

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

605 Washington Avenue, Manville, New Jersey 08835-1856

Voice: 908-685-1452 Email: frjames@ssppoc.org Website: www.ssppoc.org

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

Diocese of NY-NJ: www.ocanynj.org

BULLETIN FEBRUARY 19, 2017

*The Blessing of Homes: January 7th thru February 24th:
To have your home blessed, make an appointment with Father James*

SUNDAY/FEBRUARY 19

Meat-Fare Sunday

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

Church School & Teen Class

CHEESE-FARE MONDAY/FEBRUARY 20

From this day we do not partake of meat products
until Holy Pascha, April 16

WEDNESDAY/FEBRUARY 22

6:30p.m. Compline

7-8:30p.m. Study Class – Part Two

“The Pathology of Passion & Freedom”

SATURDAY/FEBRUARY 25

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

9:45a.m. Icon of the Theotokos, “Tender

Heart” at Ukrainian Church, So. Bound Brook

5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

SUNDAY/FEBRUARY 26

Cheese-Fare Sunday

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

Coffee Hour

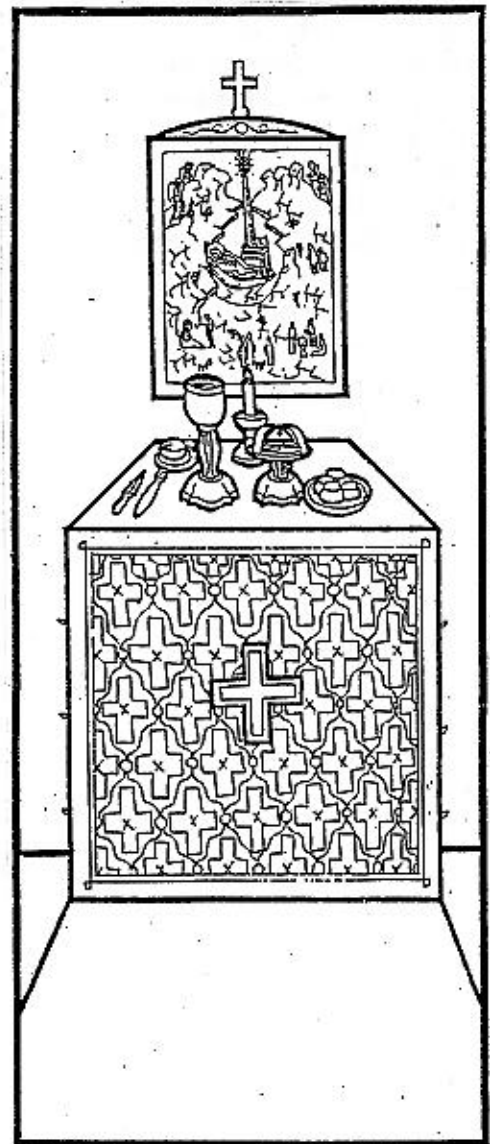
12:15p.m. Vespers & Rite Of Forgiveness

PURE MONDAY/FEBRUARY 27

Beginning of 40 Day Great & Holy Fast

From this day we do not partake of dairy or
fish until Holy Pascha, April 16

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



Offerings Week of February 19

Olive Oil: in memory of Michael, Justina, Rosalie, and Anastasia; in memory of Sarchisian & Bocai families; for a safe journey; for the health of Carol and John (anniversary).

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

Synodicon: Memory Eternal!

Feb. 19, 1963 Gregory Kilmchuk
Feb. 20, 1918 Jacob Shevchuk
Feb. 20, 1920 Anna Sabat
Feb. 20, 1963 Theodosia Zuboff
Feb. 20, 1981 Anna Lisowski
Feb. 21, 1939 John Cherkon
Feb. 21, 1963 Steven Piscadlo
Feb. 21, 1976 Anna Sharshon
Feb. 21, 2011 Ludmila Tjaden
Feb. 22, 1931 Stephen Blisak
Feb. 22, 1931 Olga Yaskovsky
Feb. 22, 1977 Stella Honchar
Feb. 22, 1989 Gertrude Huzinec
Feb. 22, 2011 Michael Warin
Feb. 23, 1942 Louis Potapchuk
Feb. 23, 1946 Joseph Wilhousky Sr.
Feb. 25, 1941 Constantine Yushkevich
Feb. 25, 1960 Helen Wislosky

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.

