

# Sts. Peter and Paul Albanian Orthodox Church

*First-enthroned of the apostles, teachers of the universe: Entreat the Master of all to grant peace to the world, and to our souls great mercy!*

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April 4, 2021

## SUNDAY OF THE CROSS

TONE 2

Today ..... 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
Wed. 07 ..... 7:15pm Presanctified Liturgy  
& Lenten Study  
Sat. 03 ..... 6:00pm Vespers  
Sun. 04 ..... 10:00am Divine Liturgy with  
Met. Tikhon

**One must be baptized and chrismated an Orthodox Christian to receive Holy Communion. Guests are invited to receive a blessing at the chalice and partake of the post-Communion bread (Antidoron).**

**Fast Days:** Strict fast Monday and Tuesday (fasting from meat, fish, eggs, dairy, oil, wine and hard spirits as you are able.) Wine and oil allowed on Sunday, Wednesday, and Saturday.

### Troparion – Tone 2 (Resurrection)

*When Thou didst descend to death, O Life immortal, Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead. And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead, all the powers of heaven cried out:  
“O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to Thee!”*

### Troparion – Tone 7 (Cross)

*Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Eden; it has been mysteriously quenched by the wood of the Cross.  
The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished;  
for Thou, O my Savior, hast come and cried to those in hell:  
“Enter again into Paradise!”*

**Prayers for those** in our Sts. Peter and Paul community (parishioners, family, friends) can be listed for remembrance in our litanies during the Liturgy. Feel free to give names to Fr. Nicholas - please indicate how each person listed is connected to us (parishioner, family, friend, etc.), as well as why we are praying for them (health, memory, travel, etc.).

**Confessions can be heard** by appointment. If you need, I will come to you during the week. Please do not hesitate to call for a time to drop by the church or to have me visit you.

**Remembrances** for both the living and the dead during the prayers of preparation of the Eucharistic Lamb and during the Augmented Litany should be given the week before the desired remembrance so that the names can be put into the bulletin and given to the Deacons for the prayers. Any names of the living that are not marked as sick or traveling will be listed under general prayers.

## SCRIPTURE THIS WEEK

### Church Lectionary

#### Today

Hebrews 4:14-5:6  
Mark 8:34-9:1

#### Monday

Isaiah 14:24-32  
Genesis 8:21-9:7  
Proverbs 11:19-12:6

#### Tuesday

Isaiah 25:1-9  
Genesis 9:8-17  
Proverbs 12:8-22

#### Wednesday

Isaiah 26:21-27:9  
Genesis 9:18-10:1  
Proverbs 12:23-13:9

#### Thursday

Isaiah 28:14-22  
Genesis 10:32-11:9  
Proverbs 13:19-14:6

#### Friday

Isaiah 29:13-23  
Genesis 12:1-7  
Proverbs 14:15-26

#### Saturday

Hebrews 6:9-12  
Mark 7:31-37

### Reading the Bible in a Year

Apr 04: 4 Kings 9-12  
Apr 05: 4 Kings 13-16  
Apr 06: 4 Kings 17-20  
Apr 07: 4 Kings 21-24  
Apr 08: 4 Kings 25-28  
Apr 09: 4 Kings 29-32  
Apr 10: 4 Kings 33-36

## We must put aside all resentment

***What is perfection in love? Love your enemies in such a way that you would desire to make them your brothers ... For so did He love, Who hanging on the Cross, said "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34)***

-St. Augustine

The decision to forgive another person a wrong done to us begins when we decide to let go of resentment and thoughts of revenge. To forgive someone does not mean that we forget what they did to us, for this may be impossible. The memory of the hurt might always remain with you, but when you decide to forgive the person who wronged you, the grip of resentment is put aside. When we forgive someone it is even possible the find yourself filled with compassion and empathy for the person, for the act of forgiveness opens the heart to God's grace.

