

Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church Newsletter

Volume 15 Issue 1

January 2015

December Council Highlights

- ✘ November's Operating Income was \$13,947 and Operating Expenses were \$11,867 resulting in income of \$2,080 for November, and a year-to-date deficit of **\$8,515**.
- ✘ Annual Church Meeting will be held Sunday, February 8, 2015.
- ✘ Analysis of Parish Survey pending; please return completed surveys ASAP.
- ✘ Arrangements for Episcopal consecration of Father Daniel discussed.
- ✘ Archbishop Benjamin will visit SS Peter and Paul the weekend of January 31-February 1, concluding with a luncheon to celebrate Father Daniel's consecration at The Gladly; see Antonia Adams-Clement or Teddi Gardner to purchase tickets.



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Women as True Witnesses

On January 4 the Church gives equal honor to each of the Seventy Apostles, and the icon for the day shows them all together. This grouping of saints is called a "synaxis."

On this day we also commemorate apostles by name. Among these is the Apostle and Evangelist Luke, writer of the third Gospel and of the Book of Acts. In these days just before the Feast of Theophany, when a multitude will witness the Father's proclamation of His Son's lordship, the Gospel of Luke is especially interesting to read. This is because Luke records several instances in which women witness to the lordship of Christ, often while those around them doubt or scoff.

In a well-known event, a Pharisee invites Jesus to dinner, and while they are at the table a sinful woman comes and anoints His feet with oil (7: 36-50). She knows Him to be the true Prophet, the One who has compassion and power to forgive her sins. But the Pharisee



considers Jesus' acceptance of her gesture to be proof that He isn't a real prophet, because a real prophet would have known "who and what kind of woman this is."

Luke writes about a different kind of witness when he describes Jesus' visit to the home of Mary and Martha (10: 38-42). Martha accepts the usual role of women—to serve guests, and to do all the things that certainly are necessary to maintain a household. Jesus doesn't rebuke her for this, but He lets Mary witness to a wonderful additional truth: women can also be His disciples, sitting at His feet to take in His teaching. In fact, He calls this "the better part." It isn't only open to Mary, of course, but to every person.

While teaching in a synagogue (13: 10-17), Jesus is approached by a woman who has suffered from a crippling spirit for eighteen years. She is a witness to His divine compassion; when He

heals her she immediately stands straight and praises God.

The leader of the synagogue completely dismisses her witness, caring only that Jesus has violated the law by curing on the sabbath day. But Jesus answers that anyone will "work" on the sabbath day by giving an animal water. Should not much more a "daughter of Abraham" be set free from the bonds of Satan on that day? His loving—and practical—answer makes the crowd express joy at the wonderful things He is doing.

Luke also tells us that the women at the tomb (24: 1-12) have no trouble believing the "men in dazzling clothes" they meet there, who remind them of Jesus' words about His death and resurrection. It is the apostles, the men closest to Jesus, who dismiss the women's witness as an "idle tale."

These same apostles, after witnessing the Ascension, will devote themselves to prayer (Acts 1: 8-14). They will be joined by women, including the Theotokos, who have been witnessing all along.

Message From Our Rector

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings in the New Year! The beginning of the New Year provides us with several opportunities that are spiritually beneficial for all of us. First, we have the opportunity to reflect and to “make good” any of our past errors, mistakes, or sins. As we start the year, we can make amends, do reparation, and seek forgiveness for the ways in which we failed in the past twelve months. This is most especially true in terms of our relationships with others. If there is anyone we have offended in word or deed, we can reach out to them, seek forgiveness, reconcile, and heal that relationship. Secondly, we celebrate the present and recognize the many blessings we have been given and rejoice in this New Year—here and now. Thirdly, as we enter 2015, we also have the chance to look to the year that lies ahead, a future that provides many new opportunities for us to grow in our relationship with the Lord and to grow in our love for and service to those whom He has placed in our lives. Let us all—each and everyone of us at Saints Peter and Paul Church—enter into this New Year with the desire to learn from the past, in a spirit of gratitude for the blessings we now receive, and look ahead to a year that will be filled with many opportunities to grow in holiness.

