

MARCH 22, 2020

BULLETIN – VENERATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS

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Deadline for Bulletin Submissions – **10:00 am Wednesday** ♦ church website: <https://ssppaoc.org/>

Many Years – Birthday

Dn. Marc Wentzel
Sophia Beck

March 23
March 23

Community Dinner Has Been **Canceled** as per Metropolitan JOSEPH'S Guidelines

VARIOUS DONATIONS

If you want to donate to a specific need, give alms, or pay tithes online, you may do so at any time via the church website at <https://ssppaoc.org/#>. When the home page comes up, at the top right, you will see “Support Our Parish”. Select “Donate Online” and that will take you to a page with a list of possible donations and a place to pay tithe.

CONGRATULATIONS

A baby boy was born to Jessica and Nathan Beck on Wednesday, March 18. May God grant him many years!

AOCWNA NEWS

Our Antiochian Women had a successful Wine & Cheese Fundraiser in February. Lots of canned and perishable goods, as well as \$150 was collected for Valley Churches United Missions (VCUM). Thank you to everyone who came and/or contributed. If you missed the event, you may put items in the barrel in the parish hall or send a check directly to VCUM.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions on gatherings, these AOCWNA events have been canceled.

- St. Timothy's Lenten Retreat 3/1
- Retreat at St. Nicholas Camp, Frazier Park 4/3-5
- Women's Book Study (Fridays)
- March Coffee Meet-up
- Business Meetings

NEEDS & SURPLUS

In this time of possible shortages at stores, if you have a surplus of

- bleach, household cleaners, hand sanitizer, toilet paper, water, canned and jarred food (especially vegetables), frozen foods, diapers, paper towels

and want to share with others in our parish who might need some of those items, please bring them to the church office **between 1:00 pm and 3:00 pm TODAY (Sunday)**. If you have a need, please call Marilyn Spurgeon at (831) 345-5448 or email her at mlspurgeon64@gmail.com. The Kindness Ministry Team will then work out a time/place for items to be distributed to those in need.

Memory Eternal!

March 24

William Steiger

This Week @ Ss. Peter & Paul—March 23-29, 2020

All services will be offered by clergy and chanters only

- 3/25 Wed 6:00 pm – Vespers Divine Liturgy for Annunciation—*please pray at home*
- 3/27 Fri 6:00 pm – Little Compline/Akathist—*please pray at home*
- 3/29 Sun 8:20 am – Orthros
9:30 am – Divine Liturgy – 4th Sunday of Lent (John Climacus)—*please pray at home*

Looking Ahead –

Services will be conducted in the same way as above listed until further notice from the Antiochian Archdiocese. When we know more, you will be notified as to any change to this schedule. Please remember to pray at home.

*From the Mull Monastery of All Celtic Saints
on the Isle of Mull, March 16, 2020*

Not looking forward to the five airports ahead of me today. I'm starting my trip back to Scotland and a prayer would be good and very much appreciated.

By the grace of God, I have done all in my power not to catch this virus and not to pass it on. I have cancelled all our retreats and I am following all instructions given by professionals.

This is not our time to 'shine' by showing empty courage and adolescent bravado. A Christian shines through humility and sacrifice of one's self, sacrifice of one's 'courageous' image in the world.

We are human beings, made of flesh and bones. Flesh and bones can become Chalices of God's presence in the world, but they can also become ill. As a Christian, my duty is to comfort and to love, to keep myself and my neighbor from harm.

Please be kind to one another. Stop mocking those who are weaker and making them feel uncomfortable to protect themselves. Stop piling pressure on the shoulders of those who need compassion and encouragement. Even if you are not afraid, act weaker than the person next to you, so they may feel comfortable to express their fears.

Stop playing this macho game of a macho Christianity. Christ is Love. Faith in Him is expressed by Love, not beating one's chest and pointing to those who fear. If my reactions are not founded on love and humility, they are not founded on Christ.

This is the time to remind the world that Christians are not judges. We are not here to condemn, but to love. We are not here to mock our neighbor, but to become what he/she needs to find hope, to find peace, to find grace. Stand with the weak, stand with the fallen—this is our 'job' in the world.

The Church has always condemned those Christians who sought out martyrdom, those who

'bravely' offered themselves to be martyred, because their behavior was not founded on humility and love. As for me, even if I get infected, at least I can stand before Christ and say that I tried my best to fight this and not to pass it on to anyone. The rest is in His hands, and glory be to Him for everything.

Pray for the weak and those most exposed, and try to help any way you can. Forget about 'playing it cool'—no one rejoices in our pride except the evil one. Be human. Be a human being, surrounded by human beings, loving them, helping them, protecting them. In this simple, living, non-'heroic' attitude is the Cross that will lead to the Resurrection.

This is the Great Lent—let us carry each other's cross, and not crucify our neighbor for the sake of a 'good image'. The real 'Good Image' is inside, imprinted on our souls, and that Image can only be 'meek and humble in heart'.

Orthodox Tidbits

"Live in gratitude, and you will never be disappointed. See that your afflictions are not there to punish you, but to purify you and cleanse you of the delusions of this world. You all are being prepared each day for great things. Be wise, and prepare for the future, but do not be worried about it. Be prudent, but not obsessed. The man who constantly worries achieves nothing but stress and anxiety. Instead, pray and draw close to God. Believe that He will help you, and suddenly, you will see how He has already."

His Eminence, Metropolitan JOSEPH

Excellent advice on how to treat stressful economic times or health concerns, showing us the balance needed, being neither obsessed with our situation, nor poor stewards of what the Lord has entrusted us with. Most of all, His Eminence reminds us to be like St. Paul, content and thankful in all situations.

**In Christ,
Fr. Nathan**