

Holy Assumption Orthodox Church
Celebrating 125 years witnessing to the Apostolic Faith

110 EAST MAIN STREET,
Marblehead, OH 43440

Fr. Peter Tomas, Rector



JULY 2, 2023

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Liturgical Schedule

SUNDAY - JULY 2

4th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Placing of the Honorable Robe of the Most Holy Theotokos at Blachernae, St. John Maximovich of St. Francisco

9:10 AM HOURS, 9:30 AM DIVINE LITURGY Followed by Coffee Hour

SATURDAY - JULY 8

Great Martyr Procopius; Righteous Prokópy, Fool for Christ

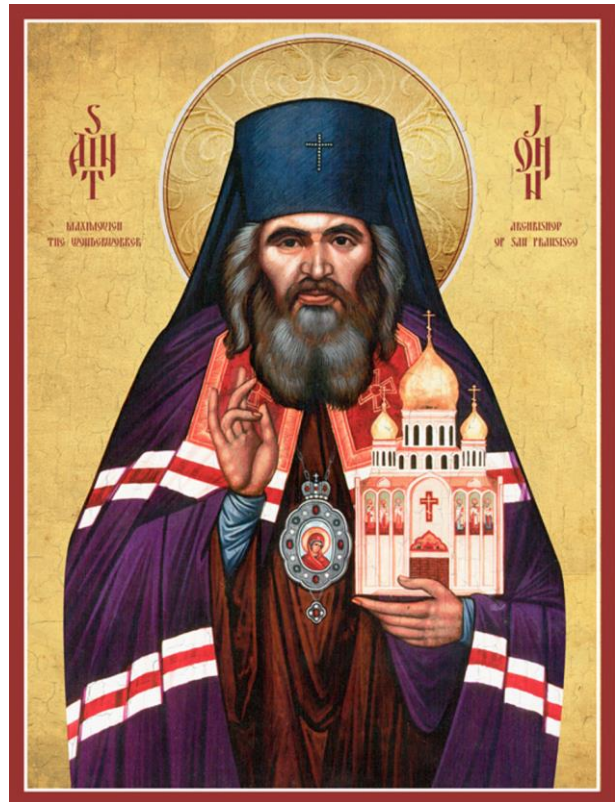
VESPERS, 4:00 PM

SUNDAY - JULY 9

5th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Hieromartyr Pancratius, Bp. Of Taormina in Sicily

9:10 AM HOURS, 9:30 AM DIVINE LITURGY Followed by Coffee Hour



St. John Maximovich of St. Francisco
Feast Day – July 2nd

EPISTLE: Romans 6:18-23

And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 8:5-13

At that time, when Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented." And Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him." The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel! And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you." And his servant was healed that same hour.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS



Basil Glovinsky, Firelands Hospital, 1111 Hayes Ave., Room 5012, Sandusky, OH 44870; Greg Twarek's sister Jeanne Smith, Magruder Hospital; Subdeacon Roger Pinta, P.O. Box 39, Middle Bass, OH 43446; Diane Tryon, 109 Joslyn Street, Arcadia, OH 44804; Ed & Irene Vangeloff, 454 Strouse Lane, Sandusky, OH 44870

JULY CANDLE SPONSORS



Altar Candles: Fr. Peter & Matushka Michelle, Wedding Anniversary blessings (7/02) and Fr. Peter's Anniversary of Ordination (7/23) (**\$50**); **Chandelier:** available (**\$50**); **Eternal Light & Icon Screen:** available (**\$25**); **Candles at the Cross:** Laura Kovach, In birthday memory of Susan (**\$15**); **Candles at St. Tikhon's Icon:** For Safety and Health of Nicholas, Tikhon, Gleice, & Chloe (**\$15**)

JULY REPOSED

Triantafilos Lefas (1995) **No date provided**; **2-** John Danchisen (2009); **6-** Anna Mazur (1969); **6-** Joseph Golob Jr (No year recorded); **7-** Mary Martha Glovinsky (1975); **9-** Andrew Holodnak (1971); **10-** Gretta Gresh (2018); **14-** John Gulla (1968); **20-** Mitered Archpriest Sava Chaly (1991) Former Pastor; **21-** Anna Mazurik (1973); **27-** Father Vladimir Meschersky (1937) Former Pastor; **29-** Sally Franklin (2018); **29-** Robert Zgonc (2018); **29-** Charles Hagmaier (2018)

