

+ 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!

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| November 1, 2015 | 22 nd Sunday after Pentecost | Divine Liturgy | 9:30 am |
| November 7 | Saturday | Great Vespers | 4:00 pm |
| November 8 | 23 rd Sunday after Pentecost | Divine Liturgy | 9:30 am |

This week's Bulletin is donated in memory of Vera Prawlocki at the request of Sonia Buttino.

Saints of the Day: Holy Wonderworkers and Unmercenaries Cosmas and Damian of Mesopotamia, and their mother Saint Theodota (3rd c.). New Hieromartyrs Priests Alexander and Theodore (1918). New Hieromartyrs Sergius Archbishop of Elets, Priests Alexander and Demetrius, Virgin-martyr Elizabeth (1937). Martyr Peter (1941). Hieromartyrs John the Bishop and James the Presbyter, of Persia (345). Martyrs Cyrenia and Juliana in Cilicia (305). Martyr Hermeningilda the Goth of Spain (586). Martyrs Caesarius, Dacius, Sabbas, Sabinian, Agrippa, Adrian, and Thomas at Damascus (7th c.). Saint Cosmas of Verkhoturys (1704). Martyrs James of Mt. Athos and his two disciples James and Dionysius (1520). Venerable David of Euboea (1589). Martyrs Cyprian and Juliana. Saint Cadfan, Abbot of Bardsey Island. New Virgin-martyr Helen of Sinope (18th c.).

Please remember in your prayers: Suffering Christians of Egypt, Syria, the Middle East and Ukraine. Bishop Boulos and Bishop Yohanna, of Aleppo. Archimandrites Athanasy, Nectarios, Luke, Pachomy. Archpriests Alvian, Eugene, Leonid, John, Jason, John, Vincent. Priests Jacobus, Leonid, Andrew. Deacons Mark, Demetrios, Philip. Mother Victoria. Mothers Raphaela, Michaela, Catherine, Anna. Sister Piama. Monk Victor, Matushka Joanna, Mary, Valentina, Dimitri, Nina, Daniel, Helen, Catherine, Anna, Peter, Helen, Michael, Stephanie, Zara, Nolan, Emelie, Michael, Ed, Nettie, Anita, Maria, Michael, John, Linda, James, Nancy, Susan, Daniel, Aaron, Nicole, Ashley, Mark, Jennifer, Nina, Nadine, Michael, Anna, Gregory, Marianna, Isaiah, Jamie, Albert, Kevin, Robert, Robert, Andrew, Betty, David, Warren.

God Grant Many Years! Prayers for the health of newly-baptised Matthew Audzeyeu and his parents Alexei and Tatiana and siblings Iliya and Paulina were offered at Liturgy and Moleben last Sunday.

God Grant Many Years! Prayers for the health of Christy Zaitseva (in Cooperstown Hospital) were offered at Liturgy and Moleben today at the request of Father Demetrios and Matushka Anastasia Richards.

God Grant Many Years! Prayers for the health of Sophia Phillips, Archimandrite Luke (Majoros) and Kevin Gray were offered at Liturgy and Moleben at the request of Father John Udics.

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of Olga Prawlocki were offered today at Liturgy and Litiya at the request of Steve and Jackie Leve.

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of Deacon Mark Hoeplinger were offered October 25 and today at Liturgy and Litiya at the request of Deacon Demetrios Richards.

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of +Archbishop Dmitri (Royster), Esther (Anastasia) Kappanadze, Betty Polk, Panagiotis (Pete) Dovas and uncle Max Hartong were offered today at Liturgy and Litiya at the request of Father John Udics.

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of Mary Behuniak and Vera Prawlocki were offered today at Liturgy and Litiya at the request of the "Memory Eternal Requiem Service Fund."

SERMON

Every so often, we hear someone say that the Church should be run more like a business. Okay – let's examine this claim and try to apply it to our situation.

This 'business' is operated for and by Our Lord, Jesus Christ, our CEO. Our Lord, now the Judge in Heaven, turned over the running of His business to us. We are no longer slaves or servants, but co-workers with the Lord. His command (not a suggested operating method, but a command) is found in (at least) two places in Holy Scripture. One is that we love God with all our heart and all our mind and all our soul and all our strength, and that we love our neighbor as much as we love ourselves.

That means that NOTHING should take precedence over the way we love God, worship and praise Him, emulate Him and obey Him. No football, baseball, ladies club, social event, family event, NOTHING is more important. Of course, everyone gets ill or has to do 'something' on a day when Liturgy is being celebrated. But when we have a choice about coming to church or doing something else, God must be the first priority. Loving your neighbor is often one of those things which demands attention, and we should leap to it and not procrastinate.

The other command is that we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked and visit those in prison or who are ill in hospitals, nursing homes, and at home on their beds of illness.

