

FC|RC HKA SAINTS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory to Him Forever!

December 7, 2014	27 th Sunday after Pentecost	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am
December 13	Saturday	Great Vespers	4:00 pm
December 14	28 th Sunday after Pentecost	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am

Saints of the Day: Saint Ambrose, Bishop of Milan (397). Venerable Nilus, Monk of Stolben Island (1554). Venerable Anthony, Abbot of Siya Monastery (Novgorod) (1556). New Hieromartyr Sergius (1917). New Hieromartyr Priest Antonius, Hieromartyr Andronic (1918). Saint Ambrosius Confessor, Bishop of Kamenets-Podolsk (1932). New Hieromartyrs Priests Sergius, Michael and Sergius, Deacon Nicephore and Hieromartyr Galaction, Martyr John (1937). New Hieromartyrs Priests Peter and Basil (1941). Venerable John, Faster of Saint Sabbas' Monastery. Martyr Athenodorus of Mesopotamia (304). Venerable Paul the Obedient. Venerable Gregory the Silent of Serbia, founder of Grigoriou Monastery, Mount Athos (1405). Venerable John, Faster of the Kiev Caves (12 c.). Venerable Monk Ignatius, near Blachernae. Saint Bassa of Jerusalem, Abess (5 c.). Saint Philothea of Turnovo (1060), whose relics are in Arges, Romania. Saint Diuma, Bishop of the Mercians and Middle Anglians. Martyr Neophytus. Martyr Dometius. Martyrs Isidore, Aceptimas and Leo.

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, John, Jason, John, Vincent. Priests Jacobus, Leonid, Vasil, Vasil. Deacons Mark, Demetrios, Philip. Monk Victor, Mother Raphaela, Dimitri, Nina, Daniel, Catherine, Helen, Anna, Peter, Helen, Michael, Stephanie, Zara, Nolan, Emelie, Michael, Ed, Nettie, Maria, 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 Drew Dudek and Bishop Seraphim were offered today at Liturgy and Moleben at the request of Father John Udics.

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of the souls of Nicholas Konet, Archimandrite Nicholas Frangakis, Esther Kappanadze, Joseph Udics and Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemann were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Father John Udics.

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of the souls of Stephen and Mary Steciak, Mary Pupcheck, John Popka, Stephen Polansky, Theresa Polansky, Wasyl Pytel and Andrew Andriadis were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of the "Memory Eternal Requiem Service Fund."

SAINT NICHOLAS, WONDERWORKER OF MYRA IN LYCIA. One of the oldest stories showing Saint Nicholas as a protector of children takes place long after his death. The townspeople of Myra were celebrating the good saint on the eve of his feast day when a band of Arab pirates from Crete came into the district. They stole treasures from the Church of Saint Nicholas to take away as booty. As they were leaving town, they snatched a young boy, Basilios, to make into a slave. The emir, or ruler, selected Basilios to be his personal cupbearer, as not knowing the language; Basilios would not understand what the king said to those around him. So, for the next year Basilios waited on the king, bringing his wine in a beautiful golden cup. For Basilios' parents, devastated at the loss of their only child, the year passed slowly, filled with grief. As the next Saint Nicholas' feast day approached, Basilios' mother would not join in the festivity, as it was now a day of tragedy. However, she was persuaded to have a simple observance at home—with quiet prayers for Basilios' safekeeping. Meanwhile, as Basilios was fulfilling his tasks serving the emir, he was suddenly whisked up and away. Saint Nicholas appeared to the terrified boy, blessed him, and set him down at his home back in Myra. Imagine the joy and wonderment when Basilios amazingly appeared before his parents, still holding the king's golden cup. This is the first story told of Saint Nicholas protecting children—which became his primary role in the West.

With the feast-day of Saint Nicholas (6 Dec) and the Nativity Fast rapidly moving us toward Christmas, there are two wonderful (and very brief) seasonal videos by Bishop Michael ... part of his "**Lessons in Our Faith Series**" on the diocesan website. "**Saint Nicholas: 7 Questions & 7 Answers**" "**Nativity of Christ: 7 Questions & 7 Answers**" <http://nynjoca.org/>

STEWARDSHIP II In so many respects are the children of men stewards of the Lord, the Possessor of heaven and earth: So large a portion of His goods, of various kinds, hath he committed to their charge. But it is not forever, nor indeed for any considerable time: We have this trust reposed in us only during the short, uncertain space that we sojourn here below; only so long as we remain on earth, as this fleeting breath is in our nostrils. The hour is swiftly approaching, it is just at hand, when we "can be no longer stewards!" The moment the body "returns to the dust as it was, and the spirit to God that gave it," we bear that character no more; the time of our stewardship is at an end. Part of those goods wherewith we were before entrusted are now come to an end; at least, they are so with regard to us; nor are we longer entrusted with them: And that part which remains can no longer be employed or improved as it was before.

2. Part of what we were entrusted with before is at an end, at least with regard to us. What have we to do, after this life, with food, and raiment, and houses, and earthly possessions? The food of the dead is the dust of the

earth; they are clothed only with worms and rotteness. They dwell in the house prepared for all flesh; their lands know them no more: All their worldly goods are delivered into other hands, and they have "no more portion under the sun."

