

Ecumenical Patriarchate
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey

ASCENSION

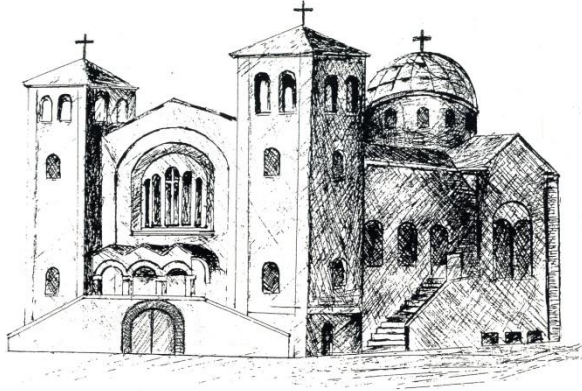
Greek Orthodox Church

FAIRVIEW - NEW JERSEY

Weekly Bulletin

Sunday, June 24, 2018

Nativity of John the Baptist



Οικουμενικόν Πατριαρχεῖον
Ἱερὰ Μητρόπολις Νέας Ἱερσέης
Ἑλληνική Ὀρθόδοξη Ἐκκλησία
ΘΕΙΑΣ ΑΝΑΛΗΨΕΩΣ
ΦΕΡΒΙΟΥ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ
ΕΒΔΟΜΑΔΙΑΙΟ ΔΕΛΤΙΟ
ΕΝΗΜΕΡΩΣΗΣ
Rev. Christos L. Pappas, Protopresbyter

ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑ ΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΙΩΝ & ΕΚΔΗΛΩΣΕΩΝ

Κυριακή, 24 Ιουνίου, 2018

Δ' Ματθαίου

8:30 π.μ. – 11:30 π.μ. Όρθρος, Θ. Λειτουργία
12:00 - 5:00 μ.μ. *Λαϊκή Αγορά της Φιλοπτώχου*

Τετάρτη, 27 Ιουνίου, 2018

8:00 μ.μ. Συνεδρίαση Κοινοτικού Συμβουλίου

Παρασκευή, 29 Ιουνίου, 2018

Απόστολοι Πέτρος και Παύλος

9:00 π.μ. Όρθρος, Θ. Λειτουργία

Σάββατο, 30 Ιουνίου, 2018

Σύναξις των Αγίων Αποστόλων

9:00 π.μ. Όρθρος, Θ. Λειτουργία

Κυριακή, 1η Ιουλίου, 2018

Ε' Ματθαίου

Κοσμά και Δαμιανού των Αναργύρων

8:30 π.μ. – 11:30 π.μ. Όρθρος, Θ. Λειτουργία

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES AND EVENTS

Sunday, June 24, 2018

Nativity of John the Baptist

8:30a.m.-11:30 a.m., Orthros, Divine Liturgy
12:00 noon - 5:00 p.m. Philoptochos Flea Market

Wednesday, June 27, 2018

8:00 p.m. Parish Council Meeting

Friday, June 29, 2018

Apostles Peter and Paul

8:30a.m.-11:30 a.m. Orthros, Divine Liturgy

Saturday, June 30, 2018

Synaxis of the Holy Apostles

9:00 a.m. Orthros, Divine Liturgy

Sunday, July 1, 2018

5th Sunday of Matthew

Cosmas & Damian Unmercen

8:30a.m.-11:30 a.m., Orthros, Divine Liturgy

St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 13:11-14; 14:1-4

Prokeimenon. Grave Mode.
Psalm 63.11,1

The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord.
Verse: Oh God, hear my cry.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 13:11-14; 14:1-4

Brethren, salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires. As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions. One believes he may eat anything, while the weak man eats only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who abstains, and let not him who abstains pass judgment on him who eats; for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for God is able to make him stand.

Πρὸς Ῥωμαίους 13:11-14, 14:1-4

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος βαρὺς.
ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 63.11,1

Εὐφρανθήσεται δίκαιος ἐν Κυρίῳ.
Στίχ. Εἰσάκουσον, ὁ Θεός, τῆς φωνῆς μου.

