

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

Brokenness

The second week of Great Lent beginning March 12 is a good time to consider Psalm 51 (50) with its emphasis on penitence and humility before God.

This psalm, used frequently in Orthodox worship services, refers to King David as a repentant sinner. The words "cleanse", "blot out", "wash" and "purge" appear in entreaties for God's mercy. The sinner feels his wrongs deeply and knows that only God can deliver him, saying, "For I know my transgressions and my sin is ever before me." He also knows that his sins are grave enough to deserve real punishment, and addresses God: "Thou art justified in Thy sentence and blameless in Thy judgment."

The word "broken" appears three times in the psalm. First we read the sinner's plea that God will let "the bones which Thou hast broken rejoice." These words remind us that even the bad things that happen to us – the things that break our bones – are under the authority of God; He is the one who has allowed them to be broken. But the very next word carries the certainty that God also can and will heal our bones and let them "rejoice."

God's power is infinite, and the sinner feels confident asking Him to "create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me." The word translated here as "create" has the same meaning as in the Book of Genesis. God can make a person altogether new and clean, as He made the world in the first days of creation.

"Broken" appears again in verses that tell us what God wants from us. He is not looking for "burnt offerings" and animal sacrifices. Rather, "the sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken

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.

spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise."

What does it mean to say that our spirits and hearts must be broken if they are to be acceptable gifts to God? In his book "Mere Christianity" the Anglican theologian C.S. Lewis addressed this in a way that has been helpful to many people who struggle to find meaning in the setbacks and suffering of human life. Lewis wrote:

"Imagine yourself as a living house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first, perhaps, you can understand what He is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks on the roof and so on; you knew that those jobs needed doing and so you are not surprised. But presently He starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make any sense. What on earth is He up to?"

The explanation is that He is building quite a different house from the one you thought of – throwing out a new wing here, putting on an extra floor there, running up towers, making courtyards. You thought you were being made into a decent little cottage: but He is building a palace. He intends to come and live in it Himself."

Birthday Greetings

Our best wishes to **Scott Cahayla**, who celebrates his Birthday tomorrow, and **Robert M. Czech**, this Tuesday. May God grant each of you and all those celebrating a birthday this week good health and happiness for Many Years! Многая Лета!



Announcements

◆ This **Wednesday, March 15** at **6:30PM**, His **Eminence Archbishop Michael** will visit our parish for the joint Pre-Sanctified Liturgy with our neighboring parishes. Lenten refreshments will be served following the Vespers. We also ask for your help with the clean-up after the fellowship, since the school is in session the following Monday.

◆ **Winter weather alert:** in case of necessity to cancel or delay any particular service at the church due to weather conditions, the information about cancellation will be posted on the parish website as well as on the Facebook page at least 1 hour before the scheduled time. If the weather is bad and you are not sure if the service will be served, please call rectory to verify.

◆ **Joint Mission Pre-Sanctified Liturgies** this year (starting at 6:30PM) are as follows:

Mar. 15 - our parish will host the service, with His Eminence Archbishop Michael presiding.

Mar. 22 - Holy Assumption Church in Clifton.

Mar. 29 - Christ the Saviour Church in Paramus, with His Eminence Archbishop Michael presiding.

◆ **Deanery Mission Vespers** this year (starting at 5PM) are as follows:

Tonight, Mar. 12 - Holy Assumption Church, Clifton

Mar. 19 - Holy Trinity Church, 830 Jefferson Ave. Rahway

Mar. 26 - Our parish will host the service

Apr. 2 - Holy Spirit Church, 102 Rte. 284, Wantage

Apr. 19, Bright Wednesday, **7:00pm** - Christ the Saviour Church, Paramus, NJ.



March 12, 2017

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

St. Gregory Palamas

- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy of St. Basil
Epistles: Heb. 1:10-2:3; 7:26-8:2
Gospels: Mk. 2:1-12; Jn. 10:9-16
- **Coffee Hour** – everyone is invited for a fellowship following the service.

Schedule of Services

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15

6:30pm - Pre-Sanctified Liturgy with His Eminence Archbishop Michael presiding

FRIDAY, MARCH 17

6:00pm - Akathist to Jesus Christ & Panikhida for the Departed

SATURDAY, MAR. 18 - MEMORIAL SATURDAY

6:00pm - Great Vespers

SUNDAY, MARCH 19 - VEN. OF THE CROSS

9:00am - Divine Liturgy