

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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

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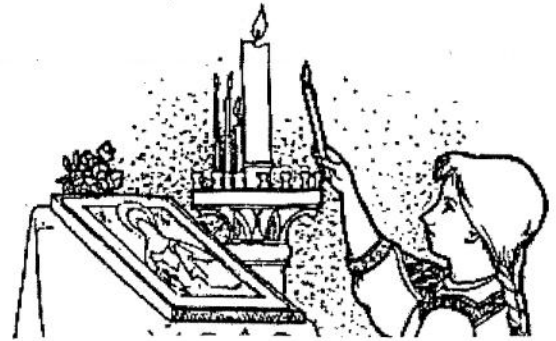
BULLETIN OF JANUARY 27, 2019

**2019 Blessing of Homes Season: January 7th thru February 28th
By Appointment**

SUNDAY/JANUARY 27

35th Sunday After Pentecost

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Church School Luncheon Presentation to Parish
"Souper Bowl of Caring" – 1 of 3 Sundays
(staple foods and/or \$ for local charity)



TUESDAY/JANUARY 29

7:00p.m. Vespers

WEDNESDAY/JANUARY 30

3 Hierarchs: Ss. Basil, Gregory and John Chrysostom

8:00a.m. Divine Liturgy

FRIDAY/FEBRUARY 1

7:00p.m. Vigil & Blessing of Candles

SATURDAY/FEBRUARY 2

MEETING OF THE LORD IN TEMPLE (One of "12 Great Feasts")

9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy & Blessing of Candles
5:30p.m. Vespers & Compline with Akathist
to St. Nicholas of Japan; Confessions

SUNDAY/FEBRUARY 3

36th Sunday After Pentecost

St. Nicholas of Japan (+1912)

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Scout Sunday; "Souper Bowl of Caring"

The Significance of Candles

We never hold a church service without candles, yet we use them not just to dispel night's gloom – we also hold our services in daylight – but in order to represent by the lighted candles, Christ, the Uncreated Light, without whom we would in broad daylight wander as if lost in darkness.

-Tertullian (2nd c)

Icon-lamps and candles represent the Eternal Light, and also the light which shines from the righteous. *–St. Sophronius of Jerusalem (7th c)*

The candles lit before the Icon of Christ signify that He is the True Light which enlightens every man that comes into the world. At the same time He is a Fire which engulfs and revives our souls and bodies. *–St. John of Kronstadt (1908)*

The candles we burn before the icons of the saints teach us that the saints are lamps burning for us and providing light for us by their holy lives. We honor them by light and show our ardent zeal and reverence and gratitude to them for their intercession on our behalf.

–St. John of Kronstadt (1908)

Offerings Week of January 20

Relics Candle: in memory of Ivanna; Michael, Justina, Rosalia, Pavel, Anastasia and Ivanna; for the health of Mark and Larissa.

Olive Oil: for the health of Amanda Sarah.

Wine: in honor of Matushka Maria of Gatchina and health and protection of Maria on Names Day; In memory of Jacob Anthony.

Flowers: in honor of the Theotokos, our great Protectress.

Offerings Week of January 27

Relics candle: in honor of St. John of San Francisco; in memory of Michael, Justina, Rosalie, Anastasia and Ivanna; for the health of Mark and in honor of the Theotokos.

Wine: in memory of Irina.

Flowers: for feast of the Meeting of the Lord.

Litya Breads: for the health of Katherine.

Parish Synodicon: Memory Eternal!

Jan. 27, 1937 Helen Popko

Jan. 27, 1972 Mary Sandago

Jan. 27, 1987 Alexander Kulina

Jan. 28, 1995 Olga Small

Jan. 29, 1974 Paul Monko

Jan. 29, 1988 John Macinko

Jan. 31, 1952 Jacob Michaelski

Feb. 02, 1940 Michael Petro

Feb. 02, 1949 Theodora Mihalick

Feb. 02, 1984 Natalie Kuntzevich

Feb. 02, 1985 Sonia Esposito

Feb. 02, 1994 Kalioppi Alexis

Coffee Hour Schedule

Jan. 27 Church School Luncheon

Feb. 03 Inga, Eka, Marina & Nona

Counters Schedule

Jan. 27 Larissa M. & Paulina N.

Feb. 03 Rebecca O. & Ekaterini M.

Ushers Schedule

Jan. 27 Edward S. & Kahka K.

Feb. 03 Timothy S. & Peter B.

Readers Schedule

Jan. 27 Daniel T. / Feb. 03 Austin K.

Scrip Fund-Raising Program

Is on-going. Speak with Pam Stone for cards.

