

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: Andrew Romanofsky Parish Council Vice President: Dean Inferrera



Sunday, May 21, 2017

Gospel: John 9:1-38

Saints: John 10:1-9

Tone 5

Epistle: Acts 16:16-34

Saints: Acts 26:1-5, 12-20

6th Sunday of Pascha: Sunday of the Blind Man; Equal of the Apostles and Emperor Constantine with his Mother Helen

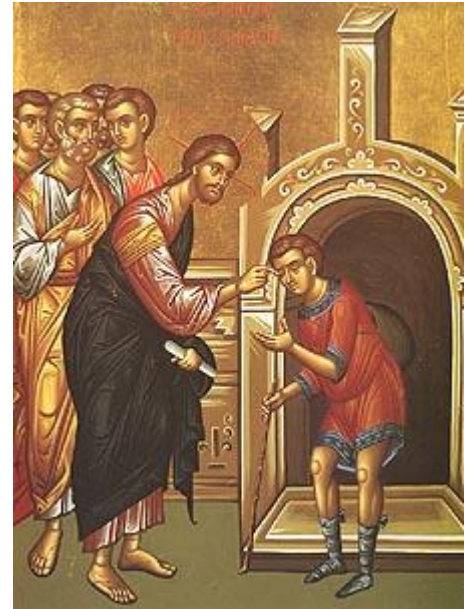
St. Constantine (1129) and his children, Ss. Michael and Theodore, Wonderworkers of Múrom. Ven. Cassian the Greek, of Uglich (1504). The Meeting of the VLADIMIR Icon of the Most-holy Theotokos (in commemoration of the saving of Moscow from the invasion of the Crimean Khan, Mekhmet-Girei in 1521).

Troparion – Tone 5

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead// by His glorious Resurrection.

Kontakion – Tone 4

I come to You, O Christ, / Blind from birth in my spiritual eyes / And I call to You in repentance: / You are the most radiant light of those in darkness!



Sunday of the Blind Man

Prayer Requests

For Health of:

Alexis Lukianov and **Robert Davis**, offered by Archbishop Michael and the Diocese of NY/NJ.

In Memory of:

+ **Christopher Michael Dawson**, grandson of Sub-Deacon Edward and Holly Dawson who fell asleep in the Lord on Wednesday, May 10th, offered by Archbishop Michael and the Diocese of NY/NJ.

Orthodox Quote of the Day

Pray carefully and constantly. Pray in fear and trembling before the greatness of the name of Jesus.

St. Ignatius Brianchaninov
On the Prayer of Jesus 23

Liturgical Schedule

Sunday, May 21st

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

Wednesday, May 24th

6:30 pm: Vesper/Liturgy:
Holy Day of the Ascension
of our Lord/Archbishop
Michael Visit

Saturday, May 27th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, May 28th

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

Saturday, June 3rd

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, June 4th

9:30 am: No Sunday School
9:45 am: General
Confession
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, June 10th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, June 11th

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

Bulletin Sponsors

No Bulletin Sponsors

Readings:

The Prokeimenon in the 8th Tone:

Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!

(Psalm 75:12)

vs. In Judah God is known; His name is great in Israel.

(Psalm 75:2)

Another, Tone 8 (Saints):

Their proclamation has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the universe! *(Psalm 18:5)*

Epistle: Acts 16:16-34

In those days, as we apostles were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by soothsaying. She followed Paul and us, crying, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." And this she did for many days. But Paul was annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour. But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the rulers; and when they had brought them to the magistrates they said, "These men are Jews and they are disturbing our city. They advocate customs which it is not lawful for us Romans to accept or practice." The crowd joined in attacking them; and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely. Having received this charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and every one's fetters were unfastened. When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out and said, "Men, what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their wounds, and he was baptized at once, with all his family. Then he brought them up into his house, and set food before them; and he rejoiced with all his household that he had believed in God.

Saints: Acts 26:1-5, 12-20

In those days, Agrippa said to Paul, "You are permitted to speak for yourself." So Paul stretched out his hand and answered for himself: "I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because today I shall answer for myself before you concerning all the things of which I am accused by the Jews, especially because you are expert in all customs and questions which have to do with the Jews. Therefore I beg you to hear me patiently. My manner of life from my youth, which was spent from the beginning among my own nation at Jerusalem, all the Jews know. They knew me from the first, if they were willing to testify, that according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. While thus

occupied, as I journeyed to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, at midday, O king, along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me. And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' So I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.' Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance.

