

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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CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!

Coming from Two Different Places

On May 16 we read the final verses of the eighth chapter of John's Gospel. In these climactic verses, Jesus so disturbs His hearers by the things He says that they take up stones to throw at Him.

The verses leading up to this climax (8:12-42) were read last week, and they record a conversation between Jesus and some Pharisees. This dialogue is an example of people seriously misunderstanding what Jesus is telling them. It happens because they and He are coming from two different places. While He speaks to them of heavenly realities as God's divine Son, their comprehension is limited by the thought patterns and realities of this world.

Jesus makes a startling claim: "I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (8:12). The Pharisees don't really respond to His claim, grand and provocative as it is. Instead they raise an objection they've brought up previously: Jesus is bearing witness to Himself, and it takes the testimony of two men to make witness true.

Willing to accede to their insistence that two witnesses are needed, Jesus points out that "I bear witness to myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness." But once again, rather than asking what He means, they ask a mundane, even insulting, question: "Where is your Father?" The question implies either that He is illegitimate and doesn't know His Father, or that Joseph, the one they know as His father, is too unimportant a person for Him to be making such lofty claims. But Jesus still tries to raise their level of understanding. They would know 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 your prayers our Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

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

Father, He tells them, if they really knew Him.

Then Jesus tells the Pharisees that "I go away, and you will seek me and die in your sin; where I am going you cannot come." Instead of taking this as a challenge to their sinful behavior, they fall back for the third time on a superficial understanding: they speculate that He must mean He is going to kill Himself.

The next verses show that Jesus doesn't simply consign the Pharisees to damnation. He says, "I told you that you would die in your sins, for you will die in your sins unless you believe that I am he." His hearers have every chance to know Him and gain salvation, and He gives them the means of doing so: by paying attention to "what I have told you from the beginning."

In the chapter's final verses, Jesus says that "if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death." The questioners indignantly challenge Him. They ask, "Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died?"

When He replies that "before Abraham was, I am" they take up those stones. Much easier to destroy Him with earthly questions and earthen stones than to follow Him and risk accepting that all He says about Himself is the plain, life-altering truth.

Mother's Day Greetings

Our heartfelt greetings to all mothers, grand-mothers, great grandmothers, godmothers, and aunts of our Parish. Let us honor our mothers by praying for them and show our love and respect. May God bless all mothers with good health, joy, peace for Many Years! Let us also not forget to pray for our departed mothers who have entered Eternal Life. Memory Eternal!

Birthday Greetings

Happy birthday to **Jennifer Czech**, who celebrates her birthday tomorrow. May God grant you and all who celebrate their birthdays this week good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnogaya Leta!

Announcements

◆ The next **Board of Trustees'** meeting will be held this **Tuesday, May 16** at 7:00 p.m. All members please plan to attend.

◆ The **Food Pantry** is always in need of food items. Please keep those less fortunate in mind and help us to feed those in need. A basket is in the vestibule of the church for your convenience. May God bless you abundantly for your generosity.

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.



May 14, 2017

5th SUNDAY OF PASCHA
Samaritan Woman
Mother's Day

- **8:45am** – Hours
- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy
Epistle: Acts 11:19-26, 29-30
Gospel: Jn. 4:5-42
- **Panikhida** - in memory of:
 - **Archpriest Peter Kohanik**, on the 48th Anniversary of his repose
 - **Nadia Sojka**, on the 40th day of her Repose, offered by Melania Dzubova
- **Coffee Hour** – everyone is invited for fellowship following the service

Schedule of Services

- SATURDAY, MAY 20**
6:00pm - Great Vespers
- SUNDAY, MAY 21**
9:00am - Divine Liturgy