

Daylight

A Ministry of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the U.S.A.

“...now you are
light in the Lord.
Walk as children
of light...”
(Ephesians 5:8)

D.A.Y.
Diocesan Apostolate for Youth

Volume 4

April 19, 2009

Number 2

Making A Difference

by Kyra Lee, St. John the Baptist Church, Rahway, NJ



Nearly one million people are homeless in the United States. As the economy worsens, the numbers are growing.

This crisis seems so overwhelming that it's easy to give up. It's easy to assume that someone else ought to solve the problem. We Orthodox youth are such a small group—how can we change anything? In a world that needs so much help, how can a van-full of young people, a bag of socks, and a few cups of hot soup make a difference?

On a freezing February night, some of us got the chance to find out.

Approximately twenty Orthodox youth from the New York City area gathered at Emmaus

House in Harlem, a shelter founded by Fr. David Kirk during the 1960s. Since Fr. David's repose in 2007, Darryl Wood, who had once been homeless himself, runs the shelter. Once we had all assembled, we prayed in the icon-filled chapel for vespers and heard Darryl's story of finding the love of Christ in the care and love of Fr. David. Darryl reminded us that though the apostles met the risen Christ on the road to Emmaus, it wasn't until they broke bread together that they could recognize Jesus. We also can best share the good news of the Gospel when we first see the image of Christ in each individual and look for ways to serve others. We ate dinner together, as hungry people in the neighborhood dropped in to get bread. Then we got

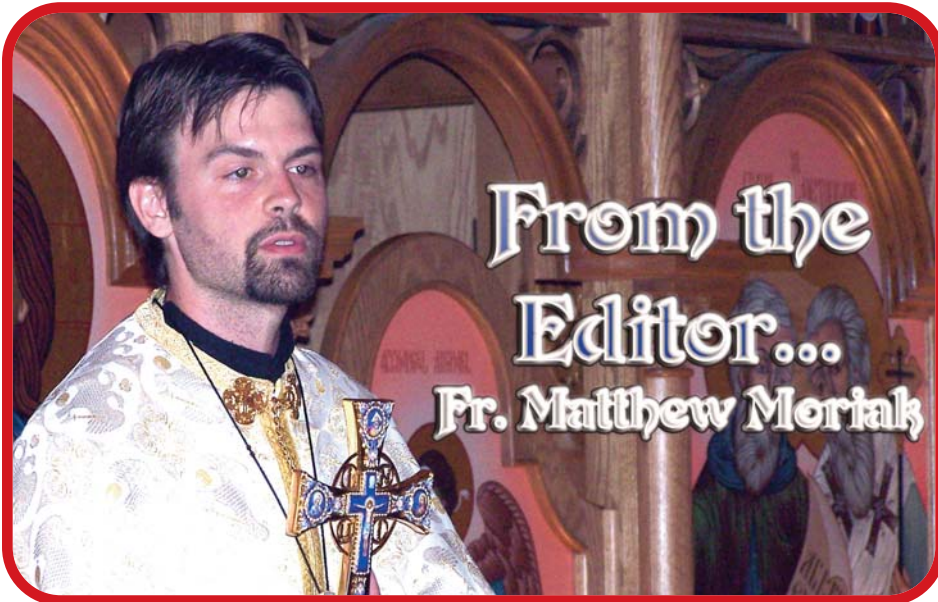
to work. We packed soup, sorted socks, and folded blankets. We packed it all into our vans, and then headed south from Harlem to mid-town Manhattan.

We made three stops around Manhattan, giving nourishing soup and warm clothing to as many people as we could. It was eye-opening to see how much a small bowl of soup or a pair of old socks could mean to those in need. It was also a good time to actually stop and look into the eyes of each person, instead of hurrying past those huddled in the streets. We all wished we had more to give and we look forward to returning to Emmaus House in the future.

As we approach the close of Great Lent, it is good to remember the Gospel reading we heard at the beginning. As Jesus said to His faithful sheep at the Last Judgment, “inasmuch as you did it to the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.”



DAYLIGHT PULL-OUT SECTION



Christ is Risen...

and I'm excited about it!!!



In high school, I played basketball and ran on the track team. Before the opening tip-off, or before a big race, I always got a nervous feeling in the pit of my stomach. Perhaps you are familiar with this feeling if you also play a sport, or if you've had to perform in a play or a musical, or a dance or piano recital. Even though it can best be described as a nervous feeling, it's a good type of nervous. It's a "nervous-excitement" because you are about to do something that you love.

