



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 ~ December 2005

Father Stephen's Message to the Faithful

"Behold,
I am coming soon
Bringing my recompense
repay all
For what they have done
I am the Alpha and the Omega
The First and the Last
Blessed are those
Who wash their robes
That they may have
The right to the tree of life
That they may enter the city by the gates
I, Jesus
Have sent my angel to you
With the testimony
For the churches
I am the root and
The offspring of David
The Bright Morning Star
The Spirit and the Bride say
Come
And let the hearer say
Come
And let the thirsty come
Let the one who desires
Take the water of life
Without price
The one who testifies
To these things says
Surely I am coming soon."

Amen
Come, Lord Jesus

- - Revelations 22

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.

Events & Announcements

Liturgical Schedule - December 2005/January 2006

NATIVITY - SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25 - Divine Liturgy, **10 AM**

FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD & ST. BASIL THE GREAT - SUNDAY, JANUARY 1 - Divine Liturgy, **10 AM**

THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD - FRIDAY, JANUARY 6 - *No Services*

GREAT BLESSING OF WATERS - SUNDAY, JANUARY 8 - Divine Liturgy, **10 AM**

Schedule of Other Services/Events

VESPERS - EVERY SATURDAY EVENING - **6 PM** (Please note: No Vespers on Saturday, 12/24)

MORNING PRAYERS - **8 AM**, Monday through Friday, ending on Thursday, Dec 22

EVE OF THE FEAST OF ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA, GREAT VESPERS - DEC 12 (MON) - **7 PM** - *at St. Stephen's Cathedral*

FEAST OF ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA - DEC 13 (TUES) - Divine Liturgy, **10 AM** - *at St. Stephen's Cathedral*

AKATHIST TO ST. HERMAN - DEC 13 (TUES) - **7 PM**

AKATHIST TO OUR LORD - DEC 20 (TUES) - **7 PM**

LITTLE COMPLINE - DEC 22 (THURS) - **7 PM**

ROYAL HOURS - DEC 23 (FRI) - **9 AM** - *at St. Stephen's Cathedral*

EVE OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST - DEC 24 (SAT) - **9 AM** - Divine Liturgy followed by Vespers - *at St. Stephen's Cathedral*

GREAT COMPLINE AND MATINS - DEC 24 (SAT) - **7 PM** - *at St. Stephen's Cathedral*

SYNAXIS OF THE MOST-HOLY THEOTOKOS - DEC 26 (MON) - **9 AM** - Divine Liturgy - *at St. Stephen's Cathedral*

GREAT VESPERS - DEC 26 (MON) - **7 PM** - *at St. Stephen's Cathedral*

FEAST OF ST. STEPHEN THE PROTOMARTYR - DEC 27 (TUES) - **9:30 AM** - Divine Liturgy - *at St. Stephen's Cathedral - His Grace Bishop Tikhon will be present for the Patronal Feast of St. Stephen Cathedral*

SYNAXIS OF THE HOLY GLORIOUS PROPHET, FORERUNNER AND BAPTIST JOHN - JAN 7 (SAT) - **5 PM** - Great Vespers - *at St. Stephen's Cathedral*

Church News & Reminders

MEMBERSHIP DUES 2006 - *Please note: effective Oct 1st, 2005, dues were increased to \$115.* If you have already paid the \$100 2006 Dues, please understand that you are still obligated to pay the extra \$15 per person. Dues can be paid at any time to James Schaeffer, our Treasurer. *Thank you!*

ICON PLEDGES - A reminder that Icon Pledges need to be paid in full by the end of December. Please see James Schaeffer, our Treasurer. *Also, please remember to return your Icons to Jim or place them in the Church and tell Jim. Thank you!*

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING - Monday, December 12, 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.

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 November, 10 casseroles were delivered. Two of the casseroles were made by Rose Shaloka's Sunday School Class! Thank you, children & Rose!* Please continue to help feed the hungry. Frozen casseroles are collected on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month by Harry Halkedis. A \$10 donation for casseroles can be given at any time. *Thank you!*

NEW CENSER & NEW ICON DONATIONS - Donations are needed for a new censer and for the purchase of new Icons. *We thank you for your support in this project. Please donate generously.*

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.

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.

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.

