

## SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Face Book: "Friends of Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church"

### *BULLETIN OF JANUARY 25, 2015* *1915 – 2015 CELEBRATING OUR 100<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY*

#### **SUNDAY/JANUARY 25**

##### **Zacchaeus Sunday**

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy  
Coffee Hour; Question & Answer Period

#### **THURSDAY/JANUARY 29**

7:00p.m. Vespers

#### **FRIDAY/JANUARY 30**

##### **Three Holy Hierarchs**

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

#### **SATURDAY/JANUARY 31**

9:30a.m. Akathist to Lord; Confessions  
5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

#### **SUNDAY/FEBRUARY 1**

##### **Publican & Pharisee**

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy  
Coffee Hour  
5:30p.m. Vigil and blessing of candles

#### **MONDAY/FEBRUARY 2**

##### **MEETING OF OUR LORD**

##### **(One of "the 12 Great Feasts")**

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy  
and blessing of candles  
7:00p.m. Compline and Akathist to  
**St. Nicholas of Japan (Feb. 3)**

#### **WEDNESDAY/FEBRUARY 4**

#### **FRIDAY/FEBRUARY 6**

These two days are fast free.

THREE HIERARCHS



"All around us, people are un-churched ... even "de-churched". People no longer come to church just because they're from an Orthodox family, or an Orthodox country. To expand the mission, we have to think like the early Church thought. Like St. Justin the Martyr, we need to water the seed of truth in everyone we encounter, and draw them in with Christ's love. Our churches cannot be clubs ... nor should they be businesses ... and they must not be museums. They have to be lighthouses, leading others to the true Light Who is Jesus Christ, our Lord."

His Grace Michael, Bishop of New York,  
Diocese of New York and New Jersey

### **Offerings Week of January 25**

**Olive Oil:** in memory of Michael, Rosalia, Justina Anastasia, Pavel, Anna; in memory of Vaschen and Emilia; in memory of Gabriela, Floarea, Gheorghe, Elena, Elena, Grigorge, Maria and Elena; in thanksgiving for protection.

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

Feb. 03 40<sup>th</sup> Day for Julia Galida  
Jan. 26, 1965 Fr. Constantine Suchostovsky  
(rector 1915)  
Jan. 26, 1982 Joseph Wilhousky  
Jan. 27, 1937 Helen Popko  
Jan. 27, 1972 Mary Sandago  
Jan. 27, 1987 Alexander Kulina  
Jan. 28, 1995 Olga Small  
Jan. 29, 1974 Paul Monko  
Jan. 29, 1988 John Macinko  
Jan. 31, 1952 Jacob Michaelski

### **Coffee Hour Hosts**

Jan. 25 Mantzafos, Sokol, Arpastean, Sarchisan & Nasledysheva  
Feb. 01 Dunaenko, Wypych, Chirnoaga, Nemes & Moldoveanu  
Feb. 08 Peterson, Bakaletz, Mattei & Erkman

### **Usher Schedule**

Jan. 25 Edward S, Adrian M. & Kahka K.  
Feb. 01 Timothy S. & Peter B.  
Feb. 08 Timothy G. & Jerome S.

### **Names Day Greetings!**

St. Mary/Jan. 26: Maria Torissi  
Many Blessed Years!

### **360 Virtual Tour of Ss. Peter & Paul Church decorated for Nativity Feast**

This is posted on our website and Face Book.

### **Deadline for Annual Meeting Reports**

Jan. 29<sup>th</sup>, Thurs. 8:00p.m. is the deadline for all written Reports for the Annual Meeting to be submitted.

### **2015 Annual Parish Meeting**

Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>, Sunday at 11:45a.m. The Meeting will be no longer than 1 hour. All parishioners are encouraged to attend. Voting is permitted to those parishioners who have fulfilled the requirements of sacramental and financial stewardship.

### **2015 Home Blessing Season**

The Blessing of Homes began on from January 7<sup>th</sup> and continue thru February 20<sup>th</sup>. 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.

### **Winter Weather Conditions**

Due to weather it may be necessary to make changes in the parish schedule of services, meetings and events. Changes are posted on website, Face Book and the Parish E-Mail. Please share any changes with other parishioners who may not be engaged in these communication forms.

### **Souper Bowl of Caring – Sunday, Feb. 1st**

- An IOCC (International Orthodox Christian Charities) sponsored annual event.
- \$1 or more for our Local Charity (Great Expectations – for Unwedded Mothers - in Raritan, NJ).
- 1 Canned Good or more for the Local Food Pantry in Bridgewater, NJ.

