

The Deadly Silence

Valerie H. Protopapas

One reason for the poor record of evangelization by the Orthodox Church in the United States is the nervousness of many within the Church at the thought of large numbers of Western Christians entering Orthodoxy. In effect, the situation might become a matter of - as one priest put it - "the tail wagging the dog." These Orthodox, clergy and laity, fear that American converts would demand a western rite of worship and that this demand would place in jeopardy the hegemony of the traditional Byzantine liturgical rites. Some Orthodox are even more frightened to consider the end of ethnic traditions which converts have no impetus to maintain while, in turn, being present in sufficient numbers to unilaterally discard. There is also a distinct unease among many in the Church that even the most numerous ethnic group - the Greeks - would be overwhelmed by a large influx of American converts. This situation would result in the power structure of the Church in the United States passing from those ethnarchs who have held the reins from the beginning. In short, there is a real fear among many present day cradle and ethnophile converted Orthodox that the Orthodox Church in America might actually become the American Orthodox Church, that Church would no longer be answerable to the traditional Orthodox jurisdictions and, in fact, those jurisdictions would no longer be tolerated since their very existence is heretical.

Yet this is precisely the situation that the Church in this nation should be striving to produce! What would it have profited the Apostles from Byzantium who went to Rus at the behest of St. Vladimir if they had insisted on remaining the largest group in that new Church, perpetuating their particular ethnic customs at the expense of the development of customs and traditions na-

tive to the new Orthodox Church? In fact, if they had insisted that the "Greek Orthodox Church" be the *only* Orthodox Church in Rus there never would have been a Russian Orthodox Church - just a few Greeks and fewer Russians; the Church in Russia would not have survived their deaths. In light of this, one wonders just how much "Orthodoxy" will remain in the United States after the present ethnic population dies out or is absorbed into the culture. In fact, without the emergence of a truly "American Orthodox Church," the presence of the Church in this nation is in danger of becoming a matter of religious curiosity, a quaint footnote in American history. Those who brought the Church to Russia and other nations as well, were willing to help create a Church *for and of the people of that nation*. They were not afraid that their particular ethnic stamp - whether of jurisdiction, language or custom - would be replaced by equally canonical versions of those functions native to the Church they were founding. So too, the Orthodox apostles who maintain the Church in America must not demand that their ethnic jurisdictions, customs and traditions (with a small "t") survive at the expense of emerging national ones by attempting to enforce that survival through the denial of the Church to large numbers of "natives" because they threaten the status quo.

Now what, one may ask, does the above have to do with witnessing to the sanctity of human life? Frankly, it is my belief that much of the hesitancy on the part of so many Orthodox clergy to witness to the Church's doctrines on abortion and related issues has to do with the fear that demands for doctrinal purity in this area will result in an exodus of many "ethnics" and (possibly worse) an influx of "outsiders" drawn to the Church by Her stand in these matters. These fears - coupled with the highly confrontational nature of the debate - has, I am convinced, greatly lessened the Orthodox witness in this country.

But there is also another aspect to the matter of converts and that is, very precisely, *just who is welcome?* What “kind of people” do “we” want to see coming into the Church? In the past, many of those not only welcomed as converts but brought almost automatically - and immediately - into the priesthood were from main-line Protestant denominations - Episcopalians and Anglicans, “high” Lutherans, etc. There were, of course, Roman Catholics but few of them were from the “traditional wing” of that Church; most were more “modern” (i.e. liberal) in their viewpoints. A significant number of the above (especially the Episcopal/Anglicans) were attracted to Orthodoxy by its worship rather than its moral doctrines. Many of these along with many cradle believers would not be thrilled if the Church became visibly and actively “pro-life.” After all, that type of public witness is an embarrassment more in keeping with “fundamentalist” Protestants and blue-collar “traditional” Catholics who stand about praying their rosaries in front of abortion clinics. This is definitely *not* the sort of thing that is *de rigour* in the Harvard Divinity School! Frankly, those who view the matter in such terms are right. A strong, public pro-life stance would not go over well in the marble halls of academe or in the fashionable world of the cultural elite. Those scenes are firmly ensconced on the other side of the issue as anyone currying favor in either or both will quickly discover. In becoming openly and actively pro-life, the Orthodox Church in this nation stands in danger of attracting a very different class of people: old-fashioned, less well educated, sincere and rather mundane (what used to be called in better days, “the salt of the earth”). Most of the converts brought to the Church by such a witness will not have graduated from the best schools nor will they be in the top intellectual or economic stratas. The sad fact is that not only will the Church be inundated by hoards of non-ethnic converts if She becomes an open force for life in the culture, but those converts will not even have the mitigating sop of being from among “the best people”.

