

Quo Vadis

The monthly newsletter of Saints Peter & Paul Orthodox Catholic Church of Bayonne, N.J.
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“**Quo Vadis?**” is a Latin phrase meaning “Where are you going?” It refers to a Christian tradition regarding St. Peter. According to the apocryphal *Acts of Peter*, Peter is fleeing from likely crucifixion in Rome, and along the road outside the city, he encounters the risen Jesus. Peter asks Jesus “Quo vadis?” Jesus replies “Romam vado iterum crucifigi” (“I am going to Rome to be crucified again”). St. Peter thereby gains the fortitude to return to the city, to eventually be martyred by being crucified upside-down. The phrase also occurs a few times in the Latin *Vulgate* translation of the *Holy Bible*, notably in John 13:36 when Peter asks Jesus the same question, to which He responds, “Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me.” The Church of Domine Quo Vadis in Rome is built where, according to tradition, the meeting between St. Peter and the risen Jesus Christ took place.

This parish newsletter is called **Quo Vadis** for a reason: to ask the question of where *you* are going in life. Is your life’s journey leading you towards Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? St. Peter, at a pivotal moment in his life, when he understandably felt like running away, found the courage to go where Jesus Christ would have him go. Where are *you* going? Will *you* follow Jesus Christ?

Rector’s Message

In his *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle writes that “all men desire to be happy.” And Thomas Jefferson, in the *Declaration of Independence*, includes the pursuit of happiness among those rights of man which are inalienable. But what is it that makes people truly happy—the ultimate object which we ought to pursue? The ancient Roman statesman and philosopher, Cicero (106-43 BC) found his life unbearable. He suffered a painful divorce from his wife, Terentia, and owed a large sum to repay her dowry to her wealthy family. Then his second marriage, to a much younger woman, Publia, failed within a year. Shortly thereafter his beloved daughter Tullia died, whereupon he wrote to a friend, “I have lost the one thing that bound me to life.” To wit, he had lost his reason to live, but he withdrew to the countryside to meditate on the meaning of life, the result being a remarkable dialogue in which four friends, Lucullus, Catullus, Hortensius, and Cicero himself, debate about life’s purpose.

The conversation, in which the friends discuss the best way to find happiness, takes place in the house of Lucullus, starting with Catullus’ admiration of the beauty of Lucullus’ house. Hortensius says that he has greater admiration for the skill of those who designed it. From there the friends take turns arguing about the best way to spend one’s time, with Hortensius praising the visual arts, Catullus literature and poetry, Lucullus the study of history, and finally Cicero the value of philosophy, that is, the study of wisdom. Cicero’s speech exhorts the friends to “love, seek, hold fast, and strongly embrace wisdom itself [*ed. – i.e., rather than a specific school of philosophy*], wherever it may be found.” Over the next few centuries Cicero’s little book, which is now lost, was enormously popular with both pagans and Christians. St. Augustine, for example, in his *Confessions* writes of how his reading of the book, while he was a young man studying in Carthage, changed his life. He says, “The book changed my feelings. It altered my prayers, O Lord, to be towards Yourself. It gave me different values and priorities.” It set him on a course in his life of searching for wisdom and finding it in Jesus Christ, the true wisdom made flesh.

Christian tradition identifies Jesus Christ with Holy Wisdom—He is Holy Wisdom incarnate—and it is through Him that we find everlasting beatitude, that is, true happiness. God desires our happiness and knows best how we are to achieve it, precisely because He created us. In the Old Testament there is a book called the Book of Wisdom [of Solomon] that, like Cicero’s little book, presents the “big picture” of happiness. It warns us that wisdom will not enter the hearts of liars, and that the spirit of wisdom is a spirit of love. Those who see only the present world, who know not of the afterlife, pursue immediate pleasures in this life, and as a result take ... consume ... all they can get, seeking wealth, power, and fame without regard of the cost to the poor, the weak, and the elderly. A mere cursory knowledge of history proves the truth of this: consider how men such as Alexander the Great, Julius

Caesar, Napoleon, and many others killed, tortured, and plundered countless numbers in their pursuit of worldly glory. The Book of Wisdom, however, tell us that “God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of His own eternity” (Wis. 2:23), and that we ought to place our hope in the afterlife, for “the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die and their departure is taken for misery ... but they are at peace. For though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality” (Wis. 3:1-3).

