

## **SS. PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH**

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**BULLETIN OF FEBRUARY 1, 2009**

### **SUNDAY/FEBRUARY 1st**

#### **Zacchaeus Sunday (Tone 8)**

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy  
Coffee Hour; Church School  
5:30p.m. Vigil and Blessing of Candles

### **MONDAY/FEBRUARY 2nd**

#### **MEETING OF THE LORD IN THE TEMPLE**

##### **(One of "the 12 Great Feasts")**

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy and  
Blessing of Candles  
7:00p.m. Compline and Akathist to  
**St. Nicholas of Japan (Feb. 3rd)**

### **SATURDAY/FEBRUARY 7th**

9:30a.m. Akathist; Confession  
5:30p.m. Vigil; Confession

### **SUNDAY/FEBRUARY 8th**

#### **Publican & Pharisee (Tone 1)**

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy  
Coffee Hour; Church School  
Teen Discussion  
11:45a.m. Annual Parish Meeting

#### **The Feast of the Meeting in the Temple**

Is celebrated thru the "leave-taking," on Monday, Feb. 9th. In this festal period, the tropar and kontakion of the feast is sung or said at the prayer rule we keep and at meal times. The tropar before the meal and the kontakion after the meal.

#### **Fasting Days**

Wednesday and Friday, February 4 & 6

#### **Fast Free Days**

Wednesday and Friday, February 11 & 13

#### **Meat-Fast Begins**

Monday, February 23



#### **The Significance of Candles**

We never hold a church service without candles, yet we use them not just to dispel night's gloom – we also hold our services in daylight – but in order to represent by the lighted candles, Christ, the Uncreated Light, without whom we would in broad daylight wander as if lost in darkness.

*-Tertullian (2<sup>nd</sup> c)*

Icon-lamps and candles represent the Eternal Light, and also the light which shines from the righteous. *-St. Sophronius of Jerusalem (7<sup>th</sup> c)*

The candles lit before the Icon of Christ signify that He is the True Light which enlightens every man that comes into the world. At the same time He is a Fire which engulfs and revives our souls and bodies. *-St. John of Kronstadt (1908)*

The candles we burn before the icons of the saints teach us that the saints are lamps burning for us and providing light for us by their holy lives. We honor them by light and show our ardent zeal and reverence and gratitude to them for their intercession on our behalf.

*-St. John of Kronstadt (1908)*

### **Annual Parish Meeting**

February 8th, Sunday at 12:00p.m. The make-up date will be February 15th, if necessary. The length of the meeting is about an hour and parishioners are asked to be in attendance.

Annual Meeting Reports are being distributed February 1st, Sunday. Please read them prior to the Meeting and bring them back with you for discussion on Feb. 8th.

Two persons are sought for Parish Council positions, please speak with Fr. James or Peter Bakaletz if interested.

### **New Vestments for Priest and Deacon**

Four sets of matching priest and deacon vestments – white, dark red, green and white have been made and are now in our possession. The greater costs of the vestments have been secured but another \$2,500 is sought. If you wish to make any offering in any amount, may it be blessed. Offerings of \$1,000, \$500, \$500 and \$150 have been received.

### **The Annual Easter Candy Sale**

Is currently underway. Order forms may be found on the vestibule stand. Please return no later than Sunday, March 15th.

### **NJ Deanery Lenten Schedule**

*First Sunday, Mar. 8* at Ss. Peter and Paul Church, Jersey City

*Second Sunday, Mar. 15* at Ss. Peter & Paul Church, Bayonne

*Third Sunday, Mar. 22* at St. Vladimir Church, Trenton

*Fourth Sunday, Mar. 29* at Assumption Church in Clifton

*Fifth Sunday, Apr. 5* at Holy Apostles Church, Saddlebrook

*Bright Wednesday, Apr. 22* at Christ the Saviour Church, Paramus

### **St. Andrew's Camp – NY State**

This Orthodox Youth Camp is now accepting applications for Campers and Counselors. You may visit the website: [www.standrewscamp.com](http://www.standrewscamp.com)

### **Parish Synodicon - Memory Eternal!**

February 02, 1940	Michael Petro
February 02, 1949	Theodora Mahalick
February 02, 1984	Natalie Kuntzevich
February 02, 1986	Sophie Esposito
February 02, 1994	Kalioppi Alexis
February 03, 1929	Jonah Lasin
February 04, 1973	Mary Bolash
February 04, 1975	Pelagia Grishkivech
February 05, 1958	Theodore Andreosky
February 07, 1931	Basil Petrovsky
February 07, 1970	Tatiana Gumenuk



### **Namesday Greetings**

St. Nicholas of Japan/Feb. 3rd: Nicholas Torrisi, Many Blessed Years!

