

Miraculous Icon begins journey back to Russia

Our Lady of Tikhvin Icon at Memorial Day Pilgrimage

SOUTH CANAAN, PA – As its first stop on what is projected to be a year-long journey to its original home at the Dormition Monastery in Tikhvin, Russia, the wonder-working icon of the Tikhvin Mother of God will be available for veneration during the 99th annual Pilgrimage to Saint Tikhon Monastery here May 23-26, 2003.

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, Primate of the Orthodox Church in America, and members of the Holy Synod of Bishops will welcome the icon at the monastery entrance at 3:00 p.m. on Friday, May 23, marking the pilgrimage's formal opening. Following the celebration of Vespers and Matins, a procession with the icon will make its way around the monastery church and the Akathist Hymn in honor of the icon will be sung.

"Tradition holds that the icon is one of several ascribed to the Evangelist Luke," according to the Very Rev. John Matusiak, OCA Communications Director. "In the fifth century, the icon was transferred from Jerusalem to Constantinople, where it was enshrined in the Blachernae church built in its honor. It miraculously appeared over Lake Ladoga in northern Russia in 1383 and was ultimately enshrined in Tikhvin's Dormition Monastery."

The late Archbishop John [Garklavs] of Chicago became the icon's guardian in 1944, while he was stationed in Riga, Latvia.

"Archbishop John brought the icon to the US in 1949, and it has remained in Chicago ever since," Father Matusiak adds. "After Archbishop John's death in the early 1980s, the Very Rev. Sergei Garklavs, the Archbishop's adopted

son, was entrusted with the icon's care, with the provision that it be returned to the monastery in Tikhvin after the demise of the Soviet regime."

According to the Very Rev. Alexander Garklavs, Archbishop John's grandson and rector of Holy Trinity Church, East Meadow, NY, "Archbishop John always believed that the fate of the icon was in God's providence and that the Theotokos herself was responsible for its miraculous journeys. It is our humble sense of that divine providence that we now feel that the time has come for the icon to be returned to the Tikhvin monastery, where it had been for over five centuries."



At the recent Spring Session of the OCA's Holy Synod of Bishops, Father Garklavs briefed the hierarchs on details of the icons return to Tikhvin, which is slated to coincide with the celebration of the icon's feastday on the new calendar, June 26, 2004.

Faithful will have the rare opportunity to venerate the icon throughout the pilgrimage to Saint Tikhon Monastery. In addition, several Services of

Thanksgiving will be celebrated before the icon. On Monday, May 26, a Service of Thanksgiving in the icon's honor will be followed by the anointing of the sick, infirm, and all pilgrims. (*OCA Office of Communications*)

HISTORICAL NOTES ON THE ICON OF OUR LADY OF TIKHVIN

According to ancient tradition, the wonderworking icon of Our Lady of Tikhvin is one of several painted by Saint Luke the Evangelist. The icon was taken from Jerusalem to Constantinople in

HISTORY TO 4

CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!



O.N.E. (ORTHODOX NEW ENGLAND)

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ON THE DOCKET

A listing of upcoming events in the Diocese.
Please forward any dates you wish to be included to the Editor.

May 8, 2003

Connecticut Deanery Meeting, 7:00 P.M.
Holy Trinity Church, New Britain, CT

May 15, 2003

FORCC Meeting, 7:00 P.M.
Holy Trinity Church, New Britain, CT

May 21, 2003

Diocesan Council Meeting, 6:30 P.M.
Holy Trinity Church, New Britain, CT

May 26, 2003

Annual Memorial Day Pilgrimage
Our Lady of Tikhvin Icon
St. Tikhon's Monastery, South Canaan, PA

May 31, 2003

Marriage Enrichment Seminar, 9:00 A.M.
Dr. Albert Rossi, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Speaker
First Church of Christ, Old Wethersfield, CT

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**Connecticut Deanery
Lenten Retreat**

On the fifth Thursday of Great Lent, His Grace, Bishop Nikon, most of the clergy of the Connecticut Deanery, many of the clergy spouses, and some guests, including His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius, retired Archbishop of Washington, gathered at Christ the Savior Mission in Woodbury, Connecticut. The evening began at 5:00 P.M. with the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, served by host Fr. Vladimir Aleandro and Deacon John Zarras.

