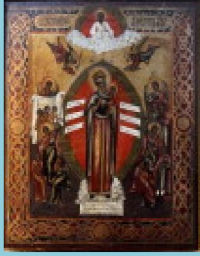


Greeting: *"Christ is Risen!"* Response: *"Indeed, He is Risen!"*



Orthodox Church of the Mother of God

OCA – Diocese of New York-New Jersey

V. Rev. Dr. Matthew Searfoorce, Rector

Sub-Deacon Edward Dawson

Reader Charles Gallagher

Parish Council President: Trudy Ellmore

Parish Council Vice President: Holly Dawson



Sunday, May 3, 2015

Gospel: John 5:1-15

Tone 3

Epistle: Acts 9:32-42

4th Sunday of Pascha; Sunday of the Paralytic



Sunday of the Paralytic

*Христос
Воскресе!*

*Восстину
Воскресе!*

*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!"*

Today the Church Remembers

Sunday of the Paralytic • Martyr Timothy the Reader and his wife in Egypt • Martyr Maura of Antioch in Egypt • Venerable Theodosius the Abbot of the Kiev Far Caves Monastery, and Founder of Coenobitic Monasticism in Russia • St Peter the Wonderworker and Bishop of Argos • Icon of the Mother of God of Sven • Translation of the Dormition Icon of the Mother of God from Constantinople to the Kiev Caves, Far Caves • St Mamai the Catholicos of Georgia • St Michael of Ulompo, Georgia • St Arsenius of Georgia • St Ecumenius of Trikala, the Wonderworker

Weekly Bulletin Sponsors

For Health of:

Lisa Matthews on her birthday, offered by her mother Lore Stefy.

Peter Freed on his birthday, nephew of Lore Stefy.

Father Andrew on the 10th Anniversary of his ord. offered by Trudy Ellmore.

Charlotte on her 1st birthday, offered by her grandmother Trudy Ellmore.

Elena Wolff on her birthday, offered by her daughter and family.

Liturgical Schedule:

Sunday, May 3th

9:30 am: Choir Practice
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, May 9th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, May 10th

9:10 am: Hours; 3rd Hour
9:20 am: Arrival of the Archbishop
9:30 am: Vesting of the Archbishop
9:40 am: Hours; 6th Hour
9:50 am: Ordination of Rdr. Charles to Sub-Diaconate
10:00 am: Hierarchal Divine Liturgy

Saturday, May 16th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, May 17th

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

Readings:

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.

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.



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 and \$2 for a small 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:

Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org

Volunteers are needed to clean the church. Please use the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board downstairs or candle stand, to indicate when you can help.

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

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: Parish News

His Eminence, Abp. Michael, will be visiting our parish Sunday, May 10th (Mother's Day) and celebrating a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. Please arrive no later than 9:20 a.m. (earlier if possible) to greet him. He will then be vested and tonsuring Reader Charles to the Sub-diaconate.

Choir Rehearsal Will be held Sunday, April 26th and Sunday, May 3rd at 9:30 a.m. to prepare for the Hierarchical Liturgy on Mother's Day.

There will be a Vespers/Liturgy on Wednesday May 20th for the Ascension of our Lord.

Reader Charles has accepted the call to once again serve with an **OCMC Youth Outreach Mission Team** going to Albania June 15 to July 1, 2015 and to go on a pilgrimage to **Mt. Athos** (the Holy Mountain) in Greece July 1 to July 9, 2015. 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).

Church of the Mother of God would like to thank Sunday school for the lovely poster downstairs in the community that they made.

Financial – March YTD: 2014 Deficit / 2015 Bottom

Line Donations & Membership: \$2,564.00 / \$8,491.00

Expense: \$3,836.48 / \$7,528.09

Balance: \$1,272.48 / \$962.91 - \$3,560.80 / \$2,597.89



Sisterhood of the Protector of the Mother of God News

There is a meeting of the Sisterhood today, May 3rd after Divine Liturgy and coffee hour downstairs in the community room.



NY/NJ Diocese News

Celebration of Archbishop Michael’s 5th Anniversary of his Consecration on Saturday May 9, 2015. Hierarchical Divine Liturgy 9:30 am, St. John the Baptist Church, 170 Lexington Avenue, Passaic NJ 07055. Followed by a luncheon at 1 pm ay The Brownstone, 351 West Broadway, Paterson, NJ 07522. Reservations Required, \$50 Adults, \$10 Children, 5 years & under free. Reserve on-line at form.jotform.us/form/40903603006139 or contact Father Joseph Lickwar at 201-434-

1986 or by email at josephlickwar@gmail.com



Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News

St. Tikhon’s Monastery announces Memorial Day Pilgrimage schedule

The community of Saint Tikhon’s Monastery and Seminary extends a cordial invitation to all to attend the 111th Annual Pilgrimage over Memorial Day weekend, May 22-25, 2015.

