

# Quo Vadis

The monthly newsletter of Saints Peter & Paul Orthodox Catholic Church of Bayonne, N.J.  
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“**Quo Vadis?**” is a Latin phrase meaning “Where are you going?” It refers to a Christian tradition regarding St. Peter. According to the apocryphal *Acts of Peter*, Peter is fleeing from likely crucifixion in Rome, and along the road outside the city, he encounters the risen Jesus. Peter asks Jesus “Quo vadis?” Jesus replies “Romam vado iterum crucifigi” (“I am going to Rome to be crucified again”). St. Peter thereby gains the fortitude to return to the city, to eventually be martyred by being crucified upside-down. The phrase also occurs a few times in the Latin *Vulgate* translation of the *Holy Bible*, notably in John 13:36 when Peter asks Jesus the same question, to which He responds, “Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me.” The Church of Domine Quo Vadis in Rome is built where, according to tradition, the meeting between St. Peter and the risen Jesus Christ took place.

This parish newsletter is called **Quo Vadis** for a reason: to ask the question of where *you* are going in life. Is your life’s journey leading you towards Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? St. Peter, at a pivotal moment in his life, when he understandably felt like running away, found the courage to go where Jesus Christ would have him go. Where are *you* going? Will *you* follow Jesus Christ?

## Rector’s Message

Forty days after the Bright and Holy Day of Pascha, we celebrate the Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ into Heaven. Holy Scripture tells of this event at the conclusion of the Gospel according to St. Luke, “And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He departed from them, and was carried up into Heaven” (Luke 24:51). The Gospel according to St. Mark also tells us, “And the Lord Jesus, after He had spoken to them, was taken up into Heaven, and sits on the right hand of God” (Mark 16:19). And, finally, the Acts of the Apostles, “While they looked on, He was raised up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they were beholding Him going up to Heaven, behold two men stood by them in white garments. Who also said, ‘Ye men of Galilee, why stand you looking up to Heaven? This Jesus Who was taken from you into Heaven, shall so come, as you have seen Him going into Heaven’” (Acts 1:9-11).

Our Lord Jesus Christ ascended body and soul into Heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father. This truth we confess in the Creed, in faithfulness to the Scriptures, and it is universally upheld by the Church Fathers. The Biblical expression “to sit at the right hand of God” goes back to Psalm 109, and is often used in the Epistles of the Apostles (Romans 8:34, Ephesians 1:20, Colossians 3:1, Hebrews 1:3, 8:1, 10:12, 12:2, and 1 Peter 3:22), asserts that Christ elevated His humanity over all the angels, and takes up a place of honor and participates in the honor and glory of God. This interpretation is also that of the Fathers, and is summarized by St. John of Damascus, in his *Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, IV, 2. The Ascension thus points to the final elevation of Christ’s human nature into the condition of divine glory.

From the perspective of our salvation, the Ascension is the crowning conclusion of the work of redemption. According to the general teaching of the Church, the souls of the righteous departed were also moved with the Savior into the glory of Heaven, “Ascending on high, He led captivity captive; He gave gifts to men. Now that He ascended, what is it, but because He also descended first into the lowest parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended above all the heavens that He might fill all things”

(Ephesians 4:8-10). In Heaven He prepares a place for His own (John 14:2). And He intercedes for them (Hebrews 7:25), “always living to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 9:24, Romans 8:34, 1 John 2:1), and sends them His gifts of grace, especially the Holy Spirit (John 14:16, 16:7).

Moreover, Christ’s Ascension is the archetype and the pledge of our ascension into Heaven. So says the Holy Scripture, “And hath raised us up together and hath made us to sit together in the heavenly places, through Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:6). This is likewise the consensus of the Church Fathers, such as St. John Chrysostom, St. Theophylactus, and Venerable Bede. Human nature is honored on account of Christ’s ascension, and through it He manifests the rewards that He promised us. St. John Chrysostom puts it thusly, “But you will say, ‘How does this concern me?’ Because thou also shalt be taken up in like manner into the clouds. For thy body is of like nature to His body, therefore shall thy body be so light, that it can pass through the air. For as is the head, so also is the body; as the beginning, so also the end. See then how thou art honored by this beginning. Man was the lowest part of the rational creation, but the feet have been made the head, being lifted up aloft into the royal throne of their head.”