Πρὸς Ῥωμαίους 13:11-14, 14:1-4 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα εἶναι ἀπο

Ἀδελφοί, νῦν ἐγγύτερον ἡμῶν ἢ σωτηρία ἢ ὅτε ἐπιστεύσαμεν. Ἡ νύξ προέκοψεν, ἡ δὲ ἡμέρα ἤγγικεν· ἀποθώμεθα οὖν τὰ ἔργα τοῦ σκοτός, καὶ ἐνδυσώμεθα τὰ ὄπλα τοῦ φωτός. Ὡς ἐν ἡμέρα, εὐσχημόνως περιπατήσωμεν, μὴ κώμοις καὶ μέθαις, μὴ κοίταις καὶ ἀσελγείαις, μὴ ἔριδι καὶ ζήλῳ. Ἄλλ' ἐνδύσασθε τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, καὶ τῆς σαρκὸς πρόνοιαν μὴ ποιῆσθε, εἰς ἐπιθυμίας. Τὸν δὲ ἀσθενοῦντα τῇ πίστει προσλαμβάνεσθε, μὴ εἰς διακρίσεις διαλογισμῶν. Ὅς μὲν πιστεῖει φαγεῖν πάντα, ὁ δὲ ἀσθενῶν λάχανα ἐσθίει. Ὁ ἐσθίων τὸν μὴ ἐσθιοντα μὴ ἐξουθενείτω, καὶ ὁ μὴ ἐσθίων τὸν ἐσθιοντα μὴ κρινέτω· ὁ θεὸς γὰρ αὐτὸν προσελάβετο. Σὺ τις εἶ ὁ κρινῶν ἀλλότριον οἰκέτην; Τῷ ἰδίῳ κυρίῳ στήκει ἢ πίπτει. Σταθήσεται δὲ δυνατὸς γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ θεὸς στήσαι αὐτόν.

The Gospel According to Luke 1:1-25, 57-68, 76-80

Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things which have been accomplished among us, just as they were delivered to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilos, that you may know the truth concerning the things of which you have been informed. In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah; and he had a wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years. Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, according to the custom of the priesthood, it fell to him by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And Zacharias was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth; for he will be great before the Lord, and he shall drink no wine nor strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God, and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared." And Zacharias said to the angel,

"How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years." And the angel answered him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God; and I was sent to speak to you, and to bring you this good news. And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things come to pass, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time." And the people were waiting for Zacharias, and they wondered at his delay in the temple. And when he came out, he could not speak to them, and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple; and he made signs to them and remained dumb. And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home. After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she hid herself, saying, "Thus the Lord has done to me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men." Now the time came for Elizabeth to be delivered, and she gave birth to a son. And her neighbors and kinsfolk heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they would have named him Zacharias after his father, but his mother said, "Not so; he shall be called John." And they said to her, "None of your kindred is called by this name." And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he would have him called. And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, "His name is John." And they all marveled. And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea; and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, "What then will this child be?" For the hand of the Lord was with him. And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways." And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness till the day of his manifestation to Israel.