Feb. 19 Sokol, Nasledysheva, Staina & Sarchisian

Feb. 26 *No meats*

Feb. 26 Wypych, Chirnoaga, Moldoveanu, Vajda & Sue

Counters Schedule

Feb. 19 Irina S. & Lisa K.

Feb. 26 Larissa M. & Paulina N

Ushers Schedule

Feb. 19 Dennis F. & Robert E.

Feb. 26 Edward S. & Kahka K.

Sunday Readers Schedule

Feb. 19 Ciprian C. / Feb. 26 Daniel T.

Study Classes – Lenten Directions

Feb. 15, Wed. *The Mind and Heart: The Pathology of Knowledge and Desire*

Feb. 22, Wed. *The Pathology of Passion and Freedom*

Mar. 16, Thurs. *The Pathology of Memory and Imagination*

These 3 evenings will examine the true nature of these faculties and the contra-natural usage.

Classes are from 7-8:30p.m. All invited.

Lenten Teen Retreat- Grades 7-12

This annual teen retreat will be held, Friday-Sunday, March 10-12 in Garrison, NY. See posted flyers with registration information.

Appreciation Is Expressed

Thank you for your participation in the Annual Meeting held on February 12th. The attendance was good. If you have not yet read the reports, please take the time to do so. We ask all of our parishioners to be informed and offer the time, talent and treasure to building up our parish.

Kollyva – Boiled Wheat Is Sought for the following dates

Mar. 3rd, Friday, 6:30p.m. (St. Theodore Miracle)

Mar. 11th, Memorial Saturday 9:30a.m.

Mar. 18th, Memorial Saturday, 9:30a.m.

Please let Fr. James know in advance if you can subscribe to one of these dates.

Souper Bowl of Caring Sundays

Your food donations were appreciated as well as your donations to Great Expectations, the Home for Unwedded Mothers. A check for \$600 has been sent to the Home.

Lenten Deanery Schedule of Services

Will be posted in next week's bulletin.

ICON "OF THE TENDER HEART"

AT ST. ANDREW'S UKRAINIAN MEMORIAL CHURCH, SOUTH BOUND BROOK, NJ

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25th: Arrives at 9:45a.m / Liturgy 10:00a.m.

The Miracles and Wonders of God - The Crying Icon of Taylor, PA

A man had a massive heart attack while in the church. Two nurses who were present rushed over to him and began to do CPR, while others called 911. As the nurses tried to revive him, he showed no pulse, stopped breathing and actually died. While waiting the few minutes for the ambulance to arrive, Fr. Mark Leisure, the priest of St. George Orthodox Church in Taylor, PA took the *Kardiotisa*, "The Tender Heart" myrrh-flowing, miraculous icon of the Virgin Mary and held it over the man so that the fragrant myrrh would drip from the icon onto the chest of the man. Immediately, the dead man took a deep breath, opened his eyes, and began singing "Mary, Mother of God Save Me." By the time the paramedics arrived, he was sitting up and didn't think he needed to go to the hospital, even though they insisted that he get checked.

The doctor at the Sloan Kettering Cancer Center tells the woman she has Stage 4 cancer, and there is no treatment that will help her condition. They tell her that they can control her pain, but she has little time to live. With little hope, she leaves the hospital. Yet a friend anoints her with the fragrant myrrh flowing from the *Kardiotisa* icon. She is miraculously healed. The next time she goes to the doctors and gets checked, they are puzzled and amazed that there is no trace of her cancer.

Over the past three years, these miracles have happened again and again – with people finding healing from prostate cancer, liver cancer, throat cancer, lung cancer, brain lymphoma, and almost every other form of cancer. There is even one oncologist who now, along with his medical treatment, directs his patients to visit the St. George Orthodox Church in Taylor, PA and be anointed by this miraculous myrrh.