When we forgive someone, we are not denying their responsibility for hurting or offending us, nor are we

## Health of the Parish



\$15,000.00

\$12,700

\$10,000.00

\$5,000.00

justifying their act. We can forgive them without approving or excusing their transgression against us. The act of forgiving another opens our heart to the peace that brings closure to hurt and pain, and opens us up to the love and peace that comes from living a life without resentment.

If we find ourselves struggling to forgive, it is a good reminder to recall those hurtful things we've done to others, and remember when we've been forgiven. It is especially good to recall how God has forgiven us, and call upon Him to give us the grace needed to put aside our resentment, and truly forgive the other person. Being quick to forgive, and putting aside all thoughts of revenge will open our heart to a joyful and peaceful life.

Finally, if we pray for those who've offended us, we open the door to all kinds of possibilities. When we ask God to help the person who's been unkind and hurtful, our own hearts receive healing, for when we've forgiven others, grace abounds.

"Don't repay evil for evil. Don't retaliate when people say unkind things about you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God wants you to do, and he will bless you for it." (1 Peter 3:9)

Love in Christ,  
Abbot Tryphon

## April Events

### April

- 04 - 10:00am Divine Liturgy
- 07 - 7:00pm Presanctified Liturgy followed by Lenten study
- 10 - 6:00pm Vespers with Met. Tikhon
- 11 - 10:00am Divine Liturgy with Met. Tikhon
- 14 - 7:00pm Presanctified Liturgy followed by Lenten study
- 17 - 10:00am Divine Liturgy
- 21 - 7:00pm Presanctified Liturgy followed by Lenten study

## A Prayer for Use During the Week

**O Lord, how wondrous are Your works. In wisdom, You made us from Your love for us. My life is cluttered with so many distractions that make me inattentive to the need to offer You the "sacrifice of praise" in my words and actions. I am so overwhelmed by life that I struggle to keep Your goodness before my eyes. Even my prayers sometimes fall into mere rote repetition and I pass through my religious acts unchanged by the power of the wisdom contained. O God, help me, and save me so that, remembering Your Name and Your love, I will finally become myself! Amen**

## Children's Word

### **Hebrews 4:14-5:6 (Epistle)**

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins. And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: "You are My Son, today I have begotten You." As He also says in another place: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek";

### **Mark 8:34-9:1 (Gospel)**

When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."

### **Take up your Cross!**

Have you ever waved a flag? You probably have waved a flag at a parade or at a sports game. You see flags waving everywhere on the 4th of July!

When we wave our flag, we are celebrating our independence. We thank God for our freedom. We are proud of the people who helped keep the rights God gave us. The flag is something that helps us remember our freedom!

Today, we celebrate a special day in our Church. It's the Sunday of the Holy Cross. We celebrate today because the Holy Cross helps us remember a different kind of freedom. When we see the Cross, we think ahead to the Resurrection. The Cross isn't something sad for us, even though our Lord died on it. The Cross shows that Christ won. He won freedom for us!

Do you know what kind of freedom Christ won for us? He made us free from sin and from death. With the Cross, we have true freedom, because now we can be free with Christ in heaven.

The Gospel tells us today, "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." So, let's celebrate today and take up our crosses. We can joyfully show our crosses, and celebrate the freedom Christ won for us!

### **SAINT RUFUS THE OBEDIENT**

Do you have a friend named Rufus? Probably not, but you might know of a dog named Rufus. Did you know it used to be the most popular dog name? It's a name that's easy to say when you call your dog to obey you!

This week we celebrate a more special Rufus, who was known for being obedient. In fact, we hardly know anything about him, but 700 years after he lived, we Orthodox Christians still remember him as Saint Rufus the Obedient!

Saint Rufus was a monk who lived in the Kiev Caves, which is in the country of Ukraine. Almost a thousand years ago, a monk decided to live in a cavern in this secluded spot. More monks followed his example, and they settled there too. In this spot, there were many, many caverns, and the monks even lived and went to church underground! Over the years, these Kiev Caves became a very popular place for monks. Even today, the Kiev Caves monastery is still active with monks.

