

# *The Protomartyr Newsletter*

A monthly publication of St. Stephen Orthodox Cathedral

## **Glory to Jesus Christ!**

Dear Parishioners and Friends of St. Stephen Cathedral,

This past Sunday, Feb. 28, we at St. Stephen's held our regular Annual Parish Meeting. We came together as a parish for an important discussion and review of the life of our community, to approve the budget for the new year and to elect the members of the Parish Council and Auditors. I think many of those who come regularly to our church for prayer services have very little idea of what is involved in keeping the doors of our church open. After all, most of our parishioners stop here for few hours on Sunday to enjoy prayer and fellowship. Yet we all know what it takes to maintain a house. There are all kinds of expenses: insurance, utilities, various maintenance, both on the inside and on the outside. Sometimes we undertake home improvement projects and sometimes we have to deal with emergency situations when something needs to be fixed right away. The church building is no different, but in addition to these familiar expenses we also need to be mindful of the spiritual nature of our ministry: we have a relationship with the Diocese, which we support with a monthly assessment; we have to properly conduct Divine Services, and in general care about the spiritual well-being of our parishioners. That's why it is important for our parishioners to be more involved in the life of the parish, especially if they have talents that can be offered to our community.

This offering of funds, time and talent are true sacrifices that every one of us should understand is the norm for every Christian person. Our life is unthinkable without a sacrifice and we should not be afraid when God calls us to it. This is emphasized during the time of Great Lent: we train ourselves, through abstinence from certain types of food, how to be willing to offer God sacrifices in other aspect of our lives as well. But before we offer these sacrifices, God wants us to be first reconciled with each other. Being together in one community often leads to conflicts. Ability to overcome these conflicts through humility, forgiveness and love is a mark of strong community where we can rely on each other. And the Lord Himself tells us that our sacrifices are not pleasing in His sight if we have something against our brothers or sisters in Christ. The Church calls us to forgive and to seek forgiveness, and this is how we are going to start our Lenten journey that leads us to Pascha. After all, it is only because God has forgiveness us that He sent His Only-Begotten Son to die for us and to rise again so that we could have eternal life.

So let us forgive each other from our heart and let us be diligent with our Lenten effort of fasting and praying so that the peace of Christ could be established in our midst.

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you!

With love in Christ,

*Fr. Victor*



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# ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Fifty-seven parishioners demonstrated their stewardship by giving up several hours of their Sunday afternoon to attend the Annual Parish Meeting (APM). Since the quorum for the APM is forty parishioners who are in good standing sacramentally and financially, this was a good attendance. The APM is an important event in the yearly life of the parish and the 2016 APM was no exception. Material for the meeting was available for parishioners to pick up the week prior to the meeting as well as the day of the meeting, including the Minutes from the 2015 APM, the 2016 Parish Budget, and the report of the Parish Warden.

Alex Cox, Financial Secretary, presented a review of the Financial Results of the General Fund for 2015, which showed a small surplus of \$1,600 for the year. Total General Fund Income for the year was \$216,536 and total General Fund Expenses were \$214,907. The expenses would have been greater had it not been for the sacrificial financial stewardship of a generous parishioner who paid a several thousand dollar utility bill for the parish.



Steven Bondira presented the Auditor's Report on behalf of the Auditing Committee and thanked all of the volunteers who work diligently year-round to oversee the parish finances.



Larry Skvir, Parish Warden, presented the 2016 Budget which had been prepared by the Finance Committee and subsequently recommended for approval by Parish Council at the February Parish Council Meeting. The budget, which was approved by the body, is a break-even budget which projects a surplus of \$78 for 2016. Larry said he was disappointed because the budget did not provide a raise for Fr. Victor, did not set aside 1% for the seminaries as requested by Archbishop MICHAEL at the All-American Council in Seattle, did not include a contribution for the Stewards of the Orthodox Church of America (S.O.C.A.), and did not include funding to partially subsidize St. Stephen's youth who attend summer camps or retreats. The parish relies on income from our annual food festival to pay our bills instead of using that revenue for outreach or other worthwhile initiatives. He pointed out that the parish continues to be supported by the

financial stewardship of a small number of families and individuals. Ten of the 168 individual and family units in the parish contributed more than 33% of total pledges received while 96 of the 168 giving units contributed less than \$500 per year. Clearly, the message of sacrificial (read tithing) and proportional giving is not being heard.

