St. John The Baptist
Greek Orthodox Church
14485 SW Walker Road
Beaverton OR 97006

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
BEAVERTON, OR
PERMIT NO. 24

No Fasting June 1st - June 5th
Apostles Fast Begins:
Monday, June 8th

Feast Days, Events & Dates

Feast of the Holy Spirit ~ at **Holy Trinity**
Monday, June 1, 2015
Orthros & Divine Liturgy 8:00 AM
Luncheon to follow

Nativity of St. John the Baptist Feast Day
at St. John the Forerunner Monastery
Tuesday, June 23, 2015
Vespers & Orthros 6:00 PM
Wednesday, June 24, 2015
Hours & Divine Liturgy 8:00 AM

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
Friday, July 3rd in Observance of July 4th Holiday

Orthros & Divine Liturgy for Apostles Peter & Paul
Monday, June 29th at 5:30 PM

Orthros & Divine Liturgy for The Prophet Elias
Monday, July 20th at 8:30 AM

Orthros & Divine Liturgy for St. Panteleimon
Monday, July 27th at 8:30 AM

Dormition Fast Begins ~ Saturday, August 1st

ST. JOHN THE FORERUNNER
GREEK ORTHODOX MONASTERY
Diocese of San Francisco ~ Gerontissa Efpraxia
5 Timmer Lane Goldendale WA 98620 ~ (509)773-7141

With the blessing of His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos, and spiritual Father of the Holy Monastery Geronta Ephraim, you are cordially invited to celebrate with us the Feast of

THE NATIVITY OF
ST. JOHN THE FORERUNNER
JUNE 23 & 24TH 2015

Abbess Efpraxia
and the Sisters with me

TUESDAY JUNE 23RD
6:00PM – 10:30PM
GREAT VESPERS & ORTHROS

Lodging may be available at:
Quality Inn & Suites: 509-773-5881
Ponderosa Motel: 509-773-5842

Μέ τήν εὐλογία τοῦ Σεβασμιωτάτου Μητροπολίτου μας κ.κ. Γερασίμου καί τοῦ πνευματικοῦ Πατρός τῆς Ἱερᾶς Μονῆς Γέροντος Ἐφραίμ, προσκαλεῖσθε ὁλόθερμα νά πανηγυρίσουμε

ΤΟ ΓΕΝΕΘΛΙΟΝ ΤΟΥ
ΤΙΜΙΟΥ ΠΡΟΔΡΟΜΟΥ
23 ΚΑΙ 24 ΙΟΥΝΙΟΥ 2015

Γερόντισσα Εὐπραξία
καὶ αἱ συν ἐμοί ἐν Χῶ ἀδελφαί

WEDNESDAY JUNE 24TH:
8:00AM - 11:30AM HOURS &
DIVINE LITURGY
FOLLOWED BY LUNCH

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

14485 SW Walker Road * Beaverton, OR 97006
Office: 503.644.7444 Fax: 503.296.2507
E-mail: churchoffice@stjohngoc.org * Parish Website: stjohngoc.org
Office Hours: 9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

June - July 2015
VOL. XVIII NO. 3

Witnessing the Truth of Apostolic Christianity

Divine Providence, Divine Intervention, Divine Revelation

The Sunday on which we read the story of the healing of the Blind Man, I offered a reflection on Divine Providence, Divine Intervention and Divine Revelation. During Theology 101 that day, we discussed the content of the sermon a little further drawing on some of your own life experiences. There were a few people who asked for a copy of the sermon, but instead of making photocopies, I decided to print the sermon in this newsletter, expanding a little on the original message.

The story of the blind man is taken from the gospel of St. John, chapter 9:1-38. The passage is too lengthy to print in this article, so I will simply quote portions that were pertinent to the sermon that day. The beginning of the passages, versus 1-3 read: "As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?" Jesus answered, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be revealed in him."

From these first three versus, we see that God allowed this man to be born blind. We also hear that the disciples were looking for a reason as to why this was. They questioned their Lord as to whether or not it was due to his own sins, a question that ultimately doesn't make sense since he would have needed to sin before he was born. The disciples also included in their question the man's parents. Maybe it was because of their sins that their son was born blind. Thinking a bit more about this, it seems rather cruel, that God would punish an innocent child due to the sins of his parents.

