

## **SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH**

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

Diocese of NY-NJ: [www.nynjoca.org](http://www.nynjoca.org)

***BULLETIN OF JUNE 2, 2019***

***CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!***

### **SUNDAY/JUNE 2**

#### **6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Pascha**

9:00a.m. Entrance into Church of Archbishop Michael with Vesting and Hours

9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy; followed by Festal Meal with Archbishop

### **TUESDAY/JUNE 4**

7:00p.m. Paschal Matins

### **WEDNESDAY/JUNE 5**

#### **Leave-Taking of Pascha**

8:00a.m. Divine Liturgy

7:00p.m. Vigil

### **THURSDAY/JUNE 6**

#### **ASCENSION OF OUR LORD**

(One of "the 12 Great Feasts")

9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

### **SATURDAY/JUNE 8**

#### **St. John of Kronstadt**

9:30a.m. Akathist to St. John; Confessions

5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

### **SUNDAY/JUNE 9**

#### **7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Pascha**

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy  
Recognition of 2019 Graduates; Coffee Hr.

1200 to 2:00p.m. Open Doors of Church

6:30p.m. Compline with Akathist to

**Martyrs of China (June 10)**



### **Offerings Week of June 2**

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

Olive Oil: in memory of Sarchisian and Bocai families; for the health of Christine & John (anniversary); for the health of Nicholas (birthday).

Wine: in memory of Wasyl Bondarenko

Flowers: for the feast of the Ascension.

Litya Breads: for the health of Ekaterina.

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

June 02, 1929 John Senko

June 02, 1951 Wasyl Bondarenko

June 02, 2017 Xenia Bodenchuk

June 03, 1952 Michael Tacak

June 03, 1985 Anna Susko

June 05, 1953 Eva Hnatuk

June 06, 1938 Eutyches Gumenuk

June 06, 1972 Charels Fetchko Jr.

June 07, 2004 Helen Kulina

June 07, 2009 Fannie Huzinec

June 08, 1976 Nadezhda Soroka

### **Coffee Hour Schedule**

June 09 Sokol, Nasledysheva, Staina  
& Sarchisian

June 16 Chirnoaga, Moldoveanu,  
Vajda & Sue

### **Counters Schedule**

June 09 Ciprian C. & Jill P.

June 16 Irina S. & Lisa K.

### **Ushers Schedule**

June 09 Jerome S. & Adrian M.

June 16 Dennis F. & Robert E.

### **Reader's Schedule**

June 09 Austin K. / June 16 Ciprian C.

### **Church Open Doors Ministry 12:00-2:00p.m. on Sundays of June**

June 09/June 16/June 23/June 30

Weather permitting, we keep the doors of the church open with a sign outside, for visitors to take a look inside. Can you give 2 hours to monitor the doors? Sign-up on vestibule stand.

### **Check On-Line Calendar on website**

June 8/Sat. Liturgical Music Workshop in Rahway from 9:30 to 3:00p.m. Pre-registration required (see posted flyer with registration forms)

June 15/Sat. Memorial Saturday: 9:30a.m. General Memorial Service at cemetery

June 16/Sun. Feast of Pentecost

June 19/21 Fast Free Wed. & Fri. Enjoy!

June 24/Mon. Feast Nativity of the Baptist

June 24/Mon. Ss. Peter & Paul Lent (5 days)

June 29/Sat. Feast of Ss. Peter & Paul

### **Study Classes June 12, 19 & 26, Wednesdays 7-8:30p.m.**

June 12: The Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ

June 19: The Spirit in the Church & Mysteries

June 26: The Spirit in Human Persons & World

An examination on the Role of the Holy Spirit, to coincide with the Festival of Pentecost.

### **Vacation Planning – Making A List**

- Location of Orthodox Church to attend on the Sunday(s) I will be away.
- Give some thought to visiting Orthodox Churches or Monasteries on your vacation, they may be on the way to where you are vacationing.
- If you are prepared to receive Holy Communion in a church you are visiting, you must communicate with the priest of that church before the Sunday you will be there. It is improper to just come up to the chalice, without the priest knowing in advance, who you are, what parish you belong to and when did you last go to Confession.
- On vacations, God is still with us; we should be sure we are still with Him; as exemplified in our conduct, speech and sense of purpose.
- Pack an icon, prayer book, bible.
- Fasting days and Ss. Peter & Paul Lent (June 24-28) and Dormition Lent (Aug. 1-14) are observed, even on vacation. Plan accordingly.
- Have your parish offering envelope given in advance for the Sunday(s) you will not be here.



## THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD INTO HEAVEN

When the day of the Jewish Pentecost drew near, the disciples of Christ returned from Galilee to Jerusalem. On the fortieth day after the resurrection of Jesus Christ they were all together in one house. Jesus Christ appeared to them and spoke with them saying, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all creation. He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs shall accompany those who believe: in My name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover."

Then the Savior said to the disciples that soon the Holy Spirit would come upon them, and until that time He charged them not to depart from Jerusalem. He said, "I send the promise of My Father upon you; but stay in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high; for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

Conversing with the disciples, the Savior led them out of the city as far as Bethany, to the Mount of Olives. The disciples, overjoyed with the words of the Savior, surrounded Him and started to ask, "Lord will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" The Savior said to them, "It is not for you to know the times or seasons which the Father has fixed by His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."

When He had said this, Jesus Christ lifted up His hands and blessed His disciples. While He blessed them, He parted from them and He was lifted up to Heaven, and soon a cloud took Him out of their sight. Thus our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ ascended in His physical body to Heaven and sat down at the right Hand of God the Father. His human soul and body took on the indivisible

glory with His divinity. In His divinity, He always is and will be in Heaven and everywhere.

The disciples worshipped the ascended Lord and for a long time continued to stand and gaze into Heaven after Him. Then two angels in white robes appeared before them and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into Heaven? This Jesus, Who was taken up from you into Heaven, will come to earth in the same way (that is, in the flesh), as you saw Him go into heaven." After this the disciples of Christ returned to Jerusalem with great joy and stayed there together, awaiting the descent of the Holy Spirit. All of them, together in soul, spent the time in prayer and were continually in the Temple of God, praising and thanking God. With them were several women and Mary, the Most-holy Mother of the Lord Jesus Christ, with their relatives. In those days the apostles, prayerfully, by casting lots, chose from among the disciples of Christ the twelfth apostle, Matthias, to take the place of Judas the betrayer, who perished.

Ascended into Heaven, Jesus Christ, according to His own promise, invisibly always comes to earth among those who believe in Him and will come again to earth in visible form to judge the living and the dead, who will then rise from the dead. After this will begin the life of the next age, another, eternal life which for true believers and pious people will be completely blessed, but for disbelievers and sinners will be a time of great torment.

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### Troparion

*Thou hast ascended in glory, O Christ our God, granting joy to Thy disciples by the promise of the Holy Spirit. Through the blessing they were assured that Thou art the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world!*

### Kontakion

*When Thou didst fulfill the dispensation for our sake and unite earth to heaven, Thou didst ascend in glory, O Christ our God, not being parted from those who love Thee, but remaining with them and crying, "I am with you and no one will be against you!"*

## ON DEVELOPING THE HEART

By Saint Theophan the Recluse

Developing the heart means developing within it a taste for things holy, divine, and spiritual, so that when it finds itself amidst such things it would feel as though it were in its element. Finding them sweet and blessed, it would be indifferent to all else, with no taste for anything else; and even more -- it would find anything else revolting. All of man's spiritual activity centers in the heart. The truths are impressed in it, and good dispositions are rooted into it. But its main work is developing a taste for the spiritual, as we have shown. When the mind sees the whole spiritual world and its different components, various good beginnings ripen in the will. The heart, under their influence, should taste sweetness in all of this and radiate warmth. This delight in the spiritual is the first sign of the regeneration of a soul deadened by sin. Therefore the heart's development is a very important point even in the early stages. The work directed at it is all of our Church services in all forms - common and personal, at home and in church -- and it is mainly achieved through the spirit of prayer moving within it. Church services, that is, all the daily services, together with the entire arrange-

