

# **SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH**

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**BULLETIN OF MAY 10, 2009**

## **CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!**

### **SUNDAY/MAY 10**

#### **4th Sunday of Pascha (Tone 3)**

##### **The Paralytic at the Pool**

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy; Coffee  
Hour; Church School; Teen Discussion  
12:00p.m. to 2:00p.m. Church Open

### **TUESDAY/MAY 12**

7:00p.m. Vespers

7:45p.m. Lesser Blessing of Waters

### **WEDNESDAY/MAY 13**

#### **Feast of Mid-Pentecost**

##### **(celebrated thru May 20th)**

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy  
6:30p.m. Compline

7-8:30p.m. Adult Study Class Part 3:

*The Conciliar Structures of the Orthodox Church  
in America*

### **SATURDAY/MAY 16**

9:30a.m. Akathist; Confession

5:30p.m. Vigil; Confession

### **SUNDAY/MAY 17**

#### **5th Sunday of Pascha (Tone 4)**

##### **The Samaritan Woman at Jacob's Well**

#### **Fasting Days**

Wednesday, May 13 *fish, wine & oil*

Friday, May 15 *wine & oil*



#### **Benefits of Christ's Resurrection**

Bestows peace, strength and resurrection of soul;  
Drives away confusion, gloom and sadness;  
Instills serenity, courage and good will;  
Enlightens every good work in the hope of the  
Living God;  
Illumines the Path into the Kingdom of God;  
Dispells the darkness of doubt, ignorance and  
despair about life after death;  
Inaugurates a new and bright day in the history  
of mankind;  
Destroyed the fear of death in the faithful;  
Justifies faith and hope in immortality;  
Announces eternal life.

#### **Tropar for Mid-Pentecost (Tone 8)**

In the middle of the Feast, O Saviour.  
Fill my thirsting soul with the waters of  
Godliness,  
As Thou didst cry to all: If anyone thirsts  
Let him come to me and drink!  
O Christ God, Fountain of our life,  
*Glorify Thee!*

### **Parish Synodicon: Memory Eternal!**

May 11, 1962 Olga Kluchnik  
May 11, 1999 Peter Grenther  
May 12, 1990 John Yalsh  
May 13, 1933 Maria Yaskovsky  
May 13, 1958 Jacob Popko  
May 14, 1933 Peter Chromoho  
May 14, 1953 Della Marchisin  
May 14, 1956 Pelagia Carko  
May 14, 1965 Metropolitan Leonty  
May 15, 1925 Maria Barna  
May 15, 2005 Olga Shemansky  
May 16, 1953 Michael Hobora  
May 16, 1962 Theodore Janushenko

### **Orthodox Youth Soccer Tournament June 13th, Saturday at South River**

A day of fellowship and athletic activity. Join the team! Talk to AlexanderTorrise (732-545-5642).

### **Open Door Ministry Begins in May**

If you wish to be a "greeter," please speak with Symeon Combs. The times are 12:00p.m. to 2:00p.m. You may team up with someone.

### **Parish Council Meeting**

May 21st, Thursday at 7:00p.m. in the Conference Room. As always, all parishioners are invited.

### **Deacon Joseph McCartney**

Will be ordained to the priesthood on May 24th, at St. Tikhon's Seminary. The Bread Plate for Sundays May 10 and 17 is earmarked for a gift for him.

### **The Parish Cemetery**

In this month of May, the annual offering envelope for Cemetery Care will be distributed. Please help us maintain the beauty and good order of our cemetery. On Pentecost Sunday, June 7th, at 4:00p.m. a General Memorial will be held at the Cemetery.

### **Offerings for the week of May 10**

**Olive Oil** – in memory of Michael and Justine; in memory of Vaschen and Emilia; for the health of Amanda Sarah Kita (graduation) in memory of Joan.

### **Congratulations on Mother's Day!**

To all mothers, grandmothers, godmothers and mothers-in-law on the civil holiday today.

### **Kneeling and Prostrations**

In accordance with the festal nature of the 50 Days of Pentecost (April 19th – June 7th). We do not kneel or make prostrations either in church or in our homes.

### **Georgian Day Celebration**

Our celebration on May 2nd was fabulous! Our thanks to Ekaterine Margiani, members of the "Outreach Committee," and all those that helped in making the feast so wonderful! Photos may be found on the parish website: [www.ssppoc.org](http://www.ssppoc.org) and video on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) under kartuli kulturis dge nj.

