

Quo Vadis

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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

Christ is Risen! Indeed, He is Risen! Христос воскрес! Воистину воскрес!

“He has risen.” – Matthew 28:6

This year’s unusual and anxious Lenten journey has left many of us unready to sing “Christ is Risen!” Never could we have imagined that this Lent would be one of virtual Liturgies, of the inability to receive sacraments and of social distancing from our community. Never could we have imagined that so many would fall ill to coronavirus, COVID-19, and even succumb to it. It is difficult to sing a joyful song in the midst of all of this loss. But let us remember those on the front line – first responders and healthcare workers, our heroes, truly men and women for others for whom we are so grateful. Yet, this is precisely what our faith draws forth from us. For on the darkest of nights the light of Christ pierces the darkness with a flame of hope that lifts up our sullen spirits and points our hearts to the Risen One. Loss gives birth to gain, death rises to life and the sealed tomb opens up to let in the bright promise of a brand-new day. And, indeed, we sing, “Christ is Risen!”

I believe that this Bright and Holy Pascha Our Risen Lord invites us into a friendship with Him; one predicated on intimacy, tenderness, and mercy. Let us imagine this Lord and Savior emerging from the tomb with light radiating all around him and his voice clearly calling out our names. This Easter, Christ desires that we be His companions in the world with a mission that has its roots in the vision of the Holy Apostles and all the missionary saints, such as St. Herman of Alaska (who was canonized fifty years ago on August 9, 1970): inviting others to trust, believe, and hope anew in the light of Christ. In closing, I would like to thank our parishioners and friends for their constant prayers and incredible generosity toward our church’s mission of worshipping God in an Orthodox manner, and proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ, crucified and risen from the dead, to a world all too often afflicted by sin, suffering and death. The epidemic has greatly affected Ss. Peter and Paul’s, and every other house of worship around

the world, but thanks to each of you, we can move forward from this time of sorrow and isolation, remaining resilient and ever so grateful for your continued love and concern, even if it be from a distance.

Parish Council President's Message

Greetings to our parishioners and friends:

Christ is Risen! Indeed, He is Risen! This Easter was much different from any other we have celebrated in the past. With the coronavirus wreaking havoc all around the world, it is bringing out the very best in people who are extending their services and risking their lives to help others.

We had to prepare ourselves, with our families, to observe Easter in silence and with prayers in order to celebrate the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ. He liberated us from the bondage of sin, and gave us faith in everlasting life after death. Christ suffered, died, and was buried, and rose on the third day, so that we may find salvation in Him.

On May 28th we will be observing Ascension, the ascent of Our Lord from earth to heaven, in the presence of His apostles, which takes place forty days after the resurrection. We can read about it in Acts 1:6-12: "Then they gathered around Him and asked Him, 'Lord are you going to restore the Kingdom of Israel?' He said to them, 'It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' After He said this, He was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid Him from their sight." Through His ascension, Christ took His seat at the right hand of God.

Ten days after Ascension is Pentecost, which we will observe this year on June 7th. Pentecost commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, and those with them, who were present in the Upper Room in Jerusalem. This represents the birth of the Church. Allow me to offer to you a prayer I say on Pentecost:

Grant, we pray, Almighty Ever-living God, that the splendor of Your Glory may shine forth upon us and that, by the bright rays of the Holy Spirit, the light of Your Light may confirm the hearts of those born again by Your Grace, through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever. Amen.

Yours in the Risen Lord,
Robert Pierce

Lives of the Saints

Ss. Flavia Domitilla and Petronilla, Martyrs – commemorated on May 12th and May 31st

St. Flavia Domitilla, born c. AD 65 in Rome, was the daughter of Domitilla the Younger by an unknown father, perhaps Quintus Petillius Cerialis, and had the same name as her mother and her grandmother Domitilla the Elder. She was thus a granddaughter of Emperor Vespasian (reigned 69-79) and a niece of Emperors Titus (reigned 79-81) and Domitian (reigned 81-96). She married her cousin, the consul Titus Flavius Clemens,¹ a grand-nephew of Vespasian through his father Titus Flavius Sabinus

¹ Titus Flavius Clemens, Flavia Domitilla's husband, was a cousin of Emperor Domitian, with whom he served as consul from January to April in AD 95. Shortly after leaving the consulship, Clemens was executed. According to historian Cassius Dio, Clemens was put to death on a charge of "atheism," for which, he adds, many others who went over to the "Jewish" opinions were executed; that is, Clemens had converted Christianity. For the same reason, his wife was banished to Pandateria. Some have identified him with Pope Clement I (reigned 88-99), the author of an epistle to the Corinthians who died in exile in AD 101, but the first century Pope was, in all probability, a freedman of his.

