

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH
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BULLETIN OF AUGUST 26, 2007

SUNDAY/AUGUST 26th

13th Sunday After Pentecost (Tone 4)
Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God;
Ss. Adrian and Natalie

9:10a.m. 3rd & 6th Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
 with Prayers for the Beginning of the New
 Academic Year; Coffee Hour;
 Question & Answer Period

TUESDAY/AUGUST 28th

7:00p.m. Vespers

WEDNESDAY/AUGUST 29th

Beheading of St. John the Baptist
(Strict Fast Day – wine & oil permitted)

9:10a.m. 3rd & 6th Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

FRIDAY/AUGUST 31st

7:00p.m. Vespers

SATURDAY/SEPTEMBER 1st

Church New Year; St. Symeon the Stylite
 9:10a.m. 3rd & 6th Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
 5:30p.m. Vigil; Confession

SUNDAY/SEPTEMBER 2nd

14th Sunday After Pentecost (Tone 5)
Supplication for the Environment
 9:10a.m. 3rd & 6th Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
 Coffee Hour; Book-for-the-Month of Spiritual
 Reading from Parish Library

Fasting Days

Wednesday, August 29th
 Friday, August 31st

The Beginning of the Church New Year

The First Ecumenical Council held in Nicea, 325, decreed that the Church New Year begin on September 1st.

The month of September was, for the Hebrews, the beginning of the civil year (Exodus 23:16), the month of gathering the harvest and of the offering of thanks to God. It was on this feast that the Lord Jesus entered the synagogue in Nazareth (Luke 4:16-21), and began His public ministry.

A Prayer on the New Year

Christ our God, Thy Kingdom is an everlasting one and Thy lordship is over all. Thou hast made all things with wisdom and have established proper times and seasons for our lives.

We give thanks to Thee in all circumstances and for all things. O Lord, bless the beginning of our Church Year with Thy goodness. Grant that this liturgical year be for all of us a year of grace. Make us worthy with purity of heart always to bless Thee, O Lord, glory be to Thee!

Reflections on the Prayer

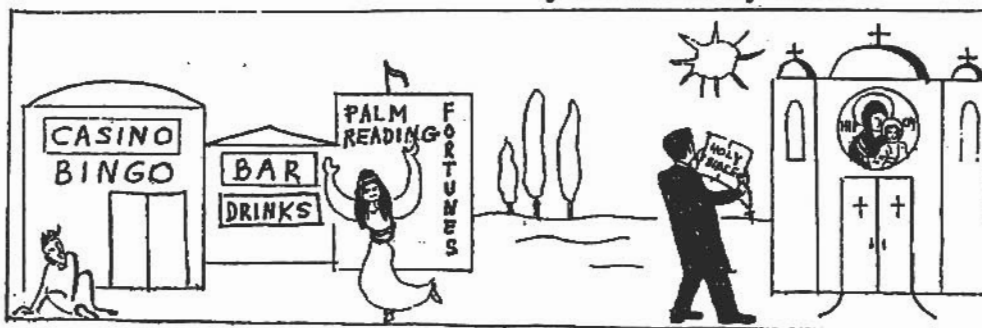
What does this prayer say about Jesus Christ, His attributes and what He has done?

What is our response?

What are our requests?

How does the hymn end?

How can I make this New Year a time of grace, a year blessed by God?



College Students: Rutgers, Rider and College of NJ

A new chapter of Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) is being organized for the students at these schools. Students going to these schools are asked to contact Christiana Cassar (Rocky Hall) via e-mail at ChristianCassar@msn.com.

RBO to Visit Parish – Sept. 9th

A representative of the Russian Brotherhood Organization (RBO) will make a 20 minute presentation at the Coffee Hour on Sunday, Sept. 9th. There are a variety of insurance products, fraternal benefits and services that the RBO provides.

Namesday Greetings

St. Natalie/Aug. 26th: Natalie Ratzkovich, Natalie Gripp and Natalie Garcia.

St. Symeon/Sept. 1st: Reader Symeon Combs
Many Blessed Years!

Offerings for the Week of Aug. 26th

Olive Oil – in memory of Emilia; in memory of Michael; in memory of Joan.

Wine – for the health of Julia (birthday).

Two of the Twelve Great Feasts of the Year are held in September Month

The Nativity of The Theotokos (8th on a Saturday) and The Elevation of the Holy Cross (14th on a Friday). All should strive to participate in the divine services on the eve and on the day.

The Parish Bulletin Board

Has posted announcements of events, press releases and other information that is not part of the regular Sunday Bulletin. At Coffee Hour you may wish to examine it.

The Sunday Bulletin

May be picked up Saturday evening, ask someone to secure it for you from the sacristy. You may also view the bulletin on our parish website. If you are receiving the bulletin by regular mail – when you are absent – and would rather read it on line, please let Fr. James know.

