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ABOUT OUR CHURCH CALENDAR

In the early 1900's, Greece fell under the power of atheistic and sectarian-minded forces. During this time, these forces tried to destroy the Orthodox Church by introducing false teachings. The leftist government tried to enslave the Church to itself.

There were even some false bishops who had been sent to schools

The Appearance of the Cross at Athens, 1926

in Europe where false teachings and disobedience to God's Church are taught. These bishops were supported by the government and they began to introduce all kinds of false teachings into Greece. The worst of these false teachings is one called "Ecumenism". Ecumenism is more than just a false teaching. It is a whole religion made up of false teachings, and it leads people to forget about Christ our Saviour. This new religion calls itself Christian and fools many people with high words.

The false bishops and the atheistic government tried to force Orthodox Christians in Greece to join this new religion. One of the first things they did was to pass a law making the Orthodox give up the Church calendar and accept the secular (new) calendar. They did this because the Church Calendar helps remind the Orthodox that they are different from the rest of the world. It is also a sign that the Orthodox are the only ones who have kept the ancient faith.

Many people refused to obey this order. They continued to keep the Orthodox faith. And the government and the false bishops persecuted them, destroyed their churches and arrested their priests. Many monks and priest were put in prison and some were even tortured.

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Then, at 11:30 P.M., the great wonder occurred. Suddenly, a radiant light filled the sky and all eyes turned heavenward. As the large and very clear form of a cross began to fill the whole sky, rays from it came down and illuminated the whole monastery and the area around it. Everyone began to weep and rejoice. The people knelt to the ground and began to pray fervently. Policemen and soldiers began to weep and pray and the whole multitude entered a holy ecstasy of joyous peace. The wondrous vision lasted for half an hour, until midnight. And then the immense cross raised slowly upright and ascended heavenward, disappearing into the deep blue depths of God's universe. The crowd, still in ecstasy, hurried in to the city and the story of the

wondrous vision spread throughout the country.

The police and soldiers, still weeping and rejoicing, joined the crowd of the faithful. No-one dared to arrest the priest.

The message of this great miracle is clear: God sealed the Church Calendar with the sign of His Cross and condemned the Ecumenists, the new calendar, the false bishops and all those who dare to try to change or pervert His Holy Church.

Let us therefore, beloved of Christ, hold fast to the faith once delivered to Saints, to the Holy Orthodox Christian Faith of our fathers and of Christ our Saviour.

OLD TESTAMENT NAME CROSSWORD

Books Read	Frequency (Number of Students)
1	2
2	4
3	1
4	3
5	2
6	1
7	1
8	1

1. Old Testament title for Bethlehem. There is a Church hymn with this name. (Mi.5:2).
2. Samuel's elder, a high priest of Israel. (1st and 2nd chapter of 1 Ki. - 1 Sam. in the King James Version).
3. These people blinded Sampson, but he destroyed their temple. (Judges 14-16).
4. Mother of Samuel. Her life is a revelation about the Holy Church. (1 Ki. 1:5, or 1 Sam. in the KJV).
5. The harlot of Jerico who aided the Hebrew spies. She was saved and justified by faith (Heb.11:31) and works (Js.2:25). (Josh. 2 and 6:22).
6. David's traitorous son. (2Ki. 3:3 or 2 Sam. in the KJV).
7. Father of Tobit. (Tobit 1:1, but the Protestants leave this book out of their versions of the Bible. The answer is on page five).
8. King of Israel, husband of Jezebel. (3Ki.16:21 or 1Ki. in KJV).

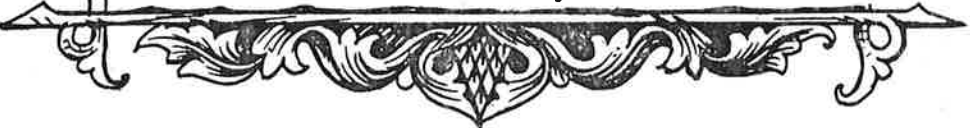
ALEKSANDR I.
SOLZHENITSYN



The Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia has called upon all True Orthodox Christians to pray for the safety and deliverance of the servant of God, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. In a recent ukaz, the Synod directed that its parishes conduct molebens for the health and safety of Aleksandr and his family. This heroic confessor of truth is a truly great patriot of the Russian land, censoring the Godless Communist regime and putting to complete shame all those who have ever supported it.



