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**ORTHODOX PARISH OF ST AIDAN  
 AND ST CHAD NOTTINGHAM**



**NEWSLETTER**

**Mar – Apr 2019 : Cost £1.00**



The Prayer of Saint Ephraim the Syrian  
 O Lord and Master of my life  
 Give me not a spirit of idleness despondency,  
 ambition or vain talking.,  
 But rather a spirit of purity, humility, patience, and love  
 Bestow on me Thy servant.  
 Yea, O Lord and King!  
 Grant me to see my own faults and not to judge my brother,  
 For blessed art Thou to the ages of ages. Amen  
*Venerated on Cheese Fare Saturday*

## THE PARISH OF ST AIDAN AND ST CHAD, NOTTINGHAM

Worshipping in the Church of St Aidan,

Arnold Road, Basford, NG6 0DN

**Rector:** Revd Fr David Gill 0115-9622351

**Priest:** Julian Lowe 0115-9780574

**Deacon:** Ian Thompson 01724-337521

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## Deanery Conference & Festival 2019

Conference details: see back cover.

Message from the organisers:

Applications: This year, we have updated the form and (hopefully) made it easier for everyone, especially families with children. There's one form to fill now, asking only very important information about each person.

Apply online or by mail. If you are unable to download the application forms, hard copy can be obtained from Frances

### OUR LIFE: Late entry: Gift Day, 2018

At our annual Gift Day, we raised £ 502 which is earmarked for The Friary, West Bridgford, a charity helping the homeless and the financially disadvantaged. Many thanks to all who donated.

Father David

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Photo by Candy: an icon in the chapel in the concentration camp remembering those who suffered



CALENDAR MARCH – APRIL 2019		
<b>MARCH</b>		
Sat 2	Saturday of Souls Sunday of the Last Judgement	Vespers 5.00pm Followed by Social
<b>Sun 3</b>	Sunday of Meatfare St David of Wales, St Chad of Lichfield	<b>Liturgy 12.00 noon</b> <b>St Aidans</b>
Sat 9	Commemoration of monks and nuns Forgiveness Saturday	No Liturgy in St Leo's Vespers 5.00pm in St Aidans
<b>Sun 10</b>	<b>FORGIVENESS SUNDAY</b> Sunday of Cheesefare Expulsion of Adam	<b>Liturgy 12.00.noon</b> <b>St Aidans</b>
	<b>First week of Great Lent</b>	
Mon 11	Great Canon of St Andrew	Great Compline 7.00pm
Tues 12	Great Canon of St Andrew	Great Compline 7.00pm
Thurs 14	Great Canon of St Andrew	Great Compline 7.00pm
Sat 16	First Sunday of Great Lent	No vigil. Clergy in London
<b>Sun 17</b>	<b>Sunday of Orthodoxy</b> St Patrick, Bishop of Armagh	<b>Liturgy 12.00 noon</b> Procession of icons
Fri 22	St Cuthbert of Lindisfarne St Cyril of Jerusalem	Liturgy of Presanctified 7.00pm
Sat 23	Saturday of Souls	5.00 Fr David's chapel
<b>Sun 24</b>	<b>2nd Sunday of Great Lent</b> St Gregory Palamas, Forefeast, Annunciation	<b>Liturgy 12.00 noon</b> 7.00pm vigil Fr David's chapel
Mon 25th	The Annunciation of our Most Holy Lady	<b>10.00am Liturgy</b>
Fri 29	Synaxis of the Angel Gabriel	Liturgy of Presanctified 7.00pm
Sat 30	Saturday of Souls	Vigil 5.00pm in St Aidans
<b>Sun 31</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Great Lent Veneration of the Cross St Innocent, Apostle to the Americas.	<b>10.30 Liturgy</b>



### FATHER DAVID'S LETTER

**O Lord and Master of my life.....**

On the Sunday of Ten Lepers (20 January), Fr Julian spoke of this encounter recorded in the Gospel of St Luke. There were ten men suffering from leprosy who came to Our Lord asking for healing, 'Jesus, Master', they cried 'have mercy on us!' Jesus saw them and said to them, 'Go, show yourselves to the priests.' They obeyed, and were cleansed. They came to Christ; they cried out for mercy. Jesus saw them and told them what to do. They obeyed and they were cleansed of the fearful disease from which they suffered.

