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PARISH LEAFLET

Holy Virgin Mary
Russian Orthodox Cathedral

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ANNUNCIATION OF THE THEOTOKOS 2017



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Spiritual Father: how to search, why do you need one, and what to do if you do not have one.

How obligatory is the decision to become a spiritual child, does it leave us free? Which attitude towards the confessor is wrong? What to do if you do not have a spiritual father yet? Is it possible to have a "confessor by correspondence"? What if a husband and his wife have different spiritual fathers? Is it possible to change one confessor for another? What makes relationships between spiritual father and his spiritual child special?

Here we are discussing these and other topics with an experienced pastor.

In absence of elders

- What is the current situation with spiritual care?

- It's complex. Not all priests, unfortunately, have a gift of being able to provide a true spiritual care.

- And what does it mean to be gifted with the ability of providing spiritual care?

- One can say that it is a rationality of one's expectations, which a spiritual father has for his spiritual child. You should always be guided by ability and spiritual strength of one's soul. And if you feel that you can damage and break, you need to know when to stop. If you feel that this person still has a good amount of spiritual strength, you should try to dig deeper into their soul and give some bits of advice, which sometimes are not easy to follow, but spiritual children, as a rule, tend to follow them.

- What happened nowadays – why is there such a difficulty with spiritual care?

- The reason is the disappearance of the elders.

One upon a time, Father John Krestiankin said: "We knew the elders, similar in spirit to the ancient elders. And you know us. But soon there will be others who will not differ by some special talents and spiritual strength." Here, perhaps, this time has come and we are passing through it now – time which is commonly called apostasy, which means departure from true faith. Only by the grace of God our Church and people of God are reborn. And just for the current generation St. Ignatius Brianchaninov reflecting on the spiritual eldership and its disappearance in the future, said the following: don't be sad because of the disappearance of wise spiritual leaders, focus on spiritual books, on the Fathers of the Church.

And surprisingly, around 1989, new Orthodox books started being published: Holy Fathers and their lives. And nowadays – there are a lot of these books and an enormous number of publishers! We have an opportunity to be introduced to the writings of St. Ignatius Brianchaninov, St. Theophan the Recluse, many elders, ancient and contemporary, such as Father John's (Krestyankin), and others who left behind their works. They, in general, answered all the questions that now emerge in front of the modern humanity. For example, Father John (Krestyankin) has a "Spiritual first aid kit", consisting of bits of advice on various problems of spiritual life. Now the writings of the Holy Fathers are systematized by themes, for example, on piety, on prayer, on pride, etc. We may all look for a spiritual guidance in them.

And nowadays it's not necessary to dive in ascetic writings of such ascetics, as, St. Isaac the Syrian, because the ancient Fathers, living in deserts, writing mostly for monastics, people living a deeply ascetic life. We do not live that kind of life. And if we try to follow their advice, on the one hand, it can certainly be good for us, and on the other hand - we can find ourselves in a trap of misunderstanding and inconsistency of such a spiritual experience and our modern day life. It can cause spiritual confusion, up to psychological illness. Therefore it is better to contact the contemporary elders, and the current native ascetics of piety, already deceased, but who left their precious works for us focused on contemporary society.

- What are these books - can you list a few more?

- Father Nicholas Golubov, Holy Righteous Father Alexei Mechev, certainly Glinsky and Optina elders, Holy Righteous Father John of Kronstadt, Theophane the Recluse, Ignatius Bryanchaninov. There are a lot of them, it's impossible to list them all! And now people are very busy – one spends much time only on one road to work or work itself. It is not possible to read all the books, but this would be sufficient for beginners guidance to the spiritual life.

To be continued...

*Faith, "FOMA in Ukraine", September 2016.
(With the editor's changes)*

PARISH LIFE:

Important dates:

March 5th – PAN ORTHODOX CELEBRATION HOSTED BY ARCHBISHOP BENJAMIN (SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY)

March 25th – ANNUNCIATION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS (GREGORIAN CALENDAR)

April 5th – Holy Unction Service

April 9th – Palm Sunday

April 16th – HOLY PASCHA

From the Desk of Fr. Nazari.