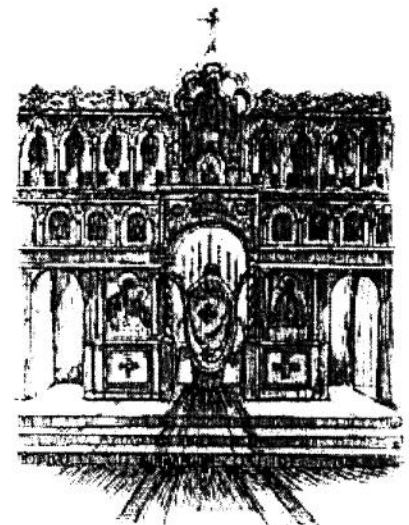


ment of the church's icons, candles, censuring, singing, chanting, movements of the clergy, as well as the services for various needs; then services in the home, also using ecclesiastical objects such as sanctified icons, holy oil, candles, holy water, the Cross, and incense -- all of these holy things together acting upon all the senses -- sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste -- are the "cloths that wipe clean" the senses of a deadened soul. They are the strongest and the only reliable way to do it. The soul becomes deadened by the spirit of the world, and possessed by sin that lives in the world. The entire structure of our Church services, with their tone, meaning, power of faith, and especially the grace concealed within them, have an invincible power to drive away the spirit of the world. In freeing the soul from the world's onerous influence, it allows the soul to breathe freely and to taste the sweetness of spiritual freedom. Walking into church we walk into a completely different world, are influenced by it, and change according to it. The same thing happens when we surround ourselves with holy objects. Frequent impressions of the spiritual world more effectively penetrate within and more quickly bring about a transformation of the heart.

### INVISIBLE PRIEST

*A comment reported on the Portland, Maine, TV station, Channel 6:*

"We could take a cue from Orthodoxy, whose priests stand with their backs to their congregation, leading a liturgy that is neither clever nor impassioned, but simply beautiful, like stone smoothed by centuries of rhythmic tides. It's an austere ritual, in the sense of - there's nothing new here; it's sublime, in the sense of - creating a clearer view into Heaven. The priest can be any priest. Who he is, what he looks like, how he speaks, and what he thinks matter little. He hasn't written the service that he officiates. It isn't about him or his prowess. He's an interchangeable functionary draped in brocaded robes, obscured by incense, and, as such, never points to himself, a flawed human, pointing ever and only to the Perfection of the Mysterious Divine. That is the role of every priest or preacher - invisibility, while making God seen."



## When Church Is Optional, You Set up Your Kids to Fail

*The following article is written by a Baptist Minister in the Pacific Northwest. Although it reflects certain theological understandings questionable from an Orthodox Christian view; the core of the article is sound and expresses the concerns of many clergy. The common disregard for the holiness of Sunday is rampant in our society. Parents are complicit in this spiritual downfall and have caved in to secular society rather than being faithful to the teachings of the Christian Church.*

"Hey Pastor, I just wanted to let you know that we won't be at church for the next three months because my girl is playing ball and they have games on Sunday and practices throughout the week."

My heart sank into my stomach. I wouldn't call it shock, because I had heard this statement, or at least something like this, dozens of times from different parents over the years. Sports, plays, bands, fundraisers, on and on went the list of programs and distractions that would inevitably take the family out of church for a season. "Well, let me encourage you to reconsider that", I began.

But there was no talking him down. I explained in a hushed tone the importance of his role as a father to set the standard for his children. I talked about the importance of putting the Lord first. I talked about the importance of \*GULP\* attending the local church (Heb 13:17). But, standing before me was a father and husband who, instead of leading his family in holiness was choosing to inflict them with spiritual wounds.

"Well they are saved, so what else is there?" he said, jovially.

I felt my face go flush. "What else is there?" I asked. "Life! The Gospel is for all of life; not just a 'get-out-of-hell-free' card. Being here as a family will do far more for them in the long run than this sport. Trust me."

He snapped back, this time with a more serious tone, "Well, they [his kids] need to learn teamwork and stuff." We exchanged a few more words and then he walked out – his children and wife in tow. We saw the kids at a couple more youth events and then never again.

Pastorally I still ache thinking about that exchange and others like it. As a believer who considers the gathering of the saints as a commanded, valuable, necessary privilege of grace; I had always struggled with these talks – I suppose I still do. I am stupefied at how readily professing believers throw God on the backburner – especially when the heart of their children is on the line.

Where did we go wrong? How can we sing on Sunday morning that Jesus is my "all-in-all" and then decide to sacrifice the glorious, life-giving truths of the Gospel on the bloody altar of hobbies? At what point did so many professing Christians parents exchange the instruction, "keep your eyes on Jesus" for "Keep your eyes on the ball"?

*Oh great, another blog post about the evils of hobbies...* I should say this, there is nothing inherently wrong with sports or any other kind of hobby, so long as it doesn't violate God's law. I am a huge Phillies baseball fan and an avid hunter (If you didn't dislike me up to this point – you probably do now).

I wrestled with the tensions between hobbies and church for years. Swinging from one end of the pendulum – *it doesn't matter*, to the other – *all hobbies are evil and pull people away from God*. I would like to think today, through studying God's Word, I now have a more biblical understanding.

