



EASTERN ORTHODOX
**CHURCH OF THE
ANNUNCIATION**

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Newsletter

Of the Eastern Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

St. Francis Ministry

“As ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me”

The scene surrounding 330 SE 11th Avenue is a vivid portrait of the homelessness epidemic that haunts Portland, Oregon. Indigent bystanders of every ilk – disheveled and unkempt, old and young, men and women, even children and pets in tow – are set against a backdrop of makeshift tents, well-lived-in vehicles, and cluttered shopping carts. But a closer look reveals much more:

“... Lord, when saw we Thee hungry, and fed Thee; or thirsty, and gave Thee drink? When saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in; or naked, and clothed Thee? Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me.”

The third Sunday of every month, volunteers from our Church of the Annunciation find a small opportunity to fulfill this Gospel commandment (Matthew 25:37-40) serving meals and cleaning up here at St. Francis Dining Hall – the heart of this community.

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Catechesis of The Good Shepherd

During our hospitality time after church on Sunday, October 15, Mat. Connie Shank and Mat. Molly Shaw gave a presentation to our parishioners on a wonderful way to help the young children of our church grow closer to God. Using a slide show, they introduced everyone to a religious formation program for children ages 3 through 12. It is called Catechesis of The Good Shepherd (CGS) and combines Montessori learning techniques with introducing young children to God in a personal relationship.

This program was begun in 1954 in Rome by Sofia Cavalletti and her Montessori collaborator, Gianna Gobbi. Now this method of helping small children develop a personal relationship with God is being used in at least 37 countries around the world. The purpose of CGS is “to assist the involvement of children and adults in a common religious experience in which the religious values of childhood, primarily those values of contemplation and enjoyment of God, are predominant.”

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Another Wonderful Harvest Festival!

Many thanks to everyone who made this year's Harvest Festival such a success! It was another wonderful day for all of us to have time to enjoy visiting with each other.

This year's event would not have been possible without all of the volunteers who helped get things ready. The Jensen Family, Jeremy Ricks, and Megan and Evan Ziegenfus worked hard on set-up, which included bringing all the tables and chairs out to the lawn and setting up the stage. Many thanks to Bruce Broding and Dave Taylor for getting all the microphones and speakers ready for the stage.

Once again, Anna Derugin made the delicious cakes and pastries for the Russian Tea House and Seraphima Green helped with set-up and serving. Everyone enjoyed sitting amongst the trees and the beautiful setting, sipping tea and enjoying the baked treats.

Our dedicated "Chicken Ladies" were: Mary Catherine, Mary Rohan, Xenia McConnell, Lois Herring and Yvonne Liid. Yvonne purchased "chicken" aprons for the group, and Mary Catherine's tea cup was often heard "clucking" during this episode. They have mastered their skill so well in three years that they had all 25 chickens cut up and plattered within one hour!

Beautiful flowers were delicately arranged in our harvest vases by Nadya and Natalie Gurnik and Maria Panoff. Harmony Browne helped to prepare the tables with greenery and decorations, and many people stepped up to the plate to decorate the tables (no pun intended).

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Annual Wildwood Pilgrimage

Our annual pilgrimage to St. Xenia's Skete in Wildwood, CA, Oct. 5 through Oct. 8, was a great success, and we were able to help the four nuns there get ready for winter! This year, we had another dedicated group of twelve people who worked really well together, and we accomplished almost all of what the nuns had planned for us to do.

We split numerous cords of wood, stacked said wood in all of their various sheds and woodpiles, (since they have limited electricity, their cells, the chapel, and all of the other buildings are heated with wood stoves), cleaned paths, helped them with cooking the meals, and did whatever else they asked us to do. The four girls helped the nuns put their multiple gardens to sleep for the Winter.

Participating this year were Rdr. Gerald Daily, Roberto Silva, Oscar (David) Johnson and his wife Miwa (Daria) and their two daughters (Nichole and Marie), Aaron and Emily Reynolds and two of their daughters (Madi and Kate), and Dn. Cuthbert and Mat. Martine Downs.

We always have a wonderful and spiritually rich experience, so if you feel like you'd like to go with us next year, put it on your calendar. We go when the nuns can have us, sometime between mid-September and mid-October. We'll announce the dates plenty early next summer, so you can have time to plan to come with us!

We would especially like to thank all those who helped us with our expenses, and/or donated food and materials for the monks or nuns, especially the BIG, YELLOW, TWO-WHEELED wheelbarrow. The nuns were thrilled to get it! (Yes, for the second [or third] year in a row!!!). And many

thanks to all those who prayed for us—we couldn't do this work without you!!