The nine went their way and only one, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at Jesus feet, giving Him thanks.

Here is illustrated the pattern of complete healing, the wholeness which we all seek. The nine were cleansed of their physical illness but the one who returned was given complete healing, total wholeness. Why? because he realised that he was cleansed, and with a loud voice he glorified God, he returned, he fell down at Jesus' feet and thanked Him. As Fr Julian pointed out, five actions on the part of the nine brought about partial healing, another five actions by the one, brought about complete healing.

We too should heed that coming to our Lord acknowledging Him as Master of our Life, crying out for His mercy and being so attentive that we are able to obey and enter into new life means we are on the right

path. Then to complete this we have to have a deep realisation of God's action in our life, an ability to be close to Him, to glorify Him, to keep close to him in humility, even at His feet, giving heartfelt gratitude and thanks. It is in this intimacy that we become totally transformed into Christlikeness and healed.

As we enter Great Lent on 11th March, here is a good model to keep us on the right path. We seek full healing and transformation to bring us to the glorious experience of Pascha. We seek not partial healing but total healing of our life in Christ. Lent gives us an opportunity to take stock and see how much we have fallen away from God over the past year and where we fall short. All our Lenten endeavour is to put things right. We are not seeking healing from leprosy but we cry out for God's mercy, His love in action, to enable us to see where we fall short, to be aware of our sinfulness and to hope to enter more deeply into His loving care so that every day of our life is filled with His presence, This is what our fasting, abstinence, prayer and almsgiving is all about. But we must be careful that the hope we have is not frustrated. Metropolitan Anthony used to point out, that it is easy to get stuck in a thorough pious observation of all that the Church provides, be it beautiful music and singing, or inspiring rituals, even fasting. All of this is good, but we must go beyond, and break through to what is beyond. The beauty of our Liturgy, so important in Orthodox Worship, is there to enable us to move into a real closeness to God in Christ Jesus. Without this union with Him, in our prayer and worship, we are stuck in a partial experience, a partial healing when it is a complete transformation and healing which we seek and desire. Yes, we can say diligently the prayer of St Ephrem:

*O Lord and Master of my Life. Take from me the spirit of sloth, faint heartedness, lust for power and idle talk,*

*But rather give the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love to Thy servant.*

*O Lord and King, grant me to see my own faults, and not to condemn my brother and sister.*

*For blessed art thou unto ages of ages.*

<b>APRIL</b>	<b>From April all services in St Aidans, unless indicated elsewhere</b>	
Fri 5	St Mary of Egypt Mark the Anchorite	Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts 7.00pm
Sat 6	Saturday of Souls	Vespers 5.00pm
<b>Sun 7</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Great Lent</b> St John Climacus	<b>Liturgy 12 noon</b>
Fri 12	Akathist of the Holy Mother of God	Matins and Akathist 7.00pm
Sat 13	Saturday Akathist	<b>St Leo's Liturgy 10.00am</b> Vigil 5.00pm St Aidan's
<b>Sun 14</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Great Lent</b>	<b>Liturgy 12 noon</b>
Sat 20	Lazarus Saturday	Vigil 5.00pm
<b>Sun 21</b>	<b>Palm Sunday</b> Entry into Jerusalem	<b>Liturgy 12 noon</b> <b>Procession of Palms</b>
Wed 24	Great and Holy Wednesday	Matins and Anointing 7.00pm
<b>Thurs 25</b>	Washing of feet The 12 Passion gospels Matins	<b>9.00am Liturgy and washing of feet.</b> <b>7.00pm Matins</b>
Fri 26	<b>GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY</b>	<b>3.00pm Vespers and Procession of the Shroud</b>
<b>Sat 27</b>	<b>Great and Holy Saturday</b>  <b>HOLY PASCHA</b>	<b>9.00am Vespers Liturgy</b> <b>10pm midnight Office</b> <b>10.30pm Paschal Matins</b> <b>11.30pm LITURGY</b>
<b>Mon 29</b>	Bright Monday	11.00am Paschal Matins
<b>MAY</b>		
Sat 4	<b>Second Sunday of Pascha</b>	Vespers 5.00pm
<b>Sun 5</b>	St Thomas Sunday	<b>Liturgy 12 noon</b>
<b>Tues 7</b>	Commemoration of the Dead	Radonitsa. <b>Tuesday 7th May 2019 at 11.40 am</b>
Sat 18	<b>Fourth Sunday of Pascha</b>	Vespers 5.00pm
<b>Sun 19</b>	St Alcuin of York St Dunstan of Canterbury	<b>Liturgy 12 noon</b>

## Oddments

Open water swimming is much more fun than a hotel pool but you do have to choose your spot!



