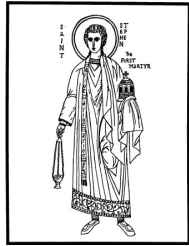


# “THE PROTOMARTYR”

WEEKLY BULLETIN OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH OF ST. STEPHEN



**Sunday Mar. 7, 2010 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the Great Fast – Tone 6**

**Epistle:** Heb. 4:14-5:6    **Gospel:** Mark 8:34-9:1

## VENERATION OF THE CROSS

The Third Sunday of Lent is that of the Veneration of the Cross. The cross stands in the midst of the church in the middle of the lenten season not merely to remind men of Christ's redemption and to keep before them the goal of their efforts, but also to be venerated as that reality by which man must live to be saved. "He who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me" (Mt.10:38). For in the Cross of Christ Crucified lies both "the power of God and the wisdom of God" for those being saved (1 Cor.1:24).

<http://ocafs.oca.org/FeastSaintsViewer.asp?SID=4&ID=1&FSID=14>

## THE SEVEN HIEROMARTYRS OF CHERSON: BASIL, EPHREM, EUGENIUS, ELPIDUS, AGATHADORUS, AETHERIUS, AND CAPITO

All of them were bishops in Cherson at different times. All suffered and were martyred at the hands of unbelievers, whether they were Jews, Greeks or Scythians, except Aetherius, who died peacefully. All of them were sent by the Patriarch of Jerusalem as missionaries to bring the light of the Gospel to these wild and uncivilized areas. They were tortured and suffered for their Lord. In Cherson, Basil raised the son of a prince from the dead which embittered the Jews and they, in turn, brought an accusation against him. He was tied and bound by the feet and dragged through the streets until his soul departed him. Ephrem was beheaded. Eugenius, Elpidus and Agathadorus were beaten with rods and stoned until they gave up their souls to God. Aetherius lived during the reign of Emperor Constantine the Great. He governed the Church in freedom and peace, erected a large church in Cherson, and died peacefully. When

the last of them, Capito, was appointed bishop for the wild and savage Scythians, they sought a sign from him that they may believe. They suggested that he enter into a fiery furnace and, if he was not consumed, they would all believe in Christ. With fervent prayers and hope in God, Capito placed his episcopal pallium over his shoulders, signed himself with the sign of the cross, and entered into the flaming hot furnace, keeping his heart close to God. He remained in the flames for about an hour without any injury or damage, either to his body or to his vesture. He came out in good health. Then, at once, all of them cried out: "One is God, the God of the Christians, great and mighty, Who protects His servant in the flaming furnace." The entire city and all the vicinity were then baptized. This miracle was spoken of at length at the First Ecumenical Council [Nicaea, 325 A.D.]. The participants in the Council all glorified God and praised the steadfast and solid faith of St. Capito. It happened that while Capito was traveling along the Dnieper river, he was captured by the pagan Scythians and was drowned. All these seven priestly-martyrs suffered during the early years of the fourth century.

Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich, *The Prologue from Ohrid*

## SERVICES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

Mar. 10, Wednesday	Presanctified Liturgy At St. Petka's	6:00 p.m.
Mar. 12, Friday	Presanctified Liturgy & Lenten Pot Luck Meal	6:30 p.m.
Mar. 13, Saturday	Annual Church Cleaning Memorial Panikhida Vigil	9:00 a.m. 4:45 p.m. 5:00 p.m.
Mar. 14, Sunday	Hours Divine Liturgy	9:10 a.m. 9:30 a.m.

## REMINDERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*A Warm Welcome to all our visitors and guests who have participated in our celebration of the Divine Liturgy this morning!  
We invite all of our guests to please join us for our Fellowship Hour and to visit our Bookstore.*

## Notes from the Central Florida Council Of Orthodox Churches:

- The Presanctified Divine Liturgy will be held on Wednesday, March 10<sup>th</sup> beginning at 6pm at the St. Petka's Serbian Orthodox Church, 1990 Lake Emma Road, Longwood.
- The year's Lenten Lecture will be held on Sunday, March 21<sup>st</sup> beginning at 5pm at the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church,

1217 Trinity Woods Lane, Maitland. The speaker will be Fr. Daniel Hickman.

**Recommended Reading:** *The Lenten Spring* by Fr. Thomas Hopko is a book of 40 meditations providing inspiration for our yearly journey to Pascha. Let us begin our Lenten journey with enthusiasm and diligently prepare so that our joy may be complete when we greet our Lord's Resurrection! *The Lenten Spring* is highly recommended to help us in that preparation! **It is currently available in St. Stephen's Bookstore.**