What an entirely different perspective this is! The pursuit of happiness, for Christians, involves not just the acquisition of those virtues—the ‘cardinal virtues’ enumerated by ancient sages such as Plato—which protect us from the temporary misery of this life, but also those virtues—the ‘theological virtues’ listed by St. Paul¹—that unite us with God, and the wisdom which we seek as our guide to happiness is none other than the wisdom of God, revealed in the Scriptures and incarnate in Jesus Christ. A clue to what constitutes happiness, in the Christian philosophy, may be found in the very first book of Scripture: “It is not good that the man should be alone” (Gen. 2:18). In His eternal wisdom, God created man to be a *person*—that intrinsic to the very constitution of his being is that he exist in mutual relations with other persons. We are not made to be happy in isolation, separate from other people and from God. Sometimes we hear people say “I am always lonely, even when I’m around other people.” This sense of loneliness exists when someone views other people as means to their ends, as tools for their use or objects for their gratification, or even worse, as obstacles to their goals and desires. It is precisely the “this-worldly” materialistic pursuit of happiness—chasing after one transient pleasure after another, seeing both the world and other people as ‘things’ to be consumed—that creates so many lonely people. When we regard other people as ‘things’ rather than ‘persons’ our relations with them cannot possibly be mutual, cannot possibly be *personal*; hence, the loneliness. But if we see other people as God sees them, we cannot possibly view or treat them as mere ‘things’.

The same is true when we view God as an ‘object’ ... as a ‘thing’, or even worse, failing to even think of Him at all. Aristotle believed that worldly pleasures will lead us to an incomplete and unfulfilled life—if he, who had not the benefit of the Word of God, knew of this essential truth, so much more should we. Aristotle believed that “contemplation [of God] is the highest form of moral activity” (*Nicomachean Ethics*, X, 8). Since God is so supreme, it is impossible to fully comprehend God’s reasoning behind the things he does; therefore, contemplating His nature is a never-ending process. One cannot get tired of such an activity because progression of learning about God’s nature cannot be measured in objective terms, and so debate on the nature of God’s existence is never-ending. The world is full of people who are interminably bored, but just as the chase after transient goods creates lonely people, so the confinement of our minds to the temporal, to the secular, to the limited, rather than seeking that perfection which is infinite and eternal, creates bored people because the horizon of their ‘vision’ is small and limited. This gives us a new insight in into the first book of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, where he says that God is what all desire [i.e., love].²

“God is love” (1 Jn. 4:8)—God does not only give love; He is the source of love. As the Creator of all things (Genesis 1:1), He is the One who created love. It is because of His love that we are able to love: “we love because He first loved us” (1 Jn. 4:19). The fullest expression of God as love was through the Son, Jesus Christ. God created us, sustains us, and has revealed Himself to us through Jesus. John 1:14 declares, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.” Furthermore, “for God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (Jn. 3:16). God has made clear that His love through the Son of God, Jesus Christ, provides an opportunity for those who believe to spend eternity with Him ... an eternity that is neither lonely nor boring ... it is God’s desire for us to enjoy His love both in this life and for all eternity. Hence, we return to the point made above, that it is in Jesus Christ that we find true happiness. It is equally clear that God created love, created us

¹ Faith, hope, and charity: “And now there remain faith, hope, and charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity” (1 Cor. 13:13).

