

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

605 Washington Avenue, Manville, New Jersey 08835-1856

Voice: 908-685-1452 / fax: 908-685-1074

Email: frjames@ssppoc.org

Website: www.ssppoc.org

BULLETIN DECEMBER 13, 2009



SUNDAY/DECEMBER 13

Sunday of the Holy Forefathers St. Herman of Alaska

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

Coffee Hour; Church School & Teen Class

11:00a.m. Christmas Cookie Walk in Lower Hall

TUESDAY/DECEMBER 15

Visitation of the Kursk-Root Icon

At St. Elizabeth Church, 38 Princeton Ave., Rocky Hill (11 miles south of Manville)

Archpriest David Straut (908-203-1252)

6:00p.m. Moleben with Akathist to the Theotokos

A Lenten meal with audio-visual presentation of the Kursk Root Icon's recent visit to Russia will

follow at the Rocky Hill Fire House

All are invited!

SATURDAY/DECEMBER 19

Sunday Before the Nativity

9:30a.m. Akathist; Confessions

5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

SUNDAY/DECEMBER 20

Sunday Before the Nativity

St. John of Kronstadt

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

Coffee Hour; Church School

5:30p.m. Compline; Confessions

Sunday of the Holy Forefathers Celebrated the 2nd Sunday before the Nativity of our lord

Who are the Holy Forefathers?

According to the hymns of the Feastday of the Holy Forefathers, the following persons are mentioned:

Persons of the earliest biblical period - Adam, Abel, Seth, Noah, Enoch and others;

The Patriarchs - Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Jacob's twelve sons, known as the Twelve Patriarchs;

Women - such as Sarah, Rebecca, Rachael, Miriam, Esther, Deborah, Ruth, Judith and others;

All the Prophets - such as Elias, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Zechariah, Malachi and others down to St. John the Baptist;

Special figures of the Old Testament - such as Melchizedek, Job, David and others, and

The Three young Men - Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego - rescued by God from Nebuchnezzar's blazing furnace.

Let us offer praise to the fathers

*Who shone forth before and during the Law;
With righteous minds they served the Lord and
Master*

*Who shone forth from the Virgin,
and now they delight in the unending Light.*

Parish Synodicon: Memory Eternal!

Dec. 25, 40th Day Patriarch Pavle
Dec. 26, 40th Day Mary Romanak
Dec. 14, 1978 Pauline Jackowlew
Dec. 16, 1933 Vladimir Shultz
Dec. 16, 1993 Ann Warin
Dec. 18, 1980 Joseph Pituck

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 rather than in their parish church, should first seek a blessing from their parish priest.

Winter Weather Changes in the schedule

Due to weather conditions, it may be necessary to postpone or cancel services, meetings, classes or other events. The parish website will provide this information at least one hour before the scheduled event. You may also call the rectory, if in doubt.

Namesday Greetings

St. Sarah/2nd Sun. Before the Nativity: Sara Kita, Sarah Oliver. Sarah Fedechko
St. Rachael/2nd Sun. Before the Nativity: Rachael Oliver
St. Rebecca/2nd Sun. Before the Nativity: Rebecca Oliver;
Many Blessed years!

Remember in Prayer

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

Parish Financial Support

Is provided through the Offering Envelopes that are mailed to your home every other month. To secure envelopes speak with Fr. James.

The Miraculous Kursk-Root Icon

Will be in our territory on two near dates.
On Dec. 15, Tues. at 6:00p.m. at St. Elizabeth Church in Rocky Hill. An akathist will be served, followed by a dinner. All are invited!
On Jan. 2 Sat. at 9:30a.m. Metropolitan Jonah will celebrate the Divine Liturgy before the Icon at Ss. Peter & Paul Church in Jersey City. All are invited!

Food Basket For Local Food Pantry

Staple food items may be brought to the church Dec. 6, 13 and 20 for the local food pantry. Baskets will be in the vestibule.

Parish Website: www.ssppoc.org

Has an advanced calendar of events thru July 2010. Check it out.

