



### ***The Parable of the Sheep and Goats***

#### ***Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone 3***

Let the heavens rejoice! Let the earth be glad! For the Lord has shown strength with His arm! He has trampled down death by death! He has become the firstborn of the dead! He has delivered us from the depths of hell, and has granted to the world great mercy!

#### ***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 for the Sunday of Judgment, Tone 3***

When Thou, O God, shalt come to earth with glory, all things shall tremble and the river of fire shall flow before Thy Judgment Seat; the Books shall be opened and the hidden things disclosed; then deliver me from the unquenchable fire and make me worthy to stand at Thy right hand, O Righteous Judge.

## *Weekly Bulletin*

# **Orthodox Church of the Annunciation**

***February 27th , Tone 3, Matt. 25:1-15***

In the same way as on the previous Sunday, fasting figures as a secondary theme in the liturgy of the day. This Sunday is called 'Meat-fare Sunday', because it is the last day on which the consumption of meat is authorized. From the next day, Monday, one should, if one can, abstain from meat until Easter. On the other hand, the use of milk, butter and cheese is allowed during all the days of this week, including Wednesday and Friday. During the liturgy a portion of the first epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (8:8-13 and 9:1-2) is read in which the apostle, in substance, says the following: Eating or not eating meat in itself is not a matter of importance, but this liberty which we have must not scandalize or be a stumbling-block to the weak. A man who believes in the only God and does not believe in the reality of idols may, with a clear conscience, eat the flesh of beasts sacrificed to idols; but, if one of his brothers is less enlightened and thinks that this means some sort of association with the worship of idols, then he should abstain from doing this, and respect the conscience of those brothers for whom too, Christ died. And so, if we are inspired by St. Paul's idea, someone who feels he has valid reasons for not fasting, or for modified fasting during Lent, will all the same be careful to avoid anything that might scandalize or offend the conscience of those who are less strong.

The gospel for the liturgy (Matt. 25:31-46) describes the last judgment. 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory', with all the holy angels, all the nations will be gathered before his throne. He will separate the sheep from the goats, setting the righteous on his right and the sinners on his left. He will invite those who have fed, clothed and visited him in his human guise of the poor, the prisoners and the sick, to enter the kingdom of the Father. He will exclude from the kingdom those who have acted otherwise. This description of the judgment obviously is partly symbolic. We pass judgment on ourselves when, voluntarily, we adhere to God or reject him. It is our love or our lack of love which will place us amongst the 'blessed' or amongst those who are dismissed (or perhaps deferred). Even if we do not have to interpret the details of the judgment literally, exactly as the evangelist describes them, we must listen very carefully to what the Savior says about his presence in those who suffer, for it is in them alone that we are in any way able to help the Lord Jesus

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

### ***From the Lives of the Saints... THE VENERABLE PROCOPIUS OF DECAPOLIS***

This saint was from Decapolis by the Sea of Galilea, for which reason he was called the Decapolite. In his youth he devoted himself to a life of asceticism and accomplished all the prescribed labors by which the heart is purified and the spirit is elevated to God. When the wicked Leo the Isaurian began his persecution of the icons and their venerators, Procopius rose up in their defense. He showed that the veneration of icons is not idolatry, for Christians know that by

## **Announcements and Activities**

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

**Sunday Divine Liturgy**— 10AM.

**Church School/Adult Ed.**— will next meet on Sunday, March 13th.

**Coffee Hours**— This week's Coffee Hour is our potluck. Next week's Coffee Hour will be sponsored by Erika, Kyle and Luci. Today is the last day on which meat may be served at Coffee Hour, until Pascha (April 24th). Next Sunday is the last day on which fish, eggs and dairy may be served at Coffee Hour until Pascha. In addition, after next Sunday, we must avoid anything with dairy products in it: MILK chocolate, Sour CREAM, Muffins with EGGS, etc. A blessed lent to all.

**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. **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. **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. **Reposed Jonathan T. 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. **Rhoda's requests for Douglas and Kayana.** **Reposed Constance**— the mother of Andrew F. **Will**— reposed, Michael T.'s brother-in-law. **Reposed Vadim. Christian**— undergoing some medical testing. **Daniel**— a friend of our parish's florist, battling end of life illness. **Stacy**— hand surgery. The reposed— **Novice Nonna**

bowing down before icons they are bowing down not to lifeless matter, but to living saints who are depicted in the icons. Because of this, Procopius was arrested, brutally tortured, flogged and scrapped with an iron brush. When the wicked Emperor Leo was slain in the body--for he had lost his soul earlier--icons were restored in the churches, and Procopius returned to his monastery, where he spent the remainder of his days in peace. In his old age he was translated to the Kingdom of God. There he gazes with joy upon the living angels and saints, whose images on icons he honored on earth. He died peacefully in the ninth century.

### **THE VENERABLE THALELAEUS**

Thalelaeus was a Syrian ascetic. At first he resided in the Monastery of St. Sava the Sanctified near Jerusalem, but later he settled in a pagan cemetery known for appearances of evil spirits and monsters. In order to conquer fear within himself through faith in God, Thalelaeus settled in this cemetery, where he lived for many years, enduring many assaults from evil spirits both day and night. Because of his great faith and love for God, God endowed him with the gift of working miracles, through which he did much good for sick and suffering people. He reposed in about the year 460 A.D.

### **THE VENERABLE TITUS OF THE MONASTERY OF THE KIEV CAVES**

Titus was a priest and had a sincere love for Deacon Evagrius, as brother for brother. But as great as their love was in the beginning, it later became a mutual hostility and hatred sown by the devil. They hated each other so much that, when one would be censuring in the church, the other would turn and walk out of the church. Titus attempted many times to reconcile with his antagonist, but in vain. Titus became ill and everyone thought that he was going to die. He begged them to bring Evagrius to him, that he might forgive him. Forcefully they dragged Evagrius to the bedside of Titus, but Evagrius broke free and fled, saying that he would not forgive Titus either in this world or the other world. As soon as he said this, he fell to the ground and died. Titus arose from his bed healthy and related how the demons had been hovering around him until he had forgiven Evagrius. When he forgave, the demons fled and attacked Evagrius, and angels of God surrounded Titus. Titus reposed in the year 1190 A.D.

### **THE VENERABLE STEPHEN**

At first Stephen was a palace official of Emperor Maurice. Later he left the palace service and, driven by love for Christ, built a charitable hospice for the aged in Constantinople. He reposed peacefully in the year 616 AD.

Taken from the Prologue of Ochrid, Compiled and edited by St. Nikolai Velimirovic)

*“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)*