



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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February 12, 2012

35th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST Sunday of the Prodigal Son.

- 9:10am – Hours, Confessions
- 9:30am – Divine Liturgy
Epistle: 2 Cor. 6:12-20
Gospel: Lk. 15:11-32
- Church School
- Fellowship – Please come downstairs following the Divine Liturgy for Coffee Hour, provided by the Bayonne "R" Club.

Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, FEB. 18 – MEMORIAL SATURDAY

9:30am – Divine Liturgy & Panikhida
6:00pm – Great Vespers, Confessions

SUNDAY, FEB. 19

9:10am – Hours, Confessions
9:30am – Divine Liturgy

Visit us online at:

www.SsPeterAndPaulBayonne.org

From Slave to Bishop

On February 15 the Church remembers the Apostle Onesimus of the Seventy, who began life in Phrygia as the slave of a prominent Christian named Philemon.

Though we do not read Saint Paul's Letter to Philemon on this day, it is the source of some of our information about Onesimus, and about the way his life intertwined with Paul's. For one thing, Paul was acquainted with Philemon. But more importantly, Onesimus and Paul were imprisoned together.

Onesimus was not a very satisfactory slave. He had probably stolen from his master, as Paul indicates when he makes a generous offer to Philemon: "If he has wronged you at all, or owes you anything, charge that to my account" (v. 18). Paul also writes that he knows Onesimus was "useless" to Philemon. So probably the slave was a runaway, and ended up in a prison where he met Paul. Some scholars believe this was in Rome, but Paul endured imprisonments in other places, such as Ephesus. This would have been a more likely place for the fleeing Onesimus to reach than distant Rome.

But wherever it was that they were confined, the two men had plenty of time to talk with each other. Paul took a fatherly interest in Onesimus, who must have been fearful and wary, and shared the good news of the Gospel with him. Paul's teaching and his loving care had such a profound effect on Onesimus that finally he was baptized.

Many people believe that the main purpose of Paul's letter to Philemon was to encourage him to receive Onesimus back with compassion rather than anger. It's true that Paul asked Philemon to go far beyond the usual master-and-slave relationship, asking him to receive the runaway "no longer as a slave but more than a slave, as a beloved brother" (v. 16). Paul even says, "Receive him as you would receive me." He was asking Philemon to remember that all people have God as

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, Faith Verona, Elizabeth Zuber, Olga Stecher.

THE DEPARTED:

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

their common Master, and are equal in His sight.

But there was more to the letter. Paul was actually asking to have Onesimus back with him. While not directly asking Philemon to send him, Paul writes, "I am sending him back to you, sending my very heart. I would have been glad to keep him with me..." (v. 12).

Onesimus was eventually reunited with Paul, continuing to work with him and learn from him. Later he became a bishop, and traveled to far countries to spread the Gospel, carrying on the work of the original apostles after they died.

The early Christians insisted that every person, no matter of what class or rank, was welcome to join the family of believers. Onesimus is proof of that, rising from powerless bondage to the rank of bishop. Even when condemned to death as a Christian, he was grateful to Saint Paul – another prisoner in miserable conditions, who still could convey the joy of Jesus Christ.

Birthday Greetings

Happy Birthday to Samantha & Stephen Cimboic and to all who celebrate their Birthdays in the month of February. May God grant you good health and happiness for Many Years!



Announcements

❖ Next Parish Council meeting is tomorrow, Mon. Feb 13 at 7pm. All members are urged to attend.
❖ Save the date! – Sunday of Orthodox Vespers – Sun. March 4, 2012 at Ss. Peter and Paul Russian Orthodox Cathedral (corner of Monroe and 3rd St.) Passaic, NJ. Concelebrating will be clergy from The Moscow Patriarchate, The Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia and The Orthodox Church in America. Following Vespers a light Lenten Meal will be offered by the New Jersey District of F.O.C.A. All are welcome!

❖ Food Pantry donations are always accepted. Place your non-perishable items in blue bins downstairs.

❖ Stop&Shop, A&P and ShopRite Shopping Cards available at the candle-stand. Do your shopping as you always do it, and help our church raise funds at no cost to you.

❖ Always available at the candle desk are memorial candles, and Bread and Wine for the Holy Eucharist. They can be offered in honor or in memory of your loved-ones. Please remember that not only these offerings are a sign of your faith and hope in God's help which is always sent to all who turn to Him and His Saints with faith and prayers; but also these are simply the deeds of mercy needed for the salvation of those whom you pray for, as well as for your own salvation.

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.