Events at SS Peter & Paul

ADULT EDUCATION & BIBLE STUDY CLASS - **Wednesdays, 7 PM** - The class will meet under the guidance of Fr. Dn. Jason every Wednesday evening in the Church Hall

YOUTH SUNDAY - 1st Sunday of every month

Ladies' Society News

MEMORIAL SERVICES - If you are planning to have a Memorial Service, please inform the Ladies' Society as soon as possible, preferably 1 week in advance, so that efforts and tangibles are not duplicated. There is a \$25 donation to the Ladies Society for each Memorial. The Society will take care of the paper goods and coffee; the individual scheduling the Memorial is responsible for all food, for setup, and for clean up. Thank you!

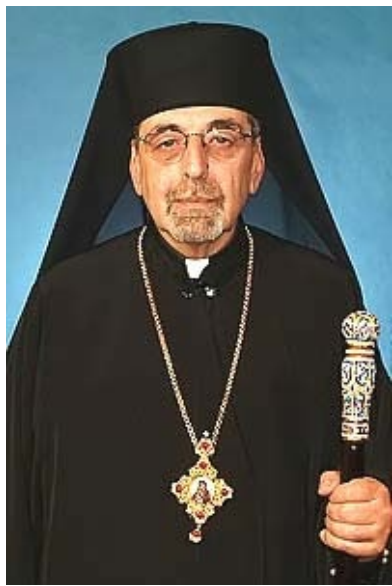
A MOST SINCERE THANK YOU to the Ladies' Society Members and to all parishioners who helped with their time, efforts, talents, and donations to make the Christmas Bazaar a big success.

Other Events of General Interest

ANNUAL ADVENT LECTURE - Sunday, December 11, 5 PM at St. Stephen's Cathedral on Verree Rd. Sponsored by the Philadelphia Deanery of the Orthodox Church in America. Topic: "*Living Water: From Genesis to Revelations.*" Speaker: Archpriest Theodore Heckman, rector of St. Mark Orthodox Church in Wrightstown, PA. Refreshments following the lecture. All are welcome! Bring a friend! For more information, contact: Archpriest John Udics (610-713-9358), Priest Victor Gorodenchuk (215-745-3232); Rev. Dn. Jason Vansuch (267-760-4561).

HIS GRACE, BISHOP NIKON OF BOSTON, NEW ENGLAND, AND THE ALBANIAN ARCHDIOCESE

BOSTON, MA [OCA Communications, 11/17/2005] — His Grace, Bishop Nikon will be installed as Bishop of New England at Holy Trinity Cathedral here December 16-18-2005.



Bishop Nikon of Boston and the Albanian Archdiocese was elected to fill the New England Diocese's vacant episcopal see by the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America during their fall session at the OCA chancery on October 19, 2005. Bishop Nikon will bear the title of Bishop of Boston and New England and the Albanian Archdiocese.

The installment weekend will open on Friday, December 16 with the celebration of Vespers at the cathedral at 6:00 p.m. On Saturday, December 17, the greeting of the hierarchs will commence at 9:00 a.m., after which the Hours and Divine Liturgy will be celebrated. A reception will follow in the cathedral's D'Arbeloff Hall. At 1:30 p.m. a banquet honoring Bishop Nikon will be held at the Elements Cafe.

On Sunday, December 18, Bishop Nikon will celebrate the Divine Liturgy at the cathedral at 9:00 a.m.

Miscellaneous

WEB PAGE/E-MAILS - SS Peter & Paul Webpage: <http://homepage.mac.com/alicaj17/sspeterpaulhome1.html>. New Bulletins can be viewed the Saturday before distribution by 7 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: alicaj17@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: alicaj17@mac.com. The deadline for the next Bulletin is Sunday, **January 1**. Thank you! Parishioners will be able to pick up the Bulletins at the Church on Sunday **1/8/06**. 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 **December** Birthdays: **Fr. Dn. Perry Angelos, Donna Bacon, Anne Halkedis, Christina Murianka, Tatyana Nilova, John Palmerick, Edna Quirias, Eurania Quirias, Diakonitsa Ekaterina Vansuch, Hope Vrato**

May God grant them all many, many years!

A VERY SPECIAL BELATED HAPPY BIRTHDAY is wished to Sallie Muzekari who celebrated a **November** Birthday.