### **Terms To Understand**

**Hyssop** - a plant mentioned in Scripture (ex. Psalm 50 "cleanse me with hyssop and I shall be clean") and used by the Jews in sprinkling the blood of the Paschal Lamb or in sprinkling water for purification. It is thought to have been the thorny caper.

**Decalogue** another name given to the Ten Commandments.

**Catholicos** a title given to a bishop who exercises authority over several ecclesiastical provinces. The head of the Church of Georgia is the Patriarch-Catholicos.

**Tropar** the principal hymn of the day, usually dedicated to the feast or the saint.

**Dedication of the Days of the Week** each day of the week is dedicated to a particular saint or salvific event:

Sunday – The Resurrection of Christ  
Monday – The Holy Angels  
Tuesday – St. John the Baptist  
Wednesday – The Holy Cross  
Thursday – Apostle and St. Nicholas  
Friday – The Holy Cross  
Saturday – All Saints and the Departed.

## St. Seraphim of Sarov A Spiritual Biography



### Are the Torments of Hell a Reality?

Nikolas Alexandrovitch Motovilov, "Seraphim's servant" as he liked to call himself, had been granted a miraculous healing and the further privilege of seeing with his own eyes St. Seraphim's illumination by the light of Tabor or, in other words, by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Being a fervent and sincere man, he wanted to perpetuate Father Seraphim's memory. So he decided to visit Kursk (the Saint's birth-place) personally in order to collect information about his childhood and youth; he also wanted to visit the Kiev-Florovsky Monastery. The journey had very sad consequences for Nikolas Alexandrovitch. Through the permissive will of God, the enemy inflicted upon him an illness in revenge for his literary labours; for his writings served to enhance the fame of one of God's Saints--Father Seraphim--to a very considerable extent.

Certain circumstances which preceded N. A. Motovilov's illness throw light on its origin. Once during a talk with St. Seraphim the question somehow arose as to the reality of diabolic assaults on men. Motovilov who had had a worldly upbringing did not fail, of course, to doubt the existence of the evil power. Then the Saint told him of his terrible fight with the devils for one thousand days and nights, and by the power of his word, by the authority of his holiness which excluded all possibility of even the shadow of a lie or exaggeration, he convinced Motovilov of the existence of devils, not as phantoms or figments of the imagination, but as a stark and bitter reality. The impetuous Motovilov was so stirred by the Elder's talk that he cried from the depths of his soul:

"Father, how I should like to have a bout with the devils!"

Father Seraphim, in alarm, cut him short:

"What on earth are you talking about, your Godliness! You don't know what you are saying. If you knew that the least of them can turn the world upside down with its claw, you would never challenge them to a fight."

"But, Father, have the devils really got claws?"

"Ah, your Godliness, whatever do they teach you at the university? Don't you know that the devils have no claws? They have been represented with hoofs, horns and tails because it is impossible for the human imagination to conceive anything more hideous. And they really are hideous, for their conscious desertion of God and their voluntary resistance to divine grace made them, who before the fall, were Angels of light, angels of such darkness and abomination that they cannot be portrayed in any human likeness. Still some likeness is necessary; that is why they are represented as black and ugly. But having been created with the power and properties of Angels, they possess such indomitable might against man and everything earthly that, as I have told you already, the least of them can turn the world upside down with its nail. Only the divine grace of the Holy Spirit which has been given to us Orthodox Christians as a free gift through the divine merits of the God-Man, our Lord Jesus Christ--only this frustrates all the wiles and artifices of the enemy."

An uncanny feeling crept over Motovilov. While he was still under the Saint's protection he could defy Satan's malice. But, by the permissive will of God, his reckless challenge did not remain unanswered. It was accepted.

When Motovilov went to Kursk after Father Seraphim's death, he did not get much information about the childhood and youth of the Saint. Of the near relatives who had known Father Seraphim as a child, some were dead, while others had forgotten the facts. Even the house where the Saint was born and brought up had been destroyed, and new buildings had sprung up in its place. However, one old man was found who was a contemporary of Father Seraphim, and who supplied Motovilov with facts which have been included in all the editions of the Saint's life. The actual journey to Kursk and his stay there were without mishap. The storm broke out on his way back to Voronezh.

