

# 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

## Truth at Great Personal Cost

**On January 21 we remember Saint Maximus the Confessor, who was born in the year 580 in Constantinople. He defended the faith so uncompromisingly that he is one of the great Fathers of the Church.**

Maximus did not start out to be a monk or priest. His parents were members of the nobility, and he was highly intelligent and well-educated. When offered an important position in the court of the Emperor Heraclius, the young man accepted it and filled it very well.

But Maximus soon realized that the imperial court was not the place for him. He gave up his position and joined a monastic community outside the city. This was the right choice; he loved the monastic life and later became abbot of the monastery. His prayer life guided him to read, study and write about Jesus Christ with great depth of understanding.

Life, though, was not destined to be peaceful. In the year 626 his monastery was invaded and dismantled. The monks were forced to leave, and Maximus fled from Alexandria to Carthage, and from Carthage to Rome.

It was in Rome that he met Pope Martin I, with whom he discovered a very important common interest. Both of these scholarly, pious men opposed a false teaching about Jesus Christ called monothelism. Those who adhered to this teaching said that He had only one will – His divine will.

For Maximus and Martin, this was a dangerous falsehood because it undermined Jesus' complete and real humanity. To be the Savior of humanity, Maximus said, Jesus had to have two wills: His divine will as Son of God, and His human will as truly one of us.

Unfortunately, the Patriarch accepted the Monothelite teaching.



January 15, 2017

30<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost

- **8:45am** – Hours
- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy  
Epistle: Col. 3:12-16  
Gospel: Lk. 18:18-27
- **Coffee Hour** – everyone is invited for a fellowship following the service.
- **11:30am** – Meeting of the **Board of Trustees**

## Schedule of Services

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 21**

6:00pm - Great Vespers

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 22**

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

Even worse, the Emperor himself accepted it, largely for political reasons. So Maximus was accused of treason, taken back to Constantinople against his will, and thrown into prison where he languished for years. But he staunchly defended the faith, and the true humanity of the incarnate God, throughout all those years.

When he was in his early eighties, Maximus was finally sentenced. His tongue was cut out so that he could no longer speak "treasonous" words, and his hand was cut off so he could no longer write them. He endured all this, as well as exile, public humiliation and beatings, still insisting that Jesus Christ had possessed a human will and a divine will. Many years later, at the Sixth Ecumenical Council which took place about two decades after his death, the Church exonerated him and declared his teachings to be true.

Saint Maximus once wrote, "To harbor no envy, no anger, no resentment against an offender is still not the same as having love for that person. It is possible, without any love, to avoid rendering evil for evil. But to render good for evil – that is the quality of perfect spiritual love." These words have special power because they come from a man who suffered so cruelly for no crime except defending the truth.

## Birthday Greetings

Happy Birthday to **Barbara Kary** and **Eva Stashitsky**, who celebrate their birthdays this Wednesday. May God grant both of you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaya Lita!

## Floral Offerings

Beautiful flowers were given by Maryann Stagen in memory of her mother **Mary**, on the 27<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of her Repose. May her Memory be Eternal!

## Announcements

◆ Father Igor, Matushka Anna, Maxim, and Sofia express their **heartfelt Thank You** to the Board of Trustees and parishioners of St. John's for the lovely cards, warm wishes, and generous and also delicious gifts during this Nativity Season. May the Lord's abundant blessings be also upon you, and upon all your loved ones throughout this New 2017 Year!

◆ The **Passaic "O" Club** is planning their **Annual Holiday Luncheon** next Sunday, January 22, 2017. Reservations have been made at Bucu's in Clifton at 2:00pm. An invitation is extended to all our parishioners at a discounted price of only \$20. (\$5 for "O" Club members). For reservation please contact Maryann Stagen or Betty Czech today.

◆ **House blessings** are in progress. The schedule was posted in the last issue of "The Enlightener". If you would like to make changes, or if you are not included in the schedule but would like to have your house blessed this year, please call Fr. Igor to arrange or rearrange it.

## Our Deepest Sympathy

to Nick and Peggy Kovalytsik, on the passing of Nick's sister, Debbie, who passed away on **Tuesday, January 10, 2017**. May the Lord rest her soul in His Heavenly Kingdom! Memory Eternal! Vechnaya Pamiat!