SPECIAL BELATED CONGRATULATIONS TO ANDREW & EKATERINA RUBIS on the birth of their son, **Ilia**, on September 1st. Mom, baby brother Isaak and Dad are all doing well. The Rubis family extends a sincere thank you for your prayers and good wishes. *God grant Ilia many, many years!*

Let Us Keep Them in our Prayers

Please continue to pray for the full and speedy recovery of: **Metropolitan Philip, Elaine Quirias, Gregory Vreto, Sr., Debbie Krimetz, Nina Horowitz, Spiro Costas, Helen Arndt, Harry Cappo, Matthew Murianka, Virginia Daka, Joyce Dorsey, Steven Yarrow, Andi Steffa**

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

Announcement from Fr Dn Jason

On Saturday, November 12, 2005, Rev. Dn. Jason and Diakonitsa Ekaterina Vansuch met with His Grace Bishop Nikon to discuss their future in the life of the Church. For some time now, Fr. Dn. Jason and Katia have been contemplating the next step in their ministry -- Holy Priesthood. By the Grace of God and with the blessing of His Grace the Right Reverend Nikon, Bishop of Boston, New England, and the Albanian Archdiocese,

Rev. Dn. Jason Vansuch will be ordained to the Holy Priesthood on Saturday, June 17, 2006. His Grace will be coming to Philadelphia to serve the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy and ordain Fr. Dn. Jason to the Holy Priesthood. The schedule of services and events for the weekend will be made available as soon as we get confirmation of where the Ordination will take place. With this taking place, Fr. Dn. Jason and Diakonitsa Ekaterina will be leaving SS Peter & Paul's in June. Their last Sunday at SS Peter & Paul's will be Fr. Jason's first Liturgy -- Sunday, June 18th. They will be serving a parish in our sister diocese -- St. Nicholas in Norwich, CT, Diocese of New England. As Fr. Dn. Jason and Diakonitsa Ekaterina take this next step in the life of their ministry, they ask for your continued love, prayers, and support. Please know that all of you and your families are in their prayers everyday. *May God bless them as they prepare themselves for this next step in their ministry in the Vineyard of Our Lord.*

Anchiskhati Choir at SS Peter & Paul

On the evening of Saturday, November 14, our parish hosted the renowned Anchiskhati Choir on tour from Tbilisi, capital city of the Republic of Georgia. This was a remarkable event in the life of our parish. The Anchiskhati Choir is considered the world's leading exponent of Georgian polyphonic choral music. The choir members specialize in singing ancient Georgian sacred and secular songs, with authentic instrumental accompaniment. Members of the Anchiskhati Choir come from different regions of Georgia where they have absorbed the unique singing traditions of their parents and grandparents. Singing weekly in the famous 6th century Anchiskhati Patriarchal Cathedral in Tbilisi, Georgia, the group collaborates as a group of expert and passionate ethno-musicologists, who teach, hold workshops and regularly perform in Georgia and abroad.

Their American tour lasted five weeks, beginning October 24 in Vermont and ending November 30 at our OCA St. Nicholas Cathedral in Washington, D.C. Their venues included many non-Orthodox churches, universities, as well as Orthodox parishes of several jurisdictions. Our link to the group and their tour began with Sally O'Brien, a student at Swathmore University who has been attending our parish, and who has sung with Village Harmony, a non-profit musical group in Vermont, which was arranging the Anchiskhati tour.

Fr. Stephen Siniari secured a place for the group to stay overnight at Craneleith, in NE Philadelphia. The greatest tasks fell to the familiar Georgian members of our church family, Kakhaber and Eteri Okropiridze. With a far-reaching effort, they were able to sell nearly one hundred tickets to Georgian people in our area, some who have attended our parish at some time, and others who had not.

Eteri Okropiridze, her mother-in-law Natela, along with Nana Korachashvili and Nana Meliksetove cooked for days; along with Inga Togshvili, they served from our little parish kitchen on the night of the concert. Light refreshments, Georgian style, quickly turned into a Georgian feast. The dishes they prepared were beautiful as well as delicious and the renowned Georgian hospitality was appreciated by all. Other preparations were carried out by several men of our parish: Jim Schaeffer, Rdr Gregory Shaloka, Harry

Halkedis, Rdr Stephen Murianka, Fr Dn Jason Vansuch and Kakha Okropiridze, with additional help from Misha Khuttishvili, Gela Tabunidze, and George and Avto Gulisashvili.

Members of our parish, along with several local clergy and parishoners of local parishes, and many members of the Georgian community enjoyed a truly blessed feast of music and food on the night of the concert. Sacred hymns were sung in the church with the lights lowered, and a truly mystical sense of serenity. Following this, we moved upstairs to enjoy traditional Georgian folk songs of warmth, joy and nostalgia. The members of the Anchiskhati choir were able to enjoy not only the appreciation of those who had come to hear their music, but an authentic sense of Georgian homestyle hospitality in our parish. As a project for our parish, the primary goal was to offer a real and manifest parish welcome to our Georgian Orthodox brothers and sisters, many who have left their homes and been unable to return for some time. This goal, an extension of our faith and love to our most recently arrived brothers and sisters, was truly accomplished.