But alongside this in all our Lenten observances, we have to allow God's blessings to enter fully into our life. We have to glorify God, fall on our knees in prayer at Jesus feet and give Him thanks for His wonderful love, His selfless self-giving on the Cross and His saving Grace so generously bestowed upon us.

We may arrive at Pascha, after diligent observance of Lent but without a changed heart, without a new lease of life, without an ability to enter into the Joy of Resurrection because our life has not changed enough, our heart is still waiting for a breakthrough. On the other hand, we might come at the eleventh hour in repentance, humility, sadness the we have not been more diligent, and yet we are able to glorify God, to be grateful for His mercy, and to rejoice in His blessing of acceptance. Our cry for mercy has been blessed by Christ, we have understood this and we have been filled with humility and joy. With this freedom, beyond our pious observance, a freedom only given by God, we shall truly be able to enter into the wholeness of our baptism life, having put on Christ, and now being transformed into His likeness in the joyful Resurrection of Christ Our Lord.

May you all have an enabling Great Lent and a truly joyful and heart warming experience of Resurrection.

Fr David

## OUR LIFE

**Theophany;**As usual, a special time for quiet reflection and prayer at the end to the busy Christmas season. After the Liturgy served by Fr Julian and Fr Dn Ian, the Great Blessing of the Waters was performed. Please remember that there is a stock of this blessed water in the Church. Please bring your bottle to be refilled or filled for the first time. It is good to sprinkle the House and garden from time to time to keep the blessing of your homes in good order.

## Extraordinary General Assembly of the Archdiocese ( EGA):

There will be an Extraordinary meeting of the Assembly of the Archdiocese in Paris on Saturday 23 February to discuss the future

arrangements for the Archdiocese following Patriarch Bartholomew's intention that we would be better served as local groups under the direction of the local Greek Metropolitan in each area. On Sunday, 3 February, we held an Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish to discuss this and share views. At the end of the Liturgy, Fr David outlined the situation and the possible options to consider. The Archdiocesan Council has appointed a Commission to explore all options and will report to the EGA on 23 February. After a break for refreshment, we reconvened and had a very fruitful and thorough review of the situation to which all present contributed. Useful views were expressed which will inform our delegates for the EGA; Fr David, Fr Julian, Tina Lowe. Unfortunately, none of the other three appointed lay delegates alternates are available to attend. Please pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit and for good amicable discussions and good decisions to be made at this important EGA.

**Fr David** has suffered ill health in recent times and has been taking a restful back seat in the life of the Parish during January and February. He is making a good recovery but with advice he should be more attentive to his health, slow down and be less adventurous. He wishes to thank all for their care, help and offers of help, prayers and respect for his solitude.

**Eucharistic Community in Leeds:** Fr Julian has been able to travel to Leeds and serve the regular monthly Liturgy in January and February. This has been greatly appreciated and our special thanks to Tina for providing transport. The Community continues to thrive although there are few students attending these days. The singing is excellent lead by Dr Maria Marples and it is always a good and jolly gathering. David Ephram Berry, an Orthodox Christian and former Anglican priest is assistant chaplain and his work in the University and Chaplaincy is proving to be very fruitful. Fr David has been Orthodox Chaplain for the two Universities for 20+ years but, of course, he has only been able to be present one weekend each month. The Eucharist

## **St. John the Baptist**

The glorious Prophet and Forerunner John the Baptist is also referred to as John the Forerunner because he was the forerunner of Christ. He was an ascetic and great prophet, who baptised Christ and became one of the most revered saints in the Orthodox Church. John is a cousin of Christ through his mother Elizabeth who was the daughter of Zoia. Zoia is the sister of Christ's grandmother. He was later beheaded by Herod in the first century to satisfy the request of Herod's stepdaughter, Salome, and wife Herodias. Because he baptised Christ, he is the patron saint of godparents. He is sometimes called the Angel of the Desert; because of this title, he is sometimes depicted with wings

His birth took place six months before that of Jesus, and according to the Gospel account was expected by prophecy (Matt. 3:3; Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1) and foretold by an angel. Zacharias lost his power of speech because of his unbelief over the birth of his son, and had it restored on the occasion of John's circumcision (Luke 1:64).

