



SS Peter and Paul Albanian Orthodox Church
9230 Old Bustleton Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19115
Church Phone: 215-676-3311

Pastor: Father Stephen Siniari
Rectory Phone: 1-609-385-3757



Church Bulletin ~ April 2007

Father Stephen's Message to the Faithful

On Insensibility, That Is, Deadening of the Soul and the Death of the Mind before the Death of the Body

"He who has lost sensibility is a witless philosopher, a self-condemned commentator, a self-contradictory windbag, a blindman who teaches others to see.

He talks about healing a wound, and does not stop irritating it. He complains of sickness, and does not stop eating what is harmful. He prays against it, and immediately goes and does it. And when he has done it, he is angry with himself; and the wretched man is not ashamed of his own words. 'I am doing wrong,' he cries, and eagerly continues to do so.

His mouth prays against his passion, and his body struggles for it. He philosophizes about death, but he behaves as if he were immortal. He groans over the separation of soul and body, but drowses along as if he were eternal.

He talks of temperance and self-control, but he lives for gluttony. He reads about the judgment and begins to smile. He reads about vainglory, and is vainglorious while actually reading.

He repeats what he has learned about vigil, and drops asleep on the spot. He praises prayer, but runs from it as from the plague. He blesses obedience, but he is the first to disobey. He praises detachment, but he is not ashamed to be spiteful and to fight for a rag.

When angered, he becomes bitter, and he is angered again at his bitterness; and he does not feel that, after one defeat, he is suffering another.

Having overeaten he repents, and a little later again gives way. He blesses silence, and praises it with a spate of words. He teaches meekness, and during the actual teaching frequently gets angry. Having woken from passion he sighs, and shaking his head, he again yields to passion. He condemns laughter, and lectures on mourning with a smile on his face.

Before others he blames himself for being vainglorious, and in blaming himself is only angling for glory for himself. He looks people in the face with passion, and talks about chastity. While frequenting the world, he praises those who live in stillness without realizing that he shames himself. He extols almsgivers, and reviles beggars.

All the time he is his own accuser, and he does not want to come to his senses -- I will not say cannot."

-- *St John of the Ladder*

Special Announcements from Fr. Stephen

*** **Father Stephen** may be reached at **609-385-3757, Monday - Friday, 8 AM - 5 PM** or by e-mail: **ssiniari@covenanthouse.org**

Please remember that all confessions and consultations on Sunday mornings shall take place from 9 AM to 10 AM before the Divine Liturgy. Thank you!

Events & Announcements

Liturgical Schedule - March/April/May 2007

ANNUNCIATION - SUNDAY, MARCH 25 - Divine Liturgy, 10 AM

PRE-SANCTIFIED - WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28 (*Last one*) - 7 PM

LAZARUS SATURDAY - MARCH 31 - Divine Liturgy, 9 AM

ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM & BLESSING OF PALMS - APR 1 (SUN) - Divine Liturgy 10 AM

HOLY WEDNESDAY - APR 4 (HOLY UNCTION) - 7 PM

HOLY THURSDAY - APR 5 (TWELVE PASSION GOSPELS) - 7 PM

**HOLY FRIDAY - APR 6 (VESPERS, TAKING DOWN FROM CROSS) - 3 PM;
LAMENTATIONS AT TOMB - 7 PM**

HOLY SATURDAY - APR 7 (VESPERAL LITURGY OF ST. BASIL) - 9 AM

ORTHROS/PASHKAL CANON/LITURGY - APR 7 (SAT) - 11 PM

PASCHA SUNDAY - APR 8 (AGAPE VESPERS; GOSPEL IN MANY LANGUAGES) - Noon; EASTER EGG HUNT FOR CHILDREN AFTER VESPERS

HOLY ASCENSION THURSDAY - MAY 17 - Divine Liturgy, 9 AM

Church News & Reminders

MEMBERSHIP DUES 2007 - Dues are \$115 per person and can be paid at any time to James Schaeffer, our Treasurer. *Thank you!*

ICON PLEDGES - Pledges can still be made by contacting the treasurer, James Schaeffer or Stephen Murianka with the Saint's name and the amount. **Please note:** when returning your Icons, please return them to the treasurer, James Schaeffer.

