

# 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 birth of Christ, the Virgin Mary complied with this precept of the Law. She redeemed her first-born from the temple and was purified by the prayer of St. Simeon the just in the presence of Anna the prophetess (see Luke 2:22). No doubt this event, the first solemn introduction of Christ into the house of God, was celebrated in the early Church in Jerusalem. We find it attested to in the first half of the fourth century by the pilgrim of Bordeaux, Egeria (also known as Silvia). The day of February 14 was solemnly kept by a procession to the Constantinian Basilica of the Holy Resurrection and the Divine Liturgy included a homily on Luke 2:22. At that time, the feast had no proper name; it was simply called the “fortieth day after Epiphany.” This latter circumstance shows that, in Jerusalem, Epiphany was when the feast of Christ’s birth was celebrated (as it still is in the Armenian Church). From Jerusalem the “feast of the fortieth day” spread throughout the entire Church and later was kept on February 2, since it was only within the last twenty-five years of the fourth century that the Roman feast of Christ’s Nativity on December 25, originally adopted by the Council of Nicaea (325), came to be widely followed in the East.

The feast appears in the *Gelasian Decree* under the title of Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, but the procession is not mentioned. Pope Sergius I (687-701), a Syrian, introduced a procession for this day. The feast spread slowly in the West; e.g., it is not found in the Lectionary of Silos (AD 650) nor in the Calendar (AD 731-741) of Sainte-Genevieve of Paris. In the East it was originally celebrated as a feast of the Lord; in the West, and in later Eastern tradition, it came to be celebrated as a feast of Mary, although the *Invitatorium*<sup>1</sup> (“Gaude et laetare, Jerusalem, occurrens Deo tuo”—“Rejoice and be glad, O Jerusalem, to meet thy God”), the antiphons, and responsories of the Roman Mass remind us of its original conception as a feast of the Lord, just as does the kontakion in the Byzantine Liturgy, whereas the troparion indicates that it is a Marian feast.

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<sup>1</sup> The *invitatorium* is used to start Nocturns in the Roman Rite’s Liturgy of the Hours.

The Eastern tradition of blessing candles did not enter into widespread use in the West before the eleventh century. The same was true at first of the custom of a procession after the blessing of candles, which had its origins in Jerusalem, wherein the participants carry lighted candles as the choir sings the antiphon “Adorna thalamum tuum, Sion” (“Adorn the bridal chamber, O Zion”) composed by St. John of Damascus, one of the few pieces for which the words and music have been borrowed by the Roman Church from the Greeks. The solemn procession represents the entry of Jesus Christ, Who is the light of the world, into the Temple of Jerusalem. In the Orthodox Church, both male and female babies are taken to the Church on the fortieth day after their birth and carried to the altar. This is done in remembrance of the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph taking the infant Jesus to the Temple (conventionally, this is now usually done following the infant’s baptism and chrismation).

## **Excerpt from the Church Fathers**

*“The Mother of God, the most pure Virgin, carried the true light in her arms and brought him to those who lay in darkness. We too should carry a light for all to see and reflect the radiance of the true light as we hasten to meet him ... The light has come and has shone upon a world enveloped in shadows; the Dayspring from on high has visited us and given light to those who lived in darkness. This, then, is our feast, and we join in procession with lighted candles to reveal the light that has shone upon us and the glory that is yet to come to us through him. So let us hasten all together to meet our God.”*

— St. Sophronius of Jerusalem (560-638).

## **Lives of the Saints**

*St. Meletius of Antioch, Bishop – commemorated on February 12th*

St. Meletius was born at Melitene in Lesser Armenia of wealthy and noble parents. He first appears around 357 as a supporter of Acacius, Bishop of Caesarea, the leader of that local faction that supported the Homoean formula, which says that the Son is like the Father without reference to essence or substance. In contrast, the Homoiousians held that God and Jesus Christ are of like essence and the Homoousians that they are, as stated in the Nicene Creed, of the same essence. St. Meletius thus first appears as an ecclesiastic of the court party, and as such became Bishop of Sebaste in succession to Eustathius. The appointment was resented by the Homoousian (Nicene) clergy, and St. Meletius resigned the see.