To help us with an correct understanding, we turn to the commentary on the Gospel of St. John offered by the Blessed Theophylact who states, "a child is not punished for his father's or mother's sins" (Commentary on John, p. 150), anymore than mankind is "punished" for the sins of Adam. This position finds further support in the book of Deuteronomy where we read, "And the sons shall not be put to death for the fathers; everyone shall die for his own sins" (24:18).

Some have proposed that a passage from Exodus would beg to differ. "I am the Lord your God, a jealous God, recompensing the sins of the fathers upon their children, to the third and fourth generation" (20:5). At first sight it would appear that this passage is very clear that children for generations can suffer because of the sins of their parents. Like any passage in Scripture, however, we have to be careful and diligent not to look at it out of context. This passage is not to be understood as children being punished for the sins of their parents. According to the Blessed Theophylact this passage "is not a universal decree applying to all men at all times, but only to those who came out of Egypt" (ibid. p. 151).

Our understanding of this passage from Exodus is two-fold:

First, children often fall into committing the same sins as their parents because they imitate what they see and hear. For children, the words and actions of the parents are the first and most frequent that they experience in their young lives, and so as in anything, repetition becomes the mother of all learning.

Second, just as all mankind suffers the effects of Adam's sin, we are not responsible for their sin. It is the same with children, who often suffer due to the choices of their father or mother. The choices we make in life not only affect us, but they affect others as well, for better or for worse. Children are like pure clay when they come into the world and are easily molded, which is why parents need to take great care when handling them. A parent needs to start first and foremost with him or her self, paying attention to their interior life, tending to their own spiritual growth and healing. Because parents, "parent from the inside out", what ever is not healed or whatever is unresolved, will be an obstacle to healthy parenting.

In the case of the Blind man, his blindness from birth was neither due to his sins or the sins of his parents. Our Lord is very clear about this (cf. Jn. 9:3). So why was he born blind? His blindness was permitted so that "the works of God might be revealed in him". This in essence is Divine Providence. When I looked up the word providence, one of the definitions listed was, "timely preparation for future eventualities". Providence refers to protection and care from God, which occur in a timely manner (perfect according to God Who Is all-knowing) for eternal purposes and value. In the story of the blind man, God

Divine Providence continued on page 3

MANY YEARS! XPONIA POLLA! MANY YEARS!

.....to those celebraing their namedays in June & July:

June 3 – Sts. Martha & Mary
Bernadette (Mary) Carlson
June 4 - St. Sophia of Thrace
Sophia Jungwirth
June 11 – St. Luke of Simferopol
Laurel Soot
June 24 – Nativity of St. John the Forerunner
Elizabeth Wood
Evon Daniels
June 25 – St. Fevronia
Fevronia VanSickle
June 29 - Sts. Peter & Paul
Chris (Peter) Black
Paul Blankenstein
Pavlos Blankenstein
Peter Davis
Peter Downs
Petra Rich
Petros Blankenstein
Petros Bournelis
Ron (Paul) Wade
June 30 - Synaxis of the 12 Apostles
Matthias Armstrong
His Grace Apostolos Koufallakis
July 2 – St. John of San Francisco
Bryan (John) Wood
Joe (John) Weick
John Martin Downs
Reg (John) Leslie
Jonathan Smith
July 4 – Royal New Martyrs of Russia
Elisha (Tatiana) Lubliner
July 5 – St. Elizabeth NM
Bethany (Elizabeth) Downs
Christy (Elisabeth) Sumerfield
Judy Elizabeth Sherley
Lauri (Elizabeth) Chosvig
Donna (Elizabeth) Chan
Melanie (Elizabeth) Hatch
July 6 - St Sisoes
Eric (Sisoes) Chosvig
July 17 – St. Marina GM
Marina Ketrenos
July 17 - Archangel Gabriel
Gabriel Egli
July 19 – St. Makrina the Younger
Alyssa (Macrina) Mansager
Cindy (Makrina) Trumpower
Jennifer (Makrina) Barnes
July 20 – Prophet Elias (Elijah)
Elias Ketrenos
Ilyana Stoeva
July 22 – St. Mary Magdalene
Magdalena Sumerfield
Maria Armstrong
July 24 – St. Christina
Kristi Maletis
Kristine Wiseman Patzke
July 25 – Dormition of St. Anna, Evpraxia
Janet (Evpraxia) Wehlitz
Jennifer (Anna) Dunfield
July 26 – St. Paraskevi
Haley (Paraskevi) Fortier
Paraskevi Whitton
Patricia (Paraskevi) Poulos
Voula (Paraskevi) Trichos