We ask all our readers to join in to the prayers for our brother Aleksandr and his family.



THE ANNUNCIATION TO THE THEOTOKOS.
(25 March of the Church Calendar)

Ever since the creation, God had been preparing man for the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ. God always knew that man would fall and that He Himself would have to come down to earth to save man.

God also knew beforehand just when people would be ready to receive the Saviour and follow Him. God also foreknew just when there would be a maiden so pure and so obedient to Him that she could be the mother of the Saviour.

The holy virgin Mary was just such a pure and perfect servant of God. She had been born in answer to her parents prayers. At the age of three, she had been taken to the temple and dedicated to God. From that time on, she lived in God's house and did nothing but serve Him, praying constantly.

When Mary was twelve years old, she could no longer remain in the temple because that was the law. What could she do? Mary wanted to remain a virgin all her life in order to serve God and dedicate her whole self to Him. But there were not yet any convents and so she could not become a nun. The young maiden went to the priest and told him what her soul desired. The old priest was very pleased to hear of Mary's love for God. He thought of a way to help her.

Mary had a relative, an old man named Joseph. Joseph's wife had died leaving him to raise his children alone.

The priest talked to Joseph and it was arranged: Mary could become Joseph's wife and he would protect her. This way she could live her whole life as a virgin, serving God. At the same time, she could act as a mother to Joseph's motherless children.

So Mary became engaged to Joseph and went to live in his house in Galilee.

At the time which God had chosen, the holy virgin Mary was in her room praying to God and working on her needlework.

Suddenly, a great light filled the room and Mary could see a radiant angel standing before her. She became frightened and, dropping her yarn, raised her hand as if to shield herself from the bright light.

The radiant angel spoke to her gently and with love and reverence in his voice: "Hail thou, full of Grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you before all women."

Hearing this, Mary became confused and even more frightened. She thought, "But I am a lowly sinner. How can it be that this angel is calling me 'full of Grace'?"

Then the angel told Mary that she was the one chosen to give birth to the Saviour. "But how can I give birth?" Mary answered. "I am a virgin."

The angel comforted Mary. "The Holy Spirit will come to you and the power of the Most High will shine over you." He told Mary that the Child which she would bear would be the Son of God, and that she would remain a virgin even after her Child was born.

The holy angel Gabriel departed, and Mary fell to her knees and began to pray to God with tears.

The Child who then appeared in her womb was truly God who was becoming a man in order to save all men who would truly accept Him. This is why we call the virgin Mary Theotokos. Theotokos means, "The one who bore God".

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Today, the Holy Church celebrates with great rejoicing the announcement of the glad tidings, the coming of our God and Saviour into the world. On this day, the Holy Church sings with joy:

TROPAR OF THE FEAST:

Today is the beginning of our Salvation and the manifestation of the mystery which is from eternity. The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin, and Gabriel announces Grace. So with him let us also cry to the Theotokos: Rejoice thou, full of Grace, the Lord is with thee.

KONDAK OF THE FEAST:

To thee the champion defender*, we thy servants dedicate a feast of victory and thanksgiving, as ones rescued out of sufferings O Theotokos. But as thou art one with might that is invincible, from all dangers that can be, do thou deliver us; that we may cry to thee: Rejoice O bride unwedded!

ON THIS DAY WE ALSO COMMEMORATE AND CELEBRATE THE MEMORY OF THE HOLY NEW MARTYR, ST. TIKHON PATRIARCH OF MOSCOW AND ALL RUSSIA, WHO WAS MARTYRED BY THE COMMUNISTS IN 1925. Holy Martyr Tikhon, pray for us!

CHURCH SCHOOL LESSON.

2. On The Divine Liturgy: Some people call our liturgy a "Mass". This is wrong. There is no "Mass" in the Orthodox Christian Church.

The main Divine Service is called a Liturgy. The Orthodox Liturgy is designed to commemorate the life of Christ on earth in a special Grace-filled way. Thus, each time we take part in the Divine Liturgy, we participate in the life of Christ in a very special and sacred way.

Starting in the next issue of The Tlingit Herald, we will look at the life of Christ in the Divine Liturgy.