(consul AD 69). A contemporary inscription indicates that Flavia Domitilla had seven children, who were thus grandnephews and grandnieces of Domitian. The Roman historian Suetonius writes that Domitian designated as the emperor's successors two very young sons of Flavia Domitilla, and changed their names to Domitian and Vespasian. Quintilian, another contemporary, mentions that Domitian had entrusted to Titus Flavius Clemens the tutelage of two grandsons of Domitian's sister, presumably the two boys designated by the emperor as his successors. In spite of having shown them such favor, Domitian had Flavius Clemens executed and Flavia Domitilla banished to an island (presumably Pandateria, now called Ventotene).

In his *Church History*, written at the end of 323 or 324, Eusebius, speaking of "writers who were far from our religion," says that "they recorded that in the fifteenth year of Domitian, Flavia Domitilla, daughter of a sister of Flavius Clemens, who at that time was one of the consuls of Rome, was exiled with many others to the island of Pontia (now called Ponza, a neighboring island to Ventotene) in consequence of testimony borne to Christ." In his *Chronicon*, which survives in a translation by St. Jerome (c. 340–420), Eusebius quotes an earlier writer who gives similar information. Under Year 16 of Domitian in the 218th Olympiad (AD 96, the year of Domitian's assassination), he states: "Brutius writes that there were very many Christian martyrs under Domitian, among whom were Flavia Domitilla, niece (on his sister's side) of Flavius Clemens the consul; she was exiled to the island of Pontia, because she bore witness that she was a Christian." George Syncellus, who died after 810, repeats the statement by Eusebius in his *Chronicon* and adds that Flavius Clemens died for Christ. In quoting Eusebius, Syncellus describes Domitilla as Clement's ἐξαδελφή (*exadelphē*), a term that can mean "cousin" and not only, as Jerome understood it, "niece." Writing of the death in 404 of St. Paula, Jerome says that on her way to the Holy Land, "the vessel touched at the island of Pontia ennobled long since as the place of exile of the illustrious lady Flavia Domitilla who under the Emperor Domitian was banished because she confessed herself a Christian; and Paula, when she saw the cells in which this lady passed the period of her long martyrdom, taking to herself the wings of faith, more than ever desired to see Jerusalem and the holy places."

The information that Eusebius attributes to Brutius about Flavia Domitilla does not agree with what Cassius Dio says of the Flavia Domitilla exiled by Domitian. The Domitilla of Cassius Dio was the *wife* of Flavius Clemens and was exiled to the island of *Pandateria* in the context of persons who "drifted into Jewish ways" [ed. – the Romans of that era would not have distinguished between Jews and Christians]. The Domitilla of Eusebius was the *niece* of Flavius Clemens and was banished to the island of *Pontia* for declaring herself a Christian. The *Acts of Saints Nereus and Achilleus* reflects this inconsistency of identity; it begins by stating that Domitilla was Domitian's niece, but then goes on to speak of her as the consul's niece. Furthermore, it presents Domitilla, not as a wife and mother of seven children but as a formally consecrated Christian virgin, a description that is not found in the writings of Eusebius and Jerome. Some modern scholars have postulated the existence of *two* distinct victims of Domitian, each called Flavia Domitilla, both belonging to the same senatorial family, but it is more likely that Domitian banished only one Flavia Domitilla and that there are errors in the texts of either Cassius Dio or Eusebius. This is likely due to confusion between the geographically close islands of Pontia and Pandateria.

