

We would like to welcome all parish visitors and invite you to join us after the Liturgy for Coffee hour.

Orthodox Church of the Mother of God

OCA – Diocese of New York-New Jersey

V. Rev. Dr. Matthew Searfoorce, Rector

Sub-Deacon Edward Dawson

Sub-Deacon Vlashi

Parish Council President: Andrew Romanofsky

Parish Council Vice President: Holly Dawson



Sunday, January 15, 2017

Gospel: Luke 18:18-27

Tone 5

Epistle: Colossians 3:12-16

30th Sunday After Pentecost

Ven. Paul of Thebes (341) and John Calabytes (“the Hut-dweller”—5th c.). Ven. Pansophius of Alexandria, Martyr (ca. 249-251). Ven. Prochorus, Abbot, in the Vranski desert on the River Pshina in Bulgaria (10th c.). Ven. Gabriel, founder of Lesnovo Monastery in Bulgaria (11th c.).

Troparion – Tone 3

Inspired by the Spirit, / you were the first to dwell in the desert in emulation of Elijah the zealot; / as one who imitated the angels, you were made known to the world by Saint Anthony the Great. / Righteous Paul, entreat Christ God to grant us His great mercy.

Kontakion – Tone 3

Today we gather and praise you with hymns as an unwaning ray of the spiritual Sun; / for you shine on those in the darkness of ignorance, / leading all mankind to the heights, venerable Paul, / adornment of Thebes and firm foundation of the fathers and ascetics.



Venerable Paul of Thebes

Prayer Requests

For Health of:

Xavier Anthony, on his name day, offered his Godmother Trudy.

Tamara Zimmerman, on her birthday, offered by her family with love.

Lisa Dantine, on her birthday, offered by her family with love.

In Memory of:

Rev. Father Demetrios J. Constantelos, offered by Sub-Deacon Vlashi.

Priest Ignatius Crockett, offered by Archbishop Michael, the Diocese of NY/NJ and the OCA.

Wisdom of the Church Fathers

"It's impossible to perish the soul who blesses Mother of God!"

Saint Paisios the Athonite
(1924-1994)

Liturgical Schedule

Sunday, January 15th

9:30 am: Sunday School
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, January 21st

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, January 22nd

9:30 am: Sunday School
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, January 28th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, January 29th

9:30 am: Sunday School
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, February 4th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, February 5^h

9:30 am: No Sunday School
9:45 am: General
Confession
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Bulletin Sponsors

*Trudy Ellmore and the
Dantinne Family*

Readings:

The Prokeimenon in the 5th Tone:

Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this generation forever.
(Psalm 11:8)
vs. Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly!
(Psalm 11:2)

Epistle: Colossians 3:12-16

Brethren, put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience, forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Alleluia in the 5th Tone:

I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation.
(Psalm 88:2)
vs. For Thou hast said: "Mercy will be established forever; Thy truth will be prepared in the heavens."
(Psalm 88:3)

Gospel: Luke 18:18-27

At that time a ruler asked him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.'" And he said, "All these I have observed from my youth." And when Jesus heard it, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." But when he heard this he became sad, for he was very rich. Jesus looking at him said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Those who heard it said, "Then who can be saved?" But he said, "What is impossible with men is possible with God."

Through the Grace of God – Orthodox Christianity

Father Seraphim Rose: Truth

“Why is the truth, it would seem, revealed to some and not to others? Is there a special organ for receiving revelation from God? Yes, though usually we close it and do not let it open up: God’s revelation is given to something called a loving heart.”



Venerable Paul of Thebes

Saint Paul of Thebes was born in Egypt around 227 in the Thebaid of Egypt. Left orphaned, he suffered many things from a greedy relative over his inheritance. During the persecution against Christians under the emperor Decius (249-251), Saint Paul learned of his brother-in-law’s insidious plan to deliver him into the hands of the persecutors, and so he fled the city and fled into the wilderness.

Settling into a mountain cave, Saint Paul dwelt there for ninety-one years, praying incessantly to God both day and night. He sustained himself on dates and bread, which a raven brought him, and he clothed himself with palm leaves.

Saint Anthony the Great (January 17), who also lived as an ascetic in the Thebaid desert, had a revelation from God concerning Saint Paul. Saint Anthony thought that there was no other desert dweller such as he. Then God said to him, “Anthony, there is a servant of God more excellent than you, and you should go and see him.”

