

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

On Sunday, July 20, 2014 – which is also the feast of the Holy Prophet Elijah – our ruling bishop, the Right Reverend Michael (Dahulich), will be making his annual episcopal visitation to our parish. It is a standard custom in the Orthodox Church for the bishop to visit each and every parish in his diocese at least once a year. The reason for this practice is that the bishop is the “archpastor” to the communities entrusted to his oversight, and it follows that it is not practically possible for a bishop to exercise this, his foremost duty as a bishop, if he does not know the clergy and faithful under his “omophorion,” and likewise is not known by them. Indeed, the very word “bishop,” derived from the Greek επισκοπος (*episkopos*), means “overseer.” The trend, in the past, of inviting the bishop only when a parish is celebrating an anniversary or some other special occasion, was at variance with the fullness of Orthodox tradition, and was at least partly responsible for an intangible barrier between the faithful and their bishop, in which the bishop was something of a “stranger” who wasn’t personally known and was rarely seen or heard. We should be gladdened by the fact that this reduction of our tradition has been rectified in recent years.

This year, on the occasion of our bishop's visit, we are celebrating not only our bishop's presence among us, but also the 90th birthday (on July 21st) of Fr. Sophrony's father, Wilfred Royer, and the elevation of our long-time altar server, Philip Benda, to the rank of a Reader. Following the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, there will be a brunch buffet downstairs in the church hall. So this year's episcopal visitation promises to be a festive event in the life of our parish. Let me, at this time, offer congratulations on all our behalf to Wilfred and Philip, and May God grant both of them many bounteous years!

Parish Council President's Message

Dear parishioners and friends,

His Grace, Bishop Michael, will be visiting our church on the weekend of July 19-20. This joyous occasion will include Philip Benda's tonsure to the order of Reader and the bishop's blessing for him to wear the subdeacon's orarion at the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. I have had the privilege of serving with Philip in the altar, and I can attest that this honor is well deserved. Philip had dedicated many years to our church and I'm gladdened that his faithful service is now being recognized by this honor. I also congratulate, on the behalf of the entire Parish Council, Wilfred Royer on the occasion of his ninetieth birthday.

Our collection on Bright and Holy Pascha this year totaled \$8,427, and I thank everyone who made a Paschal donation this year. Also, I am pleased to announce that our profit from last month's Spaghetti & Meatball Dinner was actually \$760 rather than the \$690 originally reported. Finally, just as a reminder, we are still looking for someone to donate the cost of green altar coverings—please speak with me or with Fr. Sophrony if you are interested in being a donor.

Yours in Christ,
Stephen Wasilewski

Excerpt from the Church Fathers

Therefore you, my beloved one, observe with precision the word ΩΣ, and let not this Scriptural syllable's treasure and power escape your notice, nor through any misinterpretation of the ascension be misled into equating the Lord with the supplicant (Elijah). For Elijah did not ascend into heaven, nor did he – by traversing the firmament – become a resident of its courts; instead, pay attention to what the text mentions: “Upon sweeping up Elijah as if into Heaven.” Behold, one small word (ΩΣ) was given to portray Elijah as moving upwards; for it was enough that the Prophet was honored by a semblance (AS IF) of ascent; Heaven could never receive a supplicant (Elijah) before receiving the Lord – for nobody has ever gone up to Heaven, except the Son of Man, Who is in Heaven. Heaven was reserved, for the Creator, the beginner of mankind. Thus, with Enoch and Elijah, God gladdened the people with a promising hope, by spreading before them an “airborne highway,” as though for horse-drawn vehicles.
St. Athanasius the Great, Homily 'B' on the Ascension.

Lives of the Saints

St. Margaret of Antioch-in-Pisidia, Great-Martyr – commemorated on July 17th

The Holy Great-martyr Margaret (Marina) was born in Anatolia, in the city of Antioch in Pisidia (southern Anatolia), into the family of a pagan priest. In infancy she lost her mother, and her father gave her into the care of a nursemaid, who raised Margaret in the Christian Faith. Upon learning that his daughter had become a Christian, her father disowned her. When she was fifteen years old, St. Margaret was arrested and imprisoned.

Governor Olymbrius was charmed when he saw the beautiful girl, and tried to persuade her to renounce the Christian Faith and become his wife. But Margaret refused his offers. The governor became angry and ordered that she be tortured. She was fiercely beaten, then fastened to a board and her body torn with hooks. The governor hid his face, unable to witness her suffering. However, Margaret refused to yield. Thrown again into prison, an angel appeared and healed her wounds. The next day, she was stripped and tied to a tree, then burned. Barely alive, she prayed: “Lord, You have granted me to go through the fire of Your Name, grant me also to go through the water of holy Baptism.”

