

WE WELCOME ALL OUR VISITORS AND GUESTS to our church services. You are invited to pray with us at Liturgy and every service. Please note that Holy Communion may only be received by prepared Orthodox Christians. Our non-Orthodox guests are welcomed to receive blessed bread at the conclusion of the Liturgy.

If anyone has any questions on the Liturgy or the Orthodox faith, please feel free to talk with Father John after services or give him a call.

GENERAL SERVICE SCHEDULE

Saturday: 6:00pm Vespers

Sunday: 9:30am 3rd & 6th Hours / 10:00am Divine Liturgy

1st Sunday of month: 9:25am General Confession Service

CHURCH WEBSITE: www.peterandpauloca.org

CHURCH FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/SaintsPeterAndPaulBuffalo

PARISH PRIEST: Rev. Fr. John P. Hutnyan

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PARISH COUNCIL: Martin Napierski, President

SISTERHOOD of the Protection of Most Holy Theotokos:

Nadia Ryan, President CELL: 716.228.2277



THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

The Most Blessed Tikhon (Mollard)

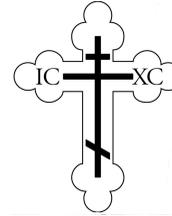
Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada

The Most Reverend Michael (Dahulich)

Archbishop of New York, and New York and New Jersey

The Mission of the Orthodox Church in America, the local autocephalous Orthodox Christian Church, is to be faithful in fulfilling the commandment of Christ to "Go into all the world and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."

Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church



September 2021

45 Ideal Street, Buffalo NY 14206

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Rectory Phone: 716.248.1306

A Parish of the ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

Rev. Fr. John P. Hutnyan, Rector

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Happy New Year!

Happy New Year?? Yes: September 1st marks the first day of the new ecclesiastical year, a day known as the Indiction on the Church calendar. As such it is a time to consider renewing and strengthening our commitment to Christ and to His Holy Church, a time to make our Christ-centered resolutions for the new year.

Let's begin by asking ourselves: why do we come to church? For some, it may be simply what we do on Sunday mornings, a habit, a custom, a family tradition. For others, it's a place to see friends, to affirm ethnic identity, or perhaps something we ought to do to keep "right with God." Any or all of these may affect why we are here, but none of them really explain what we're doing in church on Sunday mornings when, at least on the surface, we offer worship to God.

Why should we be here? And what does that tell about how we should be living?

Every time we do the Divine Liturgy, the priest raises up the chalice and the paten, bearing our sacrifice of bread and wine, and calls to God the Father: "Your own of Your own, we offer unto you..."

We pray it every week, but do we think about what it is we are praying? Metropolitan John of Pergamon wrote: "(Only) we (humans) are able to bless and praise God for the world. We are defined as a "Eucharistic" animal because we are capable of seeing the world as God's gift, as a sacrament of God's presence and a means of communion with Him. So we are able to offer the world back to God as thanksgiving: "Your own of Your own we offer unto You..." Surely part of that world that we are called to offer to God is, most importantly, ourselves.

For the Liturgy, we take wheat transformed into bread which God then transforms into the Body of His Son, Jesus Christ, and we take grapes transformed into wine which God transforms into the Blood of His Son. The raw stuff of life, wheat and grapes, are changed by human effort into the basic food of humankind, bread and wine, and having taken the human transformation as far as it can go, we must then ask God to act so that our human food, the bread and wine is transformed into "the food of immortality," into something truly holy, mystical, healing, into the Body and Blood of Christ, which in turn has the power to transform personally those who partake of it.

And in this process of this personal transformation, we are called to take the natural gifts that He has bestowed upon each of us, and to transform our time, our energy, our talents into works that bear "good fruit," works that give glory to God by bringing His presence not only into our own lives,

(continued)

(Happy New Year continued)

but also into the lives of all with whom we deal.

Thus we should be here today in this room, participating in this service in order quite literally to “put on Christ,” to be transformed by the grace of the Holy Eucharist into His witnesses who expressed His love, mercy, forgiveness and compassion to all whom we encounter. And we are to do this as an act of commitment to Him, as a sign of our love for Him and for one another: “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:35)

Thus linked in our common love for our Savior and then our common love for one another, all that we do, all that we say, all that we think should, ideally, reflect our membership in this community, this communion of the Savior’s love.

In this parish, we see this kind of love more often than in many parishes, less often than in some. This is a healthy parish made up of good people struggling to do the right thing to support and help their church, their community, their parish. Many among us step up to the challenge, offering time, effort and money for the glory of God, offering, in short, what is God’s back to God. “Your own of Your own we offer onto You...!”