When you think of your Orthodox faith, perhaps the word "exciting" isn't the first one that springs to your mind. I ask the question, "why not?" Do we love Christ? Do we love our faith? Then when we express that love, specifically in the context of the Divine Liturgy, shouldn't that be exciting for us? When we prepare to receive the precious body and blood of Christ in the Holy Eucharist, do we get that same feeling of nervous excitement in our stomachs? If not, then why not? We are given the awesome gift of receiving Christ each and every Sunday. Where else can we get that? Nowhere! That's pretty exciting.

We recently celebrated the Feast of Feasts: Pascha; the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. One of the highlights of this celebration for me has always been Holy Saturday. Even when I was very young I looked forward to Resurrection Matins, and that anticipation has only grown since my ordination to the Holy Priesthood. We leave a completely darkened Church and process solemnly around the outside. When we reach the front doors again, I know that we are only moments away from celebrating Christ's Resurrection. After the 40 days of prayer and fasting; after walking on the path of Holy Week with Christ to the Cross, we finally reach the moment when we can proclaim His Resurrection. The bells begin to peel, we joyfully sing the Paschal Tropar and when the doors to the Church are thrown open we walk, no longer into darkness, but into the brightness of the Resurrection. During all of this, do you know what I am feeling? That "nervous-excited" feeling in the pit of my stomach.

Christ loved us so much that He was betrayed, He suffered and He died on the Cross. Thankfully, that was not the end of the story. His Resurrection on the third day shows that death has no power. Because of His Resurrection, we too can someday experience eternal life with Him in His Heavenly Kingdom. Isn't that something worth getting excited about?

CHRIST IS RISEN!!! INDEED HE IS RISEN!!!

The Three Youths in the Furnace



NOTE: This is the fourth in a series of articles dealing with the presence of the Trinity in the Old Testament. The first three can be found in the June/July and November/December 2008 issues of Daylight and in the February/March 2009 issue. Go to www.acrod.org/Day to check them out.

In the third chapter of the Book of Daniel, there is a dramatic story of a pagan king, three holy youths, and a blazing furnace. King Nebuchadnezzar had a golden image constructed. He wanted everyone to worship this image. There were three young men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who refused to worship the image, because of their faith in God. In anger, the king had them thrown into a fiery furnace. The three youths prayed while in the fire, and while they prayed, they were not harmed. Nebuchadnezzar was beside himself, and when he looked into the furnace, he saw not three men, but four! The king proclaimed, "Behold I see four men untied and walking in the midst of the fire, yet they are not destroyed; and the vision of the fourth is like the Son of God." (Daniel 3:92) Nebuchadnezzar had the young men released and praised God.

This story from the book of the prophet Daniel is read on the morning of Holy Saturday during the Divine Liturgy. On Holy Saturday, while Christ's body is in the tomb, His soul descends into Hades to free those held captive there. This story of the three youths in the fire, and Christ's presence in it, is seen as a type, or representation of the events of Holy Saturday. Christ, even before He became man, was in the furnace with the three youths, protecting them.

Shop at our New Diocesan

Online Mini-mall

Orthodox Goods.Com

Featuring the products of the Seminary Bookstore, Gloria Incense and Liturgical Publications.

Christ the Saviour Cathedral
is Now Online.

Watch live or archived divine services at

www.acrod.org/livebroadcast.html

THE JOYS OF CAMP NAZARETH

by Katerina Hulme, St. Mary's Church; Corning, NY



In July 2008, many of our church school children had the wonderful opportunity to attend Camp Nazareth in Mercer, PA. Camp Nazareth provided them with religious education, time for worship, recreational activities and fellowship. In their own words, the children gave Camp Nazareth rave reviews and attested to a positive religious experience.

First time attendee Samuel Mertus described it as “the best camp in the world.” He also indicated that “Camp Nazareth has a pool and a rec. room. There are special things all throughout the week, like pool parties and you also stay up late. You pray to God every morning and night.”

Benjamin Mertus said: “This was my first visit and I am pleased to say that I enjoyed it a lot. The food was delicious and was different every meal. All of the counselors were nice and they let us have fun. We learned a lot about the church and its various saints, especially St. Paul. It was the year to learn about him at camp. We had a sport hour where we played backwards kickball. My team came in third but it was still fun. We had various parties every night, pool or movie parties. They were something to look forward to. Camp was very fun this year and I hope to go next year too.”

Anna McKane, who also attended for the first time, said: “It was really fun! You got to play backwards kickball and make crafts. One of the crafts was making key chains. There was a pool there. At the pool there was a slide and a diving board. You also get to sleep in a cabin. You can sleep on the top or bottom bunk. You can go to the gift shop and buy stuff. You go to church services, too. These are some hymns you sing: ‘Our Father’ and ‘O Holy Nectarios’.”