### **NY-NJ Diocese Altar Servers Retreat**

Feb. 6-8, at St. Basil's Academy in Garrison, NY. See diocesan website for details.

### **Our Parish is Hosting the NJ Deanery**

On February 16<sup>th</sup>, (President's Day), our parish will host the NJ Clergy deanery meeting and luncheon. Some volunteers are sought for preparing the lunch. Thanks.



## BIBLE STUDY: THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

### 6:47-49 A FIRM FOUNDATION

<sup>47</sup>Every one who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: <sup>48</sup>he is like a man building a house, who dug deep, and laid the foundation upon rock; and when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house, and could not shake it, because it had been well built." <sup>49</sup>But he who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation; against which the stream broke, and immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great."

w Other ancient authorities read *founded upon the rock*

**OVERVIEW:** The builder of the house on a rock is Christ, and the house that he builds is the church. The firm foundation that is deep and on a rock is the catechetical teaching of Jesus, the patriarchs and prophets and the apostolic church (BEDE), for Scripture is the field in which we build the house on the rock of Christ (AUGUSTINE). Christians build on the foundation of virtues Christ won for us with his life, death and resurrection (AMBROSE).

#### 6:47-49 *The House Built on a Rock*

**CHRIST IS THE BUILDER; THE FOUNDATION IS SOLID.** BEDE: The Lord indicates what the true distinction between good and bad fruits is by continuing under another figure of speech. He says, "Everyone who comes to me and listens to my words and does them, I will show you who he is like. He is like a man building a house." Now this man building a house is the mediator between God and humankind, the man Christ Jesus,<sup>1</sup> who deigned to build and consecrate a beloved and holy house for himself, namely, the church, in which to remain forever.

"He dug deep, and laid the foundation upon rock," for he strove to root out completely whatever base drives he found in the hearts of his faithful. When the traces of earlier habits and unnecessary thoughts had been cast out, he could have a firm and unshakable dwelling place in them. He himself is the rock upon which he laid the foundation for a house of this sort. Just as in building a house nothing is to be preferred to the rock on which the foundation is laid, so holy church has its rock, namely, Christ, concealed in the depths of its heart. . . .

"When a flood came, the stream was dashed

against that house and could not shake it, for it had been founded upon the rock." The explanation is obvious: the church is often struck by distressful situations but is not overthrown. If any believers are overcome by evils, if they yield, they surely did not belong to this house. If they had taken a stand founded on the rock of faith instead of on the sand of faithlessness, they would have been absolutely incapable of ever being shaken. HOMILIES ON THE GOSPELS 2.25.<sup>2</sup>

**SCRIPTURE IS THE FIELD WHERE WE BUILD THE HOUSE.** AUGUSTINE: In a certain place in the Gospel, the Lord says that the wise hearer of his word ought to be like a man who, wishing to build, digs rather deeply until he comes to bedrock. There without anxiety he establishes what he builds against the onrush of a flood, so that when it comes, rather it may be pushed back by the solidity of the building than that house collapse by the impact. Let us consider the Scripture of God as being a field where we want to build something. Let us not be lazy or content with the surface. Let us dig more deeply until we come to rock: "Now the rock was Christ."<sup>3</sup> TRACTATES ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN 23.1.<sup>4</sup>

**BUILT ON THE FOUNDATION OF VIRTUES.** AMBROSE: He teaches that the foundation of the virtues is obedience of heavenly instructions, whereby this house of ours cannot be shaken by the flow of desires, by the assault of spiritual wickedness,<sup>5</sup> by the rain of the world or the dark arguments of heretics. EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL OF LUKE 5.82.<sup>6</sup>

## LUKE 18: 15-17 CHILDREN AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

<sup>15</sup>Now they were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them; and when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. <sup>16</sup>But Jesus called them to him, saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God." Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it."

**OVERVIEW:** As Jesus draws closer and closer to Jerusalem, some persons (presumably the parents) try to bring little children to Jesus. Even now, mothers are bringing their children to Jesus in baptism. By their simplicity, innocence, humility and utter inability to come to Jesus, infants and young children demonstrate the characteristics and posture of those who enter the kingdom (CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA). It is not childhood that is being sought but goodness that reflects the simplicity of a child (AMBROSE). "Stop preventing them" implies the mandate "Do not prevent infants or Gentiles from receiving the gifts of the King through holy baptism" (AUGUSTINE).

