

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF AUGUST 18, 2013

SUNDAY/AUGUST 18

8th Sunday After Pentecost

St. John of Rila, Bulgaria

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

Coffee Hour

SATURDAY/AUGUST 24

9:30a.m. Akathist; Confessions

5:30p.m. Vespers & Compline;

Confessions

SUNDAY/AUGUST 25

9th Sunday After Pentecost

Apostle Titus

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

With Prayers for New Academic Year;

Coffee Hour

2:00p.m. Parish Picnic at Kita Home

312 No. 10th Ave., Manville

(All Are Invited – Take A Swim)

Prayer

Lord, Jesus Christ our God,

You blessed the five loaves in the wilderness,
and from them five thousand were filled.

Bless always our food and multiply our resources;
and grant us also the generosity to share them freely
with the poor and the hungry of the world.

For You bless and sanctify all things,

Christ our God, the heavenly Bread,

and to You we give glory,
together with Your Eternal Father

and Your life giving Spirit,

now and forever. Amen.

Adapted Prayer of Blessing
Artoclasia (Blessing of the Five Loaves)

CHRIST
blessing
the five
loaves



and the
two fish

I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate manna in the desert, but they died. But the bread that comes down from heaven is of such a kind that whoever eats it will not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread, he will live forever (Jn. 6:48-51).

The Church Fathers interpreted the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand as an anticipation of the Eucharist in which Christ offers Himself to us as the heavenly bread. A continuation of the Last Supper, the Eucharist is a mystical meal which we share with Christ and with one another. Through the Eucharist we are united with the Lord and with one another. This connection is already made in the Gospel of St. John where Christ clearly hints at the sacrament of the Eucharist:

I am telling you the truth . . . Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him to life in the last day. For my flesh is the true food; my blood is the real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me, and I live in him (Jn. 6:53-56).

Being of One Mind

In the Divine Liturgy we frequently pray for mutual love and unity. Before we recite the Creed the priest turns to the congregation and says, "Let us love one another that with one mind we may confess." After the consecration of the eucharistic gifts, and toward the end of the long prayer of thanksgiving and commemorations, the priest prays to God on behalf of all: "And grant that with one voice and one heart we may glorify and praise Your most honored and majestic name." One of the frequent petitions invites us to "commit ourselves and one another" to Christ. The whole Liturgy offered in the first person plural, and shared as a mystical meal with the Lord, leads us to affirm and to live the gift of unity which Christ bestows.

But unity of hearts and minds is not intended as a liturgical experience alone. The common life of Christians in community should also reflect the mutual love and harmony which Christ intended for His people. Unity of faith should be joyously confirmed by unity of life based on true Christian love and forgiveness. Christ commanded His disciples: "As I have loved you, so you must love one another" (Jn. 13:34). He prayed to the Father: "I pray that they may all be one, Father! . . . I in them and You in me, so that they may be completely one, in order that the world may know that You sent me and that You love them as You love me" (Jn. 17:21,23).

But how can this gift of perfect unity be realized in the ordinary give and take of parish life? Parish Council members have different views of administration and of priorities in the Church. The spirit of the choir may suffer because of personality clashes among its members. Various parish groups may be competing with one another. Young people may want to go off in different directions on their own. The priest himself may be frustrated by the gap he sees between, on the one hand, the unity of hearts and minds for which the Liturgy calls and, on the other hand, the lack of actual unity in the parish.

As long as we keep our eyes on ourselves, on our own interests, as well as on the personality traits and weaknesses of others, misunderstandings and conflicts will abound. But when we set our eyes on Christ, and are truly willing to serve Him and His mission with a love that does not seek its own, then we are able to transcend our peculiarities and shortcomings, and begin to experience unity as a gift of grace. The more we love Christ and seek to be true to Him by acquiring His mind and following His precepts, the more we grow to love one another. We find new ways of cooperation and mutual forgiveness. We discover the unity of which the Liturgy speaks.