In fact, the cultural elites in this society have discovered Orthodoxy and, in their own secular way, they revere Her for what they rightly perceive as Her intellectual and artistic merits. However, these will soon turn away in disgust if She proves to be, after all, only - horrors! - *the actual Christian Church* and this inevitability causes great *angst* for many of Orthodoxy’s present leaders. There are some who fear embarrassment, ridicule and disdain from their secular peers far

more than any active persecution by a secular state. In fact, they fear this loss of face among their intellectual equals even more than any loss of numbers. Together these two attendant “fears” - that of a loss of numbers among cradle Orthodox and that of a loss of face among secular colleagues - have, until now, successfully limited the pro-life witness of the Orthodox Church. Unfortunately, if the situation continues neither the culture nor the Church will long survive this deadly silence.

* * * *

(Lest anyone misunderstand the point that is being made here: the life a convert lives as an Orthodox Christian and *not* the reasons that brought him or her into the Church is what is important; that same standard applies, of course, to cradle Orthodox. History proves that some people who came into the Church for the worst possible reasons became the best possible saints.

Also, it is essential to use the gifts that God has given us including our intellect, to His glory. There is nothing holy about ignorance or stupidity. However, like the rich man in the Gospel, those with great intellectual gifts and who move in that sphere must be careful to avoid the temptations of worldly acclaim. This is especially difficult when to maintain the good esteem of one’s colleagues one need merely refrain from doing something that is probably rather distasteful in the first place. Most secular elites allow that their “religious” colleagues have to pay lip service to the Church’s moral doctrines and are understanding enough *provided, however, that the matter goes no further*. Any type of activism on behalf of those doctrines is perceived -and denounced - as “fundamentalist militancy”, “religious intolerance” and “narrow-mindedness” - none of which is permitted [at least on the pro-life side of the issue] in the world of the intellectual elite.)

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For the pastors: Sanctity of Life Sunday Sample Sermon Outline

Prepared by *Fr. Edward Pehanich*

OPENING ILLUSTRATION: In the classic movie “It’s a Wonderful Life” starring Jimmy Stewart, Stewart’s character George Baily needs a drink. Clarence, his guardian angel, is at his side. I don’t remember what George orders, but I think it was a “double something”. He was having a rough time. Clarence asks for a “flaming rum punch”. The bartender replies, “Listen, mister, this is a bar for people who want to drink hard liquor and get drunk fast!”

It was a difficult time for George and he wanted “the hard stuff.” Thankfully, here in America drinking habits have changed and less and less people are interested in drinking “the hard stuff”. In our Orthodox Christian Faith things have also changed. People don’t want “the hard stuff” - the “hard” teachings of Jesus that speak of self-denial, sacrifice, self-control, moral living in an immoral world. This comes as no surprise. The Apostle Paul predicated as much:

(quote: 2 Timothy 4:3)

And yet, the Lord Jesus Christ warned us that we need not only to hear “the hard stuff” but also to live it:

(quote: Matthew 7:14).

Our Lord tells us that the only way we can attain everlasting life is through a way that is sometimes hard and narrow and taken only by a few. I as your pastor am committed to tell you the truth: “the hard stuff”; things that may be unpopular, things that may even upset you. Yet, as your father in Christ, I care for you enough to tell you the hard truth rather than an easy lie.

Our Orthodox Church today is observing “Sanctity of Human Life Sunday - the Sunday before January 22, emphasizing the holiness of human life from conception to natural death. Our focus today is especially on one method by which the sacredness of human life is under attack through the practice of abortion.

Our world wants us to believe that abortion is about the “right” of women to control their bodies; that what a woman carries in her womb is not a living child but merely “potential life”... the preacher then can go on to discuss scientific facts which prove that there is a child in the womb (a heartbeat is present at twenty-four (24) days, brain activity little different from an adult human being is present at forty-four (44) days, etc.). He can also quote Scripture passages which tell of God’s call of the prophets even while in their mothers’ wombs: Psalm 139: 13-16, Jeremiah 1:5, Isaiah 49:1. The preacher can also speak of 1 Corinthians 6: 19-20 and how it relates to the argument “it’s my body...!” The preach may also want to speak to the fact that it is our duty as the Church to care for women with crisis pregnancies and to support organizations such as Birthright which provide help in such cases.

