

Quo Vadis

The monthly newsletter of Saints Peter & Paul Orthodox Catholic Church of Bayonne, N.J.
Vol. 10, Number 4: December 2022

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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

*Today the Virgin gives birth to the incomprehensible One;
And the earth offers a cave to the unapproachable One;
Angels and shepherds glory him; the wisemen journey with a star;
Since for our sakes is born the eternal God, as a little child.
Kontakion of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ*

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

The festal kontakion, quoted above, encapsulates the mystery of the Incarnation of the only-begotten Son of God in the flesh. He, who is timelessly begotten of God the Father before all ages, enters into time to be born as a little child. Begotten, **not made**, He enters into the creation that He made, and assumed flesh. Does the earth offer to Him a royal palace, as befits the King of Kings, as a birthplace? Is He wrapped in the finest brocade for His swaddling clothes? No, He lies in a bed of straw. As the eternal God, he is both incomprehensible and unapproachable, yet today, being as man like all other men except for sin, He becomes approachable and knowable! Despite the humility of the surroundings of His birth, nevertheless the angels and shepherds come to adore Him. And the wisemen of the East followed a star for months on end, so that they might bring to Him the royal gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh that befit His nobility. And He so condescended to come down from the heights, and share in our nature, and in our condition, for our sakes. In becoming human, the Son of God condescended to become one of us, and that through His grace, and by our faith, we might become one with Him, and through Him, be reconciled with God and participants in God’s life. What a holy marvel, to behold how God so loved the world that He deigned to be born as that little child of Bethlehem! To all of you, may the spirit of this holy season be with you this Christmas Day and throughout the entire year!

Excerpt from the Church Fathers

“He was created of a mother whom He created. He was carried by hands that He formed. He cried in the manger in wordless infancy, He the Word, without whom all human eloquence is mute.”

— St. Augustine (354-430)

Lives of the Saints

St. Ansanus the Baptizer – commemorated on December 1st

St. Ansanus was born c. 285 of a noble Roman Anician family in the third century. While still a child, Ansanus was secretly baptized by his nurse, St. Maxima of Rome, and was secretly brought up as a Christian. Ansanus openly declared his Christian faith during the persecutions of Diocletian, when he was nineteen years old. According to tradition, St. Ansanus preached the Gospel in Bagnorea and the church of Santa Maria delle Carceri outside the Alban Gate was said to have been built above the prison in which he was confined.

According to tradition, Ss. Ansanus and Maxima were scourged; Maxima died from this. Ansanus, however, survived this torture, as well as the next one: being thrown into a pot of boiling oil. He was then taken to the city of Siena as a prisoner. He managed to preach Christianity there and make many converts to this religion. He was decapitated by order of Emperor Diocletian in 304. It is also said that his own father denounced him to the authorities, but Ansanus managed to escape, and converted many at Bagnorea and later at Siena, and is one of Siena’s patron saints.

Modern Theological Classics

St. Polycarp of Smyrna

ST. POLYCARP’S EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The prayer of the martyr before the pyre was ignited is of great value for the history of early Christian prayer. Not only in the precise Trinitarian doxology, but also it seems, an echo of the Eucharistic prayer St. Polycarp used to recite every Sunday.

O Lord, Almighty God, Father of Your beloved and blessed Son, Jesus Christ, through whom we have received the perfect knowledge of You, God of angels and powers and of all creation, and of the whole race of saints who live under Your eyes! I bless you, because you have considered me worthy of this day and hour to receive a portion among the number of the martyrs, in the cup of your Christ, unto the resurrection of the eternal life, both of soul and body, in the incorruption of the Holy Spirit, among whom may I be received today as a rich and acceptable sacrifice, just as you have prepared beforehand, and revealed beforehand, and fulfilled, O undeceiving and true God. For this reason and for all these things I praise you, I bless you, I glorify you, through the eternal and heavenly high priest Jesus Christ your beloved Son, through whom to you with Him and the Holy Spirit be glory now and forever. Amen.

This document reveals St. Polycarp as a man of prayer and worship. He spent his time when he withdrew from the city praying day and night; and he asked the soldiers to give him a chance to pray before he was seized, and the same thing happened before he was burnt.

THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

The Epistle of Polycarp was an answer to the letter which the Philippians had addressed to him after St. Ignatius’s visit. St. Irenaeus tells us of “a very excellent letter of Polycarp to the Philippians...” They had

invited him to address words of exhortation to them. They had requested him to forward, by his own messenger the letter which they had addressed to the Syrian Church; and they had asked him to send them any of St. Ignatius epistles which he might have in his possession. We have fragments of the original Greek and the entire text of an old Latin translation. It is full of imitations of St. Clement's letter to Corinth, and as late as the end of the fourth century, it was read in some places in Asia Minor at the divine service. It encourages this community to constancy (at Philippi, in Macedonia) and stresses certain duties of married people, widows, deacons, youths, virgins, clergy.

