

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: Trudy Ellmore Parish Council Vice President: Holly Dawson



Sunday, October 4, 2015

Gospel: Luke 5:1-11

Tone 1

Epistle: II Corinthians 9:6-11

18th Sunday after Pentecost; Hieromartyr Hierotheus the Bishop of Athens

**Glory to
Jesus Christ!**



*Hieromartyr Hierotheus
the Bishop of Athens*

**Glory
Forever!**

*We the faithful all praise Hierótheus, the disciple of Paul,
Hierarch of Athens, the world's teacher and a preacher of the Faith,
who revealed to us Christ's Mysteries and poured forth streams of godly
doctrine. His life was well-pleasing to God, who is greatly merciful.*

Today the Church Remembers

18th Sunday After Pentecost — Tone 1. Hieromartyr Hierotheus, Bishop of Athens (1st c.). Uncovering of the Relics of St. Gurias, First Archbishop of Kazan, and St. Varsonúphy (Barsanuphius), Bishop of Tver' (1595). Synaxis of the Hierarchs of Kazan' (1976). Rt. Blv. Prince Vladimir Yaroslavich, Prince of Novgorod (1052). Ven. Helladius and Onesimus of the Kiev Caves (Near Caves—12th-13th c.). Ven. Ammon, Recluse, of the Kiev Caves (Far Caves—13th c.). Martyrs Gaius, Faustus, Eusebius, and Chæremon, of Alexandria (3rd c.). Martyr Peter of Capetolis (3rd-4th c.). Martyrs Domnina and her daughters Berenice and Prosdoce of Syria (305-306). Ven. Ammon (ca. 350) and Paul the Simple (4th c.), of Egypt. Martyr Adauctus and his daughter, St. Callisthene, of Ephesus (4th c.). St. Stephen Stiljjanovich of Serbia (1515).

**The door of
repentance
is yet open—enter and
cleanse thyself
from thy corruption.**

St. Ephraim the Syrian



Liturgical Schedule:

Sunday, October 4th

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

Saturday, October 10th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, October 11th

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

Saturday, October 17th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, October 18th

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

Readings:

Epistle: II Corinthians 9:6-11 (18th Sunday after Pentecost)

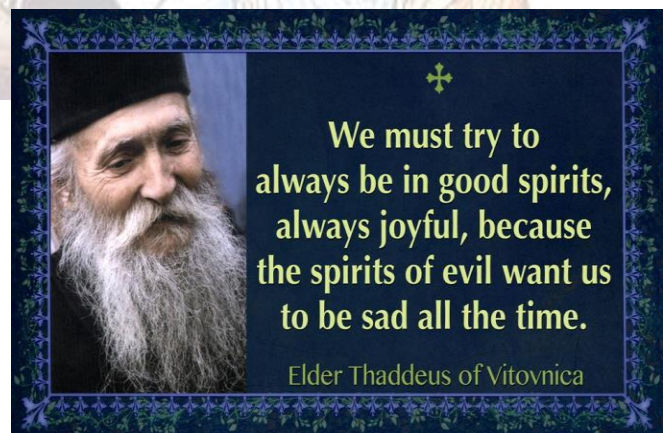
Brethren, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work. As it is written, "He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures for ever." He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your resources and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for great generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.

Gospel: Luke 5:1-11 (1st Sunday of Luke)

At that time, Jesus was standing by the lake of Gennesaret. And he saw two boats by the lake;

but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. And when he had ceased speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets." And when they had done this, they enclosed a great shoal of fish; and as their nets were breaking, they beckoned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." For he was astonished, and all who were with him, at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; henceforth you will be catching men." And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

The interruption of the reading of the Gospel of Matthew after the **Elevation of the Holy Cross** is known as the "**Lukan Jump**". This is the middle of September near the **Conception of the Forerunner John**, the start of the ecclesiastical Year in late Antiquity. This usually happens before the 18th Sunday. *More info on page 9 titled "Liturgical Matters."*





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 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.