Governor Olymbrius ordered that Margaret be drowned in a large cauldron. She cried out to the Lord and asked that this mode of torture be her holy Baptism. As she was plunged into the water, there suddenly shone a light, and a snow-white dove came down from Heaven, bearing in its beak a golden crown. The chains that had been placed on Margaret came apart, and she stood up in the fount glorifying the Holy Trinity. She emerged completely healed, without any trace of burns.

Amazed at this site, those present glorified the True God and confessed their faith in Christ. Upon hearing this, the governor flew into a rage and gave orders to kill anyone who confessed Christ. Over 15,000 Christians perished, and Margaret was beheaded. Her sufferings were described by an eyewitness of the event named Theotimus.

Up until the sack of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusade in 1204, St. Margaret’s relics were located in the Panteponteia Monastery. Other sources, however, place the relics in Antioch until 908, and from there they were transferred to Italy. They are now in Athens, in a church dedicated to her. Her venerable hand was transferred to Mount Athos and is kept at the Vatopedi Monastery.

Modern Theological Classics

Possessing the divine qualities of the Holy Trinity, the Church of Christ can only be One. The existence of two or more Churches contradicts the very nature of the Church as the unity of divine-human life. Therefore, Jesus Christ speaks of His Church, which gathers all newly born people into organic unity with Himself, as the vine and the branches (Jn. 15:4-6). The people of

God constitute one flock with one Shepherd (Jn. 10:1-10); “they are all brethren [in unity]” with Him and the Father (Mt. 23:8; Jn. 17:21).

Being One, the Church is by nature Catholic, embracing the whole world and existing without limitations. Jesus Christ came to save the *whole* world (Jn. 3:16). He is the light of the World (Jn. 1:9) and the light of life (Jn. 8:12). All nations will be able to enter into His kingdom (Lk. 13:29), and the Gospel of the kingdom will be witnessed and preached to all nations and to all the world (Mt. 24:14).

The Church of Christ can be called the society, the institution, the community, the “little flock” of people in unity with God. The membership of the Church must strive toward moral perfection and salvation by conquering their sinful nature and by becoming newly born into a new life by water and the Spirit (Jn. 3:5). It is this Spirit who will guide the Church into “all the truth” (Jn. 16:13).

The incarnation of the Son of God and the descent of the Holy Spirit into the world reveal the will and love of God the Father for us. They manifest the humility and the glory of Jesus Christ and make the introduction of the Church into the divine life by the Spirit possible. In its essence the Church is the unity of theanthropic life, and as such she belongs to the heavenly realm as “the Kingdom not of this world” (Jn. 18:36). Yet even within human history the Church exists as the Kingdom of the beloved Son of God (Col. 1:13-20).

Jesus Christ chose the Twelve to be with Him as apostles, messengers sent to proclaim His Good News (Lk. 6:13). They were called to be living witnesses of the greatest revelation of God to the world: the incarnation of God’s Son, who established the kingdom of God on earth for the salvation of the world. Jesus Himself chose those whom He desired (Jn. 15:16), that He might send them to preach and to be “fishers of men” (Mt. 4:19).

To the apostles Jesus Christ explained the mysteries of the kingdom of God (Mk. 4:11), of faith (Mt. 17:20), and of the existence of authority (Mt. 20:25-28). He explained all things to them in private (Mk. 4:34), making known to them what He had heard from the Father (Jn. 15:15). His disciples beheld the Lord’s power over death (Mk. 5:35-41), over nature (Mk. 4:38), and over the Sabbath (Mt. 12:8). Jesus sent them into the world to proclaim the coming of the kingdom of God (Mt. 10:7; Lk. 9:6), with the promise that the Spirit would help them (Mt. 13:11) and remind them of His teaching (Jn. 14:26). He reminded them that they would be hated in the world; yet promised those who endure to the end for Christ’s sake “will be saved” (Mk. 13:13; Mt. 24:13).

The establishment of a hierarchical principle within the Church is rooted in the action of God the Father, who “transferred us into the kingdom of His beloved Son” (Col. 1:13). Jesus Christ assigned to His apostles the kingdom, as His Father assigned it to Him (Lk. 22:29). He also commissioned them: “As my Father has sent Me, even so do I send you.” And having said this, He breathed upon them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (Jn. 20:21f.). By the power of the Holy Spirit the apostles were given authority to remit sins or to retain them (Jn. 20:23). This

Spirit is the “other Comforter” who will abide with them forever (Jn. 14:16) and guide them into all the Truth (Jn. 16:13). Likewise Jesus Himself will abide with them (Jn. 14:18), authorizing and empowering them to teach, to baptize, and to accomplish all that He commanded. Thus He transfers to His apostles His own authority in heaven and on earth (Mt. 28:16-20) and lays the foundation for its transmission in the Church through “apostolic succession.” Thereby the Church was given authority to exercise judgment (Mt. 18:16f.).