² What Aristotle meant by this is the idea of God as the “unmoved mover,” that all movement depends on there being a mover ... so that the stars and the planets, and ultimately everything, move out of a spiritual desire to imitate God. Christian wisdom gives this limited insight of Aristotle an entirely new depth of dimension, in which this spiritual desire to imitate God is based on personhood rather than motion—a conclusion that Aristotle, perhaps, should have reached had he connected this idea to his moral philosophy, if only he had conceived of God as being able to return our love ... if only he had understood that “God is love” (1 Jn. 4:8).

to love Him, and has extended His love to each of us. Our challenge is to accept His great love (Eph. 2:8-9), that we may experience His love in our lives today (Jn. 10:10) and for eternity (Jn. 3:16). And this is the answer to the question posed at the start of this message: "What is it that makes people truly happy?"

Parish Council President's Message

Dear parishioners and friends,

When we created the "Building Fund" in January of 2014, our vision was to have an account dedicated toward major projects around the church and our properties. With the help of the building fund, the outpouring of donations from parishioners and friends, and Bayonne Community Bank's "Pay it Forward" program, we were able to fund the cost of the newly installed church air conditioning unit. I ask that you continue to keep this building fund envelope in mind. As we continue to operate our church with a deficit, these donations help offset the cost of such major projects.

The shopping gift cards for Acme, ShopRite, and Stop & Shop are available at the candle desk in the church vestibule. Please remember that every time you shop for groceries, you could be supporting our church. Please continue to buy them if you already do so and please consider buying one if you have not yet.

Yours in Christ,
Reader Stephen Wasilewski

Excerpt from the Church Fathers

"No one can have God for his Father, who has not the Church for his mother."
— St. Cyprian of Carthage

Lives of the Saints

St. Angelina of Serbia – commemorated on July 1st

St. Angelina was the daughter of Prince George Skenderbeg of Albania. Her mother's name is not known, but she raised her daughter in Christian piety and taught her to love God. St. Stephen Branković (October 9th and December 10th), the ruler of Serbia, had come to Albania to escape those who wished to kill him. Sometime before he arrived in Albania, Saint Stephen was unjustly blinded by the Turkish Sultan for some perceived offense. Since he was innocent, he bore his affliction with courage. St. Stephen was not only Prince George's guest, but he was also treated as a member of his family. Not surprisingly, Stephen and Angelina eventually fell in love. With her parents' blessing, they were married in church. After a few years, they were blessed with two sons: George and John.

When the boys were grown, St. Stephen and his family were forced to flee to Italy for their safety. At that time the Turks invaded Albania and began to slaughter men, women, and even children. St. Stephen died in 1468, leaving Angelina a widow. In her distress, she turned to the ruler of Hungary for help. He gave them the town of Kupinovo in Sirmie. St. Angelina left Italy with her sons in 1486, stopping in Serbia to bury St. Stephen's incorrupt body in his native land. The children of these pious parents also became saints. George gave up his claim to the throne in favor of his brother John, then entered a monastery and received the name Maximus. John was married, but had no sons. He died in 1503 at a young age, and many miracles took place before his holy relics. St. Angelina survived her husband and both of her sons. Mindful of her soul's salvation, she entered a women's monastery. She departed to the Lord in peace, and her body was buried in the same tomb as her sons in the monastery of Krushedol in Frushka Gora. St. Angelina is also commemorated on December 10th with her husband St. Stephen and her son St. John.

Modern Theological Classics

ORTHODOX WORSHIP

The Church as life and grace is realized through her worship. The Greek word for worship—*leitourgia*—means more than common prayer: it means corporate action, in which everyone takes an active part, is a participant and not an “attendant.” The nature of this action is both *corporate* and *personal*. It is *corporate* because through the unity and faith of its participants it realizes and fulfills the reality of the Church, i.e. the presence of Christ among those who believe in Him. It is *personal* because this reality is every time conveyed to *me*, given *me* for *my* personal edification, for *my* own growth in grace. Thus in worship I am both an active “builder” of the Church—and to be this is my Christian duty—and I am also its “beneficiary”—for the whole of the Church’s treasure is offered to me, is a Divine gift to me.