Alleluia in the 8th Tone:

Look upon me and have mercy on me!

(Psalm 118:132)

vs. Guide my steps according to Thy word!

(Psalm 118:133)

Another, Tone 1 (Saints):

I have raised up one chosen out of my peoples.

(Psalm 88:20)

Gospel: John 9:1-38

At that time, as Jesus passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest in him. We must work the works of him who sent me, while it is day; night comes, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." As he said this, he spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and anointed the man's eyes with the clay, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar, said, "Is not this the man who used to sit and beg?" Some said, "It is he"; others said, "No, but he is like him." He said, "I am the man." They said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash'; so I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know." They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. The Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put clay on my eyes and I washed, and I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" There was a division among them. So they again said to the blind man, "What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight, and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age, he will speak for himself." His parents said this because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess him to be Christ he was to be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age, ask him." So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and said to him, "Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "Whether he is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you too want to become his disciples?" And they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Why, this is a marvel! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" And they cast him out. Jesus heard that they

had cast him out, and having found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?" Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is he who speaks to you." He said, "Lord, I believe": and he worshiped him.

Saints: John 10:1-9

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers." Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them. Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture..



Sunday of the Blind Man

After the Midfeast (John 7:14), the Lord Jesus Christ came to the Temple again and taught the people who came to Him (John 8:2). After leaving the Temple, He opened the eyes of a man "who was blind from his birth (John 9:1).

The miracle described in today's Gospel (John 9:1-38) is even more remarkable than it might seem at first. Saint Basil and other Fathers tell us that this was not just a case of giving sight to a blind man born with eyes that did not function, but to someone who had no eyes at all! The second Exapostilarion for this Sunday says, "Along the way, our Savior found a man who lacked both sight and eyes..."

The Gospel says, "Since the world began, it was not heard that any man opened the eyes of one who was born blind" (John 9:32). There are examples in the Old (Tobit 2:17) and New (Mark 8:22-26) Testaments of blind people receiving sight, but this is something completely unprecedented.

The Savior placed clay in the man's empty sockets and told him to wash in the pool of Siloam. When he obeyed these instructions, the eyes of clay became living eyes!

In his MENAION, Saint Demetrius of Rostov calls the blind man Saint Celidonius (see his account of Saint Lazarus in the Synaxis of the Seventy Apostles on January 4).



Equal of the Apostles and Emperor Constantine with his Mother Helen

The Church calls Saint Constantine (306-337) "the Equal of the Apostles," and historians call him "the Great." He was the son of the Caesar Constantius Chlorus (305-306), who governed the lands of Gaul and Britain. His mother was Saint Helen, a Christian of humble birth.

At this time the immense Roman Empire was divided into Western and Eastern halves, governed by two independent emperors and their corulers called "Caesars." Constantius Chlorus was Caesar in the Western Roman Empire. Saint Constantine was born in 274, possibly at Nish in Serbia. In 294, Constantius divorced Helen in order to further his political ambition by marrying a woman of noble rank. After he became emperor, Constantine showed his mother great honor and respect, granting her the imperial title "Augusta."

Constantine, the future ruler of all the whole Roman Empire, was raised to respect Christianity. His father did not persecute Christians in the lands he governed. This was at a time when Christians were persecuted throughout the Roman Empire by the emperors Diocletian (284-305) and his corulers Maximian Galerius (305-311) in the East, and the emperor Maximian Hercules (284-305) in the West.

After the death of Constantius Chlorus in 306, Constantine was acclaimed by the army at York as emperor of Gaul and Britain. The first act of the new emperor was to grant the freedom to practice Christianity in the lands subject to him. The pagan Maximian Galerius in the East and the fierce tyrant Maxentius in the West hated Constantine and they plotted to overthrow and kill him, but Constantine bested them in a series of battles, defeating his opponents with the help of God. He prayed to God to give him a sign which would inspire his army to fight

valiantly, and the Lord showed him a radiant Sign of the Cross in the heavens with the inscription “In this Sign, conquer.”