“It is always a blessing to welcome hierarchs, clergy and faithful from the Orthodox Church in America, other Orthodox jurisdictions and guests from near and far,” said Archimandrite Sergius, the Monastery’s Abbot.

The Pilgrimage will officially open on Friday, May 22 at 3:30 p.m. with the greeting of the Hawaiian Myrrh Streaming Icon of the Mother of God 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.

A detailed schedule of divine services for the weekend is available below. Updates will appear on the Monastery’s web site.

Saint Tikhon’s Monastery is the oldest Orthodox Christian monastic community in North America. In related news, Saint Tikhon’s Seminary will hold its 73rd annual Commencement on Saturday, May 23rd. The day will open with the celebration of the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at 9:00 a.m. and continue with graduation ceremonies at 1:00 p.m. Additional information will be posted as it becomes available.

St. Tikhon’s Monastery Memorial Day Pilgrimage

Friday, May 22, 2015

3:30 pm Official Opening of the 111th Pilgrimage Greeting of the Hawaiian Myrrh Streaming Icon with Moleben in the Church.

4:00 pm Vespers and Matins in the Monastery Church. All pilgrims are invited to dinner in the monastery dining hall following the services.

Saturday, May 23, 2015

9:00 am Hierarchical Divine Liturgy A meal for all pilgrims in the Monastery dining hall following services, 1:00 pm 73rd Annual Academic Commencement of Saint Tikhon’s Theological Seminary

4:30 pm Resurrection Vigil in the Monastery Church. Dinner in the monastery dining hall for all pilgrims following the services.

Sunday, May 24, 2015

9:00 am Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. A meal for all pilgrims in the Monastery dining hall following services.

4:00 pm Vespers and Matins in the Monastery Church.

Monday, May 25, 2015

7:30 am Divine Liturgy – Monastery Church

10:00 am Hierarchical Divine Liturgy

12:15 pm Veteran’s Pannikhida and Memorial Service, All Saints Bell Tower

1:30 pm Akathist to Saint Alexis Toth in the Monastery Church

2:30 pm Moleben to the Most Holy Theotokos and Anointing of the Sick, Infirm and all Pilgrims at the Monastery Bell Tower

4:00 pm Vespers and Matins in the Monastery Church



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.”

Patristic Wisdom for Daily Living with the Church Fathers:

Admire the world as a work of art

The world is a work of art displayed for our admiration, says St. Basil. When Genesis says, “In the beginning God created the

heaven and the earth,” it tells us that the world is a work of art, and it tells us who the artist is.

Among the arts, some have production in view, some practice, others theory. The object of the last is to exercise thought; of the second, the motion of the body. If it ceases, everything stops—there’s nothing more to see. Thus dancing and music leave nothing behind: they have no object but themselves.

In creative arts, on the other hand, the work lasts after the operation. Such is architecture; such are the arts that work in wood, brass, and weaving, and in fact every art that, even when the artist is gone, shows an industrious intelligence, and causes the architect, the brasier, or the weaver to be admitted for his work.

So to show that the world is a work of art displayed for all people to admire, and to make them know who created it, Moses uses no other word. “In the beginning,” he says, “God created.” He doesn’t say “God worked” or “God formed,” but “God created.”

—St. Basil, *Hexameron*, 1.3

In God’s Presence, consider....

If the world is a work of art, am I adding to its beauty or detracting from it?

Closing Prayer:

Father, Creator of the universe, may none of your marvelous works be silent, but may all creation join in singing a hymn of praise to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Prayers by the Lake, St. Nikolai Velimirovich:

Just a little longer and my journey will end. Keep me on the steep path to You just a little longer, O Conqueror of death; because the higher I climb towards You, the more people try to drag me down—into their abyss. The fuller their abyss becomes, the greater their hope is of defeating You. In truth, the fuller the abyss becomes, the further away from the abyss You are.

How stupid the servants of the tree of knowledge are! They do not measure their strength in You, but in their numbers. They do not adopt a law of justice in Your name, but by their numbers. Whichever way the majority of them choose is the way of truth and justice. The tree of knowledge has become the tree of crime, stupidity, and icy darkness.