Ἐκ τοῦ Κατὰ Λουκᾶν 1:1-25, 57-68, 76, 80 Εὐαγγελίου τὸ Ἀνάγνωσμα Ἐπειδὴ περ πολλοὶ ἐπεχείρησαν ἀνατάξασθαι διήγησιν περὶ τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων καθὼς παρέδοσαν ἡμῖν οἱ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρέται γενόμενοι τοῦ λόγου, ἔδοξε καὶ μοί, παρηκολουθηκῶτι ἄνωθεν πᾶσιν ἀκριβῶς, καθεξῆς σοι γράψαι, κράτιστε Θεόφιλε, ἵνα ἐπιγνῶς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν. Ἐγένετο ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις Ἡρώδου τοῦ βασιλέως τῆς Ἰουδαίας ἱερέυς τις ὀνόματι Ζαχαρίας ἐξ ἐφημερίας Ἀβιά, καὶ ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ ἐκ τῶν θυγατέρων Ἀαρῶν, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτῆς Ἐλισάβετ. ἦσαν δὲ δίκαιοι ἀμφοτέρωθεν ἐνώπιον τοῦ Θεοῦ, πορευόμενοι ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐντολαῖς καὶ δικαιοσύμασι τοῦ Κυρίου ἀμεμπτοί. καὶ οὐκ ἦν αὐτοῖς τέκνον, καθότι ἡ Ἐλισάβετ ἦν στείρα, καὶ ἀμφοτέρωθεν προβεβηκότες ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτῶν ἦσαν. Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν τῷ ἱερατεῦσιν αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ τάξει τῆς ἐφημερίας αὐτοῦ ἕνα ἡμέρας τοῦ Θεοῦ, κατὰ τὸ ἔθος τῆς ἱερατείας ἔλαχε τοῦ θυμιάσαι εἰσελθὼν εἰς τὸν ναὸν τοῦ Κυρίου· καὶ πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος ἦν τοῦ λαοῦ προσευχόμενον ἔξω τῆς ὥρας τοῦ θυμιάματος. ὤφθη δὲ αὐτῷ ἄγγελος Κυρίου ἐστῶς ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου τοῦ θυμιάματος. καὶ ἐταράχθη Ζαχαρίας ἰδὼν, καὶ φόβος ἐπέπεσεν ἐπ' αὐτόν. εἶπε δὲ πρὸς αὐτόν ὁ ἄγγελος· μὴ φοβοῦ, Ζαχαρία· διότι εἰσηκούσθη ἡ δέησίς σου, καὶ ἡ γυνὴ σου Ἐλισάβετ γεννήσει υἱόν σοι, καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰωάννην· καὶ ἔσται χαρὰ σοι καὶ ἀγαλλίασις, καὶ πολλοὶ ἐπὶ τῇ γεννήσει αὐτοῦ χαρήσονται. ἔσται γὰρ μέγας ἐνώπιον τοῦ Κυρίου, καὶ οἶνον καὶ σίκερα οὐ μὴ πῖναι καὶ Πνεύματος Ἁγίου πλησθήσεται ἔτι ἐκ κοιλίας μητρὸς αὐτοῦ, καὶ πολλοὺς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ ἐπιστρέψει ἐπὶ Κύριον τὸν Θεὸν αὐτῶν· καὶ αὐτὸς προελεύσεται ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ ἐν πνεύματι καὶ δυνάμει Ἡλιοῦ, ἐπιστρέψαι καρδίας πατέρων ἐπὶ τέκνα καὶ ἀπειθεῖς ἐν φρονήσει δικαίων, ἐτοιμάσαι Κυρίῳ λαὸν κατεσκευασμένον. καὶ εἶπε Ζαχαρίας πρὸς τὸν ἄγγελον· κατὰ τί γνώσομαι τοῦτο; ἐγὼ γὰρ εἰμι πρεσβύτης καὶ ἡ γυνὴ μου προβεβηκυῖα ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτῆς. καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ ἄγγελος εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ἐγὼ εἰμι Γαβριὴλ ὁ παρεστηκὼς ἐνώπιον τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἀπεστάλην λαλῆσαι πρὸς σε καὶ εὐαγγελισασθαι σοι ταῦτα. καὶ ἰδοὺ ἔσσι σιωπῶν καὶ μὴ δυνάμενος λαλῆσαι ἄχρι ἧς ἡμέρας γένηται ταῦτα,

