

# WEEKLY BULLETIN

Sunday, February 03, 2019

Confessor Maximus

Tone III \* Epistle: II Corinthians 6:16-7:1 \* Gospel: Saint Matt 15:21-28



## PASTOR

VERY REVEREND

FATHER MICHAEL T. CHENDORAIN

## CLERGY

FATHER DEACON GREGORY BENC

SUB-DEACON ANDREW WYTHE

## CHOIR DIRECTOR

PROFESSOR GEORGE HANAS

## CONTACT INFORMATION

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

ORTHODOX CHURCH

145 BROAD STREET

PERTH AMBOY, NJ 08861

FMCHENDORAIN@GMAIL.COM

(201) 486-2123 (MOBILE)

(732) 826-1970 (OFFICE)

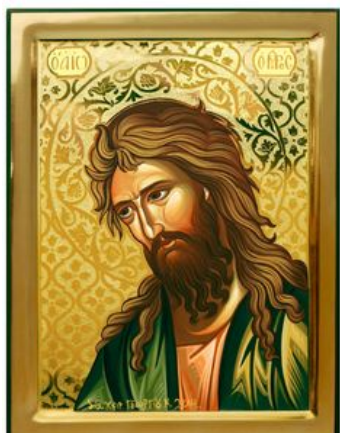
(732) 826-4442 (RECTORY)

SJACROD@GMAIL.COM (EMAIL)

www.sjacord.org (WEBSITE)

www.facebook.com/sjacrod

An Orthodox Christian community of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the USA under the protection of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.



## SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY DIVINE SERVICES

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 03

9:00AM Sunday Divine Liturgy followed by a Panachida in Memory of +George Smisko, offered by RoseMarie and RoseAnn.

### WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 06

9:00AM Divine Liturgy of February Perpetual Commemorations: George & Michael Buleca, Charles Totin, George Turjanica, Sepelyak Family, John Petrovey, John & Mary Bishop, James Ello, Basil & Mary Pinzelik, Alexander & Anna Stegura, John - Susan - George Yevchak, Nicholas & Anna Marhevka, Paul & Maria Danko, Stefan & Marie Burik, Anna Burik Schober, George & Elizabeth Dyzak, Mary Michaylo, Dorothy Dudas, Elizabeth Mikulka, Michael & Elizabeth Chandik, Anna & Gerald Parrella, Mary & John Hramotnik,

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 10

9:00AM Sunday Divine Liturgy followed by a Panbachida in Memory of +Subdcn. Michael & Mary Zolar, offered by Diane Alber.

## SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY PARISH ACTIVITIES

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 03

10:30AM Sunday Coffee Social Hour — Come join us!  
Sunday Church School — All Students are to attend!  
Adult Study Class — Come and See!  
PTO Meeting — All Members are asked to attend!

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 04

5:00PM Weekly Soup Kitchen Service — Come lend a hand!

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 10

10:30AM Sunday Coffee Social Hour — Come join us!  
Sunday Church School — All Students are to attend!

**HOUSE BLESSINGS have begun.** A **sign-up sheet has been posted in the vestibule** for you let Father know you would like to see his smiling face. Any questions, please speak to Fr. Michael and he will work out a mutually beneficial agreement.

**A MEMBERSHIP RETENTION & GROWTH COMMITTEE** has been formed for the benefit of our parish. Please add your name to the roster in the vestibule if you are interested in helping our parish with this endeavor. Interested persons are asked to speak to Steve Wythe for additional information.

**PARENTING WORKSHOP : MARCH 02 : Rockaway, NJ** Please sign up via the registration link on the Diocesan website or call Fr. Matthew (973) 627-1462.

Please remember, if you are admitted to the hospital in an emergency or for any reason, or are undergoing surgery, please notify Fr. Michael so he can make arrangements to visit and pray with you ASAP. He may be reached on his cell phone, at any hour of the day by calling (201) 486-2123. If he cannot be reached: Fr. Andrew Fetchina will assist; (732) 382-8844.

## COFFE SOCIAL HOUR SCHEDULE

02/03 - Delcher Family  
02/10 - Friedman Family  
02/17 - Fryc Family  
02/24 - Steve Gallant

