

Starosta's Corner 11-4-2018

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Forgive me for not writing more often, it has been a busy year both personally and for our church. We have done many projects and here are some of them. As you know the new gas line has been installed and the furnaces have been converted to use natural gas. The cost savings are probably close to \$5000 a year. The HVAC (heating, ventilation, Air conditioning) unit outside the altar had a new motor installed which cost approximately \$500 and both furnaces were given an inspection and tune up for the winter season. A new window has been installed in the kitchen that opens, to make it more comfortable when our ladies are cooking. The maintenance building was cleaned out and organized to better utilize our space. Our big generator has been fixed - it needed new breaker circuits. New electrical wiring and circuits were installed in the maintenance building. Used Commercial Refrigerators and freezers were bought at a great discount to use for our festivals. The annual Russian Festival was again a great success, both financially and for providing a wonderful community and family event. Many people have made this a yearly event that they come to, and many people came for the first time. What a great way to let people experience a new culture and share in the love of our parish! The last project completed was our lovely cemetery. I know many of you have been wanting one for over 10 years. We finally have made it a reality, I am really happy with how good it looks and that all have the ability to now buy a plot or more for ourselves and family. You can contact Father Gregory, Konstantin or myself to purchase space in the cemetery.

Now on to new projects. The church school has been approved, and due to the support of many of our members the financing is in place. We welcome anyone else that would like to contribute to this worthy cause. Being a parent is a big responsibility, and many are troubled with the current choices available to them. If we want to change the world we have to have a place where our children are taught good morals and a quality education. Our new school will be a blessing not only for the

children and their families, but for all of us.

The last thing I want to say is about our church. I am so blessed that God guided me to St. Vladimir. I was for a long time in my life separated from God. I never stopped believing in or loving God, but I was not close to Him. I was on a road to damnation - money, success and self indulgence were my focus. I saw many heartaches but foolishly thought I didn't need any help, that I could do it all by myself. Let me tell you that was the evil one taking me down the path to Hell. Fortunately our God is a loving and merciful Father. What people call tragedy I finally learned was actually a call from God to seek His help. The last tragedy I endured humbled me, and finally I prayed to god for his help. I started to read the word of God, our Holy Bible. I ask for Him to guide me and always be with me. Now I understand He never left me, He never stopped trying to help me. It was my pride and thoughts that fooled me into the delusion that I needed no help. After turning back to God and asking His forgiveness, I was given so many blessings and a life that before I could only dream of. The reason I am telling you this, is that I want you to see how much God loves us all. That God gives us everything, and it is only right that we give to his church to support the good works done for Him. That is why I am asking all if you to support financially our church through tithing. The Bible calls us to give 10% of what God freely gives to us. I understand now that all that I have is only through the Grace of God, and all that He asks of us is one tenth. One tenth for our salvation, for allowing the Church to help others in need and for the salvation of others. Please give this some thought and think is it possible to give 10 % or more if your able to for your salvation and the salvation of others. We have weekly expenses that are approximately \$3600 and our weekly collections are sometimes as little as only \$1100. It is only through the Grace of God and the tithes of the parishioners that we are able to meet our obligations.

Thank you and God bless you all.

Jack (Alexy) Mitchell