Saints Peter and Paul Russian Christian Orthodox Church

Washburn St &S Fillmore Ave, Scranton, PA 18504

908-705-5132 Home | Saints Peter and Paul Russian Orthodox Church



23rd Sunday after Pentecost

Tone 6

Today's Scriptural Readings:

Ephesians 2: 4-10 / Luke 16: 19-31

2 Timothy 2:1-10 / John 15:17 – 16:2

This Week's Liturgical Calendar

Monday, November 9th	*Great-martyr Parasceva of Iconium (3rd c.).*	Great Vespers: 6: 00 p.m.
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday	*Holy Unmercenaries Cosmas and Damian of Mesopotamia and their mother St. Theodota (3rd c.).*	Great Vespers: 6: 00 p.m.
Saturday		Great Vespers: 5: 00 p.m. Confession: 6: 00 p.m.
Sunday	*Martyrs Acindynus, Pegasius, Aphthonius, Elpidephorus, and Anempodistus of Persia (341).*	3rd and 6th hour: 9: 00 a.m. Confession: 9: 00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

Installation of the Parish Council for 2027

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On Sunday, November 1, 2026, our Parish of Saints Peter and Paul Russian Orthodox Christian Church solemnly installed the members of the Parish Council who will serve during the year 2027.

We are pleased to announce the following Parish Council members:

- **President:** Timothy Micek
- **Financial Secretary:** Mary Ann Hogan
- **Recording Secretary:** Joseph Micek
- **Two-Year Trustee:** Sandra Wallick
- **Two-Year Trustee:** Sonja Czachor
- **One-Year Trustee:** Barbara Ferkile

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to each member for their willingness to serve our parish and contribute to its spiritual and administrative life.

May our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ abundantly bless and reward you for your sincere dedication, faithful service, and love for God and His Holy Church!

May the Lord grant you wisdom, strength, patience, and spiritual guidance as you undertake your responsibilities for the good of our parish and the glory of God's Holy Name.

May God grant you many blessed years!

Birthdays

On November 3, our dear sister in Christ, **Sonja Czachor**, celebrated her birthday!

May our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ grant Sonja wisdom, sincere love for God and her neighbors, spiritual strength, good health, and, above all, salvation and eternal life in the Kingdom of Heaven.

May God grant Sonja many blessed years! Многая лета!

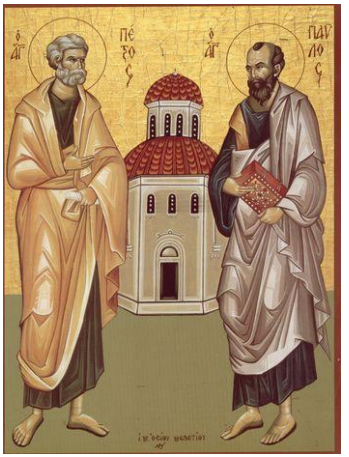
Parish Projects and Upcoming Events

Audio and Video Project — Church

Our parish is beginning a new audio and video project to establish the capability of livestreaming the Divine Liturgy and other Divine Services online. This initiative will allow parishioners who are elderly, ill, homebound, or unable to attend services in person to follow the liturgical life of our parish. It will also support our missionary outreach by introducing more people to the beauty and sacred traditions of Orthodox Christian worship.

Electronic Payment System — Parish Hall

We are also working on installing an electronic payment system in our parish hall. This improvement will allow parishioners and visitors to make purchases and payments conveniently using credit cards, debit cards, and other electronic payment methods, supporting the activities and financial needs of our parish.





International Orthodox Christian Charities:
https://iocc.org/where-we-work/ukraine-crisis-response

ROCOR Fund for Assistance:

https://www.fundforassistance.org/ukraine_crisis

Sponsor a Ukrainian Family:

https://www.uscis.gov/ukraine

Reverent Burial of Holy Icons

Our parish will organize a **special gathering on a Saturday, with the exact date and time to be announced**, for the reverent burial of old, damaged, and deteriorated Holy Icons and other sacred religious items that are no longer suitable for use.

According to the pious tradition of the Holy Orthodox Christian Church, sacred images and blessed objects must always be treated with reverence and never discarded with ordinary household trash.

We invite parishioners who have old or damaged Holy Icons, blessed religious images, or other sacred items to bring them to the parish so that they may be disposed of respectfully and in accordance with Orthodox Christian tradition.

