

NEWS FROM SAINT NICHOLAS'

~ A Newsletter For Parishioners and Friends of Saint Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church, Wallsend ~

Number 12 ~ June 2017

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This is the first edition of our parish newsletter since November 2012. Our plan is to publish it every month and to include news and information about the life of our parish, our Diocese, and the wider Russian Orthodox Church, as well as material about the Orthodox Faith. We hope that you find it interesting!

PARISH LIFE: MAY 2017

The month began with a meeting of the Parish Council of Monday 1 May. The usual pastoral, administrative, and financial reports were presented and progress on parish governance, decorative and building projects was reviewed.

On Saturday 13 May and Sunday 15 May we had services for the Fifth Sunday of Pascha, the Sunday of the Samaritan Woman (John 4:5-42). Following Divine Liturgy a memorial litia was served for Mitred Archpriest Michael Li and Mitred Archpriest Michael Klebansky, senior priests of our Diocese who both departed this life on 12 May 2016. Short biographies of both priests can be read at <http://stnicholaswallsend.org.au/rocoranzclergy.html>. It being Mothers' Day, our Head Sister Anna Morhun then presented Matushka Marie with flowers, after which "Many Years" was sung for all the mothers of our parish.

On Sunday 21 May and Monday 22 May we had services for the feast-day of the Translation of the Relics of Saint Nicholas from Myra in Lycia, modern-day Turkey, to Bari in Italy. On Sunday evening All-night Vigil with the blessing of wheat, wine, oil and five loaves was served. As this feast-day of Saint Nicholas is the patronal feast of our parish, the customary lesser blessing of water was served early on Monday morning. It being a working day, only a small number of parishioners and friends were present. Divine Liturgy followed, and then a moleben to Saint Nicholas with a cross procession and the sprinkling of the Holy Water. Following the moleben the usual prayers were offered for the Patriarch and the hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church, the Australian and Russian lands, parish office-bearers and all present, and for our departed founders and parishioners. Congratulating the people with the feast-day, Father James spoke about Saint Nicholas and the help that Christians have received through his prayers over many centuries. He also noted the particular joy with which this feast-day had been prepared for in Russia this year, a portion of Saint Nicholas' relics being due to arrive in Moscow from Bari. Following the service many of those present gathered in the church hall for a pleasant feast-day lunch.

On Saturday 27 May and Sunday 28 May we had services for the Seventh Sunday of Pascha, the Afterfeast of the Ascension, and in honour of the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council.

EPISTLE OF THE COUNCIL OF BISHOPS OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA

Editor's note: From Friday 9 June the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia – that is, the assembly of all our bishops – met in Munich, Germany. The Council heard reports about, and made decisions in relation to, every aspect of the life of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia. Towards the end of proceedings, this Epistle was drafted and approved.

We, the hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, gathered for a Council of Bishops in the God-preserved city of Munich during the celebration of the Pentecost, in the blessed presence of the Kursk-Root Icon of the Mother of God "of the Sign." This year we remember with sorrow the hundredth anniversary of the terrible, bloody events of 1917; we are at the same time filled with joy over the anniversary of the restoration of the patriarchate and the tenth anniversary of the reestablishment of unity within the Russian Church.

Tenth anniversary of the signing of the Act of Canonical Communion between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia.



We remember those who labored towards the reestablishment of unity, and those who continue to work towards strengthening of our spiritual bonds. On the feast of the Ascension of the Lord, we prayed together with the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church and the President of the Russian Federation at divine services during the consecration of the Church of the Resurrection of Christ and the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia at Lyubanka, and we conclude our assembly with the great consecration of the Cathedral of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia in the city of Munich, the only church of the Russian Church Abroad where His Holiness Patriarch Alexy II of Moscow and All Russia once served, who had together with Metropolitan Laurus of blessed memory signed the Act of Canonical Communion. We always knew that the external unity that was once rent asunder was always preserved in the spiritual plane.