Dear brothers and sisters,
I send you my cordial greetings on the occasion of the beginning of Great Lent.

As we can see especially this year time runs very fast and on April 16th we are going to celebrate Holy Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

With God's help we have successfully and joyfully celebrated our Patronal Feast day with our Ruling Hierarchy Archbishop Benjamin. Thank you all for your help in preparation, as well as participation in celebration of our feast day. Photos from our Patronal feast day can be seen on our cathedral website: www.hvmla.org and on Facebook: www.facebook.com/hvmla

March will be filled with many lenten services.

I would especially like to draw your attention to the fact that on the first Sunday of Great Lent on March 5th at 5 pm we will host guests from all Orthodox parishes of Los Angeles to celebrate Sunday of Orthodoxy. Three Orthodox Arhpastors will prayerfully lead this vesper service and icon procession. I also ask you all to come and prayerfully participate in the worship and to help with the preparation of the reception after the procession.

As we all know, Lent is a period of repentance, self-reflection and spiritual comprehension of our life, that is why during this period Holy Orthodox Church invites its faithful children to participate in the sacrament of repentance and to enhance our prayers.

If you look at our schedule, you'll see that there will be many lenten services, during which we all will have an opportunity to receive sacrament of Confession and Holy Eucharist.

In particular, I want to draw your attention to the fact that this year on Wednesday April 5th at 7 pm the Sacrament of Holy Unction will be served at our Church. The Holy Church has established this sacrament based on the Epistle of Holy Apostle James 5: 14-15: ¹⁴ "Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the

church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven". Though perhaps not all of us suffer from physical ailments, we are all spiritually ill; therefore according to Church tradition believers flow together for this sacrament, having prepared themselves for the reception of this sacrament by Holy Confession. The faithful accept the anointment with holy oil with the hopes of not only healing our physical ailments but also healing of forgotten and unconscious sins.

I wish you peace and spiritually rich Lenten journey.

God bless us all!

Archpriest Nazari Polataiko

Prayer of St. Ephraim of Syria

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power, and idle talk.

But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to Thy servant.

Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own transgressions, and not to judge my brother, for blessed art Thou, unto ages of ages. Amen.

Starosta Report

I would like to express my thanks to those who participated in our Feast Day activities. We were fortunate and blessed with good weather. The catered luncheon was excellent and enjoyed by all who attended.

The Annual Parish Meeting on January 22, went well. The 2017 Budget was approved and new Parish Council members were elected. Repairs and maintenance on our property still continues and we still are looking for volunteers to assist us.

Starting in March, we are raising the price of prosphora to **\$2.00**. If you plan to purchase your SUNDAY ONLY prosphora in advance, your cost will be \$100.00 annually. This price does not include weekdays or holiday purchases. You will still have to buy and pay for them individually. The new price for the prosphora will be **\$2.00 each**.

Leo Gregory

Sisterhood News.

We are preparing for Lent. After our Blini luncheon, we will be serving meatless dishes and our Borscht is always vegetarian. Come and enjoy our meals after Liturgy on Sundays.

Soon we will be cleaning the Church in preparation for Pascha sometime at the end of March or beginning of April. Please watch for flyers in the Parish Hall for the date announcements. Come and participate.

We always welcome as many volunteers as possible to help us with this annual task.

Irene Gregory

Saturday school

On Saturday, February 25th our school will be celebrating Maslenitsa. Traditionally, on this day we serve lunch for our students, teachers and guests: freshly baked pancakes with butter, sour cream, jam. After refreshments we will conduct our annual review of talents, participants will be given some gifts. Also, on this day

the results of the drawing competition based on the tale "The Snow Queen" will be announced. We invite everyone to join us on Maslenitsa!

Head of Studies, Irina Usova

Sunday School.

