

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

If the Lord is Good, Follow Him

On Wednesday of the last week we remember the Holy Prophet Elijah. He appears, with no introduction, at the beginning of the seventeenth chapter of First Kings (3 Kingdoms in the Orthodox Study Bible.) We see that Elijah certainly is a prophet by the way he speaks God's word, but we also see that he is both the beneficiary and the performer of miracles.

The miracle from which Elijah benefits saves his life. It's a time of famine, and God tells him to go to the brook Cherith that flows into the Jordan, and drink water from the brook. God says, "I shall command the ravens to feed you there."

When the brook dries up, God prepares Elijah to perform a life-giving miracle for someone else, telling him to go to Zarephath, where a widow will take care of him.

Elijah finds the widow, who readily gives him a cup of water. But when he asks for bread, she tells him that she has so little that she and her son will probably soon die. Elijah prophesies that the Lord will furnish her with sufficient flour and oil, and just as he says, "the bin of flour was not used up and the jar of oil did not run dry."

But the widow's son dies, and she bitterly confronts Elijah: "You came to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son." God answers Elijah's plea to restore the son's life. With that, the widow is able to say, "Now I know that you are a man of God, and the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth."

As God's prophet, Elijah does much good, but he must also confront evil. When he meets King Ahab, Elijah reminds the king



July 24, 2016

5th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Holy Martyrs and Passion-bearers
Boris and Gleb

Holy Prophet Elijah (comm. July 20)

- 8:50am – Hours
- 9:00am – Divine Liturgy
Epistle: Rom. 10:1-10
Gospel: Mt. 8:28-9:1
- Coffee Hour – everyone is invited for a fellowship following the service.

Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, JULY 30

6:00pm - Great Vespers (call Rectory to confirm)

SUNDAY, JULY 31

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, Andrew Fabian, Edward Fedush, Mary Hadginske, Helen Kurnewitz, Margaret Lawler, Kathleen Lazorczyk, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Nadia Sojka, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

that he has forsaken the worship of the true God and followed after the false gods, the Baals, of his wife Jezebel. He has thrown the people into uncertainty, which Elijah challenges: "How long will you be undecided between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him, but if Baal, follow him." Then Elijah shows in spectacular fashion that God triumphs over all false deities. Victorious, he orders the execution of all 450 of Baal's prophets.

Events like this execution make some see God as brutal, even murderous. But this alien religion of Baal – powerfully patronized by the queen, Jezebel – had moved "into the very heart of Israel, contaminating and corrupting the people from one end of the Northern Kingdom to the other", writes Norman Podhoretz in his book The Prophets. The Old Testament shows us that God protects His people and His truth, sometimes by destroying unrepentant, dangerous and arrogant enemies like the prophets of Baal.

Elijah appears to the disciples at the Transfiguration. He is alive in Christ, as we all will be if we overcome the temptation to be "undecided between two opinions", and follow the Lord because He is God.

Birthday Greetings

Happy 1st birthday to **Brielle Hope Anderson**, who celebrates it tomorrow! Happy birthday to **Kathy Petrow**, celebrating it today; **Austin Christopher Anderson**, this Wednesday; and **Betty Ann Fechisin**, this Friday. May God grant all of you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!

Announcements

◆ Please note that due to a continuing problem with the air-conditioning system in our church, and if the hot weather continues, **next Saturday Vespers service might be cancelled.** If you are planning to attend, please call the rectory or check our website to confirm if Vespers will be served. The problem is being worked as fast as can be, and, if the company is to be believed, the errant part will arrive in a couple of weeks, and it is with much hope that it will be the right solution and make the unit serviceable again.

◆ Save the date: **2016 Annual Dept. of Christian Education Conference** will be held in our Deanery on Saturday, August 20th at Mother of God Mission in Princeton, NJ. All interested are welcome. For more information please see a flyer at the bulletin board.

◆ **Enjoy your vacation** but remember to visit the Orthodox Church at your destination. To search for a local parish go to www.orthodoxyinamerica.org and enter your location in the search panel. If you plan to receive Holy Communion, be sure that the priest knows who you are *before* the Divine Liturgy. It is always good form to approach the Chalice knowing that the priest is informed about you. Have a wonderful and safe summer!

◆ The Diocesan Department of Youth Ministry has several events planned for the upcoming months: **YOUTH DAY** (August 25th); **SAINT ANDREW'S CAMP BIKE RIDE** (August 27th); **GIRLS RETREAT** (November 11th); **ALTAR SERVERS RETREAT** (February 10-12, 2017), and more! Additional information and registration will be available and listed in the "upcoming events" section of the diocesan website.