

# SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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## BULLETIN OCTOBER 23, 2016

### SUNDAY/OCTOBER 23

18<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost

St. James, Brother of the Lord

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

Church School and Coffee Hour

Question & Answer Period

### MONDAY/OCTOBER 24

Icon, "Joy Of All That Sorrow"

9:30a.m. Akathist to Icon

### THURSDAY/OCTOBER 27

6:00p.m. Compline with Akathist  
to St. Job of Pochaev

7-8:30p.m. Adult Study Class: Part Five  
*Consequences of Spiritual Guidance  
Leading To and From Deification*

### FRIDAY/OCTOBER 28

St. Job of Pochaev

9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

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### 101<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Celebration

### SATURDAY/OCTOBER 29

9:30a.m. Akathist to Our Lord; Confessions

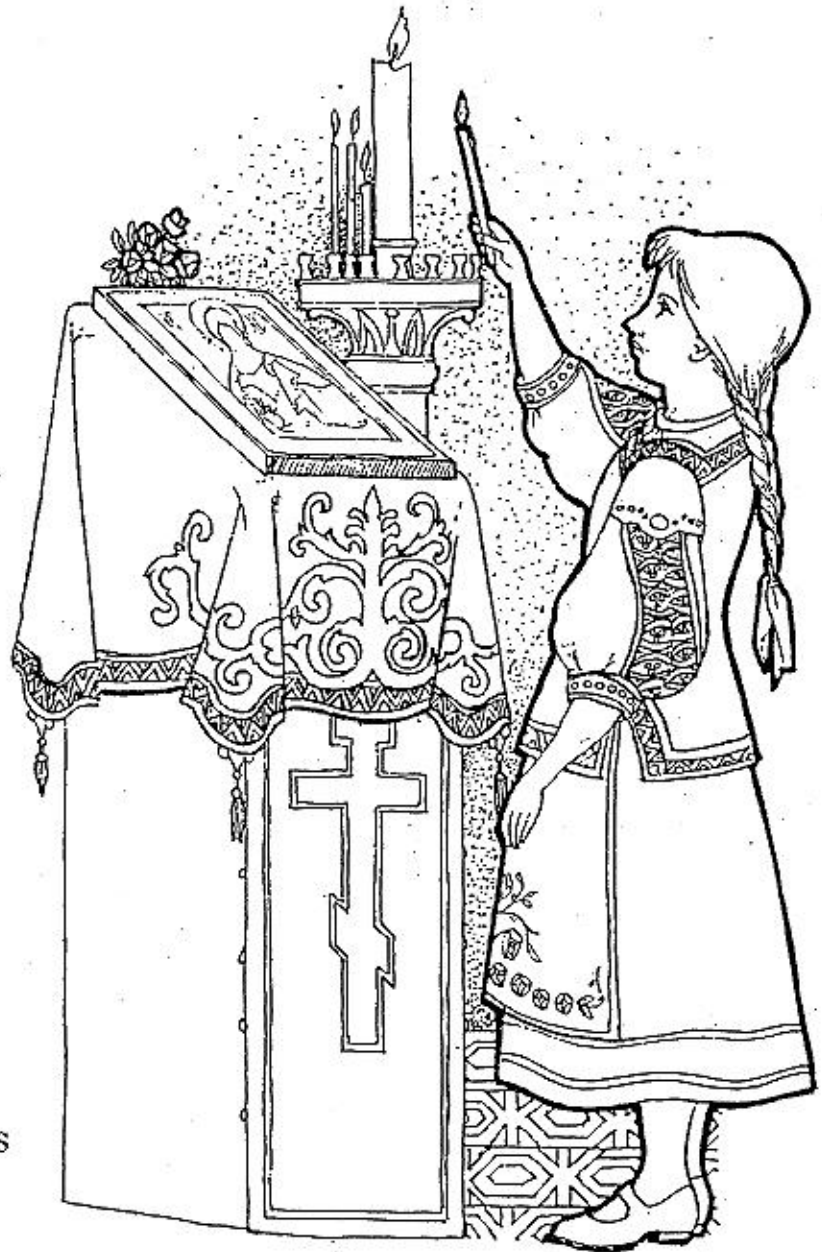
5:30p.m. Vigil with Archbishop Michael;  
Confessions; Meal in Hall

### SUNDAY/OCTOBER 30

9:00 Entrance of Archbishop Michael

9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy, followed by  
Festal Meal in Hall

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### **Offerings Week of October 23**

**Olive Oil:** for the health of Luke; in memory of Michael, Justina, Anastasia, Alexandra and John; in memory of Sarchisian and Bocai families; for the health of Michael (birthday); in memory of Floarea, Gheorghe, Gabriela, Elena, Grigore, Alexandru, Aurelia, Ilie, Valeria, Elena, Marilena, Archimandrite Roman, Grigore and Anastasia.

