

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 29, 2016

Gospel: John 4:5-42

Tone 4

Epistle: Acts 11:19-26, 29-30

Sunday of the Samaritan Woman



**Glory to
Jesus Christ!**

**Glory
Forever!**

*Sunday of the Samaritan
Woman*

*The Samaritan Woman came to the well in faith;
She saw You, the Water of Wisdom, and drank abundantly
She inherited the Kingdom on High and is ever glorified!*

(Kontakion — Tone 8)

Today's Commemorated Feasts and Saints

5th Sunday of Pascha — Tone 4. Samaritan Woman. Virgin Martyr Theodosia of Tyre (307-308). Repose of Bl. John of Ustiug, Fool-for-Christ (1494). Virgin Martyr Theodosia, Nun, of Constantinople (726-730). Icon of the Most-holy Theotokos, "SURETY OF SINNERS".

Prayer Requests

For Health of:

Paul & Linda Jankowski, on their 35th wedding anniversary, offered by their sons.

Gabrielle Stefy, on her 20th birthday, offered by her grandmother Lore Stefy.

Archpriest Ken James Stavrevsky, Director of Communications for the Diocese, preparing for knee surgery scheduled for Friday, June 3, offered by the Diocese of NY/NJ.

In Memory of:

Our father, **Risley**, offered by Linda & Richard Dantinne.

Congratulations extended to:

SDcn Ed Dawson on the completion of the OCA Board of Theological Education Diaconal Vocations Program (DVP) and graduation from St. Tikhon's Seminary on Saturday, May 28, 2016 (see more under parish news).

Liturgical Schedule:

Sunday, May 29th

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

Saturday, June 4th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, June 5th

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

Wednesday, June 8th

6:30 pm: Vesperal Liturgy
w/Abp. Michael, for the
Ascension of our Lord

Saturday, June 11th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, June 12th

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

Saturday, June 18th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, June 19th

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

Bulletin Sponsors:

*Linda & Richard Dantine
The Jankowski's
Lore Stefy*

Readings:



The Prokeimenon in the 3rd Tone:

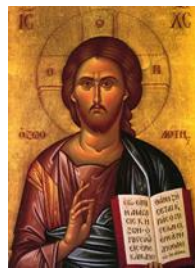
Sing praises to our God, sing praises! Sing praises to our
King, sing praises!. (*Psalm 46:7*)
vs. Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud
songs of joy! (*Psalm 46:1*)

Epistle: Acts 11:19-26, 29-30

In those days, those apostles who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to none except Jews. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number that believed turned to the Lord. News of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad; and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose; for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a large company was added to the Lord. So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul; and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church, and taught a large company of people; and in Antioch the disciples were for the first time called Christians. Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. And one of them named Agabos stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world; and this took place in the days of Claudius. And the disciples determined, every one according to his ability, to send relief to the brethren who lived in Judea, and they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

Alleluia in the 4th Tone:

Go forth, prosper and reign, for the sake of meekness, righteousness and truth!
(*Psalm 44:5*)
vs. For You love righteousness, and hate iniquity (*Psalm 44:8*)



Gospel: John 4:5-42

At that time, Jesus came to a city of Samaria, called Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and so Jesus, wearied as he was with his journey, sat down beside the well. It was about the sixth hour. There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; where do you get that living water?"

Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, and his sons, and his cattle?" Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and he whom you now have is not your husband; this you said truly." The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain; and you say that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ); when he comes, he will show us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he." Just then his disciples came. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but none said, "What do you wish?" or, "Why are you talking with her?" So the woman left her water jar, and went away into the city and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?" They went out of the city and were coming to him. Meanwhile the disciples besought him, saying "Rabbi, eat." But he said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." So the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought him food?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work. Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see how the fields are already white for harvest. He who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor; others have labored, and you have entered into their labor." Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony. "He told me all that I ever did." So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of your words that we believe, for we have heard ourselves, and we know that this is indeed Christ the Savior of the world."



Sunday of the Samaritan Woman

The Holy Martyr Photina (Svetlana) the Samaritan Woman, her sons Victor (named Photinus) and Joses; and her sisters Anatola, Phota, Photis, Paraskeva, Kyriake; Nero's daughter Domnina; and the Martyr Sebastian: The holy Martyr Photina was the Samaritan Woman, with whom the Savior conversed at Jacob's Well (John. 4:5-42).

