

*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, May 22, 2016**

Gospel: John 5:1-15

**Tone 3**

Epistle: Acts 9:32-42

*Sunday of the Paralytic*

**Glory to  
Jesus Christ!**



*Sunday of the Paralytic*

**Glory  
Forever!**

*By Your divine intercession, O Lord, as You raised up the paralytic of old,  
so raise up my soul, paralyzed by sins and thoughtless acts;  
so that being saved I may sing to You:*

*“Glory to Your power, O compassionate Christ!”*

**(Kontakion — Tone 3)**

## *Today's Commemorated Feasts and Saints*

**4th Sunday of Pascha — Tone 3. Paralytic.** Martyr Basiliscus, Bishop of Comana (ca. 308). Commemoration of the Second Ecumenical Council (381). St. John (Vladimir), Ruler of Serbia (1015). Monk Martyr Paul of the Lavra (Mt. Athos—1818).

## *Prayer Requests*

### **For Health of:**

**Protodeacon Michael Sochka** recuperating from surgery, offered by the Diocese of NY/NJ.

### **In Memory of:**

**Nikolai Taran Jr.**, brother of Holly Dawson.

### **Congratulations extended to:**

**Reader John Rusinak**, who was ordained to the Sub-Diaconate by His Eminence, Archbishop Michael, on Sunday, May 15, 2016, at Saint Andrew Church in Dix Hills, New York

**Feodor (Fred) Fetkowitz**, who was tonsured a Reader by His Eminence, Archbishop Michael, on Sunday, May 15, 2016, at Saint Andrew Church in Dix Hills, New York.

### *Liturgical Schedule:*

#### **Sunday, May 22<sup>th</sup>**

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

#### **Saturday, May 28<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

#### **Sunday, May 29<sup>th</sup>**

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

#### **Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

#### **Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup>**

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

#### **Saturday, June 11<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 pm: Vespers

#### **Sunday, June 12<sup>th</sup>**

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

### ***Bulletin Sponsors:***

***Holly Dawson & Family***

### ***Readings:***



#### **The Prokeimenon in the 1<sup>st</sup> Tone:**

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us / as we have set our hope on Thee. (*Psalm 32:22*)

vs. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous! Praise befits the just! (*Psalm 32:1*)

#### **Epistle: Acts 9:32-42**

**In those days**, as Peter went here and there among them all, he came down also to the saints that lived at Lydda. There he found a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years and was paralyzed. And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; rise and make your bed." And immediately he rose. And all the residents of Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord. Now there was at Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which means Dorcas. She was full of good works and acts of charity. In those days she fell sick and died; and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him entreating him, "Please come to us without delay." So Peter rose and went with them. And when he had come, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him weeping, and showing tunics and other garments which Dorcas made while she was with them. But Peter put them all outside and knelt down and prayed; then turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, rise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. And he gave her his hand and lifted her up. Then calling the saints and widows he presented her alive. And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.

#### **Alleluia in the 8<sup>th</sup> Tone:**

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

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



#### **Gospel: John 5:1-15**

**At that time**, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Hebrew called Bethesda which has five porticoes. In these lay a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water; for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and troubled the water; whoever stepped in first after the troubling of the water was healed of whatever disease he had. One man was there, who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him and knew that he had been lying there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be healed?" The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled, and while I am going another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your pallet, and walk." And at once the man was healed, and he took up his pallet and walked.

Now that day was the sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who was cured, "It is the sabbath, it is not lawful for you to carry your pallet." But he answered them, "The man who healed me said to me, 'Take up your pallet, and walk.' "They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take up your pallet, and walk'?" Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place. Afterward, Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse befall you." The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him.



### *Sunday of the Paralytic*

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

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

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



**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](mailto:OrthodoxChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com)

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

**The Grey Book 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*

**Church School news:** *The 9:30 church school class will not meet on Sunday May 29th (Memorial Day weekend). The 9:30 class will meet on Sunday June 5th. Our last class for the school year will be on Sunday June 12th.*



**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*

#### **As Many As Have Been Baptized**

*“Go ... make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them ...”*

During the season of Holy PASCHA we sing: *“As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ”* (Galatians 3:27). Traditionally, catechumens are received into the Church by sacramental rite (baptism and/or anointing with Chrism) especially during this period of the liturgical year.

