

Quo Vadis

The monthly newsletter of Saints Peter & Paul Orthodox Catholic Church of Bayonne, N.J.
Vol. 6, Number 6: February 2019

Editor: V. Rev. W. Sophrony Royer, Ph.D.

98 West 28th Street, Bayonne, N.J. 07002

“**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

On December 25, 2008, the movie “Doubt” was released nationwide. The movie starred Meryl Streep as Sister Aloysius Beauvier, a hardline, traditionalist nun who is the principal of a Catholic parochial school in the Bronx. Set in 1964, St. Nicholas parish and school has a new “progressive” priest, Father Brendan Flynn. Flynn’s efforts to upend the school’s strict customs sets him on a collision course with Sr. Aloysius, a stern disciplinarian who has long guarded the school’s tradition.

Change is sweeping through the community, and the school, as the school has just accepted its first black student, Donald Miller. But when Sister James, a starry-eyed innocent, shares with Sr. Aloysius her suspicion that Fr. Flynn is paying too much personal, and perhaps inappropriate, attention to Donald, Sr. Aloysius sets off on a personal crusade to unearth the truth and remove Fr. Flynn. Now, without any proof other than Sr. James’ observations and her own unshakeable moral certainty, Sr. Aloysius locks into a battle of wills with Fr. Flynn. Is Sr. Aloysius being overprotective, or not protective enough? Can she work within the system to discover the truth? Is the strength of her own certainty sufficient reason to risk the consequences of her struggle against Fr. Flynn? Has Fr. Flynn, in fact, done anything wrong?

The movie raised many disturbing, though meaningful, questions about moral certitude. My own inclination is to give the benefit of the doubt as long as possible; but does that make me more like Sr. James than I would like to admit? Sr. Aloysius is certain that she is right; she apparently has no doubt! Is she, then, justified in her conviction of Fr. Flynn’s guilt and in the campaign that she mounts against him? They raise questions such as, “Can we afford the luxury of giving the benefit of the doubt?” and “Can we wait for a slow and possibly recalcitrant system to work out a solution?” Questions made all the more urgent, for Sr. Aloysius, because a child’s welfare was at stake!

Sisters Aloysius and James confront Father Flynn. Several times, he asks them to leave the matter alone as a private issue between the boy and himself, but Sr. Aloysius persists. Next, Fr. Flynn gives a sermon on bearing false witness and gossip, and insists, in a conversation with Sr. James, that it is he, not Sr. Aloysius, who really cares about the boy. Sister Aloysius meets with Donald Miller’s mother regarding her suspicions, and is shocked at the mother’s apparent lack of interest in the alleged misconduct on Fr. Flynn’s part.

Fr. Flynn demands that Sr. Aloysius stop trying to destroy his reputation. Sr. Aloysius responds that he must confess and resign. Fr. Flynn is adamant that there is no illicit relationship, but Sr. Aloysius claims that she has learned that he has a history of problems, having moved to three different parishes in the last five years. She tells him that she has contacted a nun from one of his prior churches, who corroborated her suspicions. Fr. Flynn is furious that she has contacted a nun rather than the church pastor, which is proper church protocol. Sr. Aloysius threatens to visit his previous parishes and contact parents if necessary. Finally, Fr. Flynn agrees to request a transfer.

Sometime later, Sisters Aloysius and James are sitting together in the church garden. Sr. Aloysius tells Sr. James that despite her warning, the bishop has appointed Fr. Flynn the pastor of a larger church with a parochial school, promoting him to a more prestigious position and thus perpetuating the problem. She admits to having lied about speaking to a nun at Father Flynn's former church, saying it would not have worked if he was innocent. Sister Aloysius concludes that she has paid a price in pursuing the wrongdoing of Father Flynn. She breaks down in tears and says to Sister James: "I have doubts ... I have such doubts."

As I watched the movie, my sympathies were with the "less-than-likeable" character of Sr. Aloysius (maybe because she reminded me of the nuns from the bygone era of my childhood), rather than for the charming, though evasive, Fr. Flynn. Regardless of whether you think Sr. Aloysius was right, her courage and strength are admirable – someone who stands by her convictions, no matter the cost! Let me share with you a few principles that I learned in the study of General Ethics: (1) Always act with a certain conscience (with the clear and proper application of moral law); and (2) Never act with a doubtful conscience (for to do so is to be willing to perform an act whether it is wrong or not, which is a refusal to take the means to avoid moral evil). Was Sr. Aloysius right or wrong? If her conscience was indeed without doubt, she was not acting immorally.

