



***SS Peter and Paul Albanian Orthodox Church***  
***9230 Old Bustleton Avenue***  
***Philadelphia, PA 19115***  
***Church Phone: 215-676-3311***

***Pastor: Father Stephen Siniari***  
***Rectory Phone: 1-609-385-3757***



*Church Bulletin ~ June/July 2007*

## **Father Stephen's Message to the Faithful Rebels Against An Angry God Full of Vengeance**

This is a theme which needs to be preached with great insistence for not only the West but we Orthodox have departed from it in great numbers, causing men to fall to atheism because they are revolted against a falsified angry God full of vengeance toward His creatures...

We must urgently understand that God is responsible only for everlasting life and bliss, and that hell (gehenna) is nothing else but the rejection of this everlasting life and bliss, the everlasting revolt against the everlasting love of God...

We must urgently remember and preach that it is not a creation of God but a creation (product) of our revolted liberty, that God did not create any punishing instrument that is called hell, that God never takes vengeance on His revolted creatures, that His justice has nothing to do with the legalistic "justice" of human society which punishes the wicked in order to defend itself...

That our everlasting spiritual death is not inflicted on us by God, but is a spiritual suicide, everlasting because our decision to be friends or enemies of God is a completely free and everlasting decision of the free spiritual beings created by God, a decision which is respected by God eternally and absolutely.

And indeed, our Saviour Himself says: "And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (Jn. 12:46-48)

— From **The Soul, The Body, & Death**  
by Archbishop Lazar Puhalo quoting  
*Dr. Alexandre Kalomiros*

### **Special Announcements from Fr. Stephen**

\*\*\* *Father Stephen* may be reached at **609-385-3757, Monday - Friday, 8 AM - 5 PM** or by e-mail: **ssiniari@covenanthouse.org**

Please remember that all confessions and consultations on Sunday mornings shall take place from 9 AM to 10 AM before the Divine Liturgy. Thank you!

## Events & Announcements

### Liturgical Schedule - June/July/August 2007

SS PETER & PAUL FEAST DAY - FRIDAY, JUNE 29 - Divine Liturgy, 9 AM

HOLY TRANSFIGURATION - MONDAY, AUGUST 6 - Divine Liturgy, 9 AM

DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS - WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 15 - Divine Liturgy, 9 AM

### Church News & Reminders

**MEMBERSHIP DUES 2007** - The Church Fiscal Year ends September 30th. Dues are **\$115 per person** and can be paid at any time to James Schaeffer, our Treasurer. *Thank you!*

**ICON PLEDGES** - Can be paid at any time to our treasurer, James Schaeffer. **Please note:** *when returning your Icons, please return them to the treasurer, James Schaeffer.*

**CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING** - To be announced (usually the 1st Mon of each month). All Parishioners are welcome to attend.

**SPECIAL SERVICES** - If you are planning to have a special service in the Church, please be considerate and notify either Father Stephen or the Church Committee one week in advance. When you are planning for a Baptism, Wedding, Funeral, or any other Prayer Service in the Church, please speak with Father Stephen in advance to determine if there is any way you can contribute to help the Church in helping others. Thank you. *Please note: if the services of the Church Choir are required, please notify the Choir Director, Christina Murianka, as soon as possible.*

**NO SMOKING/NO CELL PHONES** - Please remember that SS Peter & Paul has a no smoking policy in the building and that ringers on cell phones should be off during the Divine Liturgy.

### The Joy of Giving

**CASSEROLES FOR THE HOMELESS - In May:** *11 casseroles were delivered.* Disposable razors and individual/small tubes of hand lotion are still needed. Please continue to help feed the hungry. Frozen casseroles are collected on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month by Harry Halkedis. A \$10 donation for casseroles can be given at any time. *Thank you!*

**COLLECTION FOR THE POOR** - A special collection for the poor will be held on the 1st Sunday of every month. Please plan to give generously every month to those whose lives are less fortunate than ours. Donations can also be placed in the **Poor Box** at any time.