On Lazarus Saturday 23 April, **Jen Genevieve Werner** was baptized into the Orthodox faith at Saint Basil the Great Church in Watervliet NY by Father Matthew Markewich (Rector, Christ the Savior Church, Ballston Lake NY). Following the baptism, Father Igor Burdikoff celebrated the Divine Liturgy. Sponsoring Jen in baptism were Pat and William Rentz.

On Holy Saturday, 30 April in Rochester NY, Saint John the Baptist Church embraced **Morgan Onesimus Smith** through holy anointing (Chrismation) by the hand of Father Ken James Stavrevsky and sponsor Stephen Merowsky.

*We welcome Jen Genevieve, Morgan Onesimus,  
and all newly illumined members  
of the Body of Christ -- His Holy Church.*



### *Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News*

#### **Commencements at OCA Seminaries**

Dr. David Ford, Professor of Church History at Saint Tikhon's Seminary, South Canaan, PA, was the speaker at commencement ceremonies at Saint Herman's Seminary, Kodiak, AK on Sunday evening, May 15, 2016.

Five graduates received the blessing of His Grace, Bishop David of Sitka and Alaska, who opened the day with the celebration of the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. For the first time, the commencement ceremonies and reception that followed were held at Kodiak's recently completed Afognak Hall.

Saint Vladimir's Seminary will hold commencement exercises on Saturday, May 21, at the school's Yonkers, NY campus. The day will begin with the celebration of a Service of Thanksgiving in Three Hierarchs Chapel at 2:00 p.m., followed by graduation ceremonies at 2:30 p.m. Dr. Paul Meyendorff, who will be retiring as The Father Alexander Schmemmann Professor of Liturgical Theology, will deliver the commencement address.

As reported earlier, His Eminence, Archbishop Demetrios of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America will deliver the commencement address at Saint Tikhon's Seminary, South Canaan, PA on Saturday, May 28. Graduation exercises will begin at 1:00 p.m. at the outdoor chapel on the grounds of Saint Tikhon's Monastery. Archbishop Demetrios will be awarded a Doctor of Divinity, *Honoris Causa*,

in recognition of his yeoman service to Orthodox Christian theological education, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the USA, the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, and world Orthodoxy in general.



### **The Hoppe Family** Serving in Albania

Nathan and Gabriela are working to inspire, train, equip and lead Albanians to proclaim the Gospel and make disciples in Albania. They feel a tremendous urgency to follow Christ's command to make disciples of all nations in this land where less than a generation ago, complete atheism was enforced by the totalitarian communist government. Albania is one of the fastest changing countries in the world as it moves to integrate economically and culturally with Western Europe. The Orthodox Church of Albania has experienced a resurrection under the inspired leadership of Archbishop Anastasios. This resurrection is one of the miracles of the Orthodox world today but it is a fragile miracle and there is still much work to do.

The ministry of the Hoppe's is focused on seminary students, university students and children. Nathan teaches the early church fathers at the Resurrection of Christ Theological Academy and leads the ministry to students at the University of Tirana. Nathan also directs the Central Children's Office of the Orthodox Church of Albania, a ministry in which he works closely with Gabriela. He represents the Orthodox Church of Albania at a number of international gatherings including the official dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church and the dialogue with the Lutheran World Federation. Nathan also serves on the steering committee of the Lausanne-Orthodox initiative (LOI), is a member of the Advisory Council for World Vision Albania and is on the board of the Inter-Confessional Bible Society. Together Nathan and Gabriela lead a team of 25 Albanian Orthodox youth to Kosovo each year where they hold friendship camps for about 1500 Muslim Albanian children. These camps are part of the social and philanthropic work of the Orthodox Church of Albania.

