

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 Vlash

Parish Council President: Trudy Ellmore

Parish Council Vice President: Holly Dawson



Sunday, May 24, 2015

Gospel: John 17:1-13

Tone 6

Epistle: Acts 20:16-18,28-36

7th Sunday of Pascha; Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council. Afterfeast of the Ascension.



Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council.

***Glory to
Jesus Christ!***

***Glory
Forever!***

*The Apostles' preaching and the Fathers' doctrines have established
one faith for the Church.*

*Adorned with the robe of truth, woven from heavenly theology,
It defines and glorifies the great mystery of Orthodoxy!*

Today the Church Remembers

Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council. Afterfeast of Ascension.

Ven. Simeon the Stylite (the Younger) of the Wonderful Mountain (596).

Ven. Nikita the Stylite, Wonderworker of Pereyaslav! —Zaleskii (786).

Martyrs Meletius Stratelates, Stephen, John, and 1,218 soldiers, with women and children, including Serapion the Egyptian, Callinicus the Magician, Theodore, Faustus, the women: Marciana, Susanna, and Palladia, two children: Cyriacus and Christian, and twelve Tribunes—Faustus,

Festus, Marcellus, Theodore, Meletius, Sergius, Marcellinus, Felix, Photinus, Theodoriscus, Mercurius, and Didymus, all of whom suffered in Galatia (138-161). St. Vincent of Lérins.

Weekly Bulletin Sponsors

In Eternal Memory of:

Our father **Risley**, offered by his family.

Liturgical Schedule:

Sunday, May 24th

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

Saturday, May 30th

No Vespers

Sunday, May 31st

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

Saturday, June 6th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, June 7th

9:30 am: No Church School
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Hierarchical Liturgy

Readings:

Epistle: Acts 20:16-18, 28-36

In Those Days, Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost. From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. And when they had come to him, he said to them: “You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have coveted no one’s silver or gold

or apparel. Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

Gospel: John 17:1-13

At that time, Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work which you gave me to do; and now, Father, you glorify me in your own presence with the glory which I had with you before the world was made.

"I have manifested your name to the men whom you gave me out of the world; yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you; for I have given them the words which you gave me, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you did send me. I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are mine; all mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me; I have guarded them, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves."



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 and \$2 for a small one.

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

Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org

Volunteers are needed to clean the church. Please use the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board downstairs or candle stand, to indicate when you can help.

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

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: Parish News

The Parish Council will be meeting on Sunday, May 31st downstairs in the community room at 12:15 PM.

Sub-Deacon Vlash has accepted the call to once again serve with an **OCMC Youth Outreach Mission Team** going to Albania June 15 to July 1, 2015 and to go on a pilgrimage to **Mt. Athos** (the Holy Mountain) in Greece July 1 to July 9, 2015. Please remember him in your prayers in his many preparations. If your heart is moved to support him financially, please speak to him for information on how to do so. Every dollar donated over the cost of the trip will be given to the orphanage (Children’s Home of Hope on the grounds of the Shen Vlash Monastery and Resurrection of Christ Theological Academy in Durres, Albania).

Volunteer needed to open and close doors for Living Clean Narcotics Anonymous meetings held on Fridays, for the following dates: June 19th, 26th, and July 3rd, while Sub-Deacon Vlash is away. The meetings start at 8:00 PM, however the doors need to be opened at 7:30 PM. The meetings end at 9:15 PM. If anyone is interested please contact Sub-Deacon Vlash. Thank you.

Coming Events for Your Calendar

June 13, 2015

NJ Deanery Church School Teachers Conference

Christ the Savior Church, Paramus, NJ

Teachers, please make every effort to attend!!

August 20, 2015

Orthodox Youth Day

Nativity of the Virgin Mary Church, Jackson, NJ

Six Flags Great Adventure

August 23, 2015

NJ Deanery Clergy Family Picnic

September 2-3, 2015

Clergy Conference

Assumption of the Virgin Church, Clifton, NJ



Sisterhood of the Protector of the Mother of God News

There will be a Sisterhood meeting on Sunday July 5th after Divine Liturgy and coffee hour downstairs in the community room.



NY/NJ Diocese News

SAINT ANDREW’S CAMP: Campers & Staff Make Ready for the 2015 Season!

