



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 ~ March 2009

+++ Father Stephen's Message to the Faithful +++

**Grease & Clay on Your Vestments,
Or Somebody Else's?**

**You May Be The Widow.
You May Be Miss Watson.
But At Least Be Honest About It.**

Well, I got a good going-over in the morning from old Miss Watson on account of my clothes; but the widow she didn't scold, but only cleaned off the grease and clay, and looked so sorry that I thought I would behave awhile if I could.

Then Miss Watson she took me in the closet and prayed, but nothing come of it. She told me to pray every day, and whatever I asked for I would get it. But it warn't so. I tried it. Once I got a fish-line, but no hooks. It warn't any good to me without hooks. I tried for the hooks three or four times, but somehow I couldn't make it work.

By and by, one day, I asked Miss Watson to try for me, but she said I was a fool. She never told me why, and I couldn't make it out no way.

I set down one time back in the woods, and had a long think about it. I says to myself, if a body can get anything they pray for, why don't Deacon Winn get back the money he lost on pork? Why can't the widow get back her silver snuffbox that was stole? Why can't Miss Watson fat up? No, says I to myself, there ain't nothing in it.

I went and told the widow about it, and she said the thing a body could get by praying for it was "spiritual gifts." This was too many for me, but she told me what she meant -- I must help other people, and do everything I could for other people, and look out for them all the time, and never think about myself. This was including Miss Watson, as I took it.

I went out in the woods and turned it over in my mind a long time, but I couldn't see no advantage about it -- except for the other people; so at last I reckoned I wouldn't worry about it anymore, but just let it go.

Sometimes the widow would take me one side and talk about Providence in a way to make a body's mouth water; but maybe next day Miss Watson would take hold and knock it all down again. I judged I could see that there was two Providences, and a poor chap would stand considerable show with the widow's Providence, but if Miss Watson's got him there warn't no help for him any more.

I thought it all out, and reckoned I would belong to the widow's if He wanted me, though I couldn't make out how He was a-going to be any better off than what He was before, seeing I was so ignorant, and so kind of lowdown and ornery.

-- Mark Twain, Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

+++ Events & Announcements +++

Liturgical Schedule - March/April 2009

+ PRE-SANCTIFIEDS - WEDNESDAYS, MARCH 4, 11, 18 / APRIL 1 - 7 PM *Please note: No Pre-Sanctified on Wednesday, March 25* + ANNUNCIATION - WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25 - Divine Liturgy, 9 AM

+ PRE-SANCTIFIED - WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8 - 7 PM (*last one*) + LAZARUS SATURDAY - APRIL 11 - Divine Liturgy, 9 AM

+ ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM - SUNDAY, APRIL 12 - Divine Liturgy & Blessing of Palms, 10 AM

+ HOLY WEDNESDAY - HOLY UNCTION, APRIL 15 - 7 PM + HOLY THURSDAY - TWELVE PASSION GOSPELS, APRIL 16 - 7 PM

+ HOLY FRIDAY - VESPERS, TAKING DOWN FROM CROSS, APRIL 17 - 3 PM LAMENTATIONS AT TOMB - 7 PM

+ HOLY SATURDAY - APRIL 18 - Vespertal Liturgy of St Basil, 9 AM ORTHROS/PASHKAL CANON/LITURGY, 11 PM

+ PASCHA SUNDAY - AGAPE VESPERS; GOSPEL IN MANY LANGUAGES, APRIL 19 - Noon

Schedule of Other Services

+ SATURDAY VESPERS - 6 PM - *Please note:* these are Reader's Vespers chanted in the Byzantine style. Also, there is no "entrance" into the sanctuary as is the practice during a Great Vesper service (which precedes a Divine Liturgy).

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

◇ EASTER FLOWERS DONATION - Please donate generously to defray the cost of Easter flowers. **You may give your donation directly to Belinda Mentzer or to our Treasurer, James Schaeffer (please inform Jim that your donation is for Easter flowers).** Thank you!

◇ ICON PLEDGE SUNDAY APPRECIATION - A most sincere *Thank You* to everyone who participated in our successful **Icon Pledge Sunday**, either in person or through absentee pledges. Pledges can still be made by contacting the treasurer, James Schaeffer or Stephen Murianka with the Saint's name and the amount.

May God bless you all for your generosity!

◇ **CASSEROLES FOR THE HOMELESS** - *In February: 11 casseroles and 4 bags of food*

and toiletry items were delivered. 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.