After Constantine became the sole ruler of the Western Roman Empire, he issued the Edict of Milan in 313 which guaranteed religious tolerance for Christians. Saint Helen, who was a Christian, may have influenced him in this decision. In 323, when he became the sole ruler of the entire Roman Empire, he extended the provisions of the Edict of Milan to the Eastern half of the Empire. After three hundred years of persecution, Christians could finally practice their faith without fear.

Renouncing paganism, the Emperor did not let his capital remain in ancient Rome, the former center of the pagan realm. He transferred his capital to the East, to the city of Byzantium, which was renamed Constantinople, the city of Constantine (May 11). Constantine was deeply convinced that only Christianity could unify the immense Roman Empire with its diverse peoples. He supported the Church in every way. He recalled Christian confessors from banishment, he built churches, and he showed concern for the clergy.

The emperor deeply revered the victory-bearing Sign of the Cross of the Lord, and also wanted to find the actual Cross upon which our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified. For this purpose he sent his own mother, the holy Empress Helen, to Jerusalem, granting her both power and money. Patriarch Macarius of Jerusalem and Saint Helen began the search, and through the will of God, the Life-Creating Cross was miraculously discovered in 326. (The account of the finding of the Cross of the Lord is found under the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, September 14). The Orthodox Church commemorates the Uncovering of the Precious Cross and the Precious Nails by the Holy Empress Helen on March 6.

While in Palestine, the holy empress did much of benefit for the Church. She ordered that all places connected with the earthly life of the Lord and His All-Pure Mother, should be freed of all traces of paganism, and she commanded that churches should be built at these places.

The emperor Constantine ordered a magnificent church in honor of Christ’s Resurrection to be built over His tomb. Saint Helen gave the Life-Creating Cross to the Patriarch for safe-keeping, and took part of the Cross with her for the emperor. After distributing generous alms at Jerusalem and feeding the needy (at times she even served them herself), the holy Empress Helen returned to Constantinople, where she died in the year 327.

Because of her great services to the Church and her efforts in finding the Life-Creating Cross, the empress Helen is called “the Equal of the Apostles.”

The peaceful state of the Christian Church was disturbed by quarrels, dissensions and heresies which had appeared within the Church. Already at the beginning of Saint Constantine’s reign the heresies of the Donatists and the Novatians had arisen in the West. They demanded a second baptism for those who lapsed during the persecutions against Christians. These heresies, repudiated by two local Church councils, were finally condemned at the Council of Milan in 316.

Particularly ruinous for the Church was the rise of the Arian heresy in the East, which denied the Divine Nature of the Son of God, and taught that Jesus Christ was a mere creature. By order of the emperor, the First Ecumenical Council was convened in the city of Nicea in 325.

318 bishops attended this Council. Among its participants were confessor-bishops from the period of the persecutions and many other luminaries of the Church, among whom was Saint Nicholas of Myra in Lycia. (The account about the Council is found under May 29). The emperor was present at the sessions of the Council. The heresy of Arius was condemned and a Symbol of Faith (Creed) composed, in which was included the term “consubstantial with the Father,” confirming the truth of the divinity of Jesus Christ, Who assumed human nature for the redemption of all the human race.

One might possibly be surprised by Saint Constantine’s grasp of theological issues during the discussions at the Council. The term “consubstantial” was included in the Symbol of Faith at his insistence.

After the Council of Nicea, Saint Constantine continued with his active role in the welfare of the Church. He accepted holy Baptism on his deathbed, having prepared for it all his whole life. Saint Constantine died on the day of Pentecost in the year 337 and was buried in the church of the Holy Apostles, in a crypt he had prepared for himself.



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.

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

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

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 ; reader.charles@hotmail.com or rsub-deacon.vlashi@outlook.com

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

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



Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Parish News

There will be a Parish Council meeting today, May 21th, (Sunday of the Blind Man), after coffee hour. It has been changed from May 28th. The Parish Council is having it a week earlier because the last Sunday this month is Memorial Day Weekend. All Parish Council meetings are open to any parish member and may speak on any issue of the Parish.



