

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH
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BULLETIN OF JANUARY 27, 2008

SUNDAY/JANUARY 27th
35th Sunday After Pentecost
(Tone 2)

Russian New-Martyrs & Confessors
9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Question & Answer Period
Coffee Hour

TUESDAY/JANUARY 29th
6:30p.m. Memorial for John Macinko
7:00p.m. Vespers

WEDNESDAY/JANUARY 30th
Synaxis of the Three Hierarchs
9:30a.m. Akathist to Three Hierarchs

FRIDAY/FEBRUARY 1st
Pre-Feast of the Meeting
7:00p.m. Vigil & Blessing of Candles

SATURDAY/FEBRUARY 2nd
MEETING OF OUR LORD IN THE
TEMPLE

(One of the "12 Great Feasts")
9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy &
Blessing of Candles
5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

SUNDAY/FEBRUARY 3rd
36th Sunday After Pentecost
(Tone 3)
St. Nicholas, Equal-to-the-Apostles,
Enlightener of Japan

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Church School; Coffee Hour;
Book-for-the-Month of Spiritual
Reading form Parish Library

Fasting Days
Wednesday, Jan. 30th (wine & oil)
Friday, Feb. 1st



AN INSTRUCTION OF ST. THEOPHAN
THE RECLUSE (+1894)

ON CHRISTIAN GROWTH

The sowing and germination of Christian life are essentially different from that of natural life, because Christianity is not innate. Christ's seed falls onto the earth of a heart that already beats.

Because man is not naturally inclined to follow the demands of Christianity in the same way that a plant, for example, grows by arousing dormant but innate powers, the beginning of true Christian life in man is a "re-creation." In it he is endowed with new powers, and with new life that until then had been only dormant in him.

We resolve to live a Christian life, but this seed of life in man, this resolution, is not surrounded by elements predisposed to live like this.

The whole man, body and soul, remains unsuited to the new life, unwilling to submit to the yoke of Christ. So at this moment he begins a difficult practice, a great labor; he must educate all his faculties, his whole nature, to meet the standards of Christian living.

While the growth of plants is easy and natural, Christian growth is a battle with oneself.

THE MEETING OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE – FEAST OF FEBRUARY 2ND

Forty days after His birth in the flesh, Christ was Presented at the Temple in accordance with legal Convention. And because there in the Temple He Was received by persons moved by the Spirit, and Especially because Symeon took him into his arms, This feast is also called a Meeting.

The Church appointed this great feast of the Lord and the Mother of God to be celebrated on the 2nd of February, because it is the 40th day after the 25th of December, when the Nativity of Christ in the flesh is celebrated. In this way the year is divided by the turning points in the divine economy and blesses them. At the same time it makes it possible for man to be initiated into the great mystery of the Incarnation of the Son and Word of God.



The event of the presentation of Christ in the Temple on the 40 day after His birth is described only in the Gospel of Luke, chapter 2:22-39.

The Meeting of Christ shows that Christ is the Life and Light of men and that man should aim to attain this personal light and personal life. The Church sings, by way of exhortation, "Illuminate my soul and the light of my senses, that I may see Thee in purity; and I will proclaim that Thou art God."

In order for anyone to proclaim God, he must see Him clearly. But in order to see God one must previously be illuminated, shine in soul and bodily senses. Then the Feast of the Meeting of Christ also becomes a feast of every believer.

The Feast is celebrated to the "leave-taking," on February 9th. During this festal period the tropar and kontakion of the feast is sung/said with the daily rule of prayer and at meals. The tropar before the meal and the kontakion after the meal. They replace the usual meal prayers.

Tropar Tone 1

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Full of Grace!
From you shone the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God,
Enlightening those who sat in darkness!
Rejoice and be glad, O righteous elder;
You accepted in your arms the Redeemer of our souls,
Who grants us the Resurrection!

Kontakion Tone 1

By Thy Nativity, Thou didst sanctify the Virgin's womb!
And didst bless Symeon's hands, O Christ God.
Now Thou hast come and saved us through love,
Grant peace to all Orthodox Christians,
O only Lover of Man!



Inclement Weather & Cancellations

Cancellations will be posted on the parish website at least one hour before the scheduled time. You may also call Fr. James (908-685-1452) or Mary Holovach (908-725-8978) to find out about cancellations before you set out.

The Blessing of Homes 2008

With the Sanctified Waters of Theophany the homes of the faithful are blessed:

Homes will be blessed through Feb. 16th.

To have your home blessed, please contact Fr. James in person, by phone or email to schedule a suitable day and time.

Offerings for the week of Jan. 27th

Olive Oil – in memory of Emilia; in memory of Ioan; in memory of Michael; in memory of Imogene, Farnai, Ella and Claude; in memory of Floarea, Gheorghe, Elena, Maria, Petre and Grigore.

Wine – in memory of Joan; for the health of Justina.

Flowers - in memory of Shelby, Mary Louise, Shelby Jr., Marion and Sue.

