

We would like to welcome all parish visitors and invite you to join us after the Liturgy for Coffee hour.

ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE MOTHER OF GOD
OCA – Diocese of New York-New Jersey

V. Rev. Dr. Matthew Searfoorce, Rector

Sub-Deacon Edward Dawson

Sub-Deacon Vlashi

Parish Council President: Andrew Romanofsky

Parish Council Vice President: Dean Inferrera



Sunday, October 1, 2017

Gospel: Luke 6:31-36

Theotokos: Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28

Tone 8

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1

Theotokos: Hebrews 9:1-7

17th Sunday after Pentecost (2nd of Luke): The Protection (Pokrov) of our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary

Apostle of the Seventy Ananias (1st c.). Ven. Romanus the Melodist ("Sweet-singer"—5th c.). Ven. Savva (Sabbas), Abbot of Visheva (Novgorod—1461). Martyr Domninus of Thessalonica (4th c.). Martyr Michael, Abbot in Armenia, and 36 Fathers with him (780-790). Commemoration of the Appearance of the Pillar with the Robe of the Lord under it at Mtskheta in Georgia (4th c.). Ven. John (Koukouzelis) the Hymnographer of Mt. Athos (Albanian—12th c.). Ven. Gregory of Lavra (Mt. Athos—12th c.). The PSKOV-PROTECTION Icon of the Most-holy Theotokos.

Troparion – Tone 4

Today the faithful celebrate the feast with joy / illumined by your coming, O Mother of God. / Beholding your pure image we fervently cry to you: / "Encompass us beneath the precious veil of your protection; / deliver us from every form of evil by entreating Christ, / your Son and our God that He may save our souls."

Kontakion – Tone 3

Today the Virgin stands in the midst of the Church / and with choirs of saints she invisibly prays to God for us. / Angels and bishops worship, / apostles and prophets rejoice together, / since for our sake she prays to the pre-eternal God.



The Protection (Pokrov) of our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary

Prayer Requests

In Memory of:

Clara (Nanny) Garbutt, great-grandmother of Nicholas & Elizabeth on her passing, offered by the Zimmerman Family.

Helen Beres, deepest sympathies are expressed to Proto-Deacon Michael and Matushka Leslie Sochka, on the falling-asleep in the Lord of Matushka Leslie's mother, on the morning of Friday, September 29.

Dale Mast, on his birthday, offered by his cousin, Sub-Deacon Vlashi.

The Philokalia: Daily Readings

When the grace of the Spirit rules within him, then he no longer has a will of his own, but whatever he does is according to God's will. Then he is at peace. Men like that will be called sons of God (Matt 5:9) because they will the will of the Father, as did the Son of God Who is also God.

- St Peter of Damascus, A Treasury of Divine Knowledge

Liturgical Schedule

Sunday, October 1st

9:30 am: No Sunday School
9:40 am: Hours
9:45 am: Genertal
Confession
10:00 am: Divine
Liturgy/Panikhida: Barbara
Funk
After Communion: Sunday
School pre-K - Grade 3

Saturday, October 7^h

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, October 8th

9:30 am: Sunday School
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy
After Communion: Sunday
School pre-K - Grade 3

Saturday, October 14th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, October 15th

9:30 am: Sunday School
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy
After Communion: Sunday
School pre-K - Grade 3

Saturday, October 21st

6:30 pm: Vespers

Bulletin Sponsors

Zimmerman Family

Readings:

The Prokeimenon in the 8th Tone:

Pray and make your vows / before the Lord our God!
(*Psalm 75:12*)

Vs. In Judah God is known; His Name is great in Israel.
(*Psalm 75:2*)

Another, Tone 3 (Song of the Theotokos):

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior
(*Luke 1:46-7*)

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1

Brethren, what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, >and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." Working together with him, then, we entreat you not to accept the grace of God in vain.

Theotokos: Hebrews 9:1-7

Brethren, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary. For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary; and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services. But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance.