Nathan was born and raised in Colombia, South America, where his parents continue to serve as missionaries. He is a graduate of Wheaton College and Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. Nathan has now served in Albania for more than 16 years. Gabriela, a native of Albania, is a graduate of the Resurrection of Christ Theological Academy and the University of Tirana she also holds a master's degree in Children's and Family Ministry from Bethel Seminary. In addition to her role in the Central Children's Office, Gabriela devotes much time to her important responsibilities as wife, mother and homemaker.

The Hoppes have three children, Tristan (16), Katherine (14), and Daniel (4).

Please partner with the Hoppe's through financial and prayer support.

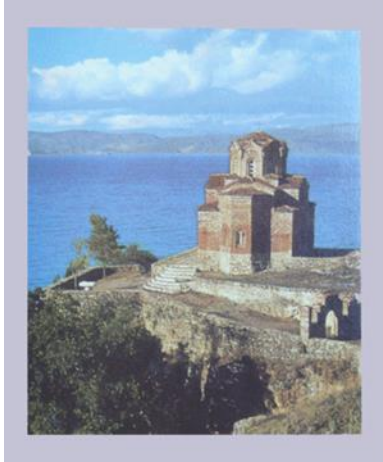
Please pray for the following:

- For Archbishop Anastasios and our other bishops, that they would have wisdom, strength and good health as they direct the Orthodox Church of Albania.
- For Nathan and Gabriela, that they would be living icons of Christ to all those around them as they seek to proclaim the Gospel in Albania and provide godly leadership in the ministry to children and university students.
- For the staff of Albanian coworkers which they lead in various ministries: Ana, Mikea, Joani, Marigela, Amarildo, Kristina, Melvina, Valeria, Marina, Fatjoni, Ingrida, Ervini, Matilda, Elisabeta, Kristi, Nikola, Marjeta.



- For children and university students in Albania, that their hearts would be open to the Gospel and that their lives would be transformed through it.
- That Nathan would be an effective teacher at the seminary, and that God would rise up zealous and committed young people to be trained for ministry.
- That God would inspire more people to become long-term missionaries from the United States, and that the church would effectively support them.

Long-term missionaries are not supported from the general fund of OCMC so the Hoppe's would be grateful if you can participate in their support by making a pledge or sending a one-time gift designated for "Hoppe family".



***Prayers by the Lake, St. Nikolai Velimirovich, LVIII:***

*Do you ask me for the way, exhausted runners?*

To what are you racing, sons of men? If you knew what you were jogging toward, you would also know the way.

Your destinations are innumerable, therefore your ways are also innumerable.

You collide with one another and curse at each other, because your pathways cut across each other.

Even if there were as many of you as there are blades of grass on the earth, you would not be colliding with one another, if you had one destination and one direction. And your mouths would quit cursing.

Those who search for life and truth, have one destination and one direction. Their destination shows them the way, just as the sun does

with light. Truly whoever hides from the sun will lose both his destination and his way, and in vain will he toss himself hither and thither in the dark.

Do not set out in the ways of your thoughts, for they lead you one thought to the next, and they know of no destination or way outside themselves.

Do not set out in the ways of your imaginations, for they allure you to level river beds until they suddenly plunge into an abyss beneath the earth.

Do not trust your soul as long as she tells you that the flesh in which she is clothed is your destination and way. Has clothing ever guided anyone?

The way to the kingdom of blessedness is not found, is not shown, and is not intersected. It is born in the soul when Life and Truth are born in her. If Life and Truth have been born in your soul, rejoice and be glad, for the Way has been born in it as well.<sup>1</sup>

Just as Life cannot be separated from Truth, so the Way cannot be separated from Life and Truth.

Until all three manifest themselves, none has been manifested.

Do not place your hope in tomorrow's day to cast bright light on your erring way. For tomorrow's day is only a new aberration of your way, and a new enigma.

Do not place your hope in days, for days are the garden of your imagination. Instead set all your hope in that Day which is never somber at dawn.

O Lord, my Lord, my triradiant Godhead, who will suffice except You?

The ways of men are a trap, in which runners run all day and at dusk find themselves in the same place. The entrapped ways of men bewilder me and I ask myself: who will suffice for a haven except my Lord?

"Whoever recognizes Me as the destination of his wayfaring," says the Lord, "will have Me as the Way to My mansions."<sup>2</sup>

O Lord, my Lord, my triradiant Godhead, who will dare to enter into Your light?