Anthony went into the desert and came to Saint Paul’s cave. Falling to the ground before the entrance to the cave, he asked to be admitted. The Elders introduced themselves, and then embraced one another. They conversed through the night, and Saint Anthony revealed how he had been led there by God. Saint Paul disclosed to Saint Anthony that for sixty years a bird had brought him half a loaf of bread each day. Now the Lord had sent a double portion in honor of Saint Paul’s visit. The next morning, Saint Paul spoke to Anthony of his approaching death, and instructed him to bury him. He also asked Saint Anthony to return to his monastery and bring back the cloak he had received from Saint Athanasius. He did not really need a garment, but wished to depart from his body while Saint Anthony was absent.

As he was returning with the cloak, Saint Anthony beheld the soul of Saint Paul surrounded by angels, prophets, and apostles, shining like the sun and ascending to God. He entered the cave and found Abba Paul on his knees with his arms outstretched. Saint Anthony mourned for him, and wrapped him in the cloak. He wondered how he would bury the body, for he had not remembered to bring a shovel. Two lions came running from the wilderness and dug a grave with their claws.

Saint Anthony buried the holy Elder, and took his garment of palm leaves, then he returned to his own monastery. Saint Anthony kept this garb as a precious inheritance, and wore it only twice a year, on Pascha and Pentecost.

Saint Paul of Thebes died in the year 341, when he was 113 years old. He did not establish a single monastery, but soon after his end there were many imitators of his life, and they filled the desert with monasteries. Saint Paul is honored as the first desert-dweller and hermit.

In the twelfth century Saint Paul’s relics were transferred to Constantinople and placed in the Peribleptos monastery of the Mother of God, on orders of the emperor Manuel (1143-1180). Later, they were taken to Venice, and finally to Hungary, at Ofa. Part of his head is in Rome.

Saint Paul of Thebes, whose Life was written by Saint Jerome, is not to be confused with Saint Paul the Simple (October 4).



Bulletin Sponsor: Use the sign-up sheet at the candle stand for the health of, eternal memory of or a Pannikhida for a loved one or friend, for a donation of \$10. Sponsors will be remembered during Divine Liturgy for the day/week that you signed up for.

Memorial Candles: Candles be purchased at the candle stand, suggested donation of \$10 for a large one.

Private Confessions: Can be heard a half hour before any service. See Father Matthew for other times.

General Confession: Will be at 9:45 am on the first Sunday of the month.

Pannikhida Service: The third Sunday of each month there will be a Pannikhida after Divine Liturgy. If you would like your loved ones to be remembered please give a list of names to Father Matthew before that Sunday for those to be remembered in the month.

Special Announcements for the bulletin can be submitted by E-Mail:

OrthodoxChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com

The Living Clean Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Friday from 8-9:15 pm downstairs in the community room.

The Grey Book Step Meeting Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Tuesday from 7-8:00 pm downstairs in the community room.



Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Parish News

Next Council meeting: January 29, 2017

Annual Parish meeting: February 12, 2017 after Divine Liturgy

The following is a schedule for viewing and funeral for Father Demetrios, as received from Father George:

Dear Fellow Holy Trinity Parishioners,

We are sending you the schedule for our beloved Father Dememtrios' viewing and funeral.

Viewing: Sunday, January 15th 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm at Holy Trinity.

Funeral: Monday, January 16th at Holy Trinity

8:30 am Orthros

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

11:00 am Funeral Services

Burial at Laurel Memorial Park

Memorial Luncheon will be at our Holy Trinity Community Center

(Please limit the number of cars brought by each family)

Thank you all once again for all your love and prayers for Father Demetrios and his family.

We will all surely miss him, but I also know that he will continue to inspire us as we carry on with our own lives and fulfill all that he has taught us and shown us over the past 35 years, as our Spiritual Father.

Thank you,
Father George



NY/NJ Diocese News

NEW MISSION PARISH FORMED: New Brunswick NJ

Reader Samuel Davis of the newly formed Saint Simon of Cyrene Orthodox Mission in New Brunswick NJ writes: “It is with great joy that I can greet you, on behalf of our Mission community. More than that, I would like to extend a welcome to you to join us in prayer whenever you are in the New Brunswick area for services. The Mission is a community dedicated to building up the Holy Orthodox Church in an area that has yet to be exposed to our faith. This is a monumental task! At present the laborers are few, having just started out, but with God’s grace and mercy we will grow and truly become a proper witness to the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church on the “Western Shore.””

“In the fall of 2013 I was received into the Coptic Orthodox Church through the mystery of baptism. My three children were first to submit ourselves to the Coptic Church; my wife would convert two years later. Putting aside my family’s Reformed Theology and worship practice was something that I did not struggle with; rather, it was the emotional tie of parting ways with men and women I served with in the ministry, primarily my father who was also the pastor of the community. It was expected of me to one day lead his communion of churches and I had to now tell him and his staff that this would not be happening.”

