

# 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

## Women as True Witnesses

**Today, January 4, the Church gives honor to each of the Seventy Apostles, and the icon for the day shows them all together. This grouping of saints is called a "synaxis."**

On this day we also commemorate apostles by name. Among these is the Apostle and Evangelist Luke, writer of the third Gospel and of the Book of Acts. In these days just before the Feast of Theophany, when a multitude will witness the Father's proclamation of His Son's lordship, the Gospel of Luke is especially interesting to read. This is because Luke records several instances in which women witness to the lordship of Christ, often while those around them doubt or scoff.

In a well-known event, a Pharisee invites Jesus to dinner, and while they are at the table a sinful woman comes and anoints His feet with oil (7:36-50). She knows Him to be the true Prophet, the One who has compassion and power to forgive her sins. But the Pharisee considers Jesus' acceptance of her gesture to be proof that He isn't a real prophet, because a real prophet would have known "who and what kind of woman this is."

Luke writes about a different kind of witness when he describes Jesus' visit to the home of Mary and Martha (10:38-42). Martha accepts the usual role of women – to serve guests, and to do all the things that certainly are necessary to maintain a household. Jesus doesn't rebuke her for this, but He lets Mary witness to a wonderful additional truth: women can also be His disciples, sitting at His feet to take in His teaching. In fact, He calls this "the better part." It isn't only open to Mary, of course, but to every person.

## 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, John Kary, Helen Kurnewitz, Margaret Lawler, Kathleen Lazorczyk, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Anatoly & Anna Rozanovich, Nadia Sojka, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

While teaching in a synagogue (13:10-17), Jesus is approached by a woman who has suffered from a crippling spirit for eighteen years. She is a witness to His divine compassion; when He heals her she immediately stands straight and praises God.

The leader of the synagogue completely dismisses her witness, caring only that Jesus has violated the law by curing on the sabbath day. But Jesus answers that anyone will "work" on the sabbath day by giving an animal water. Should not much more a "daughter of Abraham" be set free from the bonds of Satan on that day? His loving – and practical – answer makes the crowd express joy at the wonderful things He is doing.

Luke also tells us that the women at the tomb (24:1-12) have no trouble believing the "men in dazzling clothes" they meet there, who remind them of Jesus' words about His death and resurrection. It is the apostles, the men closest to Jesus, who dismiss the women's witness as an "idle tale."

These same apostles, after witnessing the Ascension, will devote themselves to prayer (Acts 1:8-14). They will be joined by women, including the Theotokos, who have been witnessing all along.

## Birthday Greetings

Happy Birthday to **Helen Kurnewitz**, who celebrates her 96<sup>th</sup> birthday today, **Joyce Cifaldi**, January 6, and to our president of the Board of Trustees **Robert Czech**, January 8. May God grant all of you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!



## Announcements

◆ The house blessing schedule was posted in the last issue of "The Enlightener". If you would like to make changes, or if you did not have your house blessing scheduled yet, please call Fr. Igor to arrange it.

◆ To the members of our "O" club: please note that the **dues for F.O.C.A are due in January**. Please see Betty Ann Fechisin.

◆ Save the date: the New Jersey Deanery is sponsoring a **bus trip to the "March For Life" in Washington, D.C. on Thursday, January 22, 2015**. The motorcoach bus will depart at 6:15am from Holy Assumption Church, 29 Huron Ave., Clifton NJ, and return to the church that evening at approximately 9:45pm. Seat reservations may be made by contacting Fr. John Diamantis by phone at (609) 393-1234, or by email [frjohndiamantis@gmail.com](mailto:frjohndiamantis@gmail.com). There is no charge for this trip. **The deadline for reservations is extended to January 20, 2015.**

◆ 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 in the school building next door.



January 4, 2015

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

Synaxis of the Seventy Apostles

- 8:50am – Hours
- 9:00am – Divine Liturgy  
Epistle: 2Tim. 4:5-5 (Sun. Before)  
Gospel: Mk. 1:1-8 (Sun. Before)
- Fellowship – everyone is invited for Coffee Hour following the service.

## Schedule of Services

### MONDAY, JANUARY 5

6:00pm - Vigil & Blessing of Waters

### TUESDAY, JAN. 6 – THEOPHANY OF THE LORD

9:00am - Divine Liturgy

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 10

6:00pm - Great Vespers, followed by General Confession

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 11

9:00am - Divine Liturgy