ἀνθ' ὧν οὐκ ἐπίστευσας τοῖς λόγοις μου, οἵτινες πληρωθήσονται εἰς τὸν καιρὸν αὐτῶν. καὶ ἦν ὁ λαὸς προσδοκῶν τὸν Ζαχαρίαν, καὶ ἐθαύμαζον ἐν τῷ χρόνῳ αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ ναῷ. ἐξελθὼν δὲ οὐκ ἠδύνατο λαλῆσαι αὐτοῖς, καὶ ἐπέγνωσαν ὅτι ὀπτασίαν ἑώρακεν ἐν τῷ ναῷ· καὶ αὐτὸς ἦν διανοεῖσθαι αὐτοῖς, καὶ διέμενε κωφός. καὶ ἐγένετο ὡς ἐπλήσθησαν αἱ ἡμέραι τῆς λειτουργίας αὐτοῦ, ἀπῆλθεν εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ. Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα τὰς ἡμέρας συνέλαβεν Ἐλισάβετ ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ, καὶ περιέκρυβεν ἑαυτὴν μῆνας πέντε, λέγουσα ὅτι οὕτω μοι πεποίηκεν ὁ Κύριος ἐν ἡμέραις αἷς ἐπεῖδεν ἀφελεῖν τὸ ὄνειδός μου ἐν ἀνθρώποις. Τῇ δὲ Ἐλισάβετ ἐπλήσθη ὁ χρόνος τοῦ τεκεῖν αὐτήν, καὶ ἐγέννησεν υἱόν. καὶ ἤκουσαν οἱ περίοικοι καὶ οἱ συγγενεῖς αὐτῆς ὅτι ἐμεγάλυνε Κύριος τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ μετ' αὐτῆς, καὶ συνέχαιρον αὐτῇ. Καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῇ ὀγδόῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἦλθον περιτεμεῖν τὸ παιδίον, καὶ ἐκάλουν αὐτὸ ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ Ζαχαρίαν. καὶ ἀποκριθεῖσα ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ εἶπεν· οὐχί, ἀλλὰ κληθήσεται Ἰωάννης. καὶ εἶπον πρὸς αὐτήν ὅτι οὐδεὶς ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ συγγενείᾳ σου ὃς καλεῖται τῷ ὀνόματι τούτῳ· ἐνένευον δὲ τῷ πατρὶ αὐτοῦ τὸ τί ἂν θέλοι καλεῖσθαι αὐτόν. καὶ αἰτήσας πινακίδιον ἔγραψε λέγων· Ἰωάννης ἐστὶ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ· καὶ ἐθαύμασαν πάντες. ἀνεῴχθη δὲ τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ παραχρῆμα καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐλάλει εὐλογῶν τὸν Θεόν. καὶ ἐγένετο ἐπὶ πάντας φόβος τοῦς περιοικοῦντας αὐτούς, καὶ ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ ὄρεινῃ τῆς Ἰουδαίας διελαλεῖτο πάντα τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα, καὶ ἔθεντο πάντες οἱ ἀκούσαντες ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῶν λέγοντες· τί ἄρα τὸ παιδίον τοῦτο ἔσται; καὶ χεὶρ Κυρίου ἦν μετ' αὐτοῦ. Καὶ Ζαχαρίας ὁ πατήρ αὐτοῦ ἐπλήσθη Πνεύματος Ἁγίου καὶ προεφήτευσεν λέγων· Εὐλογητὸς Κύριος, ὁ Θεὸς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ, ὅτι ἐπεσκέψατο καὶ ἐποίησεν λύτρωσιν τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ, Καὶ σύ, παιδίον, προφήτης ὑψίστου κληθήσῃ· προπροεῦση γὰρ πρὸ προσώπου Κυρίου ἐτοιμάσαι ὁδοὺς αὐτοῦ, τοῦ δοῦναι γινῶσιν σωτηρίας τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ, ἐν ἀφέσει ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν διὰ σπλάγχνα ἐλέους Θεοῦ ἡμῶν, ἐν οἷς ἐπεσκέψατο ἡμᾶς ἀνατολὴ ἐξ ὑψους ἐπιφᾶναι τοῖς ἐν σκότει καὶ σκιᾷ θανάτου καθημένοις, τοῦ κατευθῆναι τοὺς πόδας ἡμῶν εἰς ὁδὸν εἰρήνης. Τὸ δὲ παιδίον ἠῤῥα καὶ ἐκράται οὗτο πνεύματι, καὶ ἦν ἐν ταῖς ἐρήμοις ἕως ἡμέρας ἀναδείξεως αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὸν Ἰσραὴλ.