**Mark your Calendars! Next Saturday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m. has been chosen as the time for the Annual Church Cleaning.** A list of things needing to be done in order to prepare the church, education building and grounds for PASCHA has been posted in the Narthex. It would be appreciated if those coming to help could bring cleaning supplies such as: Rags, Brass Polish, Silver Polish, Pledge, Spray Cleaners (409), Glass Cleaner, Sponges, Buckets, etc.

#### **Metropolitan Jonah's seminary lenten retreat videos**

Videos of four lenten talks given by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah during a retreat for students of Saint Tikhon's Seminary on the first three days of Great Lent are now available on-line at [http://www.stots.edu/news\\_100223\\_2.html](http://www.stots.edu/news_100223_2.html).

In addition to touching on a variety of lenten and pastoral themes, Metropolitan Jonah challenged the seminarians to avoid meeting spiritual difficulties with resentment or reaction, but to seek inner stillness during the lenten season and beyond.

**There is a Lost & Found container in the Narthex.** If you are missing anything please check it out.

#### **PRAYER REQUESTS**

Mary Burke's brother and former parishioner of St. Stephens, Nicholas Holowatch of New Castle, DE, fell asleep in the Lord on Monday, March 1, 2010. May his Memory be Eternal! Please remember Nicholas, his wife Marie, and Mary in your prayers.

#### **PRAYERS FOR THE HEALTH & SALVATION OF THOSE IN NEED**

Priest Lawrence, Priest Peter, Maria, George, Rima, Stacy, Tamara, Lisa, Larry, Margaret, Roberta, Matushka Mary, Margaret, Salome.

**PRAYERS FOR THE NEWLY DEPARTED: MEMORY ETERNAL!**  
Joseph, Michael, John, Nicholas.

*Please let Father know if there is anyone you would like to have prayed for and added to these lists. Please use these lists in your daily prayers to remember those in need, and the faithful departed.*

#### **BIRTHDAYS, MAR. 7 – MAR. 13**

8th Fiona King  
11th Dina Fedosenko  
12th Helen Stephenson  
13th Maria Pitts

#### **ANNIVERSARIES, MAR. 7 – MAR. 13**

None

**MAY GOD GRANT THEM MANY YEARS!**

#### **Readers for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Great Lent**

SAT	VESPERS	Gloria Malanowski
6	MATINS	Mary Jane Allegro
SUN	HRS/COMM	Stephen Malanowski
7	EPISTLE	Zora Russell

#### **Readers for the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday Presanctified Liturgy**

FRI	READER	Robert Kindell
12	OT1 & OT2	Gloria Malanowski

#### **Readers for the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Great Lent**

SAT	VESPERS	Anne van den Berg
13	MATINS	Gloria Malanowski
SUN	HRS/COMM	Mary Jane Allegro
14	EPISTLE	Arlene Tonjes

#### **Coffee Hour Servers for 7 March**

Maltseva, Cox, Artamonova

#### **SYNAXARION FOR THE THIRD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT**

**"Let all the earth venerate the Cross, through which it has learned to worship Thee, the Word."**

On this third Sunday of the Great Fast we celebrate the Veneration of the precious and life-giving Cross. Since during the forty days of the Fast we are also in a way crucified, mortified to the passions,

contrite, abased and despondent, the precious and life-giving Cross is offered to us as refreshment and confirmation, calling to mind the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ and comforting us. If our God was crucified for our sake, how great should be our effort for His sake, since our afflictions have been assuaged through the Lord's tribulations, and by the commemoration and the hope of the Cross of glory. For as our Savior in ascending the Cross was glorified through dishonor and grief, so should we also endure our sorrows, in order to be glorified with Him. Also, as those who have traveled a long hard road, weighed down by the labors of their journey, in finding a shady tree, take their ease for a moment and then continue their journey rejuvenated, so now in this time of the Fast, this sorrowful and laborious journey, the Holy Fathers have planted the life-giving Cross, for our relief and refreshment, to encourage and make easier the labors that lie ahead. Or as when there is a royal procession, the king's scepter and banners precede him, and then he then himself appears, radiant and joyous in his victory, causing his subjects to rejoice with him. So then our Lord Jesus Christ, desiring to show His sure victory over death and His glory on the day of the Resurrection, sends His scepter before Himself, the sign of His kingship, the life-giving Cross, to gladden and refresh us, as it greatly fortifies and enables us to be prepared to receive the King with all possible strength, and to praise Him in His radiant victory.

