



PANAGIA PANTOVASILISSA
HOLY MOTHER QUEEN OF ALL
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

A COMMUNITY FOR ALL

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Fall/Winter 2020

Finishing the Fight

By: Fr. William



I hate the third period.

It has been almost twenty years since I left my shoes on the mat, and I still hate the third period of a wrestling match. I would do anything to avoid it, and if it happened to fall upon me, I would do anything to end it. Six minutes does not sound like all that much time, until you spend it tensing every muscle in your body contesting against an opponent who is equally dedicated, and often equally strong. After four minutes of seeking to grind your adversary into the mat, the final two minutes of a match is a combination of exhaustion and immense frustration. I hated the third period so much during my wrestling days that I figured out how to avoid it. I put in a lot of work in the offseason in the weight room, perfected a few simple moves while ignoring everything else, and figured out how to pin those I wrestled against in the earlier stages of a match. But this was not devotion to excellence, my friends; it was fear of the third period. For, indeed, I *hated* the third period.

In my senior year, I was fortunate enough to win the Kentucky State Championship in my weight class. And of the four matches I wrestled in the Tournament that year, only one of them went into the third period. And Lord, how I hated it! I had failed to end the match early. I was physically and mentally exhausted. And I knew that all it would take would be one mistake, one error in judgment, or one tired slip to end my hopes for the title. All of the work I had done could be thrown away by a single mistake. All of the challenges overcome could come to naught in an instant. Yet it was in that moment of frustration, uncertainty, and self-doubt that I realized none of the challenges or pitfalls mattered. Whether I was frustrated or not—whether I hated the third period or not—I was going to have to endure it. The easy stuff hadn't worked, and all there was left to do was grind it out.

My friends, ending the current contest we are in early is not an option. The only option left to us is to grind it out. The only option left for us in a 2020 that has seemed like one long third period since March is to do what we know need to be done, even though we are exhausted; even though we are anxious; even though we are frightened for the future. This means that those of us who volunteer our time will have to finish our particular fights, even though most of us are running on empty. This means that those of us who have supported the Church materially will need to continue to do so, though we are concerned for the future. And this means that we will have to do so in an era of unprecedented challenges.

In the coming week you will receive the final stewardship appeal for 2020 explaining some of the unique circumstances we have faced, together with a list of those who have pledged. I recognize that many of you are anxious. I recognize that many of you are concerned for the future. Yet having called through the directory twice now, and having spoken with most of you, I also know that these fears are largely abstract in the sense that we are worried about what *might* happen in the future rather than what *has* already happened. My friends, faith in Christ and Thanksgiving for what he has given us in this parish is the answer to so many of our anxieties. It is my fervent prayer that we all join together to meet very immediate and concrete needs.

We have done an immense amount of work together, these past three years, to start to turn around what was gradually becoming an inevitable demographic decline of our parish. Yet as much as we have done, much remains to be done if we are to be successful. If we are able to focus our energies, and if 2021 proves a less challenging opponent than 2020 has, we can come through to the other side with all of the momentum we have gathered in our work together. Yet if we give up the fight now because we are exhausted, leaving tasks that must be done undone; or if we leave the fulfillment of immediate material needs to the uncertain future, we run the risk of losing much of what we have gained. My prayer is that we will all resolve to go into 2021 being honest with ourselves. If we are unable to do that which we have pledged to undertake, let us willingly step aside so that another may take our place. If we are unable to meet a financial commitment, let us know that no guilt accrues. But let us honestly give what we can of ourselves in the struggle. Let us seek to do everything together, through faith in Christ, love for one another, and hope for the future. And let us finish this fight.



With every prayer for the beloved faithful of our parish family, and seeking the intercession of the Theotokos, for her protection, I remain,

Fr. William

President's Notes: Clergy-Laity Report

By: Delores Minor

On September 9 and 10, 2020, Father William, Joel Scott, Lefteris Xenos and I, represented our parish at the 45th Biennial Clergy-Laity Congress sponsored by the Greek Orthodox of America Archdiocese. This was to be held in Cleveland, Ohio in late June, 2020, but just like everything else, due to Covid 19, the congress was postponed and then was rescheduled as a virtual gathering!! So your Lexington delegates adjusted and from each of our homes we participated virtually.

400 Parishes were represented. 1,184 voting members participated which included 374 clergy, 747 non-clergy parish delegates and 63 Archdiocesan Council Members.

Over the course of two days, a variety of webinars were offered. These included topics ranging from Religious Education, Youth and Young Adult Ministries, Stewardship, Outreach and Evangelism, Internet Ministries, Youth Safety, Church Music, Greek Education and Center For Family Care. These webinars are available for you to view via the goarch.com website. If you see a topic of interest, I encourage you to spend some time and view the information which was provided.

