

*We would like to welcome all parish visitors and invite you to join us after the Liturgy for Coffee hour.*



## ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

### OCA – Diocese of New York & New Jersey

The Most Reverend Michael, Archbishop of NY & the Diocese of NY/NJ

V. Rev. Dr. Matthew Searfoorce, Temporary Rector

Sub-Deacon Edward Dawson      Sub-Deacon Vlashi

Parish Council President: Andrew Romanofsky

Parish Council Vice President: Sub-Deacon Edward

## HYMNS OF THE DAY

### *Troparion (Resurrection) in Tone 3*

Let the heavens rejoice! Let the earth be glad! For the Lord has shown strength with His arm. He has trampled down death by death. He has become the first born of the dead. He has delivered us from the depths of hell, and has granted to the world great mercy.

### *Kontakion (from the Pentecostarion) in Tone 3*

By Thy divine intercession, O Lord, as Thou didst raise up the Paralytic of old, so raise up my soul, paralyzed by sins and thoughtless acts; so that being saved I may sing to Thee: “Glory to Thy power, O compassionate Christ!”

### *Kontakion (Pascha) in Tone 8*

Thou didst descend into the tomb, O Immortal, Thou didst destroy the power of death. In victory Thou didst arise, O Christ God, proclaiming, “Rejoice!” to the Myrrhbearing Women, granting peace to Thine Apostles, and bestowing Resurrection on the fallen.

## *Prayer Requests*

### *For Health of:*

**Richard Dantine, Sr.**, on his birthday, offered by his family with love.

**Andrew Morris**, on his birthday, offered by his grandmother Lore Stefy.

**Robert Morris**, on his birthday, offered by Lore Stefy.

**Nina Dimas**, presently hospitalized after a serious injury, offered by Archbishop Michael and the Diocese of NY/NJ.

**Archpriest John Bohush, Sr.**, presently receiving medical treatment, offered by Archbishop Michael and the Diocese of NY/NJ.

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## SAINTS AND FEASTS OF THE DAY

APRIL 29, 2018

4TH SUNDAY OF PASCHA: SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC



### *Sunday of the Paralytic*

On this day the Church remembers the man who lay by the Sheep's Pool in Jerusalem for thirty-eight years, waiting for someone to put him into the pool. The first one to enter the pool after an angel troubled the water would be healed of his infirmities, but someone always entered the pool before him.

Seeing the man, the Lord felt compassion for him and healed him.

The Kontakion for this Fourth Sunday of Pascha asks Christ to raise up our souls, "paralyzed by sins and thoughtless acts."



### *Martyrs Thaumasius, Theognes, Rufus, Antipater, Theostichus, Artemas, Magnus, Theodotus, and Philemon*

The city of Cyzicus is in Asia Minor on the coast of the Dardenelles (Hellespont). Christianity already began to spread there through the preaching of Saint Paul (June 29). During the persecutions by the pagans, some of the Christians fled the city, while others kept their faith in Christ in secret.

At the end of the third century Cyzicus was still basically a pagan city, although there was a Christian church there. The situation in the city distressed the Christians, who sought to uphold Christianity. The nine holy martyrs Thaumasius, Theognes, Rufus, Antipater, Theostichus, Artemas, Magnus, Theodotus, and Philemon were also from Cyzicus. They came from various places, and were of different ages: the young like Saint Antipater, and the very old like Saint Rufus. They came from various positions in society: some were soldiers, countryfolk, city people, and clergy. All of them declared their faith in Christ, and prayed for the spread of Christianity.

The saints boldly confessed Christ and fearlessly denounced the pagan impiety. They were arrested and brought to trial before the ruler of the city. Over several days they were tortured, locked in prison and brought out again. They were promised their freedom if they renounced Christ. But the valiant martyrs of Christ continued to glorify the Lord. All nine martyrs were beheaded by the sword (+ ca. 286-299), and their bodies buried near the city.

In the year 324, when the Eastern half of the Roman Empire was ruled by Saint Constantine the Great (May 21), and the persecutions against Christians ended, the Christians of Cyzicus removed the incorrupt bodies of the martyrs from the ground and placed them in a church built in their honor.

Various miracles occurred from the holy relics: the sick were healed, and the mentally deranged were brought to their senses. The faith of Christ grew within the city through the intercession of the holy martyrs, and many of the pagans were converted to Christianity.

