



SS. Peter and Paul Albanian Orthodox Church
9230 Old Bustleton Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19115
Church Phone: 215-676-3311

Pastor: Father Stephen Siniari
Rectory Phone: 1-609-385-3757



Church Bulletin ~ June 2009

Father Stephen's Message to the Faithful

If We Took a Little Time

One day he saw some peasants busily pulling out nettles;
He looked at the heap of plants
Uprooted and already wilted and said:
They're dead,
But it would be good
If we knew how to put them to some use:
When the nettle is young, the leaves make excellent greens
When it grows old it has filaments and fibers like hemp and flax
Cloth made from the nettle is as good as cloth made from hemp
Chopped up the nettle is good for poultry
Pounded it is good for cattle.
Nettle seeds mixed with animal's fodder gives luster to their hides
The roots mixed with salt produce a beautiful yellow dye
And it makes excellent hay because it can be cut twice in a season
And what does nettle need?
Very little soil
No care
No culture
Except that the seeds fall as fast as they ripen
And it is difficult to gather them, that's all.
If we took a little time
The nettle would be useful
We neglect it
And it becomes harmful
Then we kill it
Men are like the nettle.
After a short silence he added.
My friends, remember this:
There are no bad herbs
And no bad men
Only bad cultivators.

--Jean Valjean: Les Miserables

+++ Special Announcements from Fr. Stephen +++

*** *Father Stephen* may be reached at 609-385-3757, Monday - Friday, 8 AM - 5 PM or by e-mail: ssiniari@covenanthouse.org

Please remember that all confessions and consultations on Sunday mornings shall take place from 9 AM to 10 AM before the Divine Liturgy. Thank you.

+++ Holy Days and Name Days in June +++

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| ✦ June 7 | - Holy Pentecost |
| ✦ June 9 | - St Cyril of Alexandria |
| ✦ June 11 | - Holy Apostles Bartholomew & Barnabas |
| ✦ June 14 | - Synaxis of All Saints; Prophet Elisha |
| ✦ June 19 | - Holy Apostle Jude, Brother of the Lord |
| ✦ June 21 | - All Saints of America; All Saints of Russia |
| ✦ June 24 | - Nativity of St John the Baptist |
| ✦ June 29 | - Holy Apostles Peter and Paul |

Synaxis of All Saints

(Commemorated June 14)

The Sunday following Pentecost is dedicated to All Saints, both those who are known to us, and those who are known only to God. There have been saints at all times, and they have come from every corner of the earth. They were Apostles, Martyrs, Prophets, Hierarchs, Monastics, and Righteous, yet all were perfected by the same Holy Spirit.



The Descent of the Holy Spirit makes it possible for us to rise above our fallen state and to attain sainthood, thereby fulfilling God's directive to "be holy, for I am holy" (*Lev. 11:44, 1 Peter 1:16, etc.*). Therefore, it is fitting to commemorate All Saints on the first Sunday after Pentecost.

This feast may have originated at an early date, perhaps as a celebration of all martyrs, then it was broadened to include all men and women who had borne witness to Christ by their virtuous lives, even if they did not shed their blood for Him.

St Peter of Damascus, in his "Fourth Stage of Contemplation," mentions five categories of saints: Apostles, Martyrs, Prophets, Hierarchs, and Monastic Saints (*PHILOKALIA [in English] Vol. 3, p.131*). He is actually quoting from the OCTOECHOS, Tone 2 for Saturday Matins, kathisma after the first stichology.

St Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain (*July 14*) adds the Righteous to St Peter's five categories. The list of St Nicodemus is found in his book *THE FOURTEEN EPISTLES OF ST PAUL* (*Venice, 1819, p. 384*) in his discussion of *1 Corinthians 12:28*.

The hymnology for the feast of All Saints also lists six categories: "Rejoice, assembly of the Apostles, Prophets of the Lord, loyal choirs of the Martyrs, divine Hierarchs, Monastic Fathers, and the Righteous..."

Some of the saints are described as Confessors, a category which does not appear in the above lists. Since they are similar in spirit to the martyrs, they are regarded as belonging to the category of Martyrs. They were not put to death as the Martyrs were, but they boldly confessed Christ and came close to being executed for their faith. St Maximus the Confessor (*January 21*) is such a saint.

The order of these six types of saints seems to be based on their importance to the Church. The Apostles are listed first, because they were the first to spread the Gospel throughout the world.

The Martyrs come next because of their example of courage in professing their faith before the enemies and persecutors of the Church, which encouraged other Christians to remain faithful to Christ even unto death.

Although they come first chronologically, the Prophets are listed after the Apostles and Martyrs. This is because the Old Testament Prophets saw only the shadows of things to come, whereas the Apostles and Martyrs experienced them firsthand. The New Testament also takes precedence over the Old Testament.

