

Offerings Week of December 28

Olive Oil: in memory of Michael, Rosalia, Justina Anastasia, Anna; in memory of Vaschen and Emilia; in memory of Paul, Michael, Luke, Evdokia, Marie, Marie, Marie and Marie; for the health of Basil (nameday).

Wine: in memory of Gabriella, Floarea, Gheorghe, Elena, Petre, Maria, Alexandru, Sasinca, Aurelia, Ilie, Elena and Alexandru.

Flowers: in memory of Melanie; for the health of Anna Dao (birthday).

Parish Synodicon: Memory Eternal!

Feb. 03 40th Day for Julia Galida
Dec. 28, 1927 Joseph Ribsky
Dec. 28, 1927 Olga Solodiuk
Dec. 28, 1983 John Grishkevitz
Dec. 28, 1987 Edmund Kornacki
Dec. 29, 1977 Alice Susko
Dec. 29, 2002 Edna Kalenik
Dec. 30, 1934 Adam Gromako
Dec. 30, 1989 Michael Barna
Dec. 30, 2006 Anna Wasitowski
Dec. 31, 1942 Tikhon Yakovlev
Dec. 31, 1950 Nicholas Chmelik
Dec. 31, 1962 Jacob Hriniaik
Jan. 01, 1963 Peter Romanowski
Jan. 01, 1995 Michael Emilianov
Jan. 01, 2010 Paul Lebedz
Jan. 02, 1947 Chariton Kucher
Jan. 02, 1966 Mary Knaff
Jan. 02, 1989 Charles Specian
Jan. 02, 2012 Vera Wilhousky
Jan. 03, 1962 Mary Tarby Adamcio

Coffee Hour Hosts

Dec. 28 Peterson, Bakaletz, Mattei
Jan. 04 Kita, Nevitt, Keller

Usher Schedule

Dec. 28 Edward S., Adrian M, & Kahka K.
Jan. 04 Timothy S, & Peter B.
Jan. 11 Timothy G. & Jerome S.

Christmas Yolka Celebration – Jan. 11

Our children will put on a show for the parish at the Coffee Hour on Sunday, January 11th. Stay! Enjoy!

2015 Home Blessing Season

The Blessing of Homes will be from January 7th thru February 20th. If you wish to have your home blessed please arrange this (*as soon as possible for as early a date as possible*) with Father James.

2015 Schedule of Services & Events

Our Parish website has posted the full anticipated schedule of services and events Jan. thru June.

Increase Adjustments beginning in 2015

The Parish Council being mindful of the increases in purchasing costs of candles, wine, flowers and olive oil had determined new 2015 prices. Small Candle (\$3), large candle (\$4), Olive Oil (\$7) Wine (\$15) and flowers (\$25).

Winter Weather Conditions

Due to weather it may be necessary to make changes in the parish schedule of services, meetings, events, etc. Necessitated changes will be posted at least 1 hour prior to what time had been scheduled. Notifications will be found on 1) the Parish Email (subscribe on the parish website); 2) on the Parish Website Calendar; 3) on Face Book: "Friends of Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church." If you are not into "social media," please arrange with a parishioner who is, so that they can alert you.

Names Day Greetings Many Blessed Years!

St. David/Today: David Allen Peterson
St. Basil/Jan. 1: Basil Kulick
St. Juliana/Jan. 2: Juliana Bakaletz

Memory Eternal !

Our prayers for newly-departed Julia Galida (+Dec. 25th) a long time parishioner. Our deepest sympathy is extended to her children and extended family members.

Christmas Cookie Walk

A profit just of \$1,074 was realized. Appreciation to all our bakers and buyers.

Parish Website

Has posted some 50 photos of the Nativity Services held in our church.

SELECT NOTES OF THE CHURCH FATHERS “ON VIRTUE”

From the Catechism of St. Nioklai of Zicha (+1956)

- The spiritual and moral character of every Christian is formed by three factors:
 - 1) Obedience to Christ and His Church;
 - 2) The individual effort of exercising all the virtues;
 - 3) God’s grace through the Holy Mysteries or special inspirations.
- The greatest Christian virtues are Faith, Hope and Love, this is expressed in this manner:
 - 1) Right thinking through Faith in Christ;
 - 2) Right feeling through Hope in Christ;
 - 3) Right doing through love of Christ.
- There are many virtues, both individual and social, but the following 7 are considered above the others: Humility, Generosity, Chastity, Kindness, Temperance, Patience and Diligence.
- Virtues are acquired through constant repetition, until they become as natural as breathing.
- ***The Practice of Virtue is the Natural Tendency of the Soul***

St. Basil the Great (+397) writes: *We have received from God the natural tendency to do what He commands...By using...these strengths appropriately, we live healthy in virtue...Consequently, such is the definition of virtue which God demands of us: the conscientious use of these faculties according to the Lord’s command.* In other words, leading a virtuous life consists only of living in accordance with one’s nature, that is, using one’s faculties in the way for which they were made: to direct oneself towards God and to realize His likeness.

The identification of the natural state with the virtuous one – Adam’s original state and that of the man restored in Christ – is constantly affirmed by the Fathers. *However many be the virtues which we put into practice, we put them into practice in accordance with nature,* writes Evagrius. *Where we abide in nature, there we are in virtue,* notes St. John of Damascus. And St. Issac the Syrian says just as explicitly that virtue is the soul’s natural state. St. Dorotheus of Gaza also show that the virtues *allow us to pull ourselves together and come back to the natural state by practicing Christ’s holy commandments,* and John the Solitary say that when man turns to his soul through the virtues, *he remains in the order of his whole nature.*

The Source of All Virtue is the God-Man, Jesus Christ

In the practice of virtue, man acquires Christ's likeness. Man possesses from his creation (*in the image of God*) and within his very nature all the virtues constituting God's image in him. But these are only given as a seed, and it behoves him to tend them until they reach full bloom – herein we find the realization (*the likeness of God*). The very archetype, beginning, and end of every virtue are revealed in Christ. The virtues given to human nature at man's creation and developed by his free participation in God's deifying grace appear to exist, then, only by participating in Christ's virtues, as St. Maximos the Confessor teaches:

If the essence of virtue with each man is unquestionably the Word of God, then every man who partakes of virtue in steadfast manner partakes of God, the Essence of the virtues, beyond any shadow and doubt, inasmuch as he has of a sincere will cultivated the natural seed of good and made the end identical to the beginning and the beginning to the end, or rather, has shown the real identity of the beginning to the end, in perfect accord with God. For the beginning and the end of everything is God's aim: it is the beginning insofar as he joins the natural good to his being by participation; it is the end insofar as according to the participation by a free-willed decision, he finishes the praiseworthy race thither, thanks to which he becomes god as God grants him to become god – because he has joined the likeness constituted by the virtues to the natural good according to the image by his free will, bringing about the return to his beginning and intimacy with God, according to the vow of his nature.

What Health is to the Body, Virtue is to the Soul

The Fathers of the Church affirm that for human beings, true health corresponds to being in a state of virtue. Virtue is the soul's natural health, writes St. Dorotheus of Gaza, as do St. Basil the Great, Evagrius and St. Maximus the Confessor, who writes: *What health is to the living body, virtue is with respect to the soul.* St. Issac the Syrian notes similarly: *Virtue is naturally the soul's health.* One can even say that virtue is EVEN MORE IMPORTANT FOR THE SOUL THAN IS HEALTH FOR THE BODY, SINCE AS ST. BASIL THE GREAT says, *the virtues have much more affinity with the soul than does health with the body.*