

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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Young Adults In, or Out of, the Church

A few years ago, a book called "Soul Searching" investigated the spiritual lives of teenagers. It found that religion can be important to teens, but it also determined that many of them adhere to what it called "moralistic therapeutic deism." This can be defined as a belief in a kind, loving God who is not connected to any particular faith tradition, and who is there largely to help in solving personal problems.

"Souls in Transition" is author Christian Smith's follow-up to the earlier book, and it gives valuable insights into the lives of those he terms "emerging adults" between the ages of 18 and 23. Emerging adults marry relatively late, may spend several years in higher education, and rarely stay for decades at the same job because of the unreliable global economy. Many are unaffiliated with any institution, and have no commitment to a worshipping community.

So which, if any, of these emerging adults might make or keep a commitment to faith? Smith answers that it is those who, as teenagers, had examples of older people who practiced their faith. There are other factors (such as prayer, reading of Scripture, multiple religious experiences and the absence of strong doubts in the teen years) but the example of practiced faith is the strongest indicator of future commitment. Teens who have had no such example are unlikely to develop their spiritual lives as emerging adults, and will probably follow the societal trend of indifference, and sometimes hostility, to faith.

Smith rejects the idea that parents (or adult caretakers) become less significant in their children's lives during the teen years. In fact, parents' perception that their children don't want them to promote or "impose" religious beliefs, and their resulting

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 Fehisin, 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.

fear of doing so, leaves the teens "floating in a directionless murk to figure out completely on their own some of life's most basic questions concerning reality, truth, goodness, value, morality and identity." It isn't that these children don't want their parents' involvement, Smith says. It's rather that they want it on "renegotiated" terms that "take seriously their growing maturity and desired independence."

Not only teens, but also the emerging adults who are the subject of this book benefit from the counsel, mentoring and simple presence of caring older people. Smith calls on the churches in America to recognize the unsettled and often disconnected years of emerging adulthood as a fairly new phenomenon in our fast-changing culture. Churches should create ways to reach out to emerging adults, just as they have created ways to reach out to other groups such as the elderly and families with young children.

But it really begins in the teen years, and well before. Children need relationships with adult faith models. Smith, being interviewed about "Souls in Transition," put it this way: "The most important factor is parents. For better or worse, parents are tremendously important in shaping their children's faith trajectories. That's the story that came out in "Soul Searching." It's also the story that comes out here."

Birthday Greetings

Happy Birthday to **Rose Marie Petrow** who celebrates her birthday this Wednesday, and **Sonya Finno**, this Thursday. May God grant both of you good health and happiness for Many Years! Многая Лета!



Announcements

◆ **29th Annual Beefsteak Dinner** at Holy Assumption Church in Clifton is planned for this **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.

◆ The **2016 Annual Lenten Teen Retreat** is scheduled for **April 1-3, 2016**. It is a wonderful opportunity for teens to gather in fellowship and faith. **Complete information and registration documents are now available on the diocesan website.** For more information please see the event poster at the bulletin board.

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.



February 28, 2016

39th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Sunday of the Prodigal Son

- 8:50am – Hours
- 9:00am – Divine Liturgy
Epistle: 1Cor. 6:12-20
Gospel: Lk. 15:11-32
- Panikhida – in memory of **Michael Krehel**, on the 9th day of his Repose, offered by Steven & Helen Baron.
- **Coffee Hour** – everyone is invited for a fellowship following the service.

Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, MARCH 5 - MEMORIAL SATURDAY

9:00am - Divine Liturgy & Panikhida
5:00pm - Great Vespers

SUNDAY, MARCH 6

9:00am - Divine Liturgy