

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 and the Diocese of NY & NJ
V. Rev. Dr. Matthew Searfoorce, Rector

Sub-Deacon Edward Dawson
Parish Council President: Andrew Romanofsky

Sub-Deacon Vlashi
Parish Council Vice President: Holly Dawson



Sunday, June 19, 2016

Gospel: John 7:37-52, 8:12

Tone 7

Epistle: Acts 2:1-11

8th Sunday of Pascha; Holy Pentecost: Feast of the Holy Trinity

**Glory to
Jesus Christ!**



*Holy Pentecost: Feast of
the Holy Trinity*

**Glory
Forever!**

*Blessed art You O Christ Our God
You have revealed the fishermen as most wise
By sending down upon them the Holy Spirit
Through them You drew the world into Your net
O Lover of Man, Glory to You!*

(Troparion — Tone 8)

*When the most High came down and confused the tongues,
He divided the nations;
But when he distributed the tongues of fire
He called all to unity.*

Therefore, with one voice, we glorify the All-holy Spirit!

(Kontakion — Tone 8)

Today's Commemorated Feasts and Saints

8th Sunday of Pascha — Tone 7. Holy Pentecost: Feast of the Holy Trinity. Holy Apostle Jude, the brother of the Lord (ca. 80). Ven. Barlaam of Shenkursk (1462). Martyr Zosimas the soldier at Antioch in Pisidia (2nd c.). Ven. Paisius the Great (5th c.). St. John the Solitary of Jerusalem (6th c.). Ven. Paisius of Chilandari (Bulgarian—18th c.). Repose of St. Job, Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus (1607). (**Note: The service for St Jude is transferred to June 20.**)

Prayer Requests

For Health of:

Richard, on Father's Day, offered by his wife Linda.

Liturgical Schedule:

Sunday, June 19th

9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, June 25th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, June 26th

9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, July 2nd

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, July 3rd

9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, July 9th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, July 10th

9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, July 16th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Bulletin Sponsors:

Linda Dantinne

Readings:



The Prokeimenon in the 8th Tone:

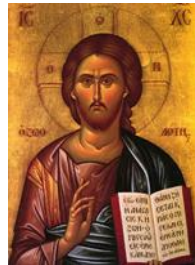
Their proclamation has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the universe! (*Psalms 18:5*)
vs. The heavens are telling the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims His handiwork! (*Psalms 18:2*)

Epistle: Acts 2:1-11

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. And they were amazed and wondered, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians, we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God."

Alleluia in the 1st Tone:

By the Word of the Lord the heavens were made; and all their host by the Spirit of His mouth. (*Psalms 32:6*)
vs. The Lord looks down from Heaven and beholds the sons of men. (*Psalms 32:13*)



Gospel: 7:37-52, 8:12

On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and proclaimed, "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" Now this he said about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive; for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. When they heard these words, some of the people said, "This is really the prophet." Others said, "This is the Christ." But some said, "Is the Christ to come from Galilee? Has not the scripture said that the Christ is descended from David, and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David was?" So there was a division among the people over him. Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him. The officers then went back to the chief priest and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why did you not bring him?" The officers answered, "No man ever spoke like this man!"

The Pharisees answered them, "Are you led astray, you also? Have any of the authorities or of the Pharisees believed in him? But this crowd, who do not know the law, are accursed." Nikodemus, who had gone to him before, and who was one of them, said to them, "Does our law judge a man without first giving him a hearing and learning what he does?" They replied, "Are you from Galilee too? Search and you will see that no prophet is to rise from Galilee." Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."



Holy Pentecost

In the Church's annual liturgical cycle, Pentecost is "the last and great day." It is the celebration by the Church of the coming of the Holy Spirit as the end—the achievement and fulfillment—of the entire history of salvation. For the same reason, however, it is also the celebration of the beginning: it is the "birthday" of the Church as the presence among us of the Holy Spirit, of the new life in Christ, of grace, knowledge, adoption to God and holiness.