NY/NJ Diocese News

WATERVLIET NY: Saint Basil's Church Acquires Holy Relics

Archbishop Michael has blessed **Saint Basil's Orthodox Church in Watervliet NY** with holy relics of the following saints: **Great-Martyr and Healer Panteleimon**, **Innocent** (Metropolitan of Moscow & Apostle to America), **Grand Duchess Elizabeth the New-Martyr**, **Tikhon** (Patriarch of Moscow & Enlightener of North America), **Alexis of Wilkes-Barre** (Confessor & Defender of Orthodoxy in America), **Raphael** (Bishop of Brooklyn), and **Venerable Ambrose** (Elder of Optina). Father Jason Vansuch prepared the relics by placing each in a special wax mixture called mastic. *“Our reliquary was sent to us from Russia,”* said Father Peter Olsen (parish rector). *“Many thanks to God for this amazing blessing and to our loving hierarch, Archbishop Michael, and Father Jason for his kind help. Glory to Jesus Christ!”*

Congratulations to:

Presbyter Matthew Brown, awarded the skufiya, by His Eminence, Archbishop Michael, on Sunday, May 14, 2017, at Holy Apostles Church, Saddle Brook NJ. May God protect and preserve His servant, the Presbyter Matthew, for many blessed years! "Mnogaya Lyeta!"



Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News

CSHA offers resources for Prison Ministry Awareness Sunday

This Sunday—May 21, 2017—has been designated as “Prison Ministry Awareness Sunday” by the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America.

“We who do not live in the darkness of a prison or jail cannot truly comprehend the incredible distress men and women prisoners live with each and every day,” write His Eminence, Archbishop Mark of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania, the Assembly’s Liaison to the Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry [OCPM], and Father Stephen Powley, OCPM Executive Director, in their message announcing the occasion. “OCPM needs all our help to bring the love and light of Christ to these precious souls. The Orthodox Church, through OCPM, offers both hope and healing to those living in such distress.”

“The OCA Department of Christian Service and Humanitarian Aid [CSHA] joins the Assembly of Bishops in urging the faithful to pray for the imprisoned, their families, prison chaplains and volunteers, and to financially

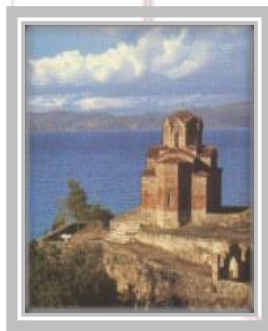
support OCPM in its dynamic and growing Matthew 25 ministry,” said Donna Karabin, who chairs the department. “CSHA offers a number of articles on its Parish Ministry Resources page with information and insights on the roles of chaplains, lay men and women volunteers, and parishes on how to become involved in this important outreach. Some are called to work within prison walls, others in compassionate support programs for families. The stories span a period of 30 years, showing the determined development of the Gospel vision in Orthodox prison ministry.”

Among the featured articles are the following.

- Unbind Him by Father Stephen Powley.
- A Parish Prison Ministry by Father Demetrius Nicoloudakis.
- Saint Seraphim Fellowship by James Seraphim Blackstock.
- Reaching Out: Prison Ministry in the Parish by Subdeacon Dennis Dunn.
- Saint Michael’s Program of Social Outreach to the Criminally Insane by Father John Kowalczyk.
- Ministering to the Imprisoned by Deacon Rodney Torbic.
- A Ministry to Orthodox Inmates by Father Thomas Mueller.
- Prison Ministry by Father Peter Baktis.

Donations in support of OCPM’s growing ministry may be made on OCPM’s website and on Facebook.

Contact the OCA Department of Christian Service and Humanitarian Aid at cscha@oca.org with comments or information on the accomplishments of other prison ministry programs.



Prayers by the Laker, St. Velimirovich, VII:

Would that I could make musicians out of stone, and dancers out of the sand of the lake, and minstrels out of the leaves of all the trees in the mountains, so that they might help me glorify the Lord-and so that the voice of the earth might be heard amidst the choirs of angels!

The sons of men gorge themselves at the table of the absent Master, and do not sing for anyone except themselves and their mouthfuls, which must eventually return to the earth.

Exceedingly sad is the blindness of the sons of men, who do not see the power and glory of the Lord. A bird lives in the forest, and does not see the forest. A fish swims in the water, and does not see the water. A mole lives in the earth, and does not see the earth. In truth, the similarity of man to birds, fish, and moles is exceedingly sad.

