

# 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

## The Smartest Person in the Room

**On Tuesday November 24<sup>th</sup> we remember the Great Martyr Catherine, who lived in the fourth century. As residents of Alexandria, Egypt, her wealthy pagan parents had access to all the city's great institutions of learning. They gave their daughter the kind of education such a place could provide, and Catherine was well-versed in public speaking, sciences, languages, and philosophy. She was a brilliant student, extremely attractive, and very well-mannered.**

*With all these desirable attributes, the young Catherine still had a big problem. There was no shortage of men who wanted to marry her, but there was a definite lack of men who could measure up to her. She told her mother, with a strong note of complaint, that all the men she knew were boring and shallow, and that she feared she might never find one who could be her equal. Catherine knew the loneliness often felt by the child who is perceived by others to be the brightest in the class, with nobody to challenge her in argument or conversation. She also must have felt the boredom of inevitably being the smartest person in the room—any room. And if some envied her wealth and beauty, that envy could isolate her even more.*

*Catherine's mother was worried. As a secretly-practicing Christian, she decided the best person to help and advise her daughter was a holy elder. This man instructed Catherine in the faith, guiding her prodigious intelligence toward a relationship with Christ. After much prayer and fasting, Catherine had a vision of Christ and His mother. She saw the Lord's beauty and brilliance, so much greater than her own. She wanted to dedicate herself to Him, happily giving up the idea of finding a human partner.*



November 20, 2016

**22<sup>nd</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**  
**Forefeast of the Entry into the Temple**  
**of the Most-Holy Theotokos**

- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy & Molieben of Thanksgiving  
Epistle: Gal. 6:11-18  
Gospel: Lk. 12:16-21
- **Coffee Hour** – everyone is invited for a fellowship following the service.
- **12:30pm** – Great Vespers with Litya

## Schedule of Services

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 21 - ENTRY OF THE MOST-HOLY THEOTOKOS INTO THE TEMPLE**

9:00am - Divine Liturgy

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26**

6:00pm - Great Vespers

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27**

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 Lazorzcyk, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Nadia Sojka, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

*But it was not to be that easy. In another vision, Christ would not even look at her, declaring her unworthy or unready. It was quite a new experience for the sought-after, bored beauty. Yet there was already a new element of humility developing in Catherine, for on the advice of the elder she continued to study, pray and fast, and finally received baptism. She had a third vision of Christ and His mother receiving her joyfully and placing a ring on her finger. When she awoke the ring was still there.*

*Catherine would later confront the pagan Emperor Maximian, publicly challenging his gory sacrifice to the gods by saying that the true God loves life and true wisdom, not senseless bloody slaughter. Seeking to put the outspoken female in her place, he called fifty prominent philosophers to persuade her that her beliefs were mistaken. But instead she convinced many of them to become believers.*

*Once again, Catherine was the smartest person in the room. But this time, her intelligence didn't bring her boredom and loneliness. It brought her the chance to witness with power and readied her, the "God-summoned bride", to die for the Bridegroom she had learned to love so much.*

## Preparation for Holy Communion

We are blessed and privileged to be able as a family to gather on Sundays and special Feast Days to worship and to celebrate Christ's presence among us in the Eucharist. Holy Communion is the sacrament of the Mystical Supper of Jesus Christ. The Body and Blood of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ is vital for the health of our souls. We should receive Holy Communion often, but only after preparing properly, keeping in mind that preparation is an on-going, year-long responsibility.

### The following should be observed:

- Participate in the Sacrament of Holy Confession regularly. Ask for God's forgiveness and thank Him for all the blessings He has bestowed upon you. Resolve to mend your life and your habits according to His loving will. Before receiving Holy Communion be first reconciled to God and your fellow man. Only then may we take courage to eat the Mystical Food. NONE of us is without sin.

- Prayer, repentance, confession, and fasting go hand in hand. Practice the fast of the tongue - speaking kindly of others, avoiding gossip, etc. Do charitable works as stewards for those in need and for His Church.

- The evening before should be set aside more specifically for one's preparation, spiritually, mentally, and physically. If possible, come for Vespers service. Read prescribed prayers. Abstain from liquids, foods, smoking or chewing gum from midnight until receiving Holy Communion.

- Approach Holy Communion with the deepest sense of humility. Approach the chalice reverently, walking forward quietly and slowly.

### Additional Reminders

- Proper reception of Holy Communion presupposes full participation in the Liturgy. Come to the Divine Liturgy on time. One should not approach for Holy Communion if he/she has come late. What's late? Any time after the Liturgy has begun, but at least no later than the singing of Holy God and the reading of the Epistle and Gospel.

- Parents, prepare your children properly for Holy Communion. The above applies to children from the age of 7 and older, as well as adults.

- Ladies, make sure lips are wiped of lipstick so it won't come off on the communion spoon and cloth.