According to Socrates Scholasticus, St. Meletius attended the synod of Seleucia in the autumn of 359, and subscribed to the Acacian (Homoean) formula. Early in 360 he became Bishop of Antioch, succeeding Eudoxius, who had been transferred to the see of Constantinople. Early the following year (361), he was sent into exile. According to an old tradition, supported by evidence drawn from Ss. Epiphanius of Cyprus and John Chrysostom, this was due to a sermon preached before Emperor Constantius II, in which he revealed Homoousian (Nicene) views.

The successor of St. Meletius was Euzoeus, an Arian heretic. In Antioch itself St. Meletius continued to have adherents, who held separate services in the apostolic church in the old town. The Meletian Schism was complicated, moreover, by the presence in the city of another anti-Arian sect, stricter adherents of the Homoousian (Nicene) formula, maintaining the tradition of the deposed bishop Eustathius and governed at this time. The synod of Alexandria in 362 sent deputies to attempt an arrangement between the two anti-Arian churches; but before they arrived the presbyter Paulinus had been consecrated bishop by Lucifer of Cagliari. When in consequence of Emperor Julian's contemptuous policy St. Meletius returned, he found himself as one of three rival bishops.

St. Athanasius of Alexandria came to Antioch by order of the Emperor, and expressed to St. Meletius his wish of entering into communion with him. St. Meletius, ill-advised, delayed answering him, and St. Athanasius went away having admitted Paulinus, whom he had not yet recognized as bishop, to his communion. The orthodox Nicene party, notably St. Athanasius himself, held communion with Paulinus only. Twice, in 365 and 371 or 372, St. Meletius was exiled by decree of the Arian Emperor Valens. A further complication was added when, in 375, Vitalius, one of St. Meletius' presbyters, was consecrated bishop by the heretical bishop Apollinaris of Laodicea. After the death of Valens in 378, the Western Emperor Gratian removed Euzoeus from Antioch, handing over the churches to St. Meletius. Theodosius I, the new emperor in the East, also favored St. Meletius, who had been increasingly adhering to the views of the Nicene Creed.

Upon his return to Antioch, St. Meletius was hailed as the leader of orthodoxy. As such he presided in October 379 over the great synod of Antioch, in which the dogmatic agreement of East and West was established. He helped St. Gregory Nazianzus to the see of Constantinople and also presided over the First Council of Constantinople, the Second Ecumenical Council, in 381. The rival bishop Paulinus, however, was favored by Rome and Alexandria, and St. Jerome accompanied Paulinus back to Rome in order to secure him more support. Meanwhile, St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, was dealing with Arians in the West. He persuaded Emperor Gratian to call a church synod. The Council of Aquileia (381) deposed two bishops of the eastern province of Dacia, Palladius of Ratiaria and Secundianus of Singidunum, and requested the Emperors Theodosius and Gratian to convene at Alexandria a general council of all bishops in order to put an end to the "Meletian Schism" at Antioch.

The two remaining factions which divided the Antiochene Church were orthodox, the supporters of St. Meletius and the adherents of Paulinus. Uniting them was a difficult move. A temporary peace ensued, when six of the leading presbyters took an oath not to seek episcopal consecration themselves but to accept as Bishop of Antioch whichever of the two rivals outlived the other. St. Meletius died soon after the opening of the First Council of Constantinople and Emperor Theodosius I, who had received him with special distinction, ordered his body to be carried to Antioch and buried with the honors of a saint. The Meletian Schism, however, did not end immediately with his death. Despite of the advice of St. Gregory Nazianzus, Paulinus was not recognized as the sole bishop and St. Flavian was consecrated as St. Meletius' successor. The Eustathians, on the other hand, elected Evagrius as bishop on Paulinus' death in 388. In 399, St. John Chrysostom, who had been ordained a deacon by St. Meletius, but later separated from his group and accepted ordination to the priesthood at the hands of Evagrius, secured reconciliation between Flavian and the sees of Alexandria and Rome. However, it would take the Eustathians at Antioch until 415 to accept St. Flavian.

St. Meletius of Antioch was renowned for his remarkable asceticism despite his great private wealth. He is venerated as a saint and confessor in the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Oriental Orthodox Church. His feast day is 12 February.