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING - To be announced (usually the 1st Mon of each month). All Parishioners are welcome to attend.

SPECIAL SERVICES - If you are planning to have a special service in the Church, please be considerate and notify either Father Stephen or the Church Committee one week in advance. When you are planning for a Baptism, Wedding, Funeral, or any other Prayer Service in the Church, please speak with Father Stephen in advance to determine if there is any way you can contribute to help the Church in helping others. Thank you. *Please note: if the services of the Church Choir are required, please notify the Choir Director, Christina Murianka, as soon as possible.*

NO SMOKING/NO CELL PHONES - Please remember that SS Peter & Paul has a no smoking policy in the building and that ringers on cell phones should be off during the Divine Liturgy.

The Joy of Giving

CASSEROLES FOR THE HOMELESS - In March: 12 casseroles, 2 bags of food, and personal items were delivered. Disposable razors and individual/small tubes of hand lotion are still needed. Please continue to help feed the hungry. Frozen casseroles are collected on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month by Harry Halkedis. A \$10 donation for casseroles can be given at any time. *Thank you!*

COLLECTION FOR THE POOR - A special collection for the poor will be held on the 1st Sunday of every month. Please plan to give generously every month to those whose lives are less fortunate than ours. Donations can also be placed in the **Poor Box** at any time.

ORTHODOX HERALD COLLECTION - Collections for the *Orthodox Herald* will take place every 2nd Sunday of the month. Please donate generously.

DONATIONS OF WINE & OIL - Altar wine and virgin olive oil for the altar lamps are always needed. The name of the altar wine is **Mavrodaphne of Patras** and it is available at most PA State Stores. Please help make sure that we always have a plentiful supply.

PASTORAL FUND COLLECTION - Collections for the Pastoral Fund will take place every 3rd Sunday of the month. Please donate generously. "Pastoral Fund" donation envelopes are found in the Church foyer, on the left side of the glass partition, should you wish to donate at another time.

POP TAB COLLECTION PRGRAM FOR RONALD McDONALD HOUSE - RJ
(with the help of his parents, Debbie & Bob Krimetz) is collecting flip tabs from soda cans, soup and vegetable cans, dog food cans, and any aluminum cans with flip tabs to donate to the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House. The program began in 1997 and to date over 127 tons have been collected, which translates into more than \$94,150. **A container has been placed upstairs in the Church Hall for the tabs.** Help RJ help the Ronald McDonald House! Thank you and remember to bring your tabs!

Sunday School News

LENTEN PROJECT - As a Lenten project for the Sunday school children, we are attempting to coordinate a project with the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House. Founded in Philadelphia in 1974, the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House provides a "home-away-from-home" at an affordable price. Parents can have a place to stay while their seriously ill child is undergoing pediatric care at a local hospital.

Once established, details about the project will be going home with each child. In addition to our project we are coordinating a visit to the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House for a tour. The children will be able to see the good work that is done there for other children and how their work and contributions will help and support other children and their parents. **Thank you for your help and support. If you have any questions please see Greg or Rose Shaloka.**

Ladies' Society News

APRIL (Date to be Announced) ~ ***Hot Dog/Meatball Sandwich Sunday***

MAY (Date to be Announced) ~ ***Hot Roast Beef Sandwich Sunday***

General Interest

ANCIENT FAITH RADIO - 24 hour a day Orthodox radio station providing high quality internet-based Orthodox programming, music, teaching, interviews, features, convert testimonies, conference recordings, and much more! The URL is: <http://ancientfaithradio.com>

Miscellaneous

WEB PAGE/E-MAILS - SS Peter & Paul Webpage: <http://homepage.mac.com/aliciaj17/sspeterpaulhome1.html>. New Bulletins can be viewed the Saturday before distribution by 7 PM. If you would like to be kept up-to-date by e-mail or to be removed from our "paper" mailing list, please send me an e-mail at: aliciaj17@mac.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS/NEWS ABOUT PARISHIONERS - If you have any items to include in next month's Bulletin, please leave the information in my wicker basket in the office. Or, call Alicia at **215-742-0492** or e-mail: aliciaj17@mac.com. The deadline for the next Bulletin is Sunday, **April 22**. Thank you! Parishioners will be able to pick up the Bulletins at the Church on Sunday **4/29/07**. Bulletins will be mailed to any Parishioners unable to attend.