One man had a ruptured brain aneurism. While in the hospital's ICU, he was in a coma with no hope for recovery. The doctors told the wife and family to say their goodbyes. A friend of the family knew a priest who had seen the *Kardiotisa* icon and had a cotton swab with the myrrh. He came and anointed the man, and the man awoke from the coma, healed. The doctors couldn't explain what happened, and said it was truly a miracle.

A woman couldn't see through her pregnancies. Four times she became pregnant, only to have her baby miscarried at a particular point in the pregnancy. There was a problem where the stem that connected the spinal cord and the brain, and this caused the miscarriage. During her fifth pregnancy, before she went to the doctor for an ultrasound, she was anointed with holy myrrh from the icon. In the ultrasound picture, which we all saw, there was an obvious light that had connected the brain with the spinal cord. The doctor and nurses said they had never seen anything like this before. The woman gave birth to a healthy child.

A young boy is rushed to the hospital with a 105 temperature. There is swelling of the brain and nothing seemed to be working to lower his temperature. His grandmother remembered that she had an old cotton swab from the miraculous icon in her purse. When she pulled it out, it was dry. And yet, she took it and tried to anoint her grandson, asking for the Virgin Mary's intercession. Shortly thereafter, the boy's temperature broke and he sat up. The next day, she took out the cotton swab again, and discovered that it was now soaked with myrrh and had even formed itself into a heart.

A young 14 year old girl had tried to commit suicide several times, and fallen into utter despair because of the bullying, ridicule and pain she experienced at school. While at Camp Nazareth, a Church Camp outside of Pittsburgh, she encountered the grace of God through this miraculous icon, and found inner healing and hope. Months later she wrote the most beautiful four page letter to Fr. Mark, which he read to us, describing how her life has turned around by her experience with the *Kardiotisa* icon.

Every Wednesday night for the past three years, Fr. Mark and his community have a special prayer service to the Virgin Mary in front of this icon. Every Monday night, Fr. Mark has a Questions and Answer session in his church. Hundreds and hundreds come every Wednesday. Several dozen come on Mondays, asking questions. One stranger began to attend on Mondays, and at one point stood up and said, "These icons in the Church are against Allah. They are idolatry." He argued that Allah was not pleased with these icons. After attending for a few weeks, this man from Iran finally approached the icon. Fr. Mark admitted that everyone was tense because he wasn't sure what the man was going to do. Over the past three years, Fr. Mark has seen someone pull out a knife and try to stab the icon; others have tried to smash it; some have spit on it; and one person even vomited over the protective case. The man from Iran approached and stood motionless in front of the icon covered with fragrant myrrh. Fr. Mark said the man was like in a trance, and it seemed like a battle was going on in his mind. Slowly a tear formed in his eyes, and he began to cry. He kissed the icon. As he walked out of the church, he stopped by the candle stand and wrote something in the sand in Arabic. Since no one could read Arabic, the priest took a picture of what he wrote and got someone to translate it. The man wrote, "Jesus Christ is Lord." Several months later this man was baptized and is now a pious Orthodox Christian.

These are only a few of the wonders and miracles which 45 of our parishioners and I heard yesterday when we visited this Tender Heart Icon of the Virgin Mary. Fr. Mark told us that October 13th will mark three years since the icon has been exuding this holy, fragrant myrrh. And not just a drop or two. Fr. Mark began his talk by holding up the icon and walking around the church, allowing the myrrh to drip from the icon into the hands of each of us. Imagine, this icon of wood has been continuously overflowing with myrrh for three years!

Bishop Gregory of Nyssa, the head of the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Archdiocese under whom St. George Church lies, worked for more than 20 years in the field of Cardiovascular Research at Carolinas Medical Center in Charlotte, NC. He has authored or co-authored more than 100 articles, abstracts and book chapters. When he first saw the icon, Fr. Mark shared how the bishop sat in front of the icon for an hour just looking at it. After an hour, he began crying and reflected, "My scientific mind cannot grasp how this is happening. How an icon painted on wood can exude myrrh. Yet my mind of faith gives glory to God for this miracle."

