WEEKLYBULLETIN

The Voice

June 29th, 2025, Vol. 42, No. 26

Third Sunday After Pentecost

Feast of Saints Peter and Paul

St. ELIA
ORTHODOX ✝ CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America

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His Eminence Alexander, Archbishop of Toledo, Bulgarian Diocese, OCA

Very Rev. Mitred Archpriest Father Don Anthony Freude, Parish Rector Rev. Protodeacon James M. Gresh, Rev. Deacon Aaron

SAINT ELIA THE PROPHET PARISH

2025 Parish Council
President: Veronica Bilas
V. President: Sandy Graham
Secretary: Deacon Aaron Gray
Treasurer: Daniel Slife
Members: Anthony Dodovich Bud Graham, Jefferson Hodge, Daniel Ralich

Choir Director: Subdeacon Terrence A. Bilas
Assistant Directors: Anastasia Bohush Deaconisa Heidi Gresh, Reader Michael Luc

Church School:
Coordinator: Popadia Donna Freude
Staff: Natalie Slife, Eve Tavenier, Reader Nicholas Morelli. Frances Hakim, Subdeacon David Trace

Sisterhood of St. Juliana:
President: Sandy Graham
V. President: Kathy Gray
Secretary: Katherine Hodge
Treasurer: Mary Magensky
Assistant Treasurer: Anastasia Bohush

Workers of St. Elizabeth the New Martyr:
Coordinators: Subdeacon Aaron Gray, Veronica Bilas

Scheduled Readers 2025
Sunday, June 29-Reader Joshua Wherley
Sunday, July 6 Deaconisa Heidi Gresh
Sunday, July 13- Reader Michael Luc
Sunday, July 20 -Sue Ellen Turscak
Sunday, July 27 -Daniel Slife

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST –Tone 2
THE HOLY, GLORIOUS AND ALL-PRAISED LEADERS OF THE APOSTLES, PETER AND PAUL
Saturday, June 28

5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Matins Gospel: Mark 16:9=20

Sunday, June 2

9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Reader Joshua Wherley
9:30 am Baptismal Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom
Baptism of Ronan Williamson
Epistle Reader: Reader Joshua Wherley
Epistles: Romans 5:1-10; 6:3-11
Gospels: Matthew 6:22-33; Matthew 28:16-20

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 3
Venerable Sisoes the Great
Saturday, July 5

5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Matins Gospel: Luke 24:1-12

Sunday, July 6

9:10 am 3rs and 6th Hours: Deaconisa Heidi Gresh
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom
Epistle Reader: Deaconisa Heidi Gresh
Epistle: Romans 6:18-23
Gospel: Matthew 8:5-13

BAPTISMAL DIVINE LITURGY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Romans 6:3-11

Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness* of *His resurrection*, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him,* that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

For he who has died has been [b]freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God.

Likewise, you also,] reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Gospel: Matthew 28:16-20

The Great Commission

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.
And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ***"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.***

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Baptism is birth to the life made new by Christ in His Death and Resurrection. Our resurrected Lord proclaims: ***"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God"*** *(John 3:3).* Baptism, as St. Paul writes, is death and resurrection with Christ. It is the personal Pascha of each Orthodox Christian.

Today, at the Baptismal Liturgy, Ronan Williamson experiences his personal Pascha in Baptism. He has chosen as his patron Saint Romanus the Melodist and we prayerfully congratulate him, his Sponsors Daniel and Natalie Slife, and his father Daniel Williamson. **Many Years!**

The Holy Glorious and All-Praised Leaders of the Apostles, Peter and Paul

Commemorated on June 29

Sermon of Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo

Today the Holy Church piously remembers the sufferings of the Holy Glorious and All-Praised Apostles Peter and Paul.

Saint Peter, the fervent follower of Jesus Christ, for the profound confession of His Divinity: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God," was deemed worthy by the Savior to hear in answer, "Blessed art thou, Simon ... I tell thee, that thou art Peter [Petrus], and on this stone [petra] I build My

Church" (Mt.16:16-18). On "this stone" [petra], is on that which thou sayest: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God" it is on this thy confession I build My Church. Wherefore the "thou art Peter": it is from the "stone" [petra] that Peter [Petrus] is, and not from Peter [Petrus] that the "stone" [petra] is, just as the Christian is from Christ, and not Christ from the Christian.

Do you want to know, from what sort of "rock" [petra] the Apostle Peter [Petrus] was named? Hear the Apostle Paul: "Brethren, I do not want ye to be ignorant," says the Apostle of Christ, "how all our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (1 Cor.10: 1-4)....

Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the final days of His earthly life, in the days of His mission to the race of man, chose from among the disciples His twelve Apostles to preach the Word of God. Among them, the Apostle Peter for his fiery ardor was vouchsafed to occupy the first place (Mt.10:2) and to be as it were the representative person for all the Church.

