

SS Peter & Paul Orthodox Church Newsletter

Volume 23, Issue 6

June 2023

May Council Highlights

- ✘ April's Operating Income was \$28,192.93 and Operating Expenses were \$17,553.82, resulting in a positive balance of \$10,639.11.
- ✘ SS Peter and Paul feast day luncheon to be held on Sunday, July 2nd.
- ✘ Archbishop BENJAMIN to visit Sept. 9-10; MBAS will prepare luncheon.
- ✘ \$2,500 donated to St. Mary's Food Bank from Nativity/Pascha card.



SS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH
1614 E. Monte Vista Rd.
Phoenix, AZ 85006
602.253.9515

www.sspeterpaulaz.org
www.oca.org
www.orthodoxfellowship.org

Archpriest Mikel Bock,
Rector
907-444-8545
frmikel@sspeterpaulaz.org

Archpriest David Balmer, Attached Retired
frdavidbalmer@sspeterpaulaz.org
480-213-7631

Deacon John Weiss
deaconjohn@sspeterpaulaz.org
Deacon Rodion Pfeiffer
deaconrodion@sspeterpaulaz.org

Andrew Evans
Council President
480.948.7929

Barbara Harp
Choir Director
barbaraharp.2030@gmail.com

Stephanie A. Homyak
Church School Director
Newsletter Editor
602.432.7473
stephanie_homyak@yahoo.com

Matushka Elizabeth Pfeiffer
Myrrhbearers Altar Society
flagstaffred@gmail.com

The Great Feast of Holy Pentecost

Fifty days after the Resurrection, on the already-existing Jewish feast of Pentecost, while the disciples and many other followers of Jesus Christ were gathered together to pray in the

Upper Room, the Holy Spirit descended upon them in the form of "tongues of fire," with the sound of a mighty rushing wind, and they began to speak in languages that they did not

know. There were many visitors from the Jewish diaspora to Jerusalem at that time for the Jewish observance of the feast, and they were astonished to hear these unlearned fisherman speaking praises to God in their foreign tongues. This account is detailed in the second chapter of the Acts of the Holy Apostles.

The number fifty, as in the fiftieth day after Pascha, stands for eternal and heavenly fulfillment, seven times seven, plus one.

The Orthodox Church sees Pentecost as the final fulfillment of the mission of Jesus Christ and the first beginning of the messianic age of the Kingdom of

God, mystically present in his Church. It is traditionally called the beginning of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. Besides celebrating the coming of the Holy Spirit, the feast also celebrates the full revelation of the Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Hymns of the Church, celebrate the sign of the final act of God's self-disclosure to the world of His creation.

To Orthodox Christians, the feast of Pentecost is not just a celebration of an event in history. It is also a celebration their membership in the Church. They have lived Pentecost and received "the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit" in the Mystery of Holy Chrismation. For the feast of Pentecost the icon of the Holy Trinity, the three angelic figures who appeared to Abraham, is placed in the center of the church for veneration. This icon is used with the traditional Pentecost icon. The church building is decorated with flowers and the green leaves of the sum-

mer to show that God's divine breath comes to renew all creation. Green vestments and coverings are also used. In many parishes the feast is celebrated starting the evening before with Great Vespers. Some parishes also serve Matins on the morning of the feast before the Divine Liturgy. The Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom is celebrated, with special hymns replacing the standard Antiphons. The hymns *O Heavenly King* and *We have seen the True Light* are sung for the first time since Easter, calling the Holy Spirit to "come and abide in us," and proclaiming that "we have received the heavenly Spirit."

An extraordinary service called the Kneeling Vespers, is observed on the evening of Pentecost. This is a Vespers service to which are added three sets of long poetical prayers, the composition of Saint Basil the Great, during which everyone kneels, even touching their foreheads to the floor (prostrations in church having been forbidden from the day of Pascha up to this point). In most parishes, this service is done immediately after the Divine Liturgy. ✘



Rector's Message

Greetings to all!

