

# 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 APRIL 10, 2016

**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 4<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> week  
of the Great and Holy Fast**

**MON/APR. 11**

**7:00p.m. Vespers**

**TUE/APR. 12**

**7:00p.m. Vespers; Confessions**

**WED/APR. 13**

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

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

**THURS/APR. 14**

**6:30p.m. Pre-sanctified Liturgy**

**FRI/APR. 15**

**7:00p.m. Matins with Akathist to the  
Theotokos, Confessions**

**SAT/APR. 16**

**Laudation of Theotokos**

**9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy**

**11:00a.m. Church Cleaning**

**5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions**

**SUN/APR. 17**

**Fifth Sunday of Great Lent**

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

**Church School; Coffee Hour; Q. & A. Period**

**4:00p.m. Deanery Vespers in our church**

**End of the 5<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> week  
of the Great and Holy Fast**



### ABOUT THE LADDER OF DIVINE ASCENT

In the sixth century, a monk of Mount Sinai named John wrote a book outlining the stages of the spiritual life. He based his entire work on the image of a ladder of thirty rungs, stretching from earth to heaven. Each rung described a step in the pursuit of virtue and the spiritual life. Since it was first written, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* has been an essential part of the formation of Orthodox monastics, and a mainstay of Orthodox ascetic spirituality. However, *The Ladder* is not just for monks and nuns because all Christians are called to make an ascent to the heights of heaven. For this reason the Church places the commemoration of Saint John and his Ladder on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Great Fast, as the faithful continue their ascent with the Lord to Golgotha and through Golgotha to His Heavenly Kingdom.

### The 30 Steps of the Ladder of Divine Ascent

- ❖ Steps 1–4: renunciation of the world and obedience to a spiritual father
- ❖ Steps 5–7: penitence and affliction as paths to true joy
- ❖ Steps 8–17: the defeat of vices and acquisition of virtue
- ❖ Steps 18–26: avoidance of the traps of asceticism (laziness, pride, mental stagnation)
- ❖ Steps 27–29: acquisition of stillness or peace of the soul, of prayer, and of dispassion
- ❖ Step 30: the union of faith, hope, and love

### **Offerings Week of April 10**

Olive Oil: in memory of Michael, Justina, Anastasia, Mary and Rosalia; in memory of Vaschen and Emilia; in memory of Loretta; in memory of Gabriela, GFloarea, Gheorghe, Elena, Grigore, Maria, Anicota, Elena, Alexandru, Mihail, Anicota, Alexandru, Aurelia, Ilie and Valeria.

Wine: for the health and salvation of Nicholas (birthday).

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

Apr. 10, 1960 Mary Romanovsky  
Apr. 11, 1919 Jacob Cherniak  
Apr. 11, 1959 Anna Skwarla  
Apr. 11, 1966 Paul Adamcio  
Apr. 13, 1961 Frank Yurchuk  
Apr. 13, 1964 Igor Mushta  
Apr. 14, 1921 Procopius Kostik  
Apr. 14, 1941 Maria Huzinec  
Apr. 14, 1955 Peter Leich  
Apr. 14, 1965 Miron Urichuck  
Apr. 14, 2008 William Davidovich  
Apr. 15, 1961 Lazar Elik  
Apr. 15, 2012 Helen Gregovitch  
Apr. 16, 1991 Vassily Seminuk

### **Coffee Hour Hosts**

Apr. 10 - *No meat, dairy or fish*  
Mantzafos, Sokol, Staina,  
Arpatean, Sarchisian &  
Nasledysheva  
Apr. 17 - *No meat, dairy or fish*  
Dunaenko, Wypych, Chirnoaga  
Moldoveanu & Nemes  
Apr. 24 - *No meat or dairy, fish allowed*  
Peterson, Bakaletz, Mattei & Erkman

### **Usher Schedule**

Apr. 10 Jerome S. & Adrian M.  
Apr. 17 Dennis F. & Peter B.  
Apr. 24 Edward S. & Kahka K.

### **Counters**

Apr. 10 Ciprian C. & Larissa M.  
Apr. 17 Ekaterini M. & Irina S.  
Apr. 24 Jill P. & Paulina N.

### **Sunday Readers Schedule**

Apr. 10 Austin K.  
Apr. 17 Ciprian C.  
Apr. 24 Daniel T.

### **Names Day Greetings**

St. Argyra/Apr. 8 – Argyra Lapchuk  
Many Blessed Years!

### **Pre-Sanctified Liturgy with Archbishop Michael – April 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:30p.m.**

On this Wednesday evening, Archbishop Michael will be at our parish to celebrate the Lenten Pre-sanctified Liturgy. A supper will follow in the hall. Join us in the Lenten Service.

### **The Mystery of Holy Unction – April 21<sup>st</sup>**

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

### **The Great & Holy Fast of 40 Days**

March 14<sup>th</sup> thru April 30<sup>th</sup>. 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.

### **New Website for Cemetery**

[www.orthodoxchristiancemetery.org](http://www.orthodoxchristiancemetery.org) is the new site. The cemetery is open to all Orthodox Christians from all parishes and jurisdictions.