Katherine McKane shared her sister’s enthusiasm, saying: “It is fun in Camp Nazareth because it has a pool. The pool has a slide and a diving board. It has a game field and the game field is for backwards kickball. The church was very beautiful inside. It had a big lamp on the ceiling. I met some friends in the camp. We had three hours of play time. There was a gift store. Camp is so much fun.”

Noah Coons felt that “Camp was awesome this year as it is every year” and he enjoyed “meeting new friends, playing games, and growing in” his faith. He added: “Camp is full of smiles, happiness, and fun, but when it comes time we know how to settle down for prayer. There is prayer in the morning, in the evening, and before meals. In between all the praying there is religious education, clergy rap, arts and crafts, ethnic dancing, plain chant, free time, and sports activities. This year’s sports activities were backwards kickball for the younger kids and flag football for the older kids. I played backwards kickball. We were undefeated until the championship game when we lost 5-4, but it was still fun. The food at camp is amazing—hats off to the cooks. One of the best things at camp are the night activities. There is the pool party, movie night, campfire, staff concert and the dance! Camp was great and I can’t wait to go back next year.”

Samuel Loposky also enjoyed going to Camp Nazareth and shared that “it really taught me things about my faith that I didn’t know. For example I learned about St. Paul’s life. I enjoyed playing ping-pong with friends that I only see once a year at camp. I enjoyed seeing the Metropolitan and being in Church with him.”

What better way for our youth to spend part of their summer vacation!

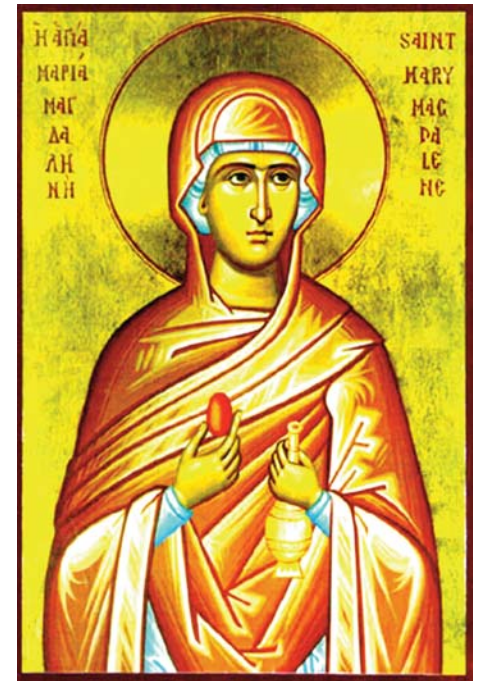
One thing you can gather from this article is that our youth not only love the Camp but look forward to making new memories there each and every summer. That time of year is upon us once again. Make plans now for the 2009 summer camping session. Please see your parish priest for the appropriate forms, or download them from the Diocesan website: www.acrod.org

July 19-25: Diocesan Session I-New England, New York, New Jersey, Florida and Canada Deaneries

July 26-August 1: Diocesan Session II-Johnstown, Pocono, Southern Tier, Youngstown and Chicago Deaneries

August 2-August 8: Diocesan Session III-Pittsburgh, Mid-Atlantic, Tri-State and Washington DC Deaneries

Lives of the Saints: St. Mary Magdalene



St. Mary Magdalene is one of the greatest Saints in the Church. Sadly, she is also one of the most misrepresented Saints, both in popular culture and in other Christian denominations. In just about any secular film or book having anything to do with her, she is depicted as the sinful women who anointed Christ’s feet with her tears. Nowhere in Scripture or in the tradition of the Church is this found to be true. What we know of her from St. Luke’s Gospel is that she was beset by seven demons and Christ drove them from her. (Luke 8:2,3). From that time on, she became a follower of Christ.

St. Mary Magdalene is closely associated with Christ’s Resurrection. She is one of the myrrh-bearing women who came to the tomb in the hopes of anointing Christ’s body. In the Gospel of St. John, she is recorded to be the first person to witness Christ risen from the dead. She makes the mistake of thinking He was a gardener, until He calls her by her name. Christ instructs her to tell the Disciples that He is risen. In doing so, she becomes the first to proclaim the truth of the Resurrection, and is thus granted the title of “Apostle to the apostles” and “equal to the Apostles.”

There is a tradition in the Church that she was bold enough in her faith to proclaim Christ’s Resurrection to the pagan Roman emperor, Tiberius Caesar. He, of course, refused to believe that this could be true. He said that a man could no more rise from the dead than the egg in her hand could turn red. Immediately, the egg in St. Mary’s hand turned red. It is for this reason that you will often see St. Mary Magdalene depicted in icons holding a red egg. This is also thought to be why we dye eggs red at Pascha.

