

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

Saint Raphael, Bishop of Brooklyn

Founder of 30 parishes; magazine publisher; fluent in Arabic, Russian, Greek and English; spiritual father to Orthodox from New York to California and Mexico to Canada: these are partial descriptions of Saint Raphael, commemorated on February 27.

Born in Syria in 1860, Rafla Hawaweeny had to flee to Lebanon with his family to escape persecution of Christians. His parish priest, like many believers in much earlier centuries, was martyred, a victim of the anti-Christian riots that roared through Damascus the year Rafla was born. Though his family was able to return to Syria, Rafla never forgot that the faith is often under attack and must be defended.

The young boy's education was always geared toward the priesthood, and at 17, an excellent student, he was chosen to attend the School of Theology on the island of Halki in Greece. After graduation he returned to Syria, visiting parishes with the Patriarch. In 1889 he was sent to Moscow, where he was ordained to the priesthood, and then given the rank of archimandrite, with the name Raphael.

In 1895, Archimandrite Raphael came to New York at the invitation of the Syrian Orthodox community there. He served New York faithfully, but felt great concern about other Arab Christians in towns and cities across the country who had no pastors and were often drawn to non-Orthodox churches that offered worship in English and the chance to be part of a church community. In 1896, he set out across the country to find and minister to these people. He would sometimes walk around visiting families all day Saturday, then take a long journey by train to another town so that he could perform the Sunday Divine Liturgy there. He preached,

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 & Dorothy Fabian, Mary Hadginske, Barbara Kary, Helen Kurnewitz, Kathleen Lazorczyk, Dennis Maixner, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky.

taught, performed the sacraments, and with loving firmness encouraged everyone to remain strong in their Orthodox faith.

As leader of the Russian Mission to America, the Russian hierarch was acknowledged as the head of the Church in America and of all the ethnic groups within it; no ethnic jurisdictions as yet existed. In 1903, the hierarch was Bishop Tikhon, later to be canonized. Needing help with his growing American flock, Bishop Tikhon asked the Holy Synod of Bishops in Russia to name Saint Raphael as Bishop of Brooklyn, which they did. He became the first bishop to be consecrated in America.

In the next years he assisted Bishop Tikhon in administering the Diocese, consecrated the grounds for St. Tikhon's Monastery, and began publishing "The Word" (in Arabic "Al-Kalimat") Magazine to reach the far parishes of the Syro-Arab Mission which he still led. He also continued his pastoral visits, urging the use of English where appropriate, until his death in 1915.

One reading for this week is Proverbs 6:6, advising us to "go the ant" and "consider her ways, and be wise." Saint Raphael had the energy and wisdom that the verse praises. But more important, he had the love for people, whatever their ethnicity, that makes a bishop a true father to his flock.

Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, MARCH 3 - MEMORIAL SATURDAY

11am - Baptism of **Jonas James Czech**

6:00pm - Great Vespers

SUNDAY, MARCH 4

9:00am - Divine Liturgy

Birthday Greetings

Happy birthday to **Evgenia Kozlenko**, who celebrates her birthday tomorrow, **Rose Marie Petrow**, this Friday, and **Sonya Finno**, this Saturday. May God grant all of you, and all who celebrate a birthday this week good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!

Announcements

◆ **Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers** this afternoon will be celebrated at St. Peter & Paul Church, 76 Whitehead Ave, South River, NJ at **4 PM**. For more information please see a flyer at the bulletin board. Everyone is invited for this Pan-Orthodox celebration of our Faith.

◆ **Joint Pre-Sanctified Liturgies** this year (6:30 PM):

Feb. 28 - Ss. Peter & Paul Church, 200 3rd St. Passaic;

Mar. 7 - our church will host the service, with His Eminence Archbishop Michael presiding;

Mar. 14, 7 PM - Christ the Saviour in Paramus, with His Eminence Archbishop Michael presiding;

Mar. 21 - Holy Apostles Church in Saddle Brook;

Mar. 28 - Holy Assumption Church in Clifton.

◆ **Deanery Mission Vespers** this year (4:00 PM):

Mar. 4 - Holy Spirit Church, 102 Rte. 284, Wantage, NJ

Mar. 11 - Holy Trinity Church, 120 Dover-Chester Rd,

Mar. 18 - Holy Assumption Church, Clifton Randolph

Mar. 25 - Holy Trinity Church, 830 Jefferson Ave,

Rahway; *Celebrant and Homilist: Archbishop Michael*

Apr. 11 - Bright Wednesday, **7 PM** - Christ the Saviour

Church, Paramus; *Celebrant and Homilist: Archbishop Michael*



February 25, 2018

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

Sunday of Orthodoxy

- **8:50am** – Hours
- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy of St. Basil
Epistle: Heb. 1:24-26, 32-12:2
Gospel: Jn. 1:43-51
- **Panikhida** – in memory of **Andrew Stankovci**, on the 7th Anniversary of his Repose.

Schedule of Services

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28

6:30pm - Joint Pre-Sanctified Liturgy at Ss. Peter and Paul Church in Passaic

FRIDAY, MARCH 2

6:00pm - Akathist to the Divine Passions & Panikhida for the Departed

(continued on the next page)