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

March 14<sup>th</sup> thru April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Ample opportunities are offered for Confession as posted or make other arrangements with Father James. College students may make arrangements for Confession during Holy Week (Apr. 24-30) if they cannot make it in Great Lent. Call Father James.

### **Great & Holy Week Task Sheet: Apr. 24-30**

On the vestibule stand will be found this sheet describing a variety of different tasks needed to be carried out. Please sign-up to help out.

### **Vigil Watch at the Tomb of Christ: Great & Holy Friday and Saturday**

There are "12 Vigils Listed. Nine are for a 2 hour period and 3 for less than a 2 hour period. Hopefully, there will be enough of the faithful to devote some time to one of the vigils, so there is no need for people to do double duty. Sign-up sheet is on the vestibule stand.

### **Paschal Memorial Service at the Cemetery**

The service is scheduled for Monday, May 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30p.m. (Rain date: Tuesday 6:30p.m.)

### **Preparing for Participation in Services of the Great & Holy Week: Apr. 24-30**

In this most important week of the year, we celebrate the Passion, Crucifixion, Death and Burial of Christ. The focus of our time should be on gathering for worship. Cleaning, food preparation, and other concerns are secondary. The State of NJ Board of Education permits student absence from school for Holy Thursday (Apr. 28) Holy Friday (Apr. 29) and Bright Monday (May 2). (See attached documentation).

Parents are strongly encouraged to come with their children to the divine services these days.

### **An Up-Date on 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Finances (requested at the Parish Annual Meeting)**

A summary is posted on the parish bulletin board.

### **St. Tikhon's Summer Camp: July 3-9, 2016**

Registration forms are available on the parish bulletin board. This yearly gathering has proved to be very popular with our children. Go!

### **Be a Co-worker in Building Up the Church**

What ministry can you participate in? Join one of our Sunday Coffee Teams. Be an altar server. Sing in the choir. Volunteer to be an usher. Be a reader for our Post-Communion Prayers. Give an hour and help out in general church cleaning. Look for opportunities to be of service in the community.

### **Jan.-Mar. 2016 Balance Sheet Income & Expenses – Comparison with 2015**

#### Sunday Envelopes

2015: \$29,031 - 2016: \$27,651 (- \$1,379) Loss of one Sunday, Jan. 24<sup>th</sup>, snow storm, no services.

#### Expenses

2015: \$48,872 - 2016: \$30,564 (18,307 difference) Due to much lower costs in utilities, grounds (snow removal) and health insurance.

### **The St. George Gazebo**

As the weather becomes warmer, everyone is invited to use the gazebo. Please do not – especially children – eat in the gazebo. Our Coffee Social Hour is in the hall and this is where we should gather for eating and conversation. Thanks.

### **Sympathy Is Expressed**

Our sympathy is expressed to Diaconissa Patricia Sokol on the repose of her Step-father, William (+Apr. 4). May he rest in eternal peace.



#### **Advice to Those Living in the World** *From Step 1 of the Ladder of Divine Ascent*

Some people living in the world have asked me: "We have wives and are beset with social cares, and how can we lead the spiritual life?" I replied to them: "Do all the good you can; do not speak evil of anyone; do not steal from anyone; do not lie to anyone; do not be arrogant towards anyone; do not hate anyone; do not be absent from the divine services; be compassionate to the needy; do not offend anyone; do not wreck another man's domestic happiness, and be content with what your own wives can give you. If you behave in this way, you will not be far from the Kingdom of Heaven."



#### **Give What You Cannot Keep**

A person is no fool who gives what they cannot keep, to gain what they cannot lose. Ultimately, what can we keep? Not our money, not our material goods, not the time spent doing foolish things. We can keep only what we have won by losing our lives for Christ's sake: our inner peace, our salvation, and our good name listed among the servants of God. This is the Lord's promise, "Whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it." (Matt 8:35)

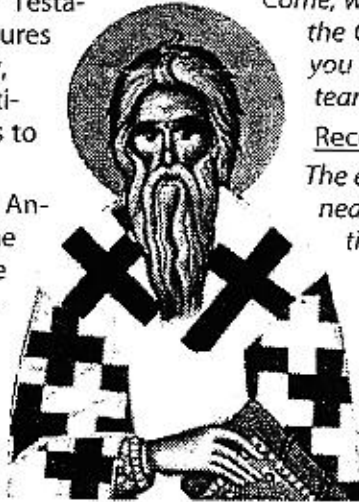
The Great Canon of St Andrew, Bishop of Crete, is the longest canon in all of our services, and is associated with Great Lent, since the only times it is appointed to be read in church are the first four nights of Great Lent (Clean Monday through Clean Thursday, when it is serialized) and at Matins for Thursday of the fifth week of Great Lent, when it is read in its entirety (in this latter service, the entire life of St Mary of Egypt is also read).

There is no other sacred hymn which compares with this monumental work, which St Andrew wrote for his personal meditations. Nothing else has its extensive typology and mystical explanations of the scripture, from both the Old and New Testaments. One can almost consider this hymn to be a "survey of the Old and New Testament". Its other distinguishing features are a spirit of mournful humility, hope in God, and complex and beautiful Trinitarian Doxologies and hymns to the Theotokos in each Ode.