Fr. Victor and Larry Skvir presented their respective Pastor's and Warden's Reports, thanking everyone in the parish who has offered their stewardship during 2015, especially members of Parish Council and the auditors whose work is not always seen, but without whose efforts St. Stephen's could not function. Larry stressed that we need to be a combined parish and not separate English and Russian speaking congregations under the same roof. Statistically, our current parish census stands at 136 adult members. There were three Chrismations, three Weddings, and five Funerals performed during the year.





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# ANNUAL PARISH MEETING (CONT'D)

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Janice Kolea chaired the Nominating Committee and the election of officers. With the exception of one trustee, Eric DiFrancesco, who stepped down, all of the officers, trustees, and auditors will remain the same in 2016 with the addition of Larissa Askerova who was elected as a replacement trustee.

Under Old Business, Fr. Victor reported that the icon replacement project has been moving forward and that two of the icons on the iconostasis in the main church have already been replaced and two more are currently being written. The response to the request for icon sponsorship has been very strong and most of the icons have been spoken for.

Under New Business, Fr. Victor reported that the roof over the main church will likely need to be replaced during 2016. That roof was installed nearly 25 years ago and the roofing company that recently inspected the roof indicated that we should consider replacing it. We will be obtaining bids for replacing the roof and may consider a fund drive to offset some or all of the cost.

In July 2015, Fr. Victor and Larry Skvir represented St. Stephen's at the All-American Council of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA) which was held in Atlanta, GA. The AAC is held every three years and is a gathering of Orthodox clergy and lay delegates from across the United States, Canada, and Mexico. The two major agenda items at this Council were the adoption of a revised Statute (internal governing document) of the OCA and a revised method of financing the OCA, moving away from a "head tax" based on the parish census, to proportional giving at the diocesan level. Both of these initiatives had been worked on for several years and represent a major accomplishment for the OCA. At the AAC, Larry Skvir was elected as an at-large delegate to sit on the Metropolitan Council of the OCA.

In January 2016, Fr. Victor and Larry Skvir represented St. Stephen's at the two-day Diocesan Assembly of the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania which was held in Jermyn, PA. The Assembly body approved By-Laws for the Diocese - which it did not previously have - that were largely modeled after the Statute of the OCA. The Assembly also passed the proposed financing resolution which had been formulated by the Finance Committee of the diocese. For 2016 and going forward, parishes will pay their annual assessment to the diocese based on a percentage of the revenue of a parish rather than a per capital assessment based on the number of parishioners.



Fr. Victor also informed the parish body that due to a change in insurance carrier by our diocese, all the parishes in the diocese are required to adopt a policy whereby any registered sex offender must be monitored while in church and have no contact with any children. This assumes that we have been made aware of such a person.

Under Good and Welfare, Fr. Victor talked about the series of Parish Revitalization meetings that were held at St. Stephen's during 2015. The purpose of these meetings was to critically discuss various aspects of our parish life and to determine what things we do well and what things we could do differently to make St. Stephen's a better parish. Unfortunately, the attendance at these meetings has been abysmal both by parish council members and parishioners. There will be several more revitalization meetings scheduled in 2016 and members are asked to demonstrate their stewardship by attending.



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# THE LIFE OF OUR PARISH

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## **Jan 2016 Financial Results**

For the month of January 2016, the Parish General Fund reported a loss of \$13,332. General Fund Income was \$9,980 and General Fund Expenses were \$23,313. Income was negatively affected due to the large Saturday snowstorm in January. Only 15 people were in church the next day and no collection was taken. During January we also paid a \$4,000 candle bill, a \$3,234 quarterly insurance bill, and a \$1,777 real estate tax for the rectory. The same situation occurred in January 2015, but we were eventually able to dig out from under the deficit thanks to the financial stewardship of our members. We are counting on the same stewardship in 2016.

