

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 Sub-Deacon Vlashi
Parish Council President: Andrew Romanofsky Parish Council Vice President: Holly Dawson



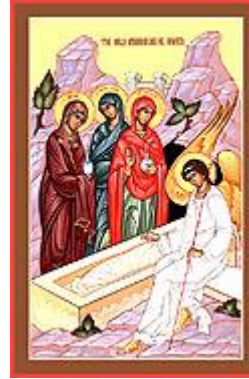
Sunday, May 15, 2016

Gospel: Mark 15:43-16:8

Tone 2

Epistle: Acts 6:1-7

Sunday of the Holy Myrrhbearing Women with the Noble Joseph



**Glory to
Jesus Christ!**

**Glory
Forever!**

*Sunday of the Holy
Myrrhbearing Women
with the Noble Joseph*

*You did command the myrrh-bearers to rejoice, O Christ!
By Your Resurrection, You did stop the lamentation of Eve, O God!
You did command Your apostles to preach: The Savior is Risen!*

(Kontakion — Tone

Today's Commemorated Feasts and Saints

3rd Sunday of Pascha — Tone 2. Ven. Pachomius the Great, Founder of Cœnobitic Monasticism (348 A.D.). Myrrhbearing Women. St. Isaiah, Bishop and Wonderworker of Rostov (1090). The slain Crown Prince Dimitry of Uglich and Moscow (1591). Ven. Isaiah, Wonderworker of the Kiev Caves (1115). Ven. Pachomius—Abbot, and Silvanus, of Nerekhta (1384). Ven. Evfrosin (Euphrosynus), Abbot and Wonderworker of Pskov, and his disciple, Ven. Serapion (Pskov—1481). St. Achilles, Bishop of Larissa (4th c.).

Prayer Requests

For Health of:

Phil Ellmore on his birthday; offered by his wife Trudy.

Ann Dahulich, the mother of Archbishop Michael, who has been hospitalized in Lourdes Hospital, Binghamton NY for treatment and testing; offered by the Diocese of NY/NJ & the Orthodox Church of the Mother of God.

In Memory of:

Michael Zablotskyy, deepest sympathy is expressed to Father Volodymyr Zablotskyy, his wife Matushka Jeanne, his mother Anna and all their family, on the falling asleep of his beloved father on Monday 5/8, in the Ukraine; offered by the Diocese of NY/NJ.

Liturgical Schedule:

Sunday, May 15th

9:30 am: Sunday School
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, May 21st

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, May 22th

9:30 am: Sunday School
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, May 28th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, May 29th

9:30 am: Sunday School
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, June 4th

6:30 pm: Vespers

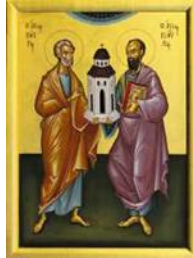
Sunday, June 5th

9:30 am: No School
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Bulletin Sponsors:

**The Dantine Family & The
Romanofsky Family**

Readings:



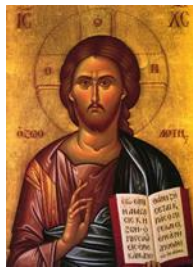
The Prokeimenon in the 6th Tone:

O Lord, save Thy people / and bless Thine inheritance!
(*Psalm 27:9*)

vs. To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me! (*Psalm 27:1*)

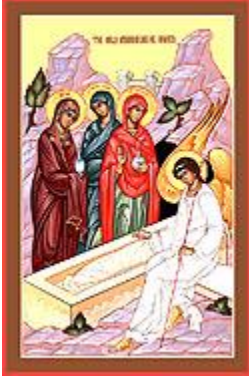
Epistle: Acts 6:1-7

In those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists murmured against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. And the twelve summoned the body of the disciples and said, "it is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." And what they said pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochoros, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaos, a proselyte of Antioch. These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands upon them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.