Please remember to let Alicia know the names of our members who are ill or in need of prayer so that they can be included in our Bulletins.

Thank You to all members of the Parish who have helped out or volunteered in any way with their time and efforts, and a very special **thank you** to anyone whose name was inadvertently omitted from the Bulletin.

Parishioner's Corner

A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY is wished to the following parishioners and friends who are celebrating **April** Birthdays: **Stuart Barenbaum, Terri Drobish, Belinda Mentzer, Sally O'Brien, Rose Shaloka, Sharon Spause, Margaret Vesho**

May God grant them all many, many years!

SOPHIE BACON is recuperating from a broken arm.

Please keep Sophie in your prayers! May God grant her a speedy recovery!

A MOST SINCERE THANK YOU to all who volunteered their time, efforts and "elbow grease" to help out during the SS Peter & Paul Annual Clean Up/Fix Up Day.

May God grant them all many, many years!

GREGORY VRATO, SR., is at the **John Neumann Nursing Home**, Room 726, at the intersection of Haldeman & Tomlinson Road (make a right on Tomlinson and the parking lot is immediately on your right). Visitors are welcome anytime from noon to 8:00 PM.

Please continue to keep Gregory in your prayers. May God grant him good health!

Let Us Keep Them in our Prayers

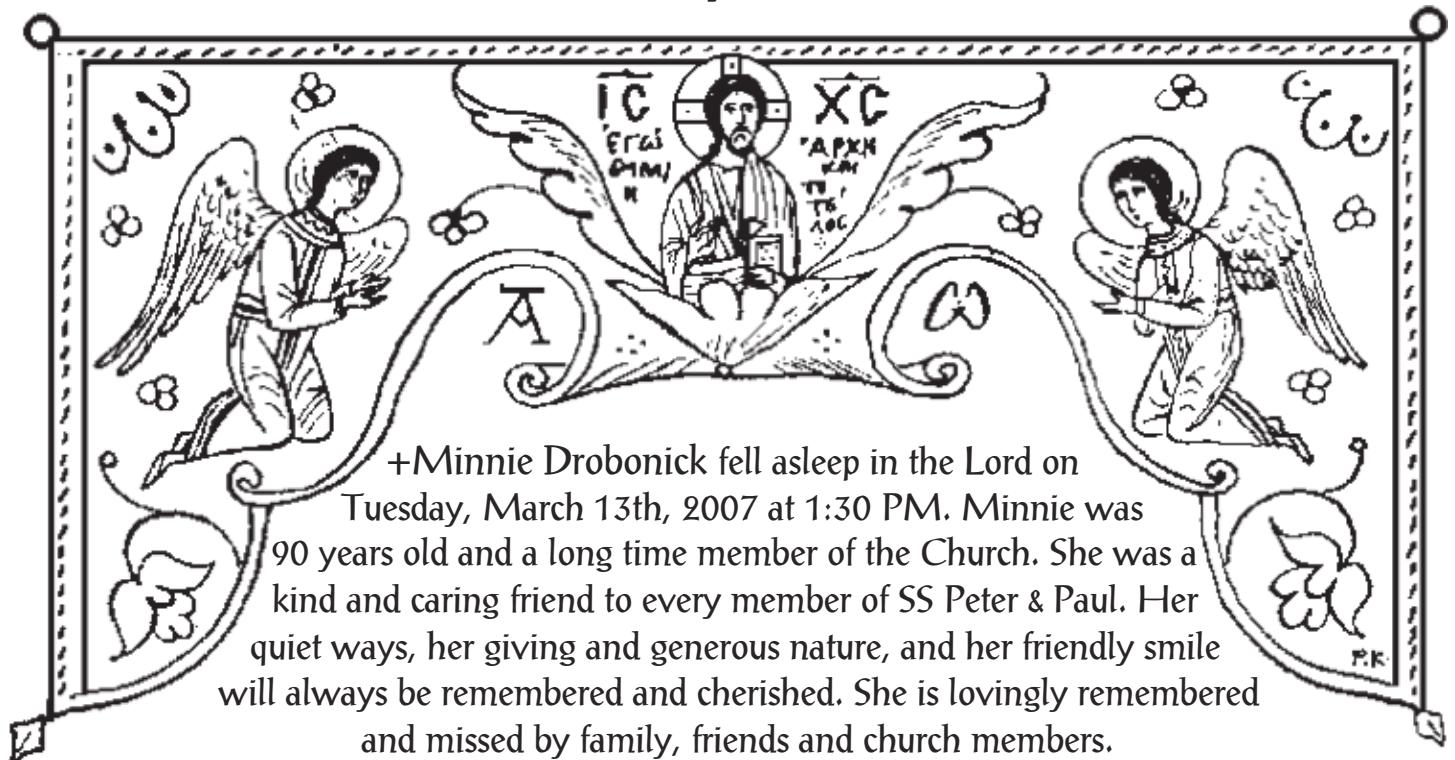
Please continue to pray for the full and speedy recovery of: **Gregory Vreto, Sr., Nina Horowitz, Spiro Costas, Harry Cappo, Matthew Murianka, Joyce Dorsey, Andi Steffa, Martha Murianka, John Palmerick, Thimi Daka, Helen Arndt, Al Rifkin, Sophie Bacon**