Offerings Week of August 18

Olive Oil – in memory of Michael, Justina, and Rosalie; in memory of Vaschen and Emilia; in memory of Maria and Rosalie; for the health of Andrew (birthday) and Barbara.

Wine – in memory of Floarea, Gheorghe and Gabriela-Antoaneta.

Flowers – for the health of Magdalena Dao (birthday).

Parish Synodicon: Memory Eternal!

Aug. 18, 1922 Demetrius Barthusak
Aug. 18, 1968 Peter Patson
Aug. 19, 1925 Helen Wawrenchuk
Aug. 19, 1942 Constantine Yancevich
Aug. 19, 1948 John Shander
Aug. 19, 1957 Samuel Barnosky
Aug. 20, 1965 Natalie Laga Salevanik
Aug. 20, 2008 Sophie Wassel
Aug. 21, 1980 Mary Pegene
Aug. 21, 2001 Anna Cherniak
Aug. 22, 1978 Anna Recketz
Aug. 23, 1926 John Mlinets
Aug. 23, 1938 Semeon Dutko
Aug. 24, 1954 John Wasevich
Aug. 24, 1958 John Galida
Aug. 24, 1990 Michael Sudia

Coffee Hour Hosting

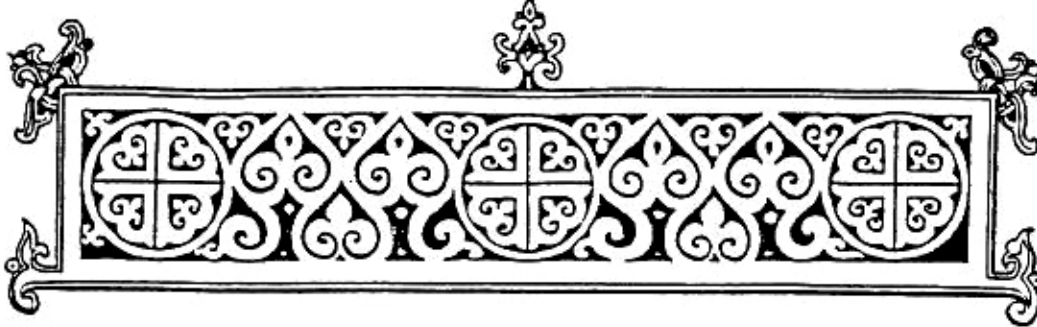
Aug. 18 Inga, Eka, Marina & Nona
Aug. 25 Motoviloff, Torrisi, Kachek & Stone
Sept. 01 Combs, Mantafos, Parsells & Sokol

Ushers Schedule

Aug. 18 D. Fedechko & C. Dunaenko
Aug. 25 E. Sarchisian, Luka, K & N. Popa
Sept. 01 . Smith, P. Bakaletz & A. Moldoveanu

A Word To Those Who Frequent the Holy Gifts – Communion Every Sunday

If you regularly receive Holy Communion, and you have not been to Holy Confession after Pascha (May 5th), in order to continue receiving the Holy Gifts, please go to Confession in the Dormition Lent (Aug. 1-14) or by extension before the end of the month of August.



APPROACHING SICKNESS

This perspective can be briefly stated in eleven propositions.

1. Evil is a condition. Ultimate reality, God, is good and the source of all good. God is the Uncreated and is the only pure good. All creation is good only inasmuch as it participates and communes with God. Evil comes into being with the deliberate renunciation of communion with God; it is therefore understood in Orthodox Christianity as "the absence of the good." The fallen condition of the created world therefore, by definition, means that much of existence is evil. This does not mean that the creation itself is evil. Because of its broken relationship with God, nature is in fact "unnatural," and human beings are in fact "less than human." We are born into this fallen, unnatural, and less than fully human condition.

