

# Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church

Albanian Archdiocese - OCA

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Rev. Nicholas Dellermann – Rector (860-861-7468)

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31**

**Sunday After the Nativity of Christ**

**Holy Righteous Ones: Joseph the Betrothed, David the King, and James the Brother of the Lord  
Leavetaking of the Nativity**

**Tone 5  
Troparion  
(Resurrection)**

*Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.*

**Tone 4  
Troparion  
(Feast)**

*Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the light of wisdom! For by it, those who worshipped the stars, were taught by a star to adore Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know Thee, the Orient from on high. O Lord, glory to Thee!*

**Tone 2  
Troparion  
(Righteous Ones)**

*Proclaim the wonder, O Joseph, to David, the ancestor of God; thou hast seen a Virgin great with child; and thou didst give glory with the shepherds; thou didst worship with the Magi, and didst receive the news from the Angel. Pray to Christ God to save our souls!*

**Tone 1  
Kontakion  
(Righteous Ones)**

*Today godly David is filled with joy; Joseph and James offer praise. The glorious crown of their kinship with Christ fills them with great joy. They sing praises to the One ineffably born on earth, and they cry out: "O Compassionate One, save those who honor Thee!"*

**Tone 3  
Kontakion  
(Feast)**

*Today the Virgin comes to the cave to give birth to the Eternal Word. Hear the glad tidings and rejoice, O universe! Glorify with the angels and the shepherds the Eternal God, Who is willing to appear as a little child!*

**Prokeimenon**

**Tone 8 (Feast)**

Let all the earth worship Thee and praise Thee; / let it praise Thy Name, O Most High! (Ps. 65:3)

V. Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth! Sing of His Name, give glory to His praise! (Ps. 65:1)

**Tone 4 (Righteous Ones)**

God is wonderful in His saints, / the God of Israel. (Ps. 67:35a)

## The Epistle Reading

### **Galatians 1:11-19**

But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

### **Galatianeve 1:11-19**

Po ju bëj të ditur, vëllezër, se ungjilli që u predikua prej meje nuk është sipas njeriut; sepse as unë s'e mora prej njeriu, as nuk u mësova prej njeriu, po nëpërmjet zbulesës së Jisu Krishtit. Sepse keni dëgjuar për sjelljen time të mëparshme në Judaizëm, se fort tepër përndiqja kishën e Perëndisë për ta shkatërruar atë. Dhe përparoja në Judaizëm më tepër se shumë bashkëmohatarë në kombin tim, sepse isha më tepër i zellshëm për traditat e etërve të mi. Po kur i pëlqeu Perëndisë, i cili më ndau që nga barku i nënës dhe më thirri me anë të hirit të tij, që të zbulojë Birin e tij tek unë, që ta ungjillëzoj atë ndër kombet, përnjëherë nuk u këshillova me mish e me gjak, as nuk u ngjita në Jerusalem tek ata që qenë apostuj para meje, por shkova në Arabi, dhe përsëri u ktheva në Damask. Pastaj, pas tre vjetësh u ngjita në Jerusalem, për të takuar Pjetrin; dhe qëndrova pranë tij pesëmbëdhjetë ditë. Edhe tjetër nga apostujt nuk pashë, veçse Jakovin, vëllain e Zotit.

### **К Галатам 1:11-19**

Возвещаю вам, братья, что Евангелие, которое я благовествовал, не есть человеческое, ибо и я принял его и научился не от человека, но через откровение Иисуса Христа. Вы слышали о моем прежнем образе жизни в Иудействе, что я жестоко гнал Церковь Божию, и опустошал ее, и преуспевал в Иудействе более многих сверстников в роде моем, будучи неумеренным ревнителем отеческих моих преданий. Когда же Бог, избравший меня от утробы матери моей и призвавший благодатью Своею, благоволил открыть во мне Сына Своего, чтобы я благовествовал Его язычникам, --я не стал тогда же советоваться с плотью и кровью, и не пошел в Иерусалим к предшествовавшим мне Апостолам, а пошел в Аравию, и опять возвратился в Дамаск. Потом, спустя три года, ходил я в Иерусалим видеться с Петром и пробыл у него дней пятнадцать. Другого же из Апостолов я не видел [никого], кроме Иакова, брата Господня.

