

# **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

Parish Website: www.ssppoc.org Diocese of NY-NJ: www.nynjoca.org

**BULLETIN OF JULY 31, 2011**

## **SUNDAY/JULY 31**

### **7<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (Tone 6)**

8:00a.m. Church Doors Open

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

Coffee Hour; Question & Answer Period

6:30p.m. Compline and Akathist to

**Holy Cross**

## **MONDAY/AUGUST 1**

**Procession of the Holy Cross**

**Beginning of the Dormition Lent:**

**August 1<sup>st</sup> thru 14<sup>th</sup>**

7:00p.m. Compline; Confession

## **TUESDAY/AUGUST 2**

7:00p.m. Compline; Confession

## **WEDNESDAY/AUGUST 3**

7:00p.m. Compline; Confession

## **THURSDAY/AUGUST 4**

7:00p.m. Compline; Confession

## **FRIDAY/AUGUST 5**

7:00p.m. Vigil with blessing of fruits;

Confession

## **SATURDAY/AUGUST 6**

**TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD**

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

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy with  
blessing of fruits

5:30p.m. Vigil; Confession

## **SUNDAY/AUGUST 7**

### **8<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (Tone 7)**

8:00a.m. Church Doors Open

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

Coffee Hour

11:45a.m. Movie: "Rediscovering God in  
America"



### **Lessons in Divine & Christian Love (71)**

When divine love came to the heart of man, with it came everything – wisdom, and power and purity and compassion and righteousness and bravery and endurance and clairvoyance and tranquility and joy and every goodness. But that is completely logical. For God “that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Romans 8:32). The entire history of the Church confirms this. By the illuminations of the love of Christ, bumpkins have developed wisdom, cowards become martyrs, rakes saints, misers benefactors, kings and rich men slaves of Christ, wolves lambs and lambs lions. The wondrous strength of Christ’s love has not ceased with His departure but has still multiplied, very much increased.

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

Aug. 17, 2011	40 <sup>th</sup> Day – Atopere Filipini
Aug. 01, 1954	Nicholas Lebedz
Aug. 01, 2005	John Rosocha
Aug. 03, 1995	Helen Hnatuk
Aug. 04, 1970	Fr. Peter Karel
Aug. 05, 1966	Jacob Hosko
Aug. 05, 1977	Joseph Pituch
Aug. 05, 1988	Lepasava Ratzkovich
Aug. 06, 1943	Sarafina Spak
Aug. 06, 1946	Jacob Russaway
Aug. 06, 1974	Artem Kuchner
Aug. 06, 1989	Andrew Gavlick

### **Offerings for the week of July 31**

Olive Oil – in memory of Michael and Justina; in memory of Marie Smith; in memory of John and Sarafina; in memory of Arthur Stanton; in memory of Joan and Sandy Filippini.

Wine – for the health of Miroslav Trofimiuk.

### **Dormition Lent: August 1st thru 14th**

This is one of “the four Lenten seasons” of the church year. For two weeks we keep a fast in honor of the Death, Burial, Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven of the Holy Theotokos.

A Fast is observed from meat, dairy, fish, wine and oil. Certain days allow for fish, wine and oil. Your parish wall calendars indicate these mitigations.

As all Lenten Seasons are periods of both Fast and Repentance, the reception of the Holy Mysteries of Confession and Communion are in order.

Those of the faithful – including children of Confession age – who have not been to Confession anytime after Pascha (April 24<sup>th</sup>) and are regular communicants every Sunday, must go to Confession this month of August to continue to receive Holy Communion.

### **Remember in Prayer**

Vera Wilhousky.



### **August Movie Presentation; “Rediscovering God in America”**

This film (56 minutes) is a trip through Washington DC stopping at the monuments and archives that highlights the Christian character of the development of the American historical development. While it is commonly said that our American Society is presently secular in nature, the Founding Fathers demonstrated that values and morals of Christian Faith had a direct bearing on their vision of American Society.

Sunday, Aug. 7: 11:45a.m.

Tuesday, Aug. 9: 7:00p.m.

### **Parish Picnic – Sunday, August 21<sup>st</sup>**

All of our parishioners and former parishioners and friends of the parish and their families are invited to the Annual Picnic. Flyers with information and directions are on the vestibule stand. You are asked to

- 1) Sign-up at the vestibule stand
- 2) Subscribe to the Side Dishes List
- 3) Add your name to the Volunteer List

All these lists are on the vestibule stand.

