

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN APRIL 3, 2016

SUN/APR. 3

Third Sunday of Great Lent

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

Coffee Hour

5:00p.m. Deanery Vespers in Perth Amboy
Church of St. Spyridon with Archbishop Michael
*End of the 3rd and beginning of the 4th week
of the Great and Holy Fast*

MON/APR. 4

7:00p.m. Vespers

TUES/APR. 5

7:00p.m. Vespers; Confessions

WED/APR. 6

9:30a.m. Akathist to the Passion; Confessions

6:30p.m. Pre-sanctified Liturgy

THURS/APR. 7

3:00p.m. Vespers; Confessions

FRI/APR. 8

7:00p.m. Vespers; Confessions

SAT/APR. 9

Memorial Saturday

9:30a.m. Akathist for Departed; Confessions

11:00a.m. General Church Cleaning

5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

SUN/APR. 10

Fourth Sunday of Great Lent

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

Church School; Coffee Hour

4:00p.m. Deanery Vespers in Medford
Church of Holy Cross with Archbishop Michael
*End of the 4th and beginning of the 5th week
of the Great and Holy Fast*

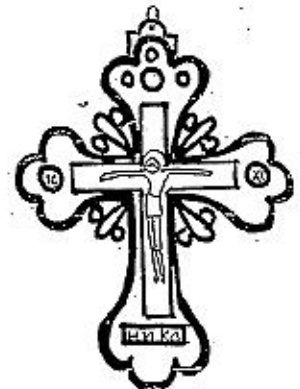
O LORD SAVE THY PEOPLE AND BLESS THINE INHERITANCE.

GRANT VICTORIES TO THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS OVER THEIR

ADVERSARIES, AND BY VIRTUE OF THY CROSS, PRESERVE THY HABITATION.

*How precious is the gift of the Cross,
How splendid to contemplate!
In the Cross there is no mingling of
good or evil, as in the tree of Paradise:
It is wholly beautiful to behold and
good to taste.
The fruit of the Tree is not death but
life; not darkness but light.
This Tree does not cast us out of
Paradise, but opens the way for
our return.*

-St. Theodore the Studite



Offerings Week of April 3

Olive Oil: in memory of Michael, Justina, Anastasia, Mary and Rosalia; in memory of Vaschen and Emilia; in memory of John and for the health of Vera; for the health of Nicholas (birthday); in memory of Gabriela, Flóarea, Gheorghe, Elena, Grigore, Maria, Valeria, Elena, Alexandru, Sasinca, Mihail, Alexandru, Aurelia, Ilie, Valeria and Ion.

The Parish Synodicon: Memory Eternal!

Apr. 04, 1957 Joseph Yarik
Apr. 04, 1959 Helen Hnatuk
Apr. 05, 2011 Helen Macinko
Apr. 05, 2013 Mildred Mock
Apr. 06, 1974 Gregory Tscherwinski
Apr. 06, 1977 Eva Marchuk
Apr. 06, 1992 Stephen Mock
Apr. 06, 1995 Anne Burd
Apr. 07, 1968 Fr. Baszil Dziama
(rector 1918-1920)
Apr. 09, 1937 George Huzinec
Apr. 09, 1953 Anna Romanovich

Coffee Hour Hosts

Apr. 03 – *No meat, dairy or fish*
Torrise, Kachek & Stone
Apr. 10 - *No meat, dairy or fish*
Mantzafos, Sokol, Staina,
Arpastean, Sarchisian &
Nasledysheva
Apr. 17 – *No meat, dairy or fish*
Dunaenko, Wypych, Chirnoaga
Moldoveanu & Nemes

Usher Schedule

Apr. 03 Timothy S. & Peter B.
Apr. 10 Jerome S. & Adrian M.
Apr. 17 Dennis F. & Peter B.

Counters

Apr. 03 Rebecca O. & Lisa K.
Apr. 10 Ciprian C. & Larissa M.
Apr. 17 Ekaterini M. & Irina S.

Sunday Readers Schedule

Apr. 03 Zachary S./Apr. 10 Austin K.
Apr. 17 Ciprian C.