During the time of the emperor Nero (54-68), who displayed excessive cruelty against Christians, St Photina lived in Carthage with her younger son Joses and fearlessly preached the Gospel there. Her eldest son Victor fought bravely in the Roman army against barbarians, and was appointed military commander in the city of Attalia (Asia Minor). Later, Nero called him to Italy to arrest and punish Christians.

Sebastian, an official in Italy, said to St Victor, "I know that you, your mother and your brother, are followers of Christ. As a friend I advise you to submit to the will of the emperor. If you inform on any Christians, you will receive their wealth. I shall write to your mother and brother, asking them not to preach Christ in public. Let them practice their faith in secret."

St Victor replied, "I want to be a preacher of Christianity like my mother and brother." Sebastian said, "O Victor, we all know what woes await you, your mother and brother." Then Sebastian suddenly felt a sharp pain in his eyes. He was dumbfounded, and his face was somber.

For three days he lay there blind, without uttering a word. On the fourth day he declared, “The God of the Christians is the only true God.” St Victor asked why Sebastian had suddenly changed his mind. Sebastian replied, “Because Christ is calling me.” Soon he was baptized, and immediately regained his sight. St Sebastian’s servants, after witnessing the miracle, were also baptized.

Reports of this reached Nero, and he commanded that the Christians be brought to him at Rome. Then the Lord Himself appeared to the confessors and said, “Fear not, for I am with you. Nero, and all who serve him, will be vanquished.” The Lord said to St Victor, “From this day forward, your name will be Photinus, because through you, many will be enlightened and will believe in Me.” The Lord then told the Christians to strengthen and encourage St Sebastian to persevere until the end.

All these things, and even future events, were revealed to St Photina. She left Carthage in the company of several Christians and joined the confessors in Rome.

At Rome the emperor ordered the saints to be brought before him and he asked them whether they truly believed in Christ. All the confessors refused to renounce the Savior. Then the emperor gave orders to smash the martyrs’ finger joints. During the torments, the confessors felt no pain, and their hands remained unharmed.

Nero ordered that Sts Sebastian, Photinus and Joses be blinded and locked up in prison, and St Photina and her five sisters Anatola, Photia, Photis, Paraskeva and Kyriake were sent to the imperial court under the supervision of Nero’s daughter Domnina. St Photina converted both Domnina and all her servants to Christ. She also converted a sorcerer, who had brought her poisoned food to kill her.

Three years passed, and Nero sent to the prison for one of his servants, who had been locked up. The messengers reported to him that Sts Sebastian, Photinus and Joses, who had been blinded, had completely recovered, and that people were visiting them to hear their preaching, and indeed the whole prison had been transformed into a bright and fragrant place where God was glorified.

Nero then gave orders to crucify the saints, and to beat their naked bodies with straps. On the fourth day the emperor sent servants to see whether the martyrs were still alive. But, approaching the place of the tortures, the servants fell blind. An angel of the Lord freed the martyrs from their crosses and healed them. The saints took pity on the blinded servants, and restored their sight by their prayers to the Lord. Those who were healed came to believe in Christ and were soon baptized.

In an impotent rage Nero gave orders to flay the skin from St Photina and to throw the martyr down a well. Sebastian, Photinus and Joses had their legs cut off, and they were thrown to dogs, and then had their skin flayed off. The sisters of St Photina also suffered terrible torments. Nero gave orders to cut off their breasts and then to flay their skin. An expert in cruelty, the emperor readied the fiercest execution for St Photis: they tied her by the feet to the tops of two bent-over trees. When the ropes were cut the trees sprang upright and tore the martyr apart. The emperor ordered the others beheaded. St Photina was removed from the well and locked up in prison for twenty days.

After this Nero had her brought to him and asked if she would now relent and offer sacrifice to the idols. St Photina spit in the face of the emperor, and laughing at him, said, “O most impious of the blind, you profligate and stupid man! Do you think me so deluded that I would consent to renounce my Lord Christ and instead offer sacrifice to idols as blind as you?”

Hearing such words, Nero gave orders to again throw the martyr down the well, where she surrendered her soul to God (ca. 66).

On the Greek Calendar, St Photina is commemorated on February 26.



