

# ⲓⲥⲁⲛⲓⲥⲁⲛⲓ SAINTS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America  
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## Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory to Him Forever!

September 21, 2014 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
September 27 Saturday  
September 28 16<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:** Apostle Quadratus of the Seventy (130). Uncovering of the relics (1752) of Saint Demetrius, Metropolitan of Rostov (1709). New Hieromartyrs Priests Alexander, Alexis, Constantine, John (1918). New Hieromartyr Mavrikius and with him Martyrs Basil and Vladimir (1937). New Hieromartyrs Priests Valentin, Alexander, John, Andrew, Peter, John (1937). New Hieromartyr Theophan (Tuliakov), Metropolitan of Lipetsk and Belo-Russia (1937). New Hieromartyr Priest John (1938). New Hieromartyr Priest Basil (1942). Venerable Daniel, Abbot of Shugh Hill (Novgorod) (16 c). Venerable Joseph of Zaonikiev Monastery (Vologda) (1612). Hieromartyr Hypatius, Bishop of Ephesus, and his Presbyter Andrew (730). Saints Isaacius and Meletius, Bishops of Cyprus. Martyr Eusebius of Phoenicia (2 c) and Martyr Priscus of Phrygia. Martyrs Eusebius, Nestabus, Zeno, and Nestor the Confessor of Gaza (4 c). Venerable Jonah the Sabbaite (9 c). Synaxis of All Saints of Uglich. Saint Mabenna, Daughter of Saint Brychan of Brecknock (6 c).

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

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

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of the soul of newly- departed uncle Anthony Moccaldi were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Lauren Jedlan.

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of the souls of Archbishop DIMITRI (Royster), newly- departed Olga Shast and infant Vera Tkachuk were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Father John Udics.

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of the souls of Michael and Elizabeth Spytko, Walter Jovorosky, Kathryn Chlus, John and Ethel Gala, Steve Bius and David Sterzin were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of the "Memory Eternal Requiem Service Fund."

**Job opening.** The Parish Council wishes to announce that we are accepting applications for the job of weekly cleaning the church. See John Ciko about salary and benefits.

### 15th Sunday after Pentecost Gospel (Luke 5:1-11)

In case you hadn't noticed, nobody is on top of the world every day. Everyone has ups and downs. Sometimes the world is sweet and sometimes it's sour. Sometimes life moves along briskly, we accomplish what we set out to do and we meet our personal goals. And sometimes things get stuck. We look failure in the face day after day. We don't know how to get out of what we don't know how we got into. And that's exactly where today's Gospel, Luke 5:1-11, starts: with some very discouraged men. Simon Peter and his partners were fishermen: not recreational fishermen, but workers whose families went hungry if there was no catch. And this particular day was a very bad day for these fishermen. They had fished all night and caught nothing. Now it was morning, the morning after a night of failure; and the men were dispiritedly washing their nets so they'd be ready for the next night's work.

There was a crowd on the beach near where they were working, a big crowd, listening to Jesus, pressing in upon him. Jesus is at the edge of the water, but the crowd keeps pressing in. So Jesus steps into Simon's boat "and asked him to put out a little from the land." Peter does; and from the boat Jesus continues to teach the crowds. Finally He's done; the crowd goes home. Jesus then turns to Simon. "Launch out into the deep," He tells him, "and let down your nets for a catch." Was Peter irritated when Jesus, a landlubber, told him, a professional fisherman, how to do fish? Maybe, because Peter immediately gives Jesus a reality-check: "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; so it won't do any good to go out again, especially in daylight. There's no point to it."

Have you ever been there? You do your best; you work hard; but the results are zero. An important relationship goes sour, and there's nothing you can do. You watch a marriage dissolve and you can't save it. A

project you've worked upon just will not pan out. A job you really wanted and were perfect for and worked hard to get goes to someone else. The harder you try, the less you produce. And all your wisdom (or plain old common sense) tells you, "Just give up. We've all been there. And the last thing we want to hear, the last thing we need to hear, is some cheerleader-wannabe telling us, "Try harder." Peter and his business partners were not stupid men. They knew the lake, the ledges where the fish congregated, the kind of weather you had to have to bring in a good catch. Their families had been working that lake for generations. They knew the time to fish, and where to fish. And they had gone fishing, at the right time, and at the right place, yet come up empty. "Try over there," Jesus says. "over there in the deep water, and let down your nets for a catch." "But Jesus," Peter replies, "we've spent all night doing everything we should've done, everything we were taught to do by our fathers and their fathers before them; but we have caught nothing." But then he adds, "Nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net."