### 18:15-17 Receiving the Kingdom as a Child

#### **MOTHERS STILL BRING INFANTS TO JESUS.**

**CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA:** Mothers brought their babes. They wanted his blessing and begged for their infants the touch of his holy hand. The blessed disciples rebuked them for doing this, not because they envied the babes; rather they were paying him due respect as their teacher and preventing him from getting unnecessarily tired. They placed much value on order.

Even until now, infants are brought near and blessed by Christ by means of consecrated hands. The pattern of the act continues even until this day and descends to us from the custom of Christ as its fountain. Only now, the bringing of infants does not take place in an unbecoming or disorderly manner but with proper order, solemnity and reverence. **COMMENTARY ON LUKE, HOMILY 121.**<sup>1</sup>

**THE SIMPLICITY, INNOCENCE AND HUMILITY OF CHILDREN.** **CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA:** What is there in babies that is worthy of imitation? Is it their lack of firmness and intelligence? It is incredible to affirm or imagine anything like this. Christ, however, does not wish us to be without understanding but wants us perfectly to know everything that is useful and necessary for our salvation. Wisdom even promises that she will give cleverness to the simple and the beginning of sense and understanding to the young.<sup>2</sup> . . . How someone might at once be both simple and clever, the Savior explains to us elsewhere, saying, "Be clever as serpents and simple as doves."<sup>3</sup> Blessed

Paul also writes, "My brothers, do not be children in your minds, but in wickedness be babies, and in your minds grown men."<sup>4</sup>

It is necessary to examine the meaning of being babies in wickedness and the way a person becomes a baby, but a grown person in mind. Knowing very little or nothing at all, a baby is correctly acquitted of the charge of depravity and wickedness. It is also our duty to attempt to be like them in the very same way. We must entirely put away from us habits of wickedness, that we also may be regarded as people who do not even know the path that leads to deception. Unconscious of spite and fraud, we must live in a simple and innocent manner, practicing gentleness and a priceless humility and readily avoiding wrath and spitefulness. These qualities are found in those who are still babies. **COMMENTARY ON LUKE, HOMILY 121.**<sup>5</sup>

#### **GOODNESS RIVALING CHILDLIKE SIMPLICITY.**

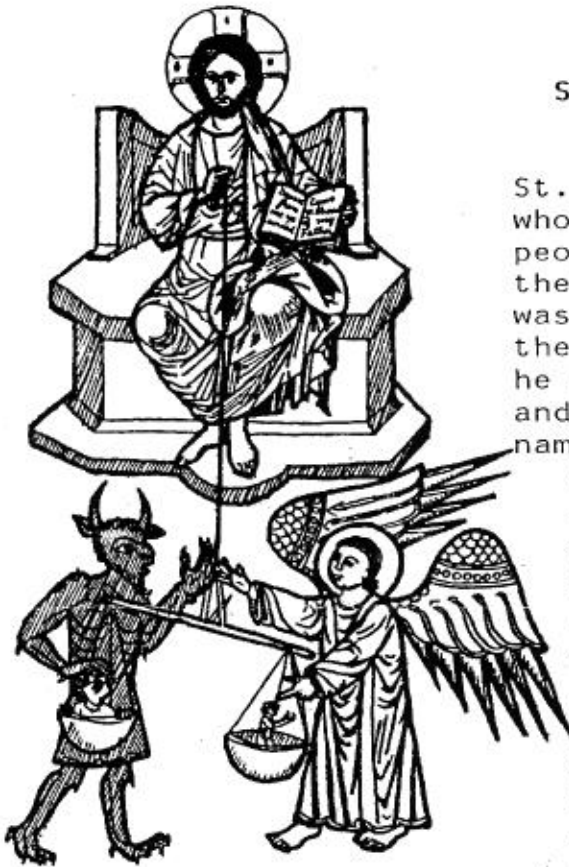
**AMBROSE:** Why does he say that children are fit for the kingdom of heaven?<sup>6</sup> Perhaps it is because they do not know spitefulness, have not learned to deceive, dare not strike back,<sup>7</sup> neglect to search for wealth, and do not work after honor and ambition. . . . Childhood is not meant, but rather goodness rivaling childlike simplicity.<sup>8</sup> It is not a virtue to be unable to sin, but to be unwilling to do so and to retain perseverance of will, so that the will imitates childhood and the person imitates nature. **EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL OF LUKE 8.57.**<sup>9</sup>

#### **INFANTS ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

**THROUGH HOLY BAPTISM.** **AUGUSTINE:** The other doctrine that your brotherhood claims they preach, that little children can attain the reward of eternal life without the grace of baptism, is very foolish. "Unless they eat of the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, they will not have life in them."<sup>10</sup> It seems to me that those who claim this for them without regeneration want to nullify baptism, since they teach that these children have what they believe is not to be bestowed on them in baptism even by themselves. If they do not want anything to stand in their way, let them confess that there is no need of rebirth and that the sacred stream of regeneration has no effect.



