

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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Simeon the Stylite

Some years ago, the Chilean writer Isabel Allende included, in one of her books, a reference to the pillar-dwelling saints known as stylites. She described them as squandering their lives, never speaking, and sitting always in the same position, unbathed and covered with sores. She added that credulous believers admired this "spectacle" which "supposedly" pleased God.

It's hard to know why a person would criticize something she clearly doesn't understand. But she is not alone. There are many who would dismiss the stylites as strange, and wonder why the Church honors them. It is for us to learn more about what they did and what they can teach us.

A good person to start with is the first and best-known stylite, Simeon, who is remembered on Thursday of this week, the first day of the Church's new liturgical year. We know more about this Syrian monk from his disciples than from the man himself, for he left no writings. He never disclosed his reasons or intentions in climbing the pillar. But according to the book "The Lives of the Stylites", translated and edited by Robert Doran, he did a great deal for others.

It's unlikely that Simeon set out to attract other people. He only wanted to live a life of prayerful worship in closeness to God. But because he lived that life so well and so authentically, others were drawn to him. It is similar to the way people were drawn to saints like Anthony and Syncletica, who left the crowded world in order to live in quiet prayer. They did not seek followers, but God sent them anyway.

People came to Simeon's pillar for counseling and spiritual guidance, which he willingly gave. But he also healed ailments,

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.

settled disputes and dispensed justice. The book tells us that "when a poor cucumber farmer, the widowed father of children, found his field sabotaged by village bullies he came to Simeon, seeking not only help for his livelihood but justice for what he had suffered." Simeon freed slaves, tore up bonds of indebtedness, and helped orphans and widows. The word of his abilities and integrity spread far: "...they say that he became so well-known in the great city of Rome that small portraits of him were set up on columns at the entrance of every shop..."

Yet Simeon always retained the essential Christian quality of humility. For example, when he heard of the holy work of Saint Genevieve in Paris he entreated her to pray for him, acknowledging her spiritual eminence. And when his monastic superiors commanded him to leave the pillar, he did so at once, never questioning their judgment or arguing for the importance of continuing his ministry.

As this new year of the Church begins, Simeon and his pillar stand as a reminder that there are many kinds of saints who did many kinds of service to God. Some in the world may not "get" them, but He embraces them all.

Birthday Greetings

Happy birthday to **Betty Czech**, who celebrates her birthday this Thursday. May God grant you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!



Announcements

◆ Prayer request: please remember in your prayers Fr. James and Matushka Pat Mason. Fr. James, former pastor of our parish, had an open-heart surgery last Wednesday, and is recovering now. Get-well cards can be sent to 653 Biltmore Ave., Easton, PA 18040.

◆ 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 **Food Pantry** is always in need of food items. Please keep those less fortunate in mind and help us to feed those in need. A basket is in the vestibule of the church for your convenience. May God bless you abundantly for your generosity.

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.



August 28, 2016

10th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Ven. Job of Pochaev

- **8:50am** – Hours
- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy
Epistles: 1Cor. 4:9-16; Gal. 5:22-6:2
Gospels: Mt. 17:14-23; Lk. 6:17-23
- **Coffee Hour** – everyone is invited for a fellowship following the service.
- **12:30pm** – Great Vespers with Litya

Schedule of Services

MONDAY, AUGUST 29 - BEHEADING OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST - STRICT FAST DAY
9:00am - Divine Liturgy

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 3
6:00pm - Great Vespers

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 4
9:00am - Divine Liturgy