Dear Parents and Families, Sunday School classes in the month of March will be held on 3/12 and 3/19. Classes in April will meet on 4/2 and 4/23. Thank you to everyone for their prayers and support.

Marie McEntire, Coordinator

Camp Fundraiser

Thank you to all who helped make the camp fundraiser a success. Everyone enjoyed the food and especially the entertainment by the school children. Special thank you to those who helped in decorating the hall. Hope to see all the children at camp this year.

Marina Burgmeier, Coordinator

BAPTISMS: Nina Bugakov..... January 21st
Mila Voitovitsch..... February 5th

Many years!

Prayer Request list:

Leonid Gregory, Irine Gregory, Chris Plourde
Marina Dobis (in need of a donor kidney)
Mary Kokayko, Alexander, Maria,
Elena, Theodore, Ann Brown

**The Parish Council Would Like to Thank the Following Persons
for their BUILDING Fund Contributions**

Ralf G. Zacky in memory of Victor and Emily Melnikov 250
Anonymous in memory of Eugene Bobrov 100
Zinaida Shalygin for good health of Luda Spilewsky 100

MARCH 2017

1	Wed	10:00am 7:00pm	Gt. Lenten Hrs. and Presanctified Liturgy Compline & Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete	Clean Wednesday
2	Thu	10:00am 7:00pm	Gt. Lenten Hrs., Vespers Compline & Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete	Clean Thursday
3	Fr	6:00pm	Hrs./Lit. of Presanctified Gifts	Clean Friday

MARCH 2017 (CONTINUED)

4	Sat	10:00am 5:00pm	Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom Vigil	St. Theodore the Recruit
5	Sun	10:00am 5:00 pm	Liturgy of St. Basil the Great Vespers of Sunday of Orthodoxy	1st Sunday of Great Lent: SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY PAN ORTHODOX CELEBRATION HOSTED BY ARCHBISHOP BENJAMIN
7	Tue	7:00pm 8:00pm	Akathist before the icon of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos "Rescuer of the Perishing" <i>Meeting of the youth and young adult group FORUM; movie night</i>	
8	Wed	10:00am	Hrs./Lit. of Presanctified Gifts	Hieromartyr Polycarp (Julian calendar) St. Theophylactus (Gregorian calendar)
10	Fr	6:00pm	Hrs./Lit. of Presanctified Gifts	St. Tarasius (Julian calendar) St. Cyprian and Dionysius (Gregorian calendar)
11	Sat	5:00pm	Vigil	
12	Sun	10:00am	Liturgy of St. Basil the Great	2nd Sunday of Great Lent: ST. GREGORY PALAMAS
14	Tue	7:00pm 8:00pm	Akathist before the icon of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos "Rescuer of the Perishing" <i>Meeting of the youth and young adult group FORUM; Reader George Abuelkhair "Bible study" Lecture 6</i>	
15	Wed	10:00am	Hrs./Lit. of Presanctified Gifts	Hieromartyr Theodotus (Julian calendar) Martyr Agapius (Gregorian calendar)
17	Fr	6:00pm	Hrs./Lit. of Presanctified Gifts	Ven. Gerasimus of Jordan (Julian calendar) Ven. Alexis (Gregorian calendar)
18	Sat	5:00pm	Vigil	
19	Sun	10:00am	Liturgy of St. Basil the Great	3 rd Sunday of Great Lent: VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS
21	Tue	7:00pm 8:00pm	Akathist before the icon of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos "Rescuer of the Perishing" <i>Meeting of the youth and young adult group FORUM; please see the updated information later on the website</i>	
22	Wed	6:00pm	Lit. of Presanctified Gifts	40 Martyrs of Sebaste (Julian calendar) Martyr Basil (Gregorian calendar)
24	Fr	7:00pm	Vigil	ANNUNCIATION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS (GREGORIAN CALENDAR)
25	Sat	10:00am 5:00pm	Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom Vigil	
26	Sun	10:00am	Liturgy of St. Basil the Great	4 th Sunday of Great Lent: St. John Climacus (of the Ladder)
28	Tue	7:00pm 8:00pm	Akathist before the icon of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos "Rescuer of the Perishing" <i>Meeting of the youth and young adult group FORUM; presentation on iconography by Fr. Nazari</i>	
29	Wed	7:00pm	Matins and Canon of St. Andrew of Crete	Presanctified Andrew's Canon
31	Fr	7:00pm	Matins with the Akathist to Theotokos	Presanctified Akathist Hymn