This double meaning and double joy is revealed to us, first of all, in the very name of the feast. Pentecost in Greek means fifty, and in the sacred biblical symbolism of numbers, the number fifty symbolizes both the fullness of time and that which is beyond time: the Kingdom of God itself. It symbolizes the fullness of time by its first component: 49, which is the fullness of seven (7 x 7): the number of time. And, it symbolizes that which is beyond time by its second component: 49 + 1, this one being the new day, the "day without evening" of God's eternal Kingdom. With the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Christ's disciples, the time of salvation, the Divine work of redemption has been completed, the fullness revealed, all gifts bestowed: it belongs to us now to "appropriate" these gifts, to be that which we have become in Christ: participants and citizens of His Kingdom.

THE VIGIL OF PENTECOST

The all-night Vigil service begins with a solemn invitation:

"Let us celebrate Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit,
The appointed day of promise, and the fulfillment of hope,
The mystery which is as great as it is precious."

In the coming of the Spirit, the very essence of the Church is revealed:

"The Holy Spirit provides all,
Overflows with prophecy, fulfills the priesthood,
Has taught wisdom to illiterates, has revealed fishermen as theologians,
He brings together the whole council of the Church."

In the three readings of the Old Testament (Numbers 11:16-17, 24-29; Joel 2:23-32; Ezekiel 36:24-28) we hear the prophecies concerning the Holy Spirit. We are taught that the entire history of mankind was directed towards the day on which God "would pour out His Spirit upon all flesh." This day has come! All hope, all promises, all expectations have been fulfilled. At the end of the Aposticha hymns, for the first time since Easter, we sing the hymn: "O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth..." the one with which we inaugurate all our services, all prayers, which is, as it were, the life-breath of the Church, and whose coming to us, whose "descent" upon us in this festal Vigil, is indeed the very experience of the Holy Spirit "coming and abiding in us."

Having reached its climax, the Vigil continues as an explosion of joy and light for "verily the light of the Comforter has come and illumined the world." In the Gospel reading (John 20:19-23) the feast is interpreted to us as the feast of the Church, of her divine nature, power and authority. The Lord sends His disciples into the world, as He Himself was sent by His Father. Later, in the antiphons of the Liturgy, we proclaim the universality of the apostles' preaching, the cosmical significance of the feast, the sanctification of the whole world, the true manifestation of God's Kingdom.

THE VESPERS OF PENTECOST

The liturgical peculiarity of Pentecost is a very special Vespers of the day itself. Usually this service follows immediately the Divine Liturgy, is “added” to it as its own fulfillment. The service begins as a solemn “summing up” of the entire celebration, as its liturgical synthesis. We hold flowers in our hands symbolizing the joy of the eternal spring, inaugurated by the coming of the Holy Spirit. After the festal Entrance, this joy reaches its climax in the singing of the Great Prokeimenon:

“Who is so great a God as our God?”

Then, having reached this climax, we are invited to kneel. This is our first kneeling since Easter. It signifies that after these fifty days of Paschal joy and fullness, of experiencing the Kingdom of God, the Church now is about to begin her pilgrimage through time and history. It is evening again, and the night approaches, during which temptations and failures await us, when, more than anything else, we need Divine help, that presence and power of the Holy Spirit, who has already revealed to us the joyful End, who now will help us in our effort towards fulfillment and salvation.

All this is revealed in the three prayers which the celebrant reads now as we all kneel and listen to him. In the first prayer, we bring to God our repentance, our increased appeal for forgiveness of sins, the first condition for entering into the Kingdom of God.

In the second prayer, we ask the Holy Spirit to help us, to teach us to pray and to follow the true path in the dark and difficult night of our earthly existence. Finally, in the third prayer, we remember all those who have achieved their earthly journey, but who are united with us in the eternal God of Love.

The joy of Easter has been completed and we again have to wait for the dawn of the Eternal Day. Yet, knowing our weakness, humbling ourselves by kneeling, we also know the joy and the power of the Holy Spirit who has come. We know that God is with us, that in Him is our victory.

Thus is completed the feast of Pentecost and we enter “the ordinary time” of the year. Yet, every Sunday now will be called “after Pentecost”—and this means that it is from the power and light of these fifty days that we shall receive our own power, the Divine help in our daily struggle. At Pentecost we decorate our churches with flowers and green branches—for the Church “never grows old, but is always young.” It is an evergreen, ever-living Tree of grace and life, of joy and comfort. For the Holy Spirit—“the Treasury of Blessings and Giver of Life—comes and abides in us, and cleanses us from all impurity,” and fills our life with meaning, love, faith and hope.