“For a season this caused emotional grief and separation between my father and I. Family members and friends did not understand what or why I made chose to leave the faith I was not only raised in but also spread myself through preaching and church planting. There was no greater joy than to know I was now a part of the one true Church of the Apostles. I was introduced to the Orthodox Faith like my other Charismatics through the preaching of Mar Enoch (formerly Veron Ashe, a Pentecostal preacher), of the Mar Thoma Church. Although I had been exposed

to great charismatic preachers who inspired Mar Enoch like Archbishop Wilbert McKinley and Evangelist Jackie McCullough, it was not his style or meter of preaching that caught my attention, but his command of the Church Fathers that caused me to privately ask myself: ‘Was I truly experiencing the fullness of the Church?’”

“This drove me to reading the Fathers and about half way through of reading the letters of Ignatius I knew if I read any further I could no longer claim any allegiance to Reformed Theology. Something absolutely real was happening and it was as if God had reached into my heart and began to change how I saw Him and His Church.”

“After being received into the Coptic Orthodox Church like many converts I was filled with zeal and wanted to serve the Church as best as possible. With the blessing of our then bishop, Anba David, I began a homeless outreach in the city of New Brunswick called Saint Simon of Cyrene Mission with three other college students. Once a week we would go out and distribute food and clothing to the local homeless community. The Lord gave His blessing and this quickly became four days a week of service. In a subsequent meeting with our priest and bishop I made a request to plant Saint Simon of Cyrene as a mission station to reach Americans with the Gospel. This may sound odd to many because the city of New Brunswick is filled with churches but the city had not had an Orthodox voice for thirty years. That small Orthodox chapel that was planted to meet the needs of Orthodox college student is now the home of four different Pentecostal groups. I was personally touched by the testimony of Haile Sellassie who said, “The American Negro would not need a Civil Rights Movement had he known the faith of his fathers (Orthodoxy)” With that HIM sent clergy to the West to share the rich wealth of the Orthodox Faith with Africans in the diaspora of the West.”

“Our bishop, Anba Karas gave his blessing for this effort to be planted in the city of New Brunswick. Sadly the Oriental Orthodox Churches are not fully prepared to share and embrace Americans of any kind. Having been under persecution in their home land, Copts are focused on the preservation of the culture and language and that gives little way for evangelism. With that, sadly, Saint Simon’s did not have a home. Frustrated I began to look for a new home for our growing mission. It was during this time that Father Jonathan Ivanoff, who I had initially met via Facebook, reached out to me and asked if I had considered the OCA a new home for Saint Simon of Cyrene Orthodox Mission. Now, having been formed in the Oriental rite I was a bit reluctant at first to take up his offer, but over time, through many phone calls, FB chats and meetings in NYC, we began to grow a new relationship and my interest began to peak. We scheduled a time for us to meet with Archbishop Michael to set a plan to making this reception happen.”

“I was still a bit burned by our last experience and shared with my wife on the way to the city that I was having second thoughts and may not follow through with this plan. Archbishop Michael was an incredible bishop who laid out his entire plan in detail on what he wanted to see happen with our mission. Hearing his heart and desire to reaffirm Holy Orthodoxy to those whose ancestors were once at the foundation of our faith touched me. That evening we all decided the OCA was the home for Saint Simon of Cyrene Orthodox Mission!”

“And so, on Saturday, December 17, 2016, our mission of about 20 adults and children was officially established and received into the Diocese by Archbishop Michael. I was tonsured a Reader and our remaining catechumens were baptized and chrismated. Our first services were held the weekend of January 7-8, 2017; we will now hold weekly Reader Vespers (Saturday evening) and Sunday morning Reader Service (Obednitsa), every weekend, and will continue an active ministry of service and evangelism to the people of the New Brunswick area.”

“I cannot thank our Lord enough for the hospitality and love we have experienced having been received into the Orthodox Church of America: SS Peter & Paul parish in Manville NJ that has continued to be a great Mother Parish to us; the direction of Archbishop Michael, Fathers Jonathan Ivanoff, Gary Breton, Timothy Hojnicky, James Parsells, Eric Tosi, and Victor Gorodenchuk have all been an incredible blessing to our mission and my family.”

“I ask you all to sincerely keep us in your daily prayers that the work of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ be accomplished not only here but throughout the world.”