When Julian the Apostate (361-363) came to rule, the pagans of Cyzicus complained to him that the Christians were destroying pagan temples. Julian gave orders to rebuild the pagan temples and to jail Bishop Eleusius. Bishop Eleusius was set free after Julian's death, and the light of the Christian Faith shone anew through the assistance of the holy martyrs.

In Russia, not far from the city of Kazan, a monastery was built in honor of the Nine Martyrs of Cyzicus. It was built by the hierodeacon Stephen, who brought part of the relics of the saints with him from Palestine. This monastery was built in the hope that through their intercession and prayers people would be delivered from various infirmities and ills, particularly a fever which raged through Kazan in 1687.

Saint Demetrius of Rostov (September 21), who composed the service to the Nine Martyrs, writes, "through the intercession of these saints, abundant grace was given to dispel fevers and trembling sicknesses." Saint Demetrius also described the sufferings of the holy martyrs and wrote a sermon for their Feast day.

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### ***Venerable Memnon the Wonderworker***

Saint Memnon the Wonderworker from his youth he lived in the Egyptian desert. By his arduous ascetical efforts, he attained a victory of spirit over the flesh.

As Igumen of one of the Egyptian monasteries, he wisely and carefully guided the brethren. Even while aiding them through prayer and counsel, the saint did not waver in his efforts in the struggle against temptation.

He received the gift of clairvoyance through unceasing prayer and toil. At his prayer a spring of water gushed forth in the wilderness, locusts destroying the harvest perished, and the shipwrecked who called on his name were saved. After his death, the mere mention of his name dispelled a plague of locusts and undid the cunning wiles of evil spirits.

### ***Martyr Diodorus the Deacon at Aphrodisias in Anatolia***

The Holy Martyrs Diodorus and Rhodopianus the Deacon suffered under the emperor Diocletian (284-305) in Aphrodisias, Caria. They were stoned to death for spreading the Christianity among the pagans.



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### ***St. Basil the Bishop of Ostrog in Montenegro, Serbia***

Saint Basil, Bishop of Zakholmsk, was born of pious parents in the sixteenth century in the Popov district of Herzegovina. At the age of maturity he left his parental home and settled in the Trebinsk monastery in honor of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos, and became a monk.

For his virtuous life the saint was elevated to be Bishop of Zakholm and Skenderia. He occupied the bishop's cathedra in the second half of the sixteenth century, a successor to Bishop Paul and predecessor of Bishop Nicodemus. Saint Basil was a good pastor of the flock of Christ, and the Lord strengthened his discourse with various miracles. For the sanctifying of soul with the wisdom of holy ascetic fathers, the saint journeyed to Athos. Saint Basil died peacefully and was buried in the city of Ostrog in Chernogoria on the border with Herzegovina.

### ***Martyr John Valaha of Romania***

No information on the life of this saint is available at this time.

### ***Venerable Nectarius of Optina***

Saint Nectarius was born in the city of Elets in the Orel province in 1853, the son of Basil and Elena Tikhonov. At his baptism, he was named Nicholas.

Saint Nectarius completed the course of his earthly life on April 29, 1928.

The Moscow Patriarchate authorized local veneration of the Optina Elders on June 13, 1996, glorifying them for universal veneration on August 7, 2000.

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### ***Martyrs of Lazeti***

Lazeti is a region in southern Kolkheti (Colchis), the ancient kingdom located in what is now southwestern Georgia and northeastern Turkey. In ancient times, Lazeti was a center of Georgian culture. The holy Apostle Andrew began the conversion of the Georgian nation from this very region.

After the fall of Byzantium in 1453, the Ottomans sought for three centuries to destroy the Christian-Georgian consciousness of the Laz people. At the same time, Rome increased its presence in the region by dispatching ever greater numbers of Catholic missionaries.

The Laz, caught in the crossfire, boldly defended and preserved their Orthodox Faith. Those that were forcibly converted to Islam struggled to preserve their national culture, the memory of their ancestors, and the love of their homeland.

As time progressed, however, some grew weak and converted to Catholicism (in word, if not in mind and heart) or allowed themselves to be won over by the Monophysite heresy.

In our own time, with the blessing of Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia II, people from several Georgian regions have reestablished lines of communication with the Laz who currently reside within Turkish borders.

Further, many of the Laz currently residing within Georgian borders have converted from Islam back to the Orthodox Christianity of their ancestors. They have recounted to the Holy Synod of the Georgian Church stories of the martyrdom of their Christian ancestors at the hands of the Ottomans: the beheading of some three hundred Laz warriors on a single mountain between the years 1600 and 1620 and the martyrdom of the clergy at one local monastery. The martyrdoms took place on Mt. Dudikvati (“the place of beheading”) and on Mt. Papati (“the place of the clergy”) respectively.