Saint Rufus was one of the monks who chose this special and holy place to pray and to focus more closely on the Lord! We all live in very different places than Saint Rufus did, but we all have many people we need to obey. That's why we can still follow Saint Rufus's holy example!

We celebrate St. Rufus on Thursday, April 8th.

# The Paradox of Sacrifice And Gratitude

April 2, 2021 · Fr. Barnabas Powell

At the very heart of the timeless Christian faith is the Eucharist. And you've heard me say many times before that the word "Eucharist" has its root in the Greek word for "thank you." The very center of what it means to be a Christian isn't some cultural habit "I'm Christian because I was born in a Christian family." It isn't in some political allegiance like insisting we are a "Christian" nation. Nor is it the happy accident of your birth. While all of the above can and will give you a "head start" (for which you must be grateful), the key to being Christian is being grateful!

And gratitude REQUIRES Sacrifice!

Look at Genesis 8:4-21. We'll just quote the passage below:

*In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from off the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry. In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry. Then God said to Noah, "Go forth from the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you. Bring forth with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh – birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth – that they may breed abundantly on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply upon the earth." So Noah went forth, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. And every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves upon the earth, went forth by families out of the ark. Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And when the LORD smelled the pleasing odor, the LORD said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I ever again destroy every living creature as I have done."*

Noah and his family and all on the ark had weathered the storm and the flood. They had obeyed God and the consequence of their obedience was their salvation, their lives. It was in "passing through" the waters of the flood that saved them. Their salvation was scary and terrible, as they were going through it, but now the floodwaters have passed and the ark was on dry land.

But notice what happens when the flood ends. First God speaks. As always, God takes the initiative to lead, instruct, and guide His humanity. He tells Noah and his family to get out of the boat and get to multiply on the earth. Just as God commanded Adam and Eve to "tend" the earth and be fruitful, so He commands Noah to do the same as He "reboots" His humanity.

The curious response of Noah is very instructive to us today. What does Noah do after hearing from God? He builds an altar! Noah's response to God's salvation, to God's instruction, to God's purpose for His humanity was to perform an act of gratitude. Noah's motivation in his relationship with God certainly was fearful as in deep awe of God's presence, but fear isn't the primary motivator here. Noah's motivation in his relationship with God certainly included deep mystery and even confusion about why God did what He did, but confusion wasn't his primary motivator here. No, Noah was motivated by gratitude, so he does what Adam failed to do. He does what Cain failed to do. He does what all of humanity failed to do before the flood; he worships God in gratitude for God's salvation. And he does so with an offering that pleases the Lord so much that God reveals to Noah that He will never again destroy the earth with water.

But that's always the consequence of gratitude towards God: Deeper intimacy with God always leads to a deeper knowledge and greater gratitude as well.

Today, what regular practices in your life display your gratitude towards God? You do understand that God doesn't "need" your gratitude at all. No, the benefits of a life of gratitude toward God are always one-sided – mine! And it requires me to sacrifice my pride to reach authentic gratitude. As we learn the path of a grateful life, we watch as our hearts grow more accustomed to God's Presence and we know Him better. It's what results from being Orthodox on Purpose.

## **К Евреям 4:14-5:6**

Итак, имея Первосвященника великого, прошедшего небеса, Иисуса Сына Божия, будем твердо держаться исповедания [нашего]. Ибо мы имеем не такого первосвященника, который не может сострадать нам в немощах наших, но Который, подобно [нам], искушен во всем, кроме греха. Посему да приступаем с дерзновением к престолу благодати, чтобы получить милость и обрести благодать для благовременной помощи. Ибо всякий первосвященник, из человеков избираемый, для человеков поставляется на служение Богу, чтобы приносить дары и жертвы за грехи, могущий снисходить невежествующим и заблуждающим, потому что и сам обложен немощью, и посему он должен как за народ, так и за себя приносить [жертвы] о грехах. И никто сам собою не приемлет этой чести, но призываемый Богом, как и Аарон. Так и Христос не Сам Себе присвоил славу быть первосвященником, но Тот, Кто сказал Ему: Ты Сын Мой, Я ныне родил Тебя; как и в другом [месте] говорит: Ты священник вовек по чину Мелхиседека.