Οι πρωτοκορυφαίοι Απόστολοι Πέτρος και Παύλος

Η μνήμη κάθε Αγίου είναι αφορμή και πρόξενος χαράς, ευλογίας και πνευματικής ωφέλειας. Όπως όταν μέσα στη νύχτα ανάψουμε μια λαμπάδα φεύγει το σκοτάδι, έτσι και μέσα στη ψυχή μας, όταν τιμούμε τους Αγίους και ιδιαίτερα τους Αποστόλους Πέτρο και Παύλο, φωτίζεται η σκέψη και η καρδιά μας. «Όταν η γη δίνει πλούσια καρποφορία, δεν χαίρονται μόνο οι γεωργοί, αλλά όλοι οι άνθρωποι που γεύονται τους καρπούς και απολαμβάνουν και οι ίδιοι τον κόπο των γεωργών»[1].

Έτσι συμβαίνει όταν τιμούμε και τους δυο κορυφαίους Αποστόλους, αφού εκείνοι έζησαν, κήρυξαν, δοκιμάστηκαν, μαρτύρησαν για τον Χριστό και για να διαδοθεί ο Χριστιανισμός, αλλά σε μας ήρθε το μεγάλο πνευματικό όφελος της παρουσίας τους στον κόσμο.

Οι δυο μεγάλοι Απόστολοι είναι καθοδηγητές όλων των άλλων Αποστόλων, των Αγίων, των Μαρτύρων, Αρχιερέων, Διδασκάλων και όλων των χριστιανών. Ο Άγιος Γρηγόριος τους χαρακτηρίζει ως «τους αρχιτέκτονες της ευσέβειας και της αρετής, καθώς προβάλλουν τον λόγο της ζωής μέσα από την Αγία Γραφή»[2].

Για να παρηγορηθούμε όλοι εμείς οι χριστιανοί που πολλές φορές απογοητευόμαστε για την σωτηρία μας λόγω της ολιγοπιστίας και της ακηδίας που έχουμε, πρέπει να προβάλλουμε τους δυο αυτούς Αποστόλους στη ζωή μας.

Η μετάνοιά τους και το οδυνηρό πένθος θεράπευσαν την άρνηση του μαθητή (Πέτρος) και τη μανία του διώκτη (Παύλος) ξεριζώνοντας τελείως από την ψυχή τους κάθε κακό. Ο τρόπος που το κατάφεραν ήταν διπλός: μετάνοια στη ζωή τους και αγάπη στο πρόσωπο του Χριστού. Έκαναν πράξη το λόγο του ψαλμωδού. «Καρδίαν συντετριμμένην και τεταπεινωμένην ουκ εξουδενώσει»[3]. Ας σκεφτούμε ότι ο Πέτρος λίγο πριν αρνηθεί το Χριστός τρεις φορές,

τοποθετούσε τον εαυτό του πάνω απ' όλους λέγοντας: «εἰ πάντες σκανδαλισθήσονται ἐν σοί, ἐγὼ δὲ οὐδέποτε σκανδαλισθήσομαι»[4]. Ο καρδιογνώστης Κύριος, όμως, λόγω της μεγάλης αγάπης του Πέτρου στο πρόσωπό του και της μεγάλης του ταπεινώσης του είπε: «Συ εἰ Πέτρος καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν»[5].

Ο Απόστολος Παύλος, μεγάλος διώκτης των Χριστιανών, κατευθύνθηκε στη Δαμασκό για να εξολοθρεύσει τους χριστιανούς και εκεί γνώρισε το προσωπικό, πνευματικό του «Βατερλώ». Έχασε το φως του σώματός του, για να φωτίσει με το κήρυγμα του αναστημένου Χριστού ολόκληρο τον κόσμο. Ταπεινώθηκε με συντριβή καρδίας, μετανόησε, βαπτίσθηκε[6] και έγινε από διώκτης του Χριστού, ο μέγας κήρυκός Του που ονομάστηκε «ο Πρώτος μετά τον Ένα».

