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ORTHODOX NEW ENGLAND

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Giving Thanks for Blessings Across New England



Right: Faithful of St. Nicholas, Pittsfield, gather around the miraculous icon of St. Anna.

Miraculous Icon Visits Pittsfield

Steve Nikitas

On Saturday, August 20 and Sunday, August 21 Archimandrite Sergius, Abbot of Saint Tikhon's Monastery, South Canaan, Pennsylvania, visited St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in Pittsfield, Massachusetts for services with the Myrrh Streaming Icon of Saint Anna and the Theotokos.

Known for its healing powers, the icon was commissioned *Icon continued on page 3*

"The Gift of Giving"—Meriden Hosts a Retreat on Stewardship

Joan Skrobat

The weekend of September 23-24, 2016, a very spirited retreat was hosted by SS. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church in Meriden. There were attendees from several parishes. The Retreat entitled "The Gift of Giving" (Growing in our Personal and Parish Life Through the Cycle of Stewardship) was presented by V. Rev Robert Holet from *Giving continued on page 2*

St. Nicholas Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Charlottesville, Va. Fr. Robert presented at the 2015 New England Diocesan Assembly.

It was fitting that this weekend the church remembered new Martyrs of Alaska: Hieromonk Juvenaly and Peter the Aleut and sang these words in the Aposticha of vespers: "Remembering the Holy Martyrs who sacrificed their whole lives for the truth and the Mother of God who offered her whole life to the Lord, let us pray that we too may be accounted faithful witnesses to the divine life the Savior has revealed and bestowed upon us. Let us spend the remaining time of our lives doing the work He has entrusted to us."

The attendees were given an assignment to complete: "A Faithful Stewardship Inventory." One had to list all the gifts the Lord has entrusted to them and then categorize them—spiritual, material, etc.

Fr. Robert used many resources as examples including the Old and New Testaments, teachings of the Fathers, iconography, lives of the Saints and even football plays.

The presentation included eight movements of Orthodox stewardship:

1. God is the Lord and source of all.

The Creation—the gift—originates in God, Man was created as the "priest" of this cosmic sacrament. Adam and Eve failed to see all came from God.

2. God's gifts must first be received.

In the center of Orthodox stewardship is the Liturgical offering. The gift of God's son. We receive the body and blood of Jesus. God has given this to us; in return, we are called to give back. In stewardship we need to recognize our offering as giving to God in thanksgiving for all He has given to us. The feminine attitude in the church gives the greatest examples of receiving and giving back, as Mary gave her whole life to God. One great example is the Annunciation.

3. We respond offering back to God

the first and finest. In Genesis we read of Abel's sacrifice of the first portion of his flock, the best lamb.

4. We offer to God by being caretakers of others, creation and all entrusted to us. Stewardship of parents offering our children to God, as our children are churched. We will be judged on how we took care of our children. The miracle of loaves and fishes. Even if we use an example of giving the ten percent to God, the good steward still has to manage 90%. So Christ tells us to offer our whole life and all we have.

5. The Lord pours forth a greater abundance to the faithful steward, entrusting greater responsibility.

6. The capacity of the steward grows

to accommodate the ever increasing transformative grace of God at work. In the Eucharist God receives our gifts of bread and wine and changes them by the power of the Holy Spirit. Then He sends His priests who present the offering. We receive Holy Communion where the miracle of His love is revealed. We receive Him. We are transformed mind and heart. We grow more mature, more involved, shifting movement towards God. Receiving now deeper spiritual gifts: perseverance, patience, long suffering, and watchfulness. One grows and matures when helping brothers and sisters to grow responsibly.

7. The steward shall give an account

for all that was entrusted to him or her. The mystery of Holy Penance is given to us to prepare for that accounting, and to receive forgiveness.

8. The faithful enters into the eternal communion and joy in Christ.

The final words of the retreat: "The Stewardship Cycle begins with the Lord and ends with the Lord." The reward is Communion with God for eternity!

Sincere thanks to Fr. Joshua Mosher and the parish of SS. Peter & Paul for hosting such an inspiring retreat.

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Miraculous Icon continued from I

by Father Athanasy at the Russian Orthodox Convent on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. It was completed in 1998 and blessed at the Holy Sepulcher in the city's Church of the Resurrection.

St. Anna, the mother of the Theotokos, began streaming tears of myrrh on May 9, 2004 but the tears no longer appear.

According to the Saint Tikhon's Monastery web site, "assistance and healings are still wrought by the miraculous icon and



Above: The wonder-working icon of St. Anna.

Below: Fr. Joseph Gall with Fr. Sergius.



Right and below: Father Sergius brought the icon to St. Nicholas and presided at a Molieben in its presence.



she continues to work wonders for those who approach with faith.”

Father Sergius personally told a full church of St. Nicholas parishioners about the many healings attributed to the icon.

