

# 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

## The First Hermit

**January 15 is the feast day of Venerable Paul of Thebes.**

The region of upper Egypt in which he was born about 227 is called the "Thebaid" because it is near the city of Thebes. It's a desert area, and over the centuries it became the dwelling place of thousands of monks seeking to come close to God.

Paul was raised and well-educated in a loving Christian family. Orphaned as a teenager, he had no adult protection when imperial Rome began severely persecuting believers. He took refuge with friends.

One of the Roman government's ploys was to offer large rewards to people who turned in Christians who were hiding. Paul's greedy brother-in-law planned to give his name to the authorities, despite the tearful pleas of Paul's sister. Being warned of this, and wishing to spare his sister grief at her husband's treachery and his own arrest, Paul fled to the mountains.

At first Paul thought his time in the wilderness would last only until the persecution abated, but he found that he liked his new life. He went deeper into the desert, and discovered a large cave. Outside it was an ancient palm tree, with fruit for food and leaves for a garment. There was also a running stream. The cave became his home for the rest of his life, which lasted well over a hundred years.

When we think of the first person to pursue a life of prayer and fasting in the desert, we may remember Saint Anthony the Great. Tradition tells us that Anthony, living in another solitary place, also had the thought that "no monk more perfect than himself had settled in the desert." These words are from the life of Paul written by Saint Jerome in the fourth century.



January 11, 2015

**31st SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**Ven. Theodosius the Great**

- 8:50am – Hours
- 9:00am – Divine Liturgy  
Epistle: Eph. 4:7-13 (Sun. After)  
2 Cor. 4:6-15 (Saint)  
Gospel: Mt. 4:12-17 (Sun. After)  
Mt. 11:27-30 (Saint)
- **Panikhida** – in memory of **Anna Mae Beckmann**, on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of her repose, offered by the family.
- **Fellowship** – everyone is invited for Coffee Hour following the service.

## Schedule of Services

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 17**  
6:00pm - Great Vespers

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 18**  
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, John Kary, Helen Kurnewitz, Margaret Lawler, Kathleen Lazorczyk, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Anatoly & Anna Rozanovich, Nadia Sojka, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

Saint Jerome writes that Anthony had a vision in the night that "there was farther in the desert a much better man than he, and that he ought to go and visit him." Though already ninety, Anthony set out to find this elder.

An arduous journey finally brought him to Paul, and the two conversed for a whole day and night. As Anthony reluctantly prepared to leave, Paul asked the younger man to bring the cloak he'd been given by Saint Athanasius to use as Paul's burial garment, for he would die soon.

Anthony was amazed that Paul had heard of Athanasius and the cloak, but he did as Paul asked. When he had buried Paul, he took the elder's simple garment of palm leaves, and for the rest of his life honored "the first hermit" by wearing it only on Pascha and Pentecost.

Saint Jerome bluntly addresses the thoughtless, idle rich with these words about Paul: "Your drinking vessels are of precious stones; he satisfied his thirst with the hollow of his hand. Your tunics are of wrought gold; he had not the raiment of the meanest of your slaves. But poor though he was, Paradise is open to him; you with all your gold will be received into Gehenna."

## Birthday Greetings

Happy Birthday to **Helen Rahnefeld**, who celebrates her birthday today, and to **Joseph Percoraro**, January 13,. May God grant both of you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!



## Announcements

- ◆ Please, note: The next **Trustees' Meeting** will be on Tuesday, **January 20<sup>th</sup>** at 7pm.
- ◆ 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.**

## Our Deepest Sympathy

to family and friends of **Anna Mae Beckmann**, who passed away on **Tuesday, January 6**. May the newly departed Anna Mae rest in peace in God's Heavenly Kingdom! Memory Eternal! Vechnaya Pamiat!