

THE LADDER



Volume 12, Issue 11

The Newsletter of St John of the Ladder Orthodox Church

July 2011

Born on the 4th of July: US Independence Day

Americans view the Fourth of July as a celebration of freedom from tyranny and oppression. Those who pause to reflect on the meaning of this day will be especially grateful that our hard-won liberties allow us to attempt to live our lives according to our sense of what is good and right.

Although the holiday is not found on the church calendar, the themes of spiritual freedom and liberty are clearly at the center of the Gospel and Christian self-understanding. According to the 'big picture' of the scriptures, we find ourselves within the story of an intense spiritual struggle, a struggle ultimately resolved in Christ but played out in our lives every single day: a tyrannical king - the devil; a cruel government - the powers of this fallen world; an overwhelming tax burden - our sins and fallen passions - and ruthless tax collectors - death.

In history and political theory, freedom from bondage has sometimes meant revolution. In spiritual terms, freedom from bondage to 'the world, the flesh, and the devil' always means repentance. Repentance is a revolution of mind and heart, a repudiation of the illegitimate claims the Adversary, the refusal to accept the rule of death and the self-centeredness that leads to eternal death. Repentance allows us to gain and participate in the freedom won for us by Christ.

The Lord says: "If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36). The Apostle Paul says: "For freedom Christ has set us free" (Galatians 5:1), but he goes on to insist: "stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery". The Apostle Peter warns: "Live as free men, yet without using your freedom as a pretext for evil; but live as servants of God" (1Pet.2:16). The paradox of true spiritual freedom is, for believers, that it is only truly free to the degree that it freely, joyfully, earnestly accepts the liberating lordship of Christ.

Prayer from the Molioben commemorating the Bicentennial of the United States in 1976:

O Master, Lord our God, the Source of life and immortality, the Author of all created things in heaven and on earth, who hast placed all times and seasons in Thy power and hast established all power and authority among men upon this earth, that it might be used to Thy glory and the well-being of Thy people, we thank Thee for the great benefits which Thou hast seen fit to pour forth on this nation in the years that are past.

We acknowledge with gratitude that Thou hast not dealt with this land according to the iniquities of the people, neither according to the wickedness which exists in the nation hast Thou given Thy blessings: but in Thine abundant mercy and infinite loving-kindness and compassion Thou hast dealt bountifully with the American nation and hast shown forth great mercy upon us all.

O our Master and Lord, we supplicate at this present time that Thou wilt continue to show mercy upon us and upon this land and its people, that Thou wilt fill our hearts abundantly with gladness and joy that we may do Thy holy will in all things.

Give to the leaders of this nation, its President and Congress, its governors and judges, its military commanders, all wisdom and guidance and direct them to discharge their duties in the manner commanded by Thee. Grant them reason and understanding that they may judge justly and act rightly, preserving the commonwealth in harmony and peace. Kindle in their hearts the will to care for the needy, to show kindness on the poor, to aid the homeless, to help the helpless. Grant them to be defenders of the defenseless and terrible to evildoers; gracious to those who are good and worthy to be trusted. Guide them in all things that they may govern the nation and care for its people in righteousness and truth, putting aside all deceit and corruption, that they may maintain the confidence of all people of this land, and of all others.

Grant also, O Lord, to the people of this nation the will to do good, to flee from all evil, and to practice all righteousness. Drive from their hearts the lusts of the flesh and all covetous desires. Make them to be respectful of life and sharers of Thy blessings, caring for one another in mercy and truth. Banish all evil from their hearts and all wickedness from their laws, that in every national action and individual deed, they may be servants of Thy will and performers of Thy love.

Grant also, O Master, that the members of Thy Church may be faithful witnesses of Thy truth in unity and peace, fulfilling all of Thy commandments in true worship of Thy glory. Bless the Orthodox Church in America with Thy powerful blessings and deliver Thy people from all falsehood and sin, through the guidance of the bishops and priests filled with the power of Thy Spirit.

O our most merciful Lord, the God of all bounties and the Father of all consolations, turn not Thy face from Thy people and put us not to shame in our hope, for Thou knowest our needs even before we ask, and dealest in all things according to Thy goodness.