Flavia Domitilla is for the first time included in a list of saints in the ninth-century martyrology of Florus of Lyon, in which there is in her regard a long entry based on the abovementioned *Acts of Saints Nereus and Achilleus*, that puts her feast on May 7th, perhaps because the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum* had on that date a mention of a St. Flavius. The same martyrology mentions her also on May 12th, the feast of Ss. Nereus and Achilleus, saying (again on the basis of these Acts) that these were her eunuchs. The martyrology of Ado of Vienne, in the same century, did the same, but more briefly. The ninth-century Martyrology of Usuard copied that of Ado and was in turn copied by the *Roman Martyrology* of Cardinal Caesar Baronius, who gave credence to the *Acts of Saints Nereus and Achilleus*, and in 1595 succeeded in having Domitilla's name added in the General Roman Calendar to those of Ss. Nereus and Achilleus on their feast, May 12th.

Until the *Roman Martyrology* was completely revised in 2001, it had the following entry under May 7th: "At Terracina, in Campania, the birthday of blessed Flavia Domitilla, virgin and martyr, niece of the Consul Flavius Clemens. She received the religious veil at the hands of St Clement, and in the persecution of Domitian was exiled with many others to the island of Pontia, where she endured a long martyrdom for Christ. Taken afterwards to Terracina, she converted many to the faith of Christ by her teaching and miracles. The judge ordered the chamber in which she was, with the virgins Euphrosyne and Theodora, to be set on fire, and she thus consummated her glorious martyrdom. She is also mentioned with the holy martyrs Nereus and Achilleus, on the 12th of this month."

However, the *Roman Breviary* presents her as the niece not of the Consul Clemens, but of the Emperors Titus and Domitian, and as a virgin, not a wife. Based closely on the *Acts of Saints Nereus and Achilleus*, it said under the date of May 12th: "The Roman virgin Flavia Domitilla, niece of Emperors Titus and Domitian, after receiving the religious veil of virginity at the hands of blessed Pope Clement, was accused by her fiancé Aurelianus, son of Consul Titus Aurelius, of being a Christian and was banished by Emperor Domitian to the island of Pontia, where she underwent a long martyrdom in prison. Finally, she was taken to Terracina and again confessed to being a Christian. She was always shown to be more and more constant and, under the Emperor Trajan, fire was set, by order of the judge, to her room and, together with her foster sisters Theodora and Euphrosyne, she consummated her glorious martyrdom on May 7th. Their bodies were found intact and were buried by the deacon Caesarius. On this day [May 12th] the bodies of the two brothers [Nereus and Achilleus] and Domitilla were brought back from the cardinal-deaconry of St. Adrian to the basilica of these martyrs, the Titulus Fasciolae."²

Thus, there is thus disagreement between the *Roman Breviary* of the Tridentine period and the *Roman Martyrology* of the same period about the identity of St. Flavia Domitilla. Since 2001, the *Roman Martyrology* states under May 7th: "At Rome, commemoration of St. Domitilla, martyr, daughter of the sister of Consul Flavius Clemens, who, being accused during the persecution of Emperor Domitian of denying the pagan gods, was because of her witness to Christ banished with others to the island of Pontia and there underwent a long martyrdom." The Greek Orthodox Church celebrates St. Flavia Domitilla on May 12th, and a publication of the *Apostolic Service of the Church of Greece* states that she lived in Rome in the first century, that she was the wife of the Roman official Titus Flavius Clemens and a daughter of Emperor Domitian's sister, and that she died a martyr for refusing to sacrifice to idols. This description identifies her with the Flavia Domitilla described above by contemporary Roman sources.

On May 31st, we also commemorate a relative of St. Flavia Domitilla, the virgin-martyr Petronilla. St. Petronilla has been identified as the daughter of St. Peter, though this stems simply from the similarity of names. More likely, she was a convert of St. Peter, and thus a "spiritual daughter," or a follower or servant. It is also said that St. Peter cured her of palsy. Roman inscriptions identify her simply as a martyr, and that she was related to St Flavia Domitilla. Stories associated with her include those that relate that she was so beautiful that St. Peter had locked her up in a tower to keep her from eligible men; that a pagan king named Flaccus, wishing to marry her, led Petronilla to go on a hunger strike, from which she died.