Father Alexander Schmemmann (1974)



Bulletin Sponsors/Prayer Requests: 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. Bulletin Sponsors/Prayer Requests will be remembered during Divine Liturgy for the day/week that you signed up for.

Candles/Memorial Candles: Candles may 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 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:
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 Study Meeting Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Tuesday from 7-8:00 pm downstairs in the community room.



Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Parish News

As the local community of the **Church of the Mother of God**, this parish, exists for the purpose of worshipping God according to the Holy Scriptures and Tradition of the Holy Orthodox Church, to encourage union with God among the members of the parish, to seek out the lost, the searching, and the un-churched and to strive to bring them into union with the Church, to provide religious education to its members and potential members, provide charitable aid, and to defend, promote, and witness to the **Orthodox Christian Faith in southern New Jersey**.



NY/NJ Diocese News

“Order of Saint Romanos” awarded to Aleksei Shipovalnikov

The visit of Archbishop Michael to **Saints Peter & Paul Church in Jersey City NJ** on the weekend of 21-22 May 2016 went beyond the regular annual visitation. Following Saturday Vespers, His Eminence greeted and spoke with the faithful and, at the conclusion of the Sunday Liturgy, on behalf of the Holy Synod of Bishops (Orthodox Church in America) he awarded the **“Order of Saint Romanos” to Aleksei Shipovalnikov**. The Holy Synod conferred this honor for extraordinary contributions in the field of liturgical music.



Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News

Study resources now available for History volume of “The Orthodox Faith”

While the late Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko was working on the revised edition of his four-volume series, *The Orthodox Faith*, he decided that adding discussion questions to the texts would enhance the books’ usefulness. Subsequently, he asked the Orthodox Church in America’s Department of Christian Education [DCE] to develop study resources/questions for each volume.

“Father Thomas especially wanted the History volume to include questions because it is the longest one and is the most thoroughly revised and expanded, through his efforts and those of Dr. David C. Ford of Saint Tikhon’s Seminary,” said Matushka Valerie Zahirsky, DCE Chairperson. “The volume offers a great deal of material, and questions can help readers review and mentally organize the information it presents.”

DCE members have developed 109 questions for the 20-chapter volume, which spans the Church’s history from the first to the 20th and into the 21st centuries. Each question is keyed to the text’s page numbers, while answers are provided in a separate document.

“Several answers also offer points for reflection, to take the reader a little deeper into the facts presented in the book,” Matushka Valerie added. “For example, an answer to a question in the first chapter dispels the false notion that the early Christians were attracted to the new faith because they were all poor, desperate people who therefore welcomed Christianity’s ‘pie in the sky’ promises.

“The questions and answers can be used as a review of each chapter, but they might also give members of a reading group things to look for before they begin a chapter,” said Matushka Valerie. “For example, a group leader might ask members reading about the third and fourth centuries to find three ways in which baptism today is like baptism in that early period, or to describe how what we know as the

‘weekend’ came about. In reading about the 20th century, they might be asked to identify the most thoroughly Orthodox nation in the world, to find out what was notable about Archbishop John, a former head of the Orthodox Church in Finland, or to name the language in which Archbishop Theophan Noli celebrated the Liturgy for the first time anywhere in the world.”

The resources also may be used in conjunction with other materials available from the DCE.

“For example, a question about the 18th century refers to the respect with which the missionaries to Alaska treated the indigenous people and their customs,” Matushka Valerie explained. “Readers can find out more about this in the DCE’s activity book, *Saints of North America* and also by using the captioned life icons and life stories of three of these missionary saints. Similarly, a question about the 20th century refers to Saint Nicholas, the Enlightener of Japan, about whom readers can find an informative account of his life, a photograph and a map of his travels in the DCE’s activity book, *Saints Commemorated in the Litiya Prayers*.” Similar study guides are being prepared by DCE staff members for the series’ other three volumes.