Facebook – Friends of Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church

This forum is for everyone to post on, exchange ideas, make comments and share information. You are encouraged to use the site.

Seminarian Family Christmas Gifts

Appreciation is expressed to all for their participation. 25 gifts were received, with \$200 cash and \$250 in gift certificates.

2010 Parish Wall Calendars

May be picked up in the church vestibule. Please, only one calendar per household, as there are no extras ordered. Please note that shaded red days on the calendar are fasting days. Plan accordingly.

St. George Day Celebration of Nov. 23rd

Photos of the celebration may be found on the parish website under "Recent Events." On YouTube a video may be viewed "georgians st. george day."

Offerings for the week of December 13

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

Greeting used on Nativity Feast

"Christ Is Born!" (response is) "Glorify Him!"

Feast of St Gregory (Peradze) in Warsaw

St Gregory (Peradze)

07.12.2009

Polish Orthodox Church



The service of all night vigil started the celebration of the feast of St Gregory (Peradze) in Warsaw chapel of his name. It was also the day of St Nicolas.

During the service there guests from Georgia were also present, who came to Warsaw to participate in the feast and to take part in the Kartvelological Conference in the name of St Gregory (Peradze), which will start on December 7, on the University of Warsaw. There was also archbishop Andria of Samtavisi and Gori from Georgia present on the feast.

The service was celebrated in Polish language, which is quite unusual, as most parishes in Poland use Slavonic as their liturgical language.

After the vigil all the guests were invited for dinner, prepared by the parishioners of the chapel.

On the feast day Divine Liturgy was celebrated. There were more than 60 people present, which made it almost impossible to get inside the small chapel.

At 16.45, an hour of the death of St. Gregory (Peradze), a wreath was placed at the board, remembering professors of Warsaw University, who died during II world war. This board is placed on the area of the university and there is a name of St Gregory Peradze – who was the professor on this university before the war. During this celebration sang the choir of the chapel of St. Gregory. Archbishop Andria also participated.

St. Gregory (Peradze) was born in 1899 in Tbilisi (Georgia). He finished a spiritual seminary in Tbilisi. Then he started studies in Berlin (Germany). In 1927 he received PhD in philosophy.

After two years he organized a Georgian, Orthodox parish in Paris. In 1931 he became a monk and was a first parish priest in this parish. In 1933 he came to Poland to be a lecturer on the faculty in Orthodox Theology Section of Warsaw University. He worked there till the break of the war.

On May 5, 1942 St. Gregory was arrested by the Germans, who then occupied Poland. The reasons are not well known, but possibly he helped Jews and cooperated with the Polish resistance movement. After half a year he was moved the the concentration camp in Auchwitz (Oswiecim). He died there on December 6, 1942. The reasons for murdering him are not well known. A witness said, that he had volunteered for the death instead of other man there. He stood barefoot on the snow, he was bitten by fierce dogs, and then he was poured with fuel and fired. Till today it is not known, what happened with saint's body.

St Gregory was canonised by the Georgian Orthodox Church in 1995. He is also well known and worshipped in Poland, as he spent many years, made a lot of his work and died there.

The chapel of St. Gregory (Peradze) was established by the metropolitan Sawa (the head of the Polish Orthodox Church) in 2006. Then regular services in Polish language started to be celebrated regularly. Now all the major feasts services are celebrated there also in Polish. From September 2009 Sunday school started to operate for 10 children. About 60 people regularly attend Sunday services, and it is maximum which are able to get to the small chapel.

The chapel belongs to the Polish-Catholic church and is used by permission by Orthodox community.

Saint Gregory became a patron of the community because he is very close to young people, who are the members of this community. He lived not long ago in Warsaw and was active in similar spheres as people from the community (like science, conferences, university lectures etc.). This saint also attracts many Georgian people, who live in Warsaw or come there on different goals – they are often present on the services.

Praising God through our Church Worship

Our Church has made every part of the day holy by its prayer. The plan of the daily services is based upon the words of David, the psalm writer: "Seven times a day do I praise thee because of Thy righteous judgements." In monasteries there are daily services, where monks and nuns gather in church several times every day to praise God. Though we cannot attend as often as they do, the Church prays for us, too. Bells always announce each service.

