

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF SEPTEMBER 17, 2017

SUNDAY/SEPTEMBER 17

Sunday After the Holy Cross

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Teen Class; Coffee Hour

MONDAY/SEPTEMBER 18

40th Day Memorial for Constantin Stepan

THURSDAY/SEPTEMBER 21

Leave-Taking of Holy Cross Feast

7:00p.m. Parish Council Meeting

SATURDAY/SEPTEMBER 23

Conception of St. John the Baptist

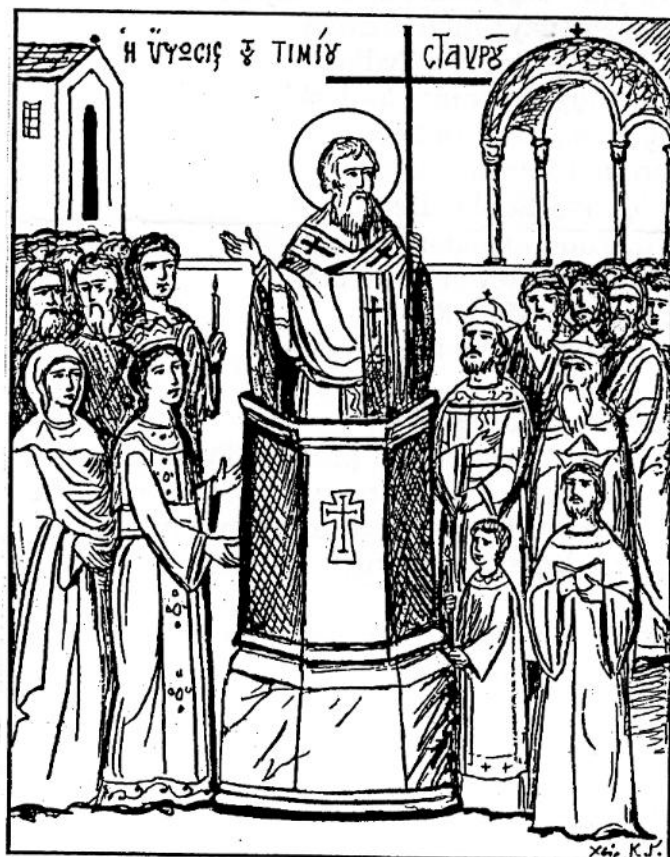
9:30a.m. Akathist to Baptist; Confessions
10:15a.m. Hall Clean-Up Second Session
5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

SUNDAY/SEPTEMBER 24

16th Sunday After Pentecost

Ss. Juvenaly & Peter of Alaska

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Church School; Coffee Hour with
Question & Answer Period



GUIDELINES FOR RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION

The Orthodox Church offers certain guidelines for members to prepare themselves for the joyous partaking of Holy Communion. These are:

1. Attendance at Church services the night before Liturgy. If not possible, then one should keep the evening with prayer, study and/or charity.
2. Observance of the fasting days and seasons of the Church.
3. A recent confession of sins and absolution from a priest.
4. Fasting from food and drink (including water), and smoking from midnight on the day which Holy Communion is to be received. **NOTE:** *Do not fast from medications, or food or drink recommended by a doctor.*
5. Abstinance from sexual relations the night before Liturgy and on the day of receiving Holy Communion.
6. Reading of the appointed prayers before and after receiving Holy Communion. These are found in one's prayer book or Liturgy book.
7. Being at peace, or at least seeking peace, with one's neighbor.

Questions or special circumstances? Please speak with your priest.

Offerings Week of September 17

Olive Oil: in memory of Michael, Justina, Rosalia, Anastasia, and Ivanna; in memory of Sarchisian and Bocai families;

Wine: for a safe journey.

Flowers: for Joseph, Ryan and Matthew

Synodicon: Memory Eternal!

Sept. 19 (40th day) Constantin Stepan

Sept. 22(40th day) Julia Cresina

Sept. 18, 1974 Stephen Zydiak

Sept. 18, 1993 Johanna Godleski

Sept. 19, 1964 Olga Dutka

Sept. 20, 1940 Peter Chapan

Sept. 20, 1976 Sophie Demjanow

Sept. 20, 2006 Eugenia Fetchko

Sept. 21, 1977 Steven Trehubets

Sept. 23, 1985 Mary Koles

Sept. 24, 1917 Evdokia Philmichuk

Coffee Hour Schedule

Coffee Hour Hosts please prepare foods that are simple enough, so you are not absent from the Divine Liturgy. It is only after Communion, that we should leave the church at attend to food preparations.

