



Weekly Bulletin

Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

September 5th, Tone 2, Matt. 18:

The Parable of the 10,000 Talents

Troparion of the Resurrection, 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!

“Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.” This petition from the Lord’s Prayer is illustrated by the parable from the gospel for the eleventh Sunday after Pentecost (Matt. 18:23-35).

A king calls his servants to account: one of the servants owes him then thousand talents and, as he cannot pay the debt, he will be sold, together with his family and all his possessions. The servant begs the king to allow him time to repay, and the king mercifully forgives him the whole debt. However, the servant, on meeting another servant who owes him a very small sum, takes him by the throat and has him thrown into prison. Other servants report this to the king who, in his wrath, hands the servant over to the tormentors until the debt is fully paid off: “Shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee?” Jesus ends: “So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgiven not every one his brother their trespasses”.

We shall underline two very striking points in this parable. God does not forgive our debts *because* we forgive those of our debtors. Certainly, there is continuity, a sequence, a parallel (“as we forgive...”) between the forgiveness which we receive from God and that which we accord to men, but the second is not the cause of the first. God, in his generosity, takes and keeps the initiative of forgiveness. When we ourselves forgive others, it is not “our” own forgiveness we grant them. We allow the divine forgiveness which we ourselves have received to “pass through” and beyond us, we make ourselves its instruments: for all forgiveness comes from God. And also, we do not only forgive others because they are men, just as we are, but because we are all servants of the same King.

Let us, today, examine every fold of our heart, every corner of our mind, lest some trespass, some injustice that we have not forgiven lies there. We have no right to try to bring to a halt in ourselves the forgiveness that flows from the Cross with the blood of the Savior. We must allow it to flow freely, we can make it flow on to others, and especially on to those who may have harmed us. If I do not, how shall I dare to say the Lord’s Prayer through to its end? The forgiveness that God grants me, I can send on beyond myself. May it reach those to whom I would extend it, and then come back and remain with me.

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

Announcements and Activities

Great Vespers for the Nativity of the Theotokos— Tuesday, at 6PM

Divine Liturgy for the feast— Wednesday, at 9AM.

Great Vespers— Saturday, at 5:30PM

Divine Liturgy— Sunday, at 10AM.

Coffee Hours— This week's Coffee Hour will be sponsored by Michael T. and Michael M.. Next week's Coffee Hour will be our monthly Bagels and Coffee.

Parish Council— will meet next Sunday, after Coffee Hour.

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. We are beyond pleased to announce that our parishioners donated \$22,000. When adding the promised parish matching funds, we surpassed our goal with a total of \$42,000.

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 Vlado 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 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.

From the Lives of the Saints... THE HOLY PROPHET ZACHARIAS AND THE RIGHTEOUS ELIZABETH

He was the father of St. John the Forerunner. Zacharias was the son of Barachias, from the lineage of Abia, of the sons of Aaron. Zacharias was a high priest who held the eighth degree of service in the Temple at Jerusalem. His wife Elizabeth was the daughter of Sophia and sister of St. Anna, who was the mother of the Holy Theotokos. During the reign of King Herod the child-slayer, Zacharias was serving one day at the Temple of Jerusalem according to his turn. An angel of God appeared to him in the sanctuary, and Zacharias had great fear. The angel said to him: Fear not, Zacharias (Luke 1:13), and announced that Elizabeth would bear a son, in answer to their prayers. But both Zacharias and Elizabeth were old. When Zacharias doubted the words of the heavenly herald, the angel said: I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God (Luke 1:19). Zacharias was struck dumb from that hour, and could not speak until his son was born and he had written on a tablet: His name is John (Luke 1:63). Then his speech returned, and he magnified God.

Some time later, when the Lord Jesus had been born and Herod began to slaughter the children of Bethlehem, he sent men to find and kill the son of Zacharias—for Herod had heard all that had happened to Zacharias, and how John had been born. Upon seeing the soldiers coming, Elizabeth took John into her arms—he was a year and a half old at that time—fled from the house with him, and ran to a rocky and desolate place. When she saw the soldiers following her, she cried out to the mountain: "O mountain of God, receive a mother with her child!" and the rock opened and hid the mother and child. Then Herod, enraged that the child John had not been slain, ordered that Zacharias be slain before the altar. The blood of Zacharias was spilled on the marble and dried solid as stone, and remained as a witness to Herod's evil deed. In the place where Elizabeth hid with John a cave opened, water flowed out of it, and a fruit-bearing palm grew, all by the power of God. Forty days after the death of Zacharias, the blessed Elizabeth died. The child John remained in the wilderness, fed by an angel and protected by God's providence, until the day he appeared at the Jordan.

THE HOLY MARTYRS JUVENTIUS AND MAXIMINUS

Little is known about the life of these two holy men, but their suffering for Christ is known from a sermon by St. John Chrysostom praising them. They were soldiers during the rule of Emperor Julian the Apostate. In conversation with others during a military feast, they condemned the emperor for his persecution of Christians. Someone told the emperor of this, and he had them thrown into prison. Some of the emperor's men visited them with the intention of turning them away from the true Faith. They told Juventius and Maximinus that many of their companions had denied Christ. To this, the two nobly replied: "Then we must stand bravely, and offer ourselves as a sacrifice for their apostasy." They were beheaded with the sword in the dark of night, but their relics were found and were revealed to be miracle-working.

SEVENTY HOLY MARTYRS

Headed by Urban, Theodore and Medimnus, these men were chosen from among the Christians of Constantinople during the Emperor Valens's persecution of Orthodoxy, as the most respected and distinguished citizens of the capital, to go to Nicomedia to implore the heretical emperor (an Arian) to at least spare the lives of Orthodox Christians. The emperor became enraged and told them to go back, but secretly ordered his sailors to set the boat on fire when they were at sea, and to save themselves in a dinghy. The wicked servants of the even more wicked master did this. The bodies of these glorious seventy martyrs were burned and drowned in the sea, but their souls swam on to the haven of eternal blessedness.

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)