

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

Secrets and Love

On January 15 we remember Saint John Calabytes, called the Hut-Dweller, who was born in the fifth century to a prominent Christian family in Constantinople. John was well-educated, and had the double luxury of access to books and the free time to read them.

The books John chose were mostly spiritual ones, and they convinced him that the familiar life of ease and comfort was not for him. He would enter a monastery, he decided, and would take on strict discipline.

He asked his parents for a book of the Gospels, wanting to study them more closely as he prepared for the life he intended to undertake. The parents' response reflected their attentive love for their son. It was also a sign of their respect for the Scriptures, and a reflection of their wealth. They had a beautiful book made for their boy, with flowing calligraphy and a gem-studded gold binding. It became his constant companion.

In secret, John made his way to a monastery in Bythinia whose monks were known as the "unsleeping" ones because their monastic rule was so demanding and rigorous. But his zeal and effort equaled theirs. He became so pale and gaunt that he no longer resembled the hearty young man who had first joined their ranks.

But something nagged at John. He remembered that his parents had shown only love and concern for him, and that he had abandoned them without a word. The elegant Gospel book, which he still kept with him, reminded him every day of their magnanimity. Finally he asked for, and received, the abbot's permission to return to his parents' home.

Once again, though, John would carry out his plans in secret.



January 10, 2016

32nd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Sunday After the Theophany
Afterfeast of the Theophany

- 8:50am – Hours
- 9:00am – Divine Liturgy
Epistle: Eph. 4:7-13
Gospel: Mt. 4:12-17
- Panikhida – in memory of newly departed **Anatol Rozanovich**, on the 9th day of his repose, offered by Anna Rozanovich and family.
- Coffee Hour – everyone is invited for a fellowship following the service.

Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, JANUARY 16

5:00pm - Great Vespers

SUNDAY, JANUARY 17

9:00am - Divine Liturgy

Intercessory Prayers

We pray for all our fellow parishioners, and we pray especially for those who are incapable of being with us in church. Please keep in your prayers our Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Genevieve Bobenko, Mary Fechisin, Nancy Filak, Mary Hadginske, Helen Kurnewitz, Margaret Lawler, Kathleen Lazorczyk, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Nadia Sojka, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

He didn't approach the spacious house, but built a tiny hut near its gates, and lived there with little protection from harsh weather. His parents' servants gave him food to survive on, but with contempt and derision. John was so haggard that they had no idea he was the master's son. Even the master might not have recognized him.

Yet that symbol of love, the Gospel book, was about to bring parents and child together again. John, having received a divine vision that he was soon to die, asked a servant to bring his parents to him. Though they were reluctant, they were curious to see what this beggar had to say. Meeting them, John told them who he was, gave them the Gospel book, and asked for their prayers as he promised to pray for them.

The parents were devastated at the thought of losing their son so after finding him again, and guilty that he had languished by their very gates. But John assured them that he had chosen his life, and would have wanted no other.

On this day we read a passage from Ephesians that gives some comfort to all those who feel alienated or separated: "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:11).

Birthday Greetings

Happy Birthday to our President of the Board of Trustees **Robert Czech**, and to **Michael Vlachos**, who celebrated their birthdays on January 8; to **Helen Rahnefeld**, January 11, and **Joseph Pecoraro**, January 13. May God grant each of you good health and happiness for Many Years!



Announcements

◆ **Holy Water** that was blessed on the Feast of the Theophany is available for the faithful to take home. After the Divine Liturgy today the font with Holy Water will be moved to its usual place at the back of the Church.

◆ The next **Board of Trustees'** meeting will be held on **Tuesday, January 19** at 7:00 p.m. All members please plan to attend.

◆ **Envelopes for 2016** have arrived and are available in the candle room. Please pick up your set and continue supporting our parish, which does rely on your support! May the Lord bless you hundredfold for your generosity!

◆ Thanks to the sacrificial generosity of **DDBs** from throughout our Diocese and beyond, over **\$650,000** was contributed during the first five years (2011-2015) of the program! Last year a record-breaking total of **\$160,000** was received. As a result, vital ministries have received much-needed support; the work of the Church is being funded as never before! There are visible "fruits" of our labors and efforts as **mission parishes are** being established and supported, **seminarians are** receiving scholarships, and **struggling parishes are** being revitalized. Your generous support is what being a Distinguished Diocesan Benefactor is all about. Your love, your prayers, and your sharing of the riches with which you have been blessed make it all possible. You can continue contributing or consider joining in this good work. You can donate through the Diocesan website www.nynjoca.org