Gospel: Mark 15:43-16:8

At that time, Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. And Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. And he bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud, and laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where he was laid. And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week they went to the tomb when the sun had risen. And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb?" And looking up, they saw that the stone was rolled back; for it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe; and they were amazed. And he said to them, "Do not be amazed; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen, he is not here; see the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him, as he told you." And they went out and fled from the tomb; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.



Sunday of the Holy Myrrhbearing Women with the Noble Joseph

Today we commemorate the Holy Myrrh-bearing women Sts Mary Magdalene (July 22), Mary the wife of Clopas, Joanna (June 27), Salome, mother of the sons of Zebedee (August 3), Martha and Mary, sisters of Lazarus (June 4). Also St Joseph of Arimathea (July 31), and Nicodemus.

The holy right-believing Queen Tamara of Georgia is commemorated twice during the year: on May 1, the day of her repose, and also on the Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women.

Synaxis of all Saints of Thessalonica.

St Seraphim Bishop of Phanar (December 4, 1610)

New Martyr Elias Ardunis (January 31, 1686)

New Martyr Demetrius of the Peolponnesos (April 13, 1803)



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 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:

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

There will be a Parish Council meeting today immediately following coffee hour.

Reader Vlashi (Charles) has accepted the call to once again serve with an **OCMC Youth Outreach Mission Team** going to Albania June 7 to June 20, 2016. Please remember him in your prayers in his many preparations. If your heart is moved to support him financially, please speak to him for information on how to do so. Every dollar donated over the cost of the trip will be given to the

orphanage (Children’s Home of Hope on the grounds of the Shen Vlash Monastery and Resurrection of Christ Theological Academy in Durres, Albania).



NY/NJ Diocese News

**Archbishop Michael: Anniversary of Episcopal Consecration
“Many Years!”**

On Monday, 9 May 2016, several clergy members, altar servers, and Matushki gathered from across the Diocese at Holy Trinity Church in Yonkers NY to join with His Eminence, Archbishop Michael, in celebrating the Divine Liturgy with special thanksgiving to God for **Archbishop Michael's sixth anniversary of consecration to the episcopacy (May 8) and enthronement in the Diocese of New York and New Jersey (May 9).** *May God grant His Eminence many, many more years of blessed and fruitful service as our Archpastor! "Eis polla eti, Despota!"*



Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News

Holy Myrrhbearers Monastery begins 40th year this weekend!

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, will preside at the celebration of the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy marking the opening of the 40th anniversary year of Holy Myrrhbearers’ Monastery here on the Sunday of the Holy Myrrhbearing Women, May 15, 2016.

The Divine Liturgy, to which the faithful are warmly invited, will begin at 10:00 a.m. in the monastery chapel. An informal “Agape” fellowship hour will follow.

“Throughout the week of May 15, we will have an informal Open House, ending with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 21,” said Mother Raphaela, Abbess. “In addition, while we no longer schedule formal ‘pilgrimage’ days, the monastery chapel will be open daily for monastic services and quiet prayer. Everyone is always welcome!”

The monastery’s extensively renovated guest house, according to Mother Raphaela, “is again available for individuals, families and small groups who wish to schedule retreats or longer visits, including teen work days, which always have been a great way to introduce young people to the monastery while helping us keep our grounds looking spruce!”

Background of the monastery.

The chapel is the center of the monastery’s life.

From modest beginnings in 1977, when they celebrated their first Divine Liturgy as a monastic community on the Sunday of the Holy Myrrhbearers, the community has endeavored, with God’s help, to “feel our way into a traditional form of monastic prayer and life within our American setting,” added Mother Raphaela. Initially, the community was housed at the Chancery of the Orthodox Church in America. Eventually it moved to rented quarters near Saint Vladimir’s Seminary, Yonkers, NY, as the nuns solidified their efforts to generate income and purchase property. During this time, the sisters began a mail-order business offering their own original greeting card designs, prayer books and other items. With the more recent addition of liturgical texts to their catalogue, the publishing concern has become an important means of support for the monastery—and a blessing for all the faithful who are enriched by these publications.

Mother Raphaela tending to the monastery farm’s “flock.”

