



Protection of the Holy Mother of God Orthodox Church

Monthly Parish Bulletin
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Reflections on the Journey by a Star

By Rev. Fr. David G. Subu

Did you ever notice how much traveling there goes on at Christmas? No, I don't mean by planes, trains, and automobiles. In the Gospel we find that the birth of our Savior was intertwined with the image and reality of travel and movement. He was born "on the road," without anything but a manger in which to lie. His parents had left the home in Nazareth to come to Bethlehem temporarily. While they were there, other travelers, three wise kings journeyed to meet them, guided by a star. After offering their gifts and worship to the Christ Child, they too traveled out of the Christmas story forever, but not before warning the Mary and Joseph of Herod's not so well-intended interest in His birth. So then Joseph led Mary and the child Jesus all the way to Egypt. And somewhere in there they managed to present the Lord in the Temple in Jerusalem on the fortieth day. It's enough to exhaust one just thinking about it. Nevertheless on the eve of the Nativity we often think of how the star stood still over where the child lay, a silent and holy night of peace. But meanwhile the rest of the world still continued moving *around* Him, oblivious of the miracle. God immediately responded by moving the world *closer* to Him. Shepherds were called to see the wonder, the first of us to receive the glad tidings, and the unfolding of our Salvation was revealed on earth in the person of the living Emmanuel, "God with us." As the world around us winds down its holiday season, filled with hustle and bustle, let us prepare ourselves to be wound up and wound around the abiding presence of God with us this New Year. Christ is born! Glorify Him! Christ has come! Receive Him! Rejoice, O heavens and the earth, for the long and winding journey to Salvation has met its end at the manger in Bethlehem. God is incarnate by the Virgin and the gate to paradise is open once more! May God bless all of you as we celebrate this festal season in the joy of the Lord and His Nativity.

— R. David Subu

An English Speaking Parish Community of the Orthodox Church in America
Most Rev. Archbishop NATHANIEL of Detroit & the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America
Rev. Fr. David G. Subu, Parish Priest
Protodeacon Peter Danilchick, Parish Deacon
Jeffrey M. Beranek, Parish Council President

Letter from Jeff Beranek, Parish Council President

'I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a schoolboy. I am as giddy as a drunken man. A merry Christmas to everybody! A happy New Year to all the world! Hallo here! Whoop! Hallo!'

So felt Ebenezer Scrooge after spending one night with the Spirits of Christmas Past, Present, and Yet to Come, upon finding that 'the Spirits have done it all in one night', and that he had not missed Christmas. I wager that his joy would have been even more unconstrained if he'd spent six months without a priest, upon the new priest's arrival. Fr. David Subu will celebrate his first Divine Liturgy as the new pastor of the Church of the Protection of the Holy Mother of God on, fittingly, the first day of the new year of 2006. (Hallo here! Whoop! Hallo!) These past several months have been rather trying at times, and I thank all of you for the patience and grace which you have shown, as well as for the encouragement you gave those of us on the council - and of course, I must thank the council for all their support and hard work during this "Time of Troubles", especially since it must sometimes have seemed as though there was no situation troublesome enough that couldn't be made worse by a presidential misstep. While regretting my many mistakes, I am grateful for the patience and support of the council, and of the parish. While there are still some challenges - financial, particularly - in our immediate future, I feel that we've turned a corner, and with a new priest in place will be embarking on a new era in our church's history.

The annual parish assembly will be held on January 22, 2006, after church school. The agenda for the meeting is published elsewhere in this newsletter, in accordance with the By-Laws of the Romanian Episcopate, which mandate that the agenda be sent to all members at least 15 days in advance of the date of the assembly. In addition, if you have not already done so, please help the parish council secretary, Marshall Standifer, validate the church membership by verifying or updating your name and address. Please make every effort to attend this important meeting at which, among other things, the slate of candidates for the 2006 Parish Council, and the 2006 budget, will be voted on. All parishioners who have been members for at least six months prior to the date of the meeting are eligible to vote.

As everyone can see, the installation of the new windows is complete, and painting of the sanctuary and adjacent spaces is almost complete as well, save for some work on the borders around the windows. The first icons (the Nativity of Christ and the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple) of the first phase of our multi-year project will be installed in the sanctuary during the last week of January. I thank everyone who has had a part in seeing this project come to realization, particularly those of you who have donated so generously. For those of you who have not yet availed yourselves of this chance to contribute to the present and future of our church, I urge you to take this opportunity now to give what you can, by sponsoring iconography which will show the beauty and the power of our Lord, His Holy Mother and the saints, so that soon in our church will not only be the words of the Liturgy which will "edify the ear", but also images which will "edify the eye".

A Merry Christmas to everybody, and a Happy New Year to you all!

-Jeff Beranek, Parish Council President

Theophany House Blessing Request Form

Family Name: _____
Address: _____

Phone: _____
Days Available: _____ Times Available: _____

Please return to the office at St Mary Orthodox Church.

