ST. INNOCENT MESSENGER

Newsletter of St. Innocent Orthodox Church

A parish of the Orthodox Church in America
Diocese of the West, under the omophorion of
His Eminence Archbishop Benjamin

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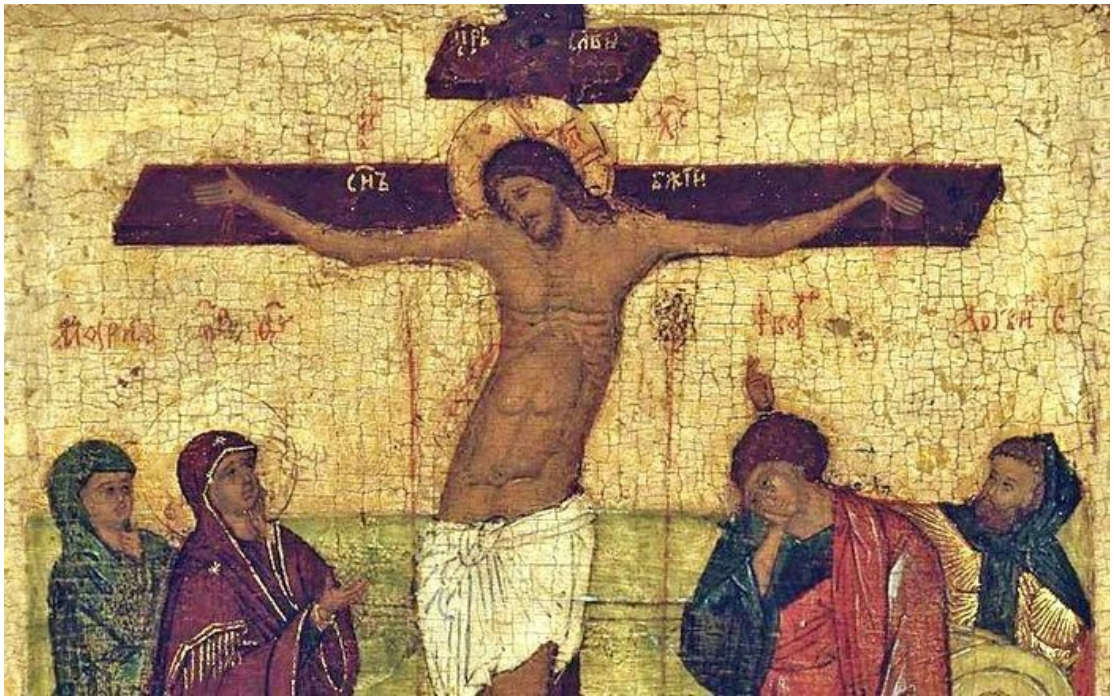
GREAT LENT 2020



Important dates for Great Lent and Pascha 2020:

Sunday March 1, Forgiveness Sunday, Forgiveness Vespers after Liturgy. Maslenitsa afterwards

.Everyone who considers this their home parish should attend the Forgiveness Vespers on that date.

Sunday March 8, Sunday of Orthodoxy, procession of Icons after Liturgy.

Wednesday March 25, Annunciation. (4th Wed of Gr Lent)

Saturday April 11, Lazarus Saturday, Church Cleaning after Liturgy

Sunday April 12, Palm Sunday. Procession of Palms after Liturgy

April 12 – 18 Holy Week

Friday April 17, Great Friday

Sunday April 19, PASCHA

MASLENITSA after Forgiveness Vespers

Please come and join us for the celebration of Maslenitsa before Great Lent. Let's gather with our brothers and sisters in Christ to break bread on Sunday, March 1, 2020. Let's worship and thank our Lord for the abundance of His gifts and Love. All delicious dishes will be prepared and donated by the loving hands of our Russian & Ukrainian women. Ticket $5 (minimum donation) kids free.

Sunday of Orthodoxy. March 8.

Procession of icons and prayers after Liturgy. Bring your favorite icon/ your patron saint icon and carry it in the procession.

Suggested reading about Great Lent

. Fr Alexander Schmemann. A short booklet. Available for borrowing and for sale in the narthex. Also available digitally.

by Fr Alexander Schmemann. The book "examines the meaning of Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, the Prayer of St Ephraim the Syrian, the Canon of St Andrew of Crete and other neglected or misunderstood treasures of Lenten worship". Very useful.