For every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from Thee, the Father of Lights, and unto Thee we ascribe all glory, thanksgiving, and worship, together with Thine only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and Thy most holy and good and life-creating Spirit, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Born on the 4 th of July	page 1
July Calendar	page 2
Parish Picnic/ Youth Events	page 3
Announcements	page 4

2011 Financial Update

	Income	Expenses
YTD (thru May)	\$60,200	\$63,923
May	\$11,539	\$14,240
Charity May	\$870	\$1,955

Restricted Income

May (for building, icon, vestment funds, etc): \$4,171
New Property Balance: \$228,934

St John of the Ladder Orthodox Church
 ~~~  
**Schedule of Services**  
 ~~~  
July 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Father, Give Us a Word... The humble feel themselves equal to the soil upon which they walk and from which they are made. They cannot be lowered, for they are already low. But this lowliness in no way means servility; it means purity and godliness. Satan's great fall came from his inordinate pride, which rendered him impure. For us, each time that we let pride get the better of us; we have similarly soiled ourselves. This is the nature of our lowliness: not servility, but a purity shared with the soil, by which we paradoxically remain unsoiled (by pride). - <i>Mother Alexandra</i>					01 <i>fast</i> Unmercenary Wonderworkers Cosmas and Damian	02 St John Bp of Shanghai and San Francisco <i>Confessions</i> Great Vespers 6:00 pm
03 3rd Sunday after Pentecost All Saints Britain & Ireland Divine Liturgy 9:30 am	04 US Independence Day	05 Relics of the Ven Sergius of Radonezh	06 <i>fast</i> No Daily Vespers	07	08 <i>fast</i> Leavetaking of the Ascension	09 Apostles Bartholomew and Barnabas <i>Confessions</i> Great Vespers 6:00 pm
10 4th Sunday after Pentecost Ven Anthony Church School <i>'The Body in Worship' Begins</i> Divine Liturgy 9:30 am	11 Daily Vespers and Picnic @ New Church Property 6:00 pm	12	13 <i>fast</i> No Daily Vespers	14	15 <i>fast</i> Great Prince Vladimir Enlightener of Rus	16 <i>Confessions</i> Great Vespers 6:00 pm
17 5th Sunday after Pentecost Fathers of the 1st Six Ecumenical Councils Church School Divine Liturgy 9:30 am	18 New Martyrs Elizabeth and Barbara	19	20 <i>fast</i> Holy Prophet Elijah Parish Council Meeting 7:00 pm Daily Vespers 6:00 pm	21	22 <i>fast</i>	23 Altar Servers Training Choir Rehearsal 4:00 pm <i>Confessions</i> Great Vespers 6:00 pm
24 6th Sunday after Pentecost Passionbearers Boris and Gleb <i>'Ask The Priest'</i> Church School Divine Liturgy 9:30 am	25 Great Vespers 6:00 pm	26 St Jacob Enlightener of Alaska Divine Liturgy 7:00 am	27 <i>fast</i> Greatmartyr and Healer Panteleimon No Daily Vespers	28	29 <i>fast</i>	30 <i>Confessions</i> Great Vespers 6:00 pm

Fellowship and Goffee Hour: Sundays immediately following Divine Liturgy
 Children's Church School resumes September 11th;
 Confessions: Saturday Evenings following Vespers (as noted)

The Body in Worship
Summer Church School Series for Adults, Families, and Youth!!!
 5 Week Church School Class Starting Sunday, July 10th and Ending Sunday, August 7th; 8:55 to 9:25 am
 Topics will include: **Creative Movement, Hearing, Sight ('Seeing'), Touch, Taste and Smell**
 The class is for everyone --- families all together, youth and seniors, children and adults, cradle and (recent) convert, single or married. The hope is to engage everyone in learning about our faith and the experience of worship in the Orthodox Church.