Summary of December 8 Parish Council Meeting

- Called to order at 7:20 pm; adjourned at 9:45 pm. Present Protodeacon Peter Danilchick [Ex Officio], Jeff Beranek, Anna Caraveli, Dumitru Carstea [ex officio], Perry Cherpes, Joe Cox, Nick Dujmovic, Jon Jacobson, Stephanie Kozemchak, Joe Kumbara, Marshall Standifer, Chris Thomas, and Sarah Zimmerli.
- Council approved \$3,000 as reimbursement for the unauthorized capital improvements made to the parish property at 2944 Irvington Road by the tenant. Motion was approved 9 votes to 2, with two abstaining.
- Council reviewed four bids for painting the sanctuary in preparation for the new icons, and selected Pedro Vides Painting to perform the work for \$4,500.
- Annual Parish Assembly will be held January 22, 2006, after church school [agenda is published in this newsletter].
- The Ladies Guild raised \$1,410 at the recent soup luncheon. Additionally, the ladies will arrange for a week of meals for the Subus on their arrival. The pastor's office will also be cleaned in preparation for Fr. David's arrival.
- Marshall Standifer will make arrangements with Fairfax County Fire Department to conduct the annual fire inspection.
- Motion was made that Sarah Zimmerli and Jeff Beranek be authorized to negotiate with various prospective tenants for immediate rental of the properties and, if necessary, Sarah may list the properties by the next Council meeting. Motion was approved with one "nay" vote.
- Anna Caraveli reported on the Iconography project. The first two icons of Phase I (the Nativity of Christ, and the

Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple) will be installed the last week of January.

- In preparation for the annual assembly, Marshall Standifer, as Council Secretary, will update the parish membership list.

January Birthdays

- 2 Greg Zimmerli
- 4 Armand Scala II
- 24 Davis Myers Robertson
- 31 Toni Robertson

January Anniversaries

- 24 Rick (Athanasios) & Lynn Elizabeth Hanson
- 30 Sarah & Arthur Zimmerli

January Saint's Name Days

- 12 St. Tatiana, Martyr in Rome-Dsa. Tanya Danilchick



St Luke's Iconography Guild invites anyone interested in iconography to a potluck brunch and gilding demonstration on Saturday, January 14th, at 10:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. Call Nadine at 703-660-6782 for more information.

Anything interesting, exciting, or noteworthy happening in your life or your family's that you would like to share? Send an email to Lori Jacobson at lori.herold@verizon.net.

Metropolitan Nikitas at St. Katherine's: Metropolitan Nikitas of Hong Kong will make a presentation on missions in China, India, Thailand, Vietnam, Taiwan, Philippines, Singapore and Indonesia, on Thursday, January 12th, at 7:00 pm, at St. Katherine Greek Orthodox Church, 3140 Glen Carlyn Road, Falls Church, VA 22401. For more information, please contact Antonia Cheplon at 703-258-5437, acheplon@aol.com.



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IOCC DINNER JANUARY 29, 2006

The DC Metropolitan Committee invites you to a special presentation of IOCC's work around the world. Join us at Ss Peter & Paul Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church in Potomac. Call 202-232-0430 for tickets.

OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING & PROPOSED AGENDA FOR 2006

In compliance with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America (Article IX, Section 25), the Annual General Meeting of the members of the congregation of Protection of the Holy Mother of God in Falls Church, Virginia, will be held on Sunday, January 22, 2006, following the Divine Liturgy and Church School. All church members have the responsibility to attend. Associates and observers are also welcome.

PROPOSED AGENDA

- I. Invocation of the Holy Spirit
- II. Roll Call of the 2005 Membership
- III. Approval of the Agenda
- IV. Selection of two (2) tellers / Appointment of Parliamentarian
- V. Reading of the Minutes of the last meeting of the Parish Council
- VI. Discussion and Approval of Reports:
 - A. Pastor
 - B. Parish Council President
 - C. Ladies' Guild President
 - D. Church School Principal
 - E. AROY President
- VII. Financial Report for 2005
 - A. Auditors
 - B. Treasurer
- VIII. Parish Council's Recommendations
- IX. Proposed Budget for 2006
- X. Election of Parish Council for 2006
- XI. Election of Delegates (2) and Alternates (2) to the Episcopate Congress
- XII. End of the Assembly / Closing Prayer

[Parishioners who have been official members of the congregation for at least six months prior to the date of the meeting are eligible to vote and to hold office.]

Rev. Fr. David Subu
Parish Priest

Jeff Beranek
President, Parish Council

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Sunday, January 22, 2006

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Note from Marshall Standifer, Secretary, Parish Council:
As the Secretary for the Parish Council, it is my responsibility to validate the membership list for the parish. I have to complete the validation in preparation for the annual Parish Assembly coming after the first of the year.

According to the Episcopate By-laws, voting membership is open to those who are:

- at least 18 years old
- belonged to/attended St Mary's for six (6) months
- fulfilled their financial obligations

To facilitate my validation, please contact me by phone (703-971-6086) or e-mail (cms.cgw@cox.net) with the following information:

Name (First, Middle Initial and Last) for each voting member:

Street Address:

City, State and Zip Code

Telephone Number (work or home)

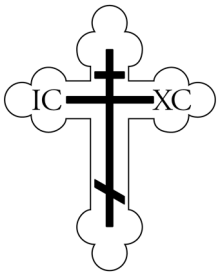
Name(s) of non-voting members (e.g. names of children)

Please contact me if you have any questions.

*-Marshall Standifer
Secretary, Parish Council*



Copy & Technical Editor: Lori Monica Jacobson (lori.herold@verizon.net)



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