As you are already aware, for me, 2015 will be a year of changes, new challenges, and greater responsibility as I accept the Church’s call to episcopal ministry and am consecrated to the episcopacy. My Episcopal Consecration is scheduled to take place the weekend of January 23-25 and will be held in San Francisco and Santa Rosa, California. I ask you to join me in



recommitting ourselves to the service of Christ and His Holy Orthodox Church—each in our own unique and special way. I have always depended on your prayers and will continue to do so in the future.

The weekend following the consecration, i.e. January 31-February 1, we will continue the consecration festivities as we welcome our archpastor, His Eminence, Archbishop BENJAMIN, as he comes to visit our parish so that he and I can concelebrate my first Hierarchical Divine Liturgy in our church. A luncheon will be held after the Liturgy beginning at 12:00 noon. Further information about this luncheon is available elsewhere in this newsletter. Please be aware that this is also Superbowl Sunday—with the Superbowl being held in our own backyard! In light of all the added activity and frenzy that the Superbowl brings with it this year, please make plans now so that you can share the joy of His Eminence’s visit and this special Liturgy. And don’t worry, if you plan on attending the luncheon, it will end by around 2:00 p.m so that everyone can get back home, turn on their televisions, and prepare those special snacks with plenty of time to spare!

I wish you all a truly blessed New Year—a year filled with the blessings of health, happiness, and everything that is necessary for an ongoing, ever-growing relationship with Christ and His Church. Again, as we enter this year, I ask your continued prayers—and assure you of mine.

With love in the Lord,

Father Daniel

FOCA MARRIED STUDENT HOUSING PROJECT

The Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America (FOCA), recognized as an official organization of the Orthodox Church in America, set forth the following mission at the 85th National FOCA Convention in Pittsburgh; the FOCA voted to pledge \$300,000 to the Married Student Housing Project at St. Tikhon’s Orthodox Theological Seminary.

St. Tikhon’s Seminary is managing the project and has purchased a vacated school building which will be the site of the housing project. The seminary acquired the building and land for \$600,000. Once the purchase of the building is paid off, the seminary will begin its Capital Campaign to fund the renovation of the building and possibly add additional housing on the site.

Many of our Orthodox Seminarians attending the seminary today are married students with families that have left secure lifestyles, homes, careers and extended family to answer God’s call to service to the Holy Orthodox Church. While the campus dormitories suffice for single students, the rural location of St. Tikhon’s Seminary makes it difficult to find affordable adequate housing for married students with families. It is imperative to the future of the seminary as well as the future of our Church to complete this project, which will provide a housing solution for these families.

Can you help by making a donation to the Married Student Housing Project through the FOCA? The pledge to St. Tikhon’s Seminary is one of FOCA’s largest challenges for its members, our parishes, and supporting friends to pull together to see this fulfilled. Your local FOCA chapter 219 donated \$1000 to this very worthwhile endeavor. Please see Pat Starkey or Peter Radjenovich.

St. Basil: A Proper Bishop

Fr. Lawrence Farley

St. Basil lived and worked in the fourth century, when the Church was just starting to work hand in glove with the Roman state. The new relationship took some getting used to: before this the Christians tried to avoid the State and its police whenever they could, since the coming of the Roman police (i.e. soldiers) was often a prelude to Christian martyrdom. Now the Roman State was everywhere inclined to favour the Christians, and even fund their endeavours. Like I said, it took some getting used to. But many career-minded Christians got used to it soon enough, and began working enthusiastically with the State, taking abundant care not to rock the new boat. Basil of Caesarea, however, was not among them. He never minded rocking the boat if he thought the boat needed rocking. And during the Arian interlude in the fourth century, it needed plenty of rocking.

