

January Notes: on the 1st *Emily Harrison* has her name day (St *Emilia*, mother of St *Basil the Great*) ... Wednesday the 3rd is the name day of *Genevieve Bell* (St *Genevieve of Paris*) ... Friday the 5th at 6:30 PM there will be **Great Vespers and Litya** for **Holy Theophany of our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ**, followed by **Divine Liturgy** the next morning at 9:30 AM ... *Luke Harrison* has his birthday on Sunday the 7th ... the 10th is *Greg Teter's* name day (St *Gregory of Nyssa*) ... Sunday the 14th is *Nina Sandbothe's* name day (St *Nina, Equal to the Apostles*) ... Tuesday the 23rd are the birthdays of *Katrina and Jillian Sandbothe* ... Saturday the 27th at 4:00 PM is **choir practice**, followed by our monthly **Great Vespers** at 5:30 PM ... on Sunday the 28th we will have our **Annual Parish Meeting** ... and finally - although this is cheating a bit - on Thursday, February 1st at 6:30 PM there will be a **Great Vespers with Litya** for the **Meeting of our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ**, followed by **Divine Liturgy** the next morning at 7:00 AM.

O Master, Lord our God, Fountain of life and immortality, the Creator of all things both visible and invisible, Who hast appointed seasons and years by Thy power, and dost direct all things by Thy most-wise and all-gracious providence: we ask that Thou wilt bless the crown of the coming year with Thy goodness, and appease among us all enmity, discord and civil strife, that Thou wilt give us peace, steadfast and unfeigned love, an orderly disposition and a virtuous life. And count us worthy that we may always offer thanksgiving unto Thee, the Father Who is without beginning, together with Thine Only-begotten Son, and Thine All-holy and Lifegiving Spirit, God glorified in one Essence, and that we may hymn Thy most-holy Name. Amen.



JANUARY 2018

Holy New Martyrs of Russia

Why do Orthodox Americans, French, Swedes, and those outside Russia need to revere the New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia? It is clear what they did for Russia, but why are they so significant for people in the West? Why should we pray to them?

First of all, for Christians, saints are the standards of life in Christ. In canonizing a saint, the Church gives us a canon, a rule to follow. In this sense, Russian saints are important to the French in just the same way that French saints are important to the Russians – as examples and standards for anyone who wants to lead a Christian life. In Christ, there is neither Greek nor Jew; so, when we think of Saint Stephen, we do not often think of the fact that he was a Jew or understand what he did for Israel, but rather see him as an example of the kind of faith and boldness in Christ to which we all should aspire. In much the same way, Americans or Europeans or Asians or Africans who learn about the New Russian Martyrs will undoubtedly find them to be examples of faith and love that were shaken by “neither tribulation, prison, nor death.”

But there is another aspect of the glorification of the New Martyrs which may be important to both Christians and non-Christians alike. The New Russian Martyrs are a constant reminder to all who are working to build heaven on earth without God. Nowadays, we think of the communists as some evil people who set out to torture and murder, yet this is simply not true. The communists believed that they were building the infamous “bright future” for everyone in the world – a future of freedom, equality, brotherhood, and happiness for all. People in the Soviet Union did not think that they lived in an oppressive and totalitarian society. In fact, they were convinced that their country was the most democratic and free in the whole world. They earnestly believed that they were building a life which was “better and richer and fuller for every man, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement.” This almost sounds Christian. Doesn’t Christ want all to be happy? Didn’t He come to free us? Aren’t we brothers and sisters? And weren’t all men created equal? All this is true, but not quite. To give people freedom, equality, and brotherhood in the kingdom of God, Christ sacrificed Himself. To give people the same in the kingdom of communism, communists sacrificed the people. According to Feodor Dostoevsky’s horrifyingly accurate analysis, one hundred million people would die for the success of the revolution in Russia. Not all of them were Christians, not all of them died for Christ, but Christ died for each and every one.

For three decades the Russian Orthodox Church has been lifting up the holy lives and deaths of the New Martyrs as an example for the faithful and a reminder to the whole world. It is a reminder that when people reject the “one thing needful,” when they reject Christ, they follow a path of destruction—millions of human lives ground up to feed the communist beast, and no “bright future.” “By their fruits you will know them;” and the fruits of godlessness are blood, death, devastation, and collapse. There is only one ending to the story of the Tower of Babel. And it would be a horrible mistake to think that communist ideals can be substituted with those of capitalism—the result will inevitably be the same. The only path which leads to the true bright future for mankind is Christ. For as long as we chase after “the bright future,” the “American Dream,” or the same “rose” by any other name—humanity is destined to failure. It is only when we start seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness that all other things will take their rightful places in our lives.

~ Father Sergei Svesbnikov, rector of the world’s first parish named in honor of the New Martyrs (in Mulino, Oregon) in pravmir.com (Feb. 24, 2012)

Charity of the Month



Since 1986, OCL has been a leading Orthodox voice presenting and supporting the position of the Church on matters of the sanctity of innocent human life to all peoples, Orthodox Christian and non-Orthodox alike. This includes not only abortion, but also euthanasia, infanticide (pediatric euthanasia), suicide, and child abuse. <http://oclife.org/> We will be collecting for this charity in January.



useful links

Database of Russian new martyrs has 35,000 entries: <http://orthochristian.com/72154.html>

But the actual number of confessors and martyrs might be as high as *half a million*: <http://orthochristian.com/98672.html>

People – famous and not so famous – who were martyred following the Russian Revolution: <http://www.pravmir.com/new-martyrs-confessors-russia-faces-fates/>

The relics of St Tikhon opened at the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church (*with video*): <http://orthochristian.com/108746.html>

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

(unaudited)

	Nov. Actual	Nov. Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Income	4,075.19	3,947.50	40,085.32	40,725.00
Total Expense	3,712.13	4,911.64	37,930.99	40,636.40
Cash Flow	363.06	(964.14)	2,154.33	88.60
Building Fund (Net of Rent Reserves)			16,833.51	