

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

V. Rev. Dr. Matthew Searfoorce, Rector

Sub-Deacon Edward Dawson Sub-Deacon Vlashi

Parish Council President: Trudy Ellmore Parish Council Vice President: Holly Dawson



Sunday, August 30, 2015

Gospel: Matthew 21:33-42

Tone 4

Epistle: I Corinthians 16:13-24

13th Sunday after Pentecost; St Alexander the Patriarch of Constantinople



**Glory to
Jesus Christ!**

**Glory
Forever!**

*St Alexander the
Patriarch of
Constantinople*

*Christ, the God Who is over all,
has proclaimed you as a venerable shepherd of His Church, O godly-minded
Alexander, a light upon a candle stand, a faithful steward,
a pillar of Orthodoxy, and a most pious example.
Therefore, we rejoice in your memory.*

Today the Church Remembers

13th Sunday After Pentecost — Tone 4. Translation of the Relics of Rt. Blv. Great Prince St. Alexander Nevsky (1724). Sts. Alexander (340), John (595), and Paul the New (784), Patriarchs of Constantinople. Repose of Ven. Alexander, Abbot of Svir (1533). Uncovering of the Relics of St. Daniel, Prince of Moscow (1652). St. Christopher of Palestine (6th c.). St. Fantinus of Calabria (9th c.). Synaxis of the Serbian Hierarchs: Ss. Sava I (1237), Arsenius I (1266), Sava II (1269), Eustathius I (ca. 1285), James (1292), Nicodemus (1325), and Daniel (1338), Archbishops; Joannicus II (1354), Spyridon (1388), Ephraim II (after 1395), Macarius (1574), Gabriel I (1659), Patriarchs; and Gregory, Bishop.

Weekly Bulletin Sponsors

For Health of:

Desiree G. & Sons, offered by the Jankowski family.

Pete Taran in his continual recovery, offered by his family and the parishioners.

Elena (Helen) Wolff, who is home from the hospital and staying with her daughter in North Jersey.

Liturgical Schedule:

Sunday, August 30th

9:40 am: Hours

10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, September 5th

No Vespers

Sunday, September 6th

9:40 am: Hours

9:45 am: General Confession

10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, September 12th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, September 13th

9:40 am: Hours

10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Readings:

Epistle: I Corinthians 16:13-24

Brethren, be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. Now, brethren, you know that the household of Steph'anas were the first converts in Acha'ia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints; I urge you to be subject to such men and to every fellow worker and labourer. I rejoice at the coming of Steph'anas and Fortuna'tus and Acha'icus, because they have made up for your absence; for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. Give recognition to such men. The churches of Asia send greetings. Aqu'ila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord. All the brethren send greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss. I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Gospel: Matthew 21:33-42

The Lord said, "Hear another parable. There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country. When the season of fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants, to get his fruit; and the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did the same to them. Afterward he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.' And they took him and cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons." Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures: 'The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes'?"





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, for a donation of \$10. Sponsors will be remembered during Divine Liturgy for the day/week that you signed up for.

Memorial Candles: Candles be purchased at the candle stand, suggested donation of \$10 for a large one and \$2 for a small one.

Private Confessions: Can be heard a half hour before any service. See Father Matthew for other times and **General Confession:** Will be at 9:45 am on the first Sunday of the month.

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:

Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org

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

Next Council meeting will be today August 30, 2015 at 12:15 p.m.

Engaging the Culture

While remaining faithful to the Gospel in the time and place where we are called

ALL ARE INVITED - NO CHARGE!

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22ND
COMPLINE AT 6:30PM • PUBLIC LECTURE AT 7PM
ST. MARK ORTHODOX CHURCH
452 DURHAM ROAD, WRIGHTSTOWN, PA
WWW.STMARKSOCA.ORG • (215) 860-9640

ABBOT TRYPHON
All-Merciful Saviour Monastery (ROCOR)
Vashon Island, Washington

Author of the "Morning Offering" Blog,
Podcast, & Book (Ancient Faith Publishing)

St Alexander the Patriarch of Constantinople



Saints Alexander, John and Paul, Patriarchs of Constantinople, lived at different times, but each of them happened to clash with the activities of heretics who sought to distort the teachings of the Church. St Alexander (325-340) was a vicar bishop during the time of St Metrophanes (June 4), the first Patriarch of Constantinople.

Because of the patriarch's extreme age, Alexander substituted for him at the First Ecumenical Synod at Nicea (325). Upon his death, St Metrophanes left instructions in his will to elect his vicar to the throne of Constantinople. During these times His Holiness Patriarch Alexander had to contend with the Arians and with pagans. Once, in a dispute with a pagan philosopher the saint said to him, "In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ I command you to be quiet!" and the pagan suddenly became mute. When he gestured with signs to acknowledge his errors and affirm the correctness of the Christian teaching, then his speech returned to him and he believed in Christ together with many other pagan philosophers. The faithful rejoiced at this, glorifying God Who had given such power to His saint.

