



Words of Wisdom

From the Saints & Teachers

12:1 So Great a Cloud of Witnesses

Sin Clings. St Theodoret of Cyr: The models of godliness are set before us on all sides, he is saying, in such vast numbers as to resemble a cloud in density and testify to the power of faith. Accordingly, let us keep our eyes on them, be light on our feet and rid ourselves of the burden of unnecessary worries, in this way being able also to avoid sin that is easy to contract. Before everything else we need perseverance to succeed in the course ahead of us. He said sin “clings” because it is easily contracted and committed: the eye is fascinated, the ear charmed, touch titillated, tongue easily loosened and thought quickly directed to the worst. Interpretation of Hebrews 12.

Heen, E. M., & Krey, P. D. W. (Eds.). (2005). Hebrews (p. 209). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

10:37 Not Worthy of Me

Familial Loyalty and Love of God. St Jerome: For he had previously said, “I have not come to bring peace but a sword.” He adds that he has divided people against father and mother and relatives, so that no one will place familial loyalty before religion. He says, “He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me.” We also read in the Song of Songs, “He established love in me.”²⁴ We must preserve this order in all our relations. Love your father, your mother, your sons. If a time comes when love for a parent and for the children of God are in conflict and both cannot be maintained, then forthright rejection of your family may be a higher form of familial loyalty in relation to God. Commentary on Matthew 1.10.37.

Simonetti, M. (Ed.). (2001). Matthew 1–13 (pp. 211–212). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.



From The Ambvon

ST MICHAEL ORTHODOX CHURCH,
OLD FORGE, PA

Priest Michael Shepherd (frmichael@stmichaelof.org)

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Sun, June 19th, 2022 1st SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 8.
Holy Apostle Jude, the brother of the Lord (ca. 80). All Saints.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays:

Nameday:

Anniversary:

Baptism:

Travelers: For all who are traveling this week

Visitors: Thank you for joining us and please introduce yourself to Fr Michael

Kitchen Schedule: Need volunteers for Kitchen

Prospora Schedule: June - Fr Michael

July - Volunteers from Prospora class! Thank you!

August -

DEAR GUESTS AND FRIENDS: *A most sincere and heartfelt welcome to you from our community. According to the ancient traditions of the Orthodox Church, the Sacrament of Holy Communion is to be administered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared to receive themselves by fasting and a recent (monthly) confession..If you have questions please ask Fr Michael!*



This Weeks Schedule

THIS WEEK

WED @ 11 AM-1:30 PM: Silent Prayer

WED @ 5:00 PM: Daily Vesper/Confession After

NEXT WEEKEND

SAT, June 18: @ 5:00 PM Great Vespers / Confession After

SUN, June 19th: Hours @ 9:10 AM, Divine Liturgy @ 9:30 AM

UP COMING

Ss Peter & Paul Fast June 20-29

Feast of Ss Peter and Paul: Wednesday, June 29

Proskomede Class: 17July @ 8:00 AM



Announcements

& Upcoming Parish & Diocesan Events

Financial Meeting: This Wednesday June 22nd, @ 10 a.m.

Parish Steering Meeting: June 18th, @ 3:30 p.m. prior to Great Vespers

St Tikhon's Summer Camp: July 3-9 (Diocesan Campers are FREE!)

All American Council: July 18-22

Parish Prospora Baking Class: July 12th at 10 a.m.

“The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.” MT 13:41-43

Holy Archangel Michael Pray unto God for us!

The reading and chanting of prayers that are served in the church by the clergy are called **Divine Services**.

The most important divine service is the **Liturgy**. It is conducted before noonday. During this service the entire earthly life of the Saviour is commemorated, and the **Mystery of the Eucharist (Holy Communion)**, which Christ himself instituted at the **Mystical Supper**, is celebrated.

The Mystery of Holy Communion is the consecration of bread and wine by God's Grace, when they become the true Body and true Blood of Christ. In appearance they remain bread and wine, but we receive the **true Body and true Blood of the Saviour**, under the appearance of bread and wine, in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, have eternal life and change ourselves.

Since the church is a **very holy place**, where **God Himself** is present invisibly by special mercy, we must enter it with prayer, and conduct ourselves quietly and reverently. During the Divine Services it is forbidden to talk, and even more so to laugh. It is forbidden to stand with your back to the Altar. Each person stands in his place and does not walk from one place to another. Only in case of sickness is it permitted to sit down and rest. It is wrong to leave the church before the end of the Divine Service.

We must approach Holy Communion **calmly** and **without haste**, with our **arms crossed over our breast**. After Communion we kiss the chalice without making the sign of the Cross, in order not to strike the chalice accidentally.

Questions: What is the church? What is its outside appearance like? How is the church divided inside? What is the iconostasis? Where are the Royal Doors? What is the Holy Table and what is celebrated on it? What is the most important Divine Service? What is commemorated at the Divine Liturgy? What is the Mystery of Holy Communion? Who instituted this Mystery? How should we conduct ourselves in church?

Holy Bread Prosphora

Prosphora is a Greek word meaning “offering.” In one sense, all that we offer for the use of the Church is *prosphora*: wine, incense, charcoal, oil (for oil lamps), candles, flowers, and bread. Our offerings are never raw materials. In all these cases we take something and make it into something else. Grapes to wine, olives to olive oil, wheat to bread, etc. Generally speaking, *prosphora* refers to the bread offering. In addition, the bread was not only a gift for use in the Liturgy, but it was also a gift to the Church to feed the priest and the poor.