In 1982, the nuns’ search for a permanent home bore fruit. Through a Pennysaver ad, they located a 144-acre plot in rural central New York state with a farmhouse, two barns, a mobile home, and a

pond. By “a series of miracles,” they were able to make a down payment that year – and be mortgage-free by the end of the following year! In 1986, work began on the monastery chapel – with immense amounts of time, materials, labor, and love contributed by many clergy and laypersons from nearby parishes in Herkimer, Watervliet, Binghamton, Wappingers Falls, and elsewhere. These joy-filled “work parties” culminated in the consecration of the chapel. A memorial prayer garden was added through the generosity of friends from Geneva, NY. Subsequently, the community acquired an adjoining piece of property and old mill-house, which they renovated to serve as guest quarters. A set of six magnificent bells, specially cast in Russia, was installed in the mid-1990s. A crowning achievement came in 1998 with the completion of the new monastery, which provides the nuns the silence and privacy needed for the hidden life of a monastic and reception rooms where guests and other pilgrims can find hospitality and opportunities for quiet reflection. Finding themselves with more room and more sisters joining the community, the nuns continued to develop the farm as an integral part of their life and livelihood. They sell yarn spun from the fine wool of their sheep, prayer ropes and other items made from this yarn, eggs from their chickens and ducks, and goats’ milk and cheese.

The monastery always welcomes pilgrims, individuals and groups.

The monastic community also publishes a newsletter, *Essays and Notes*, featuring articles written by the nuns and other authors. Mother Raphaela’s inspiring essays have been collected into three volumes—*Living in Christ*, *Growing in Christ*, and *Becoming Icons of Christ*— all published by St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press. The sisterhood welcomes pilgrims and small groups throughout the year, and many visitors find peace and spiritual healing not only in walking the grounds and participating in the divine services, but in helping with the farming chores – until the majestic peals of monastery’s six bells once again call all to the chapel for prayer. The monastery maintains an extensive web site with detailed information on the community’s life, an on-line shop, and articles on various aspects of Orthodox Christian life.



The Bendo Family Serving in Albania



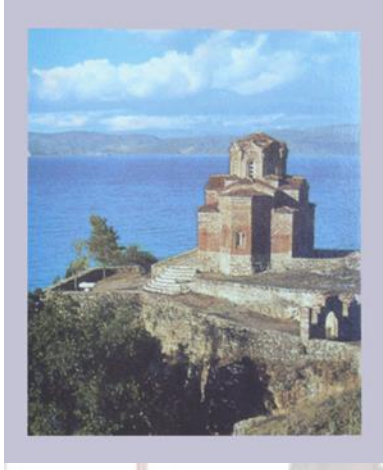
Georgia Gilman Bendo grew up with her nine brothers and sisters in North Carolina. Her parents had converted to Orthodoxy several years before she was born and thus she was raised in the faith. At Duke University she majored in Russian language and literature and was able to spend 6 months in St. Petersburg. She feels that this time in Russia together with visits to Greece during these years strengthened her in the faith and made her certain of her calling to work for the Church. She spent two years preparing for mission work after her graduation and arrived in Albania in 2004.

Since then she has been teaching English and an after-school catechism class at Protagonists Elementary School, a school started and operated by the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Albania. In addition to teaching, her work includes curriculum development for the English and catechism program, supervising the Albanian English teachers, translations into English for the Church’s website (www.orthodoxalbania.org) and taking part in a number of youth camps and conferences.

In January 2008 she was married to Theodore Bendo, who also works for the Albanian Orthodox Church.

On November 21, 2008, God blessed Georgia and Todi with a son: Vasili Thomas Bendo, was born on the Feast day of the Entrance of the Theotokos. He was 20 inches (51 cm) and weighed a healthy 8lbs 8oz (3.85 kilos). Vasili Thomas Bendo is named after St. Basil the Great, St. Basil of Ostrog

(Montenegro), Vasili (Todi's grandfather), and Thomas (Georgia's great-grandfather). Georgia needs your ongoing prayer and financial support in order to serve in Albania.



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

"Are You the One who is to come?" the sons of earth ask the One born of your Virgin, O my soul.