...to those celebrating Wedding Anniversaries:

Daniel & Kiira Taylor 12 years
Eric and Lauri Chosvig 30 years
James & Kathleen Ketrenos 20 years
Jamies & Collen Perlmutter 1 year
Joe & Linda Weick 38 years
John & Janet Wehlitz 43 years
Paul & Christina Blankenstein 15 years
Ron & Elaine Wade 7 years
Steve & Katie Tussing 10 years
Theodore & Janet Deming 22 years
Amanda & Chris Black 7 years
Barry & Agape Ketrenos 46 years
Brandon & Erica Wilson 3 years
Chris & Kristi Maletis 32 years
Christopher & Michelle Ketrenos 12 years
Janssen & Irene Hills 2 years
Jeb & Amber Hyde 12 years
Jimmy & Stephanie Makarounis 21 years
Mark & Brigid Powell 15 years
Matthew & Colleen Van Sickle 18 years
Scott & Laurie Soot 18 years
Sean Crandall & Diane Cherry 24 years

Memory Eternal:

Cecilia Buckley 4 years
George Miles 11 years
Nancy (Vasiliki) Whitton 3 years
Haralambos Pavlatos 5 years
Andree Poulos 6 years

**Please notify the church office if your feast or anniversary was not listed.*

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Rev. Fr. Theodore L. Dorrance, Priest
Rev. Fr. Timothy Pavlatos, Priest
Fr. Innocent Duchow-Pressley, Deacon
Argero Hall, Parish Administrator

Parish Council
Treas. Brent Braden
Pres. John Davis
Arthur "Ted" Deming
Robert Crosby
V. Pres. Paul Jungwirth
Mark Lindgren
Demetri Mirras
John Poulos
Niko Poulos
Kent Taylor
Colleen Van Sickle
Sec. Gregary Walsh

Sunday School
Jessie Crosby

Logos Bookstore
Agape Ketrenos - Director
Paraskevi Whitton - Co-Director

Hospitality
Stephanie Makarounis

Myrrh Bearers
Diane Cherry
Colleen Van Sickle

Moms & Tots
Athena Gonzales
Kendall Muzik

Church Music
Presvytera Stacey Dorrance

Altar Boys
Tobias Armstrong
Demetrius Van Sickle
Barry Ketrenos
Dn. Innocent Duchow-Pressley

Bookkeeping
Kathleen Ketrenos

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES
Articles & Announcements
Wednesday, July 15th
For the August/September Newsletter

AGIA SOPHIA ACADEMY GALA

Agia Sophia Academy would like to sincerely thank all St. John the Baptist Parishioners for their generous and continued support of our school. On April 26th, our third annual Dinner & Auction Gala raised over $62,000 to support future growth of the school and contribute to this year's focus, Arts and Language. This was a record-setting event! Glory to God! Many businesses and families contributed to the success of the night. Truthfully, we are humbled by the sincere kindness expressed by so many. The Auction Committee would like to specifically recognize Peter Corvallis Productions, Jimmy Mak's Jazz Club, Al Amir Restaurant, and Karam Lebanese Restaurant for their very gracious and ongoing support of Agia Sophia Academy. The entire staff and student body of ASA deeply appreciate your generosity and we look forward to celebrating this wonderful Orthodox school with you again next year. Thank you, Christina Contes & Naomi Knight (ASA Parents & Gala Co-Chairs)

VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL 2015

"Fishers of Men"

Get excited for Vacation Church School 2015!
This will be an awesome week of faith, worship,
fun, athletics, arts & crafts, music, and more!

