

+ SAINTS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America
305 Main Road, Herkimer, New York, 13350 • 315-866-3272
Archpriest John Udics, Rector • e-mail: john.udics@gmail.com
Deacon Demetrios Richards • e-mail: dwr00nhr@twcny.rr.com
Parish Web Page: www.cnyorthodoxchurch.org

GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST! GLORY TO GOD FOR ALL THINGS!

November 15, 2015	24th Sunday after Pentecost	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am
BEGINNING OF NATIVITY FAST – (SAINT PHILLIP’S FAST) until December 24			
November 21	Saturday Entrance of the Virgin into the Temple	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am
November 21	Saturday	Great Vespers	4:00 pm
November 22	25 th Sunday after Pentecost	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am

This week’s Bulletin is offered in memory of Mary Elnicky at the request of her family.

Saints of the Day: Holy Martyrs and Confessors Gurias (299), Samonas (306), and Abibus (322), of Edessa. Venerable Paisius (Velichkovsky) of Moldavia and Mt. Athos (1794). New Hieromartyrs Priests Nicholas and Peter and Deacons Gregory and Nicitas (1937). Martyrs Elpidius, Marcellus, and Eustochius, who suffered under Julian the Apostate (361). Martyr Demetrius of Thrace (307). Venerable Philip, Abbot of Rabang (Vologda) (1457). Saint Quinctian, Bishop of Seleucia (4th c.). Saint Thomas the New, Patriarch of Constantinople (665-668). Repose of Saint Herman, Wonderworker of Alaska (1836).

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, Cathy, 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 James Williams 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 Tom and Julia Todd.

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of mother Jennie were offered November 8 at Liturgy and Litiya at the request of Lauren Jedlan.

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of Archimandrite Alexander (Doumouras) and Dr Bohdan Chudoba were offered today at Liturgy and Litiya at the request of Father John Udics.

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of Katherine Chanas, Alexandria and Egneta Jovorosky, Walter Jovorosky Jr, Max Spytko, and Kathryn Chlus were offered today at Liturgy and Litiya at the request of the “Memory Eternal Requiem Service Fund.”

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

November 21 Saturday 11am there will be a BAKE SALE at church

For more information call Barbara at 867 7853. You can help make pierogi – please call Barbara.

CHRISTIAN TOWN BRACES FOR THE WORST AS ISLAMIC STATE 3KM AWAY Nov. 12, 2015

AMMAN: Syriac militias and religious figures from across Syria are mobilizing to defend a Christian-majority town in the southern Homs countryside from the Islamic State, now just three kilometers away.

An ancient settlement mentioned in the Bible whose residents still speak Aramaic, Sadad lies at the edge of Syria’s vast desert, 60km southeast of regime-held Homs city and 120km southwest of IS-held Palmyra.

Sadad is a center of heritage for Syria’s Christian minority, which made up approximately 10 percent of the country’s pre-war population. It is home to several churches, including the Syriac Orthodox Church of Saint Theodore and the Church of Mar Sarkis [Sergius], which holds a number of rare 18th century Christian wall paintings..

Sadad is also the next town in the crosshairs of the Islamic State, whose fighters hold positions just three kilometers to the east. It is part of an IS campaign to capture a string of regime-held villages lying due east of the M5 Homs-Damascus highway, a vital supply route for the Assad regime. Sadad is the last in the line of villages that ends 13km east of the M5 highway.

A surprise attack three weeks ago saw IS take the town of Mahin, 10km east of Sadad, from regime forces and ultimately advancing to a mountain around three kilometers southeast of Sadad.

This past August, IS fighters began their offensive by capturing the Christian-majority village of al-Qaryatayn, 60km east of the M5.

“The people of Sadad began to leave after IS took al-Qaryatayn,” Osama Edward, a member of the Assyrian Human Rights Network told Syria Direct. IS fighters at the time reportedly arrested more than 100 Syriac Christian families in al-Qaryatayn.

Since August, thousands of civilians have been displaced by a combination of IS advances and increased aerial and ground bombardment by Russian and regime forces trying to stave off the militants, the Syrian Network for Human Rights reported Tuesday.