Alleluia in the 8th Tone:

Come, let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior!
(*Psalm 94:1*)

vs. Let us come before His face with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him
with songs of praise!
(*Psalm 94:2*)

Another, Tone 8 (Theotokos):

Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear!
(*Psalm 44:10*)

Gospel: Luke 6:31-36

The Lord said, "And as you wish that men would do to you, do so to them. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

Theotokos: Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28

Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me." And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her." And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!" But He said, "More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

Orthodox Quote of the Day

If a person wants to get an idea about the pyramids of Egypt, he must either trust those who have been in immediate proximity to the pyramids, or he must get next to them himself. There is no third option. In the same way a person can get an impression of God: He must either trust those who have stood and stand in immediate proximity to God, or he must take pains to come into such proximity himself.

St. Nicholas of Serbia
Thoughts on Good and Evil



The Protection (Pokrov) of our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary

The Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos: "Today the Virgin stands in the midst of the Church, and with choirs of Saints she invisibly prays to God for us. Angels and Bishops venerate Her, Apostles and prophets rejoice together, Since for our sake she prays to the Eternal God!"

This miraculous appearance of the Mother of God occurred in the mid-tenth century in Constantinople, in the Blachernae church where her robe, veil, and part of her belt were preserved after being transferred from Palestine in the fifth century.

On Sunday, October 1, during the All Night Vigil, when the church was overflowing with those at prayer, the Fool-for-Christ Saint Andrew (October 2), at the fourth hour, lifted up his eyes towards the heavens and beheld our most Holy Lady Theotokos coming through the air, resplendent with heavenly light and surrounded by an assembly of the Saints. Saint John the Baptist and the holy Apostle John the Theologian accompanied the Queen of Heaven. On bended knees the Most Holy Virgin tearfully prayed for Christians for a long time. Then, coming near the Bishop's Throne, she continued her prayer.

After completing her prayer she took her veil and spread it over the people praying in church, protecting them from enemies both visible and invisible. The Most Holy Lady Theotokos was resplendent with heavenly glory, and the protecting veil in her hands gleamed "more than the rays of the sun." Saint Andrew gazed trembling at the miraculous vision and he asked his disciple, the blessed Epiphanius standing beside him, "Do you see, brother, the Holy Theotokos, praying for all the world?" Epiphanius answered, "I do see, holy Father, and I am in awe."

The Ever-Blessed Mother of God implored the Lord Jesus Christ to accept the prayers of all the people calling on His Most Holy Name, and to respond speedily to her intercession, “O Heavenly King, accept all those who pray to You and call on my name for help. Do not let them go away from my icon unheard.”

Saints Andrew and Epiphanius were worthy to see the Mother of God at prayer, and “for a long time observed the Protecting Veil spread over the people and shining with flashes of glory. As long as the Most Holy Theotokos was there, the Protecting Veil was also visible, but with her departure it also became invisible. After taking it with her, she left behind the grace of her visitation.”

At the Blachernae church, the memory of the miraculous appearance of the Mother of God was remembered. In the fourteenth century, the Russian pilgrim and clerk Alexander, saw in the church an icon of the Most Holy Theotokos praying for the world, depicting Saint Andrew in contemplation of her.

The Primary Chronicle of Saint Nestor reflects that the protective intercession of the Mother of God was needed because an attack of a large pagan Russian fleet under the leadership of Askole and Dir. The feast celebrates the divine destruction of the fleet which threatened Constantinople itself, sometime in the years 864-867 or according to the Russian historian Vasiliev, on June 18, 860. Ironically, this Feast is considered important by the Slavic Churches but not by the Greeks.

The Primary Chronicle of Saint Nestor also notes the miraculous deliverance followed an all-night Vigil and the dipping of the garment of the Mother of God into the waters of the sea at the Blachernae church, but does not mention Saints Andrew and Epiphanius and their vision of the Mother of God at prayer. These latter elements, and the beginnings of the celebrating of the Feast of the Protection, seem to postdate Saint Nestor and the Chronicle. A further historical complication might be noted under (October 2) dating Saint Andrew’s death to the year 936.