Parish Synodicon

Ronald Kavchok (Aug. 28th – 40th day)

Aug. 26, 1962 Anna Persurance
Aug. 26, 1965 John Harchin
Aug. 26, 2001 John Wassel
Aug. 27, 1934 John Poklitar
Aug. 27, 1970 Luke Vozny
Aug. 28, 1958 Daniel Zydiak
Aug. 30, 1952 Terry Beth Koles
Aug. 31, 1927 Jacob Kava
Aug. 31, 1972 Julia Marchuk
Aug. 31, 1975 John Kluchnik
Aug. 31, 1988 Archpriest Nicholas Kiryluk
Sept. 01, 1922 Constantine Maykovsky
Sept. 01, 1977 Edward Wasitowski
Sept. 01, 1978 Pauline Trosko
Sept. 01, 1998 Peter Lorenick



The Three Sunday Rule on Holy Communion

For those that are regular communicants and approach the Chalice – every Sunday– as well as others – be mindful that anyone that misses more than 3 consecutive Sunday Divine Liturgies, needs to resort to Holy Confession before they come back to Communion. This discipline is found in the Canons of our Faith.

Parish Educational Classes

Both for children and adults will get under way in the month of October. The present structure of classes for our young people needs reformation and the impute of parents is sought at a special meeting to take place in the near future. Concerns may be addressed to either Fr. James or Stacey Kita.

Appreciation Is Expressed

To all those that helped organize and execute the parish picnic last Sunday. While the weather wasn't the best, there was good fellowship, foods and lots of water activities. Thanks to all.

Many Blessed Years!

To the newly-baptized Justin Miclaus. May the Lord preserve him in the purity of Holy Orthodoxy. Congratulations to his parents, Emil and Dana.

Cell Phones

Please put off before entering for church services.



ON THE MEANING OF THE CHURCH LITURGICAL NEW YEAR
By a Monk of the Eastern Church

Each year, on September 1st, the Orthodox Church begins to lead the faithful into a cycle of prayers and commemorations that constitute the “liturgical year” or the “church year.” What does this liturgical year mean, exactly?

One could think of the liturgical year as if it were a picture of the services and feast days during a cycle of 365 days, from September to September: in short, the liturgical year could be reduced to a practical diagram, to a calendar, but simply to identify it with a calendar would be totally inadequate.

One could also say that the purpose of the liturgical year was to bring to the minds of the believers the teachings of the Gospel and the main events of Christian history in a certain order. That is true, but this educational, pedagogical, function does not exhaust the significance of the liturgical year.

Perhaps we could say that its aim is to orient our prayer in a particular direction and also to provide it with an official channel which is objective, and even, in a certain way, artistic. This, too, is true, but the liturgy is more than a way of prayer, and it is more than a magnificent lyric poem.

The liturgy is a body of sacred “signs” which, in the thought and desire of the Church, have a present effect. Each liturgical feast renews and in some sense actualizes the events of which it is the symbol; it takes this event out of the past and makes it immediate; it offers us the appropriate grace, it becomes an “effectual sign,” and we experience this efficacy to the extent that we bring to it a corresponding inclination of our soul. But still, this does not say everything.

The liturgical year is, for us, a special means of union with Christ, for in it He is “both He who offers and who is offered,” in the same way that every prayer, being the prayer of the members of the mystical body, share in the prayer of Him, who is the head of the body and the only one whose prayer is perfect.

In the liturgical year, we are called to relive the whole life of Christ: from Christmas to Pascha, from Pascha to Pentecost; we are exhorted to unite ourselves to Christ in His nativity and in His growth, to Christ’s suffering, to Christ dying, to Christ in triumph and to Christ inspiring His Church. The liturgical year forms Christ in us, from His birth to the full stature of the perfect man. According to a medieval Latin saying, the liturgical year is Christ Himself, *annus est Christus*.

It is not only the commemoration of the events in the life of the Lord Jesus that forms Christ in us. In addition to the cycle of feasts that bear directly on our Lord, the liturgical year includes the cycle of the feasts of the saints. These two cycles, however, should not be thought of as two strands that run parallel to, or separate from each other, for the saints are the glorified members of the body of Christ. Their holiness is but an aspect, a shining ray of the holiness of Christ Himself. To celebrate the feast of a saint is to celebrate a special grace that flows from Christ to that saint and so to us; it is to celebrate that aspect of our Lord which is specially evidenced by the saint, it is to enter (for our profit) into the relationship of prayer which unites that saint to Christ. It is still

more.

In the same way that the feasts of our Lord in a mysterious way renew the events of His life, so the feasts of the saints make their lives, their merits and their deaths mysteriously actual, in as much as they participate in the life, the merits and the death of the Lord Jesus. Thus commemorations of the martyrs somehow renews the grace of their violent deaths, so that, as these were a participation in the passion of Christ, it is this passion which is relived in remembering the martyrs. The liturgical year has but one and the same object, Jesus Christ; whether we contemplate Him directly, or whether we contemplate Him through the members of His body.

