

SAINTS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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November 12, 2006

SUNDAY/NOV. 12th

22nd Sunday After Pentecost (Tone 5);

St. John the Merciful of Alexandria

9:10a.m. 3rd and 6th Hours

9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy; Coffee Hour;
Church School - Young Class;
Teen Discussion

MONDAY/NOV. 13th

7:00p.m. Memorial for Peter Chabra

TUESDAY/NOV. 14th

7:00p.m. Compline and Akathist to St. Paisius
of Moldavia

WEDNESDAY/NOV. 15th

Beginning of 40 Day Nativity Fast;

St. Paisius of Moldavia

9:10a.m. 3rd and 6th Hours

9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

7-8:30p.m. Adult Study Class: "How Life,
Movement and Will are Christified"

THURSDAY/NOV. 16th

7:00p.m. Parish Council Meeting – as always,
parishioners are invited to attend

SATURDAY/NOV. 18th

9:30a.m. Akathist; Confession

2:30p.m. Church School - Older Class

5:30p.m. Vigil; Confession

SUNDAY/NOV. 19th

23rd Sunday After Pentecost (Tone 6);

St. Philaret of Moscow; Prophet Obidiah

9:10a.m. 3rd and 6th Hours

9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy; Coffee Hour

The 40 Day Nativity Lent:

November 15th to December 25th

The Feast of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ is majestically celebrated on the 25th of December. In this feast we rejoice, that "God became man, that man might become god."

The First Coming of the Lord into the world was carefully prepared for. Salvation history tells us about the Patriarchs, the Law, the Prophets and St. John the Baptist and the Ever-Virgin Mary. In the fullness of time, Christ was born in Bethlehem.

As we again approach the feast of the Nativity of Christ, we need in our own personal salvific history, to make sincere and meaningful spiritual preparation, and needed changes.

The 40 Day Lent is given to us as a time for fasting, growth in prayer, repentance, and increasing the bond of love by good works. The 40 Days are not the time for parties and the cheers of holiday celebration. A spiritual feast is held – fast free – from December 25th to January 4th. These are the proper days of celebration, not before December 25th.

St. Gregory the Theologian writes: "Let us keep the feast, not after the manner of a pagan festival, but in a godly way. Not after the way of this world, but in the fashion of the world above. Not as something our own, but as that which belongs to Him Who is ours, or rather, as our Master's. Not as of weakness, but as healing. Not as of creation, but of re-creation."

Let us enter the Nativity Lent strong in our resolve to make the 40 days blessed, so as to greet the Nativity Feast in purity of heart and abounding in righteousness.



GUIDELINES FOR RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION

The Orthodox Church sets certain guidelines for members to prepare themselves for the joyous partaking of Holy Communion. These are:

1. Attendance at Church services the night before Liturgy.
2. Observance of the fasting regulations of the Church.
3. A recent confession of sins and absolution from a priest.
4. Fasting from all food, drink (including water), and smoking from midnight on the day which Holy Communion is to be received.
NOTE: One should not fast from medications, or food or drink recommended by a doctor.
5. Abstinence from sexual relations the night before Liturgy and on the day of receiving Holy Communion.
6. Reading of the appointed prayers before and after receiving Holy Communion.

Questions or special circumstances? Please speak with your priest.

Helping A Mission to Grow

Christ the Savior Mission on Fenwick Is. in Delaware is six years old. To help them a little, we have agreed to sell their natural candles. A table is set up in the lower hall with a variety of candles and wax melt/tarts. Your offering may be placed in the basket on the table. For more information on the mission, see their website: www.orthodoxdelmarva.org.

About our Children: Counsels of the Elder Epiphanius

Speak more to God about your children than to your children about God. The soul of the teenager is in a state of a freedom of explosion. For this reason he has a hard time accepting various counsels. So, rather than counseling him continuously and reproaching him now and again, leave the situation to Christ and the Mother of God, and to the saints, asking them to bring him to reason.