The year of death might not be quite reliable, or the assertion that he survived to a ripe old age after the vision of his youth, or that his vision involved some later pagan Russian raid which met with the same fate. The suggestion that Saint Andrew was a Slav (or a Scythian according to other sources, such as S. V. Bulgakov) is interesting, but not necessarily accurate. The extent of Slavic expansion and repopulation into Greece is the topic of scholarly disputes.

In the PROLOGUE, a Russian book of the twelfth century, a description of the establishment of the special Feast marking this event states, “For when we heard, we realized how wondrous and merciful was the vision... and it transpired that Your holy Protection should not remain without festal celebration, O Ever-Blessed One!”

Therefore, in the festal celebration of the Protection of the Mother of God, the Russian Church sings, “With the choirs of the Angels, O Sovereign Lady, with the venerable and glorious prophets, with the First-Ranked Apostles and with the Hieromartyrs and Hierarchs, pray for us sinners, glorifying the Feast of your Protection in the Russian Land.” Moreover, it would seem that Saint Andrew, contemplating the miraculous vision was a Slav, was taken captive, and became the slave of the local inhabitant of Constantinople named Theognostus.

Churches in honor of the Protection of the Mother of God began to appear in Russia in the twelfth century. Widely known for its architectural merit is the temple of the Protection at Nerl, which was built in the year 1165 by holy Prince Andrew Bogoliubsky. The efforts of this holy prince also established in the Russian Church the Feast of the Protection of the Mother of God, about the year 1164.

At Novgorod in the twelfth century there was a monastery of the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos (the so-called Zverin monastery) In Moscow also under Tsar Ivan the Terrible the cathedral of the Protection of the Mother of God was built at the church of the Holy Trinity (known as the church of Saint Basil the Blessed).

On the Feast of the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos we implore the defense and assistance of the Queen of Heaven, “Remember us in your prayers, O Lady Virgin Mother of God, that we not perish by the increase of our sins. Protect us from every evil and from grievous woes, for in you do we hope, and venerating the Feast of your Protection, we magnify you.”



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

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

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

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

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

Special Announcements for the bulletin can be submitted by E-Mail:

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

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

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



Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Parish News

Sisterhood news: ...The Sisterhood will be sponsoring a fundraiser selling gourmet popcorn and snacks. The fundraiser will run from Sunday, Sept. 17th, through Oct. 1st. One half of all the costs for items purchased will be returned directly to the Sisterhood. We are asking that all parish families participate in this fundraiser. Please see Tammy Zimmerman for more information.

This year, our feast day celebration will be held outside of church at Cousin Mario's restaurant on Harding Highway. The celebration will be on Sunday Oct. 8th at 12:15 PM. All Sisterhood members in good standing are invited to attend. The Sisterhood will be covering the cost of the luncheon. Alcoholic beverages are not included. Please see Linda Dantine for more information, and to RSVP.

Panikhida: Today, Sunday, October 1st for Barbara Funk with a luncheon to follow. Everyone one is invited.

Council Meeting: October 29th immediately after coffee hour.

Bulletin News: Starting in January 2018 there will be two different sign-up sheets. One will be for Prayer Request and the other for Bulletin Sponsors. More information will be forth coming on prices for Bulletin Sponsor.

Wisdom of the Church Fathers

"Cleanse your mind from anger, remembrance of evil, and shameful thoughts, and then you will find out how Christ dwells in you!"

Saint Maximus the Confessor
(580-662)



NY/NJ Diocese News



CHURCH MUSICIAN APPRECIATION DAY

Our diocese will offer recognition and gratitude to our dedicated directors, singers, composers, arrangers and teachers of liturgical music on **Sunday, 1 October, the feast-day of Saint Romanos "the Melodist."** *A letter marking the occasion from Archbishop Michael, along with special intercessions of prayer:*

CHURCH MUSICIAN APPRECIATION DAY: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2017

The Diocese of New York and New Jersey will mark Church Musician Appreciation Day on Sunday, October 1, 2017, the exact feast day of St. Romanos the Melodist. Truly, we need to nurture and encourage our church musicians – and thank them on this day for their pious work.