While its use has remained the same as in the early Church, its form and markings have evolved. Bread with markings and in various shapes was common in ancient times among pagans as well as Christians. People decorated or impressed symbols on bread that was baked, bought, and eaten every day, as well as on bread offered in religious rites.

Details concerning the first Eucharistic loaves are not found in the writings of the early Fathers. “Probably the texts are silent because the forms and symbols were known to all and interpreted correctly. The use of bread in worship was delivered to the Christian communities by practice itself, before any formulation had found a place in the written documents. This is better understood if one remembers that the celebration of the Eucharist predates any written source. The Sacrament was celebrated as soon as a Christian group was formed. In Jerusalem, for example, the Eucharist was performed immediately after Pentecost, that is, twenty years or more before the writing of the Synoptics.” [the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke] (Galavaris, *Bread and the Liturgy*, p.22)

During the time of Christian persecution, Christian symbols became cryptic, hiding, for example, the cross in simple decorative motifs. Although the symbol used on the bread may have varied during the early

years, St. John Chrysostom (4th century) refers to the bread being “sealed,” probably with the IC-XC NIKA.

Prosphora is the name given to the loaves of bread offered during Divine Liturgy in the Orthodox Church. Each individual loaf is referred to as a prosphoron or – in everyday Russian – a prosforka.

In the Russian Orthodox tradition, the loaves are customarily small – around 60mm in diameter – and made in two parts. These represent the two natures of Jesus Christ, divine and human. Before baking, the top of each loaf is stamped with a seal that includes a cross and the letters IC-XC NIKA, meaning “Jesus Christ conquers”. In other Orthodox traditions, the loaves are generally larger with a more elaborate seal.

How are prosphora used?

Before Divine Liturgy begins the priest carefully selects and prepares five prosphora. He then begins a special service of preparation called the prothesis (“setting forth”) or proskomedia (“offering”). This service is done by the priest inside the altar. One of the prosphora prepared is called the “Lamb” and is offered on the Holy Table during Divine Liturgy. When consecrated, it becomes the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ and, when mixed with the consecrated wine that becomes His Blood, a part of Holy Communion. The other four prosphora are used to commemorate the Mother of God, the ranks of saints, and the living and departed. In addition, the people can offer prosphora for themselves and on behalf of their living and departed Orthodox Christian family members and friends. In the Russian tradition the prosphora are purchased at the candle-desk near the entrance to the church. The names of those to be commemorated are written on slips of paper – red for the living and black for the departed – or in a special commemoration book (а “помянник”, in Russian). These names are read out in the altar during the service of preparation and the Divine Liturgy.

The Church Building
“The Law of God” By Seraphim Slobodskoy.

The church ("temple") is a special house consecrated to God — "the House of God" in which the Divine Services are conducted. In the church there abides the special grace or mercy of God, which is given to us through those who conduct the Divine Services, namely, the clergy (bishops, priests and deacons).

The external appearance of the church differs from other buildings in that there is a **dome** which symbolizes Heaven rising over the church. At the top of the dome is its **peak**, where the Cross stands, to the glory of the Head, Jesus Christ. Over the entrance to the church there is usually built a **bell tower** where the bells are hung. The ringing of the bells serves to summon the faithful to prayer — to the Divine Services, and to give notice of the most important parts of the service taking place in the church.

At the entrance to the church there is a **porch** (courtyard, or entrance way). The inside of the church is divided into three parts: 1) the **narthex**, 2) the **church** itself, or the **nave, or middle part** of the church, where the people stand, 3) the **Altar**, or Sanctuary, where the services are conducted by the clergy and where the most important part of the whole church is located — **the Holy Table** (altar table), on which the Mystery of the Holy Eucharist is celebrated.

The altar is separated from the central part of the church by the **iconostasis**, which consists of several rows of **icons** and has three doors. The central doors are called **the Royal Doors**, because through them the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the King of glory, passes invisibly in the Holy Gifts (in Holy Communion). Therefore, no one may pass through the Royal Doors except the clergy.

Parish Prayer List

Living: Fr John Nightingale, Fr Theodore Orzolek, Matushka Paula Soucek, Mike Jadick, Bernie Elko, Rose Krenitsky, Margaret Pregmon, David Lezinsky, Stella Krenitsky, Marie Buranich, Helen Wytovich, Tammy Wytovich, Rosemary Kuzmich, Sandra Pritchuk, Marie Pasternak, Sandy Batton, Paula Stavisky, Al Pritchuk, Eli Stavisky, Evelyn Bunevitch, Nadia Macheska, John Pritchuk

Departed: Paul (5/15), Andrew, Irene (6/5)

Catechumen: Michael Keklak (6/12), Amaya Jackson (6/19), Robert Kane (6/19)

Reminder: Names will be rotated off on occasion - request again to have a loved one put back on again.

Readings Today

Epistle: **Hebrews 11:33-12:2**

Gospel : **Matthew 10:32-33, 37-38, 19:27-30**

Service Attendance:

Last weekend Divine Liturgy: 32
