainly not one of them.

At least I thought not, until I had an unusual experience a few days ago when I did my daily devotion. As I began to pray I heard a deep voice say, “I'm sorry, but I'll be out of the Heavenly Office for a few weeks. At the sound of the harp please leave your prayer request and I will take it under advisement when I return.”

Needless to say I was stunned. Did I really hear that? Is someone playing a trick on me?

Not sure what to do next, I thought maybe I should pray for my patron saint to intervene on my behalf. As I began to pray to St. Olaf, another voice in a Norwegian accent said, “I'm sorry, but I'm away from my intervention desk for a few weeks. Since the Boss is on vacation I decided to follow suit and go back to Trondheim. At the sound of the Viking horn, please leave your petition and I'll forward it when I return.”

Now what! As I tried each of the other saints that I usually invoke, I got the same response. They were all on vacation! With the Boss gone, St. Michael had the “Satan Watch” and the Sts. George, Herman and Raphael of Brooklyn each were enjoying the respite of taking interventions while they looked over their respective earthly habitats of Syria, Spruce Island/Alaska and the United States.

What a dilemma! How are Christians going to cope if they can't be in contact

and relationship through prayer with God and His Saints? We are a “communion,” a Community of Faith, who should be able to communicate with, rely and count upon each other!

With a jerk of my head I was suddenly shaken! Had I fallen asleep while praying? Was it just a dream? It had felt so real! Maybe it was real and was meant to be an awakening for me and for all of us.

God, Saints and the Angels on vacation? No way! They are available, and we expect them to be so, twenty-four/seven, three hundred and sixty-five days a year! We have the advantage of being able to access them, so to speak, any time of the day or night.

Why then, do we take vacation from their presence and the worship services of the Church, especially at this time of year between Easter and Labor Day? Yes, I know, it's summer, a tempting time to slow down, lay back and take a break. But do we take a break from God and His Church? I would hope that we might reconsider any answer we may give in light of my dream or vision above.

We should never take a vacation from God and Church! When all is said and done in this life what's left? The only things that will count for our eternal future is how we lived in relationship with our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ and His Church!

Yes, there are times in our busy lives when we might have to adjust schedules and miss Sunday services. But that doesn't excuse us from maintaining a close relationship with our God. There are all manner of practices that we should be following if we are serious about our Christian Faith.

We should always be in daily communication with God through our personal prayer life and the reading of Holy Scripture and spiritual books. If we miss services on Sunday we can make an effort

to be in attendance at services that occur during the week. When out of town and away from our home parish we can plan in advance to locate Orthodox parishes and be in attendance at services along the way and when we reach our destination. There is no excuse for slacking off in our Christian life.

The next time we are tempted to take a break from God, let us reflect upon my words above. Would we wish to hear this response to our prayers, “I'm sorry, but I'll be out of the Heavenly Office for a few weeks...?”



*Through humor, you can suffer some of the worst blows that life delivers. And once you find laughter, no matter how painful your situation might be, you can survive it.*

Bill Cosby



### RADIO PROGRAM

## “Come Receive the Light”

Our parish continues to be a supporting partner of the popular Orthodox radio program, “Come Receive the Light,” which airs on WCHS, 580 AM, Sundays at 8:00 A.M. There is no better way to grow in the knowledge of the Orthodox Faith, to be inspired and to prepare for the Divine Services than to tune in every Sunday morning. It costs you nothing and you gain something.





## The Breath of God

By Subdeacon George M. Damous

Jesus told His Disciples to remain in Jerusalem until the Comforter comes to them. Ten days later on a Sunday the Disciples were gathered together in a house and they heard the sound of a mighty, rushing wind that shook the house. Tongues of fire appeared over their heads and new life surged through their bodies and souls. The Holy Spirit had come.

This account of the coming of the Holy Spirit, Pentecost, teaches us many things. The Disciples were gathered together, remember together not individually, as the family of God and were praying when the Holy Spirit appeared. It is important to note the Holy Spirit did not come to individuals outside of "Church," but within the Church. Those who suggest coming to Church is not necessary would have not received the Holy Spirit, would they.

The Holy Spirit manifested itself in wind and fire. Wind is extremely powerful and invisible, just as the Holy Spirit is powerful and invisible. Fire cleanses just as fire purifies and sanitizes metals. So the Holy Spirit cleanses us from sin. Fire enlightens and shows us the way in darkness. The Holy Spirit is a beacon that guides us to Christ – the Light of the world. Fire warms as the Holy Spirit burns in our hearts and warms us with a love for God and our fellow man.

