

# 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

## The Enlightener of the First Christian Nation

**On September 30<sup>th</sup> we remember Saint Gregory, Enlightener of Armenia. Like other enlighteners – Nina of Georgia, Columba of Scotland and Innocent of the Aleuts – Gregory was not a native of the country he would one day illumine with the Christian faith.**

Born about 239 in Parthia, Gregory came to Armenia as a child with his family. His father, Anak, had a dark purpose: the king of Persia had paid him to assassinate the Armenian king when some good opportunity arose.

Anak bided his time until one day, out hunting with the king and some nobles, he saw the king sitting alone in a secluded spot. Anak attacked, but the dying king was able to cry out his name, and command that he and his family should be executed.

Pursued to a river by the nobles, Anak could see no escape. He jumped into the river and drowned. Most of his family members were soon killed, but a quick-thinking nursemaid had grabbed Gregory, and took him to safety in Caesarea.

Gregory was raised as a Christian, and among his childhood friends was the crown prince of Armenia, Tiridates, who had been forced out of his country when the Persian king's plan to invade and seize the throne succeeded. When the prince decided to return to Armenia and claim his throne, he invited Gregory to come along as his trusted advisor. Neither young man knew about the history they shared.

Once in Armenia, the two came into conflict. Gregory earnestly wanted Tiridates to become a Christian; Tiridates was content with his pagan gods. When jealous nobles noticed this rift, they

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

enlarged it by informing the king that Gregory was the son of his father's assassin. Enraged, the king consigned Gregory to a deep, foul pit. He would spend fourteen years there, visited only by a woman who dropped him morsels of bread.

The king became ill and depressed, and when nothing seemed to help, his loving sister ordered Gregory released from the pit. She was convinced that only this Christian could help her brother. Gregory, finally free, immediately asked the courtiers to fast, and prayed day and night. When Tiridates recovered, his sister revealed that she was the one who had fed Gregory in the pit.

The king was now ready to accept the Christian faith, with Gregory as his learned and loving teacher. In the year 301, he and his courtiers, followed by masses of citizens, were baptized, making the Armenian people the first to accept Christianity as a nation.

After being consecrated a bishop in Caesarea, Gregory returned to Armenia and traveled the country, teaching and preaching, opening monasteries and building churches. In the place where he had a vision of Christ, he erected a cathedral, with the king's support. He also sent missionaries into neighboring countries to spread the faith. Though known as the enlightener of one nation, Gregory never forgot the command of Christ to "Go and teach all nations."

## Heartfelt Greetings

Happy birthday to **Janice Pecoraro**, who celebrates her birthday this Wednesday. May God grant you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!

## Floral Offerings

Beautiful Fall flowers for the Feast of Protection of the Mother of God are offered by Eva Stashitsky in loving memory of all the deceased members of her family. Memory Eternal!



## Announcements

◆ The **Annual Orthodox Education Day** at St. Vladimir's Seminary will be held this **Saturday, Oct. 3**. For more information please see a flyer at the bulletin board.

◆ Next **Sunday, October 4** is the Diocesan **Church Musician Appreciation Day**. We will honor our choir directors and singers with special prayers added during the Augmented Litany and with our special thanks to them.

## 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.



September 27, 2015

17<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

- **8:50am** – Hours
- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy  
Epistle: 2Cor. 6:16-7:1  
Gospel: Lk. 5:1-11
- **Coffee Hour** – everyone is invited for fellowship following the service.

## Schedule of Services

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30**

6:00pm - Great Vespers with Litya

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1 – PROTECTION OF THE MOST-HOLY THEOTOKOS**

9:00am - Divine Liturgy

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3**

6:00pm - Great Vespers

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4**

9:00am - Divine Liturgy