The heretic Arius was punished through the prayer of St Alexander. Arius had apparently

agreed to enter into communion with the Orthodox. When the Emperor asked him if he believed as the Fathers of Nicea taught, he placed his hand upon his breast (where he had cunningly concealed beneath his clothes a document with his own false creed written upon it) and said, "This is what I believe!" St Constantine (May 21), unaware of the deceitful wickedness of Arius, set a day for receiving him into the Church. All night long St Alexander prayed, imploring the Lord not to permit this heretic to be received into communion with the Church.

In the morning, Arius set out triumphantly for the church, surrounded by imperial counselors and soldiers, but divine judgment overtook him. Stopping to take care of a physical necessity, his bowels burst forth and he perished in his own blood and filth, as did Judas (Acts 1:18). His Holiness Patriarch Alexander, having toiled much, died in the year 340 at the age of 98. St Gregory the Theologian (January 25) mentioned him afterwards in an encomium to the people of Constantinople.

The Service to St Alexander was printed in Venice in 1771. According to some ancient manuscripts, St Alexander ought to be commemorated on June 2. Today he is remembered together with the holy Patriarchs John the Faster (September 2) and Paul the New (eighth century).

Prayers by the Lake, St. Nikolai Velimirovich, XX:

Think of yourself as though you were dead, I say to myself, and you will not feel the coming of death. Blunt the barb of death during life, and when it comes it will not have the means to sting.

Think of yourself every morning as a newborn miracle, and you will not feel old age.

Do not wait for death to come, because death has indeed already come and has not left you. Its teeth are continually in your flesh. Whatever was living before your birth and whatever will

survive your death--that even now is alive within you.

One night an angel unwound the tape of time, the end of which I was unable to perceive, and he showed me two dots on the tape, one next to the other. "The distance between these two dots," he said, "is the span of your lifetime." "That means my lifetime is already over," I shouted, "and I must be prepared for the journey. I must be like a diligent hostess, who spends the present day cleaning house and making preparations for tomorrow's *slava*¹ celebration."

Truly, the present day of all the sons of men is for the most part filled with concern for the next day. Yet few of those, who believe in Your promise, concern themselves with what will happen the day after death. May my death, O Lord, be my last sigh not for this world, but for that blessed and eternal Tomorrow.

Among the burned out candles of my friends, my candle, too, is burning down. "Do not be foolish," I reprimand myself, "and do not regret that your candle is burning out. Do you really love your friends so little, that you are afraid to set out after them, after the many who have strolled away? Do not regret that your candle is burning low, but that it is leaving behind unclear and dim light."

My soul has become accustomed to leaving my body every day and every night, and to stretch herself out to the limits of the universe. When she has sprouted in this way, my soul feels as though suns and moons are swimming over her even as the swans swim over my lake. She shines through suns and supports life on earthly planets. She supports mountains and seas; she controls thunder and winds. She completely fills Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow.² And she returns to shelter in a cramped and dilapidated habitation on one of those earthly planets. She returns to the body that she still, for another minute or two, calls her own, and which sways like her shadow among mounds of graves, among lairs of beasts, among howls of false hopes.

I do not complain about death, O Living God, it does not seem to me to be anything sad. It is a terror that man has created for himself. More strongly than anything on earth, death is pushing me to meet You.

I had a walnut tree in front of my house, and death took it from me. I was angry at death and cursed it saying: "Why did it not take me, an insatiable animal, instead of something sinless?"

But now I think of myself as though I were dead, and near my walnut tree.

O my Immortal God, look mercifully upon a candle that is burning out, and purify its flame. For only a pure flame rises toward Your face, and enters Your eye, with which you watch the whole world.

Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, XIX

Those Who Have Known God

A man becomes spiritual insofar as he lives a spiritual life. He begins to see God in all things, to see His power and might in every manifestation. Always and everywhere he sees himself abiding in God and dependent on God for all things. But insofar as a man lives a bodily life, so much he does he do bodily things; He doesn't see God in anything, even in the most wondrous manifestations of His Divine power. In all things he sees body, material, everywhere and always - "God is not before his eyes."

St. John of Kronstadt, *My Life in Christ*, I.5

The Prologue of Ohrid

St. Nikolai Velimirovic

Reflection

With clamour and disgrace the noisy heretics died. And their deaths alone show God's wrath upon them because of the lies that they spread and the disturbances that they caused the Church of God. Arius, after he was condemned in Nicaea, came to Emperor Constantine one day

and begged him to be received into the Church again. The emperor asked Arius if he believes in the Nicæan Symbol of Faith [the Creed] and he, the cunning one, kept a paper in his bosom with his heretically evil confession of faith and striking himself with his hand across his bosom said to the emperor: " Thus, I believe." The emperor thought that Arius had repented and sent him to Patriarch Alexander to receive him into the Church. Under no circumstances was Alexander willing to receive Arius knowing that he lies. However, the emperor designated one day, a Sunday, that Arius had to be received in the Great Church [Hagia Sophia]. On the eve of that day, the holy patriarch prayed to God to receive his soul before the God-mocking heretic is received into the Church. When the Sunday of the appointed day dawned, the patriarch was at service in the church and Arius, with the emperor's men and his "like-minded ones" set out for the church. When they arrived at the Square of Constantine, suddenly a pain, both in body and soul overcame Arius and he looked at a place for bodily need. There on the square was such a public place and he went there. His escort waited a long time and became impatient from waiting. When some of them went to see what was the matter with Arius, they found him dead in that foul place with his entire intestine spilled on the outside in uncleanness and in blood.

