

# ICHC NTKA SAINTS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America  
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## *God is with us! Understand, all Nations!*

*Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Isaiah 7:14*

*Devise your strategy, but it will be thwarted; propose your plan, but it will not stand, for God is with us. Isaiah 8:10*

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.... Isaiah 9:6*

*Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this. Isaiah 9:7*

<b>December 18, 2011</b>	<b>Sunday of the Fathers of the Lord</b>	<b>Divine Liturgy</b>	<b>9:30 am</b>
Sunday of the Fathers of the Lord: All those who have been well-pleasing to God since time began, from Adam to Joseph the Betrothed, according to the genealogy of the Evangelist Luke; and the Prophets and Prophetesses.			
<b>December 24</b>	<b>Eve of the Nativity of Our Lord</b>	<b>Vigil</b>	<b>7:00 pm</b>
<b>December 25</b>	<b>Nativity of Our Lord God and Savior JESUS CHRIST</b>	<b>Divine Liturgy</b>	<b>9:30 am</b>

**Saints of the Day:** Martyr Sebastian at Rome and his companions: Martyrs Nicostratus, Zoe, Castorius, Tranquillinus, Marcellinus, Mark, Claudius, Symphorian, Victorinus, Tiburtius, and Castulus (287). Martyr Victor (1936). New Hieromartyr Thaddeus (Uspensky), Archbishop of Tver (1937). New Hieromartyrs Nicholas Archbishop of Velikoustiuzh, Priests James, John, Vladimir, and Nicholas (1937). New Hieromartyr Deacon Sergius and Virgin-martyr Vera (1942). Venerable Sebastian, Abbot of Poshekhonye Monastery (Vologda) (1500). Glorification (1694) of Righteous Simeon, Wonderworker of Verkhoturys (1642). Saint Modestus I, Archbishop of Jerusalem (4 c). Venerable Florus, Bishop of Amisus (7 c). Venerable Michael the Confessor at Constantinople (845). Martyr Eubotius at Cyzicus (318). Venerable Winnibald, Abbot and Missionary of England and Heidenheim (761). Hieromartyr Zaccheus the Deacon and Saint Alpheus the Reader of Caesarea. Saint Gatianus, First Bishop of Tours (3 c). Saint Sophia the Wonderworker.

**Please remember in your prayers:** Nettie, Maria, 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, Athanasys, Isidore, Nectarios, Pachomy.

**God Grant Many Years!** Prayers for the health of John Stehnach, Graham Shin and Carol Gregg for their birthdays were offered today at Liturgy and Moleben at the request of Father John Udics.

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of mother Julianne, sister Elaine and father Michael Carrol were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Denise Wolfsheimer.

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of Al Hubickey were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Cathy Parsons.

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of Anna Rinko and Glen Cooley were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of John Rinko.

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of Maria Ivanovna Krakow were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Father John Udics.

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of Walter Jovorosky Jr, Walter and Anne Jovorosky, John and Vera Prawlocki, Frank Prawlocki, Wasil and Anna Prawlocki, Frank and Mary Gromadzky at the request of Sonia Buttino, and Maria Panarites, Michael and Helen Sobolewski, Paul and Kay Sokol, Joe and Julie Firlet, and Wasil Krenichyn, were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today.

**The Holy Martyr Sebastian and those with him.** This glorious saint was born in Italy and brought up in the city of Milan. While still young, he dedicated himself to military service. Being educated, handsome and courageous, he received the favor of Emperor Diocletian, who appointed him captain of his imperial guard. Secretly he confessed the Christian Faith and prayed to the Living God. As an honorable, just and merciful man, Sebastian was greatly beloved by his soldiers. Whenever he could, he saved Christians from torture and death,