. Fr Thomas Hopko. A book of daily readings from the Lenten texts.

. Translated by Mother Mary & Fr (now Metropolitan) Kallistos Ware. The basic liturgical book of Great Lent, Sundays and major weekdays, all of the Clean week and Holy Week. There is a very useful introduction.

. Translated by Mother Mary & Fr (now Metropolitan) Kallistos Ware. The weekday texts, not included above in the first volume.

Confession Materials.

Preparation for Confession. Available free at the literature rack. Two different organizational lists.

Fr Thomas Hopko. A booklet arranged around the Beatitudes. Available for borrow and for sale in the narthex.

by Jim Forest A booklet, available for borrow in the narthex.

GROWING SPIRITUALLY

FROM LENT TO RESURRECTION

(excerpts)

WITNESS

With Christ, the time of judgement had already arrived. He came, not as one who judges us, but as one by whom all men are able to choose between God and the devil, light and darkness, by the way in which they either responded to or persecuted Jesus Christ. With Christ, the time of the end is already introduced into the world. The world is not against having a savior; as long as that savior fits the world's expectations. This is what the Pharisees and scribes were pointing out in their criticism of Jesus; that he should at least look and act like a savior; he should ride into Jerusalem on a white stallion, not a donkey. He should associate with known religious men, not tax collectors and riff-raH. He should keep the Sabbath holy; not perform miracles on the Sabbath.

In a word, Jesus should, as Messiah, conform to the criterion of savior that the world has set up. The very idea that the world has its own idea of what a savior could be is an act of rebellion and defiance from God. If it can do this, it has the right to stand against God; God

then must submit to the world's conditions, like a person who must obtain a visa before entering a foreign country.

Rather, God chose to reveal Himself in Christ, on his own terms, which are revealed only to those who see with the eyes of faith. Those who insist on their own criterion of savior remain shut up in their own darkness.

The tension between the two forces, this world, and the Kingdom of God, is most strained during Holy Week, when Christ infuses eternal life into the body of corruption, transforming the old world into the new.

END OF THE TEMPLE

The most serious charge put against Jesus at his trial was that of his claiming to be able to re-build the Temple three days. after its destruction. Jesus did not say He would tear it down, but he prophesied that it would be destroyed, which it was, about 70 AD.

This is the time, however, when the destruction of the Temple just didn't any longer matter, because Christ himself took the place of the Temple. For the Hebrews, it was inside the Temple that the glory of God was present. Now this glory is to be found in the Resurrected Lord. He who is crucified and resurrected takes the central place in the worship of the people which up to then was held by the Jerusalem Temple.

LAST SUPPER

What we most often think of when we celebrate the Divine Liturgy is the Last Supper of the Holy Thursday, before the Friday of our Lord's crucifixion; as if we are mystically sharing that very meal with Him and the Holy Apostles, and we are correct in so doing.

However, as regarding the element of time, we must also consider the timelessness of the eucharistic service by which we share in the eternal joy of the Kingdom of heaven. The Easter joy that we Orthodox experience on the pascal night, the joy that transcends our comprehension, is more like the times when our Lord shared a meal with the disciples after His resurrection, rather than the Thursday of the Last Supper.

Remember the story of the men from Emmaus, in St. Luke's gospel, (Lk. 24: 14) "did not our hearts burn within us …" and when he called them from the shore as they were fishing, and broiled fish for them, "while they still disbelieved for joy". This is the joy we share when we commune with the resurrected Lord.

CROSS AND RESURRECTION

In the gospel of St. John, time and eternity are given totally new significance by Christ. Death is the sign of this world, the end result of passing time. Christ is life, and the eternal life of God's kingdom. When Christ says:

"He who believes in me, even if he dies will come to life, and everyone who is alive and believes in me will never die." (John 11::25). He is stating that time itself is of no significance, since He is available to both those alive and those dead. The power of God at work in Him that assures eternal life to

those who live their lives in the Body of Christ, offers that eternal life to the believers who share His Body, already in this world. Life is the gift of Christ to men, and that life is Christ Himself.

It is the Cross itself which is the final lesson, summarizing dramatically all that Jesus had taught. When he told the disciples of his anticipated death, using the simile of a seed that cannot give life unless it die and be buried, what better example than his own death and burial? (John 12: 24) .

When he speaks of true love as laying down one's life for one's friends, this is just what he did in coming to Bethany and raising Lazarus from the dead, thereby placing his own life in jeopardy.

