



## Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

*The 32nd Sunday after Pentecost,  
January 24th , Tone 8, Lu.18:35-43*

### *The Healing of the Blind man*

*Troparion of the Resurrec-  
tion, Tone 8*

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One. Thou didst accept the three-day burial to free us from our sufferings. O Lord, our Life and Resurrection: Glory to Thee!

*Kontakion of Annunciation,  
Tone 8*

O Victorious Leader of triumphant hosts! We, your servants delivered from evil, sing our grateful thanks to you, O Theotokos! As you possess invincible might set us free from every calamity so that we may sing: Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride!

*For Nativity/Theophany:  
Feasts of Divine  
Illumination..*

I know Thee, O Lord; I know Thee clearly. I know Thee, since I have been taught by Thee; for no one can recognize Thee, unless He enjoys Thine illumination.

We can relate this gospel for the thirty-first Sunday after Pentecost (Lu. 18:35-43) in a special way to the feasts of Christmas and Epiphany. One of these feasts, the Church gives us the same answer that the crowd gave to the blind man of Jericho: "...he asked what it meant, and they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by..."

The great light of Epiphany must not shine in vain in front of those who are blind. Let us ask the Lord Jesus to open our eyes: "What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? — Lord, that I may receive my sight". Our eyes have become darkened by sin and they have lost sensitivity to the divine light. And yet, in God's intention, this vision should be mine. But is my faith strong enough for Jesus to be able to say to me: "Thy faith hath saved thee"? The blind man of Jericho's faith was very strong, for the more they tried to silence him "he cried out so much the more, Thou son of David...". They also try to silence me — "they" being my sins, my passions, the crowd of unbelievers. If I cry all the more strongly when sin tries to stop my voice, and if my call to Jesus rises above the voice of evil, then my faith is indeed a faith that is able to save. Is my faith really of that kind?

The epistle (1Tim. 1:15-17) consists of only three verses, and begins with this phrase: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief...". We know these words well, for the Church repeats them to us before each communion. Today, let us give a few moments to consider two aspects of Paul's affirmation: on the one hand, to the humble avowal by which we admit the seriousness of our own sin; on the other, to the certainty that Jesus has come into the world precisely to save us from our sin. Repentance and pardon: these are the two poles of the mystery of redemption, of which Christ's sacrifice is at the center.

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

### *From the Lives of the Saints... THE VENERABLE XENIA*

Xenia was born in Rome, the only daughter of a prominent senator. Drawn by love for Christ, she refused to enter into marriage as her parents wished. To avoid it, she secretly fled her home with two of her slaves, and arrived on the Island of Kos, at a place called Mylassa. There she founded a convent for virgins, where she lived an ascetic life until her death. Even though she was a frail woman, she possessed a steadfast endurance in fasting, prayer and all-night vigils. She often stood all night in prayer. She was dressed more poorly

## Announcements and Activities

**Great Vespers**— Saturday, at 5:30 PM. With just our skeletal crew.

**Divine Liturgy**— Sunday, at 10AM, outside, in person.

**Back outdoors:** Doubtless all of you have read my latest Directive (11/20) informing you of our being back outside for Sunday Liturgies and doing feasts and sacraments with a very small group of people in the Livestream style. On days when the Liturgy is being done in a livestream type of arrangement, you may still come to the door at the end of the Service for Holy Communion.

**Annual Meeting**— This is the 3rd of our 3 announcements about the Annual Meeting. The meeting will be held today (on the covered courtyard), following the Liturgy. We will try to keep the meeting to around 1hr: Reports, Elections, 2021 Budget proposal. All are welcome to come, and to participate, including catechumens. Voting members are those who are Orthodox, support the parish with Time, Talent and Resources and have received the sacraments of Holy Confession and Holy Communion at least once in the last 12 months. The meeting should not be missed except for true emergencies. We will face any weather challenges as they arise and adjust our schedule. We will also zoom the meeting for those who cannot attend. Reports distributed after last week's Liturgy and by mail.