With gratitude with God, we also mark the hundredth anniversary of the birth of a New Martyr of Russia who manifested the phrase "the blood of Christian martyrs is the seed of faith." St Alexander (Schmorell) of Munich spilt his blood in Germany. The hundredth anniversary of his birth is marked by the completion of the construction of a church not far from his grave. The cathedral was consecrated by His Beatitude Metropolitan Onouphry of Kiev and All Ukraine along with the Primate of the Russian Church Abroad, His Eminence Metropolitan Hilarion of Eastern America and New York, along with all of his fellow bishops, bishops from Russia and Ukraine and of other Local Orthodox Churches. In the global podvig of the Russian New Martyrs, among them St Alexander, the East unites with the West.

The restoration of the patriarchate at the All-Russian Council of the Russian Church, the hundredth anniversary of which we now celebrate, was a positive step towards the return to our Christian roots, to the 1,000th year of existence of our Church organism. A leading role in the reestablishment of the patriarchate was played by a hierarch who himself became the first Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev and Galicia of blessed memory. Based on the work of the Pomestny Sobor [All-Russian Church Council] of 1917-1918, he and his brother archpastors preserved church sobornost'[collegiality] in distant lands, and in this way, fealty to the legacy of the Mother Russian Church. The theology of Metropolitan Anthony returned the cognizance of the Church to her patristic roots; it cleansed Russian theology from imposed alien influences and in many ways determined the theology of the Church Abroad, and manifested itself in the legacy and practice of pastoral ministry.



The triumph of the sobornost' of the Russian Church and her New Martyrs lies in the fact that despite the crumbling of the Orthodox empire and the imposition of a regime whose ideological goal was to fight God and everyone who believes and worships Him, faith in the truth and the Church could not be destroyed. In light of the apostasy that began in earnest in the 19th century, the podvig of bearing witness to the faith "even unto death" is especially significant, just as the image of the purity of family life of the last Russian Emperor was. We are all called upon to make sense of the spiritual life of the peoples of Russia and of the whole world.

The spiritual catastrophe of the Russian nation led to the destruction of a mighty state and to terrible sufferings. How could it happen that a significant portion of the people, who for almost 1,000 years had borne the name of Christ, turned against the Church? St John of Kronstadt often prophesied about the consequences of turning away from the Church. "Ye shall be as gods" (Genesis 3:5) became the slogan of a new order, and people strove to establish a world without God. "Faith in the word of Truth, the Word of God, has disappeared, and was replaced by faith in human reason," wrote St John. "Children no longer obey their parents, students their teachers... Marriage is mocked, family life is decaying."

Today entire peoples both in the Fatherland and abroad face a choice: spiritual cultivation of the soul or utter devotion to material well-being. God forbid that we once again see the brutal consequences of the deceptive spiritual and moral choice of willingly sacrificing our souls to evil substitutions. That is why once again raise the call to conscientious purification, not in the political sense, but for the sake of obtaining spiritual succession, gazing upon the path of the New Martyrs, and to bid farewell to the symbols of militant atheism, rid ourselves of the old glorification of murderers by naming cities and towns after them, streets and plazas, train stations and parks; we call for the removal of the body from the central square of the nation of the one whose name is connected with the establishment of the militant atheist state, which led to the sacrifice of millions of lives to its ideology.

Returning to our Christian roots is our moral choice. It is built on the search for God, church life, learning about faith, growth and strengthening of our moral podvig. It is from our

parents that we must receive our first experience of knowledge of God, of prayer, participation in the Mysteries—we call upon all parents to tend to their own spiritual edification, and not only in word, but to teach their children by example. It is the family itself, the “little Church,” that the full understanding of church life is created.

The expulsion of multitudes of people from Russia introduced the West to Orthodox Christianity. Divine Providence, even the loss of goodness had positive results. Today, Orthodox Christians living in the West, where the family unit is in crisis, are called upon to serve as an example of moral purity in their own lives in their communities, both in Christian family life and in the monastic service.