At the end of the world Christ shall come again with great power and glory to judge the world (Matthew 24:30), and so as He departed, so shall He return. When the Lord ascended into Heaven, He manifested His divine power and glory, and so the disciples worshipped Him (Luke 24:52). Great was their joy, “for they rejoice that their God and Lord, after the triumph of His resurrection had also passed into the heavens” (quoted from Venerable Bede).

Let us also, like the Holy Apostles, take great joy in Our Lord’s Ascension, and emulate their worshipping of Him, continually praising and blessing God. Let us rejoice in the place of honor that He bestowed on our nature, and the promise of future life in the glory of God that it manifested before us. Let us affirm, together with the Church Fathers, that Christ’s Ascension is the pledge of the reward that He promised us; that is, our ascension into Heaven. Let us be glad, for Christ has indeed prepared a place for us in Heaven, that He might fill all things with His grace, in the Holy Spirit.

## **Parish Council President’s Message**

Dear parishioners and friends,

Christ is Risen! Indeed, He is Risen! Together with Fr. Sophrony and the Parish Council, I thank you for your generous support of the church by your Easter and Easter Flowers donations. May Our Risen Lord Jesus Christ bless all of you and grant you the gift of His risen life! I hope that everyone had a truly blessed Pascha!

I would also like to take this opportunity to wish every mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and godmother a Happy Mother’s Day on May 14<sup>th</sup> and I hope that everyone is looking forward to our Spaghetti and Meatball Dinner fundraiser, which is scheduled for Pentecost Sunday, June 4, 2017. Ticket sales, at \$20 per person, have begun and I would just like to point out that not only is this a fairly modest price for a three course dinner with wine, but it will also benefit the church. This is a great fundraiser for our church and a great opportunity for us to join in fellowship. Bring a friend and enjoy the homemade food this year.

Yours in Christ,  
Reader Stephen Wasilewski

## Excerpt from the Church Fathers

It is only right, with all the powers of our heart and mind, to praise You Father and Your Only-Begotten Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ. Dear Father, by Thy wondrous condescension of Loving-Kindness toward us, Your servants, You gave up Your Son. Dear Jesus You paid the debt of Adam for us to the Eternal Father by Your Blood poured forth in Loving-Kindness. You cleared away the darkness of sin by Your magnificent and radiant Resurrection. You broke the bonds of death and rose from the grave as a Conqueror. You reconciled Heaven and earth. Our life had no hope of Eternal Happiness before You redeemed us. Your Resurrection has washed away our sins, restored our innocence and brought us joy. How inestimable is the tenderness of Your Love! We pray You, Lord, to preserve Your servants in the peaceful enjoyment of this Easter happiness. We ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord, Who lives and reigns with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen. – *St. Gregory the Great, Pope of Rome*

When Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and did not find the Lord's body, she thought it had been taken away and so informed the disciples. After they came and saw the tomb, they too believed what Mary had told them. The text then says: "The disciples went back home," and it adds: "but Mary wept and remained standing outside the tomb." We should reflect on Mary's attitude and the great love she felt for Christ; for though the disciples had left the tomb, she remained. She was still seeking the one she had not found, and while she sought she wept; burning with the fire of love, she longed for him who she thought had been taken away. And so it happened that the woman who stayed behind to seek Christ was the only one to see him. For perseverance is essential to any good deed, as the voice of truth tell us: "Whoever perseveres to the end will be saved." – *St. Gregory the Great, Pope of Rome*