Here we are at the beginning of the summer, which is usually a time for vacations. The time that we try to leave our stressful lives behind and enjoy a different pace of life for a short duration. The summer months, with kids out of school and maybe travel to new and different locations, bring a new set of challenges to us. Because we are away from home, we sometimes seem to forget about God, unless something bad happens while on vacation then we remember Him. We need to remember that God is always there, waiting for us, He doesn't take vacation. He is there



when we call on Him and, even during vacation, we should be thanking Him daily for all the blessings that we receive from Him. We also need to remember that the demons never take vacation either, and they are there to tempt us and torment us as best they can. But, if we are calling on God in our morning prayers and evening prayers to help us, the demons have less impact on us. They try to trick us and tempt us because we are usually in a relaxed state and they can manipulate us. We should always remember that God is there and we should not forget this even on vacation. But also, we are now in the

summer months and church attendance usually falls off a little bit, it is hot, and it is my understanding that it stays hot for a few months (remember, this is my 1st summer here) but the physical church still has expenses. Please do not forget the financial responsibility we all have to keep the church running properly. The electric bill is very high during the summer because we are running the air conditioning. So, even though it is summer and we may be out on vacation or just relaxing at home, we still need to remember to tithe, and maybe even donate a little more to help with the bills for the summer months. We are Christ's servants; it is our responsibility to always put Christ and His church first, even when on vacation. I pray that everyone has a safe and blessed summer.

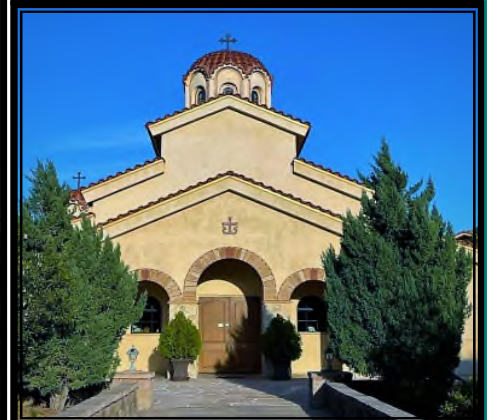
Father Mikel

Visit to St. Paisius Monastery

On Saturday, March 18th, SS Peter and Paul sent our largest group of pilgrims to St. Paisius Monastery in Safford, Arizona. The group of 28 caravanned in 8 vehicles, and included faithful from ages 2 to 92. The day was full and included shopping time in the bookstore (religious items, icons, books and handcrafted items made by the sisters), participation in Panikhida, Vespers and Compline services, lunch and dinner in the monastery Trapeza, a guided tour of the grounds, and free time to pray. The trip was blessed with being able to venerate numerous relics of saints. Of note, on this trip the sisters planned special activities for our young attendees, including time in the monastery barn with newborn animals, arts and crafts, and singing with the sisters.

If you haven't visited the monastery yet we hope you'll join our next trip!

Antonia Adams Clement



Congratulations Class of 2023!



Heidi Alexandra Anna Weiss

Heidi graduated from American Leadership Academy, Cum Laude on May 24, 2023. She will be attending Arizona State University in the Fall. She has been admitted into the College of Health Solutions, Pre-Medical (MD) Pathway on a full-ride. She is a member of: Designated Scholar - College Board; Indigenous Recognition Program - College Board; National Society of High School Scholars; and National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists.



Zachary Joseph Delsante

Zach graduated from Perry High School, an AP Scholar, on May 24, 2023. Zach was a defenseman for both his travel and high school hockey teams and has been playing the sport since he was 4. He has won awards for his dedication, sportsmanship, hustle and performance on the ice. A future Nebraska Cornhusker, Zach will be attending the University of Nebraska - Lincoln in the fall. He has been accepted into their College of Journalism and Mass Communications.