PRAYER LIST

Parishioners & Family: Basil Glovinsky / Jeanne Smith / Carol / David Martin / Jim Twarek / Fred Soski / Chris Hannon / Subdeacon Roger Pinta / Tony Monastra / Tina / Ed Vangeloff / Irene Vangeloff / Diane Tryon / Sonja Rose / David Mazurik / Ron Royhab / James Bargdill / John Beadle / Carole Conaway / Gary Conaway / Sharon Dietrich / Michael Glovinsky / Shirley Gresh / Joseph Habegger / Elaine Hileman / Betty Kovach / Helen Lis / Child Stella Miller / William Pipenur / Earl Rindfleisch / Helen Jean Rofkar / Elaine Libb / George Royhab / Marianne Royhab / Stephanie Royhab / Stacy Kaplan / Kathy Jacob / the child Bodhi Cassell / Nikki Williams & Brexly / Gleice & Chloe / Natalie & newborn Caleb / Gabrielle and her unborn child / Carol / Debbie & Marco / Nora. **Other Requests:** Anthony / Archpriest David Lis / Bishop Matthias / Fr. Emilian & Matushka Laryssa Hutnyan / Marge Dziama / Child Ezra / Kurt Franck / Ben Franklin / Donald Gresh / Mark Ludvik / Marsha / Mark Masica / Robert Piznar / Valerie Ritzenthaler / William / Rick Rowe / Sandy Scafaria / Chuck

Wiedenhoft / Chris / Tamman Haddad. **Military:** Craig Cassell / Jake Ellithorpe / Jordon Fulton / Justin Issler / Tikhon / Nicholas / & All Military



VIGILS FOR JUNE 25

Tim Glovinsky 1 Speedy recovery for dad

Susan Guzy 2 Birthday blessing to Father Peter, Many years! For the health of Basil, brother Gary and Tina

Laura Kovach 4 Birthday blessings to Fr. Peter. Anniversary blessings to Matthew and Amanda. For health and/or healing of Basil G., Kathie J., Roger P., Diane T., Irene V., Ed V., Robin C., Betty K., Ben F., Earl R., Mark M., Dana M., Bodhi C., Sharon D., John D., and Karen D. Safe travel for family

Sandy Martin 1 Special intentions

David & Roddie Mazurik 4 Special intentions

Natalie Twarek 6 Health and recovery of Basil, Health and recovery of Jeanne, Birthday blessing to Father Peter, Health and recovery Roger, Carol, Tony, Irene, Father David, Diane, Marilyn, Pauline, Sandy, Don & Judy, Mimi, For the health of Mike, Tina, Ed, Ron, Carole, Gary, Sharon, Kurt, Leslie, Health of Amber, Zach, Dottie, Jamie, Ezra, David, Helen Lis and Tina's dad, Earl, Tom, Loren, Sonya, Margi & Joe, Betty, Jackie, MaryAnn & Bob, Chuck, Bodhi, Stella, Jake, Pat, Karen, special intentions.



READERS LIST

Sunday July 2 – Natalie

Sunday July 9 - Jake

Sunday July 16 – Joe

Sunday July 23 - Tim

Sunday July 30 - Ron



CHARITY OF THE MONTH

Respect for Life Ministries is the charity we donate to for the month of July.



ATTENDANCE

6/24 Vespers, 10 attending; 6/25 Divine Liturgy, 23 attending (4 guests); 6/28 Vespers, 14 attending (2 guests); 6/29 Divine Liturgy, 11 attending



JULY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

1–Gabriel Payne; **2**–Fr. Peter & Mat. Michelle Anniversary; **4**–Stephanie Kowal; **8**–Ed Vangeloff; **11**–Christian Cleis (Korea)*; **16**–Peter & Stephanie Kowal Anniversary; **23**–Fr. Peter Ordination (1995); **27**–Greg & Natalie Twarek Anniversary; **30**–Tim & Jennifer Heffernan Anniversary



SINCERE THANK YOU

Fr. Peter would like to thank you all for your best wishes and prayers on his Birthday last Sunday. Special thanks to Tina for the delicious Birthday cake which we all enjoyed. Heartfelt thank you to the entire parish for your generous gift! May the Lord reward you all for your love and kindness with His special blessings!



SUNDAY OFFERING

Sunday, June 25

Tithe	\$ 745.00
Candles	\$ 21.00
Vigils	\$ 128.00
Donations	\$ 90.00
Holy Day Donation	\$ 150.00
Building Restoration	\$ 150.00
Total:	\$1,264.00

May the Lord reward you for your financial and spiritual support!