It is pastoral in tone. St. Polycarp warns in general terms of the dangers of heresy; he commends patient endurance of Jesus in his passion; he warns frequently and insistently of the dangers of avarice (perhaps because of a recent scandal in the church of Philippi involving one of the presbyters). His is a simple presentation of Christianity, combining moral earnestness with faithfulness to the example of Jesus. The language of which is a veritable patchwork of allusions to and quotations from various writings of the New Testament which are not, however, "quoted" in words. There are very few allusions to the Old Testament, but in the New Testament Matthew, (perhaps Luke), Acts, I and II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, I and II Thessalonians, I and II Timothy, Hebrews, I Peter and I John are drawn on. The echoes of the Pastoral Epistles, not just in allusion but in structure, have convinced the great German Church historian, Hans von Campenhausen, though few others, that Polycarp was himself their author.

St. Polycarp refers to St. Paul's communications with the Philippians, both written and oral. He mentions the fame of the Philippian Church in the primitive days of the Gospel, and he congratulates them on sustaining their early reputation. Incidentally, he stated that the Philippians were converted to the Gospel before the Smyrnaeans - a statement which entirely accords with the notices of the two churches in the New Testament. The fair fame of the Philippian Church however had been sullied by the sin of one unworthy couple. Valens and his wife- the Ananias and Sapphira of the Philippian community- had been guilty of some act of greed, perhaps of fraud and dishonesty. Valens was one of their presbyters, and thus the church was more directly responsible for his crime. Polycarp expresses himself much grieved. Though the incident itself is only mentioned in one passage, it had plainly made a deep impression on him. The sin of avarice was denounced again and again in the body of the letter.

DOGMA AND DOCTRINES

These documents, which return back to the second century, reveal some articles of the Christian faith before the appearance of the heresies, against the divinity of Christ. It declares the Trinitarian faith, the incarnation of the Logos, His crucifixion, death, resurrection according to His humanity, and the last judgment.

(1) CHRISTOLOGY

The epistle defends the christological doctrine of the Incarnation and of Christ's death upon the Cross against "false teaching" with the following words: *For everyone who shall not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is Antichrist: and whosoever shall not confess the testimony of the Cross, is of the devil; and whosoever shall prevent the oracles of the Lord to his own lusts and say that there is neither resurrection nor judgment, that man is the first - born of Satan. Let us therefore without ceasing hold fast by our hope and by the earnest of our righteousness, which is Jesus Christ who took up our sins in His own body upon the tree, who did no sin, neither was guilt found in His mouth, but for our sakes He endured all things, that we might live in Him.*

(2) THE PRACTICAL FAITH

This epistle is a practical one. Besides the need of the orthodoxy of faith, we have to translate it into practice in the lives of clergymen and laity. 1. Concerning the clergymen, the epistle refers to the duties of the deacons and the presbyters. 2. Concerning the laity, St. Polycarp exhorts them to attain virtues, to preserve, and to stand firm in doing good. *Therefore, gird up your loins and serve God in fear and truth,*

forsaking the vain and empty talking and the error of many, for that you have believed in Him that raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead and gave unto Him glory and a throne on His right hand; unto whom all things were made subject that are in heaven and that are on earth.

(3) ORGANIZATION

St. Polycarp made no mention of the bishop of Philippi, but spoke of the obedience due to presbyters and deacons. For a reason or other there was no bishop there and the church was spiritually governed by a committee of presbyters. The letter portrays the ideal deacons and presbyter in the following terms: *In like manner deacons should be blameless in the presence of His righteousness, as deacons of God and Christ and not of men; not calumniators, not double-tongued, not lovers of money, temperate in all things, compassionate, diligent, walking according to the truth of the Lord who became a Minister (deacon) of all. And the presbyters also must be compassionate, merciful towards all men, turning back the sheep that are gone astray, visiting all the infirm, not neglecting a widow or an orphan or a poor man: but providing always for that which is honorable in the sight of God and of men, abstaining from anger, respect of persons, unrighteous judgment, being far from all love of money, not quick to believe anything against any man, not hasty in judgment, knowing that we all are debtors of sin.*

(4) IMITATING CHRIST

Let us therefore become imitators of His endurance; and if we should suffer for His name's sake, let us glorify Him. For He gave this example to us in His own person, and we believed this. Steadfast, therefore, in these things and follow the example of the Lord, being firm in faith and immovable, in love of the brotherhood kindly affectionate one to another.