Sincerely, in Christ,
Dn. Cuthbert

Harvest Festival continued...

Peter Olson and Fiona Dietch provided games for the younger children, which included a "Go Fish" game and Bean Bag Toss. The little ones were lined up with excited expectation.

Thank you to Maria Elliott for providing the beautiful, decorative quilts and for Annie Dennee's lovely Harvest Festival banner that has been used for three years now. Musical talent included Michael and Olga Hodges singing some originals plus a Ukrainian song. Harmony Browne and Dn John entertained us with some jazz numbers.

We look forward to seeing parishioners and guests next year at another fun-filled, grace-filled Harvest Festival!

- Mat. Molly Shaw

St. Francis Ministry (continued from page 1)

"I have always seen service to the poor as an integral part of my Christian walk and have taken to heart the words of St. John Chrysostom, that 'it is better to feed the poor than to raise the dead,' "says Brigid Gerard, one of the cofounders of this collaborative ministry. More than a half-dozen church and fraternal groups have committed one meal-time a month to help serve lunch or dinner here.

The dining hall is a ministry in the basement of St. Francis of Assisi Catholic

Church. For nearly three decades its mission has been to, "serve a meal to people in need, in dignity and peace". Year-round, it offers hot meals Sunday through Friday. Like the miracle of the loaves and fishes, however, its efforts serve up more than meets the eye.



Pictured (L-R) Marie Johnson, Judy Sherley, Susan Judy

"We provide clothes, hygiene products, showers four days a week (a real boon to anyone without a home), shoes – also a day shelter," says Miriam Montes, the church's social ministry director and dining hall manager. "I think we are the only one in southeast Portland that operates as a day center. We open at 10 (a.m.) and remain open until 6:15."

During that time, those in need can find warm refuge from Portland's pervasive damp chill, a safe haven from the risks of living on its streets, a chance to phone a loved one, read a magazine, or simply get a fresh change of clothes. It's all offered in a spirit of "dignity," which is especially important for Montes. "I experienced homelessness myself when I was young, so I understand how it feels to be treated without dignity," she says. "I took this position to show people the dignity I wish I had been shown."

The Church of the Annunciation involvement with this ministry is storied: “We have been doing the St. Francis ministry for about 20 years off and on – mostly on,” Gerard says. It began as her family’s outreach to the children who occasionally dine here before taking root as a biannual church event. “We used to actually cook a meal on Sundays which was very meaningful.

“On several occasions, (the late) Fr. David Shank would go,” she continues. “He had a way of drawing people in and we would go and sing gospel and folk songs, and they would love it. We would bring musical instruments and just play music for folks while they enjoyed their meal. People really loved it! That would be fun to do again!”

Of course, this labor of love is not without its challenges. Gerard says one reason the church’s participation shifted from cooking to just serving meals was the stress factor. And some diners can offer their own unique challenges, especially for the uninitiated: an odd remark, incoherent ramblings, or even a verbal outburst that warrants a staff request to come back later. As an online consumer review of the facility lauds: “Free food, fun friends, coffee, phones, and drama.”

“The majority of our guests are persons experiencing homelessness,” Montes explains. “Some have persistent mental illness, and some have substance addictions. But generally speaking, they are also very polite and very kind individuals.” For Gerard, it is as it should be. Such challenges come hand in hand with the blessings of Christian service. “It’s always good for us to step outside of our comfort zone to serve Christ,” she says, “in all His distressing disguises.”

In recent years, Annunciation parishioners have stepped up for an annual Thanksgiving turkey drive for St. Francis Dining Hall – which is currently in full swing through November. Gerard says it all started about five years ago while talking with the facility’s then manager, Sue Unger, about the challenge of procuring meat for its meals. “Sue said, ‘I don’t know what we’re going to do for Thanksgiving.’” That’s when the proverbial light bulb came on for Gerard. “I said, ‘What about a turkey drive?’”

A regular fixture ever since, last year parishioners donated about \$600 that went toward a dozen or so turkeys, with the remaining funds going directly to the dining hall. “Sue was really relieved, knowing that she could count on us to deliver turkeys for Thanksgiving.”

This year, the ministry hopes to get church youth serving at St. Francis Dining Hall. The effort kicks off Nov. 19 (as always – *the third Sunday of the month*) with a fish-and-chips fest and board games for youth and chaperones. Afterward, volunteers will caravan over to the dining hall to deliver turkeys, serve a hot meal and clean up afterward.