The church services follow the order of certain events in the life of Jesus Christ and the Apostles. We remember these events because they are part of the history of our salvation. In the time of Jesus Christ, the day was divided into eight parts which corresponded to the guard duties, or watches, of the Roman soldiers.

Praising God night and day helps build in us an inner attention. Our Lord cautioned us, "Be wakeful and pray, that you may not enter into temptation." (Matt. 26:41) In this way we can keep vigil, watch, awaiting our Lord's Second Coming.

Our day of worship begins in the evening. This follows the tradition of the Old Testament which says in the story of creation: "And the evening and the morning were the first day..." (Genesis 1:5) Following is the chart on the watches, times, the services, and their meanings.

Liturgical Service	Time of Service	Theme of Service	Ancient Roman Time Roman Watch	Modern Time
Vespers	7 P.M.	Creation of the World	Evening Watch	6-9 P.M.
Compline	8 P.M.		Midnight Watch	9-12 P.M.
Midnight Service	12 P.M.	Resurrection	Rooster-crowing Watch	12 P.M. to 3 A.M.
Matins	6 A.M.	Preparation for Christ	Morning Watch	3-6 A.M.
1st Hour	7 A.M.	Creation of the Light of Day	1st Hour	6-9 A.M.
3rd Hour	9 A.M.	Descent of Holy Spirit	3rd Hour	9-12 Noon
6th Hour	9:30 A.M.	Crucifixion of Christ	6th Hour	12 Noon to 3 P.M.
Divine Liturgy	10:00 A.M.	The Mystical Supper		
9th Hour	5:30 P.M.	Death of Christ on Cross	9th Hour	3-6 P.M.

What do the soldier watches and church services have in common?



The Cup and the Manger

Written by the Very Rev. Vladimir Berzonsky

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning...The Word became flesh and lived for a while among us. We have seen His glory" (John 1:1-2,14)

Think of Christmas, and Bethlehem comes to mind. The image of the Nativity of little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay so familiar from the cards depicting the Holy Family in the manger scene is so poignant that it draws even the formerly faithful and non-believers to celebrate the birth of the Christ child with us, or at least to affirm what it portrays as a tribute to family values. I would invite the Orthodox Christians to expand their understanding of that world-changing event by gazing on another icon depicting an alternative location – a place that is no place at all, but a conception of a momentous decision. The three Persons of the Holy Trinity in an eternal contemplation, considering what would bring about the salvation of human beings. That event leading to the entry into the world and history of the Son of God.

Much is said, written and preached about the true meaning of Christmas, yet the answer cannot be found by human thought alone. This is a great mystery concerning the Incarnation – the coming to earth of divinity, specifically the only-begotten Son of God and taking on the body, mind and soul of a human being. As in the gospel of John above: *"The Word became flesh..."* To make a start at enlightenment of that profound mystery, one could stand before another icon, the Hospitality of Abraham, depicting in symbols the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity as angels visiting the great prophet at Beersheba. The genius and artist now Saint Andrei Rublev presents the Holy Trinity around a table, and in the center is a cup red with blood, sometimes with the sacrificed "fatted calf" in miniature. They are considering the enormous cost of humanity's salvation. Theirs is a timeless meditation, taking into account the trauma suffered by mankind because of the tragic decision by the first couple to abandon complete trust in divine will and to set out on their confusing and foolhardy dependency on their own will, leaving behind the freedom that comes with God-reliance for a lifetime and subsequent human history of self-reliance.

