

Pastor's Corner

Following Christ means total commitment

BY FR. THEOPHAN BUCK

Over this last year I have been in the chaotic, tiring and expensive process of remodeling my house. One of the things that is interesting about do-it-yourself remodelers is that they suffer from a certain delusion about how much time, effort and money a project will actually take. Over and over again I found myself underestimating the workload and expense and even though time and time again I was proved wrong, somehow the delusion stuck: "The next project will take less time and less money." In the Gospel of Luke

chapter 14 our Lord addresses the multitudes, saying "whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple." In verse 28 Jesus goes on to say "For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it, lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to

finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish?'"

The above quoted passage from Luke should

challenge those who consider themselves Christians. In our modern times following Christ has often been presented in overly simplistic terms. One only has to look at the billboards that apparently want us to make a quick (eternal fire insurance) decision about "Heaven or Hell." In other places Christianity is presented as a religion of self-help, confirming the statement made by Karl Marx: "Religion is the opiate of the people."

Christ does not ask us merely to make a decision, or to simply believe in Him, confess Him or to simply be moral and go to church. Jesus did not come to provide us with eternal fire insurance or to help us adjust

so that we could be "happy" in the sense that most of us would understand. However, Jesus did come to save us and heal us, but the Gospel is clear that although salvation is freely offered, following Christ comes with a heavy "price." The Apostle Paul with his proud Hebrew lineage tells us in Philippians 3, "I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ."

What a paradox, our Lord wants us to take on His light yoke (Matt.11:30), and yet He tells us "whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My dis-

ciple" (Luke 14:33). Let us not be delusional about our following of Christ. "Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever." He does not want a small segment of our lives that we are willing to painlessly give Him. He does not want our "leftovers" or to be given a mere 10 percent of our lives. He does not want us to simply make a decision and move on with our lives. Our Lord is clear; He wants 100 percent of our lives. He wants us to find our entire life in Him and to be willing in exchange to give our entire life to Him. This is the Gospel challenge presented to us.

Let us take a serious look at our Christian walk. Let us not be delu-

sional, thinking that the following of Christ is easy and will not cost us. Everything of eternal value requires great effort. Being Christian has never been easy. May God bless us to embrace, to pick up, our own crosses that we may build on the foundation of our decision and belief and truly follow the "narrow" way of the Gospel which leads to salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Father Theophan Buck is the rector of St. Innocent Orthodox Church in Bolingbroke. E-mail him at theophan60@gmail.com. The Pastor's Corner is sponsored by the Monroe County Ministerial Association



Fr. Theophan Buck

Bethany Baptist team completes Honduras mission



Team Honduras from Bethany Baptist Church in Bolingbroke traveled to Orphanage Emmanuel in Guaimaca, Honduras to work with the children. The Christian orphanage houses almost 600 abused and abandoned children. Pictured are, left to right, front, Kala Barrett, Miranda Barrentine, Gary Kornegay, Laura Garner, Rebecca Winget, Anna Claire Smith, Chancie Martin; middle, Joshua Huff, Hunter Martin, Willie Shelton, Mike Wingit, Josh Shepherd, Anna Beth Shepherd, Judy Kornegay; top, Harvey Appling, Rev. Jimmy Corbitt.

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Revival Services

Aug. 11-14 Brown Chapel Baptist

The Brown Chapel Baptist Church will celebrate its annual homecoming service on Sunday, Aug. 11. Pastor Edgar Slaughter will deliver the word at the 11 a.m. service, and Rev. Prince H. Morgan and the Mt. Olive Baptist Church of Monticello will conduct the 2 p.m. service. Revival services will be Monday-Wednesday, Aug. 12-14, each night at 7:30 p.m. The revivalist will be Pastor David Stanley of the Union Baptist Church of Macon.