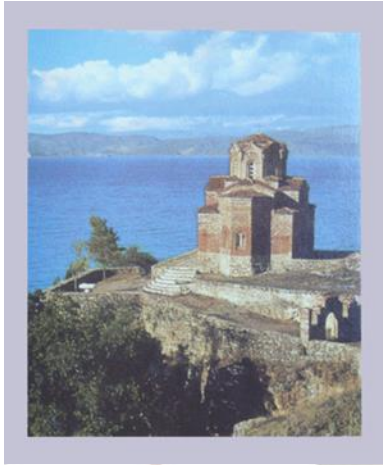
Ms. Jennifer Rice
Serving in Guatemala

During the summers of 2014 and 2015, Jennifer Rice participated in several short-term mission teams offered through the Orthodox Christian Mission Center to better discern her call to serve the Church as a missionary. She had the opportunity to engage in the pioneering work of the first music ministry team to offer catechetical instruction on the hymns of the Church to the newly Orthodox faithful of Guatemala. She was fortunate to return the following summer to collaborate with local communities by assisting in the renovation of a building into a future medical clinic in an ongoing effort by the Orthodox Church in Guatemala to tend to both the bodies and souls in the communities she serves. Jennifer is appreciative of these opportunities as well as the blessing to continue to now also serve in a long-term capacity by drawing on her experience and love for singing the sacred hymns of the Church.

Jennifer is a graduate of the Master of Theological Studies program at Hellenic College Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, Massachusetts, where she also completed coursework towards a certificate from the Boston Theological Institute in Missions and Ecumenism. In addition to her studies, Jennifer also served as President of the Missions Committee and assisted in the Office of Student Life.

Jennifer also holds a Master of Science degree in Higher Education from Drexel University, as well as a Multiple Subject Teaching Credential and a Bachelors of Art in Studio Art from California State University, Sacramento. Prior to attending Holy Cross School of Theology, Jennifer assisted in many facets of the youth and young adult ministries and was involved in the chanting of the services at St. Anna Greek Orthodox Church in Roseville, California in addition to her responsibilities as a high school English teacher.

Jennifer is currently seeking partners to join her in prayer and to thoughtfully consider offering regular financial support as she makes preparations to serve the Church in Guatemala. What will help Jennifer the most are prayer and financial partners who feel as committed as she feels to the ministry in Guatemala. A support team strongly dedicated to this mission will enable her to more quickly join the Church’s vital work in Guatemala.



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

Warriors of Life, wage war mightily and do not waver in your faith in victory.

Victory is bestowed on the one whose eye keeps its untiring gaze fixed upon it. Whoever even thinks of defeat, loses sight of victory and does not find it again. Victory is a tiny star in the distance, which continuous gazing magnifies and draws nearer!

Keep watch with vigilance, so that not even one of the enemy jumps over the wall into your city. If even one adversary jumps in, the city is lost. Only a single serpent slithered into Paradise, and Paradise was transformed into Hell.¹

Indeed, just one drop of poison enters a full body of blood, and physicians predict death!

It is not as important to slay your enemy outside the city as it is not to let him into the city.

Warriors of Life, wage war mightily and do not waver in your faith in victory.

What does it profit you, if you conquer and gain possession of the world, and the world takes the place of your soul.² Truly, the world will remain, but the soul will no longer be yours. The soul is a timid bird; if you throw even a tiny bit of ashes at her, she takes to flight and flees to escape.

The soul is more valuable than the world -- you would do better, therefore, to subjugate the soul rather than the world. The soul is a more faithful ally than the world -- you would do better, to forge an alliance with the soul. The soul is richer than the world -- you would do better, to make her your fortress. The soul is more healthful than the world -- you would do better, to seek your health in her. The soul is more beautiful than the world -- you would do better, to take her for your bride. The soul is a more fruitful field than the world -- you would do better, to exert yourself over her.

Warriors of Life, wage war mightily, and do not waver in your faith in victory.

Do not cast out a demon with a demon. For you will always have a demon in the house. But cast out the devil with God. And the devil will flee, but God will remain.³

Do not fight fire with fire. For you will make the fire into a conflagration, and your house will burn down along with your enemy's. But fight fire with water, and you will extinguish it.

Do not raise death as a weapon against death, for you will only increase the range of death. But raise life as a weapon against death, and death will retreat as a shadow does before the face of the sun.

