



Weekly Bulletin

Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

The Healing of the Paralytic

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 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 7th Sunday after Pentecost Tone 6, August 11th , Matt. 9:27-35

It is, again, Jesus as healer who is shown to us by the gospel for the seventh Sunday after Pentecost (Matt. 9:27-35). Our Lord opens the eyes of two blind men and He gives speech to a dumb man possessed by a devil. Many details of this episode — especially the question that Jesus asks the blind men, “Believe ye I am able to do this?” — deserve our attention. All the same, we will concentrate on the nature of the two miracles.

Blindness and dumbness: these are both also great spiritual infirmities. The man who is spiritually blind does not see the Light of the World. He moves about in darkened space. Not only does he not see the divine reflection, but he does not know how to see men — for it is only our own imagination, when it is not purified and illumined by God, makes us see other men as monstrously deformed. And he who is spiritually dumb cannot speak to other men; real dialogue, the exchange of the supreme values between a “thou” and an “I”, is inaccessible to him; he is condemned to a continual and sterile monologue, for, basically, he seeks only himself, in an egoistical way. All the more reason for him not to be able to tell others what comes from God. He cannot even speak to God; prayer bothers and exasperates him. He who does not receive the Word made flesh is deprived of all words; he who does not receive the Light of the World is deprived of all light. O my Savior, open Thou my eyes and free Thou my speech.

The passage from the epistle that is read today (Rom. 15:1-7) contains, as did last Sunday’s, practical advice. St. Paul stresses the need for patience and concern for those who are weak. “We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves”. He starts as if he was simply going to write a chapter of straightforward human morals, but his thought soon flies to Jesus, who remains the inspirations and the model in all circumstances. “...wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of god.” This attitude towards men is not possible unless Christ Himself, who still heals the blind and the dumb has opened our eyes and loosened our speech.

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

Announcements and Activities

Great Vespers for The Dormition of the Theotokos— Wednesday, at 6PM. It is customary to bless flowers on this day. You may bring either cut flowers or a potted plant to be blessed. Fr. Lawrence will bless them at both Vespers and, the next day, at Liturgy.

Divine Liturgy for Holy Dormition — Thursday, at 9AM. We will have some refreshments after the Liturgy.

Great Vespers— Saturday, at 5:30PM.

Divine Liturgy— Sunday, at 10AM.

Chrismations— Congratulations to Rodger F. and Sam F., who entered the Holy Orthodox Church on Holy Transfiguration..

Coffee Hour— This week's Coffee Hour is being sponsored by Luci and Nicole. Next week's Coffee Hour will be sponsored by Jim F. and Luci F.

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

Parish Council— will meet today, 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. **An Ailing Nun**— who asked for prayers and to remain anonymous. **Linda**— general health.

From the Lives of the Saints... THE HOLY MARTYR EUPLUS

Euplus was a deacon in Catania, Sicily. Emperor Diocletian dispatched the Roman commander, Pentagurus, to Sicily to exterminate any Christians he found there. Pentagurus did not find a single Christian, for the few that were there hid from the persecutor and did not reveal themselves. Even so, someone accused Euplus of taking a book to secret Christians and reading to them. This book was the Holy Gospel. They soon brought him to court, hung that book around his neck, and led him to prison. After seven days of imprisonment and hunger, Euplus was given over for torture. While they were beating him with iron rods, Euplus mockingly said to the torturing judge: "O ignorant one, do you not see that, by God's grace, these tortures are like a cobweb to me? If you can, find other, harsher tortures, for all of these are as toys." After more of the same, they led the martyr of Christ to the scaffold. There St. Euplus opened the Holy Gospel and read from it to the people for a long time. Many converted to the Christian Faith. St. Euplus was beheaded in the year 304 A.D., and took up his habitation in the Kingdom of Heaven. His miracle-working relics repose in a village near Naples, called Vico della Batonia.

THE HOLY FEMALE MARTYR SUSANNA THE VIRGIN, AND OTHERS WITH HER

Susanna was the daughter of a Roman presbyter Gabinus, and the niece of Pope Gaius. Gaius and Gabinus were of royal lineage, and kinsmen to the then-ruling Emperor Diocletian. Emperor Diocletian had an adopted son, Maximian Galerius, whom he [Diocletian] wanted to marry Susanna. Susanna, completely dedicated to Christ the Lord, did not even want to consider marriage, and particularly not marriage with an unbaptized man. The aristocrats Claudius and Maximus had been pressuring her to marry the emperor's son, but Susanna converted them and their entire household to the Christian Faith. Enraged by this, the emperor ordered that the executioners take Claudius, Maximus and their household to Ostia—where they burned them alive and threw their ashes into the sea. Susanna was beheaded in the home of her father Gabinus. The emperor's wife, Serena, secretly a Christian, removed Susanna's martyred body under cover of night, and honorably buried it. Pope Gaius converted Gabinus's house into a church and celebrated services there, since this was the place where the young martyr Susanna was slain. Shortly following the suffering of this bride of Christ, her father Presbyter Gabinus and her uncle Pope Gaius also suffered. Susanna, her father and her uncle suffered honorably for the Lord and received their wreaths of glory, in the years 295 and 296 A.D.

SAINT NIPHON, PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE

Niphon was born in Greece. He was tonsured a monk in his youth and lived a life of asceticism, eventually making his way to Mount Athos. He practiced asceticism in various monasteries, remaining the longest in Vatopedi and Dionysiou. He was loved by all the holy Athonite fathers, as much for his rare wisdom as for his unusual meekness. He was consecrated Bishop of Thessalonica against his will, and then, two years later, he journeyed to Constantinople on business, where he was elected to the vacant patriarchal throne. Eventually the Sultan banished him to Jedrene, where he lived in exile. The Wallachian [Romanian] Prince Radul besought him from the Sultan, and named Niphon the archbishop of the Wallachian people. Then, because of Radul's transgressions, Niphon departed Wallachia and returned to Mount Athos, to the monastery of Dionysiou. There he lived a life of asceticism until his ninetieth year, when he took up his habitation in the Kingdom of God. He reposed in the year 1460 A.D. He composed the "Prayer of Absolution" read at the Burial Service:

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)