**Wine:** in memory of Demetre; in honor of St. James.

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

Dorothy Macheska 40<sup>th</sup> Day-Nov. 25

Oct. 24, 1924 Isidore Ubrimovich

Oct. 24, 1949 Damian Zeban

Oct. 24, 2002 Dolores Barnosky

Oct. 25, 1961 Nicholas Harasamiuk

Oct. 25, 1966 John Lopatka

Oct. 25, 1956 Steven Max

Oct. 26, 1985 Michael Motoviloff

Oct. 27, 1960 Nikolai Roschuk

Oct. 28, 1916 Paul Klaga

Oct. 28, 1932 Nicholas Kulina

### **Coffee Hour Schedule**

- Coffee Hour Hosts are reminded to prepare foods that are simple enough that you leave the church only after Communion.
- Coffee Hour Hosts, please place trash in the garbage cans outside, or if the cans are full, on top of the cans, but not on the ground.
- Please allow church school teachers and students to be first in line so they can prepare for classes.

Oct. 23 Sokol, Nasledysheva, Staina & Sarchisian

Oct. 30 Festal Meal of Parish

Nov. 06 Wypych, Chirnoaga, Vadja, Moldoveanu & Lily

### **Usher Schedule**

Oct. 23 Edward S. & Kahka K.

Oct. 30 Edward S. & Kahka K.

Nov. 06 Timothy S.

### **Counters**

Oct. 23 Jill P. & Paulina N.

Oct. 30 Paulina N. & Ciprian C.

Nov. 06 Rebecca O. & Lisa Keller

### **Sunday Readers Schedule**

Oct. 23 Daniel T.

Oct. 30 Peter G.

Nov. 06 Daniel T.

### **The Calendar**

Nov. 1 & 2 Diocesan Assembly in Yonkers

Nov. 6 Prayers for those in Healing Ministries

Nov. 6 Eastern Standard Time Returns

Nov. 6 Church School Class

Nov. 8 St. Michael & All Angels Feast Day

Nov. 11-12 Fall Vocations Retreat at St. Tikhon's

Nov. 11-13 Annual Girl's Retreat in Garrison

Nov. 13 Youth Group Outing (Movies)

Nov. 15 Beginning of 40 Day Nativity Lent

Nov. 16 Monthly Adult Class 7-8:30p.m.

Nov. 17 Parish Council Meeting

Nov. 20 Church School Class

Nov. 20 Teen Class

Nov. 21 Entrance Into Temple Feast of Theotokos

Nov. 24 Thanksgiving Day Akathist 9:30a.m.

Dec. 3 Diocesan Workshop at our Parish for those in "Health Care Ministries"

Dec. 11 Christmas Cookie Walk

Dec. 17 Archbishop Michael at our Parish and tonsure of Samuel Davis to the rank of Church Reader

Dec. 18 First Service in New Brunswick of St. Symon of Cyrene with Archbishop Michael and faithful from area.

### **Parish Center Hall Roof Donations**

#### **Received to Date – October 16**

Total donations to date: \$49,395

Total amount needed: \$50,000

The Lord bless your offerings!

### **Memory Eternal!**

To the newly-departed Dorothy Macheska. Our prayers for her and sympathy to her daughter Lisa Keller and son-in-law Robert and to her grandchildren, Robert and Andrew

### **God is not in might, but in right.**

- St. Alexander Nevsky

### **Take care of what is God's and God will take care of what is yours.**

- St. John Chrysostom

## Being Perfect vs. Perfectionism

Fr. George Morelli

"Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mat. 5:48)

These words that Jesus Christ gave to his apostles, disciples and the multitude on the Mount must be taken to heart by every follower of Jesus Christ. We can look to the Church Fathers to help us understand what "being perfect" really means. The Fathers were surprisingly realistic in understanding the rich spiritual meaning of these words. They were far from the modern meaning of the term; where "being perfect" is understood as "perfectionism" and regarded as a cognitive-emotional aberration by mental health clinicians and researchers.