Anchiskhati Ensemble from Tbilisi, Georgia, at SS Peter & Paul ~ November 12th



The Very Reverend Peter Krochta

Funeral services for the +Very Rev. Peter Krochta were held at Saint Nicholas Russian Orthodox Cathedral, 14 East 97th St., New York, NY on Monday, December 5, 2005 at 9:00 a.m.

Father Peter fell asleep in the Lord in Massachusetts after a lengthy illness. Father Peter had served as dean of the New York cathedral from 1959-1962. He also served as pastor

of Saint Mary's Assumption Church, Worcester, MA, in the 1970s. In the 1980s, he served as dean of Holy Trinity Cathedral, Boston, MA, prior to his retirement.

Father Peter was widely known for his consummate knowledge of liturgics. He also was responsible for translating many of the late Patriarch Sergius' sermons. In 2004, he was awarded a citation by the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

He is survived by his wife, Ilaria, and several children and grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the Michael J. Fox Parkinson's Foundation <http://michaeljfox.com>

May Father Peter's Memory Be Eternal!

2005 Charity Appeal

Dearly Beloved in the Lord,

We live in a world that encourages us to look for ways to make our lives easy, to satisfy our every whim, and to focus on our own needs, often at the expense of those around us. Indeed, this presents those who have made the commitment to follow Christ with a formidable challenge.

But as Orthodox Christians, we know that Our Lord, Jesus Christ clearly teaches us on countless occasions to help ease the burdens of others, to reach out to those in need, and to tend to the "least of the brethren" out of selfless love.

This "giving of the self" out of love for God and others is especially evident in Our Lord's parable of the Good Samaritan a parable that we will hear and contemplate during the month of November. While the priest and levite ignore the victim, the Samaritan stops, shows compassion, and tends to his needs. Christ calls us to emulate the Samaritan's example, to offer compassion to those who are often ignored by others or society in general, those who have fallen victim to any number of unfortunate circumstances.

Today, as in Our Lord's time, there are many who have no one to whom they can turn in their time of need, no one from whom they can experience the compassion so freely offered by the good Samaritan. Yet his example stands as a reminder that at the very center of our faith stands the challenge to reach out to those in need.

In an effort to respond to Our Lord's challenge, The Orthodox Church in America conducts its annual Charity Appeal in November. Your generous contributions help those in need to offset medical expenses, assist those who have lost insurance benefits due to ongoing unemployment, address dire emergencies that affect lay and clergy families alike, and meet countless other issues that many of us have never had to face personally. As in years past, many people have turned to The Orthodox Church in America for assistance this year. Together, we can offer a glimmer of "the hope that is within us" the hope that is rooted in the love of Our Lord, Jesus Christ to those who turn to us in their time of need.

Please join me in making a commitment to emulate the good Samaritan's example. Pray for the poor, the homeless, the unemployed, the destitute, and those in distress. Offer a tangible sign of your concern by making a prayerful and sacrificial contribution to the

Charity Appeal, knowing that many individuals and families will benefit from your generosity.

In Christ,
+ HERMAN

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

Contributions to the Charity Appeal may be sent to:

Orthodox Church in America
P.O. Box 675
Syosset, NY 11791

or make your donation ONLINE <http://oca.org> 9

Holy Days and Name Days in December

- December 4 - Great Martyr Barbara
- December 5 - Ven. Sabbas the Sanctified
- December 6 - St Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra
- December 9 - Conception of the Holy Theotokos by the Righteous Anna
- December 11 - Sunday of the Holy Forefathers
- December 12 - St Spyridon the Wonderworker
- December 13 - Ven. Herman of Alaska, Wonderworker
- December 15 - Holy Martyr Eleutherius
- December 17 - Holy Prophet Daniel & 3 Holy Youths
- December 22 - Great Martyr Anastasia
- December 24 - Eve of Nativity; Nun Martyr Eugenia & her Companions
- December 25 - Nativity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
- December 26 - Synaxis of the Most-Holy Theotokos
- December 27 - St Stephen Protomartyr
- December 30 - Virgin Martyr Anysia
- December 31 - Leavetaking Nativity; Ven Melania of Rome

