

SS. PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH
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BULLETIN OF AUGUST 3, 2008

SUNDAY/AUGUST 3rd
7th Sunday After Pentecost (Tone 6)
 9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
 Coffee Hour; Book-for-the-Month of
 Spiritual Reading from Parish Library

TUESDAY/AUGUST 5th
Eve of the transfiguration
 7:00p.m. Vigil and Blessing of fruits;
 Confession

WEDNESDAY/AUGUST 6th
TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD
(one of "the 12 Great Feasts" of the year)
 9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy with
 blessing of fruits

FRIDAY/AUGUST 8th
 3:00p.m. Confession
 7:00p.m. Vespers; Confession

SATURDAY/AUGUST 9th
St. Herman of Alaska
 9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
 5:30p.m. Vigil; Confession

SUNDAY/AUGUST 10th
8th Sunday After Pentecost (Tone 7)
Post-Feast of Transfiguration
St. Lawrence of Rome
 9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
 Coffee Hour

Transfiguration Feast
 Is observed through the "Leave-Taking" on
 August 13th. During this time, the tropar and
 kontakion of the feast are sung/said at evening
 and morning prayers at all meals.



Tropar Tone 7
 Thou was transfigured on the Mount, O Christ
 God, revealing Thy glory to Thy disciples, as far
 as they could bear it. Let Thine everlasting
 light shine upon us sinners! Through the
 prayers of the Theotokos, O Giver of Light, glory
 to Thee!

Kontakion Tone 7
 On the mountain wast Thou transfigured, O
 Christ God, and Thy disciples beheld Thy glory
 as far as they could see it: so that when they
 would behold Thee crucified, they would
 understand that Thy suffering was voluntary,
 and would proclaim to the world that Thou art
 truly the radiance of the Father!

Dormition Lent: Aug. 1st – 14th
 A Fast is observed from meat, dairy, fish, wine
 and oil products for these two weeks. Note the
 modifications:

| | | |
|-----------|----------|--------------------------|
| Sunday | August 3 | Wine & oil allowed |
| Monday | August 4 | |
| Tuesday | August 5 | |
| Wednesday | August 6 | Fish, wine & oil allowed |
| Thursday | August 7 | |
| Friday | August 8 | |
| Saturday | August 9 | Fish, wine & oil allowed |

Vacation Planning – Orthodox Churches

An online directory of churches in North America on the site: Orthodoxy in America www.orthodoxyinamerica.org

Discipline for Reception of the Holy Communion

Those of the faithful who regularly receive Holy Communion every Sunday, and wish to continue to do so - must go to Confession before Aug. 15th, if they have not been to Confession anytime since Pascha (April 27th).

Emails of Parishioners Known to Rector

If you wish to have your email listed in the parish directory and your name and does not appear below, please email your address to: frjames@ssppoc.org

| | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| P. Bakaletz | H. Hando |
| P. & D. Bakaletz | J. Fetchko |
| V. Asaro | K. Mantzafos |
| S. Combs | K. Motoviloff |
| T. Combs | L. Mattei |
| R. Erkman | P. Oliver |
| G. Economou | P. Parsells |
| N. Parsells | J. Zahodnick |
| S. Gorbatuk | J. Peterson |
| A. Hunchar | M. Redmond |
| A. Kachek | P. & P. Sokol |
| R. Kita | M. & D. Torrisi |
| S. Kita | R. Smith |
| B. Kuzemchak | R. Weber |
| M. Vajda | |

Prayers for Beginning of Academic Year

Will be offered for teachers and students at the Sunday Divine Liturgy, Aug. 24th.

Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos

On August 15th, we celebrate with great solemnity the feast of the Repose, Burial, Resurrection and Ascension of the Mother of God into Heaven. We should all strive to be at the divine services to honor the Mother of God. Vigil on the eve with blessing of flowers and Confession following at 7:00p.m., Aug. 14th Divine Liturgy with blessing of flowers on the day at 9:30a.m., Aug. 15th.

Parish Synodicon – Memory Eternal!

| | | |
|----------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Aug. 13 | 40 th Day | Justina Sokol |
| Aug. 03, | 1995 | Helen Hnatuk |
| Aug. 04, | 1970 | Archpriest Peter Karel |
| Aug. 05, | 1996 | Jacob Horsko |
| Aug. 05, | 1997 | Joseph Pituch |
| Aug. 05, | 1988 | Lepasava Ratzkovich |
| Aug. 06, | 1943 | Sarafina Spak |
| Aug. 06, | 1946 | Jacob Russaway |
| Aug. 06, | 1974 | Artem Kuchner |
| Aug. 06, | 1989 | Andrew Gavlick |
| Aug. 07, | 1916 | Anna Wislosky |
| Aug. 07, | 1931 | Michael Gargol |
| Aug. 07, | 1932 | Maria Vozny |
| Aug. 07, | 1941 | Helen martchisin |
| Aug. 08, | 1945 | Mary Lebedz |
| Aug. 08, | 1949 | Shelia McCloskey |
| Aug. 09, | 1918 | George Siplak |
| Aug. 09, | 1939 | Michael Sapochuk |
| Aug. 09, | 1979 | Parasceva Kulwinsky |

Prayer for Travelers

May be offered for you after the Sunday Divine Liturgy. Simply let Fr. James know when you come to venerate the Holy Cross.