This week lies at the middle of the holy Forty Day Fast. The Fast is like a bitter source because of our contrition and the sadness and sorrow for sin that it brings. And as Moses plunged the branch in the bitter waters of Marah, making them sweet, so God, Who has led us through the spiritual Red Sea away from Pharaoh, through the life-giving wood of the precious and life-giving Cross, sweetens the bitterness of the Forty Day Fast, and comforts us as those who were in the wilderness, up until the time when by His Resurrection He will lead us to the spiritual Jerusalem. And since the Cross is called, and indeed is, the Tree of Life, it is the very tree that was planted in the Garden of Eden. So it is fitting that the Holy Fathers have planted the Tree of the Cross in the middle of the Forty Day Fast to commemorate both Adam's tasting of its sweet fruit and of its being taken from us in favor of the Tree of the Cross, tasting of which we shall in no way die, but will have even greater life.

*Through the power of Thy Cross, O Christ our God,  
preserve us also from the temptations of the Evil One.  
And make us worthy to venerate*

*Thy divine Passion and life-bearing Resurrection,  
having radiantly traversed the great length of the Fast,  
and have mercy on us, as Thou art good  
and lovest mankind.*

*Amen.*

Translated from Triodion, siest' Tripesnets: Triod' Postnaya, Moscow, 1904, by Robert Parent.

### YOUNG ADULTS IN, OR OUT OF, THE CHURCH

**A few years ago, a book called "Soul Searching" investigated the spiritual lives of teenagers. It found that religion can be important to teens, but it also determined that many of them adhere to what it called "moralistic therapeutic deism." This can be defined as a belief in a kind, loving God who is not connected to any particular faith tradition, and who is there largely to help in solving personal problems.**

"Souls in Transition" is author Christian Smith's follow-up to the earlier book, and it gives valuable insights into the lives of those he terms "emerging adults" between the ages of 18 and 23. Emerging adults marry relatively late, may spend several years in higher education, and rarely stay for decades at the same job because of the unreliable global economy. Many are unaffiliated with any institution, and have no commitment to a worshipping community.

So which, if any, of these emerging adults might make or keep a commitment to faith? Smith answers that it is those who, as teenagers, had examples of older people who practiced their faith. There are other factors (such as prayer, reading of Scripture, multiple religious experiences and the absence of strong doubts in the teen years) but the example of practiced faith is the strongest indicator of future commitment. Teens who have had no such example are unlikely to develop their spiritual lives as emerging adults, and will probably follow the societal trend of indifference, and sometimes hostility, to faith.

Smith rejects the idea that parents (or adult caretakers) become less significant in their children's lives during the teen years. In fact, parents' perception that their children don't want them to promote or "impose" religious beliefs, and their resulting fear of doing so, leaves the teens "floating in a directionless murk to figure out completely on their own some of life's most basic questions concerning reality, truth, goodness, value, morality and identity." It isn't that these children

don't want their parents' involvement, Smith says. It's rather that they want it on "renegotiated" terms that "take seriously their growing maturity and desired independence."

Not only teens, but also the emerging adults who are the subject of this book benefit from the counsel, mentoring and simple presence of caring older people. Smith calls on the churches in America to recognize the unsettled and often disconnected years of emerging adulthood as a fairly new phenomenon in our fast-changing culture. Churches should create ways to reach out to emerging adults, just as they have created ways to reach out to other groups such as the elderly and families with young children.

But it really begins in the teen years, and well before. Children need relationships with adult faith models. Smith, being interviewed about "Souls in Transition," put it this way: "The most important factor is parents. For better or worse, parents are tremendously important in shaping their children's faith trajectories. That's the story that came out in "Soul Searching." It's also the story that comes out here."

**This weekly bulletin insert complements the curriculum published by the Department of Christian Education of the Orthodox Church in America. This and many other Christian Education resources are available at <http://dce.oca.org>.**



**Please contact** Fr. Daniel Hickman for all pastoral issues, hospital visits, emergencies, etc. Please keep him abreast of any issues that come up.

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

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