



THE PARISH VINE



ПРИХОДСКАЯ ЛОЗА

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. John 15

The Youth Newsletter of St. Vladimir Russian Orthodox Church
Молодёжный Листок Прихода Св. Владимира
Ann Arbor, MI

July 2007

***First Annual Diocese of Chicago & Mid-America Bell Ringing Exposition
Ann Arbor, MI
June 30 – July 1, 2007***



With the blessing of His Grace Bishop Peter of Cleveland, Administrator of the Diocese of Chicago and Mid-America, the first annual Diocesan Bell Ringing Exposition was held at St. Vladimir Parish in Ann Arbor, MI June 30 – July 1, 2007. Bell ringers and those interested in learning more about the Russian tradition of bell ringing began to gather from throughout the diocese in Ann Arbor on June 29, for services on the eve of the feast of St. John of Shanghai & San Francisco.

On Saturday, June 30 the participants in the exposition gathered at St. Vladimir parish for the Divine Liturgy on St. John's feast day.

Following the Divine Liturgy a light Lenten breakfast was provided and immediately afterwards the first bell ringing instruction began under the direction of Protodeacon Vadim Gan of Holy Protection Diocesan Cathedral in Des Plaines, IL. Fr. Vadim rang the bells at Holy Trinity Monastery during his time there as a seminarian, and this experience proved to be invaluable as each of the participants tried their hand at ringing the bells and received coaching from Fr. Vadim.

During the lunch period Priest Gregory Joyce, Rector of St. Vladimir Parish, gave a short presentation on the history and use of bells in Christianity and in the Russian Orthodox Church in particular. After a group discussion each of the bell ringing teams began to prepare themselves for the competition to be held following the Sunday Divine Liturgy by practicing various peals on the parish's set of bells.



On Sunday, July 1 the bell ringing participants gathered to pray with the St. Vladimir parish family at the Divine Liturgy. Following the Divine Liturgy the parish's St. Xenia Sisterhood offered a meal to those gathered for the competition and the bell ringing began in earnest. The first round of the competition included each of the teams executing their best peals for those in attendance. After the first round three teams were judged to be exceptional. Two of these teams were from St. Sergius Cathedral in Parma, OH, with the third from St. Vladimir Parish. All three teams again rang the bells to the best of their abilities, each demonstrating mastery at this pious art. In the end the team from St. Vladimir Parish made up of Alexander Poplavsky, Lukas Meyer, and Herman Rinne received the first prize – a plaque that is to be displayed in the winning team's parish church or hall during the year following their victory, but to be given up to the next year's winning team in this annual competition.



Those in attendance for this activity sponsored by the Youth Committee of the Diocese of Chicago & Mid-America enjoyed the wonderful summer weather, making new friends and renewing old friendships, and the beautiful sounds of the Russian Church bells. Without exception all the participants look forward to next year's competition!

Fr. Gregory Joyce

Please visit St. Vladimir's photo album for more pictures from the Bell Ringing Competition Weekend www.stvladimiraami.org



The Law of God.

By Seraphim Slobodskoy.

Why we call ourselves Orthodox Christians.

We call ourselves Orthodox Christians because we believe in our Lord Jesus Christ exactly as is written in the "Creed" and belong to the **One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church** that was founded by the Saviour Himself on earth and which is directed by the Holy Spirit in preserving correctly, gloriously, and without change the teaching of Jesus Christ. That is, we belong to the Orthodox Christian Church.

All the other Christians who confess a faith in Christ which is not the same as the Orthodox Church, do not belong to her and are called the non-Orthodox or heterodox. This includes Catholics (the Roman Catholic Church) and Protestants (Lutherans, Baptists, and sectarians).

Prayers.

Short Prayers.

Every Orthodox Christian is obliged to pray every day, morning and evening, before and after eating, before and after work, before and after lessons, etc.

In the morning we pray in order to thank God that He has kept us through the night, and to ask for His Fatherly blessing and help for the day that is beginning.

In the evening, before going to sleep, we also give thanks to the Lord for the day that has successfully concluded and we ask Him to keep us during the night.

In order to do our work successfully and safely we also, before all else, should ask God to bless and assist the work that lies before us, and upon finishing, to give thanks to God.

For the expression of our feelings to God and to His holy saints, the Church has given us different prayers. Here are some which are most commonly used:

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

In the name — by the name, to the honor, to the glory; **amen** — in truth, truly, let it be so, so be it.

This prayer is called the beginning prayer, because we say it before all the other prayers when we begin to pray.

In it we ask God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, that is the All-holy Trinity, invisibly to bless us by His name for the work that is before us.

Bless, O Lord!

We say this prayer at the beginning of all work.

Lord, Have Mercy!

Have mercy — be merciful, forgive.

This is an ancient prayer and is used by all Christians. Even a little child can easily remember it. We say it when we remember our sins. For the glory of the Holy Trinity, we Christians say this prayer three times. We also say it twelve times, asking for God's blessing on every hour of the day and night, and we also say it forty times, for the sanctification of our entire life.

Prayer of Praise to the Lord God.

Glory To Thee, Our God, Glory To Thee.

Glory — praise.