The Calendar

Apr. 17 Sun. Deanery Vespers in Manville 4:00
Apr. 20 Wed. Abp. Michael in Manville for 6:30
For Pre-sanctified Liturgy

The Mystery of Holy Unction – April 21st

This Sacrament of the Church is for the Healing of body, soul and mind. Those Orthodox Christians who desire to be anointed must have gone to Confession and Holy Communion in this Great Lent prior to this date.

The Great & Holy Fast of 40 Days

March 14th thru April 30th. Our goals for this season are:

- 1) renewal through repentance;
- 2) Reordering our priorities according to Christ's teachings;
- 3) developing a stable, growing life in union with Christ.

Be A Good Steward

Please be regular in your financial support of your parish. If absent, please make-up or mail in your offerings. Be a proportionate and regular giver.

New Website for Cemetery

www.orthodoxchristiancemetery.org is the new site. The cemetery is open to all Orthodox Christians from all parishes and jurisdictions.

The Mid-Point of the 40 Days is Today

Check-Up:

- Has the Lenten Prayer of St. Ephrem been part of my prayer life?
- Have I increased the measure of prayers?
- Have I tried to come to services more than just on Sunday (22 services other than Sundays have been served)?
- Am I preparing for a good Confession?
- Have I fasted in some manner consistently in these past 20 days?
- What kind of spiritual reading am I doing?
- Am I intent upon living a Lenten style of life in accordance with the teachings and disciplines of my Faith?
- Do I really want to repent and find an abundance of life in Jesus?

The Church Discipline for Receiving Holy Communion

- One must be free of serious sin and have made a recent Confession. If your soul is troubled, you should go to Confession before approaching for Holy Communion.
- Attendance at the evening before service (Vespers or Vigil) is to be considered normal, and absence for a cause worthy of a blessing.
- A total fast begins at midnight from all foods and drinks.
- Medicines may be taken and do not break the fast. Questions? Speak with your priest.
- Pre-Communion Prayers found in your Prayer Book are recited the evening before Communion or the morning of. If one wishes half can be said at either periods of time.
- Post-Communion Prayers found in your Prayer Book are recited on the day we receive Holy Communion. In some churches – as in Manville – these are done publically after the Liturgy.

Spring Church Cleaning Dates

Saturdays, April 9th 10:30a.m. and April 16th at 11:00a.m. Please join us in preparing the church for Holy Week and Pascha.

101 Anniversary Celebration

The weekend of October 29 and 30 will be our celebration. Please reserve this weekend on your calendar.

All Orthodox Christians Partake of the Holy Mysteries of Confession and Communion During Great Lent

March 14th thru April 23rd. Ample opportunities are offered for Confession as posted or make other arrangements with Father James.

Repentance – Some Considerations As We Prepare For Confession

- Repentance is the fertile ground that makes a good Confession possible.
- Confession, without a spirit of repentance is a meaningless futile spiritual endeavor.

- The term repentance “*metanoia*” denotes a change of mind, a re-orientation, a new outlook and vision of the world and oneself.
- Repentance is not to be confused with a mere remorse, with a self-regarding feeling of being sorry for a wrong done. It is not a state but a stage, a beginning.
- Repentance is an awareness that there is separation from God – perhaps great or small – and that being self-centered, we have deprived ourselves of the glory of God and our freedom.
- St. John Chrysostom says that “it is necessary to repent, not merely for one or two days, but throughout one’s whole life.”
- Repentance is ultimately a gift of the Holy Spirit who transforms the heart of the human person, and not a fruit of individual effort or anguish.
- Abiding in repentance we acquire a different dimension to mere dwelling on human sinfulness; we realized our human insufficiency and limitation.
- Repentance is an attitude which colors our life and for which, we struggle continually. It is a way of life and a way of transfiguration.
- To relegate “repentance” to only Great Lent and distinguish it from “the rest of time,” is the work of the demons. By nature we are destined to advance and ascend spiritually, but the demons divert the course of true repentance by simulating advance in the form of a fitful movement, a wobbling from side to side, like crabs. One can test the quality of repentance by seeing if it is fleeting or fluttering.
- St. Theophan the Recluse teaches: “The duty of continual repentance is the same as the duty of keeping our conscience pure and irreproachable.”
- St. Mark the Ascetic says: “We are not condemned because of our sins, but because for our refusal to make repentance for them.
- Open to me, the Doors of Repentance, O Giver of life!