## Frequently Asked Questions

*What is original sin? Is it Biblical? How does the Eastern Orthodox view differ from Roman Catholicism?*

The doctrine of original sin is the belief that all human beings are born into a fallen state, having inherited consequences of the first sin committed by Adam and Eve. Both the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church recognize that this doctrine is rooted in the Scriptures and the teachings of the Church Fathers, but they have different understandings of its implications.

The Biblical basis for the belief is generally found in Genesis 3 (the story of the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden), in Psalm 51:5 ("I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me"), and in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, 5:12-21 ("Therefore, just as sin entered the world through

one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned"). Original Sin is understood not as a state of personal sin, but simply that of our natural state, i.e., the state of the human person left solely to his own natural abilities.

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that everyone is born with original sin, which deprives them of the original holiness and justice that God intended for them. This means that human nature is wounded by sin and inclined to sin. The only way to be freed from original sin and its effects is through baptism, which restores the grace of God in the soul and makes one a member of the Church. The Roman Catholic Church also teaches that the Virgin Mary was preserved from original sin by a special privilege of God at her conception, so that she remained sinless throughout her life. This is known as the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

The Eastern Orthodox Church generally prefers to speak of "ancestral sin" rather than "original sin." The Eastern Orthodox Church believes that while everyone inherits the consequences of the first sin, such as death, suffering, and corruption, only Adam and Eve are guilty of that sin. Eastern Orthodoxy does not accept the idea that human nature is totally corrupted or depraved by sin, which is the view of some Protestants, but rather that human nature is weakened and distorted. The Eastern Orthodox Church also does not accept the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, but venerates the Virgin Mary as "all-holy and most pure" (i.e., sinless), who cooperated fully with God's grace. Eastern Orthodoxy views baptism not only as a cleansing from sin, but also as a new birth (or regeneration) into the life of Christ and the Church.

Therefore, the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church have different perspectives on the doctrine of original sin, but they both agree that sin is a serious problem that affects all human beings, and that only through Jesus Christ and His Church can we find salvation and healing.

## Recipe of the Month

### Hungarian Mushroom Soup

*Traditionally, Hungarian mushroom soup is a super satisfying, rich and robust soup made with mushrooms, paprika, and a creamy base. By sauteing the onions, garlic, and mushrooms in butter, you'll release so much great flavor that has nowhere to go but into the soup. This is a simple mushroom soup recipe packed with flavor in every bite. Just one taste, and you'll have a new favorite soup!*

#### **Ingredients:**

- 2 tablespoons Butter
- 1 Small White Onion (finely chopped)
- 1 clove Garlic (finely chopped)
- 1 pound Button Mushrooms (sliced)
- 3 tablespoons Plain Flour
- 2½ teaspoons Hungarian Sweet Paprika
- ½ cup White Wine
- 1¼ cups Vegetable or Chicken Stock
- 3 tablespoons Light Soy Sauce
- 1 cup 2% Milk
- 3 tablespoons Sour Cream
- 3 teaspoons Dried Dill
- ½ Lemon (Juice of)
- Salt and Pepper, to taste
- 1½ tablespoons Parsley (chopped)

## Directions:

(1) In a large pan, sauté the onions and garlic in butter over medium-high heat until soft, then add the mushrooms and cook for another 2 minutes.

(2) When the mushrooms start to soften, sprinkle with flour and paprika and mix in well.

(3) Next, add the white wine and scrape up any bits of flour and paprika stuck to the base of the pan. Then gradually add the stock, milk, and soy sauce, and stir continually, until the soup starts to boil and thicken.

(4) Take the soup off the heat and allow it to cool slightly before adding the sour cream, then stir in well.

*IMPORTANT NOTE: adding the sour cream while still on the heat will cause it to curdle!*

(5) Add the lemon juice, dill, and seasoning to taste. Serve with freshly chopped parsley and extra dollops of sour cream (optional).