Liturgical teaching consists, therefore, in explaining how everything in worship concerns *us* as the Church of God, makes us the living body of Christ, and concerns *me*, as a living member of that body. The essential role of liturgical education is to show how through participation in the *leitourgia*, the corporate and official worship of the Church, we can become witnesses to Christ in our private and public life, responsible members of the Church or, in short, *Christians* in the full meaning of the word. The understanding of worship must lead to the assimilation of Christian doctrines and to the practice of Christian life.

The *leitourgia* of the Church consists of prayers, reading, singing, rites. It has, in other terms, an *order*, a structure in which various elements are related to each other and only in this relation reveal their true meaning. Each service can be compared to a building in which every single part is *functional*. To understand its function and meaning one has to understand first the *whole*. Too often in our religious education the liturgical services are not explained, but merely described as a sequence of rites and prayers. The inner necessity which links together all these elements, making them an *order*, a service, is not revealed. There are people who *know* the services very well, so as to be able to conduct them or sing them, yet understand nothing of their meaning. Liturgical celebration becomes then a blind observance of meaningless prescriptions, which is incompatible with the definition of worship given by Christ Himself: “Worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:24). The worship of the Church thus requires a spiritual and an intellectual effort for its understanding. Through the study of its various elements, of its general order and structure, we reach its *meaning*. The rubrics, prescriptions and regulations must be understood as doors leading us into the wonderful reality of the new life in Christ.

When describing Orthodox services the words “solemn,” “beautiful,” etc. are very often used. We must remember, however, that neither beauty nor solemnity are ends in themselves. There can be false beauty and false solemnity, which happens when they become ends in themselves, are “disconnected” from their relation to the meaning of worship. The latter is by its essence, and must be in practice, *spiritual*. Too many of our churches seem to reflect human pride and self-satisfaction more than the celestial beauty of the Kingdom of God. We need a rediscovery of the true spirit of worship which is that of humility, reverence, fear of God, the awareness of being unworthy and yet standing in the presence of God Himself. This is what is meant by the words of the petition: “... with faith, *reverence* and fear of God ...”

The *leitourgia* of the Church can be studied in the following order:

(1) *The Liturgy of Initiation*: The Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Chrism, by which we are integrated into the Church, become her *members*.

(2) *The Divine Liturgy or Eucharist*: The very center of the whole life of the Church, the Sacrament of Christ’s Presence among us and of His *Communion* with us. This sacrament is the *essential* sacrament of the Church, for nothing in the Church can be achieved without communion with Christ in the Eucharist.

(3) *The Liturgy of Time*: Those services by which the Church sanctifies the time in which we live and act, transforms it into the time of our salvation.

(4) *The Sanctification of Life*: Sacraments and services dealing with all details of our life, helping us to make it a *Christian* life, related to Christ, full of His Spirit, dedicated to His saving purpose. It includes the sacraments of healing: Penance and Holy Oil, the Sacrament of Matrimony, various rites of prayer and blessing, and, finally, the liturgy of Christian death.

The Church teaches us to distinguish between *Sacraments* and *non-sacramental* services. A sacrament (*mysterion*) is a liturgical service in which the Holy Spirit performs a definite *change* or *transformation*, affecting the whole Church and recognized and accepted as such by the whole Church. There are seven sacraments, and although we will deal with each of them later, a brief definition must be given here.

(1) *The Sacrament of Eucharist* is the “Sacrament of all Sacraments.” In it the “church” (visible community) is changed into the Church, the Body of Christ, the new People of God, the Temple of the Holy Spirit. This is achieved by means of a sacrificial and eucharistic meal, instituted by Christ Himself, at which the whole Church offers to God, in Christ’s name, the sacrifice of praise, commemorating the Death and Resurrection of the Lord. And, having acknowledged the transformation of the Bread and Wine, the elements of our offering and “memorial” into the Body and Blood of Christ, the Church partakes of them in perfect communion with Him.

(2) *The Sacrament of Holy Baptism*: the liturgical act of a threefold immersion in water, by which a man is changed into a “new creature,” granted the forgiveness of sins and united to the new life in Christ.