In the witness of the Holy Scriptures we find the Church of Christ to be “the divinely founded institution of the newly born, regenerated, and redeemed people who believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of the living God. They are united to Him by divine life and love as well as by the holy sacraments, and strive for perfection under the permanent guidance of the Holy Spirit” (V. Troitskii, *Ocherki iz istorii dogmata o Tserkvi*, 10f.). According to Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann, the Church’s humanity is not independent of her spiritual essence or divine root; rather, it embodies it, expresses it, and is totally and absolutely subordinated to it.

In summary, we can affirm the following: The Church of Christ as the realization (i.e., the aspect, embodiment, and actualization) of the kingdom of Christ on earth unites in Herself the freedom, holiness, love, truth, and life of Jesus Christ and all the qualities of the kingdom of God, including power, justice, beauty, and joy in the Holy Spirit. The Church, as the Kingdom of Christ, embraces the whole cosmos and unites all heavenly and earthly powers under the supreme rule of God. The Church, as the instrument of Christ’s Kingdom in the world, provides the opportunity to partake of the redeeming fruits of the saving work of Christ to all people, by offering them new life, sanctification, sacramental grace, and moral perfection in the Holy Spirit.

Finally, the saving work of Jesus Christ reaches its fulfillment in His ascension and in the sending of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles. The task given to the Son by the Father is accomplished: “I have glorified Thee on earth; I have finished the work Thou gavest me to do ... Glorify me, O Father, with the glory which I had with you before the world was” (Jn. 17:4f.). This man Jesus, the Epistle to the Hebrews declares, offered “a single sacrifice for sins, [then] sat down at the right hand of God” (10:12). The road from heaven to earth and from earth to heaven will be open forever, thanks to the descent of the Holy Spirit, who is both in heaven and in the earthly Church of Christ (Acts 1:4-8; Lk. 24:49). The promise of the Holy Spirit and the commission to the apostles to be witnesses of Jesus Christ from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth is now being fulfilled. They undertake their mission, accompanied by Jesus’ promise: “He who receives you, receives Me; and he who receives Me, receives Him who sent Me” (Mt. 10:40; Jn. 13:20).

Archbishop Gregory Afonsky, Christ and the Church, pp. 45-48. To be continued.

Our Carpatho-Rusyn Heritage

The Restoration of Rusyn Orthodoxy

In the nineteenth century, the Russian Empire became a favored destination for Carpatho-Rusyn intellectuals which, together with the spread of Pan-Slavism, contributed to the popularity of Russophile views. The Russian military campaign of Tsar Nicholas I through the Carpathians in 1849, in which the Russian tsar assisted the Austrian imperial government in suppressing the Hungarian war of independence, had great significance for the local Carpatho-Rusyn population, who came into close contact with the 200,000 man Russian army. This interaction, in turn, impacted the rising national and religious consciousness of the Carpatho-Rusyn people. For example, Fr. Alexander Dukhnovych (1803-1865), reminiscing about the sight of Russian Cossacks on the streets, related that he “danced and cried with joy.”

Rusyn Orthodoxy had become virtually extinct by the middle of the eighteenth century, but the rise of pro-Russian Slavophilism, along with a Rusyn backlash against the Hungarian government's policy of Magyarization, led to a “return to Orthodoxy” movement in the latter years of the nineteenth century. Two activists were at the forefront of this rebirth of Orthodoxy among the Rusyns: the priests Maxim Sandowicz and Alexis Kabaliuk.

Maxim Sandowicz (1888-1914) was born into a prosperous Lemko-Rusyn peasant family in the village of Zdynia, Galicia. After completing his secondary education, he crossed the border into Russia and became a novice at the Pochaev Lavra in Volhynia. Subsequently, he went to seminary in Zhitomir, married his wife, Pelagia, and was ordained to the diaconate and the priesthood before returning home. Not long afterward, in 1912, the Austrian authorities became aware of his Orthodox missionary activity and imprisoned him in Lemberg (L'viv). He was held for two years without trial or inquest, in horrid living conditions. He was finally released for lack of evidence in the summer of 1914. His return home proved short. On August 4, 1914 he and his entire family was arrested and imprisoned in Gorlice. On August 6, 1914 Fr. Maxim was executed by gunshot, his final words being “Long live the Russian people. Long live the Holy Orthodox Faith. Long live Slavdom.” He was glorified as a saint by the Polish Orthodox Church in 1994. Pelagia Sandowicz was sent to the Talerhof concentration camp, where she gave birth to a son, named Maxim after his father and who, like his father, later became an Orthodox priest.