NUT ROLLS AND KOLACHI BAKING – THANK YOU!

We wish to express our sincere thanks to the following parishioners who came this week to help with Nut Rolls and Kolachi: Tina, Natalie, Bobbie, Roddie, Kathy, Sandy, Fred, Laura, Fr. Peter, and Mat. Michelle. May our Lord and God reward you all for your hard work and love for our church, and grant you long life, good health, peace, and happiness for Many Happy and Blessed Years!



MARKET DAY

Our next Market Day will take place next Saturday, July 8th starting with set up at 8:00 AM. We will have perohi, kielbasa and kraut, spanakopita, and a large variety of baked goods. Your help is greatly appreciated!



CLEANING SCHEDULE

July 3, Laura
July 10, Basil & Tim
July 17, Laura
July 24, Susan



ANNOUNCEMENTS/NOTICES

- 1— There will be no baking this week. Enjoy the 4th of July week!
- 2— Friday, July 7th, Perohi packaging
- 3— Monday, July 10th, Nut Rolls baking at 8:AM
- 4— Could you use fresh thyme, sage, Greek oregano, sweet basil, or dill? Sprigs are ready to cut from these plants growing in the herb garden behind the church. Help yourself! Four or five other smaller herbs growing there may not yet be ready to use
- 5— Please consider sponsoring a Sunday coffee hour following the Divine Liturgy



66th ANNUAL HALUPKI FESTIVAL

Our Halupki Festival will take place on Sunday, August 20, 2023.

Once again, the main raffle during our Festival will be cash raffle with the five vining prizes of cash in the amount of **\$1,000, \$500.00, \$250, \$150, and \$100**. We kindly ask each family to help us sell twenty tickets. If anyone needs more tickets, please see Natalie. Thank you in advance for your help!



HOLY ASSUMPTION CHURCH - 125th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend our 125th Anniversary Celebration which will take place on Saturday, September 23, 2023 with the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy to be celebrated by His Beatitude the Most Blessed Tikhon, Metropolitan of All America and Canada and the Most Reverend Daniel, Archbishop of Chicago, and the Midwest.

Please Note: Laura is seeking any old photographs you have of our church, groups of people at the church, or events at the church to be published in our 125th anniversary commemorative booklet. She promises to scan them and return them to you right away so your precious photographs are not lost or misplaced. Thank you!



ARCHPASTORAL CATECHESIS ON THE OCCASION OF THE COMMEMORATION OF THE APPEARANCE OF THE ICON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD *OF TIKHVIN*

June 26, 2023

Today thy most precious Icon appears in the sky like the ever-radiant sun, O Sovereign Lady, enlightening the world with rays of mercy; and this land, devoutly receiving the divine gift from above, honors thee as the Mistress of all, O Mother of God, magnifying Christ our God, Who was born of thee. Entreat Him, O Sovereign Lady, Queen and Mother of God, to guard all Christian cities and lands unharmed by the assaults of the enemy, and to save those who kneel in faith before His divine, and thy holy image, O unwedded Virgin! (Troparion Tone 4)

Beloved in the Lord,

On June 26, the Church commemorates the finding of the Icon of the Mother of God *of Tikhvin*. For the clergy and faithful of the God-protected Diocese of the Midwest, this is a particularly significant commemoration. As most are aware, the Tikhvin Icon sojourned within this Diocese for almost fifty years, finding its temporary home in Chicago before being returned to the Holy Dormition Monastery in Tikhvin in 2004.

The origins of the icon are not recorded in history, although it is traditionally ascribed to the hand of Saint Luke the Apostle and Evangelist, like several other ancient icons of the *Hodigitria* type. It is believed that the icon was brought from Jerusalem to Constantinople in the fifth century. During the period of the iconoclastic controversy, it was taken to the Monastery of the Pantocrator for safekeeping, and afterwards it became one of the most widely venerated icons in the Imperial City. Eventually it disappeared from the church where it had been kept, reappearing over the lands of Rus' in 1383. Fishermen at work near Lake Ladoga saw how the icon appeared to traverse the skies; it was seen in over seven different locations in all until it finally settled by the banks of the Tikhvinka river, near the small village of Tikhvin in the region of Great Novgorod. Soon a wooden church dedicated to the Dormition of the Mother of God was built in that place. In just over a century, this church burned to the ground three separate times, with the icon surviving unharmed each time. A stone church was finally built in 1507, around which grew the monastery and city walls that stand to this day. The holy and wonderworking Icon of the Mother of God *of Tikhvin* was placed on the right pillar of the beautiful and impressive church, where it remained for over four hundred years, becoming as widely venerated in the lands of Rus' as it had once been in the great City of Constantine.