Truly, the knowledgeable men of this world know everything except that they are servants of Satan. When the last day dawns, Satan will rejoice in the number of people in his harvest. All the meager ears of grain! But in his stupidity, even Satan counts on quantity rather than quality. One of Your ears of grain will be worth more than the entire harvest of Satan. For You, O Conqueror of death, rely on the fullness of the bread of life, and not on numbers.

In vain I tell the godless: "Head for the Tree of Life and you will know more than you could possibly wish to know. From the tree of knowledge Satan fashions a ladder for you to descend into the nether world."

The godless ridicule me and say: "Through the Tree of Life you want to convert us to your God, whom we do not see."

In truth, you will never see Him. The Light that even blinds the eyes of the seraphim will burn your pupils forever.

Of all that thrives in the putrescence of the earth, those who believe in God are the rarest. O lake and mountain, help me to be glad that I, too, am journeying with these most rare, most unlearned, and most despised believers.

Just a little longer, brethren, and our journey will end.

Sustain us just a little longer, O Conqueror of death.

Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church

God and Us – Truth:

There is no other Christ or truth... Wool can be dyed, but its substance remains unchanged... thus also the truth is expressed in various words, but in substance stays the same, because by its very nature it is one. Truth in and of itself is not divided, but divided only in the mouths of audacious thinkers.

St. Ephraim the Syrian,

The Prologue of Ohrid

St. Nikolai Velimirovic

Reflection

The Abba John the Short asked the monks: "Who sold Joseph?" One monk replied: "His brothers." To that, the elder replied: "No brethren, rather his humility. Joseph could have said that he is their brother and could have protested to being sold but he remained silent. His humility, therefore, sold him. Afterward, this same humility made him master over Egypt." In surrendering ourselves to the will of God, we defend ourselves too much from external unpleasantness, that is why we lose the good fruits which is harvested at the end of unpleasantness endured with humility. Abba Pimen wisely spoke: "We have abandoned the easy yoke, i.e., self-reproach and we have burdened ourselves with a heavy yoke, i.e., self-justification." The Christian accepts every unpleasantness as deserving of their present or their past sins; seeking in all, the will of God with faith and awaiting the end with hope.

Contemplation

To contemplate the ascended Lord Jesus:

1. How He began His saving work on earth as an ordinary humble worker;
2. How He completed His saving work by His miraculous and glorious ascension into heaven.
- 3.

Homily:

About how the idol-worshippers will be put to shame

"As the thief is ashamed when caught, so shall the house of Israel be ashamed: They who say to a piece of wood, 'You are my father' and to a stone 'You gave me birth:' They turn to Me their backs, not their faces; yet in time of trouble they cry out, 'Rise up and save us!'" (Jeremiah 2: 26-27)

In truth brethren, they will all be put to shame who do not see beyond wood and stone and, who in their ignorance, say that man is composed entirely of plants and minerals and the same thing occurs to him as with plants and minerals. With their backs turned to the Creator, they are unable to see anything other than creation and, forgetting the Creator, they proclaim creation the Creator. They say that nature created and gave birth to man, that is why man is lesser than nature, lower than nature, the servant in the lap of nature, a slave on the chain of nature and a dead man in the grave of nature. They who speak like that will be shamed when they fall into misfortune and cry out to God: "Rise up and save us!"

Why do they cry out to God "Rise up" as though God is lying down? God is not lying down, but stands; stands and waits to be of service to everyone who, with faith and humility, request a favour from Him. But those who have become enamoured with wood and stone, while they have trusted in their own power, have overturned Him in their lives and excluded Him from their lives. That is why when they are pressured by difficulties, they cry out to Him: "Rise up!"

But the Lord is meek and rises and comes to the aid of every penitent. Let the sinner truly repent and casting off his sinful love, return to God in love and God will help him. Let him turn his back on dead wood and stone and turn his face to the Living God and God will redeem him. For the Almighty is not vengeful and vindictive. Neither did He create man for death, but for life.

O brethren, let us not seek help in the helpless nor life in the lifeless. Let us turn our heads

toward our living Creator Who gave us a face more radiant than the face of every earthly thing. Let us turn from the western ways to the eastern path, for on this path is salvation. Just let us hasten before our last day on earth is sunk into the darkness of the west.

O ascended Lord, raise our minds to heaven. Cleanse them from the darkness and unburden them of the earth, O our Light-bearing Creator.

To You be glory and thanks always. Amen.