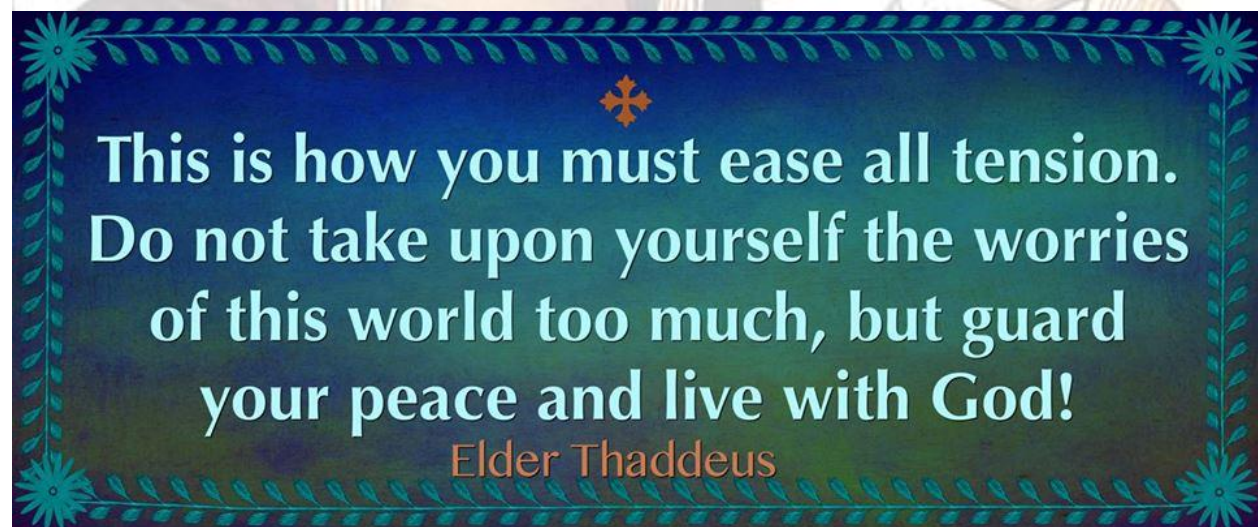
Special Announcements for the bulletin can be submitted by E-Mail:
Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org

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.

SISTERHOOD NAMEDAY CELEBRATION LUNCHEON: Today, October 4, following Divine Liturgy. Donation of \$5 per plate. Sponsored by the Sisterhood of the Protection of the Mother of God.

There will be a 40 day Pannikhida Service for Elena (Helen) Wolfe on October 25th with a dinner to follow.



Hieromartyr Hierotheus the Bishop of Athens



The Hieromartyr Hierotheus, the first Bishop of Athens, was a member of the Athenian Areopagos and was converted to Christ by the Apostle Paul together with St Dionysius the Areopagite (October 3).

The saint was consecrated by the Apostle Paul to the rank of bishop. According to Tradition, Bishop Hierotheus was present with St Dionysius at the funeral of the Most Holy Theotokos.

St Hierotheus died a martyr's death in the first century.

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

You souls of the dead, join me in glorifying the Heavenly Triad. What other way do you have to spend your time except either to cringe for fear far from God or to soar for joy close to God?

You have left behind your bodily ashes, your favorite concern, and now you only have to worry about your nakedness. Surely you realize now that the body does not give fragrance to the soul, but the soul to the body.

How difficult it is for a sinful soul when it is undiluted by flesh and unhidden by flesh! Truly, a wheel does not go into the mud by itself, but

only if a coachman drives it there. Surely you realize now that the wheel became sullied by the coachman's own will. The wheel has received its payment, and the coachman will receive his.

You sinful souls, yearn no longer to return to the body, as though you could supposedly flee from the evil stench that is suffocating you where you are now. You would only bring that same stench back with yourselves, and would increase it in a new body.

You sinful souls, yearn no longer to enter the body, as though you could flee the fire that is roasting you and the smoke that is smothering you! You would only bring the fire and smoke with yourselves, and your body would not be your rescuer but your burnt offering.

Rather direct all your attention to the eternal Virginity of God, which can cast out the evil stench from you, and to the Son of the Virgin, who would illuminate you with the flame of the wisdom of the Trinity, and to the All-Holy Spirit, who would give you the strength and the wisdom to elevate you to the choirs of angels.

You purified souls, who smell more captivating than all the balsams on earth, do not separate yourselves from those of us still on earth, who for another hour or two are still wandering over your paths of suffering and your ashes. All those who are pure on earth will be pure in heaven also, and will be your companions, perfumed with the balsam of paradise and clothed in the whiteness of virginity.

Strengthen your love for us and your prayer for us. For between you and us is no partition other than the frail veil of our flesh. For even though you have gone ahead while we have remained behind, the path is the same and the city at the end of the path is the same.

