

# Sts. Peter and Paul Albanian Orthodox Church

*First-enthroned of the apostles, teachers of the universe: Entreat the Master of all to grant peace to the world, and to our souls great mercy!*

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December 16, 2018

29TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: SUNDAY OF THE HOLY  
FOREFATHERS, PROPHET HGGAI  
TONE 4

Today .....	10:00am	Divine Liturgy Penny Party
Wed. 19 .....	7:00pm	Akathist & Bible Study
Sat. 22 .....	6:00pm	Vespers
Sun. 23 .....	10:00am	Divine Liturgy Sunday School

One must be baptized and chrismated an Orthodox Christian to receive Holy Communion. Guests are invited to receive a blessing at the chalice and partake of the post-Communion bread (Antidoron).

Fast Days: Every day (fasting from meat, fish, eggs, dairy, oil, wine and hard spirits as you are able.)

## Troparion – Tone 4 (Resurrection)

*When the women disciples of the  
Lord  
learned from the angel the joyous  
message of thy Resurrection,  
they cast away the ancestral curse  
and elatedly told the apostles:  
“Death is overthrown!  
Christ God is risen,  
granting the world great mercy!”*

## Kontakion – Tone 6 (Forefathers)

*Ye did not worship the graven image,  
O thrice-blessed ones,  
but armed with the immaterial  
Essence of God,  
ye were glorified in a trial by fire.  
From the midst of unbearable flames  
ye called on God, crying:  
“Hasten, O compassionate One!  
Speedily come to our aid,  
for Thou art merciful and able to do  
as Thou dost will!”*

Welcome to all visitors! Please join us upstairs in the church hall for coffee hour after liturgy.

Prayers for those in our Sts. Peter and Paul community (parishioners, family, friends) can be listed for remembrance in our litanies during the Liturgy. Feel free to give names to Fr. Nicholas - please indicate how each person listed is connected to us (parishioner, family, friend, etc.), as well as why we are praying for them (health, memory, travel, etc.).

Confessions can be heard by appointment. If you need, I will come to you during the week. Please do not hesitate to call for a time to drop by the church or to have me visit you.

Remembrances for both the living and the dead during the prayers of preparation of the Eucharistic Lamb and during the Augmented Litany should be given the week before the desired remembrance so that the names can be put into the bulletin and given to the Deacons for the prayers. Any names of the living that are not marked as sick or traveling will be listed under general prayers.

## SCRIPTURE THIS WEEK

### Church Lectionary

#### Today

Colossians 3:4-11  
Luke 14:16-24

#### Monday

Hebrews 8:7-13  
Mark 9:42-10:1

#### Tuesday

Hebrews 9:8-10, 15-23  
Mark 10:2-12

#### Wednesday

Hebrews 10:1-18  
Mark 10:11-16

#### Thursday

Hebrews 10:35-11:7  
Mark 10:17-27

#### Friday

Hebrews 11:8, 11-16  
Mark 10:23-32

#### Saturday

Ephesians 5:1-8  
Luke 16:10-15

### Reading the Bible in a Year

Dec 16: Hebrews 4-6  
Dec 17: Hebrews 7-9  
Dec 18: Hebrews 10-13  
Dec 19: James  
Dec 20: 1 Peter  
Dec 21: 2 Peter  
Dec 22: 1 John

## Special Prayers

Ill/Home-bound:

Virginia Rifkin, Ruth Rifkin, Virginia Daka, Emmelia Stone, Sonya, Anna, George, Lyanna, Barbara, Katelyn, Margarita, Annmarie, Shpresha, Ralph John, Christina, Mary, Alexandra, Matthew, Fran, Sophie Plasari, Donna, Mat. Linda DuDash, Leon, the child Luka, child Makayla

General:

Michael Peterson, John, Darian, Tammy, Jean Dimitri, Cheryl Dimitri, Jason, Anna, George, Sonya, Catherine, Alisha, Sasha, Joseph, Kimberly, Niko, Kristin, Robert, Jerry, Pina, Jerry, Chris, Matt, Gianna, Menina,

Fr. Gregory DuDash, Newly Illumined Natalia & Godparents Nilda and James

Memory Eternal: Lester Speero



*Every Christian should find for himself the imperative and incentive to become holy. If you live without struggle and without hope of becoming holy, then you are Christians only in name and not in essence. But without holiness, no one shall see the Lord, that is to say they will not attain eternal blessedness. It is a trustworthy saying that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners (I Tim. 1:15). But we deceive ourselves if we think that we are saved while remaining sinners. Christ saves those sinners by giving them the means to become saints.*

-St. Philaret of Moscow



## December

16 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
Sunday School  
19 – 7:00pm Akathist & Bible Study  
22 – 6:00pm Vespers  
23 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
Sunday School  
24 – 6:00pm Compline & Matins  
25 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
Nativity of our Lord

## December/January Events

29 – 6:00pm Vespers  
30 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
Sunday School  
31 – 7:00pm Vespersal Liturgy &  
Pot Luck  
Circumcision of Christ,  
St. Basil's day &  
New Year  
02 – 7:00pm Bible Study

05 – 4:00pm Holy Supper (potluck)  
6:00pm Vespers  
06 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
Theophany of our lord  
Great blessing of water  
Sunday School  
09 – 7:00pm Bible Study  
11 – 6:00pm Fun Night  
12 – 6:00pm Vespers  
13 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
Sunday School

*We are having a Potluck Holy Supper for Theophany on Saturday, January 5. Please bring your favorite strict-fast dish to church at 4:00pm to share with each other. Many families have this tradition, with many different varieties of foods. Please contact Tish and let us know what you plan to bring! This will keep us from all bringing the same item and missing out on the rest of the wonderful foods.*

## Coffee Hour

Today: Lester Speero Memorial

Next Week:

## Birthdays/ Anniversaries

Sophia Dellermann B – 12/18

Donna Bacon B – 12/20

Jeanette Napier B – 12/20

### **Colossians 3:4-11 (Epistle)**

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

### **Luke 14:16-24 (Gospel)**

Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.' Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.' And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.' For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper."