CONCERNING THE EFFECTS OF RECEIVING THE BODY AND BLOOD OF OUR LORD

There are at least four major benefits which may be expected after partaking of Christ's Body and Blood, namely:

1. Intimate union with Christ through His love.

Through this union we mingle with God and share with Him. As God is love, when we partake of Him through Holy Communion we become partakers of His love. It should be added that these Gifts from God are truly free. He compels no one to accept, just as in true love there is no compulsion, but absolute free to either accept or reject.

2. Strengthening of the body and soul.

Eating ordinary food only nourishes a person's body; but eating Christ's Flesh and Blood strengthens and nourishes both the body and soul. When the soul is nourished, a person is better able to live, grow and develop spiritually. This means that the ability to resist sin is greatly increased, thus enhancing the desire and capacity to be more virtuous, righteous, compassionate and considerate. We can be sure that this is so since Christ said: "I am the bread of life, he who comes to Me shall not hunger and he who believes in Me shall never thirst" (Jn 6:35), and then: "For My Flesh is true food and My Blood is true drink" (Jn 6:55).

With these statements Christ expounded the eternal nourishment value of His Flesh and Blood. Unlike ordinary food which only temporarily strengthens the body, true Divine food strengthens the soul eternally.

The strengthening effect of these Gifts, is another indicator of Christ's great love for us. Christ gave us certain Commandments to follow if we are able to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. Scripture teaches that evil is spread through man by various demonic powers (Eph 6:12). Without Divine intervention man does not have the strength to fight these extremely powerful, fleshless creatures – as Christ said: "...for without Me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5). Man alone does not have the strength to become perfect. Not wishing man to be condemned to hell, Christ nourishes us with His Body

and Blood – giving us a Perfect Food with which to become perfect.

3. Preparation for eternal life with God.

Partaking in Communion prepares us to share with God, an eternally joyful life after the resurrection of the dead. Christ is God and therefore lives forever – by eating His Body and Blood, we are blended with Him and will likewise live forever. This is Christ's promise when He said: "He who eats My Flesh and drinks My Blood has eternal life; and I will raise him up on the last day" (Jn 6:54).

This "life" that Christ refers to is not related to the life here on earth, since it is obvious that all men "live" here, even non-Christians. Nor does He refer to "life" of the general resurrection. Rather, Christ refers to the glorious life which some Christians will inherit as a reward for righteous living. How necessary it is for us to partake in Christ's Body and Blood; by being with Him, our souls are washed and transformed – made beautiful – then, after death, we would not expect punishment and hell, but the unspeakable rewards of the Heavenly Kingdom.

4. Unity through love with other Christians.

Christ has only one Body, by partaking of It, each and everyone of us also becomes united into one body – the Body of Christ. Christ's love for us is made perfect in unity, since not only is it reciprocated between ourselves and Christ, but amongst ourselves as well. This is what Christ meant when He established the Church.

The Church is not a building where people pray, it is the Body of Christ – a living organism, in which we all unite in love with Him and amongst ourselves, when we partake of Holy Communion (1 Cor 10:17). Christ is the head of His Body, the Church (Col 1:18), and not some bishop, patriarch, theologian or other mortal man. The Orthodox Church is thus infallible, since Christ being God, is infallible; we can then be sure that our Divine nourishment can never be false or corrupted, even if those who perform this Sacrament are themselves imperfect or unworthy.



THE BENEFITS OF FREQUENT CONFESSION
By St. Nicodemus of Mt. Athos



So as not to fall again into sins go to Confession frequently, but not in a fashion that every time you commit a mortal or grave sin you immediately run to your Spiritual Father, but also when you commit any small and pardonable sin, if it is possible. For just as wounds, when shown to a doctor do not get worse, so also when sins are confessed, they do not increase, according to St. John of the Ladder: "Wounds displayed in public will not grow worse, but will be healed." Storks have a custom of never returning to their nests if they are somehow destroyed. The demons, too, depart from those who frequently confess; for by frequent confession, one destroys their nests and their web, and they have no place in nor authority over someone who confesses frequently.