We are also seeking volunteers to assist with digging and preparing the burial site. Parishioners who are willing and able to help with this important task are kindly asked to contact the Parish Priest or on of the members of the Parish Council.

The exact Saturday and time will be announced at a later date.

May our Lord bless and reward all who offer their time and labor in service to His Holy Church.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

We are pleased to introduce **Church Center**, our parish's online platform designed to help parishioners and visitors stay connected with the spiritual, educational, and community life of Saints Peter and Paul Russian Orthodox Christian Church.

Through Church Center, you can access parish announcements, the Divine Services calendar, Sunday School information, parish history, pastoral services, and other resources.

We encourage everyone to visit our Church Center website and become part of our growing online parish community.

Scan the QR code below to visit our Church Center!

May our Lord bless this new initiative for the spiritual benefit of our parish.

Spiritual Reading

Part One

Chap 1. What is Christian perfection?—Warfare is necessary to acquire it — Four things indispensable to success in this warfare.

We all naturally wish, and are commanded to be perfect. The Lord commands: “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matt v. 48). And St. Paul admonishes: ‘In malice be ye children, but in understanding be men” (I Cor. xiv. 20). In another place he says: ‘Stand perfect and complete in all the will of God” (Col. iv. 12); and again: ‘Let us go on unto perfection’ (Heb. vi. 1). The same commandment is also found in the Old Testament. Thus God says to Israel in Deuteronomy: ‘Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God’ (Deut. xviii. 13). And David advises his son Solomon: ‘And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind’ (I Chron. xxviii. 9). After all this we cannot fail to see that God demands from Christians the fullness of perfection, that is, that we should be perfect in all virtues. But if you, my reader beloved in Christ, wish to attain to such heights, you must first learn in what Christian perfection consists. For if you have not learnt this, you may turn off the right path and go in a totally different direction, while thinking that you make progress towards perfection. I will tell you plainly: the greatest and most perfect thing a man may desire to attain is to come near to God and dwell, in union with Him. There are many who say that the perfection of Christian life consists in fasts, vigils, genuflexions, sleeping on bare earth and other similar austerities of the body. Others say that it consists in saying many prayers at home and in attending long services in Church. And there are others who think that our perfection consists entirely in mental prayer, solitude, seclusion and silence. But the majority limit perfection to a strict observance of all the rules and practices laid down by the statutes, falling into no excess or deficiency, but preserving a golden moderation. Yet all these virtues do not by themselves constitute the Christian perfection we are seeking, but are only means and methods for acquiring it. There is no doubt whatever that they do represent means and effective means for attaining perfection in Christian life. For we see very many virtuous men, who practise these virtues as they should, to acquire strength and power against their own sinful and evil nature,—to gain, through these practices, courage to withstand

the temptations and seductions of our three main enemies: the flesh, the world and the devil; and in and by these means to obtain the spiritual supports, so necessary to all servants of God, and especially to beginners. They fast, to subdue their unruly flesh; they practise vigils to sharpen their inner vision; they sleep on bare earth, lest they become soft through sleep; they bind their tongue by silence and go into solitude to avoid the slightest inducement to offend against the All-Holy God; they recite prayers, attend Church services and perform other acts of devotion, to keep their mind on heavenly things; they read of the life and passion of our Lord, for the sole purpose of realising more clearly their own deficiency and the merciful loving-kindness of God,—to learn and to desire to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, bearing their cross with self-denial, and to make more and more ardent their love of God and their dislike of themselves. On the other hand, these same virtues may do more harm than their open omission, to those who take them as the sole basis of their life and their hope; not from their nature, since they are righteous and holy, but through the fault of those, who use them not as they should be used; that is, when they pay attention only to the external practice of those virtues, and leave their heart to be moved by their own volitions and the volitions of the devil. For the latter, seeing that they have left the right path, gleefully refrains from interfering with their physical endeavours and even allows them to increase and multiply their efforts, in obedience to their own vain thought. Experiencing with this certain spiritual stirrings and consolations, such people begin to imagine that they have already reached the state of angels and feel that God Himself is present in them. And at times, engrossed in the contemplation of some abstract and unearthly things, they imagine that they have completely transcended the sphere of this world and have been ravished to the third heaven. However, anyone can see clearly how sinfully such people behave and how far they are from true perfection, if he looks at their life and character. As a rule they always wish to be preferred to others; they love to live according to their own will and are always stubborn in their decisions; they are blind in everything relating to themselves, but are very clear-sighted and officious in examining the words and actions of others. If another man is held by others in the same esteem, which in their opinion they enjoy, they cannot bear it and become manifestly hostile towards him; if