Bulletin Sponsors/Prayer Requests: Use the sign-up sheet at the candle stand for the health of, eternal memory of or a Pannikhida for a loved one or friend, for a donation of \$10. Bulletin Sponsors/Prayer Requests will be remembered during Divine Liturgy for the day/week that you signed up for.

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

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

Pannikhida Service: The third Sunday of each month there will be a Pannikhida after Divine Liturgy. If you would like your loved ones to be remembered please give a list of names to Father Matthew before that Sunday for those to be remembered in the month.

Special Announcements for the bulletin can be submitted by E-Mail:
OrthodoxChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com

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

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



Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Parish News

Congratulations to our very own SDcn Ed Dawson on the completion of the OCA Board of Theological Education Diaconal Vocations Program (DVP) and graduation from St. Tikhon's Seminary on Saturday, May 28, 2016. The DVP pamphlet states, "Every candidate to the DVP must understand that successful completion of the program does not guarantee ordination. Such a decision is the sole prerogative of the Holy Synod and the candidate's diocesan bishop and is only made subsequent to a review of each candidate's work, character, and calling by the Board of Theological Education upon successful completion of the program and recommendation for ordination." Our prayers continue for you and your family as consideration is made by the Holy Synod, Abp. Michael, and the Board of TE towards your possible ordination. Your parish family wishes you and your family sincerest congratulations and many blessed years!

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.*

PARISH COUNCIL CONFERENCE

Presenter: Matushka Mary Buletza Breton, Diocesan Treasurer; Partner, Raphael and Raphael CPAs and Consultants

Theme: Navigating the Transition from the Diocesan Assessment to Proportional Giving

The all-day conference program will begin in the morning and end in mid-afternoon. Times and program details will be published soon.

Saturday, June 18th, Christ the Saviour Church, 365 Paramus Road, Paramus, NJ 07652 (New Jersey Deanery)

Saturday, June 25th, Holy Virgin Protection Cathedral, 59 E. 2nd Street, New York, NY 10003 (New York City Deanery)

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.



NY/NJ Diocese News

Memorial Day Pilgrimage: Concert to Benefit Saint Tikhon's Seminary

The Chamber Choir of Saint Tikhon's Monastery will sing a benefit concert of sacred music by American composers at **Saint Stephen's Episcopal Pro-Cathedral, 35 South Franklin Street, Wilkes-Barre PA 18701, on Sunday, May 29, 2016 at 7:30 p.m.** Proceeds from the concert, titled ***“Rejoice, O Mountains of Pennsylvania,”*** benefit Saint Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary. The performance is part of a series of events that will take place during the 112th annual Saint Tikhon's Memorial Day Pilgrimage. **Tickets are available at the door: \$20.00 for adults and \$10.00 for students.**



Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News

112th Pilgrimage to St. Tikhon's Monastery opened Friday, May 27

The 112th Annual Pilgrimage to Saint Tikhon's Monastery opened officially on Friday, May 27 at 3:30 p.m. with the greeting of the Hawaiian Myrrh Streaming Icon of the Mother of God at the entrance arch and the celebration of a Molieben, followed by Vespers and Matins, in the Monastery Church of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk. The icon will be available for veneration throughout the Pilgrimage, which formally ends on Memorial Day—Monday, May 30.

The 74th annual Commencement of Saint Tikhon's Seminary will be held on Saturday, May 28. The day will open with the celebration of the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy in the Monastery Church at 9:00 a.m., followed by a meal in the dining hall. Commencement Exercises will begin at 1:00 p.m. His Eminence, Archbishop Demetrios of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America will deliver the commencement address, after which he will be awarded a Doctor of Divinity degree, *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. [See related story.] The Resurrection Vigil will be celebrated at 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, followed by dinner in the dining hall.

The Hierarchical Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, May 29, followed by a meal in the dining hall. Vespers and Matins will be celebrated at 4:00 p.m.

On Memorial Day, May 30, the Divine Liturgy will be celebrated in the Monastery Church at 7:30 a.m. His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, will preside at the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at 10:00 a.m., followed by a Panikhida for Veterans at All Saints Bell Tower at 12:15 p.m. The Akathistos Hymn to Saint Alexis will be celebrated in the Monastery Church at 1:30 p.m., while the Molieben to the Most Holy Theotokos with the Anointing of the Sick, Infirm and All Pilgrims will be celebrated at the Monastery Bell Tower at 2:30 p.m. The Pilgrimage will close with the celebration of Vespers and Matins at 4:00 p.m.