But the One born of the Virgin glistens with matinal light amid the sons of earth, who are as dark as extinguished days.

The flaming Seraphim shine in His eyes; the sapient Cherubim sit upon His lips; the Lordly Thrones³ bolster His stance. Seeing Him alone, a Leader without an earthly army, every sane man is convinced that this could be a leader of an awesome and enormous army of invisible powers.

And behold, surrounded by the angelic hosts your Leader, O soul, opens His mouth and speaks:

"In truth, I am the One for whom you have been waiting; do not hope for another. If you have been searching for the way, I am the Way.

"I am your Tomorrow from today until the end of time. Everything good, that you have been expecting from the days of tomorrow, is within Me. Today your tomorrow is fulfilled in Me. And no day, from now until the last day, will bring you what I am bringing you. Lo, I am the day that has no beginning and no end.

"I am the treasury of every future that exists and I am the way to that treasury. The future in its entirety cannot give you so much as a kernel of good, unless it borrows it from Me.

"All the prophets have pointed out the way that leads to Me. All the ways of the prophets come to an end and lose themselves in Me. From this time forth I am the only Way, and outside Me are only regions without roads or ways. Like many streams flowing into a single river and then losing their way, so have all the prophets flowed into Me, and from this time forth I direct the course of Life. Whoever continues to follow the ways of the prophets further, will be following paths that no longer exist and will injure themselves.

"The prophets came to show the way; I have come to be the Way.

"Whoever wishes to follow Me, must follow Me not with his feet alone, but with all his soul, with all his heart, and with all his mind.³

"My way is long, and whoever trusts solely in his feet will drop from exhaustion.

"When children want to keep up with giants, they must forego walking on their own feet and sit on the shoulders of giants.

"Whoever wants to keep up with Me, must renounce his feet, his soul, his heart, and his mind. Whoever renounces all this, I shall take onto My feet, into My soul, into My heart, and into My mind. And he will not be heavy for Me, nor shall I be tiring for him. However, anyone who fails to renounce everything, cannot overtake or detain Me along the way.⁴

"I am the Way, and he who follows My Way, does not journey alone but with Me. The prophets used to point out the way hither or thither or over in that direction, because they were not themselves the way. I cannot point out the way: hither, thither, or over in that direction; nor can I leave any of my wayfarers to journey without Me. Whoever wishes to follow My Way, I Myself shall carry.⁵

"I tell you one thing more: I am what is desired tomorrow and the Way to tomorrow. Without Me you cannot find the way to what you desire tomorrow, nor can you expect it."

O God-bearing Son, have mercy on us and begin leading us Yourself.

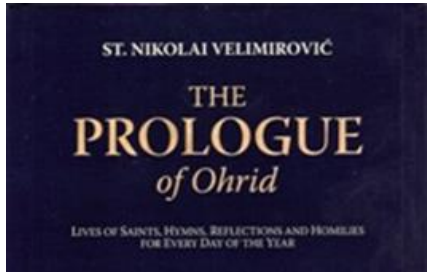
Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, LVII:

II. The Realities of the Spiritual World

The Holy Scriptures

Of all the afflictions that burden the human race, there is not one, whether spiritual or bodily, that cannot be healed by the Holy Scriptures.

