



SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH
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BULLETIN OF DECEMBER 16, 2007

SUNDAY/DECEMBER 16th
Sunday of the Holy Forefathers
 (Tone 4)

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
 Church School Classes;
 11:00a.m. Christmas Cookie Walk

WEDNESDAY/DECEMBER 19th
 7:00p.m. Compline; Confession

THURSDAY/DECEMBER 20th
Prefast of the Nativity
 3:00p.m. Confession
 7:00p.m. Compline; Confession

FRIDAY/DECEMBER 21st
Prefast of the Nativity
 7:00p.m. Compline; Confession

SATURDAY/DECEMBER 22nd
Prefast of the Nativity
 9:30a.m. Akathist; Confession
 5:30p.m. Vigil; Confession

SUNDAY/DECEMBER 23rd
Sunday Before the Nativity
 (Tone 5)
 9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
 Church School; Coffee Hour;
 Question & Answer Period
 6:30p.m. Compline; Confession

MONDAY/DECEMBER 24th
Eve of the Nativity
 9:30a.m. Royal Hours
 5:30p.m. Vigil

TUESDAY/DECEMBER 25th
NATIVITY OF OUR LORD
 9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy;
 Coffee Hour
 6:30p.m. Vespers

Fasting Days of Nativity Lent

Dec. 16th	Sunday	fish, wine & oil
Dec. 17th	Monday	
Dec. 18th	Tuesday	wine & oil
Dec. 19th	Wednesday	
Dec. 20th	Thursday	wine & oil
Dec. 21st	Friday	
Dec. 22nd	Saturday	wine & oil
Dec. 23rd	Sunday	wine & oil
Dec. 24th	Monday	wine & oil
Dec. 25th	Tuesday	40 Day Fast Ends after the Divine Liturgy



SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FOREFATHERS

Two Sundays before the celebration of the Nativity, we rejoice in the feast of the Holy Forefathers of the Old Covenant, including those who came before the giving of the Law.

The Holy Forefathers foretold the coming of the Messiah and are redeemed by His saving Pascha.

In the hymns we sing:

*Let us offer praise to the fathers
 Who shone forth before and during the Law;
 With righteous minds they served the Lord and
 Master
 Who shone forth from the Virgin,
 And now they delight in the unending Light.*

The life of the righteous fathers and mothers of ancient days, like that of all God's saints, is Christ. God's holy people live for Him alone, for the living God and for His Word. Their reason for being is to praise God, not only in words but in deeds, and so to live.

Nativity Lent

On November 15th, the 40 Day Nativity Fast began. One of the "Four Lents" of the year, we prepare for the Nativity of the Lord, on December 25th.

The Mysteries of Confession & Communion

Should be received by all the faithful during the time of this 40 Day Fast (Nov. 15th-Dec. 24th). Please note in the monthly bulletin the times offered for Confession.

Those That Are Home Bound

Be sure to arrange with Fr. James for a visit to your home for the Holy Mysteries and prayers. Please arrange this with Father as soon as possible.

Namesday Greetings

St. Daniel of Romania/Dec. 14th: Daniel-George Ligneris;

Holy Forefathers/2nd Sunday Before the Nativity: Rebecca Oliver, Sarah Oliver, Sarah Kita, Sarah Fedechko, Eve Melnikov; Rachael Oliver

St. Anastasia/Dec. 22nd: Anastasia Barna; Anastasia Hansen; Anastasia Mickel; Anastasia Kita;

Many Blessed Years!

Sunday – December 9th Celebration

A special thanks to all of our parishioners who made our celebration last Sunday possible. It was a wonderful and joyous day! The Lord bless our servers, singers, readers, and those who prepared and offered the various foods and were involved in set-up, serving and clean-up; as well as ground clean-up, transportation, photography, and other tasks and services. Bishop Peter enjoyed his visit and it was good to have parishioners from our sister parish of St. Elizabeth's join us. Some 93 photos of this historic event appear on our parish website.



