

# IC RC NT KA SAINTS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America

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## BEFORE YOUR CROSS, WE BOW DOWN IN WORSHIP, MASTER!

<b>March 27, 2011</b>		<b>Sunday of the Veneration of the Holy Cross</b>	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am
March 30	Wednesday	Saint Innocent of Moscow	Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts	6:00 pm
April 1	Friday	Akathistos Hymn to Holy Communion		6:00 pm
April 2	Saturday	Soul Saturday Divine Liturgy		9:30 am
	Saturday	Great Vespers		4:00 pm
<b>April 3</b>		<b>Sunday of Saint John of 'the Ladder'</b>	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am

**Saints of the Day:** Saint Matrona of Thessalonica (4 c.). Martyrs Manuel and Theodosius (304). Venerable John the Clairvoyant of Lycopolis, Anchorite of Egypt (394). Venerable Monk Cyricus (Quiricus), of Thrace. Prophet Hanani (Ananias). Venerable Paul, Bishop of Corinth (ca. 925). Venerable Paphnutius, disciple of Saint Anthony the Great (4 c.). Saint Ephraim of Rostov (1454). Venerable Alexander, Abbot of Voche, near Galich (on the Volga) (16 c.). Saint Anthony, Metropolitan of Tobolsk (1740). Saint Rupert, Bishop of Salzburg (718). Martyrs John and Baruch. Venerable Monk Eutyches. Saint Alkeld (Athilda), Virgin (800). Saint Suairlech, Bishop of Fore (750).

**God Grant Many Years!** Prayers for the health of Matthew Boncella and his children Felicity, Charlotte, Penelope, Oliver and Simon newly received into our parish were offered today at Liturgy at the request of Father John Udics.

**God Grant Many Years!** Prayers for the health of Seminarian Tom Slosky and Terence Joseph Dunn were offered today at Liturgy and Moleben at the request of Father John Udics.

**Memory Eternal.** Fortieth Day Prayers for the repose of the soul of Michael Sterzin were offered today at Liturgy and Parastas at the request of family.

**Memory Eternal.** Fortieth Day Prayers for the repose of the soul of grandmother Jadwiga were offered today at Liturgy and Parastas at the request of Andrei and Alexander Drozdoff.

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of the soul of George Herko were offered today at Liturgy and Parastas at the request of Anna Herko.

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of the soul of newly-departed Michael Prawlocki were offered March 19 at Liturgy and Parastas at the request of Sonia Bottino.

**Memory Eternal.** Anniversary Prayers for the repose of the soul of Archpriest Alexander Marciniuk were offered today at Liturgy and Parastas at the request of Father John Udics.

+ **Please remember in your prayers** newly-departed Metropolitan NICHOLAS, Michael, Paul, Mary

**Please remember in your prayers:** Dan, Priest Sergius, Archpriest Jason, Don, Ada, Rea, Daniel, Aaron, Mark, Jennifer, Nina, Nadine, Helen, Anna, Thomas, Archpriest Vincent, Mother Raphaela, John, Catherine, Ron, Albert, Michael, Gregory, Emma, Cathy, John, Mykola, Wayne, Nina, Isaiah, Robert, Robert, Kevin, Andrew, David, Warren, Michael, Archimandrites Athanasy, Isidore, Nectarios, Pachomy.

**Sermon: The Sunday of the Cross** (18 March 1990) by +Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh

In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

As we progress deeper and deeper into the weeks of Lent, we can say with an ever-growing sense of gratitude and of joy, of a serene and exulting joy the words of a Psalm, 'My soul shall live, and with gratitude I will give glory to the Lord'.

In the first week of Lent we have seen all the promises of salvation given in the Old Testament fulfilled: God became man, salvation has come, and all hopes are possible. And then, in the second week of Lent, we had the glorious proclamation of all the Saints of Christendom that not only did God come and dwell in our midst, but He has poured out upon us, into the Church, and into every human soul ready to receive Him the presence, the transforming gift of the Holy Spirit that makes us gradually commune ever deeper to the Living God until one day we become partakers of the Divine nature.

And today, if we ask ourselves, 'But how that? How can we be forgiven, how can evil be undone?' - one step brings us deeper into gratitude, deeper into joy, deeper into certainty when we consider, when we contemplate the Cross.

There is a passage of the Gospel in which we are told that when Christ spoke of salvation and of its conditions, Peter said to Him, 'Who then can be saved?' - and Christ answered, 'What is not possible to men is possible for God!'. And He Himself came; the fullness of God abided in a human person, and He has power to forgive because He is the victim of all the evil, all the cruelty, all the destructiveness of human history. Because indeed, no one but the victim can forgive those who have brought evil, suffering, misery, corruption and death into their lives. And Christ does not only forgive His own murderers, when He says, 'Father, forgive - they don't know what they are doing': He goes beyond this, because He had said, 'Whatever you have done to one of My smaller brethren and sisters, you have done it to Me' - not only in good, but indeed, the worst: because in compassion, in solidarity He identifies with every sufferer: the death, the pain, the agony of each of those who

suffer is His. And so, when He prays, 'Father, forgive! They do not know what they are doing, what they have been doing', He prays for each of us not only in His own name, but in the name of all those upon whom evil has visited because of human sin.

