

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN NOVEMBER 22, 2009

"And when the chief shepherd appears,
you will win the crown of glory
that never fades away."

(1 Peter 5:4)

SUNDAY/NOVEMBER 22

24th Sunday After Pentecost (Tone 7)

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour; Question & Answer Period
6:30p.m. Compline and Akathist to
St. Alexander Nevsky – Nov. 23

MONDAY/NOVEMBER 23

7:00p.m. Molieben to **Great-Martyr George**
(service in Georgian language)

TUESDAY/NOVEMBER 24

7:00p.m. Compline and Akathist to
Great-Martyr Katherine
And anointing with oil from her tomb

WEDNESDAY/NOVEMBER 25

Leave-Taking of the Feast of the Entrance

7:00p.m. 40th Day Memorial Service for
(+) Mary Holovach

THURSDAY/NOVEMBER 26

(Thanksgiving Day)

9:30a.m. Akathist to God "For All Things"

SATURDAY/NOVEMBER 28

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

SUNDAY/NOVEMBER 29

25th Sunday After Pentecost (Tone 8)

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

Temples of the Living God

Jesus Christ, the Son, Word and Image of God, is physically and spiritually formed in the body of the Virgin Mary so that He might be formed in us as well (see Galatians 4:19). This is the meaning of Christmas, which is the meaning of life itself: Christ in us and we in Christ, God with us and we with God. The Spirit in our hearts so that the Spirit can flow out from us sanctifying the world around us.

This is not mere symbolism, the high-blown language of the liturgy and the scriptures. This is serious business. It is a matter of life and death. For we are either the living vessels of God – "earthen vessels" to be sure, to show, as the Apostle again affirms, that "the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us" (2 Corinthians 4:7) – or we are, to use the Apostle's language once more, "vessels of wrath" to be destroyed in our wickedness by God's righteous glory (Romans 9:22).

As we go the way of the Nativity Fast the choice placed before us is clear. We can follow the "narrow way" that leads to life, or we can go on the "broad way" that leads to destruction.

- From *The Winter Pascha*

Parish Synodicon: Memory Eternal!

Nov. 26,	40th	Day for Mary Holovach
Nov. 23,	1968	Daniel Podobed
Nov. 25,	1968	Michael Spotts
Nov. 25,	1971	Julia Hansen
Nov. 26,	1950	Metrophan Saffron
Nov. 26,	1953	Sauka Greunther
Nov. 26,	2002	Mary Gavlick
Nov. 27,	1979	John Skwarla
Nov. 27,	1992	Mary Bozinta
Nov. 28,	1974	Anna Perchishin

Community Nativity Greeting (\$10)

This December our parish will send a community Nativity Greeting to our entire mailing list of members and friends. Please return your name list by Dec. 1st. Extra envelopes & list attachments may be found on the vestibule stand. Funds will be earmarked for St. Philaret Society Charities.

The Nativity 40 Day Lent

Began November 15th and is observed until after the Divine Liturgy on the Nativity Feast, December 25th. A Fast is observed from meat, dairy, fish, wine and oil. Your parish wall calendar as well as the monthly printed calendar indicates fast modifications of fish, wine and oil.

The Holy Mysteries of Confession & Communion

Should be received by all the faithful in this period of the Nativity Lent. Parishioners desiring to make their Confession elsewhere than in their parish church, should first seek a blessing from their parish priest.

Offerings for the Weeks of November 22

Olive Oil – in memory of Michael and Justina; in memory of Joan; for the health of Archpriest Michael Lewis.

Wine – in memory of Panteleimon; for the health of Alexander (birthday).

Namesday Greetings

St. Alexander/Nov. 23: Alexander Torrisi

St. Katherine/Nov. 24: Katherine Motoviloff, Catherine Gorbatuk, Ekatherine Margiani, Katherine Mantzafos;

Many Blessed Years!

Outreach meeting

Monday, November 30 at 7:45p.m.

Sympathy Is Expressed

To Margaret Ploof on the repose of her mother (+) Mary Romanak on November 16th. May her memory be eternal!

