

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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

BULLETIN OF MARCH 22, 2015

FOURTH SUNDAY OF FAST/MARCH 22

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour; Question & Answer Period
4:00p.m. Deanery Vespers in Mays Landing

MONDAY/MARCH 23

7:00p.m. Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

TUESDAY/MARCH 24

7:00p.m. Matins; Confession

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 25

**Annunciation to the Holy Theotokos
(one of the "12 Great Feasts" of the year)**

9:30a.m. Vespers and Liturgy

THURSDAY/MARCH 26

3:00p.m. Vespers; Confession

FRIDAY/MARCH 27

7:00p.m. Matins with Akathist to Theotokos;
Confession

SATURDAY/MARCH 28

Laudation of Theotokos

9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

3:00p.m. Vespers

5:30p.m. Vigil; Confession

FIFTH SUNDAY OF FAST/MARCH 29

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour; Question & Answer Period
4:00p.m. Deanery Vespers in Randolph
and South River



Offerings Week of March 22

Olive Oil: in memory of Michael, Rosalia, Justina Anastasia, Anna; in memory of Vaschen and Emilia.

Wine: for the health of Mark (birthday) ; for the health of Zachary.

Parish Synodicon: Memory Eternal!

Mar. 23, 1925 Peter Chabra
Mar. 23, 1975 Anna Yalsh
Mar. 24, 1959 Alexander Gromack
Mar. 24, 1970 Julia Zorzi
Mar. 25, 1954 John Holovach
Mar. 25, 1984 Stephen Szwhala
Mar. 26, 1931 Anna Mogilevsky
Mar. 27, 1971 Anna Shwala
Mar. 27, 1985 Steven Pawlik

Coffee Hour Hosts – Fasting Foods

Mar. 22 Peterson, Bakaletz, Mattei & Erkman
Mar. 29 Kita, Nevitt, Keller & Turri
Apr. 05 Inga, Eka, Marina & Nona

Usher Schedule

Mar. 22 Edward S., Adrian M. & Kakha K.
Mar. 29 Timothy S. & Peter B.
Apr. 05 Timothy S. & Peter B.

Names Day Greetings

St. Larissa/March 26: Larissa Mattei
Many Blessed Years!

The Mysteries of Confession & Communion For Those Home Bound

These visitations will take place in the weeks of March 22 and 29, please be sure you are scheduled for a visit.

2015 Equal Sacrifice Model is in Effect

Each of our 70 parishioners (100%) is asked to make an extra offering over the amount of your usual offering of \$2.87 to \$8.62 per week to cover this year's deficit. This is based on 12 months, with 2 months already over. The Lord bless your sacrifice and generosity! If absent, please mail your offerings in.

On Leaving the Church Sunday Morning

Please no conversations until outside of church.

Holy Confession: Foundational in the Season of Great Lent

Great Lent is the season of "repentance." The Mystery or Sacrament of Penance should be received by all the faithful in this period of 40 days, **ending April 4th, the eve of Palm Sunday.** In Great & Holy Week (April 5-11) Confession is not scheduled, but available for College Students. There are expanded times for Confession (see the monthly bulletin) or make an appointment with Father James. If you are a parishioner and wish to go to Confession to another priest, it is proper to secure a blessing first to do so, from your parish priest.

After the Sunday Divine Liturgy

Please start your conversations outside of church, as post-communion prayers are being read.

March 31st is the End of the First Quarter of the Year

Some 13 Sundays will have passed and in early April you will receive your Statement of Contributions. Please be regular and generous in your offerings, as you are mindful of our deficit of a projected \$25,000. Everyone's support is needed.

Great & Holy Week Work Sheet

This sheet on the vestibule stand lists various tasks necessary of Holy Week.

Vigil Watch Great & Holy Friday & Saturday

This sheet on the vestibule stand offers "12 Periods" of keeping vigil at the Tomb of Christ.

Forth-Coming on Calendar

April 13 Bright Monday – Parish Celebration
(no school – no work)
April 19 Sunday Luncheon for Rebecca Oliver
Mission Journey to Mexico
April 20 Monday – 6:30p.m. Paschal Memorial at Cemetery
April 25 Saturday – Deanery Parish Council Workshop (details to follow)

Salvation Is Indeed By Grace

Source: modeoflife <<http://modeoflife.org/category/ecclesial-meditations-theological-articles/fr-john-breck/>>

“Why, then,” he asked, “do the Orthodox submit to such regulations: ‘Do not eat (this or that),’ or ‘Do this, that, and the other thing,’ in order to be a ‘good Christian’? Isn’t it enough to ‘love God and my neighbor as myself?’”

