



## Weekly Bulletin

# Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

### **The Multiplication of the Loaves**

**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 the Dormition,  
Tone 1**

In giving birth, you preserved your virginity! In falling asleep you did not forsake the world, O Theotokos! You were translated to life, O Mother of Life, and by your prayers you deliver our souls from death!

**Kontakion of the Dormition,  
Tone 2**

Neither the tomb, nor death, could hold the Theotokos, who is constant in prayer and our firm hope in her intercession. For being the Mother of Life, she was translated to life by the One who dwelt in her virginal womb.

### **The 8th Sunday after Pentecost Tone 7, August 18th, Matt. 14:14-22**

On the eighth Sunday after Pentecost we read one of the gospel accounts of the multiplication of loaves (Matt. 14:14-22). With five loaves and two fishes, Jesus feeds a crowd of more than five thousand. This account throws light on the Savior's human concern and kindness: "And Jesus...saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them". It also throws light on the way men can collaborate in God's work: Jesus makes use of the disciples — and wants to use us — in distributing bread to the multitude. "He...gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude." But above all, the multiplication of the loaves is the sign of a spiritual reality: Jesus is the food of our soul, the living bread come down from heaven. Nor do we speak only of the gift that Jesus makes of Himself in the Eucharist. His presence, his word, his invisible action are already a food, the true manna, of which we can say, as did the disciples in another part of the gospels: "Lord, evermore give us this bread".

In the epistle which is read at the Liturgy (1Cor.1:10-18), St. Paul speaks out against the divisions and the growth of factions which he finds in the bosom of the Christian Church. Some say they are of Paul, others of Apollos, others, still, of Cephas. But Christ is not divided, and it is not Paul — as he himself says — who was crucified for us. Let us then hold on to the attitude, "...and I of Christ", of those who did not wish to say "I am of Paul", or "I of Cephas". Ecclesiastical groups must not be allowed to veil from us the face of Christ Jesus. We can develop our hidden life with Jesus and keep it aloof from all such theological "side-taking". The more a serious and humble work for the Church — which is the body of Christ — is blessed by Our Lord, the more any ecclesiastical "agitation" becomes dangerous to us and spiritually sterile. Paul thanks God that very few people have been baptized by him, so that they will not associate his name with the baptismal rite. And let us, too avoid linking our spiritual life to the name of anyman, or to any human institution, "lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect."  
(taken from, *The Year of Grace of the Lord*, by a Monk of the Eastern Church)

**From the Lives of the Saints...THE VENERABLE JOHN OF RILA** This great ascetic and saint of the Orthodox Church was born near

## **Announcements and Activities**

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

**Divine Liturgy**— Sunday, at 10AM.

**Coffee Hour**— This week's Coffee Hour is being sponsored by Jim F. and Luci F. Next week's Coffee Hour will be our monthly potluck. Bring your favorite dish to share.

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

**Parish Council**— met last Sunday. We reviewed all aspects of the coming Consecration and assigned tasks for the things we still need to get done. We also spoke, as a nominating committee about touching base with potential candidates to replace Aaron C. on council. We adopted a Treasurer's Report just \$80 to the good, but are still running a deficit budget for 2023. We have accomplished a tremendous amount of work during this year, and much of it came with being good stewards of what God has given us: both to enjoy and to care for. Blessings to all.

**Consecration**— we are getting close. Please plan your schedules to be present for the Friday Vespers (September 6, at 6PM) and for the big day of the Consecration at 9AM on the 7th. Many of you noticed that we purchased 60 chairs for the temple. Thank you for your supportive comments about how nice they look. They were purchased with the fact in mind that we make uniform the church chairs and get rid of those that have torn covers and other defects.

**Two Work Days**— There will be a grounds work day on Tuesday of this week, beginning at 8AM. Please come and help spread bark chips and do some trimming and weeding. We will then do a church/hall cleaning on Saturday, August 31st, at 9AM. I BESEĚCH YOU BROTHERS AND SISTERS that you come to help on that day. We want the place to sparkle and to have to only do a couple of touch ups before the Friday Vespers.

**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.

Sofia, Bulgaria, in the town of Skrino, during the reign of King Boris. He was of poor but honorable parents. After the death of his parents, John was tonsured a monk and withdrew to a mountain wilderness, where he lived a life of strict asceticism in a cave. There he endured many assaults, both from demons and men, robbers and his own relatives. Eventually he moved to Mount Rila and settled in a hollow tree. He fed only on herbs and beans, which, according to God's providence, began to grow in the vicinity. For many years he did not see a man's face until (again, by God's providence) he was discovered by shepherds who were seeking their lost sheep. Thus the saint became known to the people, and they began to come to him, seeking help in sickness and in sufferings. Even the Bulgarian King Peter visited John and sought counsel from him. Many who were zealots for the spiritual life settled in the proximity of John. A church and monastery were soon built nearby. St. John reposed peacefully in the Lord on August 18, 946 A.D., at the age of seventy. After his death, he appeared to his disciples. At first his relics were transported to Sofia, then to Hungary, then to Trnovo, and finally to the Monastery of Rila, where they repose today. Through the centuries, the Monastery of Rila has been a beacon of light, a place of miracle-working power, and a spiritual comfort for the Christian people of Bulgaria, especially during the difficult time of bondage under the Turks.

### **THE HOLY MARTYRS FLORUS AND LAURUS**

Florus and Laurus were brothers in the flesh, and in spirit and in vocation. Both were zealous Christians, and were stonemasons by occupation. They lived in Illyria. A pagan prince hired them for the building of a temple to the idols. It happened that, during their work, a piece of stone flew and struck the eye of the pagan priest Merentius's son, who was observing the work of the builders with curiosity. Seeing his son blind and bloody, the pagan priest began to shout at Florus and Laurus and wanted to beat them. Then the holy brothers said to him that if he would believe in the God in whom they believed, his son would be healed. The pagan priest promised. Florus and Laurus prayed with tears to the one, living Lord God, and traced the sign of the Cross over the child's injured eye. The child was immediately healed, and his eye became whole, just as it had been. Then Merentius and his son were baptized. Shortly after that, both suffered for Christ, being tortured by fire. When they completed the temple, Florus and Laurus placed a cross on it, summoned all Christians and consecrated it in the name of the Lord Jesus, with an all-night vigil of hymn-singing. Hearing of this, the Illyrian deputy burned many of those Christians, and had Florus and Laurus themselves thrown into a well. He then filled it with dirt to suffocate them. Their relics were later revealed and translated to Constantinople. These two wonderful brothers suffered, and were martyred for Christ and glorified by Him, in the second century.

### **THE PRIESTLY-MARTYR EMILIAN, BISHOP OF TREVĪ**

Emilian was born in Armenia. Seeking martyrdom, he traveled to Italy to preach Christ during the reign of Diocletian. He was elected bishop of Trevi. As a result of the many miracles worked by God during the time of Emilian's torture, approximately one thousand pagans came to believe in Christ. He was slain by the sword, together with Hilarion, his spiritual father, and two brothers, Dionysius and Hermippus.

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)*