

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, Rector

973-473-1928 (office)
646-387-5494 (cell)
fr.igorksn@gmail.com

Department of
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

By No Means

**During the week of June 29 the daily readings include
Romans 11: 2-36, all but the first verse of the chapter.**

The words "By no means!" are Saint Paul's emphatic answer to a rhetorical question he asks in that first verse: Has God rejected His people? Paul identifies himself as one of those people, an Israelite, descended from Abraham and belonging to the tribe of Benjamin. He then says, "God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew." Israel is and will always be the people God "foreknew" and will never reject, as promised in the Old Testament.

Paul acknowledges that Israel has often abandoned God by worshipping false deities. Many years earlier the prophet Elijah was so aware of this same kind of abandonment that he told God, "I alone am left." But God assured Elijah that He had kept for Himself a remnant, "seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Ba'al."

Paul then says, "So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace." But the larger part of Israel, aside from this believing remnant, has refused to believe, and so God has given them a "spirit of stupor, eyes that should not see and ears that should not hear."

What is God's reason for doing this? Is it to make them "stumble so as to fall?" Again Paul insists, "By no means!" God's purpose is to stir the Israelites to jealousy when they see Him turn to the Gentiles. That jealousy will make them turn back to Him. Paul puts it in personal terms: "Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry in order to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them."

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.

Paul cautions the Gentiles not to boast that they are keeping the faith while the Jews have failed to do so. He calls Israel the root of a "cultivated olive tree," while the Gentiles "have been cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree" and grafted into the cultivated one. Israel's disobedience to God was the means of the Gentiles being brought to faith in Him, but the Israelites are still the "natural branches" which will be "grafted back into their own olive tree."

We can't fully understand God's inscrutable ways, Paul says but we do know that the one necessary thing, for both Jews and Gentiles, is faith in the Deliverer sent by God: Jesus Christ. In Acts 2:37-40 we have the example of many Jews joining the Church when they hear Peter preach about Him. It is these Jews, with the Gentiles, who will be the members of the early Church.

Saint John Chrysostom, commenting on this chapter, says that salvation is open to all of us if we will "order [our] own doings aright." And we do that, he says, "...by being free of all passions, and showing gentleness to them that affront and wrong us. For thy Father is so to them that blaspheme Him."



Announcements

◆ The **Trustees' Appreciation Dinner** will be held on July 8 at 6:30 p.m. at *Al Cavaliere* in Clifton. For more information, please see Mary Ann Dolak.

◆ Save the date: **Annual Diocesan Church School Conference** for NJ Deanery is scheduled for Saturday, August 2. For more information please see a flyer at the bulletin board.

◆ Save the date: **Annual Diocesan Youth Day** at Six Flags Great Adventure is scheduled for Thursday, August 21, 2014. For more information please see a flyer at the bulletin board.

◆ **Enjoy your vacation** but remember to visit the Orthodox Church at your destination. To search for a local parish go to <http://orthodoxyinamerica.org> and enter your location in the search panel. Have a wonderful and a safe summer!

Birthday Greetings

Happy birthday to **Stephanie Kibitelsky**, who celebrates her birthday July 1, **Mary Fechisin** - July 2, and **Maryann Stagen**, July 4. May God grant each of you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!

Welcome Visitors

We welcome all visitors to our Divine Liturgy. It is our joy to have you with us today. If this is your first visit to our parish, we welcome you and invite you to return as often as you are able.

While Holy Communion may only be received by prepared Orthodox Christians, our non-Orthodox guests are welcome to join us in venerating the Cross, receiving blessed bread at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, and for fellowship in our Church Hall after the service.



June 29, 2014

3rd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Holy Apostles Peter and Paul

• 9:00am – Divine Liturgy

Epistle: Rom. 5:1-10

2 Cor. 11:21-12:9 (Apostles)

Gospel: Mt. 6:22-33

Mt. 16:13-19 (Apostles)

• **Fellowship** – everyone is invited for Coffee Hour following the service.

• **Panikhida** – in memory of **Helen Newell** on the 9th day of Repose, offered by her brother John Hreno and family.

Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, JULY 5

5:30pm - Great Vespers, followed by General Confession

SUNDAY, JULY 6

9:00am - Divine Liturgy