ARCHPRIEST JOHN BRECK <http://www.pravmir.com/author/user_1289841083/> | 01 APRIL 2014

At a recent, post-liturgical coffee hour, a catechumen raised a question that has troubled many people who were brought up in a Protestant environment and at some point found themselves drawn to Orthodoxy. “If we are saved by grace, and not by works,” he asked, “why does the Orthodox Church put so much stress on ascetic practice? Why should it be necessary, or even useful, to fast as we do, to make countless prostrations during Great Lent, to stand for hours through long services, and even to give so much money to the Church?” (He was preparing to enter a parish in the Southern Diocese, where tithing is usually considered an important part of personal spiritual discipline.) Then he added, “Aren’t all these things works? And what happens if I don’t do them? Am I cast out of the Kingdom and basically condemned to hell?”

The discussion went on for some time, until the coffee ran out and most people went home. He stayed, though, and continued his questioning with the priest, who later admitted he had the feeling that on some level this catechumen was getting the better of him.

Finally the man pulled out a pocket Bible and opened to Colossians 3. Selecting a few verses to make his point, he read: “Why do you submit to regulations, ‘Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch’ (referring to things that all perish as they are used), according to human precepts and doctrines? These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting rigor of devotion and self-abasement and severity to the body, but they are of no value in checking the indulgences of the flesh.”

“Why, then,” he asked, “do the Orthodox submit to such regulations: ‘Do not eat (this or that),’ or ‘Do this, that, and the other thing,’ in order to be a ‘good Christian’? Isn’t it enough to ‘love God and my neighbor as myself?’”

It was a good question. While there’s a perfectly reasonable and satisfactory answer to his objection, it seems worthwhile for all of us to think about these things, in an effort to understand just why ascetic practice and spiritual discipline in general are so important in Christian life.

Our rebellion against God and his will touches every aspect of our existence. “Sin” or “sinfulness” is not just an accumulation of specific acts of disobedience or willfulness that in some way violate the commandments. It is more than the sum total of our individual sins. Those sins are symptomatic of something broader and deeper that virtually defines us, that characterizes our every act and attitude. Sin is a state of being that permeates all aspects of our life, conscious and unconscious, physical as well as spiritual. In fact, the distinction we usually make between what is physical and what is spiritual is artificial and misleading. The human person can only be understood holistically. Our bodily gestures affect our psycho-spiritual disposition, just as our spiritual state can affect our body. Nothing attests to this fact more eloquently than the Orthodox service of Holy Unction, with its emphasis on the forgiveness of sins as integral to the quest for healing.

This point brings us back to the question of ascetic discipline and the place of “works” in our salvation. First of all, it is important to recognize that the apostle Paul is speaking to the Colossians about performing religious rituals prescribed either by the Torah, Hebrew law, or by pagan forms of worship. The admonition, “Don’t handle, taste or touch,” has to do with various religious practices that were considered by many as necessary to enter into the sacred realm of divinity. Repeatedly (especially in his letters to the Romans and Galatians), Paul insists that our salvation is accomplished wholly and uniquely by Christ: by his voluntary death on the Cross, by which he descended into the realm of death (Sheol), in order to defeat the powers of death and corruption. This is a work of pure grace that only God can accomplish. And this is why it is so essential to recognize and accept the fact that Jesus of Nazareth is truly the incarnate, eternal Son of God. Our salvation is made possible precisely by the “work” of the Holy Trinity, a work no created being can accomplish.