## **От Марка 8:34-9:1**

И, подозвав народ с учениками Своими, сказал им: кто хочет идти за Мною, отвергнись себя, и возьми крест свой, и следуй за Мною. Ибо кто хочет душу свою сберечь, тот потеряет ее, а кто потеряет душу свою ради Меня и Евангелия, тот сбережет ее. Ибо какая польза человеку, если он приобретет весь мир, а душе своей повредит? Или какой выкуп даст человек за душу свою? Ибо кто постыдится Меня и Моих слов в роде сем прелюбодейном и грешном, того постыдится и Сын Человеческий, когда приидет в славе Отца Своего со святыми Ангелами. И сказал им: истинно говорю вам: есть некоторые из стоящих здесь, которые не вкусят смерти, как уже увидят Царствие Божие, пришедшее в силе.

## **Hebrenjve 4:14-5:6**

Duke pasur, pra, një kryepriift të madh që ka përshkuar qiejt, Jezusin, Birin e Perëndisë, le të mbajmë fort rrëfimin tonë të besimit. Sepse ne nuk kemi kryepriift që nuk mund t'i vijë keq për dobësitë tona, po një që u tundua në të gjitha ashtu si ne, por pa mëkatuar. Le t'i afrohemi, pra, me guxim fronit të hirit, që të marrim mëshirë e të gjejmë hir, për të pasur ndihmë në kohë nevojë. Sepse çdo kryepriift, që merret prej njerëzve, vihet kryepriift mbi njerëzit për gjërat që kanë të bëjnë me Perëndinë, për të ofruar dhurata dhe flijime për mëkatet; kështu ai mund të ketë dhembshuri për ata që janë të paditur dhe të gënijer, sepse edhe ai është i veshur me dobësi, dhe për këtë arsye është i detyruar të ofrojë flijime për fajet, si për popullin ashtu edhe për veten e tij. Dhe askush nuk e merr këtë nder prej vetes së tij, po ai që thirret nga Perëndia, sikurse Aaroni. Kështu edhe Krishti nuk e përvetësoi ai vetë lavdinë që të bëhet kryepriift, por ia dha Ai që i tha: “Ti je im Bir, sot ti më linde,” dhe ashtu si thuhet diku gjetiu: “Ti je priift përjetë, sipas rendit të Melkisedekut.”

## **Marku 8:34-9:1**

Pastaj e thirri pranë vetes turmën me dishepujt e vet dhe iu tha: “Kushdo që don të vijë pas meje, të mohojë vetveten, të marrë kryqin e vet dhe të më ndjekë, sepse ai që don të shpëtojë jetën e vet, do ta humbasë; por ai që do të humbasë jetën e vet për hirin tim e për ungjillin, do të shpëtojë. Ç'dobi do të ketë njeriu të fitojë gjithë botën, nëse më pas do të humbë shpirtin e vet? Ose çfarë mund të japë njeriu në shkëmbim të shpirtit të vet? Sepse kujt do që do t'i vijë turp për mua dhe për fjalët e mia në mes të këtij brezi kurorëshkelës dhe mëkatar, për atë do t'i vijë turp edhe Birit të njeriut, kur të arrijë në lavdinë e Atit të vet, me engjëjt e shenjtë.” Pastaj u tha atyre: “Në të vërtetë ju them se midis jush që jeni këtu ka disa që nuk do ta shijojnë vdekjen para se të shohin të vijë me fuqi mbretëria e Perëndisë.”