

# ICHC NTKA SAINTS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America  
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## Let every heart prepare Him room!

December 8, 2013	24 <sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am
December 14	Saturday	Great Vespers	4:00 pm
December 15	25 <sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am

**Saints of the Day:** Venerable Patapius of Thebes (7 c). New Priest-Martyr John (Kochurov), (1918). New Hieromartyr Sergius (1937)..Venerable Cyril, Abbot of Chelma Hill (1367). Holy Apostles of the Seventy: Sosthenes, Apollos, Cephas, Tychicus, Epaphroditus, Caesar, and Onesiphorus. Holy 362 Martyrs of Africa, martyred by the Arians, and Martyr Anthusa, at Rome (5 c). Martyr Anthusa at Rome (5 c). Saint Sophronius, Bishop of Cyprus (8 c). Saint Valerius, Bishop of Trier (3 c). Saint Budoc, Bishop of Plourin.

**Please remember in your prayers:** Suffering Christians of Egypt, Syria and the Middle East. Bishop Boulos Yazigi, Bishop Yohanna Ibrahim, of Aleppo. Archimandrites Alexander, Athanasy, Isidore, Nectarios, Pachomy. Archpriests Jason, John, Vincent. Priests Bohdan, Sergius, Jacobus, Andrij, Vasil, Vasil. Deacons Mark, Demetrios, Philip. Mother Raphaela, Dimitri, Nina, Daniel, Catherine, Helen, Anna, Peter, Helen, Michael, Stephanie, Zara, Nolan, Emelie, Connie, Michael, Ed, Nettie, Maria, Michael, John, James, Nancy, Susan, Daniel, Aaron, Mark, Jennifer, Nina, Nadine, Michael, Anna, Gregory, Marianna, Mykola, Helen, Isaiah, Albert, Kevin, Robert, Robert, Andrew, David, Warren, Vincent, Archpriest Leonid, Diane, Abigail.

**God Grant Many Years!** Prayers for the health of Justin Schmidt, Bishop SERAPHIM (Sigrist), Drew Dudek, Alexander Ressetar, twelve abducted nuns of the Monastery of Saint Thecla in Maaloula, Syria, and Father John Southern were offered today at Liturgy and Litiya at the request of Father John Udics.

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of father Joseph Udics, Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemann and Archbishop KIPRIAN (Borisevich), were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Fr John Udics.

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of Stephen and Mary Steciak, Mary Pupchek, John Popka, Steven Polansky, Andrew Andriadis, Anna Rinko, Glen Cooley, Walter Jovorosky Jr, Walter Jovorosky Sr and Wasyl Pytel were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of the "Memory Eternal Requiem Service Fund."

### **Psalm 100** (New International Version)

1 Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

2 Worship the Lord with gladness;  
come before him with joyful songs.

3 Know that the Lord is God.

It is he who made us, and we are his;  
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving  
and his courts with praise;

give thanks to him and praise his name.

5 For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;  
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

### **HOMILY on the curse of sinful works**, by Saint Nikolai of Zhicha

*Cursed is the ground in thy works* (Genesis 3:17).

After Adam and Eve's sin, God pronounced a punishment. He did not pronounce the punishment immediately but after waiting a period of time for their repentance. This is shown in the conversation into which God entered with Adam after his sin. Where art thou? (Genesis 3:9), God asked Adam. And when Adam said that he hid because of his nakedness, God asked him again: Who told thee that thou wast naked? (Genesis 3:11). Instead of repenting, Adam then began to accuse his wife. After that, God pronounced the punishment. Upon the serpent, which served as the weapon of the devil, fell the infinite curse. The woman was condemned to bear children in pain and to have her will subject to the authority of her husband. This is not a curse but rather a punishment with hope. Man was condemned to work the land. But what do the words, Cursed is the ground in thy works, mean? Did God curse the ground as He cursed the serpent with an infinite curse? By no means! The ground is cursed only in the sinful works of man. Because of man's sin, the earth produces thorns; because of sin, there is infertility; because of sin, there are droughts, floods, earthquakes, plagues, and destructive insects such as grasshoppers and caterpillars. That the ground is not cursed in its entirety is clear from this: that the earth also produces good fruits. God, through the prayers of the righteous, has always blessed the fruits of the earth

necessary for human life, and even the angels of God, as the guests of Abraham, tasted the earth's harvest (Genesis 18:1-8). For in what way is the earth and all the rest of God's creation (except the serpent) culpable for Adam's sin? Nevertheless, the whole creation groans and travaileth in pain together until now (Romans 8:22). All creation does not groan or travail because of a curse upon itself but rather because of man's sinful works, which are cursed. O my brethren, let us be ashamed of our sin, for which even God's innocent creation suffers.