The location of St. Petronilla's tomb supports her relationship to St. Flavia Domitilla. Almost all the lists of the tombs of the most highly venerated Roman martyrs mention St. Petronilla's grave as situated in the Via Ardeatina near Ss. Nereus and Achilleus, who were servants of St. Flavia Domitilla. These lists have been completely confirmed by the excavations in the Catacomb of Domitilla. One topography of the graves of the Roman martyrs, *Epitome libri de locis sanctorum martyrum*, locates on the Via Ardeatina a church of St. Petronilla, in which Ss. Nereus and Achilleus, as well as Petronilla, were buried. This church, built into the aforesaid catacomb, has been discovered, and the memorials found in it removed all doubt

² The translation of relics in question was arranged with the greatest solemnity by Cardinal Baronius in 1597.

that the tombs of the three saints were once venerated there. A painting, in which St. Petronilla is represented as receiving a deceased person (named Veneranda) into heaven, was discovered on the closing stone of a tomb in an underground crypt behind the apse of the basilica. Beside the saint's picture is her name: Petronilla Martyr. That the painting was done shortly after 356, is proved by an inscription found in the tomb.

It is thus clearly established that St. Petronilla was venerated at Rome as a martyr in the fourth century, and the testimony must be accepted as certainly historical, notwithstanding the later legend which recognizes her only as a virgin. Another known, but unfortunately no longer extant, memorial was the marble sarcophagus which contained her remains, under Pope Paul I translated to St. Peter's Basilica. In the account of this in the *Liber Pontificalis* the inscription carved on the sarcophagus is given thus: *Aureae Petronillae Filiae Dulcissimae* ("of the golden Petronilla, the sweetest daughter"). The sarcophagus was discovered, in the very chapel dedicated to her in Old St Peter's, under Pope Sixtus IV, who hastened to inform Louis XI of France. Extant sixteenth century notices concerning this sarcophagus assert that the first word was Aur. (Aureliae), so that the martyr's name was Aurelia Petronilla. The second name comes from Petro or Petronius, and, as the name of the great-grandfather of the Christian consul, Titus Flavius Clemens, was Titus Flavius Petro, it is probable that Petronilla was a relative of the Christian Flavii, who were descended from the senatorial family of the Aurelii. This theory would also explain why Petronilla was buried in the catacomb of St. Flavia Domitilla. Like the latter, Petronilla may have suffered during the persecution of Domitian.

In the fourth-century Roman catalogue of martyrs' feasts, which is used in the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*, her name seems not to have been inserted. It occurs in the latter martyrology, but only as a later addition. Her name is given under May 31st and the Martyrologies of Bede and his imitators adopt the same date. The absence of her name from the fourth-century Roman calendar of feasts suggests that Petronilla died at the end of the first century, since no special feasts for martyrs were celebrated during this period. After the erection of the basilica over her remains and those of Ss. Nereus and Achilleus in the fourth century, her cult extended widely and her name was therefore admitted later into the martyrology. A legend, the existence of which by the sixth century is proved by its presence in the list of the tombs of the Roman martyrs prepared by Abbot John at the end of that century, regards Petronilla as a biological daughter of St. Peter. In the Gnostic apocryphal *Acts of St. Peter*, dating from the second century, a daughter of St. Peter is mentioned, although her name is not given. The legend being widely propagated by these apocryphal Acts, St. Petronilla was identified at Rome with this supposed daughter of St. Peter, probably because of her name and the great antiquity of her tomb. As such, but now as a virgin, not as a martyr, she appears in the legendary Acts of the martyrs *Ss. Nereus and Achilleus* and in the *Liber Pontificalis*. From these, a similar notice was admitted into the historical martyrologies of the Middle Ages and thence into the modern *Roman Martyrology*.