In this prayer, we do not ask God for anything, but only glorify Him. We can also say a shorter prayer: **GLORY TO GOD**. We say this prayer at the end of work, as a sign of our thankfulness to God for His mercy to us.

The Prayer of the Publican.

God Be Merciful To Me A Sinner.

This is the prayer of the publican (tax collector) who repented of his sins and received forgiveness. It is taken from the parable of the Saviour which He once told people for their instruction. Here is the parable. Two men went to the Temple to pray. One of them was a pharisee, the other a publican. The pharisee stood in front of everyone and prayed to God in this way: *"I give Thee thanks, O God, that I am not such a sinful person as that publican. I give a tenth of my possessions to the poor, I fast twice a week."* But the publican, realizing that he was a sinner, stood at the entrance to the Temple and did not even dare to lift his eyes to Heaven. He struck himself on the breast and said: *"God be merciful to me a sinner!"* The prayer of the publican was more acceptable and pleasing to God than that of the proud pharisee because the publican was humble and remembered to ask for forgiveness.

The Jesus Prayer.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son Of God, Have Mercy On Me, A Sinner!

This prayer contains the whole message of Christianity within it. It is directed to our Saviour Jesus Christ, acknowledging Him as the Son of God and humbly asking His mercy upon us. We should try to repeat this prayer at all times, for it brings great benefit to the soul.

Another Prayer to the Lord Jesus.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Son Of God, Through The Prayers Of Thy Most Pure Mother And All The Saints, Have Mercy On Us. Amen.

Have mercy on us — be merciful to us, forgive us. **Jesus** — Saviour; **Christ** — the Anointed; **through the prayers** — for the sake of the prayers, or in answer to the prayers.

Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the second Person of the Holy Trinity. As Son of God, He is our True God, as is God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.

We call Him Jesus, which means **Saviour**, because He saved us from sins and eternal death. For this, He, being the Son of God, dwelt in the all-immaculate Virgin Mary, and in His incarnation through the Holy Spirit, **took flesh and became man of Her**. That is, He accepted a human body and soul — **He was born** of the Most-holy Virgin Mary, became the same kind of man as we are, except that He was without sin — **He became God-man**. And instead of us suffering and being tormented for our sins, He, out of love for us sinners, suffered for us, died on the Cross, and on the third day He rose, conquering sin and death, and He gave us eternal life.

Realizing our sinfulness and not relying on the power of our own prayers, in this prayer we ask all the saints and the Mother of God, Who has special grace to save us sinners by Her intercession for us before Her Son, to pray for us sinners before our Saviour.

Our Saviour is called Christ, the Anointed One, because He had in full measure those gifts of the Holy Spirit, which were given to the kings, prophets, and high priests in the Old Testament by anointing. Anointed also signifies the Lord's divine mission of salvation.

Prayer to the Holy Spirit.

O Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit Of Truth, Who Art Everywhere Present And Fillest All Things, Treasury Of Good Things And Giver Of Life. Come And Dwell In Us, And Cleanse Us Of All Impurity, And Save Our Souls, O Good One.

In this prayer we pray to the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Holy Trinity.

In it we call the Holy Spirit **Heavenly King**, because He, as true God, equal to God the Father and God the Son, invisibly reigns over us, is over us and over the whole world. We call Him **Comforter**, because He comforts us in our sorrows and misfortunes, as He comforted the Apostles on the tenth day after the ascension of Jesus Christ into Heaven.

We call Him **Spirit of truth** (as our Saviour Himself called Him), because He, as the Holy Spirit, teaches all of us only truth and righteousness, only what is beneficial for us and serves for our salvation.

He is God, He is everywhere present and fills all things with Himself; **Who art everywhere present and fillest all things**. He, as the ruler of the entire world, sees all things and, where something is needed, He gives it. He is the **Treasury of good things**, that is, the keeper of all good works, the source of everything good that we could ever need.

We call the Holy Spirit the **Giver of life**, because all that lives and moves in the world does so by the Holy Spirit. That is, everything receives life from Him; especially people receive spiritual life from Him, holy and eternal life beyond the grave, being cleansed by Him of their sins.

Since the Holy Spirit has such marvelous qualities — is present everywhere, fills all things with His Grace and gives life to all — we turn to Him with special requests: **come and dwell in us**, that is, constantly abide in us, as in His temple; **cleanse us of all impurity**, that is, of sin; make us holy, worthy of His abiding within us. **Save our souls, O Good One** from sins and those punishments which follow for sins, and by this grant us the Kingdom of Heaven.

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*"If God be for us, who can be against us?"*  
*St. John Chrysostom*

#### **"The Parish Vine"**

Published monthly by the St. Herman of Alaska Youth Group of St. Vladimir Russian Orthodox Church of Ann Arbor, MI with the Blessing of Priest Gregory Joyce, Rector

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Would you like to learn more  
about your Orthodox Faith?  
Do you like to meet new  
people?  
**Join the Youth Group!**

**Diocese of Chicago and Mid-America Youth is a group for Orthodox young adults, which helps us stay united and in contact across the Midwest. Please join if you would like to know more about the Orthodox faith as well as be up to date on events/activities going on in our diocese.**

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/DioceseofChicagoMidAmericaYouth/>