
NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

SAINTS PETER and PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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JANUARY 2025



SERVICE SCHEDULE *(but always check our calendar of events)*

- VESPERS — Saturday, 6:00pm
- DIVINE LITURGY — every Sunday, 10:00am
- GENERAL CONFESSION SERVICE — **1st Sunday** of every month, 9:25am

SINCERE THANKS and HAPPY NEW YEAR!

I hope you had a joyous Christmas with your families, celebrating the Birth of Jesus Christ. I am pleased that you make church a priority in your life and attended the Christmas services. Nothing makes a priest happier than seeing his flock attend Liturgy and services offered. Matushka Nancy and I thank you for your Christmas cards and generous Christmas gifts, and especially for your love for us throughout the year. You are in our prayers always. — *Father John*

WELCOME VISITORS

We hope you find your time here with us to be a true blessing from God—who knows you by name; who knows your heart; who knows your mind; and who wants to be in a spiritual relationship with you. We challenge ourselves and the world to love like Christ our Savior, as we pray joyfully, serve compassionately, and grow spiritually. If you are seriously considering a new place of worship or a relocation to our area, we would love to have you as a part of our church family. Get in touch with Father John with any questions you may have. Welcome to Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church—we look forward to seeing you again.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

- **Anais Meza**, baptized/chrisdated into the Orthodox Faith on Sunday, December 8th. Sponsor was Kathleen Dorman.
- **Wesley Joseph Mills**, chrisdated into the Orthodox Faith on Sunday, December 15th. Sponsor was Nadia Ryan.

May their spiritual journey to Christ be fruitful as they embrace the Orthodox Faith. May God grant them many happy and blessed years, and welcome to Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church!

PARISH COUNCIL OATH of OFFICE — **Sunday, January 19th** at the end of Divine Liturgy, followed by a **COUNCIL MEETING** in the parish hall

SINCERE THANKS to all those who helped out in our recent Nativity Play: those who helped construct the scenery, the costumes, those who donated money for items needed, and those who portrayed the characters. Many thanks to NADIA RYAN for taking the opportunity to take charge and schedule this play, and for her many hours of work preparing for it. Thank you also to CHRISTINE JANIKOWSKI, who paid for the fish for our dinner afterwards for those who attended! And of course special thanks to our cast, who did a wonderful job for our enjoyment!

WE HAVE AN AMERICAN FLAG donated to our parish and we are seeking a donor/donors to help purchase the flag pole and base. Please see Father John if interested. We are the Orthodox Church in America, and it is appropriate to have an American flag in our church.

FOR SALE in our Parish Hall:

Bracelets, necklaces, bookmarkers — made by our parishioner, Aubriella Rodriguez

Scarves, dish towels, scrub pads — made by Heidi Bender's mother, Mrs. Irene Veronin

We thank Aubriella and Mrs. Veronin for their talents and generosity in helping our church. All proceeds go to our church for building repairs.

INVITE A FRIEND TO CHURCH: It is always nice to bring someone along with you to Liturgy to see what our beautiful Orthodox Faith is about. Sadly, there are so many people in today's world that stopped going to church for one reason or another—extend the invite!

BURIAL PLOTS AVAILABLE TO BUY—Saints Peter and Paul Church owns burial plots in Riverdale Cemetery, Lewiston, New York. Cost is \$400 per plot. If interested in buying any, please contact Father John.

A DONATION BUTTON is on our church website peterandpauloca.org. Your donation can be made electronically via our website using either PayPal or a credit card/bank card.

2025 CHURCH WALL CALENDARS are on sale in our church vestibule. The cost is \$10 each. The calendars give you the saints of the day to commemorate and also the epistles and Gospels to read for each particular day.

IF YOU WISH TO HAVE YOUR HOME BLESSED, please contact Father John for a day and time to be scheduled. It is a beautiful custom of the Orthodox Church to have our homes/businesses blessed each year for our family's good health and blessings from God.

UPCOMING SERVICES & EVENTS AT SAINTS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

Saturday, January 4 6:00pm: VESPERS

Sunday, January 5 *STRICT FAST DAY (Theophany Eve)*

9:25am: GENERAL CONFESSION SERVICE & Reading of 3rd/6th Hours

10:00am: DIVINE LITURGY of St. John Chrysostom

Memorial—departed **John Kolbrich** (7 year)

Memorial—departed **Katherine Mazyrka** (40 day)

Blessing/Cutting of the St. Basil's Bread

Monday, January 6 Theophany (Baptism) of our Lord (NO Divine Liturgy; transferred to Sunday)

Tuesday, January 7 Synaxis of St. John the Baptist (NO Divine Liturgy; transferred to Sunday)

Saturday, January 11 5:00pm: COMBINED PAN ORTHODOX VESPERS at St. Stephen's Serbian Orthodox Church (Lackawanna)

Sunday, January 12 9:30am: Reading of 3rd/6th Hours
10:00am: DIVINE LITURGY of St. John Chrysostom
Memorial—departed **Protopresbyter Michael Slovesko**
Great Blessing of Water in honor of the Feast of the Theophany of our Lord in the Jordan