Warriors of Life, wage war mightily, and do not waver in your faith in victory.

Your objective is your weaponry. If you wage war for Life, expect also a crown of glory from Life.

Have neither two objectives, nor twofold weaponry. When the objective is life, life is also the weaponry. When the objective is death, death is also the weaponry. Wherever life and death are intermingled, death is the victor.

Do not expect a reward from both sides. For the other side is death.

Do not serve two masters.⁴ For the name of the other master is death.

Sacrifice everything for Life, and expect everything from Life. And Life will give you everything.

Whoever captures Life, has truly taken the wealthiest city in all realms. And he will find more treasure in that city than an eye can behold, a heart can desire, and a dream can dream of.

Warriors of Life, wage war mightily, and do not waver in your faith in victory.

Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, LXII:

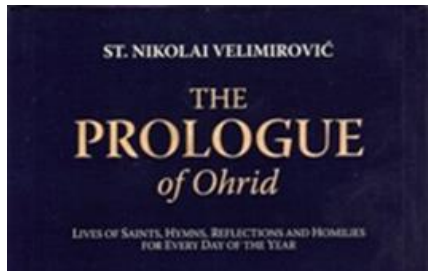
II. The Realities of the Spiritual World

The Holy Scriptures

The proud sin greatly who, after studying secular literature and having turned to the Holy Scriptures, consider all that they say to be the Law of God, and do not endeavour to come to know the thoughts of the

prophets and apostles, but seek out from the scriptures inappropriate texts for their own thoughts, as if this were a good work, and not the most defiled kind of study: to distort the thoughts of Scripture and submit them to their own intentions, in spite of obvious contradictions... It is proper to children and charlatans to try to teach that which they do not know.

+ St. Jerome, Letter to St. Paulinus



1. The Holy Apostle Jude

Saint Jude was one of the Twelve Apostles. He was the son of Joseph and Salome and the brother of James, the brother of the Lord. Joseph the carpenter had four sons with Salome [the daughter of Angeja, the son of Varahina, the brother of Zacharias]: James, Hosea, Simon and Jude. This Jude is sometimes called: "Jude, the brother of James" due to his brother being better-known (St. Luke

6:16 Acts 1:14). St. Jude begins his epistle in this manner: Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ and the brother of James (St. Jude 1:1). Even though he could be called the brother of the Lord as much as James, he did not do this, out of humility and shame, for he did not at first believe in Christ the Lord. When the elderly Joseph, before his death, wanted to leave a portion of his estate to Jesus, as well as to his other children, all of them protested, even Jude. Only James voluntarily set aside a share of his portion and intended it for Jesus. Jude is also called Levi and Thaddeaus. There is another Thaddeaus of the Seventy Apostles (August 21), but this Thaddeaus or Jude was one of the Great Apostles. Jude preached the Gospel throughout Judea, Samaria, Galilee, Idumedia, Syria, Arabia, Mesopotamia and Armenia. In Edessa, the town of Abgar, he augmented the preaching of the other Thaddeaus. When Jude was preaching in the regions around Ararat, he was captured by pagans, crucified on a cross and killed by being shot with arrows, that he might reign eternally in the Kingdom of Christ.

2. The Venerable Paisius the Great

Paisius was an Egyptian by birth and language. After a vision in a dream, his mother dedicated him to the service of God. As a young man, Paisius came to the Venerable Pambo, who received him as his disciple and as a fellow disciple of the Venerable John Kolovos [The Dwarf], who later wrote the biography of Paisius. To the joy of his spiritual father, Paisius added labor to labor and ascetic feat to ascetic feat. Many times the Prophet Jeremiah, whom he especially loved and often read, appeared to him. Angels of God often appeared to him and even the Lord Christ Himself. "Peace be with you, my beloved chosen one!" the Lord Christ said to him. By the great grace of God, Paisius possessed the special gift of abstaining from food. Often he did not taste bread for fifteen days, more often for a week, and once, according to the testimony of St. John the Dwarf, he went for seventy days without partaking of anything. He waged a great struggle with the spirits of evil, who appeared to him at times exactly as they are and at times in the form of radiant angels. But the blessed servant of God did not permit himself to be deceived and beguiled. Paisius was famous throughout Egypt as a clairvoyant and miracle-worker. He took up his habitation in eternity in the year 400 A.D. The Venerable Isidore of Pelusium translated the relics of Paisius to his monastery and honorably buried them.

