



# **Orthodox Church of the Annunciation**

**October 31st, Tone 2, Luke 8:26-39**

## **The Gadarene Demoniac**

### **Troparion of the Resurrec- tion, Tone 2**

When Thou didst descend to death, O Life Immortal, Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead! And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead, all the powers of heaven cried out: O Giver of Life! Christ our God! 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 gospel for the fifth Sunday after Pentecost (Matt. 8:28-34;9:1) tells us how Jesus healed a case of diabolic possession, and how the demons entered into a herd of swine which then hurled itself into the Sea of Galilee. We have already come across this episode in the gospel for the twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost (Lu. 8:27-38)...

Let us come back to the great doctrine of justification by faith. In the epistle for today (Rom. 10:1-10), St. Paul continues to enlarge on this theme. He deplores the blindness of the Israelites who, "going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God". This "righteousness of God" is Christ Himself. "For Christ is the end of the Law...". Such a phrase must be correctly understood. Paul certainly does not intend to say that the content of the moral law has been abolished. Crimes that the law condemns remain crimes: the good that it commands continues to be good. But we are no longer tied by an external and institutional law, by a written text. The person of Jesus Christ has become our law. It is no longer a matter of knowing whether this or that action is prescribed or forbidden by a text, but of asking ourselves if it does or does not conform to Christ. This new law, Christ Jesus, "the word of faith, which we preach," is not difficult to remember or to formulate: it is not a remote text, it is not even to be found somewhere outside ourselves.

"The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart...if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Let us always remember that, unless it bears the fruits of holiness, a belief kept safe in our heart is no more than an empty formula. And let us give thanks to God that we have been delivered from multiple and burdensome outward observances:

He has established us in a certain spirit, in accordance with a certain meaning. But, because the Apostle Paul is making use of a text from the Old Testament, let us read the phrase again in the original and pay attention to the last words: "But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, *that thou mayest do it*".

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

## Announcements and

**Great Vespers**— Saturday, at 5:30 PM.

**Divine Liturgy**— Sunday, at 10AM.

**Coffee Hours**— This week's Coffee Hour is being sponsored by Tricia and Kirk and Kathy. Next week's Coffee Hour will be sponsored by Diane F. and Luci F.

**Church School/Adult Ed.**— We will next meet on Sunday, November 14th, at 9AM.

**Marchell Baptism**— we are so blessed to announce that we baptized the newborn Elizabeth (Eliza) Marchell on Saturday, at 11AM.

**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. **Mitred 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 long-time chair of the Department of External Affairs for the OCA, and brother-in-law 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. **Mitred Archpriest Sergei**— who reposed recently.

## From the Lives of the Saints...

### THE HOLY APOSTLES STACHYS, AMPLIAS, URBAN, NARCIS-SUS, APELLES AND ARISTOBULUS

They were all of the Seventy. Stachys was an assistant to St. Andrew the First-called. St. Andrew appointed him Bishop of Byzantium. He established the church in Argyropolis and governed his flock faithfully and zealously. After sixteen years as bishop, he entered peacefully into rest in the Lord. Amplias and Urban worked likewise with St. Andrew, and were ordained bishops by him--Amplias in Lydda of Odysopolis in Judea, and Urban in Macedonia. Both died as martyrs for Christ the Lord. Narcissus was appointed Bishop of Athens by the Apostle Philip. St. Apelles was Bishop of Hera- clea in Trachis. Aristobulus, brother of the Apostle Barnabas, preached the Christian Faith in Britain and reposed peacefully there.

### THE HOLY MARTYR EPIMACHUS

He was born in Egypt and labored there in asceticism, ending his earthly life as a martyr. Imitating St. John the Baptist, he withdrew to the wilderness while still a youth. Because of his great love for God, the Spirit of God led him to every truth and, with no other teacher, taught him how to live a life of asceticism. Then, Epimachus learned that the unbelievers were torturing and killing Christians in Alexandria for the sake of Christ. All aflame with zeal for the Faith, he went to the city and smashed the idols. When the pagans tortured him for this, he cried out: "Smite me, spit on me, put a crown of thorns on my head, put a reed in my hand, give me gall to drink, crucify me on a cross, and pierce me with a spear! This is what my Lord endured, and I too want to endure it." In the crowd of people who witnessed the torturing of St. Epimachus, there was a woman who was blind in one eye. She wept bitterly, watching the heartless torture of this God-pleaser. When the tormentors scraped the body of the holy martyr of Christ, blood spurted from him, and one drop of blood touched the blind eye of that woman. Suddenly, her blind eye regained vision, and was as whole as the other. Then she cried out: "Great is the God in whom this sufferer believes!" After this they beheaded St. Epimachus and his soul took up habitation in eternal joy, in about the year 250 A.D.

### THE HOLY MARTYR NICHOLAS OF CHIOS

Nicholas was a pious youth and a great zealot for the Christian Faith. He was born in the village of Karyes on the island of Chios, where he was tortured and beheaded by the Turks in the year 1754 A.D., and gave his righteous soul to God.

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)*