



# **Orthodox Church of the Annunciation**

**October 3rd, Tone 6, Luke 6:31-36**

***"Do unto Others..."***

***Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone 6***

The angelic powers were at Thy tomb. The guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure Body. Thou didst capture hell, not being tempted by it. Thou didst come to the Virgin granting Life. O Lord who didst rise from the dead: Glory to Thee!

***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***

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!

The 17th Sunday after Pentecost takes us back to the very first teachings of Jesus in Galilee, and, in particular, to the Sermon on the Mount in St. Luke's abridged version of it. The very short Gospel read today (Lu. 6:31-36) deals with loving one's enemies. Do unto others as you would have that men should do unto you. If you love only those who love you, if you do good to only those who do good to you, if you lend to only those who lend to you, you act no differently from sinners themselves, and nothing more. It is your enemies you must love, you must do good to them, and lend to them, for only in this way will you show yourselves to be children of God, Who himself extends his goodness to those who are evil.

The idea of not doing to others what we would not wish them to do to us was familiar to Jesus' contemporaries, and was part of rabbinical teaching. But Jesus goes beyond this negative precept and requires us to treat others as we would like to be treated by them. However, this new commandment, this positive commandment, risks being misunderstood by us. We might be led into doing good to others in the hope that they would respond by doing good to us, and that there would be some sort of reciprocity between our attitude and theirs. This is why Jesus immediately insists on the principle of disinterestedness. Our love must be freely given and go out to those from whom we expect nothing in return.

The climax of today's gospel is the saying: "Be ye therefore merciful as your Father also is merciful". Here, we are very far from the trite moral injunction such as: "love other people without hoping for a reward." For this phrase confronts us with all that is absolute and — though one hesitates to say so — inaccessible in the Christian duty to love. To be merciful *as* the Father is merciful does not mean that our mercy could ever reach to the infinity of divine mercy; but, that in our own small measure, we should be inspired by the same feelings as the Father; it is from the ocean of the Father's mercy that the minute drops of water which are our acts of mercy must come, and it is into this ocean that they must finally flow

...A first sign of this spirit is never to think of a man as utterly lost. "Love ye your enemies...hoping for nothing again" today's gospel tells us. This is not a humanitarian and superficial optimism: after all, a man is never entirely bad; he can change. And another thought can inspire our attitude: if God never ceases to do good to a sinner, if he is always ready to open his arms to him,

## **Announcements and Activities**

**Great Vespers— WILL NOT BE SERVED ON Saturday.**

**Divine Liturgy—** Sunday, at 10AM. Fr. John Takahashi will be here to serve. Let us welcome Fr. John as the kind friend he has been to our parish.

**Coffee Hours—** This week's Coffee Hour is being sponsored by Kyle, Erika and Luci. Next week's Coffee Hour will be our bagels and Coffee week.

**Craft Faire—** many thanks, and *Many Years* to those who helped and donated toward our Craft Faire. We made around 2K, Glory to God!

**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 long-time 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 long-time 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. **Mitred Archpriest Sergei—** who reposed recently.

who am I to dare to be stricter than God? Even in the greatest sinner, the most hardened criminal, the "image of God" is still present. What is important is to know how the "image of God" in me can meet the "image of God" in my enemy — or in a wrongdoer.

Taken from the *Year of Grace of the Lord*, by a Monk of the Eastern Church

## **From the Lives of the Saints... THE HOLY HIROMARTYR DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE**

Dionysius is numbered among the Seventy Lesser Apostles. This wonderful man was the scion of a distinguished pagan family in Athens. Having completed the school of philosophy in Athens, he went to Egypt to study further. While he was there the Lord Christ died on the Cross, the sun was darkened, and there was darkness in Egypt for three hours. Then Dionysius cried out: "Either God the Creator of the world is suffering, or this world is coming to an end." Returning to Athens, he married a woman named Damaris and had sons by her. He became a member of the highest court among the Greeks, the Areopagus, and thereafter he was known as the "Areopagite." When the Apostle Paul preached the Gospel in Athens, Dionysius was baptized with his entire household. Paul consecrated him Bishop of Athens. He left his wife, children and his position for the love of Christ. He traveled with Paul for a long time and met all the other apostles of Christ. He traveled to Jerusalem especially to see the Most-holy Theotokos, and described his encounter with her in one of his written works. He was present at the burial of the Holy and Most-pure One. When his teacher, St. Paul, suffered martyrdom, Dionysius also desired such a death for himself, and went to Gaul, with his presbyter Rusticus and the deacon Eleutherius, to preach the Gospel among the barbarians. He suffered much but also succeeded much. By his labors many pagans were converted to the Christian Faith. Dionysius built a small church in Paris, where he celebrated the divine services.\*) When he was ninety years old, he, Rusticus and Eleutherius were seized and tortured for Christ; then all three were beheaded. The severed head of St. Dionysius rolled a long distance, to the feet of Catula, a Christian, who honorably buried it with his body. Dionysius suffered during the reign of Dometian in the year 96 A.D. He wrote several famous works: on the Divine Names of God, on the Celestial and Ecclesiastical Hierarchies, on Mystical Theology, and on the Most-holy Theotokos.

## **THE VENERABLE JOHN THE CHOZEBITE**

John was an Egyptian who lived the ascetic life in the Chozeba community during the reign of Emperor Justinian. Whenever he celebrated the Liturgy, he perceived a heavenly radiance in the sanctuary. Ananias, an elder, labored ascetically not far from him. Wondrous was the humility of these two saints. A man brought his insane son to the elder Ananias to heal him by prayer. Ananias sent him to St. John as being greater than he. John could not help but obey the elder; however, he cried out: "In the name of Jesus Christ, it is Ananias, not I, who commands you to come out of this young man!" And the young man was healed immediately.

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)*