**Pray for...** Hierarch Nikolai (Soraich)—battling cancer. **Natalia**—Olga's friend. Sunday's brother, **Joe**, ill. **Chance**— Kerri's nephew **Emory**—a young relative of Kirk and Kathy. **Linda**, Mary S.'s daughter. **Sarah**—the sister of John Deak who is battling cancer. **Theresa**, cancer, and husband **Ron**, the daughter-in-law and son of Linda D. Samir's friend, **Johnny**, who has been improving in the battle to save his sight. **Anna J.**, who is battling health issues related to her bone marrow transplant and battle with Lyme Disease. **Hanna**— a friend of April's who has a brain injury. **Darko**— who had surgery for cancer and has to undergo chemo. **Reposed Michael**, Brian R.'s cousin. **Barbara Ranjo**, cancer surgery and recovering. **David**, newly reposed. **Tony**, health and an upcoming surgery. **John**, health. **Dana and Era**, two young women who are battling health issues. **Carol**, **Mike Miller's friend**. **Julie**, a friend of Katherine M. **Michaela and family**— Heather's friend battling cancer. **George**— Sunday's husband who has been battling health issues. Mara's dad, **Ratp** who recently had surgery. **Fr. Paul Lazor**, sometime dean of St. Vladimir Seminary reposed.. **Vera**— Newly-Reposed. **Linda D.** post surgery pain. **Nicole**, **Aiden and Kate**. **Zoya**, who lives in Russia and is suffering from the covid virus. **Brian**, Sunday's brother. **George and Alex**, health problems. **Reposed Mel R.** faithful member and husband of Marianne. **Jerry** — the husband of Elise, Katie and Anna R. Who passed last Thursday. **Metropolitan Theodosius** newly reposed. **Reposed Darrel**, Kyle's father. **Diane F.** recovering from Surgery. **Erika and Family**. And, finally, all those who have lost their lives or are suffering as a result of the current Pandemic (which has been growing in numbers across the country and in the world), wildfires, hurricanes, and civil unrest. **Jerry**— Reposed. **Don**, **Judy**, **Paul**, **Thomas**, **Reposed**, friends of **Karen** and **Scott T.**

than all the other sisters, and she often sprinkled the bread she ate with ashes from the censer. At the time of her death (450 A.D.), a wonderful sign appeared over the virgins' convent: a wreath of stars with a cross in the center, brighter than the sun. Many who were sick received healing from her relics. Her female slaves [who became tonsured nuns] continued in the example of their abbess. When they reposed, they were buried, according to their wish, at the feet of Blessed Xenia.

### THE HOLY HIEROMARTYR [PRIEST-MARTYR] BABYLAS

Babylas was a priest in Sicily. He suffered for Christ with two of his disciples in the third century.

### THE VENERABLE MACEDONIUS

Macedonius was a Syrian hermit. He ate only grains of barley softened with water, and only in his old age did he allow himself baked bread. He ended his earthy life in the year 418 A.D.

### THE VENERABLE PHILO, BISHOP OF CYPRUS

When St. Epiphanius was summoned to Rome to help the sister of the Emperor Honorius by his prayer, he consecrated Philo a bishop. Philo wrote commentaries on the Pentateuch and the Song of Songs. He reposed peacefully in the fifth century.

### THE VENERABLE DIONYSIUS OF OLYMPUS

Dionysius was a miracle-worker. He lived in asceticism on Mount Olympus. He was tonsured a monk on Mount Athos, where he was the abbot of the Monastery of Philotheou. Toward the end of his life, he again withdrew into solitude on Mount Olympus, where he reposed in the sixteenth century.

### CONTEMPLATION

#### *Contemplate the Lord Jesus as Teacher:*

1. As a Teacher Who teaches how a man should think in order to be saved;
2. As a Teacher Who teaches how a man should talk in order to be saved;
3. As a Teacher Who teaches how a man should act in order to be saved.

Taken from the Prologue of Ochrid, by St. Nikolai Velimirovich

*“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)*