Offerings for the Week of August 3rd

Olive Oil - in memory of Michael and Panteleimon; in memory of Emilia; in memory of Sarafina; for the health of Mary (birthday); in memory of Justina; for the health of Vaschen.

Wine - for peace, salvation and health of Marianna and Simona-Georgiana; for a safe journey.

Flowers - in memory of Joan.

40th Day Memorial

For Justina Sokol, Aug. 12th Tues. at 6:30p.m.

Parish Website

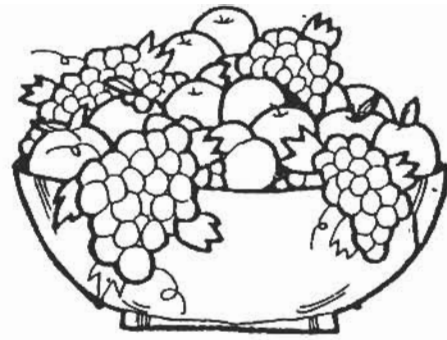
Has posted photos of the Parish Picnic and the Blessing of Autos. The site also has the 2008 calendar of all parish services, events and church school through December. Make your plans accordingly.



The Blessing of Fruit

by

ALEXANDER SCHMEMANN



It is an ancient custom in Orthodox churches to bless fruits and vegetables on the feast of Transfiguration. This prompts us to ask ourselves: what is the meaning of this ancient rite, and of blessing, sanctification in general, since the blessing of fruit on Transfiguration is only one of many such rites? If we open the liturgical service book where all these rites are collected, the so-called "Book of Needs," we find special services such as blessings for a new home, a field, a garden, a well. It is as if the Church addresses itself to the entire world, as if God's right hand of blessing were being extended over all through these rites of blessing and sanctification. Why have people from time immemorial felt the need for blessings?

We must say immediately that proponents of anti-religious propaganda unquestioningly regard all these rites as superstition which, in their view, is the whole content of religion. They argue that superstition is a product of fear: a person is afraid of being poisoned, afraid of a bad harvest, afraid that his house will burn down, afraid of other people. Religion purveys deliverance from fear: sprinkle the fruit or the garden or the home with holy water and God will protect both them and you. "So you see, it's all crude ignorance, superstition and...deception." However, in presenting the issue this way, atheist propaganda does not mention any of the prayers or rites involved with these supposed superstitions. They make it sound as if priests, the clergy, are a cadre of swindlers who exploit fear and ignorance by using incomprehensible magical incantations. But if one actually listens to these prayers and looks closely at these rites, if only once in a lifetime one experiences the joy of that radiant and sunlit Transfiguration noonday blessing, then it becomes clear that the deception is not coming from the Church, but from ill-willed atheist propaganda. It is precisely this propaganda, and not the Church's prayer, which is permeated with fear, mistrust, and a need to denounce anything more elevated, more pure, more profound than its own simplistic, mundane, and materialistic approach to the world and to life. For what we see and hear and experience above all in these rites and prayers is joy and thanksgiving. But if fear were present, there could be no joy and no thanksgiving; and conversely, if joy is present, there can be no fear. Fear produces misery and mistrust, but there is none of this in transfiguration's light. But what is the source of this joy and thanksgiving?

One of Osip Mandelstam's poems, devoted to the eucharistic liturgy, the main service of Christian worship, includes this wonderful verse: "Take into your hands the whole world, as if it were a simple apple..." Perhaps here, because it is so simple and childlike, we see better than anywhere else the source of joy and thanksgiving that permeate Christian faith. In an apple, and in everything within the world, faith sees, recognizes, and accepts God's gift, filled with love, beauty and wisdom. Faith hears the apple and the world speaking of that boundless love that created the world and life and gave them to us

as our life. The world itself is the fruit of God's love for humanity, and only through the world can human beings recognize God and love him in return... And only in truly loving his own life, can a person thereby accept the life of the world as God's gift. Our fall, our sin, is that we take everything for granted—and therefore everything, including ourselves, becomes routine, depressing, empty. The apple becomes just an apple. Bread is just bread. A human being is just a human being. We know their weight, their appearance, their activities, we know everything about them, but we no longer know them, because we do not see the light that shines through them. The eternal task of faith and of the Church is to overcome this sinful, monotonous habituation; to enable us to see once again what we have forgotten how to see; to feel what we no longer feel; to experience what we are no longer capable of experiencing. Thus, the priest blesses bread and wine, lifting them up to heaven, but faith sees the bread of life, it sees sacrifice and gift, it sees communion with life eternal.

