

# ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

Orthodox Church of America

A Parish of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey

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February 28, 2021

Sunday after Pentecost - 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the Prodigal Son

Ven. Basil the Confessor; Ven. Procopius.

- 9:10 am - Hours
- 9:30 am - Divine Liturgy, Panikhida.  
! Cor. 6:12-20  
Luke. 15:11-32

## Schedule of Services

### Tuesday, March 2

- 7:00 pm - Akathist to Saint John, Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord.

### Friday, March 5

- 7:00 pm - Moleben to the Most Holy Theotokos:

### Saturday, March 6

- 5:00 pm - Great Vespers followed by Panikhida

Sunday, March 7

- 9:10 - Hours
- 9:30 - Divine Liturgy.



## WEEKLY BIBLE MESSAG



The Sunday after the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee is the Sunday of the Prodigal Son. This parable of God's forgiveness calls us to "come to ourselves" as did the prodigal son, to see ourselves as being "in a far country" far from the Father's house, and to make the journey of return to God. We are given every assurance by the Master that our heavenly Father will receive us with joy and gladness. We must only "arise and go," confessing our self-inflicted and sinful separation from that "home" where we truly belong (Luke 15:11-24).

After the Polyeleion at Matins, we first hear the lenten hymn "By the Waters of Babylon." It will be sung for the next two Sundays before Lent begins, and it serves to reinforce the theme of exile in today's Gospel.

Starting tomorrow, the weekday readings summarize the events of Holy Week. On Monday we read Saint Mark's account of the Entry into Jerusalem. On Tuesday we read how Judas went to the chief priests and offered to betray the Lord. On the night before His death Christ tells His disciples that one of them will betray Him. He also predicts that they will desert Him, and that Peter will deny Him three times. On Wednesday the Gospel describes how Judas betrayed the Savior with a kiss. Thursday's Gospel tells how Jesus was questioned by Pilate. On Friday we read the narrative of Christ's crucifixion and death.

## Venerable Marina and Kyra of Syria

Commemorated on February 28

Saints Marina (Marana) and Kyra (Cyra), sisters by birth, lived during the fourth century in the city of Veria (or Berea) in Syria. Their parents were illustrious and rich, but the sisters left home and departed the city when they had reached maturity. Having cleared off a small plot of land, the holy virgins sealed up the entrance to their refuge with rocks and clay, leaving only a narrow opening through which food was passed to them. Their little hut had no roof, and so they were exposed to the elements. On their bodies they wore heavy iron chains and patiently endured hunger. During a three year period, they ate food only once every forty days. Their former servants came to them, wanting to join their ascetic life. The saints put them in a separate hut next to their own enclosure and they spoke to them through a window, exhorting them to deeds of prayer and fasting.

The life of the holy ascetics Marana and Kyra was described by Bishop Theodoret of Cyrhus in his Religiosa Historica. Out of respect for his hierarchical dignity, the holy virgins allowed him into their dwelling. Theodoret conversed with them and persuaded them to remove the heavy chains they wore under their clothing. Kyra, who was weak in body, was always stooped under their weight and was unable to sit upright. Once he left, however, they resumed wearing the chains. So they lived in asceticism for forty years. They disturbed their solitude only to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to pray at the Sepulchre of the Lord. During their journey (which took twenty days) they ate no food until they had prayed at the Holy Places. On the way back, they also went without eating. They did the same thing at another time, when they journeyed to the grave of the Protomartyr Thekla (September 24) at Seleucia, Isauria. Saints Marana and Kyra died in about the year 450. Their ascetical life equaled that of the great male ascetics of the desert, and they received the same crown of victory from Christ the Savior.

## Intercessory Prayers

We pray for all our fellow parishioners, and we pray especially for those who are incapable of being with us in church. Please keep in your prayers our Brothers and Sisters in Christ: Genevieve Bobenko, Barbara Bogart, Michael Bzik, Mary Ann Dolak, Dorothy Fabian, Barbara Kary, Margaret Kovalycaik, Kathleen Lazarczyk, Dennis Malsner, Marian Nagel, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovitch, Maryann Sytagen, Eva Stashitsky, Patricia Galley.

## Birthday Greeting

Happy Birthday go out this week to **Rose Marie Petrow** - March 2<sup>nd</sup>. And **Sonya Finno** - March 3<sup>rd</sup>. May God continue to enrich them life with the fullness of joy and happiness for many years - Mnogaya Lyeta!

## Announcement

♦ **Panikhida service** today following the Divine Liturgy, in memory of **Andrew Stankovci** - ten year anniversary of his repose. As well as **Steven Baron** - two year anniversary of his repose.

♦ **Memory Eternal.** Our Sister in Christ **Eva Stashitsky**, fell asleep in the Lord on Friday, February 26, 2021. Funeral service will be held on Friday March 5, at 11.00 a.m. at St. John the Baptist Church in Passaic. Interment to follow at East Ridge lawn Cemetery, Clifton NJ.

♦ **Memorial (Soul) Saturdays** On certain Saturdays of the year, the commemoration of the dead is prescribed. In the Church, we all depend on each other, belong to each other and are united by the love of Jesus Christ, even with those who have preceded us in death. Remembering departed relatives and others among the faithful who have fallen asleep in the Lord is an act of love that we should never neglect. This year, there are six Memorial (Soul) Saturdays: **Mar 6 & 27, Apr 3 & 10, Jun 19 and Oct 23.** The Panikhida on each of these days will be serve. A form to list the names of those you want mentioned is available at the Candle Desk. Once completed, you can either drop it off in church or send it to the rectory; even better, attend these services yourself to experience the beauty and meaning of these days in the place where our brothers and sisters worshipped before they were laid to pious rest.