One day, for example, as the new Bishop of Caesarea, Basil strove against the popular and State-sponsored Arian heresy. In his exchange of words with the Emperor's prefect, Modestus, Basil spoke so boldly and bluntly that it left the prefect stammering in astonishment. The prefect had summoned Basil to a tribunal, and insisted that Basil fall in line with the rest of the more pliant bishops and accept the Imperial interpretation of the faith (i.e. Arianism).

"Everyone else has yielded, and you alone refuse to accept the religion commanded by the King!"

"It is not the will of my King," replied Basil, "I cannot worship anything that has been created, since I myself am created by God."

The prefect examining Basil was incensed. "What do you think of us?" he roared. "Are we nothing?"



"You are a prefect, but I shall not honour you more than I do God."

"Do you know what I can do to you? Don't you fear my power?" asked Modestus. "There are many things I can do to you!"

"Name them."

"I can confiscate your possessions, banish you, torture you, put you to death!"

"Is that all? None of these things trouble me! You cannot confiscate my possessions, for I have none. Banishment, exile—what are these to me? Everywhere on God's earth I am at home. Torture cannot touch me, for I have no longer a body to torture. As for death, it is welcome to me, for it will bring me sooner into His blessed Presence."

The prefect was taken aback. "No one has ever addressed me in such a manner until now."

"No doubt." Basil replied. "Probably you have never met a proper bishop until now."

Basil lived in his whole life with that same indomitable courage. When he was first elected bishop of Caesarea, he was ill

and living on his nerves alone. At the time of the election, his detractors said that he should not be chosen as their bishop, since he was so weak and his health so precarious. His friend and supporter asked in return whether they wanted a bishop or a gladiator. As it turned out, they got both.

But Basil was not a mere controversialist, a mere fighter. He was also a scholar, an ascetic, a director of monastics, and the creator of a charitable estate, encompassing a hospice for travellers, a church, and a hospital, all with complete staff. He was also a man of self-sacrifice and compassion, and he worked at his facility feeding the poor with his own hands. "If you are reduced to your last loaf of bread and a beggar appears at your door, then take that loaf and lift our hands to heaven and say, 'Lord, I have but this one loaf; hunger lies in wait for me, but I revere our commandments more than all other things.' If you say this, then the bread you gave in that hour poverty will be changed for an abundant harvest." Basil knew how to love the poor. He was a proper bishop.

Now more than ever we need proper bishops. The threat of Arianism is long gone, but the deadly threat of worldliness and moral compromise with the secular age remains. St. Basil also remains, not just as our intercessor in heaven, but as an abiding example for us who still labour on earth. Now is the time for plain speaking and courageous confrontation. Now is the time to unite compassion for the poor and ascetic holiness and daring defiance of the world's standards in one potent and powerful package. Now is the time for St. Basil the Great.

Reprinted from "Straight from the Heart: Orthodox Reflections by Father Lawrence", December 31, 2014, Orthodox Church in America web site, <http://www.frlawrencefarley.blogspot.com/>

December in Pictures at SS Peter and Paul



The First Hermit

January 15 is the feast day of Venerable Paul of Thebes.

The region of upper Egypt in which he was born about 227 is called the "Thebaid" because it is near the city of Thebes. It's a desert area, and over the centuries it became the dwelling place of thousands of monks seeking to come close to God.

Paul was raised and well-educated in a loving Christian family. Orphaned as a teenager, he had no adult protection when imperial Rome began severely persecuting believers. He took refuge with friends.

One of the Roman government's ploys was to offer large rewards to people who turned in Christians who were hiding. Paul's greedy brother-in-law planned to give his name to the authorities, despite the tearful pleas of Paul's sister. Being warned of this, and wishing to spare his sister grief at her husband's treachery and his own arrest, Paul fled to the mountains.

At first Paul thought his time in the wilderness would last only until the persecution abated, but he found that he liked his new



life. He went deeper into the desert, and discovered a large cave. Outside it was an ancient palm tree, with fruit for food and leaves for a garment. There was also a running stream. The cave became his home for the rest of his life, which lasted well over a hundred years.

