



# HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

## Parish Newsletter

New Parish Center: 20937 Ashburn Rd., #110, Ashburn, VA May 2016

### APRIL—DAY 13 HOURS, NIGHT 11

- 22 Fri **DAY 40—END THE GREAT FORTY DAYS.**  
7:00 p.m. PreSanctified Liturgy, *followed by a pot-luck meal.*
- 23 Sat *Saturday of Lazarus—ancient day for reintegrating penitents bound with a penance (as the Lord Jesus will say in the gospel reading: “Unbind him and let him go....”)*  
6:00 p.m. Great Vespers

### THE GREAT WEEK, THE HOLY WEEK OUR MARANATHA LORD THA COME! 1 Cor. 16.22

#### 24 Sun ENTRANCE OF THE LORD INTO JERUSALEM—KYPIAKH TΩN ΒΑΤΩΝ, ΗΕΨΑΛΑ ΔΕΚΕΤΟ Η ΟΨΑΛΑ, SUNDAY OF FLOWERING BRANCHES AND PALMS

9:30 a.m. Matins and blessing of flowering branches and palms  
10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy—**Coffee Hour: Matyuf**  
*No Penitential Vespers (After the Pasch, Vespers moves back to Saturday.)*

#### FAST IN THE BRIDEGROOM’S ABSENCE VIGIL FOR THE BRIDEGROOM WHO COMES AT MIDNIGHT

In Mark 3.20+ the Lord Jesus says that his disciples will keep a fast “when the bridegroom is taken away from them.” And why? Because his departure can be laid to the sins of the church. There’s more, but we leave that to another venue.

#### APRIL 25 GREAT AND HOLY MONDAY

Today we commemorate the handsome and gifted Joseph, who, in his purity of life, in his unjust suffering at the hands of his brethren and in his restoration to life, is an Old Testament type of the death and resurrection of Christ. *Read about Joseph in Genesis, chapters 37 to 50 (skip chapters 38 and 49); find and watch Ted Turner’s “Joseph.”* We also remember the fig tree cursed by Christ and thus infamous for its fruitlessness; may we be spared such a fate. *Read Matthew 21.18–22 (also Mark 11.12–14, 20–25; compare Luke 13.6–9).*

7:00 p.m. Vespers

#### APRIL 26 GREAT AND HOLY TUESDAY

We commemorate the parable of the 10 bridesmaids, all of whom will be remembered forever: five for their foresight and readiness for the arrival of the bridegroom, and the other five for their failure to be so prepared. These 10 young women make up the bridal party: Keep your lamp lit and do not be scatterbrained! *Read Matthew 25.1–13.*

7:00 p.m. Vespers

#### APRIL 27 GREAT AND HOLY WEDNESDAY

We commemorate the fallen woman who anointed the feet of Jesus with costly nard. This occurred shortly before the Lord’s passion. She is the very image of conversion and restoration to grace—to communion with Christ and the Father. *Read about her in Matthew 26.6–13.*

7:00 p.m. Vespers (*joined to a Common Confession if there be need*)

#### APRIL 28 GREAT AND HOLY THURSDAY

We commemorate the Mystical Supper—the institution of the Eucharist and the doctrine linking it to the mystery of the Cross and inauguration of the New Covenant.

7:00 p.m. Vespers with the Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil—*followed by a pot-luck meal*

Each one of you is a child of God because of your faith in Christ Jesus: As many of you as were baptized into Christ have robed yourselves in him. There does not exist among you Jew or Greek, slave or freeman, male or female. All are one in Christ Jesus. Furthermore, if you belong to Christ you are the descendants of Abraham, which means you inherit all that was promised. —Galatians 3.26–20

### Reprising talk about calculating the date of the Holy Pasch.

The Holy Pasch comes late this year, Resurrection Sunday—the Great Day—falling on May 1.

A lot of ink has been spent—wasted, one might say—on the Julian calendar and the computation of the Holy Pasch, which is, in point of fact, a three-day affair (Friday, Saturday, Sunday).