### **OCA Mission Appeal Envelope**

In the month of February, a special appeal is made to help mission parishes. This year, we will again forward the funds to Christ the Saviour Mission in Delaware (Fr. John Parsells) and St. Maximus Mission in Texas (Fr. Justin Frederick). Please be generous.

### **March For Life – Jan. 22nd – Washington**

The website [www.paradosis.blogspot.com](http://www.paradosis.blogspot.com) has You Tube on Orthodox participation and speech of Metropolitan Jonah.

### **Offerings for the Week of February 1st**

Olive Oil - in memory of Michael and Justina; in memory of Vaschen and Emilia; in memory of Joan.

### **Adult Classes – Wednesdays, Feb. 11, 18 & 25 at 7:30p.m. in Conference Room**

Subject: The Church's Basic Teaching on Human Dignity, Freedom and Rights

Feb. 11 – Human Dignity as a Religious & Ethical Category. Freedom of Choice and Freedom from Evil

Feb. 18 – Human Rights in the Christian Worldview and in the Life of Society

Feb. 25 – Principles and Areas of Orthodox Church Human Rights Work

### **Winter Weather Changes to Schedule**

Please check website, call rectory or call Mary Holovach (908-725-8978)

## THE MEETING OF THE LORD IN THE TEMPLE

*Celebrated February 2<sup>nd</sup> – From the Prologue of Ochrid*

The fortieth day after His birth, the All-Holy Virgin brought her Divine Son into the Temple of Jerusalem, in accordance with the Law, to dedicate Him to God and to purify herself. "Consecrate to me every first-born that opens the womb among the Israelites both of man and beast, for it belongs to me" (Exodus 13:2). "Tell the Israelites: when a woman has conceived and gives birth to a boy, she shall be unclean for seven days, with the same uncleanness as at her menstrual period. On the eighth day, the flesh of the boy's foreskin shall be circumcised, and then she shall spend thirty-three days more in becoming purified of her blood; she shall not touch anything sacred nor enter the sanctuary till the days of her purification are fulfilled. If she gives birth to a girl, for fourteen days she shall be as unclean as at her menstruation, after which she shall spend sixty-six days in becoming purified of her blood. When the days of her purification for a son or for a daughter are fulfilled, she shall bring to the priest at the entrance of the meeting tent a yearling lamb for a holocaust and a pigeon or a turtledove for a sin offering. The priest shall offer them up before the Lord to make atonement for her, and thus she will be clean again after her flow of blood. Such is the law for the woman who gives birth to a boy or a girl child" (Leviticus 12:2-7). Even though neither the one nor the other was necessary, nevertheless the Lawgiver did not, in anyway, want to transgress His own Law whom He had given through Moses, His servant and prophet. At that time, the high-priest Zaccharias, the father of John the Forerunner [Precursor], was on duty in the Temple "serving as a priest before God in the order of his division" St. Luke 1:8. Zaccharias placed the Virgin, not in the temple area reserved for women but rather in the area reserved for virgins. On this occasion, two unusual persons appeared in the Temple: the Elder Simeon and Anna, the daughter of Phanuel. The righteous Simeon took the Messiah in his arms and said: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." (St. Luke 2: 29-32). Simeon also spoke the following words about the Christ-child: "Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel" (St. Luke 2:34). Then Anna, who from her youth served God in the Temple by fasting and prayers, recognized the Messiah and glorified God and proclaimed to the inhabitants of Jerusalem about the coming of the long-awaited One.



### **Troparion – 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 Simeon's hands, O Christ God. Now Thou hast come and save us through love, grant peace to all Orthodox Christians, O only Lover of men!

The Pharisees present in the Temple, who having seen and heard all, became angry with Zacharias because he placed the Virgin Mary in the area reserved for virgins and reported this to King Herod. Convinced that this is the new king about whom the Magi from the east spoke, Herod immediately sent his soldiers to kill Jesus. In the meantime the Holy Family had already left the city and set out for Egypt under the guidance of an angel of God. The Feast of the Meeting of our Lord in the Temple was celebrated from earliest times but the solemn celebration of this day was established in 544 AD during the reign of Emperor Justinian.

### **Concerning the Virgin Birth**

According to the Law, "Every male child that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord." Only with Christ did this literally occur. He Himself opened the womb of the Virgin at birth, while all other wombs which have born a child have first been opened by a man.



- Blessed Theophylact

## 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. Christ says, "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 Christ is everywhere in the whole church, our homes, and He is in us, too.

## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Most of the parishes of our diocese will come together at this time of year for the annual congregational meeting.

These meetings serve to remind all of us who are gathered together in them, of the conciliar nature of the Church, even as it is expressed on a small scale in our local parish.

This conciliar nature was to be found already in the New testament Church, the Book of Acts relates to us the narrative of how the Apostles elected a successor to Judas in Matthias by casting lots and how the controversy over how Gentiles should be received in the Church was settled at the Apostolic Council of Jerusalem.