THE SANCTITY OF LIFE
An Orthodox Christian Study Guide on Abortion
Prepared by: Fr. Ed Pehanich

In January, 1973 the United States Supreme Court touched off an unprecedented public debate when they issued their decision legalizing the practice of abortion in our country. Since then, our nation has been divided, often bitterly, over this medical procedure. “*A woman has a right to control her own body*” argue those in favor of abortion. “*Abortion kills a living child*” counters the pr-life side. Where do we go for answers? What is the truth? While our nation has heard the position of the Roman Catholic and Protestant Evangelical Churches on this issue, the Orthodox Church has much of these past twenty-five years been unheard and unseen. What does our Orthodox Church say on this subject of abortion? This study guide, intended for junior and senior high school and college students, as well as adults, is presented as an introduction to the teaching of the Orthodox Christian Church on abortion.

INTRODUCTION: As a group, try to list all the arguments commonly used in favor of abortion. Someone can list them on a blackboard or large sheet of paper. After that, try to list the arguments used against abortion.

THE HOLY BIBLE: While you will search in vain for a passage in the Holy Scriptures which states: “*Thou shalt not commit abortion*,” there are many passages that do address the question of life before birth.

A. Read the following passages:

Psalm 100:3
Isaiah 64:8
1 Corinthians 6: 19-20

Discuss which of the above passages address which arguments your group listed in favor of abortion? From these three passages alone, how can we determine abortion is wrong?

B. Read the following passages:

Psalm 139: 13-16
Jeremiah 1:5
Isaiah 49:1

Discuss according to Jeremiah and Isaiah, at what point did they begin to have a relationship with the Lord? When in their lives did God begin preparing them for His ministry? What response could Jeremiah or Isaiah have made if someone had said to them “*you were an unplanned pregnancy?*” How do these passages relate to the debate over abortion? One argument used in favor of abortion says that that which is in the womb is not human life but merely “potential life”. A medical permission form from a New York abortion facility states: “*I understand that tissue and tissue parts will be removed during the procedure.*” What do Jeremiah and Isaiah say to this characterization of the unborn child?

WHEN DOES LIFE BEGIN?

For this next part of the study, it will be necessary to obtain and view a video of the development of a baby in the womb such as “*Life Before Birth*” (available from Franciscan Communications, 1229 S. Santee, Los Angeles, CA 90015) or go to your local library and get a copy of a book containing information on pre-natal development. (Also, local pro-life groups have information - usually including models of the unborn child through all stages of development - which they are usually willing to lend for such presentations. These groups are listed in the local phone directory.) The following questions can then be posed to the group:

- A. What medical proof exists that life begins long before birth?
- B. At what point in pregnancy is the baby’s sex determined? Eye color? Hair color?
- C. At what point in pregnancy is the heart beat present?
- D. At what point are brain waves present?

SCRIPTURE ON THE UNBORN CHILD

A. Read aloud: Luke 1: 39-44. Why did John the Baptist while still a “fetus” in the womb of St. Elizabeth, leap for joy?

In the original Greek of the New Testament, the word used for Elizabeth’s unborn child is *brephos* - the same word used for Christ as he lay in the manger as a new born babe (Luke 2:12). The New Testament has no word for “fetus”. The child in the womb is considered “a child”, period.

B. Look at an Orthodox calendar. What events are commemorated by the Church on the following days:

Gregorian Calendar / Julian Calendar

September 23rd / October 6th; December 9th / December 22nd; and March 25th / April 7th

Why do you think the Church celebrates these events? What conclusion can we draw from them about when life actually begins? If possible, read the hymns the Church sings at Vespers and Matins on these days. Which of them answers the question *when does life begin?*

Topics for Discussion and/or Research:

Abortion was not invented in the 20th Century; it has been practiced for thousands of years. Since the days of the Apostles, the Church has had to face this difficult question and give guidance to Christian believers throughout the ages. Look up in the writings of the Fathers and the canons of the Church, passages that deal with abortion. How did the early Church deal with the problem? (see “*An Orthodox View of Abortion*” by Rev. John Kowalczyk, Light and Life Publishing Co.)