With the coming of the Holy Spirit, a great change came upon the people who received the Holy Spirit. Before the Holy

Spirit came the people and disciples were afraid. When Christ was crucified the men ran in fright and hid behind locked doors in fear of the enemy. Now the Disciples knock on doors to tell of Jesus Christ. St. Peter was weak and undependable. He denied Christ three times. Now with the Holy Spirit he stood fearlessly and preached the Gospel of Christ to those who crucified Him.

Sts. James and John were vain and somewhat arrogant, the sons of thunder. They wanted to sit on either side of Christ in His glory. They were also quick tempered to the point of telling Jesus to wipe the people of a town off the earth for not listening to Him. Now these two Disciples were patient and calm.

The Church now changed also. When man was created by God, he laid lifeless until God breathed the Breath of Life into him and man became a living soul. Christ formed His Church but it lacked life and force. On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit breathed life into it and the Church became the Living Body of Christ.

Today the Holy Spirit continues to come. Our Holy Feast Days commemorate that which occurred in the past. We remember those events such as Pascha, the Nativity, the Transfiguration and the

other feast days. Yes we speak of the feast days in the present so we do not forget or misunderstand; yet with Pentecost, the Holy Spirit continues to come!

Where is God the Father (Lord's Prayer) – in Heaven; Where is God the Son (Nativity) – on earth and then ascended to Heaven; Where is God the Holy Spirit (St. Paul writes: "Know you not, that you are the temples of the Holy Spirit?") – The Holy Spirit resides in the souls of believing Christians as we say in the prayer of the Holy Spirit: ...come and dwell in us and cleanse us from every stain... If we open the door and let the Holy Spirit in. 

## DID YOU KNOW?

that the most favored time for weddings in the Orthodox Church are Spring, Summer and Fall. Orthodox Christians shy away from Winter because of the chance of bad weather. No matter when weddings are scheduled, there are times in the Orthodox Christian Church when weddings are prohibited. These times are as follows:

1. During all Lenten periods and Fasting days, including Wednesdays and Fridays of the week.

2. During the week before Great Lent (in 2011, February 28 to March 6).

3. On Pascha Sunday (Easter, April 24, 2011) and the week following, known as Bright Week (April 25 to May 1, 2011).

4. On the Beheading of St. John the Baptist (August 29) and the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (September 14).

Lenten periods and Fasting days include the Fast of the Apostles (June 20 to 29, 2011) and the Dormition of the Theotokos (August 1 to 14).

If for a serious reason it is necessary for someone to be married on a prohibited day, the proper dispensation must be received from the Metropolitan Primate. If this is the case, the Parish Priest will advise the candidates about the proper procedure. **NO WEDDINGS SHOULD BE SCHEDULED WITHOUT A CLEARANCE FROM THE PARISH PRIEST.** A blessed wedding to all those who plan to marry. **MANY YEARS!** 

## Look Up!

Some people pass through this wonderful world

And never look up at the sky,  
It's nothing to them that the lark sings there,

While the great white clouds sail by.

It's nothing to them  
That the millions of stars  
Weave a silver web at night,  
They do not know  
Of the hush that falls  
When the dawn gives birth to the light.

Oh, pity the people  
With all your heart  
Who never look up at the sky,  
So many beautiful sights  
That they miss...  
As the pageant of God goes by. 



### THE ST. GEORGE Grapevine

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<http://www.stgeorgecharleston.org/>

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## Kid's Corner - Q & A

### Q: Who was the Holy Martyr, Julia of Carthage?

**A:** July 16. In Africa, there was once a great and famous city called Carthage. One day, the Arabs attacked this city and captured many of its people.

One of these captured people was a little girl named Julia. Julia was an Orthodox Christian from a very wealthy family.

All the captives were taken away to the lands of Palestine and Syria and sold as slaves. Little Julia was sold to a pagan merchant (a pagan is someone who worships demons rather than God).

Life was very hard for Julia. She was taken away from her parents and never saw them again. Julia had to work very hard and live in a poor room. If she displeased her master or his wife, she would be beaten severely.

Fortunately for Julia, her parents had been good Christians and had taught her how to please God. Even as a baby, Julia had been taken to church and taught how to pray and keep the fasts.

Now, she was all alone and very helpless. But she remembered our dear Saviour and turned to Him with her prayers.

Christ our God heard the tearful prayers of His little servant. He invisibly comforted the lonely child and filled her heart with peace.

Saint Julia was a very careful and hard worker. Her work was especially good because she did everything in the Lord's name. Whatever she started to do, she would first make the sign of the cross and ask for God's help.