"Whoever draws near to gaze upon My light within himself, will dare to enter into My light, and will not be scorched."

O soul, my soul, my tri-nocturnal darkness, when will you remove your mask and be transfigured into triradiant daylight?

Save yourself while the divine torch is burning above you. For when it goes away from you it will vanish, even as the dancing moonlight has vanished in the depths of the lake.

---

***Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, LVIII:***

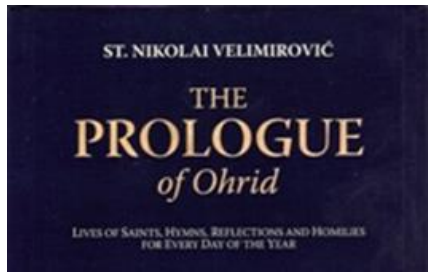
**II. The Realities of the Spiritual World**

**The Holy Scriptures**

Just as those who are deprived of light cannot walk straight, so also those who do not behold the ray of the Holy Scriptures must necessarily sin, since they walk in the deepest darkness.

+ *St. John Chrysostom, Conversations on the Book of Romans, 0.1*

---



**1. The Holy Martyr Basiliscus**

Basiliscus was a kinsman of St. Theodore Tiro. He was tortured together with Eutropius and Cleonicus. When the latter two [Eutropius and Cleonicus] were crucified and had died (March 3), then Basiliscus was returned to prison. At that time, the emperor's deputy was being replaced, and so Basiliscus remained imprisoned for a long time. With tears, Basiliscus prayed that God would not

deprive him of a martyr's death. After he prayed at length, the Lord Jesus Himself appeared to him, promised to fulfill his wish, and sent him to his village to bid farewell to his mother and brothers. At that time, Agrippa, a new deputy, was appointed and ordered that Basiliscus be brought from the village immediately. While Basiliscus was on his way from the village to the town of Amasea, the Lord, through His martyr, worked a great miracle, as a result of which many people believed in Christ. Agrippa ordered the martyr to offer a sacrifice to the idol Apollyon. Basiliscus said: "'Apollyon' means 'destroyer,'" and with fervent prayer he turned the idol into dust and burned the temple with fire from heaven. The frightened Agrippa attributed this to magic and ordered that Basiliscus be beheaded. At that moment, Agrippa went insane. In his madness, he went to the scaffold, found a little blood of the martyr in the dust, placed it under his belt, and he was healed. Coming to his senses, he was baptized. Marinus, a citizen of Comana, later built a church over the relics of the saint, at the place of the execution of Basiliscus, and many afflicted people found healing there.

**2. The Holy Martyr John Vladimir, King of Serbia**

John (Jovan) Vladimir was of princely lineage from Zahumlje. His grandfather was called Hvalimir and his father Petrislav. As a ruler, he was wise, merciful, meek, chaste and brave. He fervently prayed to God and voluntarily built churches and supported them. However, he had difficult struggles both internally and externally: internally from heretics and the Bogomils, and externally from Tsar Samuel and Tsar Basil who wanted to conquer him. Samuel deceitfully captured him and cast him into prison. While he languished in prison an angel of God appeared to him and foretold that he would shortly be freed, but that he would die a martyr's death. Getting to know him better, Samuel grew to like him and gave his daughter Kosara to be his wife. When Samuel died, his son Radomir was crowned Tsar. But Vladislav, his twin brother, slew Radomir, then deceitfully summoned Vladimir and beheaded him in the year 1015 A.D. The relics of this saintly king are preserved incorrupt in his monastery near Elbasan, and over his relics, throughout the ages and even today, numerous miracles have been worked. In 1925, a church was built to honor this crowned martyr near the Monastery of St. Nahum, since John Vladimir had been a benefactor of this glorious monastery.