## ST. ARSENIOS BOKA (+1989) AND HIS REVELATION



St. Arsenios was a renowned Romanian monastic who was a confessor and spiritual guide to many people. He was a member of the brotherhood of the St. Constantine Binkoveanou Monastery. He was gifted with the grace to enter and examine the depths of a person's soul. For their benefit, he would reveal their thoughts and many past sins and deeds. The saint would also know a person's name upon meeting them and without any prior knowledge.

The righteous elder foretold his repose and the fall of atheistic communism in Romania. He reposed in November of 1989 and yet has remained in the souls of many of his spiritual children, continuing to guide them from above.

At his grave site at the Prislop Monastery, a miraculous event occurs that attracts many. Flowers grow on his grave and remain in full blossom, not being subject to the bitter freeze.

The following is a revelation of St. Arsenios offered for our edification.

He was extremely bothered and concerned about the many people he confessed who refused to change their life, selecting to continue satisfying their desires. St. Arsenios was fully aware that, in the Day of Judgment, he would be their guarantor for the salvation of their souls. He thus begged and pleaded with God to reveal to him the reason for which people refuse to abandon their sinful ways.

One day, while he was sitting in a chair within his garden staring at the mountain across from him, he observed that a huge dark cloud appeared on the mountaintop. There was great commotion and noise coming from within the cloud. Continuing to attentively stare at it, he suddenly observed that the cloud separated in two and at the very peak of the mountain there was a royal throne surrounded by fire. On the throne was seated the Enemy of mankind, Satan, surrounded by a plethora of demons. St. Arsenios was able to clearly follow what was transpiring. He thus hears the Evil One say:

“Which one of you is skillful and clever enough to come up with some kind of a cunning and wicked thought which we will whisper in the minds of people so that we can attract them and draw them to our side? In this way we can establish a kingdom that is greater than God's since there is so little time left...”

A demon then appeared who worshipped his leader all the way to the ground and said:

“Excellent leader of the darkness, I consider it proper to whisper into people’s ears that there is no God.”

Satan then said:

“Your wickedness is not the best because we can gain a greater number of souls in a different way. Let somebody else come up with another idea.”

A second one came and said:

“Excellent leader of the darkness, I suggest that we whisper to them that there is a God but there is no such thing as Heaven or Hell and that this life of theirs simply ends at their grave.”

Satan, after extensive contemplation, said:

“This wicked thought is also insufficient and will not enable us to win many souls. People will remember that Christ said, as He ascended into Heaven: ‘In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. [Jn 14:2-3]’ The faith of people into these words is unfortunately strong enough to counteract our plans. People will continue to believe that He will reward all according to their life deeds. Let another one of you suggest something else.”

A third one then came up and after he worshipped his leader all the way to the ground, took the floor and said:

“Most excellent leader of the darkness, I propose that it is much better that we praise people for their faith in God, their belief in the existence of Paradise and Hell, their expectation for the Last Judgment. However and at the same time, let us whisper to them: ‘Do not rush into repentance. Let repentance be your deed during the latter part of your life. Death is still far away. For the time being, enjoy your life, satisfy all of your carnal desires because you have plenty of time left.’ Thus, while we conduct our alluring and magic works, they will grow old without realizing it and reach their life’s end before they can repent. Death will arrive suddenly and will find them unprepared and they will be ours forever.”

Satan then moved his head acknowledging his satisfaction. He grunted and squealed with devilish joy and with hasty anxiety told them all: “Quickly, all of you go and do exactly as your colleague indicated.”

It is for this reason that people fulfill their Christian duties in a lackluster manner. The cunning demons, throughout their life, whisper to them in a tempting way regarding the joys of this world and people obey. They refuse to change their ways and continue to satisfy their desires and sinful nature, ignoring the advice of the Church regarding true repentance, even in their old age...