The truth of the matter is that the computation of the date of the Pasch has nothing to do with the Julian computation as such. *Mutatis mutandis*, the Gregorian, or every-day calendar, would work just as well. And the reason for this is simple: according to tradition in the Orthodox Catholic East, the Holy Pasch must always follow the biblical Pasch, what English-speaking Jews call Passover. According to Scripture, the biblical Pasch begins at sundown on the 14th of Nisan, when the full moon makes its appearance (Leviticus 23). This year the 14th of Nisan falls on Gregorian April 22 (Julian April 9). This is a Friday. And since our Friday, Saturday, Sunday Pasch must follow the biblical Pasch—what our *Paschalion* calls *nomikón Páscha*, the Pasch of the Law—our Christian Pasch begins this year on the following Friday, April 29, what Greek usage calls *Páscha stavrosimón*, the Pasch of the Cross.

As regards what some think is the all-important date of the (northern) Spring Equinox and the full moon that follows as put forward by the Council of Nikaia (A.D. 325), over the past 20

**APRIL 29 GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY**

PASCH OF THE CROSS — ΠΑΣΧΑ ΣΤΑΥΡΩΣΙΜΟΝ

We celebrate the passion endured by our Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation; commemorating the insults, the mockery, and, above all, the cross and death—all of which he willingly endured for us. Though put to death on that cross, the Lord Jesus is the Word of the living God. We add to this the memorial of the confession made by the thief crucified right next to him. He opened the doors of paradise locked against him by using the key: Remember me.

**9:00 a.m.** Matins: Reading of 12 Gospels

**7:00 p.m.** Great Vespers: Descent from the Cross

**APRIL 30 THE GREAT AND HOLY SABBATH**

We commemorate the entombment of our Lord Jesus Christ by his disciples.

When he went down to the world beneath the Lord Jesus Christ brought life to those who waited there. The resurrection of Christ is the foundation stone of our faith and all the hope we have as Christians. And the Church presents it to us in all its glory as the guarantee of our salvation as well as our own resurrection; for his rising from the grave marks the death of Death and, as man, he has become the author of life because he is the very center of the whole economy of salvation. Baptism is the door to this life. From ancient times the opening verses of the Gospel of John were read over the newly baptized, and today, in the early-morning Liturgy, over us all. “To all who received [Christ, the true light], who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, born, not ... of the flesh, nor of man willing it, but of God.” *Jn. 1.12*

**10:00 p.m.** Great Paschal Canon and Divine Liturgy — *Blessing of Paschal foods and breakfast follow.*

**\* PENTECOST — ΠΕΝΤΗΚΟΣΤΗ — ΠΑΤΑΓΕΘΑΤΗΗΥΑ — THE FIFTY DAYS \***

**THE GREAT AND HOLY PASCH—FESTIVAL OF FESTIVALS—THE GREAT DAY**  
PASCH OF THE RESURRECTION — ΠΑΣΧΑ ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΙΜΟΝ

*Begin the Weeks of John.*

**MAY—DAY 14 HOURS, NIGHT 10**

**1 Sun 4:00 p.m. Paschal Vespers—followed by roasted-lamb feast**

**2 Mon BRIGHT MONDAY**

10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — *followed by breakfast*

**7 Sat 6:00 p.m. Great Vespers**

**8 Sun SUNDAY II: GOSPEL CONCERNING THOMAS**

10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Miller**

**14 Sat 6:00 p.m. Great Vespers**

**15 Sun SUNDAY III: GOSPEL CONCERNING THE MYRRH-BEARING WOMEN AND JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA**

10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Morrow**

**21 Sat 6:00 p.m. Great Vespers**

**22 Sun SUNDAY IV: GOSPEL CONCERNING THE PARALYTIC**

10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Mosholder**

**28 Sat 6:00 p.m. Great Vespers**

**29 Sun SUNDAY V: GOSPEL CONCERNING THE SAMARITAN WOMAN**

10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Smith**

**JUNE—DAY 15 HOURS, NIGHT 9**

**4 Sat 6:00 p.m. Great Vespers**

**5 Sun SUNDAY VI: GOSPEL CONCERNING THE MAN BORN BLIND**

10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Tarassova**

**8 Wed Eve of the Ascension**

7:00 p.m. Vespers with the Divine Liturgy — *followed by a pot-luck meal*

**9 Thu ASCENSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**

years the Orthodox Church has celebrated a Pasch relying on a full moon that appeared *before* March 21 at least twice, without a peep from anyone, the Old Calendar rules-are-important crowd in particular.

The term *Páscha* was coined by the translators (Alexandrian Jews) of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek in the three centuries before Christ. Hebrew *Pésach* became Greek *Páscha*. Their *Septuagint* translation became the Church's canon of Holy Scripture.