Όταν ο Παύλος άρχισε την αποστολή του, ο Χριστιανισμός ήταν ένας ασήμαντος αριθμός φοβισμένων πιστών ανάμεσα σε φανατικούς Ιουδαίους. Όταν μετά από 30 περίπου χρόνια παρέδιδε μαρτυρικά τη ψυχή του στο Χριστό, ο Χριστιανισμός είχε γίνει -για την εποχή του- παγκόσμια θρησκεία. Και οι δυο Απόστολοι, δεν συμβιβάστηκαν στη ζωή τους με τίποτα. Ας θυμηθούμε τι γράφει στους Κορίνθιους ο Παύλος για τα βάσανα που υπέστη στη ζωή του για το Χριστό: «ἐν κόποις περισσοτέρως, ἐν πληγαῖς ὑπερβαλλόντως, ἐν φυλακαῖς περισσοτέρως, ἐν θάνατοις πολλάκις· ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων πεντάκις τεσσαράκοντα παρὰ μίαν ἔλαβον, τρις ἐρραβδίσθην, ἅπαξ ἐλιθάσθην, τρις ἐναυάγησα, νυχθημερὸν ἐν τῷ βυθῷ πεποίηκα· ὁδοιπορίας πολλάκις, κινδύνοις ποταμῶν, κινδύνοις ληστῶν, κινδύνοις ἐκ γένους, κινδύνοις ἐξ ἔθνῶν, κινδύνοις ἐν πόλει, κινδύνοις ἐν ἔρημῳ, κινδύνοις ἐν θαλάσῃ, κινδύνοις ἐν ψευδαδέλφοις· ἐν κόπῳ καὶ μόχθῳ, ἐν ἀγρυπνίαις πολλάκις, ἐν λιμῷ καὶ δίψει, ἐν νηστείαις πολλάκις, ἐν ψύχει καὶ γυμνότητι·»[7]. Από την άλλη ο Πέτρος από την ημέρα της Πεντηκοστής, όπως μας

αναφέρουν οι Πράξεις, μαζί με τους άλλους έντεκα Αποστόλους μίλησε προς το συγκεντρωμένο πλήθος με παρρησία και ομορφιά ώστε να πιστέψουν και να βαπτιστούν 3.000 άτομα[8] και για το λόγο αυτό στοχοποιήθηκε από το ιουδαϊκό ιερατείο. Φυλακίσθηκε πολλές φορές και σώθηκε θαυματουργικά από την εκτέλεσή του[9]. Το κήρυγμα του Πέτρου περιορίστηκε κυρίως στους Εβραίους και μάλιστα στην Παλαιστίνη, ενώ του Παύλου απευθύνεται στους Ιουδαίους της διασποράς και στους Εθνικούς[10]. Δηλ. ο μεν Πέτρος προσπάθησε να εκχριστιανίσει τους Εβραίους και να τους εντάξει στην νέα εποχή της Διαθήκης του Χριστού, ο δε Παύλος προσπάθησε να προσελκύσει στην νέα θρησκεία τον ειδωλολατρικό κόσμο μέσω των Εβραίων της διασποράς. Πώς το κατάφεραν αυτό; Με το να ζουν μόνο για τον Χριστό. Ας θυμηθούμε τα λόγια του Παύλου: «Ζω δε ουκέτι εγώ· ζει δε εν εμοί Χριστός»[11]. Ας ζητήσουμε από τους Αποστόλους να ζήσουμε κι εμείς την προσωπική μας «Δαμασκό». Δεν βρισκόμαστε στην ίδια κατάσταση με τον Σαύλο, γιατί τα μάτια μας είναι ανοιχτά. Γνωρίζουμε τον Χριστό και είμαστε βαπτισμένοι στο Άγιο Πνεύμα. Είμαστε σίγουροι ότι ο Χριστός έχει αναστηθεί και ότι είναι ο μεγάλος δάσκαλος της ζωή μας και δεν είμαστε δικαιολογημένοι να τον αρνηθούμε όπως ο Σίμωνας. Οι σύγχρονοι χριστιανοί μένουμε μακριά από το Χριστό, επειδή επιλέγουμε να ζούμε με πλεονεξία, εγωκεντρισμό, αλαζονεία απέναντι στα δώρα του Θεού. Ο Χριστός μας μιλάει για τον ουρανό και για την αιώνια ζωή κι εμείς, κοντόφθαλμα, βλέπουμε έως τον τάφο μας. Δεν έχουμε κατανοήσει ότι μέσα στον τάφο μας περιμένει ο Χριστός για να μας οδηγήσει για να μας οδηγήσει στην μία, αιώνια ζωή. Όταν αυτό το κατανοήσουμε, τότε θα βροντοφωνάξουμε μέσα μας: «Ἐμοὶ γὰρ τὸ ζῆν Χριστὸς καὶ τὸ ἀποθανεῖν κέρδος»[12].

