

# 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

## Choosing Martyrdom

**On Friday of this week we remember Saints Adrian and Natalia, a young married couple living in Nicomedia, part of the Roman Empire, in the early fourth century. Natalia was a Christian; her husband was not.**

Visiting Nicomedia, the fiercely anti-Christian Emperor Maximian promised a reward to anyone willing to inform on Christians. Many people were willing to denounce their neighbors, and twenty-three believers hiding in a cave were informed on, captured, and tortured. Then they were brought before the Praetor or magistrate so that a scribe could record their names and statements.

Natalia and Adrian had been married for only a little over a year. But Adrian, at the age of 28, already had an important position as governor of the Praetorium. So the tortured Christians were assembled before him, and he watched in astonishment as they not only kept their composure under questioning and threat, but refused to deny their faith.

Finally Adrian felt compelled to challenge the Christians directly. He asked, "What do you hope for from this God of yours; what makes such suffering worthwhile?" The calm, sure answer came at once. The Christians declared that the rewards God is eager to bestow can hardly be imagined, let alone described.

Adrian's response reflects the day's Epistle reading: "Do not unite yourself with unbelievers; they are not fit mates for you. What has righteousness to do with wickedness? Can light consort with darkness?" (2 Corinthians 6: 14). He turned to the scribe and said, "Record my name with the rest. I too am a Christian."

No doubt Natalia had hoped that her husband would embrace the faith, but she would not have chosen these circumstances.



August 21, 2016

9<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
Afterfeast of the Dormition

- **8:50am** – Hours
- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy  
Epistle: 1Cor. 3:9-17  
Gospel: Mt. 14:22-34
- **Coffee Hour** – everyone is invited for a fellowship following the service.

## Schedule of Services

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 27**

6:00pm - Great Vespers

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 28**

9:00am - Divine Liturgy

12:30pm - Great Vespers with Litya for the feast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist

## 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.

*Both of them were young, they had just begun a life together, and they were in love. What she did next would surprise many people, because she did not try to preserve her husband's life. Instead she urged him to martyrdom.*

*The Emperor, hearing of Adrian's action, said the young aristocrat must have lost his mind. But Natalia visited the prison and encouraged her husband, by now beaten and injured, to persevere to the end without losing heart, and never to doubt that the faith he had found was worth the price. Knowing that his determination might weaken if he saw others suffer, she even asked that her husband be first to be tortured to death.*

*How many of us believe that there is nothing more important than preserving life, especially the life of young, healthy people with bright futures? Would we give our lives for the faith? Would we urge our spouses, or perhaps our children, to do so? Could we explain to someone why some saints chose martyrdom?*

*We may never be called to do any of those things. But it's worth considering the next words from 2 Corinthians 6: "Can there be a compact between the temple of God and the idols of the heathen? And the temple of the living God is what we are."*

## Birthday Greetings

Happy birthday to **Peter Czech**, who celebrates his birthday tomorrow, and **Andrea Shaker**, this Friday. May God grant both of you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!

## Congratulation

Congratulation and best wishes to **Emily and Robert Czech** on the birth of their son **Samuel**, born August 17. May God grant good health, happiness, and Many Years to all of you and to proud grandparents **Robert and Betty Czech**.



## Announcements

◆ A new edition of the diocesan publication "**Jacob's Well**" is available at the narthex. Make sure to pick up a copy of this beautiful magazine. "Jacob's Well" is informative and a good way to reach-out and share the faith with shut-ins, friends, and neighbors. To view the on-line edition visit the diocesan website.

◆ The Diocesan Department of Youth Ministry has several events planned for the upcoming months: **SAINT ANDREW'S CAMP BIKE RIDE** (August 27th); **GIRLS RETREAT** (November 11th); **ALTAR SERVERS RETREAT** (February 10-12, 2017), and more! For more information visit the diocesan website [www.nynjoca.org](http://www.nynjoca.org).

◆ **Enjoy your vacation** but remember to visit the Orthodox Church at your destination. To search for a local parish go to [www.orthodoxyinamerica.org](http://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 rest of summer!