But there is a problem: an awful lot of the work done on an ongoing basis is being done by too few people who are in danger of wearing out. As a community spiritually fed by the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion, we all need to help and to support one another. In every leadership job, we need two, three people to step forward to work together, and to spell one another when fatigue or other obligations arise. People should not hesitate to volunteer. As Saint Peter tells us: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9). And as such, we are all to offer up to God sacrifices in thanksgiving and gratitude of our time and energy.

I am not the only priest in this parish. I am simply the ordained priest, chosen to lead the worship of this community of men, women, boys and girls who are all members of a royal priesthood, bestowed on them by baptism and chrismation, and renewed through communion and confession. I am, in effect, a priest of priests. Inasmuch as each and everyone of us is a priest of the Lord, we are all under obligation to work together to raise up the Body of Christ in this time and in this place. We are all under obligation to draw people to the Light of Christ. We are all under the obligation to pass on this Light both to the world around us, and to the next generation.

Serving at the altar, the chanters stand or in the choir are all obvious things that serve the Lord’s purposes. But so is providing the hospitality of coffee and pastries after the Liturgy, so is greeting newcomers and selling candles to the faithful, so is taking our kids for an outing or a cookout, and so is cleaning the church every week after services to assure the Lord’s house is presentable. Every offering of time and energy for the benefit of this community, this Church of Christ is a priestly offering, a sacrifice of self to God, and act of love, that all together makes our Church a Holy Place, and us a holy people.

You are important to this community, we all are, and each and every one of us needs to pitch in and help as much as you possibly can, and then perhaps even more. Working together, we can give expression to our faith and culture, and most importantly, strengthen the bonds of love and fellowship among ourselves, giving witness to the world of the kind of things that a loving, Christ-centered community can accomplish.

— *Borrowed*

How Skipping Church affects our Children

In a Q&A, Carl Trueman was asked about why churches today are losing their young people. Typical answers to this question range from things like the temptations of this world or the irrelevance of the church —your typical answers. But Trueman makes a keen and convicting connection between our parenting and apostasy.

“The church is losing its young people because the parents never taught their children that it was important. I think that applies across the board. It applies to family worship, and it also applies to whether you are in church every Sunday and what priority you demonstrate to your children church has on a Sunday. If the sunshine’s out and their friends are going to the beach, do you decide to skip church and go to the beach? In which case, you send signals to your children that it is not important.” (Carl Trueman)

Now we know that artificially taking your kids to church neither bestows salvation nor guarantees it. God is obviously not honored by external religious acts without heart worship. This type of legalism is not the subject of this discussion. This is about parenting and the weight of the responsibility behind how they prioritize their time and lifestyle choices for their families.

Parents make choices all the time for their families. As they decide on what takes priority in family, every choice is carefully observed and taken into the heart of their children. Yes, they are watching you, and they are learning from you.

Maybe the reason why our children have no love for Christ is due to the fact that we as parents do not show any love or passion for Christ, evidenced by how we prioritize our time both on Sundays and during the week. When television, sports, school, hobbies, even family itself are elevated to a place of idolatry and replace the vital Christian responsibilities, then we tell our children that Christ is secondary to all these things. We tell our children that it is not necessary to take up your cross and die to yourself daily in order to follow Christ. We tell them that you only have to live for Christ when it’s convenient for you. We tell them it is OK to sacrifice time with the all-satisfying Savior if something “more fun” or “more important” comes along (sarcasm indicated by quotation marks if you didn’t catch that). And this sounds like a clear path to apostasy if you ask me.

Let’s evaluate where our hearts are by observing our choices. Do you prioritize the local church? Do you prioritize the worship of Christ in your home and on Sundays? Do you prioritize serving Him and worshiping Him in the contexts of school and work? This doesn’t mean that you can’t ever miss a Sunday or that you can’t have any extracurricular activities. Instead, it is a sobering reminder that we should not put the things of God at the bottom of the priority list, because it tells our children that Christ is at the bottom of our priority list. And the God of this universe does not belong there.

My prayer is that we all would improve in this area. But beware, maybe we don’t see this because Christ isn’t a priority in our lives. And if he isn’t a priority in our lives, then our children will know and follow suit.

— *Borrowed*

Announcements...

PRAYER LIST UPDATES: Please remind Father John when a name on our prayer list can be removed.

GENERAL CONFESSION SERVICE is held every 1st Sunday of the month at **9:25am**. *We now have a service booklet for you to follow along with.* Confessions are also heard before Vespers on Saturday evenings and also before the Divine Liturgy on Sundays.

ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL'S VISITATION TO OUR PARISH will be Saturday and Sunday, October 30/31, 2021. **MARK YOUR CALENDAR!** *Please kindly show respect to our beloved Archbishop by planning on attending both services.*

Sat., Oct.30 - 6:00pm VESPERS
Sun., Oct.31 - 10:00am
HIERARCHICAL DIVINE LITURGY

WE ARE STILL HOPEFUL that more of our parishioners will return to Liturgy on Sundays. If you wish to wear a mask to be more cautious that is your choice, of course, and we will respect that.

Moleben of Thanksgiving Service and Womens Study on Orthodox Women Saints:

every first and third Wednesdays of the month. Please plan on attending and learn of the great women saints of our Orthodox Church.

**This month's classes:
Sept. 1 & 15 at 6pm**

PRAYER FOR NEIGHBORHOOD FAMILIES

I pray to You, God, for the families of my neighborhood. Visit them. Throw their troubles out of them and bring hope. Make the daily cares that devour the heart disappear. Present solutions to life's problems. Settle the disturbed relationships among members of different families whom I know or I don't know.

Oh Lord, remind the people of our area that You exist, that You are a strong and loving Protector. Keep away, Lord, anything that causes the disappearance of peace from souls, and the escape of sleep from our eyes. Stay a little while more tonight in our neighborhood.

Spread peace along with the night. Let the harshness of the day and its struggles not spread over the night too, God.

— Archbishop Demetrios of America

Nativity of our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos – September 8

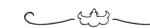
The Church regards the birthday of Mary, the mother of Jesus, with special veneration because she was the instrument whereby the Savior of the world was made man. According to the story, Joachim and Anna had been married for 20 years but had no children. One year, when they went to Jerusalem to celebrate a feast day in the temple, they each had a separate vision of an angel who announced to them the coming birth of a daughter, whom they should vow to the service of God. In due time the prophecy came to pass, and they named their daughter Mary in accordance with the angelic instructions.

Saint Joachim and Anna, whose memory the Church celebrates on September 9, are not mentioned in the canonical books of the New Testament. But the traditional story of Mary's birth is preserved for us in some other ancient writings, especially in two books known as "The Gospel of the Birth of Mary," and "The Protevangelion of St. James." The church service for the Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos draws upon these two accounts for some of its hymns.

The Elevation of the Holy Cross – September 14

This feast is celebrated as one of the most important in the church year because it commemorates two events of great significance. After Saint Helen had found at Jerusalem the cross upon which Christ was crucified, she built a church on Mount Calvary to hold the precious relic. The Christians held the Holy Cross in such regard that they soon began to celebrate this Feast in honor of the finding of the Cross.

In the year 614 the Persians invaded the empire and took Jerusalem, and sent the case containing the Cross back to their country. For 15 years the Greek emperor Heraclius waged war against the Persians, and finally in 629 defeated them, forced them to make peace, and to restore the Holy Cross to him. It is said that the case containing the sacred relics was returned to him with the seals still unbroken. The relics were replaced in the Church with great rejoicing, and to the original Feast in honor of the finding of the Cross was added another, in honor of its safe return to Jerusalem.



Building a life with God means that His time is NOT the priority among a number of other possibilities.

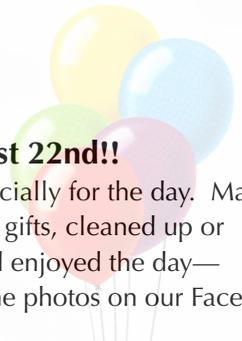
Building a life with God means that His time is His alone, and you allow nothing else to stand in the way.

You and the Lord's Prayer

I cannot say **Our**, if my religion has no room for others and their needs.
I cannot say **Father**, if I do not demonstrate this relationship in my daily living.
I cannot say **Who is in Heaven**, if all my interest and pursuits are in earthly things.
I cannot say **Hallowed be Your Name**, if I, who am called by his name, am not holy.
I cannot say **Your Kingdom come**, if I am unwilling to give up my own sovereignty and except the righteous reign of God.
I cannot say **Your will be done**, if I am unwilling or resentful of having it in my life.
I cannot say **On earth as it is in Heaven**, unless I am truly ready to give myself to his service here and now.
I cannot say **Give us this day our daily bread**, without expending honest effort for it or by ignoring the genuine needs of my fellow human beings.
I cannot say **Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us**, if I continue to harbor a grudge against anyone.
I cannot say **Lead us not into temptation**, if I deliberately choose to remain in a situation where I am likely to be tempted.
I cannot say **Deliver us from evil**, if I am not prepared to fight in the spiritual realm with the weapon of prayer.
I cannot say **Yours is the kingdom**, if I do not give the King the disciplined obedience of a loyal subject.
I cannot say **Yours is the power**, if I fear what my neighbors and friends say or do.
I cannot say **Yours is the glory**, if I am seeking my own glory first.
I cannot say **Forever**, if I am too anxious about each today's affairs.
I cannot say **Amen**, unless I honestly say: "Cost what it may, this is my prayer."