Venerable Herman of Alaska, Wonderworker of All America

Saint Herman (his name is a variant of Germanus) was born near Moscow in 1756. In his youth he became a monk, first at the Saint Sergius Hermitage near Saint Petersburg on the Gulf of Finland; while he dwelt there, the most holy Mother of God appeared to him, healing him of a grave malady. Afterwards he entered Valaam Monastery on Valiant Island in Lake Ladoga; he often withdrew into the wilderness to pray for days at a time. In 1794, answering a call for missionaries to preach the Gospel to the Aleuts, he came to the New World with the first Orthodox mission to Alaska. He settled on Spruce Island, which he called New Valaam, and here he persevered, even in the face of many grievous afflictions mostly at the hands of his own countrymen in the loving service of God and of his neighbor. Besides his many toils for the sake of the Aleuts, he subdued his flesh with great asceticism, wearing



chains, sleeping little, fasting and praying much. He brought many people to Christ by the example of his life, his teaching, and his kindness and sanctity, and was granted the grace of working miracles and of prophetic insight. Since he was not a priest, Angels descended at Theophany to bless the waters in the bay; Saint Herman used this holy water to heal the sick. Because of his unwearying missionary labors, which were crowned by God with the salvation of countless souls, he is called the Enlightener of the Aleuts, and has likewise been renowned as a wonderworker since his repose in 1837.

~ Icon Courtesy of the OCA Webpage ~

~ Reading Courtesy of Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Brookline, MA ~

Liturgical Schedule: January - December 2006

- JAN 1** - (Sunday) **CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD; ST. BASIL THE GREAT** - Divine Liturgy, 10 AM
- JAN 6** - (Friday) **THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD**
**** No Services at SS Peter & Paul ****
- JAN 8** - (Sunday) **THE GREAT BLESSING OF WATER** - Divine Liturgy, 10 AM
- FEB 2** - (Thursday) **PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD**
**** No Services at SS Peter & Paul ****
- MAR 8, 15, 22, 29 / APR 5** - Wednesday **PRE-SANCTIFIEDS** - 7 PM
- MAR 25** - (Saturday) **ANNUNCIATION** - Divine Liturgy 9 AM
- APR 12** - (Wednesday) **PRE-SANCTIFIED** - 7 PM (*last one*)
- APR 15** - **LAZARUS SATURDAY** - Divine Liturgy - 9 AM
- APR 16** - (Sunday) **ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM** - Divine Liturgy & **BLESSING OF PALMS** - 10 AM
- APR 19** - **HOLY WEDNESDAY** (Holy Unction) - 7 PM
- APR 20** - **HOLY THURSDAY** (Twelve Passion Gospels) - 7 PM
- APR 21** - **HOLY FRIDAY** (Vespers, Taking Down From Cross) - 3 PM
 Lamentations at Tomb - 7 PM
- APR 22** - **HOLY SATURDAY** (Vesperal Liturgy of St Basil) - 9 AM
ORTHROS/PASHKAL CANON/LITURGY - 11 PM
- APR 23** - **PASCHA SUNDAY** (Agape Vespers; Gospel in many languages) - NOON;
 Easter Egg Hunt for Children after Vespers
- JUN 1** - **HOLY ASCENSION THURSDAY** - Divine Liturgy - 9 AM
- JUN 17** - (Saturday) **ORDINATION OF FR. DN. JASON VANSUCH TO THE HOLY PRIESTHOOD** - at St. Stephen's Cathedral (*details to follow*)

- JUN 18** - (Sunday) **NEWLY ORDAINED FR. JASON'S FIRST LITURGY - 10 AM**
- JUN 24-25** - (Saturday/Sunday) **CELEBRATION OF SS PETER & PAUL FEAST DAY** with His Grace Bishop Nikon - Divine Liturgy - **9 AM**; Parish Meal after the Divine Liturgy
- JUN 29** - (Thursday) **SS PETER & PAUL FEAST DAY - Divine Liturgy - 9 AM**
- AUG 6** - (Sunday) **HOLY TRANSFIGURATION - Divine Liturgy - 10 AM**
- AUG 15** - (Tuesday) **DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS - Divine Liturgy - 9 AM**
- SEP 14** - (Thursday) **HOLY CROSS - *** No Services at SS Peter & Paul *****
- NOV** - (Date to Be Announced) **ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM'S FEAST DAY & His Grace Bishop Nikon's visit to our Sister Parish**
*****No Services at SS Peter & Paul*****
- DEC 25** - (Monday) **NATIVITY - Divine Liturgy - 10 AM**



Troparion for Saints Peter and Paul

**O Leaders of the Apostles
And Evangelizers of the World
Intercede with Christ our God
To grant Peace to the World
And Salvation to our Souls**