Though the monastery was occasionally occupied by foreign powers over the centuries and was ultimately closed by the Soviets in the mid 1920s, the icon itself was not disturbed, and its presence remained a source of consolation for the Christian faithful in times of need and distress. During the

Second World War, however, the city of Tikhvin was briefly seized by the Nazis, and with their departure the miraculous icon seemingly went lost. Some say the icon was then seen in 1944 in one of the antiques shops occupied by the Germans in Riga, Latvia. The icon eventually came into the possession of Bishop John (Garklavs) of Riga. Forced to leave Latvia that same year by way of the former Czechoslovakia and West Germany, Bishop John frequently brought the holy icon to displaced persons camps as a blessing and sign of hope for those whose lives had been upended by the war. When Bishop John made his way to the United States in 1949, he again brought the icon with him, ultimately making the Chicagoland its home in the New World. For over half a century thereafter, the icon traveled throughout the Midwest and elsewhere in the United States.

By God's will, with the restoration of Church life in the former Soviet Union, the original wonderworking icon was returned to its historic place in Tikhvin's newly reopened Holy Dormition Monastery in July 2004. Archbishop Paul, of blessed memory, went on pilgrimage to Tikhvin in 2016. Later, during a return visit to Chicago from Bishop Mstislav of Tikhvin, our Diocese was presented with an exact replica of the original icon. The replica, including its masterfully crafted metal cover, had been touched to and blessed upon the original icon before it was brought to Chicago, where it is enshrined at Holy Trinity Cathedral, Mother Church of our Diocese.

As we reflect upon the amazing history of the icon and of its miraculous preservation throughout the centuries, we cannot help but acknowledge that, even from the time of its origins, the Tikhvin Icon has been on pilgrimage, traveling to where the intercession and prayers and comfort of the Holy Theotokos were most needed. Latvia, Central and Western Europe, North America: all of these are now included among the traditional places visited by this highly revered image of the Mother of God.

The traveling nature of the icon should be of no surprise to us. Indeed, the Most Holy Theotokos is revealed as a traveler and sojourner, even in the Gospels. We recall Saint Luke's account of the Annunciation. As soon as the angel brought the glad tidings that she was chosen to be the mother of the Son of God and that her kinswoman Elizabeth was expecting a child in her old age, "... Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth" (St Luke 1:39-40). She went where she was needed.

Jerusalem, Constantinople, Tikhvin, Riga, New York, Chicago, Summit Argo, and many other places known and unknown are included among the many locations graced by the visitation of this wonderworking icon of the Mother of God. It has resided in monasteries, churches, and family homes. It has called upon displaced persons in deportation camps, youth gatherings, and church gatherings of all types. In this we see the Mother of God traveling to places where her presence and intercession is most needed, just as she did when she visited her cousin Elizabeth.

As we commemorate the appearance of this wonderworking icon, let us, each and all, invite Mary of Nazareth, our Sovereign Lady who is also our Mother, into our homes and families, into our parish communities, and into our hearts. It is my prayer that the Most Pure Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, venerated in all her holy icons and invoked in all her titles, will bless and protect our Diocese, its clergy and faithful, and all your families and loved ones.

*O people, let us hasten to the Virgin Theotokos and Queen,
giving thanks to Christ our God,
And looking upon her miraculous image with contrition,
let us fall down and cry out to her:
O Mary, our Sovereign Lady, who visit this land
in the miraculous appearance of thy precious image,
save all the Christians in peace and prosperity,
showing us as heirs of the heavenly life.
For to thee do we cry out with faith:
Rejoice, O Virgin, the salvation of the world!*

(Kontakion Tone 8)

Invoking God's blessing upon you all, I remain
Your Servant in Christ,

+DANIEL

Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest



Holy Glorious, All-praised and First of the Supreme Apostles Peter and Paul

S. V. Bulgakov, Handbook for Church Servers

Holy Apostle Peter, brother of Apostle Andrew, born a Judean, was distinguished by the ardor and boldness of his character (Mt. 16:15-17, 22-23; 14:25-31; Mk. 1:20, 30, Jn. 1:44). Called by the Lord from the modest lot of fisherman to catching men, he was one of the zealous disciples of the Savior (Mt. 4:18-19; Lk. 5:10-11). Up to his calling he was called Simon. After his calling, as an omen and reward for his firmness in faith, he received the name Cephas, which in Greek is Peter, which means rock. He remained faithful to this name all his life and proved this by numerous examples of his strong affection for the Lord. He was the participant and witness of the greatest miracles of the Savior and the major events of His mortal life (Jn. 1:42; Mt. 16:18; 17:1; 26:37; Lk. 8:51).