Our God is a God of wonders and miracles. He is not bound by the very laws of nature which He Himself has established. Sometimes in our contemporary, secular and materialistic world we try to insist that science and reason are the only source of truth. The Church honors and appreciates science and reason, yet we know that the Creator of all stands above all. We can never try to limit or keep God confined within our own boundaries. The miracle of the *Kardiotisa* icon is just one small example of the unfathomable mysteries of life and of the Creator of Life, God Himself! Sometimes we can only observe in awe and wonder, and give glory to God for the way He reveals His majesty!

Glory to God for all things!

THREE KINDS OF BELIEVING....

- 1) To believe God
- 2) To believe that God is
- 3) To believe in God

Truly it is not all the same when it comes to the matter of belief. The first kind of belief is to believe that things that God speaks are true. Many, even the wicked, are able to believe that the things God speaks are true; they believe that they are true and do not wish to make them their own because they are too lazy to do anything about them. The second kind of belief is to believe that God exists. Even the demons are able to believe however, that He is God. (James 2:19). The demons even believe that Jesus is the Son of God (Luke 4:41). The third kind of belief is to rightly believe in God and are Christians not only in name but also in action and way of life. Without love faith is empty; with love it is the faith of a Christian, without love the faith of a demon.

- Venerable Bede (+735)

BE SLOW TO ANGER....

The maturity of wisdom is only acquired with a quiet mind. For it has been written, "Because anger abides in the bosom of a fool." (Wis. 7:10) He does not forbid the swiftness of anger in such a way that he approves its slowness, but he is rather advising that even at a time of agitation and quarreling we avoid letting anger creep in, or if by chance it does creep in that we restrain its violence behind the barrier of our mouth, and when the hour of crises has passed, we more freely cleanse it entirely from our hearts gradually. Or at least he has commanded us to be slow to anger that we might not change the calmness of our face into harshness for just any reason except for a definite one.

- Venerable Bede (+735)



ANGER AND CALMNESS...

If we perceive that those around us, particularly those who have been entrusted to us, are not otherwise able to be corrected, we may show towards them harshness of word or even of a more severe judgment, provided that the condition of our mind remain calm, as far as human nature allows. I believe that Phinehas, Samuel, Elias and Peter, were slow to anger (Nb. 25:6-8; 1 Sam. 13:7-14; 2 Kings 1:3-4 & Jn 18:10), and yet they destroyed sinners by the sword or by a word. But even Moses, though he was a very mild man, went forth from Pharaoh, when he saw was incorrigible, exceedingly angry (Ex. 11:8), after having threatened him with a punishment that he also eventually brought down on him.

- Venerable Bede (+735)

LITTLE CHILDREN, LET US LOVE NOT IN WORD OR WITH TONGUE BUT IN DEED AND TRUTH.

1 John 3:18

To love in deed, namely that when our brother or sister are naked and need daily food we may give them the things necessary for their bodies; likewise when we behold them in need of spiritual gifts we may provide for their necessity as far as we can; in truth, however, that we may bestow these benefits on them with a simple intention and not for the sake of human praise, not through vainglory, not to the prejudice of others who, though endowed with greater means, do not do anything of this sort. For the purity of truth cannot dwell in any mind tainted like this with flaws, although it appears to perform the deeds of love for its neighbours.

The truth is more safely heard than preached.

The fire of sin is extinguished as if by the water of mercy.

The harmful disease of sadness of heart is driven away by the frequent sweetness of singing the psalms.

- Venerable Bede (+735)

"Having come to the setting of the sun . . ."