**ORTHODOX HERALD COLLECTION** - Collections for the *Orthodox Herald* will take place every 2nd Sunday of the month. Please donate generously.

**DONATIONS OF WINE & OIL** - Altar wine and virgin olive oil for the altar lamps are always needed. The name of the altar wine is **Mavrodaphne of Patras** and it is available at most PA State Stores. Please help make sure that we always have a plentiful supply.

**PASTORAL FUND COLLECTION** - Collections for the Pastoral Fund will take place every 3rd Sunday of the month. Please donate generously. "Pastoral Fund" donation envelopes are found in the Church foyer, on the left side of the glass partition, should you wish to donate at another time.

**POP TAB COLLECTION PRGRAM FOR RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE - RJ** (with the help of his parents, Debbie & Bob Krimetz) is collecting flip tabs from any aluminum cans to donate to the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House. **A container has been placed upstairs in the Church Hall for the tabs.** *Help RJ help the Ronald McDonald House! Thank you and remember to bring your tabs!*

## **Sunday School News**

**LAST DAY OF SUNDAY SCHOOL - June 10** - Certificates will be given to the students on this day

**SUNDAY SCHOOL ICE CREAM SOCIAL - June 17** - Will be hosted for all the students during the time classes are usually held

**A SINCERE THANK YOU** to all the teachers, parents and children for the completion of another successful school year. **A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU** to **Greg and Rose Shaloka** for their excellent job in directing the Sunday School

## **General Interest**

**REMINDER** - *The Celebration of SS Peter and Paul Feast Day* with His Grace Bishop Nikon will be on **September 15 and 16.**

**EDUCATIONAL RETREAT AT ST STEPHEN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL - Saturday, June 9, 10 AM - 3:15 PM** - Registration Fee, \$10 (Youth & Students Free) - *For reservations or questions, contact Fr Victor Gorodenchuk* at 215-745-3232, E-mail: dean@ststephenscathedral.org

Theme: Church and Mission: The Missionary Work of Apostle Paul

Speaker: **Very Rev. Father Michael Dahulich, PhD**, Dean of St Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary

**ANCIENT FAITH RADIO - 24 hour a day** *Orthodox radio station* providing high quality internet-based Orthodox programming, music, teaching, interviews, features, convert testimonies, conference recordings, and much more! The URL is: **<http://ancientfaithradio.com>**

## **Miscellaneous**

**WEB PAGE/E-MAILS** - SS Peter & Paul Webpage: **<http://homepage.mac.com/aliciaj17/sspeterpaulhome1.html>**. New Bulletins can be viewed the Saturday before distribution by 7 PM. If you would like to be kept up-to-date by e-mail or to be removed from our "paper" mailing list, please send me an e-mail at: **[aliciaj17@mac.com](mailto:aliciaj17@mac.com)**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS/NEWS ABOUT PARISHIONERS** - If you have any items to include in next month's Bulletin, please leave the information in my wicker basket in the office. Or, call Alicia at **215-742-0492** or e-mail: **[alicia17@mac.com](mailto:alicia17@mac.com)**. The deadline for the next Bulletin is Sunday, **July 29. PLEASE NOTE: There is NO Bulletin for the month of July.**

Thank you! Parishioners will be able to pick up the Bulletins at the Church on Sunday **6/3/07**. Bulletins will be mailed to any Parishioners unable to attend.

*Please remember to let Alicia know the names of our members who are ill or in need of prayer so that they can be included in our Bulletins.*

**Thank You** to all members of the Parish who have helped out or volunteered in any way with their time and efforts, and a very special **thank you** to anyone whose name was inadvertently omitted from the Bulletin.

