

# 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

## Did You See the Sign?

**On July 24 and 25 we read Matthew 16:1-12. In these verses Jesus Christ talks about signs with some Jewish challengers, and then with His disciples.**

The Pharisees and Sadducees throw down their challenge by asking that He show them a sign from heaven. They want a spectacle — one amazing enough to prove that He is what He claims to be.

Jesus reminds them that they are competent at interpreting the signs the sky gives. They anticipate good weather if the evening sky is red, and look for stormy weather if the morning sky is threatening. Yet, He says, they fail to interpret the "signs of the times." They don't acknowledge the clear signs He has shown them -- the great crowds who have brought "the lame, the maimed, the blind, the dumb and many others" to Him and have seen all these people miraculously healed. Nor are the healings the only signs, for Jesus has also inspired faith in those who witnessed them; we read that these witnesses "glorified the God of Israel."

The challengers are an "adulterous" generation, He tells them, because they have broken the covenant with God that is like the marriage bond. He says that such a generation, seeking signs, will not receive any other than the sign of Jonah — a reference to His three days in the tomb, like Jonah in the belly of the whale. It's also a reference to the greatest sign: the Resurrection.

The apostles, though of course not hostile to Jesus like the Pharisees and Sadducees, seem equally poor at remembering the signs He has shown them. He says, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." He means that they must avoid the wrong teachings of those men. But 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 Lazarczyk, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

disciples, who have forgotten to bring bread, relate it to their oversight. Jesus must remind them: "Do you not remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? How is it that you fail to perceive that I did not speak about bread?"

On this same day we remember Saint Apollonarius, a follower of the Apostle Peter, who consecrated him to be the bishop of Ravenna, Italy. He lived there for many years, preaching and baptizing. The years were not easy, because the pagan leaders in the area hated and harassed him. They finally succeeded in having him exiled, and he was put on a ship heading for the Balkans. The pagan soldiers assigned as his guards treated him as a dangerous criminal.

But God sent a sign. The ship capsized, and only Apollonarius, his accompanying priests, and two soldiers were saved. This miraculous sign and their survival convinced the soldiers to be baptized.

We can willfully ignore signs, as the Pharisees and Sadducees did. We can forget them, remembering only our own actions like neglecting to bring bread. Or we can respond with faith, as the pagan soldiers did.

Our God sends signs. He just won't force us to see them.

## Birthday Greetings

Happy 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday to **Brielle Hope Anderson**, who celebrates it this Tuesday! Happy birthday to **Kathy Petrow**, celebrating it tomorrow; **Austin Christopher Anderson**, this Thursday; and **Betty Ann Fechisin**, this Saturday. May God grant all of you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!



## Announcements

◆ Save the date: **2017 Church School Conference** for New York City and New Jersey Deaneries will take place at Christ the Saviour Church in Paramus, NJ on **Saturday, August 12** from 10AM - 3PM. The theme is "Raising Our Young People As a Generation of Disciples and Leaders". Conference Leader: V. Rev. Dr. Joseph Purpura, Chairman of the Department of Youth and Parish Ministries of the Antiochian Archdiocese. The conference is open to teachers and parents as well. For more information please see a flyer at the bulletin board.

◆ Save the date: **Annual Diocesan Youth Day** at Six Flags Great Adventure is scheduled for **Thursday, August 24, 2017**. For more information and how to register, please see a flyer at the bulletin board or go to our Diocesan website [www.nynjoca.org](http://www.nynjoca.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.



July 23, 2017

7<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

**Holy Glorious Prophet Elijah (July 20)**

- **8:45am** – Hours
- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy

Epistles: Rom. 15:1-7

James 5:10-20 (Prophet)

Gospels: Mt. 9:27-35

Lk. 4:22-30 (Prophet)

- **Panikhida** – in memory of **Nancy Jane Beidler**, on the 40<sup>th</sup> day of her Repose, offered by Rose Key Boykas.
- **Coffee Hour** – everyone is invited for fellowship following the service

## Schedule of Services

**SATURDAY, JULY 29**

6:00pm - Great Vespers

**SUNDAY, JULY 30**

9:00am - Divine Liturgy