Why Simon agrees to row out into the deeper water, we don't know. Perhaps he did so because he was learning to trust Jesus; or perhaps he did it just to humour Jesus or maybe to teach the Carpenter that He's no fisherman; or perhaps because of something in Jesus' tone of voice. Whatever the reason, Peter agrees to do what Jesus asks of him. And we know the story from there. They threw the nets out from Simon's boat and engulfed such a great shoal of fish with them that the nets began to break. Indeed they caught so many fish that when John and James came alongside and helped load the boats, the boats began to sink. It was an amazing catch: a catch made in deep water, a catch taken where there should've been no catch, a catch taken at a time of day when there should've been no catch.

At this point, it's tempting to talk about verse 10, where Jesus tells Peter and the boys, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will be catching men;" and to reflect on how we, each and every one of us, just as much as Peter, James and John, are called to leave behind, all our ordinary concerns and focus on winning people for God. And that is something of which we do need to be reminded frequently. But instead, let's look at the catch of fish and the facts behind it, and what the whole episode teaches us about how God expects us to live our lives.

Now, remember how Simon Peter said to Jesus, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing." In effect, he's saying, "I know my business. We tried that; we worked all night and nothing happened. So what's the point?" Well, we, like Peter, know our business, too, don't we? But do we sometimes know it too well? We know our child is not educated enough or old enough to do a particular job or to enjoy a particular responsibility; so we discourage them from even trying. We know that our brother is too busy or that our neighbour doesn't care to help; so we don't even ask. We know that we ourselves aren't talented enough to do what everyone is asking us to; so we don't even bother to try. We know that what's being asked of us, as individuals or as part of a group, will not pan out because we've tried it before; and we don't want to try again. We don't want to risk one more disappointment, one more failure. We know these things about ourselves and about others. And what happens? We feel frustrated, alone, inadequate.

How many people are dragging themselves through miserable lives because for years they've refused to risk such failure, such disappointment? They have resources, but don't use them; skills, but don't develop them; dreams, but don't follow them; gifts, but don't share them. They know what's what; they know their life's business and they are not about to be instructed in it by anyone else. They know who they are, and who others are, and what the situation is. And they're locked in by that knowledge, afraid to risk, afraid to reach out, afraid to go beyond the familiar, because they know how things will pan out in the end; that there's no point to doing what is being asked of them, that there's no point going beyond the place where fish are normally caught. If in the normal places there's nothing, then how much less will there be in the places where fish are almost never caught?

"Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." Well, that's all very fine, Jesus. But we tried our best all night; we tried it and it didn't work. "Nevertheless, at Your word I will let down the net." What's the point? Simple: sometimes we need to be stimulated, even challenged, by someone who lives outside our frame of reference. Sometimes we need to listen to another point of view. Sometimes we need to risk one more failure, to go do what our common sense tells us cannot be done and to try what we know will not work. Sometimes we just need to head out into the deep waters and let down our nets for no better reason than Jesus has asked us to do so. One author comments on today's Gospel reading: "The image that strikes me in today's Gospel is not the fishing but the reluctance of Simon to break out of the ordinary and the everyday ways of thinking and doing. I've always been attracted to Simon Peter because he's so like many of us-- well me at least. Despite verse ten, I don't think it's being suggested that our mission is to put out bait and catch unsuspecting fish who might be curious enough to nibble. I think the reading might suggest that we should be willing to set the familiar aside and unafraid to try new waters."

As He himself says in John 10:10, Jesus came that we "might have life, and have it more abundantly;" a full and rich life, a life in which we know and experience and share the love of God, that love which conquers the sting of death, and ensures that in the end our labours are not in vain, no matter how many days our nets may come up empty. But to plug into that life, we have to recognize that God is God, and we're not; that our knowledge and our experience are not equal to that of God; that God's ways are indeed superior to our own, that His wisdom is greater, His timing better, and His counsel more life-giving than our own. We have to acknowledge honestly our need of God's power, God's leading, God's grace and God's love. And yes, our nets may still come up empty for many days in a row. But if we're open to God; if we're willing to listen and to try the new things He suggests; if we are willing venture out to the deep water; or simply if we are willing, because he asks us, to do over again some of the things we have tried before and given up on, our nets will in the end be filled and filled so abundantly that our nets threaten to break and our boats to sink. If we heed the instructions God gives us here in the Scriptures and in our hearts, and dare to venture out into the deep waters, and labour hard to let down and bring up our nets, we will discover the fullness of life, a life in which God is with us to accomplish His perfect will.