In 757 the coffin containing the mortal remains of the saint was transferred to an old circular building (the mausoleum of Emperor Honorius, dating from the end of the fourth century) near St. Peter's Basilica. This building was altered and became the Chapel of St. Petronilla. Her chapel became the burial place for French kings. Her association with the French crown stems from the fact that Charlemagne and Carloman were considered St. Peter's adopted sons after 800. Petronilla, as the supposed daughter of Peter, became their patroness and of the treaties between the Holy See and the Frankish emperors. When St. Peter's Basilica was rebuilt in the sixteenth century, the old chapel and former mausoleum was demolished and St. Petronilla's relics were translated to an altar dedicated to her in the upper end of the right side-aisle of the new basilica (near the cupola). The chapel includes embellishments by Michelangelo and Donato Bramante. Guercino painted an altarpiece painted called "The Burial of Saint Petronilla" in 1623. It simultaneously depicts the burial and the welcoming to heaven of the martyred St. Petronilla. The altar, dedicated to the saint, contains her relics. She is patroness of the dauphins (i.e. crown princes) of France because a dolphin (in French, *dauphin*) was reputedly found carved on her sarcophagus. St. Petronilla has been a very popular saint among Francophones. Her feast falls on May

31st, and Mass on this day in St. Peter's is offered for France and attended by French residents of Rome. The village of Sainte-Pétronille, on Île d'Orléans in Quebec,³ founded in 1651, is named after her.

Excerpt from the Church Fathers

"Love admits no schisms: love gives rise to no seditions: love does all things in harmony."

– St. Clement of Rome, The First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians (c. 96).

Prayer for Protection from the Corona Virus

O God Almighty, Lord of heaven and earth, and of all creation visible and invisible, in thine ineffable goodness, look down upon us, Thy people gathered in Thy Holy Name. Be our helper and defender in this day of affliction. Thou knowest our weakness. Thou hearest our cry in repentance and contrition of heart. O Lord who lovest mankind, deliver us from the impending threat of the Corona Virus. Send Thine angel to watch over us and protect us. Grant health and recovery to those suffering from this virus. Guide the hands of physicians and nurses, and preserve those who are healthy that we may continue to serve our suffering brothers and sisters in peace, that together we may glorify thy most honorable and majestic name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Modern Theological Classics

III. Some Problems in the History of Religions

Anyone who has been attentively studying different aspects and phases of the world religions outside the religions of the Old and New Testament cannot help to be struck by the deep-going fundamental *duality* that permeates this religious development. The contrasts are great and striking. Alongside beautiful hymns to the Supreme God and a religious craving for the One Absolute Divinity which inspire, especially some ancient Indian and Egyptian texts, we have the motley pantheon of popular religion and sometimes – so e.g. in some Babylonian texts and in later Hellenism – the sense of the all-pervading presence and the immense power of Evil Spirits, a real "Polydemonism" that fills the heart with terror. The best means to protect oneself are magical rites and incantations. This sense of horror permeates e.g. the famous Assyro-Babylonian incantation – text against the Evil Seven:

They are Seven! They are Seven!
In the depth of the Ocean they are Seven,
They are Seven roaming through the Heaven,
They are neither male nor female,
They don't know compassion or mercy,
They don't listen to prayer or supplications ...

The First among them is the Southern Wind,
The Second – the Dragon with wide-open jaws
To whom nobody can resist,
The Third is the ferocious Leopard
Who swallows children,
The Fourth is the terrible Snake ...

They bring darkness from city to city,
Storms that make Heaven tremble,
Thick cloud, that plunges Heaven onto darkness ...

³ Île d'Orléans (English: "Island of Orleans") is located in the Saint Lawrence River about three miles east of downtown Quebec City. The island was one of the first parts of Quebec to be colonized by the French, and a large percentage of French-Canadians (such as Fr. Royer) can trace ancestry to early residents of the island. The island has been described as the "microcosm of traditional Quebec and as the birthplace of Francophones in North America."

They are crawling like snakes on their belly,
They are howling like a pack of hounds,
Through the highest wall and through the thickest wall
They pass like ravens storm,
Bursting into one house after another,
No door can detain them,
No lock can stop them,
For over the threshold they crawl in like a Serpent ...