Bearing all of this in mind, let us courageously declare in the shining joy of the Church, together with Holy Apostle Paul and St John of Kronstadt, the Martyred Royal Family and the multitude of New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia: “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Philippians 4:13).

With love in Christ,
+ HILARION,
Metropolitan of Eastern America and New York,
First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.
Signed by all the participants of the Council of Bishops

EPISTLE OF HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN HILARION OF EASTERN AMERICA AND NEW YORK ON THE DAY OF ORTHODOX YOUTH, CELEBRATED ON THE SUNDAY OF ALL SAINTS

Editor's note: In May 2008 the Council of Bishops decided that the Sunday of All Saints would be designated the Day of Youth of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. This celebration is aimed at all three basic socio-cultural groups of the youth of our Holy Church: young people born in Russia, those born abroad, and those who turned to Orthodoxy from the local populations where the Russian Church Abroad exists.

Dear in the Lord Brothers and Sisters:

I send my heartfelt congratulations on the feast day of All Saints, and also on the Day of Orthodox Youth, which was established eight years ago in the Russian Church Abroad. It is no accident that all of our saints are commemorated by the Church a week after Pentecost, for on the Pentecost, the Church herself was established, the shoot was planted into the earth. And we see the brilliant blossom that sprang forth: the holy martyrs and confessors, monastics and prophets, fools-for-Christ, holy hierarchs, hieromartyrs and confessors of the Church.

The holiday of All Saints is combined with the first Sunday (day of Resurrection), after the Pentecost, for holiness is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. This fruit did not emerge among demi-gods, but among ordinary people like you and I. Yet we must understand that almost none of these saints became saints suddenly, without the strong desire to be with God. At the same time, while striving to “obtain Divine grace,” the saints remained common, everyday folk in

their habits and human weaknesses. The Church specifically teaches the fact that each one of us is summoned to holiness. History provides many paradoxes: it has often happened that people utterly lost to society have become saints. In fact, the very first person to enter Heaven was the Thief, the one who was crucified next to Christ. “Remember me, o Lord, when you come into Thy kingdom” proved enough for him to enter Heaven.

Beloved brothers and sisters! This May we marked the 10th anniversary of the reconciliation of two branches of the Russian Church. Each of our churches, the Church Abroad and the Church in the Fatherland, thanks to this event, thanks to the good will of our beloved hierarchs, His Holiness Patriarch Alexy II of Moscow and All Russia and Metropolitan Laurus, have been doubly enriched. Now we share common all holy things, common holidays, we share veneration of the same saints and righteous people of our time. This demonstrates for us how close the Grace of God is to us, and that the Kingdom of Heaven is likewise accessible to us, for that is the chief goal of Christian life.

Let us therefore construct our life’s path on their example, witness to peace in Christ, let us preserve the Russian legacy: Russian culture, language, and the tradition of volunteer youth service.

Preserve in your hearts the words of Holy Scripture: “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect,” love God and your neighbour, strive towards true and fervent prayer, “obtain,” in the words of St Seraphim of Sarov, “the spirit of peace,” and this will suffice to ensure that a thousand around you in this world will be saved.

I wish you the abundant aid of God in all your well-intentioned and saving works, and invoke upon you Divine blessing.

+ HILARION

Metropolitan of Eastern America and New York,
First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia

PARISH LIFE: OUR WINTER 2017 SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Our Winter 2017 Schedule of services – covering the months of June, July and August – has been available in church and on our parish website since late in May. June and July are quiet months with regular weekend services only. August is a little busier – in addition to our regular weekend services there will be a general memorial service at the cemetery in Greta at 11.00am on Saturday 12 August and services on 18-19 August for the Great Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord.



