



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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Intercessory Prayer

THE LIVING:

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

THE DEPARTED:

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



Today's Memorial Offering

• *Candles on the Altar* – in memory of Andrew Bacsik, on the Anniversary of his Birth – by Andrea and Russ Wyskanycz.



Announcements

❖ We are in the Nativity (St. Philip's) Fast which ends after the Divine Liturgy on the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord, December 25th. Please remember the importance of the spiritual part of the Fast as well – make proper preparations and receive private Confession and Holy Communion during this time.

❖ **Parish Council meeting** will be this Monday, December 10 at 7pm. All members are urged to attend.

❖ The F.O.C.A. Juniors are collecting **Christmas toys** for the children affected by hurricane Sandy. IOCC has connected us with two Orthodox Churches in the affected area willing to collect and distribute the toys. Please support this effort by donating a new toy. The toys will be collected in our Church hall through **Sunday, December 16**.

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

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 and receiving blessed bread at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy.

December 9, 2012

27th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Nativity (St. Philip's) Fast

The Conception by Righteous Anna of the Most-Holy Theotokos

- 9:10am – 3rd & 6th Hour
- 9:30am – Divine Liturgy

Epistle: Eph. 6:10-17
Gal. 4:22-31

Gospel: Lk. 17:12-19
Lk. 8:16-21

Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15

6:00pm – Great Vespers, Confessions

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16

9:10am – 3rd & 6th Hour, Confessions

9:30am – Divine Liturgy

Visit us online at:

www.SsPeterAndPaulBayonne.org

The Gift to Be Simple

The first words of a well-known Shaker song, which are "Tis the gift to be simple," could well apply to the great saint we remember on December 12: Spyridon the Wonderworker and Bishop.

Spyridon's life from its very early years was simple. Born in 270, he was a shepherd on the island of Cyprus, his birthplace, and came from a family of farmers. Though they were not educated, his parents were devout Christians and raised him in the Church.

He married early in life and had a daughter, but his wife died when he was still fairly young. After her death he decided to devote his life to God's service and become a monk. His daughter, following his example, also entered the monastic life.

Spyridon's background, unlike that of many bishops, was not one of advanced education and study. Yet his dedication to God and his deep faith led to his being chosen as Bishop of Tremithus. And even though he had taken on this immense responsibility, he didn't change his way of life. He continued to care for his own cattle and till his land. The abundant produce that the land produced was mostly given to the poor, while Spyridon himself ate sparingly of the simplest food, as he had always done.

Though his work was no threat to anyone, Spyridon was persecuted, mutilated and exiled to slave labor in the mines of Spain toward the end of the third century. When he was finally allowed to return to his diocese, he continued to work with the poor and to bring many pagans to the Christian faith.

Being a person without great education or sophistication did not mean that Spyridon could not find ways of explaining the complex teaching that God is Trinity. He is credited with

using the helpful image of a piece of pottery to describe the three Divine Persons. Pottery is made, he said, of three elements—earth, water, and the effect of fire. Yet these three are united in the pot that is produced. In the same way the Persons of the Trinity are three and distinct, yet united. It was at the Council of Nicaea that Bishop Spyridon, so familiar with the elements of farming and the earth, impressed people with this image.

Spyridon's simplicity made him humble enough to be open to God's guidance, and he was given the gift to work wonders. He was able to cast out demons, bring rain in a time of drought, and heal the sick. Yet his humility never altered. When because of his modest dress he was not recognized as a bishop and was insulted by an arrogant guard, he didn't take offense but quietly accepted the ill-treatment.

Spyridon died in 348, and was buried in the Church of the Apostles in Tremithus, where he had served for so long. His relics were transferred to the Greek island of Corfu, having been discovered to be incorrupt. His grave sent forth the fragrance of basil, that herb associated with the cross and with kings.