"The goal of human freedom is not in freedom itself, nor is it in man, but in God. By giving man freedom, God has yielded to man a piece of His Divine authority, but with the intention that man himself would voluntarily bring it as a sacrifice to God, a most perfect offering. "

~~~ *St. Theophan the Recluse*

## St John of the Ladder Church Picnic

Monday, July 11<sup>th</sup>  
Vespers @ 6 PM

Food and games immediately following  
at 213 Roper Mountain Rd, Extension  
(the 'new church' property location)

### Guests of Honor

Fr Nikolay, Mat Rachael, Emil  
and Philip Miletkov

Food, Fun and, Fellowship  
Burgers, brats, hotdogs and a  
host of side dishes.

We will also have games such as volleyball  
and corn hole. Please bring your favorite  
folding or lawn chair!

Sign-up sheet is posted in the kitchen to  
coordinate food and sides for this event.

## Youth Event! Please mark your calendars! Saturday, July 2<sup>nd</sup>

The youth of **St John of the Ladder** (ages 12 – 17 or those who are attending Camp St Thekla) are invited for a brief retreat here at the church with the youth of **St Justin Martyr in Jacksonville, FL** for a evening of food and fun with a talk on prayer as both groups anticipate the beginning of **Camp St Thekla** and the Camp at the Diakonia Center.

### Schedule of Events

6:00 Great Vespers

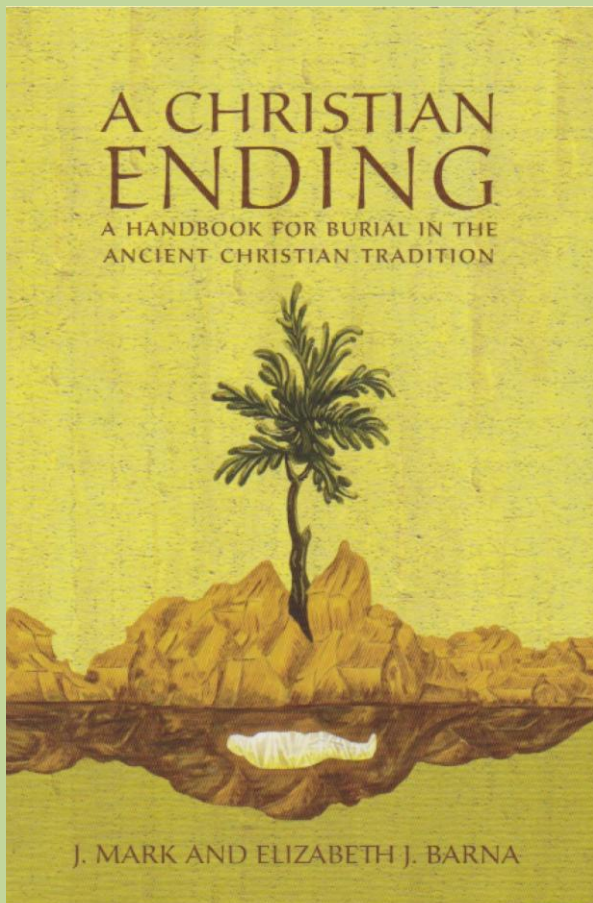
7:00 Pizza and Talk on Prayer

8:00 Games

9:00 Pick up STJOL Youth

For all of the parents of youth who will be leaving Sunday after Divine Liturgy for camp: If you are interested in carpooling to camp, please contact Fr. Thaddaeus (864-201-4772, [fr.thad.werner@gmail.com](mailto:fr.thad.werner@gmail.com)) with the number of children you have, and if you are willing to drive how many you can transport.

Thank you!



### Available in the Bookstore... *from Dn Mark and Elizabeth Barna*

*From the foreword:*

"How should Christian people prepare for death: their own and that of loved ones? No question can be more important than this, since death is the final reality of our earthly life. Yet particularly in the United States, we tend to avoid the question as much as we can. We consider death to be brutal and tragic, whatever its circumstances and causes. It marks an end to our ambitions, while it underscores the ephemeral nature of our existence. Therefore we treat it like a "last enemy" from which there is no escape, no salvation. Death appears as a specter, a menacing evil, that evokes a reaction of dread.

Written in a genial, conversational style, this book offers the Christian reader a solid foundation in both the theology and the psychology of death: its place within God's creative and saving work, and the personal impact it makes on those facing death and those who grieve for them. It also clarifies a great many misconceptions held by most people concerning professional funeral practices, making clear that a truly "Christian ending" to our life can mean beauty and utter simplicity both in the rituals that surround it and in the burial itself. Many readers will be surprised to learn that it is not at all necessary, legally or practically, to use the services of a funeral home. There is indeed "another way," one more in keeping with the Gospel imperative to honor the physical body as a temple of the Holy Spirit.

