

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Parish Website: www.ssppoc.org Diocese of NY-NJ: www.nynjoca.org
Face book: Friends of Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church

BULLETIN OF OCTOBER 20, 2013

SUNDAY/OCTOBER 20

17th Sunday After Pentecost

St. Artemius the Great-Martyr

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour; Church School & Teen Class

TUESDAY/OCTOBER 22

7:00p.m. Vespers

7:30p.m. – 9:00p.m. Reception at Rectory
on occasion of Namesday of Fr. James
You all are invited!

WEDNESDAY/OCTOBER 23

St. James, Brother of the Lord

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
6:15p.m. Compline with Akathist to the
Icon, “Joy of All That Sorrow” (Oct. 24)
7-8:30p.m. Adult Study: *“The Secret of Salvation”*

FRIDAY/OCTOBER 25

“Operation Princeton”

SATURDAY/OCTOBER 26

Great-Martyr Demetrius

9:30a.m. Akathist; Confessions
“Operation Princeton”
5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

SUNDAY/OCTOBER 27

18th Sunday After Pentecost

St. Nestor

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour with Question & Answer Period
6:00p.m. Compline with Akathist to
St. Job of Pochaev (Oct. 28)



James, the Brother of the Lord, a most beautiful righteous one, explained the teachings of Christ with his life, and when they tortured him, he meekly knelt, and prayed to God for his enemies.

James, in a most difficult place, at a difficult time, patiently bore the rank of hierarch. He governed the Church in Jerusalem as a good shepherd, and glorified the Lord in word and deed.

James taught men to love Jesus, and taught the faithful to pray to God. The Jews slew the righteous one – but they have murdered themselves and glorified him!

James, wonderful and holy apostle, help the faithful who pray to you!

Offerings Week of October 20

Olive Oil – in memory of Michael, Justina, and Rosalie; in memory of Joan and Sandy; in memory of Vaschen and Emilia; for the health and safety of Mary; for the health of Michael (birthday).

Wine – for a safe journey; in thanksgiving to God on the Marriage of Simona-Georgeta and Kurt.

Flowers – for the health of Justina Dao; for the health of Antoniou.

Parish Synodicon: Memory Eternal!

Oct. 20, 1988 George Huzinec
Oct. 20, 2005 Anna Lopec
Oct. 24, 1924 Isidore Umbrimovich
Oct. 24, 1949 Damien Dzyban
Oct. 24, 2002 Dolores Barnosky
Oct. 25, 1961 Nicholas Harasamiuk
Oct. 25, 1966 John Lopatka
Oct. 26, 1956 Steven Max
Oct. 26, 1985 Michael Motoviloff
Oct. 27, 1960 Nikolai Roschuk

Coffee Hour Hosting

Oct. 20 Sarchisian, Dunaenko, Chirnoaga & Moldoveanu
Oct. 27 Keller, Kita and Nevitt
Nov. 03 Peterson, Bakaletz and Mattei

Ushers Schedule

Oct. 20 D. Fedechko & C. Dunaenko
Oct. 27. Sarchisian & N. Popa
Nov. 03 T. Smith & P. Bakaletz

Javier Available – Work Projects

Javier does part-time work at our cemetery. He is available for landscaping, general clean-ups, painting etc. To make arrangements call Fr. James 908-685-1452.

Our Parish Website: www.ssppoc.org

Our appreciation is expressed to Fr. John Parsells for this major make-over of our website. If you have any suggestions about the site, please speak with Fr. James or Jerry Stone.

Reminder About In and Out of Doors

Once in church, stay in church, unless there is a real necessity for you to leave.

Adult Study Class: Oct. 23rd, 7-8:30p.m. Conference Room in Lower Hall

"The Secret of Salvation" Why I can say that "I was saved," "I am saved," "I am being saved," and "I will be saved." The correctness of each assertion and what each implies.

Need to Work on a Sunday?

There are other church services during the week. Don't let a week go by without a church service.