After the resurrection of the Savior, called by Him again for apostolic service, he kept unshakably firm like a rock in the faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of the world during all his life and tried also to inspire this in other people (Jn. 21; Acts 2:14; 4:8; 12:3; 8:14; 12). He was an apostle mainly of the Judeans (Gal. 2:7, 8).

In the year 44 when Herod Agrippa threatened him with death in Jerusalem, St. Peter was released from prison by an angel (Acts 12:1-11), and then he left Jerusalem.

He preached in Syria, Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, Asia and Egypt, confirming great wonders by the power of his words: he raised the dead and healed the infirm, and one of the latter was healed even from his shadow only (Acts 5:5, 10, 15; 9:33-34, 40).

In reign of Nero, having arrived in Rome, he endured a martyr's death on a cross. Recognizing him unworthy to be crucified the way Jesus Christ was crucified; Apostle Peter asked that he be crucified with his head downwards.

Although Apostle Peter was also distinguished with special zeal for Christ, this did not give him superiority of authority over the other apostles, but only superiority of honor according to Apostolic labor. The same as the other apostles he proposed the council to decide the matters of the church and these were decided by the common voice of the apostles and presbyters with the entire Church (Acts 15:7, 12, 14; 1:23-26; 6:2-6; 15:22-23). The council sends Peter on the matter of serving the same way as the other disciples of Christ (Acts 8:14).

The Apostle Paul, speaking about the apostles and honoring them as pillars, places James in the first place and then Peter and John, counts him as one of them and equal to Peter (Gal. 2:7-9; 2 Cor. 11:5). The story of the Roman church that Apostle Peter was bishop of Rome from 42 to 67 cannot withstand criticism.

The relics of St. Peter repose in the Vatican cathedral in Rome. The Holy Apostle left 2 Catholic Epistles.

The Holy Apostle Paul, named Saul up to his calling to be among the Apostles, was born as a Judean in the city of Tarsus. He was a disciple of the famous Hebrew teacher Gamaliel, belonged to the sect of the Pharisees and severely persecuted Christians (Acts 13:7-12; 21:39; 22:3; Phil. 3:4-5; Acts 7:58; 8:1, 3; 9:1, 2; 26:11).

Wonderfully called to be an apostle by the Lord Himself, Who was revealed to him on the way to Damascus, he accepted Holy Baptism from Apostle Ananias and since this time became the most zealous preacher of the Gospel (Acts 9:3-30). He wrote that he more than all labored in the good news of Christ (1 Cor. 15:10).

He was mainly the apostle of the nations (Rom. 15:16, 18; Eph. 3:6-7; Gal. 2:7) and preached Christ in Arabia, Palestine, Caesarea, Asia Minor, Greece, Italy and many other countries. Having undergone much suffering, he became worthy of ultimate revelations by the Lord, being admired in paradise, uplifted to the third heaven where he heard such mysteries that is impossible for anyone of human nature to retell and performed many great miracles (2 Cor. 11:23-29; 12:1-4, 7; Acts 13:11; 14:10; 16:18; 19:12; 20:9-12; 28:3-6).

Deep faith in the truth of preached doctrines, clear understanding of Christian truths, courageously tranquil amidst every possible danger, unusual knowledge of the human heart and by nature having the fascinating power of eloquence during the gifts of grace by the Holy Spirit, promoted his unusual success.

In the words of St. John Chrysostom, Apostle Paul for his sermons sought more of reviling and dishonor rather than us of honor, more of death rather than us of life, more of poverty rather than us of repose, more of grief rather than others of joy, and prayed more for enemies rather than others who prayed against enemies. Only one thing was terrible and dangerous for him was that of not offending God. But more than anything, equally and driving him, was nothing except pleasing God. He put love for Christ higher than anything. With this love he wanted more to be accounted among the last and punished, rather than being without it among the highest and receiving honors.