Based on the information provided by the martyrs’ descendants, the Holy Synod of the Georgian Church declared all the clergy and laymen martyred on Dudikvati and Papati and all the Laz martyred for Christ’s sake worthy to be numbered among the saints. They were canonized on September 18, 2003.



### ***St. Endellion, recluse of Cornwall***

No information available at this time.

## **GOSPEL AND EPISTLE READINGS**

### **Prokeimenon, Tone 6:**

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us / as we have set our hope on Thee! (*Psalm 32:22*)  
vs. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous! Praise befits the just! (*Psalm 33:1*)

### **Epistle Reading**

#### **The reading from the Acts (9:32-42) of the Holy Apostles**

**In those days**, as Peter went here and there among them all, he came down also to the saints that lived at Lydda. There he found a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years and was paralyzed. And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; rise and make your bed." And immediately he rose. And all the residents of Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord. Now there was at Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which means Dorcas. She was full of good works and acts of charity. In those days she fell sick and died; and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him entreating him, "Please come to us without delay." So Peter rose and went with them.

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And when he had come, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him weeping, and showing tunics and other garments which Dorcas made while she was with them. But Peter put them all outside and knelt down and prayed; then turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, rise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. And he gave her his hand and lifted her up. Then calling the saints and widows he presented her alive. And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.

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**Alleluia, Tone 5:**

I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth will I proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation. *(Psalm 88:2)*

vs. For Thou hast said: "Mercy will be established forever; Thy truth will be prepared in the heavens." *(Psalm 88:3)*

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**Gospel Reading**

**The Reading is from John (5:1-15)**

**At that time,** Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Hebrew called Bethesda which has five porticoes. In these lay a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water; for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and troubled the water; whoever stepped in first after the troubling of the water was healed of whatever disease he had. One man was there, who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him and knew that he had been lying there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be healed?" The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled, and while I am going another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your pallet, and walk." And at once the man was healed, and he took up his pallet and walked. Now that day was the sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who was cured, "It is the sabbath, it is not lawful for you to carry your pallet." But he answered them, "The man who healed me said to me, 'Take up your pallet, and walk.'" They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take up your pallet, and walk'?" Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place. Afterward, Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse befall you." The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him.

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*Daily Inspirations by Abbott Tryphon*

**Struggling to Pray**

*Struggling with prayer that has become dry and lifeless*



When we find ourselves struggling with prayer, and feel that it has become dry and lifeless, we are sometimes tempted to stop praying. When our prayer has become a struggle, it is good to remember that God knows our needs, and even knows what we want to say when we don't seem to know. This is the time we need to just pray without worrying about it. When we find we can't keep our minds focused on the formal morning and evening prayers, as found in our prayer book, it is perfectly acceptable to simply light our lampada (hanging oil lamp), sit quietly before our icons, and let silence be our voice.

God wants to enter into our heart, and requires only our permission and cooperation. This relationship does not require an emotional response, for, like all relationships, we are not always open to an emotional response. Being real with God is far more important than being emotional, since emotions can be contrived and fleshly. As in all relationships, there are times when we do feel moved by emotions, but the lack of such feelings in no way represents a lack of love for God, because God cares for us, and God knows we love him, even when suffering in those dry times.



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**Daily Reflection**  
**Casting Pearls before Swine**

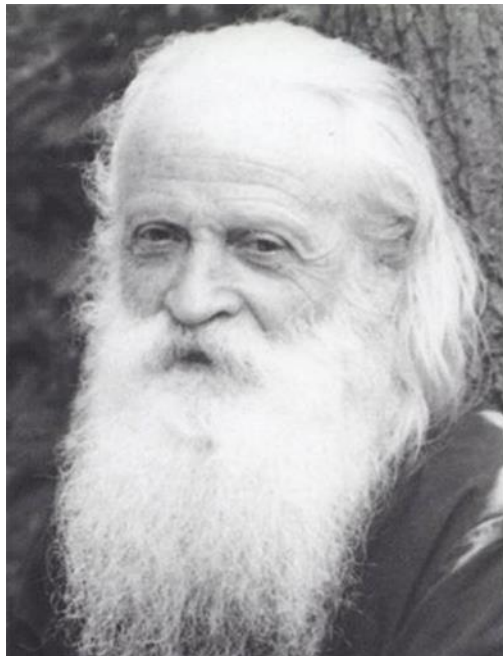
*“Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.” (Mt 7: 6)*



What does our Lord mean here, 1. by “what is holy” and by our “pearls,” and 2. Who are the “dogs” and “swine” before whom we are not to offer these?