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## **Stewards of the OCA**

The Stewards of the OCA (SOCA) was formed in 2014 for the purpose of funding the various departmental ministries of the Orthodox Church in America. The SOCA traces its roots to the earlier Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards (FOS), which had gone inactive several years ago. At its peak, FOS was raising several hundred thousand dollars annual for the OCA. During the period of financial mismanagement by the church administration, FOS went dark. As the OCA has begun to emerge from that cloud and has embraced financial transparency in everything that it does, SOCA was formed to provide an additional funding source to supplement the work done by the departments of the church. The number of SOCA donors has

grown from 58 in 2014 to 85 in 2015 and the amount raised by the SOCA increased from \$35M in 2014 to \$54M in 2015. The SOCA is looking for more members in 2016 who share the vision of the OCA and are willing to be financial stewards to expand the mission of Orthodoxy. A future Sunday bulletin will include a blank membership form. If you think the mission of spreading Orthodoxy in America is worth your financial support, you are encouraged to become a member of SOCA.

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## **Metropolitan TIKHON on the PBS Nightly News Hour**



Many of you might have been surprised to turn on your television several weeks ago to see His Beatitude being interviewed on the PBS Network along with the retired cardinal from the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington, D.C. His Beatitude and the cardinal were being asked to comment on the historic meeting between Pope Francis and Patriarch Alexis from the Russian Orthodox Church. It is significant that the head of the Orthodox Church in America was given the opportunity to present an American Orthodox perspective. The daughter of Fr.

Garretson from the South River parish of the OCA is a PBS intern who helped to facilitate the interview. The interview may be seen on the OCA website at [OCA.org](http://OCA.org).



## **March Charity**

### **Project Mexico**

Since 1988, Project Mexico has been involving young people in the alleviation of suffering by building homes for Mexico's poor. In 1996, St. Innocent Orthodox Orphanage opened in Tijuana, providing a home for teenage boys who live on the streets or who have been put out of other orphanages and would otherwise be left to fend for themselves. An award-winning organization, St. Innocent Orphanage is the only facility dedicated to teenage boys in Tijuana and one of only four in the entire country of Mexico.

This pan-Orthodox charitable outreach is unique because our very own people carry out the work. In the process, their lives are changed. This proven, powerful vehicle of change has provided a fertile environment for thousands of youth to grow in Christ and give of themselves by doing works of mercy for a needy world.  
*(from OCA.org)*



# THE LIFE OF OUR PARISH (CONT'D)



## *Help Needed at weekday Coffee Hours*

During the course of the year there are many occasions when we have a Feast Day that falls during the week. Those who come on Feast Day mornings for the service of Divine Liturgy are always invited downstairs for Coffee Hour and fellowship. If you plan on coming to a Feast Day that is celebrated on a work day, please consider bringing something to share with everyone after the service. Your help will be greatly appreciated.



## *Winter Meeting of the OCA Metropolitan Council*

From February 15-18, members of the Metropolitan Council met at the facilities of the Roman Catholic Seminary of the Immaculate Conception in Huntington, NY. The hierarchs who attended were His Beatitude Metropolitan TIKHON, Archbishop MICHAEL from the Diocese of New York and New Jersey, Archbishop BENJAMIN from the Diocese of the West, and Bishop PAUL from the Diocese of the Midwest. OCA officers attending were Archpriest Fr. Eric Tosi, Secretary, Fr. John Jillions, Chancellor, and Melanie Ringa, Treasurer. The hierarchs, clergy, and lay delegates who attended were from 16 states and Canada, representing a broad cross-section of OCA parishes in

