



Weekly Bulletin

Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

The Healing of the Paralytic

Troparion of the Resurrec- tion, Tone 5

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the word, coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead, by His glorious Resurrection.

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 the Annuncia- tion, 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 6th Sunday after Pentecost Tone 5, August 4th , Matt. 9:1-8

The gospel for the sixth Sunday after Pentecost (Matt. 9:1-8) describes Jesus healing the man sick of the palsy. It throws light on the relationship between the forgiveness of sins — “Son...thy sins be forgiven thee” — and physical healing — “Arise, take up thy bed”. Jesus, who is able to heal the man’s palsy therefore also has, despite the indignation of the scribes, the right to forgive sins. The episode has already been read as the gospel for the second Sunday of Lent (Mk. 2:1-12) ...

We continue the reading from the epistle to the (Romans 12:6-14). St. Paul, after his long discourse on the nature of faith and justification, goes on to practical questions. All of us, he says, have ‘gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us’. One is called to prophesy, another to teach, another to preach, another to administer. These different ministries must be exercised in a spirit of faith and loyalty to the particular grace received. We see that Paul does not limit the individual gifts to the high functions we have just listed: he considers that giving alms and works of mercy are also ministries which correspond to a special grace. ‘He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity . . . he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.’ These last two points, simplicity in almsgiving, and cheerfulness in works of mercy deserve to be meditated on seriously by everyone. From this, Paul goes on to the duties that are common to all: love, zeal, hope, patience, perseverance in prayer, hospitality. He concludes by advising us to bless, and not to curse, our persecutors.

his epistle, besides the general duties to which it calls us, raises the question of our own special ‘gift’ or ‘ministry’. I must examine before God what my own particular vocation is, what gift I have received to share with others. But I can also bear in mind that every action which immediate circumstances necessitate, and every situation in which I am placed by the divine will at any moment, constitutes in itself a sort of temporary vocation and ministry. There is a special grace corresponding to each minute of my life, if that minute is offered to God. No detail of life is without importance or without a blessing, as long as one knows how to see, in that detail, the reflection of a divine gift calling, on man’s part, for a loving and trustful response.

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

Announcements and Activities

Great Vespers for Transfiguration— Monday, at 6PM.

Chrismations— Rodger F. and Samuel F. will be received into the Orthodox Church by rite of Chrismation at 8AM on Tuesday, the Feast of Transfiguration, after having satisfied all requirements of catechesis and with the knowledge of His Eminence, Archbishop BENJAMIN. What a joy to have these two new, faithful servants of God in our congregation. Congratulations to them and to Michael Miller, their sponsor.

Divine Liturgy for Transfiguration — Tuesday, after the Chrismations of Rodger and Sam.

Coffee Hour— This week's Coffee Hour is our bagels and Coffee. Next week's coffee Hour will be sponsored by Luci and Nicole.

Special Note for the Dormition Fast— The fast begins on Thursday, August 1st and ends on Thursday, August 15th. No meat, eggs, dairy or dairy by products (things with dairy in them, such as MILK chocolate, sour CREME, etc.) Shellfish are allowed on weekends, but not fish with a backbone. There are 3 festal weekdays when fish is allowed: August 6th (Transfiguration); August 9th (St. Herman of Alaska) and August 14th (St. Tikhon of Zadonsk). Have a profitable fast. During the fast, it is customary for Orthodox Christians to find time to make Confession— especially if it has been a while since you've come. Father Lawrence is available before and after Vespers and during the weekdays by appointment.

Church School— will begin in late September, early October.

Consecration Committee— will meet, briefly, today, during Coffee Hour.

