

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: Dean Inferrera



Sunday, June 25, 2017

Gospel: Matthew 6:22-33

Tone 2

Epistle: Romans 5: 1-10

3rd Sunday after Pentecost:

Virgin Martyr Febronia of Nisibis (ca. 304).

All Saints of Britain and Ireland. Ss. Peter and Fevronia (tonsured David and Euphrosyne), Wonderworkers of Múrom (1228). Ven. Dionysius the Hagiorite (1375). Ven. Dometius of Dionysiou (1405). Monk Martyr Procopius of Iveron.

Troparion – Tone 3

Like a fragrant rose in the ascetic life, / You breathed forth the myrrh of Christ. / Therefore he has glorified you as a righteous martyr, O Febronia. / Now intercede with him for those who cry: / “Rejoice, O noble and blessed martyr!”

Kontakion – Tone 3

You were adorned with the grace of virginity and the beauty of martyrdom, / O Febronia, bride of Christ. / You wisely carried your lamp and ran to your Bridegroom / Receiving an incorruptible crown. / Pray for those who faithfully sing hymns of praise to you!



Virgin Martyr Febronia of Nisibis
(ca. 304).

Prayer Requests

For Health of:

Mark DaGrosa, on his 12th birthday, offered by the DaGrosa family with love.

Archpriest Gary Joseph Breton, who marked the celebration of the 25th Anniversary of his Ordination to the Holy Priesthood, this past Sunday, June 18, at the Church of the Annunciation in Brick, offered by Archbishop Michael and the Diocese NY/NJ.

In Memory of:

Peter Taran, offered by the Dawson Family.

Orthodox Quote of the Day

Very few men can accurately recognize all their own faults; indeed, only those can do this whose intellect is never torn away from the remembrance of God.

St. Diadochos of Photiki

Liturgical Schedule

Sunday, June 25th

9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy
12:30 pm: Parish Council Meeting

Saturday, July 1st

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, July 2nd

9:40 am: Hours
9:45 am: General Confession
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy
12:30 pm: Sisterhood Meeting

Saturday, July 8th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, July 9th

9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, July 15th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, July 16th

9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Bulletin Sponsors

Dawson Family, DaGrosa Family

Readings:

The Prokeimenon in the 2nd Tone:

The Lord is my strength and my song; He has become my salvation.

(Psalm 117:14)

vs. The Lord has chastened me sorely, but He has not given me over to death.

(Psalm 117:18)

Epistle: Romans 5: 1-10

Brethren, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us. While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Why, one will hardly die for a righteous man -- though perhaps for a good man one will dare even to die. But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. Not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received our reconciliation.

Alleluia in the 2nd Tone:

May the Lord hear thee in the day of trouble! May the name of the God of Jacob protect thee! *(Psalm 19:2)*

vs. Save the King, O Lord, and hear us on the day we call!

(Psalm 19:10)

Gospel: Matthew 6:22-33

The Lord said, "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is not sound, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O men of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows you need them all. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well."



Virgin Martyr Febronia of Nisibis (ca. 304).

The Virgin Martyr Febronia suffered during the reign of Diocletian (284-305). She was raised at a monastery in the city of Sivapolis (Assyria). The head of the women’s monastery was the abbess Bryaena, the aunt of Saint Febronia. Being concerned about her niece’s salvation, she assigned her a stricter form of life than the other nuns. According to their monastic rule, on Fridays the sisters put aside their other duties and spent the whole day in prayer and the reading of Holy Scripture. The abbess usually assigned the reading to Saint Febronia.

News of her pious life spread throughout the city. The illustrious young widow Hieria, a pagan, began to visit her, and under the influence of her guidance and prayer she accepted holy Baptism, bringing her parents and kinsfolk to the Christian Faith.

Diocletian sent a detachment of soldiers to Assyria under the command of Lysimachus, Selinus and Primus for the destruction of Christians. Selenos, the uncle of Lysimachus, was noted for his fierce attitude against Christians, but Lysimachus was of a different frame of mind from him, since his mother had sought to inspire love for the Christian faith in her son, and she had died a Christian. Lysimachus had discussed with his kinsman Primus how it would be possible to deliver Christians from the hands of the torturer. When the detachment of soldiers approached the convent, its inhabitants hid. There remained only the abbess Bryaena, her helper Thomais and Saint Febronia, who was seriously ill at the time.

