



Weekly Bulletin

St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church

A Community of the Orthodox Church in America

Witnessing to the Ancient Faith in Trumbull County for over 80 Years

Father Brian Crivella, Pastor

2021

Number 23

The Friend of the Bridegroom: "He Must Increase and I Must Decrease."

Sunday	June 6th	<i>6th Sun of Pascha / Tone 5 / Healing of the Blind Man</i> Readings: Acts 11:19-26, 29-30 John 4:5-42 9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Monday	June 7th	<i>Martyrs Cyriaca, Caleria, and Mary, of Cæsarea</i> 6:00 pm Moleben followed by Anointing
Wednesday	June 9th	<i>The Ascension of Our Lord</i> Readings: Acts 1:1-12 Luke 24:36-53 6:00 pm Vespereal Liturgy
Saturday	June 12th	<i>Ven. Onuphrius the Great</i> 5:00 pm Great Vespers
Sunday	June 13th	<i>7th Sun of Pascha / Tone 6 / Fathers of 1st Ecumenical Council</i> Readings: Acts 20:16-18, 28-36 John 17:1-13 9:30 am Divine Liturgy

ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP / May 30th

Attendance: (Adults: 53, Children 12)	65
Weekly Offering	\$2175.00
Candle Offerings	\$64.00
Saint Herman House	\$0.00
Sausage Sales	\$230.00

BLESSING OF GRAVES

We will be blessing graves at Pineview Cemetery on June 13th at 2:00pm. If there are other graves you'd like blessed at other graveyards, please see Fr. Brian or Fr. Dcn John to make an appointment. May God watch over us and render the memory of our loved ones to be eternal!

GREETERS NEEDED!

Greeters to welcome our brothers and sisters and visitors at our doors are still needed. Hospitality is one of the most ancient and fundamental Christian Virtues, and if you'd like to help please let Fr. Brian or Daria Fickes know.

AA MEETINGS

Our Church will begin hosting Alcoholics Anonymous meetings in our parish social hall at 5:00pm on Wednesdays, beginning June 16th. The meetings will be "closed" meetings for those who are struggling with drinking and have a desire to stop drinking only, but God willing we will have "open" meetings for anyone who wishes to come in the future.

PRAYER CORNER + + + + +

Fr. Mark Leasure / Fr. Ted Bobosh / Fr. Dcn. John Tutoki /

Dana Ronyak/ Donnie & Cherie Davidson / Jennifer Brainard / Michael, Catherine, & Zoe Stan / Art Cogar Sr. / Sandy & James Malsh / Dana Lutz / Ellen Marie / Trista Tutoki / Leslie / Joanne Kaschak / Lilian / Miles Cuckovich / Alice & Matthew / Brother Andrew / Magie & Kenny Sanders / Bill Paluch / Nina Lowry / Alyssa Angle / Josephine Grabko / Peter Bolock / James Livermore / Helen Skovan / Sarah Crivella / The Faculty, Teachers, and Students of Holy Trinity Orthodox Academy / Juliana and her unborn child (Fr. Andrew's Daughter) / Athanosia Jennifer & her newborn daughter

Memory Eternal: Patricia Rogers (5/10) / Helen Bobosh (5/31)

Birthdays: Tammy Roscoe & Vadim Stehnach (Sun), Laura DiGiacobe & Denise Higgins (Mon), Karen Livermore (Wed), Carol Denovcheck, Annamarie DiGiacobbe, Josephine Grabko, Michael Nicholl, & Lauren Thomas (Thurs), Emily Kapp (Fri)

Anniversaries: Donna & Albert Metz (Tues), Joann & George Kaschak (Wed), Keely & Ryan Henry (Thurs), Laura & John Miklos (Fri)

Candle Commemorations

Theotokos	For the Birthday of Michael Nicholl
Altar	In Memory of Catherine Cuckovich
Christ	For the Birthday of Vadim Stehnach

Exiting the Pandemic: Why don't I recognize this life?