THE SPIRITUAL MEADOW

2

In that same area of Sapsas, there lived another elder. He had attained to such great spiritual perfection that he fearlessly received lions which came into his cave, and he knelt beside them, feeding them with his own hands. So full of great divine Grace was this man of God!

On 2 March of the Church Calendar we celebrate the Ikon of the Theotokos Reigning. This ikon was revealed in the patriarchal village of Kolonna on 2 March 1917, the day of the abdication of the Tsar-Martyr St. Nicholas. Seeing this, the faithful turned to the Theotokos as the true ruler of Russia.

The answer to number seven of the crossword on page two is TOBIEL. This question ought to serve as a reminder to Orthodox Christians that much of the sectarian (Protestant) teaching and doctrine is based upon willfully incorrect versions of the Bible as well as upon selfwilled interpretations. Since there is not one completely accurate translation or version of the Bible in the English language, we must be very careful to read the Scripture in the context of the Church teaching about it.

For those who find the crossword difficult, this should be a clue to you to read the Bible more and to pay more attention to what you read.

* or champion leader, which is also a good translation. Some translations read "Queen of the Heavenly host", but this is totally wrong.

GREAT LENT

Our holy forefathers Sts. Adam and Eve were placed in a garden of every good thing. For, nothing which God made was created for evil or for any bad use.

Yet, God commanded the first humans, "Of this tree thou shalt not eat!" But why? Was this food unclean? God forbid! For the most loving Creator made nothing which was unclean. St. Paul answers this question very clearly when he says, "Everything is permitted to me; but not everything is expedient to me". In simple terms, St. Paul is explaining that all foods are clean and may be eaten, but it is not always useful to our salvation to eat them.

The Great Lent is, for us, something like God's commandment to Sts. Adam and Eve in Eden. The Holy Church does not teach us to fast because any kind of food is unclean, but because fasting is a great help in our salvation.

You see, the holy and God-bearing fathers have explained to us that God commanded Adam and Eve not to eat from a certain tree because they were not yet strong enough and perfect enough to eat of that fruit. If, however, Adam and Eve had obeyed God, then when they were ready for it, God would have given them that tree for food also. But Adam and Eve disobeyed God. They ate of the tree and instead of learning knowledge as Satan had promised them, they learned passions. The food was clean, for it was created by God, but it was harmful for them at that time. It was not the food itself which caused Adam and Eve to fall, but it was their disobedience. The food only made their fall deeper and more miserable.

We, beloved of Christ, are the same. The Holy Spirit, speaking through the Holy Church, commands us to fast from certain foods at certain times. Why? Not because the food is unclean, but because it is not always good for our souls to eat it.

If Adam and Eve fell from paradise on account of disobedience to God, do you really think that you will get back into paradise if you are disobedient to God? No, of course not.

God commanded Adam and Eve, "Eat everything except this fruit." They disobeyed and lost paradise. Now, He commands us, "In the fast periods, don't eat these things....."

So each of us must choose: Will we obey God or will we listen to false prophets and obey Satan who tells us not to fast.

You see, keeping the fast is really a matter of obedience to God. The command is given to us for the same reason that Adam and Eve were commanded to fast in Eden from that one fruit: because we are not perfect, we are not yet strong and mature and we need the help of the fast.

Let us, Orthodox Christians, obey God and not the tempting voice of Satan. Let us keep the fast, thanking God that He has given it to us to help save our souls. Adam and Eve lost paradise through disobedience, let us regain paradise through obedience.

HYMN CHANTED ON WEDNESDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF GREAT LENT:

Brethren, while fasting bodily let us also fast spiritually; let us loosen every bond of injustice; let us render assunder the strong fetters of violence; let us tear up every unjust writing; let us give bread to the hungry and let us welcome the homeless poor into our houses, that from Christ our God we may receive great mercy.

THE ENTRY OF OUR SAVIOUR

The Feast of the Entry of our Lord into Jerusalem falls on 25 March this year. There are some interesting nicknames for this feast, and there is a certain revelation to us in this. In Russian, the feast is often called "pussy-willow Sunday", while in southern lands, it is usually called "Palm Sunday".

In Jerusalem, on the original day of our Saviour's entry into Jerusalem, He was received and greeted with the branches of local trees mainly palms.