And so on ... On the other hand, what immense religious dynamism is sometimes to be found in these old texts of a monotheistic (or pantheistic) inspiration from Egypt or ancient India! I will make only a few quotations from some old Egyptian documents. An old Pyramid text speaks of Him “who is without name, whose name is hidden.” Or there is a papyrus from Leyden (19th dynasty) that recognizes in the god Amon a manifestation of the Supreme Divinity: “No god knows his real aspect ... He has no image that could be designed ... He is too full of mystery for His glory being revealed, too great to be scrutinized, too mighty to be known ...” This tradition continues also in later times. On the entrance of the Ptolemaic temple of Medumoud there is the following inscription: “The One who has produced Himself, whose name is secret and who hides Himself from His children, who raised His head out of the dark abyss, who has existed when there was nobody except Him, who rose alone, given birth to Himself, according to Whose designs all beings have been produced, the Unknown as to His image who hides Himself from His creation ...” In the like way the God Ptah is called (in texts coming from Memphis) “Father of all the gods, the great God of the primordial times,” the “Lord of Years,” “the Master of Eternity.”

And now let us turn to some texts from Ancient India. There is a strain of deep-felt, most earnest and striking religious yearning, religious “nostalgia” that runs through many passages of the Upanishads and of related texts (as the Mokshadharma of the Mahabharata), a proclaiming of the *One*, the only One that really exists, the “Satya Satyasya” (“the Reality of the Reality”), “For there is Something or Someone that does not grow old, the Ancient, the Eternal One,” “that exists by Himself,” Something “Immortal, Permanent,” “not subject to changes,” “Great, free from disease,” “Radiant and Immutable,” that is “beyond hunger and thirst, beyond sorrow and error, beyond old age and death.” “His name is ‘High,’ because He is raised high above all evil,” He is the Ineffable, Unfathomable One, “the deep Hidden One, who can neither be seized by thought nor measured,” of Whom the only thing that can be said is: “He is!,” and “Who alone really exists.” In Him we have the true refuge, He is the longed-for ‘shore,’ beyond all sorrow, “To know Him is ‘the goal of the Upanishads.’” “His name is: ‘The One Whom we yearn for,’” “Who has come to know Him becomes wise, and in search of Him, the ascetics start on their wanderings, in nostalgia for a better land.” “Having come to know Him, brahmins⁴ cease to desire sons, possessions, worlds, and to beggars they enter a homeless life.” For of Him it is said: “The Infinite is bliss. There is no bliss in what is finite. Only in the Infinite there is bliss.” And again: “Brahman is Bliss.”

And from many passages of these ancient texts we hear these accents of joy: “He that has come to know Him, has attained freedom, he that has come to know him has attained peace; he who has come to know him, becomes immortal!” Or listen to this passage, also from the Katha-Upanishad: “The wise man who by means of meditation on the Atman (the Self) recognizes the Ancient who is difficult to be seen, who has entered into the dark, who is hidden in the cave, who dwells in the abyss of God – he indeed leaves joy and sorrow far behind forever.”

But this Ultimate Reality is conceived by the authors of the Upanishads as an impersonal Divine Ocean, in which all is engulfed, as a Divine Indifference, beyond all our distinctions, not as a loving creative personality. “Tat tvam asi” – “That is you” – that is the formula of deliverance: to conceive of all being as *one* and individualization as false, as the “nightmare” by which is chained the One Supreme Being. There is therefore a breath of cold indifference about this Divine all-permeating Substance: it takes no interest in any individual being, it is neither a loving Father nor a merciful Savior. And, also, on the

⁴ Hindu priests.

other hand, alongside these glimpses of a higher Divine Reality, alongside an experience thereof, what strange absurdities, gross magical practices, strange, poor and primitive cosmological speculations verging on magic are piled up in the same texts! The dynamism of a deep religious craving and an intense religious quest, the wonderful glimpse of the Supreme Reality remain here mixed up with strata of much lower religious conceptions that are so characteristic for the religions of India. Both elements are characteristic – the higher yearnings and experiences and the superstitious and magic pervading the popular religion. And likewise what a strange and motley impression the official religions of Egypt make upon us with the multiplicity of their magical rites, their cults of animals, their magical texts concerning the life beyond the grave and the multitude of their gods and with a monotheistic (or rather henotheistic⁵) strain here and there making its way, or rather losing itself among the floods of grosser practices and conceptions.