June 22-26th 10a-1pm every day with lunch provided.
(***9:30am the first day***)

Online Registration Link: http://goo.gl/forms/eZrtx83aRz There is also a link at www.goholytrinity.org under the 'forms' tab at the bottom of the homepage.

Please fill out the online form above and send a check (or bring one on the first day) to: 3131 NE Glisan St Portland, OR 97232 Attn: Christine Whitton. Checks can be made payable to: Holy Trinity Youth. Memo: VCS 2015. $20 per child. $30 for 2, $40 for 3 or more. Contact Christine Whitton at *christine.n.whitton@gmail.com* with any questions. Thanks!

***Note: We will be taking the kids to the park on Fri, June 26th---need as many parents as possible to help chaperone for that day.
*** Registration Deadline: June 1st

CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!

our High School graduates:

Pascale Rich, Lincoln High School
Maddie Bob, Arts & Communication Magnet Academy
Ula Butti, Sunset High School
Nathaniel Corazza, Sunset High School & PCC
Heran Mamo, Jesuit High School

our Higher Education graduates:

Carlos Esparza, Spanish, Pacific University
Lukas Breen, Modern Languages, Pacific University
Alyssa Mansager, Masters of Counseling, Western Seminary

CAMP ANGELOS

"RECEIVE THE LIGHT"
August 16 - 21
Camp Angelos 2015

A week of faith, fun, campfires, skits, Orthodox Life, arts & crafts, sports, hikes and more!

Online Registration ONLY at:
app.campdoc.com/register/campangelos

Link may also be found at *goholytrinity.org* under the "forms" tab at the bottom of the homepage

Camper Ages 9-17 (grades 4 through 11)
Cost $385 per person
$300 for subsequent family memers
(use code MULTIPLE while registering)

**Note a $125 late fee well be added to registrations AFTER August 1st

MANDI BUCKLEY'S JOURNEY TO ORTHODOXY

Over the past five years, I have begun to recognize the grace which God has poured over my life from the very beginning. Becoming Orthodox has been the greatest culmination of so many difficult and beautiful events. At the same time, however, my baby steps in Orthodoxy are the start of a whole new journey which is both brand new and yet, at the same time, intimately familiar.

I was raised by two loving parents, both of whom were the first Christians of their families. They became Christians in the protestant "Jesus Movement". I don't ever remember a time when I didn't love Jesus. I wanted to be with him and go to heaven, something my mom made sure to tell me wouldn't happen for a VERY long time. As a child and teen, I experienced various traumatic events, and was able to keep my eyes on Christ through it all. I know now this is solely due to His grace over my life.

Mandi and Patrick on their wedding day.

As I started my freshman year of college, my parents began going to a Messianic church on Saturdays. I slowly began to attend with them when I was home, and within two years I went regularly. Don't be confused, we are not Jewish. We were searching for the Hebraic roots of our Christian faith. I spent the next six years fully immersed in the Messianic realm, which means eating kosher, not celebrating Christmas, and keeping the Jewish feasts and calendar. I am very thankful for this time, as God showed me the immense beauty of His love throughout the Old Testament. This experience was actually really helpful when it came to learning about Orthodoxy years later. After being highly involved in our congregation, our little church split in half. I had met my dearest friend, Julie, at this church, and I continued to spend a lot of time with her and her beautiful and growing family.

About four years ago, Julie, her husband Blake, and I went to a class taught by a pastor friend of ours on the dogma and history of the Church. This was our first taste of anything Orthodox. The pastor was very pro-Orthodox, although he still remains protestant. Julie and Blake began to look into the Orthodox Church, and since they were my closest friends, I looked on with hesitant interest. The summer we took this class was the summer Cecelia Buckley passed away. Patrick Buckley, Cecelia's father, went to high school with Julie, but hadn't stayed in contact since. About 6 months after the class and Cecelia's death, Patrick and Julie reunited with some old friends to check in with each other, specifically with Patrick. It was at this dinner that Patrick described to Julie how the Orthodox Church got him through the darkest period of his life. Julie was very moved by Patrick's experience and the love he received from the family at Saint John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church. She and Blake soon became catechumens at a local Orthodox church in Arlington, Washington. I was still a bit leery about this massive change in my friend's life.