### **Parishioner's Corner**

**A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY** is wished to the following parishioners and friends of SS Peter & Paul who are celebrating **June** Birthdays: **George Gulisashvili, Katherine Halkedis, Mary Jaxheimer, Tatyana Kuzentsova, Donna Lane, Isabelle McGinely, John Siniari, Zinaida Zemlyanaya**

*May God grant them all many, many years!*

**A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY** is wished to the following parishioners and friends of SS Peter & Paul who are celebrating **July** Birthdays: **Helen Banushi, Andrew Cappo, John Douris, Linda Dudash, Michelle Murianka, Nicholas Muzekari, Ted Muzekari, Viktor Skuratovskiy, Jennie Speero, Lester Speero, Silvia Yankova Yovtcheva**

*May God grant them all many, many years!*

**A VERY HAPPY AND BLESSED FATHER'S DAY** to all of our Fathers, Grandfathers, Great-Grandfathers, Uncles, and to all of the men in our lives who have been like Fathers to us.

*May God grant them all many, many years!*

**CONGRATULATIONS AND SINCERE WISHES FOR SUCCESS** to **Philip Christopher Costa**, Class of 2007, who graduated from Durant High School on May 17th. Philip graduated with high honors and is part of the National Honor Society. He will be attending the University of Florida in Gainesville, FL. Philip is the son of *Christopher and Donna Costa* of Valrico, FL, and the grandson of *Marge Costa* of Natick, MA.

*May God grant Philip Christopher many, many years!*

**CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES** to **Susan and Charles Stevens** of Shrewsbury, MA. They welcomed a new son, **Andrew Paul Stevens**, born May 15th, 2007. Andrew is the grandson of *Marge Costa* of Natick, MA.

*May God grant Andrew Paul many, many years!*

**CONGRATULATIONS AND SINCERE WISHES FOR SUCCESS** to **Sally O'Brien** who graduated from Swarthmore College in June, 2007.

*May God grant Sally many, many years!*

**GREGORY VRATO, SR.**, is at the **John Neumann Nursing Home**, Room 726, at the intersection of Haldeman & Tomlinson Road (make a right on Tomlinson and the parking lot is immediately on your right). Visitors are welcome anytime from noon to 8:00 PM.

*Please continue to keep Gregory in your prayers. May God grant him good health!*

## **Memory Eternal**

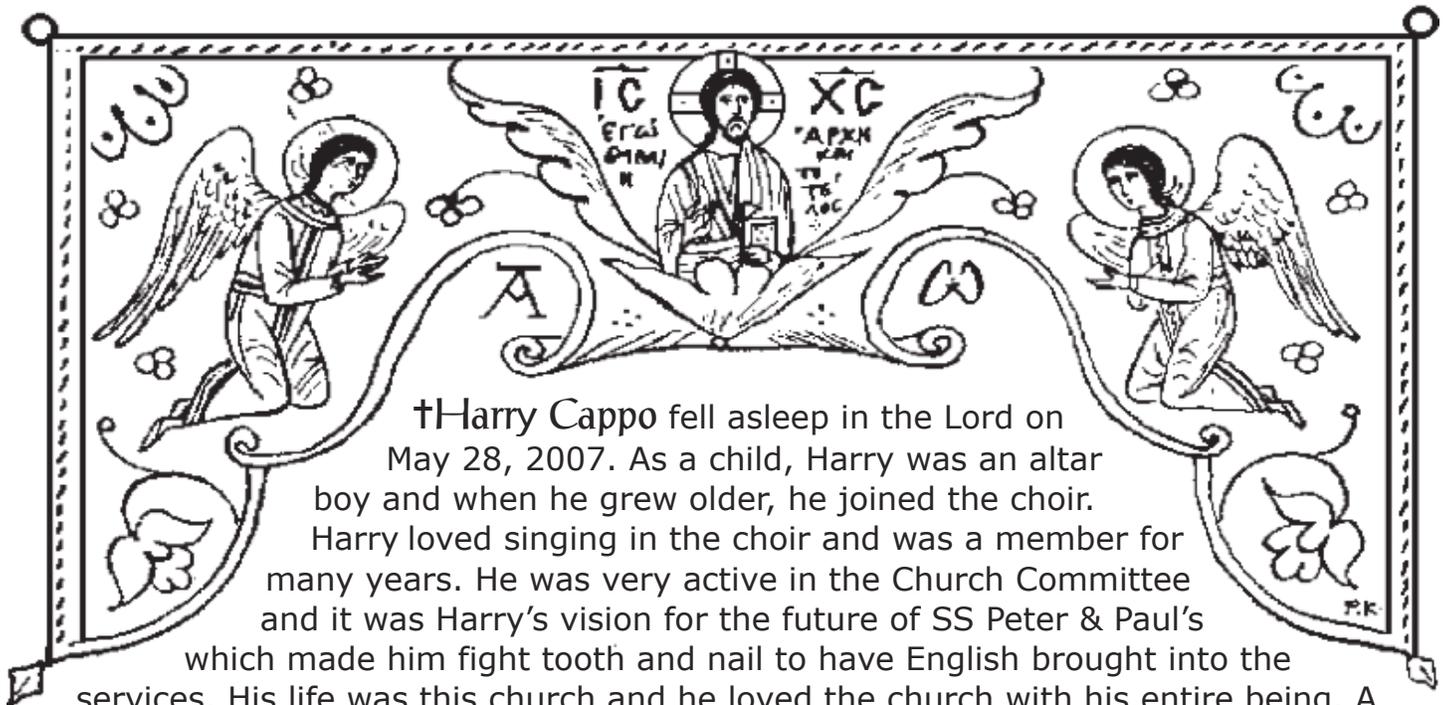
†**Helena Liolin, 90**, reposed on June 2, 2007.