The summer programs at **Saint Andrew’s Camp in Jewell NY** are “gearing-up” for another summer of faith, fun, and fellowship. Currently the camp is **seeking additional male counselors**, and there’s always room for dedicated volunteers to support the activities of the five-week resident camping schedule in the beautifully rustic setting along the shore of Lake Oneida. **Programs begin on 28 June and**

conclude on 1 August.



Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News

St. Tikhon’s site of PaTram Institute’s second choral class July 13-18, 2015

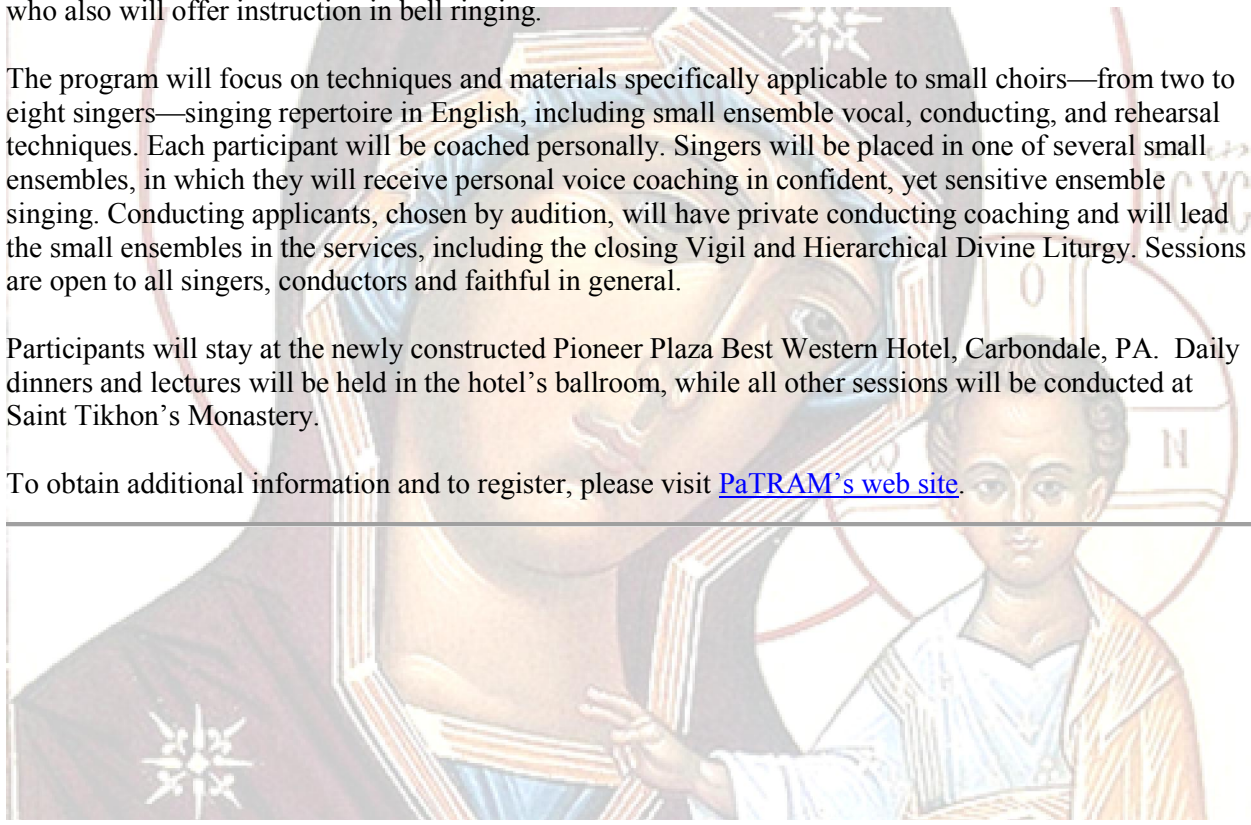
A mixed choir and conductor’s class titled “Cultivating Pearls” will be offered by the [Patriarch Tikhon Russian American Institute](#) [PaTRAM] in conjunction with [Blagovest Bells](#) at Saint Tikhon’s [Monastery](#) and [Seminary](#) here July 13-18, 2015.

