

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

An Announcement of Life Shared with God

March 25 is the Feast of the Annunciation, when God announces to the world His plans to come to the world as a baby in the womb of a mother, just as we all do.

So the first chapter of Luke's Gospel tells of the archangel Gabriel presenting himself before a very young woman with words of great authority: "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" Mary is not so overcome by this amazing statement that she can't think. Though she is "greatly troubled" at what Gabriel says, she is able to "consider in her mind what sort of greeting this might be" (Luke 1: 29). When Gabriel describes in some detail what is to happen, and tells her that her little Jesus will be the Son of the Most High, she again shows presence of mind, and asks the very sensible question, "How can this be, since I have no husband?" (1:34).

Once Gabriel makes God's plan clear, Mary accepts what he has told her. In this she's different from Zechariah, who has been told about the birth of his own son, John the Baptizer, a few verses earlier. Zechariah responds to Gabriel with skepticism, and pays the price by being made temporarily mute. Mary, by contrast, is so joyful that she goes to greet Zechariah's wife Elizabeth, who is also her cousin, with the good news.

Luke has told us how Jesus Christ will become one of us, a Man born of a woman. On this day we also read Hebrews 2: 11-18, which describes the way we can now be joined with Him, as a family in faith. This is possible because "he who sanctifies

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.

{Jesus Christ} and those who are sanctified [all of us] have one origin. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brethren" (2:11).

The verse goes on to say that Jesus will show His brotherhood with His people in the words of a Psalm 22: "I will proclaim thy name to my brethren, in the midst of the congregation I will praise thee" (2:12). These words are triumphant verses from the same psalm that Jesus quoted on the cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" The agonized words spoken on the cross give way to the thankful words quoted here, just as the cross gave way to the Resurrection.

The next verses give insight into one of the greatest mysteries of our faith: the suffering of Our Lord. If He was to be our savior, "...he had to be made like his brethren in every respect" (2:17a). In other words, God humbled Himself to become one of us. Islam rejects this teaching, as do other faiths. But for us it is central, and the very last verse of the passage tells us why it's so important for humans who are so prone to mistakes and sins: "For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted" (2:18).

Birthday Greetings

Happy Birthday to **Nicholas Kovalycsik**, who celebrates his birthday today, and **Genevieve Bobenko**, this Tuesday. May God grant both of you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!



Announcements

◆ **Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers** tonight will be celebrated at St. Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral, 355 State Street, Brooklyn, NY starting at 5:00pm. **Deanery Mission Vespers** (beginning at 4:00pm) are as follows:

March 27 - Mother of God Church, 904 Cherry Hill Rd, Princeton, NJ.

April 3 - Holy Spirit Church, 102 Rte. 284, Wantage NJ.

April 10 - Holy Assumption Church, Clifton, NJ.

April 17 - Holy Trinity Church, 120 Dover-Chester Rd, Randolph, NJ.

Wed. May 4, Bright Wednesday, **7:00pm** - Christ the Saviour Church, Paramus, NJ. For more information please see a flyer at the bulletin board.

◆ **Joint Mission Pre-Sanctified Liturgies** during this Great Lent will be as follows:

Mar. 23, 6:00pm - Holy Apostles Church in Saddle Brook

Apr. 6, 6:00pm - our parish will host the service.

Apr. 13, 6:00pm - Holy Assumption Church in Clifton.

◆ 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.

◆ If you would like to share some information, like announcements, Anniversaries/Birthdays/events etc. in this weekly bulletin, please call the Rectory or email it to fr.igorksn@gmail.com.



March 20, 2016

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT Sunday of Orthodoxy

- **8:50am** – Hours
- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy of St. Basil
Epistle: Heb. 11:24-26, 32-12:2
Gospel: Jn. 1:43-51
- **Coffee Hour** – everyone is invited for a fellowship following the service.

Schedule of Services

THURSDAY, MARCH 24

6:00pm - Great Compline & Matins

FRIDAY, MARCH 25 - ANNUNCIATION

9:00am - Divine Liturgy

SATURDAY, MARCH 26

6:00pm - Great Vespers

SUNDAY, MARCH 27

9:00am - Divine Liturgy