

# SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Parish Website: [www.ssppoc.org](http://www.ssppoc.org) Diocese of NY-NJ: [www.nynjoca.org](http://www.nynjoca.org)

Face book: Friends of Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church

## BULLETIN OF DECEMBER 01, 2013

### SUNDAY/DECEMBER 1

**23rd Sunday After Pentecost**

**St. Philaret the Merciful**

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

Coffee Hour

### TUESDAY/DECEMBER 3

6:30p.m. Compline

7-8:30p.m. Adult Study: *"On Guarding  
The Mind and the Heart"*

### WEDNESDAY/DECEMBER 4

**Great-Martyr Barbara**

**St. Alexander of Moscow/New York**

9:30a.m. Akathist to St. Barbara

### THURSDAY/DECEMBER 5

7:00p.m. Vespers

### FRIDAY/DECEMBER 6

**St. Nicholas the Wonderworker**

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

### SATURDAY/DECEMBER 7

8:30a.m. Akathist; Confessions

9:30a.m. General Church Cleaning

5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

### SUNDAY/DECEMBER 8

**24th Sunday After Pentecost**

**St. Patapius of Thebes**

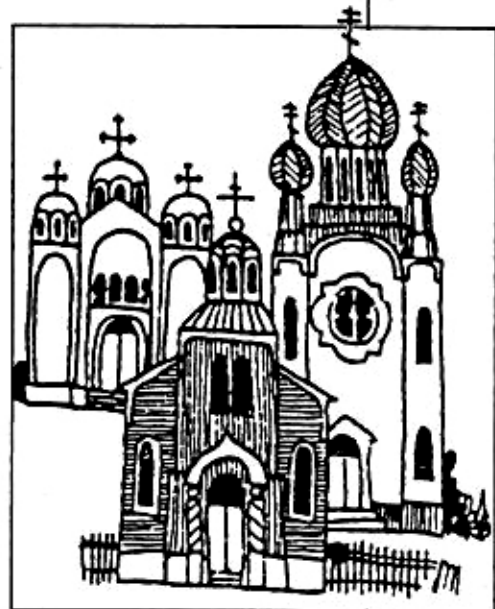
9:00a.m. Entrance of Iwonna Into  
Holy Orthodoxy

9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

11:15a.m. Christmas Cookie Walk

*"Why is it necessary to pray at home and go to church to attend divine services? Why is it necessary for you to eat, drink and walk in the fresh air? What the body needs, so does the soul, for we are composed of two elements."*

SAINT JOHN OF  
KRONSTADT  
(+1908)



### **Offerings Week of December 1**

**Olive Oil:** in memory of Michael, Justina, Rosalia, and Anastasia; in memory of Vaschen and Emilia; for the health of Basil Kulick (birthday); for the health of John, Vera, Alexander and Barbara.

**Wine:** for the health of Nicole (name's day); for the health of Nicholas (name's day).

**Flowers:** for the health of Antoniou; for the health of Nicholas, Nicholas and Nicole (name's days).

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

Dec. 05, 1941 Anastasia Rilik  
Dec. 05, 1978 Stephen Syubiak  
Dec. 06, 1997 John Suseck Jr.  
Dec. 06, 2010 John Chabra  
Dec. 06, 2011 Howard Bozinta  
Dec. 07, 1929 Felix Kshanovsky  
Dec. 07, 1972 Gregory Hriniaik  
Dec. 07, 1999 Fr. Jaroslav Roman

### **Coffee Hour Hosting**

Dec. 01 (fast) Sarchisian, Dunaenko, Moldoveanu and Vajda  
Dec. 08 (fast) Peterson, Bakaletz & Mattei  
Dec. 15 (fast) Kita, Nevitt, Keller

### **Ushers Schedule**

Dec. 01 P. Bakaletz & T. Smith  
Dec. 08 T. Gorbatuk & J. Stone  
Dec. 15 D. Fedechko & C. Dunaenko

### **Javier Available – Work Projects**

Speak with Fr. James.

### **Names Day Greeting: Many Years!**

St. Barbara/Dec. 04: Barbara Kulick and Barbara Erkman  
St. Sabbas/Dec. 05: Saba Kaliashvili  
St. Nicholas/Dec. 06: Nicholas Kita, Nicholas Mattei, Nicholas Oliver and Nicholas Holot.

### **Study Classes December 3 & 10 (Tuesdays) Conference Room 7-8:30p.m.**

*“Guarding the Mind and the Heart,” by Saint Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain*

### **Our Parish Celebration Dates**

99<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, November 8-9, 2014  
100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, October 4-5, 2015  
Please mark your calendars and inform friends of our parish of these dates.