## PRAYER LIST

His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew, Richard Pratscher, Sue Shevchenko, Chris Petersen, Pat Yurcisin, Eleanor Aleksa, Ann Papp, Sandy DiLeo, Eleanor Dussling, John Billy, Walter Lykosh, Dorothy Szczecina, Olga Medvigy, Stephanie Gallant, Carol Rezes, Fr. Michael Psenechnuk, LCPL Michael Delcher, Janice Seniakevgh, Bill Kobasz, Kelly Peterson, Lilly Perry, Nino Krataschvili, John & Suzanne DiBiasi, Craig Chapman, Helen Hrehowsik, Michele Camisa, Dolores Matyola, Fr. John Gido, Betty Short, Irene Yacina, Carol Kondor, Lisa Buckley, Angel Abigail Billy, Angel Joseph Santalla, Sussi Howard, Amanda Orender, Helen Deliman, Melanie McHenry, Peggy Patrick, Oleg Alber, Maxine Vigilante, Lillian Kalog, Maryann Della Serra, Mary Stumpf, John Popadin, Victoria Dean, Joyce Nimetz, Stephen Skasko, Helen J. Dunham, George Kratsashvili, John Paul Hall, Veronica Houser, Edward Sierzega, Fr. John Baranik, Joshua Skoog, Joan Winters, Michael Ascher, Alex Fosinas, PO Daniel Langner, LCPL Matthew Fetchina, US Armed Forces, the unborn children of this world and more vocations to the Holy Priesthood. *May the Divine Physician touch them all! Amen!*

# ANNUAL

# MEETING

# HIGHLIGHTS

\*Parish Assessment for 2020 raised to \$250/person

\*AUL Charter School will be terminating lease in August. Resultant loss in extra income of \$80K+. The school will assist us in finding a new tenant.

\*Major Roof Repair addressed in detail. Moving forward with proposal received from Fania Roofing (Dover, NJ) and dispensing with 3 bid by-law. Board will work to clarify scope and cost. Financing to be discussed as needed.

\*Ramp Project Final Decision delayed 60 days in order to speak to Mason Contractors on options.

\*SOBOR Delegates Elected: RoseMarie Smisko and Stephen Gallant. One more delegate is requested as well as an alternate. Interested parishioners can present themselves to the board for election.

\*Parish will purchase additional 50 new pew books from Diocese. Donations to be sought from parish for commemorations.

\*Parish will look into purchasing Orthodox Study Bibles for parish use in the home and in church.

## Parish Council Officers 2019

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| President:        | Steve Wythe   |
| Secretary:        | George Maslow   |
| Treasurer:        | Kim Kuzma   |
| Trustees:         | John Seniakevgh, Wayne Petersen<br>Stephen Gallant, John Sasala,<br>George Gray, Dan Nimetz |
| Auditors:         | Judi Petersen, Sharon Sarno,<br>Dan Mucisko   |
| Honorary Trustee: | William Kobasz  |

*Anyone interested in serving as a Vice President is asked to present themselves to any Council Member for nomination/ election.*

Special Thanks to Eileen Haluska, who choose to step down as an Auditor, for her many years of service and input on the Council. Her stewardship of the parish in this capacity is most appreciated. God grant her many years!

Thank you to those parishioners who showed up last week to participate in the Annual Meeting, the attendance was much better than in previous years. There is much to do in the coming year and we look forward to even greater participation.

---

**ACRY STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN RESULTS** Thanks to the generosity of all our parishioners and guests during the Advent Season, “The Jar” was filled with **gifts totaling \$506.57!!** We thank you for your support!



**PIROHI WORKERS NEEDED** Tuesday, February 12 and Wednesday February 13. Please see RoseMarie Smisko to let her know if you are coming.

**CAMP NAZARETH NEWS** Please check out the camp’s website for a slew of recently released information regarding the Diocesan Senior Retreat, Family Camp, Summer Camp and Science and Nature Camp. Most registration opens March 01. Information about Summer Camp will be promoted in the near future.

**ACRY LENTEN RETREAT** On Saturday, April 13th the National ACRY will host its Annual Lenten Retreat in Bethlehem, PA. Information will be posted soon and our parishioners are asked to consider attending this year. His Eminence Metropolitan Gregory will be presenting along with other spiritual fathers. There will be a program for the younger children as well. Mark your calendars and make some time for spiritual renewal.

**ST. NECTARIOS PRAYER SOCIETY** At last week’s meeting, Bill Kobasz brought up and reminded us of an important part of our responsibilities as an Orthodox Christian and as a parish family. This was the idea of tending to and caring for the forgotten members of our parish, namely the sick and the shut-ins. Fr. Michael echoed the need for this spiritual care and concern to extend beyond the priest’s pastoral responsibilities to our fellow parishioners to visit, to call, to write and to make contact and keep the connection to the church alive. Those interested in re-activating this group once again and participating in this stewardship of our brethren, in any fashion, are asked to see Fr. Michael in the coming weeks. Perhaps this can be energized with the upcoming Lenten season? Come and see! Come and be!

## An Orthodox Response to the Tragedy in New York

**This Homily was given at a Baptismal Divine Liturgy on the Sunday after Sanctity of Life Sunday (2019), after the State of New York Passed the most aggressive abortion laws in history.**

After Divine Liturgy, in our memorial service for all unborn infants, we read these words:

*Blessed are You, God of compassion and consolation. You know the name and age of each person, even from our mother’s womb. Accept the sorrow of us who are grieved by the loss of these children. You know the desires of our hearts. Help us to have confidence in your sustaining presence, in this moment, and in all future days!*

*(continued on last page )*

We are in need of that consolation and sustaining presence this week, which has been a difficult one for devout Orthodox Christians throughout the country. Just a few days after praying these prayers, we watched in horror as the State of New York condemned even more unborn children to their deaths, by passing the most immoral and unrestrictive abortion laws that our country has ever seen. So many children, just a few weeks younger than the one who has just received a second birth by water in the Spirit, will sadly be added to our list of daily prayers, all in the name of “Human Progression”.