The merchant who owned Saint Julia was very pleased by her hard work. But when he found out that Julia was a Christian, he became very angry. The pagans hated Christians. Many times, the cruel master tried to force Julia to give up Christ and become a pagan. He even told her, "If you do not give up Christ, I will kill you."

Julia only crossed herself and peacefully replied: "I am ready to die for my Saviour at any time."

At last the merchant gave up and left her alone. Saint Julia continued to work hard. She was so good at managing the merchant's house that he became even richer. This made him very happy.

Soon, the merchant began to notice what kind of life Julia was living. She was very meek and humble, and fasted

very strictly. In her free time, she always prayed or read from the Gospel. Sometimes Saint Julia spent the whole night in prayer, not even sleeping.

Seeing this, the merchant became ashamed of himself and was sorry for being so mean to Julia. He began to have a great respect for his slave.

When Saint Julia reached the age of twenty, the merchant decided to go to France (Gaul) on business. He took Saint Julia with him, for she was now his bookkeeper.

The merchant loaded his ship and set out. After many days, the ship came to the island of Corsica. There were a few Christians on the island, but at that time, most of the people were still pagans. Just at the time the ship arrived, these pagans were having a feast to worship their idols.

The merchant and his crew all went ashore and joined this feast. Animals were sacrificed to the demons and everyone began to eat and get drunk.

Saint Julia stayed on the ship, all alone, and prayed that God would teach these pagans the truth. Suddenly, someone came back on board the ship for something. He saw Julia standing there in prayer and understood that she was a Christian. The man reported her to the leader of the pagans. The leader was angry. He asked the merchant, "Why did this maiden not come to the feast to worship our idols?"

The merchant tried to defend Saint Julia, but the pagans were furious. They went to the ship and took her prisoner. The leader of the pagans demanded, "Offer sacrifices to our idols and give up this Christ of yours."

Julia replied, "I will never give up Christ. I am willing to die for Him."

The pagans began to torture Saint Julia in order to force her to renounce Christ, but God gave her strength and she stood fast.

At last, the leader of the pagans cried out, "So you want to die for Christ? Then die as He did!"

A rough cross was made, and Saint Julia was put on it. There, she died for our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Just as her soul left her body, all those present, even the pagans, saw radiant angels standing by Saint Julia's side. The angels took Saint

Julia's soul and carried it away to heaven, to our Saviour.

Seeing this, the pagans became terrified. They ran off in every direction and hid. Many of them later became Christians because of Saint Julia's witness for Christ, and the whole island of Corsica was soon devoted to Christ.

May the holy martyr Julia ever pray for us.

From "Lives of Saints for Young People" by Archbishop LAZAR.





**Formula for  
a Strong Nation**

I know three things must always be  
To keep a nation strong and free.  
One is a hearthstone bright and dear,  
With busy, happy loved ones near.

One is a ready heart and hand  
To love, and serve, and keep the land.  
One is a worn and beaten way  
To where the people go to pray.

So long as these are kept alive,  
Nation and people will survive.  
God, keep them always,  
everywhere— The home, the heart, the place of prayer.

—Author unknown



## Kid's Corner - Q & A

### Q: Who was the Fool for Christ, St. Lawrence of Kaluga?



**A:** August 10. Saint Lawrence was a fool for Christ. This means that he did many things which seemed foolish to worldly people. But all these things had a special meaning, and they helped to save many souls.

The saint was a great struggler. He fasted and prayed all the time. Because of his great humility and struggles against the passions, God gave

him many gifts of Grace. Saint Lawrence became filled with the Holy Spirit.

The blessed one walked barefoot in both summer and winter, wearing only a long shirt and a sheepskin jacket. Saint Lawrence lived in a small hut in a dense forest, half a mile from the city. Near his hut, there was a small church named for the Nativity of Christ. The saint usually spent the entire night in prayer on the steps of this church.

Saint Lawrence was concerned about everyone. He taught the rich to help the poor, made peace between enemies and, most important of all, helped people struggle against sin.

In 1512, some Mongols attacked the city of Kaluga. Prince Simeon and his soldiers went out to battle, but soon the

Mongols began to win and the prince himself was surrounded.

Saint Lawrence saw in a vision that Prince Simeon was being defeated, so he ran to the site of the battle, praying all the way there. When Saint Lawrence arrived, he stood nearby, leaning on his axe and praying to God, and the tide of battle immediately changed. The defenders of Kaluga won the battle and the city was saved. Because of this, in icons, Saint Lawrence is almost always shown with his axe in one hand, its blade on the ground.