“Free Table” in Lower Hall

On this table may be found a variety of books, icons and other items that are yours for the taking.

There is a Difference

The on-line parish directory lists parishioners and friends of the parish. It has a good number of names and addresses. Your name being listed does not mean you are a parishioner of the parish. How can you tell if you are a parishioner? If you are receiving bi-monthly in the mail offering envelopes you are registered as a parishioner. All on the parish directory listing are encouraged to be members of our parish family by being committed as parishioners, fulfilling the spiritual and financial duties thereof. Speak with Father James to be registered as a parishioner.

Adult Study Classes: Dec. 2 & 9

These two Wednesday evening classes will focus on “*The 3 Powers of the Soul and Their Curative Exercises.*” Based on the writings of St. Theophan the Recluse (+1894), we will examine the mind, the will and the heart and how they are spiritualized. Classes are open to all. We meet in the Conference Room 7:00 to 8:30p.m.

Remember in Prayer

Archpriest Michael Lewis, Tatiana Onuschak, Charles Kachek, Theodora Combs and other especially needful of prayers.

Seminarian Family Gift Wish List

On a separate flyer information and items sought may be found. The deadline is Sun. Nov. 29th.

Parish Council Members Sought for 2010

The Parish Council is seeking 3 persons for membership. Please offer names to either Protodeacon Paul Sokol or Peter Bakaletz.

THE BENEFITS OF FREQUENT CONFESSION
By St. Nicodemus the Hagiorate



So as not to fall again into sins go to Confession frequently, but not in a fashion that every time you commit a mortal or gave sin you immediately run to your Spiritual Father, but also when you commit any small and pardonable sin, if it is possible. For just as wounds, when shown to a doctor do not get worse, so also when sins are confessed, they do not increase, according to St. John of the Ladder: "Wounds displayed in public will not grow worse, but will be healed." Storks have a custom of never returning to their nests if they are somehow destroyed. The demons, too, depart from those who frequently confess; for by frequent confession, one destroys their nests and their web, and they have no place in nor authority over someone who confesses frequently.

And why didn't Naaaman the Syrian wash only one time in the Jordan but seven? (2 Kings 5:14). For no other reason than to teach us all, small and great, patriarchs and hierarchs, Spiritual Fathers and priests, to confess seven times, that is, frequently and many times (for the number seven means many, according to the divine Scripture), and to wash in the waters of repentance, of which the Jordan River was a type, for which reason the Forerunner was baptizing in it: "A baptism of repentance for the people" (Mark 1:4). In addition to vexing the power of the demons, frequent Confession also brings five additional benefits to one who frequently confesses.

Benefit 1

First, just as trees that are frequently transplanted cannot become deeply rooted in the earth, so also frequent confession does not allow the bad habits and addictions of sin to become deeply rooted in the heart of the one who frequently confesses. Or rather, just as an old and large tree cannot be cut down by just one chop, so also an old bad habit or addiction of sin cannot be uprooted or removed completely by the penitent having just one experience of pain of heart during a confession, and that probably incomplete, even if his sin is forgiven through the forgiveness of the Spiritual Father.

Benefit 2

Second, whoever confesses frequently has great ease examining his conscience precisely and determining the number of his sins. For by continually being relived of the burden of the multitude of his sins through frequent confession, there are always less and lees than remain. On this account it becomes easier for him to find them and remember them. But the one who does not confess frequently, on account of the multitude of sins which accumulate in him, neither with precision is he able to find them, nor can he remember them, but very often he forgets many and grave sins which, remaining unconfessed, remain unforgiven. Wherefore the devil has him remember his unconfessed sins at the hour of his death, which upsets him so much that the poor wretch sweats violently and wails, but to no avail, for then it is too late and impossible to confess them.

Benefit 3

Third, whoever confesses frequently, even if he is to commit a mortal sin, immediately enters into the grace of God when he confesses, and as many good works as he does becomes for him worthy of eternal life. But the one who does not confess frequently, if he happens to commit a mortal sin

and does not immediately run to confess it, for as much time as he remains unconfessed, he is not only deprived of the grace of God, but as many good works as he does, whether fasts, or vigils, or prostrations, and the like, are not worthy of any reward or eternal life, for they are bereft of the grace of God, which is the beginning and the foundation of all works of salvation.

