

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
FEAST OF THE APOSTLES PETER AND PAUL



Icon of Saints Peter and Paul -- June 29th

June 29, 2014

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

THE HOLY, GLORIOUS, ALL-PRAISEWORTHY AND PREEMINENT APOSTLES PETER AND PAUL PASSING INTO ETERNAL LIFE (1941) OF BLESSED YAKYM (JOACHIM) (SENKIVSKY), BASILIAN PROTOHEGOU MEN AND MARTYR OF DROHOBYCH, WHERE HIS BODY WAS BOILED

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF JUNE 30 – JULY 6

PLEASE NOTE: There will be NO vespers during the Summer months unless noted in the bulletin.

SUNDAY, JULY 6 – *FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; OUR VENERABLE FATHER SISOES THE GREAT*
9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy All Parishioners

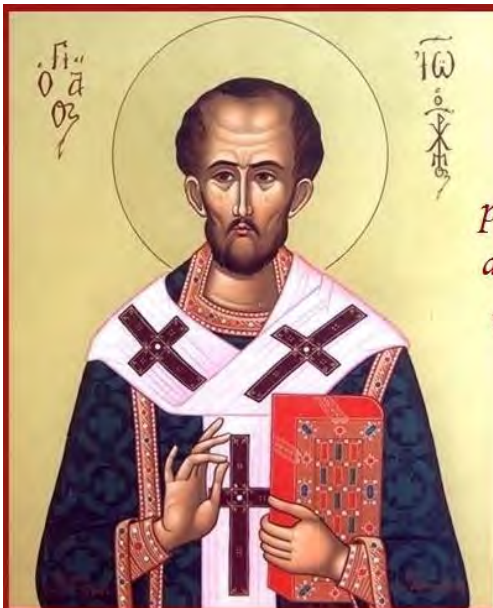
Today is “**Soup’s On**” Sunday. On the last Sunday of each month we will have a soup lunch available. A freewill offering is asked with the proceeds going to help pay the mortgage. If you would like to volunteer to provide the soup for a future Sunday, please talk to Olga Miller or Olena Bankston.

Last Sunday’s Bulletin

If you haven’t yet picked up last Sunday’s bulletin, it is available in the church hall, or on our website, stjohnthebaptizer.org.

Warm Welcome!

We warmly welcome all of our visitors!
It’s good to have you with us!



The Apostle has told us to pray uninterruptedly, without anger or passionate thoughts. And this is excellent advice, for every thought which takes the mind away from God is not merely from the devil but is the devil himself.

† *St. John Chrysostom*

Sts. Peter and Paul

Peter was the son of Jonah and the brother of Andrew, the First-called. He was of the Tribe of Simeon from the town of Bethsaida. He was a fisherman and, at first, was called Simon but the Lord was pleased to call him Cephas or Peter: "And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, He said, You are Simon the son of Jonah: you shall be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, a rock" (St. John 1:42). He was the first of the disciples to clearly express faith in the Lord Jesus saying: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (St. Matthew 16:16). His love for the Lord was great and his faith in the Lord gradually strengthened.

When the Lord was brought to trial, Peter denied Him three times but after only one glance into the face of the Lord, Peter's soul was filled with shame and repentance. After the descent of the Holy Spirit, Peter appears as a fearless and powerful preacher of the Gospel. Following one of his sermons in Jerusalem, three-thousand souls converted to the Faith. He preached the Gospel throughout Palestine and Asia Minor, throughout Illyria and Italy. Peter worked many powerful miracles; he healed the sick, resurrected the dead; the sick were healed even from his shadow. He had a great struggle with Simon the Magician who proclaimed himself as god but in reality Simon was a servant of Satan. Finally, Peter shamed and defeated him. By order of the evil Emperor Nero, Simon's friend, Peter was condemned to death. Installing Linus as Bishop of Rome, counseling and comforting the flock of Christ, Peter proceeded joyfully to his death.