People, like animals, do not pay attention to what exists in excessive abundance, but only open their eyes before what is rare or exceptional.

There is too much of You, O Lord, my breath, therefore people do not see You. You are too obvious, O Lord, my sighing, therefore the attention of people is diverted from You and directed toward polar bears, toward rarities in the distance.

You serve Your servants too much, my sweet faithfulness, therefore You are subjected to scorn. You rise to kindle the sun over the lake too early, therefore sleepyheads cannot bear You. You are too zealous in lighting the vigil lamps in the firmament at night, my unsurpassed zeal, and the lazy heart of people talks more about an indolent servant than about zeal.

O my love, would that I could motivate all the inhabitants of the earth, water, and air to hum a hymn to You! Would that I could remove leprosy from the face of the earth and turn this wanton world back into the sort of virgin that You created!

Truly, my God, You are just as great with or without the world.

You are equally great whether the world glorifies You or whether the world blasphemes You. But when the world blasphemes You, You seem even greater in the eyes of Your saints.

Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, CVII:

III. Us and Our Neighbors

Judging

To judge sins is the business of one who is sinless, but who is sinless except God? Whoever thinks about the multitude of his own sins in his heart never wants to make the sins of others a topic of conversation. To judge a man

who has gone astray is a sign of pride, and God resists the proud. On the other hand, one who every hour prepares himself to give answer for his own sins will not quickly lift up his head to examine the mistakes of others.

St. Gennadius of Constantinople, The Golden Chain, 53-55



The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration by Abbott Tryphon

Proof of Love

The proof of love is in the works

The very moment faith enters the soul is that moment when we turn toward God in repentance and recognize we cannot live without Him. As we grow in our faith we come to realize we must remain in a continual state of repentance, for grace abounds in the heart of the man who is repenting. We come to see the truth that the saints were those who never ceased to call upon the Lord in repentance. Never did they think themselves worthy of anything but God’s wrath, and their continued plea was for mercy.

This humility spawned God’s love in the hearts of these saints, and works of love and mercy grew out of God’s indwelling love within their hearts. Their works showed forth that their love and good works came out of that deep state of repentance, and their love was the proof of God’s indwelling Spirit in their hearts. Saint Gregory the Great said, “The proof of love is in the works. Where love exists, it works great things. But when it ceases to act, it ceases to exist.”

If we do not do good works, love does not dwell in our heart, and we have no faith. “Yea, a man may say, You have faith, and I have works: show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works (James 2:18).” The Liturgy reminds us, only those with faith and love may draw near to receive the Holy Mysteries. Our participation in the Body and Blood of the Lord provides each of us with the opportunity to be Christ-bearers in the world in which we live, and others will know we belong to Christ, “by our love” (John 13:35).



Daily Reflection

Sunday of the Blind Man

“As he passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ Jesus answered, ‘It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the

works of God might be made manifest in him. We must work the works of him who sent me, while it is day; night comes, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.’” (Jn 9: 1-5)

So the innocent suffering of a child born blind was not “because” of anybody’s sin, but for the works of God to be “made manifest in him.” Because the birth of a helpless, blind child calls the parents or caretakers of the child to extra-attentive service and selflessness, which are “works of God,” to care for the life of this child. (This is true, BTW, in the case of any baby, because all babies are helpless, but it is “particularly true,” if that makes any sense, in the case of a baby born blind.) Now, in the case of this particular “man blind from his birth,” who happened to cross the path of the God-Man, the works of God were made even more “manifest in him,” through the unique, healing ministry of our one-and-only Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave the man sight.

But what about the rest of the above-quoted passage? What did Jesus mean by the “night,” when “no one can work”? Isn’t He always, even today, “the light of the world”? Indeed He is. What He meant here was the brief, dark period of His passion, which was coming up, and about which He was warning, once again, His disciples. At the moment of His arrest in the garden of Gethsemane, He said to those arresting Him, “But this is your hour, and the power of darkness” (Lk 22: 53). Note that at His crucifixion there was to be “darkness over all the land” in the middle of the day (Mt 27: 45), as the disciples were scattered and unable “to work,” in helplessness and despair.

But Christ rose, and is risen today, dear zillions, bringing His light and vision into our here and now, if we will have it. O Lord, help me see today, in Your light, that I may “work” in You, the light of the world, in Your kind of vision and effectiveness.