I strongly encourage Rectors, Parish Councils, and choir leaders to offer special thanks to their singers, composers, arrangers, and teachers of church music. And I direct the following petitions to be offered during the Augmented Litany on October 1:

O Heavenly Father, on this day of recognition for the women, men and youth in our parish who give their time and musical talent in service to Thee, our Lord, and to Thy Church, we pray Thee hearken and have mercy.

Response: Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy.

Bless them, O Lord, as they sing praises to Thee, and glorify Thy Name. Let their work be a witness to Thy majesty and love, reminding us all of Thy presence in our lives. We pray Thee hearken and have mercy.

Response: Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy.

O God, whom saints and angels delight to worship in heaven: be ever present with Thy servants who seek through music to perfect the praises offered by Thy people on earth; grant to them even now glimpses of Thy beauty; and make them worthy to behold it unveiled for evermore; we pray Thee hearken and have mercy.

Response: Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy.

Extending my archpastoral blessings, prayerful gratitude, and sincere love to all of you, especially to the church musicians of our beloved Diocese,

+ **Michael**

Archbishop of New York and the Diocese of New York and New Jersey



PRAYER FOR RACIAL RECONCILIATION

Our newest mission parish community, **Saint Simon of Cyrene in New Brunswick NJ**, will host an Akathist service ("To the African Saints") with prayers for racial reconciliation on **Sunday, 1 October 2017 at 6:00 p.m.** Following the service which will include pastors and members of faith communities in the area, Archbishop Michael will offer a brief address on the themes of racism, prejudice, and reconciliation. The faithful of the diocese are encouraged to attend!

Beloved in the Lord:
Christ is in our midst!

It is with great joy that I invite you to be part of a very special upcoming event, hosted by the newest mission parish community of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey – Saint Simon of Cyrene Orthodox Mission:

Akathist Service to the African Saints: Prayer for Racial Reconciliation

Sunday, October 1, 6:00 PM

Hosted by Saint Simon of Cyrene Orthodox Mission

80 Livingston Avenue

New Brunswick, New Jersey

(in the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church)

Following the Akathist Service, I will give a brief address, together with other invited speakers who will reflect on themes of racism, prejudice, and reconciliation. It is my hope that this event may bring together Orthodox Christians with other people of faith and good will, in a spirit of unity – giving a worthy witness of “the love of God in Christ Jesus” to a world urgently in need of that love and reconciliation.

In order that we may plan accordingly, I ask that you kindly RSVP to Deacon Samuel Davis, at 732-277-0854 or e-mail samuel.davis339@gmail.com, with the number of people attending, by Wednesday, September 27. However, all guests will be warmly welcomed, whether you have sent an RSVP or not.

Thank you for considering this invitation. I ask the Lord’s blessings on you and your loved ones; and I look forward to seeing you on October 1.

Devotedly yours in His service,
+ **Michael**
Archbishop of New York and the
Diocese of New York and New Jersey



BUFFALO NY: STREAMING ICON OF THE THEOTOKOS

Saint George Orthodox Church located in Buffalo NY has been blessed with the icon of the Annunciation of Most-Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary streaming fragrant oil. *“It is a great and humble miracle, and blessing, for our parish and for those who come and pray here,”* said Father Jason Vansuch (parish rector). His daughters, Alexandra and Anna, witnessed the streaming Holy Oil following Great Vespers on the Eve of Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross of Our Lord (September 13). The Holy Oil began streaming from the Cross on top of the Veil of the Theotokos and then also began streaming from the back of Her Veil; it has continued to stream down her face.