John was a Nazarite from his birth (Luke 1:15; Num. 6:1-12) and his birth took place six months before that of Jesus. He spent his early years in the mountainous tract of Judea lying between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea (Matt. 3:1-12). As an adult John led a simple life and started to preach in public, and people from "every quarter" were attracted to his message. The essence of his preaching was the necessity of repentance and turning away from selfish pursuits

Jesus himself testified regarding John that he was a "burning and a shining light" (John 5:35). John was the last of the Old Testament prophets, thus serving as a bridge figure between that period of revelation and Jesus. They also embrace a tradition that, following his death, John descended into Hell and there once more preached that Jesus the Messiah was coming. Jesus said, "Among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist" (Mt 11:11).

**Fr Julian**

huge language barrier some of the local people were very friendly and showed us some of their customs; for example, the women were making cheese pancakes for Pascha which were wrapped and placed into a bed to rise!

One of the church services in Great Week involved a procession around the streets and as we joined in the shuffling through our younger daughter's hair caught briefly alight in the flame of a candle, causing a moment of panic as we pounced on her to put it out.

Janet

Janet (now Joanna) and Stephen Shaw used to be members of our parish but moved away. Now they are members of the Walsall parish.

### The Nine Ranks – Part 2 The Proskomedia



Having removed 'The Lamb' from the first loaf, and the particle signifying the Mother of God from the second, the Priest then prepares the third loaf.

From this loaf are taken nine smaller triangular particles in commemoration of the various ranks of saints. There are some differences between the Greek and the Slavic texts as to which particular saints

are named, but the intent is that all of the saints are included. Saint John the Forerunner and the Patron Saint of the church or monastery are always named. The number nine was chosen because that is the traditional number of the ranks of angels.

These nine particles are placed to the left of the Lamb (i.e., to the priest's right, as he looks down on the diskos).

*(The priest removes a particle and places it on the left side of the 'Lamb' making it the first particle of the first column, saying "Of the honoured and glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist, John")*

Community meeting in the University is an outpost of our Parish in Nottingham.

**Use of St Leo's:** Fr Julian has served the Liturgy in St Leo's on the second Saturday of most months and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. This attracts a small gathering but the traditional prayerful atmosphere and a different setting is appreciated and there is a request for this to continue. It is also good to use St Leo's from time to time.

This also means that we now have a celebration of the Holy Liturgy on three or four weekends every month now that we have two priests; First, Third and Fifth Sundays in St Aidan's, Second Saturday in St Leo's.

### Faith Enrichment Meetings

We will be holding a weekly 'on Mondays during Lent. The focus of these meetings will be 'Almsgiving', what it really means, and why it is a vitally important aspect of our Lenten preparation and our Orthodox life in general.

**After Vespers on Mar 2<sup>nd</sup>** there is to be a get-together with our St Aidan hosts. There is to be a bring and share meal followed by a quiz.

This gathering is a follow-on from Fr Julian's talk on Orthodoxy to our hosts and although we do some things differently we have lots of things in common. One thing we do appreciate is the welcome, help and friendship that has been shown to us.

**This next entry** has come about because of the report in our Jan/Feb newsletter of the kind Greek man who had a win on the football pools and used some of his money to buy new shoes for needy children in his village. The Dead Sea Scrolls do have some relevance here. Read on!

**The Scrolls:** These were written between 300BC-100AD and discovered in 1946-47.

They are Jewish and Hebrew manuscripts which were found in caves near the Dead Sea. The scrolls included 225 biblical texts of which 39 were from the Psalms and 33 from Deuteronomy. The documents are now owned by the Government of the State of Israel and most are housed in the grounds of the Israel Museum.

