



SS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

A PARISH OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA, DIOCESE OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

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December 11, 2011

26th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS

- 9:10am – Hours, Private Confessions
- 9:30am – Divine Liturgy
Epistle: Col. 3:4-11
Gospel: Luke 14:16-24
- Church School
- Fellowship – Please come downstairs following the Divine Liturgy for Coffee Hour, provided by the “R” club and followed by the “R” club’s meeting.

Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17

6:00pm – Great Vespers and Confessions

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18

9:30am – Divine Liturgy, followed by

Panikhida in memory of:

Benedict Benda (offered by beloved wife Eva and children), **Andre w & Juliana Bacsik** (by Andrea & Russ Wyskanycz), and **Antonina Rotko** (by Suchowacki Family).

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Resisting Royal Temptations

The Gospel and Epistle readings for December 17 both include some well-known verses.

In Luke 14: 1-11, Jesus has gone on the sabbath to dine at the home of one of the rulers of the Pharisees. As usual, they are “watching Him” to see what He will do and whether He might make a mistake. But Jesus is also watching them, and He notices how they choose the places of honor at the table. As a result of His observation, He tells them a parable.

The parable cautions against taking a place of honor at a wedding feast, and then having to give it up when a more eminent guest arrives. Rather, you should humbly take the lowest place, and the host will honor you by moving you to a higher one. Jesus’ final words in the parable are, “For every one who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

The Epistle reading is Galatians 5:22-6:2. Here Saint Paul lists the fruits of the Spirit, and then writes words that form the basis of fasting: “And those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”

On this same day, the Church commemorates the prophet Daniel, who as an exile in Babylon had to deal with proud foreign kings. Daniel resisted the temptations these strong-willed royals put in his path, by living up to both the verses we read on this day. He humbled himself, and put away the “passions and desires” of the flesh.

In Daniel 2, King Nebuchadnezzar has had a troubling dream, and promises great rewards to whoever can interpret it. But none of his wise men can tell him what he dreamed, or what it meant. Furious, he threatens that they must find the answer, or be “torn limb from limb.” The threat includes Daniel.

Intercessory Prayer

THE LIVING:

Eva Benda, Valentina Benda, Cathryn Christensen, Olga DeMay, Marianne Guagenti, George Hook, Peter Mazula, Walter Milk, Helen Pirniak, Stephen & Lillian Sokol, Elizabeth Zuber.

THE DEPARTED:

Peter Kalada, Benedict Benda, Georgette Saba, Matilda Skripak, Andrew Bacsik, Helen Pawlush, Mary Milk, Antonina Rotko, Helen Cotrone, June Bianchini, Marianne Benda.

God reveals the dream and its meaning to Daniel, who then comes before the king with the tempting chance to gain untold riches as the great interpreter. Instead, he tells Nebuchadnezzar that no wise men can find the answers, but that “there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries.” Daniel goes on: “...not because of any wisdom that I have more than all the living has this mystery been revealed to me, but in order that the interpretation may be known to the king” (2:30). Daniel directs Nebuchadnezzar’s attention to God, and humbly refuses to claim special insight.

In Daniel 1: 1-15, Nebuchadnezzar favors Daniel with the offer of the same rich food that his courtiers consume. Daniel resists this temptation, and persuades the steward to let him observe the Jewish dietary laws. After ten days, seeing how much “better in appearance” Daniel is than the youths who eat richly, the steward begins giving them all vegetables and water. Daniel’s fasting thus benefits the whole court.

Our temptations may not come from royal sources, but we can still use them, as Daniel used his, to glorify the God we all worship.



Today’s Memorial Offering

- *St. Nicholas Cross* – in memory of Mary Pirniak, on the Anniversary of her Repose – by Pirniak Family.

Announcements

❖ We are in the **Nativity Fast**, which ends after the Divine Liturgy on the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord, December 25th. Please make proper preparations and receive private Confession and Holy Communion during this time.

❖ “Listening to Christmas Another Way” – On **Sun. December 18th, 2011** at 3pm there will be a concert given by the *Spirit of Orthodoxy Choir* at Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church in Jersey City (109 Grand Street). This is an afternoon of treasured Orthodox choral masterpieces exploring and celebrating the mystery of the Birth of Christ. The afternoon will not end without a sing along of hymns you certainly know and will want to sing. Everyone is welcome.

❖ **Sat. December 17** – be in our church kitchen from 10am to 12pm for a **charitable outreach to the Hoboken Shelter**. We will be making 75 sandwiches for shelter guests. Food donations must be received in the church hall by Friday, December 16, 2011. Please sign up for either donations or participation on the sheets at the candle desk.

Welcome Visitors

We welcome all visitors to our Divine Liturgy. It is our joy to have you with us today. If this is your first visit to our parish, we welcome you and invite you to return as often as you are able.

While Holy Communion may only be received by prepared Orthodox Christians, our non-Orthodox guests are welcome to join us in venerating the Cross, receiving blessed bread at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy and for fellowship in our Church Hall after the service.