The services featuring St. Anna were part of a series of events held in honor of the 100th anniversary of St. Nicholas.

On Saturday evening, August 20, a Molieben memorial service was held at St. Nicholas featuring the Miraculous Icon.

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Altar Servers Strengthen Their Skills and Deepen Their Understanding

Rev. Joshua Mosher

On Sept. 10, eighteen men and boys gathered at SS. Peter & Paul, Meriden, Conn., for an Altar Server Retreat. Fr. John Hopko led the retreat, on the theme “The Wonderful Privilege of Serving in the Lord’s Sanctuary.” Participants came from a wide range of parishes—among them Hartford, Southbury, and Pittsfield.

After morning prayers, Fr. John began with a presentation, sharing many experiences from his service as an altar boy and deacon, as well as a priest. He described beautifully reverent men who treated every moment in the altar as a gift. He also told horror stories of careless servers who jostled and even hurt the metropolitan presiding at the Divine Liturgy. His lively and humorous

presentation provided many practical pointers and principles.

The rest of the day was devoted to learning the finer details of serving with a bishop at the Divine Liturgy. Fr. Hopko walked the group step by step through welcoming and vesting the bishop, and all the distinct aspects of



Above and below: Fr. John Hopko uses Subdeacon John Barone to illustrate serving with a bishop.



the Hierarchal Divine Liturgy. He enlisted Subdeacon John Barone to stand in as the hierarch for the day, so that the participants could simulate how they would interact with the bishop.

By mid-afternoon, the retreat closed with prayers, and the group dispersed for their homes. Many spoke

appreciatively of the opportunity, and thought a reunion would be worthwhile next year.

We hope next time will be better still—perhaps with bishop’s vestments on loan to practice the vesting in greater detail. Thanks to Fr. John for his insights, and to everyone who participated! **ONE** +

Right: Altar servers of all ages walk through aspects of the Hierarchal Divine Liturgy.



Tribute to Matushka Anastasia Timpko

Joan Skrobat

The Annual “Women Making a Difference in the Valley” luncheon was established in 2001 as a tribute to the many women who volunteer their time to improve the quality of life in the Naugatuck Valley. This year’s event was held in conjunction with the Valley Women’s Health Initiative. This initiative was established to ensure that no person is denied screening mammograms or diagnostic testing for breast cancer.

The event was held October 6 2016, at the Inn At Villa Bianca in Seymour, Conn. Matushka Anastasia Timpko was one of the five 2016 honorees. She was selected for her work as an Orthodox

Matuska supporting Fr. Nicholas Timpko’s ministries and her many roles in the life of the church. She developed the volunteer program at Griffin Hospital in Derby, Conn.

For 27 years she established a program that was a model for others. She coordinated the “Mature Advantage” program. This is an educational program to assist people 55 and older. She has worked at Valley senior centers with food drives. She has coordinated blood drives and AARP programs.

She has truly made a difference in the Valley and is well deserving of this honor. Kudos and Many Years, dear Matushka Anastasia.

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Newly Installed Choros and Seminarian Intern at Christ the Savior Church, Southbury

Nicholas Yuschak, Jr.

As part of our 25th anniversary celebration the parish family of Christ the Savior Church in Southbury raised money for a Byzantine Choros (chandelier) for our church building. From the very first vision in the early design phase of our church, there was the hope of having a Traditional Byzantine Choros hanging from the center dome.

The workmanship by Woodbury Forge, in consultation with Father Alexis Vinogradov, was based upon a design by our own parishioner, Tatiana Novosilzov. Early in September her vision was realized when work on the Choros was completed.

Forty eight candles, each representing a memorial light dedicated in memory of a loved one, ring the ornate framework, made from hand crafted steel. The entire assembly is suspended by chains from the perimeter of the dome. The candles are electrified and illuminated by a 7.5 watt miniature bulb that gives off a delicate golden light, very similar to that of real candles. The names of those dedicated by the candles will be placed in our Memorial Book and read at the five Memorial Saturdays each year for the life of the parish.

In addition to our new Choros, we are blessed once again to host a seminarian as an Intern at Christ the Savior. We welcome Seminarian

Christopher Stoops, his wife Anastasia, their daughter Yeva, son Vanya, and Anastasia's father, Anatoli. Chris is beginning his third year of studies in the MDiv program after completing his internship in Clinical Pastoral Education last summer at NYU Langone Medical Center in Manhattan. After graduation, Chris would like to pursue his calling to ministry as a hospital chaplain resident. We look forward to worshipping together while getting to know them better during the upcoming year!

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Upcoming Events

Dec 15

Nov. 6

Nov. 15

Deadline for the next issue of the ONE

St. Nectarios Celebration at Christ the Savior, Southbury, Conn.

Nativity Fast begins