What a successful Carnival Cookout we had on Sunday, August 22nd!!

It was great to have our parish community come together spiritually and socially for the day. Many thanks to those who organized, setup, cooked, donated, bought prizes and gifts, cleaned up or helped in any way for this event. And especially to those who attended and enjoyed the day—THANK YOU for being there! If you have not already done so, check out the photos on our Facebook page and our website.



Prayer Made Visible

We all know that the icon is a window into the kingdom of God, that we are living icons of God, and that through our constant prayer in all we do, we open that window for others to see the kingdom of God that dwells within us.

An essential principle is that the icon expresses events in two dimensions, never in three dimensions. This is essential for what the faithful person experiences in front of an icon. In iconography there are two dimensions, height and width, but not depth as in a representation of drawing.

If someone stands in front of an icon and seasonally height and width, the icon invites him to understand that the icon is incomplete. What is absent? The depth.

This is critical for the viewer to understand that the one who stands in front of the icon is the missing depth. Instead of the depth going behind the pictured events (or Saint) like any normal painting, the vanishing point comes out to the one standing before the icon. This is called inverse perspective, with the person becoming the third dimension that completes the icon! This means that Christ will participate in the events and will fulfill the missing depth by His presence in you, in front of the icon. This mystery opens the window to heaven in a way most Orthodox Christians have never contemplated. The icon is not an art event. It is an event of prayer that invites you to participate in the icon to make it complete. We grow up with icons all around us, but do we understand the role they play in completing us?

The Prayer of the Optina Monastery Elders

○ Lord, grant that I may meet all that this coming day brings to me with spiritual tranquility. Grant that I may fully surrender myself to Thy holy will.

At every hour of this day, direct and support me in all things. Whatsoever news may reach me in the course of the day, teach me to accept it with a calm soul and the firm conviction that all is subject to Thy holy will.

Direct my thoughts and feelings in all my words and actions. In all unexpected occurrences, do not let me forget that all is sent down from Thee.

Grant that I may deal straightforwardly and wisely with every member of my family, neither embarrassing nor saddening anyone.

○ Lord, grant me the strength to endure the fatigue of the coming day and all the events that take place during it. Direct my will and teach me to pray, to believe, to hope, to be patient, to forgive, and to love. Amen.



SAINTS PETER and PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH
 45 Ideal Street, Buffalo, New York 14206
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| SEPTEMBER 2021 | | | | | | |
|--|--------|--|---|---|---|--|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| Aug 29 BEHEADING OF THE BAPTIST 9:30am Hours 10am Divine Liturgy Strict Fast | Aug 30 | Aug 31 | 1 Church New Year 6pm Moleben of Thanksgiving 6:30pm Womens Study on Orthodox Women Saints Fast | 2 | 3 Fast | 4 6pm Vespers |
| 5 Prophet Zachariah & Righteous Elizabeth 9:25am General Confession/Hours 10am Divine Liturgy | 6 | 7 6pm Vespersal Divine Liturgy: Nativity of Theotokos | 8 NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS Fast | 9 | 10 Fast | 11 5pm Choir Practice 6pm Vespers |
| 12 Hieromartyr Autonomus, Martyr Julian, Venerable Vassian 9:30am Hours 10am Divine Liturgy | 13 | 14 ELEVATION OF THE CROSS Strict Fast | 15 6pm Moleben of Thanksgiving 6:30pm Womens Study on Orthodox Women Saints Fast | 16 | 17 Fast | 18 5pm Choir Practice 6pm Vespers |
| 19 Martyrs Trophimus, Sabbatius, & Dorymedon 9:30am Hours 10am Divine Liturgy | 20 | 21 | 22 Fast | 23 | 24 Fast | 25 5pm Choir Practice 6pm Vespers |
| 26 St John the Theologian, Venerable Efreim of Perekop 9:30am Hours 10am Divine Liturgy | 27 | 28 | 29 Fast | 30 6pm Vespersal Divine Liturgy: Protection of Theotokos | Oct 1 PROTECTION OF THE THEOTOKOS Fast | Oct 2 5pm Choir Practice 6pm Vespers |