But was Sr. Aloysius really acting with a certain conscience? If she judged without fearing that the opposite may be true, as apparently was the case, then her conscience was certain. But what if she was not correct? What if she was mistaken? If she became aware of her error, that is, if she began to doubt, then her conscience becomes doubtful, and she would have to correct the error. But what if she had no means of knowing that she is in error, and has no means of correcting it? The dilemma is resolved by remembering that conscience is something subjective, a guide to conduct, and that a wrong which occurs that is not done voluntarily is not imputable to the agent. In "Doubt" we do not know whether Sr. Aloysius is mistaken (though there are hints that she isn't mistaken), and are left without a means of finding out. If that is true for us, then it is certainly true for her as well!

What sense, then, are we to make of Sr. Aloysius' final, tearful words: "I have doubts ... I have such doubts"? Many viewers are led to the impression that these words indicate that Sr. Aloysius wasn't quite so certain of Fr. Flynn's guilt after all; i.e. that she had, therefore, acted with a doubtful conscience. I, however, don't think that is the correct interpretation of Sr. Aloysius' words. First, throughout the entire movie, up to the closing scene in the church garden, she shows utterly no signs of doubting Fr. Flynn's guilt (though she also clearly dislikes him). Moreover, as she herself states, her lie wouldn't have worked if Fr. Flynn was innocent. So why would she have "second thoughts" about his guilt now?

I believe there two possible alternative ways of interpreting her confession of having doubts. If Sr. Aloysius is anything, she is a person of strict moral standards. Her "doubts" may have been about the means she used to obtain her ends; that is, she lied, she used immoral means to bring about Fr. Flynn's departure. This certainly would have distressed someone of Sr. Aloysius' moral character. Another possibility might be distress over the ultimate outcome she achieved: instead of being punished for his crimes, Fr. Flynn is promoted! Despite Sr. Aloysius' best efforts, the problem hasn't been solved, it has merely moved on to somewhere else. It screams of injustice! Surely this would be reason for Sr. Aloysius to doubt the justice of the "system," possibly even to the point of doubting God's justice. And that would certainly explain her tears!

Perhaps the answer, both for Sr. Aloysius and for us, is to contemplate the words Job spoke to God, in Job 42:2-6: "*I know that thou canst do all things, and that no purpose of thine can be thwarted. Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge? Therefore, I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. Hear, and I will speak; I will question you, and you declare to me.' I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees thee; therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.*"

Parish Council President's Message

Dear parishioners and friends:

Five years ago, through the generosity of Lillian Sokol, we purchased a new set of white vestments—needed because there were none in that color that fit Fr. Sophrony. While the sewing done cannot be faulted, the brocade fabric used, unfortunately, has proven of poor durability. Fraying has caused it to appear much older and worn than any other set of vestments, including those that are about 30 years old. The bottom line is that we need a new set of white vestments—doing so sooner rather than later will help extend the life of this set. What I have in mind is a new set, in pure white, for the Paschal season, and the existing set would be used for the other liturgical periods, that is, for the feasts of Theophany, Transfiguration, and Christmas, when white vestments are worn by the priest, for as long as they still remain presentable. This time we would have the vestments made by the nuns in Minsk, who had made the gold vestments worn by Fr. Sophrony not long after that white set was made, and which have shown practically no wear. If anyone is interested in being a donor (the gold vestments had cost \$800, so I estimate the cost of the new vestments to be about the same), please speak to me as soon as possible. If we were to have the new set by Easter Sunday, which is April 28, 2019, we would need to place the order now.