+ *St. John Chrysostom, Conversations on the Book of Genesis, 29.1*



1. The Venerable Pachomius the Great

Pachomius was born in Egypt and was a pagan in his youth. As a soldier, he fought in battle alongside Emperor Constantine against Maxentius. Following that, he learned of the One God from Christians and, witnessing their devout life, Pachomius was baptized. He withdrew to the Tabennisi wilderness (Thebaid desert), to the famous ascetic Palamon, with whom he practiced the ascetic life for ten years. Then, an angel appeared to him in the habit of a Schema [The Great Angelic Habit of a Monk], at the place called Tabennisi, and gave him a board upon which was written the Monastic Rule [Constitution] for the Cenobitic Life. The angel ordered him to establish such a monastery in that place, prophesying to him that to this monastery many monks would come for the sake of the salvation of their souls. Heeding the angel of God, Pachomius began to build many cells, even though no one was at that place except his brother John and himself. When his brother reproached him for building unnecessary cells, Pachomius simply said to him that he was following the command of God without regard as to who would come to live there and when. But soon, many men gathered at that place, moved by the Spirit of God, and began to live a life of asceticism according to the Rule of Pachomius, which he had received from the angel. As the number of monks increased, Pachomius gradually established six more monasteries. The number of his disciples amounted to about seven thousand. St. Anthony is considered to be the founder of the hermitical life; and St. Pachomius as founder of the monastic cenobitic way of life. The humility, love of labor, and abstinence of this Holy Father were and remain rare examples for imitation by a vast number of monks. St. Pachomius worked numerous miracles, but he also endured numerous temptations from demons as well as from men. He served men as both a father and a brother. He inspired many to follow the path to salvation and directed many on the path to truth. He was and remains a great light of the Church and a great witness to the truth and righteousness of Christ. He died peacefully in the year 348 A.D. in the seventy-fourth year of his earthly life. The Church has included many of his disciples in the ranks of the saints, such as: Theodore, Job, Paphnutius, Pecusius, Athenodorus, Eponichus, Sorus, Psois, Dionysius, Psentaesis and others.

2. Saint Achilleus, Bishop of Larissa

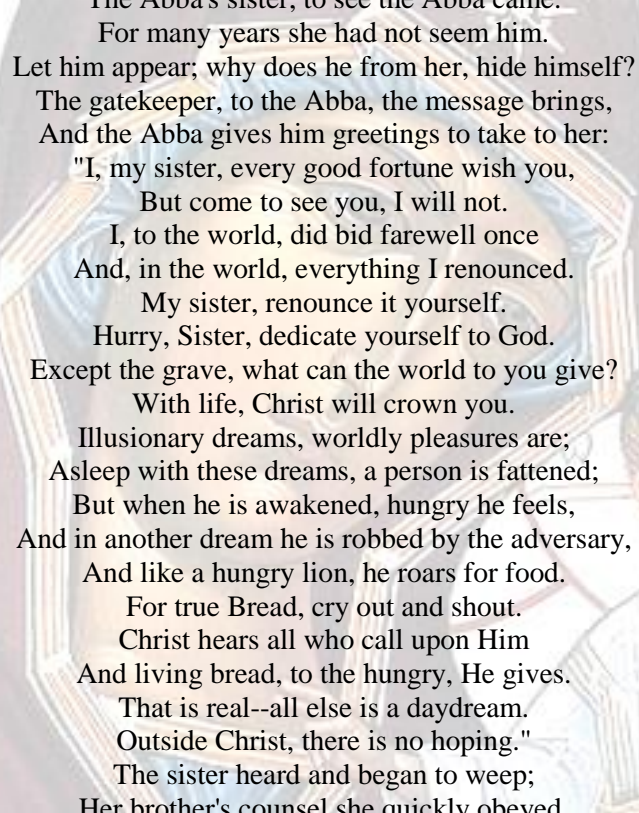
Achilleus, the great hierarch and miracle-worker, was born in Cappadocia. He participated in the First Ecumenical Council [Nicaea, 325 A.D.], at which he shamed the heretics and, by his learning as well as by his sanctity, commanded great astonishment. Picking up a rock, St. Achilleus shouted to the Arians: "If Christ is a creation of God, as you say, then command oil to flow from this rock." The heretics remained silent and were amazed at such a request from St. Achilleus. Then the saint said: "And if the Son of God is equal to the Father, as we believe, let oil flow from this rock." And, indeed, oil did flow to the amazement of all. St. Achilleus died peacefully in Larissa in the year 330 A.D. When the Macedonian King Samuel conquered Thessaly he translated the relics of Achilleus to Prespa, to an island in a lake, which even today is called Achilleus or Ailus.

3. The Venerable Silvanus

At first, Silvanus was a comedian, impersonating everyone and everything. But then he was inflamed with love for Christ and became a disciple of St. Pachomius. "I am ready to give my life," St. Silvanus would say "only to receive forgiveness of my sins."