3. The case is the same with regard to the body. The moment the spirit returns to God, we are no longer stewards of this machine, which is then sown in corruption and dishonour. All the parts and members of which it was composed lie mouldering in the clay. The hands have no longer power to move; the feet have forgot their office; the flesh, sinews, and bones, are all hastening to be dissolved into common dust.

4. Here end also the talents of a mixed nature; our strength, our health, our beauty, our eloquence, and address, our faculty of pleasing or persuading, or convincing others. Here end, likewise, all the honours we once enjoyed, all the power which was lodged in our hands, all the influence which we once had over others, either by the love or the esteem which they bore us. Our love, our hatred, our desire, is perished: None regard how we were once affected toward them. They look upon the dead as neither able to help nor hurt them; so that "a living dog is better than a dead lion."

5. Perhaps a doubt may remain concerning some of the other talents wherewith we are now entrusted, whether they will cease to exist when the body returns to dust or only cease to be improvable. Indeed, there is no doubt but the kind of speech which we now use, by means of these bodily organs, will then be entirely at an end, when those organs are destroyed. It is certain, the tongue will no more occasion any vibrations in the air; neither will the ear convey these tremulous motions to the common sensory. Even the sonus exilis, the low, shrill voice, which the poet supposes to belong to a separate spirit, we cannot allow to have a real being; it is a mere flight of imagination. Indeed, it cannot be questioned, but separate spirits have some way to communicate their sentiments to each other; but what inhabitant of flesh and blood can explain that way? What we term "speech," they cannot have: So that we can no longer be stewards of this talent when we are numbered with the dead.

6. It may likewise admit of a doubt, whether our senses will exist, when the organs of sense are destroyed. Is it not probable, that those of the lower kind will cease -- the feeling, the smell, the taste -- as they have a more immediate reference to the body, and are chiefly, if not wholly, intended for the preservation of it? But will not some kind of sight remain, although the eye be closed in death? And will there not be something in the soul equivalent to the present sense of hearing? Nay, is it not probable, that these will not only exist in the separate state, but exist in a far greater degree, in a more eminent manner, than now, when the soul, disentangled from its clay, is no longer "a dying sparkle in a cloudy place;" when it no longer "looks through the windows of the eye and ear;" but rather is all eye, all ear, all sense, in a manner we cannot yet conceive? And have we not a clear proof of the possibility of this, of seeing without the use of the eye, and hearing without the use of the ear? Yea, and earnest of it continually? For does not the soul see, in the clearest manner, when the eye is of no use; namely, in dreams? Does she not then enjoy the faculty of hearing, without any help from the ear? But however this be, certain it is, that neither will our senses, any more than our speech, be entrusted to us in the manner they are now, when the body lies in the silent grave.

7. How far the knowledge or learning which we have gained by education will then remain, we cannot tell. Solomon indeed says, "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." But it is evident, these words cannot be understood in an absolute sense. For it is so far from being true that there is no knowledge after we have quitted the body, that the doubt lies on the other side, whether there be any such thing as real knowledge till then; whether it be not a plain sober truth, not a mere poetical fiction, that All these shadows which for things we take, Are but the empty dreams, which in death's sleep we make; only excepting those things which God Himself has been pleased to reveal to man. I will speak for one. After having sought for truth, with some diligence, for half a century, I am, at this day, hardly sure of anything but what I learn from the Bible. Nay, I positively affirm, I know nothing else so certainly, that I would dare to stake my salvation upon it.

So much, however, we may learn from Solomon's words, that "there is no" such "knowledge or wisdom in the grave," as will be of any use to an unhappy spirit; "there is no device" there, whereby he can now improve those talents with which he was once entrusted. For time is no more; the time of our trial for everlasting happiness or misery is past. Our day, the day of man, is over; the day of salvation is ended! Nothing now remains but the "day of the Lord," ushering in wide, unchangeable eternity!

8. But still, our souls, being incorruptible and immortal, of a nature "little lower than the angels" (even if we are to understand that phrase of our original nature, which may well admit of a doubt,) when our bodies are mouldered into earth, will remain with all their faculties. Our memory, our understanding, will be so far from being destroyed, yea, or impaired, by the dissolution of the body, that, on the contrary, we have reason to believe, they will be inconceivably strengthened. Have we not the clearest reason to believe, that they will then be wholly freed from those defects which now naturally result from the union of the soul with the corruptible body? It is highly probable, that, from the time these are disunited, our memory will let nothing slip; yea, that it will faithfully exhibit everything to our view which was ever committed to it. It is true, that the invisible world is, in Scripture, termed "the land of forgetfulness;" or, as it is still more strongly expressed in the old translation, "the land where all things are forgotten." They are forgotten; but by whom? Not by the inhabitants of that land, but by the inhabitants of the earth. It is with regard to them that the unseen world is "the land of forgetfulness." All things therein are too frequently forgotten by these; but not by disembodied spirits. From the time they have put off the earthly tabernacle, we can hardly think they forget anything.

9. In like manner, the understanding will, doubtless, be freed from the defects that are now inseparable from it. For many ages it has been an unquestioned maxim, *Humanum est errare et nescire*; -- ignorance and mistake are inseparable from human nature. But the whole of this assertion is only true with regard to living men; and holds no longer than while "the corruptible body presses down the soul." Ignorance, indeed, belongs to every finite understanding (seeing there is none beside God that knoweth all things;) but not mistake: When the body is laid aside, this also is laid aside, for ever.