3. The Holy Martyr Zosimas

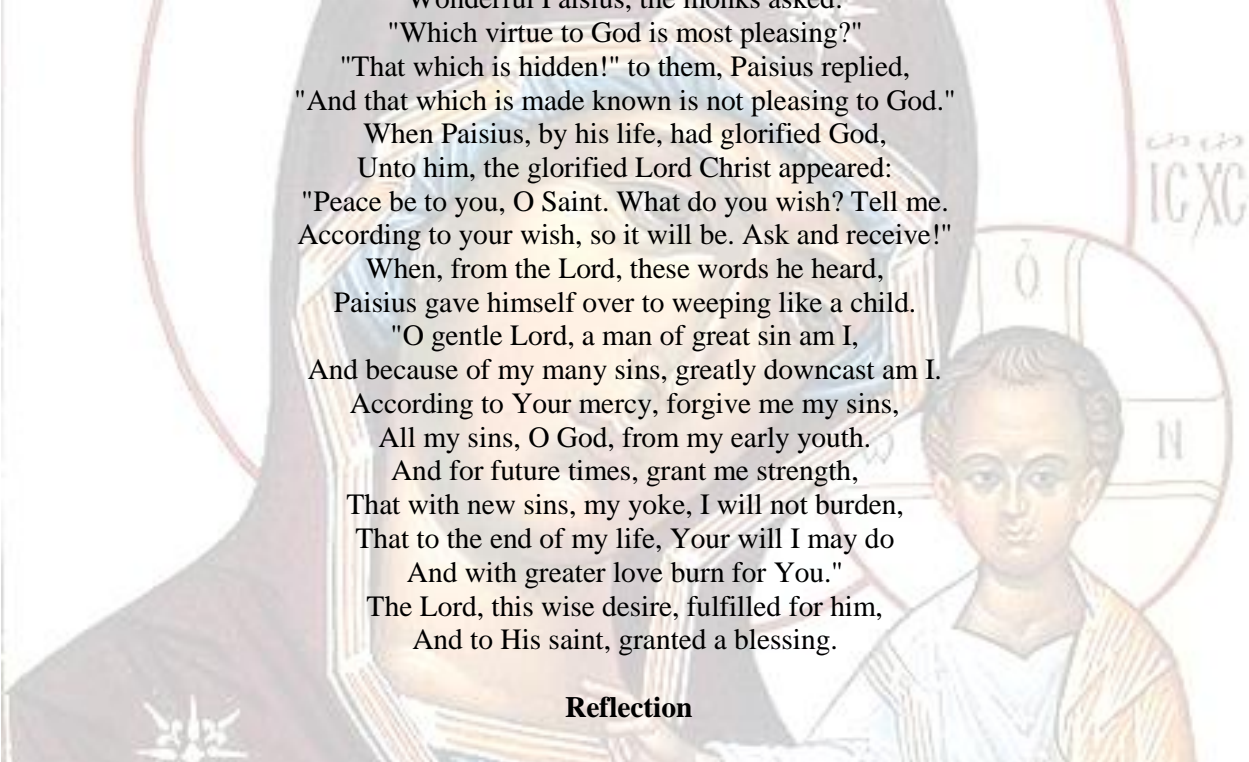
Zosimas was a Roman soldier during the reign of Emperor Trajan. He courageously confessed his faith in Christ the Lord, for which he endured cruel tortures. In the midst of his tortures, he heard a voice from heaven saying: "Be brave Zosimas, and sign yourself with the cross, I am with you!" Angels of God appeared to him in prison. After many tortures, Zosimas was beheaded in the year 116 A.D.

4. The Venerable John the Hermit [Anchorite]

John lived a life of asceticism in the sixth century in the proximity of Jerusalem. Through his asceticism, he achieved a high degree of purity and power, so that even the wild beasts were submissive to him. John reposed in the Lord in extreme old age, in the year 586 A.D.

