

one should trouble him. Soon the Lord also revealed Saint John's secret to Saint Sava. Saint John spent four years in his cell, receiving no one and not going out even for church.

Desiring ever greater solitude and increased abstinence, Saint John quit the Lavra and withdrew into the desert, where he spent more than nine years, eating plants and grass. He survived a devastating incursion of the Saracens and did not perish, only because the Lord sent him a defender: a ferocious lion. When the enemy tried to harm the saint, the lion attacked them and they scattered in fright. Tradition speaks of many miracles Saint John performed during this time in the desert.

When Saint Sava returned after an extended stay in Scythopolis, he persuaded Saint John to forsake the wilderness and to live at the monastery. After this, the Lord, in a miraculous way, revealed to everyone at the Lavra that the monk John was actually a bishop.

When Saint John reached age seventy, his holy and God-bearing spiritual Father Saint Sava died. The saint grieved deeply over this, since he was not present at the time. Saint Sava appeared to him in a vision, and having consoled him, he foretold that there would be much toil ahead in the struggle against heresy. Saint John even had to leave his solitude to strengthen the brethren in the struggle with the Origenists.

Saint John the Silent spent sixty-six years at the Lavra of Saint Sava the Sanctified. Through his constant ascetic efforts, by his untiring prayer and humble wisdom, Saint John acquired the grace of the Holy Spirit. At his prayers, many miracles took place, and he was able to discern the secret thoughts of people. He healed the sick and those possessed by demons. Even during his lifetime he saved those who invoked his name from certain destruction. Once, he scattered fig seeds on barren rock, and a beautiful and fruitful tree sprang up. In time, the tree grew so much that it overshadowed the saint's cell.

Saint John the Silent departed to the Lord in peace at the age of 104.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND SERVICES

TODAY

St. Nicholas Party

This will be Church School- Children will be singing some selections, there will be a visit from St. Nickolas, games goodies and activities for all)

- Divine Liturgy for St. Nicholas Wednesday, Dec. 6th at 9:30am
Great Vespers- 6pm Tuesday

- Divine Liturgy for St. Herman Wednesday, Dec. 13th at 9:30am
Great Vespers- 6pm Tuesday
(Confession is available after all vespers services, and by appointment)

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD SERVICE SCHEDULE

- Akathist to the Mother of God - Wed. Dec. 20th
- Royal Hours - Friday, Dec. 22nd at 9am
- Holy Supper begins at 5:00pm on Dec. 24th with Nativity Vigil to follow.
- Divine Liturgy Nativity of our Lord Dec. 25th 9:30am

- The Royal Hours of Theophany – Friday, Jan. 5th 9:00am
- Vigil for Theophany- 6:00pm (with the Great Blessing of Waters)
- St. Basils Divine Liturgy – (With blessing of waters- Cussewago Creek) Tuesday, Jan. 6th – 9:30am ~ Blessing of Homes begins.

MISSIONS TEAM –“*We bless Christ when we bless the poor*”

Fall/Winter Missions Drive: The missions committee is currently collecting clean winter clothing, blankets, and quilts which will be donated to The Upper Room of Erie. All donations can be dropped off in the first Sunday School Class room on the left.

*Please support our Kenyan Orthodox children. Marilyn Filipos will be collecting donations for Christmas gifts for the orphans beginning this week.

House Keeping-

--A friendly reminder to parents of little ones, please try to keep loud disruptions to a minimum, keep up the reminders to participate and pray.

--A reminder to everyone to continue to fulfill your financial pledge to the Church. Pledge forms can be given to Fr. Daniel. IF you have not received one, there will be some available by the bulletins in the narthex.

--Please sign up to help for coffee hour

Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church

25636 N. Mosiertown Rd Crossingville, PA 1641 Rev. Fr. Daniel Mathewson – *Rector* **Lord's Day – Dec 3rd, 2017** Parish phone: 814-734-3801 Find us on the Web at: www.orthodoxcrossingville.org or on Face book: Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church

GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST!

26th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 1. Prophet Zephaniah (Sophonias—635-605 B.C.). Ven. Sava (Sabbas), Abbot of Zvenigorod, disciple of Ven. Sergius of Rádonezh (1406). St. Theodulus, Eparch of Constantinople (ca. 440). Ven. John the Silent of St. Sabbas' Monastery (558). Hieromartyr Theodore, Archbishop of Alexandria (606). Monk Martyr Cosmas of St. Anne's Skete (Mt. Athos).