Orthodox Christians especially should take this news with incredible sadness. We know from the Holy Scriptures and from the teachings of the Church, that life (without a doubt) begins at conception. This is seen in the way that we celebrate the conception of many saints throughout the year, like the conception of the Theotokos (December) and of St. John the Baptist (September). The image and likeness of God is placed upon every human being from their very beginning, and this is why hearing news like this strikes a Christian to their core, because to deliberately destroy the image and likeness of unborn children, is to destroy God Himself. This is something that our souls simply cannot understand.

In the midst of this darkness, brothers and sisters in Christ, what are left to do?

There is an incredible saying from a very famous Saint, that describes for us the heart of an Orthodox Christian. If we could describe what our goal is in the midst of the chaos of the world, it comes from the lips of St. Seraphim of Sarov who famously said: *“Acquire the Spirit of Peace, and a thousand souls around you will be saved.”*

This incredible teaching goes hand in hand with the Gospel lesson that we just heard, about a man who entrusted talents to three of his servants. Two of them ended up investing and growing their gifts, and were praised for doing so by the master. The third servant ended up burying his gift in the ground, blaming the master for being too difficult, and wasting what he had been given. For this he was condemned and sent into the outer darkness.

This is often a mis-understood and difficult parable to understand. Contrary to popular belief, it isn't talking about the importance of stewardship in the Church. Christ isn't telling us that we need to double our finances! Money doesn't come from God, it comes from the world! This parable is rather about receiving God's own life through the Holy Spirit. It is about accepting this gift that is freely given by our Creator, to all those who wish to receive it.

So what does all of this mean for the chaos and immorality that witnessed this past week? How can we use these gifts that the Lord has entrusted to our care to enlighten the world?

We have all been given the gift of prayer and conversation with our Lord. When news hit of New York's tragedy, was our first reaction to run to our icon corners and pray?

Our Lord has given us the cross, to sign upon ourselves multiple times throughout the day, acting as a shield to the evil that permeates mankind. Is our first reaction to the devil's works to make the sign of the cross? We have all been given the gift of life. Being Pro-Life isn't just about caring for the rights of unborn children. It's about caring for all life: The sick, the homeless, the refugees, and all of the “Lazarus's” that God put's at our doorstep. Have we used our own gift of life to help save other lives?

Each of us has the ability to take these gifts of the Spirit and use them not only to improve our own lives, but to bring peace to the world. Christ calls for us in the parable of the talents, to take all our spiritual gifts and produce dividends of Grace. The more the Light and Life of Christ shines within our own hearts, the more **it permeates** the hearts of those who have chosen to turn their back on God and His creation. This should be, **and needs to be**, our response to the immorality and injustice of the world!

We must be careful however, brothers and sisters in Christ, and proceed to navigate these waters carefully. There is a tendency to get fired up and to personally attack and judge in anger, those whose hearts have fallen. But we must remember to respond rather with kindness, gentleness, and most importantly deep prayer. It is St. Seraphim who tells us:

*“All condemnation is from the devil. Never condemn each other...but rather, strive to reach that inner peace. Keep silent, refrain from judgment, as this will raise you above the deadly arrows of slander, insult, and outrage, and will shield your glowing hearts against all evil.”*

My own spiritual father once told me something that had a profound impact on my life. He said when we are in pain and crying over something in our life (or something in the world) ,we take our tears to our Lord and his Mother. We pray in the psalms that God Himself numbers the tears that flow from our eyes...and so we weep. Weep for those who have been coaxed by the devil. Mourn for the loss of innocence. Wait for the consolation of the almighty.

*“Acquire the spirit of peace, and a thousand souls around you will be saved.”*

Thank God we didn't have to wait long for consolation, because we as a parish family were all witnesses to the Holy Spirit in a very real way this morning. Winifred Anna was given her own “Talents of Grace” this morning for her salvation. The gift has been given, and with the help of her parents, her godmother, and her new parish family, she will learn how to re-invest it in her life, and multiply it throughout the entire world.

We see the saying of St. Seraphim truly come to life this morning, because those who have the eyes to see and the ears to hear, were able to see pure **light and life** come forth from the baptismal font. The Grace of the Holy Spirit not only changes the life of a newborn baby girl, but it also serves to enlighten the lives of those who are gathered to witness it. In the midst of darkness, here is light...and we witness that reality here this morning in the purity of a simple little girl, who has been un-coaxed by the passions and unaffected by the wiles of the devil. May she serve an example to us all, as she leads us in conquering the darkness of the world...Amen

+Fr. Gabriel Bilas ([pravmir.com](http://pravmir.com))