The initial discovery in 1946 was by Dhib, a Bedouin shepherd. His cousin had pointed out the cave to him but it was Dhib who went off to explore it. After a scramble he managed to retrieve a handful of scrolls which he took home to show his family. Whilst deciding what to do with his find he hung them on a tentpole but they came to no harm. Dhib took them to a dealer in Bethlehem who said they were worthless and probably had been stolen from a synagogue. Undaunted, Dhib took them to a nearby market where a Syrian Christian offered to buy them but suggested that they should go together to ask Kando to have a look at them. Kando was a cobbler and part-time antiques dealer.....

Reader Simon at our host church of St Aidan takes over the story:

Kando was intrigued and sent them back to the cave to search for more treasures

To his delight, they returned with a total of seven scrolls. Blind to their real value, Dhib sold four of the seven scrolls to Kando. He was asked to name his price but all that he requested was a pair of new sandals; previously his had always been second-hand. He received his new sandals and some money.

Dhib was not interested in the money as his needs were simple and he now had everything he wanted. Kando resold the four scrolls to Archbishop Samuel, head of the Syrian Orthodox Monastery of St. Mark in Jerusalem and told the authorities that there were plenty more scrolls where these came from.

As Charles Spurgeon said, "*It is not how much we have, but how much we enjoy, that makes happiness.*" Dhib knew how much enjoyment

All day on Good Friday the bells of the church chimed dolefully. During the twelve o'clock service the 'taking down from the cross' took place. The shroud was moved from the altar and laid in the decorated epitafios (canopy). Later in the evening there was procession of the epitafios in the streets accompanied by the local philharmonic band, the dignitaries of the town, the singers, the priests and bishop and soldiers to honour it.

On Good Saturday night after the first chime of the bell we went to church for Christ's Resurrection. At twelve o'clock the priests announced 'Christ is Risen!' and the bells rang joyfully. We exchanged the kiss of love between us. We were proudly holding our lighted candles and all held a red egg to crack with each other. Later on we returned home to have a special meal. There were also lots of fireworks which increased the excitement of the occasion.

On Easter day the whole family aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents used to sit around the table to have the Easter meal; we had a variety of different food, especially roast lamb with all the trimmings and drinks and we were cracking the red eggs between us. Later in the afternoon all the children of the community were in church to see the bishop who distributed to all of us a red egg and a cookie and blessed us.

The service was very nice and we were amused because the priests were reading the gospel in twelve different languages that we didn't understand.

My Easter childhood memories are very happy, and now I can reminisce and call to mind all the beloved relatives who have passed away and the joyful time we had as brothers and sisters.

Athena

### **Holy Week In Cyprus**

We were the first tourists to stay in Ohmodos in the Trudos mountains in 1993 and were a source of great interest to the villagers. Despite the

I actually re-enacted such a walk a hundred years later, bringing a lit Easter candle home from church across the whole of Geneva, where my granddaughter was born. She was named Varvara after her great-great-grandmother. The “candle walk” was indeed a challenge, but I shared the experience with my long-gone grandparents, and it felt really good.

Olga

### **Easter holidays in Greece – Childhood Memories**

Easter holidays were the most exciting time for us as children.

We used to have a two weeks’ holiday from school and waited impatiently for Holy Week which was the most exciting time for all children.

During Holy week we used to go to church in the early evening for the services, and it was the week that we were fasting, having to eat very different varieties of food.

We were excited waiting for Thursday because it was the day that my mother used to dye the eggs red to use them for Easter. She also baked a lot of various Easter cakes. The most traditional sweet is the Tsoureki with a red egg in the middle. It is a custom referring back to Byzantium.

For Easter we always had nice Spring clothes and white shoes to wear to go to church.

On Thursday after the evening service my sister, my younger brother, my mother and I stayed all night in church for the decoration of the Epitaphios. We were helping to prepare the beautiful flowers to be ready for the decoration. The flowers were in general white, roses, carnations, and violets.

We had as Easter presents from our godparents a beautiful white candle decorated with a lot of ribbons, baubles and flowers and a red Easter egg full of various sweets and chocolates.

his “new” sandals would bring. As Francis of Assisi said, “*simplicity confounds all the wisdom of this world and the wisdom of the flesh.*”

Simon Toplis

As Gandhi said: ‘*Learn to differentiate between the essentials and non-essentials of life.*’

Times were hard in the 1940s: war, shortages, rationing and bombing. Life was not easy for anybody but at least children had freedom to play outside or go off exploring on their own. There were no social pressures on teenagers to stay connected to the media or to be slaves to fashion. Few suffered from allergies; self-harming was unheard of and the teenage cult did not exist until about 1950. Social media and ‘must haves’ are now high on the pyramid of needs. Have we lost something along the way?