Check On-Line Calendar on website

Jan. 30/Wed. Deadline for Reports for Annual Meeting

Feb. 02/Sat. Meeting of Lord/ Blessing of candles

Feb. 03/Sun. Scout Recognition Day

Feb. 03/Sun. Souper Bowl of Caring (2 of 3 Suns.)

Feb. 03/Sun. Annual Mtg. Reports Distributed

Feb. 10/Sun. Annual Parish Meeting 12:00p.m.

Feb. 13/20/27 Wed. Study Classes 7-8:30p.m.

Mar. 11/Mon. Great Lent Begins

Apr. 21/Sun. Western Easter

Apr. 28/Sun. Holy Pascha (Orthodox Easter)

June 1-2 Sat/Sun. Archbishop Michael Visitation

The Blessing of Homes Season for 2019

The season is from Jan. 7th thru Feb. 28th. Homes are blessed by appointment with Fr. James. You are requested to have your home blessed earlier rather than later in the season. You can make your appointment presently.

Inclement Weather Changes to Calendar

If it is necessary to cancel or change something on the parish schedule, this will be indicated through 1) the Parish E-Mail; 2) Friends of Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church Face Book; 3) and on the Parish Website – www.ssppoc.org

Apology for Cancellation of Services Last Sunday, January 20th

Your parish rector placed too much trust in the forecasters and their dire predictions; that never came to pass. In the future, cancellation decisions will be made in a much later time frame. Sorry!

Holy Water Available All Year

The large Fount stored in the coatroom has blessed water for your usage all year. Bring a vessel and take the waters home.

Appreciation Is Expressed to the Donors of the Newly-installed furnishings in the vestibule and the Ambo Carpet

May the Lord bless your kind generosity!

THE THREE HIERARCHS: SS. BASIL THE GREAT, GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN AND JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

Commemorated on January 30th / From the Prologue of Ochrid

Each of these saints have their own feast day. St. Basil the Great, January 1; St. Gregory the Theologian, January 25; and St. John Chrysostom, January 27. This combined feast day, January 30, was instituted in the eleventh century during the reign of Emperor Alexius Comnenus. At one time a debate arose among the people concerning who of the three is the greatest? Some extolled Basil because of his purity and courage; others extolled Gregory for his unequaled depth and lofty mind in theology; still others extolled Chrysostom because of his eloquence and clarity in expounding the Faith. Thus some were called Basilians, others Gregorgians, and the third were called Johannites. This debate was settled by Divine Providence to the benefit of the Church and to an even greater glory of the three saints. Bishop John of Euchaita (June 14) had a vision in a dream: At first, all three of these saints appeared to him separately in great glory and indescribable beauty, and after that all three appeared together. They said to him, "As you see, we are one in God and there is nothing contradictory in us; neither is there a first or a second among us." The saints also advised Bishop John that he write a common service for them and to order a common feast day of celebration. Following this wonderful vision, the debate was settled in this manner: January 30 would be designated as the common feast of these three hierarchs. The Greeks consider this feast not only an ecclesiastical feast but their greatest national school holiday.

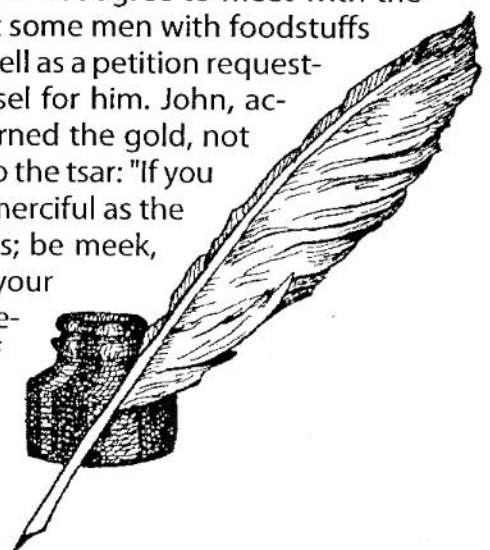


A LETTER TO THE KING

From the Prologue of Ochrid

Here is an example of how emperors seek counsel from the saints and how the saints avoid vanity and riches and how they counsel emperors. The Orthodox Bulgarian Tsar Peter set off with his retinue toward the Rila mountain driven by the insatiable desire to see St. John of Rila and to benefit from his instruction. The tsar sent men ahead to inform the saint of his arrival, but the saint did not agree to meet with the tsar. The saddened tsar again sent some men with foodstuffs and an ample amount of gold as well as a petition requesting the saint to write some counsel for him. John, accepted the edible things but returned the gold, not even wanting to touch it, replied to the tsar: "If you desire the heavenly kingdom, be merciful as the

heavenly Father. Do not trust in injustice and do not be covetous; be meek, quiet and be accessible to everyone. Do not accept praises from your noblemen. Let your purple robe radiate with virtues. May the remembrance of death never depart from your soul. Humble yourself before the feet of Mother Church; bow your head before her prime-hierarchs so that the King of kings, seeing your sincerity, reward you with goodness such as never entered into the heart of man." Receiving that letter, the tsar kissed it, and after that read it frequently.



