

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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Our Minds Also Lead Us to God

On August 18 the Church celebrates the memory of the Venerable Christodoulos the Philosopher.

Born in the 11th century, young John, as he was named at birth, loved to learn from books and read everything he could get his hands on. Though John especially loved Scripture and knew he wanted to live by Christ's teachings, his curious mind led him to read about other faiths as well. He enjoyed discussions with wise people, which were another source of learning. He further broadened his knowledge by learning several languages.

John also admired and was inspired by the simple, prayerful life of monastics. So when he told his mother and father that he wanted to become a monk, they weren't surprised. Unlike some parents, who are concerned that they will never become grandparents, they raised no objections.

He was tonsured with the name Christodoulos, and as a monk he continued to think and learn. Because he particularly wanted to be able to defend Christianity in a hostile environment, he memorized the holy book of Islam, the Quran. This enabled him to debate with anyone, and to show the truth of Christianity clearly.

Saint Christodoulos spent many years on the island of Patmos, where he established a famous monastery named for another person of learning he greatly admired – Saint John the Theologian. The monastery's library preserved many precious books that might otherwise have been lost in the violent attacks that Christians frequently endured in those times. That preservation made it possible for others to learn and think deeply – a fitting legacy for a saint referred to as "Philosopher."

In our own day, some writers called the "new atheists" deny that our rational minds can lead us to God. They contend that the

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.

mind is only concerned with facts that can be demonstrated, and faith is not based on such facts. Therefore faith is not rational, and not real.

In his book "God and the New Atheism," John F. Haught offers several convincing objections to this assertion. One is that the new atheists, without seeming to realize it, place complete faith in the ability of their own minds to understand reality. John Haught asks, "If our minds are nothing but the accidental outcome of a mindless evolutionary process, why should we trust them at all?" He also points out that the atheists have faith that there is truth to be understood, and that is worth trying to understand. But they have no basis for this faith; it's simply an assumption.

What is the faith of believers in God? Haught says it certainly is not the "belief without evidence" that the new atheists accuse it of being. Rather it is "...an adventurous movement of trust that opens reason up to its appropriate living space, namely, the inexhaustibly deep dimension of Being, Meaning, Truth, and Goodness...Faith is what opens our minds to the infinite horizon in which alone reason can breathe freely..."

Saint Christodoulos, who used his mind to investigate that infinite horizon, would agree.



Announcements

◆ Save the date: **The "O" Club Meeting** will be next Sunday, August 24 following coffee hour. All members please plan to attend.

◆ Save the date: **Annual Diocesan Youth Day** at Six Flags Great Adventure is scheduled for this Thursday, August 21, 2014. For more information please go to our Diocesan website www.nynjoca.org.

◆ As part of a "Vision for Our Future," Bishop Michael launched the Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors (DDB) program in January 2011. He called upon the faithful of the diocese to voluntarily support this program through their financial gifts. The donations to this fund were used to support mission parishes, help seminarians, and assist existing parishes in their need. The program continues to be a vital force in our diocese and mission parishes are being established, seminarians are receiving scholarships, and struggling parishes are being revitalized. Please consider joining in this good work. You can donate through the Diocesan website: www.nynjoca.org.

Birthday Greetings

Happy birthday to **Patricia Galley**, who celebrated her birthday last Thursday, and to **Peter Czech**, whose birthday is this Friday. May God grant both 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 after the service in our Church Hall next door.



August 17, 2014

10th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Afterfeast of the Dormition

- **8:50am** – Hours
- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy
Epistle: 1Cor. 4:9-16
Gospel: Mt. 17:14-23
- **Panikhida** – in memory of Matushka **Donna Holoduek** on the 5th Anniversary of her Repose, offered by Deacon John & John Holoduek.
- **Fellowship** – everyone is invited for Coffee Hour following the service.

Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, AUGUST 23
5:30pm - Great Vespers

SUNDAY, AUGUST 24
9:00am - Divine Liturgy