Parish Synodicon

Dec. 28, 2007 (40th Day) Archbishop PETER

Dec. 28, 2007 (40th Day) Vera Somoluk

Dec. 18, 1980 Joseph Pituck

Dec. 20, 1962 Michael Popko

Dec. 20, 1980 Anna Martin

Dec. 21, 1946 Helen Semoskovich

Dec. 21, 1997 Nadia Marchuk

Dec. 21, 2006 Nicholas Chabra

Dec. 23, 1950 Gregory Persurance

Dec. 23, 1989 Peter Kozura



Parish Educational Classes

Teen Discussion Group (high school students) a brief 20 minute informal discussion to be held on the 2nd Sunday during the Coffee Hour.

Class A (K thru 3rd grade) on the 1st and 3rd Sundays during Coffee Hour.

Class B (4 thru 8 grade)

on the 1st, 2nd & 3rd Sundays during Coffee Hour.

General Question & Answer Period on the 4th Sunday during Coffee Hour.

OCA Charities Appeal

You are asked to use your envelope for this annual offering. Instead of the funds being sent to Syosset, The Parish Council will directly disperse them to persons and charitable causes (due to OCA crisis).

Have You Notified the Rector?

Of any changes in parish membership status, as well as names, addresses, and phone for the new 2008 Parish Directory?

Offerings for the Week of Dec. 16th

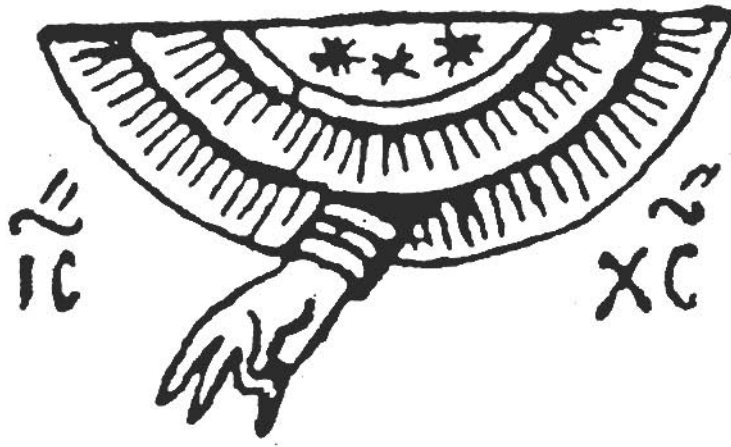
Olive Oil – in memory of Emilia; in memory of Michael; for the protection and health from God for Gabriela-Antoaneta; for the health and protection of Daniel, Maria, Alexander and Nicholas; in memory of Joan.

Wine – in thanksgiving on 9th anniversary of Baptism; for the health of Justina.

Flowers – for the health of Daniel-George (namesday).

Memorial Service

For Nicholas Chabra (+Dec. 21, 2006), on Friday, Dec. 21st at 6:15p.m.



TATTOOS AND ORTHODOXY

Who of our readers has not experienced something similar to the following? You walk into a convenience store to buy a loaf of bread. Ahead of you at the check out counter there is a middle aged man in a sleeveless shirt. His arms and seemingly the rest of his entire upper body are covered by the most colorful and varied tattoos. You try not to stare, but the sight of this "art" disgusts you none the less. The man makes his purchase and departs. It is your turn at the cashier, where you are met by a pleasant young lady. You look up at her and notice that she is "adorned" by various piercing in her nose, ears and even her eyelids. It is painful to look at her. You pay for your loaf of bread no longer looking at her and depart as quickly as you can, making a mental note to buy your bread elsewhere next time.

We live in a free society. Everyone has the right to do whatever one wants with one's body, disfigure it any way one pleases. But is this proper? Is it permissible for an Orthodox Christian to pierce his or her body, to discolor it with tattoos? Our initial feeling, the one we had at the convenience store counter, tells us that it is not. But why is this? Can we support our inner innate revulsion to such physical disfigurement with some rational explanations and arguments? It turns out that we can.