Well, how often do people need to eat? At least once a day, one would think. Yet our parish collects food only once a year. We have dinners twice a year – the harvest dinner and the pre-Christmas dinner (but we don't go out into the byways and invite beggars and starving folk in to our tables). We don't sit and have the Holy Supper as a parish or the meal after the Divine Liturgy on Pascha as a family. That food doesn't go out into the community. So we pretty much fail, when it comes to those bits of business. The next – that we give drink to the thirsty – need not be interpreted literally, since most everyone has running water or easy enough access to it. Rather, the Fathers of the Church interpret this command as meaning providing the Gospel, The Living Water, to those who are thirsty for the Word of God. Clothing the naked is another command which need not be taken literally, but the Fathers tell us that clothing the naked soul of someone who is vulnerable or weak is to provide them with spiritual life to clothe their psyche. Finally visiting the sick and hospitalized and imprisoned may not be possible for every one of us to do in person – but we can talk with people on the telephone, we can communicate by letter. So all of these commands are doable. But we aren't doing very much to even attempt to accomplish these things – not as individuals, not as a parish.

In short, our productivity report is an embarrassment. Our personal evaluation is something we all need to consider. In a business, there's a manager who assesses the performance of the personnel. We are our own manager and can give our productivity report with our confessions. [I know a few people who are always ready to help others. They are positive, giving, generous, kind, always thinking of the needs of others. Actually, these people amaze me.](#) The Parish's annual report is about money. But again, no matter how much money comes in, how much of it goes out into the world for feeding and clothing and giving drink or visiting the sick?

Customers or clients, continuing or potential, hear the promises we make and then compare with the promise we keep and see the great discrepancy. They look at what we say and what we actually do and are not impressed or inspired by it. Social events don't really fill the bill of keeping the commands of Jesus. Who would buy the product we offer?

Are we then, being good stewards of the job our Lord gave us to do? If we look at the performance records, we ought to be embarrassed. We can't brag about how we love God or our neighbors as much as we love ourselves. Unless that changes, this business will soon be bankrupt.

SAINTS COSMAS AND DAMIAN were unmercenaries and miracle-workers. They were brothers both in the flesh and in the spirit, born somewhere in Asia Minor of a pagan father and a Christian mother. After their father's death, their mother Theodotia devoted all her time and effort to educating her sons and raising them as true Christians. God helped her, and her sons matured as sweet fruit and luminaries of the world. They were learned in the art of medicine and ministered to the sick without payment, not so much with medicine as by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. They were called "unmercenary physicians," that is, unpaid physicians, for they healed freely and thus fulfilled the commandment of Christ: Freely ye have received, freely give (Matthew 10:8). So careful were they in healing men free of charge that Cosmas became very angry with his brother Damian because he accepted three eggs from a woman, Palladia, and ordered that he not be buried alongside his brother Damian after his death. In fact, Saint Damian did not accept these three eggs as a reward for healing the ailing Palladia, but rather because she adjured him in the name of the Most-holy Trinity to accept these three eggs. Nevertheless, after their death in the town of Fereman, they were buried together according to a revelation from God. The holy brothers were great miracle-workers both during their life and after their death. A snake crawled through the mouth and into the stomach of a certain farm laborer during his sleep, and the unfortunate man would have died in the greatest pain had he not, in the last moment, invoked the help of Saints Cosmas and Damian. Thus, the Lord glorified forever the miracle-working of those who glorified Him on earth by their faith, purity and mercy.

THE HOLY MARTYR HERMENEGILD THE HEIR was the son of the Gothic King Leovigild who adhered to the Arian heresy. However, Hermenegild did not turn away from Orthodoxy in spite of all the flatteries and threats of his cruel heretical father. His father cast him into prison and, early on Pascha, sent a heretical bishop to administer Communion to him. But the God-pleaser refused to receive Communion at the hands of a heretic, and the heretical bishop informed the king about this. The king became angry and ordered the executioner to behead Hermenegild in the year 586. Leovigild later repented that he had killed his son; he renounced his heresy and returned to Orthodoxy.

THE VENERABLE MARTYR JAMES WITH HIS DISCIPLES JAMES AND DIONYSIUS. James was born in the Diocese of Castoria of parents named Martin and Paraseva. Working as a shepherd James became wealthy, and by this incurred the envy of his brother, who maligned him to the Turks as having found some treasure in the ground. James fled to Constantinople where he again became very wealthy. Once, James was the guest of a Turkish Bey. The Turks ate meat and James fasted. Then the Bey said: "Great is your Christian Faith!" And he related how his wife had been mentally ill and how he, after all the physicians and cures had failed, took her to the patriarch for prayers to be read over her. As soon as the patriarch opened the book to read, a heavenly light shone forth in the church. After the completion of the prayer, his wife was made whole. Hearing how the Turk extolled the Christian Faith, James distributed all his goods and went to the Holy Mountain, where he was tonsured a monk in the Monastery of Iveron. He lived a life of asceticism on the Holy Mountain and suffered for the Faith at the hands of the Turks in Jedrene on November 1, 1520. His miracle-working relics and those of his disciples, James and Dionysius, repose in the Monastery of Saint Anastasia in Galakistou near Thessalonica.