### **Tone 1**

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

V. The heavens are telling the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims His handiwork. *(Ps. 18:1)*

V. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge. *(Ps. 18:2)*

### **Tone 4**

V. Remember, O Lord, David and all his meekness! *(Ps. 131:1)*

## **Holy Righteous Joseph the Betrothed**

Saint Joseph the Betrothed was of the lineage of King David. He had four sons from his previous marriage: James, Judah, Joses, and Simon (or Symeon), and three daughters: Esther, Martha, and Salome, who was the mother of Saint John the Theologian. After he became a widower, Saint Joseph led a life of strict temperance. He was chosen to be the husband and guardian of the Most Holy Theotokos, who had taken a vow of virginity.

An angel told him of the Incarnation of the Son of God through her. Saint Joseph was present when the

*Continued on page 4*

## The Gospel Reading

### **Matthew 2:13-23**

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him." When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My Son." Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more." Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child's life are dead." Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee. And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

### **Mattheut 2:13-23**

Edhe pasi ikën ata, ja një engjell i Zotit tek i duket në ëndërr Josifit, duke thënë: Ngrihu e merr me vete djalin dhe të ëmën e tij, edhe ik në Egjipt. Edhe rri atje deri kur të të them ty, sepse Herodi do të kërkojë djalin që ta vrasë. Edhe ai u ngrit, e mori me vete djalin edhe të ëmën e tij natën, edhe iku në Egjipt. Edhe ndenji atje deri në vdekjen e Herodit, që të përmbushet e thëna prej Zotit me anë të profetit, që thotë: "Nga Egjipti thirra tim bir". Atëherë Herodi, kur pa se u gënjye nga magët, u zemërua fort, edhe dërgoi e vrau gjithë djemtë që ishin në Betlehem e nëpër gjithë rrethinat e tij, që nga dy vjeç e poshtë, sipas kohës që kishte marrë vesh saktësisht nga magët. Atëherë u përmbush ç'është thënë nga profeti Jeremia, që thotë: "Zë u dëgjua në Rama, vaj e të qarë e gjëmë shumë. Rakela qante djemtë e saj, edhe nuk donte të ngushëllohej, sepse nuk janë". Edhe si vdiq Herodi, ja një engjell i Zotit tek i duket në ëndërr Josifit në Egjipt e i thotë: Ngrihu e merr me vete djalin dhe të ëmën e tij, edhe shko në dhe të Izraelit; sepse vdiqën ata që kërkonin jetën e djalit. Edhe ai u ngrit e mori me vete djalin dhe të ëmën e tij, edhe erdhi në dhe të Izraelit. Po kur dëgjoi se Arkelau mbretëron në Jude në vend të Herodit, të atit të tij, pati frikë të shkojë atje; edhe siç iu tregua atij nga Perëndia në ëndërr, iku në anët e Galilesë, edhe erdhi e ndenji në një qytet që quhet Nazaret; që të përmbushet ç'është thënë nga profetët, se nazaretas do të quhet.

### **От Матфея 2:13-23**

Когда же они отошли, --се, Ангел Господень является во сне Иосифу и говорит: встань, возьми Младенца и Матерь Его и беги в Египет, и будь там, доколе не скажу тебе, ибо Ирод хочет искать Младенца, чтобы погубить Его. Он встал, взял Младенца и Матерь Его ночью и пошел в Египет, и там был до смерти Ирода, да сбудется реченное Господом через пророка, который говорит: из Египта воззвал Я Сына Моего. Тогда Ирод, увидев себя осмеянным волхвами, весьма разгневался, и послал избить всех младенцев в Вифлееме и во всех пределах его, от двух лет и ниже, по времени, которое выведал от волхвов. Тогда сбылось реченное через пророка Иеремию, который говорит: глас в Раме слышен, плач и рыдание и вопль великий; Рахиль плачет о детях своих и не хочет утешиться, ибо их нет. По смерти же Ирода, --се, Ангел Господень во сне является Иосифу в Египте и говорит: встань, возьми Младенца и Матерь Его и иди в землю Израилеву, ибо умерли искавшие души Младенца. Он встал, взял Младенца и Матерь Его и пришел в землю Израилеву. Услышав же, что Архелай царствует в Иудее вместо Ирода, отца своего, убоился туда идти; но, получив во сне откровение, пошел в пределы Галилейские и, придя, поселился в городе, называемом Назарет, да сбудется реченное через пророков, что Он Назореем наречется.