A highlight of this year's Pilgrimage will be the historical exhibition, “Russian America: The Alaskan Native Spiritual Legacy,” which pilgrims are invited to view at the Monastery Museum. Organized in conjunction with the 45th Anniversary of the Glorification of Saint Herman of Alaska and offering a glimpse into Orthodox Christianity's spiritual legacy in Alaska, the exhibition opened on January 22, 2016 at Villanova University, where it ran through May 16. [See related story.]

Concurrent with the Pilgrimage, the Patriarch Tikhon Russian-American Music Institute [PaTRAM] will hold its First Annual Memorial Day Young Singers’ Conference at the Monastery. Under the direction of Maestro Vladimir Gorbik, the 30-voice mixed choir includes vocalists and choral musicians from the US, Canada and Russia. Conference participants will sing the liturgical responses during the Pilgrimage. In addition, the Saint Tikhon’s Monastery Chamber Choir will be presenting a benefit concert featuring works by American composers at 7:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 29. The concert will be held at Saint Stephen’s Episcopal Pro-Cathedral, Wilkes-Barre, PA. Details and additional information are available.



OCMC News - New Board Members and a New Strategic Plan at This Year's Spring OCMC Board Meeting

by Sara Staff

The Annual Spring Board of Directors Meeting of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) was held May 9th and 10th at the Orthodox Christian Mission Center in Saint Augustine, Florida. Board members from across the country attended the meeting. Also present at the meeting were participants on an OCMC short-term healthcare team who were preparing to fly out to serve in Indonesia. The board participated in the commissioning prayer for the team’s outreach, where they will be using their professional skills to minister at the RSU Theotokos Hospital in Medan.

The Board welcomed two new members during the meeting, Mr. Armin Brown of Cypress, California, from the Antiochian Archdiocese and Mr. Frank Catricket of Boston, Massachusetts, from the Greek Archdiocese. The Board also recognized members of the Executive Committee whose terms are ending, especially officers Fr. George Liacopoulos (President), John Colis (Vice President), William Birchfield III (Treasurer), and Dr. Gayle Woloschak (Secretary). A new slate of officers will be voted upon and installed this summer.

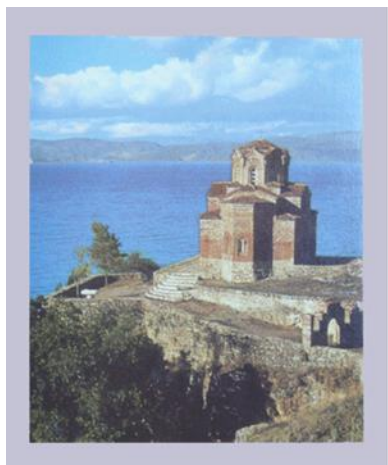
“We appreciate the work that has been done and will continue to be done through the support of those participating in the work carried out through the OCMC Board,” stated Fr. Martin Ritsi, OCMC Executive Director.

There was a positive report of the organization’s financial health. The OCMC Board heard a report from their independent outside auditor, who announced that the agency received a clean audit on its 2015 financials.

A large part of the meeting involved reviewing OCMC’s new three-year strategic plan. Fr. Ritsi and Dr. Gayle Woloschak led the Board in looking at the vision and mission of OCMC for the next three years and beyond. He mentioned the three core focus areas that drive mission efforts; these include bringing non-Christians to Christ, helping to establish the Church in places where it is newly emerging or re-emerging, and encouraging self-support for the programs and parishes that have been started in the mission field. The board had an extensive conversation about about the importance of self-support. These focus areas work toward OCMC’s overlying vision: “to bring all people to know the saving love of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.”

The OCMC Staff and Board, along with retired Executive Director, His Grace Bishop Dimitrios of Xanthos, enjoyed a dinner together on the evening of May 10th at Creekside Dinery, where Indonesia Healthcare Team Leader Dr. Cheryl Johnson gave a presentation about her journey to Orthodoxy and how missions has been an integral part of that journey. Presentations such as Cheryl’s bring to life the work of OCMC in a way that makes it tangible and relevant for those who hear it. We thank God for the continued opportunity to make disciples of all nations through His grace and provision.