Sept. 17 Kita, Keller, Turri, Torrisi & Kachek

Sept. 24 Inga, Eka, Marina & Nona

Oct. 01 Sokol, Naseledysheva, Staina & Sarchisian

Counters Schedule

Sept. 17 Irina S. & Lisa K.

Sept. 24 Larissa M. & Paulina N.

Oct. 01 Rebecca O. & Ekaterini M.

Ushers Schedule

Sept. 17 Dennis F. & Robert E.

Sept. 24 Edward S. & Kahka K.

Oct. 01 Timothy S. & Peter B.

Sunday Readers Schedule

Sept. 17 Ciprian C. / Sept. 24 Daniel T.

General Clean-Up of the Upper Hall

Sept. 23rd, Sat. after Akathist (about 10:15a.m.)

Please join us in getting our Hall in good order!

Names Day Greetings

St. Sophie/Sept. 17th: Sophie Barna, Sophia Bakaletz & Sophie Vasilisa Avelar
Many Blessed Years!

Cemetery 7 Day Vigil Light (3 bar cross)

On sale \$95.00

Orders for the New Edition of the Prologue of St. Nicholas of Zicha

The 2 volume edition may be viewed on the table in the nave of the church. If you are interested in placing an order (\$140.00) let Katherine know.

Adult Study Thursday Evenings

There will be 5 consecutive classes, beginning Sept. 28th, with four classes to follow on the Thursdays of October. 7-8:30p.m. Classes Are held in the Conference Room, and all are encouraged to participate.

Hurricane Relief Collection – ends September 24th

A Special Basket is in the center of the church for offerings for Hurricane Relief victims. The funds collected will be sent to IOCC (International Orthodox Christian Charities) for distribution. You may make your checks to either Ss. Peter & Paul with notation of IOCC or make your check to IOCC. The Lord bless your offerings.

Help us Get Back on Track

During the Summer months, our Sunday Envelope offering was off budget by \$5,000. If you were away and do not make your offerings, please consider in making them up if possible. Thanks!

What is “the Lucan Jump” that is marked on my parish wall calendar September 18th?

The Lucan Jump is the date – always the Monday after the Sunday after the Holy Cross (Sept. 14th), in which the Church leaves off the cycle of Matthew’s Gospel and begins Luke’s. The Lucan cycle will predominate the Gospel readings thru February. The Lucan Jump is a good time to start Scripture readings.

ASK FATHER: 1 QUESTION / 1 ANSWER

Question: I am wondering about the subject of "tithing" spoken about in the Old Testament. What is the Orthodox view on this? How much should we be giving to the Church?

Answer: A lot can be said on this important subject of Christian stewardship, but I will try to be as concise as possible. The following is adapted from a stewardship presentation given at our church.

False Stewardship Models

Equal Giving: 1) Each person gives the same dollar amount, dividing the sum needed by the number of people. 2) Each person offers the same percentage amount, such as the 10% tithe.

Explanation: Every person differs according to financial resources and spiritual maturity. Equal dollar amounts unfairly burden the poor, not even meeting the Old Testament standard, which used a 10% scale (the tithe) as small step toward equity. The tithe, equal percentage, is also unfit for Christians for a series of reasons. The tithe: 1) only considers income not assets and liabilities, as does, for instance, the secular US tax system, 2) doesn't address how to properly manage the other 90% of one's income, nor teach the proper use of existing wealth, 3) doesn't develop the necessary discernment between needs and wants, which allows the Christian to properly see the connection between one's treasure and one's heart, and 4) is not taught by the Lord nor the Fathers, except being referenced as something below Christian stewardship.

Orthodox Christian Stewardship

Equal Sacrifice: New Testament stewardship is the only model that is equitable, faithful to the Gospel, and spiritually sound. Each person is equally free, yet equally accountable, for 100% of everything God has entrusted to his or her temporary care.

