

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

Compassion and Salvation

On February 13th the Church honors Saint Martinian, a fourth-century native of Caesarea in Palestine.

His life is closely intertwined with the lives of two women, Zoe and Photina, who are commemorated on the same day. Yet he was a hermit saint, and already by the age of eighteen he had decided to live his life in a mountain retreat fairly near the city but having no contact with it. He would be there for twenty-five years, becoming known in the area for his gift of healing and his silence.

A woman of Caesarea, named Zoe, had heard a great deal about the holiness of this man who never came to the city but who seemed to be known to everyone in it. Perhaps it was because she wanted to test the power of her feminine wiles that she decided she would make him betray his vow of celibacy.

Zoe put on rags and made herself look disheveled. Then she approached his dwelling at night, pretending she was disoriented after wandering too far in the dark. Appealing to his compassion, she prevailed on him to let her spend the night in his cell. He went to sleep in a large crevice near the cell.

Just before morning, Zoe tidied herself and changed into alluring clothes she'd brought in what had seemed like a beggar's bundle. When Martinian came to tell her she must leave, she offered herself to him in a low, sultry voice. He was almost overcome with desire, and walked outside for a moment to recover.

Perhaps it was because he'd been compassionate that God strengthened Martinian, keeping him from doing something that would have destroyed the life he'd worked for a quarter-century to build. He returned to the cell, built a small fire, and put his feet

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, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Anatoly & Anna Rozanovich, Nadia Sojka, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

into it. The pain made this man, known for silence, cry out. He pulled his feet from the fire and lay gasping and sobbing on the ground.

Then he said to Zoe: "If I cannot bear this little fire, how shall I cope with the fires of hell?" She was so overcome that she begged him to help her change her life. He sent her to the monastery in Bethlehem overseen by Saint Paula, and there she lived in prayer and repentance for the rest of her life.

Once his legs healed, Martinian moved to a remote island, where a kind boatman brought him provisions every few months. But a few years later his compassion was called on again when he heard a young woman crying for help. She had survived a shipwreck and was floating toward his island on a plank.

He went and pulled young Photina to safety. To avoid temptation, he invited her to stay on the island and live on his provisions till the boatman came again. Saying farewell, he dove into the water and swam to the mainland.

Martinian lived out his life peacefully in Athens. He is called a hermit saint, but perhaps his salvation also depended on his compassionate unwillingness to leave a woman in distress.

Birthday Greetings

Happy Birthday to **Jeffrey Rahnefeld**, who celebrates his birthday today, and to **Christopher Kary**, Feb. 10; **Anatol Rozanovich**, Feb. 11; **Alissa Pecoraro**, Feb. 11; and **Chris Finno**, Feb. 14. May God grant all of you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!

Announcements

◆ There will be a short **meeting of the Board of Trustees** after the Liturgy today to review a budget for the Annual Meeting. All members are urged to attend.

◆ Our **Annual Parish Meeting** will be held next **Sunday, February 15** following the Divine Liturgy. Please plan to attend this meeting.

◆ **Sunday, February 22** is the Cheesefare Sunday, the last day when we are allowed to have dairy products and eggs before Pascha. After the Divine Liturgy we will have **Maslenitsa** in our church hall, followed by the Forgiveness Vespers. Please plan to attend. Delicious blintzes and other meet-free foods are in the menu. Let us have a little celebration before we start Great Lent.

◆ The **Sunday of Orthodoxy Deanery Vespers** on **March 1st** of this year will be hosted by our parish. His Grace, Bishop Michael has also invited His Eminence, Metropolitan Joseph of the Antiochian Archdiocese to be the homilist. Invitation has also been extended to clergy and faithful of various jurisdictions. The responses will be sung by a Pan-Orthodox choir. To participate in the choir, it is necessary to contact Stratos Mandalas by February 10th via email at hymnodia@optonline.net. The rehearsal will be at St. Anthony Church, 385 Ivy Lane, Bergenfield, NJ 07621 on February 11th at 7:30pm. We are looking forward to sharing this day, the first Sunday of the Great Lent, as brothers and sisters in Christ. Lenten refreshments will be served following the Vespers. We are also asking for your help with clean-up of the gym area after the fellowship, so it can be used by the school on following Monday morning.



February 8, 2015

SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON Afterfeast of the Meeting

- 8:50am – Hours
- 9:00am – Divine Liturgy
Epistle: 1Cor. 6:12-20
Gospel: Lk. 15:11-32
- Fellowship – everyone is invited for Coffee Hour following the service.

Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, FEB. 14 - MEMORIAL SATURDAY

- 9:00am - Divine Liturgy
- 6:00pm - Great Vespers, followed by General Confession

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15

- 9:00am - Divine Liturgy followed by panikhida in memory of Anna Mae Beckmann, and the Annual Parish Meeting