



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 ~ November 2005

Father Stephen's Message to the Faithful

Second Book of Revelation

Pergamos: Comprising

"And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write,

'These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword:

"I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne *is*. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

"But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.

"Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

"Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives *it.*" '

Thyatira: Corrupt

"And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write,

'These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass:

"I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and *as* for your works, the last *are* more than the first.

"Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.

"And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.

"Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds.

"I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.

"Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden.

"But hold fast what you have till I come.

"And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations --

*'He shall rule them with a rod of iron;
They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels' --*

as I also have received from My Father;

"And I will give him the morning star.

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

Special Announcements from Fr. Stephen

*** *Father Stephen has a new phone number.* He may be reached at **609-385-3757, Monday - Friday, 8 AM - 5 PM** or by e-mail: **ssiniari@covenant-house.org**

Please note that this is the only number available. 267-973-9975 and 856-616-0782 are no longer in service.

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 - November/December 2005

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM'S FEASTDAY & HIS GRACE BISHOP NIKON'S VISIT TO OUR SISTER PARISH - NOVEMBER 12 - 13 - *NO* Divine Liturgy at SS Peter & Paul

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

Schedule of Other Services/Events

VESPERS - EVERY SATURDAY EVENING - 6 PM (Please note: On Saturday, Nov 12, Vespers will be at 5 PM)

AKATHIST SERVICE TO ST. PANTELEIMON - NOV 1 (TUES) - 7 PM, NOV 5 (SAT) - 5 PM

EVE OF FEAST OF ARCHANGEL MICHAEL & THE BODILESS HOSTS - NOV 7 (MON) - 7 PM - *Great Vespers at St. Stephen's Cathedral*

MORNING PRAYERS - BEGIN ON TUESDAY, NOV 15 - 8 AM, Monday through Friday, ending on Thursday, Dec 22

BEGINNING OF THE NATIVITY FAST - NOV 15 (TUES)

AKATHIST SERVICE TO OUR LORD - NOV 15 (TUES) - 7 PM, NOV 19 (SAT) - 5 PM, NOV 29 (TUES) - 7 PM, DEC 3 (SAT) - 5 PM

LITTLE COMPLINE - NOV 17 (THURS) - 7 PM, DEC 1 (THURS) - 7 PM

EVE OF THE FEAST OF THE ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS INTO THE TEMPLE - NOV 20 (SUN) - 1 PM - *Great Vespers at St. Stephen's Cathedral*

FEAST OF THE ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS INTO THE TEMPLE - NOV 21 (MON) - 9 AM - *Divine Liturgy at St. Stephen's Cathedral*; AKATHIST SERVICE TO THE THEOTOKOS - 7 PM - *At SS Peter & Paul*

AKATHIST SERVICE TO THE THEOTOKOS - NOV 26 (SAT) - 5 PM

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 - Sunday, November 6, after Divine Liturgy. 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 October***, 13 casseroles were delivered and 35 blankets from Deer Meadow Retirement Community, arranged by Pat Bergey. *Also delivered were hand towels, soaps, toothpaste, combs, and canned goods. We also delivered a barrel and 1/2 of canned goods from St Stephen's Cathedral.* 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, except for the week before Thanksgiving when the class will meet on Tuesday evening.

YOUTH SUNDAY - November 6 - To make this year's Church School Program more exciting, Fr. Stephen has blessed us to have a Youth Sunday in our parish. On the 1st Sunday of every month, our children will be participating in the Divine Liturgy in the following ways: ringing the bell before the Divine Liturgy, reading the Psalms prior to the start of the Divine Liturgy, reading the Epistle, singing an antiphon or the Our Father, doing the collection, holding the Communion Cloth, and passing out the weekly bulletins at the end of the Divine Liturgy. *What a blessing to see our children participate in the life of our parish. May God continue to bless them as they continue to grow in faith and love!* -- Fr. Dn. Jason

LEARN TO MAKE "MESHE" - November 6, after the Divine Liturgy, taught by Fr. Stephen - SS Peter & Paul is trying to get more people involved in the making of "Meshe". Anne Halkedis will be putting a sign-up sheet upstairs in the Church Hall. If you already know how to make "Meshe", please sign up. If you don't know how to make "Meshe" and would like to learn, please come to the class.

SS PETER & PAUL COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CARD - If you wish to have your name included in the Community Christmas Card, please see Jim Bachelor ASAP. This is a great opportunity to support your Parish! *The donation is \$10 and the deadline is Sunday, December 4th.*

GEORGIAN CHOIR CONCERT - SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 7 PM, AT SS PETER & PAUL - The ***Anchiskhati Choir*** from the Republic of Georgia will be singing both a capella Liturgical and traditional Georgian music. Their presence in this area is an opportunity to extend a sense of welcome and a sense of home to our Georgian Orthodox brothers and sisters, many of whom are recent newcomers. In the warm spirit of our greater Orthodox family, we will also be sharing some traditional Georgian foods after the concert. ***Suggested donation: \$12.*** *For tickets, see Alicia or Kakhaber Okropiridze. All are welcome and please bring a friend!*

Anyone wishing to help with this event, please see **Sandy Speero**. For more information, contact **Fr. Dn. Jason Vansuch** (267) 760-4561 or e-mail: jvansuch@hotmail.com ~or~ **Christina Murianka** (215) 742-6223 or e-mail: cmurianka@verizon.net. For *Georgian speakers*, call **Kakhaber Okropiridze** (215) 676-8154.

