

# SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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## BULLETIN DECEMBER 4, 2016

### SUNDAY/DECEMBER 4

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

Great-Martyr Barbara

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

Coffee Hour; Church School

5:30p.m. Compline with Akathist to

St. Sabbas (Dec. 5) and oil from

his tomb

### MONDAY/DECEMBER 5

7:00p.m. Vespers

### TUESDAY/DECEMBER 6

St. Nicholas of Myra

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

6:00p.m. Youth Group Gathering

### THURSDAY/DECEMBER 8

6:30p.m. Compline

7-8:30p.m. Adult Study Class

### FRIDAY/DECEMBER 9

6:00p.m. Christmas Cookie Baking in Hall

### SATURDAY/DECEMBER 10

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

10:30a.m. General Church Cleaning

5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

### SUNDAY/DECEMBER 11

Holy Forefathers Sunday

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

11:20a.m. Christmas Cookie Walk

5:30p.m. Compline with Akathist to

St. Spyridon (Dec. 12) and oil from

his tomb



*And unite all of us to one another who become partakers of the one Bread and Cup in the communion of the Holy Spirit. Grant that none of us may partake of the holy Body and Blood of Thy Christ for judgment or condemnation. Instead, may we find mercy and grace with all the saints who through the ages have been well-pleasing to Thee: ancestors, fathers, patriarchs, prophets, apostles; preachers; evangelists, martyrs, confessors, teachers, and every righteous spirit made perfect in faith.*

### **The Mysteries of Confession & Holy Communion in the Nativity 40 Days**

One of the aspects of a Lenten season is receiving the Mysteries of Confession & Communion. Those desiring to receive Holy Communion for Nativity Day (Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>) ought to have gone to Confession sometime in the months of November or December. Please be attentive to this discipline.

### **Offerings Week of December 4**

Olive Oil: in memory of Michael, Justina, Rosalie and Anastasia; in memory of Sarchisian and Bocai families; in memory of John; for the salvation of Vera and in memory of John.

Wine: for the health of Nicole and Alexander (Names Days).

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

Dec. 05, 1941 Anastasia Rilik  
Dec. 05, 1978 Stefan Syubiak  
Dec. 06, 1997 John Suseck Jr.  
Dec. 06, 2010 John Chabra  
Dec. 06, 2011 Howard Bozinta  
Dec. 07, 1929 Felix Kshanovsky  
Dec. 07, 1972 Gregory Hriniak  
Dec. 07, 1999 Fr. Jaroslav Roman  
Dec. 09, 1965 Max Horbel  
Dec. 09, 1970 Helen Horbel  
Dec. 10, 1946 David Gerasemchuk  
Dec. 10, 1956 Anthony Pawlik  
Dec. 10, 1988 Michael Sofko  
Dec. 10, 2004 Ann Kralovich

### **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.

Nativity Fast: Nov. 15-Dec. 24: No meat or dairy

Dec. 04 Sokol, Nasledysheva, Staina & Sarchisian  
Dec. 11 Wypych, Chirnoaga, Moldoveanu, Vajda & Sue

### **Usher Schedule**

Dec. 04 Timothy S. & Peter B.  
Dec. 11 Jerome S. & Adrian M.

### **Counters**

Dec. 04 Rebecca O. & Lisa K.  
Dec. 11 Ciprian C. & Larissa M.

### **Sunday Readers Schedule**

Dec. 04 John Z.  
Dec. 11 Austin K.

### **The Calendar – For Your Participation**

Dec. 10 Church Cleaning Saturday – Part 2  
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.

### **Names Day Greetings**

St. Barbara/Dec. 4: Barbara Kulick and Barbara Erkman  
St. Sabbas/Dec. 5: Saba Kaliashvili  
St. Nicholas/Dec. 6: Nicholas Mattei, Nicholas Kita, Nicholas Stucka.  
Many Blessed Years!

### **Nativity 40 Day Lent: Nov. 15-Dec. 24**

In this one of "The Four Lents," of the year, a fast is observed from eat, dairy, fish, wine and oil. The Parish Wall Calendar and the Monthly Printed Wall Calendar indicate modifications to the fast.

Dec. 04/Sun. fish, wine and oil allowed  
Dec. 05/Mon. -  
Dec. 06/Tue. fish, wine and oil allowed  
Dec. 07/Wed. -  
Dec. 08/Thur. wine and oil allowed  
Dec. 09/Fri. -  
Dec. 10/Sat. fish, wine and oil allowed  
Dec. 11/Sun. fish, wine and oil allowed

### **Baskets for Food Collection in Vestibule**

Staple food items may be brought for our local food pantry during Nativity Lent season.

### **4<sup>th</sup> Annual Winter Coat Drive**

Unwanted coats, gloves, hats may be placed in the bin in the lower hall. Dec. 11<sup>th</sup> is the last day for this drive.