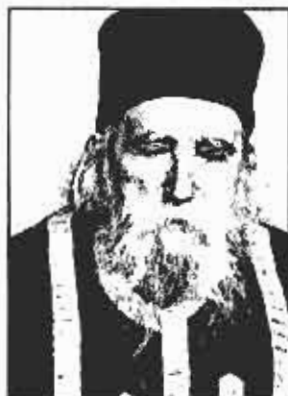
Gaze long enough at the three figures and one can discern a line from eternity into history and their decision, involving a visit from the Archangel Gabriel to the young virgin in Nazareth and her response to his question, followed by the problems she encountered with her betrothed spouse; then another angelic visitation to Joseph, this time in a dream – actually a series of dreams to that blessed, obedient man. And how did it enter the mind of the Roman emperor to tax his realm, mandating that Joseph and Mary would be forced, despite her pregnancy, to go to their ancestral homeland in order that the prophecy might be fulfilled, that the Messiah would be known as proceeding from David's lineage; and another prophecy, that He would be born in Bethlehem.

Yet all the seemingly incidental events that Christians know so well from the gospels of Matthew and Luke are but a backdrop to the dogmatic mystery of a member of the Holy Trinity entering time and history to be born as a human being, the very Son of God becoming the Son of man. What does it mean for us? What should it mean? Love, of course – God's love that we delight in. Love not just as words read from the Holy Scriptures written by prophets, but love embodied, displayed and proved by that same God-Man, Jesus Christ. Now we turn again to the stable in Bethlehem and vow to clean out the debris from the stables of our souls, to get rid of all that is irrelevant for our salvation, to strain at grasping the awesome truth – the divine Christ wants to be born in your heart and my heart. Do we want Him? Enough to welcome Him by prayer, fasting, meditation and great joy? This is what the Nativity lent is about.

FROM THE WRITINGS OF ST. JOHN OF KRONSTADT
Commemorated December 20th



- ❖ The enemy of our salvation especially strives to draw our heart and mind away from God when we are about to serve Him, and endeavors to adulterously attach our heart to something irrelevant. Be always, every moment, with God, especially when you pray to Him. If you are inconstant, you will fall away from life, and will cast yourself into sorrow and straightness.
- ❖ Prayer is a golden link connecting the Christian man, the wanderer and the stranger upon earth, with the spiritual world of which he is a member, and, above all, with God the source of life. The soul came forth from God, and to God may it ever ascend through prayer.
- ❖ Watch yourself continually, in order that the spiritual life and spiritual wisdom should not be dried up within you. Meditate oftener upon what you read, or sing, or hear in church, or sometimes at home. Live as the saints lived: by their prayers, wisdom and virtues; in meekness, humility, and gentleness, not sparing yourself, but renouncing yourself, your rest, ease and enjoyment for the love of God and your neighbor, in patience, courage and struggle - have their faith, hope, and love. "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding." (Luke 12:35-36)
- ❖ The tree firmly fixed in the earth by its roots grows and brings forth fruit. The soul of a man firmly fixed in God by faith and love, as by spiritual roots, also lives, grows spiritually, and brings forth the fruits of virtue pleasing to God, through which the soul lives now and shall live in the future world. The tree, when uprooted from the ground, ceases to live by the life which it received from the heart through the roots. Similarly, the soul of the man which has lost faith and love to God and does not dwell in God, in Whom alone it can live, spiritually dies. What the earth is to the plants, God is to the soul.
- ❖ Begin to fulfill the commandments relating to small things, and you will come to fulfill the commandments relating to great things: small things everywhere lead to great ones.



ON FOUR TYPES OF COMMUNION WITH GOD
By Elder Cleopa of Romania

Our union with God in general terms comes about in two ways: through the mystical communion of the Body and Blood of the Lord and through spiritual communion.

The first and most important communion with Christ takes place through the partaking of His Body and Blood at the Divine Liturgy.

The second way of communion and union with Christ is in the prayer of Jesus, during which the intellect is plunged into the heart and there says unceasingly, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner."

The third way of communion with God our Creator takes place through the keeping of His commandments and the acquisition of the virtues.

And the fourth way of communion with Christ takes place through the reading and hearing of the Word of God in the Holy Scriptures.

Our Orthodox Church is the special, most holy place in which is realized our many-sided communion with Christ. Therein, all of our faithful, approaching the divine services with piety and faith, dwell in a mystical atmosphere and communion by the intellect, heart, prayer and participation in the divine communion of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.