Saturday, January 18 6:00pm: VESPERS

Sunday, January 19 9:30am: Reading of 3rd/6th Hours
10:00am: DIVINE LITURGY of St. John Chrysostom
Memorial—**all departed priests** who have served our parish
OATH OF OFFICE to newly elected parish council members
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING in parish hall

Saturday, January 26 9:30am: Reading of 3rd/6th Hours
10:00am: DIVINE LITURGY of St John Chrysostom
Memorial—departed **Protopresbyter Ronald & Dolores Hazuda**
Memorial—departed **Protopresbyter Michael & Eleanor Polanichka**

Thursday, January 30 Feast of Three Hierarchs: St. Basil, St. Gregory the Theologian, and St John Chrysostom (NO Divine Liturgy; transferred to Sunday)

Saturday, February 1 6:00pm: VESPERS

Sunday, February 2 9:25am: GENERAL CONFESSION SERVICE/Reading of 3rd/6th Hours
10:00am: DIVINE LITURGY of St. John Chrysostom
Presentation of our Lord into the Temple—Blessing of Candles
Memorial—departed **Daniel Metz**, requested by wife, Christine Metz

FEASTS OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

Theophany of our Lord in the River Jordan — January 6

About the beginning of our Lord's thirtieth year, John the Forerunner, who was some six months older than our Savior according to the flesh, and had lived in the wilderness since his childhood, received a command from God and came

into the parts of the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins, then our Savior also came from Galilee to the Jordan and sought and received baptism though He was the Master and John was but a servant. Whereupon, there came to pass those marvelous deeds, great and beyond nature: the heavens were opened, the Spirit descended in the form of a dove upon Him that was being baptized and the voice was heard from the heavens hearing witness that this was the beloved Son. From these events the Divinity of the Lord and the great mystery of the Trinity were demonstrated. It is also from this that the present feast is called “Theophany,” that is, the “Divine Manifestation,” God’s appearance among men. On this venerable day the sacred mystery of Christian baptism was inaugurated; and also began the saving preaching of the Kingdom of the Heavens.

According to Orthodox doctrine, holy water has the power to sanctify and heal. The holy water that is blessed is taken home and put in front of your icon corner for future use—times of adversity, before starting a new venture or trip, to give thanks, or when someone is ill. You may drink it and/or put it on an afflicted part of the body. To rid the house of evil spirits, it should be sprinkled in the four corners of each room, so no one will step on it. In rural areas, the holy water is sprinkled in the fields, on the animals, and even their cars.

It is customary to invite your priest to bless your home with holy water the few weeks following Theophany. Prepare by cleaning the house, opening and lighting all the rooms. Place a clean bowl of water, a candle, an icon and even an incense burner on a small table. The priest will bless the water by dipping a cross in it and repeating a blessing. Using a basil or evergreen spring dipped in water as a sprinkler, he will go to each room and sprinkle it in the four corners, exorcising evil spirits. Save some of the holy water in a bottle in your icon corner and pour the remainder on plants.

Synaxis of Saint John the Baptist — January 7

On the day following the Theophany, the Church remembers St. John the Baptist, the Prophet and Forerunner of Christ. The story of St. John’s ministry is told in the Gospel of Saint Matthew (Chapter 3:1-17). The Orthodox Church holds St. John in great honor, and his picture is placed alongside that of our Lord in our churches. St. John preached the coming of the Messiah and knew Jesus for the Savior when they met beside the River Jordan.

Saint Anthony the Great — January 17

St. Anthony is the great patriarch of the monastic life. He was born near Heraclea in Upper Egypt in 251. After his parents died, he retired into the desert and began a life of prayer and penitence. His great piety made him famous, and he began to attract disciples to such a great number that he finally founded a monastery in the Thebaid in 305. Many of the Christians who came to him for guidance had fled from the great persecution then raging and they came to regard his wisdom and sanctity as miraculous. In 325 Anthony and his monastic followers helped to defeat the Arian Party at the Council of Nicea. No Christian of that age was more famous than he for the ascetic life, and when he died in 356 at the age of 105, the story of his life was written by no less a person than St. Athanasius, the Patriarch of Alexandria.

The Three Hierarchs: Saint Basil the Great, Saint Gregory the Theologian, and Saint John Chrysostom — January 30

These three saints are regarded as the “Three Stars” of the Orthodox firmament, and are commemorated together on this day in addition to their own individual feast days. St. Basil is remembered by himself on January 1st; St. Gregory on January 25th; and St. John Chrysostom on November 13th.



A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION LIST

With every new year, many people renew their commitment to making life changes. Here are five Faith Resolutions for your 2025.

- 1) Make PRAYER a more consistent part of your every day life.
- 2) Try to read the SCRIPTURE readings before each Sunday Divine Liturgy.
- 3) Study a SAINT each month to gain wisdom, inspiration, and guidance to keep on the right track.
- 4) Make an effort to expand WORSHIP beyond just Divine Liturgy once a month. Attend more often.
- 5) VOLUNTEER your time at your church, at a local school or with local charity/philanthropic organizations.