Following the liturgy, a wonderful lenten repast was presented for our enjoyment in the church hall. The parish provided great hospitality. A short meeting was held of the clergy with Bishop Nikon, who reviewed the recent Holy Synod of Bishops meeting for the clergy.

The meeting was followed by a presentation by Fr. Michael Koblosh, pastor of St. Nicholas Church in Whitestone, NY, and a former pastor in our diocese. He shared with us some moving and meaningful passages from *The Arena* by St. Ignatius Brianchaninov. The passages focused on the pastoral work necessary in a parish, asceticism necessary in every Christian life, and the challenges that we face completing Great Lent and living the Christian life in today's society.

The next meeting of the Connecticut Deanery clergy is May 8th, 7:00 P.M., at Holy Trinity Church in New Britain.

Around the Parishes

Ansonia, Connecticut

The Lenten Season at Three Saints Church was both busy and productive. Our parish had many visitors during this time, including visits from The St. Tikhon's Seminarians, Bishop Nikon, and Metropolitan Herman joined us for the Unction Service. The church welcomed all of our visitors and enjoyed the services as well as fellowship afterwards. Olga Horoschak and her group of knitters and crocheteers gathered all of the lap robes, and made more, to give to all of the visitors to be dispersed as they saw fit.

Also, during this season, our Sunday School children joined Fr. Timpko in the making of Prospora. Each child received a wooden cross to wear during the Lenten season as well as a seed to grow a plant to be brought back to the church for Holy Pascha so the children could truly develop a sense of the season.

The coming months prove to be busy ones as well. The parish has activities planned for upcoming months, including a Festival of Tables to be held June 1, 2003.

– submitted by Julie Craft

OUR DIOCESE

**PEOPLE
PLACES
EVENTS**

Hartford, Connecticut

In 2004 our parish will celebrate her 90th anniversary and we are seeking historical material about the parish. If anyone has documents, photos or information that would be willing to share with the parish, please send them to Fr. William at 205 Scarborough Street, Hartford, CT 06105. Items can be loaned or donated.

Our annual meatfare dinner was a delightful and delicious event. It was prepared by volunteers under the leadership of Chris Evans and John Holobinko. A highlight of the day was awarding of Savings Bonds in the FOCA-R Club and Church School essay contest. The topic this year was "What is your favorite Bible story and why"? Winners were Christian Holobinko in the second and third grade category who wrote about Samson and Delilah as pointing us to Christ. In the sixth and seventh grade category, Noemy DaSilva wrote about Christ's washing of his apostles feet and the love He shows. All those who participated received a gift certificate to a bookstore, donated by the R Club.

Our newest member recently welcomed to our parish is Elaine Kash. Many Years!

An icon of the burial of Christ, painted by Viktor

Kazanin, was blessed. The icon was donated by Helen Bugai, Mary Kudrowski and Olga Gaganon in memory of their sister, Alexandra Sriendzienski. Many Years and Memory Eternal!

The FOCA-R Club continues to sponsor vareniki workshops and sell the tasty food as a fund-raiser.

– submitted by Fr. William DuBovik

Meriden, Connecticut

We have made the journey through the Lenten season and Pascha has come. Spring is in bloom and many things are happening. Our Brotherhood held their annual installation dinner on January 19th at our Church Community Center. As usual, the meal was great and all enjoyed the fellowship. In early March, our Seniors held a fund raiser and made blintzes

On February 15th, we had the joy of baptizing and chrismating Roger Fransson into the Church. For Roger, this marks the end of a long religious journey of some 20 years, and now of course, he begins a new one. May the Lord grant him many, many years.