*(Instead of "It is truly meet...", we sing:)*

Magnify, O my soul, the most pure Virgin Theotokos,  
more honorable and more glorious than the heavenly hosts.

I behold a strange, most glorious mystery:  
heaven—the cave;  
the cherubic throne—the Virgin;  
the manger—the place where Christ lay:  
the uncontainable God, Whom we magnify in song.

*(or, the ninth heirmos of the second canon)*

Out of fear, we should choose to love silence,  
for that is a safer course;  
so difficult it is lovingly to compose intricately woven songs  
to thee, O Virgin.  
But grant us strength, O Mother,  
equal to our natural calling.

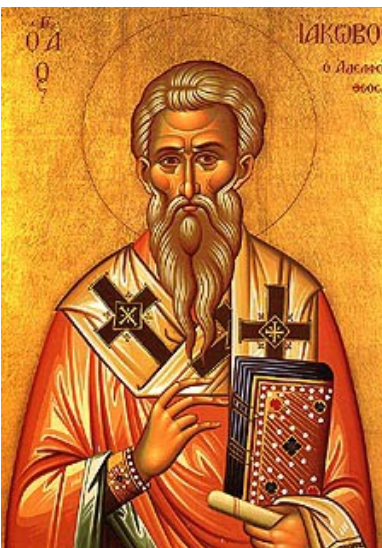
### Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! *(Ps. 148:1)*  
The Lord has sent redemption to His people. *(Ps. 110:8a)*  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

*Continued from page 2*

shepherds and the Magi worshiped the new-born divine Infant. On the orders of the angel, he fled into Egypt with the Mother of God and the Infant Jesus, saving them from the wrath of King Herod. He lived in Egypt with the Virgin Mary and the divine Child, working as a carpenter. Saint Joseph reputedly died at the age of one hundred.

Saint Joseph is commemorated on the Sunday after the Nativity. If there is no Sunday between December 25 and January 1, his Feast is moved to December 26. The Righteous Joseph is also commemorated on the Sunday of the Holy Forefathers.



### Righteous James the Brother of the Lord

The Holy Apostle James, Brother of the Lord, was the eldest son of Joseph the Betrothed from his first marriage with Solomonia. The Apostle James is remembered after the Feast of the Nativity of Christ together with his father Joseph and the Prophet-King David, since he accompanied his family on the Flight into Egypt and lived there with the Infant Jesus, the Mother of God and Joseph. Later, he returned to Israel with them. After the Ascension of the Lord, Saint James was the first Bishop of Jerusalem, gaining the great esteem not only of Christians, but also of Jews. He was thrown from the roof of the Jerusalem Temple because he had publicly preached to the people about the God-Manhood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Apostle James is also commemorated on October 23.