*** God knows the names and ages of all who need His love and mercy...

Prayer for the Sick

O Christ, Who alone art our Defender: Visit and heal Thy suffering servant _____, delivering him (her) from sickness and grievous pains. Raise him (her) up that he (she) may sing to Thee and praise Thee without ceasing, through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Thou Who alone lovest mankind.

Memory Eternal



+Minnie Drononick fell asleep in the Lord on Tuesday, March 13th, 2007 at 1:30 PM. Minnie was 90 years old and a long time member of the Church. She was a kind and caring friend to every member of SS Peter & Paul. Her quiet ways, her giving and generous nature, and her friendly smile will always be remembered and cherished. She is lovingly remembered and missed by family, friends and church members.

May her memory be eternal!

**The 40 day Memorial Service
for +Minnie Drononick
will be on Sunday, April 22nd**

Holy Days and Name Days in April

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| April 1 | - Entrance into Jerusalem; Palm Sunday |
| April 4 | - Holy Wednesday |
| April 5 | - Holy Thursday |
| April 6 | - Holy Friday; St Methodius, Enlightener of the Slavs |
| April 7 | - Holy Saturday; Repose of St Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow |
| April 8 | - Pascha - Feast of Feasts |
| April 9 | - St Vadim, Monk Martyr of Persia |
| April 14 | - St Martin, Confessor, Pope of Rome |
| April 15 | - St Thomas Sunday |
| April 16 | - Virgin Martyrs Agape, Irene & Chionia |
| April 22 | - Holy Myrrhbearing Women; Apostles Nathaniel, Luke & Clement |
| April 23 | - Holy Great Martyr, Victorybearer, Wonderworker George |
| April 25 | - Holy Apostle & Evangelist Mark |
| April 28 | - St Jason & St Sosipater |
| April 29 | - Sunday of the Paralytic |
| April 30 | - Holy Apostle James, Brother of St John; St Ignatius Brianchaninov |

Great and Holy Thursday

Two events shape the liturgy of Great and Holy Thursday: the Last Supper of Christ with His disciples, and the betrayal of Judas. The meaning of both is in love. The Last Supper is the ultimate revelation of God's redeeming love for man, of love as the very essence of salvation. And



the betrayal of Judas reveals that sin, death and self-destruction are also due to love, but to deviated and distorted love, love directed at that which does not deserve love. Here is the mystery of this unique day, and its liturgy, where light and darkness, joy and sorrow are so strangely mixed, challenges us with the choice on which depends the eternal destiny of each one of us. "Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come... having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end..." (John 13:1). To understand the meaning of the Last Supper we must see it as the very end of the great movement of Divine Love which began with the creation of the world and is now to be consummated in the death and resurrection of Christ.

God is Love (1 John 4:8). And the first gift of Love was life. The meaning, the content of life was communion. To be alive man was to eat and to drink, to partake of the world. The world was thus Divine love made food, made Body of man. And being alive, i.e. partaking of the world, man was to be in communion with God, to have God as the meaning, the content and the end of his life. Communion with the God-given world was indeed communion with God. Man received his food from God and making it his body and his life, he offered the whole world to

God, transformed it into life in God and with God. The love of God gave life to man, the love of man for God transformed this life into communion with God. This was paradise. Life in it was, indeed, eucharistic. Through man and his love for God the whole creation was to be sanctified and transformed into one all-embracing sacrament of Divine Presence and man was the priest of this sacrament.