Holy Orthodox Quotes

"For the sorry caused in the heart by sin against love is more poignant than any torment."

- St. Isaac the Syrian

Luke 22:61-62 (OSB)

And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times."† So Peter went out and wept bitterly.

The Philokalia: Daily Readings

The nature of the person who prays must be supple and malleable, like that of children, so that it is receptive to the development brought about by prayer.

- St Elijah the Priest, Gnostic Anthology

Ancient Christian Wisdom

'But who do I treat unjustly,' you say, 'by keeping what is my own?' Tell me, what is your own? What did you bring into this life? From where did you receive it? It is as if someone were to take the first seat in the theater, then bar everyone else from attending, so that one person alone enjoys what is offered for the benefit of all in common — this is what the rich do. They seize common goods before others have the opportunity, then claim them as their own by right of preemption. For if we all took only what was necessary to satisfy our own needs, giving the rest to those who lack, no one would be rich, no one would be poor, and no one would be in need.

+ St. Basil the Great

Wisdom of the Church Fathers

"Mother of God is offended by those who never ask her for anything! She is the prayerful intercessor for people; and as much as God can do through His power, so much can the Mother of God do by Her prayer".

**Elder Arsenie Papacioc
(1914-2011)**

Through the Grace of God – Orthodox Christianity

St John Chrysostom: Love is the Passport

"Love is the passport with which man passes through all the heavenly doors without obstacle."

St John Chrysostom: Supplication To God

"It's not an abundance of words that supplicate God, but a pure soul which manifests good deeds."

St John Chrysostom: Afflictions

"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."



HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
35TH ANNUAL GREEK FESTIVAL 2017
THU JUN 1 * FRI JUN 2 * SAT JUN 3 * SUN JUN 4

FEATURING ALL YOUR GREEK FOOD FAVORITES

Gyro Sandwich Shish-Ke-Bob Roast Lamb Chicken Gyro Moussaka Pastichio
Cheese Pies Spinach Pies Loukourmades Gyro Pizza Greek Chicken
Retsina & Ouzo Baklava Pastries Greek Coffee

GREEK MUSIC AND DANCING IN OUR TAVERNA

LIVE Band Saturday Night
Ethnic Greek Dance Performances

FIREWORKS
Thu, June 1 - 9:30pm
Sun, June 4 - 9:30pm

FREE PARKING

WHERE: Mill Road & Ridge Avenue, Egg Harbor Township, NJ
TIMES: Thurs & Fri 5pm - 10pm * Sat 12pm - 11pm * Sun 12pm - 10pm

Admission \$1 Children Under 5 FREE

AMUSEMENT RIDE SPECIAL
Johnson's Fun Factory
Thu June 1 - 5pm - 10pm
Sun June 4 - 2pm - 6pm
ALL YOU CAN RIDE \$18

Raffle Prizes & Drawing
Special Permit No. 46300

WWW.THEGREEKFESTIVAL.INFO
Additional Information Contact: Church 609-653-8092, ext 5 or Yiannis Kyriakou, Chairman 609-645-8970

Greek Food and more at our 35th Annual Holy Trinity Greek Festival, June 1 - 4 2017.

- Traditional Greek dishes and delicious desserts.
- Greek Dance performances,
- Raffle Prizes and Drawings.
- Thalassa Band performing live Greek music on Saturday night, June 3.
- Fireworks Displays, Thursday, June 1 and Sunday, June 4 at 9.30 pm.
- Amusement Rides by Johnson's Fun Factory.

All you can Ride special \$18.00 only on Thursday, June 1, 5-10 pm and Sunday, June 4, 2-6 pm.

- Free Parking
- Admission: \$1.00 Children under 5 free

Where:

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
7004 Ridge Avenue
c/o Mill and Ridge Avenues
Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234

When:

Thursday and Friday, June 1 and 2, 5 pm-10 pm,
Saturday, June 3, Noon-11 pm
Sunday, June 4, Noon-10 pm

For more information contact:

Holy Trinity Church 609 653-8092 ext. 5 or

Log onto our website: www.TheGreekFestival.info for more information.

We look forward to welcoming you!

Eugenia Kramvis
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Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
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Egg Harbor Township, NJ
609 344-2967
ekramvis@comcast.net