Seeing the cross before him, he begged his executioners to crucify him upside down for he considered himself unworthy to die as did his Lord. Thus the great servant of the Great Lord reposed and received the wreath of eternal glory.

Paul was born in Tarsus of the tribe of Benjamin. At first, he was called Saul, studied under Gamaliel, was a Pharisee and a persecutor of Christianity. He was miraculously converted to the Christian

Faith by the Lord Himself Who

appeared to him on the road to Damascus. He was baptized by the Apostle Ananias, was called Paul and numbered in the service of the great apostles. With a fiery zeal, Paul preached the Gospel everywhere from the borders of Arabia to Spain, among the Jews and among the Gentiles. He received the title "Apostle to the Gentiles."

As horrible as his sufferings were, so much more was his super human patience. Throughout all the years of his preaching Paul, from day to day, hung as one on a weak thread between life and death. Since he fulfilled all days and nights with labor and suffering for Christ, since he organized the Church in many places and since he attained such a degree of perfection he was able to say: "It is now no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20). Paul was beheaded in Rome during the reign of Emperor Nero at the same time as the Apostle Peter. (Prologue from Ochrid)



Age of Sin

Why is Catholicism in decline?

<http://www.aleteia.org/en/religion/article/age-of-sin-5855080695726080?>

One of my sociological preoccupations is concern for the question: Why has Catholicism gone into steep decline in the last half-century or so in the most modernized and prosperous countries in the world – that is, the United States, Canada, and much of Europe?

The most popular answer to this question is that the decline is totally the result of Vatican II. But I reject that answer. If Vatican II played a role in the decline, it was only a very small role. The important factors are to be found elsewhere. There may be a hundred of these factors, but one might be more prevalent than the others.

Christianity is a salvation religion, and it offers to save us from sin. According to the Christian story, God became incarnate in Jesus Christ, and then suffered and died on the cross, to save us from our sins. The premise upon which all this is grounded is, of course, that we humans are sinners – very serious sinners.

However, what if we are not sinners? Then it would follow that we don't need salvation from sin. And if we are sinners but don't feel that we are sinners, then we won't feel the need of salvation. So Christianity will make no sense to us.

By and large we modern men and women do not feel that we are sinners, at least not in any serious sense. Oh, we admit that we

are not perfect. Any one of us can draw up a list of our imperfections: we sometimes eat or drink a little too much; we often exercise too little; we don't read enough good books; we commit little acts of impoliteness from time to time; and so on. But no really big sins – certainly no sins that are great enough for the Creator and Sustainer of the universe to become man and suffer and die in order to atone for our great wickedness.

We admit that some humans truly are very wicked – Hitler, Stalin, Osama bin Laden, Charles Manson, and a few others. But they are very untypical of humanity. The rest of us, normal human beings, are utterly horrified by the crimes of Hitler and company. This is proof – isn't it? – that we ourselves are not very wicked. So we don't need salvation from sin. And we don't need a religion that offers this salvation. No wonder Catholicism is in decline.

There was a time, centuries ago, when people in the world of Christendom (the world that we today call the “Western world” – for we can no longer with any accuracy call it the Christian world) had a strong sense of their sinfulness, and thus a strong sense that they needed to be saved from their sins. In that atmosphere Catholicism flourished.

Even when the great Protestant Reformation came along (better called, perhaps, the Protestant Revolution), this strong sense of

sin persisted. The leading early Protestants, e.g., Luther and Calvin, had as strong a sense of human sin as did any Catholic – maybe an even stronger sense.

But things changed in the 18th century. The idea that human nature is inclined to evil was gradually replaced by the opposite idea that human nature is inclined to good. The thinker who expressed this idea better than anybody else was Jean-Jacques Rousseau, often called “the father of Romanticism.” But if Rousseau was a powerful influence on 18th century thought and feeling (and he certainly was), this is because he expressed in persuasive words what everybody – or at least vast numbers of people – were already on the verge of thinking and feeling.