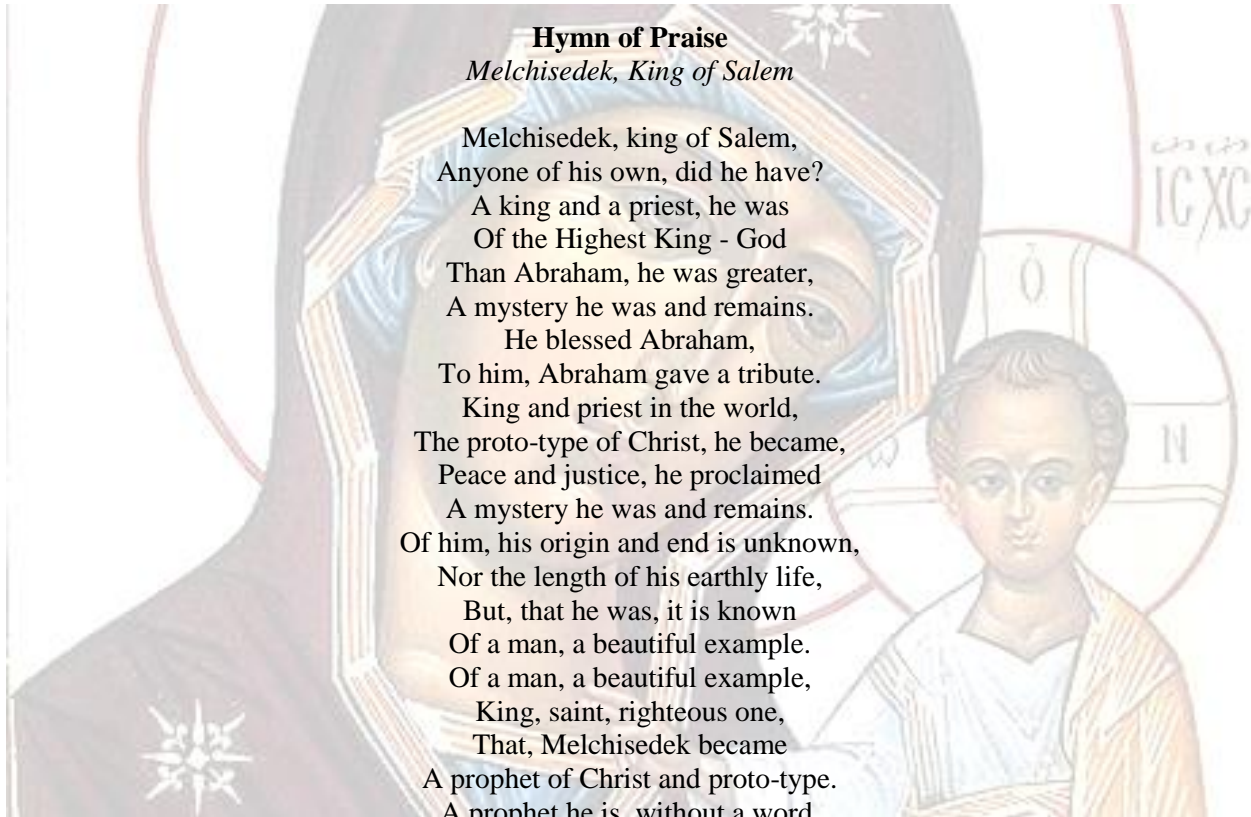


### 3. The Second Ecumenical Council

This Council was called during the reign of Emperor Theodosius the Great in Constantinople in the year 381 A.D. Its goal was to confirm the Orthodox teaching concerning the Holy Spirit. Macedonius, Patriarch of Constantinople, had erroneously taught that the Holy Spirit was God's creature and not a Divine Person [Hypostasis], and therefore not equal to the Father or the Son, or One in Essence with Them in the Holy Trinity. Macedonius was condemned by this Council, and the teaching about the Holy Spirit was added to the Nicaean Symbol of Faith [the Nicene Creed].

### 4. The Holy Righteous Melchisedek, King of Salem

Melchisedek was a contemporary of our forefather Abraham. According to the words of the Apostle Paul he was a king, a priest and a type of the Lord Jesus Christ (Hebrews 7).