Contemplation

To contemplate the victories of David over the Philistines (2 Samuel 5 [2 Kings 5]):

1. How the Philistines attacked the lands of David and David prayed to God and set out and defeated the Philistines;
2. How the Philistines again attacked and David again prayed to God and defeated the Philistines.

Homily:

About the mysterious ancestry [generation] of Christ

"...And who shall declare His generation?" (Isaiah 53:8).

As a hidden source of a great river, thus for the Jews the ancestry of the Lord Jesus was hidden. They read and knew that the Messiah will be born in Bethlehem, and He was born in Bethlehem but they did not recognize Him. They knew that the Messiah will come from the lineage of David and He was born of the lineage of David through His Most-holy Mother, but they did not recognize or acknowledge Him. They read that He will be born of a Virgin, that He will flee to Egypt and that He will be called out of Egypt and that His forerunner will appear before Him, "Crying in the wilderness" (St. Mark 1:3), and that He will shine as a great light in the darkness and in the shadow of the deadly land of Zebulon and Naphthali and all the rest that the prophets foretold and wrote as a sign of His coming. Still, they did not recognize or acknowledge Him, but rather they crucified the King of Glory as a criminal.

If He were an ordinary man, would the prophet inquire about His ancestry and origin? Whose ancestry and origin in the history of the people of Israel is not known? His ancestry is hidden as the ancestry of Melchisedek. It was hidden for the Jews and is always hidden for unbelievers but for us believers it is not hidden anymore. We know that He is "Light of Light, True God of True God, Begotten not made" (The Nicæan Creed). That is He in eternity. We know that "He was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary" [The Nicæan Creed] and that He appeared in the world as man, as God-man. That is He, in time; wondrous, mysterious, glorious and majestic is His ancestry. When we say everything what was revealed to us about Him, nevertheless, we can still ask ourselves: "Who shall declare His generation [ancestry]?" Not because His ancestry is unknown but rather because His ancestry is unreachable, incomprehensible, beyond sensual and above nature.

O Lord Jesus Christ our God, enlighten us by Your divine mind and raise us up to You by Your man-loving power.

To Thee be glory and thanks forever. Amen.

***Thoughts for Each Day of the Year
According to the Daily Church
Readings from the Word of God
By St. Theophan the Recluse***

The Lord breathed the breath of life, and man became the image of God. It is the same with one's own rebirth: the beginnings of a new life are set down and one's image is renewed by the breath of the Spirit of God; and whence and how it comes is not known. This is a point of departure; from here the work begins of raising up the image to a perfect likeness. When we are reborn according to the image of the Creator by the Lord's Spirit we are transfigured from glory to glory, but not without us, our work and effort; however it is God who creates and restores us by the grace of the Most Holy Spirit, according to faith in the Lord. Behold the ideal and method of fulfilling in oneself the image and likeness of God! People so often write about and discuss upbringing. Meanwhile, it is all determined in the word of God by several words. Undertake only to fulfil what is prescribed, and upbringing will go on successfully to the goal. This is God's path; but it does not exclude human paths—to the contrary, it gives them direction and crowns their success. When only the human remains, upbringing usually is insufficient, even detrimental, and not rarely totally perverts those being raised; then the rest of life goes crooked. Where those raised in a crooked manner multiply, all of society becomes more and more crooked, both in life and in its attitudes. The end is universal crookedness; one bends in one direction, then another bends in another.

***Stephanos & Alexandria Missionaries
to Albania***

Update on the Orthodox Church of Saint Athanasios in Dhermi. The Church was completely demolished in the middle of the night. May God lead us and help us in our time of need.





A Walk for International Orthodox Missions! Are you within a few hours of Washington, DC and looking for a beautiful opportunity to engage your community in raising awareness and money for international missions? Check out the link below for the 3rd Annual Monumental Missions Walk scheduled for Saturday, September 19th on the National Mall in Washington, DC! Follow the link below for more information and to register yourself, your youth group, or your parish:

<http://www.eventbrite.com/e/2015-monumental-missions-walk-registration-17020607094?aff=es2>

The ministries of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center will be a direct beneficiary of this mission walk!

In Christ,

The Orthodox Christian Mission Center

EXPLORING OUR FAITH
in Challenging times

Please join us as we share and learn
at our free Fall 2015 Discussion Series

Topics will include:

- **Marriage and Divorce**
- **Parenting**
- **Addictions**
- **Social Media**
- **Financial Stress**
- **Global issues**
- **Mental Health**
- **Dealing with Sickness and Death**

A series of 5 classes led by Father George Liacopulos will be held on the following dates:

September 23, September 30, October 14, October 21, & October 28

Classes are on Wednesdays from 7-8 p.m., in Father George's reception room.

Please contact Ginny Kramvis at 609-653-8092 ext. 5 or ekramvis@comcast.net