



# ST. STEPHEN'S QUARTERLY

A Newsletter of St. Stephen Orthodox Cathedral

8598 Verree Rd. Philadelphia, PA 19111

## FALL 2011

### *A note from Fr. Victor...*

Dear brothers and sisters in the Lord,

This is the first issue of a newsletter of St. Stephen's Cathedral which, I hope, we will be able to publish on a quarterly basis. I felt that we should find new ways for our parishioners to receive updates about the recent events as well as to be notified about the upcoming important days in the life of our parish. My hope that with these quarterly newsletters our parish will become a better-connected community and that you will be able to plan ahead to special events that are coming up. Since this is our first attempt at this type of communication, we will surely be making some changes to this newsletter. I will be appreciative of any suggestions that you can give and to any assistance that you can provide to improve the quality of St. Stephen's Quarterly.

One thing that we all should remember is that communication is not a goal in itself and by will not automatically help us to grow our community or make it stronger. This is just a tool and means for us to achieve our goal: to help us acquire more prayerful life as individuals and as a parish. It is only in coming together for feast days of the church or for other special events that we grow closer to God and to each other. Please check the list of events here and mark them on the calendar so that you have them to look forward to as faithful parishioners of St. Stephen's.

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### LOOKING AHEAD:

Feast Days and Events

- **Great Feast Day:** *Nativity of Theotokos.* **Sept. 8:** Liturgy 9 AM
- **Great Feast Day:** *Elevation of the Precious Cross.* **Sept. 13:** Vespers 7 PM; **Sept. 14:** Liturgy 9 AM
- **Feast Day:** *Protection of the Theotokos.* **Sept. 30:** Vespers 7 PM; **Oct. 1:** Liturgy 9 AM
- **Penny Party:** Sat. Oct. 22, 7 PM
- **Feast Day:** *St. Michael the Archangel.* Nov. 7: Vespers 7 PM, Nov. 8: Liturgy 9 AM
- **Great Feast Day:** *Entrance of the Theotokos.* Nov. 20: Vespers 1 PM; Nov. 21 Liturgy 9 AM

### **Feast Days of the Church**

We, Orthodox Christians, are a new nation of God's people whom He redeemed by His own Blood. Being a nation means to have common mind, heart and spirit. The Church possesses this quality, but often we ourselves are still not perfectly united with Christ and with His Church to be that one Body that we should be. So our task is to continue to grow into this fullness of life in Christ.

One important way in which this can be accomplished is by coming together in the celebration of feast days that should be near and dear to the heart of every Orthodox Christian. Even in the Old Covenant times God commanded the Israelites to keep special days of observance and festivals. This brought people together, united them in one spirit and taught them important religious experience that should penetrate their whole life. The same is true in the New Covenant. The Holy Orthodox Church established the feasts for us to call us to come together as a community. How sad it is to see that so many of our parishioners do not respond to this call and consider that the Great Feasts of the Church, like Nativity of the Theotokos, Her Entrance into the Temple and Exaltation of the Precious Cross are not worthy of their time! If we want to be strong spiritually, both individually and as a community, we cannot ignore this call. We should plan ahead to be in church on the eve of the feast days or in the morning for the Liturgy of the feast. This might take some effort if we didn't do it regularly before, but the reward will be great because it will help us draw closer to the Lord and be one with His Church.

### **Beginning of Sunday School Year**

With great enthusiasm we are starting another Sunday School Year. By the grace of God, the children population in our parish has increased significantly. It is our duty given by God to make our parish a welcoming environment for children and their families and to do all we can to help our parents to give their children proper Orthodox Christian formation. Our Sunday School program therefore should be of primary importance. We ask all the parents of children age 4 and up to register them for participation in the Sunday School program. We also ask the parents to be diligent with bringing their children to Church on a regular basis so that they could have full benefit from our curriculum.

### **Weekly Bible Study**

We will be resuming our weekly Bible Classes in September as part of our ongoing effort to learn more about the mysteries of our Salvation as they are revealed in the Scriptures. We will study the writings of the Apostles, beginning with the Epistles of St. Peter and after that studying the writings of St. Paul. This will be very educational, both for our parishioners as well as for those who are new to the Church. In fact, these Bible classes might be a perfect opportunity for you to invite your friends and neighbors to get to know the Orthodox Church, so please come and invite them as well!

### **Parish Stewardship**

As we've done for a number of years, this Fall our parishioners will receive a Stewardship Pledge Card in the mail asking for your continued support of St. Stephen's Cathedral. We are very grateful to the dedication of our parishioners through whose efforts our parish continues to be a vibrant community for Orthodox Christians in North East Philadelphia. Although our country is going through difficult economic times, it is important to remember that the Scripture calls us to give proportionally of what we receive from the Lord. In other words, instead of expecting the same "fair share" from everyone, we should be thinking about a free-will offering that reflects our income. Please consider this as you fill out your pledge card. Remember, that we are asking from you **an estimate** (and not an exact amount) of how much you think you can contribute to the parish in the course of the upcoming year and that all your Sunday offerings will go towards your stewardship pledge.

### **Memorial Service for Victims of 9/11: Sun. Sept. 11**

As our country marks the 10th anniversary of tragic terrorist attack that took lives of over 3000 people, we at St. Stephen's will hold a Memorial Service (Panikhida) of all those who passed away as a result of tragic event. If you know of anyone who died on 9/11, please give their names to Fr. Victor for commemoration in prayer. Also we ask you to invite your family and friends who you think would like to join us for this service. The service will take place at 1 PM on Sun. Sept. 11 following the Divine Liturgy and the Coffee Hour.

## *Snapshots of Recent Events at St. Stephen's*



Pierogie Making on 7/15



Church Picnic 7/17



Church Picnic 7/17



Vacation Church School, Day 1: Making Proshpora



Vacation Church School Day 2:  
welcoming visitors from Berwick  
and making food for the hungry



Vacation Church School Day 3: visit from Phila-  
delphia Zoo

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Philadelphia, PA

His Grace Bishop Tikhon  
Fr. Victor Gorodenchuk, Dean  
Fr. Dn. George Zlatkowski, Deacon

Visit us on the Web:  
[www.ststephencathedral.org](http://www.ststephencathedral.org)



Postage



75<sup>th</sup>

## Novogodny (New Year's) Ball



Sponsored by

*St. Stephen's OCF - Chapter 82  
Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America*

**Sunday, January 15, 2012**

**Crowne Plaza Hotel – Philadelphia  
Cherry Hill, NJ**

*A Semi-formal for the Benefit of the IOCC &  
Orthodox Christian Theological Education*



**Optional Dinner: 4:30 PM    Dancing & Entertainment: 6:30 – 11:30**

**For detailed information regarding reservations,  
call Paul Fedoronko at (610) 328-6911 or  
email: [novogodnyball@verizon.net](mailto:novogodnyball@verizon.net)**