anyone interferes with them in their pious occupations and works of asceticism, especially in the presence of others,—God forbid! —they immediately become indignant, boil over with wrath and become quite unlike themselves. If, desirous of bringing them to self-knowledge and of leading them to the right path of perfection, God sends them afflictions and sickness, or allows them to be persecuted, by which means He habitually tests His true and real servants, this test immediately shows what is hidden in their hearts, and how deeply they are corrupted by pride. For whatever affliction may visit them, they refuse to bend their necks to the yoke of God's will and to trust in His righteous and secret judgments. They do not want to follow the- 6 Unseen Warfare example of our Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, Who humbled Himself and suffered for our sakes, and they refuse to be humble, to consider themselves the lowest of all creatures, and to regard their persecutors as their good friends, the tools of the divine bounty shown to them and helpers in their salvation. Thus it is clear that they are in great danger. Their inner eye, that is their mind, being darkened, they see themselves with this and see wrongly. Thinking of their external pious works and deeming them good, they imagine that they have already reached perfection and, puffing themselves up, begin to judge others. After this it is impossible for any man to turn such people, except through God's special influence. An evident sinner will turn to-wards good more easily than a secret sinner, hiding under the cloak of visible virtues. Now, having seen clearly and definitely that spiritual life and perfection do not only consist in these visible virtues, of which we have spoken, you must also learn that it consists in nothing but coming near to God and union with Him, as was said in the beginning. With this is connected a heartfelt realisation of the goodness and greatness of God, together with consciousness of our own nothingness and our proneness to every evil ; love of God and dislike of ourselves; submission not only to God but also to all creatures, for the sake of our love of God; renunciation of all will of our own and perfect obedience to the will of God; and moreover desire for all this and its practice with a pure heart to the glory of God. (I Cor. x. 31), from sheer desire to please God and only because He Himself wishes it and because we should so love Him and work for Him. This is the law of love, inscribed by the finger of God Himself in the

hearts of His true servants! This is the renunciation of ourselves that God demands of us! This is the blessed yoke of Jesus Christ and His burden that is light! This is the submission to God's will, which our Redeemer and Teacher demands from us both by His word and by His example! For did not our Master and the Author of our salvation, our Lord Jesus Christ, tell us to say when praying to the heavenly Father: ' Our Father . . . Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. vi. 10)? And did not He Himself exclaim on the eve of His passion: 'Not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke xxii. 42)! And did not He say of His whole work: 'For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me' (John vi. 38)? Do you now see what this all means, brother? I presume that you express your readiness and are longing to reach the height of such perfection. Blessed be your zeal! But prepare yourself also for labour, sweat and struggle from your first steps on the path. You must sacrifice everything to God and do only His will. Yet you will meet in yourself as many wills as you have powers and wants, which all clamour for satisfaction, irrespective of whether it is in accordance with the will of God or not. Therefore, to reach your desired aim, it is first of all necessary to stifle your own wills and finally to extinguish and kill them altogether. And in order to succeed in this, you must constantly oppose all evil in yourself and urge yourself towards good. In other words, you must ceaselessly fight against yourself and against everything that panders to your own wills, that incites and supports them. So prepare "yourself for this struggle and this warfare and know that the crown—attainment of your desired aim—is given to none except to the valiant among warriors and wrestlers. But if this is the hardest of all wars—since in fighting against ourselves it is in ourselves that we meet opposition—victory in it is the most glorious of all; and, what is the main thing, it is most pleasing to God. For if, inspired by fervour, you overcome and put to death your unruly passions, your lusts and wills, you will please God more, and will work for Him more beautifully, than if you flog yourself till you draw blood or exhaust yourself by fasts more than any ancient hermit of the desert. Even if you redeem hundreds of Christian slaves from the infidels and give them freedom, it will not save you, if with this you remain yourself a slave to your own passions. And whatever work you may undertake, however glorious, and with whatever effort and sacrifice you may accomplish it, it will not lead you to your

if you really desire to be victorious in this un-seen warfare and be rewarded with a crown, you must plant in your heart the following four dispositions and spiritual activities, as it were arming yourself with invisible weapons, the most trustworthy and unconquerable of all, namely: (a) never rely on your-self in anything; (b) bear always in your heart a perfect and all-daring trust in God alone; (c) strive without ceasing; and (d) remain constantly in prayer.

- **Saint Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain. *Unseen Warfare*.**