Benefit 4

Fourth, the one who confesses frequently is more assured that death will find him while in the grace of God and thus be saved. And the devil, who is always accustomed to visiting the dying, not only sinners, but saints as well, as St. Basil the Great says, and even the Lord Himself: "The prince of the world comes and has nothing in Me" (John 14:30, and who is present at people's death in order to see if he can find anything, will visit the one who frequently confesses but will find nothing, because he made time to confess, and cleared his debts and balanced his register through frequent confession. But the one who does not frequently confess will most likely die unconfessed and thus be eternally damned, because he easily and repeatedly falls into sin and does not confess, and because of the uncertain time of death.

Benefit 5

The fifth and final benefit of frequent confession is that it deters and restrains people from sin. For when the person who frequently confesses remembers that in just a few days he will confess, and the notion of sin arises, he is deterred from doing it, thinking about the shame he will experience when he confesses it and the rebuke he will receive from his Spiritual Father. Therefore St. John of the Ladder wrote: "Nothing gives the demons and thoughts more power against us than the unconfessed sins in our heart upon which they feed." And again: "By resolving to make one's confession, the soul is therefore held from sinning as by a bridle. For what we do not confess, that we do fearlessly as though in the dark."

So my brother sinner, having learned these things, go frequently to Holy Confession, for as often as you frequent that bath the more will you be cleansed. Do not postpone the time saying, "Let me do this first, and then I will go to confess," because even if God is slow to anger and tolerant many times over, He always catches up: "Do not say, 'I sinned, and what happened to me?' for the Lord is slow to anger. For both mercy and wrath are with Him and His anger rests upon sinners." (Sirah 5:4,6)

Always remember Sampson who, even though enabled to break the enemy's bonds three times, was unable to break them a fourth time and escape: "I will go out as at other times and shake myself free.' And he knew not that the Lord was departed from him." (Judges 16:20). You, too, brother, even if you have sinned one, two, and three times and put off correction and confession, and then were deemed worthy to make it to be corrected and to confess, you may not make it a fourth time if you sin and postpone the time of your confession, and die unconfessed and uncorrected,. May this never happen to any Christian.

From the Exomologetarion – A Manuel of Confession

By St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite

Uncut Mountain Press (2006)



Patriarch Pavle of Serbia Reposed in the Lord | OBL Articles



By Yuri Maksimov

I have never personally seen Patriarch Pavle, although I have heard about him for a long time. I first visited Serbia in fall 2006. I very much wanted to see His Holiness, especially because, from what I knew, he was normally completely accessible. It was not that I expected to have an audience, but I hoped simply to look with my own eyes at a holy man of our time and receive his blessing, and this alone would be a joy. But this did not happen. In the fall of 2006 his health worsened, and in my later visits it grew still worse. I was clearly unworthy of seeing His Holiness, Pavle.

While in Serbia I heard many remarkable stories about him from trustworthy people, which I would like to share. His Holiness, Patriarch Pavle, is a unique phenomenon for our times; therefore, of course, it would be pointless to make him the measure for other patriarchs, just as it would be, for example, to make St Philaret the Merciful or St Alexei the Man of God the measure for the majority of contemporary laypeople. Everyone has his own standard and his own kind of podvig. It seems to me that one should simply rejoice that in our lifetime such a person was and is in the Orthodox Church.

It is well known that the Serbian Patriarch, even when taking up his high-ranking position, continued his ascetic podvigs and strove to live modestly – although for him this was all quite natural, without any deliberate affectation. He went around town by foot or took regular public transportation, among the throngs of people, was not acquisitive, and ate as little as the ancient desert fathers – simply because that was the way he was.

Mrs Jana Todorovic told me a story that concerned her sister. She was at a reception at the Patriarch's for some reason. Discussing business, she happened to look at the Patriarch's feet and was shocked at the sight of his shoes: they were old, had been torn and then repaired. The woman thought: "How shameful for us Serbs, that our Patriarch has to go around in broken shoes; couldn't somehow give him some new shoes?" The Patriarch said joyfully: "Look at what good shoes I have! I found them near the garbage cans when I went to the patriarchate. Someone had thrown them away, but they are real leather. I darned them a little bit and, look, they can still serve a long time."