### **Nativity Lent: Nov. 15- Dec. 24**

This 40 Day Lent is observed to prepare us for the Nativity of our Lord Feast, Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>. A Fast is observed from meat, dairy, fish, wine and oil. On certain days, we are permitted fish, or wine or oil. Your Parish Wall Calendar and the Monthly Bulletin indicates this mitigation. The Nativity Lent is not “an option,” but part of the expected discipline we adhere to. Questions or concerns you have ought to be addressed to your spiritual father.

### **The Mysteries of Confession & Communion**

In this period of the 40 Days, all the faithful should prepare for the reception of these Holy Mysteries of the Church. Those planning to receive the Holy Gifts (Communion) for Nativity of the Lord (Dec. 25), must go to Confession in the time period of November or December.

### **Visitation with Holy Mysteries to Those Home-Bound**

Weeks of December 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. Please make arrangements with Father James.

### **2013 Wall Calendars**

Each household be sure to secure a calendar on the table in church. The number of calendars allows only for one per family. Thanks.

### **Forth-Coming Calendar**

On our Parish Website, the 2015 calendar for the year is now posted – subject to changes. Please consult it as you arrange your own calendar. Around the corner:

Jan. 06 Theophany & Blessing of Waters  
Jan. 07 thru Feb. 09 Blessing of Homes (short season – arrange your blessing early)  
Jan. 12 Christmas Yolka  
Jan. 23 Parish Council  
Feb. 02 Meeting of our Lord  
Feb. 09 Annual Parish Meeting  
Mar. 02 Beginning of Great Lent

# THE SOCIETY OF SAINT PHILARET THE MERCIFUL

In 1984, our diocesan hierarch, Archbishop PETER gave his blessing for the establishment of a parish organization to promote charitable causes in the parish and for Orthodox and non-Orthodox communities.

The Society of St. Philaret seeks to help parishioners and other needful individuals. In addition to providing concrete help to those needing it; the society strives to educate parishioners in the theology of Christian philanthropy.

The work of the society has consisted in: providing meals to sick people in the parish; sponsoring a monthly food basket collection in church; monetary offerings to monasteries and convents; support of Ss. Cosmas & Damian Adult Home; St. Basil's Home for Orphans; Cyprus Children's Fund; Task Force on Hunger and Homelessness; Religious books for college bound students; Persecuted Orthodox Christians; etc.

In addition, persons and families have been helped out with food and necessary medicines.

The society addressed the needs of parishioners, the larger Orthodox needs and again the needful in and of Somerset County.

All donations to the society come from the poor box in church. Anyone in the parish may receive benefits from the society. Please bring the names or situations needing help to the parish rector. Obviously, help provided is done with little fanfare and kept quiet.

*Saint Philaret the Merciful was a married wealthy man from the area of Paphlagonia. He was not only wealthy, but virtuous and freely bestowed his wealth to those less fortunate than himself.*

*It came to pass, that God tested Philaret—like Job of the Old Testament—and he lost most of his wealth. Although his friends disappeared, and his family had to struggle for the basic needs of life, St. Philaret proved to be as generous when poor as he was when rich.*

*God therefore rewarded St. Philaret, granting him even greater riches and blessings than before. Now he was, through the marriage of his daughter, a member of the Royal Court. Even in the midst of great wealth, St. Philaret loved the poor and spent his riches, time and love in caring for all those needful in any manner.*

*At the age of 90, he distributed the last of his belongings and peacefully reposed in the Lord. Miracles occurred over his blessed relics.*



**Saint Philaret the Merciful (+797)**

*"Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful."*

LUKE 6:36

# The Privilege of Being Listened To

This weekly bulletin insert complements the curriculum published by the Department of Christian Education of the Orthodox Church in America. This and many other Christian Education resources are available at <http://dce.oca.org>.



**Because Saint Nicholas of Myra, celebrated on December 6, is remembered for generosity and gentleness, one event in his life surprises many people.**

It happened at the Council of Nicaea in 325, which both he and the heretic Arius attended. The well-spoken Arius was confidently trying to convince the Council to accept his teaching that Jesus Christ is not truly the Son of God.

Nicholas listened until he could bear no more. He rose and struck Arius, believing that dangerous lies and distortions did not deserve the privilege of being listened to.

A number of articulate, popular atheists today write books and make public statements attempting to convince people that God does not exist. To believe in God, they say, is to subscribe to a false idea that has caused strife all over the world.

