

THE PARISH NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2009

The Nativity of the Mother of God Russian Orthodox Church 518 869-3932

A parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad www.albanyrocor.org

Mitred Protopriest Wsevolod Drobot Protopriest Father Michael Fritz

Protodeacon Michael Soloviev Subdeacon Andrei Podymow

THE SCHEDULE OF SERVICES AND MEETINGS FOR DECEMBER

Saturday Vigils: 6:00 p.m. Vigils of Feasts: 6:30 p.m.

Sundays & Feasts: 9:30 a.m., Hours; 9:50 a.m., the Divine Liturgy

4 (Friday) Entry of the Theotokos

6 26th Sunday after Pentecost

13 27th Sunday after Pentecost

20 28th Sunday after Pentecost **Nativity Fast Lecture (see article below)**

27 29th Sunday after Pentecost **Dessert & Discussion after Coffee Hour**

DECEMBER NAMES' DAYS May God grant them all many years!

3 Anatoli Shevtchuk

5 Matushka Cecelia Soloviev

6 Gregoriy Cherkezov

7 Katherine Paukova Catherine Taylor

13 Subdeacon Andrei Podymow Andrew Federow-Adams

Andrew Nedvidek Andrew McClure Andre Kosovskiy

17 Barbara Nikiforov Barbara Markessinis

19 Deacon Nicholas Drobot Nicholas Milas Nicholas Taylor

30 Daniel Welsh

NATIVITY FAST LECTURE: The Poltava Victory in Russian Liturgy

Sunday, December 20 after Coffee Hour

The course of European history was changed three-hundred years ago by the outcome of the Battle of Poltava: The victory of the Russians over the Swedes had momentous effects not only for the two nations, but for the entire European geopolitical landscape. The Poltava battle was commemorated in many forms, from church buildings to icons. The most distinctive monument to that battle,

however, is the unique full victory service that Peter the Great commissioned to commemorate it. In her lecture, Professor Nadieszda Kizenko will describe the unusual features of the service, of how the Orthodox Church has marked military victory in general, and of the legacy of Poltava to our day.

CHURCH SCHOOL SCHEDULE

The tentative schedule for the rest of the semester: December 6, 13, 20.

Mark the date: Russian Winter Festival, February 14, Washington Armory.

WHY THE NATIVITY FAST WAS ESTABLISHED

The Orthodox Church prepares its faithful to welcome the Nativity of Christ by a forty-day fast from November 28 to January 6. In addition to generally known reasons, this fast is also undertaken to venerate the suffering and sorrow of the Holy Mother of God at the hands of the scribes and the Pharisees just prior to the sacred event of Christ's Nativity.

Holy Tradition tells us that before the righteous Joseph and the Holy Virgin set off for Bethlehem, they were subjected to tribulation. A scribe by the name of Ananias entered their home and, seeing her pregnant, was severely distressed and went to the High Priest and the entire Council, saying: "Joseph the carpenter, though regarded as a righteous man, has committed iniquity. He has secretly violated the Virgin Who was given to him from the temple of God for safekeeping. Now She is with child." Then the High Priest's servants went to Joseph's house, took Mary and Joseph, and brought them to the High Priest, who denounced and shamed Her.

But the Holy Virgin, crying in deep sorrow, replied: "The Lord God is My witness that I am innocent and have known no man." Then the High Priest accused the righteous Joseph, who swore on oath that he was not guilty. The High Priest did not believe them and subjected them to the customary trial, (when a woman suspected of violation was given to drink bitter water cursed by the High Priest); but the trial confirmed Her innocence and of the righteous Joseph. All those present were amazed at this.

After that the High Priest allowed the holy couple to go home in peace. Righteous Joseph took the Virgin Mary and went to his house, glorifying God; but this was not the end of the Holy Theotokos' trials. Afterwards she shared with Joseph the toil of a three-day journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem. In Bethlehem there was no place for the Holy Virgin, and with night approaching, She sought shelter in a cave which served as a resting place for cattle. There She remained in prayer and divine contemplation and painlessly gave birth to our Lord Jesus Christ, Savior of the world.

