

# ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST 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

## Destroyer of Royalty and Servant of the King

*The Church honors the Holy and Great Martyr Irene on May 5th.*

She lived in the fourth century in the city of Magedon, Persia. Her royal parents named her Penelope, and her father Licinius decided to protect her from the evil world. When she was six, he installed her in a small castle with every comfort and a staff of servants. The wise tutor Apellianus instructed her, from behind a curtain. Licinius placed statues of pagan gods as guardians throughout the castle. Here she was to live till her parents betrothed her to a worthy young man.

Penelope begged her father not to shut her away from the sound of bird songs and the sight of the changing light of day. But the king was determined, so she stayed where she was. What Licinius apparently did not know was that the old tutor Apellianus was a Christian, and was instilling the teachings of Jesus Christ in his young daughter.

One day Penelope had a disturbing vision. She saw a window suddenly open in the castle wall. A dove flew in with an olive branch in its beak, and dropped it on a table. Then an eagle swooped in with a wreath of flowers, which it also placed on the table. Finally a raven flew in carrying a wriggling snake, and dropped it on the table.

Penelope turned to her tutor to explain these things. Apellianus, in awed wonder, told her that they were signs of her becoming perfect in faith and serving God well, but also enduring sufferings sent by Satan. Apellianus said it was clear that she was meant to belong to Jesus Christ. Realizing this was also what she wanted, Penelope was baptized, taking the name Irene.

## 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: Genevieve Bobenko, Nancy Filak, Mary Hadginske, Helen Kurnewitz, Margaret Lawler, Kathleen Lazorczyk, MaryAnn Rabakoz, Anatoly & Anna Rozanovich, Nadia Sojka, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

When Irene refused every suitor her father offered her, he couldn't understand such disobedience in his carefully-raised daughter. And why, he thundered, had she dared to change her name? But when he tried to punish her by having horses trample her, the animals charged him instead and killed him. Irene prayed fervently, and raised her father from the dead. Seeing the miracle, he and his wife, plus many onlookers, became followers of Christ. After that, Irene served the Lord by converting and healing great numbers of people.

But she would also have more encounters with pagan rulers. One of these, the Persian king Sapor, called her a "destroyer of royalty" because she had turned her father from the Persian gods and had defeated or converted other royal pagans, after enduring humiliating tortures.

God revealed to Irene the time when her life was about to end. She found a new tomb and asked followers to close it with a large stone after she had gone inside. When they came again several days later, they found it empty.

On this day we read Acts 10:21-33, in which the apostle Peter "shakes up" the community by unlawfully meeting with a non-Jew, Cornelius. The great martyr Saint Irene also shook things up and was accused of "destroying royalty." Their "unlawful" actions were for the same reason: they were servants of the King.

## Heartfelt Greetings

Happy Birthday to Marion Nagel, who celebrates her birthday today, Kathie Sudol, May 7, and Elena Nehrebecki, May 8. Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Wedding Anniversary to Robert and Emily Czech. May God grant all of you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!

## Announcements

♦ The 5th Anniversary of the consecration of His Eminence, Archbishop Michael, will be celebrated in our church this coming Saturday, 9 May 2015. The day will begin at 9:30 a.m. with a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, and conclude with a 1:00 p.m. celebratory luncheon at "The Brownstone" in Paterson NJ. Clergy and faithful from throughout the diocese are invited to attend. Reservations are required for the luncheon and may be made on-line at [www.nynjoca.org](http://www.nynjoca.org) by Monday, May 4.

♦ The 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our parish is coming up! Please reserve the weekend of June 13-14, 2015, when our beloved Hierarch Archbishop Michael will join us in celebrating this milestone. Great Vespers will be served on Saturday at 6:00pm. On Sunday, the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy will start at 9:00am, followed by a banquet at The Brownstone in Paterson, NJ at 1:00pm. Don't miss this wonderful occasion. For reservations, please contact Robert or Betty Czech by June 1. For more details please see a flyer at the bulletin board.

♦ Our Church is getting a new set of Icons that we don't have. The set includes 25 Icons that are used for the Pre-Lenten Sundays, all Sundays of the Great Lent, Holy Week, Bright Week, and all Sundays from Pascha to Pentecost. Icons are 12" x 15", and will be placed in the center of the Church for corresponding days. The set also includes a kiot, a beautifully decorated wooden case with glass to hold the icons. All is made in the USA. If you would like to use this opportunity to have this set dedicated in honor or in memory of your loved ones (\$250 for the icons, and \$250 for the kiot), please speak to Fr. Igor or Betty Czech.

May 3, 2015

4<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF PASCHA

Sunday of Paralytic

Ven. Theodosius of the Kiev Caves

• 8:50am – Hours

• 9:00am – Divine Liturgy

Epistle: Acts 9:32-43

Gospel: Jn. 5:1-15

• Fellowship – everyone is invited for Coffee Hour following the Divine Liturgy

## Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, MAY 9 – 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF CONSECRATION OF HIS EMINENCE, ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL

9:30am - Hierarchical Divine Liturgy

6:00pm - Great Vespers

SUNDAY, MAY 10

9:00am - Divine Liturgy