You righteous souls, we pray to the Lord for you as well, so that He may make your passage to Him easy and swift. Even though we are weaker than you, we nevertheless pray to God for you. We pray out of the love with which our heart burns for you, even as a younger and weaker

brother reaches out to help his older and stronger brother.

For just as younger and older brothers are one flesh in the eyes of the love that gave them birth, so also are we and you one flesh in the eyes of the exceedingly wise and exceedingly strong love of the Most High.

You countless flocks of souls of the dead, do not be distraught and confounded, and have no more regard for the cold island of life on earth, to which we, being few in number, are still stuck for another hour or two until we come to join you for the summer in warmer and brighter regions.

For all of you, both righteous and sinful, we who are half dead, half-alive pray to the Mercy of Heaven, so that you may not be confounded, so that you may not be afraid and look back, but may, in the fullness of summer, head ever forward and ever higher--
toward light and joy
toward peace and plenitude.

Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, XXIV:

Christ and Us

It is only necessary to seek one thing: to be with Jesus. The man who remains with Jesus is rich, even if he is poor with regard to material things. Whoever desires the earthly more than the heavenly loses both the earthly and the heavenly. But whoever seeks the heavenly is Lord of the whole world.

St. Ignatius Brianchaninov, Patericon

The Prologue of Ohrid
St. Nikolai Velimirovic

1. The Hieromartyr Hierotheus

Hierotheus was a companion of St. Dionysius the Areopagite and received the Christian Faith from the Apostle Paul a short time after Dionysius did. Later, the Apostle appointed him bishop of Athens. At the time of the Dormition

of the Most-holy Theotokos, Hierotheus arrived in Jerusalem and took part in her burial. With his divine chanting he inspired heartfelt worship in many, revealing himself as a man inspired from on high. He laboured much in the work of evangelism, converted many pagans to the truth and governed well his rational flock. He finally died a martyr for Christ, Who granted him a twofold crown in His Heavenly Kingdom: the crown of a hierarch and the crown of a martyr.

2. Saint Stefan Štiljanovic

Stefan was a Serbian despot, born of the Pastrović clan. He governed the Serbian people during a most difficult period, struggling courageously against the Turks and the Latins. A righteous man and a patriot, this wonderful prince could be compared with St. Alexander Nevsky, or with the holy King Jovan Vladimir. He entered into rest in the sixteenth century (according to some, in 1515). Over his grave a light appeared at night, by which means his holy relics were discovered. They were brought to the Monastery of Šišatovac in Fruška Gora, where they reposed for a long time. During the Second World War, St. Stefan's relics were transported to Belgrade and placed in the Cathedral Church beside the body of Prince Lazar. The prince's wife, Helena, seeing Stefan's incorrupt relics and witnessing miracles arising from the relics, was tonsured a nun, and gave herself over to asceticism until death.

3. The Venerable Ammon

Ammon was an Egyptian wine grower. His kinsmen forced him to marry against his will, but he did not wish to live with the woman as husband and wife. From the first day he called her his sister, and counselled her to join him in preserving their mutual chastity for the sake of the greater good in heaven. He lived with his wife this way for a full eighteen years. Later, by mutual agreement, his wife established a convent in her home, and Ammon went to the Nitrian desert, where he gave himself up to the ascesis of hermitic life. Because of his purity of heart, God granted him the great gifts of clairvoyance and miracle-working. A husband and wife brought their insane son to Ammon for

healing by his prayer, but Ammon in no way desired to do this. After prolonged insistence by the parents, Ammon said: "The illness and health of your child is in your hands. Return the stolen ox to that widow (and he spoke her name) and your son will be healed." The parents, amazed at the saint's clairvoyance, admitted their sin and promised to return the stolen ox as soon as they arrived home. Then St. Ammon prayed to God and the child was healed. Ammon was a close friend of St. Anthony the Great. When Ammon died in Nitria, in approximately 350 A.D., St. Anthony saw Ammon's soul in the heights from his cell and said to the brethren: "Today Abba Ammon died; behold, I see his holy soul as the angels bear it to heaven."

4. The Venerable Paul The Simple

Until the age of sixty, Paul lived in the world as a married man. Catching his wife in sin, he left everything and went to St. Anthony in the wilderness, receiving the monastic tonsure from him. Even though he was simple and illiterate, he achieved such spiritual perfection that he perceived every man's soul just as ordinary men see each other's bodies. He was a great miracle-worker, and in some instances, surpassed even St. Anthony. Paul died in deep old age in the year 340 A.D., and took up his joyful habitation with the angels.