Explanation: Of course, this does not mean that 100% of what we possess or obtain must be given to the Church and the poor (although some have done this), but it does mean that 100% of our financial resources should be acquired, stored, and used in a godly manner. As Christians we should be working hard and honorably, saving prudently to provide for those entrusted to our care, supporting the work of the Church, helping the poor, rendering taxes to Caesar, living within our means, curbing unnecessary wants, and in all things using our treasure to redirect our hearts to God and our fellow man. If truly practiced, this means that the stronger will help the weaker, yet no one will excuse himself or herself from stewardship as each person has been entrusted with time, talent and treasurer by God.

This model of 100% stewardship: 1) applies to each and every person equally, 2) burdens no one unfairly, 3) offers everyone, whether rich and poor, married, single, or monastic an equal opportunity to offer his or her own self completely to God's service, 4) educates us to see the connection between our treasure and our heart, as well as the difference between our needs and wants, and most importantly, 5) is the teaching and example given by the Lord, who not only gave His whole life for us but also asks us to give our whole life back to Him. Understood in this manner, stewardship is an integral part of our common struggle and shared path, leading to a loving, self-sacrificial and full union with God and our fellow man.



ON THE KEEPING OF THE GOSPEL COMMANDMENTS

By St. Ignatius Brianchaninov

The Lord's commandments are Spirit and life. They save the doer of them. They restore a dead soul to life. They make a carnal and worldly person spiritual. On the other hand a person who neglects the commandments ruins himself and remains in a carnal and worldly state, in a fallen condition, and develops the fall in himself. This animal man does not receive the gifts of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him.



Choosing One's Cross

Narrator: Once upon a time there lived a man, who was very unhappy and poor. He couldn't find any work. Some of his friends had turned away from him. His health began to fail.

Man: I am being tried too hard. My cross is too heavy to bear. It is unfair. Why do I have to have such a difficult life?

Narrator: Exhausted and unhappy, he fell into a deep sleep and dreamt of a young stranger standing by his bed, who looked like an angel.

Angel: My friend, you feel that your cross is too heavy. Let me help you choose another one. Come with me. Let's see if we can find one less hard to bear.

Man: *(They go into a large and majestic hall full of crosses.)* My, my, all these crosses! Which one to choose? Stones ones, wooden ones, golden and silver ones, large and small ones, plain and beautifully decorated ones.

Angel: You can choose any cross you want. Make sure you choose the one that fits you best.

Narrator: So the man gladly dropped his old wooden cross and started looking.

Angel: Here's a nice small decorated golden cross.

Man: *(Trying it on.)* But it's too heavy. And the jewels set in it cut into my neck.

Angel: There's a nice cross - it's a well polished wooden one.

Man: *(Trying this one on.)* It's not too heavy, but it keeps slipping off my shoulders. It's hard to carry.

Narrator: The man went round and round trying out this cross and that one. At last he came to a medium sized wooden cross.

Man: This is the cross. It's not too light to carry, but it sets comfortably on my shoulders. It's just the right size to hold on to. I'll take this one. This is the one that fits me best.

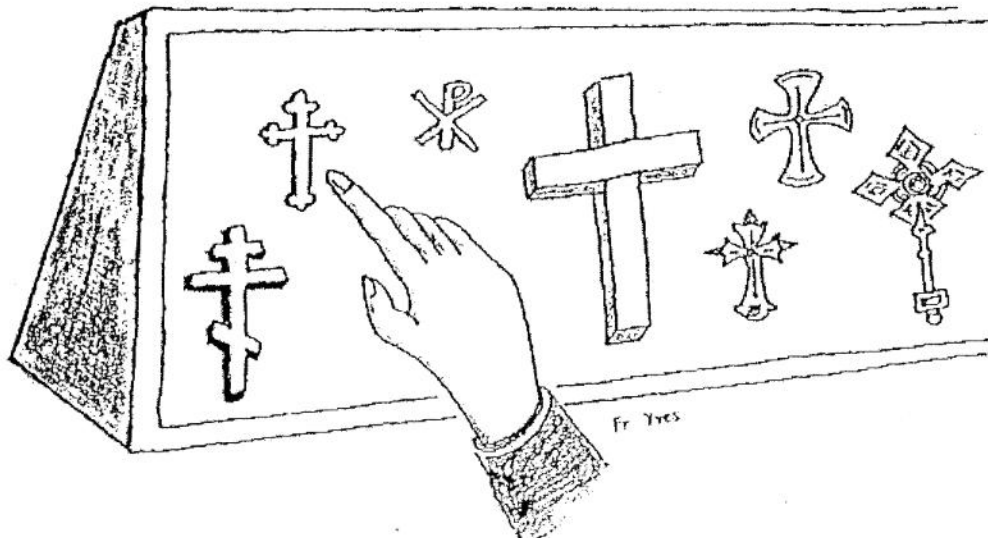
Angel: Do you know what cross this is?