Hymn of Praise

The Venerable Pachomius the Great



With the Spirit of God, Pachomius burns;
With the angels, Pachomius speaks.
Around him the monks gather;
Like candles, they all stand before God.
One day, the knocker sounded;
The Abba's sister, to see the Abba came.
For many years she had not seen him.
Let him appear; why does he from her, hide himself?
The gatekeeper, to the Abba, the message brings,
And the Abba gives him greetings to take to her:
"I, my sister, every good fortune wish you,
But come to see you, I will not.
I, to the world, did bid farewell once
And, in the world, everything I renounced.
My sister, renounce it yourself.
Hurry, Sister, dedicate yourself to God.
Except the grave, what can the world to you give?
With life, Christ will crown you.
Illusionary dreams, worldly pleasures are;
Asleep with these dreams, a person is fattened;
But when he is awakened, hungry he feels,
And in another dream he is robbed by the adversary,
And like a hungry lion, he roars for food.
For true Bread, cry out and shout.
Christ hears all who call upon Him
And living bread, to the hungry, He gives.
That is real--all else is a daydream.
Outside Christ, there is no hoping."
The sister heard and began to weep;
Her brother's counsel she quickly obeyed.

Reflection

When a tyrant commits violence against the righteous out of greed, then the violence brings about loss and gain, i.e., a loss to the tyrant and a gain to the one who suffered violence. Boris Godunov murdered Dimitri, the eight-year old crown prince, to gain control of the throne without competition. The imperial days of Boris ended quickly, and the tyrant was given over to corruption and condemnation, but Dimitri was proclaimed a saint. After fifteen years of lying in the grave, the body of Dimitri was exhumed and found to be uncorrupt and miracle-working. There were forty-five miraculous healings which occurred over his body. Who, therefore, receives the injury, and who receives the benefit from tyranny? If the tyrant knew that by his tyranny he would help his opponent to be included among the saints and that he would prepare defeat and damnation for himself, he would desist from his plan of violence. But twisted thinking is the forerunner and companion of tyranny.

Contemplation

To contemplate the action of God the Holy Spirit upon the apostles:

1. How, by the Holy Spirit, the apostles received mystical visions of the other world;
2. How, by the Holy Spirit, the apostles perceived mysteries in the hearts of men.

Homily:

About the prophesied and actual destruction of the idols of Egypt

"And the houses of the gods of the Egyptians shall burn with fire" (Jeremiah 43:13).

Who will burn them? Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, My servant, said the Lord (Jeremiah 25:9). This prophecy came true. Nebuchadnezzar conquered Egypt and by fire destroyed the houses of the false gods, the idols of the Egyptians. He burned them but he did not destroy them forever. For after that came the destruction of Babylon, again according to the prophecy of the holy Prophet Jeremiah, and Babylon became and remains to this day heaps, a dwelling place for dragons, an astonishment and a hissing, without an inhabitant (Jeremiah 51:37). But there is a tradition, recorded by St. Epiphanius of Cyprus, that there remained another prophecy of Jeremiah about the final destruction of the idols of Egypt: "All the idols will fall," says this prophecy, "and all that is made by hands will be destroyed at the time when a Virgin Mother comes here with a young Child, Who was born in a cave and placed in a manger." This prophecy was preserved by the pagan priests themselves, who from the time of Jeremiah introduced the custom of depicting the Virgin as she reclines on a bed and her young Child wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger.

Nebuchadnezzar, the servant, was able by God's permission to cut down evil, but not to pluck it out by the roots. Sheared evil, like sheared grass, grows again. When the Lord came to earth, He plucked out evil by the roots. Nebuchadnezzar, the servant, burned the temples and the idols, but the temples were rebuilt and new idols were made, for they were not plucked out from the souls of men. When the Lord came and began His reign in the souls of the Egyptians, the temples and idols fell forever. So it was the same with the disobedient Jews who waged war against God. Nebuchadnezzar, the servant, took them into bondage for seventy years, and the offended Lord scattered them throughout the world, where many of them find themselves in dispersion today even after two-thousand years. This scattering of the Jewish people throughout the world was clearly prophesied by Jeremiah. And so, time justified the prophet of God in all his words.