DETAILS AND VISITATION SCHEDULE:

STREAMING ICON OF THE MOST-HOLY THEOTOKOS

(St. George Orthodox Church - OCA)
2 Nottingham Terrace ~ Buffalo, NY

St. George Orthodox Church (OCA) located in Buffalo, NY has been blessed with the Icon of Most-Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary (Icon of the Annunciation) on the Iconostasis streaming Oil. A great and humble miracle and blessing for our parish and for those who come and pray here. Alexandra and Anna Vansuch (daughters of Rev. Jason and Matushka Vansuch) witnessed the streaming of the Holy Oil following Great Vespers on the Eve of the Universal Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross of Our Lord (September 13). The Holy Oil began streaming from the Cross on top of the Veil of the Theotokos and then also began streaming from the back of Her Veil and has continued to stream down Her Face.

In consultation with His Eminence Archbishop MICHAEL and with his blessing, we served The Akathist Service to The Most-Holy Theotokos every morning at 9:00 AM for two weeks. We also had the church open every day (Monday-Friday) from 8:30 AM to 11:00 AM and from 6:00-8:30 PM for everyone to come and pray before the Icon of the Mother of God along with serving the Paraklesis Service to the Mother of God every night at 6:30 PM.

We collect the Holy Oil every day and mix it with Holy Oil from the Wonder-Working Poached Icon of the Mother of God and Iveron Icon of the Mother of God and then bless that Oil on the Miraculous Oil-Streaming Icon of Most-Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary (Icon of the Annunciation) on the Iconostasis at our parish. We also have Icon Cards of the Miraculous Oil Streaming Icon of Most-Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary for the faithful which have been blessed on the Icon itself.

Beginning with the week of October 1, we will be serving The Akathist Service to The Most Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary every Wednesday Morning at 9:00 AM and the Paraklesis Service to The Most-Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary every Wednesday night at 6:00 PM along with The Akathist Service to The Most-Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary every Saturday at 3:15 PM prior to Great Vespers at 4:00 PM.

The Church will be open every week on the following days for the faithful to come and pray before the Miraculous Oil-Streaming Icon of Most-Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary:

Mondays-Wednesdays-Thursdays-Fridays

8:30 to 10:30 AM

- Daily Matins is served at 9:00 AM on Mondays
- Akathist to The Theotokos is served at 9:00 AM on Thursdays

Tuesday and Wednesday

6:00 to 8:00 PM

- Daily Vespers is served at 6:30 PM on Tuesdays
- The Paraklesis Service to the Mother of God is served at 6:00 PM on Wednesdays

Saturday

3:00 to 5:00 PM

- Great Vespers is served at 4:00 PM

Sundays

9:00 to 1:00 PM

- Divine Liturgy is served at 10:00 AM
- Matins is served on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month at 9:00 AM
- The Hours are served on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month at 9:30 AM
- The Hours are served on the 4th Sundays of each month at 9:15 AM
- General Confession is served on the last Sunday of each month at 9:30 AM

We also pray to The Most-Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary after every Service followed by Veneration of the Miraculous Oil-Streaming Icon of Most-Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary and anointing with Holy Oil.

To schedule a visit to come and pray before the Miraculous Oil-Streaming Icon of Most-Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, please contact Rev. Jason Vansuch at 716.875.4222.

I encourage all of us to come to the services and pray to The Mother of God that through Her Holy Prayers and Precious Omophorion, God may strengthen us, comfort us, bless us and guide us to continue doing His Will and His Work of the Gospel and of the Church!

“Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Joy of all the Sorrowful” founded in 1966

Through the Prayers of the Most-Holy Theotokos, may God continue to watch over you, guide you and protect you, your families and all of the clergy and faithful of our parishes.

MOST-HOLY THEOTOKOS, SAVE US!



SAINT ANDREW'S CAMP: 60TH ANNIVERSARY

Saint Andrews Camp, on the shore of Oneida Lake in Upstate New York (Jewell NY), celebrated 60 years of faith, friendship, and fun on Saturday, 23 September 2017. Current and former campers, counselors, and staff members joined Archbishop Michael for the memorable occasion. Founded in 1957 by Father Alexander Warnecke, the establishment of the camp was inspired by the words of Saint John Chrysostom: *"Let everything take second place to our care of our children, our bringing them up to the discipline and instruction of the Lord."*

