

# 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

## Saintly in Secret

The Church gives the title of Greatmartyr to Anastasia of Rome. Her father, a prominent member of the Roman Senate from an old and established family, was a pagan. Her mother, Fausta, was a Christian whose faith was very important to her, but in order to preserve her marriage she practiced that faith quietly. She did make sure that Anastasia was baptized, and saw to it that the little girl learned about Jesus Christ and the Gospel teachings.

Fausta also gave her daughter the example of charity to people in need, and taught her to be steadfast in her beliefs even though there were many, like her pagan father, who would never share her faith.

Anastasia's father arranged a marriage for his daughter that she did not welcome, but as an obedient child of her times she married the rich landowner named Publius who had been chosen for her. There was really no love in the marriage, and Anastasia knew that her pagan husband was indifferent to any questions of belief, so that she probably could never bring him to the faith.

She also knew that he would never approve of her actions as a Christian. It was a time of persecution for believers; Christians were tortured and imprisoned for the flimsiest reasons. Anastasia would dress in rags, so as not to be identified and anger her husband, and would go to the jails to encourage those who were suffering for the faith, washing their wounds and praying with them. She also gave food, clothing, and large amounts of money to the poor. Though it was her own money, part of her large inheritance, Publius would have considered it wasteful and unnecessary.

Publius discovered her secret work, and punished her harshly



December 16, 2018

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

Holy Forefathers

- 8:45am – Hours
- 9:00am – Divine Liturgy  
Epistle: Col. 3:4-14 (Forefathers)  
Gospel: Lk. 14:16-24 (Forefathers)
- Panikhida – in memory of **William and Rose Marie Chabay**, on the anniversaries of their repose, offered by their daughter Nadine Schober.
- Coffee Hour – everyone is invited for fellowship following the service.

Schedule of Services

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22**  
6:00pm - Great Vespers

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23**  
9:00am - Divine Liturgy

## 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, Dorothy Fabian, Barbara Kary, Helen Kurnewitz, Kathleen Lazorzcyk, Dennis Maixner, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky.

for mixing with undesirables in the Roman prisons. He ordered her to be locked up and denied food. It was only when he was sent by the Roman Emperor on a mission and drowned at sea that her terrible ordeal ended.

Some time after her husband's death, Anastasia went to Macedonia and ministered to Christians there. She stayed for a while with a young widow named Theodota, who joined her in caring for prisoners. Theodota and her children were burned to death for fearlessly confessing their faith in Christ, and Anastasia herself was imprisoned once again.

During the dark days in prison, Anastasia had visions of her friend Theodota. The younger woman always encouraged and comforted her, but the visions were a secret between them. It was not until Anastasia was condemned to death that Theodota showed herself to other people in an amazing way.

Anastasia and other Christians were put on a small boat. The plan was that soldiers would capsize it and drown the believers. But Theodota suddenly was seen walking on the water, and pulled the leaky little craft safely to shore.

Anastasia was eventually martyred. The Church to this day honors her and Theodota openly, not in secret, as true saints.



## Announcements

◆ The response to our appeal for **gifts for the seminarian family** we are sponsoring this year for Christmas has been very inspirational. Father Igor, the Passaic "O" Club, and the trustees of St. John's are all grateful for the loving response, and thank everyone for their participation. We wish you a blessed Christmas season and may the light of Christ's Holy Nativity guide you throughout the coming year!

◆ **Wall Calendars for 2019** are available in the narthex. Please take one per household. Many thanks to the Bizub-Quinlan Funeral Home for sponsoring 2019 calendars.

◆ This year on Christmas day, Tuesday December 25, there will be a **dessert pot luck** during the Christmas social. Please feel free to bring any of your favorite desserts to share.

◆ **House blessings** will start on the Feast of Theophany, Sunday January 6, 2019. A proposed schedule will be posted in the next bulletin. Please let Fr. Igor know if you would like to have your house blessed on any particular day or time.

## 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.