St. Diadochos of Phototiki tells us:

For what is considered perfection in a pupil is far from perfect when compared with the richness of God, who instructs us in love which would still seek to surpass itself, even if we were able to climb to the top of Jacob's ladder by our own efforts.

St. Makarios of Egypt states:

Thus aspiring to perfection two of the best things come about, provided we struggle diligently and unceasingly we seek to attain this perfect measure and growth; and we are not conquered by vanity, but look upon ourselves as petty and mean because we have not yet reached our goal.

St. Makarios again warns us:

Hence, if we do not know how to discriminate, we fancy that we have attained something great and begin to think highly of ourselves, deluding ourselves that we have reached the final stage of purification, though this is very far from the truth.

Ultimately perfection does not come from the individual but from God. "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory in Christ. Jesus, after you have suffered a little, will Himself perfect you and confirm you and establish you" (1 Peter 5:10).

The psychological model of perfection is very different. Individuals suffering from this malady are motivated by a fear of failure and sense of duty. They strive to be in first place in all manner of endeavours but their accomplishments never seem to satisfy them. They believe there is a special quality to acquiring "perfection." The flawless expression of particular characteristic such as intelligence or the mistake-free application of a specific skill is the only way to earn self esteem and achieve the sense of being special.

This perception may lead individuals to intuit that they have mastery over their emotions and behavior. When unforeseen consequences challenge these unrealistic perceptual intuitions the person becomes self-critical and experiences anxiety and hostility and becomes vulnerable to depression, disgrace, even suicide, through the collapse of self-esteem (Burns, 1989). Slaney and his colleagues (Grzegorek, Slaney, Franze and Rice 2004) add that patients who sense a discrepancy between their unrealistic standards of perfection and their actual accomplishments are most vulnerable to the delirious effects of self-criticism.

This problem is addressed in scripture and by the Fathers. St Matthew records the dialogue between Jesus and His disciples: "Who then can be saved?"; asked the disciples. "And Jesus beholding, said to them: With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." What a rock of assurance to all Christians in their struggle to attain "perfection" which is holiness, union with God or *theosis*.

Perfection comes from God. We have to trust in Him. To think we have attained perfection or can attain it on our own is an unrealistic delusion, vanity. Our goal of union with Christ can only come as a gift, as a grace from God. Theosis is a movement toward the energies of God, and not his essence (Chryssavgis, 2004). Paraphrasing the words of St. Maximus the Confessor, from Him we come and toward Him we tend.

Theosis is not static, it is movement. Theosis is a process that is eternal starting with our new-birth at Baptism, continuing through cooperation with the grace of God -- a grace that extends through our lifetime into eternity. Because we are finite and created (creatures) we can only move toward Him because of His grace because He is infinite through eternity and without end.

Trust and patience are two pillars of our journey to "perfection." In psychological terms patience is attained by letting go of our "unrealistic urgent demanding expectations" and substituting reality the way it actually is. Trust in God and His Divine Providence becomes a powerful "technique" to challenge self-created urgencies and helps heal the malady of perfectionism.

The Church is crucial in this healing. St. Irenaeus said that, "Where the Church is there is the Spirit, and where the Spirit is there is the Church." Thus we have tradition, scripture in tradition (Breck, 2001) the Divine Liturgy, the holy mysteries (e.g. repentance, reception of the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ) the other prayers of the church, the writings of our holy fathers and mothers of the church, the teachings of our bishops and priests, the holy icons and architecture of our buildings and the love we are to have between one another.

St. Paul reminded the Galatians of the fruits and the virtues involved in this journey: charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, modesty and self continence (Gal 5: 23-24). We cannot love God, if we do not love man (1 John). One spiritual director taught that we can only love God to the extent we love the person we *hate* the most.

Ultimately the spiritual cure for perfectionism is given to us by St. Paul: "For if anyone thinks of himself as something, whereas he is nothing he deceives himself" (Gal 6:3). "God forbid I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world is crucified in me" (Gal 6:14). Here lies true perfection.



All my happiness and unhappiness are in the thoughts and desires of my heart. If the thoughts of my heart are in accord with God's truth, with the will of God, then I am at rest, filled with divine light, joy and blessedness; if not, I am uneasy, filled with spiritual darkness that corrupts the soul, with heaviness and despondency. If I replace the false and ungodly thoughts of my heart by true and godly ones, then rest, blessedness and joy return.

*Saint John of Kronstadt*