*Beloved mother of His Grace, Bishop Nikon, Very Rev Arthur Liolin and James Liolin & their families.*

*May her memory be eternal!*

Mr and Mrs Evans Liolin founded the Theological Student Fund of the Albanian Archdiocese. In that sense, they have had many, many sons.

In lieu of flowers, expressions of sympathy may be made to: St. George Cathedral, 523 East Broadway, South Boston, MA 02127 or to St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church, 181-14 Midland Parkway, Jamaica Estates, NY 11432.



†**Harry Cappo** fell asleep in the Lord on May 28, 2007. As a child, Harry was an altar boy and when he grew older, he joined the choir. Harry loved singing in the choir and was a member for many years. He was very active in the Church Committee and it was Harry's vision for the future of SS Peter & Paul's which made him fight tooth and nail to have English brought into the services. His life was this church and he loved the church with his entire being. A kind and gentle man in every sense of the word, Harry always had a kind word and a sweet smile for everyone. All who knew him loved him and he will always be remembered lovingly by all those whose lives he touched. The many parishioners, friends and family who attended his funeral is a fitting testimonial to Harry's life.

*May his memory be eternal!*

## Let Us Keep Them in our Prayers

Please continue to pray for the full and speedy recovery of: **Gregory Vreto, Sr., Nina Horowitz, Spiro Costas, Matthew Murianka, Joyce Dorsey, Andi Steffa, Martha Murianka, John Palmerick, Thimi Daka, Al Rifkin, Sophie Bacon, Fr Stephen Siniari**

\*\*\* God knows the names and ages of all who need His love and mercy...

### **OCCMC Missionaries: The Luisi Family, Serving in Albania**

Dennis and Constance Luisi are both converts to Orthodoxy. Constance became Orthodox in 1988 with her family, Fr. Patrick and Kh. Denise Reardon and her brother, Jeremy. Dennis converted with his whole parish in the early nineties. They were married in February, 1999. Their son, Domenico, was born in June of 2000.



For twelve years, Dennis has been the choir director at All Saints Orthodox Church in Chicago, IL. He has also taught Sunday school, served on the parish council and assisted with facilities maintenance. He played a significant role in the parish's journey from mission to church status.

Constance has had a varied church life experience. She has been choir director and assistant choir director at four parishes, as well as Sunday school director and teacher. She is a chanter, and composes and arranges music for the Girls' Choir, which she leads.