(3) *The Sacrament of Holy Chrism*, by which a man is *ordained* Christian. He receives the gift of the Holy Spirit, making him a living member of the Church which is “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation” (1 Pet. 2:9). He is introduced into the life of the Holy Spirit and made a citizen of the Kingdom of God.

(4) *The Sacrament of Holy Orders*, by which the Holy Spirit changes the function of a Christian in the Church, granting him gifts necessary for the edification of the Church through public ministry, sacramental power and teaching ability.

(5) *The Sacrament of Holy Matrimony*, by which two members of the Church are transformed into *one body*, one new “unit” in the Body of Christ, with the power of perpetuating life and of growing into the perfect unity of love.

(6) *The Sacrament of Penance*, by which a Christian whose sins have led him away from the life in Christ, is reconciled—after repentance—with the Church and readmitted to full communion and participation in her life.

(7) *The Sacrament of Holy Oil*, by which the power of healing, spiritual or physical, is bestowed upon a sick member of the Church.

In *non-sacramental worship* we must distinguish between liturgical and non-liturgical activities. We call “liturgical” those services which are performed on behalf of the whole Church, which have the Church as their “subject,” even if only two or three are in attendance, and which belong, therefore, to the official cult of the Church, e.g. Vespers, Matins, Feasts, Common Prayer, etc. They are “catholic” and “universal” in their scope and meaning, even when they deal with one individual (funeral, reunion with Orthodoxy, etc.). As to the “non-liturgical” services, their main characteristic is that their scope is limited, and they do not “imply” the whole Church (e.g. the monastic service of Compline).

The *order of services* is committed in the *liturgical books* of the Church. And although not everything in the liturgical tradition of the Church has the same degree of authority, it does not belong to individuals to alter the order of, or introduce changes in, the accepted forms of worship. It is the right and the duty of the Hierarchy to keep the liturgical life of the Church pure of everything that can obscure it or make it inadequate to its eternal function.

Fr. Alexander Schmemmann,³ *Liturgy and Life*, pp. 23-27.

³ Fr. Alexander Schmemmann (1921-1983) was an influential Orthodox priest, teacher, and writer. From 1946 to 1951 he taught in Paris, and afterwards in New York. In his teachings and writings he sought to establish the close links between Christian theology and Christian liturgy. At the time of his death, he was the dean of St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in Yonkers, New York.

Recipe of the Month

Romanov Piroshki

Romanov Piroshki is a traditional Russian dumpling that can be filled with pretty much whatever you like. It may be served with sour cream.

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 3 onions, chopped
- 1 large white onion
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 pounds lean ground beef
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1/2 cup cold water, or as needed

Directions:

(1) To Make Meat Mixture: Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a large skillet over medium high heat. Sauté onions until golden brown, then remove from skillet and set aside. Add remaining 2 tablespoons oil to skillet and heat for 1 minute over medium high heat. Add beef and cook until browned, mashing with a fork to break into small pieces. Drain fat.

(2) Place beef, sautéed onions, salt and pepper in a blender and blend on high for 5 to 7 seconds; set aside.

(3) To Make Dough: In a medium bowl, combine flour, salt and egg and mix well. Stir in water, a little bit at a time, until dough is stiff. Knead dough for 2 to 4 minutes on a lightly floured surface. Roll out dough to 1/8 inch thickness with a rolling pin. With a glass or cookie cutter, cut out rounds about 3 inches in diameter.

(4) Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.

(5) Place 1 tablespoon filling on 1/2 of each dough circle. Moisten edges of dough with a little water; fold dough over filling and press edges together, first with your fingers, then with a fork.

(6) Place piroshki on a lightly greased cookie sheet and bake for 30 minutes, or until golden brown. Brush with melted butter and serve at room temperature.

Parish News

In Memoriam

Basil Kraftician, a friend of many in our diocese and our parish, passed into blessed repose on June 8, 2018. Memory Eternal!

Parish Council Meeting

The Parish Council is meeting on Monday, July 30, 2018 at 7:00 PM.