America. The delegates heard reports from the various OCA administrative entities and the various committees met in separate session to discuss their specific areas of competency (Finance, Human Resources, Legal). On Feb. 17, members of the Council attended a morning hierarchical Divine Liturgy in the St. Sergius Chapel of the Chancery in Syosset, followed by a breakfast. Interested members were given a tour of the extensive OCA archives in the chancery basement by Alex Liberovsky, OCA Archivist for the past 20 years. One of the important tasks of the Council is how to best protect and preserve these irreplaceable materials which document the history of Orthodoxy in America. A small amount of money has been set aside to hire a consultant to advise the church in this process. One of the highlights of the sessions was an extensive presentation by Archpriest Leonid Kishkovsky, who is in charge of External Relations for the OCA and has extensive Orthodox contacts throughout the entire world. Fr. Leonid spoke about the anticipated Great Council of Orthodox Churches which will be held in Crete later in 2016. It is unlikely that the OCA will officially be asked to participate in any capacity, not even as observers, because many global Orthodox churches do not recognize our 1970 autocephaly. Our best hope is to continue what we are doing and show that we are truly the face of Orthodoxy in

the Americas rather than a church imported from Greece or other foreign countries.

## *The Four Pillars; Metropolitan TIKHON's Vision for the Framework of the Orthodox Church in America*



At the 18th All-American Council in Atlanta, Georgia in July 2015, at the Fall Metropolitan Council meetings in September 2015, and again at the Spring Metropolitan Council meetings in February 2016, His Beatitude Metropolitan TIKHON continued to refine his vision for the Orthodox Church in America which he has called the "Four Pillars." The Four Pillars are Spiritual Life, Stewardship, Evangelism and Outreach, and External Affairs. Each of these areas could be represented as legs supporting a table. Without all four legs, the table will not stand. Each of these pillars has an important role in the church and each is critical. In the near future, it is the intention of his Beatitude to prepare a video giving an overview of his vision and separate videos more fully describing each pillar in more detail.





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# THE LIFE OF OUR PARISH (CONT'D)

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## ***Penny Party***

Special thanks to everyone who volunteered their time and energy in making the Penny Party a successful parish fund raising event. In particular, thanks to Natalie Tapykoff, Vivian Radu, Les and Nancy Grabania, Matushka Margarite Zlatkowski, Alex Cox, Nicholas Cox, Michael Tapykoff, Dr. Michael Tapykoff, Sasha Gorodenchuk, Alexander Drobish, Joe and Carmen

Stearne, Marge Pron, Helen Davis and Harold and Lorraine Kane and anyone who helped in any capacity who may have been accidentally omitted from this list. Thanks also to those parishioners who donated items and/or donated desserts and thanks to everyone who attended. As a result, **the Penny Party generated a profit of \$1,696.53** for the general fund of the parish. Thanks for your support!

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## CHURCH ETIQUETTE

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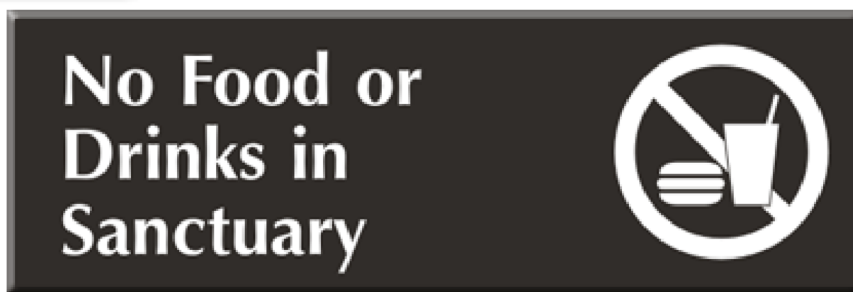
### ***Part 5 - Special Considerations During the Divine Liturgy***

- **Refrain from socializing during the Liturgy.** Save your greetings and conversations for the fellowship hall. We are in the Liturgy to greet God with our prayers and worship, not to distract others.
- **Refrain from reserving places in the pews.** Allow others to sit as they come into the church, and especially make room for visitors so they will feel welcome.