In addition to his work in the Church, Dennis is a maintenance mechanic in the pharmaceutical industry. He has experience in multiple trades including carpentry, plumbing, HVAC, and electrical

maintenance, which he has been putting to use rehabbing the Luisi home in Chicago.

Constance earned her BA in French and German Language and Literature. Like many literature majors, she has developed other, more profitable skills: creating organizational systems, tutoring, and teaching.

She is currently home schooling their son. Domenico is a very busy boy, always bustling about and asking questions. He's working on his first grade books, especially reading and math. His favorite question these days is: "How many more days until we move to Albania?"

The Orthodox Church in Albania and the Orthodox Christian Mission Center have asked the Luisi Family to serve in Albania. Their primary job will be to work with children's choirs, first in Tirana and then throughout the country. Dennis' skills may be put to work on various building and repair projects. There may also be opportunities to put Constance's language skills to work in teaching English and French.

In order to serve the people of Albania, the Luisi Family requires the prayers and financial assistance of the faithful in America. Please help send the Luisis to the mission field by offering your prayer and financial support.

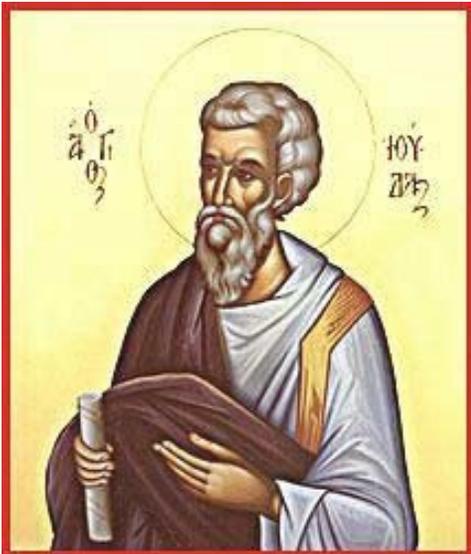
### **Holy Days and Name Days in June**

- June 3 - Sunday of All Saints
- June 4 - Beginning of SS Peter & Paul Fast
- June 9 - St Cyril of Alexandria
- June 10 - All Saints of America; All Saints of Russia
- June 11 - Holy Apostles Bartholomew & Barnabas
- June 14 - Prophet Elisha
- June 19 - Holy Apostle Jude, Brother of the Lord
- June 24 - Nativity of St John the Baptist
- June 29 - Holy Apostles Peter & Paul

### ***Holy Apostle Jude, Brother of the Lord***

*Commemorated on June 19*

The Holy Apostle Jude, one of the twelve apostles of Christ, is descended from King David and Solomon, and was the son of Righteous Joseph the Betrothed by his first wife.



The Holy Apostle John the Theologian writes in his Gospel, "... neither did his brethren believe in Him" (John. 7:5). St Theophylact, Archbishop of Bulgaria, explains this passage. He says that at the beginning of the Lord Jesus Christ's earthly ministry, Joseph's sons, Jude among them, did not believe in His divine nature. Tradition says that when St Joseph returned from Egypt, he began to divide his possessions among his sons. He wanted to allot a share to Christ the Savior, born miraculously and incorruptibly from the All-Pure Virgin Mary. The brothers were opposed to this because Jesus was born of another mother. Only James, later called "The Brother of God," offered to share his portion with Him.

Jude came to believe in Christ the Savior as the awaited Messiah, and he followed Him and was chosen as one of the twelve Apostles. Mindful of his sin, the Apostle Jude considered himself unworthy to be called the Lord's brother, and in his Epistle he calls himself merely the brother of James.

After the Ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, St Jude traveled about preaching the Gospel. He propagated the faith in Christ at first in Judea, Galilee, Samaria and Idumaia, and later in the lands of Arabia, Syria and Mesopotamia. Finally, he went to the city of Edessa. Here he finished the work that was not completed by his predecessor, St Thaddeus, Apostle of the Seventy. There is a tradition that St Jude went to Persia, where he wrote his catholic Epistle in Greek. In the Epistle much profound truth was expressed in a few words.