Instructors include Vladimir Gorbik, PaTram’s Artistic Director and Choirmaster at Moscow’s Holy Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra Podvorye, who will teach conducting virtually from Moscow; Vladimir Morosan, Founder of Musica Russica, who will offer instructions in technique and lecture on congregational singing; Benedict Sheehan, Music Instructor at Saint Tikhon’s Monastery and Seminary, who will offer instruction in conducting and voice; Mark Galperin, General Manager of Blagovest Bells, who will lecture on bell ringing; and Constantine Stade, bell installation and ringing specialist, who also will offer instruction in bell ringing.

The program will focus on techniques and materials specifically applicable to small choirs—from two to eight singers—singing repertoire in English, including small ensemble vocal, conducting, and rehearsal techniques. Each participant will be coached personally. Singers will be placed in one of several small ensembles, in which they will receive personal voice coaching in confident, yet sensitive ensemble singing. Conducting applicants, chosen by audition, will have private conducting coaching and will lead the small ensembles in the services, including the closing Vigil and Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. Sessions are open to all singers, conductors and faithful in general.

Participants will stay at the newly constructed Pioneer Plaza Best Western Hotel, Carbondale, PA. Daily dinners and lectures will be held in the hotel’s ballroom, while all other sessions will be conducted at Saint Tikhon’s Monastery.

To obtain additional information and to register, please visit [PaTRAM’s web site](#).



Athanasius conclusively refuted the blasphemous opinions of Arius. The heresiarch Arius is depicted in iconography sitting on Satan’s knees, or in the mouth of the Beast of the Deep (Rev. 13).

The Fathers of the Council declined to accept a Symbol of Faith (Creed) proposed by the Arians. Instead, they affirmed the Orthodox Symbol of Faith. St Constantine asked the Council to insert into the text of the Symbol of Faith the word “consubstantial,” which he had heard in the speeches of the bishops. The Fathers of the Council unanimously accepted this suggestion.

In the Nicean Creed, the holy Fathers set forth and confirmed the Apostolic teachings about Christ’s divine nature. The heresy of Arius was exposed and repudiated as an error of haughty reason. After resolving this chief dogmatic question, the Council also issued Twelve Canons on questions of churchly administration and discipline. Also decided was the date for the celebration of Holy Pascha. By decision of the Council, Holy Pascha should not be celebrated by Christians on the same day with the Jewish Passover, but on the first Sunday after the first full moon of the vernal equinox (which occurred on March 22 in 325).

The First Ecumenical Council is also commemorated on May 29.

Patristic Wisdom for Daily Living with the Church Fathers:

Nature shows us the Resurrection

St. Clement of Rome tells us that belief in the resurrection should come naturally. God has given us signs everywhere: in the day and night, in the way seeds disappear and grow into fruitful plants. We should contemplate the constant resurrection of the natural world and learn from its example.

Think, dear friends, how the Lord continually proves to us that there will be a resurrection to come, of which he made the Lord

Jesus Christ the first-fruits by raising him from the dead.

Contemplate the resurrection that is always going on. Day and night declare the resurrection to us. The night sinks to sleep, and the day rises; the day departs, and the night comes on. Look at the crops, how the grain is sown: the sower goes out and throws it on the ground, and the scattered seed, dry and bare when it fell on the ground, is gradually dissolved. Then out of its disintegration the mighty power of the Lord’s providence raises it up again, and from one seed come many bearing fruit.

—St. Clement, *1 Corinthians*, 24

In God’s Presence, consider....

If we are like seeds destined to grow into plants, what does that tell us about our life with God after we die?

Closing Prayer:

Father, you are the only source of growth and abundance. You help us plant our crops, and they yield their produce by your power. Lead me to share forever in the even greater gifts of heaven that are signified by the fruits of the earth.

Prayers by the Lake, St. Nikolai Velimirovich, VI:

Onto your knees, generations and nations, before the majesty of God! You are quick to fall down on your knees before your bandit leaders, yet you hesitate to fall down on them before the feet of the Almighty!

You say: "Will the Lord really punish us who are so small? If He had made us bigger and stronger, then He would punish us. But as it is, take a look—we are scarcely any taller than a thorn bush along the road compared to the roaring universe around us, yet do you threaten us with punishment by One who is incomparably greater than we are?"

Fools! When your bandit leaders summon you to evil that even causes the universe to tremble, you still say that you are too small. You excuse

yourselves by reason of smallness or weakness only when it comes to performing illustrious deeds.

Even if you are small in your own eyes, you are recorded in the book of fate under a great name. Your forefather Adam used to have the greatness of an archangel and used to glisten with an angelic countenance. Therefore, either the reward of an archangel or the punishment of an archangel is designated for you.