On Saturday, March 1st, we were very happy to have His Grace, Bishop Nikon, visit our Parish and join us for Vespers and officiate at Divine Liturgy on Sunday. His Grace was greeted by Father Timothy Lowe and our Council Vice-President Alexia Tassmer. After Liturgy, we all drove to our Community Center where the Church Council sponsored our Meatfare Dinner in his honor.



Fr. Timothy Lowe greets His Grace, Bishop Nikon, in Meriden.

As a Lenten project, our Church School made up Easter baskets for needy families who live in the neighborhood around our Church. A ham raffle was held to raise funds.

HISTORY FROM 1

the fifth century, where it was enshrined in the Church of Blachernae, which was built especially for this purpose.

In 1383, seventy years before the seizure and fall of Constantinople at the hands of the Turks, fishermen on Lake Ladoga in the principality of Novgorod the Great witnessed the icon miraculously hovering over the lake's waters amidst a radiant light. According to an early 16th-century Russian manuscript, "The Tale of Miracles of the Icon of the Tikhvin Mother of God," the Theotokos herself decided that her image should leave Constantinople, perhaps in anticipation of the impending fall of the Byzantine Empire. Shortly after its miraculous appearance, the icon was discovered in several neighboring towns, including the village of Motchenitsy on the bank of the Tikhvinka River, before it finally appeared near the town of Tikhvin. A wooden church dedicated to the Dormition of the Theotokos was built on the site of the icon's final resting place. Miraculously, the icon survived a number of fires.

In the early 16th century, through the zeal of Great Prince Vasilij Ivanovich, a stone church was built to replace the original wooden structure. In 1560, by order of Tsar Ivan the Terrible, a men's monastery was established near the church and enclosed with a stone wall.

In 1613-1614, the Swedish army, having seized Novgorod, made several attempts to destroy the monastery. The countless prayers offered to the Theotokos before the icon were heard, and the monastery was spared. On one occasion, after monks had been alerted to the approaching Swedish army, they decided to flee and to take the icon with them. But the monks soon discovered that they could not remove the icon from its shrine. Seeing this as a sign of the Theotokos' protection, the monks decided not to abandon the monastery, begging the Theotokos to spare

them and their beloved spiritual home. To their amazement, a large Muscovite army appeared to defend the monastery. When the Swedes encountered the army, they retreated immediately. Word of this miracle spread rapidly, and imperial emissaries soon visited the monastery. Accompanied by a copy of the wonderworking icon, they set off for the village of Stolbovo, 33 miles from Tikhvin, where they concluded a peace treaty with the Swedes on February 10, 1617. Afterwards, the copy of the icon was taken to Moscow and enshrined in the Kremlin's Dormition Cathedral. Later, the same icon was placed in the Cathedral of the Holy Wisdom in Novgorod at the request of the city's faithful, who also found themselves under attack by the Swedes. Once again, through the intercession of the Theotokos, the city was spared.

Over the centuries, the icon's fame spread far and wide. Copies of the wonderworking icon began to adorn churches throughout the land. Some of these copies also proved to be sources of miracles, and it was not uncommon to find the faithful praying before the icon to seek healing for children who were ill. No fewer than 24 processions with the icon were celebrated each year at the Tikhvin Monastery, where the icon was enshrined. A decorative cover, or "riza," adorned the icon, exposing only the faces and hands of the Holy Virgin and Christ child. Numerous precious stones studded the riza, and many of the faithful, desiring to express thanksgiving for prayers answered through the Theotokos' intercession, affixed precious jewelry to the riza.

Most miraculous is the fact that the icon was preserved from destruction or sale after the Russian Revolution, which ushered in a 74-year persecution of the Church. During the 1920s, the communist government demanded that the Russian Orthodox Church turn over countless icons and other precious liturgical items, which through the nationalization of private property were considered the

property of "the people." Many of these sacred items were sold, allegedly to raise money to feed the Russian and Ukrainian population which was afflicted by famine.

