

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

For a long while, I have been alarmed at what I have referred to as the pending “cultural suicide of Western Civilization,” i.e., the abandonment of Western Civilization’s Judaeo-Christian and Graeco-Roman cultural heritage in favor of secular multiculturalism. I am not alone – e.g., similar concerns have appeared in publications such as *The National Review*. Today there are unprecedented numbers of foreign nationals living in Western countries, with many doing so illegally. However, in our universities and bureaucracies, the pressures to assimilate in melting-pot fashion have been replaced by “salad-bowl” separatism — as if the individual can pick and choose which elements of his adopted culture he will embrace, which he will reject, as one might croutons or tomatoes in a salad. But ultimately he can do that because he senses that Western peoples, governments, institutions, and media reward such opportunism and have no desire, need, or ability to defend the very inherited culture that has given the leeway to ignore it, and so attracted others from otherwise antithetical paradigms. That is a prescription for cultural suicide. More alarmingly, however, there is also broader phenomenon of arrested development, indicative of a possibly causal relationship, underlying this rush towards cultural suicide, which Dr. Simon Gottschalk, Professor Emeritus of Sociology at the University of Nevada, has termed the “infantilization of the West,” as he argues in his book *The Terminal Self* (Routledge, 2018). Dr. Gottschalk’s thesis, and his disquieting conclusions, may be summarized as follows.

The dictionary defines infantilizing as treating someone “as a child or in a way that denies their maturity in age or experience.” What’s considered age-appropriate or mature is obviously quite relative. But most societies and cultures will deem behaviors appropriate for some stages of life, but not others. As the Bible puts it in 1 Corinthians 13:11, “When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me.” Some psychologists will be quick to note that not everyone puts their “childish ways” behind them. You can become fixated at a particular stage of development and fail to reach an age-appropriate level of maturity. When facing

unmanageable stress or trauma, you can even regress to a previous stage of development; e.g., psychologist Abraham Maslow suggested that spontaneous childlike behaviors in adults are not inherently problematic.

But some cultural practices today routinely infantilize large swaths of the population. We see it in our everyday speech, when we refer to grown women as “girls;” in how we treat senior citizens, when we place them in adult care centers where they’re forced to surrender their autonomy and privacy; and in the way school personnel and parents treat teenagers, refusing to acknowledge their intelligence and need for autonomy, restricting their freedom, and limiting their ability to enter the workforce. Can entire societies succumb to infantilization? Frankfurt School scholars such as Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm, and other critical theorists suggest that – like individuals – a society can also suffer from arrested development. In their view, adults’ failure to reach emotional, social, or cognitive maturity is not due to individual shortcomings. Rather, it is socially engineered. While visiting America in 1946, French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss commented on the endearingly infantile traits of American culture. He especially noted adults’ childish adulation of baseball, their passionate approach to toy-like cars, and the amount of time they invested in hobbies. As contemporary scholars note, however, this “infantilist ethos” has become less charming – and more pervasive. Researchers on both sides of the Atlantic have observed how this ethos has now crept into a vast range of social spheres.

In many workplaces, managers can now electronically monitor their employees, many of whom work in open spaces with little personal privacy. As sociologist Gary T. Marx observed, it creates a situation in which workers feel that managers expect them “to behave irresponsibly, to take advantage, and to screw up unless they remove all temptation, prevent them from doing so, or trick or force them to do otherwise.” Much has been written about higher education’s tendency to infantilize its students, whether it’s through monitoring their social media accounts, guiding their every step, promoting “safe spaces” on campus, or making entire campuses tobacco-free. Meanwhile, tourist destinations like Las Vegas market excess, indulgence, and freedom from responsibility in casino environments that conjure memories of childhood fantasies: the Old West, medieval castles, and the circus, and so forth. Scholars have also explored how this form of Las Vegas-style “Disneyfication” has left its stamp on planned communities, architecture, and contemporary art. Then we’ve witnessed the rise of a “therapy culture,” which, as sociologist Frank Furedi warns, treats adults as vulnerable, weak, and fragile, while implying that their troubles rooted in childhood qualify them for a “permanent suspension of moral sense.” He argues that this absolves grown-ups from adult responsibilities and erodes their trust in their own experiences and insights.