In Russia, the local tree which shows its new buds and first heralds spring (which is an image of the resurrection) is the pussy-willow. So Russians greet our Saviour's entry with the boughs of the pussy-willow.

In Alaska, especially in the area of our Tlingit nation, the blueberry (blue huckleberry) is the most beautiful herald of spring. At the end of March, it is already a delicate green laden with lovely pink and lavender blossoms. So our Orthodox Christian Tlingits and other Alaskans greet our Saviour's entry with branches of blueberry bushes.

This is very appropriate to the Orthodox Christian understanding of the feasts of the Holy Church. For the acts of God are eternal. They are not distant from us either in time or place. The entry of our Saviour takes place "here and today". The feasts of the Church take place in the heart of the faithful. Whereas, on that first day, the children welcomed Christ into Jerusalem, we now welcome Him into our hearts, into our own time and place. So it is fitting that we not be bound by dead legalism to bear palms on this day, but that we greet Him with branches from our own local trees, with the ones that blossom at this time heralding the resurrection of spring.

So on this day, our Tlingit Orthodox Christian people bear blueberry branches to church, welcoming the entry of Christ into their own time and place, living the words of the hymn, "...Wherefore we also, like the children of old bearing the symbols of victory, cry out to Thee the Conqueror of death: Hosanna in the highest, Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord."

THE HOLY VIRGIN MARTYR BASIL OF MANGAZEYA (23 March, Church Calendar)

(We celebrate the memory of the Holy Virgin Martyr Basil (Vasili) of Mangazeya with special joy. He is a special patron of missionaries and, in particular, he is the patron of the Sts. Kyril and Methody Society missionary project in Southeast Alaska. Moreover, the Society's chapel is named in his honour.

The life of St. Basil presents us with a very rich example of moral grandeur. He was a martyr for the sake of virginity, but chastity by itself is not yet morality. All too often one hears an accuser say of someone, "his morals are in question" because of some slander about the person's chastity. This is hypocrisy, especially if the accuser is committing acts of immorality and hiding behind chastity as an excuse. St. Basil's whole life, however, was lived in a manner and in a state of morality which made him worthy of being called to the martyrs' crown. We find morality in the entire scope of St. Basil's life: in his resistance to greed, in the meek and humble manner in which he served a master who tormented him, fulfilling his obligations to the letter, in his faith in the face of trials and in his love of Christ.

St. Basil was called by Christ to the honour and glory of martyrdom as a reward for the moral grandeur of his entire life.

There can be no doubt that the example of St. Basil of Mangazeya like that of St. Moses the Hungarian, is most significant to us in these the last days when all concept of morality and chastity have virtually collapsed and all mankind is rushing like the gadarene swine into the depths of a moral darkness which will drown him).

St. Basil was born in 1587 in the very old town of Yaroslavl. Yaroslavl was an important port on the Volga River. Basil's father, Theodore, was a very poor merchant and his family often had very little food.

Even when he was a very small boy, St. Basil used to go to church everytime he could. He loved God's house and he wanted to be there more than anyplace else.

In those days, when a boy reached the age of 12, he could become an apprentice. An apprentice is someone who works for a company without pay just to learn the business. The boss pays the boy's father a certain amount and then gives the boy food and a place to live.

Because Basil's family was very poor, he agreed to become an apprentice too. When Basil was 12 years old, he became an apprentice merchant for a company in the town of Mangazeya in Siberia.

Siberia was a very dangerous place, full of wild animals and tribes of natives.

The journey to Mangazeya was a long, difficult and dangerous one. When he arrived, he hurried to the church to give thanks to God that he had arrived safely. Then the boy went to the merchant's office where he was given the job of clerk. St. Basil was a very good worker and very intelligent. He was soon given a responsible job as a steward in the company. St. Basil was a very hard worker and served his boss faithfully and honestly.

Unfortunately, at that time Siberia was a frontier area, and there were almost no women there. Because of this, some men who had bestial passions used to commit sodomy with young men and boys. St. Basil's boss was one of these perverse men. Soon after St. Basil had arrived in Mangazeya, this boss tried to entice the youth into homosexual relations. He tried flattery, he would offer Basil money and finally, he tried threats and punishments.

St. Basil only continued to fast and pray and ask God to help him remain pure.

