
THE ALEUTIAN

Volume 2, Issue 2

Saint Peter the Aleut Orthodox Church, Louisiana USA

May, 2010

UPCOMING POINTS OF INTEREST

- ❖ *Next Sisterhood meeting will be Saturday, June 19th at IHOP on Hwy 190 in Covington at 1pm.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ❖ *We will begin our children's catechism classes after fellowship on Sunday, June 6th.*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 What's Love Got to do with It?
- 2 When Receiving Communion (Part 3)
- 3 What ROCOR Knew and When They Knew It
- 4 Parish Notes: A letter from Mati Ephosina

What's Love Got to do with It?

By Reader Herman Leblanc

“Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets’ Matt. 22:36-40).

“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:34-35).

What is the most important commandment in the Law of God? According to Christ, it is to *love*. Christ

did not say that fasting, making the sign of the cross, beautiful chanting, or any other thing was most important. Not that any of these other things are not good or important, but to walk in love, is essential in a person's spiritual life. Saint Paul says, “And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not Love, I am nothing.” Saint Paul is conveying that without Christian Love, a person is nothing. We can read spiritual books, fast, and sleep on a board, but if we don't help those in need around us, we are deluded. We are deluded if we think we are “holy,” because we do these things, yet we don't love our neighbor next to us; next to us in the home, in the work place, in our parish, etc.

“We can read spiritual books, fast, and sleep on a board, but if we don't help those in need around us, we are deluded.”

As True Orthodox Christians, we need to keep these things in our minds, because there is always the temptation to become like a Pharisee. There is always the temptation to become an “outward” Christian, and to neglect the most important matter of all: The heart. The saints witness to this fact that our hearts must be pure; our hearts must contain a flame of love burning within us; a heart that burns with fiery love for the Lord, and out of this love for the Lord, love for our neighbor (who is the image of our Lord). If we truly love God, we will love our neighbor as well because mankind is an icon of God, for he was created in His image. When we see our neighbor we must try and see Christ. We must remember the words of Christ, “When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: And before

Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth His sheep from the goats...”

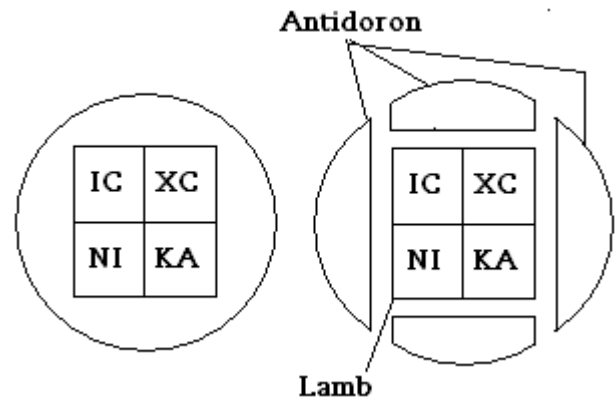
We are no different than Protestants, if we think we are saved because we have the correct Faith. We can have the most perfect, correct Orthodox Faith, but if we fail to love God our neighbor, we have missed the mark. Let us remember the saints of old, and of our own times, who call us both to correct faith as well as to a correct way of life: the way of love. It is interesting, that the first name Christians were labeled with was “Followers of ‘The Way.’” What is “The Way?” Our Lord Jesus Christ told us Himself, that He *is* The Way; and His way *is* Love. Saint John the Theologian says, “God is Love.” If our spiritual goal is to be deified, then we must *become* Love.

When Receiving Communion (Part 3)

By Father Mark Temple

I thought it beneficial to go over the differences in bread used in the Orthodox Church. All bread brought to the church as an offering for use in the Divine Liturgy is called *prosphora*. In the Russian tradition five small loaves, about the size of biscuits, are used in the Service of the Preparation – the *Proskomede*. In the Byzantine tradition one large *prosphora* is used. The Russian tradition symbolizes the five loaves and two fish from the feeding of the five thousand in the Holy Gospel; the single loaf in the Byzantine tradition signifying the oneness of the Godhead. In either case, *prosphora* are always made with two layers of bread that were “glued” together prior to baking. The two layers are symbolic of the two natures of Christ—divine and human. *Prosphora* are generally made by the women of the parish, though not exclusively, whom the rector has given his blessing to do so. The process of making *prosphora* is hard work and requires the purest ingredients to adhere to the canons.

During the *Proskomede* service, according to the Russian tradition, only one of the five *prosphora* is chosen to become “The Lamb.” The priest then takes this *prosphora* and cuts the edges



of the *prosphora* off so that the once round *prosphora* is now a cube—The Lamb. The pieces that were removed are called *antidoron* (αντιδορον) which means “a blessing in place of.” In other words, you would receive this bread in place of receiving Holy Communion if you are Orthodox. Therefore, you should never consume *antidoron* on the same day that you have received Holy Communion.

From the other *prosphora* the priest removes particles that are to commemorate various Saints, the living, and the departed. Once these particles are removed from the other loaves, which are also to become part of Holy Communion, the remaining portions of the four loaves are cut into bit-size pieces referred to as *panagia* (all-blessed) bread. The *panagia* bread may be consumed by anyone at the end of the Divine Liturgy whether they have received communion or not.

Another subject that I want to cover is the wine and *panagia* bread that is normally placed on the side of the church. There are a wide variety of local traditions with regards to when and why the wine and bread are consumed. No single tradition is more correct than another, but here is the tradition that we have received: after you receive Holy Communion you should immediately go over to the place where the wine and bread are and eat a small piece of bread and drink a little wine. This tradition began with Saint John Chrysostom, the premise being that by eating and drinking these items we cleanse all of the Holy Communion out of the mouth, thus helping to ensure that we would not spit out a crumb of Holy Communion during the rest of the service while chanting and praying. Again, there are other customs of piety with how a communicant is to conduct themselves after

receiving, but this is the tradition that we have received.