Additional information about the group and their US tour can be found on the following websites: <http://www.deepdownproductions.com/artists/anchiskhati.shtml> or at <http://villageharmony.org>.

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!

MEETING - Sunday, **November 20**, after Divine Liturgy

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BAZAAR - **December 4**, after Divine Liturgy. Donations of new, unused items for the raffle are welcomed. Monetary donations are also welcomed. *Please help with your time, donations, or special talents! Thank you!*

Other Events of General Interest

ELECTION OF HIS GRACE BISHOP NIKON - During the recent Fall Session of the Holy Synod Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America, His Grace the Right Reverend Nikon, Bishop of Boston and the Albanian Archdiocese was elected as the Ruling Hierarchy for the Diocese of New England. His Grace will now bear the title, 'The Right Reverend NIKON, Bishop of Boston, New England, and the Albanian Archdiocese. A December weekend has been set for the Installation Services for His Grace. This will take place at the Diocesan Cathedral in Boston -- Holy Trinity Cathedral. Please refer to the weekly bulletin for further information on this Joyous Celebration for our sister diocese. *May the Lord God continue to grant life, peace, good health, and salvation and Many, Blessed Years to our Beloved Hierarchy!*

A PARISH LIFE STRATEGY SEMINAR: FOCUS ON THE FUTURE ~ SATURDAY, NOV 12, 10 AM TO 3:30 PM - By Fr. Protodeacon Peter Danilchik, at St. Thomas Greek Orthodox Church, 615 Mercer St, Cherry Hill, NJ. Adults, \$25; Youth/Sr. Citizens, \$15. *If you can't afford the fee, come anyway -- no one will be turned away!* More info, call **Fr. Vincent Saverino** at **610-989-0519** or e-mail: **john.udics@comcast.net** Last minute info, call St. Thomas Church at **856-665-1731**.

HIS GRACE BISHOP NIKON'S ARCHPASTORAL VISITATION TO OUR SISTER PARISH, ST. JOHN'S - **Saturday, Nov 12 & Sunday, Nov 13**. There will be **Vespers** at our Parish on **Saturday, November 12** with Fr Dn Gregory. There will be **no** Divine Liturgy celebrated at our Parish on **Sunday, November 13**. We will travel down to St. John's to join His Grace, Fr. Matthew, and the faithful of St. John's as they celebrate the Patronal Feast day of their parish. We should all try to make an effort to join our brothers and sisters in Christ as they celebrate this great feast in the life of their parish.

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, **December 4**. Thank you! Parishioners will be able to pick up the Bulletins at the Church on Sunday **12/11/05**. 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 **November** Birthdays: **Yelena Alekseyeva, Marie Antony, James Bachelor, Cathy Cappo, Spiro Costas, Alicia Jaroni, Joanne Johns, Al Rifkin, Fr. Dn. Gregory Vreto, Jr., Nick Zeo**

May God grant them all 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**

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

Memory Eternal

†George J. Steffa fell asleep in the Lord at the age of 85 on October 24th, 2005. He was an active Church member and his smile, his warmth, and his caring will long be remembered and missed by all. He always had a good word for everyone and was generous with his time and labor for any family member, friend, or Church member in need. He was a member of the Church Council for many years and had received the St. George Award. George had worked for the government for many years and he had also played baseball for "Berat", a team named for a city in Albania.

George is mourned by his wife Victoria (nee Kuchova) of 55 years, their daughters Janet, Debra, and Karen, their 7 grandchildren, and his sister Margaret.

George Steffa was one of the very nicest people one could ever know. He is remembered lovingly by his family, friends, and Church members and by all those whose lives he touched.

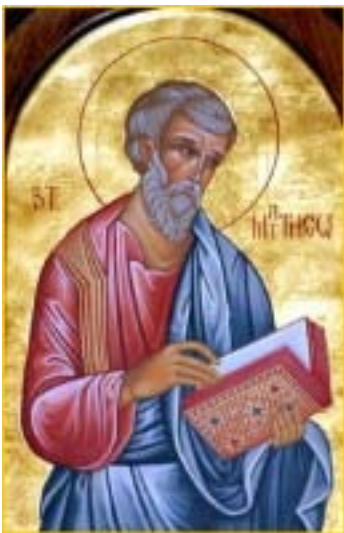
May George Steffa's memory be eternal!