It grieved the abbess terribly that her niece might fall into the hands of the torturers, who might defile her. She prayed fervently that the Lord would preserve her and strengthen her in the confession of Christ the Savior. Selinus gave orders to bring him all the nuns of the convent. Primus with the detachment of soldiers found no one, except the two old women and Saint Febronia. He regretted that they had not hidden, and he suggested to the nuns that they flee. But the nuns decided not to leave the place of their labors and they entrusted themselves to the will of the Lord.

Primus told Lysimachus about the particular beauty of Saint Febronia and advised him to take her for himself. Lysimachus said that he would not seduce a virgin dedicated to God, and he asked Primus to hide the other nuns somewhere so that they would not fall into the hands of Selinus. One of the soldiers overheard the conversation and told Selinus. They led Saint Febronia off to the military commander with her hands bound and a chain around her neck. Selinus urged her to deny Christ, promising her honors, rewards, and marriage with Lysimachus. The holy virgin firmly and fearlessly answered that she had an Immortal Bridegroom, and she would not exchange Him for any mortal man. Selinus subjected her to fierce torture. The saint prayed, “My Savior, do not abandon me in this terrible hour!”

They beat the martyr for a long time, and blood flowed from her wounds. In order to intensify the suffering of Saint Febronia, they tied her to a tree and set a fire under it. The tortures were so inhuman, that the people began to demand an end to the torture, since there was no confession of guilt by the girl. Selinus continued to mock and jeer at the martyr, but Saint Febronia became silent. Because of weakness she was unable to utter a word. In a rage Selinus gave orders to tear out her tongue, smash her teeth, and finally, to cut off both hands and feet. The people were unable to bear such a horrid spectacle and they left the scene of the torture, cursing Diocletian and his gods.

Among the crowd was the nun Thomais, who afterwards recorded Saint Febronia’s martyrdom in detail, and also her student Hieria. She came forth out of the crowd and in the hearing of all reproached Selinus for his boundless cruelty. He gave orders to arrest her, but learning that Hieria was of illustrious standing whom he could not readily subject to torture, he said, “By your speech you have brought on Febronia even greater torment.” Finally, they beheaded the holy Martyr Febronia.

Departing the place of execution, Lysimachus wept and withdrew to his quarters. Selinus made ready to eat, but he was not able to take food, and went off to the quiet of his own chambers. Suddenly, he became like one deranged. Looking up to the heavens, he raved and bellowed like a bull, then fell down and struck his head on a marble column and died. When Lysimachus learned of this, he said, “Great is the God of the Christians, Who has avenged Febronia’s blood, so unrighteously shed!” He prepared a coffin, placed the martyr’s body in it, and took it to the convent.

Abbess Bryaena fell senseless, seeing the mutilated remains of Saint Febronia. Later, she recovered her senses and gave orders to open the convent gates so that all would be able to come and venerate the holy martyr and glorify God Who had given her such endurance in suffering for Christ. Lysimachus and Primus renounced their idol worship and accepted both Baptism and monasticism. Hieria gave her wealth to the convent and petitioned Abbess Bryaena to accept her at the convent in place of Saint Febronia.

“Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Joy of all the Sorrowful” founded in 1966

Every year, on the day of the martyric death of Saint Febronia, a solemn feast was celebrated at the convent. During the time of the all-night Vigil the nuns always saw Saint Febronia, at her usual place in church. From the relics of Saint Febronia occurred numerous miracles and healings. The Life of Saint Febronia was recorded by the nun Thomais, an eyewitness to her deeds.

In the year 363 the relics of Saint Febronia were transferred to Constantinople.

Soon after the death of Saint Febronia, Saint James the Bishop of Nisibis (January 13) built a church and transferred into it a portion of the of the holy martyr’s relics.



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 ; reader.charles@hotmail.com or rsub-deacon.vlashi@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

The next meeting of the Parish Council is today Sunday June 25th after coffee hour.

The next meeting of the Sisterhood of the Protection of the Mother of God will be held on Sunday July 2nd after coffee hour.



NY/NJ Diocese News



SAINT ANDREW’S CAMP: a “Jewell” in Upstate New York

Our diocesan **Summer Camp** offers a uniquely Orthodox experience in a beautiful setting on the shore of Oneida Lake in Jewell NY (north of Syracuse). Children are offered 5 one-week sleep-over sessions from 2 July to 5 August 2017. Daily worship, religious education, fun, and fellowship highlight each session as enduring bonds and friendships are formed. *“My experience at Saint Andrew’s Camp was life-changing,”* said Father Ken James Stavrevsky of Rochester NY. **See “Upcoming Events” on the diocesan website for details and registration.**

CONGRATULATIONS are extended to:

Archpriest Gary Joseph Breton, who marked the celebration of the 25th Anniversary of his Ordination to the Holy Priesthood, this past Sunday, June 18, at the Church of the Annunciation in Brick, New Jersey; and

Veljko Pejovic, recent graduate of St. Tikhon's Seminary, tonsured to the rank of Reader by His Eminence, Archbishop Michael, on Sunday, June 18, at the Church of the Annunciation in Brick, New Jersey.



Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News

Alaska's 47th annual St. Herman Pilgrimage to be held August 7-9

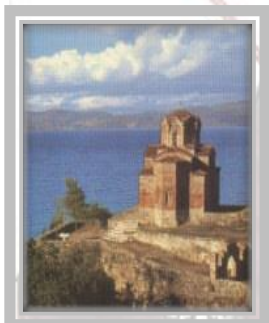
Hundreds of faithful are expected to participate in the 47th annual Saint Herman Pilgrimage to Spruce Island, home of North America's first saint, August 7-9, 2017.

According to the Orthodox Church in America's Diocese of Alaska, the pilgrimage will open on Monday evening, August 7, with the celebration of the Akathistos Hymn in honor of Saint Herman at Kodiak's Holy Resurrection Cathedral, in which his relics are enshrined. The annual Bishop's Tea will follow.

On Tuesday, August 8—the Feast of Saint Jacob Netsvetov—the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at Holy Resurrection Cathedral. A grand banquet and introduction of pilgrims will follow at the Afognak Native Corporation Hall. Vigil will be celebrated in the evening.

Boats will depart Kodiak for Monk's Lagoon on Spruce Island early on the morning of Wednesday, August 9—the Feast of Saint Herman. The Hierarchical Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at Saints Sergius and Herman of Valaam Chapel. The original log chapel was built in 1805, while the present structure dates to 1898. The chapel marks the burial site of Saint Herman. After the Liturgy, pilgrims will enjoy a picnic lunch before returning to Kodiak, where they will partake of a light soup dinner at Holy Resurrection Cathedral. The pilgrimage schedule is subject to revision. Check the Diocese of Alaska's web site for updates and additional information.

Prayers by the Laker, St. Velimirovich, XII:



Anoint my heart with the oil of Your mercy, my most merciful Lord.

*May neither anger against the strong nor scorning of the weak ever erupt in my heart!
For everything is weaker than the morning dew.*

*May hatred never make a nest in my heart against those who plot evil against me, so
that I may be mindful of their end and be at peace.*

*Mercifulness opens the way to the heart of all creatures, and brings joy.
Mercilessness brings fog to the fore, and creates a cramped isolation.*

*Have mercy on Your merciful servant, most Tender Hand, and reveal to me the
mystery of Your mercy.*

The Ultimate Man is the child of the Father's mercy and the Spirit's light.

All creation is merely a story about Him. The mighty suns in the heavens and the smallest drops of water in the lake carry in themselves one part of the story about Him. All the builders of heaven and earth, from the exceedingly mighty seraphim to rulers and the tiniest particle of dust, tell the very same story about Him, their fore-essence and fore-source.

What are all the things on the earth and the moon except the sun in stories? Truly, in this way all visible and invisible creation is the Ultimate Man in stories. Essence is simple, but there is no end or number to the stories about essence.

My neighbors, how can I tell you about essence, when you do not even understand stories.

Ah if you only knew how great the sweetness, the expanse, and the strength are, when one reaches the bottom of all the stories—there, where the stories begin and where they end. There, where the tongue is silent and where everything is told at once!

How boring all the lengthy and tedious stories of creatures become then! Truly, they become just as boring as it is for one who is accustomed to seeing lightning to hear stories about lightning.

Receive me into Yourself, O Only-Begotten Son, so that I may be one with You as I was before creation and the Fall.

Let my long and weary story about You end with a moment's vision of You. Let my self-deception die, that would have me think that I am something without You, that I am something else outside of You.

My ears are stuffed with stories. My eyes no longer seek to see any display of clothing but You, my essence, overladen with stories and clothing.

Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, CXII:

III. Us and Our Neighbors

How to Deal with Those Who Hurt Us

Whoever prays for those who hurt him lays the demons low; but he who opposes his affronter is bound to the demons.

St. Mark the Ascetic, Homilies, 1.45



The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration by Abbott Tryphon

Forgiveness

Forgiveness is the cure for judgment, anger, and resentment

Our Lord Jesus Christ told us: “Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you shall be forgiven (Luke 6:37).” In the Our Father, the very prayer given to His disciples after Christ was asked to teach them to pray, we say the words “forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors”. These strong words make it clear that we are to forgive others if we expect God to forgive us.

Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk, in his book, “Journey to Heaven”, says: “Do we forgive our neighbors their trespasses? God also forgives us in His mercy. Do we refuse to forgive? God, too, will refuse to forgive us. As we treat our neighbors, so also does God treat us. The forgiveness, then, of your sins or unforgiveness, and hence also your salvation or destruction, depend on you yourself, man. For without forgiveness of sins there is no salvation.”

Throughout Christ’s ministry He emphasized the need for us to be willing to forgive others, for if we expect to be forgiven, we must nurture a forgiving heart. If we hold grudges, and remember wrongs, we poison our souls, and love has no place in us.

“The drunkard, the fornicator, the proud – he will receive God’s mercy. But he who does not want to forgive, to excuse, to justify consciously, intentionally... ..that person closes himself to eternal life before God, and even more so in the present life. He is turned away and not heard (Elder Sampson of Russia).”

As we are quick to forgive our neighbors, so God also forgives us in His great and loving mercy. If we refuse to forgive, God, too, will refuse to forgive us. Our salvation or destruction, depend on our willingness to forgive others, for without forgiveness of sins there is no salvation.



Daily Reflection

Enemies in Our Own House



“Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to divide (διχάσαι, to divide in two) a man against/regarding his father (κατὰ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ), and a daughter against/regarding her mother, and a daughter-in-law against/regarding her mother-in-law; and one’s foes (ἔχθροὶ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) are those of one’s own household (οἱ οἰκιακοὶ αὐτοῦ). He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me...” (Mt 10: 34-37)

What “sword” does Christ bring between us and those of our own “house”? Himself. In faith, I learn that no relationship with another human being is healthy, when it’s just the two of us, without God between us, and without an inspired awareness of us both inhabiting God’s “house,” under His house-rules and guidance. My Lord reminds me of this in no uncertain terms, calling all inhabitants of my “own” house (i.e., a “house” run God-lessly by me alone) my “foes” or “enemies.” If I am living and loving in a house like that, isolated from God, then I do not have

true unity with others, the kind of unity God wants for us, in Him; then others in my house are ultimately my enemies, as I am theirs.

Today let me open the windows of my “house” and let some fresh air in, of God’s grace-filled Presence, lest self-reliance and self-centeredness make “enemies” of everyone in my life, making me fight useless battles against everyone in my life, including myself. “Let us commend ourselves and one another and all our lives to Christ our God.” To You, O Lord!

Holy Orthodox Quotes

Matthew 6:28-33 (Orthodox Study Bible)

“So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.† But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.’†

For this cause He mentioned the heathens also, saying that the Gentiles seek after these things; they whose whole labor is for the present life, who have no regard for the things to come, nor any thought of Heaven. But to you not these present are the chief things, but other than these. For we were not born for this end, that we should eat and drink and be clothed, but that we might please God, and attain unto the good things to come. Therefore as things here are secondary in our labor, so also in our prayers let them be secondary. Therefore He also said, Seek the kingdom of Heaven, and all these things shall be added unto you. And He said not, shall be given, but shall be added, that you might learn, that the things present are no great part of His gifts, compared with the greatness of the things to come.

Accordingly, He does not bid us so much as ask for them, but while we ask for other things, to have confidence, as though these also were added to those. Seek then the things to come, and you will receive the things present also; seek not the things that are seen, and you shall surely attain unto them. Yea, for it is unworthy of you to approach your Lord for such things. And thou, who ought to spend all your zeal and your care for those unspeakable blessings, dost greatly disgrace yourself by consuming it on the desire of transitory things.'

-St John Chrysostom

The Philokalia: Daily Readings

Through the practice of the virtues the outward aspects of the soul become like the silver-coated wings of a dove. Through contemplation its inward and intelligible aspects become golden. But the soul that has not in this way regained its beauty cannot soar aloft and come to rest in the abode of the blessed.

- St Elijah the Priest, Gnostic Anthology

Ancient Christian Wisdom

If we truly think of Christ as our source of holiness, we shall refrain from anything wicked or impure in thought or act and thus show ourselves to be worthy bearers of his name. For the quality of holiness is shown not by what we say but by what we do in life.

+ St. Gregory of Nyssa

Wisdom of the Church Fathers

A certain monk asked St. Anthony the Great, "What must I do to be saved?" The elder answered him, "Don't trust in your own righteousness, don't worry about what's past, and constrain your tongue and your stomach."

**Saint Anthony the Great
(251-356)**