The boss began to hate Basil. He was angry that the boy would not submit to his evil lust. Moreover, he could not tolerate Basil's prayerful, religious attitude. He especially hated Basil for his meek and humble personality. But no matter how much he was persecuted and mistreated by the beast-like boss, St. Basil continued to faithfully perform his duties and to fulfil his responsibilities zealously.

Finally, the persecutions and slanders reached a terrible point. During the Paschal matins, thieves robbed the store of the merchandise house in which Basil worked. The boss, discovering the theft, went immediately to the governor and reported the theft. But then a terrible deed occurred: the merchant hated Basil so much and so strong was the evil in him that he formally accused the innocent boy of being one of the thieves.

Thus, on the first day of Christ's bright Pascha, when the Holy Church calls all people to peace and love, this innocent, God-fearing youth was betrayed by a false witness, just as Christ had been betrayed by false witnesses. The governor did not even investigate the charges. He sent officers to arrest the boy and drag him right out of the church. The governor began to torture Basil in order to force a

confession from him. In spite of all the fierce tortures inflicted upon him, the blessed boy would only reply meekly, "I am innocent". The pain from the tortures became so unbearable that the youth fainted, but when he came to, he again quietly repeated, "I am innocent".

The meek, humble, Christ-like endurance and the peaceful reply of the Blessed One enraged the evil merchant even more. Finally, he flew into a demonic rage and struck the innocent boy in the temple with a heavy chain of keys. Basil fell to the floor, sighed heavily and gave up his pure, innocent soul into the hands of the Lord on the first day of Christ's Radiant Pascha, 1600.

In order to hide this foul crime, the governor, Pushkin, and the passion crazed merchant placed the body of the Holy Martyr into a coffin and lowered it into a marsh near the meeting hall in which the brutal interrogation had taken place. Rumours of the murder circulated around the town of Mangazeya almost immediately after the incident, but God chose to conceal the sacred relics of His Saint for fifty-two years.

In 1652, during the tenure of the military governor Ignaty Stepanovich Korsakov, God willed to reveal the glory of His Holy Martyr. In that year, many wondrous events began to happen in the area around Mangazeya. Many pious people had dreams in which a beardless youth appeared to them and many sick people were healed by this young boy. A strange light was seen over the marsh and unseen voices were heard chanting nearby.

Then the coffin of the Saint rose slowly to the top of the mud. A pious archer, Stepan Shiryayev, noticed the coffin, but did nothing about it until the wonders became known to him. St. Basil appeared to Stepan in a dream and told him to open the coffin. The whole story of St. Basil's martyrdom became known.

The coffin was brought out of the swamp and opened. Inside, they found the sacred relics of the Saint, whole and incorrupt. A chapel was built over the relics and many people received healings through the young martyr.

St. Basil began to appear to some of the missionaries in Siberia. In March of 1670, St. Basil appeared to the elder Tikhon who had founded a monastery in Siberia. At the Saint's instructions, Fr. Tikhon set out to the ruins of Mangazeya (which had been abandoned some years earlier) and found the holy relics.

Fr. Tikhon carried the sacred relics over to his monastery on the Yenisei River. From then on, St. Basil was known as a special patron of missionaries in Siberia. He was especially revered by the great 18 century enlightener of Western Siberia, Metropolitan Filothei.

Today, he is the intercessor of all pious Orthodox Christians who are struggling for their salvation in these last days, days which can only be described as "a wicked and perverse generation."

On 23 March, the Church glorifies the Holy Virgin Martyr Basil of Mangazeya with these hymns:

TROPAR: Thou O Basil didst witness unto death to the glory of virginity, and having been cast into the darkness of a swamp by thy cruel tormentors, thou didst ascend to the heights and shine forth with the glory of the Eternal Light, wherefore we cry to thee rejoicing, glory to Christ Who has glorified thee, glory to Him Who has made thee wondrous, glory to Him Who worketh healings for all through thee.

KONDAK: Chosen Martyr of Christ, patron of missionaries, protector of those who struggle for chastity, we see thee as a radiant lamp in the darkness of a wicked and perverse generation. And since thou hast been thrice-crowned by our Saviour, free us from passions who cry to thee: Rejoice Holy Martyr Basil, radiant light of virginity.