Hymn of Praise The Venerable Ammon

Someone once begged Ammon:
"Show me, the wretched one, the path to
salvation."

To him, the saint said: "Through your entire life
You must be as a prisoner who awaits judgment,
As the prisoner who fears the judge,
And counts the hours to his trial,
Listening carefully for the voice that will say:
'The judge is calling for you!'
He does not value food and shelter,
Cares not whether he stands or sits:
He simply listens and listens
For the call of the judge.
My dear brother, we are like that--
It is true for me, and it is true for you."

And another asked him: "The narrow path, what
is it?

And the sorrowful path, how long does it last?"

Ammon said to him: "The narrow path is
Constraining your thoughts, so that they do not
stray.

The sorrowful path is the binding of your
desires,

So that your desire is naught but seeking
salvation in Christ."

O all-wise Ammon, knight of asceticism;

Patient bearer of the yoke of Christ

Who pleased God, and tamed men--

God has rewarded your labors with Paradise!

Reflection

A vision of St. Andrew: St. Paul was not the only one who was *caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words* (II Corinthians 12:4). Over 850 years after St. Paul, this also occurred to St. Andrew. One wintry night, St. Andrew was lying among the dogs on a dung heap in order to warm his frozen body, when an angel of God appeared to him and raised him up to Paradise (whether in the body or outside the body, St. Andrew himself could not explain), and kept him in the heavenly world for two weeks, eventually leading him to the third heaven. "I saw myself clothed in the most dazzling garments--they were as if woven from lightning--with a wreath of flowers on my head, and girt with a royal girdle. I rejoiced greatly at this beauty, and was amazed in both mind and heart, at the inexpressible beauty of God's Paradise, as I walked around it and rejoiced." Andrew also wrote that he saw Christ the Lord: "And when a flaming hand drew the curtain, I saw my Lord--as once did the Prophet Isaiah--sitting upon a high and exalted throne, with Seraphim standing all around Him. He was clothed in a crimson garment. His face was most radiant, and His eyes gazed most kindly upon me. Seeing Him, I prostrated before Him, worshiping the brilliant and awesome throne of His glory. How much joy overcame me during the vision of His face cannot be expressed; and now, calling to mind this vision, I am filled with inexpressible joy.... I heard my Most-merciful Creator when, with His most sweet and pure lips, He spoke three words to me, which so

sweetened my heart and inflamed it with love for Him, that I melted as warm wax from spiritual warmth..." When St. Andrew also desired to see the Most-holy Theotokos, he was told that she was not in heaven just then, but had descended to earth to help the poor and to comfort those in need.

Contemplation

Contemplate the injustice of King Manasseh and God's punishment (II Chronicles 33):

1. How Manasseh restored idol worship, enchantments and witchcraft, and did everything that is evil in the sight of the Lord;
2. How God permitted the Chaldeans to capture Manasseh.

Homily: on useful anger

Be angry and sin not (Psalm 4:4).

Be angry with yourself, brethren, and sin no more. Be angry at your sins of thoughts and deeds, and sin no more. Be angry with Satan *the father of lies* (John 8:44), and no longer do his will. Be angry at sin in the world and the trampling of God's holy Church by godless men, but beware that you do not cure sin by sin. Be angry with your friends when they sin; but be angry with the intention to correct them, and not to embitter them even more. The anger of a friend toward a friend, and the anger of parents toward their children--and of God toward men--is not a storm that uproots the tree but a wind that strengthens the tree, and rids it of rotten fruit so that the healthy fruit will increase in number and beauty. But let your anger have measure, so that it may be healing and not poisonous. In order to have this kind of control, keep God before you in your anger. There is no stronger containment for anger than God. All anger that is not in the name of God and God's righteousness is a sin. Do not become angry for the sake of idleness, but become angry for that at which God is angered. If your will is firmly set in God's law, you will always know when it is necessary to be angry, and how much is needed.

This cannot be expressed entirely in words, nor can it even be explained to the uneducated. Anger, in its place, acts as mercy does in its place. O my brethren, do you see how various powers are placed in our souls, and man, by his free will, can utilize them for life or death? Anger toward oneself can never be recommended enough. Here is a wonderful example: the more a man learns to be angry with himself, the less he is angry with others. Carried away with anger at his own weaknesses, he either does not see the weaknesses of others, or when he does see them, he judges them kindly. O Lord God, Thou only righteous One, implant in us the remembrance of the Day of Thy righteous anger, so that we may protect ourselves from spiritual sin.