During the World War II German occupation, the Nazis removed the icon from the Tikhvin Monastery, from where it was taken to Pskov and subsequently to Riga, Latvia. When the city was evacuated, Bishop John [Garklavs] of Riga, in whose care the icon was placed, took the icon to Bavaria, where it was venerated by Orthodox faithful who had been displaced because of the war. While Soviet agents had spotted the icon, Bishop John was permitted to take the icon to the United States in 1949, under the pretext that the icon in his care was a reproduction, the work of a simple monk, and that it was of little historic or monetary value. Shortly after his arrival in the United States, Bishop John, who was later elevated to the rank of Archbishop, was elected to oversee the Diocese of Chicago, and the icon was regularly displayed and venerated in Chicago's Holy Trinity Cathedral. Bishop John frequently took the icon on pilgrimage to various places throughout the United States and Canada. After his retirement in the late 1970s and death on Palm Sunday in 1982, Archpriest Sergei Garklavs, Bishop John's adopted son, became the caretaker of the icon. In 2003, over a decade after the fall of communism and the resurrection of the Russian Orthodox Church, the decision was made to return the precious icon to its original home.

The icon will begin its year-long journey to Russia at the 99th annual Pilgrimage to Saint Tikhon Monastery, South Canaan, Pennsylvania, Friday through Monday, May 23-26, 2003. His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, Primate of the Orthodox Church in America, together with members of the Holy Synod of Bishops and guest hierarchs, will greet the icon, which will be available for veneration by the faithful.

The icon follows the "Odigitria"

model and is similar in style to the ancient icon of Our Lady of Iberia. It differs in that the Christ child's legs are crossed, while the sole of His foot is turned to the viewer. Several historic sources note that several other Odigitria icons of the Theotokos had been brought to Russia in the 1380s, during the rule of the saintly prince Dmitri Donskoy.

– *Archpriest John Matusiak*

TROPARION IN TONE 4

Today, like the eternal sun, your icon appears in the sky, O Theotokos. With rays of mercy it enlightens the world.

This land accepts the heavenly gift from above,

Honoring you as the Mother of God. We praise Christ our Lord Who was born of you.

Pray to Him, O Queen and Sovereign Virgin,

That all Christian cities and lands be guarded in safety,

And that He will save those who venerate His divine, and your holy, image, O unwedded bride.

KONTAKION IN TONE 8

O people, let us come to the Virgin, Queen and Mother,

Giving thanks to Christ God.

Let us fall before her miraculous icon, crying out:

“O sovereign Mary, your glorious icon now inhabits this land.

Save all the Christians of this world, showing us the heavenly life.

To you we faithfully cry: ‘Rejoice, O Virgin, the salvation of the world!’”

PUBLICATION DEADLINES

Summer Issue
June 15th

September Issue
August 1st

FORCC News

We hope everyone in all of our Orthodox parishes enjoyed a glorious Pascha and we look forward now to the season of graduations and happy family vacations. We are happy to award scholarships to our entering college graduates.

We would like to remind students graduating this year, that the FORCC applications are now on our website (www.forcc.org). Applications are available for students of FORCC member parishes only.

There are six scholarships available. Four \$500.00 scholarships and two \$1,000.00 scholarships (one boy and one girl) will be awarded. Recipients will be acknowledged at the annual benefit banquet in October.

DEADLINE for receipt of application is **JUNE 1, 2003**. Please send applications to:

Eva Vaniotis
4100 Park Ave, #12
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Forms to place ads in our Banquet Benefit Program Book have been sent to the local parishes. Please help our cause. The ads in the program book are our only fundraiser.

At our last FORCC meeting we elected co-corresponding secretaries. They are MaryAnn Kendall and Heidi Crosby. Congratulations.

– *Barbara Ann Dixon*

THE FATHERS SPEAK

Pascha and Baptism

After this you were led to the holy pool of divine baptism, as Christ was carried from the cross to the sepulchre that is before our eyes. Each of you was asked whether he believed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and you made this confession and descended into the water three times, and ascended again; here again quietly pointing by way of a figure to the burial of Christ for three days.

For as our Saviour passed three days and nights in the heart of the earth, so you in your first coming out of the water represented the first day of Christ under the earth, and by your descent, the night; for as he who is the night sees no more, but he who is the day stays in the light, so in descending you saw nothing, as in the night, but in coming up again you were as in the day.