Alexis Kabaliuk (1877-1947) was born into a Uniate peasant family in Izsa, Hungary (now in Slovakia). As a youth he frequently visited with his family the Orthodox monasteries in neighboring Bukovina, and in 1905 he crossed into the Russian Empire to visit the Orthodox monasteries in Pochaev and Kiev. Three years later he went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and to the Russian Monastery of St. Panteleimon on Mount Athos, where he converted to Orthodoxy in July 1909. Returning from Mount Athos, he went again to the Russian Empire and began his monastic noviate at the Monastery of St. Onuphrius in Jableczna (in present-day Poland). By 1911 he had met with the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople and the Serbian Patriarch in Karlovci, who at the time had jurisdiction over the Orthodox communities in the Hungarian Kingdom.

Fr. Alexis was assigned by the Serbian church to serve the recently established Orthodox communities in Subcarpathian Rus' at Izsa and Velyki Luchky. Though he was closely followed by the Hungarian authorities, who suspected him of pro-Russian agitation, he met with the grandsons of Adolph Dobrianskij, who helped him maintain contacts with secular Orthodox and Slavophile activists in the Russian Empire. Facing imminent arrest, Kabaliuk fled to Russia, arriving in Moscow in the spring of 1913, where visiting Archbishop Platon (Rozhdestvensky) convinced him to go to the United States to serve a Rusyn Orthodox parish in Pittsburgh. At the end of 1913, however, he returned home to join the accused at the Maramaros Sighet Trial initiated by the Hungarian government against Rusyn converts to Orthodoxy. At the close of the trial in early 1914, Kabaliuk was sentenced to four and a half years in prison.

With the fall of Austria-Hungary in late 1918, Kabaliuk was released from prison. He then began the most active phase of his ministry of promoting Orthodoxy among the Rusyns of Czechoslovakia. He became priest of the parish in Khust, and in 1921 became archimandrite (superior) of the St. Nicholas Monastery in Izsa. Though he was under the jurisdiction of Bishop Gorazd (Pavlik) of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Fr. Alexis Kabaliuk effectively headed the Orthodox church in Subcarpathian Rus' as administrator (as of 1922) of the Temporary Spiritual Consistory of the Orthodox Eparchy of Mukachevo-Presov.

During the interwar years, Rusyn cultural life flourished and nearly one-third of the population "returned" to Orthodoxy. Unfortunately, one result of the newly found freedom was an increase in religious and national tensions. Left basically to themselves within democratic Czechoslovakia, the Greek Catholic (Uniate) and Orthodox Churches frequently clashed with each other in competition for new adherents and for control of church property, while supporters of the Rusyn, Russian, and Ukrainian national orientations had their own organizations, newspapers, and publications, which tried to convince the masses that they were either Rusyns, Russians, or Ukrainians. Meanwhile, in Poland, in an attempt to counter the growing Orthodox movement, the Vatican created a special Greek Catholic Lemko Apostolic Administration in 1934, so that parishes in the Lemko region were no longer under the direct control of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Eparchy of Przemysl.

After the Soviet army arrived in the region, Fr. Alexis Kabaliuk co-signed a letter, dated November 18, 1944, on behalf of the entire Orthodox community, which requested of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin that all of "Carpathian Rus'," from Izsa to Proprad and from the Uzhok Pass to Debrecen, be united, in the form of a distinct "Carpatho-Rusyn Soviet Republic," with the Soviet Union (instead, Subcarpathian Rus' was incorporated into the Ukrainian S.S.R. as its "Transcarpathia" oblast after being ceded to the Soviet Union by Czechoslovakia on June 29, 1945). In early December 1944 Kabaliuk joined an Orthodox delegation to Moscow which requested the transfer of the "Orthodox Eparchy of Mukachevo-Uzhgorod" from the jurisdiction of the Serbian Orthodox Church to the Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate). In recognition of his role in promoting the Rusyn Orthodox faith, in 2001 the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate) glorified Fr. Alexis as a saint.

This segment was the result of original research by V. Rev. W. Sophrony Royer, Ph.D.

