

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

A PARISH OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

170 Lexington Avenue, Passaic, New Jersey, 07055
www.stjohnspassaic.org

REV. FR. IGOR KSENIUK, Rector

973-473-1928 (office)
646-387-5494 (cell)
fr.igorksn@gmail.com

Department of
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

Saint Raphael, Bishop of Brooklyn

Founder of 30 parishes; magazine publisher; fluent in Arabic, Russian, Greek and English; spiritual father to Orthodox from New York to California and Mexico to Canada: these are partial descriptions of Saint Raphael, commemorated on February 27.

Born in Syria in 1860, Rafla Hawaweeny had to flee to Lebanon with his family to escape persecution of Christians. His parish priest, like many believers in much earlier centuries, was martyred, a victim of the anti-Christian riots that roared through Damascus the year Rafla was born. Though his family was able to return to Syria, Rafla never forgot that the faith is often under attack and must be defended.

The young boy's education was always geared toward the priesthood, and at 17, an excellent student, he was chosen to attend the School of Theology on the island of Halki in Greece. After graduation he returned to Syria, visiting parishes with the Patriarch. In 1889 he was sent to Moscow, where he was ordained to the priesthood, and then given the rank of archimandrite, with the name Raphael.

In 1895, Archimandrite Raphael came to New York at the invitation of the Syrian Orthodox community there. He served New York faithfully, but felt great concern about other Arab Christians in towns and cities across the country who had no pastors and were often drawn to non-Orthodox churches that offered worship in English and the chance to be part of a church community. In 1896, he set out across the country to find and minister to these people. He would sometimes walk around visiting families all day Saturday, then take a long journey by train to another town so that he could perform the Sunday Divine Liturgy there. He preached, taught, performed the sacraments,



February 21, 2016

38th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee
(Beginning of the Lenten Triodion)

- 8:50am – Hours
- 9:00am – Divine Liturgy
Epistle: 2Tim. 3:10-15
Gospel: Lk. 18:10-14
- Coffee Hour – everyone is invited for a fellowship following the service.
- Annual Parish Meeting – a light lunch will be served.

Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27

5:00pm - Great Vespers

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28

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 Lazorzcyk, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Nadia Sojka, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

and with loving firmness encouraged everyone to remain strong in their Orthodox faith.

As leader of the Russian Mission to America, the Russian hierarch was acknowledged as the head of the Church in America and of all the ethnic groups within it; no ethnic jurisdictions as yet existed. In 1903, the hierarch was Bishop Tikhon, later to be canonized. Needing help with his growing American flock, Bishop Tikhon asked the Holy Synod of Bishops in Russia to name Saint Raphael as Bishop of Brooklyn, which they did. He became the first bishop to be consecrated in America.

In the next years he assisted Bishop Tikhon in administering the Diocese, consecrated the grounds for St. Tikhon's Monastery, and began publishing "The Word" (in Arabic "Al-Kalimat) Magazine to reach the far parishes of the Syro-Arab Mission which he still led. He also continued his pastoral visits, urging the use of English where appropriate, until his death in 1915.

One reading for this week is Proverbs 6:6, advising us to "go the ant" and "consider her ways, and be wise." Saint Raphael had the energy and wisdom that the verse praises. But more important, he had the love for people, whatever their ethnicity, that makes a bishop a true father to his flock.

Heartfelt Greetings

Happy Wedding Anniversary to **Vladimir & Elena Nehrebecki** (this Wednesday), and happy Birthday to **Evgenia Kozlenko** (This Friday). May God grant all of you good health and happiness for Many Years! Многая Лета!



Announcements

◆ Throughout the following week there is a general dispensation from fasting, so there is **no fasting** this Wednesday and Friday.

◆ **29th Annual Beefsteak Dinner** at Holy Assumption Church in Clifton is planned for **Saturday, March 5**. For reservations please call Barbara Polk @ 973-452-1233. For more information please see a flyer at the bulletin board.

◆ Save the date: **Sunday, March 13** is the Cheesefare Sunday. It is 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.

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.