The holy Hierarchs comprise the fourth category. They are the leaders of their flocks, teaching them by their word and their example.

The Monastic Saints are those who withdrew from this world to live in monasteries, or in seclusion. They did not do this out of hatred for the world, but in order to devote themselves to unceasing prayer, and to do battle against the power of the demons. Although some people erroneously believe that monks and nuns are useless and unproductive, St John Climacus had a high regard for them: "Angels are a light for monks, and the monastic life is a light for all men" (*LADDER, Step 26:31*).

The last category, the Righteous, are those who attained holiness of life while living "in the world." Examples include Abraham and his wife Sarah, Job, Sts Joachim and Anna, St Joseph the Betrothed, St Juliana of Lazarevo, and others.

The feast of All Saints achieved great prominence in the ninth century, in the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Leo VI the Wise (*886-911*). His wife, the Holy Empress Theophano (*December 16*) lived in the world, but was not attached to worldly things. She was a great benefactor to the poor, and was

generous to the monasteries. She was a true mother to her subjects, caring for widows and orphans, and consoling the sorrowful. Even before the death of St Theophano in 893 or 894, her husband started to build a church, intending to dedicate it to Theophano, but she forbade him to do so. It was this emperor who decreed that the Sunday after Pentecost be dedicated to All Saints. Believing that his wife was one of the righteous, he knew that she would also be honored whenever the Feast of All Saints was celebrated.

~ Reading & Icon Courtesy of OCA Webpage ~

✦✦✦ Events & Announcements ✦✦✦

Liturgical Schedule - June/July/August 2009

- ✦ PENTECOST SUNDAY - JUNE 7 - Divine Liturgy, 10 AM
- ✦ SS PETER & PAUL FEASTDAY - MONDAY, JUNE 29 - Divine Liturgy, 9 AM
- ✦ HOLY TRANSFIGURATION - THURSDAY, AUGUST 6 - Divine Liturgy, 9 AM
- ✦ DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS - SATURDAY, AUGUST 15 - Divine Liturgy, 9 AM

Schedule of Other Services

BIBLE STUDY - EVERY WEDNESDAY - 7 PM - 8:30 PM in the Church Hall - Bible Study led by **Fr. Dn. Gregory**. The title for the Bible Study is "*Seeking the Treasure of Christ Throughout Scripture*." The study will use the new Orthodox Study Bible of the Old and New Testament as a base. The first topic of discussion will be the meaning of the story of Adam and Eve and the discussions will proceed with a journey through the Hebrew Bible.

Church News & Reminders

- ◇ **ICON PLEDGES** - Icon Pledges can be paid at any time to our treasurer, James Schaeffer.
- ◇ **MEMBERSHIP DUES 2009** - ***Please note:*** Membership Dues for 2009 have been raised to \$125. *Dues* can be paid at any time to James Schaeffer, our Treasurer. *Thank you!*
- ◇ **CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING** - 1st Monday of each month, 7 PM. All Parishioners are welcome to attend.
- ◇ **SPECIAL SERVICES** - If you are planning to have a special service in the Church, please be considerate and notify either Father Stephen or the Church Committee one week in advance. When you are planning for a Baptism, Wedding, Funeral, or any other Prayer Service in the Church, please speak with Father Stephen in advance to determine if there is any way you can contribute to help the Church in helping others. Thank you. ***Please note:*** *if the services of the Church Choir are required, please notify the Choir Director, Christina Murianka, as soon as possible.*
- ◇ **Memorials:** Any help in setting up and cleaning up from the families involved is truly appreciated and welcomed by the Ladies Society.
- ◇ **NO SMOKING/NO CELL PHONES** - Please remember that SS Peter & Paul has a no smoking policy in the building and that ringers on cell phones should be off during the Divine Liturgy.

The Joy of Giving

- ◇ **CASSEROLES FOR THE HOMELESS** - *In May: 7 casseroles and 2 bags of toiletries were given to the Hospice. Thanks to all!* Disposable razors and individual/small tubes of hand lotion are still needed. Please continue to help feed the hungry. Frozen casseroles are collected by Harry Halkedis. A \$10 donation for casseroles can be given at any time. *Thank you!*
- ◇ **PASTORAL FUND COLLECTION** - Collections for the Pastoral Fund will take place every 3rd Sunday of the month. Please donate generously. "Pastoral Fund" donation envelopes are found in the Church foyer, on the left side of the glass partition, should you wish to donate at another time.
- ◇ **CHURCH LIBRARY DONATIONS** - We are greatly in need of monetary donations for buying books to establish our Church Library to help all of us continue to learn about the Orthodox Faith. Any amount is truly appreciated and can be given to our Treasurer, James Schaeffer, at any time. *May God bless you for your generosity!*

◇ **COLLECTION FOR THE POOR** - A special collection for the poor will be held on the 1st Sunday of every month. Please plan to give generously every month to those whose lives are less fortunate than ours. Donations can also be placed in the **Poor Box** at any time.