Another thing I would like to call your attention to: every February Americans, and other Western peoples, celebrate Valentine's Day. In 2018, \$19.6 billion were spent on Valentine's Day just in the U.S., according to the National Retail Federation. The average person spent over \$146 on Valentine's Day. Quite impressive, is it not? Far from impressive, however, is the progressive decline in church attendance, regardless of denomination, in the U.S. and other Western countries. Our churches see their highest attendance numbers on the holy days of Christmas and Pascha. But let's remember that every Sunday is "Pascha"—a celebration of Christ's Resurrection, and at every Divine Liturgy we're offered the holy gifts of same Body and Blood of Christ that was born in the manger, and crucified on the Cross, and rose from the dead on the third day. The "Preparatory Sundays" before the start of Great Lent begin in February. Can we not, this month, make a commitment to spend our time nourishing our immortal souls with the same gusto as we spend our money, every Valentine's Day, on things perishable? Can we not truly prepare ourselves for the penitential season of Lent, and the joyous season of Pascha that follows, by making a renewed effort to attend Divine Liturgy each and every Sunday? I look forward to seeing everyone in church on Sundays, and please remember that without God nothing is possible.

Yours in Christ,
Reader Stephen Wasilewski

Excerpt from the Church Fathers

"As, when one torch has been fired, flame is transmitted to all the neighboring candlesticks, without either the first light being lessened or blazing with unequal brilliance on the other points where it has been caught; so the saintliness of a life is transmitted from him who has achieved it, to those who come within his circle."

— St. Gregory of Nyssa, On Virginity, ch. 24.

Lives of the Saints

St. Scholastica – commemorated on February 10th

According to the *Dialogues* of St. Gregory the Great, St. Scholastica, the twin sister of St. Benedict, was born c. 480 in Nursia, Umbria, Italy, of wealthy parents, Anicius Eupropius and his wife Claudia Abondantia Reguardati. St. Gregory the Great says she was dedicated to God from a young age. She and her brother Benedict were brought up together until the time he left to pursue studies in Rome. A young Roman woman of St. Scholastica's class and time would likely have remained in her father's house until marriage (likely arranged) or entry into religious life. But wealthy women could inherit property, divorce, and were generally literate. On occasion several young women would live together in a household and form a religious community.

Benedictine tradition holds that St. Scholastica established a hermitage about five miles from Monte Cassino¹ and that this was the first "Benedictine" convent. However, it has been suggested that it is more likely that she lived in a hermitage with one or two other religious women in a cluster of houses at the base of Mount Cassino where there is an ancient church named after her (Monastero di Santa Scolastica). Ruth Clifford Engs² notes that since *Dialogues* indicates that Scholastica was dedicated to God at an early age, perhaps she lived in her father's house with other religious women until his death and then moved nearer to St. Benedict.

The most commonly told story about her is that she would, once a year, go and visit her brother at a place near his abbey, and they would spend the day worshiping together and discussing sacred texts and issues. One day they had supper and continued their conversation. When St. Benedict indicated it was time for him to leave, perhaps sensing the time of her death was drawing near, St. Scholastica asked him to stay with her for the evening so they could continue their discussions. Not wishing to break his own Rule, St. Benedict refused, insisting that he needed to return to his cell. At that point, St. Scholastica closed her hands in prayer, and after a moment, a wild storm started outside of the guest house in which they were housed. St. Benedict asked, "What have you done?", to which she replied, "I asked you and you would not listen; so I asked my God and he did listen. So now go off, if you can, leave me and return to your monastery." St. Benedict was unable to return to his monastery, and they spent the night in discussion. Three days later, from his cell, he saw his sister's soul leaving the earth and ascending to heaven in the form of a shining white dove. St. Benedict had her body brought to his monastery, where he caused it to be laid in the tomb which he had prepared for himself. The Anglo-Saxon bishop and scholar, Aldhelm, recounts the story in the *De Laude Virginitatis*, written for the nuns at Barking, and in the shorter *Carmen de virginitate*.

St. Scholastica's legacy is that of being the foundress of the women's branch of Benedictine monasticism. She was selected as the main motif for a high value commemorative coin: the Austria €50 'The Christian Religious Orders', issued March 13, 2002. On the obverse (heads) side of the coin St. Scholastica is depicted alongside St. Benedict. In iconography, St. Scholastica is often represented as an abbess, in a black habit and holding a book or a dove. St. Scholastica is the patron saint of nuns, education, and convulsive children, and is invoked against storms and rain. Her feast day in both the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches is February 10th.