Holy Days and Name Days in November

- November 1 - SS Cosmas & Damian; St Theodota; Martyrs John & James
- November 8 - Synaxis of Archangels Michael & Other Bodiless Powers
- November 11 - Great Martyr Mennas
- November 13 - St John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople
- November 14 - Holy Apostle Philip; St Gregory Palamas, Abp of Thessalonica
- November 15 - Beginning of Nativity Fast
- November 16 - Holy Apostle & Evangelist Matthew
- November 17 - St Gregory the Wonderworker; Ven Nikon of Radonezh
- November 21 - Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple
- November 24 - Great Martyr Catherine; Great Martyr Mercurius
- November 25 - Leavetaking of the Entry of the Theotokos; St Clement, Pope of Rome
- November 30 - Holy Apostle Andrew, the First-Called

Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew

The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew, was also named Levi (Mk 2:14; Lk 5:27); he was one of the Twelve Apostles (Mk 3:18; Lk 6:45; Acts 1:13), and was brother of the Apostle James Alphaeus (Mk 2:14). He was a publican, or tax-collector for Rome, in a time when the Jews were under the rule of the Roman Empire. He lived in the Galilean city of Capernaum. When Matthew heard the voice of Jesus Christ: "Come, follow Me" (Mt 9:9), left everything and followed the Savior. Christ and His disciples did not refuse Matthew's invitation and they visited his house, where they shared table with the publican's friends and acquaintances. Like the host, they were also publicans and known sinners. This event disturbed the pharisees and scribes a great deal.



Publicans who collected taxes from their countrymen did this with great profit for themselves. Usually greedy and cruel people, the Jews considered them pernicious betrayers of their country and religion. The word "publican" for the Jews had the connotation of "public sinner" and "idol-worshipper." To even speak with a tax-collector was considered a sin, and to associate with one was de-filement. But the Jewish teachers were not able to comprehend that the Lord had "come to call not the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mt 9:13).

Matthew, acknowledging his sinfulness, repaid fourfold anyone he had cheated, and he distributed his remaining possessions to the poor, and he followed after Christ with the

other apostles. St. Matthew was attentive to the instructions of the Divine Teacher, he beheld His innumerable miracles, he went together with the Twelve Apostles preaching to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Mt 10:6). He was a witness to the suffering, death, and Resurrection of the Savior, and of His glorious Ascension into Heaven.

Having received the grace of the Holy Spirit, which descended upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, St. Matthew preached in Palestine for several years. At the request of the Jewish converts at Jerusalem, the holy Apostle Matthew wrote his Gospel describing the earthly life of the Savior, before leaving to preach the Gospel in faraway lands.

In the order of the books of the New Testament, the Gospel of Matthew comes first. Palestine is said to be the place where the Gospel was written. St. Matthew wrote in Aramaic, and then it was translated into Greek. The Aramaic text has not survived, but many of the linguistic and cultural-historical peculiarities of the Greek translation give indications of it.

The preaching and deeds of the Savior are presented by the evangelist in three divisions, constituting three aspects of the service of the Messiah: as Prophet and Law-Giver (Ch. 5-7), Lord over the world both visible and invisible (Ch. 8-25), and finally as High Priest offered as Sacrifice for the sins of all mankind (Ch. 26-27).

The holy Apostle brought the Gospel of Christ to Syria, Media, Persia, Parthia, and finishing his preaching in Ethiopia with a martyr's death. When the holy apostle was fervently entreating God for the conversion of the Ethiopians the Lord Himself appeared to him in the form of a youth. He gave him a staff, and commanded him to plant it at the doors of the church. The Lord said that a tree would grow from this staff and it would bear fruit, and from its roots would flow a stream of water. When the Ethiopians washed themselves in the water and ate the fruit, they lost their wild ways and became gentle and good.

When the holy apostle carried the staff towards the church, he was met by the wife and son of the ruler of the land, Fulvian, who were afflicted by unclean spirits. In the Name of Christ the holy apostle healed them. This miracle converted a number of the pagans to the Lord. But the ruler did not want his subjects to become Christians and cease worshipping the pagan gods. He accused the apostle of sorcery and gave orders to execute him.

They put St. Matthew head downwards, piled up brushwood and ignited it. When the fire flared up, everyone then saw that the fire did not harm St. Matthew. Then Fulvian gave orders to add more wood to the fire, and frenzied with boldness, he commanded to set up twelve idols around the fire. But the flames melted the idols and flared up toward Fulvian. The frightened Ethiopian turned to the saint with an entreaty for mercy, and by the prayer of the martyr the flame went out. The body of the holy apostle remained unharmed, and he departed to the Lord.

The ruler Fulvian deeply repented of his deed, but still he had doubts. By his command, they put the body of St. Matthew into an iron coffin and threw it into the sea. In doing this Fulvian said that if the God of Matthew would preserve the body of the apostle in the water as He preserved him in the fire, then this would be proper reason to worship this One True God.

That night the Apostle Matthew appeared to Bishop Platon in a dream, and commanded him to go with clergy to the shore of the sea and to find his body there. The righteous Fulvian and his retinue went with the bishop to the shore of the sea. The coffin carried by the waves was taken to the church built by the apostle. Then Fulvian begged forgiveness of the holy Apostle Matthew, after which Bishop Platon baptized him, giving him the name Matthew in obedience to a command of God.

~ Icon & Reading Courtesy of the OCA Webpage ~