When the desire of your forefather creeps into your heart without a sound, the desire to know creation without the Creator, his archangelic countenance darkens like the earth, and his greatness cmmbles into trifles—into you, his seed. For he wishes to know trifles and to cmmble into trifles, so that he might enter into the trifles, taste them, and test them.

All trifles, all trivial trivia, most come together and turn their face from the earth to the Creator, so that your archangelic forefather may be established once again and so that his face may shine once again with the radiance of a mirror turned toward the sun.

O my Lord and my Creator, establish man as You first created him. This sort of man is not Your work. This sort of man created himself. His name is disease—how was there ever disease in Your hands? His name is fear—how could fear have ever come from the Fearless One? His name is malevolence —how could malevolence ever have come from the Benevolent One?

Fill me with Yourself, O my health; fill me with your eternal matinal light, and make disease, fear, and malevolence evaporate out of me—even as a marsh evaporates in the presence of the sun and is transformed into a fertile field!

Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church

God and Us – How does God relate to us?

A certain monk told me that when he was very sick, his mother said to his father, How are little boy is suffering. I would gladly give myself to be cut up into pieces if that would ease his suffering. Such is the love of God for people. He pitied people so much that he wanted to suffer for them, like their own mother, and even more. But no one can understand this great love without the grace of the Holy Spirit.

St. Silouan the Athonite, Writings, IX.10

The Prologue of Ohrid

St. Nikolai Velimirovic

Reflection

The Apostle Paul said: "To the pure all things are pure" (Titus 1:15). Even the food of man, by itself, cannot be called impure although some food in man can provoke impure thoughts and desires in man. Concerning this, the wonderful St. Simeon the Stylite reflects on a conversation with his Elder John. John the Elder said: "Man does not soil food and drink for the Lord says in Scripture: 'Even as the green herb have I given you all things' " (Genesis 9:3). To that Blessed Simeon responded: "If man then does not soil food, nevertheless it gives birth to impure thoughts and darkens the mind and it gives root to and fattens passions and transforms the spiritual man into the physical, nailing his thoughts to earthly desires." Is not the water which falls from the clouds clean? But when too much rain falls, the crops decay from it. Likewise heavy foods provoke the decay of the spiritual and moral being of man.

Contemplation

To contemplate the Grace of God the Holy Spirit in the Mystery [Sacrament] of Chrismation [Confirmation]:

1. How that Grace anoints the soul cleansed from original sin by baptism, with the joy of sonship;
2. How that Grace confirms man in the Faith of Christ and seals him for the kingdom of God.

Homily:

About how the love of God is shed abroad in the hearts of men

"The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us" (Romans 5:5).

Love is joy and love anoints the heart of man with joy. Brethren, love is power and love anoints the heart of man with power. Love is peace and love anoints the heart of man with peace. And from joy, power and peace, courage is born and love anoints the heart of man with courage.

The love of God, as a fragrant oil, is shed abroad in our hearts by no other than the Holy Spirit, the All-gentle and All-powerful Spirit. Completely undeserved by us, the Spirit of God is shed abroad in us: the love of God in our hearts in the Mystery [Sacrament] of Chrismation. However, in time we neglect this love and by sin we alienate ourselves from God and fall into the disease of spiritual paralysis. And the Holy Spirit unwilling to abide in an impure vessel, distances Himself from our heart. When the Holy Spirit distances Himself from us, then joy, power, peace and courage also departs from us immediately. We become sorrowful, weakened, disturbed and fearful. But the All-good Spirit of God only distances Himself from us but does not abandon us completely. He does not abandon us but He offers to us who are sick, remedies through the Mystery of Repentance and the Mystery of Holy Communion. When we again cleanse ourselves through the Mysteries [Sacraments] of Repentance and Communion then He, the Holy Spirit of God, again abides in us and the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts. We fall, we rise, we fall and we rise! When we fall, the Spirit of God stands by us and raises us if we desire to be raised. However, when we are raised, the Spirit of God stands within us all until we, by sin and foolishness, do

not desire to fall. Thus, we in this life interchangeably become a fertile field and a wilderness, sons of repentance and prodigal sons, fullness and emptiness, light and darkness.

O All-good Holy Spirit of God, do not depart from us either when we want You and when we do not want You. Be with us all the time until our death and save us for life eternal.