I hadn't been attending any one church regularly. Having become disillusioned with the Protestant churches, I felt like they were all missing something. As my dear friends prepared for their upcoming reception into Orthodoxy in September 2012, I was torn about making a decision to learn more about this for myself, verses learning to understand for my friends. Julie and I took a girls' weekend away, and I found myself honestly sharing my fear about making such a huge change to my life. I knew there were aspects of Orthodoxy that went against all the Protestant teachings I had grown up with, i.e. the veneration of saints and presence of icons; however, one saint who bridged the gap for me was Saint Nicholas. During the turmoil of trauma in my childhood, Christmas was a time of joy and love, unique for me among all the other seasons. I also knew the story of Saint Nicholas, how he helped maidens marry. He was the first saint I asked to pray for me, specifically regarding my desire to marry. His prayers availed much.

One month after my weekend away with Julie, she and Blake and their three youngest kids were received into the Orthodox Church. Patrick drove up from Portland to support his friend, and he and I hit it off. Starting a dating relationship with Patrick in October of 2012 definitely helped me on my path towards Orthodoxy, though he didn't push it on me by any means. Julie invited me to attend the St. Nicholas day service at her congregation on December 6th, 2012. It was on this evening that I officially gave up my struggle with pursuing Orthodoxy. I couldn't stop crying all throughout the service. It was so beautiful and striking; my heart was torn between acceptance and rebellion. After a long heart to heart talk with my dear friend, I drove home elated and full of peace to move forward in my understanding of Orthodoxy. Soon after, Julie found me a church closer to where I lived in Kirkland, Washington, and she and Blake joined me for my first Vespers service before Christmas. By the spring, I was attending the Catechumen classes taught by Father Barnabas Powell, and became Orthodox the following Nativity with Saint Nicholas as my patron saint.

As you can see, the road to Orthodoxy was an easy one once I accepted the path on which God was leading me. Each piece of my spiritual life lead me to that place, and I'm eternally grateful for my varied protestant background. I see how God's grace has ever surrounded me and how he has protected me with His great love in many ways. I know that Saint Nicholas has always been my patron saint, guiding me during my singleness, as well as praying for me as a hurting child. Attending a messianic church gave me experience in trying something out that was totally foreign to me, which made the transition to Orthodoxy more familiar. The pure love and joy I had in Christ as a young child is renewed with each service I attend, as the focus of liturgy is rejoicing in His resurrection and receiving His body and blood, which heals my soul.

Patrick and I were married in the church July 13, 2014, and we are expecting a little girl this August. I am beyond thrilled to continue to grow and learn about my faith with my new family at Saint John the Baptist in the coming years. ✣

Divine Providence continued from page 1

allowed this man to be born without eyes for a period of time and for a purpose that was beyond our comprehension.

We can also ask the question, was it necessary that this man to be born blind in the first place? Couldn't God just have manifested His power or revealed his works in another way? I suppose He could have, and in fact He did in other cases, but not in this instance.

Perhaps looking at this story of the blind man now, nearly two thousand years later, we can make sense of it all. But if this same story was our story, or the story of someone close to us today, I wonder if we would have the same understanding? I wonder if we would we be questioning God as to why? It's one thing to look at the story's in the Bible historically, and quite another to try to understand the workings of God as they are happening to us in our own very lives, when it's not always as clear.

In fact, I find it remarkable how easily our faith and trust in God can be shaken when things don't seem to go the way we want them to, or how bold we can become with God when something doesn't make sense. Because we struggle to understand why things happen to us, and to others around us, it's not difficult to become angry with God, to begin questioning Him, His methods, His love and sometimes His very existence. We can even begin to question if God really knows what He's doing or even if He really cares at all. At these times it's okay to struggle and to feel and to express what's going on inside of us. Ultimately, though, we can return to the words as recorded by the Prophet Isaiah, "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My way, declares the Lord" (55:8).