### **Annual Nativity Card Appeal (\$15)**

For the benefit of St. Philaret Charities. Please return no later than Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup>.

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## ST. BARBARA

December 4

St. Barbara was born in 290 A.D. in Heliopolis, the only child of wealthy parents. When she was very young, her parents wanted to protect her, so they built a fortress and placed Barbara in it so people could not see her.

Her father, Dioscuros, decided to add a bath house with two windows to the fortress. Barbara instructed the builders to put in three windows. While standing by the pool in the bath house, Barbara made the sign of the cross on the marble with her finger. Miraculously, her finger chisled the cross so deeply in the marble that it still exists today!

When Dioscuros returned and saw the third window, he asked Barbara if there was any particular reason she wanted three windows. She replied, "Three lights guide everyone who walks the earth." Dioscuros asked her how these three lights could guide everyone. *James Nemitz is a 20th Anniversary winner!*

Making the sign of the cross with three fingers, she said, "This signifies the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and with these Lights the whole world is guided."

These words angered her father and even made him forget that Barbara was his daughter. He drew his sword and threatened to murder her. Terrified, she ran from him to a nearby mountain. Upon reaching the top, she raised her arms to the heavens and prayed to God for help.

After finding his daughter, Dioscuros forced her back to the fortress and locked her in a small room. Outside, he placed two guards. He then went to the ruler of the city and informed him that Barbara was a Christian. Because she would not sacrifice to false gods, Marcius, the ruler, ordered his soldiers to beat Barbara with sticks and then to rub her wounds with vinegar so that the pain would be even greater. Then she was thrown in prison.

Towards midnight, a bright light appeared to Barbara and a voice told her not to fear, for Christ was always with her. As soon as the words were spoken, all her wounds disappeared!

Marcius refused to believe that she had been cured by the power of God and ordered his soldiers to beat her again. But an angel appeared and again healed her. Marcius was furious and ordered his soldiers to cut off her head.

Barbara's father was present at all these tortures, but he was not sorry for what he had done to his only child. He asked that he be allowed to perform the execution. This happened on December 4, 290 A.D. The earth shook and opened and swallowed Barbara's body. As Dioscuros was leaving the scene, God sent a thunderbolt to kill this bloodthirsty man.

After several days, a pious Christian named Valenios had a dream which instructed him where to go to find Barbara's body. He dug it up and entombed it in the village of Galassos where it was venerated with great respect and honor.

Today, St. Barbara is considered one of the major saints of our church.



## LESSONS FROM TREES

The Aromatic Tree is full of a wonderful fragrance, not in greens or in flowers but in the bark. When the bark is cut with an ax, the fragrance pours forth. In such a manner, we Christians are aromatic trees in Christ's Church, when struck by the sinful world, we pour forth the heavenly fragrance of divine forgiveness.

The Chinese Bamboo Tree for the first four years of its growth, only a small shoot appears above ground, yet miraculously, in the 5th year, the tree grows up in one year to some 80 feet. In our spiritual life, we need to pay the price to prepare the ground of our soul - plant the seed of virtue, cultivate it by righteous living, water it with the Sacraments; knowing that in the future, great growth will take place.

The Tree of the Holy Cross is the most precious tree in all the world. It provides heavenly shelter and divine shade. The fruit of this tree - is the Lord Jesus, if we eat of this tree, we shall not die, but live forever.

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## AN EXPLANATION OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

ON MATTHEW 9:16-17

BY ST. THEOPHAN THE RECLUSE (+1894)

No Man puts a piece of new cloth unto an old garment...nor do men put new wine into old bottles.

What does the Saviour wish to teach us by this comparison? By this comparison the Lord taught that strenuous labors, without the spirit of true life, brings no benefit to our moral character, but rather, confusion and corruption. A repentant sinner is given grace, which forms in him a determination to please the Lord, without sparing his own life. All labors are useful to a person with determination. However, should a person who lacks it, attempt on occasion, for example, to impose a fast on himself, he will strain and strain harder, but then he gives up his efforts. And after this his life becomes even worse.

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## ABOUT ORTHODOX PARISH LIFE

.....If people want a parish community, then they have to work to create it. As they say: no pain, no gain. Today, many people seem to have adopted a Welfare State mentality, a consumer mentality, towards the Church. As a result they expect church services and activities to be laid out for them, as if it were their right. This is totally unrealistic. We have to combat the mentality which says that 80% of church activities are carried out by 20% of the parishioners and the remaining 20% of activities are carried out by 80% of the parishioners.

.....some are critical that Orthodox laity appear to have no role to play in church life, and seem to be mere passive spectators of services. This impression is sometimes founded in reality, but only in dying parishes where laity may indeed have reduced their role to passive spectatorship. Laypeople can only be passive if they wish to be passive.



**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)***