Researchers in Russia and Spain have even identified infantilist trends in language, and French sociologist Jacqueline Barus-Michel observes that we now communicate in “flashes,” rather than via thoughtful discourse – “poorer, binary, similar to computer language, and aiming to shock.” Others have noted similar trends in popular culture – in the shorter sentences in contemporary novels, in the lack of sophistication in political rhetoric and in sensationalist cable news coverage. While scholars such as James Côté and Gary Cross remind us that infantilizing trends began well before our current moment, our daily interactions with smartphones and social media are so pleasurable precisely because they normalize and gratify infantile dispositions. They endorse self-centeredness and inflated exhibitionism. They promote an orientation towards the present, rewarding impulsivity and celebrating constant and instant gratification. They flatter our needs for visibility and provide us with 24/7 personalized attention, while eroding our ability to empathize with others.

Whether we use them for work or pleasure, our devices also foster a submissive attitude. In order to take advantage of all they offer, we have to surrender to their requirements, agreeing to “terms” we do not understand and handing over stores of personal data. Indeed, the routine and aggressive ways our devices violate our privacy via surveillance automatically deprive us of this fundamental adult right. While we might find it trivial or amusing, the infantilist ethos becomes especially seductive in times of social

crises and fear. And its favoring of the simple, the easy, and the fast betrays natural affinities for certain social solutions over others. And typically not intelligent ones.

Intelligent policy-making requires debate, demands compromise, and involves critical thinking. It entails considering different viewpoints, anticipating the future, and composing thoughtful legislation. What is a fast, easy, and simple alternative to this political process? It is not difficult to imagine an infantile society being attracted to authoritarian rule. Unfortunately, our social institutions and technological devices seem to erode hallmarks of maturity: patience, empathy, solidarity, humility, and commitment to a project greater than oneself – an erosion which has been profoundly exacerbated by what some social scientists have termed the “great dechurching” of the West. All are qualities that have traditionally been considered essential for both healthy adulthood and for the proper functioning of democracy.

Excerpt from the Church Fathers

"That one woman is both mother and virgin, not in spirit only but even in body. In spirit she is mother, not of our head, who is our Savior himself--of whom all, even she herself, are rightly called children of the bridegroom--but plainly she is the mother of us who are his members, because by love she has cooperated so that the faithful, who are the members of that head, might be born in the Church. In body, indeed, she is the Mother of that very head."

— St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430)

Lives of the Saints

St. Justina of Padua, Virgin-martyr – commemorated on October 7th

St. Justina of Padua was a virgin of noble birth, born in Padua, Italy about the middle of the first century. Her father, Vitalian, was a rich nobleman and prefect of Padua. Her parents were converted to Christianity by the preaching of St. Prosdocimus, first bishop of Padua, and not having been blessed with children up to that time, they received Justina in answer to their prayer.

St. Justina was devoted to religion from her earliest years and ultimately she took the vow of perpetual virginity. At this time arose the persecutions of the Christians by Emperor Nero, and Maximian the prefect who had succeeded Vitalian, proved himself particularly brutal. As St. Justina would visit the prisons to comfort and encourage the Christians there, Maximian ordered her arrest. While she was passing by the Pont Marin near Padua she was seized by the soldiers. When she was brought before Maximian he was struck by her beauty and endeavored by every means to shake her constancy. However, she remained firm against all attacks and the prefect caused her to be slain with the sword.

Medieval texts describe her as a disciple of St. Peter the Apostle since St. Prosdocimus, the first bishop of Padua, is said to have been St. Justina's teacher; his hagiography states that he was sent from Antioch by Peter. St. Justina is a patron saint of Padua. After St. Mark, she is also a second patroness of Venice. Her feast day is October 7 and coincided with the end of the grape harvest and the time for settling agricultural contracts. St. Justina is represented in iconography as a maiden with a crown, palm, and sword; or a maiden with a palm, book, and a sword in her breast; or a maiden with a unicorn, symbolizing virginity, and a palm. She is also sometimes depicted together with St. Prosdocimus.