Man: Did I try it on before?

Angel: It is the one you were bearing before you came here, the one you said was too heavy to carry.

Narrator: The man awoke from the dream refreshed and rested.

Man: I see that God chose that cross for me with love and wisdom. He knew what was best for me. Now I will accept the difficulties of my life, until a happier time begins, and I will bear my cross.



AN EXPLANATION OF THE ORTHODOX THREE-BAR CROSS

By Fr. Theodore Jurewicz

The Top Bar - The Explanation:

The top bar is the title-board, which Pilate ordered to be hung in mockery over Christ's head on the Cross. On this board was inscribed: "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin (abbreviated to the Greek initials 'INBI' or the Latin initials 'INRI' in the Western tradition). This is replaced with the Christian inscription: "King of Glory" – below the knees of the angels. On the title-board is inscribed the initials 'IC XC', being the first and last letters of Christ's name in Greek. In addition, just above Christ's arms we see the inscription: 'NIKA', which in Greek means: "He conquers" or "He is victorious." Frequently, we see these last two inscriptions together: 'IC XC NIKA', meaning: "Jesus Christ is victorious" (over death and sin).



The Middle Bar - The Explanation:

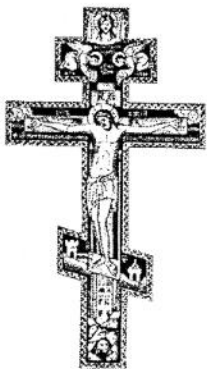
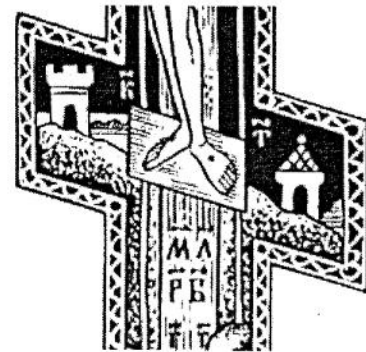
The middle bar is that on which the Lord's hands were nailed. On either top corner we see the depiction of the sun (left) and the moon (right), for "The sun hid its light, and the moon turned to blood." (Joel 2:31)



The inscription: "Son of God" is placed on both sides of Christ's head, and below His arms we read the inscription: "Before Thy Cross we bow down, O Master, and Thy holy Resurrection, we glorify". The halo of Christ is inscribed with three Greek letters meaning "The Being" or "He Who Is", to remind us that Christ is the same God Who identified Himself with those words to Moses in the Old Law.

The Bottom Bar - The Explanation:

The slanted bottom bar is the footrest. There is some question of whether it was actually on the Cross of Christ, but it is acknowledged to be a necessary attribute of the Cross, worthy of veneration and prophetically alluded to in the words [Let us] worship the footstool of His feet... (Ps. 98:5). In prayers for the Ninth Hour, the Church likens the Cross to a type of balance of righteousness: "Between two thieves Thy Cross did prove to be a balance of righteousness: wherefore one of them was dragged down to Hades by the weight of his blasphemy whereas the other was lightened of his transgressions unto the comprehension of theology. O Christ God, glory to Thee." The meaning of this prayer is as follows: the Cross of Christ stood for a scale of justice between the two thieves: for one of them sank in to hell, dragged down by his blasphemous words; and the other, the wise thief, ascended into heaven, because of his repentance. The church fathers attempted to render tangible the thought of the unfaithful thief going to hell for his blasphemy through the just judgment of God (the lower end of the bar), and of the wise thief going to heaven for his repentance and his praise of God (the upper end).