St Peter: A visiting dignitary is honoured with a symbolic key to the city as a token of respect, but for eternity the keys to the kingdom of Heaven have been placed by the Messiah himself, out of respect to one of his greatest disciples, into the hand of a man called Peter, the constant companion and beloved friend of Jesus Christ. This magnificent disciple, whom trust places at the gates of heaven to examine the credentials of those who would enter, had a master key in his lifetime which unlocked the hearts of men to admit the Saviour, and his wisdom was the key to men's minds which in turn admitted the intelligence to give meaning to the Christian faith. Brought to Jesus by his brother Andrew, a fisherman like himself, Peter forthwith acknowledged the Master and undertook a lifetime of casting his fisherman's nets for the sake of Jesus Christ and so excelled himself in his personal and total dedication to the Saviour that in the two thousand years that have elapsed any roll call of the disciples finds the name of Peter among the most prominent. He ranks with St. Paul as one without whom the new Faith could not have survived the whips and scorns of the pagan era of superstition and spiritual darkness.

Several accounts are given in the New Testament about St. Peter and his strong bond with the Nazarene, but the stirring passage in Matthew should be etched in the mind of every Christian, that which says "And I say to thee that thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. I will give thee the keys of the Kingdom of the Heavens, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in the heavens, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in the heavens." This divine authority vested in Peter as well as to all of the disciples of Christ, placed a sacred trust in Peter, whose name means, "rock" from the Greek word *petra*. It

was upon this rock of faith, as depicted in holy Scripture, that the formation of the Christian Church, the disciples' handywork, was not only a success but a triumph as well. Peter, the redoubtable fisherman who had never strayed far from his home in Capernaum on the shores of Galilee, was at the side of Jesus in his ministry throughout the Holy Land and as one of his closest apostles planned the campaigns for the winning of converts.

In the course of this spiritual campaign, he came to witness the many miracles of the Master, such as the walking on water, the miracle of the loaves and fishes and, many others which were to lend an aura of divine authority to all of the apostles in the stewardship of the Church.

Peter, together with many others, was privileged to witness the glorious resurrection of Christ, an event which all Christendom views with such reverence as to regard the first followers of Christ, as next to divine. Peter struck out on his own in the missionary work of renewed dedication after the death of Jesus, but he favoured Jerusalem and together with other followers of Christ assisted diligently in the formation of the Christian community in Jerusalem. Peter, whose presence at Gethsemane had further fuelled the fires of Christian zeal in his heart, joined John in Samaria, Lydda, Joppa, and Caesaria in a propagation of the truth of the Messiah, but returning to Jerusalem found that a famine had set in and that the Christian community was somehow being blamed for the economic woes that ravaged the land. With the help of Paul and Barnabas they restored the confidence of the people and led them out of their hapless state to an era of new prosperity. Ultimately Peter established the first church in the ancient city of Antioch and became its first bishop. Later in Rome, he was sentenced by Nero to be crucified, a manner of death in which he emulated the Messiah.