PRAYERS	Birthdays, Names-days, & Anniversaries	SCRIPTURE THIS WEEK
<i>For Those Who Have Fallen Asleep</i>		
<p>Newly Departed Alexander Newly Departed Stephen, Newly Departed Miriam, Newly Departed Theodore Newly Departed Prifteresha Elisabeth Bouteneff,</p> <p><i>[To be inserted after the petition for the departed]</i> Again we pray for those who have lost their lives because of conflicts in Ukraine, Armenia, and the Middle East: that the Lord our God may look upon them with mercy, and give them rest where there is neither sickness, or sorrow, but life everlasting.</p>	<p>December 31 – January 6 Bill Rubis (N)</p> <p><b><u>Seven-Day Vigil Candles</u></b></p> <p>Llukan Dylgjeri – health Michael Mogilevich - health</p> <p>Seven-Day Vigil Candles are used for the Eternal Light that hangs above the Royal Doors and are often placed in front of the icons of Christ or the Birth-giver of God. If you would like to donate a Seven-Day Vigil Candle, Please include the name or names of those for whom the candle is donated, and we will place them in this section for special prayers.</p>	<p><b><u>Church Lectionary</u></b></p> <p><i>Today</i> Galatians 1:11-19 Matthew 2:13-23</p> <p><i>Monday</i> Colossians 2:8-12 Luke 2:20-21,40-52 Hebrews 7:26-8:2 Luke 6:17-23 2 Timothy 4:5-8 Mark 1:1-8</p> <p><i>Tuesday</i> Galatians 5:22-6:2 Luke 6:17-23 Hebrews 12:25-26, 13:22-25 Luke 14:25-35</p> <p><i>Wednesday</i> James 1:1-18 Luke 15:1-10</p> <p><i>Thursday</i> James 1:19-27 Luke 16:1-9</p>
<i>For Those Who Are Sick And Home-bound</i>		
<p>Virginia, Denise, Olvian, Marie, James, Alexandra, Andrew, Christina, Louise, Porter, Alvin, Tracy, Kathy, Andrew, Maria, Helen, John, Nina, Sophia, Spresha, Kristin, Niko, Spiro, Angeliki, Melod, Olgay, Ruth, Terry, Naomi, Annette, Tatiana, Lester Jr., Natalia, Otari, Lasha, Fr. Nikolas, Llukan, Marina, Sophia, Fr. Maxwell, Donna, Christina, Anastasia, Mary</p>		<p><i>Friday</i> James 2:1-13 Luke 16:15-18, 17:1-4 1 Corinthians 9:19-27 Luke 3:1-18</p> <p><i>Saturday</i> 1 Corinthians 10:1-4 Mark 1:9-11</p> <p><b><u>Reading the Bible in a Year</u></b></p> <p>Dec 31: Revelation 19-22 Jan 01: Genesis 1-4 Jan 02: Genesis 5-8 Jan 03: Genesis 9-12 Jan 04: Genesis 13-16 Jan 05: Genesis 17-20 Jan 06: Genesis 21-24</p>
<i>Prayers In General</i>	<b>COFFEE HOUR</b>	
<p>The community of Ss. Peter &amp; Paul Miami, Fr. Dennis and his family, Fr. Ioan, Christian, Michael, Erica, Kaida, DuDash family, Michael, Robert, Ally, Steve, Jake and Amanda and their children, Katherine, Ron, Anthony, Volodymyr, Nick, Sophia, Michael, Rafael, Bob, Barbara, Sandra, Enoch, John, Victoria, Melenie, Grace, Michael, Barbara, Giorgi, Molly, Jim, Chloe, Marsha, Ann, Lilly, Stephen, Gela, Gabriel Joseph</p> <p><i>[To be inserted after the petition for the living]</i> Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, for those who are suffering, wounded, grieving, or displaced because of the conflicts in Ukraine, Armenia, and the Middle East.</p> <p><i>[Petitions at Augmented Litany]</i> Again we pray for a cessation of the hostilities in Ukraine, Armenia, and the Middle East, and that reconciliation and peace will flourish in these places, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.</p>	<p><b><u>December</u></b> 31</p> <p>January 07 14 21 28</p> <p>Coffee Hour is a wonderful chance for us to get together to break bread and spend time with each other, to celebrate those whom we have held memorials for, and to come together as the family of God outside of worship. To sign up, to host a coffee hour, contact Fr. Nicholas or Donna Bacon.</p>	

## Being Faithful Means Building Endurance

BY FR. BARNABAS POWELL

“It’s a marathon, not a sprint.” Good advice to hear when you’re struggling with sticking to a discipline or trying to push through a difficult task. It’s even good advice for relationships. Usually, we humans give up too soon! And when we do, we usually regret it later. Or, sometimes, we stay too long, and we usually regret that later as well!

So, what’s the answer? The Faith invites us to the lifestyle of repentance and endurance. Especially at this time of year, we need to keep in mind both of these truths if we are going to really prepare to celebrate God entering His world as a Baby in Bethlehem.

Look at our lesson today in Hebrews 10:32-38:

Brethren, recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, sometimes being publicly exposed to abuse and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. For you had compassion on the prisoners, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that you may do the will of God and receive what is promised. “For yet a little while, and the coming one shall come and shall not tarry; but my righteous one shall live by faith.”