Please continue to pray for OCMC’s staff, board, missionaries, and volunteers in the coming year.



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

How many, many times, my soul, you have sobbed for someone who knew the way, had seen the truth, and possessed life.

You thirstily used to entrust yourself to many expert runners, who would lead you along every way to a certain point, and would then take you back.

You used to listen to many who told tales about the truth, my soul. But when you would pose certain questions to them, questions which burned deep within you, their words would get stuck in their throats. And saddened, you would go to other story-tellers, and would hear the same tale over again --a tale which, like all the others, only went so far, like a stretched rubber band.

And those who used to try to explain life to you, would only succeed in opening your eyes to death.

But behold, the One who resurrects is coming, and all-terrifying death flees in terror before Him. Here is a story for you about Life, one which death does not shorten, but lengthens.¹

Here is a story for you about Truth, one which provides answers to all your questions before you even pose them.

Here is the Guide for you, whose Way never ends; and once He begins to guide you, He does not go back.

Here is the Good Shepherd,² who values the life of one sheep above all the Sabbaths of the Jews.³ And here is the Healer, to whom the life of a penitent sinner is more valuable than Solomon's temple.⁴

Do not worry, my soul, about any of the sheep in your sheepfold -- not one of them will perish. Neither need you fret over the wolves around the sheep -- not one of them will escape. For your Shepherd has a sharp two-edged sword.

All the sheep are within you, and all the wolves are within you -- the progeny of your marriage with heaven and earth --and behold, my Favorite is coming in with a sharp two-edged sword.

Do not wail, if He hurts you with His sword. He is the Good Physician and He cuts out of you only that which is not you. Do not wail for the strangers who brought you disease, and shame, and grievous wounds. Do not be afraid of the in-extinguishable fire, that He brings into you. For a long time the junk accumulated within you has been in need of a bonfire. The bonfire will last a long time, because the old junk within you has rotted.

The pain that you feel is not your own, my soul, but is the pain of your other marriage and its -- illegitimate children.

Do not lament, if He separates you from a father and a mother, and brothers and sisters.⁵ He will not separate you from anything that is of heaven. He would not even consider cutting a single heavenly bond. Indeed, He is only separating and purifying you from earth, and is cutting your bonds with earth.

If you were a chaste virgin, my soul, and saw with the unconfounded eye of celestial innocence, even you yourself would easily break these bonds, for you would see that in truth they do not even exist.

Hurry, my soul, and unite yourself with the Son of the Living God, for He is not waiting for me. Once you unite yourself with Him, behold, neither His sword nor His fire will be frightening to you, but will be as sweet as honey.

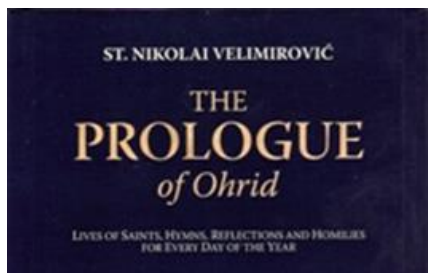
Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, LIX:

II. The Realities of the Spiritual World

The Holy Scriptures

A humble man who lives a spiritual life, when he reads the Holy Scriptures, while relate all things to himself and not to others.

+ St. Mark the Ascetic, Sermon, 1.6



1. Commemoration of the First Ecumenical Council

The commemoration and praise of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council is held on the Sunday before Pentecost, the Seventh Sunday after Pascha. This Council was held in Nicaea in the year 325 A.D. during the reign of the saintly Emperor Constantine the Great. The Council was convened to eliminate the confusion which Arius, a priest of Alexandria, had created by his false teaching. He taught that Christ was created in time by God and that He is not the pre-eternal Son of God, equal in being [essence] with God the Father. Three hundred and eighteen Holy Fathers participated in this Council. The Council condemned the teaching of Arius, and Arius was anathematized since he refused to repent. The Council finally confirmed the Symbol of Faith [The Creed], which was later augmented at the Second Ecumenical Council [381 A.D.]. Many distinguished saints were present at the First Ecumenical Council, among whom the most notable were: St. Nicholas of Myra in Lycia, St. Spyridon, St. Athanasius, St. Acillus, St. Paphnutius, St. James of Nisibis, Macarius of Jerusalem, Alexander of Alexandria, Eustathius of Antioch, Eusebius of Caesarea, Metrophanes of Constantinople, John of Persia, Aristarchus of Armenia and many others from the East. From the West, the following were present: Hosius of Cordova, Theophilus the Goth, Cecilianus of Carthage and others. The most important work of this Council was the confirmation of the Symbol of Faith [The Creed]. The Council also established the time of the celebration of the Feast of the Resurrection of Christ [Pascha] and issued twenty various canons.