◇ **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!*

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

Ladies Society News

◇ **A MOST SINCERE THANK YOU** to all who volunteered their time, efforts and services and to those who participated in the Lenten Luncheon

◇ **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!*

General Interest

◇ **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>

◇ **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

◇ **ST PHILIP'S ANNUAL LENTEN RETREAT** (St Philip Antiochian Orthodox Church, 1970 Clearview Rd, Souderton, PA 18964) - **Saturday, March 14, 2009, 9 AM to 6 PM Vespers**

Topic: *Welcome to the Culture Wars: The Struggle to Remain Orthodox in a Heterodox World* - 3 Sessions: 1) What are the culture wars? From sexuality and abortion to public prayer and physician-assisted suicide. 2) Why Great Lent is politically incorrect. 3) Why St Benedict of Nursia is an Orthodox saint: Bringing the West back to right worship and right belief.

Speaker: *Dr. H. Tristram Engelhardt* (Professor, Department of Philosophy, Rice University; Professor Emeritus, Department of Medicine, Department of Community Medicine, Baylor College of Medicine)

Registration Fee: *No Charge, but please call to let them know you are coming:* 215- 721-4947

For more information and directions: See the flyers posted in the Church; go to their website: www.st-philip.net; access the flyer from SS Peter & Paul website's Bulletin Page

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); Censers; Unique and different wearing apparel; CDs and cassettes; Religious Books

◇ **SS PETER & PAUL HAS A NEW WEBSITE** - Reader David Biando is spearheading this new and exciting project. **The new url is: www.sspeterpaulalbanianorthodox.org.** *Thank you, David,* for all your hard work! 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 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 can be viewed the Saturday before distribution by 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 me 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, **March 29**.* Thank you! *Parishioners will be able to pick up the Bulletins at the Church on Sunday **4/5/09**.* 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 **March** Birthdays: Yolanda Barenbaum, Katherine K. Costa, Thimi Daka, Mary Dimitri, Fr Gregory Dudash, Debbie Krimez, Claire Kutzler, Martha Murianka, Stephen Murianka, Mary Palmerick, Virginia Rubis, Priftesha Margot Siniari, Diana Vesho, Kathryn Vrato, Steven Yarrow

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...**

††† **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 March** †††

- † **March 1** Cheesefare Sunday; Forgiveness Sunday
- † **March 2** Beginning of Great Lent
- † **March 7** St Theodore Saturday
- † **March 8** Sunday of Orthodoxy
- † **March 9** Holy 40 Martyrs of Sebaste
- † **March 11** St Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem
- † **March 14** St Benedict of Nursia
- † **March 15** St Gregory Palamas
- † **March 17** Ven Aleksy, Man of God; St Patrick, Bishop of Armagh
- † **March 18** Repose St Nikolai of Zhicha
- † **March 19** Martyrs Chrysanthus & Daria
- † **March 20** Holy Martyr Photina (Svetlana)
- † **March 21** St James the Confessor, Bishop of Catania
- † **March 22** Veneration of the Precious Cross; Hieromartyr Basic of Ancyra
- † **March 23** Martyr Nikon & 199 Disciples
- † **March 25** Annunciation Most-Holy Theotokos
- † **March 26** Synaxis of the Archangel Gabriel
- † **March 29** St John Climacus (of the Ladder)
- † **March 31** Repose St Innocent, Metr of Moscow & Apostle to Americas

Martyr Photina (Svetlana), the Samaritan Woman & her Sons
(Commemorated March 20)



The Holy Martyr Photina (Svetlana) the Samaritan Woman, her sons Victor (named Photinus) and Joses; and her sisters Anatola, Phota, Photis, Paraskeva, Kyriake; Nero's daughter Domnina; and the Martyr Sebastian: The holy Martyr Photina was the Samaritan Woman, with whom the Savior conversed at Jacob's Well (John. 4:5-42).

During the time of the emperor Nero (54-68) St Photina lived in Carthage with her younger son Joses and fearlessly preached the Gospel there. Her eldest son Victor fought bravely in the Roman army against barbarians, was appointed military commander and later Nero called him to Italy to arrest and punish Christians.

Sebastian, an official in Italy, said to St Victor, "I know that you, your mother and your brother, are followers of Christ. As a friend I advise you to submit to the will of the emperor and practice your faith in secret." St

Victor replied, "I want to be a preacher of Christianity like my mother and brother." Sebastian said, "O Victor, we all know what woes await you, your mother and brother." Then Sebastian suddenly felt a sharp pain in his eyes. For three days he lay there blind, without uttering a word. On the fourth day he declared, "The God of the Christians is the only true God." St Victor asked why Sebastian had suddenly changed his mind. Sebastian replied, "Because Christ is calling me." Soon he was baptized, and immediately regained his sight.