Many other miracles were worked through the saint's prayers. He reposed in the Lord on 10 August, 1515, and was buried with great honour and love by the people.

*From "Lives of Saints for Young People" by Archbishop LAZAR.* ✠

*Those were the days, my friends, we thought they'd never end,  
we'd sing and dance all weekend long!!!*



## Welcome Back Labor Day Weekend! Sept. 2-4, 2011

St. George Cathedral • Charleston, WV

Mark your calendar now to celebrate the good times!

### FRIDAY NIGHT:

7 pm - Midnight: Get together with DJ, St. George Conference Center Ballroom

### SATURDAY FUN DAY (ON YOUR OWN):

10 am: Golf Outing, *Scarlet Oaks Country Club*  
1-5 pm: Shuttle to Mardi Gras Gaming Center from Embassy Suites

### SATURDAY EVENING:

8 pm - Midnight: *Hafli, Arabic Food - St. George Conference Center Ballroom.*

### SUNDAY:

10:30 am: Hierarchal Divine Liturgy followed by special coffee hour - *St. George Cathedral and Conference Center*

3:30 - 7 pm: Tailgate and Football Game - *WVU and Marshall (ON YOUR OWN)*  
- *Embassy Suites Athletic Club.*

7 pm - 1 am: Dinner and Hafli - *Embassy Suites Ballroom*

**TICKETS:** A registration desk will be outside of Embassy Suites Ballroom for ticket purchase, ticket pick up, and seating chart for Dinner table assignments. Registration desk will be open Friday and Saturday prior to start of the day's events.



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## Antiochian Women - (Ladies Guild)

Our Ladies Guild will meet again on Monday, Aug. 1 at 6:30 PM. We will try to "beat the heat" with an ice cream social before the meeting. We will finalize plans for our annual dinner on Oct. 16. Volunteers are still needed, so contact Mary Dooley or Anne Marie Haddy.

All Antiochian Woman of St. George are invited to attend our meetings to plan activities for the fall. Stay cool and mark your calendar to join us Aug. 1 at 6:30 PM. ✠

## Senior Fellowship

Thank you to all who came out for our Senior get-togethers in May and June. Dr. Bruce Cassis' pictorial trip to Lebanon was enjoyed by all. Some even said they would like to see it again. In June, the WV Mountain Valley Cloggers danced their way into our hearts with an evening of foot-stomping and hand-clapping entertainment.

Due to preparations for our annual dinner, we may not be able to meet again until after Oct. 16. So watch the bulletin and September newsletter for details. ✠

*I don't feel old. I don't feel anything until noon. Then it's time for my nap.*

- Bob Hope



## Church School News



By Layla Michael

I wanted to start off by saying thank you to everyone that has helped this year with our Church School. I could not do it without the continued support of everyone in our Cathedral and especially the teachers, and parents of our children. I want to also thank everyone of our children who participated in this year's Creative Festival. We have some very talented children in our Cathedral and I am sure it was very difficult to pick winners from all of the entries. The following children will be receiving awards for their efforts in the Creative Festivals this year at the Parish Life Conference in Baltimore.

### Creative Writing:

Reema Choueiri - 2nd place; Sophia Skaff - 3rd place; Matthew Ede - 3rd place.

### Creative Arts:

Alanna Mobayed - 3rd place.

### Creative Poetry:

Brent Bsharah - 1st place; Kaitlin Nester - 3rd place; Jenna Bsharah - 1st place; Megan Bsharah - 1st place.

### Creative Photography:

Isaac Abdalla - 3rd place.

I am very proud of the winners, and to all the children who turned in an entry this year. I hope that we see even more entrants and winners next year! Our annual kickoff luncheon will be held on August 21, 2011. There will be inflatables in the gym for the children, with more details following soon. Our first day of Church School will be September 11, 2011 at 9:45 am. Please mark these important dates on the calendar. I hope to see everyone in attendance for another exciting year of Church School at St. George Cathedral. God Bless you all and I hope everyone has a safe and enjoyable summer vacation! See you in August! ✕

## House of Needs - A Scriptural Meditation

*Every Christian house in itself represents an infinitely large house - the universe, heaven and earth - in which the Lord dwells. It is for this reason that one sees in every Christian house representations of the Saviour and of the Mother of God - listening to the prayers of those who live in the house and who call upon Them.*

*St. John of Kronstadt*

*(My Life in Christ, Holy Trinity Monastery, 1971, p. 178 part 2)*

*Your house is that in which you live and move and have your being. Within it dwells your body, heart and God. This little temple of the wood of the tree needs a strong foundation deeply secured on the rock nestled against the side of the hill from whence cometh Thy help, the One Who made heaven and earth.*

