

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

Dealing with the Devil

The words of Jesus Christ in Mark 13:9-13 warn the disciples of difficult times to come.

The events He foretells are frightening: "They will deliver you up to councils; and you will be beaten in synagogues...And brother will deliver up brother to death and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all for My name's sake."

But before telling them all these things, He urges the disciples to "take heed to yourselves," which is also translated as "watch out for yourselves" or "beware." This warning could simply mean that they must prepare for the trouble that is coming.

But it might also mean that they must be ready to face that trouble without letting it overcome them. The devil uses whatever he can to tempt us away from faith, and making us despair when we suffer unjustly for the faith can be one of his weapons. That is why Christ adds this promise to His warning: "But he who endures to the end will be saved."

A man who did allow the devil's temptation to overcome him is the monk Erasmus of the Kiev Caves. He came from a very wealthy family, and decided that the best way to spend his money was to beautify the monastery church with icons and precious relics. He used up his fortune doing this, and continued to live his personal life as a monk without possessions or wealth.

The devil found a way to use Erasmus' generous beautifying of the church against him by making him doubt what he had done.



February 24, 2019

38th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Sunday of the Prodigal Son

1st and 2nd Finding of the Honorable
Head of St. John the Baptist

- 9:00am – Divine Liturgy
Epistles: 1Cor. 6:12-20; 2Cor. 4:6-15
Gospels: Lk. 15:11-32; Mt. 11:2-15
- Panikhida – in memory of Angelina Afanasyeva, on the 40th day of her Repose, offered by Elena and Vladimir Nehrebecki.
- Coffee Hour – everyone is invited for fellowship following the service.
- Annual Parish Meeting

Schedule of Services

SATURDAY, MAR. 2 - MEMORIAL SATURDAY

5:30pm - Panikhida
6:00pm - Great Vespers

SUNDAY, MARCH 3

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 Ann Dolak, Dorothy Fabian, Barbara Kary, Kathleen Lazorczyk, Dennis Maixner, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakoz, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky.

Why, the devil tempted him, didn't you use your money to help the poor? What good is a beautiful church?

Erasmus allowed these evil questions to drive him into despair, which was his real sin. He drifted into an unhealthy, unfruitful way of living.

When he became deathly ill, his monastic brothers were sure that it was too late for him to repent. But the Mother of God appeared to him as he lay dying. She understood that he had wanted to honor her by making the church beautiful, and she assured him that he would be given time to repent, and would be received into the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Church remembers another person who was tempted by the devil: Saint Tarasius, Patriarch of Constantinople. At the end of a life spent honorably serving God, he was attacked by demons trying to make him despair by accusing him of various sins. But rather than give in, he shouted back at them, "I am not guilty of that sin!" and flailed the air with his arms, driving them off. When he finally died, he was at peace and his face was radiant.

Whatever ways the devil finds to tempt us into despair, it's good to remember the promise of Christ: The person who endures to the end will be saved.

Birthday Greetings

Happy birthday to **Father Igor**, who celebrates his birthday today; **Evgenia Kozlenko**, this Tuesday; and **Rose Marie Petrow**, this Saturday. May God grant all of you, and all who celebrate a birthday this week good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!



Announcements

◆ The **Annual Parish Meeting** will be today, following the Divine Liturgy and coffee hour. Please plan to attend this important meeting in life of our parish. A light lunch will be available.

◆ Diocesan **Altar Servers Retreat** will take place on **Friday, March 1st - Sunday, March 3rd** at Saint Basil Academy, 79 St Basil's Rd, Garrison, NY 10524. This event is open to current altar servers, and those with an interest in serving in the altar. Last day to register is Sunday, February 17. All those who plan on attending – children, chaperones, and clergy – must fill out the respective participant and chaperone registration forms available at the Diocesan website www.nynjoca.org.

◆ Save the date: **Holy Trinity Church in Rahway** will be having a Fish/Chicken Fry, **Saturday, March 2, 2019** from 5-7 PM at the American legion Post, 581 Maple Ave. Rahway, NJ 07065. Tickets are \$15.00 for adults and kids under ten are \$7.00. The Fry is by Argyle catering of Kearny. We will also hold a raffle and 50-50. Lots of off street parking. Take-out available. For more information, please see a flyer at the bulletin board.

◆ Diocesan **Annual Lenten Teen Retreat** will take place on **March 22-24, 2019** at Shiloh Bible Camp & Retreat Center, 753 Burnt Meadow Road, Hewitt, NJ 07412. For more information and how to register, please see a flyer at the bulletin board or visit our Diocesan website.