## Lives of the Saints

*St. Bertha, Queen of Kent – commemorated on May 1<sup>st</sup>*

St. Bertha (c. 565 - c. 601) was a Frankish princess, the daughter of King Charibert I of Paris and his wife Ingoberga, granddaughter of the reigning King Chlothar I and great-granddaughter of Clovis I and St. Clotilda. Her father died in 567, her mother in 589. Bertha had been raised near Tours. Her marriage to the pagan King Æthelbert of Kent was conditioned on her being allowed to practice her religion. She brought her chaplain, Liudhard, with her to England. Bertha restored a Christian church in Canterbury, which dated from Roman times, dedicating it to St. Martin of Tours. It was the private chapel of Queen Bertha before St. Augustine of Canterbury arrived from Rome. The present St Martin's at Canterbury continues in the same building as the oldest church in the English-speaking world and is part of the Canterbury World Heritage site.

St. Augustine of Canterbury, whose Gregorian mission was sent by Pope Gregory the Great to preach the Gospel in England in 596, owed much of his favorable reception to the influence of Bertha. Without her support, monastic settlements and the cathedral would likely have developed elsewhere. In 601, Pope Gregory the Great addressed a letter to Bertha, in which he complimented her highly on her faith and knowledge of letters. Anglo-Saxon records indicate that St. Bertha had two children: Eadbald of Kent and Æthelburg of Kent.

Today the city of Canterbury celebrates Queen Bertha in many ways: the Bertha Trail, consisting of fourteen bronze plaques set in pavements, which runs from the Buttermarket to St Martin's Church via Lady Wootton's Green; the bronze statues of Bertha and Æthelbert installed on Lady Wootton's Green in 2006 as part of the Canterbury Commemoration Society's "Æthelbert and Bertha" project; and a wooden statue of Bertha inside St. Martin's Church. St. Bertha is commemorated in the Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Anglican Churches on May 1<sup>st</sup>.

# Modern Theological Classics

## SERVING GOD

In the previous part we discussed doctrinal themes, not the doctrine as a whole, but a few characteristic features of the early Church which have been cherished by Orthodoxy and which, though natural and self-evident to the Orthodox themselves, may seem peculiar in Protestant surroundings. We turn now to the question of what the Church means to us in practice, how we participate in its life.

When an individual member of the Church is mentioned in the prayers of the Church he is called "the servant of God so-and-so." In the widest sense, serving God, fulfilling God's will, is a man's whole life, but in particular it is the life of prayer, whether in the privacy of one's own room or in corporate worship. A person participates with his whole being in serving God, so that the Apostle's hope may be fulfilled in him: "May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5:23).

The practice of prayer will be the subject of the third part of the book; the aim of this part is to describe how God is served in the congregation, especially in connection with Eucharistic worship. However, let us first look at some general features of Orthodox worship. When we enter an Orthodox church we notice that the people stand and usually there are just a few seats for those who for some reason are unable to stand. Standing in church is the most natural position of prayer. It is one way, a symbolic way, of showing reverence for God. Man's whole life is full of symbols as agreed forms of behavior, not only in the religious sphere but elsewhere as well.

The sign of the Cross which we see people making is one of the oldest Christian symbols. In Orthodox worship people make the sign of the Cross at special moments in the service, and at other times as well, according to their own feeling in prayer. The sign of the Cross is a wordless confession of faith: the thumb and first two fingers of the right hand joined together symbolize our belief in the Holy Trinity, and the other two fingers pressed against the palm represent our belief that the Savior was both God and man. The sign of the Cross, kneeling and prostrations give expression to the thoughts of the worshipper and to the feelings in his heart. But at the same time these outward gestures affect him inwardly, strengthening the right frame of mind in him. They also help a person who is weaker in prayer to enter more fully into the spirit of the common prayer of the Church. We shall see that many other symbols too are used in services. Thus when the priest gives a blessing either with his hand or with the Cross, the congregation bow their heads to receive the blessing. The smoke of the incense, according to the psalm, symbolizes prayer rising before the face of God. The candles which worshippers place in front of the icons express fervent prayer.