But it is not only Christ who forgives; everyone who has suffered in soul, in body, in spirit, - everyone is called to grant freedom to those who have made him suffer.

And so, we can see why Christ says, 'Forgive so that you may be forgiven' because both the victim and the culprit are tied in one knot of solidarity and reciprocal responsibility. Only the victim can say, 'Lord - forgive him, forgive her', and only then can the Lord say, 'I do!'.

But do you realise what responsibility it puts on each of us with regard to all and everyone? But also the depth, the glorious depth of hope which opens up to us when we look at the Cross and see that in solidarity with all mankind Christ taking upon Himself all the suffering of the world, accepting to die an impossible death has said in the name of all the sufferers, 'Yes, - we forgive!'

This is one more step towards freedom, this is one more step towards the moment when we will be faced with Christ's resurrection that engulfs us also because the risen Christ is risen and is offering all and each of us the fullness of eternal life.

And so again, and again we can say that Lent is a spring of a new life, a new time, a time of renewal, not only in repentance, but in being taken by Christ Himself as the shepherd took the lost sheep, as the Lord took up His Cross, brought it to the place of death, and undid death, undid evil by forgiveness and giving His life. Once more we are confronted with another step of our freedom and of newness. Let us enter ever deeper into this mystery, into this wonder of salvation, and rejoice in the Lord, and rejoicing, step after step, more and more, let us also express our gratitude by newness of life. Amen! © Estate of Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh

**THE VENERABLE PAPHNUTIUS** was a disciple of Saint Anthony the Great. By his sanctity of life, Paphnutius converted many sinners to the path of repentance, as did Saint Thaïs, who is commemorated on October 8. Paphnutius resembled an incorporeal angel more than a corporeal man. He died toward the end of the fourth century.

**REFLECTION** by Saint Nikolai of Zhicha. "There is no cleanness in him who thinks evil," says Saint Simeon the New Theologian; and he further adds, "How can there be a pure heart in him, who soils it with impure thoughts as a mirror is darkened by dust?" Do you see then, the inaccessible height on which the religion of Christ stands above all other faiths and worldly sophistries [=empty secular wisdom]? He who only thinks about evil, even though he does not commit any evil, is at fault before God and before his own soul. For he offends God and loses his soul. To be a Christian, in the proper sense, means to invest enormous effort on cleansing evil thoughts from one's heart and mind. What kind of effort is that? There exists a complete study about this, which in our days became completely locked away even for us Christians, and the one enormous actual experience of holy men and women who justified that study. To cleanse oneself from these wicked and impure thoughts, the root of all evil, was the goal of all the great ascetics, hermits and those who vowed to keep silence.

**Update on: "Metropolitan Jonah's 60-day leave of absence."** An important YouTube video on the internet: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zhWlhUPjfu8&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zhWlhUPjfu8&feature=player_embedded)

**A word from the desert.** An Athonite father said: "The one who loves God, loves not only men, his brothers, but loves as well all of nature since it is God's blessing. Someone will rush to get a piece of the clothes or of something else that belonged to a saint, and kiss it devoutly, because he knows he receives from it the saint's blessing. It's the same with nature's trees, grasses, flowers: everything is God's blessing. We embrace all of it with the same rush of love, especially those fruits that nourish us."

#### **REMINDERS FOR YOUR CALENDARS:**

- The Sisterhood would appreciate **your donation of cookies** for the Bake-Sale/ Bazaar. Please bake your favorite recipe of smaller sized cookies. Please bring them to Church Thursday, April 14 by 7 pm or early Friday morning April 15. Why not bake now and freeze them, then bake again late in the month, and maybe a third bake in early April!
- **TODAY:** Teenage Church Schoolers meet Father John after Liturgy. Cookie dough making
- March 28: Monday: Bake cookies 9:00 am
- April 1: Friday: Make dough for Perohi. 9:00 am
- April 2: Saturday: Make Perohi potato filling after Liturgy
- April 4: Monday: Perohi pinching at 9:00 am
- **April 3: Sunday:** Younger Church Schoolers Meet with Father John after Liturgy
- April 9: Saturday Church cleaning for Pascha after Liturgy
- **April 10: Sunday:** Fund-Raisers Meet with Father John after Liturgy
- April 13-15: Wednesday thru Friday: Bread baking, Group 'B' – times to be announced
- April 14: Thursday: Deliver Cookies to Church
- April 15: Friday: Deliver Cookies to Church by 9 am. Assemble Cookie trays, 9:30 am
- April 16: Saturday: Sisterhood Spring Bake-sale/Bazaar, 11:00 am
- **April 17: Palm Sunday:** Pascha Preparation Workers meet with Father after Liturgy
- May 14: Saturday: Set up for Paschal dinner, 9:00 am
- **May 15: Sunday:** Paschal Dinner
- **June 12: Pentecost:** Potluck Lunch after Liturgy, and before going to the Cemetery
- **June 19:** Graduate Sunday