On the Importance of Attending the Evening Divine Services

by Mitred Archpriest Valery Lukianov

Man's life is a chain of alternating links of labor and rest. There are always more men who love repose than those who prefer labor. And, true, it is characteristic of human nature to strive more for consolation than for labor. Thus, man loves the beauty of the body; he loves beauty in art, in music, in fine literature; fame, honor and respect impress him. Men have a preference for tasty food and fine beverages, for convenience and sufficiency, for elegance in their attire and dwellings; they love celebrations and parties, getting together with friends, vacations and trips to new places, comfort and rest, entertainment, all sorts of amusements, games and spectacles; they prize good health, tranquility, good weather, a pleasant climate. In a word, man strives for blessedness; he seeks it as a natural manifestation of life, for his consciousness has retained the memory of his ancestors' delightful sojourn in the wondrous garden of paradise.

However, in attaining to various degrees of earthly blessedness, man very quickly discovers that true satisfaction on earth is unattainable. The more man surrounds himself with comfort and momentary delights, the less satisfaction he derives from them, and he begins to seek out ever new delights. Becoming convinced that earthly good things and health are unstable and changeable, man begins to pine. And this pining, this subconscious yearning for the lost Paradise is, as it were, a link with heaven.

In reviewing man's aspirations, one has to conclude that in general man is burdened by a long and laborious life, that he often loses patience and can fall into despondency. Very seldom do men find genuine satisfaction in a favorite type of work, laboring until exhaustion. Few individuals can be carried away by a profession or service to the point of self-forgetfulness, always guided by principle and not by gain, who have a special calling, a feeling of duty and responsibility.

If one were to confine oneself to these observations, one might well fall into pessimism and admit the hopelessness of human aspirations in general. Such conclusions might be justified were the human spirit limited by the earthly. But this is not the Christian philosophy of life, which sees the fulfillment of this life not only on earth, with all its vicissitudes, but in unshakeable eternity.

This in no way means that Christianity loses its tie with temporal life on earth. On the contrary, Christianity regulates earthly life in such a way that it is suitable to eternal ideals, giving place both to the natural satisfaction of needs and to earned re-

pose and rest. But Christianity is characterized first of all by inner struggle. Consolation in eternity is a reward for earthly struggles and afflictions, unselfishly borne solely out of love for God and devotion to Him. The Saviour Himself also testifies to this: *The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force* (Matt. 11:12). The beauty and justification of the Christian struggle lies in the fact that through it the way is opened to spiritual perfection: *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect* (Matt. 5:48). *If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me* (Matt. 19:21; Mark 10:21).

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matt. 7:7). *"But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first* (Matt. 19:30).

We see the realization of this ideal in the lives of the holy God-pleasers. We are guided in life by their example, we are nourished by their writings, we are animated by their fervor, we are inspired by their good disposition, we learn patience and humility from them. Elder Silouan of Athos eloquently testifies of this:

"Many people think that the saints are remote from us. But they are remote only from those who have removed themselves; they are very close to those who preserve Christ's commandments and have the grace of the Holy Spirit. In the heavens, everything lives and moves by the Holy Spirit. He lives in our Church; He lives in the Mysteries; He is in Sacred Scripture; He is in the souls of the faithful. The Holy Spirit unites all, and that is why the saints are close to us; and when we pray to them, they hear our prayers in the Holy Spirit, and our souls feel that they are praying for us."

The tie between struggle and consolation is most powerfully revealed in the liturgical experience of the Church. By joining in the liturgical life, the faithful learn to engage in the struggle of prayer, so distinctly unique in the Eastern Church by reason of its profundity and lengthiness, and they find true spiritual consolation according to the Saviour's testament: *Verily I say unto you . . . where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them* (Matt. 18:19, 21).

The apotheosis of spiritual consolation in the life of the Church is the Divine Eucharist — the real and mystical union of man with God. But it is unthinkable to enter at once into the spirit of this most sublime consolation, without due preparation, without bridling the turbulent worldly spirit, without the