80 Livingston Ave New Brunswick NJ 08901



Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News

“Teachers: It’s not too early to plan your Lenten lessons”

While we are anticipating the celebration of the Great Feast of Theophany on January 6, and while the Great Fast this year does not begin until Monday, February 27, it’s not too early for Church school teachers to begin planning lessons that focus on the Great Lent, Holy Week and the Feast of Feasts—Holy Pascha.

The Orthodox Church in America’s Department of Christian Education offers an excellent, six-session study unit titled “Journey to Pascha” with a wealth of lessons and activities for four different age groups, from four years old to 18, and a fifth unit for adults. The program includes numerous Bible stories, icons, activities and texts and explanations of services and prayers. Each session focuses on a different theme, beginning with the account of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Subsequent sessions trace the days of Holy Week, what Jesus taught His disciples during this time, and what happened to Jesus as He was brought to trial, put to death and buried. The final sessions celebrate the events that led to His Resurrection from the dead. A palm cross activity for older students is also included.

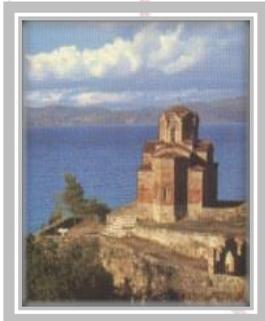
“Journey to Pascha” lessons and related resources may be downloaded and printed for use free of charge.

In Memoriam: Priest Ignatius Crockett

Priest Ignatius Crockett, who in retirement was attached to Saint Symeon the New Theologian Church here, fell asleep in the Lord on Thursday evening, January 12, 2017.

A graduate of Saint Tikhon’s Seminary, South Canaan, PA, Father Ignatius served parishes in Charlotte, NC and Titusville, FL prior to his retirement due to health reasons.

Additional information and the schedule of services will be posted as received.
May Father Ignatius’ memory be eternal!



Prayers by the Laker, St. Velimirovich, XC:

Many in the world will stumble and fall because of Your Son, O Lord longer than time and more blessed than temporal generations.

The princes of the people joined forces with robbers against the Most Pure Christ, as did the priests with false witnesses and the learned with the demented.

Oh how majestic He is in His aloneness and in the purity of His way!

The scribes, who had spent their lifetime interpreting the law of God, now all rose up in unison not only to judge, but to put a man to death.

The leaders of the people, who wore the written law from Sinai on their breast, around their waist and on their temples, forgot the several thousand years of their being trained in justice, and like ravenous wolves they ran after the Man of peace and goodness to tear Him apart.

The merchants closed their shops and drew their daggers to kill Him.

The elders, decorated with countless external reminders of God’s miracles among their people, but with no internal ones, dragged themselves from their hearths to join in the kill.

The youths, who tend to revel whenever their elders urge them to do something wicked, went out with sticks and stones to commit murder before sitting down for the Passover and glorifying God.

Even the women rose up for blood, and led their children forth, so that even the children could assist in a national deed.

Cutthroats and ruffians, who on other days would have been slithering through the shadows and alley-ways, now became leaders to the leaders and princes to the princes.

For the criminals in prison came the day of liberation, for the people needed them to teach them how to kill a man.

All the visitors [in Jerusalem] who had come to the city for the feast in order to bow down to Heaven and petition God, turned their backs on the Temple and, together with their hosts and innkeepers, rushed to seek the blood of a righteous man.

The priests forgot the Temple and set out with their sacrificial knives, in order to save the people from God.

The lame and the crippled raised their crutches and the blind raised their begging-bowls -- as their only weapons to help kill the healer.

Thus did a nation of sinners rise up, as unanimously as grass, to kill God. And the dagger that they swung against God slipped, and they stabbed themselves in the heart.

Grant that I not also fall, O dearest Lord!

Open the eyes of my soul, so that I may see and learn from the fate of sinners.

May my feet not follow those, who march against You.
May I never in any way raise a stone at You and slay myself forever.
Grant that I not also fall, O dearest Lord.

Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, XC:

**III. Us and Our Neighbors
Relationships With Other People**

If someone puts his trust in God in a matter, let him not argue with his brother about it.

St. Mark the Ascetic, Sermon 2.103

The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration by Abbott Tryphon



Godly Friendships

Godly friendships and spiritual progress

It is easy to feel trapped by our bad habits. We don't like certain behavioral patterns that have become habitual, and we feel helpless in our attempt to change. Growing as Christians is often fraught with failure, and we find ourselves stuck. Our spiritual progress feels more like a treadmill, only seemingly moving forward, yet noticing the scenery is remaining the same.