Mt. Pleasant Baptist

Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church will celebrate its annual homecoming services on Sunday, Aug. 11 at 11 a.m. The pastor, Rev. Hosie Waters, will bring the message. Monday-Wednesday, Aug. 12-14, annual revival services will begin nightly at 7:30 p.m. The speaker for the week will be Rev. Dr. I.E. Mack, pastor of Unionville Baptist Church, Macon.

Coleman Clark AME

Coleman Clark AME Church, Hwy 42 North, Forsyth, will celebrate homecoming on Sunday, Aug. 11 at 12 p.m. Richard Chambliss Sr. is pastor. Revival services will be Monday-

Wednesday, Aug. 12-14, at 7:30 p.m. The guest speaker is Rev. Shawn Drains of Williams Chapel AME Church and St. Paul AME Church Smarr.

St. Paul Missionary Baptist

Rev. Rufus Whatley and the St. Paul Missionary Baptist invite everyone to worship and praise the Lord on Sunday, Aug. 11, as we observe our annual homecoming day service at 11:30 a.m. Our pastor, Rev. Rufus Whatley will be delivering the message. Revival will be Monday-Wednesday, Aug. 12-14, starting at 7:30 p.m. nightly. Rev. Jeremy Head of the Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church in Jackson will be the guest minister for the revival. Everyone is invited to come and worship with us.

Aug. 18-23 Orange Grove Baptist

Orange Grove Baptist will have homecoming on Sunday Aug. 18, at 2:30 pm. The guest speaker will be Rev. Greg Tyler of Macedonia Baptist Church, Griffin. Revival services will be Monday, Aug. 19 - Friday, Aug. 23 at 7:30 p.m. nightly. There will be various guest speakers.

Aug. 18, 21-23 Williams Chapel AME

The Williams Chapel A.M.E. Church, 9818 Zebulon Road Forsyth, will host its annual homecoming celebration on Aug. 18, at 2:30 p.m. The speaker will be Rev. Michael Ephram, pastor of St. Peter A. M. E. Church of Fort Valley. Music will be provided by the G4 Gospel Singers (previously known as the Goodman Family.)

Revival will be Wednesday, Aug. 21 through Friday, Aug. 23. The speaker will be Rev. Jimmy Lyons, pastor of East Mt. Sinai Baptist Church of Barnesville and Friendship Baptist Church of Thomaston. Services begin nightly at 7:30 p.m.

Aug. 20-22 Tessie Hall Baptist

The Tessie Hall Baptist Church family invites everyone to annual revival services Aug. 20-22 at 7:30 p.m. nightly. The Rev. Randy Paschal, pastor of Calvary Hill Missionary Baptist Church, Irwinton will be the guest minister.

Aug. 20-25 Parker's Chapel AME

Parker's Chapel AME Church, 5744 Hwy 83 South, Culloden will

have revival services Tuesday-Thursday, Aug. 20-22 at 7:30 p.m. nightly. On Tuesday, the guest speaker will be Rev. B.R. Fulton of New Macedonia Baptist Church, Culloden; on Wednesday, the guest speaker will be Rev. Jahmmar Pye of Forsyth Parrish, Forsyth; on Thursday, the guest speaker will be Rev. Ezekiel Powers of Mathloma, McDonough. Homecoming will be Sunday, Aug. 25 at 2:30 p.m. The guest speaker will be Rev. Michael Davis of St. Phillip AME Church, Culloden. Dinner will be served.

Aug. 25-29 Wrights Grove Baptist

The Wrights Grove Baptist Church family invites everyone to homecoming celebration as we return to our home at 3056 Old Atlanta Highway (Highway 41), Forsyth on Sunday, Aug. 25, at 11 a.m. with our pastor Henry D. Leonard Sr. delivering the word of God. Three nights of revival will follow, Tuesday, Aug. 27 - Thursday, Aug. 29 at 7 p.m. each night. Revivalist will be Pastor Shawn Jones of New Thing Empowerment Church of Auburn, Ala. Note beginning date & time change for revival.

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