The services include reading and singing. The reading is done in a recitative or singing voice. This way of reading shows that the celebrant is not expressing his own feelings, but the common prayer of the Church, in which it is easy for all to join. The corporate character of the prayer is particularly important. Many of the prayers used in the Church are Biblical texts or are otherwise inherited from the early Church. The songs too are prayer: praise, thanksgiving, supplication, proclamation. Sung prayer is always the common prayer of the Church. Therefore, it is always the text of the song which is most important, directing the thoughts and hearts of the worshippers to the same subject of prayer. Instrumental music is not used in Orthodox worship, for each listener experiences it in his own way. Church songs with their texts and melodies are regarded as an organic part of the service. For this reason genuine liturgical music based on tradition is of the greatest value. Along with choral singing, congregational singing is fundamental, especially in the Liturgy.

During a service the congregation, under the leadership of the bishop or priest, participates in certain activities according to the established pattern of the service. The pattern of the service dates back to the early Church and varies according to the time of day and the church year. Thus there is Vespers in the

evening, with which the church day begins, Compline before bed, the Midnight Office, Matins in the morning, and the Hours throughout the day. The most central service is the one in which the sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated. This service is called the Liturgy, or Eucharist.

A person who is not a member of the Orthodox Church may attend an Orthodox service. The visitor may stand in the church like the others without being noticed. But if he wishes he may also participate in the service and express the prayer in the same symbols as the Orthodox. The one thing which only members of the Orthodox Church can participate in is Holy Communion. Why this is so will become clear in the following chapters when we take a closer look at the Eucharist from the point of view of the individual Christian as well as that of the whole Church.

## THE SACRAMENT OF OUR REDEMPTION

That remarkable teacher of the early Church in the West, the blessed Augustine, speaks of his mother, the pious Monica, in his *Confessions* as follows:

*She only desired to be remembered at Thy altar, which she had served without ever missing so much as a day. For she knew that at Thy altar we receive the holy Victim Who cancelled the decree that was against us and in Whom we have triumphed over the enemy who reckons up our sins, tries to find some charge against us ... To this sacrament of our redemption Thy handmaid had bound her soul by the bond of faith. (IX,13).*

This testimony of Augustine concerning his mother, who had “bound her soul to the sacrament of our redemption by the bond of faith,” tells us something very essential about the faith of a Christian, something that was important not only in Monica’s time in the early Church of the fourth century, but even today.

The visible center of the spiritual life of the individual member of the Church as well as that of the whole Church is still the Holy Altar and the sacrament of redemption which is performed there. This sacrament is called Holy Communion, and the service in which it takes place is called the Holy and Divine Liturgy.

Participation in Holy Communion is the physical aspect of this sacrament of our redemption, but its audible and verbal content is the offering of thanksgiving—*eucharistia* in Greek—to God the Father. In this verbal service the main cause for thanksgiving is the redemptive sacrifice once offered by Christ for the sake of mankind, the Eucharist is also called a bloodless sacrifice of thanksgiving.

In the early Church, according to Augustine, the Christian bound his soul to the sacrament of redemption simply by the bond of faith. For us today, however, it is necessary to make a deliberate effort to enter deeply into the subject before the fundamental significance of this sacrament becomes clear to us. We must hasten to add, however, that not even the most thorough knowledge about this sacrament can change its suprarational, hidden character. Hence in the Orthodox Church Holy Communion, and the other sacraments and well, are called mysteries. In the text of the Liturgy participation in the Holy Mysteries means participation in the Eucharist and in Communion.

Archbishop Paul Olmari, \* *The Faith We Hold*, pp. 31-35.

