



# EASTERN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION

Volume 3 No. 4

May - June 2018

## Newsletter

Of the Eastern Orthodox Church of the Annunciation



### **Pascha Baptisms!**

On Holy Saturday, April 7th, eleven catechumens walked into the church pond to be baptized. It was a cold and rainy day, but each newly-baptized person was met on the shore by their sponsors and godparents with many towels and hugs. After the baptism, everyone returned to inside the church for a Vespereal Liturgy. There was much celebration and excitement as the clergy tossed basil leaves around the church followed by the children in the balcony banging pots and pans for “the harrowing of Hell”! The church was filled with the feeling of joy and beauty of the blessings on this day!

## Catechesis of The Good Shepherd

Thank you to the many parishioners who have helped prepare for the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program thus far. Thank you to all who have made things for the children, donated particular items needed and for those who have made financial donations for the program. It is all greatly appreciated.

A special thank you to Christine Furrer who built two beautiful wooden shelves for the atrium. Thank you to the Jensen Family who has helped build tables, painted our classroom, built a miniature tomb and have been on hand for various duties throughout the year. Thank you to Fr. Athanasius and Dale Liid who built dioramas for the classroom. Thank you to Rhonda Reed who made a beautiful baptismal gown and to Carolyn Sabel who used her calligraphy skills to make special gospel cards. We appreciate very much, Diana, Mary, and Emilia who have helped to make the liturgical cloths for the various feasts to be celebrated in the atrium.

Thank you to Mark Green who has made thrift store furniture look beautiful. Thank you to Lori and Roy Aveling and Cynthia Malain, who have donated beautiful rugs to be used in both classrooms. Thank you to all who have come and helped on the craft days, and to all that we have neglected to mention by name.

There's been a slight change of plans for the classroom. Catechesis of the Good Shepherd will be using the two small classrooms on the third floor. There will be at least 2-3 catechists assigned for the sessions that we're holding, and the children will be choosing work spaces in either of the classrooms. One room has

been painted and we will be setting up that classroom during May. In June, the other classroom (pond side) will be painted and set up so that we are ready for our training that takes place the last week of June.

We have a good many projects to complete over the next 8 weeks. We are holding another craft Saturday on May 19 in the fellowship hall, 10-3. Please come and help us out if you can.

Just like the icon workshops, we may be asking parish members to host out of town training participants. We will also be asking that you help us with lunches during that week, June 25-30. Please consider if this is something you can help with.

Our final touches will be adding house plants to our atrium. If you have some to offer, that would be appreciated.

Lastly, thank you for the generous support from our Annunciation Parish Board and Fr. Matthew throughout this entire process.

We will be hosting some Open Houses later in the summer to show off the classroom and give everyone a deeper understanding of the program.

- Mat. Molly and Mat. Connie

"A child's upbringing commences at the moment of its conception. If the mother doesn't want the child, if she doesn't love it, then the embryo senses this and traumas are created in its little soul that accompany it all its life. The opposite occurs through the mother's holy emotions. When she is filled with joy, peace and love for the embryo, she transmits these things to it mystically, just as happens to children that have been born."

- *St. Porphyrios the Kapsokalivite*

## New Martyr Eleni of Lesbos

In 1961, a woman named Visilike Rallis had a dream that she was at the church at Karyes on the Greek island of Lesbos. She saw a girl of fourteen or fifteen years of age praying, so she also began to pray. The girl said that her name was Eleni, and she was a martyr. She lived with the mayor's family, and she was with them when the Turks tortured them on April 9, 1463. Eleni said that she received a horrible beating and died, along with Sts. Raphael, Nicholas, and Irene. She said, "but if you only knew what I endured!"

Vasilike was hesitant to tell anyone about her dream. The next night, she had another dream that she was in the village church. She saw three clerics coming out of the altar door, and she recognized Sts. Raphael and Nicholas right away. Many others came out as well. Then she saw Sts. Irene and Eleni coming out together. A woman approached Vasilike and told her that Eleni was not the mayor's servant but his orphaned niece, and that Eleni also wishes to be remembered. The woman talking to Vasilike was St. Irene's older cousin.

*From 2016 Daily Lives, Miracles, and Wisdom of the Saints*

The soul is greater than the body: the body becomes sick, and with that it is finished. But a spiritual sickness extends into eternity. Deliver us, O Lord, from such illness, and grant us healing.

- St. Macarius of Optina

## What's New in the Bookstore?

In the next few weeks, the bookstore will have a new recommended book from Fr. Nicholas and Fr. John, which will be featured on the bookstore counter. In addition, we'll be featuring a marriage and family section. We will have plenty in stock of the books that will be used for the upcoming book study in the fall: *Blueprints for the Little Church* by Elissa Bjeletich & Caleb Shoemaker, and *Parenting toward the Kingdom* by Philip Mamalakis. Please feel free to contact the bookstore for any requests or feedback at [coabookstore@gmail.com](mailto:coabookstore@gmail.com).

- *The Romanenkos*

## Upcoming Retreats

The Monastery of St. John of San Francisco, located in Manton, CA, will again present the Orthodox LIFE School for men and women, ages 18-35. Established in 2017 as a regular week-long retreat for young adults, the Orthodox LIFE School is an instructional and practical week-long experience. The "LIFE" stands for Liturgy, Inspiration, Faithfulness, and Experience. Students in this School will learn about and participate in private prayer and corporate prayer. If you are interested in attending and want more information about this retreat, you can contact the Monastery of St. John by phone (530) 474-5964 or email: [www.monasteryofstjohn.org](http://www.monasteryofstjohn.org).

## Sacraments and Blessings

### New Catechumens:

Michael and Anna Williams



*We mustn't despair when we struggle and continuously see nothing but the slightest progress. We all do nearly nothing, some a little more, some a little less. When Christ sees our little effort, He gives us an analagous token, and so our nearly nothing becomes valuable, and we can see a little progress. For this reason, we mustn't despair, but hope in God.*

- Elder Paisios, the Athonite

*Do not regard the present serpent; do not regard how we flee it and feel revulsion towards it. It was not such in the beginning. The serpent was the friend of man and the closest of those who served him. and who made it an enemy? The sentence of God: "Cursed are you above all the cattle, and above all wild animals... I will put enmity between you and the woman" (Gen 3:14-15). It was this enmity that destroyed the friendship. I mean not a rational friendship, but one of which an irrational creature is capable. Similar to the way that now the dog manifests friendship... just so did the serpent serve man. As a creature who enjoyed great closeness to man, the serpent seemed to the devil to be a convenient tool (for deception)... Thus, the devil spoke through the serpent, deceiving Adam.*

-St John Chrysostom, On the Creation of the World; 6.2

If you have submissions for the newsletter,  
please contact  
Evan Ziegenfus