The canon is a dialog between St. Andrew and his soul. The ongoing theme is an urgent exhortation to change one's life. St Andrew always mentions his own sinfulness placed in juxtaposition to God's mercy, and uses literally hundreds of references to good and bad examples from the OT and NT to "convince himself" to repent.

A canon is an ancient liturgical hymn, with a very strict format. It consists of a variable number of parts, each called an "ode". Most common canons have eight Odes, numbered from one to nine, with Ode 2 being omitted. The most penitential canons have all nine odes. Some canons have only three Odes, such as many of the canons in the "Triodion" (which means "Three Odes").

In any case, all Odes have the same basic format. An "Irmos" begins each Ode. This is generally sung, and each Irmos has a reference to one of the nine biblical canticles, which are selections from the Old and New Testament, which can be found in an appendix in any complete liturgical Psalter (book of Psalms, arranged for reading in the services). A variable number of "troparia" follow, which are short hymns about the subject of the canon. These are usually chanted, and not sung. After each troparion a "refrain" is chanted. At the end of each Ode, another hymn, called the "Katavasia", either the Irmos previously sung, or one like it is sung.



The troparia of the Great Canon in all its twelve Odes are usually chanted by the priest in the center of the church, with the choir singing the Irmos and Katavasia. There are varying traditions about bows and prostrations. Some prostrate and some make the sign of the cross and bow three times after the Irmos and each troparion.

**General Themes of the Great Canon.**

How we should think about ourselves

*Where shall I begin to lament the deeds of my wretched life? What first-fruit shall I offer, O Christ, for my present lamentation? But in Thy compassion grant me release from my falls.*

Desire to change—dialogue with the soul

*Come, wretched soul, with your flesh, confess to the Creator of all. In the future refrain from you former brutishness, and offer to God tears of repentance.*

Recognizing Reality

*The end is drawing near, my soul, is drawing near! But you neither care nor prepare. The time is growing short. Rise! The Judge is at the very doors. Like a dream, like a flower, the time of this life passes. Why do we bustle about in vain?*

How to pray - Laments and supplications to God

*Thou art the Good Shepherd; seek me, Thy lamb, and neglect no me who have gone astray.*

OT and NT examples of righteousness and unrighteousness, for the purpose of emulation or avoidance.

*Do not be a pillar of salt, my soul, by turning back; but let the example of the Sodomites frighten you, and take refuge up in Zoar.(Genesis 19:26)*

*I have reviewed all the people of the Old Testament as examples for you, my soul. Imitate the God-loving deeds of the righteous and shun the sins of the wicked.*

**The most important thing to know about the Great Canon**

The Great Canon was written by a holy man to teach himself the right way to live. We cannot benefit from it unless we make it a priority to stand in prayer, in the church, and listen to it, with a great desire and expectation for God's grace to teach us and heal us. Our theology is first and foremost—experienced and prayed, and not only "studied".

# WORDS FOR SIN

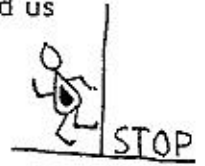
There are many words which people use to describe their wrongdoing.

Here are some of them:

**SIN** — a long time ago the word simply meant missing the target. If someone were shooting and missed the target, then the word to say it was Sin. If we do wrong we are really missing the target that God has given us to hit. The target, of course, is to be good and reach our aim which is the eternal life in the Kingdom of God.



**TRESPASS** — to trespass means to go where we should not go and to do what we should not do. If we do something bad, we are trespassing. We are going where God told us not to go and doing what God told us not to do.



**TRANSGRESSION** — is almost the same as trespass. It means going beyond the limit, going against what is right by going over into what is wrong.

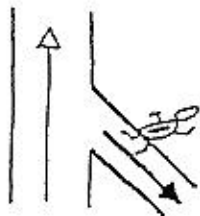


**STAIN** — is that which makes dirty something that is clean. Stains on our soul by our wrongdoing make our souls dirty so that they cannot shine anymore with the goodness of God.



**FALLENNESS** — means that our sins have brought us down from the high place where God wants us to be.

**LOSTNESS** — means that we are not at home with God. **ALIENATION** and **ESTRANGEMENT** mean the very same thing.



**DEVIATION** — means that we have lost our way and are not on the right road leading to the place where God wants us to go.

However many sins we do, God the Father is always there to forgive us. This is why Jesus Christ has come, to forgive our sins and to allow us to hit the target again.



## 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 2015-2016 school year:

April 24	+	Palm Sunday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 25		The 11 <sup>th</sup> Panchen Lama's Birthday (Buddhist)
April 28	+	Holy Thursday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
April 29	+	Ninth Day of Ridvan (Baha'i) Holy Friday (Eastern Orthodox Christian) Last Day of Unleavened Bread (Church of God)
April 30		Mahavir Jayanti (Jain)
<b>May 2016</b>		
May 1	+	Beltane (Wicca) Pascha (Easter) (Eastern Orthodox Christian)
May 2	+	Twelfth Day of Ridvan (Baha'i) Bright Monday (Eastern Orthodox Christian)