- **Cell phones and texting are never allowed in the church.** If you have a professional reason to carry a phone for emergencies, keep it on mute and sit near the exit so that leaving for an emergency will not be a distraction to others. Otherwise, turn off your phone before entering the sanctuary.

- **No food in the Sanctuary.** No food or beverages are allowed to be used inside the sanctuary of the church. If for whatever reason you need to eat or drink something, please step outside for it and then come back. Don't chew gum during the service, it is not appropriate for the spirit of prayer.



- **Lipstick.** Do not wear lipstick while taking Holy Communion, or when kissing the cross, an icon, the priest's or bishop's hand, or any sacred object. It is best not to wear it at all in the church, because of the damage it causes.
- **Leg crossing.** One should not be too casual in the Divine Liturgy. People from some cultures are offended by the crossing of legs or by arms thrown back over the pew. Keeping your feet on the ground also enables you to remain attentive and to stand when necessary.

*(Read Part 6 in the April 2016 Newsletter)*







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# PRAYERS

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## *For our March Birthdays*

Grant, O Lord, a prosperous and peaceful life, health, salvation, visitation, and furtherance in all good things to Thy servants, and preserve them for MANY YEARS!

Victoria Rapak - 1  
John Ryder - 6  
Matthew Decker - 6  
Julie Mandell - 9  
Leyla Blyumin - 10  
Larissa Mariani - 11  
Anthony Ferraro - 11

James Ryan - 14  
Sonia Mariani - 15  
Zacharias Clausson - 15  
Helene Hopkins - 19  
Kathryn Cox - 20  
Michael Blyumin - 21  
Jack Zwick - 21

Halina Forest - 23  
Anna Simon - 23  
Margarite Zlatkowski - 26  
John Cox - 26  
Lisa Lelo - 27  
Katherine Clausson - 29  
Maria Ann Kontos - 31

## *For the Sick*

O Christ our God, Who alone art our Defender: visit and heal Thy suffering servants, delivering them from all sickness and grievous pains and afflictions. Guide the hands of the physicians and nurses that attend to them so that all things may be done according to Thy Will. Raise them up from their bed of illness, so that they may continually offer hymns and songs of praise and thanksgiving unto Thee; through the prayers of the Most-holy Theotokos, the Holy Apostle and Physician Luke, the Holy Greatmartyr and Healer Panteleimon, and all the Holy and Venerable Unmercenary Physicians and Healers who have been well-pleasing to Thee throughout all the ages. For Thine it is to show us mercy and to save us, and to Thee do we ascribe Glory, together with Thy Father who is from everlasting, and Thy Most-Holy, Good, and Life-creating Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen!

Mary Popelak  
Bogdan Arutyunov  
Andrew Wagner  
Keivan Galaviz

Ersilia Maximo  
Arnold Jensky  
Dimitry Hubiak

Eric DeFrancesco  
Pauline Englesson  
Michele Decker

Alice Kopistansky  
Lois Brautigam  
Maria Sedorcheva  
Olga Gazak


## *For the Departed*

O God of spirits and of all flesh, Who hast trampled down Death and overthrown the Devil, and hast given Life to Thy world, do Thou, the same Lord, give rest to the soul of Thy departed servants, in a place of brightness, a place of refreshment, a place of repose, where all sickness, sighing, and sorrow have fled away. Pardon every transgression which they have committed, whether by word or deed or thought. For Thou art a good God and lovest Mankind; because there is no man who lives yet does not sin, for Thou only art without sin, Thy righteousness is righteousness to all eternity, and Thy Word is Truth. For Thou art the Resurrection, the Life, and the Repose of Thy departed servants who have fallen asleep, O Christ our God, and unto Thee do we ascribe Glory, together with Thy Father, who is from everlasting, and Thine All-Holy, Good, and Life-creating Spirit, now and ever unto ages of ages. Amen! MEMORY ETERNAL!