And why didn't Naaman the Syrian wash only one time in the Jordan but seven? (2 Kings 5:14). For no other reason than to teach us all, small and great, patriarchs and hierarchs, Spiritual Fathers and priests, to confess seven times, that is, frequently and many times (for the number seven means many, according to the divine Scripture), and to wash in the waters of repentance, of which the Jordan River was a type, for which reason the Forerunner was baptizing in it: "A baptism of repentance for the people" (Mark 1:4). In addition to vexing the power of the demons, frequent Confession also brings five additional benefits to one who frequently confesses.

Benefit 1

First, just as trees that are frequently transplanted cannot become deeply rooted in the earth, so also frequent confession does not allow the bad habits and addictions of sin to become deeply rooted in the heart of the one who frequently confesses. Or rather, just as an old and large tree cannot be cut down by just one chop, so also an old bad habit or addiction of sin cannot be uprooted or removed completely by the penitent having just one experience of pain of heart during a confession, and that probably incomplete, even if his sin is forgiven through the forgiveness of the Spiritual Father.

Benefit 2

Second, whoever confesses frequently has great ease examining his conscience precisely and determining the number of his sins. For by continually being relieved of the burden of the multitude of his sins through frequent confession, there are always less and less than remain. On this account it becomes easier for him to find them and remember them. But the one who does not confess frequently, on account of the multitude of sins which accumulate in him, neither with precision is he able to find them, nor can he remember them, but very often he forgets many and grave sins which, remaining un-confessed, remain un-forgiven. Wherefore the devil has him remember his un-confessed sins at the hour of his death, which upsets him so much that the poor wretch sweats violently and wails, but to no avail, for then it is too late and impossible to confess them.

Benefit 3

Third, whoever confesses frequently, even if he is to commit a mortal sin, immediately enters into the grace of God when he confesses, and as many good works as he does becomes for him worthy of eternal life. But the one who does not confess frequently, if he happens to commit a mortal sin and does not immediately run to confess it, for as much time as he remains un-confessed, he is not only deprived of the grace of God, but as many good works as he does, whether fasts, or vigils, or prostrations, and the like, are not worthy of any reward or eternal life, for they are bereft of the grace of God, which is the beginning and the foundation of all works of salvation.

Benefit 4

Fourth, the one who confesses frequently is more assured that death will find him while in the grace of God and thus be saved. And the devil, who is always accustomed to visiting the dying, not only sinners, but saints as well, as St. Basil the Great says, and even the Lord Himself: "The prince of the world comes and has nothing in Me" (John 14:30) and who is present at people's deaths in order to see if he can find anything, will visit the one who frequently confesses but will find nothing, because he made time to confess, and cleared his debts and balanced his register through frequent confession. But the one who does not frequently confess will most likely die un-confessed and thus be eternally damned, because he easily and repeatedly falls into sin and does not confess, and because of the uncertain time of death.

Benefit 5

The fifth and final benefit of frequent confession is that it deters and restrains people from sin. For when the person who frequently confesses remembers that in just a few days he will confess, and the notion of sin arises, he is deterred from doing it, thinking about the shame he will experience when he confesses it and the rebuke he will receive from his Spiritual Father. Therefore St. John of the Ladder wrote: "Nothing gives the demons and thoughts more power against us than the un-confessed sins in our heart upon which they feed." And again: "By resolving to make one's confession, the soul is therefore held from sinning as by a bridle. For what we do not confess, that we do fearlessly as though in the dark."

So my brother sinner, having learned these things, go frequently to Holy Confession, for as often as you frequent that bath, the more will you be cleansed. Do not postpone the time saying, "Let me do this first, and then I will go to confess," because even if God is slow to anger and tolerant many times over, He always catches up: "Do not say, 'I sinned, and what happened to me?' for the Lord is slow to anger. For both mercy and wrath are with Him and His anger rests upon sinners." (Sirah 5:4,6)

Always remember Sampson who, even though enabled to break the enemy's bonds three times, was unable to break them a fourth time and escape: "I will go out as at other times and shake myself free.' And he knew not that the Lord was departed from him." (Judges 16:20). You, too, brother, even if you have sinned one, two, and three times and put off correction and confession, and then were deemed worthy to make it to be corrected and to confess, you may not make it a fourth time if you sin and postpone the time of your confession, and die un-confessed and uncorrected. May this never happen to any Christian.

***From the Exomologetarion – A Manuel of Confession
By St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite
Uncut Mountain Press (2006)***