(5) TAKING CARE OF THE SALVATION OF OTHERS

He speaks about a priest called Valens and his wife who inclined from the faith because of their covetousness: *I am very unhappy on account of Valens, who was formerly made an elder among you, that he should so misunderstand the office given to him. I exhort you, then, to abstain from love of money, and to be pure and trustworthy... I am exceedingly unhappy, then on account of that man and his wife; to whom may the Lord give true repentance! Therefore, you too be sober in this matter; and don't consider such people as enemies; but bring them back as weak and erring members that you may preserve your body in its entirety. For by doing this you build one another.*

(6) CHARITY

Almsgiving is earnestly recommended. *When you are able to do good, defer it not, for Pitifulness delivers from death. Be you all subjected one to another, having your conversation unblameable among the Gentiles, that from your good works both you may receive praise and the Lord may not be blasphemed in you. Therefore, I am exceedingly grieved for him and for his wife, unto whom may the Lord grant true repentance. Be you therefore yourselves also sober herein, and hold not such as enemies, but restore them as frail and errant members, that you may save the whole body of you. For so doing, you do edify one another.*

(7) CHURCH AND STATE

Worthy to notice is the attitude of the persecuted Church towards the State. Prayer for the civil authorities is expressly enjoined. *Pray also for kings and powers and princes, and for them that persecute and hate you, and for the enemies of the cross, that your fruit may be manifest among all men, that you may be perfect in Him.*

Fr. Tadros Y. Malaty,¹ "The Apostolic Fathers," pp. 117-122.

¹ Fr. Tadros Y. Malaty (b. 3/16/1937) is a Coptic Orthodox priest, theologian, and prolific writer, based at the famous Church of St. George in Sporting, Alexandria, Egypt. His theological, spiritual, liturgical, and historical books are characterized by an abundance of biblical and patristic references. He composed a complete set of patristic commentaries that cover the entire Old and New Testaments, and he has authored many books about the lives of the Early Church Fathers and Martyrs that reveal how they led their lives as a "living

Recipe of the Month

Queen Elizabeth II's Drop Scones

For a taste of what life is like for British royalty, consider making the late Queen Elizabeth II's drop scone recipe (drop scones are a thicker version of standard American pancakes, which are dropped on to griddles in dollops). The recipe was included in a letter sent by the Queen to U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower. The original letter and recipe were penned in 1960 after Eisenhower and his wife, Mamie, visited with the Queen at her castle in Balmoral, Scotland.



Queen Elizabeth II (4/21/1926-9/8/2022)



Queen Elizabeth w. the Eisenhowers

Ingredients:

- 3 cups flour
- 4 tbsp. caster (superfine) sugar
- 1½ cups milk
- 2 whole eggs
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 3 tsp. cream of tartar
- 2 tbsp. melted butter

Directions:

(1) Beat eggs, sugar, and about half the milk together, add flour, and mix well together, adding the remainder of milk as required, also baking soda and cream of tartar, fold in the melted butter. Beat well with a whisk until you have a batter with the consistency of thick pouring cream – you may not need all the milk. The mixture needs a great deal of beating while making and shouldn't stand about too long before cooking.

(2) Heat a large non-stick frying pan or griddle and grease with a little oil. Drop the batter in dessert-spoonfuls onto the hot pan, spacing the mixture well apart to allow for them to spread. When bubbles appear on the surface, turn the scones over with a spatula and cook on the other side for a further 30 seconds to 1 minute, or until they are lightly golden brown.

(3) Lift the pancakes on to a wire rack and cover with a clean tea-towel to keep them soft. Continue cooking the batter in the same way.

(4) Serve at once with butter, maple syrup or honey, yogurt, blueberries, raspberries or other seasonal fruits.

Bible” and as role models for all Christians. In the 1960’s he began publishing his books and booklets in Arabic, and many of them have since been translated into English.

M.Y.O. Caster Sugar:

(1) Place granulated sugar in a food processor, blender, coffee grinder, or spice grinder. When using a large food processor, add enough sugar to cover the blades. A well-cleaned spice or coffee grinder is perfect for making small batches of caster sugar.

(2) Pulse until it reaches a superfine but not powdery consistency. You're aiming for a crystal size directly between granulated sugar and powdered sugar.

(3) Let the sugar settle for a few minutes. Otherwise, you'll end up with a dust cloud when you open the top. If you have leftovers, store them in a labeled container for the next time you bake.

Parish News

Parish Council Meeting

Parish Council is meeting in the church hall on Sunday, December 11, 2022 after Divine Liturgy.

Confessions

All parishioners ought to go to confession during the Nativity Fast, which may be heard after any Vespers. Those unable to attend Vespers may call the Rectory at 201-436-3244 to make an appointment.

Annual St. Nicholas Dinner

The annual "St. Nicholas Dinner" at St. Mary's Carpatho-Russian Church, 90 W. 29th Street, Bayonne, N.J. is at 12:00 PM on Sunday, December 4, 2022. For information, call St. Mary's Rectory at (201) 436-5549.