By Fr. Joshua Makoul

What a fascinating time we find ourselves in presently. It seems the pandemic is rapidly drawing to a close, as states lift restrictions and even the mask mandates. For the first time, many of us are feeling and seeing the first signs of “normal” re-emerging into our lives. Perhaps it was the feeling of air hitting our faces as we walked into a store for the first time without a mask, the first indoor school event in over a year, the first coffee hour at church, or even the resumption of hugs and handshakes. In the past week, my family and I attended an event at the local high school. After the event, parents gathered on the athletic field to congratulate their children for awards they had earned. Many parents wore no masks and many did. Gradually, however, one parent after another removed their mask, perhaps for the first time at a public event. One could easily observe their struggle; it was clear they wanted to remove it, but it took great effort. Suddenly, parents began handshaking again. I distinctly remember that first handshake with a parent, the first in over a year! It was as though time stood still for that two seconds as an era of struggle came to a close and a new era was beginning.

Each one of us may have had that moment already, that moment that signaled to us that the pandemic is concluding. However, each of us is on a different place on the spectrum so to speak; some of us being more cautious than others. Of course, it is not a time for judgment, we are past that now. Each of us has to re-engage and rediscover our former way of living as we are ready. It's kind of like going into a pool or entering the ocean; some of us like to jump or run right in and some of us like to gradually ease our way in. Neither is wrong or right. I have found myself having mild difficulty reflecting on the past fifteen months. It's as though my mind does not want to go back there. The divisiveness over the response to the virus, that was so rampant, seems to have faded away. The anger and agitation that stirred in so many, now seems to have largely dissipated. However, I find that the memory of those things, is like a gap or taped off section of my memory; I just don't want to go back there.

Having observed all of these things, we might be quick to conclude that we should all just be feeling great, joyful, and flip the switch back to normal. Perhaps some of us can do this, but for many of us, it might not be that simple. If we are feeling a bit disoriented at this present time, this is normal, and we are not alone. If we are feeling a bit emotionally numb in the midst of this transitional stage, this too is normal. Many of us might be feeling conflicting feelings. We might be feeling relief over normalcy and normal practices returning, but we might also be feeling some sadness. The sadness might be a mild one, but present like elevator music playing in the background of our lives. If we could assign

words to the music perhaps it would be, “what did I just go through?”, “things feel a bit different”, or “though I was still living during the pandemic, I feel a sense of loss, as though I lost a year”.

Some of us might feel that we don't recognize the life that we are returning to, as though something has changed, but we can't articulate what changed. It is as though we encounter an acquaintance we have not seen for many years and have a hard time recognizing them for a moment. Much of the return to normalcy is welcomed, however, there are those aspects that many of us wish did not return. For the latter, perhaps it is the hectic and frenetic schedules and pace of life that dominates our American lifestyle. Perhaps it is the return of heavy traffic. Perhaps we are noticing we are not having as much family time and we find ourselves missing some of the days when we were home more and not travelling so much. Indeed, we are having to use muscles so to speak, that we have not used in a long time.

So, if we see our environment and lifestyle going back to normal, why do we still feel as though something has changed? Perhaps it is because we have changed. Experiences can change us. Stressful or even traumatic experiences can change us. It is much like a soldier who returns from a war. They are often not the same; not always in a negative way, sometimes it may be in a positive way. During the pandemic, there were three elements present that are predominant in traumatic experiences. Those elements are powerlessness, fear, and a real or perceived threat to ourselves or others. It is safe to say that all of those elements were present for all of us over the course of the entire pandemic. Having said that, we all respond differently to traumatic, stressful, or frightening experiences. For example, not all veterans develop PTSD. We are not insinuating now that we have PTSD, just that we are all emerging from an experience that had a profound effect on us. Many of us may find ourselves grappling with coming to terms with what we just passed through. Experiences such as the pandemic can change our perception of ourselves, others, and the world we live in. Our relationships may have been affected. We may feel that on some level we skipped a year in our lives. We may also need to do some grieving for losses that occurred. Remember, losses come in all shapes, forms, and sizes.

During this summer, let us take it easy on ourselves. Let us use this time for recovery, healing, and processing; so that when September arrives, we can engage our lives with a renewed focus and put into practice all that we learned and hopefully gained from the pandemic. Like all painful or traumatic experiences, the silver lining is there. In order to discover it, we first have to allow ourselves to acknowledge and heal from our experience. Let us show some self-compassion towards ourselves and acknowledge these things, rather than force or lecture our way back into normalcy.