APRIL 2017

1	Sat	5:00 pm	Vigil	
2	Sun	10:00 am	Liturgy of St. Basil the Great	5 th Sunday of Great Lent: MARY OF EGYPT
4	Tue	7:00 pm 8:00 pm	Akathist before the icon of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos "Rescuer of the Perishing" <i>Meeting of the youth and young adult group FORUM; choir practice with Serge Liberosky</i>	

APRIL 2017 (continued)

5	Wed	10:00 am 7:00 pm	Hrs. / Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts Holy Unction Service	
8	Sat	10:00 am 5:00 pm	Liturgy HIERARCHICAL VIGIL	Lazarus Saturday
9	Sun	10:00am	HIERARCHICAL DIVINE LITURGY	PALM SUNDAY: ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM

Great & Holy Week of Our Lord's Passions

9	(Sun)		6:00pm	Matins ("Bridegroom")	
10	Gt. & Holy Monday		7:00pm	Matins ("Bridegroom")	
11	Gt. & Holy Tuesday		7:00pm	Matins ("Bridegroom")	
12	Gt. & Holy Wednesday		10:00am 7:00pm	Hrs. /Lit. of Presanctified Gifts Matins of the Holy Wednesday	
13	Gt. & Holy Thursday		10:00am 7:00pm	Vesperal Liturgy of St. Basil – Commemoration of the Last Supper Matins – Service of the Twelve Passion Gospels	
14	Gt. & Holy Friday		10:00am 2:00pm 7:00pm	Hours of Great & Holy Friday Vespers w/Bringing out of Shroud (Epitaphion) Matins and Cross Procession	
15	Gt. & Holy Saturday		10:00am 2,4,6,8,11pm 8:00pm 11:30pm	Vesperal Liturgy with reading of 15 Parables Blessing of baskets Reading of the Acts of the Holy Apostles Nocturnes/Midnight Office	
16	HOLY PASCHA		12:00am 1:00am 1:30am 11:00am	Cross Procession and Matins Paschal Hours and Blessing of baskets Paschal Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom Paschal Vespers	
17	Mon	10:00 am		Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom and Procession	Bright Monday
18	Tue	10:00 am		Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom and Procession	Bright Tuesday
21	Fr	10:00 am		Liturgy	Theotokos of Life-giving Font
22	Sat	10:00 am 5:00 pm		Liturgy and Procession Vigil	Bright Saturday
23	Sun	9:00 am 12:00 pm 3:00 pm		Liturgy Paschal Litiyas at Hollywood Cemetery Paschal Litiyas at Valhalla Cemetery	2 nd Sunday in Paschal-tide Thomas Sunday
25	Tue	9:00 am 12:30 pm 1:30 pm 2:30 pm 3:30 pm 7:00 pm 8:00 pm		Liturgy and Litiya Paschal Litiyas at Hollywood Cemetery Paschal Litiyas at Serbian Cemetery Paschal Litiyas at Rosedale Cemetery Paschal Litiyas at Valhalla Cemetery Akathist before the icon of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos "Rescuer of the Perishing" <i>Meeting of the youth and young adult group FORUM; presentation on iconography by Fr. Nazari</i>	RADONITZA – Day of Rejoicing; Confessor Basil (Julian calendar) Apostle and Evangelist Mark (Gregorian calendar)
29	Sat	5:00 pm		Vigil	
30	Sun	10:00 am		Liturgy	3 rd Sunday in Paschal-tide Myrr-Bearing Women