### **Lemonade & Informal Conversations .**

On these evenings for an hour we meet at the parish rectory for a cold glass of lemonade and engage in conversations about matters of life, with a focus on the spiritual and moral aspects. All are invited to converse, listen, question, share, or just have a cold drink. Come to the front door. Non-parishioners are also invited. Time 7-8p.m.

Wed. July 27

Thurs. Aug. 11/18/25

### **NY-NJ Diocesan Youth Day – Aug. 18<sup>th</sup>**

The Diocese is sponsoring a Youth Day at Great Adventure on Thursday, August 18<sup>th</sup>. All our young people are invited. For more information please go to the Diocesan Youth Day Website:

[www.dioceanyouthday.webs.com](http://www.dioceanyouthday.webs.com)

### **Coffee Hour Hosting**

July 31 - Hunchar, Erkman and Turri

Aug. 07 - Sarchisian, Dunaenko, Hando (fasting)

Aug. 14 - Peterson, Bakaletz, Mattei (fasting)

## THE FASTS IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

### Q. Who instituted fasting as necessary for salvation?

A. Our Lord Jesus Christ, both by His personal example (Matt. 4:2) and by His teaching (Matt. 6:16; 7:21).

### Q. What is the aim of fasting?

A. The aim of fasting is to:

1. purify the body;
2. strengthen the will;
3. elevate the soul over the body;
4. glorify God and honor His saints.



### Q. In what does Fasting consist for an Orthodox Christian?

A. In abstention from rich foods such as meat and dairy products, evil thoughts, desires and deeds. In the application of greater prayer, alms giving and more strenuous exercising of all the Christian virtues.

### Q. How do we classify the Fasts and their seasons?

A. There are four fasting seasons which can be found of the Church calendar:

1. Advent – a six week fast before the Nativity of the Lord (Christmas), December 25<sup>th</sup>
2. Great Lent – a seven week fast before Pascha (Easter)
3. Apostles' Fast – of changing duration before the feast of Ss. Peter & Paul, June 29<sup>th</sup>
4. Dormition Fast – a two week fast before the Dormition of the Mother of God, August 15<sup>th</sup>

### FROM THE CHURCH FATHERS – FASTING AS MEDICINE

Fasting is a medicine. But medicine, as beneficial as it is, becomes useless because of the inexperience of the user. He has to know the appropriate time that the medicine should be taken and the right amount of medicine and the condition of the body which is to take it, the weather conditions and the season of the year and the appropriate diet of the sick and many other things. If any of these things are overlooked the medicine will do more harm than good. So, if one who is going to heal the body needs so much accuracy, when we care for the soul and are concerned about healing it from bad thoughts, it is necessary to examine and observe everything with every possible detail.

Fasting is the change of every part of our life. Because the sacrifice of the fast is not the abstinence but the distancing from sins. Therefore, whoever limits the fast to deprivation of food, he is the one who, in reality, abhors and ridicules the fast. Are you fasting? Show me your fast with your works. Which works? If you see someone who is poor, show him mercy. If you see an enemy, reconcile with him. If you see a friend who is becoming successful, do not be jealous of him! If you see a beautiful woman on the street, pass her by.

In other words, not only should the mouth fast, but the eyes and the legs and the arms and all the other parts of the body should fast as well. Let the hands fast, remaining clean from stealing and greediness. Let the legs fast, avoiding roads which lead to sinful sights. Let the eyes fast by not fixing themselves on beautiful faces and by not observing the beauty of others. You are not eating meat, are you? You should not eat debauchery with your eyes as well. Let your hearing also fast. The fast of hearing is not to accept bad talk against others and sly defamations.

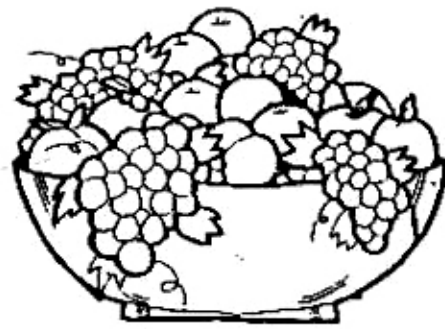
Let the mouth fast from disgraceful and abusive words. Because, what gain is there when, on the one hand we avoid eating chicken and fish and, on the other, we chew up and consume our brothers? He who condemns and blasphemes is as if he has eaten brotherly meat, as if he has bitten into the flesh of his fellow man. It is because of this that Paul frightened us, saying: "If you chew up and consume one another be careful that you do not annihilate yourselves."



