

# ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

A PARISH OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

170 Lexington Avenue, Passaic, New Jersey, 07055  
www.stjohnspassaic.org

REV. FR. IGOR KSENIUK, Acting Rector 973-473-1928 (office)  
646-387-5494 (cell)  
fr.igorksn@gmail.com

Department of  
**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**  
ORTHODOX CHURCH in AMERICA

## Rich and Poor in the Letter of James

**During the week of January 26, and also the preceding week, the Church's prescribed readings include most of the Epistle, or Letter, of James.**

The final reading, for January 30, has harsh words for the rich who have treated others badly: "Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you. Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver have rusted and their rust will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire...Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts" (James 5: 1-3a, 4).

These words read more like a sermon than a letter, and the Letter of James probably is a sermon, or several sermons, the words having been copied down by those who were hearing them. James is the man known as the "brother of the Lord." Orthodox Tradition holds, as the whole early Church held, that he was the son of Mary's husband Joseph by a previous marriage. (Both Martin Luther and John Calvin believed in the perpetual virginity of Mary. So, unlike some modern Christians, they would never have said that James was the biological brother of Jesus.)

James was a leader in the early Church, so when Peter was miraculously freed from prison, he instructed his amazed friends to "tell this to James and to the brethren" (Acts 12: 17). James was trusted and respected enough to preside over the Council of Jerusalem, also described in the Book of Acts.

## Intercessory Prayers

We pray for all our fellow parishioners, but we pray especially for those who are incapable of being with us in church. Among them are:

Michael, Mary and Max Bakaletz, Genevive Bobenko, Pauline Bodnar, Nancy Filak, Dorothy Gentner, Mary Hadginske, Helen Kurnewitz, Margaret Lawler, Kathleen Lazorczyk, Emil Mikulik, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Anatoly & Anna Rozanovich, Nadine Sojka, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

The first part of James' letter, like the strong words in Chapter 5, teaches about being rich, but in a different way. In these verses, he describes the effect of being a follower of Christ on a poor or "lowly" person, and then on a rich person. He says, "Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, and the rich in his humiliation" (1: 9).

For the poor person, being faithful to God means being exalted, raised to heights unlike anything the world offers. Trials will come to every person, rich or poor, but the poor person who endures them "will receive the crown of life which God has promised to those who love Him" just as the rich person will. In the Kingdom, the rich have no advantage.

That is why James says that the rich person should boast "in his humiliation." Having found the true riches of Christ, the rich person will be satisfied. It will no longer be necessary or appealing to pursue the fleeting wealth and position of this world: "For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits" (1: 11).

To both rich and poor, James gives the same advice: "Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand" (5: 8).

## Birthday Greetings

Happy Birthday to **Mary Hadginske**, who celebrates her 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday today. May God grant you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!



## Announcements

◆ Due to the weather conditions last week the **Board of Trustees'** meeting was rescheduled to **Tuesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>** at 7:00 p.m. All members are urged to attend.

◆ Our **Annual Parish Meeting** will be held on **Sunday, February 16** following the Divine Liturgy. A light luncheon will be available. Please plan to attend. Important subjects are listed on the agenda.

◆ Congratulations to Anna and Anatole Rozanovich on the birth of their grandson, Zachary, on December 8, 2013. Parents are Vladimir and Stephanie Rozanovich of Cincinnati, Ohio. Many Years!

◆ Fred and Anna Mae Beckmann's granddaughter, Christina Craig, was graduated in May from the University of Hartford, CT, with a B.C. Degree, emphasis in Journalism & TV Broadcasting (Communications). She is residing in Yakima, WA, and is currently employed by KIMA-TV, a subsidiary of CBS, as a TV News Field Reporter. Congratulations!

◆ Alyssa Mayer, granddaughter of Emil Mukluk and his wife, the late Helen, was graduated from the University of Delaware on May 25, with a Bachelor of Science in Education. She is teaching grade 4 in Vernon and is the JV Girls' Basketball Team Coach at Vernon High School. Congratulations!

◆ Food items are always in need for our **food pantry**. Please place non-perishable food items in a basket in the narthex.

January 26, 2014

31<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

• 9:00am – Divine Liturgy

Epistle: 1Tim. 1:15-17

Gospel: Mt. 15:21-28

• Fellowship – everyone is invited for Coffee Hour following the Divine Liturgy

## Schedule of Services

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29**

6:00pm - Great Vespers with Litya

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 30 – THREE HOLY HIERARCHS**

9:00am - Divine Liturgy

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1**

4:00pm - Great Vespers with Litya

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2 – MEETING OF THE LORD IN THE TEMPLE**

9:00am - Divine Liturgy & Blessing of Candles.