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Father Nicholas, Matushka Charlene, and Quentin Garklavs, on the birth of their son and baby brother, Clement John Garklavs, born Monday, September 25th at 6:15pm. Clement John weighs 9 pounds; and he and his mother are already home and doing well. *Grant, O Lord, a prosperous and peaceful life, good health and salvation, visitation and good hastening to Thy servant, the infant Clement John ... his dad Father Nicholas, his mother Matushka Charlene, and his big brother Quentin, and all his family ... and protect and preserve them all for many, many blessed years! "Mnogaya Lyeta!"*

Presbyter Nikolai Gulin, awarded the kamilavka, by His Eminence, Archbishop Michael, on Sunday, September 24, at SS. Peter and Paul Church, Jersey City NJ. *"Axios! Axios! Axios!" May God protect and preserve his servant, the Presbyter Nikolai, for many blessed years!*



Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News

"Modern Martyrs" theme of SVOTS Education Day October 7

Saint Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary will hold its annual open house, Orthodox Education Day, on the school's campus here on Saturday, October 7, 2017. The day will open with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy at 10:00 a.m.

This year's timely theme is "Modern Martyrs: Christians of the Middle East and North Africa. In his keynote address—"Dying, and Behold, We Live: Martyrdom in the New Testament"—biblical scholar Rev. Dr. George Parsenios, Associate Professor of New Testament, Princeton Theological Seminary, and Sessional Professor of New Testament at SVOTS, will focus on sections in 2 Corinthians and in the Gospel of Saint John, chapter 9 (the healing of the Blind Man), where suffering is connected to assimilation to Christ and being "in Christ."

9

According to Matushka Robyn Hatrak, SVOTS Special Events, Hospitality and Alumni Officer, other Education Day offerings will feature

- an emotionally powerful exhibit of photographs of modern martyrs.
- a presentation by SVOTS alumnus, Father Abraham Wassef, on recent slayings of Christians in North Africa and their effects on Coptic Orthodox parishes in North America.
- a discussion titled “Martyrdom as Witness: Helping the Hopeless in America,” by the nuns of All Saints Monastery, in which they will share their healing ministry for victims of human trafficking.
- a book signing with Christine Chaillot, who will be presenting her latest work, *The Dialogue Between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches*

Supplication services for suffering and martyred Christians also will be celebrated during the day. Children will enjoy an activity area, led by Jenny Mosher, while teen talks and activities will be led by Father John Hopko. And, in addition to a buffet of delicious entrées, desserts, and poured-over coffee, a full display of SVS Press and Bookstore books, CDs, icons and other religious items will be available for purchase.

A detailed schedule of the days services, events and activities is available on the SVOTS web site.

The public is invited to attend.

Metropolitan Tikhon celebrated the Synaxis of All Saints of Alaska at St. Vladimir’s Seminary

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon made his first archpastoral visit of the new academic year to Saint Vladimir’s Orthodox Theological Seminary [SVOTS] here on Sunday, September 24, 2017—the Synaxis of All Saints of Alaska.

In addition to the seminary faculty, staff, student body, and area faithful, participants in a three-day conference organized by the recently established Orthodox Vision Foundation [OVF] on the seminary campus gathered for the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, at which Metropolitan Tikhon presided in Three Hierarchs Chapel. See related story.

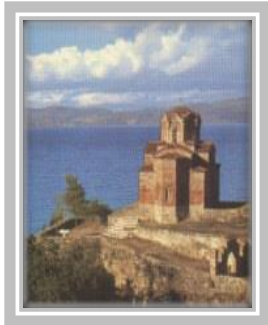
Saint Vladimir’s Seminary, together with Saint Tikhon’s Seminary, South Canaan, PA, are the two graduate schools of theology under the direction of Metropolitan Tikhon. A third school—Saint Herman’s Seminary, Kodiak, AK—also faithfully serves the needs of the faithful, particularly in the Diocese of Alaska. SVOTS’ 2017 incoming class numbers 25 men and women desiring to devote their lives to the Church. Defying most trends in theological education, the OCA’s seminaries continue to experience a steady influx of students from the OCA and other jurisdictions in North America and abroad.