The English term *Easter* derives from the name of some Germanic goddess, Venerable Bede says *Ēastre*, a goddess associated with Spring. In usage it refers only to the Sunday, Easter Sunday. (Years back, some screwball opined we should be singing, “This indeed is the Lord” own Easter...” God help us!) Talking on the street, the term *Easter* has its use, but in church it is best left on the street. *Pascha* moves into the Slavic languages. Into Latin too. In Italian and Spanish it is *Pascua*; and in French *Pâque*.

## **The Tomos of Autocephaly: Forty-Six Years Later**

SYOSSET, NY

[OCA — Archpriest John Jillions]

*Photo that follows on page 4: The OCA delegation with Russian hierarchs after the granting of autocephaly in April 1970.*

April 10, 1970 is the day that the Orthodox Church in America received the official proclamation [“Tomos”] granting autocephaly from the Russian Orthodox Church. From then on, the OCA had the freedom to order its own life, both internally and in relation to the other Orthodox Churches around the world. However, to this day the precise meaning of the OCA's autocephaly has continued to be a source of controversy in the Orthodox world. Indeed, this is a much bigger issue than just the OCA. The very question of what autocephaly means and who has the authority to grant autocephaly remains charged and unsettled,

and for that reason could not be included on the agenda of the Great and Holy Council to be held in June of this year. Thankfully, in spite of disagreements over the precise status of the OCA as an autocephalous Church, Eucharistic communion has been preserved, and for that we can be grateful even as we continue to discuss how to resolve the issues of autocephaly and the fragmented state of Orthodoxy in North America.

The history recounted below is a completely revised, updated and abbreviated version of an article I wrote for the Tenth anniversary of autocephaly in 1980, which appeared in the February and March editions of *The Orthodox Church*, edited at that time by the late Protos-pyter John Meyendorff, one of the architects of the OCA's autocephaly.

On April 10, 1970, the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church proclaimed the autocephaly of the "Metropolia." Five weeks later, the official *Tomos of Autocephaly*, signed by all the Russian bishops and stamped with the Patriarchal seal, was handed over to the delegation of the new Autocephalous Orthodox Church in America. What had begun in 1794 as the remotest mission of the Russian Church was now added to the list of fourteen other Orthodox autocephalous churches.

Tremendous confusion over the meaning and implications of this act made it an issue of bitter contention among the various jurisdictions of the Orthodox Church operating in America. The Moscow Patriarchate saw autocephaly as a simple declaration that its mission in America—which for 50 years had been living in de facto autonomy—was now independent, officially and canonically. The motivation to grant autocephaly to one branch of Orthodoxy here was to bring contemporary Orthodox life in step with its canonical tradition and its historical past in America. Autocephaly was viewed as a step toward the full realization of having one bishop in one district and being a local, i.e., American, Church—the ecclesiological and canonical norm of Orthodoxy. Other jurisdictions, however, beginning with the Ecumenical Patriarchate, considered this a rash claim to exclusive jurisdiction, granting a title and rights that are "disproportionate with reality" without consultation with the other jurisdictions that have staked a claim in America.

At the outbreak of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution that ultimately led to the de facto break with the Moscow Patriarchate, the Metropolia already had more than 100 years of history in North America, and not only in Alaska. There were 320 parishes across the US and Canada, half of which came about as a result of the return of Eastern Rite Catholics ("uniates") in the missionary work started by Saint Alexis Toth in 1892. The directory of parishes in 1918 includes Arabic, Albanian, Serbian, Greek, Romanian and Bulgarian parishes. This is in addition to the many

parishes that were mainly Galician and Carpatho-Russian [Rusyn], and Russian. There was a clear sense even then that the Mission in North America could embrace the variety of Orthodox peoples under one ecclesiastical head—"One bishop in one place," according to the Orthodox principle.

To better understand what led to the proclamation of autocephaly in 1970, it is important to remember that the "Metropolia," as the OCA was then called, had been living in a canonical limbo since the 1920s. Because of the "Soviet captivity" of the Russian Church, the Metropolia was fairly bold about its claims to de facto canonical autonomy. Nevertheless, regularization of its status was desirable not only to settle its own inner life, but equally to help move toward the realization of Orthodox unity in America. By the 1960s, the internal state of affairs of the Metropolia was stable enough for it to consider options for resolving both its ambiguous status vis-a-vis Moscow and the blatantly uncanonical pluralism of jurisdictions.