Perhaps instead of pondering on the question as to why the man was born blind, we can look at how Divine Intervention, the healing of this man's blindness, impacted him. Our inclination may be to look at his situation from the standpoint of fairness because that's just how we operate. However, we need to remember that we are short sighted and we seldom see the entire picture, whereas God is all knowing and sees everything from the past to the present to the future as one moment in time.

Likewise, our responses are typically emotionally driven, whereas God's responses are guided by dispassion and by His desire to have all people saved. We see things and react in the hear- and-now and judge based on our limited capacity to understand. Whereas God has everlasting life in view at all time for His children. God is eternal and sees and knows all things perfectly.

Our Lord said that this man was born blind so that God's work, Divine Intervention, would be revealed in him. What we see as a tragedy, blindness from birth, is actually a condition that will eventually lead a man into the Kingdom of Heaven. This moment of Divine Intervention was a shadow of what God was offering to all of humanity.

The man who received his eyesight would eventually depart this life, and not be able to use his newly acquired sight to gaze on the beauty of the earth or into the eyes of loved ones. For Jesus, giving this man his sight was not the primary purpose for working this miracle. This was secondary. The primary purpose for giving this man his eyesight was to open the eyes of the man's soul, so that he would gain his spiritual sight, and recognize Jesus Christ as his God and Creator. Gaining this kind of sight had eternal ramifications.

This man, his parents, his family and friends were thrilled beyond belief to see this miracle and to know that their son and friend would now be able to look into their eyes, and see their faces. But for Christ, it was a very, very small thing by comparison.

Both Divine Providence, and Divine Intervention, led to Divine Revelation. After receiving his sight, the man cried out to Christ, "Lord, I believe, and he worshipped Him as God" (v. 38). The words uttered by this man, "Lord, I believe", caused the angels in heaven to rejoice, not because a human being received his sight on earth, but because a soul was saved! The purpose for which Jesus worked this miracle came to pass. Though the man, his family and friends rejoiced at the miracle of gaining his eyesight, the ultimate purpose, the man's salvation, was the true work of God revealed in him. This is what Jesus was trying to get across to His disciples. It wasn't about God working an impressive miracle. God's work is to draw all men to Himself, out of love, with the hope that all men will respond to this love and follow Him saying "I believe", whether there is physical healing or not.

In summary, Divine Providence was that this man was born blind for a time and a purpose. Such is the mystery of God's ways. Second, Divine Intervention is when Jesus spat on the ground, made clay, anointed the eyes, and sent the man to wash in the pool of Siloam. And third, Divine Revelation was Jesus Christ revealing Himself as God and Creator, bringing the man to faith and to eternal life, wherein the man responded, "Lord, I believe."

Where do we fit in to all of this? Do we think about God's Divine Providence and really try to see our life, our circumstances, and all that takes place day to day from the perspective of Divine Providence, God constantly working in our lives, timely preparation for future eventualities? Or, are we blind to these and try to figure out why things are happening, and whether it's fair or not, or right or not?

In what way is God's Divine Intervention presenting itself to us? Are we missing this too? Do we question God with "what" and "why" and "how"? Do we sometimes even believe that God is absent, or forgotten us, or if He really cares at all? These are great challenges for us. If we are struggling with the first two of these, I can tell you we will struggle with the third one, Divine Revelation. It's hard to cry out "I believe" to God when we struggle with doubt in God's Providence, and overlook the multiple ways God intervenes in our life.

The truth of the matter is that no matter how we see things, or what we choose to believe about what is going on in our life, God's providence is always at work in our life and for our salvation. We can question His goodness, His love, His methodology and even His very existence. Rest assured, though, God's love for us never waivers, despite how we respond to life's challenges.

In Christ with love,

Fr. Timothy

WHAT'S NEW IN FUNDRAISING BY THOMAIDA HUDANISH

Our parish is growing and we look forward to buying land and building a beautiful Byzantine church and supporting facilities. We also still owe just over $450,000 on our Mortgage. It would be great to either pay off as much of our mortgage as possible or add to our Building Fund, whichever makes the most sense. In an effort to realize our ultimate site goals, parishioners have suggested various fundraising ideas. After a period of evaluation by the Fundraising Committee and discussion at the Parish Council, it was decided to pursue three unique fundraising opportunities. The idea is that a menu of events gives parishioners options to choose from for when and how it works best for them to participate.