Hymn of Praise

The Venerable Paisius the Great



Paisius the great from the earliest age
Behind him, the doors of all desires he closed.
His spirit to God he lifted, his only desire,
Like all the great saints of old.
Wonderful Paisius, the monks asked:
"Which virtue to God is most pleasing?"
"That which is hidden!" to them, Paisius replied,
"And that which is made known is not pleasing to God."
When Paisius, by his life, had glorified God,
Unto him, the glorified Lord Christ appeared:
"Peace be to you, O Saint. What do you wish? Tell me.
According to your wish, so it will be. Ask and receive!"
When, from the Lord, these words he heard,
Paisius gave himself over to weeping like a child.
"O gentle Lord, a man of great sin am I,
And because of my many sins, greatly downcast am I.
According to Your mercy, forgive me my sins,
All my sins, O God, from my early youth.
And for future times, grant me strength,
That with new sins, my yoke, I will not burden,
That to the end of my life, Your will I may do
And with greater love burn for You."
The Lord, this wise desire, fulfilled for him,
And to His saint, granted a blessing.

Reflection

The monks once inquired of Paisius the Great: "Father, speak to us a word of salvation. How should we live according to God?" The elder replied to them: "Go and keep the commandments of God and preserve the traditions of the Fathers." The tradition of the Fathers is the experience of the saints in the spiritual field, the enormous experience of nearly two-thousand years, the experience of many hundreds and thousands of holy men and women. What an extremely rich depository of wisdom! What an immense mass of proofs of every truth of Holy Scripture! All that wealth, all that wisdom, all those proofs, all that experience, the Protestants have rejected! Oh, what inexpressible madness! Oh, the poverty of beggars!

Contemplation

To contemplate the miraculous healing of the two blind men: *And behold, two blind men sitting by the wayside, heard that Jesus was passing by, and cried out, saying: "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!"* (St. Matthew 20:30):

1. How the two blind men cried out to the Lord: *Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!*;

2. How the merciful Lord touched their eyes and they saw;
3. How I also am blinded by sin; and how even I can see if I cry out to the Lord to touch me.

Homily:
About revenge and the Avenger

"Say not, I will repay evil! Trust in the Lord and He will help you" (Proverbs 20:22).

Do not be vengeful; do not return evil for evil. The evil from your neighbor is sufficient. If you return evil for evil to him, you will double the evil in the world. If you do not return evil for evil to him, he can still burn away his evil through repentance. Thus, through patience and forgiveness, you will reduce evil in the world.

Do not be vengeful; do not return evil for evil, but wait on the Lord. He sees and remembers, and in your time both you and he who does evil will know that God sees and remembers. You ask yourself: What have I done in not returning evil for evil? You have done the wisest deed that you could do in the given situation, i.e., you have relinquished your struggle to the One stronger than yourself, and the stronger One will fight victoriously for you. If you enter into battle with the evil doer, you might be defeated. But God cannot be defeated. Therefore, relinquish your struggle to the victorious and undefeated One and patiently wait.

Learn from a small child. If someone attacks a child in the presence of his parents, the child does not return the attack by attacking, but rather looks to his parents and cries. The child knows that his parents will protect him. How is it that you do not know what a little child knows? Your heavenly Parent is constantly beside you. Thus, do not be vengeful; do not return evil for evil; rather look to your Parent and cry. Only in this way will you guarantee victory for yourself in the conflict with evil men.

O Almighty Lord, Who said: *Vengeance is Mine* (Romans 12:19 Hebrews 10:30), protect us from the unrighteous ones by Your almighty hand, and restrain us from vengeance. Counsel us by Your Holy Spirit that the greater heroism is to endure rather than to avenge.

To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.



The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration with Abbott Tryphon

The Priesthood

The priesthood should be like a funnel

If a priest is truly to be an agent for grace, he must become like a funnel through which the Lord's mercy can flow. That a priest has received the grace of ordination, if he does not attempt to live a life of holiness, if he does not become a living sacrifice for his people, if he does not give himself over to his parishioners as a loving servant, he will have failed in his priestly service.

Priesthood is not simply a profession, like that of an attorney or doctor. The priest, in his service to the Church, is sharing in Christ's priesthood. His service must be as direct and committed as is the Lord's commitment to His Church.