*Your house needs walls to hold up the roof, so that the sun will not smite thee by day nor the moon by night; so that the Psalmist's lone bird on the roof-top will have a place to rest his foot; so that it can serve as Moses' veil worn over his shining face (having received the Ten Commandments), when your life within becomes so radiant the neighbors would think your house afire!*

*Your house needs lamps, chandeliers, lampadas in front of the icons, for you see by the light of your eye and by God Who is Light and in Whom there is no darkness at all.*

*Your house needs rooms for your family members, for in your Father's House there are many mansions. And for the One for Whom there was no room in the inn — a corner becomes the center.*

*Your house needs closets where you can enter in and pray.*

*Your house needs stairs to ascend and descend from one level to another as the angels call to you.*

*Your house needs water, pure and holy, cool as Jacob's well, warm as the Holy Spirit, dew from heaven, gift of tears, an ever-flowing fountain.*

*Your house needs a chimney to let smoke rise as incense of prayer.*

*Your house needs windows, icons to look in on you from outer sacred space.*

*Your house needs doors through which, even closed, holiness can pass because it is everywhere present, filling all things.*

*Your house needs beds on which to meditate in your heart and be still.*

*Your house needs a kitchen where Martha can be concerned about many things, and Mary watch and hear the Word of God.*

*Your house needs children like olive plants around your table.*

*And your house needs an oak tree under which you may entertain angels unawares.*

*"Unless the Lord builds the house, those that build it labor in vain"*  
(Ps. 127~1).

*Your house needs you and the loving care which you provide for the life of the world within, in response to the grace and great mercy of the steadfast love of the Almighty Lord.* ✕

*I never lose sight of the fact that just being is fun.*

- Katherine Hepburn

## Happy Fourth of July!

Fill in the blanks:

You're a   1   old flag,

You're a   2   flying flag.

And forever, in   3   may you wave.

You're the   4   of the land I love.

The   5   of the   6   and the   7  .

Ev'ry heart beats   8   under   9  ,  
  10   and   11  .

Where there's never a   12   or brag.

But should   13     14   be forgot  
  15   your eye on the grand old flag.





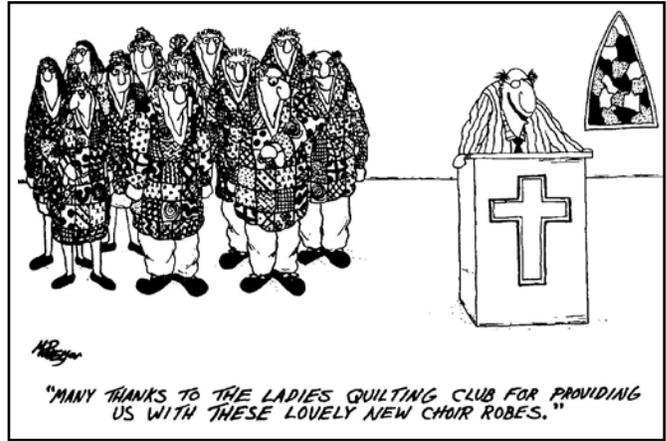
### CALENDAR

**JUL 2011**

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
31						

**AUG 2011**

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	31			



1-3: Parish Life Conf., Baltimore

6: Parish Council, 7:30 PM

15: Wedding Rehearsal,

16: Wedding,

19: Evening Liturgy-Elijah, 6:30 PM

21: Communion for Shut-ins

23: Manna Meal Preparation, 9:30 AM

25-31: Archdiocese Conv.-Chicago; Fr. Olof attending

6: Liturgy-Transfiguration, 10:00 AM

10-12: Archdiocese Business-Fr. Olof attending

15: Evening Liturgy-Dormition, 6:30 PM

18: Communion for Shut-ins

19: Wedding Rehearsal, 6:00 PM

20: Wedding, 3:30 PM

26-28: Wedding, Toledo-Fr. Olof attending

27: Manna Meal Preparation, 9:30 AM

29: Evening Liturgy-Beheading of John Baptist, 6:30 PM

30: FSJD Meeting, 7:30 PM

- 15 keep
  - 14 acquaintance
  - 13 auld
  - 12 boast
  - 11 blue
  - 10 white
  - 9 red
  - 8 true
  - 1 grand
  - 2 high
  - 3 peace
  - 4 emblem
  - 5 hoome
  - 6 fee
  - 7 brave
- Answers to Grand Old Flag



1: Dormition Fast begins; Ladies Guild, 6:30 PM

3: Parish Council, 7:30 PM

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