He died in Rome about the year 67, beheaded by the sword on command of Emperor Nero. His relics repose in a Roman church beyond the city on road to Ostia. Apostle Paul has written 14 Epistles: to the Romans, 2 to the Corinthians, to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, to the Colossians, 2 to the Thessalonians, 2 to Timothy, to Titus, to Philemon and to the Hebrews.

In the services for this day the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul are glorified, as "friends of Christ", "of the heavenly recesses", "rivers of knowledge", "feeders of the entire inhabited world", "preachers of true piety", "intercessors for the whole world", "disciples of Christ and founders of the Church, true pillars and walls, and trumpets of the doctrine and suffering of the divine Christ, "fishers of the world" "possessors of the keys of the Kingdom", "prototypes of the preachers of God", "chiefs of the Apostles"

Troparion, tone 4

First-enthroned of the Apostles, and teachers of the universe, pray to the Master of all, to grant peace to the universe, And great mercy to our souls.

Kontakion, tone 2

Firm and divinely-inspired preachers, Highest of Your Apostles, O Lord, you received in enjoyment of Your blessings and repose: For you accepted their sickness and death more than any sacrifice, O Only One Who knows their hearts. Magnification We magnify you, Apostles of Christ, Enlightening the entire world with your teaching, having led all the ends of the world to Christ.

The image of Apostle Peter on icons with keys is based on the known place of the Holy Scriptures (Mt.

16:13-18), where the Savior announced to Apostle Peter that he was the first who confessed Him to be the Son of God, uttered the promise to give him "the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven", i.e. the authority to open and close the entrance to this Kingdom. Such authority, however, the Lord then promised to all the Apostles (Mt. 18:18) and after His resurrection solemnly confirmed this for all of them and consequently also to all the pastors of the Church for their service (Jn. 20:23).

The image of Apostle Paul on icons holding a sword signals his tireless, most zealous preaching of the word of God and he called it a spiritual sword (Eph. 6:12-17; Heb. 4:12), using which he victoriously amazed and cut asunder impiety and faithlessness and converted a large number of people to Jesus Christ.

Church attendance continues to fall, now below pre-pandemic levels: poll

By Karah Rucker (Reporter/Producer), Jack Aylmer (Producer)

The way Americans practice their faith is undergoing a transformation, as traditional religious institutions have ***witnessed a decline in attendance*** and individuals explore alternative avenues to express their spirituality. While a significant portion of the population identifies as religious, only about one in four Americans currently attend religious services, according to a ***recent Gallup poll***.

The impact of the pandemic on church attendance has been profound, with levels dropping as low as 29% of the U.S. population, including both physical and virtual attendees. Surprisingly, even though the pandemic offered new opportunities for individuals to engage with religious services online, the number of people affiliated with a church, whether in-person or virtually, hit an all-time low since the survey's inception in 1939. However, a closer examination reveals that the ***decline in church attendance*** was a trend that had been ongoing for years prior to the pandemic.

"It is not clear if the pandemic is the cause of the reduced attendance or if the decline is a continuation of trends that were already in motion," Jeffrey M. Jones, a senior editor for Gallup, wrote.

In the 1950s, religious service attendance reached its peak, with one in every two Americans participating in religious gatherings at churches, synagogues, mosques, or temples. By 2012, that number had declined to 40%, indicating a 10-point dip over a 60-year span. Comparatively, from 2012 to 2022, church attendance experienced another 10-point decline over just a 10-year period, bringing the percentage of churchgoers to a mere 30%.

Although the pandemic further exacerbated the decrease in church attendance, the preceding years already indicated a significant shift in religious engagement.

While the pandemic resulted in an ***all-time low for church attendance***, the trend leading up to this point suggests that the country was already headed in that direction, with the health emergency merely hastening the process.

With a declining congregation and approximately 5% of followers participating remotely, churches find themselves with only 25% of the population walking through their doors. This reality necessitates a careful examination of how religious institutions can adapt to changing times.

Despite the decline in attendance at organized religious services, a substantial 76% of the U.S. population still holds religious beliefs. However, the majority of individuals choose to practice their faith in ways that extend beyond the traditional confines of religious institutions.

Holy Assumption Orthodox Church is a parish of the Orthodox Church in America, Diocese of the Midwest; Rectory: (419) 798-4591, Father Peter's cell: (607) 206-5523; frpetertomas@yahoo.com; website: www.holyassumptionmarblehead.org