St Paul: Whenever the storms of controversy within the Christian Church have cast a shadow on the Cross of Jesus Christ, the clouds have been rolled back by the spiritual brightness, undiminished by the centuries, of the magnificent St. Paul. Most Christians agree that were it not for St. Paul, the new faith of Jesus Christ would have never taken hold to become the mainstay of Western civilization. The total commitment of St. Paul to the Messiah, for which he ultimately sacrificed his life, brought the message of Jesus to the nucleus of Christians over a period of thirty years and assured the permanency of the truth of the Savior. It was Christ, of course, who planted the seeds, but it was St. Paul who nourished the garden of Christendom. St. Paul was born in Tarsus, a flourishing crossroads city in Cilicia, Asia Minor. He received his religious training in Jerusalem under the renowned rabbinical tutor Gamaliel, from whom he absorbed the teaching of the Pharisees with intensity and sincerity. He deplored the acceptance of the Messiah as heresy to his religion and as an affront to the Law of the ancient covenant. Armed with articles of condemnation from his council, he set out for Damascus with an avowed purpose of wiping out this new belief in Jesus Christ. On the road to Damascus he met Jesus. This is perhaps the most dramatic turnabout in history, one that was destined to alter the course of the world. St. Paul embraced as the Messiah the man whom he had set out to destroy; thereafter he devoted himself with deep conviction to the truth of Christianity. The conversion alone of this profoundly religious man is in itself testimony to the reality of the Messiah's divinity. Although not one of the twelve disciples of Christ, Paul linked himself with the apostles and became the greatest apostolic missionary of all time. A brilliant orator and writer, he was sensitive to the needs and moods of the various tribes of both

Greek and Near Eastern backgrounds. Furthermore, he was intelligent enough to cope with the problems that beset the new faith at every turn.

St. Paul, a man of small physical stature, cast a giant shadow upon the missionary scene as he traveled the length and breadth of the ancient Eastern world. He had success following success in the vast areas of Asia, Greece, Cyprus, Macedonia, and eventually Rome, where his most noble purpose was to prove his undoing. He had a fondness for Jerusalem, for whose poor he continually solicited funds. Moreover, he envisioned a union of the Jewish and Christian communities, a project which was to prove dangerous. He met James in Jerusalem and together they sought a means to bring this laudable plan into being. However, he encountered not love but outright hostility. In fact, he had to be saved from an angry mob by the Roman authorities, who placed him aboard a ship bound for Rome, where he arrived after a tossed voyage. St. Paul had always wanted to use the eternal city with its strategic position in the empire, from which the spread of Christianity could be projected. Although he preached in Rome for two years, his ambitions were never completely realized, except for the production of his masterful Pastoral Letters. Despite his frail health he continued his work for Christ at an accelerated pace, but his enthusiastic love for the Savior also brought him the resentment of certain influential elements in Rome. When his enemies had done their worst, he was brought to trial and met a martyr's death about A.D. 67. The true greatness of Paul is discerned in his writings, particularly his epistles. As author of almost half of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, he has influenced Christianity as no other man with the exception of Jesus himself. Even after nearly two thousand years, St. Paul's candor, freshness, clarity, and perceptiveness in his writings are as welcome as sunrise. Orthodox Christianity remembers St. Paul each year on 29th June and as one of the Apostles on June 30.

FLEA MARKET PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY

*ASCENSION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
101 Anderson Avenue, Fairview, NJ 07022
Church Office Phone # 201 945 6448*



Friday, June 22, 2018 9:00 am - 6:00pm

Saturday, June 23, 2018 9:00 am - 6:00pm

Sunday, June 24, 2018 12:00 noon - 5:00pm

Proceeds for the benefit of Philoptochos/Church Project

Ascension Greek Orthodox Church
101 Anderson Ave. Fairview New Jersey
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THE WEEKLY BULLETIN
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SUNDAY, June 24, 2018
Nativity of John the Baptist

ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ, 24 Ιουνίου, 2018
Δ' Ματθαίου
Γέννηση Ιωάννου Προδρομού

MEMORIAL SERVICES

ΜΝΗΜΟΣΥΝΑ

6 μήνες: Κλάρα Μιαούλη

6 months: Clara Miaoulis

*Ο καφές προσφέρεται
από την οικογένεια Μιαούλη
που τελεί το μνημόσυνο
εις μνήμη της κεκοιμημένης.*

*The coffee is offered by the Miaoulis Family
that has the Memorial Service.*

TRISAGIO - ΤΡΙΣΑΓΙΟ

3 χρόνια: Αργυρούλα Δημητράκη

3 years: Argyroula Demetrakis