Litya Breads – for the health of Mary and Zena.

Diocese Youth Retreat – Feb. 8th-10th

The Annual Pre-Lenten Youth Retreat (ages: 7th-12th grades), will be held at St. Joseph's Seminary in Princeton. Information has been mailed out to parents and is posted on the parish bulletin board. Highly recommended for our young people to participate.

Easter Candy Sale – February Month

Order forms have been distributed and may also be picked up at the church vestibule stand and in the hall office. Please return your orders no later than Sunday, Feb. 24th.

Hall Rentals

Please speak with Austin Kachek.

Parish Synodicon – Memory Eternal!

Feb. 27th (40th Day) Lydia Seman
Jan. 27, 1937 Helen Popko
Jan. 27, 1972 Mary Sandago
Jan. 27, 1987 Alexander Kulina
Jan. 28, 1995 Olga Small
Jan. 29, 1974 Paul Monko
Jan. 29, 1988 John Macinko
Jan. 31, 1952 Jacob Michaelski
Feb. 02, 1940 Michael Petro
Feb. 02, 1949 Theodora Mahalick
Feb. 02, 1984 Natalie Kuntzevich
Feb. 02, 1986 Sonia Esposito
Feb. 02, 1994 Kalioppi Alexis



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.

No classes on the 5th Sunday of the month.

Annual Parish Meeting – Feb. 17th

On this Sunday at 12:00p.m. the Annual Parish Meeting will be held. (If necessary, the make-up date will be Feb. 24th.)

All reports for the Annual Meeting, are asked to be submitted in care of Fr. James by Jan. 31st so as to be compiled and distributed two weeks prior to Annual Meeting.

OCA Mission Appeal Envelope

In the month of February, a special collection is taken for the benefit of mission work in the USA.

These funds will be distributed directly by our parish to OCA Mission parishes – they will not be sent to the Central Church Administration. You are asked to be mindful and generous in supporting our missions and use the envelope provided.

Parish Library Items Overdue

Be so kind to return them to the library so others can profit from them.

The Moscow Patriarchate criticizes 'politically correct' Christianity

Vienna, January 22, Interfax - The Russian Orthodox Church's representative to the European International Institutions believes it important to preserve Christian traditions in today's liberal world.

'Christianity, empty inside, lacking inner power, Christianity that has renounced itself, will not be able to oppose challenges of the modern world,' Bishop Hilarion of Vienna and Austria said at a meeting organized by the Ecumenical Council of Churches in Austria dedicated to its 50th anniversary.

The Russian Church's representative stressed that 'we should be afraid of giving up spiritual and moral teaching accumulated by the Christian Church for centuries and surrender to the influence of liberal ideas and secular moral standards.'

'When some Christian communities start revising theological or moral teaching of Christianity in order to 'update' it or to make it more 'politically correct', it is a direct way to spiritual collapse,' the bishop added.

According to him, 'Christians are powerful only when they follow the testament of Christ rather than when they start building their life by the rules of secular world.'

Saakashvili swears on the Bible to reunite Georgia

Tbilisi, January 21, Interfax - Georgian president Mikhail Saakashvili has received a blessing of Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia II in Kutaisi in half-destroyed church of King Bagrat.

Saakashvili swore on the Bible he would 'spare no effort to unite Georgia', an *Interfax* correspondent has reported.

Ilia II welcomed Saakashvili and his wife Sandra Rulovs at the church's entry. They entered the church where the catholicos conducted a prayer service and then Saakashvili swore an oath with his hand on the Bible.

The president promised that the restoration of the Bagrati church would begin in the following weeks. 'It would be a symbol of our unity', he added.

Four years ago, a day before his inauguration, Saakashvili had already sworn to serve his people in the Gelati church in Kutaisi where King David the Builder is buried.

LINDA A. SEMAN

Linda A. Seman, 59, Cumru Township, died Jan. 19, 2008, at 6:26 a.m. in Reading Hospital, where she was a patient for five days.

She was the wife of John C. Seman. They celebrated 37 years of marriage.

Born in Philadelphia, she was a daughter of Karl A. Osterburg of Host and the late Mary (Maleyeff) Osterburg.

She was a sales executive for Imagistics International, Harrisburg, for five years, last working in 2005.

She was a graduate of East Paterson High School, East Paterson, N.J.; and attended Upsala College, New Jersey.

She loved cooking, entertaining and fellowship. She was a member of St. Herman of Alaska Orthodox Church, Shillington, where she was treasurer of the women's group and past president of the church council.

In addition to her father and husband, she is survived by a son, John K. Seman, companion of Genesee Adkins, Seattle; a daughter, Mary Anne, wife of Kyle Kweder, Bowie, Md.; and her stepmother, Ruth (Graybill) Osterburg, Host.

She was predeceased by a brother, Karl J. Osterburg Jr., in 1995.

