



# SAINTS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America  
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## GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST! GLORY TO GOD FOR ALL THINGS!

November 27, 2011 24<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

December 3 Saturday

December 4 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

Divine Liturgy 9:30 am

Great Vespers 4:00 pm

Divine Liturgy 9:30 am

**Saints of the Day:** Great-martyr James the Persian (421). Venerable Palladius of Thessalonica (6-7 c). Saint James, Bishop, Wonderworker of Rostov (1392). Uncovering of the relics (1192) of Saint Vsevolod (Gabriel), Prince and Wonderworker of Pskov (1138). Blessed Andrew of Symbirsk (1841). New Hieromartyrs Archbishop Nicholas of Vladimir, Priests Basil, Boris, Theodore, Nicholas, Alexis, John, Sergius, John, Sergius, Nicholas, New Hieromartyrs Ioasaf, Cronides, Nicholas, Xenophon, Alexis, Appolos, Seraphim, Nicholas and Martyr John (1937). 17 Monk-martyrs in India (4 c). Venerable Romanus the Wonderworker of Cilicia (5 c). Venerable Pinuphrius of Egypt (4 c). Venerable Nathaniel of Nitria (6 c). Venerable Diodorus of George Hill (Solovki) (1633). Saint Maximus of Riez (460). Venerable Theodosius of Trnovo (1363). Saint Virgil, Bishop of Salzburg (748). Saint Congar, Bishop of Somerset. Saint Fergus of Glamis, Bishop (721). Saint Seachnall of Dunshaughlin, Bishop (447). Saint Edwold of Cerne, Hermit (871). Saint Abbot Gallgo of Wales.

**Please remember in your prayers:** Nettie, Michael, Mother Raphaela, John, Hilda, James, JoAnne, Ada, Priest Sergius, Louellen, Nancy, Rea, Archpriest Jason, Susan, Daniel, Aaron, Mark, Jennifer, Nina, Nadine, Michael, Anna, Gregory, Jim, Marianna, Mykola, Helen, Isaiah, Archpriest Vincent, Albert, Kevin, Robert, Robert, Andrew, David, Warren, Archimandrites Alexander, Athanasy, Isidore, Nectarios, Pachomy.

**God Grant Many Years!** Prayers for the health of Nettie Sherby were offered November 24 and today at Liturgy and Moleben at the request of Anita Anderson and Father John Udics.

**God Grant Many Years!** Prayers for the health of Christian Parfait, Matthew Pintar, Father Paul Oikawa and Archimandrite Nectarios 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 Anne Bayzon were offered November 19 at Liturgy and Litiya, at the request of Mary Jane Chlus.

**Memory Eternal.** Second year Anniversary prayers for the repose of John McCartney were offered today at Liturgy and Litiya at the request of sister Annamae Witiak.

**Thank You, O Lord!** Everyone capable of thanksgiving is capable of salvation and eternal joy.

Thank You, O Lord, for having accepted this Eucharist, which we offered to the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and which filled our hearts with the joy, peace and righteousness of the Holy Spirit.

Thank You, O Lord, for having revealed Yourself unto us and given us the foretaste of Your Kingdom.

Thank You, O Lord, for having united us to one another in serving You and Your Holy Church.

Thank You, O Lord, for having helped us to overcome all difficulties, tensions, passions, temptations and restored peace, mutual love and joy in sharing the communion of the Holy Spirit.

Thank You, O Lord, for the sufferings You bestowed upon us, for they are purifying us from selfishness and reminding us of the "one thing needed;" Your eternal Kingdom.

Thank You, O Lord, for having given us this country where we are free to Worship You.

Thank You, O Lord, for this school, where the name of God is proclaimed.

Thank You, O Lord, for our families: husbands, wives and, especially, children who teach us how to celebrate Your holy Name in joy, movement and holy noise.

Thank You, O Lord, for everyone and everything.

Great are You, O Lord, and marvelous are Your deeds, and no word is sufficient to celebrate Your miracles.

Lord, it is good to be here! Amen.

*Father Alexander Schmemmann celebrated the Divine Liturgy for the last time on Thanksgiving Day. This was particularly appropriate since Father Alexander had devoted his whole life to teaching, writing and preaching about the Eucharist; for the word eucharist in Greek means thanksgiving. At the conclusion of the liturgy, Father Alexander took from his pocket a short written sermon, in the form of a prayer, which he proceeded to read. This was a strange occurrence since Father never wrote his liturgical homilies, but delivered them extemporaneously. These were his words, which proved to be the last he ever spoke from the ambo in Church.*

**Sermon** Anger is a treacherous and poisonous emotion. When we lose control of ourselves and fly into a rage and say things like 'I don't know what came over me.' 'That was my anger talking, not me.' 'I really lost it, didn't I?', the devil is very happy to step in and take control. When that happens, the fight against our anger becomes much more difficult. Anger can easily become like an infection, poisoning our souls and minds and hearts. Our judgment will be clouded, and we begin to see hidden meanings, attacks, and conspiracies behind other people's every action.

Anger may be justifiable in cases when someone does something wrong, deceives us, doesn't do what they're supposed to, refuses to learn, or lies, cheats, or steals. In those cases, we get angry for a moment and forget it. Our anger may be justifiable, but it's never productive. We deal with the problem, resolve it, and move

on with our lives, hopefully having learned a lesson.

But, if what the other person has done is petty and our angry reaction to their offense is much greater than their error, if we hold a grudge and keep the anger alive for hours, days, weeks, years after the offense (even sometimes forgetting what it was we got angry about), if we plot revenge against others for having hurt or offended us, then our anger endangers us.