## Schedule of Services

### February 1-2, 2024 [Presentation of Our Lord]

6:00 PM (Thursday) – Great Vespers w. Lity

9:30 AM (Friday) – Divine Liturgy

### February 3-4, 2024

5:00 PM (Saturday) – Great Vespers

9:30 AM (Sunday) – Divine Liturgy

### February 10-11, 2024

5:00 PM (Saturday) – Great Vespers

9:30 AM (Sunday) – Divine Liturgy

### February 17-18, 2024

5:00 PM (Saturday) – Great Vespers

9:30 AM (Sunday) – Divine Liturgy

### February 24-25, 2024

5:00 PM (Saturday) – Great Vespers

9:30 AM (Sunday) – Divine Liturgy

## Daily Bible Readings

1. Hebrews 10:35-11:7; Mark 9:10-16

2. Hebrews 7:7-17; Luke 2:22-40

3. Ephesians 5:1-8; Luke 14:1-11

4. Colossians 3:12-16; Matthew 25:14-30

5. Hebrews 11:17-23, 27-31; Mark 9:42-10:1

6. Hebrews 12:25-26, 13:22-25; Mark 10:2-12

7. James 1:1-18; Mark 10:11-16

8. James 1:19-27; Mark 10:17-27

9. James 2:1-13; Mark 10:23-32

10. Colossians 1:3-6; Luke 16:10-15

11. 1 Timothy 1:15-17; Matthew 15:21-28

12. James 2:14-26; Mark 10:46-52

13. James 3:1-10; Mark 11:11-23

14. James 3:11-4:6; Mark 11:22-26

15. James 4:7-5:9; Mark 11:27-33

16. 1 Peter 1:1-2, 10-12, 2:6-10; Mark 12:1-12

17. 1 Thessalonians 5:14-23; Luke 17:3-10

18. 1 Timothy 4:9-15; Luke 19:1-10

19. 1 Peter 2:21-3:9; Mark 12:13-17

20. 1 Peter 3:10-22; Mark 12:18-27

21. 1 Peter 4:1-11; Mark 12:28-37

22. 1 Peter 4:12-5:5; Mark 12:38-44

23. 2 Peter 1:1-10; Mark 13:1-8

24. 2 Timothy 2:11-19; Luke 18:2-8

25. 2 Timothy 3:10-15; Luke 18:10-14

26. 2 Peter 1:20-2:9; Mark 13:9-13

27. 2 Peter 2:9-22; Mark 13:14-23

28. 2 Peter 3:1-18; Mark 13:24-31

29. 1 John 1:8-2:6; Mark 13:31-14:2

## Special Donations

*Special Donations may be offered at \$15 for the Altar Vigils, \$10 for the Sanctuary Lamp, and \$5 for any one of the following: 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 March to be acknowledged in "Quo Vadis," the donation must be recorded in the Special Donations register in the church vestibule by February 25, 2024.*

February 4, 2024

**St. John's Cross** offered by Fr. W. Sophrony Royer in memory of Archpriest John Udics. **St. Nicholas' Cross** offered by Fr. W. Sophrony Royer in memory of Archimandrite Athanasy Mastalski.

February 11, 2024

**St. John's Cross** offered by Fr. W. Sophrony Royer in memory of Ernest Alexander Royer. **St. Nicholas' Cross** offered by Fr. W. Sophrony Royer in memory of Rev. Thomas Sheridan, S.J.

February 18, 2024

**St. John's Cross** and **St. Nicholas' Cross** offered by the Wasilewski Family in memory of Julia Wasilewski. **Triple Candelabra** offered by Fr. W. Sophrony Royer in memory of Rita Richards.

## Parish News

### "Souper Bowl" Project

Our parish is collection of cans of soup and other non-perishable foods for donation to a local food pantry concludes on February 11, 2024. Here's an idea to help both our parish and the needy: buy one of the grocery store gift cards from the church and use it to buy the non-perishable foods.

### Special Collection for Alaskan Clergy

On the first two Sundays of February there shall be special collections for the benefit of the Alaskan Clergy. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

### Parish Council Meeting

Parish Council is meeting in the church hall on Sunday, February 18, 2024 after Divine Liturgy.

### Roast Pork Dinner

The Carpathian Club is sponsoring a roast pork dinner to be held in our church hall after Divine Liturgy on Sunday, February 25, 2024. There will also be a "tricky tray." Tickets are \$30 per person.

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



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