



Faith the Size of a Mustard Seed

Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone 1

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life:

Troparion of Annunciation, Tone 4

Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery! the Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace. Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos: Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you.

Kontakion of Annunciation, Tone 8

Neither the tomb, nor death, could hold the Theotokos, who is constant in prayer and our firm hope in her intercession. For being the Mother of Life, she was translated to life by the One who dwelt in her virginal womb.

Weekly Bulletin

Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

August 29th, Tone 1, Matt. 17:14-23

On this tenth Sunday after Pentecost, we read at the Liturgy the gospel account of the healing of a young epileptic (Matt. 17:14-23); a different version of this same episode was read on the fourth Sunday of Great Lent. We would ask the reader to refer to that.

Today, we shall restrict ourselves to commenting on some of Jesus' words which are not found in the gospel for the fourth Sunday in Lent. They are these: "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you".

It seems to us that, in this saying, the emphasis is not placed on the extraordinary physical phenomenon, on the possibility of removing the mountain, but rather on the contrast between the mountain and the grain of mustard seed, on the infinite possibilities (of which the displacement of a mountain is only a symbol) open to faith — even if it is very new — provided that something other than a simple intellectual adherence to a revealed truth.

As in the case of the centurion at Capernaum, Jesus speaks of faith as being a humble and total trust in the all-powerful goodness of God. If I have but a grain of such a faith, I can risk making that faith the basis of my life in all circumstances, confident that God will not necessarily give my difficulties the precise solution I may have in mind, but that He will give them their true, their best, solution — the one He wants. That would be my way of removing mountains. And, furthermore, I should always bear these words of St. Paul's in mind: "And though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing".

(taken from, *The Year of the Grace of the Lord*, by a Monk of the Eastern Church)

***From the Lives of the Saints...* THE BEHEADING OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST [MATTHEW 14:1-12]**

Herod Antipas (son of the elder Herod who slew the children of Bethlehem at the time of Christ's birth) was ruler of Galilee when John the Baptist was preaching. He was married to the daughter of Aretas, an Arabian prince. But Herod, an evil sprout of an evil root, put away his lawful wife and unlawfully took Herodias as his concubine. Herodias was the wife of his brother Philip,

Announcements and Activities

Divine Liturgy for the Indiction of the New Church Year— Wednesday, at 9AM.

Great Vespers— Saturday, at 5:30PM

Divine Liturgy— Sunday, at 10AM.

Coffee Hours— This week's Coffee Hour is our mini potluck. **Please note that this day, August 29th, is kept as a fast day, honoring the Beheading of the Baptist. No meat or dairy of any kind. Oil and Wine are permitted, as are shrimp and shell fish, but not fish with a backbone.. Next week's Coffee Hour will be sponsored by Michael T. and Michael M.**

Mortgage Reduction 40years/40K Pledge Drive — Most will recall that we began our drive on PASCHA and we had in mind to announce the results of the drive on the first Sunday in September, as that Sunday is closest to the beginning of the Indiction of the New, Ecclesiastical Year. Next Sunday will be that Sunday. Our Treasurer, Sunday B. has informed council that there are a few people who have told her they plan to contribute but have not yet done so. This is a reminder that the scheduled period for the drive is coming to a close.

Pray for... Hierarch Nikolai (Soraich)— battling cancer. Samir's friend, **Johnny**, who has been improving in the battle to save his sight. **Brian**, Sunday's brother. **George and Alex**, health problems. **Reposed Darrel**, Kyle's father. **Diane F. recovering from Surgery. Erika and Family. All those who have lost their lives or are suffering as a result of the current Pandemic . Archimandrite Alexander** — Fr. Lawrence's long-time father confessor, who reposed. **Kerrie Photine**— recent surgery, **Karen and Scott**— battling health issues. **Mitered Archpriest Basil**— a longtime friend of Father's, newly reposed. **Newly reposed Emiliane (Janie G.) and reposed Vadim. Our Vladyka Benjamin**— battling on-set parkinsons. **Tsige Roman and Abraham**— I know we are always mindful of Tsige, but please continue to pray for the work and for Ethiopia, torn by civil war, with all the problems that go with a regional terror. **Newly Reposed Maria S.**—who fell asleep in the Lord on Wednesday, around 11:30 PM. **Reposed Jonathan T. Reposed Vadim, Newly Reposed Donny. The newly reposed Protopresbyter Leonid, the longtime chair of the Department of External Affairs for the OCA, and brotherinlaw to Olga H., Brian, Kerrie and family**— asking prayers for family sickness. **Oxana**— traveling. **George and Alesis**, Brother and Daughter of Peter and Irene S. **Matushka Ioanna R., Reposed. Matushka Priscilla, ill. Anya J**— a longtime friend of the parish who is ill. **Stephen F.**— battling back pain. **John F.**— battling cancer. **Archpriest Anthony**— battling cancer. **Julie**— sister of Kathy M., battling health problems. **Archbishop Benjamin**— parkinsons.

who was still alive. John the Baptist stood up against this lawlessness and strongly denounced Herod. Herod then cast John into prison. During a banquet in his court at Sebastia in Galilee, Salome--the daughter of Herodias and Philip--danced before the guests. Herod, drunk with wine, was so taken by this dance that he promised Salome anything she asked of him, even if it were half of his kingdom. Salome was persuaded by Herodias to ask for the head of John the Baptist. Herod gave the order, and John was beheaded in prison--and his head was presented to him on a platter. John's disciples took the body of their teacher by night and honorably buried it, but Herodias pierced John's tongue with a needle repeatedly, and buried his head in an unclean place. What later happened to John the Baptist's head can be read on February 24. However, God's punishment quickly befell this group of evil-doers. Prince Aretas, avenging his daughter's honor, waged war against Herod with his army and defeated him. The defeated Herod was sentenced by the Roman Caesar, Caligula, to exile (at first to Gaul, then later to Spain). Herod and Herodias lived in poverty and humiliation in exile, until the earth opened up and swallowed them. Salome died an evil death on the Siskaris (Sula) River (see "Reflection" below). St. John's beheading occurred just before Passover [the Pascha] but its celebration on August 29 was established because a church that had been built over his grave in Sebastia (by Emperor Constantine and Empress Helena) was consecrated on August 29. The relics of John's disciples, Eliseus and Audius, were also placed in that church.

VENERABLE THEODORA OF THESSALONICA

She and her husband, a wealthy and devout man, lived on the island of Aegina. When the Arabs menaced Aegina, they settled in Thessalonica. There they gave their only daughter to a convent, and her monastic name was Theopista. Theodora's husband died soon after this, and she also became a nun. She was a great ascetic. She often heard angelic singing, and often mentioned it to the sisters: "Do you not hear how beautifully the angels sing in the heavenly sanctuary?" She died at the age of seventy-five, in the year 879 A.D. From her relics flowed healing myrrh, which benefited many.

THE HOLY FEMALE MARTYR VASILISSA

Vasilissa suffered for Christ in Srem [Serbia].

THE HOLY MARTYR ANASTASIUS

Anastasius was a young man from Radovište, in the diocese of Strumica. He learned a trade in Thessalonica. The Turks tried to force him to become a Muslim, which he adamantly rejected, and for that he was tortured, then hanged, on August 29, 1794 A.D.

Taken from The Prologue of Ochrid, edited and written by St. Nikolai

"There do not exist many or few, nor small or great problems. The only problem is the absence of Christ from our lives" (From the life and teachings of Elder Epiphanius Theodoropoulos)