2. The Holy Female Martyr Theodosia of Tyre

Once, during the reign of Emperor Maximian, many Christians stood bound before the praetor in Palestinian Caesarea. The pious virgin Theodosia approached, and comforted and encouraged them in their martyrdom. Upon hearing what she was saying, the soldiers also led her before the judge. The enraged judge ordered that a stone be hung around her neck and that she be cast into the depths of the sea. But angels of God carried her to the shore alive. When she appeared before the judge again, he ordered her to be beheaded. The following night, Theodosia appeared to her parents encompassed in a great heavenly light, surrounded by many other virgins who were also saved and said: "Do you see how great is the glory and grace of my Christ, of which you wanted to deprive me?" She said this to her parents because they had tried to dissuade her from confessing Christ and martyrdom. Theodosia suffered honorably and was glorified in the year 308 A.D.

3. The Venerable Female Martyr Theodosia

Theodosia was born as the result of the prayers of her mother to the holy martyr Anastasia, who appeared to her and said that she would give birth. Her parents dedicated her to God and at an early age presented her to a woman's monastery. After the death of her parents Theodosia inherited a vast estate, and from that estate she ordered three icons from a goldsmith: of the Savior, the Mother of God [The Theotokos] and St. Anastasia. The rest of her inheritance she distributed to the poor. She suffered in the year 730 A.D. during the reign of the evil Emperor Leo the Isaurian, the iconoclast, and received a two-fold wreath: virginity and martyrdom.

4. Saint Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria

Alexander was the first to take up the fight against Arius. He died in the year 326 A.D.

5. Saint John Ustjuzski, Fool for Christ and Miracle-Worker

6. The Holy Martyr John (Nan) of Thessalonica

John suffered for the Faith at the hands of the Turks in Smyrna in 1802 A.D.

7. The Holy Martyr Andrew of Chios

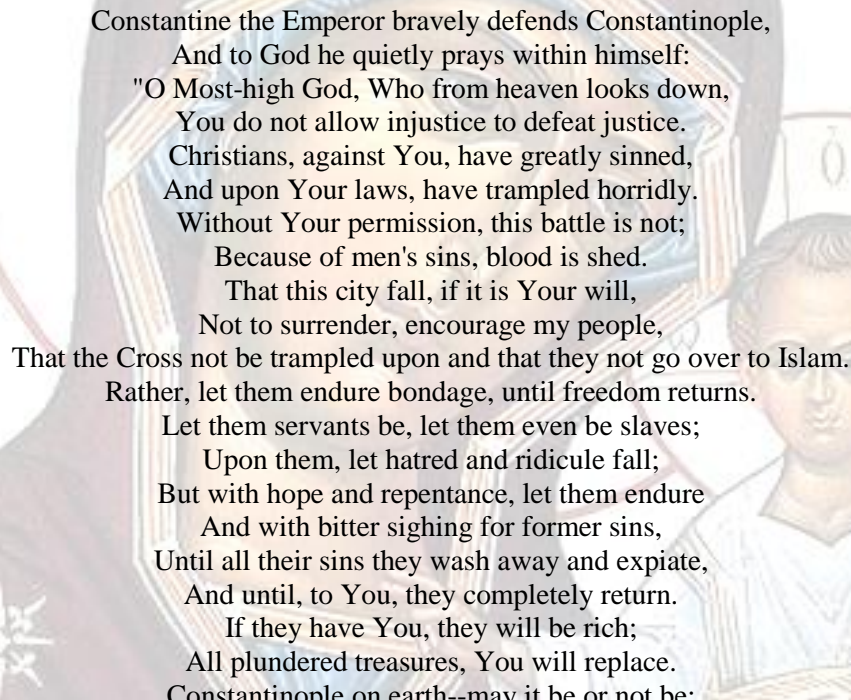
Andrew suffered for the Faith at the hands of the Turks in Constantinople in the year 1465 A.D.