O All-seeing Lord, grant us that we adhere to the words of Your true prophet.

To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.



The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration with Abbott Tryphon

The Divine Liturgy

Where communion with God is restored

At the Mystical Supper in the Upper Room Jesus gave a dramatically new meaning to the food and drink of the sacred meal. He identified Himself with the bread and wine: "Take, eat; this is my Body. Drink of it all of you; for this is my Blood of the New Covenant" (Matthew 26:26-28).

Food had always sustained the earthly existence of everyone, but in the Eucharist the Lord gave us a distinctively unique human food – bread and wine – that by the power of the Holy Spirit, has become our gift of life.

Consecrated and sanctified, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. This change is not physical but mystical and sacramental. While the qualities of the bread and wine remain, we partake of the true Body and Blood of Christ. In the eucharistic meal God enters into such a communion of life that He feeds humanity with His own being, while still remaining distinct. In the words of St. Maximos the Confessor, Christ, “transmits to us divine life, making Himself eatable.” The Author of life shatters the limitations of our createdness. Christ acts so that “we might become sharers of divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4).

From the moment Christ instituted this Mystery, the Eucharist became the center of the Church’s life, and her most profound prayer. The Eucharist is both the source and the summit of our life in Christ. It is in the Eucharist that the Church is changed from a mere human community into the Body of Christ, the Temple of the Holy Spirit, and the People of God. The Eucharist is the pre-eminent sacrament, as it completes all the others and recapitulates the entire economy of salvation. Through the Eucharist our new life in Christ is renewed and increased. The Eucharist imparts life and the life it gives is the life of God.

The Church is that place where heaven and earth are united, and where we can live as we were meant to be, as before the Fall. The Church’s Divine Liturgy is that place where the disunity that came with the Fall is put aside, and communion with God is restored. Our participation in the Divine Liturgy is the moment when we are restored to the Garden of Eden, and God and man walk together. The Divine Liturgy unites us to the Heavenly Banquet which is taking place before the Throne of God.

The Divine Liturgy transcends time, and space, uniting believers in the worship of the Kingdom of God along with all the heavenly hosts, the saints, and the celestial angels. To this end, everything in the Liturgy is seen as symbolic, yet also not just merely symbolic, but making the unseen reality manifest in our midst.

We do not attend the Divine Liturgy, but participate in the Divine Liturgy, for in communing with God, we receive the Bread of Life. The Liturgy lifts us up above the disordered and dysfunctional world, and we are placed on the path to restoration and wholeness, healed by the self-emptying love of Christ, and communion with God is restored.

With love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon



Daily Reflection
Church Divisions & Politics

CHURCH DIVISIONS &
POLITICS

Saturday, May 14, 2016



“I appeal to you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and that there be no dissensions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. For it has been reported to me by Chloe’s people that there is quarreling among you, my brethren. What I mean is that each one of you says, ‘I belong to Paul,’ or ‘I belong to Apollos,’ or ‘I belong to Cephas,’ or ‘I belong to Christ.’ Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?” (1 Cor 1: 10-13)

The “*dissensions among you,*” St. Paul indicates to me today, come from placing human allegiances above the One “*crucified for you.*” And further in this well-known first chapter of 1 Corinthians, the Apostle goes on to stress the centrality of the Cross and its unifying power, which “*destroys the wisdom of the wise*” and “*makes foolish the wisdom of the world*” (1 Cor 1: 19-20), lifting us above the divisive phenomenon of human opinions. We are elevated by the humility and “*weakness of God,*” which is “*stronger than men*” (1 Cor 1: 25).

In any “dissensions” that arise among us, be it in church-politics in this year of the Holy and Great Council, or national politics in this election year, let me not depart from the unity of “*the same mind and the same judgment*” of the One and Only crucified for us. This means taking a step back into self-giving, when discussions among us turn into “*quarreling among us*” and tempt me to jump in, abandoning the Spirit of my cross-carrying journey. “*For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.*” Glory be to Him.