Those who have been placed in the care of the priest must see in him the Christ Whom he serves. They must know by his fatherly love for them that they can trust him to care for them, no matter what. If a priest is not willing to offer himself fully to his people, as their loving father, loving each with equal fervor, he will have betrayed his priestly calling.

The priest must first and foremost be a man of prayer, and his intercessory role on behalf of his people must play a central role in his day to day service. It is in his commitment to be a man of prayer that

he will be able to minister to his people with the power of the Holy Spirit. No amount of education or intellectual ability can make a priest effective.

Prayer is that central element that will make him able to minister to his people with conviction, demonstrating the love of God by his life. The wisdom needed to guide his people cannot come from academic knowledge, but must flow forth as the wisdom of the ages. He must be a funnel through which the love and mercy of God can be seen and experienced by the people he is called to serve.

With love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon



Daily Reflection **A Religion You Couldn't Have Guessed**

"So Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and

drink his blood, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me. This is the bread which came down from heaven, not such as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever.' This he said in the synagogue, as he taught at Capernaum. Many of his disciples, when they heard it, said, 'This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?'" (Jn 6: 53-60)

And a few verses later, we learn that "after this, many of his disciples drew back and no longer followed him" (Jn 6: 66). It is one of the many passages in the Gospels that makes me think of C.S. Lewis's famous comment: "That is one of the reasons I believe in Christianity. It is a religion you could not have guessed."

Indeed, our Lord is unpredictable and, at times, even outrageous. He calls me to unthinkable heights and unthinkable depths, of intimate connection with Him. He goes all the way, giving of Himself most entirely, that I may live not just happily, not just contentedly, but "forever," and in Him, in the living God. Let me call upon His name today, and stay close to His unpredictable, life-giving word. Glory be to Him.



The Philokalia: Daily Readings

The Lord said, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matt 6:33), that is, seek the knowledge of truth before all things, and therefore seek training in appropriate methods of attaining it. In saying this, He shows clearly that believers must seek only divine knowledge and the virtue which adorns it with corresponding actions.

+ *St Maximus the Confessor, 500 Various Texts*

Daily Readings with Early Church Fathers and Mothers

"Rustling of the Reeds"

Once Arsenius came to a place where there was a bed of reeds shaken by the wind. He said to the brothers, "What is this rustling noise?" They said, "It is the reeds." He said to them, "If a man sits in silence and hears the voice of a bird, he does not have quiet in his heart; how much more difficult is it for you, who hear the sound of these reeds?"

June – 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 8:00-9:15pm –Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	4 6:30pm Vespers
5 Blind Man 9:30am Sunday School 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy/Social	6	7 7:00-8:00pm – The Grey Book Study Mtg. NA Grp	8 Leavetaking Pascha/Forefeast Ascension 6:30 pm: Vespers Liturgy w/Abp. Michael, for the Ascension of our Lord	9 Ascension of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ	10 8:00-9:15pm –Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	11 Holy Apostles Bartholomew and Barnabas 6:30pm Vespers
12 Fathers of the 1st Ecumenical Council 9:30am Sunday School (Last class for the school year) 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy/Social	13	14 7:00-8:00pm – The Grey Book Study Mtg. NA Grp	15 Marianica Icon	16	17 Leavetaking Ascension 8:00-9:15pm –Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	18 Memorial Saturday/Bogoliubskaya Icon 6:30pm Vespers
19 Feast of the Holy Trinity/Holy Apostle Jude, Brother of the Lord 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy / Social	20 Holy Spirit/Hodogitria Icon at Mt Athos	21 3rd Day Holy Trinity 7:00-8:00pm – The Grey Book Study Mtg. NA Grp	22	23 Vladimir Icon	24 Nativity of St John the Baptist 8:00-9:15pm –Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	25 Leavetaking Pentecost 6:30pm Vespers
26 All Saints/Tikhvin & Sedmiyezerskaya Icon 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy / Social	27	28 Three Hands Icon 7:00-8:00pm – The Grey Book Study Mtg. NA Grp	29 Holy Apostles Peter and Paul	30 Balykinskaya Icon		