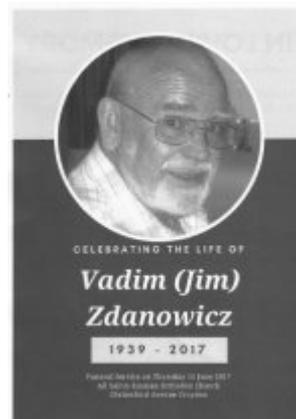
THE REPOSE AND FUNERAL OF ALMA KAIKO

On Tuesday 30 May 2017 we learned with sadness of the repose that day of 88 year-old Alma Kaiko, a long-term friend and supporter of our parish. Alma's husband of 57 years was Włodzimierz (Volodya) Kaiko (d. 2007), one of our church builders and for many years our senior altar-server, and together with him Alma did much for the benefit of

our small parish. Lutheran by faith, Alma's funeral was held at the LifeWay Lutheran Church in Broadmeadow on Wednesday 7 June with our parish rector Archpriest James Carles, Subdeacon Vitaly Lupish and his family, and Head Sister Anna Morhun in attendance. Alma was afterwards laid to rest beside her husband in Sandgate Cemetery. We offer condolences to Volodya's and Alma's children Leo, Ralph, Elizabeth and Alexander and their families, and pray that God will give rest to his departed servant.

THE REPOSE AND FUNERAL OF VADIM ("JIM") ZDANOWICZ

On Saturday 10 June we learned with sadness of the repose of our parishioner Vadim ("Jim") Zdanowicz. Jim arrived in Australia at the age of 10 in 1949 and had a long involvement in the life of the Russian Orthodox Church in New South Wales - his father, Gennady Ivanovich Zdanowicz, was a key figure in the early life of the Diocese who served as Warden of both Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral, Strathfield, and the Church of All Saints of Russia, Croydon. Jim prepared himself carefully for the end of his life, receiving Holy Communion for the last time just a few hours before his repose. Our parish rector presided at Jim's funeral at the Croydon church on Thursday 15 June and at his burial afterwards alongside his parents, Gennady Ivanowich and Anna Dmitrievna, in the Russian Orthodox section of Rookwood Cemetery. Jim is survived by his wife Eleanor and his children George and Kathy, to whom we offer heartfelt condolences. May his memory be eternal!



Symposium Syezd
Remembering the New Martyrs of Russia 100-years later
 July 14th to 17th at Sts. Peters and Paul Cathedral

\$225 Conference Hotel (2-person share room)*, or
 \$327 Conference Hotel (private room)*, or
 \$60 (daily commute - meals only)
* prices cover the duration of the symposium (3 nights)

The symposium will feature visiting guest speaker, Metropolitan Jonah (USA) and
 a **midnight liturgy** in remembrance of the **Holy Royal Martyrs** (starting 10:00pm 16th July)

Contact:
 syezd2017@gmail.com
www.syezd.com.au

DIOCESAN YOUTH SYMPOSIUM IN HONOUR OF THE ROYAL MARTYRS OF RUSSIA

From Friday 14 July to Monday 17 July this year, Saints Peter and Paul Diocesan Cathedral will host a four-day youth symposium in honour of the Royal Martyrs of Russia. The keynote speaker at the Symposium will be His Eminence Metropolitan Jonah (Paffhausen), retired First Hierarch of the Orthodox Church in America and now a bishop of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia. All-night Vigil for the Royal Martyrs will begin at 10.00pm on Sunday 16 July and be followed by a midnight Divine Liturgy. More information is available at www.syezd.com.au.

RUSSIAN AND OTHER ORTHODOX KIDS' CAMP, 10-16 DECEMBER 2017

A group of young families from the Intercession of the Holy Virgin parish in Cabramatta, NSW, is again organising a camp for Russian and other Orthodox children and young people aged 8-17 to be held in Toukley, NSW - not far from us, on the Central Coast - from 10

December - 16 December 2017. The cost will be \$399.00 per person. For those interested, more information is available at: <https://cabrapokrov.org/camp-rok/>