As we celebrate the joy of Christ’s Resurrection, let us remember the example of St. Mary Magdalene, who never lost faith in Her Lord Jesus Christ, and who enthusiastically and joyfully proclaimed to all, “Christ is Risen!”

Windows Into Heaven



When we sing the Tropar for the Resurrection of Christ, we sing: “trampling down death by death.” Christ, through His death on the Cross, destroys the power that death has over us. This is clearly expressed in the icon of the Resurrection. The traditional Orthodox icon for Pascha does not literally show Christ bursting forth from the tomb. Rather, His defeat of death itself is the idea that is expressed. We see Christ’s descent into Hades and His releasing of those held captive there.



Underneath Jesus are the two crossed leaves of hell’s door that have been pulled down. Below the doors is the blackness of the abyss where Satan makes his home. In some icons, you see Satan depicted as an old, defeated man with his hands bound.

Christ Himself is surrounded by bright colors. He wears a radiant halo, with various shades of blues surrounded Him and rays of light issuing from Him.

Sometimes, we see Christ holding a scroll, which symbolizes the preaching of the Resurrection in hell. More often though, if He is holding anything, He is holding a cross. After Christ’s Resurrection, the cross is no longer a symbol of death and punishment. It is now a symbol of victory over death.

There are many other figures in the icon of the Resurrection. The two figures kneeling to the left of Christ are Adam and Eve being raised from their graves. On Christ’s right, we see other Old Testament figures representing the righteous who have waited for Christ’s coming. King David and King Solomon are shown wearing royal robes and crowns. Behind them is St. John the Baptist, who went before Christ into Hades to preach Christ’s coming. On Christ’s left, we will see in some icons Moses holding the tablets of the Law. Sometimes we will see Adam and Eve’s righteous son Able, depicted as a shepherd holding a staff.



Diocesan Website Update

The Diocesan Chancery is pleased to announce that the diocesan website redesign project slated to be complete by September 1, 2009 is progressing on schedule. This comprehensive redesign of the diocesan website, www.acrod.org is taking place in collaboration with the Internet Ministries and Information Technologies Departments of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

The new website, in addition to a completely new graphic “look” will incorporate the latest multi-media technology. This technology will include, an enhanced MP3 library of liturgical music, audio and video recordings of educational lectures, podcasts, a virtual classroom for distance learning, and live broadcasting of divine services from Christ the Saviour Cathedral.

Of keen interest to our youth will be the development of a special subsection of the site called The Arena. This section will provide a gathering place for our Diocesan youth, where they will, in an innovative manner, be given the opportunity to learn more about the faith. They will be challenged as well, to take a stand, and share their common struggles in the Arena of faith in a special blog forum.

Pascha



Almost all of us are familiar with the special bread that is prepared to celebrate the Resurrection of Christ, called pascha. But “Pascha” is not the name of the bread alone, but was the name that was used in Carpatoho-Russia—indeed, in the whole of the Orthodox East—to speak of the feast day of the Resurrection of Christ. In fact, most modern European languages know the Lord’s Resurrection by this name or a variation of it. Our English word “Easter” has unfortunately come to be used in referring to this day. This is unfortunate because it has no Biblical connection like “Pascha” does. The word “Easter” was simply the name of the ancient Germanic goddess of spring (Eastra), worshipped by the early Anglo-Saxon tribes.

The word Pascha is the Greek version of the Hebrew word for Passover, pesach. It was first used when the Hebrew Old Testament was translated into Greek for those Jews who no longer knew the Hebrew language of their ancestors, and who had emigrated to other areas of the Mediterranean outside of Palestine, especially to the city of Alexandria in Egypt. The first Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament was prepared in Alexandria about 200 BC. In this work the word Pascha was used to render the Hebrew word for Passover. Since this version of the Old Testament (the Septuagint, or LXX) was the one used most widely by the early Church, the word Pascha came to be applied to the Passover of Jesus as well. The early Christians saw the Passover of Exodus as a forerunner of the Lord’s own Passover from death to life.



Part of the lesson plan for the students of Saint Nicholas Sunday School of Lansford, PA was to learn the Ten Commandments. The first part of the study was about the commandments that pertain to God and the second about those which involve others.

At the end of their study, each was awarded a special certificate saying, “I Learned the Ten Commandments.” The students are learning the song “A New Commandment” which sums up Jesus’ teaching about the greatest commandment that we should “love one another.” Pictured are (left to right) Julian Rickert, Matthew and Mark Kokinda, and Claire Kokinda with their instructor, Cantor Raymond J. Mastroberte.