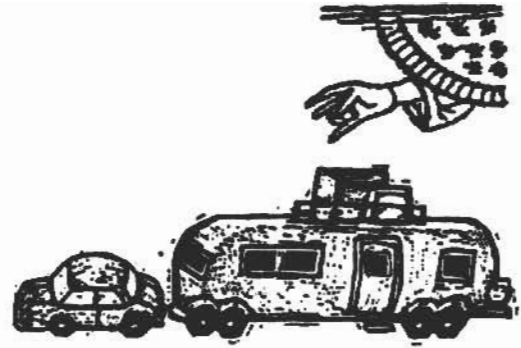
So, on Transfiguration we bring to church apples, pears, grapes, vegetables, and suddenly the church itself is transformed anew into that mystical garden, into that blessed paradise where man's life and his encounter with God began. And just as that first man rejoiced and gave thanks to God as he opened his eyes for the first time and saw this world where everything, by God's own word, was "very good," so in this rite of blessing we see the world as if for the first time, as the reflection of God's wisdom and love, and we rejoice and give thanks. And through this joy and thanksgiving our life is purified, renewed and reborn. No, we do not negate the material world, as atheist propaganda falsely claims, nor do we repudiate it; on the contrary, we sanctify and bless it, for in it we joyfully and with thanksgiving see and feel the gift of God. "Heaven and earth are full of your glory," we sing in church. The significance of blessing is that through it, this glory breaks into our drowsy consciousness, opens our ears, opens our eyes, and life itself becomes praise, joy and thanksgiving.

But what about evil, people ask me. What about suffering, what about death? To this we answer: if we are filled to the brim with this light, if we genuinely accept this blessing and sanctification and bring them within, then we ourselves become the place where the victory over evil begins. And death will be swallowed up in victory, for we live in a world where Christ lived and continues forever to be present. And if in everything and everyone in the world we see him, love him, give ourselves to him; if in all, we see the light of his presence, his love, and his victory—then nothing can separate us from him.

ORTHODOX DRIVING

In these days when "road rage" seems to be such a problem, it might do us some good to think about our own attitudes when we drive. As in all other aspects of life, we are not responsible for the behavior of others, but we are responsible for ours, and driving in traffic is not too unlike every other human interchange. Nevertheless, driving, somehow, seems to be able to release in us certain behaviors we otherwise do not manifest, and the most notable of these is, of course, anger.

Since we tend to be alone in driving, we can have some opportunities to look at ourselves and ask ourselves why we react in one way or another, and whether it does or does not conform to behavior expected of a Christian, especially an Orthodox Christian, in the light of the Gospel and our experience of the Savior. And if we are reacting angrily at such times, we might not be surprised to find that it usually is because we are angry about something else; or that, as is so often the case, we have not forgiven someone somehow, and we are consciously or unconsciously holding a grudge. Perhaps, in the solitude of the automobile, we have opportunities to see our symptoms, and prayerfully come to a better self-understanding, opening the door to our own ability to forgive, and to be healed in heart.



10 COMMANDMENTS FOR DRIVERS

- I. Always begin a trip with prayer, making the Sign of the Cross and entrusting yourself to the Lord.
- II. Never drink and drive.
- III. Never try to shorten the time of a trip. If you started out late, you will arrive late. Do not speed.
- IV. Apologize to a driver whom you have interfered with, even when you did not intend to. After all, when we are walking, and bump someone, we apologize without thinking. So why should there be a different ethic behind the wheel?
- V. Always yield way to someone who is in a great hurry, or is driving aggressively. If you do not yield, he will still pass you, but the situation will be more dangerous.
- VI. Give a wave of thanks to a driver who makes way for you.
- VII. Drive in such a way that you won't fear seeing a police car. Remember that God is watching, even if the police are not.
- VIII. Stay as far away as possible from cars that have dents or show signs of accidents. But be careful not to judge, or you may share in their misfortune.
- IX. Never speed up when another driver tries to pass you, or to get into your lane. Do not treat your neighbor in a way you do not want to be treated.
- X. After every trip, thank God for its safe completion. Be thankful after any trip, and not just a successful one. After all, almost always it could have been worse!