Because these writers particularly attack Christianity, we Christians should determine whether the quality of their scholarship and their actual knowledge of the faith they criticize entitles them to the privilege of being listened to.

In his book "The God Delusion" atheist Richard Dawkins writes that Adam and Eve, as a result of their sin, were "banished forever from the Garden of Eden" and "deprived of the gift of eternal life." This is nonsense; the reason for Christ's coming is to restore our eternal communion with God.

Regarding Christ Himself, Dawkins says that "Jesus was a loyal Jew. It was Paul who invented the idea of taking the Jewish God to the Gentiles." He quotes one John Hartung: "Jesus would have turned over in his grave if he had known that Paul would be taking his plan to the [Gentiles]." Reading Matthew 28: 19-20, a passage universally known as the "Great Commission", is enough to show that Dawkins is in error here—and is apparently unfamiliar with some of Jesus' best-known words.

Much more could be said about Dawkins' theological misrepresentations, but any serious reader will also take issue with his claims about other writers. For example, he writes that Martin Luther King, though a Christian, "derived his philosophy of non-violent civil disobedience directly from Gandhi..." But in his famous "Letter from the Birmingham Jail", King himself, having been called an extremist, lists other inspirational "extremists": Jesus, Amos, Paul. Gandhi's name does not appear.

Of fellow scientist Stephen Jay Gould, who wrote that science has nothing to say about God's existence, Dawkins says, "I simply do not believe that Gould could possibly have meant much of what he wrote..." What writer, whatever Dawkins believes, writes what he doesn't mean?

Again displaying his own beliefs, Dawkins refers to the Taliban dynamiting Buddhas in Afghanistan and writes: "I do not believe there is an atheist in the world who would bulldoze Mecca [or other holy sites]..." Is it possible he's unfamiliar with—for just one prominent example—the Soviets' destruction of countless churches in the name of atheism?

#### Kontakion - Tone 3

You revealed yourself, O saint, in Myra as a priest,  
For you fulfilled the Gospel of Christ  
By giving up your soul for your people,  
And saving the innocent from death.  
Therefore you are blessed as one become wise in the grace of God.

Saint Paul encourages us to "test everything" (I Thessalonians 5:21). Testing the claims of today's popular atheists shows their lack of intellectual substance. That lack means they have forfeited the privilege of being listened to.

# ST. PHILARET THE MERCIFUL

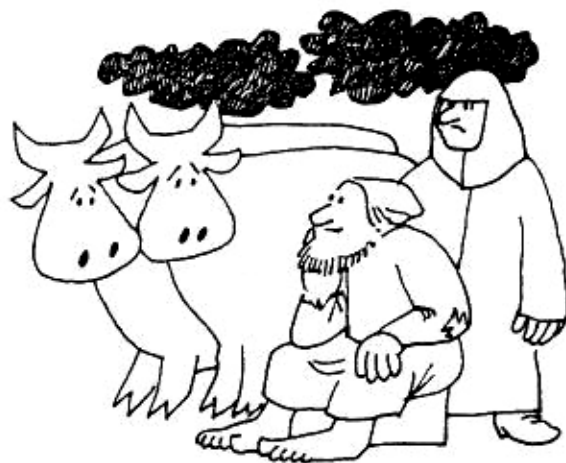
Remembered on December 1



Philaret was rich and happy. He lived in a small village in the Byzantine Empire in the eighth century. He had a good wife and three good and beautiful children. But his greatest joy was to help poor and unhappy people and every day many of them crowded his big house.

Then came the hard times. The land was ruined by war and Philaret lost all his fortune. Two old oxen were all that remained from his riches.

A poor neighbor came to ask Philaret for help. His only ox had been killed and Philaret gladly gave him one of the two he had. Then another man begged for help and Philaret gave away his last ox. His wife was angry at him: "We'll starve!" she said. But Philaret continued to share with others even when he became so poor that people gave him food because they were sorry for him.





One day two messengers came from the Emperor's palace to the village where Philaret lived. They were looking for a good and beautiful maiden to become the bride of the Emperor. They saw Mary, Philaret's granddaughter, and they liked her best of all.

Philaret became the grandfather of an Empress! Again he was rich and powerful, but his greatest joy remained helping the poor. They were his best friends. They always gathered around him and he shared all he had with them.



Philaret became very, very old. When the time came for him to die, he called his wife and children and grandchildren to his bed. "The best gift I can give you," he said, "is my love for all the poor and unhappy. Love them, share all you have with them and you will find great joy!"

Great crowds gathered to see Philaret the Merciful to his grave. The Emperor and the Empress were there, his rich and powerful friends, but most of the people were his beloved poor.