Let me stress here a more over-arching point: not only are we attempting to maintain the customs of the Russian Church, in particular we are trying to maintain the customs of the Suzdal area churches. The reason we are doing so is based on the ideal that any of the bishops from Russia could come to our church (although they would not understand the service in English) and be completely comfortable with the practices we use. This means that we will differ from other Orthodox churches that follow Byzantine traditions and even with other Russian (Slavic) churches. This does not in any way detract from the oneness of our faith; it is the natural variation of customs. Over time the ROAC churches in America, Africa, Australia, etc. will develop their own unique favors of local custom, however, this must happen in an organic fashion, rather than forced changes that serve no purpose other than to be distinctive.

To be continued...

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that our parish has its own message board that you can post discussions and questions? The web address is:

<http://orthodoxchristianity.myfreeforum.org/>

What ROCOR Knew and When They Knew It

The following is the text of an original newsletter published by ROCOR dated October 5/18, 1975. It is clear that the ROCOR was fully aware of what was occurring the Moscow Patriarchate.

In June, Metropolitan Nikodim visited Western Europe. He is now immediately in charge of the Western European Exarchate. In Paris he called together a conference of non-Russian clergy. The Metropolitan explained to

this clergy that the Moscow Patriarchate is now completely involved in the Ecumenical Movement. Thus its clergy must somewhat change its mentality in the West, showing a greater understanding in their relationship to their "separated brothers", participating ecumenical contacts and joint prayer with other faiths. Metropolitan Nikodim rode to revere the Mother of God of Fatima and in Rome gave a stern order to his hieromonk Evlogy to not accept any Italians into Orthodoxy so as not to hurt the Vatican. With the Pope's permission, Metropolitan Nikodim served in the Cathedral of [the] Apostle Peter on a Catholic antimission cloth and an altar, consecrated to St. Peter.

Archbishop Athenagoras of Theatira published a new Confession of Faith which acquires a special meaning in view of its formal acceptance by the Constantinople Patriarchate. The bulletin, "Episcopis," reckons that "After more than two centuries, the Ecumenical Patriarchate approved the publication of a new Orthodox Confession of Faith, that is, the expression of the Orthodox Faith and prayer." The official letter of the Patriarch dated January 10, 1975, says of the Confession that, "this study has been examined by the Synodical Committee of the Patriarchate, and has been found appropriate for the care of spiritual needs of the rational flock." Patriarch Dmitry wrote, "Gladly therefore according to the Decision of the Synod, we extend our Blessing for the publication of this excellent work, the product of your pastoral zeal and the spiritual endurance of Your Eminence and congratulate you wholeheartedly on its production."

This Confession expresses "a new understanding" of the Church dogmas, "Christian people now visit churches and pray with other Christians of various traditions, with whom they were forbidden in the past to associate, for they were called heretics, damned heretics, and antichristians." The faithful were offered to not be polemical and not to display antagonism to heretics, "Orthodox Christians, Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Armenians, Copts, Ethiopians,

Lutherans, and Methodist etc. are Christians, baptized in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit... The Church has doors but no walls.” The existence of different opinions is explained by the fact that the Orthodox Church as a whole “has not yet examined these important questions.” All Christians independent of their confessions are declared to be members of the Body of Christ, the Church.

The Confession declares that Catholics are permitted to receive Communion in the Orthodox Church, and the Orthodox in the Catholic. It is now permitted for the Orthodox Liturgy to be offered in a Roman Catholic Church. The same permission is given to serve Catholic Mass in an Orthodox Church.

The Confession further states that because of friendly relations it has now become customary for the Orthodox to perform funerals for the Anglicans and offer to them the Holy Eucharist in places where there is no Anglican clergyman available. This is reciprocated for Orthodox Christians where there is no Orthodox clergyman available.

Concerning Masonry, it states that it is considered in vain to be a religion, regardless of the fact that it has distinct services for marriage, burial, christenings, and so on. We are reminded that the Catholic Church has announced that it no longer condemns Masonry.

The clear unorthodoxy of this document is remarked upon even by the monthly journal of the Orthodox Church of America [OCA].

This is the same Patriarchate of Constantinople with whom the Moscow Patriarchate (MP) has continued to be in communion with. The MP is still a member of the ecumenical organization, the World Council of Churches (WCC). All of this the ROCOR “reunited” with three years ago this month.

Parish Finances

March 1 – May 15, 2010

Beginning Balance:	\$1,588.17
Church beautification, supplies, and expenses:	\$1,354.45
Donations to others:	\$53.91
Tithes & Deposits:	\$1314.00
Ending Balance:	\$1493.81

Parish Notes:

I received a very warm email from Mati Ephosina and Sister Sarah Elizabeth of the Stjenik Monastery in Serbia. She thanked us for our hospitality and related what an absolute joy and inspiration it was for her to go across America and meet with so many True Orthodox Christians. She stated:

It was a very great pleasure to meet your budding community. You are truly blessed with wonderful pastors and we enjoyed speaking to all of you so much. Real spiritual conversation is of such great value to us and we treasure the time we had with you.

As we are in a similar catacomb situation, know well how it is difficult for all new parishes in the beginning, but you should be comforted upon thinking how much you have grown in such a short time – surely your efforts have been blessed! If you are only loyal to Christ, He will always grant you ‘every other good thing.’ May you never lose your zeal for Christ and True Orthodoxy.