St Jude's Epistle speaks about the Holy Trinity, about the Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, about the good and bad angels, and about the dread Last Judgment. The Apostle urges believers to guard themselves against fleshly impurity, to be diligent in prayer, faith and love, to convert the lost to the path of salvation, and to guard themselves from the teachings of heretics. He also says that it is not enough just to be converted to Christianity, but faith must be demonstrated by good works. He cites the rebellious angels and men punished by God to support this.

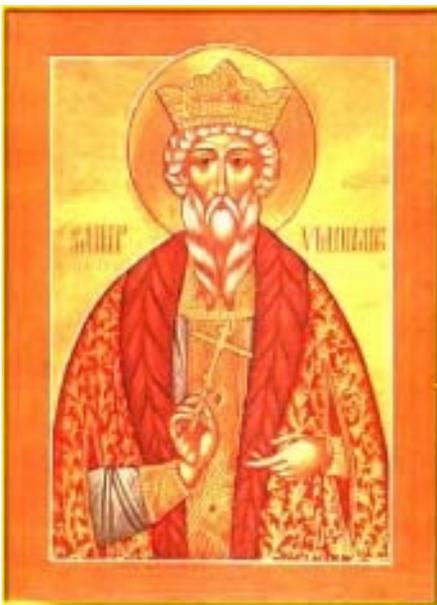
The Holy Apostle Jude died as a martyr around the year 80 near Mt. Ararat in Armenia, where he was crucified and pierced by arrows.

### **Holy Days and Name Days in July**

- July 1 - Unmercenary Wonderworkers Cosmas & Damian
- July 4 - St Andrew of Crete; Ven Andrew Rublev; Ven Martha
- July 10 - Ven Anthony of the Kiev Caves
- July 11 - Great Martyr Euphemia; Bl Princess Olga
- July 15 - Great Prince Vladimir, Equal-to-the-Apostles
- July 16 - Virginmartyr Julia
- July 17 - Great Martyr Marina
- July 18 - Martyr Emilian
- July 19 - Ven Seraphim of Sarov; Ven Macrina; Bl Stephen of Serbia
- July 20 - Holy Prophet Elijah
- July 21 - Prophet Ezekiel
- July 22 - Myrrbearer Mary Magdalene, Equal-to-the-Apostles; Martyr Marcella
- July 24 - Martyr Christina; Martyrs Boris & Gleb, Passionbearers
- July 25 - Dormition of Righeous Anna
- July 26 - St Jacob Netsvetov; Martyr Parasceva
- July 27 - Grt Martyr & Healer Panteleimon

### ***Equal of the Apostles Great Prince Vladimir, in Holy Baptism Basil, the Enlightener of the Russian Land***

*Commemorated on June 19*



The Holy Great Prince Vladimir, Equal of the Apostles. Few names in the annals of history can compare in significance with the name of St Vladimir, the Baptizer of Rus, who stands at the beginning of the spiritual destiny of the Russian Church and the Russian Orthodox people. Vladimir was the grand-son of St Olga, and he was the son of Svyatoslav (+ 972). His mother, Malusha (+ 1001) was the daughter of Prince Mal who had killed Princess Olga's husband, Igor, and then attempted to marry Olga. Princess Olga gave orders to execute Prince Mal and she took to herself Mal's children, Dobrynya and Malusha.

Malusha became a Christian (together with Great Princess Olga at Constantinople), but she preserved in herself a bit of the mysterious darkness of the pagan forests. Thus she

fell in love with the austere warrior Svyatoslav, who against the will of his mother Olga made her his wife. The enraged Olga, regarding as unseemly the marriage of her "house-keeper" and captive servant to her son Svyatoslav, heir to the Great Kiev principality, sent Malusha away to her own native region. And there in about the year 960 was born the boy with the Russian pagan name Volodimir, meaning peaceful ruler, ruling with a special talent for peace. And there in about the year 960 was born the boy with the Russian pagan name Volodimir, meaning peaceful ruler, ruling with a special talent for peace.