The founders of the OCA's autocephaly saw the step in 1970 as a temporary measure until the time of that a full autocephaly could include all the Orthodox jurisdictions in North America. The main question in the late 1960s was how to regularize our own status vis-a-vis the Russian Orthodox Church, which at the time was still very much oppressed by the Soviet government. Autocephaly answered that dilemma. But it was equally understood that the OCA's autocephaly was a step along the way to the full unity of the Orthodox Church in North America.

In retrospect, there were three routes that could have been taken as the Metropolia contemplated how to regularize its canonical status.

The Metropolia could seek the patronage of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. But at the time, the Ecumenical Patriarchate believed that the Metropolia should return to its Mother Church, the Moscow Patriarchate. In 1965, the Patriarch of Constantinople had dissolved its Russian Exarchate in Western Europe (since restored) on the grounds that conditions were now "normal" in the Soviet Russia and that Russian Churches in the West should submit to Moscow.

The most radical solution would have been to declare the Metropolia autocephalous on its own authority. Many of the modern autocephalies in fact began this way, with formal recognition coming years after the de facto break. Clearly, this was not in the interests of a peaceful resolution to the problem of disunity in America.

The option that was canonically and practically most feasible was to negotiate with the Mother Church, but with the strict proviso that independence be swiftly given. Anything less would be returning to the past, a return which was unacceptable given the increasing heterogeneity of the American Church and the very different social structures



**That's the future Metropolitan Theodosius third from the right.**

under which the two Churches existed at that time—keep in mind that this was still the Soviet period. A return to the Mother Church purely and simply would only have added another jurisdiction to the already jurisdiction-bound Church in America—one more tacit agreement to the status quo of multiple jurisdictions.

The Metropolia's reconciliation with the Moscow Patriarchate began as early as 1961, with informal talks between representatives of Moscow and the Metropolia at the Assembly of the World Council of Churches in New Delhi, India. It was understood that autocephaly was an accepted goal. By 1963, negotiations had been formalized, but the initial talks were inconclusive. They resumed again only in 1968, and this renewed effort was a decisive step forward.

The negotiations were not kept secret, and the rest of the Orthodox world was informed. But there was a swift and unexpected reaction from Constantinople. The letters of the Ecumenical Patriarch to Moscow were adamant: only an Ecumenical Council, or at the very least the Patriarch of Constantinople himself, has the right to grant autocephaly. The subsequent back-and-forth correspondence is extremely valuable for pinpointing the difficulties raised by the negotiations. (The Saint Vladimir's Theological Quarterly 15:1-2 is a special issue devoted to the OCA autocephaly and includes the correspondence between the Patriarchs of Moscow and Constantinople plus other articles and documents. This was also published separately as *Autocephaly*, SVS Press, 1971.)

At the center of the dispute was the very term “autocephaly.” Each side was interpreting the term in quite

different ways. To Constantinople, “autocephaly” implied first of all that the OCA was claiming exclusive jurisdiction in America, that it was the only legitimate Orthodox Church in America. For Moscow, the term “autocephaly” had none of the implications that Constantinople claimed it did. Autocephaly meant essentially that the Church, which was formerly under its canonical authority, was now independent. In other words, the whole process of granting autocephaly was “an internal matter of the Russian Orthodox Church.” In contrast, expressing the fear of the Greek Churches, Archbishop Iakovos stated, “They will seek the gradual coercion of others, or the actual subjection to them of all Orthodox churches in America when they believe possible” [Letter to the Patriarch of Antioch, May 1970.] For Moscow, however, there was no question of “interfering in the affairs of other sister Churches, having their own branches in America” [Patriarch Alexis to Patriarch Athenagoras]. There was a great deal of misunderstanding over the 1970 autocephaly because they were not talking about the same thing.

It is important to remember that autocephaly was not granted simply for the purpose of forming another permanent jurisdiction. The OCA claims, therefore, that while it does not encroach upon the rights of other jurisdictions, its autocephaly was granted as a basis for unity pending agreement between all Orthodox Churches in America—and possibly, a final approval of a future ecumenical council. The Church must be unified but also, as Metropolitan Ireney wrote in 1966, it must be “a local, permanent American Church, bound for all time with this land and with this people.”