When the spear is thrust into his side, we who are on this side of the Pentecost coming are able to understand that the blood and water flowing from His side is that which, if a man drink, shall never thirst again, the blood which is from the True vine, the wine, like that of Cana of Galilee, is better tasting than all others, and of unlimited supply.

No career has ever been so crowded as that of the Lord's from the time in Cana of Galilee, when his Mother asked that he miraculously produce wine for the wedding guests and he replied, "My time has not yet arrived," to the time on the Cross, when He could finally return to the Father, assured in his last words that "It is accomplished".

– V B. [Archpriest Vladimir Berzonsky]. Originally printed by the Ohio Deanery

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On January 7th, our dear sister in Christ, Helen Norman reposed. She had been a long-time community member at our parish and is sorely missed. She was 92. She was a loving daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother and a good friend to many. Her big smile, bright blue eyes and her loving kindness will live on forever in the many lives she touched.

Helen was born January 25, 1927 in Montreal, Canada, one of 10 children of the late Mary and Alexander. In Montreal she was a devoted member of St Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Church. She and her husband George lived in the United Kingdom, in Atlanta Georgia, where she was a devoted member of St Elias Antiochian Orthodox Church, before moving here to California where she was a much loved and faithful member of our

parish. She was preceded in death in 2007 by her beloved husband of over 58 years, George Norman.

Helen is survived by her sisters Victoria Isaac and Xenia Samoluk, her 2 daughters Karen Norman and Sandra Norman (married to Emmanuel Edward Baetge), her son John Norman (married to Kathy) and her 3 grand daughters Katelyn, Kacie, and Kayley. *Picture*: Helen and her daughters and son in 2015 at the 60th anniversary of St. Innocent

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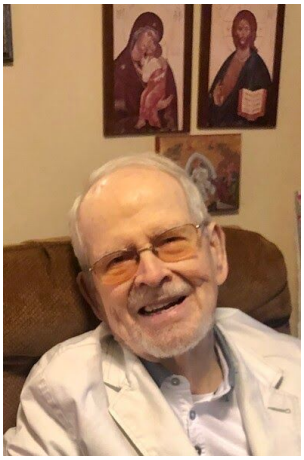
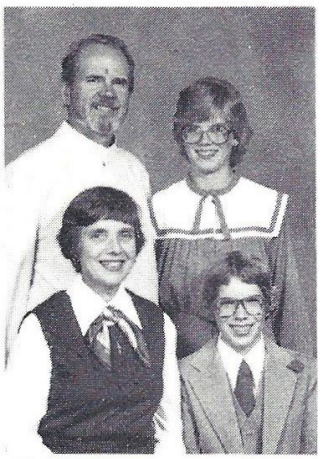
The Very Rev. Archpriest Dr. John Wallace Anderson fell asleep in the Lord peacefully in his sleep at his residence in Billings, Montana, on 11 February 2020, at the age of 95. He was soon to celebrate his 40th Anniversary to the Holy Priesthood. Born in Red Wing, Minnesota, on April 8,1924, raised as a Lutheran in the southern Minnesota Scandinavian farming community of Spring Garden, he served as US Naval officer (Ensign) on the USS Cabot carrier during World War II. After the war at Temple University he met the love of his life, the late Matushka Isabel Anne Scott Anderson. Wed on November 26, 1947, and raising a family of eight, they served together as Lutheran missionaries in Liberia and Sierra Leone, West Africa, promoting Bible Translation and literacy in the villages. At home in the States in 1977 they converted to the Eastern Orthodox Church, **joining St. Innocent OCA Parish in Tarzana, California**. In 1980 Father John was ordained to the Holy Priesthood and assigned to start a mission in Orange County, California. After operating a storefront mission and Orthodox day school in La Habra (1980-1989), Fr. John and Matushka Isabel served as instructors at St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary (1989-1993). After serving at Makarios III Seminary in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1995, Fr. John and Matushka Isabel lived in retirement near children and grandchildren in Billings, Montana. Attached to St. Nicholas OCA Church, they enjoyed many years of interaction with the parish. Since Matushka Isabel's death in 2004, Fr. John continued to stay active by authoring several books. Fr. John leaves behind a loving family which includes 18 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren. *Adapted from dowoca.org* The second photo, of Fr John as a deacon in our parish with his family, is from our parish's 25th anniversary directory, 1980.





FR. DEACON JOHN ANDERSON & FAMILY