THE MEETING OF THE LORD IN THE TEMPLE

Celebrated February 2nd – From the Prologue of Ochrid



The fortieth day after His birth, the All-Holy Virgin brought her Divine Son into the Temple of Jerusalem, in accordance with the Law, to dedicate Him to God and to purify herself. "Consecrate to me every first-born that opens the womb among the Israelites both of man and beast, for it belongs to me" (Exodus 13:2). "Tell the Israelites: when a woman has conceived and gives birth to a boy, she shall be unclean for seven days, with the same uncleanness as at her menstrual period. On the eighth day, the flesh of the boy's foreskin shall be circumcised, and then she shall spend thirty-three days more in becoming purified of her blood; she shall not touch anything sacred nor enter the sanctuary till the days of her purification are fulfilled. If she gives birth to a girl, for fourteen days she shall be as unclean as at her menstruation, after which she shall spend sixty-six days in becoming purified of her blood. When the days of her purification for a son or for a daughter are fulfilled, she shall bring to the priest at the entrance of the meeting tent a yearling lamb for a holocaust and a pigeon or a turtledove for a sin offering. The priest shall offer them up before the Lord to make atonement for her, and thus she will be clean again after her flow of blood. Such is the law for the woman who gives birth to a boy or a girl child" (Leviticus 12:2-7). Even though neither the one nor the other was necessary, nevertheless the Lawgiver did not, in anyway, want to transgress His own Law whom He had given through Moses, His servant and prophet. At that time, the high-priest Zaccharias, the father of John the Forerunner [Precursor], was on duty in the Temple["serving as a priest before God in the order of his division" St. Luke 1:8]. Zaccharias placed the Virgin, not in the temple area reserved for women but rather in the area reserved for virgins. On this occasion, two unusual persons appeared in the Temple: the Elder Simeon and Anna, the daughter of Phanuel. The righteous Simeon took the Messiah in his arms and said: " Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." (St. Luke 2: 29-32). Simeon also spoke the following words about the Christ-child: "Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel" (St. Luke 2:34). Then Anna, who from her youth served God in the Temple by fasting and prayers, recognized the Messiah and glorified God and proclaimed to the inhabitants of Jerusalem about the coming of the long-awaited One.

Troparion – tone 1

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos full of grace! From you shone the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, Enlightening those who sat in darkness! Rejoice and be glad O righteous elder, you accepted in your arms the Redeemer of our souls, Who grants us the resurrection!

Kontakion – tone 1

By Thy Nativity Thou didst sanctify the Virgin's womb, and didst bless Simeon's hands, O Christ God. Now Thou hast come and save us through love, grant peace to all Orthodox Christians, O only Lover of men!

The Pharisees present in the Temple, who having seen and heard all, became angry with Zacharias because he placed the Virgin Mary in the area reserved for virgins and reported this to King Herod. Convinced that this is the new king about whom the Magi from the east spoke, Herod immediately sent his soldiers to kill Jesus. In the meantime the Holy Family had already left the city and set out for Egypt under the guidance of an angel of God. The Feast of the Meeting of our Lord in the Temple was celebrated from earliest times but the solemn celebration of this day was established in 544 AD during the reign of Emperor Justinian.

Concerning the Virgin Birth

According to the Law, "Every male child that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord." Only with Christ did this literally occur. He Himself opened the womb of the Virgin at birth, while all other wombs which have born a child have first been opened by a man.



- Blessed Theophylact

CANDLES – SMALL PIECES OF LIGHT

By Natalie Ashanin

Lighting Candles

Light. Bright, beautiful light was created by God before all other things. It was only after He created light that He looked at His creation and saw that it was good. Without light we cannot see and we cannot do very much. Light is God's first and greatest gift, for with it we can see all the other beautiful things He has given to us.

A candle is a small piece of light. Long ago candles and oil lamps were the only ways people could have light at night. They would bring these bits of light to the first Christian gatherings in catacombs and other secret places so they could see what was taking place and to bring joy and warmth into the meeting. Soon the candles became a way of praying, of giving something back to God.

Candles are used in all Orthodox churches. When we enter the church, we stop to buy a candle. It's our sacrifice. In olden days, people made their own candles. Some had a bees hive at home. Candles were made from pure wax, then, without any mixtures. Bees were thought of almost like saints, because of their purity.

