

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF NOVEMBER 13, 2011

SUNDAY/NOVEMBER 13

22nd Sunday After Pentecost (Tone 5)

St. John Chrysostom

8:00a.m. Church Doors Open

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

Coffee Hour; Church School

"Presentation on the Shrines and Sights in the Land of Georgia"

TUESDAY/NOVEMBER 15

Beginning of the 40 Day Nativity Lent

7:00p.m. Compline with Akathist to

St. Matthew (Nov. 16th)

7:45p.m. Memorial for (+) Vaschen and Emilia Sarchisian

WEDNESDAY/NOVEMBER 16

7:30p.m. 40 Day Memorial for
(+) Noah Kanchaveli

THURSDAY/NOVEMBER 17

7:00p.m. Parish Council Meeting

SATURDAY/NOVEMBER 19

St. Philaret of Moscow

9:30a.m. Akathist to St. Philaret; Confessions

5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

SUNDAY/NOVEMBER 20

23rd Sunday After Pentecost (Tone 6)

Eve of the Feast of Entrance

8:00a.m. Church Doors Open

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

Coffee Hour; Church School/Teens

5:30p.m. Vigil

MONDAY/NOVEMBER 21

**Entrance of the Theotokos Into
The Temple**

(One of "the 12 Great Feasts")

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



Lessons in Divine & Christian Love (93)

Christ as bridegroom and His mystical marriage with individual souls and with the Church universal has been the subject of much Orthodox theology. In the parable of the nuptials of the Royal Son, it is obvious that Christ is presenting Himself as the Royal Son and Bridegroom. But His reference to nuptials rather than marriage indicates that He expects a union in marriage with many human souls, who in this life love Him as He loves them. Not all who are invited respond to the call, for there are many bound to carnal lusts and wedded to the world. But even without them, "the wedding was furnished with guests" (Mt. 22:10). In this way, too, the heavenly kingdom, the nuptial chamber of Christ, would fill itself with the souls of the faithful and those who would love Him. But whoever was missing, was absent not because he had not received a call, but because, according to his will he did not desire to be invited by the call.

- Fr. Callistratus of Mileseva (Serbia)

Parish Synodicon: Memory Eternal!

Nov. 17th 40th Day Noah Kanchaveli
Nov. 13, 1963 Peter Chabra
Nov. 15, 1929 Fr. Nikita Borisoff
(Rector 1920-1922)
Nov. 16, 1950 Francis Romanofsky
Nov. 16, 1965 Anastasia Kuzmiak
Nov. 16, 1977 Michael Putyrsk
Nov. 16, 2009 Mary Romanak
Nov. 17, 1951 Vladimir Pasechnik
Nov. 17, 1977 Stanley Bozinta
Nov. 19, 1941 Mary Skwarla
Nov. 19, 1959 Andrew Panacek
Nov. 19, 1978 Mary Suseck
Nov. 19, 2007 Archbishop Peter
Nov. 19, 2007 Vera Somoluk



Namesday Greetings – Many Years!

St. Matthew/Nov. 16–Matthew Kita, Matthew Peterson, Matthew Eradze

Offerings for the week of November 13

Olive Oil– in memory of Michael and Justina; in memory of Joan and Sandy; for the health of Mark and Libbye (anniversary); for the health of Derek (birthday).

Wine– for the health of Frank and Joan Bongiorno on wedding anniversary.

Flowers–in memory of Vaschen and Emilia.

Coffee Hour Hosting

Nov. 13 - Combs, Mantzafos, Parsells and Sokol
Nov. 20 (fasting) Hunchar, Erkman and Turri
Nov. 27 (fasting) Sarchisian, Dunaenko, Hando

An Important Study Paper: “The Parish Community: Our Life in Christ”

Have you read this study paper? Copies are on the vestibule stand.

Nativity 40 Day Lent

The Nativity fast begins on November 15th and ends after the Divine Liturgy on December 25th. In this Lenten time a fast is observed from meat, dairy, fish, wine and oil. Days of fasting modification are indicated on your parish wall calendar.

Giving-Bean Fund Raiser

Specialty Coffees, teas and Chocolates are on sale. Order forms are on the vestibule stand and posted on the bulletin board in the hall. Great food gifts for the holidays. The Fund-Raiser ends Nov. 27th.

St. Nicholas Project for Seminarian Family

This year we will again support the Morrison family at St. Tikhon's Seminary. Gifts that may be given were posted in last Sunday's Bulletin or you may find Project Sheet on the bulletin board. For more information or any questions, please contact Maria Torrisi (732-545-5642) or mdtorrisi@gmail.com.

Sunday Coffee Hour- Important Change

The Sunday Coffee Hour is an important aspect of our parish life in which we share wonderful foods and fellowship. To make sure everything is done in good order:

- No one should be staying in the social hall or partake of any drinks or foods until after the Divine Liturgy.
- Juice and coffee may be secured when we enter the social hall after the Divine Liturgy.
- The Food Table must not be partaken of until the foods are blessed by the priest.