DIOCESAN LIFE: A RUSSIAN ORTHODOX LITURGICAL MUSIC CONFERENCE

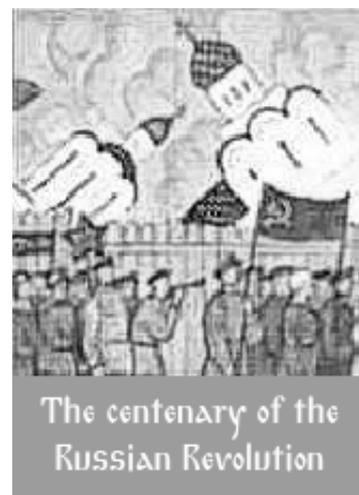


From Wednesday 27 September until Monday 2 October this year, a Russian Orthodox Liturgical Music Conference will be held in Brisbane. Organised by the Diocesan Liturgical Music Committee, the conference programme will include lectures from eminent guest speakers, intensive choral workshops and rehearsals, common meals, and a hierarchical All-Night Vigil and Divine Liturgy. Further information will be published here as it becomes available. See also:

<https://www.facebook.com/ROCSingersANZ/>

DIOCESAN LIFE: A RELIQUARY WITH RELICS OF THE NEW MARTYRS OF RUSSIA WILL VISIT NEW SOUTH WALES PARISHES IN JULY AND AUGUST 2017

On 6 June 2017 His Grace Bishop George announced that a reliquary containing relics of a number of the New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia will, in this year of the centenary of the Russian Revolution and the beginning of persecution by the godless authorities, visit parishes, monasteries and missions of our Diocese. The reliquary will visit New South Wales parishes during July and August. Enshrined in this reliquary are the relics twenty-four saints including Saint Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow; Hieromartyr Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev; Saint Luke of Simferopol; Royal Passion-Bearers Grand Duchesses Elizabeth and Anastasia; and others. Further information will be made available in due course about the schedule of visits and the arrangements for a service of intercession before the relics in our parish.



PARISH LIFE: NEW CHILD-SAFE, CHILD-FRIENDLY STATEMENT



In May 2017 the Parish Council approved a new statement about strategies to make sure that our parish is child-safe and child-friendly. The child-safe, child-friendly statement can be read on the website at http://stnicholaswalsend.org.au/files/Policies/Saint_Nicholas_child-safe_child-friendly_statement_May_2017.pdf. Those without access to the website can obtain a copy from Father James.

PARISH LIFE: TWO DECORATIVE PROJECTS



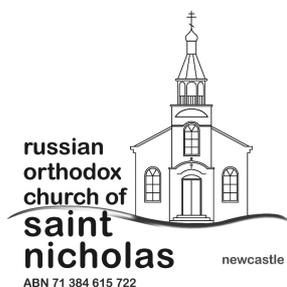
For some time, work has been underway on two projects for the beautification of our small church. The first of these is the construction of a new carved wooden table for the commemoration of the departed. This table, which will have a nickel-gilded top with holders for each individual candle, is being made for us by Protodeacon Basil Hadarin from Sydney. A picture of a similar table can be seen to the left. The purchase of this new memorial table was made possible by a generous bequest from the estate of the late Tamara Bachkovsky. We expect to receive it before the end of 2017.

The second decorative project is that of a large – 2.6 metre high – standing icon case that will hold hand-painted icons of the Annunciation and of the Mother of God surrounded by a multitude of saints of importance to our parish. This project is being undertaken by Dmitry Lihachov, the same iconographer who worked on the large Cross that stands on the left-hand side of the church. The new icon case will stand on the right-hand side of the church, by the side door and in front of the downstairs kliros. The parish has received a number of generous donations to assist with this project. It, too, is expected to be finished by the end of 2017.



DATES TO REMEMBER

On Sunday 24 September 2017 we will have our parish Annual General Meeting. This is an important event in parish life and all parish members are asked to make time for it. On Sunday 22 October 2017 Bishop George will be visiting our parish. Please keep this day free and be present to welcome Vladyka to Newcastle.



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Beginning in June 2017, we hope to publish our parish newsletter every month. If you wish to receive a copy by post or by email, please talk to Father James. Alternatively, send an email to info@stnicholaswallsend.org.au.