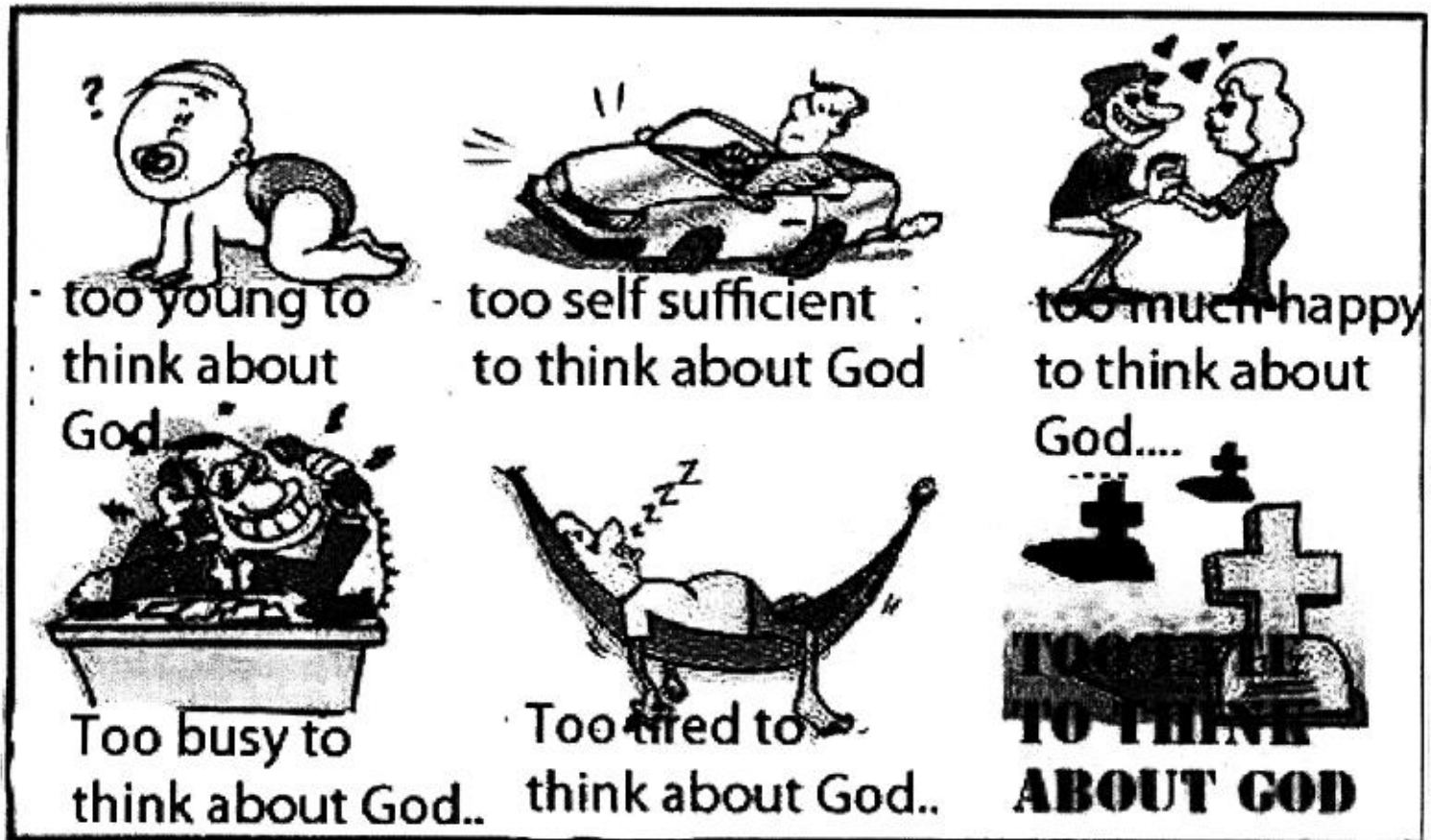
So we, as Orthodox Christians, affirm as clearly and unambiguously as any Lutheran, for example, that “salvation is by grace” and not by our works. Unlike medieval Catholicism, Orthodoxy does not hold that a person can build up a “treasury of merits” that will count in our favor at the Judgment Seat of Christ. What will matter then is our having surrendered our sin to God through confession, and our gestures of love (Mt. 25), together with the unshakable conviction that “Jesus Christ is Lord,” and the unique Way to eternal life.