8. The Fall of the City of Constantinople

Because of the sins of men, God permitted a bitter calamity to fall upon the capital of Christianity. On May 29, 1453 A.D., Sultan Muhammed II conquered Constantinople and executed Emperor Constantine XI.

Hymn of Praise

*The Fall of the City of Constantinople (May 29, 1453)
Emperor Constantine XI*



Constantine the Emperor bravely defends Constantinople,
And to God he quietly prays within himself:
"O Most-high God, Who from heaven looks down,
You do not allow injustice to defeat justice.
Christians, against You, have greatly sinned,
And upon Your laws, have trampled horridly.
Without Your permission, this battle is not;
Because of men's sins, blood is shed.
That this city fall, if it is Your will,
Not to surrender, encourage my people,
That the Cross not be trampled upon and that they not go over to Islam.
Rather, let them endure bondage, until freedom returns.
Let them servants be, let them even be slaves;
Upon them, let hatred and ridicule fall;
But with hope and repentance, let them endure
And with bitter sighing for former sins,
Until all their sins they wash away and expiate,
And until, to You, they completely return.
If they have You, they will be rich;
All plundered treasures, You will replace.
Constantinople on earth--may it be or not be;
A Constantintople in heaven, You established,
Where, with Your servants, you gloriously reign.
Before this Constantinople, behold, I stand.
O Blessed One, on our sinful souls, have mercy.
When it is built anew, let the old one be razed!

Reflection

Oh, how great was the fearlessness of the holy men and holy women! When we read about their lives, both shame and pride is awakened involuntarily in us: shame that we have lagged so far behind them, and pride that they are of our Christian race. Neither sickness, nor prison, nor exile, nor suffering, nor humiliation, nor the sword, nor the abyss, nor fire, nor the gallows were able to shake the exalted peace of their souls, firmly attached to Christ, the Helmsman of the universe and of human history. When Emperor

Julian apostasized from the Faith and began to lay waste Christianity throughout the entire empire, St. Athanasius the Great quietly spoke of him to the faithful: "It is a small cloud; it will pass!" (*Nibicula est, transibit*). And indeed, that dark cloud quickly passed, and Christianity lowered its roots even deeper and spread its branches all the more throughout the world. The impotent rage of Julian against Christ passed after several years with Julian's cry in his death-rattle: "O Nazarene, You have conquered!" O sons of God, why should we be afraid of anything, when God our Father fears nothing?

Contemplation

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

1. How grace gives a certain dignity to the manner of the procreating of the human race;
2. How it makes matrimony honorable by comparing it to the union of Christ with the Church.

Homily:

About the two-fold mystery of marriage

"This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church" (Ephesians 5:32).

Great is the mystery when a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife. The Apostle himself, who was raised to the third heaven and who saw many mysteries of heaven, calls the physical union of men and women in marriage on earth "a great mystery." It is the mystery of love and life, and only the mystery of Christ's union with His Church is greater. Christ is called the Bridegroom, and the Church is called the Bride. Christ loves His Church so much that, because of Her, He left His heavenly Father--remaining with Him, of course, in unity of essence and divinity--and descended to earth and bound Himself to His Church. He suffered for Her so that, by His Blood, He might cleanse Her from every sin and defilement, and make Her worthy to be called His Bride. With His love He warms the Church, with His Blood He feeds the Church, and by His Holy Spirit He causes the Church to live and sanctifies and adorns Her. What a husband is to a wife, so Christ is to the Church. Man is the head of woman and Christ is the Head of the Church. A woman listens to her husband, and the Church listens to Christ. A husband loves his wife as he loves his own body, and Christ loves the Church as His own Body. A husband loves his wife as he loves himself, and a wife reveres her husband; so also Christ loves the Church as His own self, and the Church reveres Christ. Since no one hates his own flesh but rather warms and nourishes it, so also Christ warms and feeds the Church as His own Body. Every individual human soul is the bride of Christ the Bridegroom, and the assembly of all the faithful is the bride of Christ the Bridegroom. The relationship of a believing man toward Christ is the relationship of the entire Church toward Christ. Christ is the Head of that great Body which is called the Church, and which is in part visible and in part invisible.

