

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

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**BULLETIN OF FEBRUARY 15, 2009**

**SUNDAY/FEBRUARY 15th**

**Prodigal Son (Tone 2)**

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy  
Coffee Hour; Church School

**MONDAY/FEBRUARY 16th**

7:00p.m. Outreach Meeting

**WEDNESDAY/FEBRUARY 18th**

7:00p.m. Compline

7:30p.m. Adult Study: Part Two –  
*Human Rights in the Christian Worldview and  
in the Life of Society*

**SATURDAY/FEBRUARY 21st**

**Memorial Saturday: Commemoration of  
all of the Departed from Adam and Eve**

9:30a.m. General Memorial Service; Confession  
5:30p.m. Vigil; Confession

**SUNDAY/FEBRUARY 22nd**

**Meat-Fare or Judgment Sunday (Tone 3)**

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy  
Coffee Hour; Question & Answer Period

**Fast Days**

Wednesday and Friday, February 18 & 20

**Meat-Fare Sunday, Feb. 22nd**

Last day for meat until Pascha, April 19

**Cheese-Fare Sunday, Mar. 1st**

Last day for dairy until Pascha, April 19

**40 Day Great & Holy Fast Begins**

Pure Monday, March 2



**Kontakion of the Prodigal Son**

*I have recklessly forgotten Thy glory, O Father;  
and among sinners I have scattered the riches  
with Thou gavest me. And now I cry to Thee as  
the Prodigal: I have sinned before Thee, O  
Merciful Father; receive me as a penitent and  
make me as one of Thy hired servants.*

**On the Boundless Love of God  
By St. John Chrysostom (+407)**

Such is the love of God for mankind that He never rejects genuine repentance, but even if someone were to go beyond the limit of evil and desired to return from there to the way of virtue, He would receive and approach him, doing everything to guide him to his former condition. In fact, He is still more loving: for even if one did not show all repentance – even the very least – He would reward him much for the little repentance shown.

It is not He who ever turns away from us, but rather we who detach ourselves from Him.

If you have sinned and fallen, rise, arise please. For the good and loving master who was put to shame by your sin is beside you and does not reject cohabitation with you. Give him your hand.



### **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.

### **The Pre-Lenten Period**

On the past Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee which was Feb. 8th, we entered into the time of "Pre-Lent." While the Great and Holy Fast does not begin until March 2nd, now is the appropriate time to begin to think about and plan for Great Lent. What are the Fasting Norms? In what manner can I best keep them? Now is a good time to examine the schedule of services for the months of March and April on the parish website and plan accordingly. What additional services will I plan to attend beside the Sunday Divine Liturgy? What reading materials can I secure to help me make the most of Great Lent? Is it of profit for me to speak with my priest about Lenten concerns I have?

This Pre-Lenten period is provided for our careful consideration, so we can mobilize ourselves for the Great and Holy Forty Fast.

Let us do our dining and socializing presently.

It is wise for us to be attentive now to what foods we buy, so our refrigerators are in "fasting mode" by Meat-Fare Sunday - Feb. 22nd.

### **Offerings for the week of Feb. 8th**

Olive Oil in memory of Michael and Justina; in memory of Vaschen and Emilia; for the health of Stacey Kita (birthday); in memory of Joan.

Flowers in memory of Evdokia.

### **Offerings for the week of Feb. 15th**

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

Wine in memory of Joan; in memory of John Danilack.

### **Parish Council Notations**

The installation of the New Council will take place on Sunday, March 15th at the Divine Liturgy. The next Parish Council meeting will be Thursday, March 19th at 7:00p.m.

### **Commemoration Books**

Please have out the evening before if possible.

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

February 15, 1929	Moses Korenchik
February 15, 1998	Helen Russo
February 15, 1999	Zollie Pituch
February 16, 1928	Athanasius Barna
February 16, 1954	Abraham Yashuk
February 17, 1003	Anna Psechek
February 18, 1952	Gregory Holovach
February 18, 1963	Magdalena Padla
February 18, 1993	Josephine Fedchin
February 19, 1963	Gregory Klimchuk
February 20, 1918	Jacob Shevchuk
February 20, 1953	Anna Sabat
February 20, 1963	Theodosia Zuboff
February 20, 1981	Anna Lisowski
February 21, 1939	John Cherkan
February 21, 1963	Steven Piscadlo
February 21, 1976	Anna Sharshon

### **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.

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

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

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 Annual Meeting Reports of 2009**

May be found on the vestibule stand. Hopefully all parishioners - even if they did not come to the Annual Meeting - will take the time to read the Reports and be appraised of our Parish Life.