# The Blessing of Fruit

by

ALEXANDER SCHMEMANN



It is an ancient custom in Orthodox churches to bless fruits and vegetables on the feast of Transfiguration. This prompts us to ask ourselves: what is the meaning of this ancient rite, and of blessing, sanctification in general, since the blessing of fruit on Transfiguration is only one of many such rites? If we open the liturgical service book where all these rites are collected, the so-called "Book of Needs," we find special services such as blessings for a new home, a field, a garden, a well. It is as if the Church addresses itself to the entire world, as if God's right hand of blessing were being extended over all through these rites of blessing and sanctification. Why have people from time immemorial felt the need for blessings?

We must say immediately that proponents of anti-religious propaganda unquestioningly regard all these rites as superstition which, in their view, is the whole content of religion. They argue that superstition is a product of fear: a person is afraid of being poisoned, afraid of a bad harvest, afraid that his house will burn down, afraid of other people. Religion purveys deliverance from fear: sprinkle the fruit or the garden or the home with holy water and God will protect both them and you. "So you see, it's all crude ignorance, superstition and...deception." However, in presenting the issue this way, atheist propaganda does not mention any of the prayers or rites involved with these supposed superstitions. They make it sound as if priests, the clergy, are a cadre of swindlers who exploit fear and ignorance by using incomprehensible magical incantations. But if one actually listens to these prayers and looks closely at these rites, if only once in a lifetime one experiences the joy of that radiant and sunlit Transfiguration noonday blessing, then it becomes clear that the deception is not coming from the Church, but from ill-willed atheist propaganda. It is precisely this propaganda, and not the Church's prayer, which is permeated with fear, mistrust, and a need to denounce anything more elevated, more pure, more profound than its own simplistic, mundane, and materialistic approach to the world and to life. For what we see and hear and experience above all in these rites and prayers is joy and thanksgiving. But if fear were present, there could be no joy and no thanksgiving; and conversely, if joy is present, there can be no fear. Fear produces misery and mistrust, but there is none of this in transfiguration's light. But what is the source of this joy and thanksgiving?

One of Osip Mandelstam's poems, devoted to the eucharistic liturgy, the main service of Christian worship, includes this wonderful verse: "Take into your hands the whole world, as if it were a simple apple..." Perhaps here, because it is so simple and childlike, we see better than anywhere else the source of joy and thanksgiving that permeate Christian faith. In an apple, and in everything within the world, faith sees, recognizes, and accepts God's gift, filled with love, beauty and wisdom. Faith hears the apple and the world speaking of that boundless love that created the world and life and gave them to us

as our life. The world itself is the fruit of God's love for humanity, and only through the world can human beings recognize God and love him in return... And only in truly loving his own life, can a person thereby accept the life of the world as God's gift. Our fall, our sin, is that we take everything for granted—and therefore everything, including ourselves, becomes routine, depressing, empty. The apple becomes just an apple. Bread is just bread. A human being is just a human being. We know their weight, their appearance, their activities, we know everything about them, but we no longer know them, because we do not see the light that shines through them. The eternal task of faith and of the Church is to overcome this sinful, monotonous habituation; to enable us to see once again what we have forgotten how to see; to feel what we no longer feel; to experience what we are no longer capable of experiencing. Thus, the priest blesses bread and wine, lifting them up to heaven, but faith sees the bread of life, it sees sacrifice and gift, it sees communion with life eternal.

So, on Transfiguration we bring to church apples, pears, grapes, vegetables, and suddenly the church itself is transformed anew into that mystical garden, into that blessed paradise where man's life and his encounter with God began. And just as that first man rejoiced and gave thanks to God as he opened his eyes for the first time and saw this world where everything, by God's own word, was "very good," so in this rite of blessing we see the world as if for the first time, as the reflection of God's wisdom and love, and we rejoice and give thanks. And through this joy and thanksgiving our life is purified, renewed and reborn. No, we do not negate the material world, as atheist propaganda falsely claims, nor do we repudiate it; on the contrary, we sanctify and bless it, for in it we joyfully and with thanksgiving see and feel the gift of God. "Heaven and earth are full of your glory," we sing in church. The significance of blessing is that through it, this glory breaks into our drowsy consciousness, opens our ears, opens our eyes, and life itself becomes praise, joy and thanksgiving.

But what about evil, people ask me. What about suffering, what about death? To this we answer: if we are filled to the brim with this light, if we genuinely accept this blessing and sanctification and bring them within, then we ourselves become the place where the victory over evil begins. And death will be swallowed up in victory, for we live in a world where Christ lived and continues forever to be present. And if in everything and everyone in the world we see him, love him, give ourselves to him; if in all, we see the light of his presence, his love, and his victory—then nothing can separate us from him.