development of spiritual compunction. Really, how can one take part in the Supper made in remembrance of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and in accordance with His promise, without due preparation: without clothing one's soul in the proper garment, without reconciling the conscience, without a consciousness of one's unworthiness, or a feeling of the great benefit of this saving mystery? Can a musical instrument make a beautiful and pure sound without prior tuning?! Remembering that, in the biblical and New Testament tradition, days are calculated from the evening, the holy Church enjoins the faithful to enter into the spirit of the eucharistic sacrifice through a preparatory service in the evening, on the eve of the Liturgy. It is in this evening service that genuine life in God and with God is revealed in all its spiritual beauty, when those who are praying "become attuned," with trembling anticipation, to union with the Lord through communion of the Holy Body and Blood of Christ. Even if a man does not commune at the Liturgy, this in no wise excuses him from joining in the eucharistic spirit, from thankfully experiencing Jesus Christ's whole saving exploit. After all, the Liturgy is the moving commemoration and the co-suffering experiencing of the life of the Lord and Saviour — from the Bethlehem manger, through the death on the Cross on Golgotha, the resurrection from the dead and the ascension into heaven, to the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, and through them on all the faithful in the bosom of Christ's Church. From Apostolic times, the faithful have been called to participation in the "little Pascha," to the eucharistic banquet each Sunday.

The best of these "participants" not only compiled the orders of the liturgies, but they became strugglers for holiness and were ready to undergo sufferings and even martyrdom, preserving faithfulness to Christ. They prayed all night, and already with the rising of the sun — the image of light and warmth — they received the Holy Body and Blood of Christ. It is not surprising, therefore, that the present-day evening Divine service is also filled with the prayerful remembrance of the struggle of the saints, and also, of course, with the commemoration of the great events from the life of Christ and the Mother of God. Desiring to help her faithful children remain in the circle of this on-going sanctity, the holy Church carefully and in advance, from the evening, leads them into the spirit of piety, uncovering before their spiritual gaze the life, labors, testaments, struggles and fervor of the holy God-pleasers who have ascended to God's eternal glory. What beauty, what mercy it is to have the good opportunity to join one's rebellious and turbulent spirit to the peaceful Spirit of God's saints, to find repose in Him! What joy it is to learn from the saints goodness, patience, and hope in God's help! What happiness it is to hear, as it were, from their mouths the sweet-sounding words of life in God! And just think — this joy is but a shadow of that great consolation which Christ has prepared for them that love Him.

Today's Christians who reject the path of struggle and strive only for consolation, are robbing themselves, depriving themselves of grace. It is good that our people fill the churches on Sundays and feast days for the Divine Liturgy. And we rejoice in this. But the heart bleeds on seeing how Orthodox Christians of today completely neglect participation in the struggle of the saints, they have abandoned attending church for the All-night Vigils on the eve of Sundays and feast days. Excuses of tiredness, weak health or difficulty with transportation are not convincing, considering that parishioners gather in great numbers for dancing parties and concerts on Saturday nights. Not a few Orthodox people come to panikhidas in the evening hours. But here again, at the tolling of the bell for the All-night Vigil, those who had filled the church for the requiem service turn around and leave. And only the same few — the habitués — remain. This is shameful! It is insulting!

Let us admit that the cool attitude of today's church people toward the evening services is nothing other than a wounding of Christian consciousness; it reflects a loss of the spirit of piety and the sense of God, an effectual loss of churchliness. There can be no genuine consolation without struggle, no real joy without preparation — just as there can be no smoke without fire, no shadow without light. One may add that the evening is also the proper place for confession, not before the Liturgy or, what is altogether inadmissible, immediately before Communion.

Orthodox Christian! Reflect well on what has been said here. Does not your heart ache to see our churches empty at the evening services? Ask yourself — how must the priests feel, who serve in these empty churches? And those few who do pray at these services, imagine their feeling of abandonment. Where is our brotherhood in Christ? Truly, man is foolishly preoccupied with earthly things; he loves rest and pleasure more than anything, and has little desire to gain a true consciousness of the need to save his soul, to save it by works of piety, by a prayerful disposition, and by struggle!

May the Lord God deliver Christians who are zealous for their salvation from their neglect of the divine services, so widespread now, and vouchsafe them, in a surge of thankfulness for the redeeming sacrifice of Christ, to start on the path of prayerful plenitude, in order to be vouchsafed the higher and eternal consolation of hearing the desired voice of the Lord: *Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord* (Matt. 21:21).