#### **Hymn of Praise**

*Melchisedek, King of Salem*

Melchisedek, king of Salem,  
Anyone of his own, did he have?  
A king and a priest, he was  
Of the Highest King - God  
Than Abraham, he was greater,  
A mystery he was and remains.  
He blessed Abraham,  
To him, Abraham gave a tribute.  
King and priest in the world,  
The proto-type of Christ, he became,  
Peace and justice, he proclaimed  
A mystery he was and remains.  
Of him, his origin and end is unknown,  
Nor the length of his earthly life,  
But, that he was, it is known  
Of a man, a beautiful example.  
Of a man, a beautiful example,  
King, saint, righteous one,  
That, Melchisedek became  
A prophet of Christ and proto-type.  
A prophet he is, without a word,  
But with a most beautiful personality;  
A prophet he is, without a word,  
A prophet, with righteousness and mercy.

#### **Reflection**

How was Moses able to fast for forty days? How were the many Christian ascetics able to live a long life in extreme abstinence from food and drink? For the physical man who does not know about the spiritual life, this is impossible to believe. It is impossible even to prove it to him, for the understanding of this is achieved only by experience. When the torturers of St. Basiliscus detained him for three days without food and water, and when they did offer him food to eat, he refused, saying that he was not hungry. "I am," said he, "filled with immortal food and do not want to receive mortal food. You are fed by earthly bread, but the heavenly word of God feeds me; wine makes you happy, but the Grace of the Holy Spirit



makes me happy; meat satisfies you, but fasting satisfies me; physical power strengthens you, but the Cross of Christ strengthens me; gold makes you rich, but the love of Christ enriches me; clothing adorns you, but good works adorn me; you are made happy with laughter, but I am comforted by the Spirit through prayer." Behold this man, one of many, in whom the word of the Lord was confirmed: *Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God!* (St. Matthew 4:4).

### **Contemplation**

To contemplate the Grace of God the Holy Spirit in the Mystery [Sacrament] of Baptism:

1. How that grace cleanses man from original sin;
2. How it brings man to participation in the freedom of Christ.

### **Homily:**

#### **About the bodies of men as temples**

*"Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit Who is in you, Whom you have from God and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price" (1 Corinthians 6: 19-20).*

How is it, brethren, that our bodies became the temple of the Holy Spirit? Because we are bought with a price. The Lord Jesus bought us with His cares, labors, sufferings and death. Because of this price we were made worthy to become the temple of the Holy Spirit.

But someone will say: "That price was paid a long time ago, and we live twenty centuries later!" It is all the same: the price was not paid for one time and for one generation, but rather for all times and for all generations from Adam to the Dreadful Judgment. And if billions and billions of human beings are born on earth, the price is paid for all of them. The price is so great and rich that, if all the sand in the sea were changed into men, the price would be sufficient.

Brethren, from what moment do our bodies become the temple of the Holy Spirit? From the moment of our baptism. Although the price is paid for all men, only those who are baptized become the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Brethren, what is the consequence of the Holy Spirit taking up His abode in us? The consequence is this: that we are not our own anymore. When the Holy Spirit takes up His abode in our bodies, then He becomes the Master over us, and not we over our bodies or over ourselves. Then, brethren, we are the possession of God the Holy Spirit.

Brethren, what did it mean at the Mystical Supper [Last Supper], when the Lord washed even the feet of Judas, and Judas received a piece of bread from the Lord, when the Scripture says: *Satan entered into him* (St. John 13:27). Oh, what dreadful words! Oh, what a horrible punishment for the traitor of God! Brethren, does this not mean that when we reject God, Who washes and feeds us, the Spirit of God departs from us and Satan settles in His place? Oh, what a harsh meaning! Oh, what a terrible reminder to all of us who are baptized! The Holy Spirit settled in us during our baptism and made us a temple for Himself. But the Holy Spirit does not dwell in us by force, but rather according to our good will. If we transgress against Him, He departs from us; Satan enters in His place, and our physical temple is transformed into a pigsty.

O All-good Holy Spirit, do not leave us. Have mercy on us and forgive us.