When we think of the first person to pursue a life of prayer and fasting in the desert, we may remember Saint Anthony the Great. Tradition

tells us that Anthony, living in another solitary place, also had the thought that "no monk more perfect than himself had settled in the desert." These words are from the life of Paul written by Saint Jerome in the fourth century.

Saint Jerome writes that Anthony had a vision in the night that "there was farther in the desert a much better man than he, and that he ought to go and visit him." Though already ninety, Anthony set out to find this elder.

An arduous journey finally brought him to Paul, and the two conversed for a whole

day and night. As Anthony reluctantly prepared to leave, Paul asked the younger man to bring the cloak he'd been given by Saint Athanasius to use as Paul's burial garment, for he would die soon.

Anthony was amazed that Paul had heard of Athanasius and the cloak, but he did as Paul asked. When he had buried Paul, he took the elder's simple garment of palm leaves, and for the rest of his life honored "the first hermit" by wearing it only on Pascha and Pentecost.

Saint Jerome bluntly addresses the thought-

Troparion - Tone 3

Inspired by the Spirit,
you were the first to dwell in the desert
in emulation of Elijah the zealot;
as one who imitated the angels,
you were made known to the world
by Saint Anthony the Great.
Righteous Paul, entreat Christ God
to grant us His great mercy.

less, idle rich with these words about Paul: "Your drinking vessels are of precious stones; he satisfied his thirst with the hollow of his hand. Your tunics are of wrought gold; he had not the raiment of the meanest of

your slaves. But poor though he was, Paradise is open to him; you with all your gold will be received into Gehenna."

This weekly bulletin insert complements the curriculum published by the Department of Christian Education of the Orthodox Church in America. This and many other Christian Education resources are available at <http://dce.oca.org>.

Altar Servers Workshop



**THE HIERARCHICAL DIVINE LITURGY
(How to Serve with a Bishop)**

led by Archdeacon Kirill Sokolov

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31ST

**SAINTS PETER AND PAUL CHURCH
1614 E. Monte Vista Road, Phoenix**

**BEGINS AT 11:30 A.M.
(Lunch will be served)
CONCLUDES WITH VESPERS**



Now and Then

Two of the readings for January 20th are Wisdom of Solomon 3: 1-9 and Luke 6: 17-23.

Though one is from the Old Testament and the other is from the much later time of the New Testament, they both tell us that the "now" of the present life is a passing reality. The "then" of eternity, and its everlasting reality, is what matters.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon describes the deaths of righteous people living among ungodly and powerful people, as the Jews of Alexandria were doing at the time the book was probably written. The author makes clear the difference between what appears in this world to be the fate of the righteous, and what constitutes the true reality of their lives. First he writes, "In the eyes of the foolish they seem to have died, and their departure was thought to be a disaster, and their going forth from us to be their destruction." Even to the other Jews, apparently, these



deaths were a disaster, and the final destruction of life. The following verses, however, show that another reality was actually being worked out: "But they are at peace. For though in the sight of others they were punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having been disciplined a little, they will receive a great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of Himself."

In the passage from Luke, often called the Sermon on the Plain, Christ Himself tells us that this world's painful difficulties fade into nothing when we know the glory of the future with God: "Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets." Not only does Christ reassure us about our own lives; He also reminds us that others—such as the righteous people described in Wisdom of

Solomon—experienced the same things.

On this day the Church honors the New Martyr Zachariah of Patras, who lived in the late eighteenth century. He was born a Christian, but converted to Islam. Living as a Muslim for many years, he still kept and read a book called "The Salvation of Sinners." The book's powerful words finally convinced him that he had made a dreadful mistake.

Zachariah publicly declared his intention to return to Christianity, having received absolution from a Christian elder. For this he was tortured so severely that he died. When the local Christians asked permission to bury him, the Muslim ruler said he was unworthy of burial, having betrayed two faiths. His body was dragged through the streets and unceremoniously tossed into a dry well.

Yet people approaching the well saw an unearthly light shining above it. This man, who in life was pronounced unfit even for a proper burial, had found the "then" of God's forgiving and welcoming love.

