

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

A PARISH OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

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Outcasts Working for God

May 14 is the feast day of the Venerable Isidore, Fool-for-Christ of Rostov, a city north of Moscow.

This fifteenth-century saint was neither raised in Russia nor in the Orthodox faith. His family lived in Brandenburg, Germany, an area not greatly hospitable to Orthodox Christians. At some point, Isidore moved to Russia, settled in Rostov, and didn't just practice the Orthodox faith but took on one of its most extreme manifestations, serving the Lord as a fool-for-Christ.

This meant abandoning the comforts of the prosperous merchant class to which his family belonged. It also meant being an outcast. He was seen every day wandering the streets in rags, thin and unkempt, shouting out warnings against sin or deliberately behaving in foolish ways to call people's attention to their own foolishness. He occasionally rested on a pile of garbage.

What people never saw was his constant prayer for them, with only an hour or two of sleep a night to interrupt it. Isidore had built himself a ramshackle hut that offered no protection from the weather, but did hide his ascetical efforts. He knew the danger of praise, and had no intention of letting people see and admire him as a man of prayer.

One account of his life says that he went to the home of Prince Vladimir of Rostov on a Sunday and asked a servant for a drink of water. He did so with a specific purpose: he had entreated God to bless Prince Vladimir so that he would govern justly. He had in mind Christ's words: "Whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ, will by no means lose his reward" (Mark 9:41).

The servant gave him nothing, haughtily and hurriedly dismissing him. There was no time for beggars, because everyone was busy



May 11, 2014

4th SUNDAY OF PASCHA
Sunday of Paralytic

- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy
Epistle: Acts 9:32-43
Gospel: Jn. 5:1-15
- **Fellowship** – everyone is invited for Coffee Hour following the Divine Liturgy

Schedule of Services

- SATURDAY, MAY 17**
5:30pm - Great Vespers
- SUNDAY, MAY 18**
9:00am - Divine Liturgy

Intercessory Prayers

We pray for all our fellow parishioners, but we pray especially for those who are incapable of being with us in church. Among them are:

Michael, Mary and Max Bakaletz, Genevieve Bobenko, Pauline Bodnar, Nancy Filak, Mary Hadginske, Helen Kurnewitz, Margaret Lawler, Kathleen Lazarczyk, Emil Mikulik, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Anatoly & Anna Rozanovich, Nadia Sojka, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

preparing a special dinner, to which the local archbishop had been invited.

As the guests sat at table that evening, the butler discovered a serious problem: the wine containers were completely empty. He nervously whispered the bad news into the prince's ear.

Prince Vladimir questioned the servants and was told that nothing unusual had happened that day, except for a beggar asking for water. Being a godly man, the prince suspected that the visitor had been Isidore, and sent a servant to invite him to the house. The servant couldn't find him, but he suddenly appeared in the dining room, offering the archbishop some blessed bread from that morning's Liturgy.

A moment later he had vanished, but the wine containers were full to the brim. The prince and his household never again forgot the blessing that offering a cup of water can bestow.

On this day we read Acts 14:6-18, about a man unable from birth to walk, who is part of the crowd listening to Paul's preaching. This man, too, would probably have been an outcast. But Paul looks "intently" at him, perceives his faith, and miraculously heals him.

The outcast may be the very one through whom God works, bringing great blessings to the rest of us.



Announcements

◆ **Mother's Day Greetings** to all mothers, grandmothers, great grandmothers & godmothers in our Parish. Let us honor our mothers by praying for them and show our love and respect. May God bless all mothers with good health, joy, peace for Many Years! Let us also not forget to pray for our departed mothers who have entered Eternal Life. Memory Eternal!

◆ Save the date: the 110th annual **Memorial Day Pilgrimage** at St. Tikhon's Monastery is scheduled for May 23-26, 2014. For more information please see a flyer posted at the bulletin board or go to www.sttiknonmonastery.org

Birthday Greetings

Happy birthday to **Jennifer Czech**, who celebrates her birthday on May 15. May God grant you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!

Congratulation

Our heartfelt greetings to the newlyweds **Robert and Emily Czech**, who united their lives in the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony last Sunday. May God bless your new family with abundant health, peace and prosperity for Many Years to come!

Welcome Visitors

We welcome all visitors to our Divine Liturgy. It is our joy to have you with us today. If this is your first visit to our parish, we welcome you and invite you to return as often as you are able. While Holy Communion may only be received by prepared Orthodox Christians, our non-Orthodox guests are welcome to join us in venerating the Cross, receiving blessed bread at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, and for fellowship in our Church Hall after the service.