However, in the popular understanding of the word "conciliarity" is often translated simply as "democracy" which comes from the Greek words "rule of the people." In this concept everything in the Church is able to be reduced to a majority vote.

Living in a representative republic like the United States, it is often easy to apply the gleanings of our 8<sup>th</sup> grade civics class to the workings of the Church – sometimes, as the history of our Orthodoxy in America poignantly reminds us, with disastrous results. The first thing that a "people's church movement" seeks to limit severely and finally to destroy is the office of the priesthood, the bishops and by extension the priests of the church.

Contrasting with this purely "democratic" approach also is the often presumed role of the priesthood in the Church. It is unfortunate that while on the one hand some would make the

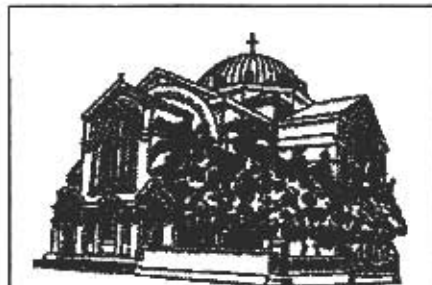
clergy mere figure-heads others would elevate them above and beyond the pale of the Church making them kings over it and "vicars of Christ on earth."

### *Alien to Orthodoxy*

The truth is that both these approaches are alien to Orthodoxy. Both have been imported knowingly or unknowingly from the Western churches. In the first instance Protestant congregationalism; in the second instance from the Roman Catholic Church of recent times.

Conciliarity is the principle that each member of the Church from the smallest to the greatest lives, through the Holy Spirit – the vicar of Christ on earth (*He will take what is mine and declare it to you – John 16:14*) will act through the collective assembly of the faithful – be that assembly the Annual Meeting or the Parish, the Diocesan Councils or the Synods of Bishops.

In the words of St. Ignatius of Antioch (+116 A.D.):



*The unity of the Church follows of necessity from the unity of God; for the Church is not a multitude of persons in their separate individuality, but a unity of the grace of God, living in a multitude of rational creatures, submitting themselves willingly to grace....*

*A. Khomiakov*

*Harmonize your actions with God's mind. For Jesus Christ, that life we cannot be torn from, is the Father's mind as the bishop too, appointed the world over, reflects the mind of Jesus Christ.*

*Hence, you should act in accord with the bishop's mind, as you surely do. Your assembly of priests, indeed, which deserves its name and is a credit to God is as closely tied to the bishop as the string of a harp. Wherefore your accord and harmonious love is a hymn to Jesus Christ. Yes, one and all of you should form yourselves into a choir, that in perfect harmony and taking your*

*pitch from God, you may sign in unison with one voice of the Father through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 3:2-4).*

### **Choir Metaphor**

The choir metaphor of St. Ignatius is a good one to help us understand that "conciliarity" is the collective voice of all sections of the church – hierarchs, priests and faithful.

We notice as well St. Ignatius emphasis on the role of the bishops and by extension the local pastors who exercise their office in the name of the bishop, as the directors of this choir, who *reflects the mind of Jesus Christ*. Each member of the choir subjugates his or her talents to the director of the choir – just as St. Ignatius calls upon the Church at Ephesus to be joined with the bishop.

In every choir there is a certain tension in the subjugation of the individual singers and parts to

the will of the director and his or her freedom to interpret the music to be sung.

The same is true in the Church. The choir members, without giving up their individual voices bring them into accord with the leadership of the director. It is the ministry of the bishops of the Church and the pastors they appoint to function as "directors." They bring the individual voices together and interpret and direct the music as the Holy Spirit guides them. The choir is unable to act without a director and likewise the director is nothing without a choir. Each has need of the other.

Conciliarity thus recognizes that there is a time for voting and "majority rules" but it also recognizes that there is a time as well for submitting to direction and seek discernment between the two.

- By Father Lawrence Barriger

#### **INSTRUCTION OF THE SAINT PAUL IN ROMANS, CHAPTER 6: HOW MEMBERS OF A CHURCH COMMUNITY SHOULD ACT**

- ❖ Use your spiritual gifts.
- ❖ Let love be genuine.
- ❖ Reject what is evil, cling to what is good.
- ❖ Love one another warmly.
- ❖ In honor give preference to one another.
- ❖ Do not be lazy in zeal.
- ❖ Be fervent in the Spirit.
- ❖ Serve as slaves in the Lord.
- ❖ Rejoice in hope.
- ❖ Persevere in tribulation.
- ❖ Be steadfast in prayer.
- ❖ Contribute to the needs of others.
- ❖ Seek opportunities to practice hospitality
- ❖ Bless your enemies.
- ❖ Rejoice with the happy.
- ❖ Weep with the sorrowful.
- ❖ Be of the same mind toward one another.
- ❖ Do not set your mind on high things.
- ❖ Associate with the humble.
- ❖ Do not be wise in your own opinion.

