

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

A PARISH OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

170 Lexington Avenue, Passaic, New Jersey, 07055
www.stjohnspassaic.org

REV. FR. IGOR KSENIUK, Rector

973-473-1928 (Phone/Fax)
646-387-5494 (cell)
fr.igorksn@gmail.com

Department of
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

The People Where Spellbound By What They Heard

On Thursday and Friday of this week we read Luke 20:9-26. The first verse tells us that the scribes and chief priests wanted to lay hands on Jesus because He had told the parable of the vineyard and its wicked tenants being destroyed. The scribes and chief priests "perceived that He had told this parable against them." But they didn't dare take Him because they "feared the people."

Why should these Jewish leaders fear those they had been entrusted to lead? Verses 19:47-8 give an answer: "Every day He was teaching in the temple. The chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people kept looking for a way to kill Him; but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were spellbound by what they heard". Jesus was a spellbinder, giving people a vision of God they had never had before. He spoke as nobody else had ever spoken. So He was indeed someone to fear, because His teaching could upend the whole religious power structure and put the Jewish leaders' positions in jeopardy. But to take Him by violence would enrage the people.

So they approached Him not with a frank challenge to what He was saying but with a craftily concocted trap. They began with fulsome praise of His admirable indifference to rank and His speaking and teaching "rightly." We can only wonder how they ever got the idea that He was susceptible to oily accolades and false smiles.

They then laid the trap with a question designed to get him in trouble no matter which way He answered. They asked Him whether it was lawful to give tribute to Caesar. A "no" would be

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.

treason against the Roman government; a "yes" would alienate those Jews who equated patriotism with resistance to Rome.

But Jesus would not be trapped. He said that the coin bearing Caesar's image ("likeness" in some translations) belonged to Caesar, and must rightly be paid to him when he asked for it. But by extension we, who bear the image and likeness of God, belong only to Him, and that must be our first allegiance. We should not be just good but exemplary citizens of the places we live in now, yet always mindful of our true home and citizenship with God.

On December 4th we remember another spellbound person: the great martyr Barbara. Though her father locked her away from the world, she heard the Gospel from her maidservants and was deeply drawn to it. Her father, like the Jewish leaders but without their subtle craft, reacted with fear and dragged her directly to the authorities. Barbara had to decide what to render to Caesar and what belonged only to God. Perhaps as she was being martyred she held onto Christ's words and let them carry her to Him. She had maintained the image and likeness He gave her, so she could be certain of a warm welcome.

Birthday Greetings

Happy Birthday to **Mirek Szestawicky**, who celebrates his birthday tomorrow, and **Daniel Beckmann**, this Wednesday. May God grant both of you good health and happiness for Many Years!

Announcements

◆ Just a reminder: we are in a **Nativity Fast** that will last until the Feast of Nativity of Christ. This is the time when each member of our parish community is encouraged to prayerfully prepare for, and then participate in the Sacrament of private Confession and Holy Communion. **Parish Confessions** will be offered on **Saturday, Dec. 17**, right after the Healing service. If for any reason you cannot make it that day, you can have your Confession after any Vespers service or half-an-hour before the Divine Liturgy on Sundays, just let Fr. Igor know in advance.

◆ On **Saturday, December 17 at 1:00pm** in our church there will be a **Healing service** to the Mother of God in front of her icon "Queen of All". This service is open for everyone and is for the healing from any disease (this icon of Mother of God is especially known for the healings that occurred of those who suffered with cancer).

◆ Save the date: on **Sunday, December 4, 2016** the Hawaiian Myrrh-streaming Icon of the Mother of God will visit Ss Peter & Paul Church here in Passaic. An Akathist service will be served at 6PM. All are invited to attend.

Our Deepest Sympathy

to family and friends of **Joseph Korin**, who passed away on **Friday, November 25, 2016**. Viewing will be at Bayonne Memorial Home, 854 Avenue C, Bayonne, NJ on Monday, Nov. 28 from 2-4pm, and 7-9pm with Panikhida at 8pm. Funeral will be on Tuesday, Nov. 29 at 9am in our Church. Burial service will follow at East Ridgelawn Cemetery. Memory Eternal! Vechnaya Pamiat!



November 27, 2016

23rd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

- **8:50am** – Hours
- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy
Epistle: Eph. 2:4-10
Gospel: Lk. 13:10-17
- **Coffee Hour** – everyone is invited for a fellowship following the service.
- **"O" Club meeting** – all members are urged to attend.

Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3

6:00pm - Great Vespers

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4

9:00am - Divine Liturgy