Reports of this reached Nero, and he commanded that the Christians be brought to him at Rome. Then the Lord Himself appeared to the confessors and said, "Fear not, for I am with you. Nero, and all who serve him, will be vanquished." The Lord said to St Victor, "From this day forward, your name will be Photinus, because through you, many will be enlightened and will believe in Me."

All these things, and even future events, were revealed to St Photina, who left Carthage and joined the confessors in Rome.

At Rome Nero ordered the saints to be brought before him but all the confessors refused to renounce the Savior. The martyrs' finger joints were smashed, but they felt no pain, and their hands remained unharmed.

Nero ordered that Sts Sebastian, Photinus and Joses be blinded and locked up in prison, and St Photina and her five sisters Anatola, Phota, Photis, Paraskeva and Kyriake were sent to the imperial court under the supervision of Nero's daughter Domnina. St Photina converted both Domnina, all her servants and a sorcerer, who had brought her poisoned food.

Three years passed, and Nero sent messengers who reported to him that Sts Sebastian, Photinus and Joses, who had been blinded, had completely recovered, and that people were visiting them to hear their preaching, and indeed the whole prison had been transformed into a bright and fragrant place where God was glorified.

Nero then gave orders to crucify the saints, and to beat their naked bodies with straps. On the fourth day the emperor sent servants to see whether the martyrs were still alive but the servants fell blind. An angel of the Lord freed the martyrs from their crosses and healed them. The saints took pity on the blinded servants, and restored their sight. Nero gave orders to flay the skin from St Photina and to throw the martyr down a well. Sebastian, Photinus and Joses had their legs cut off, and they were thrown to dogs, and then had their skin flayed off. He further gave orders for the sisters of St Photina to have their breasts cut off and then to flay their skin. Her sister St Photis was tied by the feet to the tops of two bent-over trees. The ropes were cut, the trees sprang upright and tore the martyr apart. The others were beheaded.

St Photina was removed from the well and locked up in prison for twenty days. Nero had her brought to him and asked if she would now relent and offer sacrifice to the idols. St Photina spit in the face of the emperor, and laughing at him, said, "O most impious of the blind, you profligate and stupid man! Do you think me so deluded that I would consent to renounce my Lord Christ and instead offer sacrifice to idols as blind as you?" Hearing such words, Nero gave orders to again throw the martyr down the well, where she surrendered her soul to God (+ ca. 66).

~ Reading & Icon Courtesy of OCA Webpage ~



Heartfelt and sincere thanks to all parishioners and friends of SS Peter and Paul who donated so generously towards our new Icon, in memory of beloved patriarchs and matriarchs who have fallen asleep in the Lord. Donations total \$4,200 and are still being gratefully accepted.

Mr & Mrs Edwin Anderson
Mrs Helen Arndt
Ms Emma Avanesova
Mr & Mrs Stephen Auerbach
Mr & Mrs Joseph Bacon
Mrs Raisa Belous
Mrs Helen Caniz
Ms Annemarie Cappel & Family
Mrs Gregory Costa
Mrs Margaret Costa
Mrs Margot Craig
Mr Charles Daka
Ms Virginia Daka & Family
Mrs Mary Delellis
Mrs Maria Dennis
Mrs Letitia Desloges & Family
Mrs Mary Dimitri
Mr & Mrs John Dougherty
Mr & Mrs John Douris
Mr & Mrs Ronald Drobonick
Father Gregory & Matushka Linda Dudash
Mr & Mrs George English
Mrs Denise Gormley & Family
Mr John Petit & Ms. Anne Halkedis
Ms Elizabeth Hansburg
Ms Anna Fedryck Hargrave
Mr & Mrs. David Heller

Mr John Jance
Mr & Mrs Ralph John
Mr Andrey Krasnov
Mr & Mrs Robert Krimetz
Mrs Tatyana Kuznetsova
Qamil Laco
Mr & Mrs Peter Linski
Mrs Valentina Maskuti
Ms Theresa McGinley
Mrs Martha Murianka
Mr & Mrs Stephen Murianka
Mr & Mrs Stephen Nowmos
Ms Aideen Nunan
Mr & Mrs John Palmerick
Ms Marlene Papa
Mr & Mrs Gregory Shaloka
Mr & Mrs Viktor Skuratovsky
Mrs Sharon Spause
Mr & Mrs Lester Speero
Mrs Victoria Steffa
Mr & Mrs Charles Stevens
Ms Manana Tchiokadze
Mr & Mrs John Vesho
Ms Valeriy Yasinovskaya
Mrs Jennie Zalli
Mrs Margaret Zoto