Parents should love their children as their children and not as their idols. That is to say, they should love their children as they are and not how they would like them to be, that is, to be like them.

Select Commentary on Psalm 118 by St. Theophan the Recluse

Verse 7: I will confess Thee with uprightness of heart, when I have learned the judgments of Thy righteousness.

The second requirement for a successful going in the ways of God is meditation (*the first requirement was attention*), which is the knowledge to discern the judgments of God's righteousness and to act accordingly. This leads to the ability to discern thought and perceive the directions of God's leadership. And for such a submission to God's will man will see God's hand above himself and give thanks and glorify Him.

Verse 8: I will keep Thy statutes; do not utterly forsake me.

The third requirement for success in a God-pleasing life is courage. Where to get it? In hope in the Lord. God favors and protects men who enter the path of a godly life. "Be of good courage, and let your heart be strengthened" (Ps. 30:25). God's grace does just that, but, whether to teach or to reform, sometimes it steps aside and lets man feel powerlessness and lets man realize that it is God's might that does what is being done.

The Mystery of Holy Confession

Is offered every Saturday evening after Vigil (7:30p.m.) and most Saturday mornings after the Akathist (10:00a.m.). You may also make arrangement with Fr. James for Confession at another time; simply call, speak with or email.

The Parish Synodicon: Memory Eternal!

Nov. 13, 1963 Peter Chabra
Nov. 15, 1929 Fr. Nikita Borisoff
Nov. 16, 1950 Francis Romanofsky
Nov. 16, 1965 Anastasia Kuzmiak
Nov. 16, 1977 Michael Putyrsk
Nov. 17, 1951 Vassily Pasechnik
Nov. 17, 1977 Stanley Bozinta
Nov. 19, 1941 Mary Skwarla
Nov. 19, 1959 Andrew Panacek
Nov. 19, 1978 Mary Suseck

Remember in Prayer

Archbishop Jovan of Ochrid (imprisoned); Lydia Seman (former parishioner); Jovanka Nestojko (former parishioner); Tatiana Onuschak (home); Mother Christophora (Ellwood City Monastery); Natalie Gripp (parishioner).

Adult Study Class – A four week series

A class will be offered on the theme: "To Be a True Human Being Means To Become A God." How exactly does this take place? What does Jesus Christ do? What is our part?

Wednesdays, 7-8:30p.m. in the Conference Room.

Nov. 8th: Salvation in Christ

Nov. 15th: Christification of the Human Being

Nov. 29th: Christification of the World by the Church

Dec. 6th: The Cosmic Christ

NATIVITY FAST GUIDELINES

| <i>Days:</i> | <i>Abstinence of:</i> | <i>No Abstinence of:</i> |
|---|--|--|
| Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday | Meat and Meat Products Dairy Products | Fish, Wine and Oil, Fruits and Vegetables |
| Wednesday, Friday | Meat and Meat Products Dairy Products Fish, Wine and Oil | Fruits and Vegetables |

Note: From December 13-24 inclusive, as the Fast becomes stricter, wine and oil are permitted only on Saturdays and Sundays. Also, fish is not permitted on any day during this period. Questions or special circumstances? Please speak with your priest.

Two Nov. Offering Envelopes Deleted

The Church Restoration Envelope and the feast day Envelope for Nov. 21st, Entrance into the Temple. Please use Sunday Envelopes.

The OCA Charities Offering Envelope

Is taken up every November. The distribution of this collection will be made by the Parish Council, as difficulties persist in the Central Church administration. As this offering is taken during the Nativity Lent, we should be especially mindful that charity – that is to say, love – benefits both the giver and receiver.

Namesday Greetings

St. Matthew/Nov. 16th: Matthew Kita and Matthew Peterson, Many Blessed Years!

Offerings for the Week of Nov. 12th

Olive Oil - in memory of Emilia; in memory of Michael; for the health of Derek (birthday); in memory of Stefan; in memory of Joan.

Wine - for a safe journey.