At one and the same moment you died and were born; the water of salvation was your grave and your mother at once. What Solomon spoke of others may be applied to you. He said: ‘There is a time to bear and a time to die’ (Eccles. 3:2); but to you

on the other hand the time of death is also the time to be born. One and the same season brings both of these about; and your birth and your death go hand in hand.

O what a strange and inconceivable thing it is! We did not really die, we were not really buried; we were not crucified and raised again; our imitation of Christ was but in a figure, while our salvation is truth. Christ actually was crucified and buried, and truly rose again; and all these things have been transmitted to us, that we might by imitation participate in his sufferings, and so gain salvation in truth.

– *St. Cyril of Jerusalem*





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*A new reader being
tensured in Waterbury*

PARISHES FROM 3

On Sunday, April 20th, we hosted Deanery Bridegroom Matins. We were happy to see so many people from surrounding parishes.

We are looking forward to the next few months since we have several activities planned. At the end of May, we will hold our Church School Awards day and present awards to our Church School students. We have also organized several clean up projects around our Church and Community Center and will be getting ready for our Annual Church Picnic later this summer. Give us a call if you would like to join us.

– submitted by John S. Nighyew

New Haven, Connecticut

Congratulations to Nicole Maldera, daughter of Andre and RoseAnn, on being accepted to Southern Connecticut State University. Nicole, a senior at Hamden High School, is planning to pursue a career in Nursing. Nicole is quite active in our parish, is a member of the choir, reads the epistle, the hours, various readings during and after services.

Thanks to the efforts of Anastasia Avgerinos and Nancy Muro, our Meatfare Sunday, "covered dish" luncheon was a huge success. Great food and fellowship was enjoyed by all.

Daffodils, a symbol of hope for the continuous fight against cancer, once again brought our "Daffodil Lady," Anastasia Avgerinos, to the forefront to chair the annual Daffodils for Cancer Foundation sales for our parish.

Sonya Hitt received a wonderful response to her request for volunteers to assist with a project called "Healing Shawls." These are shawls that are knitted by cancer survivors, their families and friends and are then distributed to patients recently diagnosed with breast cancer. When worn while the patient is in the infusion chair, it feels like a "warm hug" from someone who cares. Sonya will deliver the completed shawls to the Norma Pfriem Breast Cancer Center at Bridgeport Hospital.

Deepest sympathy extended to Gene Gillen and Sonya Kissel Tetmeyer on the loss of their beloved wife and daughter, Dr. Jean T. Gillen, who fell asleep in the Lord on March 26. Dr. Gillen was a school psychologist for over 30 years in the Cheshire Public School System.

With the arrival of spring and the turning ahead of the clocks, our thoughts turned to "parish spring cleaning." The second Friday and Saturday in April, our volunteers crawled out of bed at dawn's early light, arriving at the church by 8:30 A.M. and began the task of cleaning the church from top to bottom. With all the "elbow grease" that was applied, the church was resplendent for Pascha.

– submitted by Barbara Ann Dixon

Norwich, Connecticut

In October 2002, we held our annual Harvest festival. Everyone enjoyed the food delights including the home-made pierogies, stuffed cabbage and kielbasa sandwiches. As usual, the chance table, flea market, country store, bake sale and Russian imports were a huge success.

Also in October, Father Dennis and Frank Krejewski attended the annual New England Diocesan Assembly.

December saw the completion of our new elevator and sidewalk ramps. Now there is easy access to our church for everyone. Thanks to all the parish families and friends for their generous donations that made our dream a reality. December also saw us celebrating the feast of St. Nicholas on December 8th with a church dinner after Divine Liturgy and a potluck dinner on Christmas Eve complete with garlic and honey.

On the Sunday after Christmas, Father Dennis gave out candy canes, gold (candy) coins and gift certificates from Walden Books to all the church school children.