Local Christmas Concert

The annual Christmas concert at St. Peter's University is 5:30 PM on December 11, 2022, at St. Aedan's, the St. Peter's University Church, located at 800 Bergen Avenue, Jersey City, N.J. The Aidan C. McMullen Chorale and St. Aedan's SCHOLA are joined by guest instrumentalists under the direction of Prof. Joseph Hill.

Parish Council for 2023

The following have been elected to the 2023 Parish Council: President – Reader Stephen Wasilewski; Vice-President – Reader Philip Benda; Recording Secretary – Margaret Kovach; Financial Secretary – Russell Wyskanycz; Treasurer – Stephen Wanko; Trustees – Dr. Andrea Bacsik, Tais Fedetz, Anna Turowska, Victor Wasilewski; Auditors – Stephen Cimboric and Jerome Kovach.

Special Donations

Special Donations may be offered at \$10/week for the Altar Vigils, and \$5/week for any one of the following: Sanctuary Lamp, St. John's Cross, St. Nicholas' Cross, and Triple Candelabra, and may be offered in memory of the departed or in honor of the living. Please note that for Special Donations in January to be acknowledged in "Quo Vadis," the donation must be recorded in the Special Donations register in the church vestibule by December 25, 2022.

December 4, 2022

Altar Vigils offered by John & Helen Wanko in memory of Lydia Wanko (anniversary of birth).

December 11, 2022

Sanctuary Lamp offered by Fr. W. Sophrony Royer in memory of Right Rev. Bishop Anthony (Grabbe).

December 25, 2022

Altar Vigils offered by John & Helen Wanko in memory of June Bianchini (anniversary of birth).

Schedule of Services

December 3-4, 2022

5:00 PM (Sat.) – Great Vespers
9:30 AM (Sun.) – Divine Liturgy

December 6, 2022 [St. Nicholas]

9:30 AM (Tue.) – Divine Liturgy

December 10-11, 2022

5:00 PM (Sat.) – Great Vespers
9:30 AM (Sun.) – Divine Liturgy

December 17-18, 2022

5:00 (Sat.) – Great Vespers
9:30 AM (Sun.) – Divine Liturgy

December 24-25, 2022

4:30 AM (Sat.) – Vigil w. Lity
9:30 AM (Sun.) – Divine Liturgy

December 26-27, 2022

9:30 AM (Mon.) – Divine Liturgy
9:30 AM (Tues.) – Divine Liturgy

Daily Bible Readings

1. 2 Thessalonians 2:13-3:5; Luke 20:9-18
2. 2 Thessalonians 3:6-18; Luke 20:19-26
3. Galatians 1:3-10; Luke 12:32-40
4. Ephesians 4:1-6; Luke 17:12-19
5. 1 Timothy 1:1-7; Luke 20:27-44
6. Hebrews 13:17-21; Luke 6:17-23
7. 1 Tim. 1:18-20, 2:8-15; Luke 21:5-7, 10-11, 20-24
8. 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Luke 21:28-33
9. 1 Timothy 4:4-8, 16; Luke 21:37-22:8
10. Galatians 3:8-12; Luke 13:18-29
11. Colossians 3:4-11; Luke 14:16-24
12. 1 Timothy 5:1-10; Mark 8:11-21
13. Galatians 5:22-6:2; Luke 6:17-23
14. 1 Timothy 5:22-6:11; Mark 8:30-34
15. 1 Timothy 6:17-21; Mark 9:10-16

16. 2 Timothy 1:1-2, 8-18; Mark 9:33-41
17. Galatians 5:22-6:2; Luke 14:1-11
18. Heb. 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40; Matthew 1:1-25
19. 2 Timothy 2:20-26; Mark 9:42-10:1
20. 2 Timothy 3:16-4:4; Mark 10:2-12
21. 2 Timothy 4:9-22; Mark 10:11-16
22. Titus 1:5-2:1; Mark 10:17-27
23. Titus 1:15-2:10; Mark 10:23-32
24. Galatians 3:8-12; Luke 13:18-29
25. Galatians 4:4-7; Matthew 2:1-12
26. Hebrews 2:11-18; Matthew 2:13-23
27. Acts 6:8-15; 7:1-5, 47-60; Matthew 21:33-42
28. Hebrews 5:11-6:8; Mark 11:22-26
29. Hebrews 7:1-6; Mark 11:27-33
30. Hebrews 7:18-25; Mark 12:1-12
31. Ephesians 2:11-13; Luke 17:3-10

Remember to support the parish every time you shop!

ShopRite, Stop & Shop, and Acme gifts cards available for purchase in the church vestibule.