### **Children's Word**

Do you know what a "makeover" is? You might have seen one in a magazine or even on TV. You see pictures of one person, and then you see pictures of that same person with new clothes, a new hairstyle, everything different. That person was made over. You see from the pictures how he or she changed for the better!

Today in the epistle reading, we hear about a different kind of makeover. Saint Paul's letter talks about how we Christians have to put away our old ways and put on our new ways. We have to get rid of things like "anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self."

In his letter, Saint Paul was talking to people who had just become Christians. But we can listen to him every day of our lives. That's because every day, we can try to get a makeover! You can change "the old you" by being gentle and friendly and loving and honest, and with good words coming from your lips. You can change that "old self" of yours into a "new self" by acting the way our Lord wants us to act!

### **THE THREE HOLY YOUNG MEN: FAITH EVEN IN THE FIRE**

We all know stories from the Old Testament like Jonah and the big fish, Noah's ark, Adam and Eve, Daniel and the lion's den. But have you heard the amazing story of the 3 holy young men?

Long ago, before Christ was born, a king named Nebuchadnezzar built a big huge statue of himself. Why? Because he wanted everybody to worship him, and not God! These three boys were friends with the prophet Daniel. They knew it was silly to worship a statue. They only wanted to worship the one, true God. But when they wouldn't worship the statue of the king, the king grew really angry. He sent them into a blazing furnace, a fire. But inside the fire, the three boys prayed to God. They asked God to help them.

The Bible says that God sent an angel to cool the fire for them. So, instead of feeling hot, the three boys felt a nice, cool dew. They trusted in God, even when things were awful for them. These three young men, named Ananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, knew that God was much more powerful than the king.

What do you think you can learn from these three holy young men? Can you try to trust God as much as they did? Even when things are hard for you?

We celebrate the 3 holy saints on Monday, Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>



# God's Generosity

December 11, 2018 · Fr. Barnabas Powell

Listen to St. Poemen. "As far as you can, do some manual work so as to be able to give alms, for it is written that alms and faith purify from sin."

Why? Why does almsgiving and faith purify from sin?

By the way, this is a big deal!

Look at our Gospel Lesson for today in Mark 8:22-26:

At that time, Jesus came to Bethsaida. And some people brought to him a blind man, and begged him to touch him. And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the village; and when he had spit on his eyes and laid his hands upon him, he asked him, "Do you see anything?" And he looked up and said, "I see men; but they look like trees, walking." Then again he laid his hands upon his eyes; and he looked intently and was restored, and saw everything clearly. And he sent him away to his home, saying, "Do not even enter the village."

Here Jesus heals a blind man. He displays His generosity in touching someone in need AND someone who simply could not repay the Lord's kindness. The Lord even tells the man not to return to the village, to go straight home, so this would avoid bringing too much adulation to the Lord! Amazing! The purpose for the healing wasn't a marketing ploy, but a pure act of generosity expecting NOTHING in return, not even credit for the healing!

During this time of the year when our thinking is turned to the dangers of mere sentimentality in our giving, the Church continually calls us to a more robust and mature attitude about generosity and sharing the fruits of our work, which is ALWAYS for our benefit.

We are called to appreciate the absolute necessity of giving because this attitude of generosity works to create the character of Christ within us! The truth is work, and the blessings that come from our work, are fundamentally about our first desire and need to see our souls shaped into a fitting companion for God. If that isn't the foundation of our thinking and attitudes then we will fall into the many "traps" for our souls that diminish the power of our work and our generosity.

It's why the Church insists that those who really are serious about their spiritual maturity, about actually practicing their faith see Almsgiving (the sharing of money or time or abilities with others who CANNOT repay them) as one of the three pillars of spiritual development. Without Almsgiving, Prayer and Fasting are incomplete.

When this attitude toward generosity takes hold of your life, you are set free from the power of your possessions to possess you! You begin to see God's character formed in your life as you fully embrace the Eternal over the Temporary. This freedom filters into every aspect of your life AND offers your children the path to this freedom as well. You CANNOT be Christian in the fullest sense of that word without generosity.

So, today, allow the insights of your true spiritual need to return to a deep and intimate connection with God and with others around you for your own salvation, to mature your motivation for giving. You must give. If you don't a serious spiritual illness in your heart (and in all our hearts) will never be healed. Learning the power of generosity to overcome the spiritual cancer of stinginess is necessary if you are ever going to enjoy being with God. Because He is the most generous and the most humble Being in the universe. And learning to be like Him is the only way you are ever going to enjoy being around Him for eternity. Today, give alms and your Father Who sees in secret will reward you openly with a free heart and a joyful life. That's the power of generosity to make you Orthodox on Purpose!