Parish News

Episcopal Visitation

His Grace, Right Reverend Bishop Michael of New York shall visit our parish on Sunday, July 20, 2014. The bishop will be greeted at the front doors of the church at 9:00 AM, after which shall commence the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. Philip Benda will be elevated to the rank of Reader during the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. A brunch buffet will be held after Divine Liturgy in the church hall.

Rector's Vacation

Fr. Sophrony will be away in New Hampshire from July 28th until August 4th. A substitute priest shall celebrate the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, August 3rd at the usual time. Should there arise an emergency need for a priest, please contact Fr. John Fencik at 201-779-6604 or the nearest available Orthodox priest.

Congratulations

Congratulations to our former rector, Fr. Igor Kseniuk, and his wife, Matushka Anna, on the occasion of the June 12th birth of their daughter, Sophia Kseniuk. Congratulations to Stephen Cimboric, who graduated Arthur L. Johnson High School in Clark, New Jersey last month. Congratulations to Philip Benda on his elevation to the order of Reader with the blessing to wear the subdeaconial orarion.

Special Donations

*Please note that for Special Donations in August to be acknowledged in **Quo Vadis**, it will be necessary for the donation to be recorded in the Special Donations register in the church vestibule by July 20, 2014.*

July 20, 2014

Sanctuary Lamp offered by Fr. Sophrony Royer in honor of Wilfred Royer's 90th birthday.

July 27, 2014

Sanctuary Lamp offered by John & Helen Wanko in memory of Rose Brelinsky (anniversary of repose). St. Nicholas' Cross offered by Tais Fedetz in memory of V. Rev. Archpriest Nicholas Fedetz and Triple Candelabra offered by Tais Fedetz in memory of Matushka Geraldine Fedetz (tenth anniversary of repose).

Schedule of Services and Events

July 5-6, 2014

6:00 PM – Great Vespers
9:00 AM – Divine Liturgy

July 12-13, 2014

6:00 PM – Great Vespers & General Confession
9:00 AM – Divine Liturgy

July 14-15, 2014

6:00 PM – Great Vespers w. Lity
9:00 AM – Divine Liturgy

July 16, 2014

7:30 PM – Carpathian Club Meeting

July 19-20, 2014

6:00 PM – Great Vespers w. Lity
9:00 AM – Hierarchical Divine Liturgy
After Liturgy – Brunch Buffet

July 26-27, 2014

6:00 PM – Great Vespers
9:00 AM – Divine Liturgy

Daily Bible Readings

1. Rom. 10:11-11:12 & Matt. 11:16-20
2. Rom. 11:2-12 & Matt. 11:20-26
3. Rom. 11:13-24 & Matt. 11:27-30
4. Rom. 11:25-36 & Matt. 12:1-8
5. Rom. 6:11-17 & Matt. 8:14-23
6. **Rom. 6:18-23 & Matt. 8:5-13**
7. Rom. 12:4-5, 15-21 & Matt. 12:9-13
8. Rom. 14:9-18 & Matt. 12:14-16, 22-30
9. Rom. 15:7-16 & Matt. 12:38-45
10. Rom. 15:17-29 & Matt. 12:46-13:3
11. Rom. 16:1-16 & Matt. 13:4-9
12. Rom. 8:14-21 & Matt. 9:9-13
13. **Rom. 10:1-10 & Matt. 8:28-9:1**
14. Rom. 16:17-24 & Matt. 13:10-23
15. **1 Cor. 1:1-9 & Matt. 13:24-30**
16. 1 Cor. 2:9-3:8 & Matt. 13:31-36
17. 1 Cor. 3:18-23 & Matt. 13:36-43
18. 1 Cor. 4:5-8 & Matt. 13:44-54
19. Rom. 9:1-5 & Matt. 9:18-26
20. **Rom. 12:6-14 & Matt. 9:1-8**
21. 1 Cor. 5:9-6:11 & Matt. 13:54-58
22. 1 Cor. 6:20-7:12 & Matt. 14:1-13
23. 1 Cor. 7:12-24 & Matt. 14:35-15:11
24. 1 Cor. 7:24-35 & Matt. 15:12-21
25. 1 Cor. 7:35-8:7 & Matt. 15:29-31
26. Rom. 12:1-3 & Matt. 10:37-11:1
27. **Rom. 15:1-7 & Matt. 9:27-35**
28. 1 Cor. 9:13-18 & Matt. 16:1-6
29. 1 Cor. 10:5-12 & Matt. 16:6-12
30. 1 Cor. 10:12-22 & Matt. 16:20-24
31. 1 Cor. 10:28-11:7 & Matt. 16:24-28

- *Sunday & Holy Day readings printed in boldface*