To Mark On Your Calendars

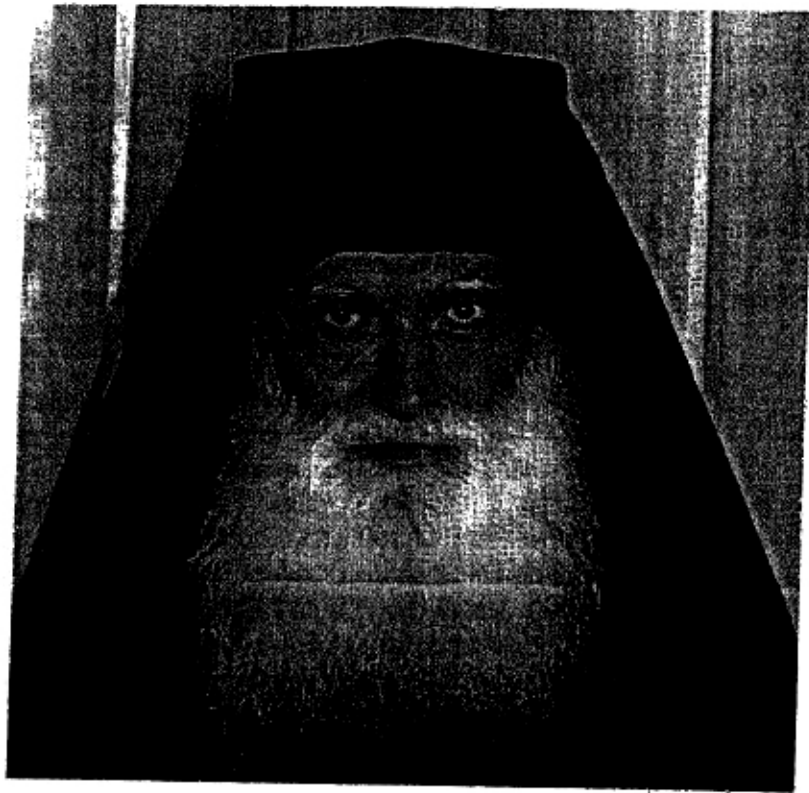
- Prayers for Those in Healing Ministries/Nov. 3 at Divine Liturgy
- Diocesan Assembly/Nov. 12 in Yonkers
- Parish Council Meeting/Nov. 14
- Nativity Lent 40 Day Lent Begins/Nov. 15
- Parish Council Workshop/Nov. 16
- Church Cleaning/Nov. 30 & Dec. 7
- Annual Christmas Cookie Walk/Dec. 8

A Sincere Appreciation to All

Our celebration on October 13th of the 98th Anniversary of our parish and the International Food Festival was very well attended and enjoyed by all! It was a wonderful day and it was great to see many friends of the parish, former parishioners and extended family members. On our parish website you may view some 287 photos. Thank you to all for your hard work in all phases of this occasion and for your offerings of time, talent and treasure!

ORTHODOX PSYCHOTHERAPY

Orthodoxy is mainly a therapeutic science. Every means that it employs and indeed its very aim, is to heal man and guide him to God. For in order to attain communion with God and achieve the blessed state of divinization, we must first be healed. So beyond all other interpretations, our Faith is mainly a therapeutic science and treatment. It differs clearly from other psychiatric methods, because it is not anthropocentric but theanthropocentric and because it does its work not with human methods, but with the help and energy of divine grace, essentially through the synergy of divine and human volition.



A LETTER TO A SPIRITUAL CHILD FROM A MONK OF MOUNT ATHOS

This letter is from Elder Ephraim of Katounakia on Athos. The Elder spent 65 years on Mount Athos, reposing on February 14, 1998, at the age of 86.

Like many elderly people, he was afflicted with illnesses - ulcers on his legs, loss of eyesight, severe eczema, ischaemic strokes and allergies. In the last years of his life, no standing, lying or sitting position gave him comfort.

Yet, as we see in the letter, the Elder was able to profit from his suffering.

May we also learn to be strong when we are weak and see God's love at work.

You wrote to me that you pray to God to relieve me from all my pains and so, I want to ask you to not pray for me like this. Instead, I want you to plead with God to give me patience, not relief. The Holy Fathers teach us many things but our poor experience teaches us much more, and more powerful things.

So, I confess to you:

Six years ago, I was in the Clerical Hospital in Athens due to my eczema. When I was released I went on a pilgrimage to St. Nektarios, in Aegina. When I knelt and kissed his holy skull I sensed a fine scent emanating from it and I took it to mean that many more afflictions awaited me and this is exactly what happened.

When we returned to Kallithea, Athens, I lay down on the bed to rest and I told Father J. who was with me: 'I feel as exhausted as if a hundred men have thrashed me.'

Ever since, all these years, I have been bedridden; you know all of this.

Many years ago I suffered from a cyst on the coccyx, which was unbearably painful. Due to my long stay in bed my behind hurt very much, they were stinging, which was a sign that sores were about to open.

Those sores were even more painful than the first ones.

I couldn't lie down on my right; the pain was horrible.

The wound on my leg, the eczema, was at its worst.

And while in this ocean of affliction, at this dead end, I saw myself completely alone, fighting desperately against those bitter and unbearable waves. I realized that despair had gotten hold of me and suffocated me. Even thinking about this makes me tremble with horror.