O Gracious God, forgive us our past sins and protect us from future sins. O Merciful God, have mercy on all Thine innocent creatures, who suffer because of us, and ease their suffering.

To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.

### **Left Alone in Syria** By Patrick Brennan

NATIONAL REVIEW ONLINE [www.nationalreview.com](http://www.nationalreview.com) December 2, 2013 6:04 PM

The AP reports this morning: Activists and residents say Syrian rebels have taken control of parts of an ancient Christian town in the rugged Qalamoun region near Damascus. . . .

The resident said hardline Islamic brigades first began attacking Syrian forces in the town three days ago. He said Maaloula residents fled to Damascus, fearing rebels would punish them for supporting the government of Bashar al-Assad and because they are Christians. The resident requested anonymity, fearing for his safety.

In previous battles, hardline rebels have desecrated churches but largely left Christians alone.

Maaloula is one of three towns where Syrian Christians still speak Aramaic (Jesus' mother tongue), and was nearly overrun by rebel units in September. The rebels were driven out by regime forces, but now more rebels - led, especially in the northern part of the country, by proudly Islamist groups - are mounting an offensive in the remote area. In the process, **rebels apparently today kidnapped twelve Greek Orthodox nuns**: Islamist rebels have kidnapped a group of nuns from the Greek Orthodox monastery of Saint Thecla (Mar Taqla) in Maaloula (north of Damascus).

Monsignor Mario Zenari, the Vatican nuncio in Damascus, confirmed the information after speaking with the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate. Through the Vatican diplomat, the latter "calls on all Catholics to pray for the women religious."

"Armed men burst in the monastery of Saint Thecla in Maaloula this afternoon. From there, they forcibly took 12 women religious," Monsignor Zenari said, citing a statement from Patriarchate. The group of Islamist rebels has apparently taken them to Yabrud, some 80 km north of the capital.

Neither the nuncio nor the Greek Orthodox Church know the reason behind the kidnapping.

Meanwhile, the U.N. reported on Friday that more than 1 million children have been made refugees from their own country by the war the Assad regime began, making it the worst new refugee crisis in more than two decades.

<http://www.nationalreview.com/node/365297/print>

### **Calatrava unveils designs for Ground Zero Greek Orthodox Church destroyed on 9/11**

By KATHERINE BURGESS – NEW YORK - Twelve years after falling rubble from the World Trade Center towers destroyed Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, images have been released showing the design for an elaborate new building.

"We want people to feel like this is their house," said the Rev. Mark Arey, spokesman for the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. "I do believe what Jesus said, 'My house will be a house of prayer for all people.' Even though it is a Greek Orthodox church, it will be open to all people of all faiths, a place of solace for them."

Santiago Calatrava, the renowned Spanish architect who designed the new World Trade Center Transportation Hub, is designing the new Saint Nicholas Church, which will include a nondenominational bereavement center as an open place for rest and meditation.

Originally housed in an old row house, the original Saint Nicholas Church was a narrow, largely unadorned building. The new designs, however, show a luminous domed building modeled partly on the Hagia Sophia and the Church of the Holy Savior in Chora, both in Istanbul.

The designs had to meet two criteria, Arey said. First, the church had to look like a Greek Orthodox church. Second, it had to fit in with the environment surrounding Ground Zero.

"It needed to be something which achieves a substantive presence, and we believe that the Calatrava design does both," Arey said.

As the only house of worship destroyed in the 9/11 attacks, Saint Nicholas faced years of back-and-forth negotiations with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey for a land swap and public funding. The Port Authority is in charge of overall rebuilding efforts at Ground Zero.

In 2011, it took an agreement brokered by New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo for the church to drop a lawsuit against the Port Authority in exchange for permission to build the 4,100-square-foot church at a new site on the corner of Liberty and Greenwich streets.

The church said its original 1,200-square-foot site at 155 Cedar Street was too close to a new vehicle security center's garage doors.

The new building is estimated to open by early 2016 and will cost \$20 million, money the church is currently raising.

"As Christians, we believe in the Resurrection, and if we could raise the people who lost their lives that day from the dead, we would do it," Arey said. "But Saint Nicholas, the only place of worship destroyed on 9/11, that can be raised. . . . We can raise Saint Nicholas from the dust, and that's what we're going to do."