Gerard expects the experience to be a gift for all involved. “I think it’s very important for child to learn to serve,” she says, “especially if they step out of their comfort zone to serve people they may not otherwise be comfortable with.”

Information on the St. Francis

Dining Hall Ministry:

- **Every third Sunday of the month,** Church of the Annunciation volunteers serve meals at St. Francis Dining Hall (330 SE 11th Avenue, Portland) from 3:15 p.m. to 5

p.m. Individuals and families are always welcome.

- **November Thanksgiving Turkey Drive** is underway at our Orthodox Church of the Annunciation for St. Francis Dining Hall through November. Donate funds or a frozen bird via Brigid Gerard. (If you write a check for this ministry to buy a turkey, please note at the bottom of your check that your donation is “for the Thanksgiving Turkey Drive”.)
- **Sunday Nov. 19:** The Youth Group Fish & Chip Fest in the church dining hall will precede a chance for youth to deliver turkeys to St. Francis Dining Hall and help serve a meal. Turkey loading will begin about 2:30; we will “move 'em out” about 2:45. Volunteer chaperones and drivers are encouraged.
- **Donated Items Needed:** socks, coats, men’s clothes – especially jeans, sleeping bags, blankets, tarps, coffee cups, razors, deodorant.
- For details, contact Brigid Gerard: 971-678-9550.

- Oscar David Johnson

Catechesis of The Good Shepherd

(Continued from page 1)

During the presentation it was explained that, next summer, a week-long training will be held at our church for those interested in becoming a “catechist”. The term “catechist” refers to the adults who will be hands-on in the classroom (called the “atrium”) where the children will learn. Depending upon how many of our parishioners sign up for catechist training,

we may reach out to other interested persons at local Orthodox churches who wish to receive this training as well.

One of the essential factors of this program is the encouragement and support of the pastor of the church. Fr. Matthew explained that the church Board has approved the idea of instituting this program at our church, but that it would take a vote of parishioners to agree to commit to this and make it a reality for our children. He then took a vote of hands from those present to see if parishioners wanted to do this, and there was overwhelming consent.

Fr. Matthew also said that, besides the catechists, there will be many needs to help get this program running. He explained that the children, ages 3 through 6, will begin attending weekly classes in the Fall of 2018.

Many parishioners are excited about this new method of helping our small children come closer to God and are looking forward to helping in whatever ways that they can. There is much enthusiasm and a “coming together” of many people to make CGS a reality at our church. We welcome those who would like to help with woodworking, sewing, clay sculpting, hand-written Psalm and Prayer cards (possibly calligraphy), and many other crafts. We also appreciate any monetary support to prepare the Atrium for our children.

There will be regular work sessions announced for those who would like to prepare materials before the June training. There will also be some opportunities for those who would like to work on projects at home. If you have questions about how to support this new program for our children, contact Mat. Connie or Mat. Molly. You can also learn

more about CGS online at <http://www.cgsusa.org/>

- Mat. Molly and Mat. Connie

Sacraments and Blessings

Child Baptism:

10/17/17 – Gabriel Leyes (St. Gabriel)

Godparents: Irina Kakorin and Jim Buchfuehrer



Parents: Jeff and Julia Leyes

New Catechumens:

9/3/17 Noah Warila (St. Noah)



9/10/17 Janelle Honeycutt



Calendar of Events

NOVEMBER

- 11/7 Clergy Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 11/8 Matins 4:45 a.m., Liturgy 5:45 a.m.
- 11/9 Catechism, 7:00 p.m.
- 11/10 Young Adults at Jensen's, 6:00 p.m.
- 11/11 Panikhida, 6:00 p.m.
- 11/15 Nativity Fast begins
- 11/16 Matins 8:00 a.m., Liturgy 9:00 a.m.
- 11/16 Catechism, 7:00 p.m.
- 11/19 St. Francis Hall, 3:15 p.m.
- 11/20 Vigil, 6:30 p.m.
- 11/21 Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple, Liturgy 9:00 am
- 11/23 No catechism; fast-free
Thanksgiving Day
- 11/29 Parish Council, 7:00 p.m.
- 11/30 Matins 8:00 a.m., Liturgy 9:00 a.m.
- 11/30 Catechism, 7:00 p.m.

DECEMBER

- 12/7 Matins 8:00 a.m., Liturgy 9:00 a.m.
- 12/7 Catechism, 7:00 p.m.
- 12/8 Young Adults at Jensen's, 6:00 p.m.