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\* Archbishop Paul Olmari (1914-1988) was Primate of the Orthodox Church of Finland, and Archbishop of Karelia and All Finland, from 1960 to 1988. The spiritual vitality and growth which he brought to the Finnish Orthodox Church made him a nationally respected religious leader and a respected voice throughout the Orthodox world.

# Our Carpatho-Rusyn Heritage

## Carpatho-Rusyn Cuisine

*This year "Quo Vadis" is featuring recipes typical of the cuisine of the Carpathians, as cuisine is an integral component of culture, often persisting long after other components of culture, such as language, have been lost by the descendants of immigrants. The cuisine of the Carpatho-Rusyns is eclectic, broadly incorporating Hungarian, German, Polish, and Ukrainian influences and, notably in the southeastern region, Romanian influences as well. This month features the region's most widely popular dish.*

### **Chicken Paprikash**

#### *Ingredients:*

2-2½ lbs. of chicken pieces	Black pepper to taste
Salt to taste	3 tbsp. Hungarian paprika
2-3 tbsp. unsalted butter	1 cup chicken broth
2-3 large yellow onions	½ cup sour cream

#### *Directions:*

- (1) Salt the chicken pieces well and let sit at room temperature while slicing the onions. Slice onions lengthwise (top to root).
- (2) Heat a large sauté pan over medium-high heat and melt the butter. When butter is hot, pat the chicken pieces dry with paper towels and place them skin down in the pan. Let chicken pieces cook 4-5 minutes on one side, until well browned, then turn over and cook 2-3 minutes on the other side (take care when turning so as not to tear the skin if any is sticking to the pan). Remove the chicken from the pan to a bowl and set aside.
- (3) Add the sliced onions to the sauté pan and cook them, stirring occasionally, scraping up the browned bits from the chicken, until lightly browned, about 7 minutes.
- (4) Add the paprika and some black pepper to the onions and stir to combine. Add the chicken broth, again scraping up the browned bits from the pan's bottom, and nestle the chicken pieces into the pan on top of the onions. Cover and cook on a low simmer for 20-25 minutes (depending on the size of the chicken pieces). When the chicken is cooked through (at least 165 degrees, when the juices run clear, not pink when the thickest part of the chicken pieces is pierced with a knife), remove the pan from the heat (if you wish, you may continue cooking the chicken until it begins to fall off the bone, which may take another 30 minutes).
- (5) When the chicken is done to your preference, remove the chicken from the pan. Allow the pan to cool for a minute and then slowly stir in the sour cream and add salt to taste. If the sour cream cools the sauce too much, turn the heat back on just enough to warm it through. Add the chicken back to the pan and coat with the sauce.
- (6) Serve with dumplings, egg noodles, rice or potatoes.

## **Parish News**

### Summer Schedule

This year, the summer schedule of morning services starting at 9:00 AM will begin on the first Sunday of May (May 7, 2017) and will last until Sunday, October 29, 2017.

### In Memoriam

Mrs. Teresa Cimboric, age 99, Burlington, N.J. passed into blessed repose on April 7, 2017. Vicnaja Pamjat!

### Welcome to the Orthodox Church

Sophie Marie Musteata, daughter of Constantin Musteata and Raluca Negrea, was baptized and chrismated on April 29, 2017. Many Years to Sophie, her parents, and godparents!

Tatiana Julia Porch-Wasilewski, daughter of Lisa Marie Wasilewski, was baptized and chrismated on April 30, 2017. Many Years to Tatiana, her mother, and godparents!

### Rector's Vacation

Fr. Sophrony shall be leaving for Puerto Rico on the evening of Monday, May 15<sup>th</sup>. He will be back on the morning of Wednesday, May 24<sup>th</sup>. A substitute priest, Fr. Stephen Krivonak, shall celebrate Divine Liturgy on Sunday, May 21<sup>st</sup>. Emergencies should be directed to Fr. John Fencik at (201) 436-5549 or (201) 779-6604 while Fr. Sophrony is away.