But in sin man lost this eucharistic life. He lost it because he ceased to see the world as a means of Communion with God and his life as eucharist, as adoration and thanksgiving. . . He loved himself and the world for their own sake; he made himself the content and the end of his life. He thought that his hunger and thirst, i.e. his dependence of his life on the world - can be satisfied by the world as such, by food as such. But world and food, once they are deprived of their initial sacramental meaning - as means of communion with God, once they are not received for God's sake and filled with hunger and thirst for God, once, in other words, God is no longer, their real "content" can give no life, satisfy no hunger, for they have no life in themselves... And thus by putting his love in them, man deviated his love from the only object of all love, of all hunger, of all desires. And he died. For death is the inescapable "decomposition" of life cut from its only source and content. Man thought to find life in the world and in food, but he found death. His life became communion with death, for instead of transforming the world by faith, love, and adoration into communion with God, he submitted himself entirely to the world, he ceased to be its priest and became its slave. And by his sin the whole world was made a cemetery, where people condemned to death partook of death and "sat in the region and shadow of death" (Matt. 4:16).

But if man betrayed, God remained faithful to man. He did not "turn Himself away forever from His creature whom He had made, neither did He forget the works of His hands, but He visited him in diverse manners, through the tender compassion of His mercy" (Liturgy of St Basil). A new Divine work began, that of redemption and salvation. And it was fulfilled in Christ, the Son of God Who in order to restore man to his pristine beauty and to restore life as communion with God, became Man, took upon Himself our nature, with its thirst and hunger, with its desire for and love of, life. And in Him life was revealed, given, accepted and fulfilled as total and perfect Eucharist, as total and perfect communion with God. He rejected the basic human temptation: to live "by bread alone," He revealed that God and His kingdom are the real food, the real life of man. And this perfect eucharistic Life, filled with God, and, therefore Divine and immortal, He gave to all those who would believe in Him, i.e., find in Him the meaning and the content of their lives. Such is the wonderful meaning of the Last Supper. He offered Himself as the true food of man, because the Life revealed in Him is the true Life. And thus the movement of Divine Love which began in paradise with a Divine "take, eat. . ." (for eating is life for man) comes now "unto the end" with the Divine "take, eat, this is My Body..." (for God is life of man). The Last Supper is the restoration of the paradise of bliss, of life as Eucharist and Communion.

But this hour of ultimate love is also that of the ultimate betrayal. Judas leaves the light of the Upper Room and goes into darkness. "And it was night" (John 13:30). Why does he leave? Because he loves, answers the Gospel, and his fateful love is stressed again and again in the hymns of Holy Thursday. It does not matter indeed, that he loves the "silver." Money stands here for all the deviated and distorted love which leads man into betraying God. It is, indeed, love stolen from God and Judas, therefore, is the Thief. When he does not love God and in God, man still loves and desires, for he was created to love and love is his nature, but it is then a dark and self-destroying passion and death is at its end. And each year, as we immerse ourselves into the unfathomable light and depth of Holy Thursday, the same decisive question is addressed to each one of us: do I respond to Christ's love and accept it as my life, do I follow Judas into the darkness of his night?

The liturgy of Holy Thursday includes: a) Matins, b) Vespers and, following Vespers, the Liturgy of St Basil the Great. In the Cathedral Churches the special service of the Washing of Feet takes place after the Liturgy; while the deacon reads the Gospel, the Bishop washes the feet of twelve priests, reminding us that Christ's love is the foundation of life in the Church and shapes all relations within it. It is also on Holy Thursday that Holy Chrism is consecrated by the primates of autocephalous Churches, and this also means that the new love of Christ is the gift we receive from the Holy Spirit on the day of our entrance into the Church.

-- *Excerpted from the writings of The Very Rev. Alexander Schmemann
S.T.D. Professor of Liturgical Theology, St Vladimir's Seminary*

~ Reading and Icon Courtesy of OCA Webpage ~