Ever-Memorable Archpriest Alexander  
Ever-Memorable Matushka Mary  
Newly-departed Antonina Ren  
Newly-departed Walter Barford  
Newly-departed Michael Mariani

Newly-departed Dimitri Archie  
Newly-departed Dorothy Vernak  
Newly-departed Pelagia Voychuk  
Newly-departed James Adams

**NO OTHER LABOR IS AS DIFFICULT AS PRAYER TO GOD.**



**EVERY TIME A PERSON WANTS TO PRAY,  
OUR SPIRITUAL ENEMIES WANT TO COME AND DISRUPT IT,  
FOR THEY KNOW THAT IT IS ONLY BY DEFLECTING HUMANS  
FROM PRAYER THAT THEY CAN DO THEM ANY HARM.**

*~ ABBA AGATHON (4TH CENTURY)*

## **GREAT LENT 2016**

### **MISSION VESPERS SCHEDULE**

**ALL SERVICES ARE SCHEDULED FOR 4:00PM**

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday (20 March)</b>	<b>St Michael, Philadelphia</b> 335 Fairmount Ave, 19123
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday (27 March)</b>	<b>Ss Peter &amp; Paul, Philadelphia</b> 9230 Old Bustleton Ave, 19115
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday (03 April)</b>	<b>St Nicholas Church, Coatesville</b> 11 Oak St, 19320
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday (10 April)</b>	<b>Holy Assumption, Philadelphia</b> 2800 Snyder Ave, 19145
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday (17 April)</b>	<b>St Michael, Wilmington</b> 2300 W Huntington Dr, 19808



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# MEDITATIONS ON THE DIVINE LITURGY OF THE HOLY EASTERN ORTHODOX CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH

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BY NIKOLAI GOGOL

## The Office of Preparation (The Proskomidia) (*cont'd*)

The deacon reminds the priest to begin the divine service with the words:

*Bless, Master!*

and the priest begins with the words:

*Blessed is our God, always, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.*

and goes to the table of preparation (prothesis) at the side. All this part of the service consists of the preparation of what is needed for the service, that is, of the removal from the altar-loaves or prosphora that portion which at first must represent the body of Christ and later be changed into It. The table at the side, to the left of the altar, called the prothesis (that is, table of offering or preparation, because on it the loaves are prepared), represents the place in the primitive Church where everything was kept that the early Christians brought for the service and for their common meal.

Since the whole proskomidia is nothing more or less than a preparation for the Liturgy itself, the Church has connected it with the commemoration of the early life of Christ which was a preparation for His public ministry. All this is carried out in the altar behind closed doors and drawn curtain, unseen by the congregation, just as Christ's early life was hidden from the masses. But for the worshipers at this time the Hours are read, a collection of Psalms and prayers which the early Christians read at the four most important times of the day: the first hour, when the day begins, according to the Church's reckoning; the third hour, when the Holy Spirit descended; the sixth hour, when the Savior of the world was nailed to the Cross; and the ninth hour, when He yielded up His spirit. As present-day Christians, owing to the lack of time and constant distractions, cannot read these prayers at the appointed times, they are read one after the other at this time.

The priest goes to the table of preparation (prothesis) and takes up one of the prosphora in order to remove that part which will afterwards become the Body of Christ - the center with the seal bearing the name of Jesus Christ. This removal of bread from bread represents the separation of Christ's flesh from the flesh of the Virgin - the birth of the Flesh-less One in the flesh. And reflecting that it is the One Who offered Himself as a sacrifice for the whole world Who is born, the priest inevitably connects the thought of the sacrifice itself with the offering and regards the bread as the "Lamb" offered in sacrifice; the spear, with which he will cut it out, as the sacrificial knife - a reminder of the spear with which the Savior's body was pierced on the Cross.



At this point the priest does not accompany his acts with the Savior's words or with the words of the eyewitnesses, the contemporaries who lived through all these events. He does not transport himself in mind back to the time when the historical offering of this sacrifice took place, for all this is presented in the latter part of the Liturgy. For the moment he is in the yet more distant past looking ahead to what is to come (that is, to the coming of the Messiah).

