

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

Martyrs and Confessors

On June 1 we remember Saint Justin the Martyr, and the next day we celebrate Saint Nicephorus the Confessor. These titles, Martyr and Confessor, have different meanings, as we would expect.

A martyr, which means "witness," is one who gives his or her life for the faith. A confessor is a person who does not actually die for the faith but witnesses to it under difficult and often dangerous conditions. The lives of these two saints commemorated a day apart make it clear that both kinds of witness demand courage and fortitude.

These two men might both be described with a third title: apologist. The word "apology" in its original meaning doesn't have the connotation of making amends after having done something wrong. "Apologetical" writings are those that explain and defend the faith, which Justin and Nicephorus both did.

Saint Justin, born to pagan parents, studied many forms of philosophy, searching among them for the truth about God. He was always left unsatisfied, and one day he met an old man who challenged him and got him to admit his dissatisfaction. The man told him about the writings of the prophets and the Savior they describe, urging him to read and to pray for enlightenment. Justin did read and pray, and became a committed Christian. Seeing the willing self-sacrifice of Christ's followers, he became even more convinced of the truth of their belief.

Justin was able to save many Christian lives by writing his "Apologia," explaining the faith for those who were new to it. After reading this work, the Emperor Antoninus halted the persecution of Christians. In the following years, Justin convinced many people to become believers. When in the year 166 he faced martyrdom due to false accusations, he was able to answer the

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, Andrew & Dorothy Fabian, Mary Hadginske, Barbara Kary, Helen Kurnewitz, Kathleen Lazarczyk, Dennis Maixner, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky.

government official who asked him, "Do you think by dying you will receive a reward from God?" Justin replied, "I do not think; I know."

Several centuries after Justin's martyrdom, Saint Nicephorus became Patriarch of Constantinople in 806. He was immediately controversial, having reluctantly accepted appointment by the Emperor while still a layman. This appointment, not surprisingly, was unpopular with many monks and priests. There were also those who disapproved of some of his patriarchal decisions. Most significantly, as a staunch defender of the veneration of icons, he later came into conflict with an equally staunch enemy of icon veneration – the new emperor, Leo, who allowed him to be harassed and finally exiled him.

During his years of harsh isolation, Nicephorus wrote several apologetical works defending the importance of icons, never backing down in his insistence that they must be part of Orthodox worship. He declined all offers to regain imperial favor by renouncing his views, and died in 829.

Martyrs and confessors acquired certainty about the faith through prayer, study and effort. They dared to say things like, "I do not think; I know." In our day, when such words might well bring accusations of arrogance and exclusivity, we need their example more than ever.

Birthday Greetings

Happy birthday to **Richard Paul Rahnefeld**, who celebrates his birthday today. May God grant you, and all who celebrate a birthday this week good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!

Floral Offerings

Floral arrangements for the Feast of Pentecost are offered by Maryann Stagen in memory of Archpriest Peter Kohanik, and her mother Mary Stagen, on the Anniversaries of their Repose. May their Memory be Eternal! Vichnaya Pamiat!



Announcements

◆ The Trustees' Appreciation Dinner will be held this **Friday, June 1** at **Buco's in Clifton** at **2:00 PM**. For more information please see Maryann Stagen.

◆ **Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors** program have funded vital ministries in our Diocese for several years. Parishes, youth, seminarians, and clergy have all benefitted through financial assistance, retreats, workshops, programs, and social/educational opportunities that help to nurture and grow the Body of Christ. Thanks to our DDBs, much has been accomplished as is being accomplished to this day. The fruits of their investment in the life of our Diocese are obvious and the source of much joy. As we are in the midst of the journey to Pentecost, perhaps you will consider making a contribution to the 2018 DDB program, and join with many others in this blessed work. For more information about the program please pick up a brochure by the bulletin board ... and, thank you for your generosity!



May 27, 2018

PENTECOST – FEAST OF THE HOLY TRINITY

- **8:45am** – Hours
- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy & Vespers with kneeling prayers
Epistle: Acts 2:1-11
Gospel: Jn. 7:37-52; 8:12
- **Coffee Hour** – everyone is invited for fellowship following the service

Schedule of Services

MONDAY, MAY 28, DAY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

9:00am - Divine Liturgy

SATURDAY, JUNE 2

6:00pm - Great Vespers

SUNDAY, JUNE 3

9:00am - Divine Liturgy & Blessing of our newly elected Board of Trustees