St. Paul is making the case to these Hebrew Christians to stick with Jesus and not return to their former lives without Christ. He spends the entire book of Hebrews making his case that Jesus is BETTER than what they had before. Toward the end of his work, he makes the above plea, and he gives them three keys to learning how to “endure.”

First, Remembrance. St. Paul gives us the first step in running this marathon of faith with endurance by asking us to remember. Remember the longing for God and then finally seeing Him among us. Remember the expectation of waiting for Him to come and then there He was! Remember the hardships you faced because you were so overjoyed that He was here. Remember the price you and your friends paid for believing in Him. The first step toward true endurance is to not forget what you’ve learned through your relationship with Christ regardless of the present pain and fear. Don’t forget. Keep being attentive. Make memory eternal! That is the first step in learning to endure.

Second, Enlightenment. If you are going to endure, you have to face the truth that you have faced the Truth! If you are going to make it out of this time of trouble and this time of doubt, you have to be willing to unpack the Treasure of your faith and be enlightened by Him. You have to face the reality that knowing the ultimate Truth in Christ is always true regardless of the circumstances you currently face. Jesus Christ is God in the Flesh. Jesus Christ is risen from the dead. Jesus Christ will come again. Jesus Christ is Lord. This Reality stands above every other temporary situation we may face. Everything else is passing away. Even our very earthly struggles will come to a close at the moment of our death. So none of your troubles that torment you are eternal UNLESS you make them eternal by holding on to them. You have been Enlightened. Don’t throw that away.

Finally, Joyful Acceptance. Nothing removes the sting of struggle like Joy. St. James says: “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.” (James 1:2) If you reorient your mind to say “Glory to God for all things” then absolutely nothing you face can ever destroy you. I had an old preacher tell me years ago “Boy, even if the devil kills you, he just puts a crown on your head!” What a hope! What joy. If you have the courage and the humility to face every moment with the joy of the eternal reality of Jesus Christ, as St. Isaiah says elsewhere, “no weapon formed against you shall prosper.” (Isaiah 54:17) Joy isn’t a giddy feeling as much as it is a strong confidence in the eternal reality as opposed to the temporary difficulty. Comparing the two, it is hard not

to smile even in a struggle. You know the joy of eternal peace.

So, St. Paul begs them and us: "Do not throw away your confidence." If I am going to endure, be faithful, to not give up, I have to Remember. I have to be Enlightened. And I have to hold onto my Joy.

Talking about enduring, St. Ignatius is a model of enduring faithfulness. In fact, his moniker is "The God-bearer." How's that for a reputation? St. Ignatius was a disciple of St. John, the Beloved Disciple. He was a small child when Christ walked the earth. Some say he was the little boy Christ sat on His knee when He said "Suffer the little children to come to Me." St. Ignatius became the second bishop of Antioch and wrote many letters to the Churches that we have to this day. You can read St. Ignatius' letters in the book "The Apostolic Fathers." St. Ignatius was an old man when the pagan Romans came to arrest him for being a Christian. He was so revered in his city that, when the soldiers came to arrest him, he had to command the people not to defend him. He stood in the arena in Rome and faced the lions. And he gave up his life as a faithful follower of Christ having endured to the end and preserved his soul for Christ.

Today, as we move toward the celebration of The Moment when God took His flesh from one of us and stepped into His creation to restore us to what we were all made to be, don't give up. Endure. Make the choice to stay faithful and see everything around you, the good, the bad, the scary, and the mysterious, as invitations to go deeper into your confidence in being Orthodox on Purpose!

