

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

A PARISH OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

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Department of
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
ORTHODOX CHURCH in AMERICA

A New Testament Prophet

Anyone who reads the Bible knows about the Old Testament prophets, men and women who tell God's people about His will and His plans. On April 8th we celebrate a man who prophesied in the New Testament.

This Christian prophet, Agabus, is mentioned twice in the Book of Acts. The first time, he is one of several prophets who come from Jerusalem to Antioch (11:27-30). His prophecy reminds us that having the prophetic gift often means having to say hard things, and to deliver bad news.

Agabus stands up and foretells, by the power of the Holy Spirit, a great famine "throughout all the world," in the days of the emperor Claudius. The prophecy did come to pass at the time he said it would, starting in Judea and then spreading out to afflict the people of Italy and Greece.

The famine foretold by Agabus was a serious problem for the young Church to deal with as it struggled to establish itself in the Empire. But at the same time it gave believers an urgent reason to practice the compassion the Lord had taught them. The very next verses of Acts tell us that the disciples, "each according to his ability," sent relief to the people in need. They gave their gifts to Barnabas and Saul, who would later be called Paul, to deliver.

Agabus next appears in Acts 21. Saint Paul and his companions have been traveling by ship. Paul wants to reach Jerusalem in time for Pentecost. The group has now come to Caesarea, where they stay with Philip. He is one of the seven deacons, with Stephen the Protomartyr, who were chosen to help the apostles. Philip's four daughters are prophetesses, and it is in this

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, Genevieve Bobenko, Pauline Bodnar, Nancy Filak, Mary Hadginske, Helen Kurnewitz, Margaret Lawler, Kathleen Lazorzcyk, Emil Mikulik, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Anatoly & Anna Rozanovich, Nadia Sojka, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

atmosphere of prophecy that Agabus, coming from Judea, encounters Paul.

He prophesies in a dramatic manner. Taking Paul's belt, he binds his own hands and feet with it and announces, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'"

This graphic style puts Agabus directly in the tradition of the Old Testament prophets. Isaiah walked "naked and barefoot" as a warning to Egypt. Jeremiah wore a linen sash and then hid it and let it rot, a symbol of God's intention for Judah and Jerusalem.

Agabus' terrifying prophecy makes Paul's companions beg him not to go to Jerusalem. He is touched by their pleas, but not dissuaded. He says, "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." In the face of such determination, the companions can only say, "The will of the Lord be done."

Prophecy is one of many things that continued from the Old Testament into the New. It shows us that God has been with us, working in our lives, from the first day to the day we are living right now.

Birthday Greetings

Happy birthday to **Maxim Kseniuk**, who celebrates his birthday this Monday. May God grant you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!



Announcements

◆ **NJ Deanery Mission Vespers** tonight will be at Holy Apostles Church in Saddle Brook at 4:00pm.

◆ This **Tuesday, Apr. 8 at 7:00pm** the **Sacrament of Holy Unction** will be served at the Holy Transfiguration Church, 35 Sickletown Rd, Pearl River, NY. Invite your family and friends. For more information please see a flyer at the bulletin board.

◆ Next joint **Pre-Sanctified Liturgy** will be this **Wednesday, Apr. 9 at 6:30pm** at the Holy Assumption Church in Clifton. His Grace Bishop Michael will be main celebrant and homilist; St. Tikhon's Choir will sing the responses. Today at the end of the Liturgy we will have a collection for the Seminary and it will be presented to St. Tikhon's at the end of the Pre-Sanctified on Wednesday. May God bless you for your generosity.

◆ This year, the Palm Sunday **Gifts of Love** collection will be for gift packs for Orthodox Christians serving in the Armed Forces. These packs will include a pocket Orthodox prayer book, a cross, an icon, and a few other items. Your donation is greatly appreciated.

◆ It is again that time of the year when we are looking for **volunteers** to be present in the Church during the **Holy Friday and Saturday**. Please see AnnaMae Beckmann to sign up. May God reward you hundredfold for the time that you will dedicate to the Church.

◆ **Service books** for Lenten services are available for purchase. Please see Mary Ann Dolak at the coffee hour.

◆ The **Food Pantry** is always in need of food items. Please keep those less fortunate in mind and help us to feed those in need. A basket is in the vestibule of the church for your convenience.



April 6, 2014

5TH SUNDAY OF LENT
St. Mary of Egypt

• **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy of St. Basil

Epistle: Heb. 9:11-14
Gal. 3:23-29 (Saint)

Gospel: Mk. 10:32-45
Lk. 7:36-50 (Saint)

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

Schedule of Services

FRIDAY, APRIL 11

6:30pm - Akathist to the Divine Passion

SATURDAY, APRIL 12 – LAZARUS SATURDAY

9:00am - Divine Liturgy

5:30pm - Great Vespers & Blessing of
palms and willows.

SUNDAY, APRIL 13 - PALM SUNDAY

9:00am - Divine Liturgy