



Weekly Bulletin

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

A Community of the Orthodox Church in America

Witnessing to the Apostolic Faith in Lake County for over 42 Years

Father Andrew Clements, Pastor

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Number 7

Sunday	Feb 18	<i>37th Sunday after Pentecost / Tone 4 / Cheesefare Sunday / Forgiveness Sunday</i>
		9:00 am Church School
		10:00 am Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour
		5:30 pm Forgiveness Vespers / Rite of Forgiveness
Monday	Feb 19	<i>1st Day of Great Lent</i>
		7:00 pm Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete
Tuesday	Feb 20	<i>2nd Day of Great Lent</i>
		7:00 pm Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete
Wednesday	Feb 21	<i>3rd Day of Great Lent</i>
		4:00 pm Confession
		6:30 pm Presanctified Liturgy
Thursday	Feb 22	<i>4th Day of Great Lent</i>
		7:00 pm Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete
Friday	Feb 23	<i>5th Day of Great Lent</i>
		7:00 pm Lagusch Funeral Coffee Hour
Saturday	Feb 24	<i>1st Saturday of Great Lent</i>
		10:00 pm Casket Closing Service / Interment - Mentor City Cemetary
		11:30 pm Funeral Luncheon in the Hall
		4:00 pm Confession
		5:30 pm Great Vespers Confession
Sunday	Feb 25	<i>1st Sunday of Great Lent / Tone 5 / Triumph of Orthodoxy</i>
		Readings: Heb 11:24-26, 32-12:2
		9:00 am Church School
		10:00 am Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour
		5:00 pm Festal Vespers / SS Constantine & Helen

ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP / Feb 11

Attendance: (Adults 125, Children 28)	153
Operating	\$3,845.00
OCA Assessments	324.00
Uganda Children	30.00
Charities	139.00
Zoe for Life	235.00
Pre-Lenten Brunch	386.00
Icons	35.00

SPECIAL THANKS

Thanks to all who helped in any way with our Pre-Lenten Brunch last Sunday. Everything was great.

IT'S A BOY

Michael David Schlafer was born to Sarah & Cole on Monday, Feb 12 at 12:09 pm weighing 8lbs, 5ozs and

measuring 20." Everyone is doing well.

MEMORY ETERNAL

Maria Lagusch fell asleep in the Lord early this week. All services for Maria will be at our Church this week as follows:

Friday Feb 23

Calling Hours - 5:00 - 7:00 pm
Funeral Service - 7:00 pm Coffee Hour

Saturday Feb 24

Casket Closing Service - 10:00 am
Interment - Mentor City Cemetery
Funeral Luncheon - St Nicholas Hall - 11:30 am

PRAYER CORNER + + + + +

Eleanor Alexander (Tom's mom), Perry (Capitan), Sbdcn Leonard, Kathy (Denise F's sis), Jim (Ruth's dad),

Michael (Chongris nphw), Ted Geletka, (Fr's frnd), Alex Dzura, infant Julian, John Clements, Willie (Elena G's son), Sarah Crivella, suffering Christians in Ukraine and the Middle East.

Birthdays: Debbie Clements, Anna Dombrovskaya (2/18), Alex Walker, Ron Sieloff (2/21), Valerie Christani (2/22), Juliana Kingsbury, Christian Rausch, Anna Lynch (2/23).

Newborns: Michael David (Cole & Sarah), Nina Mar-

gret (Matt & Krista), Andrew James (James & Lisa).

Expecting: Fred & Faith, Matt & Michelle, Tom & Miranda, Mitch & Winnie, Brian & Nicole, Jon & Larissa.

Our Seminarian: Brian Crivella & Family.

Our Missionaries: Peter & Sharon.

Memory Eternal: Maria Lagusch (2/14).

Bright Sadness

by Fr Andrew Morbey

The American poet and Orthodox convert, Scott Cairns, writes in a chapter of *God For Us: Rediscovering the Meaning of Lent and Easter*:

... at first, I was surely among the crew that Father Alexander Schmemmann acknowledges when he writes (in his amazing and very helpful book, *Great Lent*), "For many, if not for the majority of Orthodox Christians, Lent consists of a number of formal, predominantly negative, rules and prescriptions.... Such is the degree of our alienation from the real spirit of the Church that it is almost impossible for us to understand that there is 'something else' in Lent — something without which all these prescriptions lose much of their meaning."

Father Schmemmann goes on to explain that this "something else" is another disposition altogether. He characterizes it as an "atmosphere," a "climate," and "a state of mind, soul, and spirit." In my own experience — which, as I say, required some years of practice before I so much as noticed — Lent can become an incentive and a powerful means by which we can enter the kingdom of God, even as we abide here on earth.

This disposition is the harmolype — the bright-sadness — of which the fathers and the mothers speak. Even in the dryness of our desert journey, we are offered a sustaining taste of the sweet, the living waters. Even amid the gloom, we apprehend a glimmer of the light.

This bright sadness permeates much of the wonderful poetry of the Lenten Triodion. These hymns fill our liturgical services with a sadness that is at once bitter, as we consider the wretched state we find ourselves in, and yet leavened with joy, the bright promise of God's presence and forgiveness. Bright sadness is connected with tender-heartedness, that is, compassion, a compassionate heart, from out of which a loving gaze embraces the suffering of others. What begins as something inward, and deeply personal — being touched by the poetry and melodies of bright sadness — is meant to be a source or well-spring of empathy, of mercy and forgiveness, of loving acts.

Father John Breck wrote in a meditation many years ago:

Bright sadness may be the most powerful and important experience we can know. It brings to our mind and heart,

in the most direct and personal way, the ultimate purpose of our life and the object or end of our most passionate desire. It reminds us of who we are, as beloved children of God, created in His image and invited to glorify and enjoy Him forever.

That conflicted emotion of bright sadness is a blessed gift, bestowed by the God who loves us with a "love without limit." It comes to us through our ascetic struggle during the Lenten season, as it does through the solemn beauty of the Church's liturgical services. But it can come to us as well when we observe it in the people around us: people with whom and for whom we pray, people who in many cases pray for us without our being aware of it. We find that bright sadness in communion with them, in hearing their stories, in sharing their hopes, fears and longings. We find it through being attentive to the beauty and truth of their life and their unique presence.

The elder Paisios once said that for love to blossom in the heart, we must pray with pain of heart. In explaining this he noted that when we hurt some part of our body — our hand, for example — all our attention and energy focuses on where we hurt. So too it is a hurting and broken heart that focuses our spiritual attention. When asked what can we do if, in fact, we are not suffering and our heart is not hurting, the elder replied: "We should make the other's pain our own! We must love the other, must hurt for him, so that we can pray for him. We must come out little by little from our own self and begin to love, to hurt for other people as well, for our family first then for the large family of Adam, of God."

May our attention to the bright sadness of Lent bring us to the joy of the Resurrection! On Monday of the first week of the Fast, at Matins we sing:

Let us joyfully begin the all-hallowed season of abstinence; and let us shine with the bright radiance of the holy commandments of Christ our God, with the brightness of love and the splendor of prayer, with the purity of holiness and the strength of good courage. So, clothed in raiment of light, let us hasten to the Holy Resurrection on the third day, that shines upon the world with the glory of eternal life.