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Around Ss. Peter & Paul

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 George Moriarity
- 3 John Tanner
- 5 Pat Starkey
- 6 Walter Booriakin
- 16 Ted Demos
- Liliya Armstrong
- 17 Mark Littrell
- 19 John Hecht
- George & Nadya Moriarty
- 26 Teddi Brent
- 28 Samuel Melendrez
- 29 John & Carol Yavornitzky

Many Years! Mongaya Leta!

LUNCHEON HONORING NEWLY-CONSECRATED BISHOP DANIEL

A luncheon to honor the newly-consecrated Bishop Daniel will be held following the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, February 1, 2015, beginning at 12:00 noon. The luncheon will take place at *The Gladly Restaurant*, 2201 E Camelback Road, Phoenix, AZ, 85016. Tickets are \$35.00 per person. To purchase your tickets and for more information, please see Teddi Brent or Antonia Adams-Clement during coffee hour.

PRAYER LIST

*"I was sick and you visited me."
Matt 25:36*

We offer prayers to all of our parishioners who are ill or unable to attend services:

- Protodeacon Alexis
- Cassandra Wenz Wagner
- Rose Kurowski
- Ann Garza
- Rose Koval

If you know of anyone else in need of our prayers, please contact Father Daniel.

Bits and Pieces

THANK YOU!

As we prepare to celebrate the Feast of the Theophany, I want to express my deep gratitude to all the members of our parish family. May the Lord abundantly bless all of you who labor for the building up of the Kingdom of God in our corner of the Lord's Vineyard. Our parish celebrations for the Feast of the Lord's Nativity were, once again, truly beautiful and inspiring to all who participated. From the decorations, to the beautiful hymns sung by our choir, to those who served in the altar, to the Holy Supper... all gave glory to God as we celebrated His coming into our world and into our lives.

I feel truly blessed that the Lord has called me to serve you. May the Lord grant our parish community continued growth in the year ahead. Thank you, as well, for the many expressions of kindness extended during this Holy Season—your cards, gifts, and kind words are all deeply appreciated.

With love in the Lord,

Father Daniel

EPISCOPAL CONSECRATION OF FATHER DANIEL

Father Daniel will be consecrated to the Episcopacy the weekend of January 23-25, 2015. The schedule of events and other information concerning this moment in the life of our Diocese—and of our Parish—can be found at the diocesan website: dowoca.org as well as on our parish website. Photos of all the events will be posted as soon as possible after the event on the oca.org website.

ARCHPASTORAL VISIT OF ARCHBISHOP BENJAMIN

On Sunday, February 1, 2015, His Eminence, Archbishop BENJAMIN will be making an archpastoral visit to Saints Peter and Paul Church in order to concelebrate with the newly-consecrated Bishop DANIEL. The Divine Liturgy will begin at the usual hour. We can also expect visitors from Saint John the Evangelist Mission, Tempe, which will not hold their own Liturgy on that day in order to participate in the Archbishop's visit.

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THEOPHANY HOUSE BLESSINGS

The rich liturgical tradition of the Orthodox Church includes a variety of services and blessings. Each year, after the celebration of the Feast of Theophany and the Blessing of Water (January 6), it is customary for the priest to visit parishioners' homes, bringing with him the newly blessed Holy Water to sprinkle and thereby bless the home. Fr Daniel will be available to bless homes throughout the month of January. To arrange to have your house blessed, please speak with Father Daniel.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Our annual parish meeting will be held on Sunday, February 8, 2015, after Coffee Hour. The agenda includes approval of our 2015 budget as well as the election of parish officers. Should you wish to be nominated, please see Fr Daniel or the members of the Executive Board of the Parish Council.

CHURCH CALENDARS

Many thanks to Nick Enoch and John W. Blischak for sponsoring our 2015 parish calendar. A box has been placed in the narthex for you to recycle your 2014 calendars.

