

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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Department of
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

Costly Mercy

December 1 is the feast day of an 8th-century saint known for his great charity. He is called Saint Philaret the Merciful.

Philaret lived with his wife and three children in the province of Paphlagonia, in Asia Minor. They had a very comfortable life, but their comfort nagged at Philaret when he saw the contrast between his family's ease and the distress of so many poor and destitute people. He asked himself, "Have I really been given so many good gifts from the Lord only so that I can enjoy the pleasures of life, never thinking of those who have nothing? What good will my possessions do me at the Last Judgment if, like a miser, I have preserved them for myself?"

He began giving away his wealth. The family was not too much affected at first, but then nomadic raiders left them impoverished. His wife and children became angry when he continued his charity, gradually giving away the little they still had. Though he suffered greatly from their hard feelings against him, he believed that the Lord would always provide for them, and that he was storing up treasures in heaven for them as well as himself.

Saint Philaret's lovely daughter eventually became the Byzantine empress, and the family received wealth once again. But Philaret continued his humble charity, living his last years in a monastery and personally serving meals to the beggars at the monastery door.

A 2014 movie entitled "The Overnighters" is in part the true story of another Christian, a Lutheran pastor named Jay Reinke, who also gives away much of what he and his family have, in order to help others in desperate need.

This documentary, which won a Special Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival, takes place in tiny Williston, North Dakota. The town is overwhelmed by thousands of indigent men

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:

Genevieve Bobenko, Pauline Bodnar, Nancy Filak, Mary Hadginske, John Kary, Helen Kurnewitz, Margaret Lawler, Kathleen Lazarczyk, Emil Mikulik, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Anatoly & Anna Rozanovich, Nadia Sojka, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

seeking work as part of the fracking operations in the oil-rich area.

As the number of seekers grows, the town becomes less able to offer them jobs or places to sleep. Reinke opens his church basement as an informal dormitory and counseling center. He works endlessly to meet the men's needs, waking them in the mornings with prayer and planning ways for them to get regular housing and jobs, while offering them advice and emotional support.

His congregation, at first supportive, becomes fearful when the checkered pasts of many of the men are revealed. Reinke is severely criticized for moving one man into the home he shares with his long-suffering but supportive wife Andrea and their teenage daughters: the man has a record of sex offenses. Then, some of those he has befriended begin to see him as an enemy, and in a startling climax he tells Andrea about things in his own past that wouldn't be easy for any wife to hear.

The movie shows the desperate poverty that exists in our wealthy country, and reveals the difficulty of accepting and helping people who enter and upset our comfortable lives. Mercy is costly, and only God can judge the hearts of those who offer it and those who accept it.



Announcements

◆ After examining the revenue and the cost of the candles that we sell in the church, (some were priced lower than they actually cost), it was decided at the previous trustees' meeting to change candle prices as follows: 7 day vigils - \$3, votives - \$0.50, large beeswax - \$2, and small beeswax - \$1. These prices go into effect today. We appreciate your support and understanding.

◆ Save the date: **Friday, December 5** – Annual St. Nicholas Day Fish Dinner at the Holy Assumption Church in Clifton. For tickets please see Peggy Kovalycsik.

◆ Save the date: **Saturday, December 20 at 1:00pm** in our church there will be a **Healing service** to the Mother of God in front of her icon "Queen of All". This service is open for everyone and is for the healing from any disease (this icon of Mother of God is especially known for the healings that occurred of those who suffered with cancer). At the service you will also be able to submit for commemoration the names of those who need healing.

◆ Just a reminder: we are in **Nativity Fast**, and this is the time when each member of our parish community is encouraged to prayerfully prepare for, and then participate in the Sacrament of private Confession and Holy Communion. **Parish Confessions** will be offered on **Saturday, Dec. 20** right after the Healing service, from 1:30pm to 3:00pm. If for any reason you cannot make it that day, you can have your Confession after any Vespers service or half-an-hour before the Divine Liturgy on Sundays, just please let Father Igor know in advance.

Birthday Greetings

Happy Birthday to **Greg Cahayla**, who celebrates his birthday this Saturday. May God grant you good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!



November 30, 2014

25th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Holy Apostle Andrew the First-called

- **8:50am** – Hours
- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy
Epistle: Eph. 4:1-6
Cor. 4:9-16 (Saint)
Gospel: Lk. 13:10-17
Jn. 1:35-51 (Saint)
- **Fellowship** – everyone is invited for Coffee Hour following the service.

Schedule of Services

- FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5**
6:00pm - Great Vespers with Litiya
- SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6 – ST. NICHOLAS**
9:00am - Divine Liturgy
6:00pm - Vespers
- SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7**
9:00am - Divine Liturgy