When we light the candle before an icon and say a prayer for someone; we tell God that we are praying for that person and as long as our candle burns our prayer will be there before God. We say to our

friends who are sick or troubled that we will light a candle for them. We light candles for someone who has died. Sometimes we light a candle to say "thank you" to God. In some churches people kiss the candle before lighting it.



Candlelight In The Home

In many Orthodox homes, especially Russian and Ukrainian ones, it is the custom to have a "beautiful corner" where the family icons are placed with a candle or an oil lamp burning before them. This light is a reminder that the family's prayers are going before God. It reminds them of Christ and the saints who watch over them. The Serbian people



honor the family's patron saint with a special celebration called a Slava during which they burn a large candle called the "Slava Candle". It is said that as long as the candle burns the saint will be at the celebration.

Candles are especially important during holidays for Carpatho Russians, Bulgarians and Albanians. At Christmas time, it is the custom to light a special decorated candle or place it in a round loaf of bread for the feast day meal. Among the Romanians, groups of children go from house to house on Christmas eve, singing carols and carrying a beautifully decorated lantern in the shape of a star, to recall the Bethlehem star that showed the Wise Men where the Christ Child was lying.

Those who have converted to Holy Orthodoxy have a rich treasury of customs to choose from to brighten their home celebrations.

Candle Light During Services

Candles are an important part of many services. They are used during the service for a funeral, a baptism, wedding, and holy unction. When a bishop serves, he uses two candleholders to bless the faithful at the Divine Liturgy. Candles play an important part in the services of Holy Week and Pascha. During the midnight Paschal Matins, the priest calls to the people to "Come, take the light that is never overtaken by night and glorify Christ Who is Risen from the dead." Altar servers carry candles during the Little Entrance and for the reading of the Holy Gospel, to represent the Light which shines upon the world.



Light In Our Life

Even today when we have electric lights we do not want to give up praying with those small bits of living light. God's first creation. Candles are pictures of our prayer to God. But they also stand for us. They remind us that our souls should burn with love for God and our neighbor, for we are called to be living candles. Christ says, "You are like a light to the world. You are like a candle in a dark room. Don't hide your light. Let your light shine for everyone to see!" When we see so many candles everywhere, we know that Christ is everywhere in the whole church, our homes, and He is in us, too.

**CONCERNING MEMBERSHIP IN AA (ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS)
AND ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS***

- by Bishop Kallistos (Ware)

Can an Orthodox Christian, while still remaining fully loyal to the Church, at the same time turn for help to AA? Should we not put rather our trust in the Sacraments of Confession, Anointing with Oil and Holy Communion, and in the counsel and prayers of our spiritual father? Why seek help elsewhere? Does this signify a lack of faith?



Membership in AA in no way contradicts or undermines membership in the Church. Quite simply, the two are not in competition; for AA makes no claim to be a church or a religion. The Twelve Steps will never replace the Gospels as the call of Christ. The meetings of the AA are not in any sense a substitute for participation in the sacramental worship of the Church.

Membership in AA will not make us less Orthodox, or less Catholics, or less whatever else we are. What AA can do – what, indeed it has actually done for innumerable believing Christians – is to enable them to live out their faith and to experience the power of the Sacraments in a way that they had not otherwise found possible. For again and again this has been the experience of the many thousands, if not millions, who have turned to AA: it works. Its distinctive blend of spirituality and practicality has proved remarkably successful in the contemporary world. But the rules of AA, while simple, are certainly not easy.

DON'T BE IN DENIAL, GO TO THE MEETINGS*

by Fr. Meletios Webber

One of the forms of denial I have come across on a number of occasions is that Orthodox Christians with a drinking problem try to avoid going to AA on the grounds that AA is not Orthodox. I would encourage such people to go to the meetings anyway. They will find that they are able to take their Orthodoxy with them (to the extent that they need to), just as others take their own religious traditions with them. Indeed, the richer the diversity in an AA group, the more the group is likely to be able to help other newcomers. Remember, AA is not a church, and AA is not a religion. The focus of every single meeting is sobriety, and that is what you need to go to find. If there is anything in the meeting which you really find offensive from an Orthodox standpoint, discuss it with your parish priest. If you are still resisting AA because it is not Orthodox, you need to consider whether this is not perhaps an excuse.

* Taken from the book, *Steps of Transformation* by Fr. Meletios Webber. This book, printed by Conciliar Press (2003) “presents” says Fr. Thomas Hopko, “the vision and practice of the Twelve Step programs for dealing with addictions, particularly alcoholism. Fr. Meletios relates the Steps to Orthodox Christian spirituality, with clarity and conviction, and appealing personal engagement. Here is a book which addicts and their friends are sure to treasure. It is true, deep, pure, rich and highly rewarding.”