

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

Jesus Christ in His Own Words

On April 28 we read John 5:30-6:2.

In these verses Jesus establishes Himself as God's Son by calling the Father His witness: "If I bear witness to myself, my testimony is not true; there is another who bears witness to Me, and I know that the testimony which He bears to me is true." In an earlier verse (5:20) Jesus has stated that He "raises the dead and gives them life" and He "judges all people." This authority has been give to Him by the Father, who loves Him and sent Him to the world. Like the Father, He is to be honored.

Here is a major difference between Christianity and Islam. For Muslims, Jesus Christ cannot be the Son of God because that would require that God the Father had a wife: "And exalted is the Majesty of Our Lord: He has Taken neither a wife Nor a son" (Qur'an 72:3). But as Archbishop Hilarion writes in his book "The Mystery of Faith:"

"...the Christ of the Gospels is simultaneously revealed as both God and man: all his actions and words are those of a human being which, nonetheless, are marked with the divine imprint. Jesus is born like all other children, but from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin rather than from a husband and a wife. Brought into the Temple like other infants, he is greeted by a prophet and prophetess who recognize him as the Messiah. Jesus grows and becomes strong in spirit while living at his parents' home, yet at the age of twelve he sits in the Temple among the teachers and utters mysterious words about his Father. Like others, he comes to be baptized in the Jordan, but at the moment of immersion the voice of the Father is heard and the Holy Spirit appears in the

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 you prayers our Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Genevieve Bobenko, Michael Bzik, Mary Fechisin, Andrew Fabian, Mary Hadginske, Helen Kurnewitz, Margaret Lawler, Kathleen Lazorczyk, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

form of a dove" (p. 82).

This description of Christ's baptism negates another Islamic claim, that Jesus could not be the Messiah about whom John the Baptizer prophesies. If He were, according to Islam, it would be unnecessary for Him to be baptized by an inferior. But the Father's voice and the Holy Spirit's appearance make the baptism one of the clearest Biblical proofs of Christ's divinity.

In this day's verses from John's Gospel, Jesus speaks of the "works which the Father has granted me to accomplish" (5:36). He has come to finish and complete the things which the Father has sent Him to do. Here is another difference from Islamic teaching. Badru Kateregga writes in his book "Islam and Christianity" that Muslims "do respect the Messiah, Jesus, profoundly, but they do not believe that he is, therefore, superior to all prophets. In fact, the Qur'an affirms that Jesus foretold the coming of the Seal of the Prophets [Muhammed]" (p. 47).

But in His own words, Jesus tells us that He is not foretelling someone else's coming. Jesus is the One who IS foretold, by every Old Testament prophet and by the truly final prophet, John the Baptizer.



Announcements

◆ **The Blessing of Graves at East Ridgelawn Cemetery** will start today with Panikhida in the cemetery chapel at **1:30pm**. For St. Peter's and other cemeteries please make an appointment with Father Igor. If you have family members that are buried in other cemeteries and you will not able to visit their graves, you can submit their names for commemoration at the time of blessing.

◆ **The Paschal Artos** that was blessed at the end of the Paschal Divine Liturgy last Sunday symbolizes the physical presence of the resurrected Christ among the disciples. The Artos then was placed on a small stand in Royal Doors, where it remained throughout Bright Week. On Bright Saturday the priest says another prayer over the Artos and it is then broken and distributed among the faithful along with the Prospora. It is a custom among Orthodox Christians to keep a portion of the Artos throughout the year and with due reverence and faith to eat of it in time of illness or distress. This is eaten, often together with a drink of Holy Water, which had been blessed at the Feast of the Theophany of Our Lord.

Our Deepest Sympathy

to family and friends of **Edward Fedush**, who passed away last **Sunday, April 16, 2017**. May he rest in peace in God's Heavenly Kingdom! Memory Eternal!

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.



April 23, 2017

ANTIPASCHA
2ND SUNDAY OF PASCHA
St. Thomas Sunday
Holy Greatmartyr George
the Victorybearer

- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy
Epistle: Acts 5:12-20
Gospel: Jn. 20:19-31
- **Coffee Hour** – everyone is invited for fellowship following the service
- **1:30pm** – Blessing of Graves at the East Ridgelawn Cemetery

Schedule of Services

- SATURDAY, APRIL 29**
6:00pm - Great Vespers
- SUNDAY, APRIL 30**
9:00am - Divine Liturgy