



Weekly Bulletin

Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

The Walking on the Water

Troparion of the Resurrec- tion, Tone 8

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One. Thou didst accept the three-day burial to free us from our sufferings. O Lord, our Life and Resurrection: Glory to Thee!

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.

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!

The 9th Sunday after Pentecost Tone 8, August 25th , Matt. 14:22-34

This account contains precious information that applies to our own spiritual life. The wind-tossed waters on which Peter wants to walk could be compared to our difficulties and, especially, to our temptations. Why does Peter sink? Is it a sign that he was presumptuous, and should not have attempted to walk on the water? But Peter had asked Jesus for permission. He did not leave the ship without a positive invitation from the Lord: 'Come!'. We can learn from this that we should never undertake anything extraordinary without a call, an order from the master.

But the center of gravity of this episode lies elsewhere. As long as Peter goes towards Jesus, as long as his attention remains fixed on that goal, he is able to walk on the sea. It is when his attention is distracted from his goal, when he notices the storm surrounding him, that he starts to be afraid and, so, to drown. Thus, in our moments of temptation, we must look directly, constantly, at the person of Jesus. We must fix in our minds the image of the Savior and pay no attention to the surrounding storm. If we look back at our spiritual defeats, we will see that it is always at the instant when we stopped looking at Christ and going straight towards him that we have begun to be beaten. As soon as we allow our attention to be distracted by the wind and the waves, as soon as we delay in order to consider the temptation and discuss it, instead of going straight towards Jesus, we are lost – for we always find ourselves weaker than the adversary. We are saved from temptation (and all distress) only when we make up our minds to look at Jesus alone, and not at the obstacles. Briefly, instead of facing the temptation and fighting it head-on, what matters is, instead, to face the Savior, and to substitute his person for the temptation. Many storms surround and threaten us. 'Lord . . . bid me come *unto thee* on the water.'

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

From the Lives of the Saints...

THE HOLY APOSTLE BARTHOLOMEW

On this day we commemorate the translation of the relics of St. Bartholomew, although his main feast is celebrated on June 11. When this great apostle was crucified

Announcements and Activities

Great Vespers— Saturday, at 5:30PM.

Divine Liturgy— Sunday, at 10AM.

Coffee Hour— This week's Coffee Hour is our monthly potluck. Next week's Coffee Hour will be sponsored by Loly and Fadia.

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

Consecration— we are getting close. Just two weeks from yesterday. 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.

Work Days— Thank the people who came out and did an amazing job on trimming, weeding and cleaning the grounds. We will do a church/hall cleaning this Saturday, August 31st, at 9AM. I BESEECH 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 next week.

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. **Caleb** bicycle wreck

in Albanopolis [Derbend] in Armenia, Christians removed his body and honorably buried it in a lead sarcophagus. When numerous miracles--especially healings of the sick--occurred over the grave of the apostle, the number of Christians visiting the grave increased, so the pagans took the coffin containing the relics of Bartholomew and threw it into the sea. They also threw four more coffins into the sea. These contained the relics of four martyrs: Papias, Lucian, Gregory and Acacius. However, by God's providence the coffins did not sink, but floated and were carried by the current: Acacius to the town of Askalon, Gregory to Calabria, Lucian to Messina, Papias to the other side of Sicily, and Bartholomew to the island of Lipara. By a miraculous revelation, Agathon, the Bishop of Lipara, foresaw the approach of Apostle Bartholomew's relics. Accompanied by other clergy and the people, Agathon came to the seashore to receive the coffin with great joy. Immediately, many healings of the sick occurred over the relics of the holy apostle. The relics were placed in the Church of St. Bartholomew on Lipara, and reposed there until the time of Theophilus the Iconoclast. In approximately 839 A.D., the Muslims threatened Lipara, and the relics of the apostle were translated to Benevento. Thus the Lord glorified His apostle by the miraculous grace bestowed upon him, both during his life and after his death.

THE APOSTLE TITUS

Titus was one of the Seventy [Apostles]. He was born in Crete and was educated in Greek philosophy and poetry. Following a vision in a dream, he began reading the Prophet Isaiah and lost his faith in Hellenic philosophy. Hearing of Christ the Lord, Titus traveled to Jerusalem with other Cretans, and there he heard the Savior speak and witnessed His mighty acts. He gave his young heart completely to Christ. Later he was baptized by the Apostle Paul, whom he served, like a son to a father, in the work of evangelization. Paul loved Titus so much that he referred to him at times as his son: To Titus, my beloved son (Titus 1:4) and at times as his brother: I urged Titus to go to you and I sent the other brother with him (2 Corinthians 12:18). Titus traveled extensively with the great apostle, and Paul appointed him Bishop of Crete. Titus was present at Paul's suffering and death in Rome, and honorably buried the body of his teacher and spiritual father. Afterward Titus returned to Crete, where with great success he baptized the pagans, and where he prudently governed the Church of God until old age. Titus entered into rest at the age of ninety-four.

THE HOLY CONFESSORS OF EDESSA

They suffered much, in prisons and in exile, for the Orthodox Faith. This was during the reign of the Arian Emperor Valens. Their persecution was lifted under Emperor Theodosius.

SAINT MENAS, PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE

Menas governed the Church wisely from 536-552 A.D. Before that, he was in charge of the Home of St. Sampson (see June 27) for the poor and needy. Pope Agapitus (who had come to Constantinople in order to refute and depose the heretical Patriarch Anthimus) participated at the consecration of Menas as bishop. *)

*) It is said that the following miracle occurred in Constantinople during the patriarchate of St. Menas. A Jewish boy went to church with his Christian friends and, following their example, received the Sacrament of Holy Communion. His father, a glassblower by trade, learned of his son's action, and threw him into the superheated kiln that he had prepared for firing glass. The boy remained in the fiery kiln for three days and three nights. When it was finally opened, the boy was alive and healthy, preserved by God's providence.

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)