Therefore it is said to him, preferentially, after the confession: "I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in the heaven: and

whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth: shall be loosed in heaven" (Mt.16: 19). Therefore it was not one man, but rather the One Universal Church, that received these "keys" and the right "to bind and loosen." And that it was actually the Church that received this right, and not exclusively a single person, turn your attention to another place of the Scriptures, where the same Lord says to all His Apostles, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit" and further after this, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them: and whose soever sins ye retain, are retained" (John 20: 22-23); or: "whatsoever ye bind upon the earth, shall be bound in Heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosened in heaven" (Mt.18:18).

Thus, it is the Church that binds, the Church that loosens; the Church, built upon the foundational cornerstone, Jesus Christ Himself (Eph 2:20), doth bind and loosen. Let both the binding and the loosening be feared: the loosening, in order not to fall under this again; the binding, in order not to remain forever in this condition. Therefore "Iniquities ensnare a man, and everyone is bound in the chains of his own sins," says Wisdom (Prov 5:22); and except for Holy Church nowhere is it possible to receive the loosening.

After His Resurrection the Lord entrusted the Apostle Peter to shepherd His spiritual flock not because, that among the disciples only Peter alone was pre-deserved to shepherd the flock of Christ,

but Christ addresses Himself chiefly to Peter because, that Peter was first among the Apostles and as such the representative of the Church; besides which, having turned in this instance to Peter alone, as to the top Apostle, Christ by this confirms the unity of the Church. “Simon of John” -- says the Lord to Peter -- “lovest thou Me?” -- and the Apostle answered: “Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee”; and a second time it was thus asked, and a second time he thus answered; being asked a third time, seeing that as it were not believed, he was saddened. But how is it possible for him not to believe That One, Who knew his heart? And wherefore then Peter answered: “Lord, Thou knowest all; Thou knowest that I love Thee.” “And sayeth Jesus to him” all three times “Feed My sheep” (John 20:15-17).

Besides this, the triple appealing of the Savior to Peter and the triple confession of Peter before the Lord had a particular beneficial purpose for the Apostle. That one, to whom was given “the keys of the kingdom” and the right “to bind and to loose,” bound himself thrice by fear and cowardice (Mt.26:69-75), and the Lord thrice loosens him by His appeal and in turn by his confession of strong love.

And to shepherd literally the flock of Christ was acquired by all the Apostles and their successors. “Take heed, therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock,” the Apostle Paul urges church presbyters,

“over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28); and the Apostle Peter to the elders: “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint, but willingly: not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind: neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being examples to the flock. And when is appeared the Prince of pastors, ye will receive unfading crowns of glory” (1 Pet. 5:2-4).

It is remarkable that Christ, having said to Peter: “Feed My sheep,” did not say: “Feed thy sheep,” but rather to feed, good servant, the sheep of the Lord. “Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” (1 Cor.1:13). “Feed My sheep”.

Wherefore “wolfish robbers, wolfish oppressors, deceitful teachers and mercenaries, not being concerned about the flock” (Mt.7:15; Acts 20:29; 2 Pet 2:1; John 10:12), having plundered a strange flock and making of the spoils as though it be of their own particular gain, they think that they feed their flock. Such are not good pastors, as pastors of the Lord.

“The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep” (John 10:11), entrusted to Him by the chief Shepherd Himself (1 Pet 5:4). And the Apostle Peter, true to his calling, gave his soul for the very

flock of Christ, having sealed his apostleship by a martyr's death, is now glorified throughout all the world.

The **Apostle Paul**, formerly Saul, was changed from a robbing wolf into a meek lamb. Formerly he was an enemy of the Church, then is manifest as an Apostle. Formerly he stalked it, then preached it. Having received from the high priests the authority at large to throw all Christians in chains for execution, he was already on the way, he breathed out "threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord" (Acts 9:1), he thirsted for blood, but "He that dwells in the Heavens shall laugh him to scorn" (Ps 2:4).

When he, "having persecuted and vexed" in such manner "the Church of God" (1Cor.15:9; Acts 8:5), he came near Damascus, and the Lord from Heaven called to him: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" and I am here, and I am there, I am everywhere: here is My head; there is My body. There becomes nothing of a surprise in this; we ourselves are members of the Body of Christ. "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me; it is hard for thee to kick against the goad" (Acts 9:4-5). Saul, however, "trembling and frightened", cried out: "Who art Thou, Lord?" The Lord answered him, "I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest."

And Saul suddenly undergoes a change: "What wantest Thou me to do?" -- he cries out. And

suddenly for him there is the Voice: “Arise, and go to the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do” (Acts 9:6). Here the Lord sends Ananias: “Arise and go into the street” to a man, “by the name of Saul,” and baptize him, “for this one is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel” (Acts 9: 11, 15, 18). This vessel must be filled with My Grace. “

Ananias, however, answered: Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he hath done to Thy saints in Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Thy Name” (Acts 9:13-14). But the Lord urgently commands Ananias: “Search for and fetch him, for this vessel is chosen by Me: for I shall show him what great things he must suffer for My name’s sake” (Acts 9:11, 15-16).