The days preceding the Nativity were not days of rest and comfort for the Holy Mother of God. In those days She suffered various sorrows and trials, but did not leave off her prayers and contemplation. The Holy Church appeals to the faithful to participate, to some small degree, in the Holy Theotokos' spiritual labor,

constraining one's flesh during the Nativity fast and nourishing one's soul with prayer; however, the Church warns us that we must also apply ourselves to internal fasting: shunning malice, deceit, wrath, worldly bustle, and other vices. We must show works of love and mercy, doing all we can to help those in need and sorrow. Then will our fasting be genuine and not hypocritical, then will it be God-pleasing, and then will we know the true joy of the bright feast of Christ's Nativity.

Adapted from "Orthodox Russia", No. 21, 1999

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Be sure to check out ROCOR's Eastern Diocese Website: www.eadiocese.org

HAIL THE NEW ARRIVAL!—to Eugenia and Brother Andrei Podymow

Nikolai Andreievich Podymow was born November 20, 2009 at 6:18 p.m. at Bellevue Hospital in Schenectady. He weighed 8 pounds, 2 ounces, measured 19.5 inches. Mom and baby son are doing great and are

A CONCERT NOT TO BE MISSED

The St. Petersburg Men's Ensemble will perform on December 9 at 7 p.m. at our Church Hall. Their program includes Russian folk songs and sacred Church music. Kirill Sokolov, Alexander Korbakov, Evgeny Vishnevsky, and Vadim Smanstser give a wonderful performance. Be sure to be there.

A GENTLE REMINDER AT YEAR'S END

To vote at the Annual Parish Meeting or to hold office, one's parish dues must be paid up to date. Monthly dues are as follows: adults over 21 and employed, \$20; retired persons, \$10; students and non-working adults, \$5. Questions?—Call Margo Beighey, Church Treasurer, at (518) 371-7758.

MAPLE-MUSTARD GLAZED SALMON Preheat oven: 350 degrees

¼ cup (real) maple syrup	3 tablespoons coarse-grain mustard
2 tablespoons light brown sugar	4 6-oz. salmon fillets (thaw, if frozen)
fresh parsley (optional, for garnish)	

Lightly coat shallow baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Place fillets skin side down in baking dish. Whisk together maple syrup, mustard, and brown sugar in small bowl. Pour over salmon. Bake 15 to 20 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Garnish, if desired. Serves 4.

PARISH FEASTDAY AND PARISH PICNIC PHOTOGRAPHS

The photos are posted on our parish website. Enjoy! By the way, that "Russian Big Mac" T-shirt (with both red and black caviar) worn by your editor was a gift

from **Dmitry Katalevsky** of Moscow, who worshiped with us while studying at SUNY Albany a few years ago. Since his return to Russia, Dmitry has married and has earned his doctorate at Moscow U.

COFFEE HOUR TEAMS FOR DECEMBER

December 6 Margo Beighey, Nina Vepritskaya, Nadja Jernakoff
December 13 Cecelia Soloviev, Anna Popova, Olga Parella
December 20 Tasia Fedorov, Maria Hauf, Christina DiLello
December 27 Unless someone volunteers, no coffee hour!

FYI: Marcus Hauf is immersing himself in Russian language studies and also in devotional matters at Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville. Remember him, please, his wife Anya, and daughter Isabella in your prayers.

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DEADLINE FOR THE JANUARY ISSUE: Thursday, December 24

Please submit items in writing or by e-mail. Thanks for your cooperation.

CharlieVas Murn, Editor BACVAS@dishmail.net

NEWS OF THE SISTERHOOD: Our 4th annual “Taste of Russia”

Truly the backbone of a parish is its Sisterhood. So again on Saturday, November 21 with lots of help, diligence, and enthusiasm, our Sisterhood led our biggest annual fund-raising event. It was quite a success, though with fewer customers than last year. So far, profit of a bit over \$7,000 was realized. Great! Deepest gratitude to the volunteers in the kitchen and elsewhere, to set-up and clean-up crews, and to teenagers with their boundless energy. Most frozen items were sold out, excepting pelmeni—a few bags left at \$6.50 each. Come and get ‘em.

The Sisterhood seeks a new vice-president to start in January. All ladies are urged to attend the next meeting and think about volunteering! Let Raelynn (Anastasia) Gonyea—695-6865—know if you are interested.

IT’S KIND OF LIKE BEING PREGNANT

For the next nine months we’ll be laboring towards the consecration of our temple on Monday, September 6, 2010—Labor Day! Sustained effort will be required from us all, not just one big push at the end. Thank you.