12/13 Matins 8:00 a.m., Liturgy 9:00 a.m.
 12/14 Catechism, 7:00 p.m.
 12/17 St. Francis Hall, 3:15 p.m.
 12/21 Matins 4:45 a.m., Liturgy 5:45 a.m.
 12/21 Catechism, 7:00 p.m.
 12/22 Royal Hours, no Liturgy
 12/24 Vigil with Liturgy, 9:30 p.m.
 12/25 Blessed Christmas to all!
 Fast-Free period begins.
 Vespers 6:00 p.m.
 12/26 Matins 8:00 a.m., Liturgy 9:00 a.m.
 12/27 Matins 8:00 a.m., Liturgy 9:00 a.m.
 12/27 Parish Council, 7:00 p.m.
 12/28 Matins 8:00 a.m., Liturgy 9:00 a.m.
 12/28 No catechism class tonight

Family Christmas Program

We hope you will join us on Sunday, 12/17, for a special time during fellowship downstairs for our Family Christmas Program. Instead of the usual Children's Nativity Play, this year we're asking you to come forward to share your favorite Christmas songs, instrumental pieces, or poems and stories. We will have some holiday breads and hot apple cider to enjoy during the program. It should be a fun and festive time for all. Please contact Mat. Molly at 360-352-3554 or mollyshw@gmail.com

Fish 'n Chips Fest and Turkey Delivery!

Dear brothers and sisters:

November 19th is the day when our Saint Francis Dining Hall Turkey Drive will be delivering birds to the dining hall and serving food to the homeless. We would like to extend an invitation to the youth group to join us for fish & chips in the church basement hall and board games before we collect the turkeys and make our way over there. We are looking for parents

to help drive and chaperone that afternoon. Turkey loading will begin at about 2:30, and we will "move 'em out" at about 2:45. Please contact Brigid Gerard to let her know if your child will be attending and if you could possibly help drive/chaperone the fish and chip fest etc. In gratitude for your service, Oscar David Johnson and Brigid Gerard.

What's New in the Bookstore?

We have the 3 books in the bookstore now that are required reading for those who would like to be trained as catechists for the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. They are The Religious Potential of the Child, Listening to God With Children, and The Good Shepherd and the Child. These are also great for anyone who would like a greater understanding of this approach.

The 2018 calendars will be arriving soon as well as an assortment of Christmas cards. There will be some new additions to our children's books, as well as many other gift possibilities.

We apologize for the number of Sundays we have no one to serve you at the counter. You are welcome to leave cash or a check in an envelope with your name and what you purchased in the little wooden box to the right of the counter. If you have an interest in serving in the bookstore, please let Mat Connie know.

Hospitality Schedule

11/6 - Johnson/Asano/Olson
 11/13 - Barton/Aveling
 11/20 - Gunderson/Dales/Sayre
 11/27 - Herring/Bell/Rupp
 12/4 - Cazel
 12/11 - Dorning/Seylon Belai
 12/18 - Larkins/Reynolds
 12/25 - Nativity
 1/1 - Sarah Silva/Gabriella Hesselink
 1/8 - Tadesse/Martinsen/Sege

There are still openings for Hospitality kitchen helpers, if you are looking for a church ministry to help provide a light meal after Sunday services. You can ask a friend or family to help you, or you can join an already established person on the list who needs more help. Contact Karen Barton at 503-317-8121 to see how you can help with this needed ministry. She will offer lots of support for you if this is something you would like to do. This ministry is a wonderful way to work along other parishioners in helping serve a meal. The commitment to do this would be two Sundays per year.

- Geronda, although one may be struggling, doesn't it displease God if he constantly falls into the same sins? Doesn't he disappoint Him?

- Is God expecting any progress from us in the first place? No. But we are His children and He loves us all the same. One of the children of a father I once saw was mentally handicapped, and although he kept wiping his runny nose on his sleeves, his father hugged him, kissed him and caressed him, just as much as his other children. God does the same thing. Being the Good Father He is, God not only loves His accomplished children, but He also loves those who are spiritually weak for Whom He is all the more pained and concerned.

No one can grasp how much God loves man! His love is incomparable! It is boundless! His love is so vast and powerful that our earthen heart cannot withstand even the slightest bit we may feel of it; His love dissolves the heart because the heart is made of earth.... The greater the cleansing of our heart, the greater the capacity--and the greater will be its acceptance of divine love, which is boundless, undivided and inexhaustible.

- Passions and Virtues: St. Paisios of Mount Athos, Spiritual Counsels V, pgs. 200-201

If you have submissions for the newsletter,
 please e-mail them to
 Gail Cramer, islandtimezone@yahoo.com