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, Metropolitan Tikhon addressed the student body and their families and participants in the OVF conference.

“I would like to offer one final exhortation to both the seminarians and their families as they begin this new year, and to the participants of this week’s conference,” Metropolitan Tikhon said. “Often in the business and administrative world, forward progress is measured by aggressive attempts to forge ahead against the waves of difficulties. In the Church, we also know that we are navigating the ‘sea of life,’ as we hear in our liturgical hymnography and in the writings of the Fathers. One of the great desert fathers, Abba Dorotheos, offers Christians a helpful image for passing through these temptations of life, by drawing a contrast between a good swimmer and a bad swimmer. A bad swimmer, says Abba Dorotheos, will try to make his way forward by swimming over the waves. Unfortunately, anyone who has gone swimming in the ocean knows well how powerful the waves can be, and the tactic of trying to fight through the waves by going over them not only does not provide any forward movement, but actually pushes the swimmer even further back. A good swimmer knows that, to make forward progress, the best approach is to swim under the waves. This movement under the waves is, for Abba Dorotheos, an image of the humility required to pass through the temptations of life. Only with Christ-like humility can we safely pass through the temptations and difficulties of life.

“All of us, whether we are laboring in the world and preparing ourselves through seminary training, will face temptations and struggles,” Metropolitan Tikhon concluded. “I encourage you to follow the advice of Abba Dorotheos and to strive to attain the humility and the love needed to fulfill the work that the Lord has placed on your shoulders.”

A photo gallery can be viewed on the OCA website and Facebook page.



Prayers by the Laker, St. Velimirovich, XXVI:

Arise all you creatures and serve the Living Lord who cares about you. Worship Him and serve Him, for no one greater than He has visited you in this vale of fear and tears.

Servants come and make themselves lords. The Lord came and made Himself a servant. Servile lords strive to Lord it over as many people and creatures as possible, while the lordly Servant strives to serve as many people and creatures as possible.

Arise, O lilies of the field, and give off your fragrance, for His holy mouth mentioned your name.

Arise, O stone and rock, and worship Him, for His holy feet walked over you.

Arise, O desert, and rejoice, for He sanctified you with His longest and most

mysterious prayers.

Arise, O wheat and grapevine, for He blessed you especially among all created things. Arise and bless Him.

Arise, O fish, and glorify the Lord, for He was hungry and you nourished Him.

Arise, O water and skies, and serve Him, for by His power He cleansed you and calmed you.

Arise, O sycamore tree, and clothe yourself in silk, for in you He saw a sinner and saved him.

Arise, O sheep and oxen, and be filled with awe, for in your lowly stable He was born.

Arise, O birds, and sing, for He raised you up as an example for men.

Arise, O oil, and burn before His throne, for when He was anointed with you He felt joyful and saved a sinful woman.

Arise, O thorns and reed, and be filled with shame, for you caused Him pain.

Arise, O iron and wood, and repent, for even unwillingly you caused Him torments on the cross.

Arise, inhabitants of cities, and weep, for you did not believe in Him.

Arise, O leaders of the people, and sprinkle yourselves with ashes, for you passed judgment over Him.

Arise, O paupers, and embrace Him, for He is your wealth.

Arise, O kings, and lay down your crowns before Him, for He alone has taught you true wisdom concerning primacy and leadership.

Arise, O sinners, and start sobbing before Him, for only His hand does not cast a stone at you.

Arise, O righteous, and be vigilant, for your loader is coming to you.

Arise, all you stars, and begin to dance, for your Lightgiver goes to visit you.

Arise, O universe, and begin to hum the Lord's hymn, for the living Lord who cares about you has entered you.

300 Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, CXXVI:

IV. Concerning that which Brings us Close to God

Prayer

Do not forsake prayer, for just as the body becomes weak when it is deprived of food, so also the soul when it is deprived of prayer draws nigh to weakness and noetic death.