I couldn't lie down on my left; the pain was terrible. I tried to lie on my back I couldn't; it hurt too much. 'What should I do? What will become of me? How will I end up?'

I was disturbed and pressed by disgraceful thoughts, terrible ones.

I even thought that God abandoned me.

I said nothing to my brotherhood. Outwardly, I appeared to be calm and peaceful but inside I was experiencing hell itself. That's what I had been taught by my elder: whether we experience heaven or hell we should never externalize it; we should appear impassive.

I was in this state for about six or seven minutes and then it was as if I heard a faint voice, that could barely be heard, telling me: 'That's how God wants you to be' and at once I came to my senses.

I replied to that voice: 'Since this is God's will, let this be blessed. Just give me the patience needed to deal with it'.

I then went, feeling more dead than alive, up to a small oil-lamp hanging in front of the icon of the Theotokos, I took some oil and smeared it twice or three times on the places that hurt most and I was healed.

However, the years went by and I was constantly in pain. Many times I clenched my teeth and stifled my groans of pain. I try to bear the pain, and I cannot sleep.

I believe this was an ordeal sent by God.

And now I move on to my main theme—listen to what I have to say carefully, my dear little teacher.

It's been seven or eight months now since God approached me from the right side. He opened the eyes of

my soul and I realized how much profit I have gained from this wound, how much reward is waiting for me, how much I have gained.

I thank you God a thousand times.

I will never cease praising You as long as I live in this world; I will never stop chanting to You, kneeling before You, thanking You for this wound that You gave me.

Your boundless love, inconceivably deep and high, was revealed to me by this wound.

Thanks to Your glory - thanks to Your love - thanks to Your compassion - thanks to Your infinite mercy.

Thanks to You - Thanks to You - Thanks to You.

You are hidden there, in that wound.

Did you really love me, this dirt and stink, that much? Me, this dirt, this stink?

What good did I do to make you love me so much that you gave me this wound as a token of Your great love?

This wave of gratitude lasted three days and three nights and then disappeared. After that I was soared with unutterable joy, I was in an ocean of spiritual happiness and other such feelings.

This I keep as a cornerstone, as a bedrock in my various sorrows, in the various afflictions of this bogus earthly life.

And so I tell you that whenever I am in pain, I am always happy deep down inside me. And when my pains are lessened I feel sad. Still, I am not indifferent to their cure.

It's only now that I understand why all the saints were happy about their sorrows. And I also now realize why the highest of the Apostles boasted of his sufferings, his illness, his cross.

And I also realize why St. John Chrysostom praises Job more when he suffered all the ordeals and while he was patient during his afflictions than when in his earlier life when he was righteous and pious and charitable and hospitable.

Now I understand by experience why all the saints suffered various ordeals of affliction and were tested through these whether they love God. God himself says: 'For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life' (Mt. 7:14).

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Our late elder used to tell us that his entire life was a daily martyrdom. He was seldom happy; he was in sorrow night and day, and he was sad, and he cried.

Let me tell you something else as well. I think—at least this is what has been revealed to me—that God offered me a great gift by giving me this wound and these pains. Because the joy has no rewards, but sorrow does. 'Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things' (Lk. 16:25).

So, aiming at that reward, I am patient with the help of God. It's true, physically I might suffer, hurt, be in pain, but deep in my soul joy is what I feel.

Still, I don't neglect the care of my wound, with the help of various medicines, and doctors, and diets, and any reasonable way I think I might be cured.

Yesterday, while the Divine Liturgy was being celebrated, a first-class cantor came to our church and chanted. While he was chanting I said to myself: 'Father, you chant and this you offer to God and thus you are happy. I, on the other hand, have nothing but my pain and suffering to offer to God in order to be shown His mercy'

Whatever each one of us has to offer, this he will offer to God. Still, joy is very different to sorrow, health from illness, day from night.

Since you claim that you love God, wait for the proof of His love, meaning His Cross. This He will give you during this life, this gift, which is His love.

That is how you understand that God loves you: from the sorrows He gives you.

If we truly want to be His disciples, not only in word but also in deed, we must ascend the Cross just as He, our leader, did.

'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me' (Mt. 16:24).

By the cross He means afflictions and tears.

Whatever each one of us has suffered in his earthly life for Christ's sake, will be revealed on Judgement Day.

And blessed will be he who has many sufferings and a heavy cross to reveal.

May God forgive me for this verbosity of mine.

Blessed be His name now and forever.

With paternal wishes,
Father Ephraim from Katounakia
July 20th, 1989

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