and, when he was unable to do so, he exhorted them to die for Christ the Living God without turning back. Two brothers, Marcus and Marcellinus, who had been imprisoned for Christ and were already on the verge of denouncing Him and worshiping idols, were confirmed in the Faith by Sebastian, who strengthened them for martyrdom. As he spoke with them, encouraging them not to fear death for Christ, his face was illumined. Everyone saw his shining face, like that of an angel of God. Sebastian also confirmed his words by miracles: he healed Zoe, the jailer Nicostratus's wife, who had been mute for six years; he brought her, Nicostratus and his entire household to baptism; he healed the two ailing sons of Claudius the commander and brought him and his household to baptism; he healed Tranquillinus, the father of Marcus and Marcellinus, of gout and pains in his legs which had troubled him for eleven years, and brought him to baptism together with his entire household; he healed the Roman eparch Chromatius of the same illness and brought him and his son Tiburtius to baptism. The first of them to suffer was Saint Zoe, whom they seized at the tomb of the Apostle Peter, where she was praying to God. After torturing her, they threw her into the Tiber River. They then seized Tiburtius, and the judge placed live coals before him, telling him to choose between life and death, that is, either to cast incense on the coals and to cense the idols or to stand barefoot on the hot coals. Saint Tiburtius made the sign of the Cross, stood barefoot on the hot coals, and remained unharmed. After this, he was beheaded. Nicostratus was killed with a stake, Tranquillinus was drowned, and Marcus and Marcellinus were tortured and pierced with spears. Then Sebastian was brought before Emperor Diocletian. The emperor rebuked him for his betrayal, but Sebastian said: "I have always prayed to my Christ for your health and for the peace of the Roman Empire." The emperor ordered that he be stripped naked and shot through with arrows. The soldiers shot him through with arrows until the martyr was so completely covered with arrows that his body was not seen because of them. When all thought that he was dead, he appeared alive and completely healthy. Then the pagans killed him with staves. He suffered gloriously for Christ his Lord and took up his habitation in the Kingdom of Christ in the year 287 at the time of Diocletian the Emperor and Gaius the Bishop of Rome.

**Saint Florus, Bishop of Amisus** lived at the time of the Emperors Justin II and Maurice (565-602). He was the son of nobles. He renounced the commotion and vanity of the world and withdrew to a monastery in order to live a life of asceticism for the salvation of his soul. Later he was chosen bishop of the town of Amisus in the province of Cappadocia. And as an ascetic and a hierarch, Florus pleased God, and he peacefully took up his habitation in the Kingdom of God.

**Saint Modestus, Patriarch of Jerusalem** was only five months old when his parents died, but by God's providence he was brought up in the spirit of Christianity. When he became an adult, he was sold as a slave to a pagan in Egypt. However, he succeeded in converting his master to the Christian Faith, and his master granted him freedom. Modestus withdrew to Mount Sinai, where he lived a life of asceticism until the age of fifty-nine. He was then chosen as Patriarch of Jerusalem and fed the flock of Christ as a true shepherd. He entered peacefully into rest in the year 633, at the age of ninety-seven.

#### **HOMILY on Ruth** by Saint Nikolai of Zhicha

*Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: naught but death shall part thee and me* (Ruth 1:16,17).

These are wonderful words, whether they are spoken by a son to a father, a daughter to a mother, or a wife to a husband. But they are three times more wonderful when a daughter-in-law says them to her mother-in-law. Blessed Ruth spoke these words to Naomi, her sorrowful mother-in-law. When both of Naomi's sons died in the land of Moab, where they lived as immigrants, the aged mother wanted to return to Bethlehem, her native land, and there to lay her bones to rest. And Naomi, noble in her grief, counseled her young daughters-in-law to remain in their own land and to remarry. Orpah remained, but Ruth said: Naught but death shall part thee and me. Behold a most beautiful example of how a mother-in-law can tenderly love her daughters-in-law, and again how a daughter-in-law can be wholeheartedly devoted to her mother-in-law. But in Bethlehem someone had to feed these two souls. Who would feed them? God and the diligent hands of Ruth. Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn (Ruth 2:2), said the daughter-in-law to the mother-in-law. And Naomi replied: Go, my daughter (Ruth 2:3). In a strange field, with strange reapers, she had to glean the ears of grain. That was not only toil but also shame. However, Ruth took upon herself both toil and shame out of love for her aged mother-in-law. The All-seeing God saw these two sweet souls and rejoiced. Their Creator rejoiced and rewarded and glorified them, as only He knows how to reward and glorify those who fear Him. And God, in His providence, provided that Ruth should enter the field of the wealthy Boaz to gather the gleaned ears of grain, and Boaz saw Ruth and asked Naomi for her hand in marriage. Of this marriage was born Obed, the father of Jesse and grandfather of David the King. So it was that Ruth had humbled herself to being a beggar but God made her the ancestress of the great king (David), from whom came many kings and finally the King of kings, our Lord Jesus Christ.

O All-seeing and Gracious Lord, how wonderful art Thou in Thy providence toward the righteous and the merciful. Do Thou guide us also and have mercy on us. To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.

**FOR YOUR CALENDARS:** January 1: Sunday **Breakfast at Coffee Hour** (not held on Christmas Day)

January 15: Parish Council Meeting (third Sunday of the month)

January 22: Annual Parish Meeting and Election of Officers.

#### **End of the Year – Annual Report**

The Annual Report is a good way to see what happened and where we're going. Now is the time for all the various reports comprising the annual report to be submitted. The deadline for submitting reports is January 8, after which we will compile them for the annual report document, which we would like to have printed and ready before the annual meeting proposed for January 22, 2012.