Flowers - for the health and salvation of Nectarios (namesday & birthday).

Cheesecake Orders – Are Ready

Cheesecakes that you have ordered may now be picked up. The profit made was \$843.15. Thanks!

Christmas Cookie Sale – Dec. 10th

A sign-up sheet for bakers, helpers in setting up and during the sale may be found on the stand in the vestibule. Please indicate your cookie type. Questions? Speak with Terri Filippini.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF A REAL CHRISTIAN **By Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafpaktos**

A true member of the Church and a real Christian is the person who has the following attributes:

First, he remains within the Church, without leaving it through atheism or heresy. He is not cut off from this living organism and does not participate in heretical sects. This means that he accepts the faith confessed in the Symbol of Faith absolutely, that he participates in the sacraments of the Church, is sanctified by them and practices ascesis in his personal life so that he will keep God's commandments. He feels that he remains within the Church in order to be saved rather than to save, because the Church does not need saviours.

Second, he feels that he is a son of God, that is, he has a father and is not an orphan. His great Father is God. Yet, the clergy are also fathers, because they are the type and place of Christ's presence. Hence, a real member of the Church is obedient to the bishops, the clergy and has a spiritual father, who guides him in his spiritual life. Of course, he also accepts the teachings of the Holy Fathers of the Church and tries to imitate their life, that is to say, their ascetic practice and witness.

Third, he feels that he belongs to a family, and, therefore, has spiritual brothers and sisters. He is not alone within the Church. This chiefly means that he loves his brothers and sisters. He does not judge them, regardless of the mistakes they may have made and he does not condemn them. He is tolerant and shows forbearance towards their chance weaknesses. In addition, he shows his love in a variety of ways. He participates in their pain and in their joy. The happiness of other people is his own happiness, their sorrow is his own sorrow, their love is a fellowship of love and their faith a unity of faith. He should feel that everything is in common. He should feel that the Church is a family, just as the first Christians felt her to be, according to the description in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:41-47). If he tries to keep God's law, but does not have love, he is not a real Christian; he is a sick member of the Church.

Fourth, in the instance of sin, he follows a therapeutic course of treatment. Man is changeable. This means that he alters and is wounded throughout his life. In consequence, he sins. The Holy Scriptures say, "Who can become clean

from filth? But no-one, even if his life on the earth is only for a day" (Job 14:4-5 *Septuagint*). St. John the Evangelist writes, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8).

Sins are not guilty acts or simple rejections of the law; they are first and foremost wounds or sicknesses. The sinner is spiritually sick. Consequently, sin should be encountered within a therapeutic and healing framework. The priest is a healer or doctor, who practices this function in the name of the Great Physician, Christ. He cleans and dresses the wounds, intervenes surgically, if necessary, and in general, heals the wounds. Within this framework, we should look at repentance, confession and the orders of the spiritual father, i.e. what is known as penance. We must repent. We must really feel our fault and our illness, we should want to be cured, and resort to the therapist disclose our illness and reveal all the hidden and concealed points of the sickness. We will then follow the therapeutic advice of the spiritual doctor with zeal and resolve. The Church has the sacrament of repentance and of confession.

In the ancient Church when someone committed a grave sin, i.e. when he fell seriously ill, he was demoted into the order of Catechumens once again. This is why in the Catechumens, the demon possessed and the penitents are all included the category of those being purified. All these people follow an appropriate course of treatment. The sinful and repentant Christians, who have already been baptised, are, of course, not baptised again. However, they had to go through the stage of repentance and feel that the grace of God was working within their hearts again.

When the baptised Christian leaves the Church and falls into heresy, he must then go through a certain procedure before he is re-included within the Church. Repentance was required, as well as the signing of a written declaration (*libellus*), by which he denounced the heresy that he had fallen into, followed by Chrism.

From all this we realise that Baptism alone is not enough; one must also live in accordance with God's commandments in order to become a true member of the Church. If a Christian happens to fall ill, there is a special method through which he will gain his health again.

