



Weekly Bulletin

Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

The Sunday of the Cross

Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone 7

By Thy Cross, Thou didst destroy death! To the thief, Thou didst open Paradise! For the myrrhbearers, Thou didst change weeping into joy! And Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God, to proclaim that Thou art risen, granting 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.

Troparion of the Cross, Tone 1

Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of paradise; it has been mysteriously quenched by the wood of the Cross! The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished; for Thou, O my Savior, didst come and cry to those in hell: Enter again into Paradise.

The 3rd Sunday of Great Lent, Tone 7, March 19th, Mark 8:38-9:1

According to the church hymns: "In the middle of the Fast, the all honorable tree calls in worship" all those who "worthily follow through their passion the passion of Christ," who in the first half of the Holy Forty Day Fast have fervently practiced asceticism in fasting and prayers, in repentance and cleansing from all impurities, in acts of love and good works. For those, the holy cross of Christ really serves with the most comfort and strongest encouragement for the continuation of their Lenten efforts, "easing their Lenten time."

But how and for what will they approach the life-giving cross of Christ in the course of the holy days of "the soul-pleasing Forty Day Fast" when they lead the usual sinful, vain, sensual life which, perhaps, even after holy confession and holy communion remain the same as before, with the same passions and with the same insensitivity and hardness of heart? How will they kiss the Holy Cross when during the holy days of the Fast they strayed to the way of vice and yet have not taken the way to true repentance, the real struggle against their passions? How will they touch the pierced side of Christ, who in their heart and during the days the Lenten tenderness did not cease to be the source only of "evil desire, theft, usury, insult, cunning, temptation, shunning, abuse, arrogance, and foolishness"? How will those touch the holy tree, when their impure mouth opened only for idle talk and malicious gossip, for condemnation and slander, for grumbling and indignation? How will they look on the stretched body of Christ hanging on the cross, who with cowardice yielded to any need of the flesh, satisfied all whims, and were afraid to give up for themselves even the excessively fashionable food and clothes? Will they even worship the Crucified One on the cross? But then will their acts of worship be distinct from those genuflections, with which the warriors of Pilate fearlessly greeted the condemned Jesus on the cross? Will they even kiss the wounds of Christ? But would these kisses be better than the kiss of Judas?

So the negligence of people and the very saving suffering of Christ can turn into condemnation, and the word of comfort of the Cross changes to a word of bitter accusations! So from the one cup of the eternal covenant, the Christian, faithful to His name, vigilant about His salvation, or renewed by true repentance, sings of life eternal; but those uncaring about salvation, insensitive to the voice of the grace of God sings eternal condemnation! But the Holy Church offers the life-giving Cross of Christ also to the careless in hope that the beneficial power of the Cross will also touch their heart and will urge them away from the deep sleep of the sinner. "They will respect my son" said the owner of the vineyard, sending his only son to the tenants who were grumbling against him (Mt. 21:37). "They will respect the wounds of the Son of God", as if thus the Holy Church speaks about her prodigal and disobedient children, offering them the sight of the life-giving cross of Christ. She hopes that the sight of the Divine Sufferer will remind the sinners, that as they were baptized into the death of Christ,

Announcements and Activities

Presanctified Liturgy— Wednesday, at 6PM. The Church's magnificent way of composing a Lenten service, with a Lenten feel, while giving us Holy Communion to aid us in our Lenten efforts. Those desiring to receive Holy Communion should not eat or drink after their noon meal. A Lenten meal will follow the service, in the Social Hall.

Vigil for the Feast of the Annunciation— 6Pm on Friday, March 24th. Please, be here for the Vigil and Saturday' Liturgy, unless you are truly unable to come. Our Archbishop health is such that it may be the last time His Eminence can come, given the fact of His Eminence's Parkinsons and the fact that His Eminence only comes here every other year because of our sister parish in Oregon. Let us lift up our voices to our Gracious Lord and His Mother, for whom our parish is named, in gratitude and love, along with our archpastor, Archbishop BENJAMIN and under the newly completed dome.

Divine Liturgy for the Feast with Banquet to Follow— Saturday, at 10AM. Please bring a vegan dish to our potluck, if you are able.

Great Vespers— Saturday, at 5:30PM.

Divine Liturgy— Sunday, at 10AM.

Church School/Adult Ed.— March 26th, at 9AM.

Coffee Hours— This week's Coffee Hour is being sponsored by Brandon and Leanna. Next week's Coffee Hour will be our monthly potluck. It challenges us a bit, as we will have just contributed to our parish feastday potluck. Still, let's bring something if you are able. From now until PASCHA, on April 16th, we do not allow meat, dairy, eggs or fish at coffee hour, or anything with dairy or meat byproducts: such as chicken stock, sour cream, chocolate, etc. While shellfish is allowed —shrimp, oysters, clams, etc.— fish with a backbone is allowed on March 25 (our feast) and on Palm Sunday (April 9th). If you have any questions beyond these instructions, you may speak to Fr. Lawrence.