In January, we held our annual meeting and the newly elected officers were installed. The newly elected officers for 2003 are: Anna Talbot, Warden; Peter Shillo, First Assistant Warden; Eric Ford, Second Assistant Warden; Lydia Pierce, Treasurer; Sophia Kashanski, Financial Secretary; Fred Tarasuk, Recording Secretary; Vincent Melesko, Comptroller; George Stolaronek, Trustee; Thomas Shankun, Trustee; Mary Maciejewski, Trustee; Lydia Lucier, Trustee; Vera Dubenetsky, Trustee and Douglas King, Trustee.



Pachel Geeza presents flowers to His Grace, Bishop Nikon, in Norwich

On Sunday, February 16, 2003, His Grace, Bishop Nikon, made his first archpastoral visit to St. Nicholas. He was assisted by Father Dennis and Deacon Mark Doku. Flowers were presented to Bishop Nikon by Rachel Geeza. This was World Orthodox Youth Sunday so the young people of our parish assumed various roles during the liturgy. Altar servers were Alex & Nick Melesko and Chase King. The Epistle reading was done by Natalie Geeza and Sara Fritz helped hold the communion cloth. At that liturgy, Alison Pyott was received into the catechumenate. On February 23, 2003 the church school and their families, including pre-schoolers Jared Ford and

Lauren King, enjoyed bowling after liturgy.



Norwich bowlers enjoy fellowship after liturgy.

Over the last several months, we have lost several members of our church. They are Olga Bartnicki, Helen Stuart, Elizabeth Kuhn, Michael Veronick, Alexander Shuleshko and Eugene Gladky.

– submitted by Vincent and Marlene Melesko

Waterbury, Connecticut

Forgiveness Sunday was an opportunity to celebrate the Divine Liturgy with His Grace, Bishop Nikon. His Grace prayed with us at Vespers on March 8th, and joined our altar servers and their families for dinner after a short “practice session”. Everyone enjoyed the opportunity to get to know His Grace a bit better. His Grace enjoyed the service of the “army” of altar servers here at the Nativity of the Holy Virgin.

During the Divine Liturgy on Sunday March 9th, His Grace tonsured three Readers and awarded them the right to wear the Subdeacon’s orarion. Our new Readers, Joseph Boruch, David Searfoorce, and Gregory

PARISHES TO 8



Protodeacon Paul Nimchek, His Grace, Bishop Nikon, and Fr. Matthew Searfoorce in Waterbury.

PARISHES FROM 7

Matzkevich were very active in the course of the Divine Liturgy carrying out their duties very well.



His Grace with the "army" of altar servers in Waterbury.

On Friday March 14th, clergy and parishioners from Ss. Cyril and Methodius Parish in Terryville CT joined us for the celebration of the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts and a potluck supper afterwards. The Christian fellowship was excellent.

Orthodox Sunday Vespers were celebrated at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Waterbury, but the pastor, Fr. Stephen Natsis, was unable to join us due to recent surgery on his ankle. Fr. Matthew Searfoorce and Fr. Vladimir Aleandro (from Woodbury) celebrated the Vespers. A wonderful Lenten meal followed in the Social Hall at Holy Trinity.

Parishioners and clergy from our parish joined the faithful at Christ the Savior Mission in Woodbury on March 19th for the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. We were all pleased at how many of our Faithful turned out for the celebration.

On Sunday March 23rd, we hosted the Deanery Ves-

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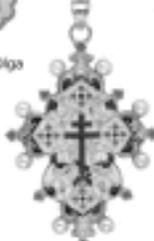
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Soldiers



Russian Baptismal



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pers with so many turning out for the service. Fr. John Kreta preached a wonderful homily on the Prayer of St. Ephraim.

We were also pleased to host a Pysanki class at our church on Saturday March 15, 2003. Over 20 joined our instructors Beverly Malkin and her daughter Kelly (Bev joined us from Michigan, and Kelly came from Washington DC) in the creation of some beautiful eggs. Many of the participants were trying their hand for the first time at this wonderful Pascha egg decorating art form. All the participants seemed to enjoy the opportunity to learn and socialize at the same time.

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