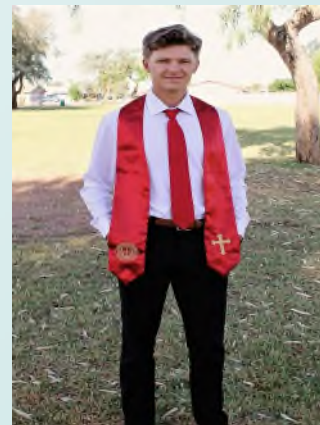


"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Jeremiah 29:11

Alexander Enoch

Alexander Enoch graduated from the Pennsylvania State University on May 6, 2023 with a double major in International Politics and African Studies. On June 3rd, Alexander will be leaving for the Republic of Liberia in west Africa for a twenty-seven month stint with the Peace Corps. During his time in Liberia, Alexander will be living in a rural community and working on locally prioritized projects in the Education and Health sectors. Alexander plans to continue his education when he returns to the United States in the fall of 2025.



Andrew Hirsch

Andrew Hirsch graduated from Arizona Christian University, Summa Cum Laude, on May 5, 2023 with a major in Business Administration. Andrew was a 3 year GSAC Scholar Athlete, 4 year starting baseball player, and Tim Reed service award nominee. Andrew plans to remain in Phoenix and accept a position as an Account Executive at Audacy, Inc.

Blessed Xenia of St. Petersburg

Saint Xenia lived during the eighteenth century, but little is known of her life or of her family. She passed most of her life in Petersburg during the reigns of the empresses Elizabeth and Catherine II.

Xenia Grigorievna Petrova was the wife of an army officer, Major Andrew Petrov. After the wedding, the couple lived in Saint Petersburg. Saint Xenia became a widow at the age of twenty-six when her husband suddenly died at a party. She grieved for the loss of her husband, and especially because he died without Confession or Holy Communion.

Once her earthly happiness ended, she did not look for it again. From that time forward, Xenia lost interest in

the things of this world, and followed the difficult path of foolishness for the sake of Christ. The basis for this strange way of life is to be found in the first Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 1:18-24, 1 Cor. 2:14, 1 Cor. 3:18-19). The Lord strengthened her and helped her to bear sorrow and misfortune patiently for the next forty-five years.

She started wearing her husband's clothing, and insisted that she be addressed as "Andrew Feodorovich." She told people that it was she, and not her husband, who had died. In a certain sense, this was perfectly true. She abandoned her former way of life and experienced a spiritual rebirth. When she gave away her house and possessions to the poor, her relatives complained to the authorities. After speaking to Xenia, the officials were convinced that she was in her right mind and was entitled to dispose of her property as she saw fit. Soon she had nothing left for herself, so she wandered through the

poor section of Petersburg with no place to lay her head. She refused all assistance from her relatives, happy to be free of worldly attachments.



When her late husband's red and green uniform wore out, she clothed herself in rags of those colors. After a while, Xenia left Petersburg for eight years. It is believed that she visited holy Elders and ascetics throughout Russia seeking instruction in the spiritual life. She may have visited Saint Theodore of Sanaxar (February 19), who had been a military man himself. His life changed dramatically when a young officer died at a drinking party. Perhaps this officer was Saint Xenia's

husband. In any case, she knew Saint Theodore and profited from his instructions.

Saint Xenia eventually returned to the poor section of Petersburg, where she was mocked and insulted because of her strange behavior. When she did accept money from people it was only small amounts, which she used to help the poor. She spent her nights praying without sleep in a field outside the city. Prayer strengthened her, and in her heart's conversation with the Lord she found the support she needed on her difficult path.

When a new church was being built in the Smolensk cemetery, Saint Xenia brought bricks to the site. She did this in secret, during the night, so that no one would know.

Soon her great virtue and spiritual gifts began to be noticed. She prophesied future events affecting the citizens of Petersburg, and even the royal family. Against her will, she became known as someone

pleasing to God, and nearly everyone loved her. They said, "Xenia does not belong to this world, she belongs to God." People regarded her visits to their homes or shops as a great blessing. Saint Xenia loved children, and mothers rejoiced when the childless widow would stand and pray over a baby's crib, or kiss a child. They believed that the blessed one's kiss would bring that child good fortune.

Saint Xenia lived about forty-five years after the death of her husband, and departed to the Lord at the age of seventy-one. The exact date and circumstances of her death are not known, but it probably took place at the end of the eighteenth century. She was buried in the Smolensk cemetery.