The Philokalia: Daily Readings

He who seeks only the outward form of knowledge, that is, knowledge which is merely theoretical, and pursues the semblance of virtue, that is, a merely theoretical morality, is puffed up.

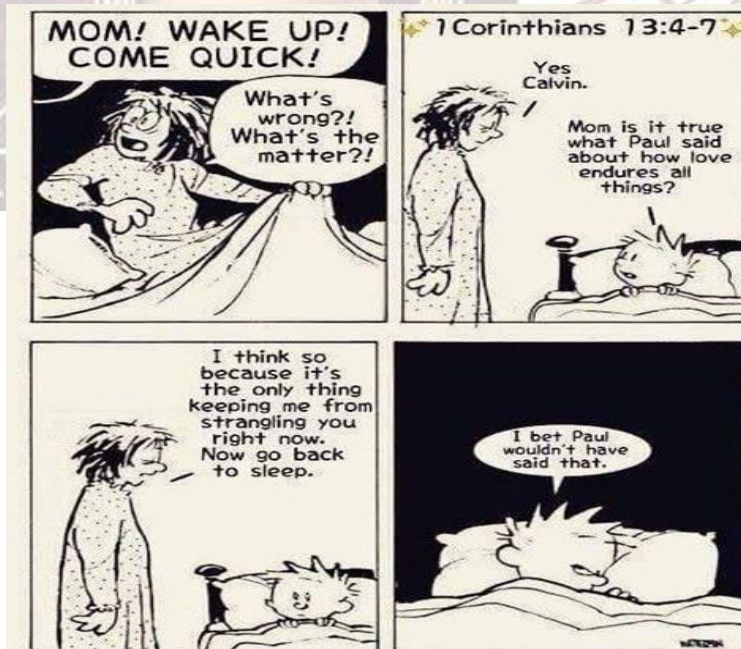
+ *St Maximus the Confessor, 500 Various Texts*

Daily Readings with Early Church Fathers and Mothers

"Saved" by St. Anthony

The brethren came to the Abba Anthony and said to him, “Speak a word; how are we to be saved?” The old man said to them, “You have heard the Scriptures. That should teach you how.” But they said, “We want to hear from you too, Father.” Then the old man said to them, “The Gospel says, ‘if anyone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also.’” (Matt. 5.39) They said, “We cannot do that.” The old man said, “If you cannot offer the other cheek, at least allow one cheek to be struck.” “We cannot do that either,” they said. So he said, “If you are not able to do that, do not return evil for evil,” and they said, “We cannot do that either.” Then the old man said to his disciples, “Prepare a little brew of corn for these invalids. If you cannot do this, or that, what can I do for you? What you need is prayers.”

+ *From Abba Anthony the Father of Monks, Apophthegmata Patrum*



May – 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3 7:00-8:00pm – The Grey Book Study Mtg. NA Grp	4	5	6 8:00-9:15pm – Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	7 6:30pm Vespers
8 9:30am Sunday School 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy/Social	9 10:00 a.m. Liturgy in Thanksgiving celebrating the 6th Anniversary of Archbishop Michael's Episcopal Consecration Holy Trinity Church Yonkers NY	10 7:00-8:00pm – The Grey Book Study Mtg. NA Grp	11	12	13 8:00-9:15pm – Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	14 6:30pm Vespers
15 9:30am Sunday School 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy/Social	16	17 7:00-8:00pm – The Grey Book Study Mtg. NA Grp	18	19	20 8:00-9:15pm – Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	21 6:30pm Vespers
22 9:30am Sunday School 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy / Social	23	24 7:00-8:00pm – The Grey Book Study Mtg. NA Grp	25	26	27 8:00-9:15pm – Living Clean NA Group Mtg.	28 6:30pm Vespers
29 9:30am Sunday School 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy / Social	30	31 7:00-8:00pm – The Grey Book Study Mtg. NA Grp				