JULY 2, 2017
FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

The Placing of the Honorable Robe of the Most-holy Theotokos at Blachernæ (5th c.).
St. Photius, Metropolitan of Kiev (1431).
St. Juvenal, Patriarch of Jerusalem (ca. 458).

“A Victorious Presence”

(I am always amazed when I read about those who have undergone persecution for their faith during Soviet times. I am humbled by their witness, even though severe punishments and repercussions hung over them. It begs questions – What did these people discover that was so meaningful in the midst of such persecution? How would we respond if we were in their place? Our age is a different one. No one is threatening us with the gulag or death. But we often take much of the Church’s life for granted. Sometimes we can take or leave it depending on our convenience. I hope you are stirred as I was in reading some of these brief accounts written in 1959 by Nicholas Arseniev.)

Innumerable reliable sources have recently demonstrated an unexpected flower of the religious life in Soviet Russia. The Christian faith, long buried in the catacombs, took advantage of a more favorable atmosphere in the years following the Second World War to spread with amazing vitality into various sections of the Russian people, even among members of the Communist Party and Komsomols (Alliance of Communist Young People). This has made the Communist leadership extremely uneasy, and measures taken against the Church and religion have become increasingly harsh since 1959. Here are a few examples taken at random.

One of my friends, a professor of Slavic philosophy in one the of the great universities of Western Europe, a Catholic who is a warm friend of the Orthodox Church, visited Moscow as a tourist at the end of 1958, and got to the Monastery of St Sergius, about 40 miles north of Moscow. A long line of believers would form in the evening in order to get into the Monastery Cathedral the following day. He himself was able to enter in the morning as a tourist, without difficulty, through a side door. He says that he has never attended a service as beautiful as this Liturgy at the Cathedral of the Dormition. It lasted two and a half hours. The chants were magnificent. But what caught his attention especially was the congregation. Packed together in a church that was too small for the number present, they remained almost motionless throughout the service. But as they prayed tears ran down their faces, faces which shone with a fervor my friend had never seen before.
Daily Scripture Readings

MONDAY, JULY 3
Romans 12:4-5, 15-21
Matthew 12:9-15

TUESDAY, JULY 4
Romans 14:9-18
Matthew 12:14-16, 22-30

WEDNESDAY, JULY 5
Romans 15:7-16
Matthew 12:38-45

THURSDAY, JULY 6
Romans 15:17-29
Matthew 12:46-13:3

FRIDAY, JULY 7
Romans 16:1-16
Matthew 13:4-9

SATURDAY, JULY 8
Romans 8:14-21
Matthew 9:9-13

Services This Week

SUNDAY, JULY 2
Divine Liturgy 9:00am

TUESDAY, JULY 4
Independence Day

SATURDAY, JULY 8
Great Vespers 4:00pm

SUNDAY, JULY 9
Divine Liturgy 9:00am

Never had she seen people pray in this way. The majority were women, but there were also many men present, and not a few young people, some of them in uniform. Scenes such as this, observed by many reliable witnesses are significant. They could be multiplied without end. Another characteristic feature here is the courage of the believers, often displayed especially among young people. We are familiar with the indignant articles in Soviet papers and magazine about the model student, the ornament of the university, the young scholar full of promise, suddenly discovered to have been at the same time one of the most active members of such and such a parish, where he took part, for example, in solemn processions around the church, carrying a sacred banner. The authorities, of course, did not suspect this “double life”! Finally, the denunciators and spies found him out. The young man showed courage in his replies, and did not allow himself to be intimidated. But his career was ended.

Here is a young school teacher from the Kuibychev region (Samara), who writes that she is resigning from the ranks of the Komsomols because of her religious convictions. “I am a Christian,” she said in the oral examination which followed her decision. In the region of Tarnopol the majority of marriages are celebrated in the churches; the chief doctor of the Sidorovo Hospital, P Melanenko, attends church often and even brings his child to receive Communion. The chief of rural police in a village of the same region, a member of the Communist Party, and his wife (a school teacher), have one whole wall of the house covered with icons. In the same Communist review a denunciator describes in angry detail the great fervor he noticed among the faithful at the famous Cathedral of the Dormition of the Virgin in the city of Vladimir. Besides old men and many old women he saw a great number of young people, especially girls and young couples with babies. Pilgrimages continue to be made even when the sanctuaries which attract the people have been demolished. Streams of pilgrims continue to make their way each year on the 23rd of May, in Kirov region, where as in the past there is an ancient and honored icon of St Nicholas. It is an irresistible popular movement. What is especially remarkable is the great number of Communists at Liturgies celebrated early in the morning.