St. Gennadius of Constantinople, The Golden Chain, 44



The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration by Abbott Tryphon

Transforming Society

Acquire a peaceful spirit, and thousands around you will be saved

“We have all sinned and fall short of the Glory of God (Romans 3:23).” We Orthodox often miss the mark in understanding and ministering to this world. We fail the words of Christ, “to love one another as God has loved us”, and forget we are charged by Our Lord to bring healing and wholeness to those struggling in this fallen world. In our righteous indignation we show contempt to those who live apart from biblical morality, forgetting that we were ourselves called out of this fallen world by Christ. We forget, in our contempt for the sins of others, that it was this very Christ Who asked those in the crowd who were without sin to cast the first stone.

All of us have failed to fulfill the Commandments of God, and we are all deserving of being squashed like worms. But Jeremiah says, “Through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed, because His compassion’s fail not. They are new every morning; great is Your FAITHFULNESS” (Lamentations 3:22-23).

God never washes His hands of us. We may disappoint Him every day, but His love is without measure, and He responds with His saving Grace and Mercy. The Church, as the hospital of the soul, is the very institution founded by Our Lord to bring wholeness and healing to everyone. It is the lie of Satan that some are deserving of nothing but our contempt, but it is Christ Who has called us to compassion for those who are stuck in sin, and Who offers, through the Church, the saving, transformational healing that can turn hearts around, and turn sinners into saints. Countries become grounded in the moral and spiritual principles of the Church not by political confrontation, but by the transformational change that takes place when clergy lead their people into a personal relationship with the very Christ Who changes hearts, and saves us. It is not political extremism that preserves nations from immorality and sin, but the people themselves, who, having put on Christ, transform the society from within. As Saint Seraphim of Sarov said, “Acquire a peaceful spirit, and thousands around you will be saved.”



Daily Reflection **The Power of Forgiveness**



“And behold, men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they sought to bring him in and lay him before Jesus; but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus. And when he saw their faith he said, ‘Man (ἄνθρωπε), your sins are forgiven you (ἀφεῖται σοι).’ And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, ‘Who is this that speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only?’ When Jesus perceived their questionings, he answered them, ‘Why do you question in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of man (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) has power on earth to forgive sins’—he said to the man who was paralyzed—‘I say to you, rise, take up your bed and go home.’ And immediately he rose before them, and took up that on which he lay, and went home, glorifying God.” (Lk 5: 18-25)

The Pharisees are wrong, presuming that “God only” can forgive sins. Christ, Who calls Himself “the Son of man” (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου), and Who here addresses one of us paralytics as “Man (ἄνθρωπε),” reveals to us that, in communion with Him, we all share in this “power” of forgiveness. That’s why He doesn’t say to the paralytic, “I forgive” your sins, but – your sins “are forgiven” you, in this encounter between you and Me, in our shared humanity. Christ shares with us His empowering, forgiving, grace-filled humanity with our paralyzed humanity, enabling us to rise and “go home,” when we are willing to show up for that encounter and to share in His kind of humanity, empowered through forgiveness.

That’s why He teaches us to pray, with Him, “Our Father... forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” In Him and with Him, we are all sons and daughters of God, empowered by grace to forgive our “debtors,” including ourselves, that we may rise and go forward, free of the crippling self-loathing and doubt that hinders us from responding to God’s call, in usefulness to ourselves, to Him and others. “Our Father,” I say to God today with so many others, “forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,” that we may come “home,” to You.

Ancient Christian Wisdom

Turn your mind towards Him continually. Learn to love prayer, familiar converse with the Lord. What counts above all is love, passionate love for the Lord, for Christ the Bridegroom. Become worthy of Christ’s love. In order not to live in darkness, turn on the switch of prayer so that divine light may flood your soul. Christ will appear in the depths of your being. There, in the deepest and most inward part, is the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is within you [Luke 17:21].

+ St. Porphyrios

Through the Grace of God – Orthodox Christianity

Father Seraphim Rose: Share Orthodoxy

“Don’t keep Orthodoxy to yourself as though it were some private treasure. Share it!”