

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST 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

Secrets and Love

On January 15 we remember Saint John Calabytes, called the Hut-Dweller, who was born in the fifth century to a prominent Christian family in Constantinople. John was well-educated, and had the double luxury of access to books and the free time to read them.

The books John chose were mostly spiritual ones, and they convinced him that the familiar life of ease and comfort was not for him. He would enter a monastery, he decided, and would take on strict discipline.

He asked his parents for a book of the Gospels, wanting to study them more closely as he prepared for the life he intended to undertake. The parents' response reflected their attentive love for their son. It was also a sign of their respect for the Scriptures, and a reflection of their wealth. They had a beautiful book made for their boy, with flowing calligraphy and a gem-studded gold binding. It became his constant companion.

In secret, John made his way to a monastery in Bythynia whose monks were known as the "unsleeping" ones because their monastic rule was so demanding and rigorous. But his zeal and effort equaled theirs. He became so pale and gaunt that he no longer resembled the hearty young man who had first joined their ranks.

But something nagged at John. He remembered that his parents had shown only love and concern for him, and that he had abandoned them without a word. The elegant Gospel book, which he still kept with him, reminded him every day of their magnanimity. Finally he asked for, and received, the abbot's permission to return to his parents' home.



January 14, 2018

**32nd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Leavetaking of the Theophany**

- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy
Epistle: 1Tim. 1:15-17
Gospel: Lk. 18:35-43
- **Panikhida** – in memory of:
+ **Olga Holden, Maria Kovalytsik, Diane Kovalytsik, and Deborah Kovalytsik**, offered by Peggy and Nick Kovalytsik
+ **Anna Sereques**, offered by Patricia Galley
- **Coffee Hour** – everyone is invited for fellowship following the service
- **Board of Trustees'** meeting.

Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, JANUARY 20

6:00pm - Great Vespers

SUNDAY, JANUARY 21

9:00am - Divine Liturgy

Intercessory Prayers

We pray for all our fellow parishioners, and we pray especially for those who are incapable of being with us in church. Please keep in your prayers our Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Genevieve Bobenko, Michael Bzik, Mary Fehisin, Andrew & Dorothy Fabian, Mary Hadginske, Barbara Kary, Helen Kurnewitz, Kathleen Lazorzcyk, Dennis Maixner, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky.

Once again, though, John would carry out his plans in secret. He didn't approach the spacious house, but built a tiny hut near its gates, and lived there with little protection from harsh weather. His parents' servants gave him food to survive on, but with contempt and derision. John was so haggard that they had no idea he was the master's son. Even the master might not have recognized him.

Yet that symbol of love, the Gospel book, was about to bring parents and child together again. John, having received a divine vision that he was soon to die, asked a servant to bring his parents to him. Though they were reluctant, they were curious to see what this beggar had to say. Meeting them, John told them who he was, gave them the Gospel book, and asked for their prayers as he promised to pray for them.

The parents were devastated at the thought of losing their son so soon after finding him again, and guilty that he had languished by their very gates. But John assured them that he had chosen his life, and would have wanted no other. There is a passage in Ephesians that gives some comfort to all those who feel alienated or separated: "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ" (2:11).

Birthday Greetings

Happy birthday to **Barbara Kary**, and **Eva Stashitsky**, both celebrating their birthdays this Thursday. May God grant both of you, and all who celebrate a birthday this week good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!



Announcements

◆ House blessings are in progress. If your name was not included in the schedule but you would like to have your house blessed this year, please contact Fr. Igor or use a sign-up sheet in the church vestibule.

◆ Thank you to all those who in any possible way participated in preparation, beautification and clean-up of the services and social events in our parish during this Nativity season. May the blessing of the Lord be upon you for Many blessed Years!

◆ **Winter weather alert:** in case of necessity to cancel or delay any particular service at the church due to weather conditions, the information about cancellation will be posted on the parish website as well as on our Facebook page at least 1 hour before the scheduled time; or you can always call rectory to verify.

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.