Parish Council— met this past Sunday. We spent a good deal of time discussing our fundraising plans for the coming year and the fact that we're running a bit of a deficit for 2023 (nearly 4K). We have had some unexpected expenses: repairs, assessment adjustment, etc. loss or adjustment to pledged income, etc. We also discussed parish ministries: current and future.

Pray for... Sarah, the daughter of Fr. Lawrence's godfather, health issues. **Youseff and Jimmy— who are ill.** Matushka Ann Hopko, reposed. **Jonathan— ill.** Reposed Barbara Ranjo. **Fr. And Matushka's Granddaughter Annabella is past her illness, but still needs prayer for the return all body parts to normal.** Laure— battling Cancer. **Paul— ill** **Ralph—ill** Archpriest Lawrence, from Canada, progressive eye disease. **Tsige Roman—** our beloved Tsige reposed on December 3rd. Please keep praying for her homeland of Ethiopia. **Brian— ill.** **Jonathan— ill.** **Katia—** sister of Shkbarra's Grace, Heather's goddaughter. **Reposed Priest, James.** **Reposed Hierarch Tikhon . Diane— surgery.** **Rufin—** soldier in Ukraine. Elise, ill.

they promised to serve the Lord instead of the world and the devil, to please God instead of their flesh, to obey the will of God instead of their lusts and passions.

The Holy Church hopes that souls will be found though guilty, but not fallen into the depths of evil, not going towards the edge of hardness, by which a look at the instrument of the suffering of the Son of God will shakes the conscience, will prick the heart, will make the saving change of thoughts and feelings so that they will return from the temple as many returned from Golgotha, - "beating their breasts" (Lk. 23:48), and in their life from now on will go by the way of faith, repentance and Christian piety. (See details in "Full Collection of the Sermons of Demetrius, Archbishop of Chersonese, vol. 4, pages 324-326). They, as Ambrose of Milan teaches, should "grieve and cry, however not pushing to despair, because the One who has enlightened the eyes of the man blind from birth (Jn. 9), can make them both zealous and firm in His service if only they want to return with a pure heart. Therefore, let them recognize they are in their blindness and let them run to the Physician who can enlighten them". (taken from

S.V.Bulgakov's *Church Server's Handbook*)

From the Lives of the Saints. THE HOLY MARTYRS CHRYSANTHUS AND DARIA, AND OTHERS WITH THEM

Chrysanthus was the only son of Polemius, a distinguished patrician, who moved from Alexandria to Rome. As the son of wealthy parents, Chrysanthus studied all the secular subjects, having the most learned men for instructors. But secular wisdom confused him and left him in uncertainty as to what is truth. As a result of this, he grieved. But God, who plans all and everything, alleviated his grief: a written copy of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles came into the hands of the young Chrysanthus. Having read them, Chrysanthus was enlightened with the truth. He desired a teacher and found one in the person of a certain priest, Carpophorus, who taught and baptized him.

This did not please his father, who by all means attempted to dissuade him from believing in Christ. Not succeeding, the wicked father at first tried to corrupt him by placing him alone with an immoral woman. But Chrysanthus was victorious over himself in this, and persevered in chastity. His father then coerced him into marrying Daria, a pagan girl. Chrysanthus counseled Daria to embrace the Christian Faith and to live together with him as brother and sister, although pretending to be married.

When his father died, Chrysanthus began to confess Christ openly and to live as a Christian, both he and his entire household. During the reign of the Emperor Numerian, he and Daria were cruelly tortured for their faith. Even the torturer Claudius, witnessing the forbearance of these honorable martyrs and the miracles which were manifested during their sufferings, embraced the Christian Faith along with his entire household. For this Claudius was drowned, both of his sons were beheaded, and his wife, after having recited her prayers, died on the gallows. Daria was so steadfast in her martyrdom that the pagans cried out: "Daria is a goddess!" Finally, it was decreed that Chrysanthus and Daria be buried in a deep pit and covered with stones. Later a church was erected on this site. There was a cave near this pit where some Christians assembled for prayer and Communion in memory of the martyrs Chrysanthus and Daria. Hearing of this, the pagans attacked and sealed off this cave, and thus they drove these Christians from this world to a better world, where Christ reigns eternally. These glorious martyrs, Chrysanthus and Daria and the others with them, among whom were the priest Diodorus and the deacon Marianus, suffered for Christ in Rome in 283 or 284 A.D.,

Taken from The Prologue of Ochrid, 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)