MAKING THE *RIGHT* CHOICES

The following is a true story with details changed to preserve anonymity.

Catherine is a twenty year old college student majoring in business. She is the oldest of two children of divorced parents; her father has since returned to Greece. For the past year and a half, Catherine has been involved with a young man at school in a relationship that can only be characterized as abusive. While he has never physically harmed her, Tim while professing his love for her on many occasions, ignored her for weeks at a time while he dated others. Catherine, by her own admission, has been chasing Tim, wanting to continue their relationship and trying to get him to commit to her. After much pressure from Tim, Catherine slept with him only to become quickly pregnant. Tim, on hearing of her condition, has once again begun to ignore her, only offering money to pay for an abortion.

A. What choices are available to Catherine in this situation?

B. What are the consequences of each choice, good and bad?

C. If she chooses to continue her pregnancy, what will she need?

Many women in similar situations choose to have an abortion simply because they see no other solution to their problem. How will they tell their parents? Where will they live? How will they pay for prenatal medical care? Delivery and hospital costs? How will they pay for the baby's needs? Diapers, formula, clothes, etc.? How will they care for a child while going to school, working, etc.?

As a class project, locate "crisis pregnancy centers" such as "Birthright" in your community. These centers help women with such crisis pregnancies. Call the center and make arrangements for a field trip to their facility or, if that is not possible, to have a representative come and address the group. What services do they provide? How can they help someone like Catherine?

As a class project, sponsor a "diaper drive" or "baby shower" to aid the women assisted by this center.

CONCLUSION

A. Read Romans 8: 5-17

In many of the difficult moments of life, we are called upon to make hard decisions. Often times the right decision is not the easiest one, nor is the easiest decision the right one. From this passage, what does St. Paul say are the two options we have in living? If we make the right decision - that is, what God wants us to do - what are we promised? If we do not, what consequences do we face? In making decisions, St. Paul refers to sharing in Christ's sufferings. How is it that making the right decision sometimes involves suffering? Ask the participants if they ever had to make a "right" decision that involved suffering but turned out to be a blessing?

Key Scriptural Passages on the Sanctity of Human Life

I. Creation: The Sanctity of Human Life is Established

- A. God is the source and summary of life
 - 1. As the Living God, He is Eternal Life
 - 2. His people are sustained by His life (Josh. 3:10; 1 Sam. 17:26, 36; II Kings 19:14, 16)
- B. God is the Giver of life
 - 1. God created sub-human life (Gen. 1: 11-13, 20-25)
 - 2. God created human life in His image (Gen. 1:1, 26-28; 2:7, 5:1-3; 25:21; Job 10:8-12; Ps. 127:3)

Comment: This means we were created to know God and to resemble Him as our Heavenly Father. To this end we have been endowed with moral and spiritual capacities, creativity and aesthetic sensitivities. This image is not limited to some part of our being, but what we are in our totality, including our physical lives (I Cor.6:19). As humans, our value or worth is not based on what we do, but on who we are before God.

II. The Fall: The Sanctity of Human Life Denied

- A. Before the giving of the Law, murder considered the most heinous of crimes (Gen. 4:8-16, 9:4-6)
 - Comment:** Violence and evil provoke God's judgment as seen in the Flood (Gen. 6:11).
- B. God is the protector of life; the Law imposed a positive obligation to respect human life
 - 1. Old Testament: The Sixth Commandment (Thou shalt not murder) is not merely a prohibition of murder, but also a positive injunction to respect all human life (Ex. 20:13)
 - 2. New Testament: The revelation that not only violent actions but even violent thoughts and emotions are prohibited (Matt. 5:21-26, 15:19; 19:17-18; Rom. 1:29; Rev. 22:15)
 - 3. New Testament: Enjoins us to not only love the neighbor but reveals that love is the law of life, hatred the law of death (I John 3:14-15)