**To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.**

---



## ***The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration with Abbott Tryphon***

### **No Greater Honor**

*The invitation to become a child of God*

We have been praying most of our lives, but do we ever think about what that means? Have we ever thought how incredible it is that our Creator God has invited us to speak with Him at any time? That the Lord of the Universe has given us the right to speak with Him, to ask for help, to seek His mercy? There is no greater honor given to humanity than the gift of being able to approach our God in prayer, any hour of the day or night, in every circumstance. In every season we can speak to Him. We can call upon God in our joy or in our anger, and from the depths of despair, we can speak to Him. It is beyond our human understanding that we have been assured that our God is always listening to us, yet it is true. Our Creator even condescended to join His Divinity with our humanity, becoming incarnate in the flesh, that we might see His face. In Christ, He has revealed Himself to us, and invited us to commune with Him forever.

With love in Christ,  
Abbot Tryphon



### ***Daily Reflection*** **A New Rest**

*“...The man (the one healed at the pool of Bethesda) went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him. And this was why*

*the Jews persecuted Jesus, because he did this on the sabbath. But Jesus answered them, ‘My Father is working still, and I am working.’ This was why the Jews sought all the more to kill him, because he not only broke the sabbath but also called God his own Father, making himself equal with God.” (Jn 5: 15-18)*



Here, in yet another incident within the ongoing “Sabbath controversy” between Jesus and the Pharisees, our Lord makes a shocking statement: *“My Father is working still (until now), and I am working.”* Jesus is signaling a change in His Father’s dealings with us, His people.

Previously, God had made His “rest” on the seventh day upon creation, as described in Genesis 2: 1-3, a “sign” of the Old Mosaic Covenant between Him and us (Ex 31: 13). We were blessed with the Fourth Commandment by “imitating” God and “resting” as He did upon His first creation. But now He reveals Himself as “working still,” also on the Sabbath, because He is working, in His Son, on the new creation, which is to become the “New Covenant” in the blood of the Son (Lk 22:20); in the salvific works and workings of Christ crucified.

So now we are called to be “working” in Him, with Him, and like Him, Who offers us a new connection with Him, in *“a new covenant in His blood”* (1 Cor 11: 25). Today I find new “rest” and new peace in the lightness of His redemptive Cross, according to His promise: *“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am meek and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”* (Mt 11: 28-30)

### ***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.

He who has just begun to follow a holy way of life, and has received instruction about how to act righteously, devotes himself wholly to the practice of the virtues in all obedience and faith, nourishing himself, as if on meat, on their manifest aspects, that is to say, on moral training.

Faith is knowledge that cannot be rationally demonstrated. If such knowledge cannot be rationally demonstrated, then faith is a supra-natural relationship through which, in an unknowable and so undemonstrable manner, we are united with God in a union which is beyond intellection.

+ *St Maximus the Confessor, 500 Various Texts*

#### ***Daily Readings with Early Church Fathers and Mothers***

##### **"The Proper Diet"**

Evagrius said, "Some of our predecessors used to say that a dry and regular diet combined with love will soon bring a monk to the harbor where the storms of passion do not enter."

He also said, "A monk was told that his father had died. He said to the messenger, "Do not blaspheme. My Father cannot die.""

##### **"Three Things God Wants"**

Gregory said, "God asks three things of anyone who is baptized: to keep the true faith with all his soul and his might; to control his tongue; to be chaste in his body."

##### **"What Shall I Do?"**

Pambo said to Antony, "What shall I do?" Antony said, "Do not trust in your own unrighteousness. Do not go on sorrowing over a deed that is past. Keep your tongue and your belly under control."

##### **"Pleasing God"**

Somebody asked Antony, "What shall I do in order to please God?" He replied, "Do what I tell you, which is this: wherever you go, keep God in mind; whatever you do, follow the example of holy Scripture; wherever you are, stay there and do not move away in a hurry. If you keep to these guidelines, you will be saved."



## 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 <i>10:00 a.m. Liturgy in Thanksgiving celebrating the 6th Anniversary of Archbishop Michael's Episcopal Consecration Holy Trinity Church Yonkers NY</i>	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 No Sunday School 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy / Social	30	31 7:00-8:00pm – The Grey Book Study Mtg. NA Grp				