### **Candy Charters’ poignant visit**

#### **Remembering the Holocaust - A very special church in Dachau**

The most significant church that I have ever seen was also the tiniest. And I wasn’t even able to go inside it.

Last autumn, when we were travelling around Germany, we stayed in Dachau, just outside Munich, for a few days.

We decided to go to visit the concentration camp there. It was a beautiful day, and it felt strange to be wandering around in this place where so many people had suffered so greatly.

We came to a tiny Russian Orthodox chapel, one of several religious memorials to Dachau’s role in the Holocaust. Sadly, it was locked. But I looked in, and saw the most wonderful mural or icon. Christ is standing in front of a host of the people who had suffered and died in the camp. I don’t know whether the picture which I took from outside the chapel can show people properly how moving it is. It was a chapel

dedicated to the Resurrection, and it felt more liberating and hopeful than any other place that I have ever visited.

*This icon is shown on the inside back cover*

### **Easter Traditions**

A Greek student once said to me, ‘I can’t get over all the decorations and celebrations that go on around Christmas. Whatever do you do at Easter?’ The answer is that here our top celebration is the Nativity whereas in other countries it is the Resurrection. As a child, I remember Good Friday being a very mournful day with most shops closed apart from shops selling fresh fish and these were busy. Easter Sunday was not totally joyful as the Easter lilies which decorated the chancel in the local church were all bought by parishioners in memory of someone dear to them and there seemed to be more emphasis on death rather than resurrection.

Frances

### **Easter in Russia**

One might argue which event is more important, the birth of Jesus Christ or His resurrection. In the Russian orthodox tradition, as far as I know, Easter has been celebrated at a somewhat greater scale than Christmas. It is so, perhaps, because it happens in Spring, at the return of warmth and awakening of nature after a long cold winter. The end of Lent is another reason for jubilation: in Russia it lasts for 49 days and reduces one to a vegan diet. During my childhood and adolescence Easter was always special and church related, while Christmas somewhat mingled with the New Year, and was more about the decorated spruce tree, Grandfather Frost (Russian Santa) and presents.

Both holidays were certainly non-official. Born after the death of Stalin, my generation did not put their lives at risk celebrating church holidays, which was the case with my parents’ generation. Being reported as believers, however, could seriously damage one’s career. And yet everyone knew about Easter and its attributes – painted eggs,

tall sponge cakes “kulichi” and pyramids made of sweet curd called “pas-kha” (often mispronounced here as “pasha” with the fricative sh). I still have a set of wooden boards used by Grandma to shape Paskha, and mould curd pyramids every year at Easter.

I was brought up in a religious family where God was part of life, like daylight or the weather. My parents skilfully introduced me to double speak at a very early age: I knew that my belief in God was a very personal and somewhat secret thing, not to be talked about outside home. Mum and Dad were not visibly engaged in any religious activities, but my grandparents were avid church goers. In fact, Granddad told me that religion had saved him in the Siberian lumber camps of GULAG, where he had served a twelve-year sentence under false accusations.

I certainly did not keep Lent as a school girl (that could have aroused unwanted questions), but I did take part in home feasts that happened after my Granddad returned from the Easter service late at night. He would return at about 2 am, and I was in bed, asleep, though fully dressed in a nice frock in the anticipation of a festive event. Grandma would gently wake me up asking whether I would like to sit down at the table with the rest of the family. Of course, I did. The table looked lovely: a white starched cloth, brightly painted eggs (I took part in making them), tall cakes, Paskha pyramids with candles, platters of cooked beef, ham and cheese, meat pies, sweet red wine in shiny cut glass. And stories! My Grandparents were great story tellers, and I loved the tales of their childhood. For example, a story of Grandma Varvara about her walk home from the Easter night service, as a small girl, in the company of friends and family. Each of them carried a candle lit in the church, and the trick was to bring it home sheltering the little flame from the wind. That was quite a challenge and quite an adventure!