The focus of this Covid driven virtual congress was to present necessary resolutions for the proper operation and administration of the Archdiocese. Archbishop Elpidophoros was an active participant throughout the two days. My time was spent in hearing the information presented by the Administration Committee and the Finance Committee. The budgets for 2021 and 2022 were presented, discussed and motions were made to pass both budgets. A significant amount of time was spent via these two committees, discussing operating costs and the concerns for the funding of the clergy pension. There has been 15 plus years beginning in 2004 – 2017, in which the Archdiocese did not fund the clergy pension. So, much discussion took place on how this issue is to be resolved. As a delegate, one of the concerns was how much of the fiscal responsibility would come back to local parishes versus the fiscal responsibility of the Archdiocese. It is important to note, that our parish has always been current with payment in to the clergy pension fund as well as our priests, past and present, being current with their pension contributions. While no motion passed, which resolves the pension deficit, which at this time is 65 million, I believe that the clergy and the delegates made it be known, that the Archdiocese must address this issue and find a solution.

I appreciate the opportunity that was provided for me to be a delegate and represent our parish. While it was an exhausting two days spent receiving a great deal of financial information, my participation allowed me greater understanding of the function of the Archdiocese, the Metropolis and the local parish.

Pastoral Notes

SIGN UPS FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP

For technical reasons, it is no longer advisable for us to send out the Monday Sign-up Emails. This means that anyone wishing to attend the Sunday Liturgy will need to email Fr. William by Friday at 6:00 PM until we are able to come out of Phase One. Please provide a phone number and note how many people you are requesting space for. Services will be Livestream only until December 13.

NEW LISTSERV EMAIL LIST

You may or may not have received a notice that you have been added to a ListServ (HMQA-GOC@LISTSERV.GOARCH.ORG). I say may or may not, because we are still learning how it works. That said, if you are reading this bulletin, that means we have some familiarity with it. There should be an unsubscribe feature, if you wish to be taken off the list. It should also prevent our emails from getting caught in the spam filters of those who actually wish to receive them.

VISITS FOR VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS

It is our official guidance, during Phase One, that those in demographics especially vulnerable to COVID-19 refrain from signing up for in-person worship. Yet even when we cannot come to Church, the Church can come to us! The Priest is always happy to bring communion to and visit with those who are unable to make it to Church. If you are unable to attend, and would like to receive a pastoral visit, please contact Fr. William *directly*. Please note that, due to privacy concerns, the Priest cannot receive requests from a third party.

FACEBOOK STREAMING

Please pay attention to our Facebook page, for community announcements. You do *NOT* need a Facebook account to view livestreams. During Phase One, all services will be streamed, along with other educational programming, through our Facebook page. If you have an account and have not already followed the page, I encourage you to do so. During the pandemic, necessity has dictated that much of what we do will take place in this forum.

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Please stay tuned for the announcement of the Fall General Assembly. This has been postponed from the originally intended date. At our December PC meeting, we will be setting the new date, and the notice will then go out to the community. I appreciate your patience in bearing with us during the seemingly interminable scheduling challenges of a very unprecedented 2020.



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Serving the People of Central Kentucky Since 2007

Holy Mother Queen of All GOC:

The Light of Christ in Kentucky

Even a pandemic and a lockdown cannot stop our thriving Outreach and Evangelism ministry here at Holy Mother Queen of All GOC. Our parish continues to lead the way towards an Orthodox future for the Commonwealth, as we seek to bring the Gospel of Christ, and the holy Orthodox Faith, to Lexington, KY. In the past three years, we have baptized or chrismated around 30 converts to Orthodoxy, the overwhelming majority of whom remain a part of our parish family. Though 2020 has been different in many ways, through the grace of God, and the work of His faithful ones, our parish family continues to grow. May God grant the increase, as we seek to continue our labours in His Holy Name. Most recently, we would like to congratulate David Lawson and Javier Muñoz who entered into the Body of Christ by joining our parish family.



Philoptochos Board Meeting

On September 5, our Philoptochos Board met. As we are not using the Church as a meeting space during Phase One, Dennis and Chrisi Karounos graciously hosted the event. Many thanks to our Philoptochos chapter for all of the valuable work they do!



Sunday School Graduation

This year, Holy Mother Queen of All GOC congratulates our honoured graduates Ionut Moga and Sophia Xenos. You both have had an extremely challenging senior year, and our entire parish family are proud of the way you endured. May you both encounter success under the guidance of our Lord as you go out into the world to do His work!



Parish Council Meeting with His Eminence

By: Carolyn Janssen

His Eminence, Metropolitan NICHOLAS of Detroit, our beloved spiritual father, met with our Parish Council in August, to listen to our concerns and questions regarding the ongoing pandemic, and our response as a Church.



The Mandylion Icon has Arrived!

With the arrival of the Icon of the Holy Mandylion, donated by Grace Mashni in honour of the memories of Sam, Johnny, and the rest of her family, our Phase One Beautification Project is now complete. The icon was blessed on August 16, the date of the feast commemorating the Translation of the Image of Our Lord to the Holy Napkin. Many thanks to Grace for the icon, and to all of those who helped us to complete the beautification of the Eastern face of our Church!



***AND REMEMBER: EVEN IN WHAT SEEM LIKE THE DARKEST OF DAYS,
THE LIGHT OF GOD ILLUMINES OUR LIVES SO LONG AS
WE ALLOW OUR HEARTS TO BE KINDLED BY HIS LOVE!***

