



## Weekly Bulletin

# Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

### **Loving One's Enemies**

#### ***Troparion of the Resurrec- tion, Tone 5***

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the word, co-eternal 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: Re-joyce, 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: Re-joyce, O Unwedded Bride!

### **The 14th Sunday after Pentecost Tone 5, September 29th, Luke 5:1-11**

The 14th Sunday after Pentecost takes us back to the very first teachings of Jesus in Galilee, and, in particular, to the Sermon on the Mount in St. Luke's abridged version of it. The very short Gospel read today (Lu. 6:31-36) deals with loving one's enemies. Do unto others as you would have that men should do unto you. If you love only those who love you, if you do good to only those who do good to you, if you lend to only those who lend to you, you act no differently from sinners themselves, and nothing more. It is your enemies you must love, you must do good to them, and lend to them, for only in this way will you show yourselves to be children of God, Who himself extends his goodness to those who are evil.

The idea of not doing to others what we would not wish them to do to us was familiar to Jesus' contemporaries, and was part of rabbinical teaching. But Jesus goes beyond this negative precept and requires us to treat others as we would like to be treated by them. However, this new commandment, this positive commandment, risks being misunderstood by us. We might be led into doing good to others in the hope that they would respond by doing good to us, and that there would be some sort of reciprocity between our attitude and theirs. This is why Jesus immediately insists on the principle of disinterestedness. Our love must be freely given and go out to those from whom we expect nothing in return.

The climax of today's gospel is the saying: "Be ye therefore merciful as your Father also is merciful". Here, we are very far from the trite moral injunction such as: "love other people without hoping for a reward. For this phrase confronts us with all that is absolute and — though one hesitates to say so — inaccessible in the Christian duty to love. To be merciful *as* the Father is merciful does not mean that our mercy could ever reach to the infinity of divine mercy: but, that in our own small measure, we should be inspired by the same feelings as the Father; it is from the ocean of the Father's mercy that the minute drops of water which are our acts of mercy must come, and it is into this ocean that they must finally flow.

..A first sign of this spirit is never to think of a man as utterly lost. "Love ye

## **Announcements and Activities**

**Great Vespers**— will not be served this Saturday or next Saturday, as Fr. Lawrence is otherwise detained.

**Divine Liturgy**— Welcome to Fr. John Takahashi. Fr. John will serve Liturgy at 10AM, Sunday, October 6th. Fr. Lawrence will serve Liturgy on Sunday, October 13th, at 10AM.

**Coffee Hour**— This week's Coffee Hour is our monthly potluck. Next week's coffee hour will be sponsored by Diane and Andrew and Laura Beth and Darrell.

**Parish Council**— met this past week. We adopted a deficit budget of 3K for August. We discussed the consecration, and the need to begin planning for the coming year and what it will likely bring with clergy change and other facets of the parish's ongoing stewardship.

**Church School/Adult Education**— will begin the 24/25 church school year next Sunday at 9AM.

**Youth Visit to St. Barbara Monastery**— Saturday, October 5th. Pray for our young people.

**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. **Novice Alexandra**— who recently had surgery and is recovering. **Linda**— general health. **Grandson of Larissa.** **Rebecca**— Philip's daughter, health issues. **Abbess Victoria**— recovering

your enemies...hoping for nothing again" today's gospel tells us. This is not a humanitarian and superficial optimism: after all, a man is never entirely bad; he can change. And another thought can inspire our attitude: if God never ceases to do good to a sinner, if he is always ready to open his arms to him, who am I to dare to be stricter than God? Even in the greatest sinner, the most hardened criminal, the "image of God" is still present. What is important is to know how the "image of God" in me can meet the "image of God" in my enemy — or in a wrongdoer.

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

### **From the Lives of the Saints... THE VENERABLE CYRIACUS THE RECLUSE**

Cyriacus was born in Corinth, to John and Eudoxia. His father John was a presbyter and Peter, Bishop of Corinth, was his kinsman. In his early youth, the bishop ordained Cyriacus a reader in the cathedral church. Reading the Holy Scripture, the young Cyriacus marveled at God's providence: how God glorified all His true servants and how He arranged the salvation of the human race. At age eighteen, Cyriacus's desire for the spiritual life led him to Jerusalem. There, he entered the monastery of a godly man Eustorgius, who gave him his first instruction in the monastic life. After that, he went to St. Euthymius, who foresaw that he would be a great spiritual father. He clothed him in the schema and sent him to St. Gerasimus at the Jordan, where Cyriacus spent nine years. Following the death of Gerasimus, he returned to the Monastery of St. Euthymius, where he remained in stillness for ten years. Then, fleeing the praise of men, he moved from place to place. He finally lived a life of asceticism in the community of St. Chariton, where he ended his earthly sojourn of 109 years. A celebrated ascetic and miracle-worker, St. Cyriacus was massive and strong in body, and remained such in deep old age, despite strict fasts and vigils. In the wilderness, he sometimes ate only raw greens for years. He was very zealous for the Orthodox Faith, denouncing all heresies, especially that of Origen. He said of himself that, since he became a monk, the sun had neither seen him eat nor become angry with anyone. According to the Rule of St. Chariton, the monks ate only once a day, after the setting of the sun. Cyriacus was a great light, a pillar of Orthodoxy, the adornment of monks, a mighty healer of the sick, and a gentle comforter of the sorrowful. Having lived long for the benefit of many, he took up his habitation in the eternal joy of his Lord in the year 557 A.D.

### **THE HOLY MARTYRS DADA AND GABDELAS**

Dada was a great Persian nobleman and a kinsman of King Sapor, and Gabdelas was Sapor's son. When St. Dada openly confessed his faith in Christ, King Sapor ordered that he be cruelly tortured. During these tortures, Dada worked great miracles in the name of Christ, and these so strongly influenced Gabdelas that he also believed in Christ. The pagan King did not even spare his own son, but subjected him also to harsh tortures. Both Dada and Gabdelas glorified God with their patient endurance and many miracles, and gave up their souls to God under torture. They suffered in the fourth century. Gabdelas's sister Casdoa, and Gargal the chief pagan priest, suffered with them--for they, too, had come to believe in Christ.

### **SAINT THEOPHANES THE MERCIFUL**

Theophanes was a wealthy citizen from Gaza. He was so merciful that, in distributing his possessions to the poor, he impoverished himself. Toward the end of his life, he was afflicted with dropsy and died from that illness. Thereafter a healing myrrh flowed from his body, by which the sick were healed.

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)*