Dr. Nicholas Arseniev,⁶ “The Revelation of Life Eternal,” pp. 29-33

Recipe of the Month

Frozen Margarita Pie

A unique, and refreshing, dessert from ‘south of the border’ that makes a perfect finish to dinner!

(1) Crust Ingredients:

- 1 cup finely crushed pretzels
- ¼ cup white sugar
- ⅓ cup margarine, melted

(2) Filling Ingredient:

- 1 (14 ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
- ⅓ cup frozen limeade concentrate, thawed
- 2 tablespoons tequila
- drops green food coloring, or as needed (optional)
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1 lime, sliced (optional)

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
2. Mix pretzels and sugar together in a bowl; stir in margarine until evenly incorporated. Spoon mixture into a 9-inch pie plate; press into bottom and up sides of plate to form a firm, even crust.
3. Bake crust in the preheated oven until edges are lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Cool on a wire rack.
4. Mix sweetened condensed milk, limeade concentrate, tequila, orange liqueur, and green food coloring in a large bowl.

⁵ This term has been introduced by the great scholar of Indology and comparative study of religion, Prof. Max Müller, to designate a temporary monotheistic mood, a temporary exaltation of some god, to whom one just happens to pray, as the only one who counts.

⁶ Dr. Nicholas Arseniev (1888-1977) was an Orthodox lay theologian, born in St. Petersburg, Russia of a prominent family whose members included several diplomats. In December 1919, he and his family came under suspicion of counter-revolution from the NKVD and was imprisoned. After release in 1920, he escaped from Russia, and became a professor at the University of Königsberg. After the Second World War, he migrated to the United States, and became professor of New Testament and Apologetics at St. Vladimir’s Orthodox Theological Seminary in Yonkers, New York. Professor Arseniev was known for his knowledge of obscure languages and research on Christian mysticism and Russian piety.

5. Beat cream in a glass or metal bowl until soft peaks form. Lift your beater or whisk straight up: the whipped cream will form soft mounds rather than a sharp peak. Fold whipped cream into sweetened condensed milk mixture. Spoon filling into cooled crust.
6. Cover pie with plastic wrap and freeze until firm, about 4 hours. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving; garnish with lime slices (optional).

Parish News

Parish Council Meeting

Parish Council Meetings remain suspended until after the social distancing restrictions are lifted by the State of New Jersey and City of Bayonne. Urgent parish business shall be conducted by the council officers in consultation with the parish priest as needed; contact and consultation with parish council members shall be through telephone and internet only.

Blessing of Graves

The blessing of graves at Bay View, Evergreen, and Rosedale cemeteries is postponed to Saturday, June 6, 2020, starting at 10 AM. The blessing of graves at Graceland Cemetery will be by appointment only, after New Jersey's social distancing restrictions have been lifted.

Giving During This Crisis

Please continue to give as you normally would during this crisis. Even though you are not attending church there are still bills that need to be paid. This is a time when we need for everyone who is able to give to the church, and to even consider increasing their contributions to make up for those temporarily unable to give. You may mail your contributions weekly, or monthly if you prefer, to the parish's mailing address of: 98 West 28th Street, Bayonne, New Jersey 07002. Thank you in advance for your continued support of Ss. Peter and Paul's Orthodox Church. May Our Risen Lord Jesus Christ bless you all!

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 24, 2020.

May 24, 2020

Sanctuary Lamp offered by John and Helen Wanko in memory of Anastasia Grudinoff (anniversary of repose).

May 31, 2020

Altar Vigils offered by John and Helen Wanko in memory of Lydia Wanko (anniversary of repose). **Sanctuary Lamp** offered by Fr. W. Sophrony Royer in memory of Concetta Gloria Royer (anniversary of repose). **Triple Candelabra** offered by Fr. W. Sophrony Royer in memory of Irene Felice (anniversary of repose).

Schedule of Services

Due to the restrictions on public gatherings imposed by the Bayonne Office of Emergency Management, it is not possible at this time to provide a schedule of services for May. Please check the parish website at www.sspeterandpaulbayonne.org and, after public divine services have resumed, the weekly bulletin.

Daily Bible Readings

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