

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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ORTHODOX CHURCH in AMERICA

Seeing the Kingdom Before We Die

Luke 9:26 includes a warning from Our Lord. His words remind us that we are called to witness to Him no matter what the circumstances, and regardless of temptations to disavow Him in order to make our own lives easier. He says, "Whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and the holy angels."

The next verse is one that apparently still troubles people. Jesus says, "But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God." A lengthy article in the New Yorker Magazine cited this verse as a "proof" that the whole story of Jesus Christ is questionable. The writer of the article understands the verse to mean that the Second Coming would take place during the lifetimes of some who were Jesus Christ's contemporaries. Since that did not happen, Christianity is based on a lie, or in fact a series of lies.

But is that what Jesus means, that the Second Coming is imminent, and that some of those to whom He is speaking will live to see it? Does the fact that things didn't happen that way mean that Christianity is based on lies? Any Christian, especially one who knows some lives of saints and holy people, can confidently answer no to both questions.

Saint Paul is the first one who helps us see what Jesus' words meant. In II Corinthians 12:2-4 he writes about a man (himself, as

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, Barbara Kary, Helen Kurnewitz, Kathleen Lazarczyk, Dennis Maixner, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky.

later verses reveal) who "fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven — whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. And I know that this man was caught up into Paradise...and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter." Certainly this vivid description shows us that Paul saw the Kingdom of God promised by Christ before he tasted death

But Paul's experience is not the only example. We know of many saints who in various ways saw and knew the Kingdom while they lived on earth. Saint John the Chozebite saw a light from heaven whenever he served the Liturgy. Other saints were seen to be surrounded by angels while they served at the altar. Saint Seraphim spoke about man known as Peter the Breadgiver, who offered a piece of bread to a beggar and received a vision assuring him that, because of his act of simple charity, all his sins were forgiven. There are innumerable other incidents like this.

Some might see in these visions and revelations "proof" that Jesus' words are true. But they help us more if we accept them as God's gift of assurance that others have seen the destination of the path we are on, and know the journey is worth it.

Birthday Greetings

Happy birthday to **Anna Rozanovich** and **Michael Shaker**, both celebrating their birthdays tomorrow. May God grant you, and all who celebrate a birthday this week good health and happiness for Many Years!



Announcements

◆ Save the date: **His Eminence Archbishop Michael** will be visiting our parish with his annual Archpastoral visitation on the first weekend of November. Services will begin at their usual times: Great Vespers – on **Saturday, November 3, at 6:00PM**, and Hierarchical Divine Liturgy – on **Sunday, November 4, at 9:00AM**.

◆ On **Sunday, October 28** there will be a second collection in support of the Orthodox Christian Fellowship's (OCF) **College Student Sunday**. The Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA encourages all the faithful to be generous in your offering of support to this ministry on behalf of our treasured college students.

◆ Please be aware that Thanksgiving and Christmas is just around the corner. Keep in mind those of our neighbors who are in need. Our Pantry Coordinator, Helen Baron, is asking for your help with food or funds to donate to those who need assistance especially at this holiday season.

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.



October 14, 2018

20th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Holy Fathers of the 7th Ecumenical Council

- 8:45am – Hours
- 9:00am – Divine Liturgy
Epistles: Gal. 1:11-19
Heb. 13:7-16 (Fathers)
Gospels: Lk. 8:5-15
Jn. 17:1-13 (Fathers)

- Coffee Hour – everyone is invited for fellowship following the service

Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, OCT. 20 - MEMORIAL (ST. DEMETRIUS) SATURDAY
5:30pm - Panikhida for the Departed
6:00pm - Great Vespers

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21
9:00am - Divine Liturgy