Services will be Tuesday at 10 a.m. in St. Herman of Alaska Orthodox Church, 133 W. Broad St., Shillington, PA 19607, with Father John Onofrey, celebrant. Burial will be in Fairview Cemetery, Shillington. The family will receive friends Monday from 6 to 8 p.m. and Tuesday from 9 to 9:45 a.m. in the Klee Funeral Home & Cremation Services, 1 E. Lancaster Ave., Shillington. The casket will be closed.

In lieu of flowers, please make contributions to Susan G. Komen for the Cure, 5005 LBJ Freeway, Suite 250, Dallas, TX 75244, or the building fund of her church at the above address.

Candles - small pieces of light

by Natalie Ashanin

Lighting candles

Light. Bright, beautiful light was created by God before all other things. It was only after He created light that He looked at his creation and saw that it was good. Without light we cannot see and we cannot do very much. Light is God's first and greatest gift, for with it we can see all the other beautiful things He has given to us.

A candle is a small piece of light. Long ago candles and oil lamps were the only ways people could have light at night. They would bring these bits of light to the first Christian gatherings in catacombs and other secret places so they could see what was taking place and to bring joy and warmth into the meeting. Soon the candles became a way of praying, of giving something back to God.

Candles are used in all Orthodox churches. When we enter the church, we stop to buy a candle. It's our sacrifice. In olden days, people made their own candles. Some had a bees hive at home. Candles were made from pure wax, then, without any mixtures. Bees were thought of almost like saints, because of their purity.

When we light the candle before an icon and say a prayer for someone, we tell God that we are praying for that person and as long as our candle burns our prayer will be there before God. We say to our friends who are sick or troubled that we will light a

candle for them. We light candles for someone who has died. Sometimes we light a candle to say "thank you" to God. In some churches people kiss the candle before lighting it.

Candlelight in the home

In many Orthodox homes, especially Russian and Ukrainian ones, it is the custom to have a "beautiful corner" where the family icons are placed with a candle or an oil lamp burning before them. This light is a reminder that the family's prayers are going before God. It reminds them of Christ and the saints who watch over them. The Serbian people honor the family's patron saint with a special celebration called a Slava during which they burn a large candle called the "Slava Candle". It is said that as long as the candle burns the saint will be at the celebration.

Candles are especially important during holidays for Carpatho Russians, Bulgarians and Albanians. At Christmas time, it is the custom to light a special decorated candle or place it in a round loaf of bread for the feast day meal. Among the Romanians, groups of children go from house to house on Christmas eve, singing carols and carrying a beautifully decorated lantern in the shape of a star, to recall the Bethlehem star that showed the Wise Men where the Christ Child was lying.

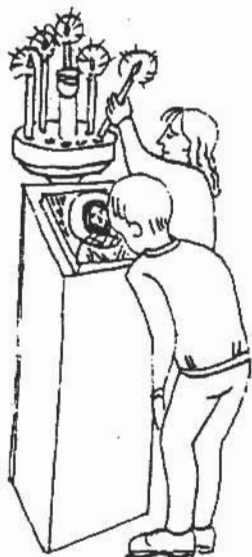
Those who have converted to Holy Orthodoxy have a rich treasury of customs to choose from to brighten their home celebrations.

Candle light during services

Candles are an important part of many services. They are used during the service for a funeral, a baptism, wedding, and holy unction. When a bishop serves, he uses two candleholders to bless the faithful at the Divine Liturgy. Candles play an important part in the services of Holy Week and Pascha. During the midnight Paschal Matins, the priest calls to the people to "Come, take the light that is never overtaken by night and glorify Christ Who is Risen from the dead." Altar servers carry candles during the Little Entrance and for the reading of the Holy Gospel, to represent the Light which shines upon the world.

Light in our life

Even today when we have electric lights we do not want to give up praying with those small bits of living light, God's first creation. Candles are pictures of our prayer to God. But they also stand for us. They remind us that our souls should burn with love for God and our neighbor, for we are called to be living candles. Jesus said, "You are like a light to the world. You are like a candle in a dark room. Don't hide your light. Let your light shine for everyone to see!" When we see so many candles everywhere, we know that Jesus is everywhere in the whole church, our homes, and He is in us, too.





SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2008

Help Our Parish Become Souper Bowl Champions!

On Super Bowl Sunday, Feb. 3, 2008, team up with our parish's youth to help the needy in our community and around the world. Help our team in the "Souper Bowl of Caring" by bringing one dollar and a canned good with you to Liturgy. Please support this effort and help our parish become Souper Bowl Champions!



International Orthodox Christian Charities
P.O. Box 630225 • Baltimore, MD 21263-0225
Toll-Free: (877) 803-4622 • Fax: (410) 243-9824
Internet: www.iocc.org

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

SUNDAYS: FEB. 3rd & 10th

For the Local Food Pantry – 1 canned good or more

For Helping Unwedded Mothers - \$1 or more

A Basket for both will be in the church vestibule.