PLEASE INCLUDE THESE OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS:

Those in need –Fr. Andrew, Fr. David, Mat. Donna, Fr. John, Fr. Nicholas, Fr. Paul, Fr. George, Mat. Suzanne, Meghan, Pearl, Karen, Mary, Stavros, Marilyn, Theona, Sara, Evan, Eugene, John, David, Ann, Thomas, Timothy, Jeremiah, Renee, Delani, Emily, George, Tanya, The Homebound... Vincent, Tanya, Mary-Louise, Richard, Helen, John, Irene, Ruth, Josephine, William, Claudia... Travelers.. ...Catechumens –Rick and Christian Our Missionaries Abroad...Fr. David and Mt. Rozanne, Military servers...Greg ...Departed Orthodox...Newly Departed – Ann, Katherine. Vernon, Paul, James, Andrew, Peter, Paul, Margaret, Michael Mary Ann, Timothy special requests... Anthony, Ian, Paul, Daleen, Penni, James, Sean, Liam, Susan, James, Joel, Jen, Roger, Jasmine, Cassandra

Tone 1 Troparion (Resurrection)

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world.

The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life:

“Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ!

Glory to Thy ^Kingdom!//

Glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou who lovest of mankind!”

Tone 2 Troparion (*Prophet Zephaniah*)

We celebrate the memory
of Thy prophet Zephaniah, O Lord;
through him we beseech Thee:
“Save our souls!”

Tone 1 Kontakion (*Resurrection*)

As God, Thou didst rise from the tomb in glory,
raising the world with Thyself.
Human nature praises Thee as God, for death has vanished.
Adam exults, O Master!
Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage and cries to Thee://
“Thou art the Giver of Resurrection to all, O Christ!”

Tone 4 Kontakion (*Prophet Zephaniah*)

Thou hast been revealed by the Spirit of God to be brilliant, O
Prophet Zephaniah,
for thou didst proclaim the coming of God: “Rejoice greatly, O
Daughter of Zion!
Proclaim Him, O Jerusalem! //
Behold, your King is coming to save mankind!”

Tone 4

*First-enthroned of the apostles, / teachers of the universe: / Entreat the
Master of all / to grant peace to the world, / and to our souls great
mercy!*

Kontakion — Tone 2

*O Lord, You have taken up to eternal rest / and to the enjoyment of
Your blessings / the two divinely-inspired preachers, the leaders of the
Apostles, / for You have accepted their labors and deaths as a sweet-
smelling sacrifice, / for You alone know what lies in the hearts of men.*

Tone 1 Prokeimenon

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on Thee!
(Ps 32/33:22)

*v: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous! Praise befits the just! (Ps
32/33:1)*

Tone 1

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

v: God gives vengeance unto me, and subdues people under me.

(Ps 17/18:47)

*v: He magnifies the salvation of the King and deals mercifully with
David, His anointed, and his seed forever. (Ps 17/18:50) Troparion —*

Today's Scripture Readings:

Ephesians 5:9-19 (*Epistle*)

(for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore He says: “Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.” See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,

Luke 18:18-27 (*Gospel*)

Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’” And he said, “All these things I have kept from my youth.” So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” And those who heard it said, “Who then can be saved?” But He said, “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.”

St. John the Silent of St. Sabbas Monastery

Saint John the Silent was born around 454 in the city of Nicopolis, Armenia into the family of a military commander named Enkratius and his wife Euphemia. The boy began to study Holy Scripture, and he loved solitude and prayer with all his heart.

With the inheritance his parents left him, John built a church dedicated to the Most Holy Theotokos. At eighteen years of age, John became a monk, living an ascetic life of fasting, prayer, and temperance with ten other monks at the church he had founded.

At the request of the citizens of Colonia, the Metropolitan of Sebaste consecrated the twenty-eight-year-old John as Bishop of Colonia. Having assumed the episcopal throne, the saint did not alter his strict ascetic manner of life. Under the influence of the saint his relatives, his brother Pergamios (an associate of the emperors Zeno and Anastasius) and his nephew Theodore (an associate of the emperor Justinian), also lived in a Christian manner.

In John's tenth year as bishop, the governorship of Armenia was assumed by Pazinikos, the husband of the saint's sister, Maria. The new governor began to interfere in spiritual and ecclesiastical matters, and there was unrest in the Church. Saint John then went to Constantinople, and through Archbishop Euthymius, he entreated the emperor Zeno to defend the Armenian Church from the evil Governor.

Overwhelmed by worldly quarrels, John secretly left his diocese and sailed to Jerusalem. With tears he besought God to show him a place where he might live and find salvation. A bright star appeared, which led Saint John to the Lavra of Saint Sava.

John, concealing his episcopal rank, was accepted in the community as a simple novice. Under the guidance of the igumen Saint Sava (December 5), Bishop John toiled obediently for more than four years at every task he was assigned. When a guesthouse was built at the Lavra, Saint John served the workers, serving their food and assisting in the construction of the building. When a cenobitic monastery for novices was being built, John was once again assigned to help the workers.

Seeing Saint John's humility and love of labor, Saint Sava deemed him worthy of ordination to presbyter. Saint John was forced to reveal his rank to Patriarch Elias of Jerusalem (494-517), who told Saint Sava that John could not be ordained. Moreover, he said that John was to live in silence, and that no