This work includes a section on the actual preparation of the body of the deceased, together with prescribed readings of psalms and prayers, all of which can be accomplished with or without the participation of clergy. Finally, an extensive bibliography is followed by a list of items needed for preparation, as well as various post-mortem forms the reader will find indispensable." ~~~ **Fr. John Breck**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

■ **ALMS SUNDAY**

Our alms collection will be July 10<sup>th</sup>. In addition to our on-going commitments, money raised and food and items donated this month will go to support United Ministries and the OCA's Planting Grant and Seminary appeals.

■ **LOOKING AHEAD**

St John of the Ladder will welcome Dn James and Katie Bozeman and their children Alex and Gabe during the month of August. Dn James will be serving the continuation of a summer internship that has already begun at Holy Ascension Orthodox Church in Mt Pleasant, SC.

■ **'ASK THE PRIEST' DISCUSSIONS OF ORTHODOXY**

Note the date for the after-liturgy Q & A is July 24<sup>th</sup>. This is an opportunity to get answers to those difficult question you have been struggling with! No question is too ridiculous or sublime! Questions may be put in the box on the 'Bookshelf' or asked during the session. Everyone is invited.

■ **SUMMER LITURGICAL SCHEDULE**

Please note that through the Feast of **Dormition** (August 15), we will depart from our usual Wednesday Daily Vespers schedule. If there is some other feast or 'major' saint's day during the week, we will celebrate vespers on the eve and liturgy on the morning of the feast in place of the usual Wednesday evening service; otherwise, Wednesday evening as usual (no service on July 6<sup>th</sup>, the week of July 4<sup>th</sup>). Saturday and Sunday services remain unchanged!

\*\*\*\*\*

**A Reminder...and a Hearty 'Thank You'!**  
**June Fellowship and Coffee Hour**

July 3<sup>rd</sup> Potluck!!!!  
July 10<sup>th</sup> Team 6  
July 17<sup>th</sup> Team 7  
July 24<sup>th</sup> Team 8  
July 31<sup>st</sup> Team 1

\*\*\*\*\*

**Celebrating Anniversaries and Birthdays in July**  
**May God bless you and give you many years!**

Andy Small (1<sup>st</sup>), Jamie Levitsky (2<sup>nd</sup>), Anna Little (3<sup>rd</sup>), Margie Wamboldt (3<sup>rd</sup>), Stefka & David Eddins (6<sup>th</sup>), Irina Freund (7<sup>th</sup>), Ken & Angie O' Shaughnessy (10<sup>th</sup>), Elena Simpson (14<sup>th</sup>), Vinny Anderson (18<sup>th</sup>), Bill Gubser (19<sup>th</sup>), Barbara Burch (19<sup>th</sup>), Jack & Cathy Gandler (22<sup>nd</sup>), Brina Flanagan (30<sup>th</sup>)

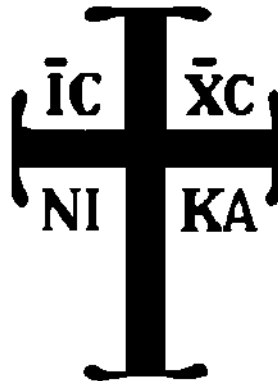
\*\*\*\*\*

**St Jacob Netsvetov, July 26**

O righteous Father Jacob, Adornment of Atka and the Yukon Delta; You offered yourself as a living sacrifice to bring light to a searching people. Offspring of Russian America, Flower of brotherly unity, Healer of sickness and terror of demons: O Holy Father Jacob, pray to Christ God that our souls may be saved!

~~~ Troparion

St John of the Ladder Orthodox Church
701 Augusta Arbor Way
Piedmont, SG 29673
864 299 1140 www.stjohnoftheladder.org



PLACE
POSTAGE
HERE

VRev Fr Marcus G Burch, Pastor
Rev Fr Thaddeus Werner, Assistant
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Schedule of Services

Daily Vespers ---See Calendar for Schedule
Great Vespers, Saturday, 6:00 pm
Divine Liturgy, Sunday, 9:30 am

'Love is the complete repudiation of any unkind thought about one's neighbor, since "Love thinks no evil" (1 Corinthians 13:5).'

St John of the Ladder, The Ladder of Divine Ascent

JULY 2011