All parishioners and visitors are invited to share in the Coffee Hour. The foods are very varied and many thanks to our teams that make such a great Coffee Hour. There being no need to rush over to Coffee Hour, those that receive Holy Communion are encouraged to remain for the Post-Communion Prayers.

Forth-Coming Calendar

Nov. 24th/Thanksgiving Day–Akathist “Glory to God For All Things” 9:30a.m.

Dec. 10th/Sat. 10:30a.m. Church Cleaning

Dec. 11th/Sunday–Christmas Cookie Walk

IRA Matching Funds 2011

As per decision of 2008 Annual Parish Meeting, the Parish Council invites matching contributions for the Rector's Retirement Account. The Parish will match up to \$2,500 earmarked funds. For more information speak with the Treasurer, Daniel Torrisi. Be sure to mark your contribution “for IRA.”

ABOUT CARE FOR OUR CHURCH BY FUNDING

Q. How do we provide for the financial support of our parish?

A. The Parish Church is supported by the parishioners. The chief manner of support is the Sunday Envelope, that accounts for almost 90% of the parish income. All parishioners receive in the mail envelopes for the support of their parish. If you are not receiving envelopes presently, you are not registered as a parishioner and should speak to Father James about parish membership.

Q. What is the required or suggested amount one should make weekly to the church?

A. There is no required or suggested amount. What is the model for our parish that was implemented in the year 2006 was the tithe or proportionate giving. This model - found in the Scriptures - has as its principle, that the % of what one gives is the determining factor, not the amount one gives. The tithe is the Old Testament standard, and used by our Lord and the Apostles in the New Testament, in which 10% was set aside as an offering. Proportionate giving is similar to the tithe but different in the sense that it may be 10% or any other %, as 3%, 5%, 7% 12% etc.. Parishioners are asked to support the parish by adopting a self-determined percentage of funding, that is regular, made through the usage of the Sunday envelope and offered in thanksgiving and as a "the first fruit."

Q. What is the "first fruit offering.?"

A. First fruit offering means that when we consider our income or salary, that the "first" portion of it is dedicated to the Lord in return for the blessings and benefactions we have received. First Fruit Offerings are given in thanksgiving, not in obligation; they are given joyfully. Our checks or cash given to the funding of the Church is to do the "Lord's work," it is not another thing that needs to be paid, like our mortgage, car insurance, and other obligations.

Q. How has the tithing/proportionate model worked in our parish?

A. It has worked very well. It has worked well because it is the best and biblical model for church funding. Consider the following:

The average Sunday Envelope income (2005/2004/2003) given by 119 parishioners was \$85,478. This was before we adopted the tithe model.

The Sunday Envelope income in the year the tithe was adopted (2006) was \$101,401. In the year 2007, the first full year after the tithe was implemented the Sunday Envelope income was \$120,473.

Our parishioners responded positively to the tithe model.

The average Sunday Envelope income (2010/2009/2008) given by 93 parishioners was \$98,133. There has been a noticeable decline in the Sunday Envelope in the last 3 years attributive to:

- The bad economy that manifested itself fully in 2008.
- The decline of our parish membership by 26 parishioners and the loss of employment by a number of our parishioners.
- The hesitancy on the part of the rector and parish council to remind and instruct the faithful about church funding due to the economic hard time we are all dealing with.

Presently, we invite and encourage all of our parishioners to be renewed in the understanding of and participation in proportionate giving. The Lord bless!

Determining Your Tithe

Weekly					
If Annual Gross Income Is:	5%	7%	10%	12%	15%
20,000	\$19	\$27	\$38	\$46	\$58
30,000	\$29	\$40	\$58	\$69	\$87
40,000	\$38	\$54	\$77	\$92	\$115
50,000	\$48	\$67	\$96	\$115	\$144
60,000	\$58	\$81	\$115	\$138	\$173
75,000	\$72	\$101	\$144	\$173	\$216
100,000	\$96	\$135	\$192	\$231	\$288

Monthly					
If Annual Gross Income Is:	5%	7%	10%	12%	15%
20,000	\$83	\$117	\$167	\$200	\$250
30,000	\$125	\$175	\$250	\$300	\$375
40,000	\$167	\$233	\$333	\$400	\$500
50,000	\$208	\$292	\$417	\$500	\$625
60,000	\$250	\$350	\$500	\$600	\$750
75,000	\$313	\$438	\$625	\$750	\$938
100,000	\$417	\$583	\$833	\$1,000	\$1,250

TITHES AND FIRSTFRUITS: AN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING

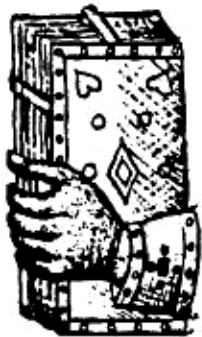
“Honor the Lord with your substance and with firstfruits of all your produce” (Proverbs 3:9).