First of all, there is a direct and clear prohibition of this in Holy Scripture. In the third book of the Bible, Leviticus, we read the following: *Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the Lord (19:28).*

Further, if we look at the history of tattoos and piercing we can clearly see that there is a direct correlation with paganism. Here is what Terry Watkins, an internet researcher, has to say about this in his article entitled "Tattoo... Ye Worship Ye Know Not What": "Throughout history the tattoo bears the mark of paganism, demonism, Baal worship, shamanism, mysticism, heathenism, cannibalism and just about every other pagan belief known. The tattoo has NEVER been associated with Bible Believing Christians. And whenever and wherever, in history Christianity appears—tattoos disappear. The only exception—20th century, lukewarm, carnal, disobedient Christians. The birth of the tattoo has always borne the fruits of pagan religion and mysticism. Without exception, research after research, study after study, book after book, the roots of the tattoo never wavers" (www.biblebelievers.com/watkins_tattoos).

Piercing and tattooing are not without their medical hazards. The high risk of transmission of blood-borne diseases such as hepatitis B and C, tetanus, and HIV during these procedures has been clearly defined and extensively documented by the CDC. A good example of this is the 1961 hepatitis B outbreak in New York City after which the tattoo was out-

lawed there until 1997, when it was again legalized. Up to this very day the American Red Cross will not allow you do donate blood for 12 months after you have had a piercing or tattoo applied. You are too high a risk as a transmitter of hepatitis or HIV to the recipients of your blood.

If this is not enough, let us consider the following. The Church teaches us that in the life to come, our bodies will be resurrected and reunited with our souls. What do we know about these bodies which the righteous will have after the general resurrection? First of all, in essence these bodies will be the same bodies which we possess now. The holy apostle Paul tells us: *For this corruptible [body] must put on incorruption, and this mortal [flesh] must put on immortality* (I Cor. 54:53). Furthermore, the holy Fathers of the Church tell us that the bodies of the righteous will be like the Body our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ after the His glorious Resurrection. They will be transformed, more spiritual bodies, but they will retain characteristics that they had in the previous life. When after His Resurrection our Lord appears to His disciples, they are terrified and afraid because they suppose that He is a spirit. Yet He reassures them by saying: *Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have* (Luke 24:39). He is able to walk through locked doors (John 20:19), yet the disciple recognize that this is without a doubt their Teacher before them. Our Lord eats a piece of fish and some honeycomb in the presence of His disciples (Luke 24:42), yet He is capable of vanishing out of plain sight (Luke 24:31). Most notably, when the Apostle Thomas is told that the Lord is risen, he responds with his famous words of doubt: *Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe* (John 20:25). In eight days the Lord once again appears to the disciples and removes all doubt from Thomas' heart by saying: *Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing* (John 20:27).

The Lord's Resurrected Body was a transformed, more spiritual body, yet it retained the scars from His Passion upon the cross. The imprint from the nails on His hands and feet from being nailed to the cross and the scar from the wound inflicted by the Roman soldier from which came blood and water are clearly visible. Does it not stand to reason then, that any marks with which we imprint our bodies, any holes we make in our flesh with pins and nails will be visible on our resurrected bodies? These will be remnants, scars of sinful, defiling behavior. And we know that nothing defiled can ever enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Now I know that this note will be read by some faithful who at some point in their life, impetuously decided to get a tattoo or piercing. The Lord is merciful. There is no sin of which if we sincerely repent that the Lord will not grant remission. If one has a tattoo that can be removed without risking one's health, it should be removed. If one has those nails or pins in some part of their body, they should be removed at once. Then one should go to their spiritual father (usually their parish priest) and ask God forgiveness for this sin in Holy Confession and He will forgive, for He is merciful. And those of us who have been contemplating tattooing the name of our girlfriend or boyfriend on our ankle or putting that spike through our nose, let us once and for all realize that this is not pleasing to God.

ORTHODOX LIFE



Priest Gregory Naumenko

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