1. The “holy” and the “pearls” in us are our God-like and God-given gifts, like love, faith, wisdom, desire (both spiritual and physical), beauty (both spiritual and physical), creativity, compassion, etc. 2. The “dogs” and “swine” on whom we might be tempted to waste our God-given gifts and energies are not other people, because we are never to regard other people as “dogs” or “swine.” They are the evil spirits that may entangle us in sinful obsessions, like lust of the flesh, love of money, vainglory, self-centered fear, idleness, or despondency. For example, in the widespread case of “lust of the flesh” (often misnamed as “unrequited love”), we might find ourselves giving away all our love, all our desire, all our beautiful, God-given energies not to the visible, flesh-and-blood human being who is the object of our lust (because he or she simply rejects it), but to a ravenous spirit that is “tearing us in pieces.” As St. Paul writes, “our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” (Eph 6: 12) And, as Bonnie Tyler reminds us, “It ain't right with love to share, / When you find he doesn't care / for you...” (Bonnie Tyler, “It's A Heartache”).

So today, if I find myself being “torn to pieces” by some obsession, be it lust or workaholism or something else, let me not become bitter against other people or another person, somehow involved in this story. Let me, first of all, recognize the value of “what is holy” and what are precious “pearls,” in me. And then, let me gratefully and prayerfully place myself and my gifts where they belong, before God, asking Him to re-direct my love, my desire, and my beauty toward His purpose for me, as I forgive myself and others for the whole story of my “sin” (i.e., my “amartia” or “missing the mark” of my God-given purpose or vocation). Thank You, Lord, for guiding and keeping me, as Your precious work-in-progress, full of precious “pearls,” even when I don't put them to proper use. Glory be to You.



When bad thoughts surround us like a swarm of flies,  
we shouldn't become discouraged, but persevere in  
prayer and hold on.

Elder Sergei of Vanves  
Elder Sergei of Vanves: Life & Teachings p.95

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## PARISH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

[There will be a council meeting today after Divine Liturgy at 12:20 pm downstairs.](#)

### LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

#### Sunday, April 29<sup>th</sup>

9:30 am: Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom  
After Communion: Sunday School pre-K – Grade 3

#### Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup>

6:30 pm: Vespers

#### Sunday, May 6<sup>th</sup>

9:30 am: No Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
9:45 am: General Confession  
10:00 am: Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom  
After Communion: Sunday School pre-K – Grade 3

#### Saturday, May 12<sup>th</sup>

6:30 pm: Vespers

#### Sunday, May 13<sup>th</sup>

9:30 am: Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
9:45 am: General Confession  
10:00 am: Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom  
After Communion: Sunday School pre-K – Grade 3

#### Saturday, May 19<sup>th</sup>

6:30 pm: Vespers

#### Sunday, May 20<sup>th</sup>

9:30 am: Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
9:45 am: General Confession  
10:00 am: Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom  
After Communion: Sunday School pre-K – Grade 3

**Request & Bulletin Sponsor:** Use the sign-up sheet at the candle stand for the health of, eternal memory of or a Pannikhida for a loved one or friend will be remembered during Divine Liturgy for the day/week that you signed up for.

**Memorial Candles:** Candles can be purchased at the candle stand, suggested donation of \$10 for a large one.

**Private Confessions:** Can be heard a half hour before any service. See Father Matthew for other times.

**General Confession:** Will be at 9:45 am on the first Sunday of the month.

**Receiving Holy Communion:** Holy Communion is offered to those baptized Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves for the reception of the Sacrament by prayer and fasting. Blessed Bread is available for all our visitors at the very end of the Divine Liturgy.

**Pannikhida Service:** The third Sunday of each month there will be a Pannikhida after Divine Liturgy. If you would like your loved ones to be remembered please give a list of names to Father Matthew before that Sunday for those to be remembered in the month.

**Special Announcements** for the bulletin can be submitted by E-Mail: [OrthodoxChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com](mailto:OrthodoxChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com)

**The Living Clean Group** of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Friday from 8-9:15 pm downstairs in the community room.

**The Grey Book Step Meeting Group** of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Tuesday from 7-8:00 pm downstairs in the community room.

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