I do not believe that skipping out on the Lord's Day services is ever appropriate unless divinely organized (sickness, hospitalization, etc.) Sunday is a special day for God's people and ought not be treated like a second Saturday. This means that hobbies should fall second to the things of God. This thought is certainly counter-cultural. My unsaved family thinks I'm crazy, because every hunting season I come down out of the mountains with my wife and daughters, shower at a truck stop, and attend the service at a small rural church in the nearest town – effectively "wasting" the entire day... and I love it every time. Admittedly, there are times when I am driving down the mountain pass and thoughts of the big muley bucks I'm missing out on trot through my mind, but then the truth hits me, "Glorious are you [God], more majestic than the mountains full of prey" (Ps 76:4). Hobbies and convenience are no reason to disobey clear commands (Heb 10:25) – not even hunting season. I don't ever want my girls thinking that we vacation from God.

I believe that the problem is not the sport or hobby itself – the problem is often the forgetfulness of the parents.

## **Parents Have Forgotten Who Is Responsible for Their Kid's Spiritual Well-Being.**

Children are a heritage and a blessing from the Lord (Ps 127:3-5), and as gifts from the Lord they are to be handled and cared for as precious beings made in His image (Gen 1:27). It is the parents that are commanded in scripture to discipline their children (Prov 25:19) and teach them what they are to know about God (Prov 22:6, Duet 6:7). It is the parent's responsibility to introduce their child to the scriptures, "...which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." (2 Tim 3:14-17). Oddly, in all of the passages we read about raising children, nowhere are these responsibilities shifted to the church. If I must give an account for my family, then I must take these responsibilities seriously.

## **Parents Have Forgotten the Purpose of Youth Ministry.**

We can argue the validity of youth ministry all day, but most of us should at least agree, as mentioned above, youth group is not an acceptable substitute for Godly living and training at home. I am the first to recognize that there are a lot of bad youth programs out there. However, youth ministry, in its purest form is to come along side parents in helping to equip, meet, and reinforce the spiritual needs and habits of their children. Unfortunately, instead of being used as a helpful tool, youth ministry is often used as a substitute spiritual guide. It is a sad day when spiritual care of kids is pawned off onto the church, who having them for an hour or two each week is supposed to make up for the lack of spiritual vitality and leadership at home. Is it any wonder that kids get "board" and fall away? It is even less of a wonder that upon the child falling away the blame is often placed directly on the lap of the church. Imagine if parents took to regularly praying with, studying with, and investing spiritually into their kids!

## **Parents Have Forgotten the Purpose of the Local Church Gathering.**

When parents choose to enroll their children in programs that will directly violate the clear commands of Hebrews 10:25, it is a sign that they have forgotten the purpose of the local gathering. It's easy to say "\_\_\_\_\_ " is more fun than church, the kids enjoy it more; forgetting, of course, that the purpose of the church is not to entertain you! Gathering together fulfills a much greater purpose than simply something to do on Sunday morning (as long as nothing else is going on.) Mark Dever summarizes the purpose of the church gathering in this way: "The proper ends for a local congregation's life and actions are the worship of God, the edification of the church, and the evangelization of the world. These three purposes in turn serve the glory of God." (A Theology for the Church, p. 809)

## **Parents Have Forgotten Their Greater Affection**

Most Christians profess that they love God. 1 John 4:19 reminds us that, "we love because he first loved us." In fact, love for God and love for others is the most prominent mark of believers (John 13:15). Jesus says in John 14:5, "If you love me, keep my commandments." Simply put, the Christians life is marked by love.

Consider the fact that Jesus lived, died and rose on your behalf. He died as the propitiation for your sins; satisfying the divine wrath of the Father that would have justly fell on you (1 Jn 2:2), had His mercy not spared you. You who were once dead in your trespasses and sins have been made alive (Eph 2:1). When you were born again, Christ took out that old stone heart and replaced it with a heart of flesh that would worship, honor, communion with, and glorify Him (Ez 11:19). You were bought with a price, believer, and you are no longer your own (1 Cor 6:20). Jesus and His commands are EVERYTHING to the believer and it is that love and passion for Jesus that we should be demonstrating and passing down to our children. Friend, as much as I like baseball and hunting – neither of those have done what Jesus has done for me.

When I pull my children away from the things of God for the sake of hobbies, I am not loving God and I am not loving them. I am programming them to be satisfied with lesser affections – I am programming them to fail.

## **Conclusion**

Parents, we need to stop "programming" our children to fail in spiritual things by substituting spiritual things with an excess of programs (say that 10X fast), and get back to reminding ourselves of our responsibilities and showing our children that true joy is found in the presence of King Jesus (Ps 16:11).