<https://faithencouraged.org/being-faithful-means-building-endurance/>

**Dear Lord, I have fallen. But I rise up to You. I have sinned. But I cry out to You for forgiveness. I have struggled with despair. But I see You standing by my side. There is still time for endurance, patience, healing, and change. You are my Hope. You are my Joy. You are my Savior, and I run to You when I feel my strength ebbing away! Thank You, Lord. Amen.**

## December Events

### December

31 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
7:00pm Vespers & Pot-luck

### January

01 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
03 – 12:00pm 6<sup>th</sup> Hour  
7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets  
06 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
*Feast of Theophany*  
07 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
10 – 12:00pm 6<sup>th</sup> Hour  
7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets  
14 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
17 – 12:00pm 6<sup>th</sup> Hour  
7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets

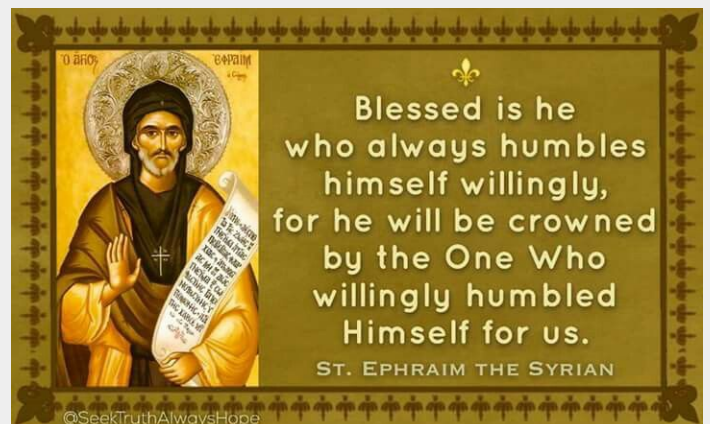
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We stream our services on our YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@sspeterpaulorthodoxchurch01810>

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St Peter St Paul Alb Orth Ch James Schaeffer



## ST. INNOCENT OF ALASKA'S GOSPEL RETURNED TO RIGHTFUL HOME IN ALASKA CATHEDRAL AFTER DECADES

Sitka, Alaska, December 11, 2023

A Gospel published in the late-18th century and used by St. Innocent of Alaska and Moscow was returned to its rightful home at St. Michael's Cathedral in Sitka, Alaska, last month.

The large, silver Gospel, printed in Russia under Emperor Paul I (1796-1801), was removed from the cathedral at some point in the last 60 years and eventually wound up in a Church museum in Pennsylvania. His Grace Bishop Alexei of Sitka traveled there in September with the express purpose of recovering the Gospel, which was facilitated by Archpriest John Perich of St. Herman's Orthodox Church in Glenn Mills, reports the Diocese of Alaska.

And on November 19, during the annual banquet celebrating the patronal feast of St. Michael the Archangel in Sitka, His Grace unveiled the Holy Gospel and returned it to the cathedral community. His Grace read from the Gospel's front page that it was printed in



1796, or 7,305 years from the creation of the world.

The initial inscription reads: "To the Glory of the Holy Consubstantial, Life-Creating, and Undivided Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—at the command of our Great Lord Paul I Petrovich, Autocrat and Emperor of All Russia..."

The faithful then came forward to venerate the Gospel while singing "O Lord, save Thy people."

The Gospel was once again used in the Liturgy, as it was in the time of St. Innocent, who served in Alaska in the early-mid-1800s. Fr. Deacon Thomas Rivas relates that "although he has had back pain even handling much lighter Gospels, this Gospel of Saint Innokenty suddenly felt light in his hands when used for the little Entrance, causing him no pain whatsoever. Truly, through the prayers of Saint Innokenty, 'His yoke is easy and his burden is light.'"

The Gospel now resides again at its former home of St. Michael's



Cathedral in Sitka.



*"What, then, O brethren, is required of us in order that we might avail ourselves of all the grace brought unto us from on high by the coming to earth of the Son of God? What is necessary, first of all, is faith in the Son of God, in the Gospel as the salvation-bestowing heavenly teaching; a true repentance of sins and the correction of life and of heart; communion in prayer and in the mysteries [sacraments]; the knowledge and fulfillment of Christ's commandments. Also necessary are the virtues: Christian humility, alms-giving, continence, purity and chastity, simplicity and goodness of heart.*

*Let us, then, O brothers and sisters, bring these virtues as a gift to the One Who was born for the sake of our salvation – let us bring them in place of the gold, frankincense and myrrh which the Magi brought Him, as to One Who is King, God, and Man, come to die for us. This, from us, shall be the most-pleasing form of sacrifice to God and to the Infant Jesus Christ."*

+ St. John of Kronstadt, Sermon on the Nativity of Jesus Christ