Too often we deal with anger the way children do. Children get angry for the same reasons as adults, but their reaction is simpler and healthier, in a sense. Children may shout and carry on for a while, but they soon forget it, and quickly go back to their usual occupations. It's the adults who hold grudges over months and years, who attempt to get revenge for wrongs they think they've suffered, who fly into a rage and yell and shout for hours, and who attempt to diminish the person who angered them by bringing up things from the past or by yelling all the hurt, regret and fury they've stored up for years.

We must learn to deal with anger as mature Christians. We need to find the real root of anger. We need to look deep inside ourselves in order to find what causes us to show anger to those who have done nothing wrong, other than to be in the wrong spot. We need to discover what it is which causes us to 'take out' our anger on whoever comes along at the wrong time or who says the wrong thing. We need to discover the real cause of our anger, whether it's in ourselves, or for some other reason, and to control that anger. We need to ask God to help us break the chains of anger which tie us to irrational, inappropriate, overwhelming rage. And when someone is angry with us for no apparent reason, we must learn to respond as mature Christians and tell them 'keep your anger to yourself, I have no use for it'. And if anger has become a habit with us, we have to learn to replace it with something good and healthy. When we get angry, after we calm down, we have to learn to apologize to the other person, pray for the other person, and pray for ourselves so we can turn away from this poison and live.

Should we lose our temper in return when someone is angry with us? Sometimes, people who are angry can't hear the voice of reason any more. Sometimes, they can't listen to a calm voice and are even provoked more by temperate kindness. In these cases, if we have something positive to say, it may be necessary for us to raise our voices just to get through the screen of their temper. But we must never get angry in return. The other person has lost self-control, that they are in great need of help, but anger for anger never benefits anyone.

Jesus tells us about mature responses to anger in today's Gospel lesson. On the surface, we might think the ruler of the synagogue got angry because Jesus broke the rules about work on the Sabbath day. This rabbi had spent his whole life upholding the Law as he understood it, spent his whole life interpreting it in his limited way, and now, Jesus does what the rabbi perceives as work on the Lord's Day. We can understand his apparent indignation that Jesus, who the people thought of as a teacher and a prophet, and some even thought of as the Messiah, was breaking the rule that the rabbi had tried all his life to keep for himself and enforce for others. He mocked Jesus' holiness as false, if He couldn't even keep the rule about the Sabbath Day being holy for the Lord.

But in fact the rabbi was exaggerating the interpretation of the Law in an attempt to catch Jesus breaking the Law. The Law states clearly that absolutely no work may be done on the Sabbath, with the exception of work done in order to save a life. Had the rabbi looked into the depths of his heart, he would have had to admit that there were other reasons for his anger and for trying to trap Jesus. The way the rabbi saw it, Jesus was stealing the thunder of the temple - there was a long history of jealousy between the priests and the prophets. Jesus was being treated as a Prophet and the Messiah, and seeming to reinterpret the Law. The rabbi thought Jesus was changing the faith by revealing the real meaning of the faith, expressed in the Law, by teaching the spirit of the Law.

It's still true that six days we should labor, and the seventh day is the Lord's. We Christians are not required to keep the Sabbath rules as expressed in the Old Testament. We don't keep any of the other Jewish rules - our men don't have to wear beards, women don't have to keep their heads covered 24 hours a day, we aren't required to circumcise our sons, we don't have to follow the Old Testamental dietary restrictions, and so on. We still keep the Sabbath, Subbota, Saturday, in a special Liturgical way, but we are not bound to the Law. Christians do not keep the Sabbath as an absolute day of rest. We keep the Eighth Day, the Day of the Lord's Resurrection, as a holy day, a day kept separate and apart for the Lord through our Liturgical celebration on that day. It is our pious custom to keep the rest of the day as a quiet time, reading the scriptures, studying our faith, and doing various Christian acts of charity - especially visiting the sick and those who aren't so mobile any more, and other acts performed in the Name of the Lord. But the Old Testamental regulations about the Sabbath have never been transferred onto the Lord's Day.

We talked about following the letter of the Law as opposed to learning to follow the spirit of the Law, and inscribing it on our hearts. We talked about spiritual maturity. There are so many more examples... How often do we quote the Scriptures and not know what we're saying?! There are only a few passages from Scripture that most of us quote, and most of them we quote incorrectly or interpret incorrectly. Isn't it part of our responsibility as mature Christians to come to an understanding of the rules by which we live? How often do we lose our tempers and get angry without good cause? How mature is our understanding of our faith? We must become mature in our spiritual lives. We must look at the meanings of things and understand the implications for our lives because the life and death of our very souls, hearts and bodies are in serious danger.

Bishop Michael has announced that "**OPERATION ONEONTA**": **Saint Innocent Mission Parish** will be launched to prepare a new worship space for **Saint Innocent Mission Parish (Oneonta NY)** in the lower level of Saint James Episcopal Church. Work days will be on **26 November, 3 December, and 10 December (all Saturdays)**. Volunteers from throughout the diocese are invited to join in "OPERATION ONEONTA." Those skilled in painting, electrical work, and carpentry/woodworking are especially needed. To participate, please coordinate with Father Thomas Langdon (570-503-0512 email [trinityoaks@echoes.net](mailto:trinityoaks@echoes.net)) or John Koch (315-855-7505 email [johnkoch@frontiernet.net](mailto:johnkoch@frontiernet.net))