



### ***The Healing of the Blindman***

#### ***Troparion of the Resurrec- tion, 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 the Annuncia- tion, 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!

## *Weekly Bulletin*

# **Orthodox Church of the Annunciation**

**January 23rd , Tone 6, Lu.18:35-43**

We can relate this gospel for the thirtieth Sunday after Pentecost (Lu. 18:35-43) in a special way to the feasts of Christmas and Epiphany. On 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 Year of the Grace of the Lord, by a Monk of the Eastern Church)

### ***From the Lives of the Saints...* THE HIEROMARTYR [PRIESTLY- MARTYR] CLEMENT, BISHOP OF ANCYRA**

Clement was born in the year 258 A.D. in the city of Ancyra of a pagan father and a Christian mother. His devout mother, Euphrosyne, prophesied that her son would die a martyr's death; then she herself departed this world when Clement was twelve years old. Her friend Sophia took Clement into her home as a son, and assisted in rearing him with a Christian spirit. Clement was so famous for his virtuous living that he was elected Bishop of Ancyra at the age of twenty. In his youth he attained the wisdom of a mature adult, and by great abstinence he tamed and conquered his body.

## **Announcements and Activities**

**Liturgy for St. John Chrysostom— Please note a change to our calendar!** We cannot serve this Liturgy because the Archbishop has scheduled a Diocesan Council meeting that will conflict with the celebration. Sorry to not be able to celebrate a feast that is so dear to me.

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

**Sunday Divine Liturgy—** 10AM.

**House Blessings—** We're moving into February soon, please sign up soon if you want your home blessed. Fr. Lawrence placed a sign-up sheet for House Blessings in the Social Hall, on the table against the wall with the double doors to the patio. If, in addition to the blessing itself, you are interested in dining or having refreshments with Father and Matushka, you'll want to adjust the time you sign up for accordingly. There are, of course, still concerns about the new Omicron variant and its highly contagious characteristic. If you would prefer to not have Fr. Lawrence come for now, he understands completely and will gladly do it at another time when you are feeling more comfortable. We will need to be somewhat cautious with our schedules, as we do not want to have to close the church down from an outbreak of Covid. If anyone in the household is sick with a fever, just call Fr. Lawrence and we'll reschedule; better that than having to close the parish due to an outbreak. If Fr. Lawrence falls ill, he will, of course, cancel and reschedule with you by phone. Our goal is, as always, to finish House Blessings before the start of Great Lent.

**Church School/Adult Ed.—** will next meet on Sunday, February 6th, at 9AM. We'll forego January 23rd, as it's the day of the Annual Meeting.

**Coffee Hours—** This week's Coffee Hour is our potluck before our Annual Meeting. Next week's Coffee Hour will be sponsored by Sunday and Rhoda.

**Annual Meeting—** today. Council and I hope you read your reports carefully. We are grateful to be able to gather and reflect on our church year. All are welcome to attend, but non-members should not vote on the issues that require a vote.

**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 cur-

Clement fed on bread and vegetables only, and did not eat anything butchered or bloody. During the reign of Emperor Diocletian, he was tortured horribly, "as no one had ever been, since the beginning of the world." He spent twenty-eight years in torments and in dungeons. Eleven different torturers tormented and tortured him. At one time, when they struck him in the face, spat upon him and broke his teeth, he cried out to Domentian, his torturer: "You are doing me great honor, O Domentian, and you are not torturing me, for the mouth of my Lord Jesus Christ was also beaten and struck in like manner--and behold: I, the unworthy one, have now been made worthy of this!" When Clement was brought to Rome before Diocletian, the emperor placed various weapons of torture on one side, and on the other side such gifts as medals, clothing, money and all that the emperor could bestow. Then he told Clement to choose. The martyr of Christ glanced with scorn at all the emperor's gifts and chose the instruments of torture. Clement was indescribably tortured: piece by piece they removed the flesh from his body, so that the white bones showed beneath the flesh. Healed of these wounds, he was beheaded by a soldier in the church in Ancyra, while he was celebrating the Divine Liturgy as bishop, in the year 312 A.D. The miracles of St. Clement are without number.

### **THE SIXTH ECUMENICAL COUNCIL**

The first session was held in Constantinople during the years 680-681 A.D. This Council condemned the Monothelite heresy, which erroneously taught that in Christ there was only one divine will and not a human will. The Council also passed several canons concerning the order and discipline of the clergy.

### **SAINT PAULINUS THE MERCIFUL**

At first, Paulinus was a Roman senator, and afterward a bishop in Nola. He followed the example of his friend, St. Ambrose, and received baptism. Following his baptism, Paulinus withdrew to the Pyrenees Mountains in Spain, where he lived a life of asceticism. But as no lighted lamp can be hidden, so also was St. Paulinus discovered and elected Bishop of Nola. He was a good and merciful shepherd. He reposed peacefully in the year 431 A.D. His relics repose in the Church of St. Bartholomew in Rome.

### **REFLECTION**

Compassion has always been a characteristic of a true shepherd of Christ's flock. In his glorious homilies, St. John Chrysostom did not emphasize or praise anything more strongly than compassion. St. John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria, lamented every day wherein the opportunity was not given him to show compassion to someone. St. Paulinus deserved to be called the Merciful, for he was truly compassionate in the full Christian sense of the word. Once, when the Vandals looted Nola, they took many men into slavery. The Vandal Prince Rig took a certain widow's only son as a slave. The widow came weeping to her bishop and sought money from him to pay the ransom for her son. Not possessing anything, Bishop Paulinus dressed in the clothes of a simple man and asked the widow to take him before the prince and exchange him for her son. The prince released the widow's son and took Paulinus with him to Africa--where Paulinus served as the prince's gardener until, by God's Providence, he was freed and returned to Nola with the other slaves.

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)*