In the sixth century the Paduans dedicated a church to her and she was among the virgin martyrs portrayed in the presbytery arch in the Euphrasian Basilica and in the procession of virgins in Sant'Apollinare Nuovo. In the seventh century, Venantius Fortunatus, writing in Gaul, urged travelers to Padua to visit her relics there. The Paduan Basilica and Abbey of Santa Giustina house the *Martyrdom of St. Justina* by Paolo Veronese. The Abbey complex was founded in the fifth century on St. Justina's tomb, and

in the fifteenth century became one of the most important monasteries in the area, until it was suppressed by Napoleon in 1810. In 1919 the Abbey was reopened. The tombs of several saints are housed in the interior, including those of Ss. Justina, Prosdocimus, Maximus, Urius, Felicitas, and Julian, as well as relics of the Ss. Matthias the Apostle and Luke the Evangelist.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do Eastern Christians cross themselves from right to left?

Eastern Christians cross themselves from right to left, while Western Christians cross themselves from left to right. Eastern Christians make the sign of the cross from right to left to mirror the actions of the priest when he blesses them. The priest blesses from left to right while looking at the parishioners. Therefore, the parishioners put on the sign of the cross on themselves from right to left. The right-to-left action still used in the East was universal for the whole Church until about the twelfth century, according to the *Catholic Encyclopedia*. In the thirteenth century, Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) indicated a shift was beginning to occur. He said right to left signified that the faith extended from the Jews (right) to the Gentiles (left). But, he continued, others reverse the order because a Christian moves from “misery” (left) to “glory” (right) “just as Christ crossed over from death to life.” Another late medieval explanation said Jesus suffered for us (left) and then ascended to heaven (the preferred right).

Because the Lord separated the sheep from the goats (Matthew 25:33), putting the faithful sheep on His right side, and the goats on the left, the Church always treats the right side as the preferred side. We only cross ourselves with our right hand. The priest, when blessing a person, first touches or points to their right side, then their left. Also the censing of the Holy Table in the Altar is always done from the right side first; censing of the iconostasis, the Congregation and of the Church itself always begins with the right side. The priest always gives communion with his right hand, even if he is left-handed. There are other examples of this right side preference.

Another aspect of this tradition is the positions of the fingers of the hand. Eastern Christians place the thumb and first two fingers together to form a point, while the remaining two fingers are placed against the palm. The three represent the one God in three persons of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Believers usually invoke these names of the Trinity, either audibly or mentally, when they make the sign. The two fingers represent the two natures in Jesus Christ, divine and human. In the West, for some reason, that largely changed to use of the full hand.

Recipe of the Month

Itriya

Itriya is a traditional Sicilian dried pasta dish that was possibly brought to Sicily by the Arabs in the Middle Ages. The name “Itriya” is derived from Latin, “itrium,” which referred to boiled dough. Muhammad al-Idrisi¹ wrote in 1154 that itriyya was manufactured and exported from Norman Sicily. A dried pasta recipe by the same name is found in the cookbook “Kitab al-Tabikh,” written in Baghdad in 1226.

Ingredients:

- ½ lb. of lamb or beef shoulder
- 2 onions
- 2 cinnamon sticks

¹ Muhammed al-Idrisi (1100-1165) was a Muslim geographer and cartographer who served in the court of King Roger II at Palermo, Sicily. Born in Ceuta, Morocco, he created the *Tabula Rogeriana*, one of the most advanced medieval world maps.

- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 teaspoons coriander powder
- 1 teaspoon mastic powder
- 2 teaspoons ground black pepper
- 3 chard stalks
- ¼ cup rice
- 7 ounces chickpeas
- 4 ounces dried pasta
- ½ teaspoon cumin powder
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon powder

Directions:

1. Cut the meat into bite-sized pieces. Heat some butter in a frying pan. Fry the meat on all sides over high heat until brown. Put the meat in a casserole.
2. Clean and roughly chop the onions. Fry them in the remaining fat in the pan, then add them into the casserole. Add salt, coriander, mastic powder, and black pepper. Add water to just cover the meat and bring to a boil, then lower the heat and let it simmer for about one and a half hours until tender.
3. Clean the chard and cut the stalks into thin strips. Chop the leaves coarsely. Add to the casserole. Add rice and chickpeas too, and simmer gently for ten minutes. Finally, add the pasta and let it simmer for another fifteen minutes.
4. Server the Itriya in a bowl with a sprinkle of cumin and cinnamon.

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 November to be acknowledged in "Quo Vadis," the donation must be recorded in the Special Donations register in the church vestibule by October 22, 2023.

