



Weekly Bulletin

Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

Raising of the Canaanite Woman's Son

Troparion of the Resurrection, 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 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 the 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 31st Sunday after Pentecost Tone 6, January 26th, Matt.15:21-28

The gospel for this Sunday (Matt. 15:21-28) describes how a Canaanite woman comes up to Jesus in the region of Tyre and Sidon. Her daughter is possessed with a devil, and she implores Jesus and cries out to him; but Jesus does not answer, and His disciples want him to tell her to go away. Jesus then says that he has only been sent to the lost sheep in Israel; but still the woman is not discouraged and keeps on insistently. Jesus answers her with apparent hardness: is he to take the bread from the children to cast it to the dogs? Truth, Lord, says the woman humbly, but the dogs themselves eat the crumbs which fall from the table. "Great is thy faith" Jesus says to her: let it be done unto this woman according to her faith. And her daughter is immediately made whole.

This episode is probably reported by Matthew to show how the mission of the Messiah, at first destined for the Jews, is graciously extended to the Gentiles. Spiritually, this gospel shows what intense faith, and prayer which is humble and insistent can achieve. Jesus seems to be silent. He seems to say hard things...Our Lord acts in this way when he wants to test the strength of our faith. But he does not refuse grace to someone who is humble enough to compare themselves to a dog feeding on crumbs fallen from the table. Let us look at the Canaanite woman's reaction when Jesus says that he has only been sent to the lost sheep of Israel: "Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me". It is often at the very moment when Jesus seems to put up a decisive refusal that we must redouble our faith, come near to him, worship him and beg for his help. The formula "help me" is always acceptable to the Lord, even if the particular form of help we are seeking is not that which he desires to give us. "Lord, Thou dost say "no" to me. I come to Thee and adore Thee: help me as Thou dost judge it good

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

From the Lives of the Saints...THE VENERABLE XENOPHONT AND MARIA, AND THEIR SONS JOHN AND ARCADIUS

They were prominent and wealthy citizens of Constantinople. Xenophont and

Announcements and Activities

Great Vespers- Saturday, at 5:30PM.

Divine Liturgy- Sunday, at 10AM.

House Blessings- began right after the celebration of the Liturgy on Monday the 6th. I put out a sign-up sheet. I will not be available for more than my already scheduled blessings this week. I will return to a fuller schedule next week.

Coffee Hour- This week's Coffee Hour is our potluck for the Annual Meeting. Next week's Coffee Hour will be our Bagels and Coffee week.

Annual Meeting- This year's Annual Meeting will be held today, after our potluck.

Church School/Adult Education- will be next held on Sunday, February 9th, at 9AM.

Pray for... Sarah, the daughter of Fr. Lawrence's godfather. Eutychia's husband: **Stephen- battling cancer.** **Barbara H.** health issues. **Archbishop Benjamin**- our Vladyka, parkinsons. Fr.'s grandson, **Christian, joint pain and problems from an inherited gene.** **Archpriest Matthew Tate**- a leader of diocese that is battling Leukemia. **Archpriest James, seizures.** **Novice Alexandra**- who recently had surgery and is recovering. **Linda**- general health. **Grandson of Larissa.** **Rebecca**- Philip's daughter, health issues. **Abbess Victoria**- recovering from a stroke. **Reposed John & Jakov.** **Tasha Mendez**- **Reposed on November 8th.** **Rex**- the ailing brother of a friend of Fr. Lawrence's. **Tina**- friend of the parish, **Rebecca's daughter.** **Joseph and Ella, and family**- loss of Natalia. **Archpriest Nazari**- several family members facing serious health issues. **Thomas and Linda, John and Irene**- friends of Mike Miller. **Departed Eugenia.** **The Sister of the Kazan Skete**- who passed through a community illness. **Anahi** a friend of the Skete. The Wildfires that have devastated so much of LA County and the firefighters battling the blazes. **Geri**- a friend of Heather's battling illness.

his wife, Maria, lived a God-pleasing life and dedicated all their attention to the Christian upbringing of their sons. When their sons came of age, they were sent to study in Beirut, but it so happened that a storm capsized their boat. By the providence of God, John and Arcadius were somehow saved. They were tossed ashore by the waves, but in two different places, so that each thought the other had drowned. Out of grief for each other, they both became monks in two different monasteries. After two years, their grieving parents came to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage to venerate the holy shrines. There the brothers met, and after that the parents met their children, all with the help of the clairvoyance of a certain spiritual father. Out of gratitude to God, Xenophont and Maria distributed their entire estate to the poor, and both of them were tonsured. The history of these four souls is touching, and it shows how the Lord wonderfully guides the fate of those who believe in Him: how He permits pain and sorrow to come upon them that later, having been yet more strengthened in faith, they may be led into still greater joy. They lived and reposed in the Lord in the fifth century.

THE VENERABLE SIMEON THE ANCIENT [VETNI]

Simeon was a companion and friend of St. Palladius. From his early youth until his death, Simeon lived a life of asceticism in a cave. He established two monasteries and reposed in the Lord in the year 390 A.D. He is called the Ancient to distinguish him from Simeon the Stylite, who labored somewhat later.

Reflection:

The greatest treasure of any realm is the saintly and good men who live in it. Compared to this wealth, all other wealth is as nothing. Devout Christian emperors considered holy men within their realms as the greatest of God's blessing. The holy Emperor Constantine the Great said: "I give thanks to the Lord Jesus Christ that in my days there exist three divine lights: Blessed Abba Anthony, Abba Elonius and Abba Euchius." Before the battle of Kulikovo, crucial for the Russians, the devout Prince Dimitri Donskoy went to the forest of Radonez with his chief assistants and dukes, to seek out the Venerable Sergius, and he implored his intercession before God. Even though the prince prepared his army for a war of liberation against the Tartars, he placed greater hope in the prayers of one holy man than in a vast army and many weapons.

Contemplate The Lord Jesus Christ

1. As a Prophet Who clearly prophesied to individuals (such as Peter, John, Judas and the other apostles) what would happen to them in the future;
2. As a Prophet Who clearly prophesied the future of Jerusalem and other cities, of the Jewish people, and of the Church of God;
3. As a Prophet Who clearly prophesied the end of the world--and His Second Coming.

Taken from The Prologue of Ochrid, by St. Nikolai Velimirovich

"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)