By the 1820s, people flocked to her grave to pray for her soul, and to ask her to intercede with God for them. So many visitors took earth from her grave that it had to be replaced every year. Later, a chapel was built over her grave.

Those who turn to Saint Xenia in prayer receive healing from illness, and deliverance from their afflictions. She is also known for helping people who seek jobs.

Reprinted from the Orthodox Church in America web site, <https://www.oca.org/saints/lives/2011/01/24/100297-blessed-xenia-of-st-petersburg#:~:text=Saint%20Xenia%20lived%20during%20the,empresses%20Elizabeth%20and%20Catherine%20II.>*

"To be Orthodox means to have the God-man Christ constantly in your soul, to live in Him, think in Him, feel in Him, act in Him. In other words, to be Orthodox means to be a Christ-bearer and a Spirit-bearer."

St. Justin Popovich

Youth Corner: St. Innocent, Metropolitan of Moscow

**ENLIGHTENER OF THE ALEUTS, APOSTLE TO THE AMERICAS
 COMMEMORATION: OCTOBER 6TH & MARCH 31ST**

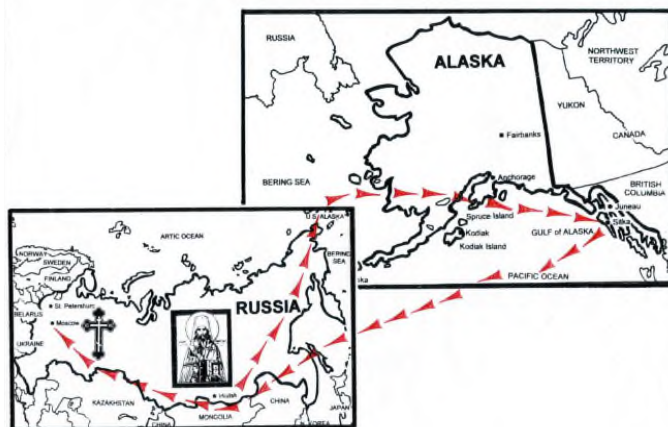
John Veniaminov was born on August 26, 1797 in a rural village of the Irkutsk province in Russia. His father was a church server and taught John to read the Epistle at a very young age. When he was six years old he was orphaned. At the age of ten, John was assigned to the Irkutsk Theological Seminary. He was a very hard worker and an outstanding student. He was also very humble and kind. When he was 20, he was married and ordained to the diaconate. Following graduation from the seminary, he became a teacher at the parish school and was ordained to the priesthood. He served as a parish priest for two years in Irkutsk and in 1824 he volunteered to do missionary work in Alaska. When he was 26 years old Father John and his family traveled over 2,000 miles on a fourteen month journey to Unalaska, in the Aleutian Islands. There he lived in a hut with his wife, elderly mother, baby son Innocent, and brother. At Unalaska he taught the natives of the islands to be carpenters, blacksmiths, and bricklayers. In return,

they helped him build a church, which they named Holy Ascension. Father John continued to travel to remote areas throughout Alaska by canoe, dog sled, and even reindeer. In order to talk to the natives, he learned six different native languages. To help them learn about the church, he translated the Scriptures and other church books into their languages. After spending fourteen years in Unalaska and Sitka, he returned to Russia to ask for more support and money for his work in Alaska. When he arrived there, he got the sad news that his wife had died. He made the decision to stay in Russia, and was tonsured a monk and given the name Innocent. On December 15, 1840, he was consecrated Bishop at Kazan Cathedral in St. Petersburg, Russia. As Bishop he returned to Alaska and spent many years traveling throughout his diocese. He con-

tinued to build churches, guide the priests under his care, and bring the Gospel to the native Alaskan people. After his appointment as Metropolitan of Moscow in 1867, he continued to raise money so priests would have a better life and a place to live after they got older. On March 31, 1879, Innocent died at the age of 82. He was canonized a saint on October 6, 1977.