2. Sickness is an evil. Because of the fallen condition in which humanity finds itself, everything is subject to corruption. This does not mean that everything is totally corrupt or that there cannot be in the fallen condition a significant proportion of the human experience which is good. Nevertheless, only the fully natural is good. Since evil is a privation of the good, evil is by definition unnatural. An aspect of this reality is illness. Sickness, as a result, is fundamentally seen as part of a global disharmony, disorientation, and disorder; it is perceived as a fundamental evil integral to the fallen experience of humanity and therefore unavoidable.

3. The goal of life as God-likeness transforms illness. Yet evil, and illness as a particular evil, are within the parameters of the work of salvation of Jesus Christ. The saving work of Christ in Eastern Orthodoxy is seen as victory over the enemies of true human existence. Sickness, a discontinuity with the presence and energies of God, can be transformed into an instrument for the fulfillment of human purpose, which is to realize as fully as possible the image and likeness of God in human life.

4. Sickness is a testing. When the Christian suffers an illness, he or she is being tested. Illness is seen not as an absolute evil but as an evil capable of redemption, if it enhances communion with God and growth in full God-like personhood. Its proper use is the issue. In the same manner, health is not an absolute good but a test. It, too, provides opportunities either for good or for evil.

5. Sickness is a gift. If the test of sickness is met properly, it can force us to face up to our selves, our values, our vices and virtues. It can teach us what is truly important about our lives. It can mold our character into a more God-like pattern, and as a result it can make us more fully and more completely human. Unhealed sickness or illness under therapy can be a gift that transforms human life in the direction of fulfillment.

(over)

6. Sickness is a temptation. There is nothing automatic, however, about the potential of sickness to help us achieve full human purpose as the image and likeness of God. If we do not accept it as a gift from God, it can also stand as a temptation to despair, to further distancing from God, to an even sharper division between our empirical selves and our true human nature. As such, sickness is dangerous, not only to our bodily condition but to our spiritual condition. Remarkably the same can be said about health: it too is a temptation that can lead human beings far from God and from their own humanity.

7. Illness is an occasion for witness. Propositions 4, 5, and 6 refer to the inner disposition and inner potentialities given the Christian when he or she faces illness. The bearing of illness can also serve as a witness to others. Like a new form of martyrdom, it provides a way of giving witness to others of the faith that we hold.

8. Illness affects other responsibilities. As a trial, as a gift, as a temptation, as an occasion for witness, sickness becomes in itself a "calling." It is valued as a potential instrument of God's will, and as such, it morally frees the sick person from responsibility for some other duties he or she normally has. These, of course, are not abandoned, but they may recede in importance as the Christian seeks to transform the evil of sickness into growth in God-likeness.

9. Health maintenance is a responsibility. One ought not deliberately harm one's own health. Just as early Christians were prohibited from provoking the occasions for martyrdom, so no Christian should deliberately and without proper cause put life and health to risk. Rather, because health is a good and illness an evil, one has a basic responsibility to preserve and maintain life and health. Reckless risking of health and life, abusing the body, ignoring the basic necessities of life—all constitute inappropriate behavior for the Christian.

10. It is appropriate for a Christian to seek healing when sick. Although sickness is not an absolute evil and can in fact become the occasion for growth toward fullness of life, Eastern Christianity does not teach passivity in the face of illness. We have a responsibility to seek healing, using means ranging from the purely spiritual to the purely scientific. Traditionally, both means are used without a sense of conflict. Spiritual healing methods, including prayer and sacraments, are applied in conjunction with "rational medicine" to effect healing. For the church, the true source of the good of healing is God. Christ is the "physician of our souls and bodies." In this sense, the physician is also perceived as a servant of God's will and purposes, allowing the good of health to emerge wherever possible.

11. Christians have a responsibility for the health of others. An essential dimension of Christian love, itself a chief dimension of God-likeness, is concern for the well-being of the neighbor. No one, even the most remote desert ascetic, can grow in God-likeness without caring for another who suffers affliction. Because everyone eventually suffers the affliction of illness, the care of the sick is an expression of fulfilling the image and likeness of God in relationship toward others. Christians thus have a universally acknowledged responsibility to aid others in reducing the evil of sickness in this life.