This substitution of the modern idea of human goodness for the Catholic idea of Original Sin has had, it must be admitted, some very important good consequences. For one thing, it facilitated the coming of democracy; for if humans are good, then we can trust them to govern themselves. For another, it has given us great confidence in our own creative powers, leading to tremendous economic and technological progress. But, and this also has to be admitted, undermined the *raison d’être* of Catholicism.

Is there any chance that the old Catholic view of human sinfulness can be revived? Yes, if we enter another age of wickedness, like the age of Hitler and Stalin. It was relatively easy to believe in Original Sin during the era of Hitler and Stalin, who offered daily

demonstrations of that wickedness. But is there no other way of recovering our feeling that we need salvation from sin?

It all depends on what we mean by sin. If sin is a matter of sensational immorality (murder, rape, robbery, embezzlement, the sexual molestation of children, self-destruction through drug and alcohol abuse, etc.), then most of us are not sinners, and we don’t need Christian redemption. But if sin is an absence of holiness, then we all need redemption, for God alone is truly holy. We humans are not holy, and cannot make ourselves holy. We can become holy – become saved from our sinful state of unholiness – only by the gift of Christ.

The root problem, I suggest, is that we moderns don’t really believe in God. At most we semi-believe. But if we truly believed in God, we would have a strong sense of the holiness of God; and if we had a strong sense of God’s holiness, we would have a correspondingly strong sense of our own lack of holiness (that is, our sinfulness); and this in turn would make us feel a need for salvation from sin.

In sum, Catholicism will revive once a strong and genuine belief in God revives.

David Carlin, *a professor of sociology and philosophy at the Community College of Rhode Island at Newport, is the author of The Decline and Fall of the Catholic Church in America.*

BEING A CHRISTIAN

The Christian life requires work and effort

Every priest can tell you that he's had his share of people who don't think he understands the difficulties they face with their jobs, families, and spouses. Many people think their priest expects too much of them, and they ignore the homilies that challenge them to go deeper into their faith. They drop a check into the collection plate, and head out the door of the church for another round of spiritual nothingness.

Yet the scriptures tell us that we must seek first the Kingdom of Heaven. Being successful in business or raising the perfect child are wonderful things, but they should not be on the top of our list. Making more money than your brother-in-law, or having a better house than your neighbors should not be on your list. Working for a good retirement can be a good thing, but not at the expense of your eternal life.

The challenges given to us by the Church's priests are meant to aid us in our quest for the Kingdom of God. And if we are taking our faith seriously we will be grateful for those hard to hear homilies that hit too close to home. We seek out a golf pro in order to improve our swing, and expect him to help us be a better golfer. The trainer in the gym is expected to help us be healthier, and fitter, and our financial adviser is expected to help us make good choices in our investments, yet we ignore the advice of our parish priest, as he attempts to help us gain ground in the spiritual arena.

Our pride can keep us from deepening our spiritual life, if we refuse to seek the guidance of one more experienced in the inner life. If we don't want anyone telling us what do to or pointing out areas of our lives that need change, we can become off kilter, spiritually. The spiritual father gives

direction and sets standards that, like the golf pro and weight lifting instructor, are based on experience.

Have your priest recommend some spiritual books that can inspire you to work for perfection in your spiritual life. Ask the proprietor of your parish bookstore to suggest books that would work for you. If you don't have a prayerbook, get one and use it. Create an icon corner or wall for your own personal and family devotions.

Start going to confession on a regular basis. And, whatever you do, don't allow yourself to be late for the services. Arrive from fifteen minutes to a half hour early, so as to properly prepare yourself for the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Get in the habit of attending Orthros if this service precedes the Sunday Liturgy, or attend the Vesper service, or the All Night Vigil, on Saturday night. Make an effort to immerse yourself in the life of the Church.