To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.

Thoughts for Each Day of the Year According to the Daily Church Readings from the Word of God By St. Theophan the Recluse

The honorable cross is brought out for veneration in the middle of Great Lent in order to inspire those who toil in fasting to patiently bear the yoke they have taken to the end. Why is this done in September? Is it accidental? But there are no accidents for the Providential Wisdom that arranges all things. This is why: [in Russia], at least, in September the harvest is taken from the field. And so that some of the Christians might not feel too satisfied and say: "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry!" and so that others might not fall in spirit because of scarcity, the elevated cross is brought before all. It reminds the former that the support of well-being is not possessions, but their bearing of the cross in a Christian, inner way, should God's goodness bring external plenitude; and it inspires the latter to possess their souls in patience, through the certainty that they will go from the cross directly to heaven. Therefore, may some endure, knowing, that they are travelling a smooth path to the heavenly kingdom; and may the others enjoy external comforts with fear, not sealing the entrance to

heaven against themselves

The Banquet of the Lord

The importance of preparing to receive the Holy Mysteries

That the Church requires us to prepare to receive the Holy Mysteries of the Body and Blood of Christ, prior to the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, by saying the Pre-Communion Prayers, is a given. The Church also requires us to fast from midnight on, abstaining from either food or drink, until after we have received the Body and Blood of our Saviour. The only exception is when we must, because... of health issues, eat or drink something, and this must be blessed by our confessor or priest.

Although not required, if we read the appointed Epistle and Gospel readings prior to entering into the Liturgy, the Word can better enter the heart, for when hearing God's Word for the second time, we are more receptive, and the Word penetrates deeply.

Perhaps the most important preparation we must make before attending the Divine Liturgy, is to be sure we are at peace with all our brothers and sisters. We dare not approach the chalice with malice or hatred towards anyone, nor can we receive the Holy Gifts with a heart that has refused to forgive those who have hurt or offended us. An important part of forgiving others, is for us to seek forgiveness. Thus, frequent confession is an imperative.

Participating in the Divine Liturgy is a great privilege, for in this service we are entering into a place where there is neither time nor space, and where we are worshiping the Holy Trinity, together with the hosts of heaven.

In the Liturgy, encounter God in a way that is beyond human comprehension, for we are invited to commune with our Creator in the most intimate way. To approach the Holy Mysteries (Communion) without thought, as though we were simply going to a movie, is beyond foolishness. To receive the "hot coals" that is meant to transform us, and make us whole, without proper preparation, is a very dangerous thing to do.

With love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon

Coffee with Sister Vassa – Daily Reflection



Her Protection and Care



“Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, ‘Woman, here is your son,’ and to the disciple, ‘Here is your mother.’ From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.” (Jn 19: 25-27)

In His final hour on the cross, Christ indicates to His mother that She is the mother of John, the beloved disciple, and to John Christ says that the disciple is Her son, who was to care for Her in Her old age. According to a traditional interpretation of the Orthodox Church, She is also Mother to all disciples, to all followers of Christ. As members of the Body of Christ, communing with Him and in Him, we also enter into His relationships, becoming daughters and sons of His Mother and His Father. When I see an icon of the Mother of God, holding Her Child, I also see Her holding each and every one of us, who can run to Her protection and care with our cuts and bruises.

Today I remember the simple truth that I need the love, protection and care of others, just as others need mine. In the community of faithful, in the Body of Christ, the "others" include those already departed, who no longer need our protection and care, but are ready to provide it with their intercessions. This includes, most prominently, the Mother of God, whose motherly love is consistently there for me. Today let me ask for Her protection and care on my cross-carrying journey, because She does not abandon Her child on the cross.

***Liturgical Matters:
"The Lukan Jump"
by Archbishop Peter
(Fall, 1992)***

What is the "Lukan Jump"? The annual cycle of the Gospels is composed of four series:

1. The Gospel of St. John (read from Pascha until Pentecost Sunday);
2. The Gospel of St. Matthew (divided over seventeen weeks beginning with the Monday of the Holy Spirit - from the twelfth week, it is read on Saturdays and Sundays while the Gospel of St. Mark is read on the remaining weekdays);
3. The Gospel of St. Luke (divided over nineteen weeks beginning on the Monday after the Elevation of the Holy Cross - from the thirteenth week, is only read on Saturdays and Sundays, while St. Mark's Gospel is read on the remaining weekdays);
4. With the exception of the Sunday of Orthodoxy, the Gospel of St. Mark is read during the Lenten period on Saturdays and Sundays.