The Images - The Explanation:

On the Cross is our Savior, Jesus Christ. Note that He does not wear a crown of thorns, and that His feet are nailed with two nails. Behind the body of Christ, on either side, are a lance (which pierced Him) and a sponge (which was soaked with gall and offered to Christ to drink) on a pole made of reed or cane. On the body of Christ is depicted blood and water flowing forth from His side. Below the feet of Christ is four Slavonic letters meaning: "The place of the skull became Paradise". Hidden in a cave under the earth is 'the skull of Adam'. We are thus reminded that Adam our forefather lost Paradise through the tree from which he wrongly partook; Christ is the new Adam, bringing us Salvation and Paradise through the tree of the Cross. The city of Jerusalem is depicted in the background, for He was crucified outside the city walls.

RETURNING GOOD FOR EVIL

Fr. Richard Demetrius Andrews

Ever been treated poorly? Co-workers don't respect you? Boss criticizes too much? Spouse doesn't appreciate you? People slander you by telling rumors and falsehoods? Discriminated against because of your faith and beliefs?

St. Paul the Apostle endured almost all of these things and worse. He was imprisoned, physically abused and punished for proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This new Faith was directly at odds with the established pagan beliefs and rituals in Roman society. It challenged the man-made idols and silly beliefs in natural phenomena as manifestations of the divine. In today's Epistle Reading from the 10th Sunday of Matthew, 1 Corinthians 4:9-16, St. Paul identifies and names his new-found low-standing in society. He says that as apostles we are last, condemned to death, a spectacle (v.9), fools, weak, dishonored (v.10), reviled, persecuted (v.12), defamed, filth of the world, off-scouring of all things (v.13). Have you been made to feel like a fool, dishonored, defamed, and persecuted? What St. Paul experienced was so severe

that it caused physical consequences of hunger, thirst, being poorly clothed, beaten and homeless.

How do we respond to this negative behavior? Somewhat instinctively we often return the same. You say something bad about me, I will say something bad about you. You say something hurtful to me, I'll say something hurtful to you. We may even escalate the affair to make our point. You hit me, I will smash you. Sadly, we know this occurs between children on the playgrounds and in the hallways of our schools. Some kids never grow up and it continues in the boardrooms and cafeterias of companies and corporations. Tragically, it also happens in pews and social halls of churches. Some of what St. Paul wrote in his letter was referring to Christians in Corinth.

How should we respond to this inappropriate, abusive and corrosive behavior? St. Paul gives us simple instructions in verse 12-13. He says "being reviled, we bless; being persecuted we endure; and being defamed, we entreat."

* Reviled means "to be addressed or spoken of abusively". We respond by blessing which literally means "to speak with good words."

* Persecuted means "to be pursued and harassed with oppressive treatment." The Greek has a

connotation of "to be chased off or driven away." We respond with endurance which means "to bear with patience or tolerate."

* Defamed basically means "to be slandered; to have your good name, reputation attacked by uttering or publishing malicious or false accusations." We respond with entreaty which means "to make earnest request, petition or supplication." The Greek connotation means also "to pray."

In these instructions, St. Paul is teaching what Christ Himself taught in Matthew 5:43-44 "You

have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' (Lev.19:18; Dt.23:3-6) But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who persecute you, do good to those who hate you and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you." St. Peter reinforces the teaching by saying, "Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult but with blessing because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing" (1Peter 3:9). St. Paul also says, "Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong,

but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else" (1Thessalonians 5:15). And quoting Proverbs, "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head" (Pr.25:21-22). Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." (Romans 12:20-21).

In this last passage we understand that St. Paul's instructions on how to respond to revilement, persecution and defamation did not give implicit or tacit approval to this ungodly behavior. Rather, he shows how the cycle of inappropriate and disrespectful words and actions can be ended. If we return slander for slander, then the evil from the other person has overcome and infected us. Let's end the cycle of evil in our lives. Let's end it here in our parish community. Because people are free, because the devil is free to work in this world, we will never completely eliminate revilement, persecution and defamation. However, these horribly hurtful and divisive tools can be stopped at our doorstep, they can be turned away from our home. When you hear bad words about yourself or others, be patient, speak good words and remember to pray for all people.