In the year 970 Svyatoslav set out on a campaign from which he was fated not to return. He had divided the Russian Land among his three sons. At Kiev Yaropolk was prince; at Ovrucha, the center of the Drevlyani lands, was Oleg; at Novgorod was Vladimir. In his first years as prince, we see Vladimir as a fierce pagan. In July 11, 978 he entered into Kiev, having become the "sole ruler" of the Kiev realm, "having subdued the surrounding lands, some by peaceful means, and the unsubmissive ones by the sword."

Though Vladimir indulged himself in a wild, sensuous life, he was far from the libertine that they sometimes portray him as being. He "shepherded his land with truth, valor and reason", as a good and diligent master, of necessity he extended and defended its boundaries by force of arms.

But the Lord prepared him for another task. Where sin increases, there, in the words of the Apostle, grace abounds (Rom. 5: 20). "And upon him came visitation of the Most High, and the All-Merciful eye of the Good God gazed upon him, and shone forth the thought in his heart, of understanding the vanity of idolous delusion, and of appealing to the One God, Creator of all things both visible and invisible." The matter of accepting Baptism was facilitated through external circumstances. The Byzantine Empire was in upheaval under the blows of the mutinous regiments of Bardas Skliros and Bardas Phocas, each of whom sought to gain the imperial throne. In these difficult circumstances the emperors, the coregent brothers Basil the Bulgar-Slayer and Constantine, turned for help to Vladimir.

Events unfolded quickly. In August 987 Bardas Phocas proclaimed himself Emperor and moved against Constantinople, and this compelled him to enter into an alliance with the Emperor of the Russians. As a reward for his military help, Vladimir asked for the hand of the emperors' sister Anna, which for the Byzantines was an unheard of audacity. Princesses of the imperial lineage did not marry "barbarian" rulers, even if they were Christians. However, in Vladimir's case Constantinople was obliged to consent.

An agreement was concluded, according to which Vladimir had to send the emperors six thousand Varangians, and to accept holy Baptism. Under these conditions he would receive the hand of the imperial daughter Anna. Thus in the strife of human events the will of God directed the entering of Rus into the grace-filled bosom of the Ecumenical Church. Great Prince Vladimir accepted Baptism and sent the military assistance to Byzantium. With the aid of the Russians, the mutineers were destroyed and Bardas Phocas killed. But the Greeks, gladdened by their unexpected deliverance, were in no hurry to fulfill their part of the bargain.

Vexed at the Greek duplicity, Prince Vladimir "hastened to collect his forces" and he moved "against Korsun, the Greek city," the ancient Chersonessos. This blow was so much felt, that its echo resounded throughout all the regions of Byzantium. Vladimir again had the upper hand. His emissaries soon arrived in Constantinople for the imperial daughter. At Taurida St Vladimir awaited her, and to his titles there was added a new one: Caesar (Tsar).

Together with the empress Anna, there arrived for the Russian See Metropolitan Michael ordained by holy Patriarch Nicholas II Chrysoberges. He came with his retinue and clergy, and many holy relics and other holy things. In ancient Chersonessos, where each stone brings to mind St Andrew the First-Called, there took place the marriage-crowning of St Vladimir and Blessed Anna, both reminiscent and likewise affirming the oneness of the Gospel of Christ in Rus and in Byzantium. Korsun, the "empress's dowry", was returned to Byzantium. In the spring of 988 the Great Prince and his wife set out through the Crimea, Taman and the Azov lands, which had come into the complexion of his vast realm on the return trip to Kiev. Leading the princely cortege with frequent Services of Thanksgiving and incessant priestly singing they carried crosses, icons and holy relics. It seemed, that the Ecumenical Holy Church was moving into the spacious Russian land, and renewed in the font of Baptism, Holy Rus came forth to meet Christ and His Church.