The goal is to initially raise $5-8,000 at each of the events during the first-year and God-willing, build each one into an annual event with increasingly better earning potential each year.

Additionally, the Fundraising Committee invites parishioners to follow their inspiration and take the lead in pulling together fundraisers--whether they are one-time events or have the potential to be ongoing. For example, parishioner Sam Marine suggested doing a Building Fund Bake Sale at the Ancient Church Reading Room in Forest Grove and this will take place on Wednesday, July 1st.

St John Take 'n' Bake

When: September/October orders and assembly; November/December pick up

Lead: Christina Blankenstein and Sam Marine

Vision: Parishioners and community members could purchase pre-made traditional favorites to stock their freezer in time for the holidays.

Help Needed: logistics for assembly days and storage, buying ingredients, leading assembly, workers for assembling the pastries, creating and printing order forms and labels, marketing, taking orders from friends and family

Community Dinner or Party

When: January/February, before Great Lent

Lead: Patricia Poulos and Chris Perlmutter

Vision: A fun, family-friendly gathering using our St John facility to enjoy fellowship and good food around a specific theme, such as a sporting event or holiday.

Help Needed: planning, food prep and service, decorations, ticket sales, entertainment, audio/visual, and other logistics.

Festival Food Booth

When: Summer 2016

Lead: Gregory Walsh

Vision: Provide a limited menu of delicious Greek foods at a local 2 or 3-day festival.

Help Needed: planning, registration for event(s), buying ingredients, food prep, transportation of food and materials to the event, onsite set-up, food service and staffing the booth, take-down

BAKE SALE

at Ancient Church Reading Room

1930 Pacific Ave, Forest Grove

When: Wednesday, July 1st, 4-7 p.m.

Lead: Sam Marine, marine.samantha@gmail.com

Volunteers are still needed to help with baking & on the day of the event.

Three other fundraising topics discussed include:

- **Adding a DONATE button to the parish homepage online.** This would allow people to donate using their credit card and sign up for reoccurring donations if desired. If you are able to help with this, please talk to John Davis or Jimmy Makarounis.
- **Developing a Go Fund Me account or other type of crowd-funding** - this is a creative idea which more than one parishioner has suggested. Online crowd-funding works best when there is a finite financial goal and deadline. The Fundraising Committee would like to table this option until the parish has a specific project and deadline in mind and success with other annual fundraising efforts.
- **The Pascha Appeal, Christmas Card and other gifts** - The parish will continue to solicit gifts to the Building Fund to mark specific feast days and seasons.

To find out more or offer your talents to any of these events, please feel free to reach out to the leaders named or contact John Davis, Jimmy Makarounis or Thomaida Hudanish.

May our efforts to build a church to the Glory of God be blessed. ✣

Photo: Anna Marie Hafez, Heran Mamo and Meika Wood working at St John the Baptist's 2009 Glendi Greek Festival.

PENTECOST: STEWARDSHIP OF THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The feast of Pentecost marks the beginning of the New Testament Church, when the Apostles and disciples of Christ received the Holy Spirit. From that time on, every believer who had been baptized and chrismated by the Apostles or their successors, the bishops and priests, received the Holy Spirit, making them members of the Body of Christ and temples of the living God.

We know that no one can say Jesus is Lord and mean it with understanding without the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, we know that no one can come to the knowledge of the truth, be healed of their infirmities, or freed from their passions without the Holy Spirit. It was through the empowering and transfiguring energy of the Holy Spirit that ordinary fisherman became "fishers of men." Likewise, as in the case of many of the Apostles, the Holy Spirit transformed otherwise uneducated men into theologians and superb missionaries and evangelists. One sermon, from the Apostle Peter, converted over three thousand souls. We know through history that men and women, who have surrendered to the power of the Holy Spirit, have literally uprooted paganism and converted an entire Empire to Christianity in just a few generations.