Motovilov was obliged to spend a night at one of the post-stations on the road from Kursk. As he was quite alone in the room for travelers, he took his manuscripts out of his suitcase and began to sort them out by the dim light of a single candle which scarcely lit up the spacious room. One of the first records he discovered contained a description of the cure of a possessed lady of noble parentage called Eropkin at the Shrine of St. Metrophan of Voronezh.



"I wondered," writes Motovilov, "how it could happen that an Orthodox Christian who partook of the most pure and life-giving Mysteries of the Lord could suddenly be possessed by a devil, and moreover, for such a long period as over thirty years. And I thought: Nonsense! It is impossible! I should like to see how the devil would dare to make his abode in me, especially when I frequently have recourse to the Sacrament of Holy Communion."

At that very moment he was surrounded by a horrible, cold, evil-smelling cloud which began to make its way into his mouth, while he made convulsive efforts to keep it tightly shut.

The unhappy Motovilov struggled desperately, trying to protect himself from the stench and icy cold of the cloud which was gradually creeping into him. In spite of all his efforts it got into him completely.

His hands became exactly as if they were paralyzed, and he could not make the Sign of the Cross; his mind became frozen with terror and he could not remember the saving name of Jesus. Something terrible and repulsive had happened, and Nikolas Alexandrovitch experienced a time of dreadful torture. A manuscript in his own handwriting gives us the following description of the torments he experienced:

"The Lord granted me to experience in my own body, and not in a dream or apparition, the three torments of hell. The first was that of the fire which gives no light and which can be extinguished only by the grace of the Most Holy Spirit. This agony lasted for three days. I felt myself burning, yet I was not consumed. Ten or eleven times a day they had to scrape off the hellish soot which covered my whole body and was visible to all. This torture ceased only after Confession and Holy Communion, through the prayers of Archbishop Antony of Voronezh who ordered litanies to be said for the suffering servant of God Nikolas in the forty-seven Churches and Monasteries of his diocese.

"Then I was tormented for two days by the unbearable cold of Tartarus, so that fire could neither burn nor warm me. According to the wish of His Grace, Archbishop Antony of Voronezh, I held my hand over a candle for about half an hour, and though it was thickly coated with soot, it did not get warm in the least. I described this experiment on a whole sheet of paper and signed it by stamping it with my sooty hand. Both these torments were visible to all; yet with the help of Holy Communion I could partake of food, drink and sleep to some extent.

But the third torment of Gehenna, though it was still shorter by half a day, for it lasted only a day and a half (possibly a little more), caused me the greatest terror and suffering as it was something indescribable and incomprehensible. It is a wonder that I remained alive! This torment also disappeared after Confession and Holy Communion. This time Archbishop Antony himself administered the Holy Sacrament to me with his own hands. This torment was the undying worm of Gehenna. The worm in this case was visible only to Archbishop Antony and myself. But my whole body was riddled with this pernicious worm which crawled through the whole of me and in an indescribably frightful manner gnawed at my vitals. Though it crawled out through my nose, mouth and ears, yet it went back in again. However, God gave me some power over it, and I could take it into my hands and stretch it like rubber.

I feel myself compelled to make this declaration, for God did not grant me this vision for nothing. Let no one think that I dare take the Lord's name in vain. No! On the day of the Lord's awful judgement, He Himself--my God, my Helper and my Protector--will testify that I did not lie against Him, my Lord, and against the operation of His Divine Providence which was accomplished in me."

Soon after this terrible test which is beyond the experience of ordinary men, Motovilov had a vision of his patron St. Seraphim who comforted the sufferer with the promise that he would be cured at the exposition of the relics of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk and that until that time the devil residing in him would not torment him so cruelly.

The exposition of the relics of St. Tikhon actually took place thirty years later, and Motovilov lived to see it and was in fact cured according to his great faith.

On the day of the exposition of the relics of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk (1865), Motovilov was standing in the sanctuary praying and weeping bitterly because the Lord had not granted him the cure for which his tortured soul was waiting according to the promise of St. Seraphim of Sarov. During the Song of the Cherubim, he glanced at the Bishop's throne in the apse and saw St. Tikhon there. The holy prelate blessed the weeping Motovilov and vanished from sight. Motovilov was healed instantly.