Article and activities reprinted from the Orthodox Church in America's [Saints of North America](http://dce.oca.org/assets/files/resources/american-saints.pdf), <http://dce.oca.org/assets/files/resources/american-saints.pdf>

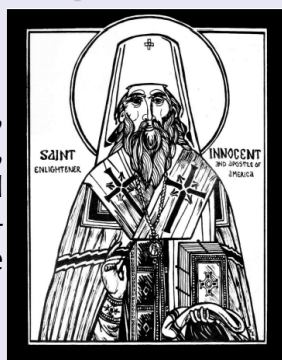
St. Innocent's Travels



Word Search

INSTRUCTIONS:

Search up, down, forward, backward, and on the diagonal to find the hidden words about the life of St. Innocent.



- ENLIGHTENER
- CANOE
- EPISTLE
- REINDEER
- HUMBLE
- CONSECRATED
- KIND
- CANONIZED
- ORDAINED
- ALASKA
- PRIESTHOOD
- SITKA
- MISSIONARY
- BISHOP
- ALASKA

C A N O N I Z E D H U M
 P O H S I B W S N U Z I
 S D N I K A C J A M N S
 O I V S P O H S I B Y S
 E R T X E P I S T L E I
 A O L K S C T X F E P O
 D E N I A D R O T B G N
 M U T A M A L A S K A A
 V K U Z C H E W T W I R
 A D O R E E D N I E R Y
 E P R I E S T H O O D A
 R E N E T H G I L N E S

Mother's Day

Our mothers were certainly given the royal treatment on Mother's Day. As they entered church, they were greeted by Marty Gala and presented with carnations from the Myrrh Bearers Altar Society.

As they exited the church, Sunday School students presented all women with a jar of *Lime & Mint Foot Soak*. The children really put their heart and soul into making the foot soak, and made 60 jars over two Sundays.

Finally, they were treated to a scrumptious luncheon prepared by the men of the church. Thanks to Nick Bock and the men for organizing and preparing lunch.



Around SS Peter & Paul

JUNE BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

- June 1 Matushka Lisa Bock
Elena Kerr
Irina O'Brien
Teras Mebrahtu
Avah Scholten
- 7 Jose Arauz
- 9 Jerry Hix
- 10 Yelizaveta Gallagher
- 12 David & Sue Bieber
Rosemarie and William Osolinsky
- 20 Larry Gardner
- 22 Brittany Lauber
- 27 Rita Mudrenko
Jaden Valencia

*Many Years!
Mnogaya Leta!*

CONGRATULATIONS!

Deacon John and Matushka Juliana are proud to announce: On March 29th, their first granddaughter, Everleigh Jean Genevieve Weiss-Stokes was baptized into the Orthodox Faith. Everleigh was born on February 17th, 2023 and weighed 7 pounds, 5 oz.



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:

- Sandra Hoff*
- Barbara Harp*
- Sarita and the child to be born of her*
- Marie Lobb*
- Ann Carroll*
- Elizabeth Michel*
- Walter Booriakin*
- Jamie Arango*
- Tammy Horton*
- The suffering people of Ukraine*

If you know anyone else in need of our prayers, please contact Fr. Mikel.

Bits and Pieces

SAINTS PETER AND PAUL FAST, the Church's annual Fast in preparation for the Feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, begins each year on the Monday following the Sunday after Pentecost. This year it begins on Monday, June 12th and concludes after the Divine Liturgy on Thursday, June 29th.

SUMMER IS HERE! As in your own homes, *please do not prop open doors to the outside* as this practice just vents the cool air out and the hot air in.

FATHER'S DAY LUNCH Father's Day is quickly approaching and we are planning a special lenten luncheon, because it is in the Apostles fast. If you are interested in helping, please see Mat. Elizabeth (Heather) Pfeiffer.

CELEBRATING SS PETER & PAUL SS Peter & Paul Day is June 29 and they will be celebrated with a liturgy on that day. However, we will have a larger luncheon in their honor on Sunday, July 2nd. We will be holding a potluck luncheon and would like everyone to participate. If you are able to bring something, please sign up with Mat. Elizabeth (Heather) Pfeiffer.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP We are in need of volunteers to clean-up the church hall on Sundays after coffee hour. Cleaners clean off the tables, put away/give away leftover food, wash dishes, take out the trash, etc. If you are interested in volunteering for one weekend a month or one weekend every couple of months, please sign up in the hall. If you have questions please speak to Heather Pfeiffer or Marty Gala.