Then followed an unforgettable and quite singular event in Russian history: the morning of the Baptism of the Kievans in the waters of the River Dneipr. On the evening before, St Vladimir declared throughout the city: "If anyone does not go into the river tomorrow, be they rich or poor, beggar or slave, that one shall be my enemy." The sacred wish of the holy Prince was fulfilled without a murmur: "all our land glorified Christ with the Father and the Holy Spirit at the same time." It is difficult to overestimate the deep spiritual transformation of the Russian people effected by the prayers of St Vladimir, in every aspect of its life and world-view. In the pure Kievan waters, as in a "bath of regeneration", there was realized a sacramental transfiguration of the Russian spiritual element, the spiritual birth of the nation, called by God to unforeseen deeds of Christian service to mankind. "Then did the darkness of the idols begin to lift from us, and the dawn of Orthodoxy appear, and the Sun of the Gospel illumined our land."

Everywhere throughout Holy Rus, from the ancient cities to the far outposts, St Vladimir gave orders to destroy the pagan sanctuaries, to flog the idols, and in their place to clear land in the hilly woods for churches, in which altars would be consecrated for the Bloodless Sacrifice. Churches of God grew up along the face of the earth, at high elevated places, and at the bends of the rivers, along the ancient trail figuratively as road signs and lamps of national holiness.

To advance the Faith among the newly enlightened people, learned people and schools were needed to help prepare them. Therefore, St Vladimir and the holy Metropolitan Michael "commanded fathers and mothers to take their young children and send them to schools to learn reading and writing." St Joachim of Korsun set up such a school at Novgorod, and they did the same in other cities. "And there were a multitude of schools of scholars, and of these were there a multitude of philosophers."

In addition to the Christian preaching, there were the renowned feasts of St Vladimir. After Liturgy on Sundays and Church Feasts there were put out abundant feasting tables

for the Kievans, they rang the bells, choirs sang praise, the "transported infirm" sang bylini-ballads and spiritual verses.

A new misfortune erupted in the North, at Novgorod. Yaroslav, not yet "the Wise," as he was later to be known, in the year 1010 having become ruler of Novgorod, decided to defect from his father the Great Prince of Kiev. He formed his own separate army, moving on Kiev to demand the customary tribute and tithe. The unity of the Russian land, for which St Vladimir had struggled all his life, was threatened with ruin. In both anger and in sorrow St Vladimir gave orders to "secure the dams and set the bridges," and to prepare for a campaign against Novgorod. His powers were on the decline. In the preparations for his final campaign, happily not undertaken, the Baptizer of Rus fell grievously ill and surrendered his soul to the Lord in the village of Spas-Berestov on July 15, 1015. He had ruled the Russian realm for thirty-seven years (978-1015), twenty-eight of these years after his Baptism.

The name and deeds of the holy Equal of the Apostles St Vladimir, whom the people called the Splendid Sun, is interwoven with all the successive history of the Russian Church. "Through him we too have come to worship and to know Christ, the True Life," testified St Hilarion. His deeds were continued by his sons, and grandsons and descendants, rulers of the Russian land for almost six centuries, from Yaroslav the Wise, who took the first steps towards the independent existence of the Russian Church, down to the last of the Rurikovichi, Tsar Theodore Ioannovich, under whom (in 1589) the Russian Orthodox Church became the fifth independent Patriarchate in the dyptichs of Orthodox Autocephalous Churches.

The first veneration of the holy prince began in Rus when the Metropolitan of Kiev St Hilarion (+ 1053), in his "Word on Law and Grace," spoken on the day of memory of St Vladimir at the saint's crypt in the Tithe church, calls him "an apostolic sovereign", like St Constantine, and he compares his apostolic evangelisation of the Russian Land to the evangelisation by the holy Apostles.

~ Reading and Icon Courtesy of OCA Webpage ~



## **Troparion for Saints Peter and Paul**

**O Leaders of the Apostles  
And Evangelizers of the World  
Intercede with Christ our God  
To grant Peace to the World  
And Salvation to our Souls**