Out of 15,000 original residents, “95 percent have left,” Karman Mawwas, a displaced Sadad resident told Syria Direct on Monday. Her family “left Sadad six hours after IS took control of Mahin because mortars and artillery started to fall” amidst fighting between regime forces and IS near the town.

“Nobody is left in Sadad except for some young men who stayed to defend it alongside Syrian army forces,” Mawwas told Syria Direct.

Most of those who fled Sadad travelled to towns with sizeable Christian populations such as Fairouzeh and Zaidal east of Homs city.

Fears of advancing IS forces were likely bolstered by memories of fighting in the town two years ago, when Jabhat a-Nusra fighters and allied rebel groups held Sadad for one week before regime soldiers recaptured it. During that period, 46 of the town’s residents were killed by opposition groups as a result of sniper fire, shelling, and apparent executions, Human Rights Watch reported. Several of Sadad’s churches were also vandalized.

‘From Qamishli to Sadad’

Fearing Sadad’s loss, hundreds of volunteers from Christian militias across Syria have rushed to the town’s aid since the beginning of November to support the Syrian army, already on the ground. Members of the pro-regime Syrian Social Nationalist Party’s militia (SSNP) are also fighting for the town.

Dozens of members of the Qamishli-based Gozarto Protection Force (GPF), a pro-regime Syriac Christian militia, flew to Damascus just over a week ago ahead of leaving for Sadad, pro-opposition Orient News reported.

“From Qamishli to Sadad,” reads the caption of photos posted to official GPF media just over a week ago as smiling militia members pose in front of a military transport plane.

The GPF, also known as the Sootoro, “are an armed group close to the Syrian regime,” Osama Edward, who is currently in Sweden, told Syria Direct.

“Wherever the Syrian army is, we’re there to support them,” a GPF fighter in Qamishli told Lebanese channel OTV in a recent video report. A Syrian flag flies above the gate of the group’s headquarters in the same video. The pro-regime GPF is based in the northeast city of Qamishli, and fought alongside Syrian army forces and NDF militias against IS in Al-Hasakah earlier this year. The GPF/Sootoro are separate from the YPG-aligned Syriac Christian forces called the Sutoro, operating in other parts of Al-Hasakah.

It was not immediately clear how many fighters flew to Sadad, although pictures posted to the GPF’s Facebook account on Tuesday show approximately 50 fighters in Sadad.

A post on a GPF social media account listed 17 additional fighting groups from multiple Syrian provinces as having traveled to Sadad to help defend the town.

Religious reinforcements

Amidst the mobilization of Christian militias, Syriac religious leaders have manifested in Sadad, with the head of the Syriac Orthodox Church photographed walking the streets and offering support to soldiers on standby.

The head of the Syriac Orthodox Church, Patriarch Mor Ignatius Aphrem II, a native of Qamishli, also visited Sadad last Thursday in a show of support for the town and its defenders, in pictures posted on social media.

With praise for the “bold visit” by some, one prominent writer in Al-Hasakah found the involvement of religious figures in Syria’s war a sign of new pressures on the Christian community.

“It is unprecedented in the history of the Syriac Orthodox church that one of our leaders should check on fighters at the fronts,” Suleiman Yusef, a Christian writer from Al-Hasakah province wrote on his personal Facebook account in response to the Patriarch’s visit.

Religious figures have literally stood by militia members in Sadad “since the first day” they arrived, GPF social media said.

Father Gabriel Daoud, a priest from the Syriac Orthodox Patriarchate in Damascus also visited the frontlines around Sadad and addressed fighters on Tuesday in pictures posted online by the GPF.

The church has 1.5-2 million followers spread throughout Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and southern Turkey.

Despite visible efforts to preserve and defend one of Syria’s most ancient towns, one of the Syriac Christians who fled Sadad last week said it is still not safe to go home. Residents are watching and waiting, said Karman Mawwas.

“Although the army promised us a week ago that they would return, they haven’t done so, and we are afraid.”