BOOK STORE As summer slows down our routines a bit, fill that time with reading that edifies the soul and brightens the heart! There are so very many different topics and saints and ideas to ponder upon. Better to redeem the time with beauty that endures than mindless entertainment that passes quickly. Our parish library also has an abundance of titles to borrow.

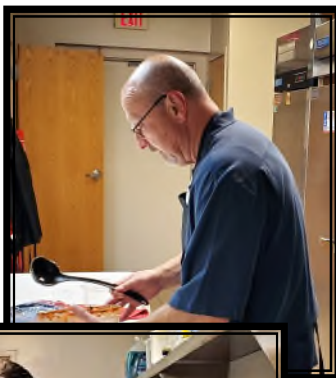
THANK YOU to all who have supported the parish Nativity and Pascha cards. We raised \$2,500 which was donated to St. Mary's Food Bank and will pay for 12,500 meals!



FAREWELL Sadly, the time has come to say goodbye to the Arauz family. Despite my extensive efforts to dissuade them, they will be moving to Minneapolis to be closer to family. Their last day in church will be June 11th, as they leave on June 17th. Their new address is:

15621 Robinwood Drive
Minnetonka, MN 55345-1423

A SHOUT OUT to Nick Bock and all the men who helped to prepare the Mother's Day luncheon. The food was delicious, the mimosas exceptional, and, best of all, they took care of the clean-up!



CONGRATULATIONS AND MANY YEARS!

On Saturday, June 3rd, our parish was blessed as we welcomed into the Church, through Baptism and Chrismation, the Servants of God: Peter (Arthur), George (John Henry), and Ferronia (Sarita) Rhodes. We rejoice with them, their sponsors Deacon John, Dan Kesic, and Kim Arauz, families, and friends that the Lord has called them to live lives of discipleship as members of Christ's Holy Orthodox Church. Many years!



THE FOCA will be meeting this Sunday, June 4th after liturgy. We want to wish everyone born in June a Happy Birthday and May God grant you many years.

Thanks to all who joined us Sunday, May 21st for our family bowling outing. A fun time was had by all!



June 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p style="text-align: center;">WELCOME</p> <p>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.</p>				1	2 Leavetaking Ascension	3 10:00am Baptisms Rhodes Family 5:00pm Vespers
4 PENTECOST 8:40am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy <i>Kneeling Prayers</i> FOCA Meeting	5 <i>Holy Spirit</i> 8:40am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy	6	7	8 Forefast Ascension	9	10 <i>Leavetaking Pentecost</i> 5:00pm Vespers
F A S T - F R E E W E E K						
11 All Saints Holy Apostles Bartholomew and Barnabas 8:40am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy MBAS Meeting	12 SS Peter & Paul Fast Begins	13 6:00 Parish Council Meeting	14 Prophet Elisha 6:00pm Bible Study	15	16	17 5:00pm Vespers
18 All Saints of America All Saints of Russia 8:40am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy <i>Happy Father's Day</i>	19 Holy Apostle Jude, Brother of the Lord	20 21 22 Mark your calendars... SS Peter and Paul Potluck Luncheon Sunday, July 2, 2023 following Divine Liturgy			23 Vladimir Icon 6:00pm Vespers	24 Nativity of St. John the Baptist 8:40am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy 5:00pm Vespers
25 8:40am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy	26	27	28 6:00pm Vespers NO Bible Study	29 Holy Apostles Peter & Paul 8:40am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy 	30	1 Wonderworkers Cosmas & Damian 5:00pm Vespers
2 8:40am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy SS Peter and Paul Potluck Luncheon	3	4 	5 Ven Athanasius of Athos Relics of Ven Sergius of Radonezh 6:00pm Bible Study	6	7	8 Kazan, Sitka-Kazan Icons and others 5:00pm Vespers