And actually the Lord did show the Apostle Paul what things he had to suffer for His Name. He instructed him the deeds; He did not stop at the chains, the fetters, the prisons and shipwrecks; He Himself felt for him in his sufferings, He Himself guided him towards this day.

On a single day the memory of the sufferings of both these Apostles is celebrated, though they suffered on separate days, but by the spirit and the closeness of their suffering they constitute one. Peter went first, and Paul followed soon after him.

Formerly called Saul, and then Paul, having transformed his pride into humility. His very name (Paulus), meaning “small, little, less,” demonstrates this. What is the Apostle Paul after this? Ask him, and he himself gives answer to this: “I am,” says he, “the least of the Apostles... but I have labored more abundantly than all of them: yet not I, but the grace of God, which was with me” (1 Cor.15:9-10).

And so, brethren, celebrating now the memory of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, remembering their venerable sufferings, we esteem their true faith and holy life, we esteem the innocence of their sufferings and pure confession. Loving in them the sublime quality and imitating them by great exploits, “in which to be likened to them” (2 Thess 3: 5-9), and we shall attain to that eternal bliss which is prepared for all the saints.

The path of our life before was more grievous, thornier, harder, but “we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses” (Heb 12: 1), having passed by along it, made now for us easier, and lighter, and more readily passable.

First there passed along it “the author and finisher of our faith,” our Lord Jesus Christ Himself (Heb 12: 2); His daring Apostles followed after Him; then the martyrs, children, women, virgins and a great multitude of witnesses. Who acted in them and helped them on this path? He Who said, “Without Me ye can do nothing” (John 15: 5).

VOLUNTEER AT ST. HERMAN'S HOUSE

On Saturday, July 26 at 11:15 am, a group (six people) from St. Elia is scheduled to help serve the noon day meal at St. Herman's House m Cleveland. **Please see Jefferson Hodge to volunteer.**

BOOKSTORE ORGANIZED

Thank you to Daniel Slife who coordinated the organizing of our Parish Library along with Deacon Aaron Gray, Tyler McElvey and Joshua Wherley. Your time and effort is greatly appreciated;

GRASS CUTTERS NEEDED

Please check the sign-up sheet on the counter in the Church Vestibule and sign up for your availability. Please see Subdeacon Terrence Bilas for questions.

CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX COUNCIL OF AKRON - COCA

COCA, which represents all the Parishes of the Greater Akron Area, has elected Reader Joshua Wherley from our Parish as President for 2025-2026

OUR STEWARDSHIP

June 22 2025

Candles:	**$ 92.00**
Sun. Tray Offerings:	**889.00**
Bookstore:	**20.00**
PayPal Donations:	**30.00**
Tithely Donations;	**296.12**
TOTAL:	**$1,127.12**

REMEBERING THOSE SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES

Subdeacon Anthony Freude, son of Fr Don and Popadia Donna.
Egor Cravcenco, son of Serghei and Ludmila
Khristopher Barnhart, son of Diego and Chanelle

REMEMBERING OUR SICK AND SHUTIN

Archbishop Onuphry of the Ukraine
Archbishop Benjamin
Archbishop Nathaniel
Archpriest Anderew Moulton
Archpriest Emil Huntyan
Priest Gabriel Bilas
Priest John Manuel
Mitered Archpriest Daniel Kovalak
Matushka Myra Kovalak
Matushka Christine Zebren
Matushka Laryssa Huntyan
Matushka Valerie Zahersky
Subdeacon Martin Paluch,
Reader John Paluch
Florence Lambo
Mary Magensky
Sarah Niglio
Meliss Trace
Frances Hakim
Louis Hakim
Joey Gresh
Halina Woroncow
Joseph Taylor
Brian Gable
Ellen Rees
David Elioff
Sofia Wsevolodovna

Book Study: LIVING AS AN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN IN AMERICAN SOCIETY
7:00-8:15 PM, Thursdays, July 3 - July 10, St. Elia Church (a Zoom connection will also be available)

Orthodox Christians are often unaware of how profoundly American culture affects their beliefs and spiritual practices. American ideas and habits regarding individualism, democracy, progress, politics, sexuality, and wealth are frequently at odds with the teachings of Holy Tradition. This study is intended to shed light on these secular attitudes and philosophies, and compare them, in a side-by-side format, to the theology and spiritual practices of the Eastern Orthodox Church. The goal of our class is not simply to know what Orthodoxy teaches, but to achieve an Orthodox *phronema* or mindset.
The class is based on an eBook (PDF) by the same name. For those without computer access, black and white printed copies can be made in advance by request (about
$8 for an unbound copy). But most people will benefit by using the searchable electronic version which contains hundreds of online links.

If you are interested in joining this class, you can download the book: saintelia.com/news/bookstudy/

If you are attending by zoom, please contact Bill DiPuccio by email to obtain the link:
wlliamdipuccio@sbcglobal.net
Bill Di Puccio PhD