III. Redemption: Sanctity of Human Life Restored

- A. Jesus Christ is our Life (John 1:4; 5:26; 14:6; Acts 17:25)
- B. Jesus Christ *reinstalls* us as His children; language of "adoption" is used. Thus, creation's original purpose is fulfilled in Jesus Christ (John 1:12-13; Rom. 8:14-17; Gal. 4:4-7)
- C. Jesus Christ *recreates* us in His image and we come to resemble God as our Father (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10)
- D. The continued sanctity of human life is due to the grace of God. Human nature, though fallen, is sacred because it continues God's image in the world.
 - 1. That there is no direct prohibition of abortion in the Old Testament indicates that it was foreign to the Jewish mind, not that it was an accepted practice.
 - 2. Fertility was regarded as the most wonderful of blessings and barrenness as a most dreadful curse, not because of a patriarchal or agrarian ethic, but because it was the means whereby God gathered His people. (Gen. 21:1f; I Sam. 1:1-20; Ps. 127:3-5)
 - 3. The death of an unborn child is explicitly identified as a curse... (Hos. 9:14) and live birth as a blessing (Ex. 23:26)
 - 4. Accidental abortion was punishable under Mosaic Law (Ex. 21:22f)

Comment: One line of interpretation construes v. 22 as referring to a *miscarriage*. For example, the New American Standard Version translate v. 22: "**And if men struggle with each other and strike a woman with child so that she has a miscarriage, yet there is no further injury...**" Even this does not prove that the unborn child is less human since the passage regards even the accidental destruction of fetal life as a punishable offense. That the Law does not impose the death penalty is not surprising since accidental manslaughter never merits such a punishment (Ex. 21:13f). No penalty was exacted for the unintentional killing of a slave (Ex. 20:20f). Just as this does not establish that God regards slaves as sub-human, so the fine imposed on anyone who caused the accidental death of an unborn child does not lessen the value of that child.

A second line of interpretation construes v. 22 as referring to a live birth. For example, the New International Version renders it thusly: "**If men who are fighting hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely, but there is no serious injury...**" Causing premature delivery would thus be punishable by a fine while injury either to the child or to its mother would be dealt with according to *lex talionis* (an eye for an eye). There are several arguments for this interpretation. The Hebrew word **yeled** always refers to a child, *never to a miscarriage*. The word occurs eighty-eight times in the Old Testament and is translated in the King James Version as

“child,” seventy-two times; “boy,” twice; “young man,” seven times; “son,” three times’ and “fruit,” once. The Hebrew word for “miscarriage” - **nefel** (cf., Job 3:16; Ps. 58:8; Eccl. 6:3) - is not used in this passage.

Furthermore, the text does not specify that “injury” refers only to the woman. Thus it would appear that injury to the woman, to the prematurely born child or to both would be punishable according to the standards set forth in v. 22.

IV. The Sanctity of Unborn Human Life

- A. God creates and fashions life in the womb (Gen. 29:31; Job 31:15; Is. 44:2, 24; 49:1,5; Jer. 1:5)
- B. Conception marks the beginning of life (II Sam. 11:5; I Chron. 7:23; Luke 1:36)
- C. Children in the womb are regarded as persons (Ps. 51:5; 58:3; Ps. 139:13-16; Luke 1:41-44)
 - 1. In Psalm 139, David considers God to be at work with him personally as evidenced by his constant use of the pronouns “I,” “me,” and “my.”
- D. God’s purpose for each man is operative before birth (Is. 49:1; Jer. 1:5); he is set aside for service, filled with the Holy Spirit and consecrated (Luke 1:15; Gal. 1:15)
- E. The entity in the womb is considered a human baby
 - 1. Pregnant women are “with child” (Luke 1:41-44; 2:5)
 - 2. The Greek for baby is *brephos* - it is used interchangeably in the New Testament for “baby” (Luke 2:12,16), “infant” (Luke 18:15), and “child” (II Tim. 3:15). There is no distinction in these passages between that which is born and that which is yet to be born.
- F. It is unnatural not to love the life in one’s womb (Is. 49:15)
- G. The Incarnation demonstrates God’s total identification with man from conception through death.
 - 1. Unique as He was, Jesus Christ was made like unto us in every way (Heb. 2:17; Luke 1:31)
 - 2. Jesus was a Person in His mother’s womb (John 1:1,14; Luke 1:41-44; 2:21)

Comment: Even if there were a question of whether or not unborn life was entitled to full humanity before the Incarnation (and there is not), **once Jesus Christ sanctified prenatal life with His presence in the womb of His Mother, the blessed Theotokos, all question as to the sanctify of that life ceased.** Christ sanctified each and every stage of human life from the moment of conception to the moment of death and the extremely reverential treatment of His body by His followers indicates that even our mortal remains demand a degree of respect by virtue of our human origins. The questions of whether or when the soul is present before birth is academic since *only God can destroy the soul*. With the stringent prohibition of murder in both the Old and New Testament (Matt 10:28-31), we need only be concerned with bodily death and unquestionably abortion kills the body.