◇ **ORTHODOX HERALD COLLECTION** - Collections for the *Orthodox Herald* will take place every 2nd Sunday of the month. Please donate generously.

◇ **DONATIONS OF WINE & OIL** - Altar wine and virgin olive oil for the altar lamps are always needed. The name of the altar wine is **Mavrodaphne of Patras** and it is available at most PA State Stores. Please help make sure that we always have a plentiful supply.

◇ **POP TAB COLLECTION PRGRAM FOR RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE** - **RJ** (and his parents, Debbie & Bob Krimetz) is collecting flip tabs from any aluminum cans to donate to the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House. *Help by bringing your tabs! Thank you!*

◇ **PASTORAL FUND BOX/POOR BOX** - Please note: There are now 2 collection boxes in the back of the church, **the Poor Box AND a Pastoral Fund Box.** *Please donate generously!*

Ladies Society News

◇ **A REQUEST...** if you have borrowed any containers, trays, bowls, coffee carafes, etc. from the kitchen, **please return them as soon as possible.** These items are used for many of the functions held in the Church Hall and they are needed. *Thank you!*

Other Events at SS Peter & Paul



◇ **SS PETER & PAUL ANNUAL CLAM BAKE - September 19, 2009 - The date has been set for our most fun-filled & delicious event of the year. Make sure to keep Saturday, September 19, open for a super great time!**

General Interest

◇ **OCMC NEWS** - Link to the coverage of the **Archbishop Anastasios and Archbishop Demetrios Missionary Training and Administrative Building** of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC), which took place on May 21, 2009 in St Augustine, FL. There are numerous interviews of interest, including Met. Jonah, Archbishop Anastasios of Albania, Fr. Luke Veronis, and Nathan and Gabriella Hoppe who are missionaries in Albania. **<http://www.myocn.net/index.php/OCMC/>**

◇ **ANCIENT FAITH RADIO** - **24 hour a day** *Orthodox radio station* providing high quality internet-based Orthodox programming, music, teaching, interviews, features, convert testimonies, conference recordings, and much more! The URL is: **<http://ancientfaithradio.com>**. There are a whole series of podcasts (audio files). Especially wonderful are those from Fr Thomas Hopko. Listen through your computer or download them into an mp3 player or Ipod: **<http://ancientfaith.com/podcasts/hopko>**

-- **CONVERSATIONS WITH METROPOLITAN JONAH** - His Beatitude Metropolitan Jonah offers his thoughts on monasticism, Church ministry, and episcopal service in the latest "Conversations with Metropolitan Jonah" podcast on Ancient Faith Radio.

In a conversation with OCA Director of Ministries and Communications, the Very Rev. Andrew Jarmus, Metropolitan Jonah spoke at the conclusion of a month-long series of visits through the US, Canada, and Russia.

The conversations may be heard here:

<http://ancientfaith.com/podcasts/conversations>

◇ **ALBANIAN FORUM ON THE INTERNET (FORUMI SHQIPTAR)** - Ne gjuhen shqipe: per te dhena informative mbi Kishen Orthodhokse, klikoni "Komuniteti Orthodhoks" ne uebsajten Forumi Shqiptar me poshte: **www.forumishqiptar.com/forumdisplay.php?f=186**

Miscellaneous

◇ **SS PETER & PAUL CHURCH STORE** - Open Sundays at 9:30 AM (1/2 hour before Divine Liturgy)
Items available: Divine Liturgy Books, Icons; Crosses (Baptismal, lapel pins, Georgian style, orthodox); Prayerbooks (Georgian and English); Censors; Unique and different wearing apparel; CDs and cassettes; Religious Books

◇ **SS PETER & PAUL HAS A NEW WEBSITE** - **The new url is: www.sspeterpaulalbanianorthodox.org.** We will be gradually phasing out the current website. If you have any news or announcements that you would like to see up on the new website, please e-mail David Biando at davidbiando@verizon.net or call him at 215-725-3797 and he will post it ASAP. Suggestions are always welcomed.

◇ **WEB PAGE/E-MAILS** - SS Peter & Paul Webpage: <http://homepage.mac.com/aliciaj17/sspeterpaulhome1.html>. New Bulletins available online by Saturday 8 PM. If you would like to be kept up-to-date by e-mail or to be removed from our "paper" mailing list, please send Alicia an e-mail at: aliciaj17@mac.com

◇ **ANNOUNCEMENTS/NEWS ABOUT PARISHIONERS** - If you have any items to include in next month's Bulletin, please see Alicia or call her at 215-742-0492 or e-mail: aliciaj17@mac.com. *The deadline for the next Bulletin is Sunday, July 5.* Thank you! *Please note that this will be a combination July/August Bulletin. Parishioners will be able to pick up the Bulletins at the Church on Sunday 7/12/09.* Bulletins will be mailed to any Parishioners unable to attend.