Remember, if we let our own ego be our spiritual guide, we will be following the direction of a fool. Living the Christian life takes effort on our part, and with the guidance of someone who really knows us, and is willing to point out where we need to change, we will begin to grow in our faith. The Christian life begins when we decide to think like a Christian, and spiritual maturation comes with work and effort, just as does emotional maturation. Spiritual maturation will fill your life with tranquility, joy and meaningfulness, but you must work for this end.

With love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon
All-Merciful Saviour
Orthodox Christian Monastery


**The Original
COFFEE
WITH
JESUS**


 There's a new church starting up in town that promises to be "relevant" and different. Think I might try it.


 You keep searching for the perfect fit, Carl, but you're never going to find it.


 Then maybe this is a sign that I need to start my own church! The Church of Carl!

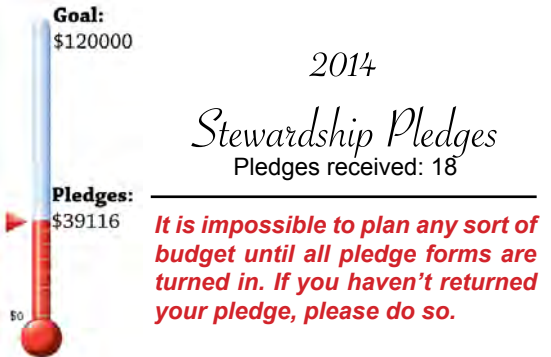

 Which would fast become a cult, Carl. No, this is a sign that you need to be relevant.

CoffeeWithJesus.com

Share 2014

We do not doubt the Resurrection of Christ, His gift of salvation to us all. How are we prepared to reciprocate for this most wondrous of gifts? Let us help our eparchy bring Christ's salvation to others by making a contribution to **Share 2014 – Annual Eparchial Appeal**.

Ми не сумніваємося у Воскресінні Христа і Його дару для нашого спасіння. Як ми готові віддячити Йому за цей найчудовіший із всіх дарів? То ж допоможемо нашій єпархії принести Христове спасіння до інших внесок в **Share 2014 – Єпархіальний Заклик**.



Pastor:

Fr. James Bankston: (619) 905-5278

Pastoral Council:

Fr. Deacon Frank Avant: (760) 805-1667

Vladimir Bachynsky: (619) 865-1279

Mark Hartman: (619) 446-6357

Luke Miller: (858) 354-2008

Jeanine Soucie: (718) 674-4529

Social Committee Chairpersons:

Olga & Michael Miller:

(858) 483-3294

Finance Committee:

Bohdan Knianicky: (619) 303-9698

Fr. Deacon Frank Avant: (760) 805-1667



**Українська Греко-Католицька Церква
Святого Йоана Хрестителя
St. John the Baptizer
Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church**

4400 Palm Avenue
La Mesa, CA 91941
Parish Office: (619) 697-5085

Website: stjohnthebaptizer.org

Pastor: Fr. James Bankston
frjames@mac.com

Fr. James' cell phone: (619) 905-5278

Saints Peter and Paul

It is the birthday of the apostles Peter and Paul that has dawned today, not the birthday which entangled them in the world, but the one that set them free from the world. It is in virtue of human feebleness, of course, that people are born for distress, and in virtue of Christian charity that martyrs are born for a crown.

And it is on account of their merits that this day has been set before us for the solemn celebration of their feast and the imitation of their holiness, so that by recalling the glory of the martyrs we might love in them what those who killed them hated and by loving their manly courage we might honor their sufferings.

It was by their courage that their merit

was acquired, and by their sufferings that their reward was earned.

One day for two martyrs and two apostles. As far as we have gathered from the tradition of the Church, they did not suffer on one and the same day, and yet they did suffer on one and the same day. Peter was the first to suffer on this day, Paul suffered on this day later on.

Their merits gave equal value to their sufferings. This was brought about for them by the One who was in them, who was suffering in them, who was suffering with them, who was helping them as they fought, awarding them the crown when they won.

St. Augustine of Hippo