### **Purchasing Books or Icons at the Vestibule Stand?**

Please place your offering in an envelope and mark it "religious resale." Thanks.

## RETURN FROM EXILE (The Sunday of the Prodigal Son)

On the third Sunday of preparation for Lent, we hear the parable of the Prodigal Son (Lk. 15:11-32). Together with the hymns of this day, the parable reveals to us the time of repentance as man's *return from exile*. The prodigal son, we are told, went to a far country and there spent all that he had. A far country! It is this unique definition of our human condition that we must assume and make ours as we begin our approach to God. A man who has never had that experience, be it only very briefly, who has never felt that he is exiled from God and from real life, will never understand what Christianity is about. And the one who is perfectly "at home" in this world and its life, who has never been wounded by the nostalgic desire for another Reality, will not understand what is repentance.

Repentance is often simply identified as a cool and "objective" enumeration of sins and transgressions, as the act of "pleading guilty" to a legal indictment. Confession and absolution are seen as being of a juridical nature. But something very essential is overlooked—without which neither confession nor absolution have any real meaning or power. This "something" is precisely the feeling of *alienation from God*, from the joy of communion with Him, from the real life as created and given by God. It is easy indeed to confess that I have not fasted on prescribed days, or missed my prayers, or become angry. It is quite a different thing, however, to realize suddenly that I have defiled and lost my spiritual beauty, that I am far away from my real home, my real life, and that something precious and pure and beautiful has been hopelessly broken in the very texture of my existence. Yet this, and only this, is repentance, and therefore it is also a deep desire *to return*, to go back, to recover that lost home. I received from God wonderful riches: first of all life and the possibility to enjoy it, to fill it with meaning, love, and knowledge; then—in Baptism—the new life of Christ Himself, the gift of the Holy Spirit, the peace and the joy of the eternal Kingdom. I received the knowledge of God, and

in Him the knowledge of everything else and the power to be a son of God. And all this I have lost, all this I am losing all the time, not only in particular "sins" and "transgressions," but in the sin of all sins: the deviation of my love from God, preferring the "far country" to the beautiful home of the Father.

But the Church is here to remind me of what I have abandoned and lost. And as she reminds me, I *remember*: "I have wickedly strayed away from Thy fatherly glory," says the *Kontakion* of this day, "and wasted with sinners the riches Thou gavest me. Then do I raise the prodigal's cry unto Thee, O bountiful Father: I have sinned against Thee; take me back as a penitent, and make me as one of Thy hired servants. . . ."

And, as I *remember*, I find in myself the desire to return and the power to return: ". . . I shall return to the compassionate Father crying with tears: Receive me as one of Thy servants. . . ."

One liturgical particularity of this "*Sunday of the Prodigal Son*" must be especially mentioned here. At Sunday Matins, following the solemn and joyful Psalms of the *Polyeleion*, we sing the sad and nostalgic Psalm 137:

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, and we wept  
when we remembered Zion. . . . How shall we sing the Lord's  
song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,  
let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember  
thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I  
prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy. . . .

It is the Psalm of exile. It was sung by the Jews in their Babylonian captivity as they thought of their holy city of Jerusalem. It has become forever the song of man as he realizes his exile from God, and realizing it, becomes man again: the one who can never be fully satisfied by anything in this fallen world, for by nature and vocation he is a pilgrim of the Absolute. This Psalm will be sung twice more: on the last two Sundays before Lent. It reveals Lent itself as pilgrimage and repentance—as *return*.



## THE OFFERING OF BOILED WHEAT AT MEMORIAL SERVICES

At Memorial Services for the Departed (called, Panikhida, in Russian), there is a long tradition to offer something sweet to those in attendance.