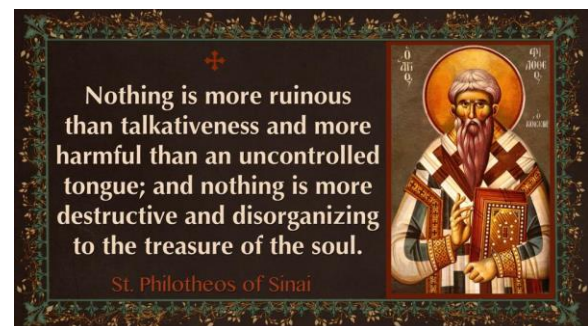
Why, after the Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross, is the reading of the Gospel of St. Matthew suddenly interrupted and why do we start then with the reading of St. Luke? At first glance, this jump appears to be arbitrary, more especially as there is no parallel in the reading of the Epistles.

To be sure, there is nothing arbitrary, although throughout the centuries the rationale has been forgotten. First, let us keep in mind that the fact that the reading of the Gospel of St. Luke

follows the Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross is merely coincidental and the theological reason lies elsewhere. Actually, the change is related to the chronological proximity of the commemoration of the Conception of St. John the Baptist celebrated on September 23rd. In later Antiquity, this feast marked the beginning of the ecclesiastical New Year. Thus, the reason for starting the reading of the Lukan Gospel toward the middle of September can be understood. This is based on a vision of Salvation History: the Conception of the Forerunner constitutes the first step of the New Economy, as mentioned in the stikhera of the matins of this feast. As we know, the Evangelist Luke is the only one to mention this Conception (Lk. 1:5-24). Later on, the introduction of new feasts, especially that of the Nativity of the Theotokos (September 8th), contributed to the downgrading of the significance of the Conception of St. John.

The Orthodox in the East have always observed the "Lukan Jump." In Russia, this tradition vanished, obviously because its rationale was not known. However, some decades ago, on the advice of the great liturgical specialist, the late Professor Uspensky, the Russian Church decided to come back to the old practice of the "Lukan Jump."

Since this action implies a connection between the cycle of the "Sanctorale" (Menaia) and the cycle of the feast, the date of which is determined by the date of Pascha, there is a practical difference between the Churches following the Julian Calendar and those using the Revised Julian Calendar with regard to the timing of the "Jump." Let us finally notice that the calendars published by the "Russian Church Abroad" continue to ignore the jump re-established recently by the Moscow Patriarchate.



Parents are responsible for the upbringing of their children (St. Paisios)



Most of us parents are very proud of our children. We are continually reinforcing their accomplishments with praise and telling them how wonderful they are. But is this healthy for them? This is a question that surely will draw much discussion and differing viewpoints.

Here is what St. Paisios has to say,

Many parents, thinking they dearly love their children, end up destroying them without realizing it. For example, a mother, who excessively loves her daughter, tells her while holding her in her arms: "I have the best child in the world." Therefore, from a very young age (when a child is unable to realize it and react against it) the child acquires a haughty mind-set

and believes she is a nice person. As a result, she is unable to sense the lack of God's presence and his benevolent power in her life and of course, cannot learn to ask for Him. Consequently, she develops a self-confidence as stiff as marble, which often never goes away, since, as the time goes by, it becomes very difficult to get rid of. The challenge of a parent is to help their child develop a healthy self-esteem which includes humility, while teaching them that all comes from God. Truly, we are all God's children and everything we have and can do comes from Him. It is important to remember to thank Him for the gifts He gives us and our ability to develop and apply them. Pride develops when we think our accomplishments are all our doing or that we are inherently better than others.

How about the extreme emphasis on sports and its competitiveness? A recent survey showed that those who participate in the major sports of baseball, basketball or football are more likely to cheat in school. These activities which emphasize personal accomplishment independent of God can lead our children away from God making it more difficult for them in later life to repent and come closer to God.

We as parents have an awesome responsibility. First we have to develop humility ourselves.

St. Paisios says,

Parents must look after their spiritual life, because apart from themselves, they are also responsible for their children. Of course, they have the excuse of having inherited their negative traits from their own parents; they have no excuse, however, for not trying to get rid of them, once they become aware of their existence. Work continually on your own relationship with God and you will continually become a better parent.