O my brethren, this is a great mystery! It is revealed to us according to the measure of our love for Christ and of our fear of Christ's judgment.

O Lord, gentle Savior, cleanse us, save us and adorn our souls, that we may be worthy of the immortal and indescribable unity with You in time and in eternity.

To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.



The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration with Abbott Tryphon

Divided Loyalties

We only think we can be of Christ and of the world

“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Matthew 6:24).

It is important that you be mindful of where you place your priorities. Are you of Christ, or are you of the world? Do you serve God, or do you submit to this temporal world which shall one day come to an end? Do you think you can divide your loyalties in this life, serving your spouse or boss during the week, while serving God only on weekends, or perhaps even just major holy days? Do you think of God only when in church or with religious people? When working at your job, do you think of God, or are you disconnected from your spiritual life because you’ve compartmentalized it? Jesus says this is impossible, because “No one can serve two masters”.

The Apostle Paul taught in I Timothy 3:15, the Church is the pillar and ground of Truth, and it is to this Church that the Apostles entrusted the Faith, once and for all delivered to the saint as its guardian and protector (Jude v. 3). Thus, the Church’s services, Liturgies, prayers and sacraments are all essential if we are to be authentic as people of faith.

“In accordance with the Apostolic faith delivered to us by tradition from the Fathers, I have delivered the tradition, without inventing anything extraneous to it. What I have learned, that I inscribed, comfortably with the Holy Scriptures (Saint Athanasios the Great).”

It is through this Tradition that we bind ourselves to Christ, serving only Him. All else must be secondary. When the Lord says “You cannot serve God and mammon,” He is referring to things of a materialistic nature (mammon is the Aramaic word for “god of wealth”). He asks us all to declare whom we serve, God or mammon? And the way to determine who or what you love the most is to see where your loyalties lie.

When you are faced with choices between God, and anything else, what will be your choice? Do you choose to attend church on Sunday or do you chose to sleep in? Do you prioritize your life around your relationship with God, or do sporting events, vacations, family outings, entertainment, or friends take center stage? Does prayer, reading the bible, serving others, financially supporting the church and its mission, and giving alms serve as your central theme, or do you chose personal gain and pleasure as central to your life?

Are you more concerned about money, your popularity, or the home you own, or do these things take back seat to Jesus Christ? If God be your master, you will be able to honestly say that none of these worldly things are anywhere near as important to you as your relationship with Christ.

Christ said, “Be not therefore like them: for your Father knows what things you have need of, before you ask him (Matthew 6:8).” If we serve only God as our master, all else that you need will be provided.

With love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon



Daily Reflection **He Crosses the Line**



"So he came to a city of Samaria, called Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and so

Jesus, wearied as he was with his journey, sat down beside the well. It was about the sixth hour. There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink.' For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, 'How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?' For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.'" (Jn 4: 5-10)

Indeed, at first the Samaritan woman does not see "who it is" that is speaking with her. She merely sees the externals and politics of status. She sees not Christ, but "a Jew," and herself, "a Samaritan" and "a woman," drawing an immediate, accepted line of demarcation between herself and the Stranger. But our Lord crosses this line, speaking to her not as to "a woman" or "a Samaritan," or some other category, but as to a distinct person. Differently from her, He recognizes *"the gift of God"* and exactly "who it is" with whom He speaks, – a concrete human being – and He calls her to do the same.

Today let me recognize His voice, however and whenever He might strike up a conversation with me. Let me recognize *"the gift of God"* in His messengers, be they women, men, Jews, Samaritans, Greeks, Russians, Americans, Georgians, Romanians, Serbs, or others. And let me pray, as the Holy and Great Council nears, in a divided and divisive world: O Lord, Founder and Spirit of our unity, may You speak and be heard among us, regardless of our human lines of demarcation and politics of status, that we may have living water. Glory be to You.

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

"Acquiring the Fear of God"

A brother said to a hermit, "How does the fear of God come into the soul?" He said, "If there is humility and poverty, and no judgement of others, the fear of God will be present there."

Taken from Ward, Benedicta. *The Desert Fathers: Sayings of the Early Christian Monks*. Penguin: UK. 2003.

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				