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

Pray for... Sarah, the daughter of Fr. Lawrence's godfather. **Reposed**— Kalche. Eutychia's husband: **Stephen**— battling cancer. **Barbara H.** health issues. **Archbishop Benjamin**— our Vladyka, parkinsons. **Luci F.** recovering from knee procedure. Fr.'s grandson, **Christian, joint pain and problems from an inherited gene.** **Monk who is suffering from heart issues.** **Archpriest Matthew Tate**— a leader of diocese that is battling Leukemia. **Archpriest James, seizures.** **Catherine**— eye. **Philip**— special request. St. John Monastery—threat of fire. Ailing Nun

From the Lives of the Saints... THE SEVEN HOLY YOUTHS OF EPHEBUS

There was a great persecution of Christians during the reign of Decius. The emperor himself went to Ephesus, and there arranged a boisterous and noisy celebration in honor of the lifeless idols--as well as a terrible slaughter of Christians. Seven young men, soldiers, refrained from the impure offering of sacrifices. They earnestly prayed to the one God to save the Christian people. They were the sons of the most influential elders of Ephesus. Their names were Maximilian, Jamblicus, Martin [Martinian], John, Dionysius, Exacustodianus, and Antonin [Antoninus]. When they were accused before the emperor, they retreated to a hill outside of Ephesus called Celion, and there they hid in a cave. When the emperor learned of this, he commanded that the cave be walled shut. Yet, God--according to His far-reaching providence--caused a miraculous and long-lasting sleep to fall upon the young men. The imperial courtiers Theodore and Rufinus (themselves secret Christians) built a small copper box into the wall. It contained lead plaques on which were written the names of these young men, and which recorded their martyric deaths during the reign of Emperor Decius. More than two hundred years passed. During the reign of Emperor Theodosius the Younger (408-450 A.D.), there was a great dispute about the resurrection of the dead, and there were some that doubted in it. Emperor Theodosius was in great sorrow as a result of this dispute among the faithful, and prayed to God that He, in some way, would reveal the truth to men. Then some shepherds of Adolius, who owned the hill Celion, were building folds for their sheep, using stones from the cave. They removed stone after stone. Suddenly, the youths awoke from their sleep, as youthful and healthy as on the day they fell asleep. The news of this miracle was spread abroad in every direction, so that Theodosius himself came with a great entourage and conversed with the youths, to his delight. After a week, they again fell into the deep repose from which they had awakened, to await the General Resurrection. Emperor Theodosius wanted to place their bodies in gold caskets; but they appeared to him in a dream, and told him to leave them in the earth as they had been laid there.

THE PRIESTLY-MARTYR COSMAS, EQUAL TO THE APOSTLES

Cosmas was born in Aitolia in the village of Megadendron (Large Tree). As a young man he went to Mount Athos, where he was tonsured a monk in the Monastery of Philotheou. However, driven by a constant desire to preach the Holy Gospel to the people, Cosmas went to Constantinople, where he asked the blessing of Patriarch Seraphim II. He visited the regions of the Danube, preaching the Gospel [Good News], but remained mostly in Albania, where he suffered at the hands of Kurt Pasha, whom the Jews had incited against Cosmas. The Turks strangled Cosmas and threw his body into a river, in the year 1779 A.D. His miracle-working relics repose in the village of Kalikontasi in the Church of the Holy Theotokos, not far from the town of Berat. Cosmas suffered for his Lord in the sixty-fifth year of his life.

Ask and it shall be given to you, said the Lord (Matthew 7:7). As parents give to their children all that the children ask, and all that is for their benefit, so does God, the Lover of Mankind, give to men all that men ask of God, and what conducive to their salvation. As a monk on Mt. Athos, Cosmas asked two things of God: to preach the Gospel to the people, and to suffer as a martyr for the Faith. For an Athonite monk, who is bound by vows to his monastery, these two desires seem unattainable and unrealistic. But to God, everything is possible. God perfectly fulfilled both desires of Cosmas. The joy of Cosmas was indescribable, when he received the blessing of the patriarch--that he could leave Mt. Athos and go among the people to preach the Gospel [Good News]. Cosmas had a similar moment of joy when the servants of the Turkish Pasha informed him that, by the command of the Pasha, he must die. Full of joy, the saint sank to his knees, thanking God for fulfilling even this desire. He gave up his body to death, and his soul to the Living God.

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)