Modern Theological Classics

The Consecration

The sign of this acceptance and fulfillment is the *Consecration*. The Eucharistic movement upwards ends with the *elevation of the Gifts* by the priest. *Thine own of Thine own we offer unto Thee ...* and the prayer of Epiclesis (invocation of the Holy Spirit), in which we ask God to send down His Holy Spirit and to *make this Bread the precious Body of Thy Christ* and the wine in the chalice – *the precious Blood of Thy Christ*, transforming them, *making the change by the Holy Spirit ...*

The Holy Spirit *fulfills* the action of God, or rather, He *is* this very Act in Person. He is *Love, Life, Fulness*. His coming at Pentecost means the fulfillment, the end and the achievement of the whole history of Salvation, its perfection. In His coming, the Saving work of Christ is *conveyed* to us, is given as Divine Gift. Pentecost is the inauguration in this world of the Kingdom of God, of the new age. The Church *lives by the Holy Spirit*, and in her life everything is achieved by and is a gift of the Holy Spirit – the One who proceeds from God and abides in the Son, the One who *reveals* to us the Son as our Savior, and the Father as our Father. His fulfilling action in the Eucharist, in the transformation of our Eucharist into the gift of Christ to us (hence the Orthodox emphasis on the *epiclesis*, the *invocation*), means that the Eucharist has been accepted into the Kingdom of God, takes place in the new age, that of the Spirit. The *metabole*, the transformation of the elements into the Body and the Blood of Christ, takes place on the heavenly altar, in the Kingdom of God, which is beyond time and the "laws" of "this world." This transformation is itself the fruit of Christ's Ascension and of the Church's participation in His Ascension, in His *new life*. All attempts to "explain" what happens in the Eucharist in terms of "substance" and "accidents" (the western doctrine of transubstantiation, unfortunately taught sometimes as an Orthodox one) or in terms of time (the

¹ Monte Cassino is a rocky hill about 81 miles southeast of Rome, in the Latin Valley, Italy, 1.2 miles to the west of the town of Cassino and 1,706 feet in altitude. Site of the Roman town of Casinum, it is best known for its abbey, the first house of the Benedictine Order, having been established by St. Benedict of Nursia around 529. It was for the community of Monte Cassino that the *Rule of Saint Benedict* was composed.

² Ruth Clifford Engs is Professor Emeritus of Applied Health Science at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana.

“moment of transformation”) are inadequate and futile precisely because they apply to the Eucharist the categories of “this world” while its very essence is in transcending these categories, in introducing us into the dimensions and the reality of the *new age*. This (the transformation) happens not because of some strange and miraculous power left by Christ with some people (priests) and who therefore can perform this miracle by virtue of their power, but because we—the Church—are *in Christ*, i.e. in His Sacrifice, Love, Ascension, in the while of His *movement* of deification, of transforming His Humanity by His Divinity, because, in other words, we are in *His* Eucharist and offer Him as our Eucharist to God. And when we do *this*, as he told us we should, we—the Church—are accepted where He has *entered*. And being accepted, “we eat and drink at His table in His Kingdom” (Luke 22:30) as He said we would. Since the Kingdom is He Himself, the Divine Life communicated to us at this heavenly banquet, we receive *Him* as the new food of our new life. The mystery of the Eucharistic transformation is thus the mystery of the Church herself, of her belonging to the new age and to the new life—in the Holy Spirit. For “this world” for which the Kingdom of God is yet to come, for its “objective categories,” the Bread remains bread and the Wine remains wine. But in the wonderful and transfigured *reality* of the Kingdom, revealed and manifested in the Church, they are *verily* and *totally* the very Body and the very Blood of Christ.