19th All-American Council

Reader Stephen Wasilewski shall be representing our parish at the Orthodox Church in America's 19th All-American Council, meeting July 23-27, 2018 in St. Louis, Missouri.

Special Donations

Please note that for Special Donations in August to be acknowledged in **Quo Vadis**, it is necessary for the donation to be recorded in the Special Donations register in the church vestibule by July 22, 2018.

July 1, 2018

Sanctuary Lamp offered in honor of John Wanko's birthday by his grandchildren, Larissa, Matthew, Kenneth, Danielle, Lauren, Nicholas, and Lindsey, and his great-grandchildren, Kiera, Mia, Bella, Landen, and Leila.

July 22, 2018

Sanctuary Lamp offered by John and Helen Wanko in memory of Rose Brelinsky (anniversary of repose).

July 29, 2018

St. Nicholas' Cross and **Triple Candelabra** offered by Tais Fedetz in memory of Matushka Geraldine Fedetz (anniversary of repose).

Daily Bible Readings

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| 1. Rom. 10:1-10; Matt. 8:26-9:1 | 16. 1 Cor. 9:13-16; Matt. 16:1-4 |
| 2. Rom. 16:17-24; Matt. 13:10-25 | 17. 1 Cor. 10:5-12; Matt. 16:6-12 |
| 3. 1 Cor. 1:1-9; Matt. 13:24-30 | 18. 1 Cor. 10:12-20; Matt. 16:20-24 |
| 4. 1 Cor. 2:9-3:6; Matt. 13:31-36 | 19. 1 Cor. 10:26-11:7; Matt. 16:24-28 |
| 5. 1 Cor. 3:18-23; Matt. 13:36-43 | 20. 1 Cor. 11:8-22; Matt. 12:30-37 |
| 6. 1 Cor. 4:5-8; Matt. 13:44-54 | 21. Rom. 13:1-10; Matt. 12:30-37 |
| 7. Rom. 9:1-5; Matt. 9:18-26 | 22. 1 Cor. 1:10-18; Matt. 14:14-22 |
| 8. Rom. 12:6-14; Matt. 9:1-8 | 23. 1 Cor. 11:31-12:6; Matt. 18:1-11 |
| 9. 1 Cor. 5:9-6:11; Matt. 13:54-56 | 24. 1 Cor. 12:12-26; Matt. 18:18-22, 19:1-2, 13-15 |
| 10. 1 Cor. 6:20-7:12; Matt. 14:1-13 | 25. 1 Cor. 13:4-14:5; Matt. 20:1-10 |
| 11. 1 Cor. 7:12-24; Matt. 14:35-15:11 | 26. 1 Cor. 14:5-10; Matt. 20:17-28 |
| 12. 1 Cor. 7:24-35; Matt. 15:12-21 | 27. 1 Cor. 14:26-40; Matt. 21:12-14, 17-20 |
| 13. 1 Cor. 7:35-8:7; Matt. 15:29-31 | 28. Rom. 14:6-9; Matt. 15:32-39 |
| 14. Rom. 12:1-3; Matt. 10:37-11:1 | 29. 1 Cor. 3:9-17; Matt. 14:22-34 |
| 15. Rom. 15:1-7; Matt. 9:27-35 | 30. 1 Cor. 15:12-19; Matt. 21:18-22 |
| | 31. 1 Cor. 15:29-38; Matt. 21:23-27 |

Schedule of Services

June 30-July 1, 2018

5:00 PM (Sat.) – Great Vespers
9:00 AM (Sun.) – Divine Liturgy

July 7-8, 2018

5:00 PM (Sat.) – Great Vespers & Gen. Confession
9:00 AM (Sun.) – Divine Liturgy

July 14-15, 2018

5:00 PM (Sat.) – Great Vespers w. Lity
9:00 AM (Sun.) – Divine Liturgy

July 21-22, 2018

5:00 PM (Sat.) – Great Vespers
9:00 AM (Sun.) – Divine Liturgy

July 28-29, 2018

5:00 PM (Sat.) – Great Vespers
9:00 AM (Sun.) – Divine Liturgy