V. God’s Truth is the Way of Life

- A. Obedience to God brings life (Ps. 36:9; Prov. 3:1,2; 4:22-23; 6:23; 12:28; 13:14; Ezek. 33:14-15)
- B. Disobedience brings death (Deut. 30:19-20; Rom. 8:5,7; Eph. 4:18)
- C. God judges those who shed innocent blood; He is not complacent towards violence (Gen. 9:6; Ex. 20:13; Num. 35:33; Prov. 24:10,12)

VI. Related Issues

- A. Child abuse is an abomination to God (II Kings 17:16-20; Lev. 20:1-5; Jer. 32:35; Amos 1:13; Jer. 7:6; 22:3,17; Ex. 23:7; Prov. 6:16-17; Gen. 9:6; Ex. 20:13; Matt. 5:19,21; 18:10; 19:18; Rom. 1:29; Rev. 21:8; 22:15)
- B. We do not have an unqualified “right” to our own bodies (I Cor. 6:19-20)
- C. God has special concern for the infirm and the deformed (Is. 45:9,10; I Cor. 10:13; II Cor. 12:7-9; Eph. 2:10; 5:20)
- D. As all are sinners, God forgives those who have been involved in abortion (I John 1:9; Rom. 6:1-2; Gal. 6:1)
 - Comment:** Jesus Christ expects His Church to walk as He walked. He was confronted by a plethora of desperate situations, yet not once did He solve the problem by eliminating the person or by suggesting that he or she should not have been born (Matt. 5:14; 22:36-40; 25:37-40; John 8:31-32; 10:10; Rom. 12:2; I John 2:4-6).
- E. God’s concern extends to the unfortunate, the poor and the disenfranchised, born and unborn (Ex. 22:22-24; Deut. 27:19; Ps. 10:17-18; 41:1-2; 72:1-4; 140:12; Prov. 15:25; 17:5; 19:17; 31:8-9; Eccles. 4:1; Ezek. 16:48-50; Luke 6:20-25 and many, many more)

Food for Thought

by Valerie Protopapas

The following is a quote from the renowned lay theologian C.S. Lewis. In it, Lewis not only clearly indicates where our priorities must lie - the individual human being as opposed to "the masses" - but also that if we truly love in the way that God loves, we cannot, indeed we *must* not, tolerate deadly sins in our neighbor. That may seem to be the "loving", "Christian" thing to do, but in that such sins lead to the death of the sinner, to assuage ourselves with "good feelings" because we have failed to condemn such sins (and therefore have appeared very tolerant and loving) is in itself, a very serious sin - *especially* for those who have responsibility for the spiritual lives of their flock. Lewis, of course, does not speak of individuals condemning the sinner. However, he does point out that by our action - *or inaction* - we are helping others towards a particular end and all of our involvement with our fellow man should be with that fact in mind.

"It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare. All day long we are, in some degree, helping each other to one or other of those destinations. It is in the light of these

overwhelming possibilities, it is with the awe and the circumspection proper to this, that we should conduct all our dealings with one another, all friendships, all loves, all play, all politics. There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations - these are mortal, and their life to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub and exploit - immoral horrors or everlasting splendors. This does not mean that we are to be perpetually solemn. We must play. But our merriment must be of that kind (and it is, in fact, the merriest kind) which exists between people who have, from the outset, taken each other seriously - no flippancy, no superiority, no presumption. And our charity must be a real and costly love, with deep feeling for the sins in spite of which we love the sinner - no mere tolerance or indulgence which parodies love as flippancy parodies merriment. Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbor is the holiest object presented to your senses. If he is your Christian neighbor he is holy in almost the same way, for in him also Christ *vere latitat* - the glorifier and the glorified, Glory Himself, is truly hidden."

**Christ is Born,
Glorify Him!!!**

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From the Director's Desk

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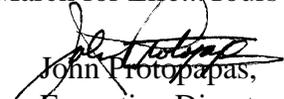
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