Sometimes the only way to move forward is to commit to changing our environment. If we have friendships that keep us from growing, perhaps it is time to leave those friendships behind. Back in the 1960's I hung around with a group of friends, in Berkeley, California, where we'd gather in a coffee house, talking about the poetry books we were going to publish, and the novels we were going to write, but all we did was talk. One young man shocked the rest of us one day by announcing he was no longer going to come to the coffee house. He'd decided it was just a waste of time. If he was ever going to make something of himself, he had to make the break. He told us he wanted to go to medical school, and was therefore planning to put all his energy in completing his college degree with the best grades he could possibly get. We all tried to convince him that he could accomplish all of that without abandoning the coffee house scene, but he wasn't convinced. That was the last evening he'd ever join the rest of us.

His decision haunted me, for deep down I knew he was right. My life was going nowhere, and I was feeling increasingly unfulfilled, both spiritually and intellectually. Within six months I made the decision to move to Portland, Oregon, for a fresh start. Abandoning those friends was the best decision I could have made, for none of us was motivated to go beyond that little coffee house ghetto we'd created for ourselves.

Sometimes the only way to make the changes in our lives that are needed for spiritual growth is to walk away from relationships that are keeping us stuck. As Christians, it does make a difference who we hang out with. If we have friendships with individuals who are simply not interested in things of a spiritual nature, we will find yourself wasting precious moments in our journey to God.

Having friendships with fellow Christians is the only way we can keep ourselves centered in Christ. If we want to deepen our faith, we need to spend time with people who desire the very same thing. We can build a strong relationship with Christ by spending time with people whose values are the same. If we waste our time with people who are only pursuing worldly pleasures, we'll end our life doing the same. The time God has allotted us must not be squandered. If we keep company with people whose goals are of a spiritual nature, and whose lives are centered in Christ, our goals will be the same, and we will grow as Christians, together.



Daily Reflection
Circumcision vs. Baptism

“See to it that no one makes a prey of you through philosophy (διὰ τῆς φιλοσοφίας) and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the principles of the world, and not according to Christ. For in him the

whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness of life in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of flesh



in the circumcision of Christ; and you were buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.” (Col 2: 8-12)

The “philo-sophy” or “love of wisdom” talked about here is the human kind of “wisdom” that was not “according to Christ.” He, the God-Man, brought us Wisdom incarnate, in Whom “*the whole fullness of deity dwells,*” outrageously for ancient thinking, “bodily.” For ancient philosophy, the body and the rest of the material world were the seat of all evil. But for the chosen people in particular, the human body was also the seat of all hope for the future, because of its capacity for procreation. There was no other “future” for us, except through procreation, before the Lord’s Resurrection.

Thus the physical circumcision “spoke” to the chosen people before the coming of Christ and descent of His Spirit in the symbolic terms they could understand: It “symbolized” their fidelity to God both vis-à-vis the evil in this world and their future aspirations. That’s why God chose the physical circumcision as the “sign” or “symbol” of the covenant with His people (Gen 17: 11).

In the New Covenant “*of His blood*” (Lk 22:20), we have a new “sign” of belonging to Him, in the baptism “*with the Holy Spirit and fire*” (Mt 3: 11) extended to all. It is understandable to us in light of the “tongues as of fire,” which rest upon “all” those gathered at Pentecost (Acts 2) and called to a new kind of birth and birth-giving, in and of the Holy Spirit. Today I embrace this “*circumcision made without hands,*” received in baptism, as the invisible sign of my new, life-giving capacities in Him.

Holy Orthodox Quotes

“Watch against pride: it appears imperceptibly, in time of irritability against others usually for quite unimportant causes.”

+St John of Kronstadt

Mark 7:20-23

And He said, “What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man.”

The Philokalia: Daily Readings

Fear of God purifies us through awe and self-abasement. Longing for Him brings us to perfection through discrimination and inward illumination, raising our intellect to the heights of contemplation. Without fear we cannot acquire intense love for the divine, and so cannot spread our wings and find our resting-place in the realm of our aspiration.

+ St Theognostos, On the Practice of Virtue

Ancient Christian Wisdom

Repentance means to change one’s way of thinking. It is to realize that you are not moving in the right direction and, subsequently, to change course. It is to abandon your sinful habits and establish a new order and governing principle in your life. To repent is to make a courageous decision and to seek liberation from the vices and passions that enslave you and humiliate your personality. It is to hate your sinful self and to love God. It is to cease trusting your own mind with absolute confidence and, instead, to open your eyes to the light of faith... like preparing for Christ to come and dwell within us.

- Metropolitan Ambrosios of Korea