The Intercession

Now we stand before the Gift, in the fulness and joy of God’s presence, and we prepare ourselves for the last act of the Divine Liturgy: the acceptance of these Gifts in *communion*. There remains, however, one last and necessary act: *intercession*. Christ eternally intercedes for the whole world, He Himself is that *Intercession* and Mediation. To partake of Him necessarily means that we also are filled with the same love and accept, as His Church, His ministry of Intercession. This intercession embraces the whole creation. Standing before the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, we first commemorate the Mother of God, St. John the Baptist, the Apostles, the Martyrs, and the Saints—the innumerable *witnesses* of the new life in Christ. We intercede for them not because they need our intercession, but because Christ, in Whom we intercede, is their Life, their Priest and their Glory. The Church is not divided into two parts, the “heavenly” and the “earthly.” She is one Body and whatever she does, she does *on behalf* of the whole Body and *for* the whole Body. The act of intercession thus is not only an act of expiation, it is also glorification of God, “wonderful in His Saints,” and communion with the Saints. We begin our prayer of intercession by mentioning the Mother of God and the Saints because the presence of Christ is also *their* presence, and the Eucharist is the supreme revelation of the “communion of Saints,” of the unity and interdependence of all the members of the Body of Christ.

We pray for the departed members of the Church, “*for every righteous spirit departed this life in faith.*” How far from the true spirit of Orthodoxy are those who think it proper to multiply “private masses” for the repose of the soul of such and such person—as if there existed something “private” in the all-embracing scope of the Eucharist! It is time for us to realize that the prayer of the departed consists in *integrating* them into the Eucharist of the Church, and not vice versa, in subordinating the Eucharist to a private, i.e. “separate,” need. “We want *our* Liturgy, for *our* people ...” What a deep and tragic misunderstanding of the Liturgy and also of the real needs of those for whom one wants to pray! For what he or she needs *now*—in the state of death and separation and sorrow—is precisely to be accepted again and again in the One and Unique Eucharist of the Church, in the unity of love, which is the essence of their *membership*, of their belonging to the real life of the Church. And this is achieved by the Eucharist, which is the manifestation of the Church as new age and new life. The Eucharist transcends the hopeless difference between the “living” and the “dead” because it transcends the limits between “this age” and the “age to come.” On the one hand, we all “are dead and our life is hid with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3), yet, on the other hand, we all *live*, because Christ’s life has been granted to us in the Church. The departed members of the Church are not mere “objects” of our prayer, but, through their membership in the Church “actualized” in the Eucharist, they are alive, and pray, and offer and receive us. Finally, no one can “order” (or buy!) a Liturgy, for the Only One who orders it is Christ, and He has *ordered* the Church to offer it as the offering of the Whole Body and always *on behalf of all and for all*. Thus, although there is a place and need for the commemoration of everyone and of everything in the Liturgy, its only valid “intention” is to unite all and everything in the Love of God.

For the Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church ... all civil authorities ... for all people, for all needs, for all conditions. Read the prayer of intercession in the Liturgy of St. Basil and understand what intercession means: the gift of Divine Love which makes us realize, be it only for a few minutes and partially, the prayer of Christ, the love of Christ. We understand that the only real sin, and the root of all sin, is *selfishness*, and the Liturgy, taking us to its movement of love and sacrifice, reveals to us that true religion is, above everything else, this new and wonderful

possibility to intercede and pray for the *other*, for *all*. In this sense, the Eucharist is indeed a sacrifice offered *on behalf of all and for all*, and the Prayer of Intercession is its “logical” and “necessary” conclusion.

*Among the first remember, O Lord, our Bishop ... that he may rightly divide the Word of Thy Truth ... The Church “is in the Bishop and the Bishop is in the Church,” St. Cyprian of Carthage said, and when we pray for the Bishop, we pray for the real “welfare” of the Church, for her abiding in Divine Truth: that the Church may be the Church—the Presence of God, His Healing Power, His Love, His Truth—and not, as it so often happens, a selfish, self-centered community defending its own human “interests” instead of the Divine purpose for which it exists. The Church so easily becomes an “institution,” a “bureaucracy,” a “money-raising” group, a “nationalism,” a “social gathering,” and these are temptations, deviations, distortions of the Truth which alone ought to be the criterion, the measure, the authority for the Church. How often people who “hunger and thirst after righteousness” do not see Christ in the Church, but see in it merely human pride and arrogance, selfishness, and the spirit of “this world.” Of all this, the Eucharist is *judgment* and *condemnation*. We cannot partake of the Lord’s Table, we cannot stand before the Altar of His Presence and offer to God the sacrifice of our life, praise, and adoration, we cannot be the Church, if we have not condemned in ourselves the spirit of the “Prince of this World.” What we receive then is not for salvation but for condemnation. It is not mere belonging to the Church that saves, for there is no magic in Christianity, but the acceptance of the Spirit of Christ. And this spirit judges not only individuals but also congregations, parishes, dioceses. A parish as a human institution can easily replace Christ with something else: the worldly spirit of success, of human pride and human “achievements.” The temptation is always present and “tempting.” But then, the one whose sacred duty is always to minister the “Word of Truth,” must remind the parish that it is being tempted, must condemn, in the name of Christ, all that is not compatible with the spirit of Christ. It is for this courage and wisdom, love and faithfulness of the clergy, that we pray in the Prayer of Intercession.*