October 1, 2023

Altar Vigils and **Sacramental Bread** offered by Stephen Wasilewski in honor of Tatiana Julia Wasilewski's seventh birthday. **Sanctuary Lamp** offered by Fr. W. Sophrony Royer in memory of Omer J. Royer.

October 8, 2023

Sanctuary Lamp offered by John & Helen Wanko in memory of Helen Grudinoff (anniversary of birth). **Triple Candelabra** offered by Fr. W. Sophrony Royer in memory of Rt. Rev. Bishop Gregory (Grabbe).

October 15, 2023

Sanctuary Lamp offered by Wasilewski Family in memory of Anna Wasilewski (anniversary of repose).

October 22, 2023

Sanctuary Lamp offered by John & Helen Wanko in memory of Stephen Brelinsky (anniversary of repose).

October 29, 2023

Sanctuary Lamp offered by John & Helen Wanko in memory of Helen Grudinoff (anniversary of repose). **Triple Candelabra** offered by Fr. W. Sophrony Royer in memory of Lewis Cusano (15th anniversary of repose).

Parish News

Parish Council Meeting

Parish Council is meeting in the church hall on Sunday, October 15, 2023 after Divine Liturgy.

Social Hour

On October 15th we will resume having parish social hour after Sunday Divine Liturgy. Once a month the parish council will sponsor, but the Sundays in between we need parishioners to do so, for which there is a sign-up sheet in the vestibule. On Sundays in which there is no sponsor, there will not be a social hour.

College Students Sunday

The Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America has designated October 1, 2023 as College Student Sunday. On this day, Orthodox parishes will recognize and honor Orthodox college students and take a special collection to support the ministry to students of Orthodox Christian Fellowship.

Schedule of Services

September 30-October 1, 2023

5:00 PM (Saturday) – Great Vespers w. Lity
9:30 AM (Sunday) – Divine Liturgy

October 7-8, 2023

5:00 PM (Saturday) – Great Vespers
9:30 AM (Sunday) – Divine Liturgy

October 14-15, 2023

5:00 PM (Saturday) – Great Vespers
9:30 AM (Sunday) – Divine Liturgy

October 21-22, 2023

5:00 PM (Saturday) – Great Vespers
9:30 AM (Sunday) – Divine Liturgy

October 28-29, 2023

5:00 PM (Saturday) – Great Vespers
9:30 AM (Sunday) – Divine Liturgy

Daily Bible Readings

1. 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1; Luke 6:31-36
2. Ephesians 4:25-32; Luke 6:24-30
3. Ephesians 5:20-26; Luke 6:37-45
4. Ephesians 5:25-33; Luke 6:46-7:1
5. Ephesians 5:33-6:9; Luke 7:17-30
6. Ephesians 6:18-24; Luke 7:31-35
7. 1 Corinthians 15:39-45; Luke 5:27-32
8. 2 Corinthians 9:6-11; Luke 7:11-16
9. Philippians 1:1-7; Luke 7:36-50
10. Philippians 1:8-14; Luke 8:1-3
11. Philippians 1:12-20; Luke 8:22-25
12. Philippians 1:20-27; Luke 9:7-11
13. Philippians 1:27-2:4; Luke 9:12-18
14. 1 Corinthians 15:58-16:3; Luke 6:1-10
15. 2 Corinthians 11:31-12:9; Luke 8:5-15
16. Philippians 2:12-16; Luke 9:18-22
17. Philippians 2:17-23; Luke 9:23-27
18. Philippians 2:24-30; Luke 9:44-50
19. Philippians 3:1-8; Luke 9:49-56
20. Philippians 3:8-19; Luke 10:1-15
21. 2 Corinthians 1:8-11; Luke 7:1-10
22. Galatians 1:11-19; Luke 16:19-31
23. Philippians 4:10-23; Luke 10:22-24
24. Colossians 1:1-2, 7-11; Luke 11:1-10
25. Colossians 1:18-23; Luke 11:9-13
26. Colossians 1:24-29; Luke 11:14-23
27. Colossians 2:1-7; Luke 11:23-26
28. 2 Corinthians 3:12-18; Luke 8:16-21
29. Galatians 2:16-20; Luke 8:26-39
30. Colossians 2:13-20; Luke 11:29-33
31. Colossians 2:20-3:3; Luke 11:34-41

**Remember to support the
parish every time you shop!**



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