Great graces and great spiritual opportunities are offered us through the liturgical year. It provides a frame and support for Christian piety; it gives it a style which is sober and objective; it maintains a bond of unity among believers. And, above all, it communicates an inspiration, it transmits a life.

One should however, beware of excessive "liturgicalism" which would seek to enclose prayer in ritual frames. Liturgical life is not an end in itself; it is but a means which "is within us." Our taking part in the liturgical year, with the many feasts, differing Lenten, various services is empty and illusory if the outward cycle is not matched by an inner cycle, and if the events of Christ's life that each feast represents do not find themselves mysteriously renewed in our soul. The liturgical year acquires its true meaning to the extent it becomes an adoration in spirit and in truth.



THE BEHEADING OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST – AUGUST 29TH

In Matthew 14:1-12 we read about the cruel death of St. John the Baptist. The saint had publicly reprimanded Herod for taking his brother's wife as his own, so Herod had him imprisoned. Although Herod really wanted John dead, he feared the many people who believed John to be a prophet. During his riotous birthday party, Herod was so pleased with the dancing of his wife's daughter Salome, that he promised her anything she wanted. Her mother prompted her to say, "the head of John the Baptist on a platter." Even though Herod regretted his promise, he had to abide by it because his guests had heard him. So he commanded that John be beheaded and the head be given to Salome, who in turn, gave it to her mother.

This day is kept as a "strict fast day." This means we do not partake of meat, dairy, or fish. Wine and oil are permitted. The meaning of "a strict fast day," is lost to many people. Its authentic meaning is that one fasts all day until sunset and has a small meal in which wine and oil may be used. We fast on this feast as a reminder that we are to live a different style of life than Herod. In memory of this event, some Orthodox Christians keep the custom of not using dishes on this day, since St. John's head was served on a dish/platter. Instead, only bowls are used. Also, the food that is served on this day should not require the use of a knife, since a sharp instrument was used to behead the saint. The keeping of a fasting day, using bowls and the eating of food that is not cut, are time honored customs that aid us in understanding and celebrating the feast.



Among some Slavic Orthodox Christians, this feast day is also a day to commemorate departed Orthodox Soldiers.

A Prayer for Rain

A story based on a Serbian religious custom

by Fr. Thomas Kazich

art by Connie Savich



Little Jovo followed old Marko up and down the rows of wheat.

"We are in bad shape," old Marko told him. "No rain for six weeks."

"Old Marko, why doesn't the rain come?" Jovo asked. "Doesn't God love us anymore?"

"God loves us," Old Marko answered. "Sometimes we forget about God. Sometimes we are not grateful and happy for everything God sends down to us."

"Is there anything we can do?" asked Jovo. "I will go see Fr. Milan," Old Marko answered. "The whole village must make a procession to pray to God for rain."

A couple of days later, all the farmers, wives, children and village elders gathered around the church.

There was Grandmother Militsa clasping her hands together, "Dear God, answer our prayers."

Why even Aunt Stana had come, "God is great. He is merciful."

At the head of the procession was Stevo who carried the cross. Behind him was Fr. Milan with the Book of Gospels. And then the faithful, some carrying icons. For three hours the procession wound its way along rocky roads, under the hot sun. No one wanted their field to be missed.

They sang: "The cross-bearers pray to God, O Lord, have mercy on us! Send forth the dew to cover the fields, O Lord, have mercy on us!"

Finally the procession halted and everyone knelt around an old oak tree. On the bark of the tree was carved the sign of the cross.

Under the huge tree, everyone stood. Little Jovo felt cool. It smelled fresh and the leaves shimmered as the wind passed through them.

The priest recited the prayers. The people answered each litany with "Give rain, O Saviour, to the thirsty land." The priest sprinkled holy water on the tree and on the land.

The mayor cut a fresh sign of the cross in the bark of the tree. He filled it with wax so the bark wouldn't grow back. Everyone stood up and the procession continued.

Old Marko told little Jovo, "These trees are considered holy. You must never throw a stone at it or break its branches. Every tree reminds us of the tree-cross that our Lord was crucified on." Jovo listened

carefully. He was happy to be in the procession. He was glad to offer his prayers for rain, too.

That evening Jovo sat on a rock near his house eating sour cherries. Suddenly he felt something wet on his forehead. Then another one. He saw on the field droplets of water roll into the dirt like sugar cookies. Then came the thunder.

Jovo ran to the doorway of his house. The lightning was frightening! The rain soaked down into the ground and up into the roots of the crops. Just as old Marko had said, the blessing of God would come upon everything that praises His name.