And grant that with one mouth and one heart we may praise Thine all-honorable and majestic name ... One mouth, one heart, one redeemed humanity restored in love and knowledge of God—such is the end, the goal of the Liturgy, the fruit of the Eucharist. And the mercies of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ shall be with all of you ... This is the achievement of the “second movement,” that of God giving Himself to us, in His mercy, which passes all human understanding. The Eucharistic Prayer is over, and we come to the fulfillment of everything the Eucharist has revealed: to the Communion, i.e. our partaking of its reality.

Fr. Alexander Schmemann,³ Liturgy and Life, pp. 59-64.

Recipe of the Month

Sauerbraten

Sauerbraten, also known as German pot roast, is a signature dish of Germany. The fork-tender beef, drowned in a velvety sweet & sour gravy, is usually served on special occasions such as Christmas, but can be enjoyed anytime you want. It's a long-lasting tradition in Germany and you can find Sauerbraten on every single Christmas table, together with such staples as Glühwein (Mulled Wine), Lebkuchen (a German baked Christmas treat, somewhat resembling gingerbread), and others. What you won't find is two recipes that are alike! Every region has its own version of this famous dish. The most differences can be found in the gravy. Many add raisins while others skip it, some throw crumbled gingerbread or gingersnaps into the mix, others not, sour cream may be used or left out, and so forth.

Ingredients:

(1) For the marinade:

- 1 teaspoon black peppercorns
- 4 juniper berries
- 8 whole allspice berries
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 whole cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

³ Fr. Alexander Schmemann (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.

- 1 1/2 cups red wine vinegar
- 1 1/2 cups dry red wine
- 1 large yellow onion, sliced
- 4-5 lbs. boneless beef chuck roast (beef eye of round, bottom or top round can be used)

(2) For the browning:

- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil

(3) For the gravy:

- 6 store-bought gingersnap cookies, broken into crumbs
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1/2 cup golden raisins

Instructions:

(1) Marinating the meat. Crush the peppercorns, juniper, and allspice in a mortar or in a small plastic bag using a rolling pin. Transfer them to a small saucepan and add the bay leaves, cloves, salt, red wine vinegar, red wine, and onion and bring to a boil. Turn off the heat and let cool. You can transfer the marinade to a large bowl to quicken the process.

(2) Add the beef to the bowl and coat all sides with the marinade. Cover and let sit in a fridge for 48-72 hours, turning the meat a few times a day.

(3) Preheat the oven to 300°F (150°C).

(4) Browning the meat. Transfer the beef to a plate, scraping any solids that stick to it back into the marinade. If needed, pat the meat dry with paper towels.

(5) Heat the butter and oil in a large Dutch oven (6-7 quarts), add the meat, and brown it well on all sides. About 25 minutes total. Transfer the beef back to the plate. Pour off the fat from the pot and deglaze it adding the reserved marinade and scraping browned bits. Bring to a boil and add the beef. Cover with parchment paper, pressing it down so it almost touches the beef and cover with a lid. The parchment paper has to hang over the sides of the pot. Transfer to the oven.

(6) Cook the meat for 1 1/2 hours, then turn it over and continue braising for another 1 1/2 hours or until fork-tender.

(7) When done, transfer the meat to a plate and cover to keep warm.

(8) The gravy. Strain the cooking liquid into a saucepan. Let sit for a few minutes and skim off the fat. Add the gingersnap, raisins, and sugar, and bring to a boil. Boil for about 5 minutes, whisking, to thicken the sauce a little bit. Turn off the heat and whisk in the sour cream. Taste the sauce and add seasonings if needed.

