

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

The Enemy Still Works Against Us

October 29 is the feast day of the Venerable Abramius, Recluse of Mesopotamia. He lived in the fourth century.

Abramius left his parental home while still fairly young, and went to the desert to live in prayerful seclusion. But he never ignored the needs of others, and over the years he offered spiritual counsel and healing to many people who sought him out. He lovingly guided his orphaned niece Maria in the ascetical life. His contemporary Saint Ephrem the Syrian so admired the lives of both Abramius and Maria that he wrote about them.

After some years in the desert, Abramius was appointed to be priest of a pagan village. The villagers, worshippers of earth-centered gods, strongly resisted teaching about a heavenly Kingdom and subjected Abramius to great abuse. But he continued to pray for the well-being and enlightenment of his flock, working patiently with them. By the end of three years most of the villagers had been baptized.

Abramius returned to the desert and resumed his secluded life. His spiritual efforts strengthened him, and as they did he became a special target of the devil. Once in his cell, at midnight, he saw a shimmering light and heard a beautiful voice say, "You are truly blessed, Abramius, for nobody else has done my will as you have."

His holy life had enabled Abramius to recognize the deadly flattery of a demon posing as an angel. He ordered the demon out: "I don't fear you and your illusions; I trust in the help and grace of my God."

The devil appeared in other tempting guises, but Saint Abramius was able to withstand them. When his beloved niece Maria strayed from her godly life, he helped her regain her spiritual balance. The two died within a few years of each other,



October 26, 2014

20th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Holy Greatmartyr and Myrrhusher
Demetrius

- **8:50am** – Hours
- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy
Epistle: Gal. 1:11-19
2 Tim. 2:1-10 (Martyr)
Gospel: Lk. 16:19-31
Jn. 15:17-16:2 (Martyr)
- **Fellowship** – everyone is invited for Coffee Hour following the service.

Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1
5:30pm - Vespers

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2
9:00am - Hierarchical 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 Lazarczyk, Emil Mikulik, MaryAnn Rabakoz, Anatoly & Anna Rozanovich, Nadia Sojka, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

both trusting in God's love and forgiveness. Reading about the deceptive visions that came to early saints, we may think that such things no longer happen, at least not to "ordinary" people. But in the book "Everyday Saints" (Pokrov Publications, 2012) Father Tikhon of the Pskov Caves Monastery in northwestern Russia writes about the experiences of some university students in the 1980's. Out of curiosity, they arranged nocturnal séances, after a professor described the mystical experiments of certain well-known Russian scientists.

At first the students were fascinated by the answers they received about future events, especially from the "spirit" of Nikolai Gogol, a famous nineteenth-century writer they all admired. But one night this spirit began groaning in agony and begging for their help. Naively flattered, they readily offered it. They were stunned when the spirit said, "If you really are ready to help...then I'd give you some poison."

The students were firmly convinced that the spirit was urging them to suicide, and that if they remained in its presence they would succumb. They were equally convinced that only God the Savior could deliver them.

The Church's stern warning against "mystical experiments" isn't based on outdated superstition. In the 21st century, as in the 4th and the 20th, our enemy is still at work.



Announcements

◆ Just a reminder: Next weekend, **November 1st & 2nd**, His grace Bishop Michael will be visiting our parish with **Archpastoral visitation**, and he will also be a guest and a main speaker at the New Jersey **District Convention of the F.O.C.A.**, hosted by our "O" Club. There are few seats still available for the Convention Banquet at The Brownstone, which will be after the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy on Sunday, Nov. 2 at 1:00pm. For tickets please see Betty Fechisin. Please plan to attend services on both days.

◆ **Daylight Saving Time** ends next Sunday, November 2. Don't forget to turn your clocks 1 hour backwards before coming for the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. But remember, even though there is one extra hour of sleep, try not to be late for the service.

◆ Starting **Saturday, November 8**, all Vespers services (both weekdays and weekends) will begin at 6:00pm.

◆ **At the last Trustees' meeting**, after examining the revenue and the profit from the candles that we sell in the church, and since half of them were priced lower than they actually cost, it was decided to make an update of prices. The new prices will start **November 30**, and will be as follows: 7 Day Vigils - \$3, Votives - \$0.50, large beeswax - \$2, and small beeswax - \$1. We appreciate your support and understanding.

◆ Save the date: **Sat. November 8, 2014 - Annual Beefsteak Dinner** at the Assumption Church in Clifton, NJ. For reservations (due by Sun. November 2nd) call Barbara Polk at 973-473-3773

Birthday Greetings

Happy Birthday to those who celebrate their birthdays this week: **John Kary**, Oct. 28, and **Betty Hatsko**, Oct. 30. May God grant both of you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!