

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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CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

Seeing the Kingdom Before We Die?

One of the readings for October 17 includes a warning from Our Lord. His words remind us that we are called to witness to Him no matter what the circumstances, and regardless of temptations to disavow Him in order to make our own lives easier. He says, "Whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and the holy angels" (Luke 9:26).

The next verse is one that apparently still troubles people. Jesus says, "But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God." Earlier this year, a lengthy article in the New Yorker Magazine cited this verse as a "proof" that the whole story of Jesus Christ is questionable. The writer of the article took the verse to mean that the Second Coming would take place during the lifetimes of some who were Jesus' contemporaries. Since that did not happen, Christianity is based on a lie – in fact, a series of lies.

But is that what Jesus means, that the Second Coming is imminent, and that some of those to whom He is speaking will live to see it? Does the fact that things didn't happen that way mean that Christianity is based on lies? Any Christian, especially one who knows some lives of saints and holy people, can confidently answer "no" to both questions.

Saint Paul is the first one who helps us see what Jesus' words meant. In II Corinthians 12: 2-4 he writes about a man (himself, as

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.

later verses reveal) who "fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven – whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. And I know that this man was caught up into Paradise...and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter." Certainly this vivid description shows us that Paul saw the kingdom of God before tasting death.

But Paul's experience is not the only example. We know of many saints who in various ways saw and knew the Kingdom while they lived on earth. Saint John the Chozebite, commemorated earlier this month, saw a light from heaven whenever he served the Liturgy. Other saints were seen to be surrounded by angels while they served at the altar. Saint Seraphim spoke about man known as Peter the Breadgiver, who offered a piece of bread to a beggar and received a vision assuring him that, because of his act of simple charity, all his sins were forgiven. There are innumerable other incidents like this.

Some might see in these visions and revelations "proof" that Jesus' words are true. But they help us more if we accept them as God's gift of assurance that others have seen the destination of the path we are on, and know the journey is worth it.

Birthday Greetings

Happy birthday to **Anna Rozanovich**, who celebrates her birthday today. May God grant you and all who celebrate a birthday this week good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!

Announcements

◆ Please note: the next Trustees' Meeting that was scheduled for this Tuesday, October 17 is postponed. The new date will be announced later.

◆ In the aftermath of recent Hurricanes, International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) is offering assistance on the ground to those affected by the storms. **A special collection will be taken today** to assist IOCC with their relief efforts. May God bless you richly for the holy work that you undertake in His Name. A letter with request from His Eminence Archbishop Michael as well as a flyer from IOCC regarding their assistance are posted on the bulletin board.

◆ Please note: next Sunday, October 22, during coffee hour there will be a **short organizational meeting** of all children, parents, and possible teachers who are interested in re-opening of our **Church School**. For more information please see Fr. Igor.

◆ Save the date: **66th Annual NJ District FOCA Convention** with an Oktoberfest theme will be held on Sat. October 28, at Ss. Peter & Paul Church in South River. A flyer of the event is posted on the bulletin board.

◆ Save the date: on Sunday, Oct. 29, the "O" Club will be hosting a **Pot Luck Luncheon** for all our parishioners and their families. Stay tuned for more information.

◆ **Your help is needed:** in church we pray, besides others, for our parishioners who are incapable of being with us. If you would like to "adopt" one of those home-bound parishioners and mail/deliver them weekly bulletins with readings, as well as monthly newsletters, please see Fr. Igor or Bob Czech for their name and contact information. Also, located by the bulletin board there is a box with bulletins and readings from previous weeks.

October 15, 2017

19th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Holy Fathers of the 7th Ecumenical Council

- 8:45pm – Hours
- 9:00am – Divine Liturgy
Epistles: 2Cor. 9:6-11
Heb. 13:7-16 (Fathers)
Gospels: Lk. 7:11-16
Jn 17:1-13 (Fathers)
- Coffee Hour – everyone is invited for fellowship following the service

Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21 - MEMORIAL (ST. DEMETRIUS) SATURDAY
9:00am - Divine Liturgy & Panikhida
6:00pm - Great Vespers

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22
9:00am - Divine Liturgy