An external but eloquent sign of the fervor and number of believers are the very large sums of money taken up in the churches as offerings. It is truly said that it is a believing people who guard the Church, support her, maintain her, defend her. This makes it ever more difficult, in spite of all the government’s efforts and all its hostility toward the Church, to return to the bloody persecutions of the ‘30s.

What is the end result of all these facts, as they appear on the background of contemporary Russian life? More servants of God of all ages, even among the youth! And the Christian faith, as so many examples show, is more and more alive and evident, not just as a pious and venerable tradition which restores links with the past, but as a far greater reality – as a merciful and victorious Presence, who reveals Himself to the heart and takes hold of the heart – and as the victory of the risen Christ, who reigns over and within those who believe in Him. It was just in this way that this message, this same Good News, once made its appearance in the world: as a victorious Presence which the powers of evil could not suffocate or destroy.
Romans 6:18-23  (Epistle for the Day)
And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.
19 I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your
members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present
your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.
20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.
21 What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those
things is death.
22 But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to
holiness, and the end, everlasting life.
23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Matthew 8:5-13  (Gospel for the Day)
Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him,
saying, “Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.”
6 And Jesus said to him, “I will come and heal him.”
7 The centurion answered and said, “Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But
only speak a word, and my servant will be healed.
8 For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, ‘Go,’ and he
goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”
9 When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, “Assuredly, I say to you, I have
not found such great faith, not even in Israel!
10 And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and
Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.
11 But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing
of teeth.”
12 Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you.”
And his servant was healed that same hour.
DONATIONS, CANDLES, AND FLOWERS

CANDLES
Altar Table in memory of George J Kasper from his family $10.00
Lampatki over the Royal Doors for the health and happiness of Jacob Matthew Savisky on his 20th birthday from his family $10.00

DONATIONS
To the Myrrhbearers from Sophie Rogers $25.00

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP
July 2  Vera and friends
July 9  Joe and Jerry

CANDLE DESK SCHEDULE
July 2  Sue Maugeri, Diane Laufer, Tim Savisky
July 9  LoveAnn Curran, Barbara Dulin, Frank Krasowski

PARISH PRAYER LIST
Home bound — Kay Havelick and Helen Kushel
Birthdays — Deborah Rapoport (July 3), Jacob Savisky (July 4), Helen Kushel (July 5), Darcy Ellis (July 6), Gillian Ellis (July 6), James Gulash (July 8).
Anniversaries — None listed

DEPARTED FROM THE PARISH METRICS (July 2 – July 8)
JULY 2 - Anastasia Demenchuk Vitnevsky (26) 1931, Mary Cherveniak (53) 1934, Martha Kostik (70) 1941, Nicholas Shumsky (70) 1941, John Sivec (66) 1955, Christine Kravitze 1988, Nicholas Hudobenko (90) 2014.
JULY 4 - Leonia Gulash (1 mo.) 1911, Joseph Sulich (35) 1917, Theodore Pamarick (10 mos.) 1918, Anna Vasiliev 1918, Maria Jankura (56) 1922, John Kamlitsky (34) 1923, Vikenty Zelinsky (85) 1969, Stanley Duban 2005.
JULY 6 - Sophia Klisty (45) 1922, Alexandra Dmitrievna Baskiroff (80) 1944, Mary Feltevich Kovalchuk (81) 1971.

TALENT PROJECT:  As you know, we are continuing the ‘TALENT PROJECT’ as one of the parish fundraisers. Over the few years since we started this project, it has proven positive, not only in providing needed funds to our parish but also in tapping the hidden talents of our parish members. Let me encourage all of you to consider participating – those, who have done so before, and those who haven’t as yet. Please see Sue Maugeri about ideas that you may have. Let’s get the thinking juices flowing. Already our parish members have made special cupcakes and sold tomato plants.

CHURCH PICNIC:  Looking ahead, please mark your calendars for our annual parish picnic, which will be held on Sunday, August 20 at the Shelton Property. Liturgy that day will begin at 10am at the park. Sign-up sheets for volunteers are now available at the front of the church. Please extend a helping hand.