The Apostles and the subsequent generations of Christians have not accomplished these might works based only on their own abilities. They were not willing to suffer so much and even die simply because the cause was good or to feel good about themselves. All these virtuous and heroic acts have come about precisely due to the presence of the Holy Spirit in these men and women's lives. When we say "presence," we do not simply mean the reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit at chrismation, but we mean these men and women we honor as Saints were filled and guided by the Holy Spirit. Each of them could say along with the Apostle Paul, "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ (through the Holy Spirit (through the Holy Spirit) who lives within me." To fully love Jesus Christ and to accomplish the works He would will for us requires our surrender to His Holy Spirit, for with God all things are possible, but without Him we can do nothing.

This is why our holy Orthodox Church considers the Holy Spirit to be the most precious gift we have received from our Lord Jesus. Jesus plainly told His disciples that it was better for Him to leave this world and go to the Father, that He may send His Holy Spirit into the world, into the heart of all believers. If we have been baptized and chrismated in the Orthodox Christian Church, we can be sure that we have received the Holy Spirit. The paramount question still facing each of us, however, is to what degree are we allowing the Holy Spirit to direct and guide our lives? Put another way, are we cooperating with Him or stifling His lordship over us through a lack of cooperation? The only thing that separates the average Orthodox Christian from the Saints is his/her willingness to be obedient to the Holy Spirit. Salvation comes about through the Divine operation of God and the human cooperation of man.

Our annual celebration of Pentecost is a reminder to us all of our all-important responsibility to be good stewards of the gift of the Holy Spirit. When we receive the holy mysteries of initiation into the Church, but refuse to surrender ourselves to the Spirit, we grieve God. Baptism and chrismation are commanded by God and are necessary, but by themselves, they do not save. Salvation comes about when we are faithful stewards of God's greatest gift, the Holy Spirit. As we celebrate the Feast of Pentecost on May 31st, let us commit ourselves to further bowing our wills before the Holy Spirit, just as did the Apostles and the Saints throughout the centuries. ✣

ST JOHN THE FORERUNNER MONASTERY

Blessed Makrina Project Update: By Innocent Lewis

From 1922 to 2015 The life of Blessed Makrina is still radiating throughout the world. What comes to mind when you hear 1922? As Americans we might see a dark theatre. A flickering black and white stream of light, choking its way through clouds of smoke. An out-of-tune piano banging away in the corner. Or Gatsby himself, sprawled in a huge chair. Long fingers cradling a slender glass of champagne.But our heroine of 1922 is far from such scenes. She is an infant, two years old, held tight by her mother who is held tight by her husband. They are fleeing from their home in Asia Minor. Fleeing from their bloodstained, battered home that has been destroyed by the hatred of genocide."Throw her into the sea! You can't survive with a child to slow the way." The other refugee women advise her mother, who does no such thing. She chooses to risk her own life for the sake of her little daughter, and for that we are eternally grateful. The story of Gerontissa Makrina is a story fraught with turmoil, tragedy and loss. She lost her parents at the tender age of twelve, and had to support herself and younger brother by the labor of her own little hands.

She became, through these trials, strong and prayerful. She, the orphan child, became a mother to thousands. Three of her daughters in Christ she sent to the little Eastern Washington town of Goldendale, to found a Monastery that has been a light to so many of us here in the northwest. In less than two weeks, Seraphim Dunaway and I will be shipping out to the homeland of this holy woman. The sisters of St. John the Forerunner Monastery in Goldendale have set up an itinerary of places for us to visit, and people to interview. Their love for Gerontissa Makrina is what has given life to this project. We owe everything to their enthusiasm.We can't believe people's generosity thus far, and we are so grateful to everyone who has donated, but the costs of the project keep multiplying. If you are able, donations are still gladly accepted.In addition, there are many little nagging trials and temptations that have the potential to wear us down. Please keep us in your prayers.

May the prayers of Gerontissa Makrina be with us all.

~SAVE THE DATE!~

St. John the Forerunner 20th Anniversary Dinner
Dedicated to the Ever Memorable Gerondissa Makrina

Sunday, October 11, 2015 ~ 5:30PM
Fort Dalles Readiness Center
402 East Scenic Drive The Dalles, Oregon
(Please Note New Venue)