(9) Cut the meat into thick slices, pour some gravy over it, and serve. Enjoy!

Recipe Notes:

Sauerbraten can also be cooked on a stovetop. The same instructions apply, except covering the meat with parchment paper before cooking. No need to do that.

Parish News

Parish Council Meeting

The Parish Council is meeting Sunday, February 24, 2019 after Divine Liturgy.

In Memoriam

Helen Purniak, age 82, of Bayonne, New Jersey, passed into blessed repose on January 13, 2019. Fr. Sophrony's maternal uncle, Angelo Cusano, age 90, of Landing, New Jersey, passed into blessed repose on December 30, 2018. Memory Eternal!

"Souper Bowl" Outreach Project

Our parish's project of collecting cans of soup for donation to a local soup kitchen concludes on February 3, 2019. Thank you for co-operating in this project!

FOCA Beefsteak Dinner

FOCA New Jersey District's annual beefsteak dinner is February 22, 2019 at the Russian Hall, 46 Woodhull Ave., Little Falls, N.J., starting at 7:00 PM. Tickets are \$50 per person (\$40 for children under 16). Contact Stephen Wasilewski at 201-960-4352 by February 11, 2019 to reserve tickets.

Special Donations

Please note that for Special Donations in March 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 February 17, 2019.

February 3, 2019

Sanctuary Lamp offered by Fr. W. Sophrony Royer in memory of Angelo Cusano Jr.

February 24, 2019

Sanctuary Lamp, St. John's Cross, St. Nicholas' Cross, and Triple Candelabra offered by the Carpathian Club in memory of Helen Pirniak.

Schedule of Services

February 1-2, 2019 [Presentation of Christ]

6:00 PM (Fri.) – Great Vespers w. Lity
9:30 AM (Sat.) – Divine Liturgy

February 16-17, 2019

5:00 PM (Sat.) – Great Vespers & General Confession
9:30 AM (Sun.) – Divine Liturgy

February 2-3, 2019

February 23-24, 2019

5:00 PM (Sat.) – Great Vespers
9:30 AM (Sun.) – Divine Liturgy

5:00 PM (Sat.) – Great Vespers
9:30 AM (Sun.) – Divine Liturgy

February 9-10, 2019

5:00 PM (Sat.) – Great Vespers
9:30 AM (Sun.) – Divine Liturgy

Daily Bible Readings

1. James 2:1-12; Mark 10:23-32
2. Heb. 7:7-17; Luke 2:22-40
3. 1 Tim. 1:15-17; Mark 15:21-28
4. James 2:14-26; Mark 10:46-52
5. James 3:1-10; Mark 11:11-23
6. James 3:11-4:6; Mark 11:22-26
7. James 4:7-5:9; Mark 11:27-33
8. 1 Pet. 1:1-2, 18-12, 2:6-10; Mark 12:1-12
9. 1 Thess. 5:14-23; Luke 17:3-10
10. 1 Tim. 4:9-15; Luke 19:1-10
11. 1 Pet. 2:21-3:9; Mark 12:13-17
12. 1 Pet. 3:10-22; Mark 12:18-27
13. 1 Pet. 4:1-11; Mark 12:28-37
14. 1 Pet. 4:12-5:5; Mark 12:38-44

15. 2 Pet. 1:1-10; Mark 13:1-8
16. 2 Tim. 2:11-19; Luke 18:2-8
17. 2 Tim. 3:10-15; Luke 18:10-14
18. 2 Pet. 1:20-2:9; Mark 13:9-13
19. 2 Pet. 2:9-22; Mark 13:14-23
20. 2 Pet. 3:1-18; Mark 13:24-31
21. 1 John 1:8-2:8; Mark 13:31-14:2
22. 1 John 2:7-17; Mark 14:3-9
23. 2 Tim. 3:1-9; Luke 20:46-21:4
24. 2 Tim. 3:10-15; Luke 18:10-14
25. 1 John 2:18-3:10; Mark 11:1-11
26. 1 John 3:10-20; Mark 14:10-42
27. 1 John 3:21-4:6; Mark 14:43-15:1
28. 1 John 4:20-5:21; Mark 15:1-15