In ancient Israel, the Church of the Old Testament, the law of Moses instituted the “**tithe**”, also called the offering of the “**firstfruits**.” “Tithe” is merely the Old English word for “**tenth**.” Israel’s tithe was an assessment of one-tenth of all produce for maintenance of the Temple, the support of the priesthood, and the sustenance of the poor (Numbers 18:24; Deuteronomy 12:11 and 26:12). Usually this portion was rendered from the first harvested of the crop, hence the title “firstfruits.”

These activities are still necessary parts of Church life. Parishes need suitable places for worship, education, and fellowship; we are still responsible for our priest’s livelihood; and the Lord continually reminds us of our obligation to the needy. Therefore, the practice of good stewardship, represented by the tithe, retains its importance.

The motive behind the old Testament tithe, however, was not merely pragmatic. For the ancient Hebrews tithing was never merely an efficient way to raise money. Rather, they understood that their relationship with God required them to dedicate a substantial portion of the fruit of their labor to His purposes.

Our basic understanding as Orthodox Christians, derived from the Old Testament, is that everything comes from God. All that we have or hope to possess, beginning with life itself, is His gift. We acknowledge this fact in our spiritual life through prayer and fasting and through our struggle to follow His commandments. With regard to our material blessings, we confess that he is their true source by **returning a portion to God**, to worship, the support of those called to His special service, and the aid for the poor. By thus giving a portion of our wealth for His purposes, we **sanctify the remainder**. Through offering a part, we bring the whole our lives into harmony with God’s will.



The Old Testament Law embodied this admission of God’s sovereignty, in the tithe. Nothing in this is changed by the coming of Christ. Tithing is not a purely Old Testament observance revived by Protestants and, therefore, a thing we Orthodox Christians need not worry about. It is true that many Old Testament practices are now understood in a spiritual way fulfilled, transformed, or displaced by Christ’s coming, death and Resurrection. It is also true that, in recent times, some Protestants have stressed tithing as the norm of giving. But in reality, neither of these objections applies to the tithe or denies its validity.

Our Lord criticized the way in which his opponents tithed, but in so doing, He confirmed the tithe itself: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe your mint, dill, and cumin, but have omitted the weightier matters of the law judgment, mercy, and faith. These you ought to have done, without omitting the others” (Matthew 23:23).

Likewise, on of the earliest witnesses to Holy Tradition, The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles (also called, “The Didache), applies the firstfruits to the Church. “Every firstfruit of the produce of

the wine-vat and of the threshing floor, of cattle and flocks, you will take and give as the firstfruits to your prophets; for they are your chief priests...if you prepare food, take and give the firstfruit according to the commandment. Likewise, when you open a jar of wine or oil, take and give the firstfruit to the prophets. Take also the firstfruit of money and clothing and of every possession, as it may seem right to you, and give according to the commandment."

St. Irenaeus, writing toward the end of the 2nd century, notes that Christ Himself "gave directions to His disciples to offer the firstfruits of His own created things not as if He stood in need of them, But that they might be themselves neither unfruitful nor ungrateful."

St. John Chrysostom (+407) contends that the tithe is more binding on us than the Jews. In one of his sermons, he notes that under the Old Testament tithing was the norm. Among Christians, however, it has become a cause of amazement; we exclaim in wonder, "Why, so-and-so tithes!" St. John finds this a sad reflection on our piety and ends with the warning, "if it was a danger to neglect the tithe then, how serious, it must be now!"

As we said, the Old Testament saints did not see the tithe merely as a way of organizing fund-raising for the Temple and clergy, but as part of their relationship with God. Similarly, we cannot regard our giving merely as providing for our parish's material needs. We must appreciate the spiritual importance of tithing, as the return to the Lord of a portion of His blessings through which we sanctify the remainder for our own use. Thus we acknowledge the lord's claim upon the whole of our life and affirm that the focus of our existence is not of this world but the Kingdom to come.

The tithe, one-tenth, is the **ideal of stewardship** set forth in Scripture in the Old Testament tithe, and in Tradition, represented by the Didache, St. Irenaeus, and St. John Chrysostom. At first, for those not used to the idea of tithing, this amount may seem staggering. The best way to begin is to **adopt a lower percentage and then increase it over time**. First, we should accept the underlying principle behind tithing: that we should not give an arbitrary amount that our contributions should represent a proportion of our income. Once we establish a certain percentage (for example 3%-5%) as our starting point, we can then increase it by one percent a year until we reach the tithe. From the beginning, however, we must adopt the idea that we give a percentage of our treasure; we cannot base it on impulse, giving "a little something" from what "we have left over". Instead, our offering should represent "the firstfruits of our produce" offered because we want to show **our gratitude to God** for His blessings, and because we **acknowledge our part in His work** of redeeming the world.

Fr. Dmitri Cozby

The Time to Tithe is Now: It is a Spiritual Adventure

You will never be in a better position to tithe than you are today. Whether you can tithe has relatively little to do with the amount of your income or the number of your financial obligations. The person who says "After I pay all my bills, I can't afford to tithe," is telling the truth. He or she simply has the cart before the horse. None of us could afford to tithe with what's left. Tithing (10% giving) is a matter of putting first things first, taking our tithe out first, and then wisely managing the rest of our income in a way in which we still pay our bills.