### Memorial Day Pilgrimage

The 113<sup>th</sup> Annual Memorial Day Pilgrimage at St. Tikhon's Monastery in South Canaan, Pennsylvania is scheduled for May 26-29, 2017. See [www.sttikhonsmonastery.org](http://www.sttikhonsmonastery.org) for information.

### Spaghetti & Meatball Dinner

A Spaghetti & Meatball Dinner is scheduled for Sunday, June 4, 2017 at 11:30 AM. The menu consists of salad, Italian bread, spaghetti and meatballs, wine, coffee or tea, and dessert. Tickets are \$20 per person; for information and tickets, contact Marge Kovach at (732) 815-9765.

## **Schedule of Services**

### May 6-7, 2017

6:00 PM (Sat.) – Great Vespers  
9:00 AM (Sun.) – Divine Liturgy

### May 13-14, 2017

6:00 PM (Sat.) – Great Vespers & General Confession  
9:00 AM (Sun.) – Divine Liturgy

### May 21, 2017

9:00 AM (Sun.) – Divine Liturgy

### May 24-25, 2017

6:00 PM (Wed.) – Great Vespers w. Lity  
9:00 AM (Thu.) – Divine Liturgy

### May 27-28, 2017

6:00 PM (Sat.) – Great Vespers  
9:00 AM (Sun.) – Divine Liturgy

## **Special Donations**

*Please note that for Special Donations in June to be acknowledged in **Quo Vadis**, it is necessary for the donation to be recorded in the Special Donations register in the church vestibule by May 21, 2017.*

### May 7, 2017

**Sanctuary Lamp** offered by Mary Macinsky in memory of Joseph Macinsky (anniversary of repose).

### May 14, 2017

**St. John's Cross** offered by Mary Macinsky in memory of Katharyn Yendrey (anniversary of repose).

May 28, 2017

**Sanctuary Lamp** offered by John and Helen Wanko in memory of Anastasia Grudinoff (anniversary of repose). **St. John's Cross** offered by Fr. Sophrony Royer in memory of Fr. John Buckley, S.J. **St. Nicholas Cross** offered by Fr. Sophrony Royer in memory of Concetta Gloria Royer (anniversary of repose).

## Daily Bible Readings

1. Acts 6:8-7:5, 47-60; John 4:46-54
2. Acts 8:5-17; John 6:27-33
3. Acts 8:18-25; John 6:35-39
4. Acts 8:26-39; John 6:40-44
5. Acts 8:40-9:19; John 6:48-54
6. Acts 9:20-31; John 15:17-16:2
7. Acts 9:32-42; John 5:1-15
8. Acts 10:1-16; John 6:56-69
9. Acts 10:21-33; John 7:1-13
10. Acts 14:6-18; John 7:14-30
11. Acts 10:34-43; John 8:12-20
12. Acts 10:44-11:10; John 8:21-30
13. Acts 12:1-11; John 8:31-42
14. Acts 11:19-26, 29-30; John 9:1-38
15. Acts 12:12-17; John 8:42-51
16. Acts 12:25-13:12; John 8:51-59
17. Acts 13:13-24; John 6:5-14
18. Acts 14:20-27; John 9:39-10:9
19. Acts 15:5-34; John 10:17-28
20. Acts 15:35-41; John 10:27-38
21. Acts 16:16-34; John 9:1-38
22. Acts 17:1-15; John 11:47-57
23. Acts 17:19-28; John 12:19-36
24. Acts 18:22-28; John 12:36-47
25. Acts 1:1-12; Luke 24:36-53
26. Acts 19:1-8; John 14:1-11
27. Acts 20:7-12; John 14:10-21
28. Acts 20:16-18, 28-36; John 17:1-13
29. Acts 21:8-14; John 14:27-15:7
30. Acts 21:26-32; John 16:2-13
31. Acts 23:1-11; John 16:15-23