Orthodoxy does recognize, however, the importance of our “cooperation” with God, what we term “synergy.” “Salvation,” as we usually understand the word, is only the beginning of a pilgrimage that leads us through this life, through our physical death, and into life beyond. Salvation, accomplished by the death and resurrection of Christ, means freedom from the consequences of our sinfulness: separation from the holiness and love of the God who desires only that we be saved and enter into eternal and joyful communion with himself. If we were not continually tempted to fall back into sin, there would be no need for such a “synergy.” Then we could declare, with absolute confidence, “once saved, always saved!” Temptation and spiritual struggle, however, mark every day of our life. And the way we face and, by the grace of God, overcome those forces (demonic powers), is precisely through the “spiritual warfare,” the ascetic struggle that enables us to confront those forces day by day and overcome their destructive influence.

This is why, in the same letter to the Colossians, the apostle can declare: “I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his body, the Church” (1:24). We may not suffer as Paul did, risking our very life for the gospel, enduring torture, hardship, hunger and rejection by one’s own people. Nevertheless, our small efforts, of fasting, prostrations, intense participation in long liturgical services — like almsgiving and other acts of love offered to those in need — enable us also to share in Christ’s

own sufferings, which he will endure in us and for us until he comes again in glory. That participation is essential; yet it is not the means by which we are saved.

The final word, as so often, comes from our Lord himself. Condemning the Pharisees for their hypocritical observance of empty ritual, he accuses them of performing small religious acts while "neglecting the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith." And he concludes, "These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others" (Mt 23:23). Those "others" include precisely the sorts of ascetic practices Orthodox tradition calls us and invites us to assume — not to achieve salvation, but to bring heart, soul, mind and body into harmony with the ineffable gift of salvation that Christ has already offered to us.



"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



**Adoption Resolution
December 3, 2014**

State of New Jersey

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

RESOLUTION

The List of Religious Holidays Permitting Student Absence from School

WHEREAS, according to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14 through 16 and N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3(j), regarding student absence from school because of religious holidays, the Commissioner of Education, with the approval of the State Board of Education, is charged with the responsibility of prescribing such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the purpose of the law; and

WHEREAS, the law provides that:

1. Any student absent from school because of a religious holiday may not be deprived of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award because of such absence;
2. Students who miss a test or examination because of absence on a religious holiday must be given the right to take an alternate test or examination;
3. To be entitled to the privileges set forth above, the student must present a written excuse signed by a parent or person standing in place of a parent;
4. Any absence because of a religious holiday must be recorded in the school register or in any group or class attendance record as an excused absence;
5. Such absence must not be recorded on any transcript or application or employment form or on any similar form; and
6. The Commissioner, with the approval of the State Board of Education, is required to:
 - (a) prescribe such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this act; and
 - (b) prepare a list of religious holidays on which it shall be mandatory to excuse a student. The list, however, is to be a minimum list. Boards of education, at their discretion, may add other days to the list for the schools of their districts; and

WHEREAS, although the New Jersey Department of Education makes every attempt to ensure the accuracy of the dates using the lunar, Gregorian and Julian calendars; and

WHEREAS, dates within this resolution may not be fixed before the State Board adopts the annual calendar and may require additional revision; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, the State Board of Education permits the Commissioner of Education, after annual adoption by the State Board of Education, to revise the dates provided in list of religious holidays.

WHEREAS, the district board of education has the right to add any bona fide religious holiday to the list for its own schools; now therefore be it,

RESOLVED that the State Board of Education adopts the following list of religious holidays for the 2014-2015 school year:

2015	
March 25	The Annunciation/The Annunciation of the Virgin Mary (Eastern Orthodox Christian; Christian)
March 26	Khordad Sal (Zoroastrian)
March 28	Rami Navami (Hindu)*
March 29	Palm Sunday (Christian)
April 2015	
April 2	Holy Thursday (Christian) Mahavir Jayanti (Jain)
April 3	Holy Friday (Christian)
April 4	Lazarus Saturday (Eastern Orthodox Christian) First Day of Unleavened Bread (Church of God) Theravadin New Year (Buddhist) Hanuman Jayanti (Hindu)*
April 4-10	Days of Unleavened Bread (Philadelphia Church of God)
April 4-11	Pesach (Jewish)
April 5	Easter (Christian) Palm Sunday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 6	Easter Monday (Christian)
April 8	Buddha's Birthday (Buddhist)
April 9	Holy Thursday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 10	Holy Friday (Eastern Orthodox Christian) Last Day of Unleavened Bread (Church of God)
April 12	Pascha (Easter) (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 13	Bright Monday (Eastern Orthodox Christian) Baisakhi (Sikh)