Another story is connected with these same boots. A certain woman came to the patriarchate with the request to speak with the Patriarch concerning an urgent matter, about which she needed to speak with him personally. This request was unusual and she was not immediately admitted, but the visitor's persistence bore fruit, and an audience took place. Seeing the Patriarch, the woman said with great excitement that that night she had dreamed of the Theotokos, who told her to take money to the Patriarch so that he could buy himself new shoes. Saying this, the visitor took out an envelope full of money. Patriarch Pavle, not taking the envelope, responded affectionately: "At what time did you lay down to sleep?" The woman, surprised, asked: "Well... around eleven." "You know, I lay down later, around four in the morning," the Patriarch responded, "and I also dreamed of the Theotokos, who asked me to tell you to take the money and give it to those who really need it." He did not take the money.

Once, approaching the patriarchate building, His Holiness, Pavle, noticed many cars near the entrance and became interested in whose they were. He was told that these cars belonged to bishops. To this the Patriarch replied with a smile: "If they, who know the Savior's commandment about unacquisitiveness, have such cars, just imagine what kind of cars they would have if there this commandment did not exist!"

Once the Patriarch was flying somewhere on a visit. While they were flying over the sea the airplane went into a zone of turbulence and began to shake. A young bishop who was sitting next to the Patriarch asked what he would think if the airplane were to fall. His Holiness, Pavle, replied calmly: "With regard to myself personally, I would take this as an act of justice: I've eaten so many fish in my life that it would be no surprise if they were to eat me now."

It would not be a bad idea to cite a passage from a conversation between Nikolai Kokukhin and Deacon Neboisha Topolic:

"By God's mercy we have such a spiritual pastor as His Holiness, Patriarch Pavle... He leads an ascetic life and is a living example of an evangelical pastor. He lives in Christ in the full sense of this word... As an Orthodox monk he fasts, that is, does not eat meat, and keeps a very strict fast on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays... He serves the Liturgy every morning in a small chapel in the building of the patriarchate. There is no choir there, and only parishioners sing...

"He vests himself before the service and unvests after the service, he Confesses and Communes parishioners himself. He has worn the same riasa and cassock from the time of his tonsure to the angelic order (and this was fifty years ago). He does not replace them. He washes, irons, and mends them himself. He prepares his own food. Once he told me that he had made himself a pair of good boots out of women's boots. He has all the instruments for fixing boots; he himself can fix any shoes. He frequently serves in different churches, and when he sees that a priest has a torn riasa or phelonion, he says to him: 'Bring it, and I'll fix it'... Being around such a person is a great benefit for the education of the soul, for spiritual growth."

For all this, Patriarch Pavle is a doctor of theology (he received this before becoming Patriarch), and is the author of several books: a monograph on the monastery of St Joannicius of Devich and the three-volume *To Clarify Certain Questions of Faith*, several selections of which have recently appeared in Russian translation.

Patriarch Pavle has repeatedly requested to be retired for reasons of health, but the last Council of Bishops decided that he will remain the spiritual head of the Serbian Church until his very death. Patriarch Pavle was very close to the people, and the people loved him very much. He is a unique figure even for the Serbian Church and the next Patriarch, of course, will be different.

By Predrag Miodrag

He is very accessible. When his sister was alive he frequently walked to her house by foot. He in general like to go about by foot, without an escort. Anyone can approach him and speak with him. He receives visitors every day at his residence. People go to him with their needs and their small questions, and he finds a comforting word of consolation for each of them.

He gets up very early and, when everyone is still sleeping, he serves the Liturgy, praying for the entire Serbian people. All Serbia is in his heart. He is small in stature, but great in spirit. He has thin fingers, but when he forms these fingers into the sign of the cross legions of demons flee; he wears thin cotton vestments, but beneath these vestments is hidden the soul of a brave warrior. The people say: "This is our angel, who protects and defends us."