HOLY SUPPER

More than one hundred parishioners, family/ friends attended Holy Supper. It was a beautiful evening that began with everyone attending Compline before Holy Supper. Thank you all for attending and contributing to this special evening. Thank you to those who donated food and those

who helped to set-up and then clean-up after the meal.

BEESWAX CANDLES

The tradition of lighting candles as a sign of our prayer and as a sacrificial gift to the Lord is an ancient one. We will soon be transitioning from using the white paraffin candles with which everyone is familiar to the more traditional beeswax candles. There are many benefits in making this transition: beeswax candles are a more traditional Orthodox offering; beeswax candles burn more cleanly, with less smoke; beeswax candle also emit a "sweet" fragrance as they burn; they burn longer and don't drip as much; and they are a natural "green" product, produced without the use of chemicals. Also, by using beeswax candles we are able to support the work of the Monastic Brotherhood at our diocesan Saint John of San Francisco Monastery in Mantion, CA.

WELCOME

We welcome all visitors to SS Peter & Paul. We hope your visit was enriching and enlightening. Please join us in the Cultural Center, behind the church, for our Fellowship Hour. It's a chance to meet some of our members, other visitors, and enjoy some coffee and fellowship. It's also a great time to take a look at what our bookstore has to offer.


MBAS

Many thanks to the Myrrh Bearers Altar Society and all the hard work they put in preparing for the holidays, baking nut, poppy, and apricot rolls, the Christmas cookie bake sale and raffle, beautifying the church, and hosting Holy Supper. Thanks to everyone (both members and parishioners) who participated in the various MBAS activities during 2014; without you, we would not have been a success.

BOOKSTORE

If you purchase an item while the store is unattended, please leave a note to as what was purchased. It makes taking inventory a little easier! Thanks everyone!

January 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Circumcision of Christ St. Basil the Great 9:00am Divine Liturgy	2 Ven. Seraphim of Sarov Forefeast of Theophany	3 Forefeast of Theophany 5:00pm Great Vespers
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #e0f2f1;"> <p>FOCA Piroghi Workshop Saturday, January 10, 2015 at 9:00 am Please see Pat Starkey to place your order (\$7.50/doz) or volunteer to help.</p> </div>						
4 Forefeast of Theophany Synaxis of the Seventy Apostles 8:30am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy	5 Eve of Theophany 6:00pm Compline	6 Holy Theophany 9:00am Divine Liturgy <i>Great Blessing of Water</i>	7 Synaxis of St. John the Baptist	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #bdbdbd;"> <p>SS Peter and Paul Annual Meeting Sunday, February 8, 2015 following fellowship hour.</p> </div>		10 9:00am - <i>DONE</i> <i>FOCA PIROGHI WORKSHOP</i> 5:00pm Great Vespers
11 Sunday after Theophany Ven. Theodosius the Great 8:30am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy Church School MBAS Meeting	12	13 6:00pm Council Meeting	14 Leavetaking Theophany	15	16	17 Ven. Godbearing Anthony the Great 5:00pm Great Vespers
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #e0f2f1;"> <p>We welcome all of our guests and visitors. Please join us in the Cultural Center for Fellowship Hour following Divine Liturgy each Sunday.</p> </div>						
18 8:30am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy Church School	19	20 Ven. Euthymius The Great	21 Icon "Joy and Consolation"	22	23	24 5:00pm Great Vespers
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #cfcfcf;">  <p>Altar Servers Workshop Saturday, January 31, 2015 11:30am—Vespers Lunch will be served</p> </div>						
25 Zacchaeus Sunday St. Gregory the Theologian 8:30am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy Church School	26	27 Translation of the Relics of St. John Chrysostom	28 Venerable Ephraim & Isaac of Syria	29	30 Synaxis Three Hierarchs	31 11:30 am—Vespers Altar Servers Workshop: The Hierarchical Divine Liturgy <i>SS Peter & Paul</i> 5:00pm Great Vespers
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #e0f2f1;"> <p>Theophany House Blessing Father Daniel will be available to bless homes throughout the month of January. To arrange to have your house blessed, please speak with Father Daniel.</p> </div>						