Like the people of whom it is said that while sitting in darkness they saw a great light, he looks towards the light beaming ahead of him. As Isaiah foresaw with the eagle-eye of prophetic vision what was to come beyond what was around him, just so the priest through this proskomidia looks prophetically to the sacrificial act ahead of him. Uniting himself with the prophet, he accompanies each ritual act with the words of the Prophet Isaiah, who foresaw long beforehand out of ages of darkness the wondrous Birth, Sacrifice and Death and proclaimed it with inconceivable clarity. The priest thrusts the spear into the right



side of the seal and says:

*He is led as a sheep to the slaughter.  
(Isaiah 53:7)*

and then thrusting it into the left side he says:

*And as a lamb before her shearers is dumb,  
so He opens not His mouth. (Isaiah 53:7)*

Then thrusting the spear into the upper part of the seal he says:

*In His humiliation justice was denied Him.  
(Isaiah 53:8)*

Finally, thrusting it into the lower part he pronounces the words of the prophet who was absorbed in contemplation of the wondrous origin or lineage of the condemned Lamb:

*Who shall declare His generation? (Isaiah 53:8)*

With the spear he lifts out the portion of bread cut out of the center and says:

*His life is removed from the earth. (Isaiah 53:8)*

Turning this portion of the seal downwards, he now cuts it cross-wise as a sign of His death on the Cross and says:

*Sacrificed is the Lamb of God, Who takes away the  
sin of the world for the life of the world and for its  
salvation. (cf. St John 1:29; First John 2:2)*

Then the priest thrusts the spear into the right side as a reminder of the offering of the sacrifice, of how the soldier at the Cross pierced our Savior's side, and says:

*One of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and  
immediately there came out blood and water. And he  
who saw it bore witness and his witness is true. (St  
John 19:34-35)*



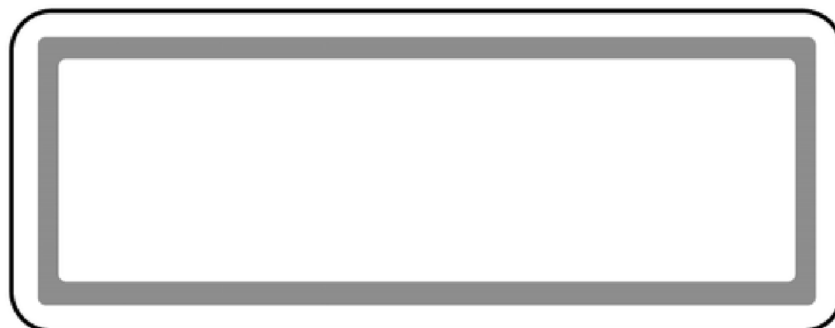
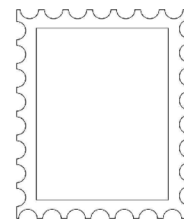
At the same time these words are the sign for the deacon to pour wine and water into the holy chalice. The deacon reverently observes all that the priest does, and prompts him to begin each ritual act by saying:

*Let us pray to the Lord!*

Finally he pours wine and water into the chalice, after mixing them and asking the priest's blessing. The wine and bread are prepared in this way so they may be changed later during the sublime action of the Liturgy that lies ahead.

*(Read part 4 in the April 2016 Newsletter)*





## THE RESTORATION OF ICONS

**A**s the Prophets saw, as the Apostles taught, as the Church has received, as the Teachers express in dogma, as the inhabited world understands together with them, as grace illumines, as the truth makes clear, as error has been banished, as wisdom makes bold to declare, as Christ has assured, so we think, so we speak, so we preach, honoring Christ our true God, and his Saints, in words, in writings, in thoughts, in sacrifices, in churches, in icons, worshiping and revering the One as God and Lord, and honoring them because of their common Lord as those who are close to him and serve him, and making to them relative veneration.

**T**his is the faith of the Apostles; this is the faith of the Fathers; this is the faith of the Orthodox; this faith makes fast the inhabited world.

*(excerpt from the text of the Synodikon of Orthodoxy)*

