

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

Christlike Love

During the week of July 19, the Church remembers two saints who showed deep love for Christ by doing things that go far beyond what most people would be willing to do.

The first is Saint Seraphim of Sarov. On July 19th the Church celebrates the transfer of his relics from his original place of burial to the Church of Sts. Zosimus and Sabbatius, and then to the Dormition Cathedral in Sarov. Over 200,000 people paid their respects to the beloved saint, and many healings took place during the procession with his relics.

We know many things about Saint Seraphim, including his wonder-working and his gentle companionship with wild animals. But one of the most unusual things we know is the story of what caused him to walk hunched over during the later years of his life.

Saint Seraphim was working in his garden when he was attacked by robbers. Rather than defend himself or use his heavy garden tools to fight them off, he allowed them to beat him badly. It was after that incident that his injured back was permanently bent and affected his walk.

For most people, the idea of not even trying to defend ourselves from an unjust attack is unthinkable. But Saint Seraphim's Christlike love for God's creatures made him unwilling to harm any of them, no matter what the circumstances.

Saint John Chrysostom comments on a similar episode, when companions of Saint Paul didn't fight back against attackers: "For to endure when insulted is God's part: to be merely abusive, is the part of the devil...to them that beat us, let us return blow for blow, by meekness, by silence, by long-suffering..."



July 19, 2015

7TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Holy Fathers of the First Six Ecumenical Councils
Holy Prophet Elijah
(commemorated on July 20)

• **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy

Epistle: Rom. 15:1-7
James 5:10-20(Prophet)

Gospel: Mt. 9:27-35
Lk. 4:22-30(Prophet)

• **Fellowship** – everyone is invited for Coffee Hour following the service.

Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, JULY 25

6:00pm - Great Vespers

SUNDAY, JULY 26

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:

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

The second saint, commemorated on July 21st, is the Venerable Simeon of Edessa, Fool-for-Christ. Like Saint Seraphim, though in a different way, he showed Christlike love that would be difficult for most people to manage. He called people to repentance by feigning madness. He would bound around crazily in the streets and approach people, whispering their sins in their ears and urging them to repent. Sometimes he appeared in dreams and reminded the dreamers to repent. To do this, of course, he had to have insight into people's deepest secrets, which he did.

Commenting on Saint Simeon in "The Prologue from Ochrid," Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich writes about Lycerges, the king of Sparta, who set down strict laws and got his citizens to promise to obey them while he was away for a protracted period of time. Having secured their agreement he left, and never returned, thus "binding them to their oath forever."

Lycerges' willingness to leave his country forever was a sacrifice for the good of the Spartan people, Bishop Nikolai writes: "But how much greater a sacrifice it is voluntarily to leave one's mind and always to appear before men as mad! Is not madness the greatest banishment known to man? And to live year after year in that state, and all in order to be of help to one's neighbour!"

Birthday Greetings

Happy birthday to **Helen Baron**, who celebrates her birthday July 22, and to **Kathy Petrow**, July 24. May God grant both of you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!

Announcements

◆ Save the date: **Annual Diocesan Youth Day** at Six Flags Great Adventure is scheduled for **Thursday, August 20, 2015**. For more information please see a flyer at the bulletin board.

◆ St. Peter's Heaven is getting ready for the new school year and is having their **Back Pack Drive** until the first week of August. The items needed are: backpacks, pens, pencils, sharpeners, erasers, crayons, markers, composition books, spiral notebooks, calculators, glue sticks, scissors, and pencil cases. You can either bring these items to the Church by Sunday, August 2, or drop them off at 380 Clifton Ave., Clifton, NJ 07011 by Aug. 7. For more information please see a post card at the bulletin board.

◆ **Enjoy your vacation** but remember to visit the Orthodox Church at your destination. To search for a local parish go to <http://orthodoxyinamerica.org> and enter your location in the search panel. If you plan to receive Holy Communion, be sure that the priest knows who you are before the Divine Liturgy. It is always good form to approach the Chalice knowing that the priest is informed about you. Have a wonderful and safe summer!

Welcome Visitors

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 in our Church Hall after the service.