

# 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

## Apostle to the Dead

**On August 29 the Church remembers the Beheading of St. John the Baptist – one of the feasts of our Patron Saint.**

John dared to reprove a powerful man, King Herod. Herod knew John to be a just and holy man, and even benefited from listening to John's words. But his awareness of his own moral weakness also made him fear this bluntly truthful preacher.

John reproved Herod for unlawfully marrying his brother's wife, Herodias. Furious at this insult, she convinced Herod to imprison John. She really wanted him executed, but Herod hesitated, because John was revered as a prophet among the people.

But her chance came at Herod's birthday celebration. Herodias used her daughter Salome to entice Herod with a sensuous dance, knowing he would lavishly promise to grant any request the girl made. Her request startled and saddened him, but he couldn't lose face in front of his important guests. John's severed head, which Herodias had told her daughter to ask for, was delivered on a charger, or large plate.

How did Jesus react to the news of His cousin John's death? Matthew 14:13 tells us that He went into a "lonely place apart" but was soon followed by a crowd. He did not take time alone to grieve, but compassionately began healing the sick among them.

Saint Justin Popovich, along with other commentators on John's beheading, asks this question: Why didn't Jesus raise John from the dead, as He had raised, for instance, the daughter of Jairus? Why not bring this man back to life to continue his important work?

Saint Justin answers the question by saying that among John's many titles—Baptizer of the Lord, Holy Forerunner, Seal of All the Prophets, God-Sent Messenger—there is another he might be



August 24, 2014

11<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

- **8:50am** – Hours
- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy  
Epistle: 1Cor. 9:2-12  
Gospel: Mt. 18:23-35
- **Fellowship** – everyone is invited for Coffee Hour following the service.
- **“O” Club Meeting** following Coffee Hour

## Schedule of Services

- THURSDAY, AUGUST 28**  
6:00pm - Great Vespers with Litya
- FRIDAY, AUGUST 29 - BEHEADING OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST**  
9:00am - Divine Liturgy
- SATURDAY, AUGUST 30**  
5:30pm - Great Vespers
- SUNDAY, AUGUST 31**  
9:00am - Divine Liturgy

## 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 Lazorczyk, Emil Mikulik, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Anatoly & Anna Rozanovich, Nadia Sojka, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

given, and that is Apostle to those in Hades, the Dead. Father Justin writes:

"The Forerunner had to become the Forerunner in Hades as well, in death's kingdom, so that he might preach there as well: Lo, the One whom all you Righteous Ones have been awaiting...is working signs and wonders such as you, all of you taken together, have never seen. And lo, I go before Him to preach to you as well this best of all news: He will come down here to us as well...the kingdom of death will be destroyed when, in a little while, the Lord appears here, and you will be led out of this horror and into heavenly joy, into the Kingdom On High."

Those in Hades had to be prepared for something new: a Messiah who could lead them to eternal life. On this same day we read Mark 2: 18-22, which calls us to be ready for something new. Christ compares His saving message to new wine, which requires new wineskins, because old ones can't expand enough to hold it.

Can we "expand" our minds to receive Christ's message? John the Baptist was willing to give his life to preach the Good News to those in Hades. We, still having our lives, can honor him by hearing it and rejoicing in it.



## Announcements

◆ For the second year in a row, the Department of Liturgical Music of the OCA will be offering an on-line course, "Choral Conducting for Beginners," beginning September 15, 2014. For more information please go to [www.oca.org](http://www.oca.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](http://www.nynjoca.org).

## Birthday Greetings

Happy birthday to **Andrea Shaker**, whose birthday is this Tuesday. May God grant 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.