

# 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

## God Will Find a Way to Reach Us

**On June 9 we read Romans 2:14-29. The very first verse is: "When Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law."**

The phrase "a law to themselves" is one of many Scriptural verses that in our modern culture have taken on a different meaning from the one the original writer intended. When we hear this phrase, we think of people who go their own way, following their personal inclinations rather than adhering to the rules and norms that govern other people's lives.

But Saint Paul had something far different in mind. He goes on to say that Gentiles, the non-Jews who do not know the Law of the Old Testament, "show that what the law requires is written on their hearts." This is why they can "do by nature what the law requires." God has put in their hearts an understanding of the way He wants people to live. He reaches these Gentiles not by giving them the law, as He did to the Jewish people, but by giving them a natural inclination to obey Him and a conscience that "also bears witness." So their hearts are their law, and in this sense they are a "law to themselves."

Then Saint Paul addresses those who do have the law, his fellow Jews. He cautions them that being "instructed in the law" is not enough – in fact, it can imperil their salvation if they only know it and do not keep it in their daily lives. He writes, "You who

## 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 Fehisin, Andrew Fabian, Mary Hadginske, Barbara Kary, Helen Kurnewitz, Margaret Lawler, Kathleen Lazorczyk, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

*boast in the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law?" Paul respects the law, but by itself it cannot save.*

As an example, he writes that circumcision – a basic practice of the Jews – has no meaning if the circumcised person is unfaithful to God: "He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart, spiritual and not literal." Once again, Saint Paul is describing God's effort to reach us. For Jews, the response to God's reaching begins with the written law, but must become something that is felt from the heart. Similarly, true circumcision is not physical but spiritual. God reaches the Jews by giving them these outward things – law and circumcision – and guiding them to a deeper, "inward" understanding.

Saint Paul wants those he's addressing to know one thing: God can reach anyone who is ready to be reached, whether Jew or Gentile. So he writes: "Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also since God is one; and He will justify the circumcised on the ground of their faith and the uncircumcised through their faith. Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law."



## Announcements

◆ **Save the Date:** The upcoming **Parish Council Conference** will take place on **Sunday, June 25**, from **2pm - 6pm** at Ss. Peter & Paul Church, 76 Whitehead Avenue, South River, NJ. Judge Ray Lanier will be the presenter. He will guide all through the changes, emphasize the reasons for and the importance of the Diocesan By-Laws, and will be available to answer all related questions on this topic. All Board of Trustees' members, please plan to attend this conference. For more information please see a flyer at the bulletin board.

◆ 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.

◆ **St. Andrew's Camp Annual Bicycle Ride Fundraiser:** Do a charity bike ride this year! Mark your calendar for Saturday, August 26, 2017 and bike for St. Andrew's Camp. This ride is ideal for the person who has never attempted a charity bike ride. The Ride offers 3 distances from which to choose, each on flat to rolling terrain. Overnight accommodations are available at the camp. Reach out and ask a friend to bike with you and support the Camp at the same time. For additional information visit [www.saintandrewscamp.org](http://www.saintandrewscamp.org).

## 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.



June 4, 2017

### PENTECOST – FEAST OF THE HOLY TRINITY

- **8:45am** – Hours
- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy & Vespers with kneeling prayers  
Epistle: Acts 2:1-11  
Gospel: Jn. 7:37-52, 8:12
- **Coffee Hour** – everyone is invited for fellowship following the service

## Schedule of Services

**MONDAY, JUNE 5 - DAY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**  
9:00am - Divine Liturgy

**SATURDAY, JUNE 10**  
6:00pm - Great Vespers followed by general confession

**SUNDAY, JUNE 11 - ALL SAINTS**  
9:00am - Divine Liturgy