Please remember to let Alicia know the names of our members who are ill or in need of prayer so that they can be included in our Bulletins.

◇ **Thank You** to all members of the Parish who have helped out or volunteered in any way with their time and efforts, and a very special **thank you** to anyone whose name was inadvertently omitted from the Bulletin.

Parishioner's Corner



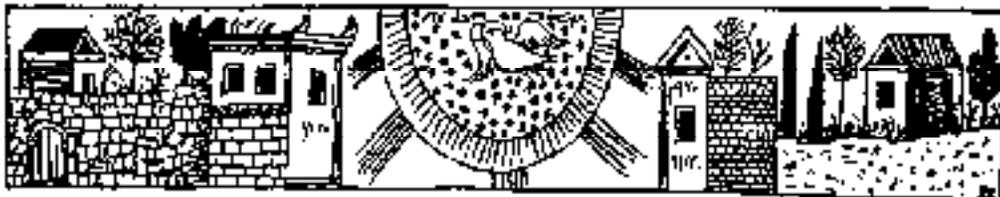
◇ **A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY** is wished to the following parishioners and friends who are celebrating **June** Birthdays: George Gulisashvili, Katherine Halkedis, John Hondros, Mary Jaxheimer, Tatyana Kuznetsova, Donna Lane, John Siniari, Lyudmila Sivak, Zinaida Zemlyanaya.

May God grant them all many, many years!

◇ **A VERY HAPPY AND BLESSED FATHER'S DAY** to all of our Fathers, Grandfathers, Great-Grandfathers, Uncles, and to all of the men in our lives who have been like Fathers to us. *May God grant them all many, many years!*

◇ **GREGORY VRATO, SR.**, is at the **John Neumann Nursing Home**, Room 726, at the intersection of Haldeman & Tomlinson Road (make a right on Tomlinson and the parking lot is immediately on your right). Visitors are welcome anytime from noon to 8:00 PM.

Please continue to keep Gregory in your prayers. May God grant him good health!



Let Us Keep Them in our Prayers

Please continue to pray for the full and speedy recovery of: **Gregory Vreto, Sr., Nina Horowitz, Spiro Costas, Matthew Murianka, Joyce Dorsey, Andi Steffa, John Palmerick, Thimi Daka, Al Rifkin, Sophie Bacon, Angie Kozlowski, James Vesho, Margot Craig, Eteri Okropiridze, Katherine Halkedis, Martha Murianka, Christina Murianka, Mary Ann Clark, Paulette Steffa, Alexandra Pana**

***** God knows the names and ages of all who need His love and mercy...**

Archpastoral Message of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah for the 2009 Church Planting Grant Appeal

June 7, 2009

Dearly Beloved in Christ:

I recently returned from a visit to the Church of Russia, during which I was blessed to visit once again the Valaam Monastery. One of the great holy places of the Russian Church, this monastery holds a significant place in the spiritual legacy of Orthodox Christianity in America.

In 1794, a group of monks from the Valaam Monastery arrived on Kodiak Island, Alaska, to bring the Orthodox Christian Faith to a people eager to receive the Good News of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Because of the exemplary lives and efforts of those first missionaries, Orthodox Christianity was firmly planted on the North American continent, where it remains firmly rooted and continues to proclaim the fullness of truth.

Although the world has changed dramatically since Saint Herman and his companions first arrived in Alaska, the mission we have inherited from them has not. Following their example, we also are called to bring the fullness of truth found in the Orthodox Christian Church to the people of North America, to any and all who would receive it.

One of the many ways you can take part in this mission is by providing financial assistance through your support of the Orthodox Church in America's Church Planting Grant Appeal -- formerly known as the "Mission Appeal." Your designated gifts will be shared with qualifying OCA missions, enabling them to grow and prosper by providing a portion of their rectors' full-time salaries.

This year, Sunday, June 7, the Great Feast of Pentecost, has been designated "Church Planting Grant Appeal Sunday." The mission entrusted to the apostles on that first Pentecost -- the proclamation of the Gospel in its fullness -- has also been entrusted unto us. Your generous gifts will enable our mission communities to continue the work of the apostles, as well as the first North American missionaries, in our time. Focusing solely on Christ, may we bring about a new, yet equally Spirit-filled Pentecost, through our efforts to proclaim the Good News in its glorious fullness!

With God's Blessings,

+JONAH

Archbishop of Washington and New York
Metropolitan of All America and Canada