This practice, can be traced back to the 4th century. Bread and wine with olives or cheese or rice were offered at Memorial Services at first. The offering of these gifts served the purpose of charity, and those who partook of them would pray, "blessed be his/her memory." This is why they were called "blessings" and had their origin at the meals or the funeral meals of which the Apostolic Constitutions speak. As a continuation of that ancient custom are the luncheons and the coffee offered today by the relatives of the departed to those who prayed with them at the Memorial Service.

The Boiled Wheat (kutya in Russian or kollyva in Greek) finally prevailed over the other gifts. The Boiled Wheat conceals a profound and most didactic symbolism. They symbolize the Resurrection from the dead of the bodies. They remind us that man too, is a seed that is at death buried in the earth as is the seed of wheat. This seed will be resurrected again by the power of God. For this reason, As St. Symeon of Thessalonica observes, in the Boiled Wheat, we add various other seeds (raisins, walnuts, almonds, seasmé, etc.). But the basic element is always wheat because the Saviour Himself likened His All-Holy Body and His Resurrection to wheat, saying: "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." (John 12:24).



In Russian or Ukrainian tradition, kutya is often made with rice rather than wheat. Along with the rice, almonds, yellow raisins, cinnamon, honey and a bite of grated lemon or orange peel are used.

### Recipe One

Boil 1 cup of raw rice (keep a kettle of boiling water handy to add as needed, as you don't want the rice to become dry). To the boiling rice, add a half of cup of honey, a half of cup of yellow raisins, a half cup of ground toasted almonds (toast in the oven at 350° for 8 minutes), 1-2 tsp. of grated lemon or orange peel. Cook over medium heat stirring often (so it won't burn), until the rice is barely cooked. Add more boiling water as needed. It should not be soupy. Let it cool and

put into an attractive bowl. It should have an X in the center or the sign of the Cross. The X or Cross, can be done with candies, whole almonds, candied fruit or even colored Lifesavers.

Place a candle in the center and light it during the Memorial Service.

Greek-style kollyva is made from hulled wheat, and is more or less the same but is covered with graham cracker (or zwieback) crumbs over which is put a layer of confectioned sugar.

#### Dates for Kollyva or Kutya

- 1) Memorial Saturday – Feb. 21
- 2) St. Theodore Commemoration – Mar. 6
- 3) Memorial Saturday – Mar. 14
- 4) Memorial Saturday – Mar. 21
- 5) Memorial Saturday – Mar. 28

The Saturday Memorial Services are 9:30a.m.

The Service for St. Theodore is on a Friday at 6:30p.m.

If you wish to make boiled wheat or boiled rice for a specific service, please let Father James know in advance.

The spoons, cups and napkins will be provided by the church.

### A Recipe for Koliva

- 1 C hulled wheat (1 lb.)
- 4 C water
- ½ to ¾ C chopped nuts (walnuts, almonds, pistachios, etc.)
- ½ to ¾ C raisins, golden or regular
- ¾ C chopped fresh parsley or mint (optional)
- 1 tsp. cinnamon

For the topping:

- 1 C fine crumbs of zwieback or graham crackers
- 1 C sifted powdered sugar
- ¼ to ½ lb. white Jordan Almonds (sugar-coated almonds)

The day before the Memorial Service:

- Rinse and drain the wheat. Cook it as you would rice, for about 1 to 1½ hours. Do not overcook so that the grains explode. Since there is more water in the cooking than there would be for rice, check the wheat as it's cooking for doneness.
- Pour the hot wheat into one large or two smaller colanders.
- When drained, put the wheat into a large bowl. Cover the wheat with very cold water to stop the cooking.
- Allow the wheat to drain overnight.

The morning of the Memorial Service:

- In a large bowl mix the wheat with the cinnamon, nuts, raisins, and parsley or mint.
- Transfer the mixture to the bowl to be taken to Church. Place a piece of waxed paper on top of the mixture and flatten the top so that it is evenly distributed.
- Sprinkle the zwieback or graham cracker crumbs evenly over the wheat mixture. This keeps the moisture from the powdered sugar layer.
- Sift the powdered sugar atop the crumb layer.
- Use the Jordan almonds to form a cross atop the powdered sugar. The edge of the bowl can be lined with Jordan almonds if desired.
- Cover the bowl with plastic wrap.

Plan to be at Church before Liturgy begins so that you can give the bowl and your list of names of your deceased family and friends to the priest. A candle is often placed in the bowl and lit during the memorial service.