

September 5 – The Holy Prophet Zachariah and the Righteous Elizabeth

The Holy Prophet Zachariah and the Righteous Elizabeth were the parents of the holy Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord, John. They were descended from the lineage of Aaron: Saint Zachariah, son of Barach, was a priest in the Jerusalem Temple, and Saint Elizabeth was the sister of Saint Anna, the mother of the Most Holy Theotokos. The righteous spouses, “walking in all the commandments of the Lord” (Luke 1:6), suffered barrenness, which in those times was considered a punishment from God.

Once, during his turn of priestly service in the Temple, Saint Zachariah was told by an angel that his aged wife would bear him a son, who “will be great in the sight of the Lord” (Luke 1:15) and “will go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias” (Luke 1:17).

Zachariah doubted that this prediction would come true, and for his weakness of faith he was punished by becoming mute. When Elizabeth gave birth to a son, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit she announced that his name was John, although no one in their family had this name.

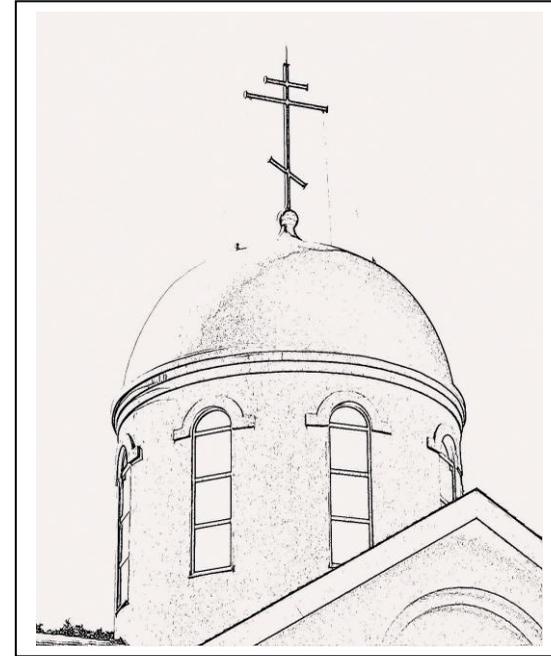
They asked Zachariah and he also wrote the name John down on a tablet. Immediately the gift of speech returned to him, and inspired by the Holy Spirit, he began to prophesy about his son as the Forerunner of the Lord.

When King Herod heard from the Magi about the birth of the Messiah, he decided to kill all the infants up to two years old at Bethlehem and the surrounding area, hoping that the new-born Messiah would be among them.

Herod knew about John’s unusual birth and he wanted to kill him, fearing that he was the foretold King of the Jews. But Elizabeth hid herself and the infant in the hills. The murderers searched everywhere for John. Elizabeth, when she saw her pursuers, began to implore God for their safety, and immediately the hill opened up and concealed her and the infant from their pursuers.

In these tragic days Saint Zachariah was taking his turn at the services in the Temple. Soldiers sent by Herod tried in vain to learn from him the whereabouts of his son. Then, by command of Herod, they murdered this holy prophet, having stabbed him between the temple and the altar (MT 23: 35). Elizabeth died forty days after her husband, and Saint John, preserved by the Lord, dwelt in the wilderness until the day of his appearance to the nation of Israel.

WEEKLY



BULLETIN

Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery. The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace. Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos: Rejoice O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you!

Troparion of the Annunciation to the Theotokos

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION

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Matthew Petrides, *Senior Warden*

Reader Matthew Hascha, *Choir Director*

September 5, 2021

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Tone 2. Holy Prophet Zachariah and Righteous Elizabeth, parents of St. John the Baptist (1st c.). Martyrdom of Ven. Athanasius, Abbot of Breta (1648). Martyrdom of the Holy Passionbearer Gleb (in holy Baptism David—1015). Martyr Tathuil, and his sister, Bebaia (98-138). Martyr Sarbelus of Edessa (2nd c.). Martyrs Juveninus and Maximus the soldiers, at Antioch (361-363). Martyrs Urban, Theodore, Medimnus, and 77 companions, at Nicomedia (370). Martyr Abdias (Obadiah) of Persia (5th c.).

Today's Readings:

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 9:2-12

Gospel: Matthew 18:23-35

Upcoming Service Schedule:

Today – **9:00am Divine Liturgy**

Tuesday – **6:00pm Great Vespers** (*Nativity of the Theotokos*)

Wednesday – **9:00am Divine Liturgy** (*Nativity of the Theotokos*)

Saturday – **6:00pm Great Vespers**

Sunday – **9:00am Divine Liturgy**

Next Sunday's Readings:

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 and Galatians 6:11-18

Gospel: Matthew 19:16-26 and John 3:13-17



*The Nativity of
the Most-holy
Theotokos and
Ever-virgin Mary*

Keep up on OCA news by visiting www.oca.org, diocesan news by visiting www.nynjoca.org, and parish news by visiting www.occa-brick.org.

Special Prayers

We pray for all our parish family members, but we pray especially for those who are ill and afflicted. Among them are **Zoran Pejovic, Ruth Federoff, Betty James, Manya Shark, Deryl Tczap, Rdr. John Economou, Margaret Makara, Ann Marie and Dennis Gahr, and Dorothy Studier.**

To those who have joined us in-person today for worship, we are happy you have done so. Please join us for coffee hour after the service. Please note that **reception of the Holy Eucharist** is only for baptized members of the Orthodox Church who have prepared with prayer, fasting, and recent confession. We encourage you to receive the blessed bread that is **offered at the end of the service and which may also be offered to you by one of your neighbors during Communion.**

Annunciations

TODAY – Please join us for **Coffee Hour** after Divine Liturgy and the veneration of the Cross. **Team #3** is in charge of today's ministry effort. Everyone is invited to participate.

THIS WEDNESDAY is the Great Feast of the **Nativity of the Most-holy Theotokos**. Please check the "Upcoming Service Schedule" for the services to be served in commemoration of this Feast.

NEXT SUNDAY – **Team #1** will oversee the Coffee Hour.

Formal invitations will be sent out this week for the celebration of the **Parish's 50th Anniversary and Consecration of the Altar and Church** on **Saturday, October 16, 2021**. Please save the date and be ready to respond to the invitation!

Congratulations and welcome back to Sarah Bair who was churched yesterday.

Church School and Adult Education will be commencing later this month. Stay tuned for details.

We are praying for all those who were affected by the remnants of **Hurricane and Tropical Storm Ida**, especially the faithful Orthodox Christians who have been temporarily displaced from their homes and parishes.

Grocery Gift Cards are available for sale. Please see Cathy Berger or Olga Pasick at Coffee Hour to make purchases.

Stewardship Donations may be brought to the church or mailed to the church at 360 Van Zile Road, Brick, NJ 08724. On-line donations are possible by visiting our website for a link. **Many thanks** for continuing to support your parish prayerfully and financially.

Please stay safe during the remainder of this **Labor Day weekend!**

Please pray for vocations to the Holy Priesthood!

MANY YEARS

Birthdays this week:

Today – Bill Buchala

Tuesday – Anthony Macejka

Thursday – Linda Washenko

Anniversaries this week:

Wednesday – Charlie & Joanne Bass (#21)

Thursday – Brian and Marie Price (#54)

Friday – Michael & Paula Getmanov (#32)

The Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors program is an essential vehicle for funding the activities and programs of our diocese. Please consider participating in the program. Brochures are located by the bulletin board in the parish hall or at the diocesan website at www.nynjoca.org.