

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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August 29, 2021

10TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: THE BEHEADING OF THE HOLY
GLORIOUS PROPHET, FORERUNNER, AND BAPTIST, JOHN
ST PHANOURIOS

Today 10:00am Divine Liturgy
Wed. 01 7:15pm Bible Study with
GoogleMeet
Fri. 03 6:00pm Fun Night
Sun. 05 10:00am Divine Liturgy

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: Wednesday and Friday (fasting from meat, fish, eggs, dairy, wine and oil as you are able.)

Troparion – Tone 4 (Phanourios)

*A heavenly song of praise is chanted
radiantly upon the earth
the company of angels now joyfully
celebrates an earthly festival,
and from on high with hymns they
praise your contests,
and from below, the church
proclaims the heavenly glory
which you have found by your labors
and struggles,
O glorious Phanourios.*

Kontakion – Tone 5 (St. John the Baptist)

*The glorious beheading of the
Forerunner
became an act of divine
dispensation,
for he preached to those in hell the
coming of the Savior.
Let Herodias lament, for she
entreated lawless murder,
loving not the Law of God, nor
eternal life,
but that which is false and
temporal.*

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

Acts 13:25-33
Mark 6:14-30
1 Corinthians 4:9-16
Matthew 17:14-23

Monday

2 Corinthians 2:4-15
Matthew 23:13-22

Tuesday

2 Corinthians 2:14-3:3
Matthew 23:23-28

Wednesday

Colossians 3:12-16
Matthew 11:27-30
2 Corinthians 3:4-11
Matthew 23:29-39

Thursday

2 Corinthians 4:1-6
Matthew 24:13-28

Friday

2 Corinthians 4:13-18
Matthew 24:27-33, 42-51

Saturday

1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Matthew 19:3-12

Reading the Bible in a Year

Aug 29: Grk Esther 9-12
Aug 30: Grk Esther 13-16
Aug 31: Wis Sol 1-4
Sept 01: Wis Sol 5-8
Sept 02: Wis Sol 9-12
Sept 03: Wis Sol 13-16
Sept 04: Wis Sol 17-19

AUGUST EVENTS

August

29 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

September

01 – 7:15pm Bible Study with GoogleMeet

03 – 6:00pm Fun Night

05 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

07 – 7:00pm Vespers Liturgy

*Feast of the Nativity of the
Theotokos*

08 – 7:15pm Bible Study with GoogleMeet

Coffee Hour

This Week: Memorial for Alvin Rifkin

Next Week:

If anyone who is currently unable to attend our Sunday Liturgy and supply coffee hour would like to donate to host a coffee hour, please contact Fr. Nicholas 860-861-7468

Flower Donation

This week's flowers were donated by:
Masha Zaychick

A Prayer for the Week

O Lord of Glory, You use Power to embrace service and love. You have never tried to control or manipulate me into loving You. You show me how true authority is to be used and why power is never used to master anyone. Your example of strength under control and love based on selflessness that doesn't attempt to gain anything sets such a high standard for true leadership! I am not able to achieve this lofty example so I run to You in repentance, asking for Your grace and strength to embrace Your loving authority and to share this amazing revelation about Power and Authority to everyone, especially in a world where such Power and Authority has been so misused for selfish gains. Have mercy, O Lord. Amen.

The Destruction of the Ego Begins with Repentance

Modern psychology has told us we must feel good about ourselves, and instructed us to reject the idea of guilt and sin. Sin is seen as religion's instrument for keeping people in line, making them dependent on an institution that should be relegated to the Dark Ages. In an age where man is elevated to being his own god, religion is seen as a sort of enslavement. Up with self! Down with guilt!

Self as the new god is worshiped at the expense of community, and enthroned to a position of the utmost importance. Worship of self has contributed to the downfall of families and societal stability, with careers, social and financial gain and self-fulfillment reigning supreme.

Divine love does not tolerate this elevated status of self, for the ego is the enemy of our communion with God. In an age of financial collapse, mortgage foreclosures, and "pandemic" lockdown, worship of self dooms us to a life of total loss.

We were created for communion with God and the worship of the ego has led us into a state of spiritual bankruptcy. The total meltdown of societal standards, and the destruction of the environment, is the direct result of the turning away from spiritual values. The foundation of economic and environmental collapse is to be found in our spiritual bankruptcy, and calls us to return to the worship of God, and reject the worship of self.

The denial of guilt and sin is the ultimate example of our having accepted the lie perpetrated by the devil, the great deceiver. True happiness and true wealth come only through the fulfillment of our destiny, and that for which we were created, communion with God.

The destruction of the ego begins with repentance, and the acquisition of a humble and a contrite heart. It begins with a return to God.

Love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon

 •  • 

Love for Christ overflows into love for one's neighbor, love for truth, love for holiness, for the world, for purity, for everything divine, for everything deathless and eternal ... All these forms of love are natural manifestations of love for Christ. Christ is the God-man, and love for Him always means love for God and for man. When we love Christ God, we also love all that is divine, immortal and Christ-like in people. We can't truly love people if we do not love them for the sake of these causes. Any other love is pseudo-love, which is easily changed into lovelessness and hatredness toward people. True love for man comes from love for God, and love for God grows in accordance with the keeping of His commandments.

-St. Justin Popovich



1 Corinthians 4:9-16

For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are distinguished, but we are dishonored! To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now. I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me.

Acts 13:25-33

And as John was finishing his course, he said, 'Who do you think I am? I am not He. But behold, there comes One after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to loose.' Men and brethren, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the word of this salvation has been sent. For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not know Him, nor even the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath, have fulfilled them in condemning Him. And though they found no cause for death in Him, they asked Pilate that He should be put to death. Now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb. But God raised Him from the dead. He was seen for many days by those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses to the people. And we declare to you glad tidings – that promise which was made to the fathers. God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm: 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You.'

Matthew 17:14-23

And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him." Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me." And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" So Jesus said to them,

"Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting." Now while they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up." And they were exceedingly sorrowful.

Mark 6:14-30

Now King Herod heard of Him, for His name had become well known. And he said, "John the Baptist is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him." Others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is the Prophet, or like one of the prophets." But when Herod heard, he said, "This is John, whom I beheaded; he has been raised from the dead!" For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her. Because John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." Therefore Herodias held it against him and wanted to kill him, but she could not; for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just and holy man, and he protected him. And when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly. Then an opportune day came when Herod on his birthday gave a feast for his nobles, the high officers, and the chief men of Galilee. And when Herodias' daughter herself came in and danced, and pleased Herod and those who sat with him, the king said to the girl, "Ask me whatever you want, and I will give it to you." He also swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half my kingdom." So she went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist!" Immediately she came in with haste to the king and asked, saying, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." And the king was exceedingly sorry; yet, because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he did not want to refuse her. Immediately the king sent an executioner and commanded his head to be brought. And he went and beheaded him in prison, brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother. When his disciples heard of it, they came and took away his corpse and laid it in a tomb. Then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught.

Be Suspicious of Power to Control

August 25, 2021 · Fr. Barnabas Powell

It's amazing how quick folks get upset if they feel like they are being bossed around. I had a couple come to see me once about how to raise their child and they informed me they had decided to not say anything about God to the child so that he could make up his mind once he got older. Imagine their surprise when I pointed out that was not just foolish but actually communicated to the child that God was, at best, an afterthought for his parent. I pointed out they wouldn't take the same attitude about their son's learning good hygiene or how to read or even cross the street safely. We moderns aren't so much confused as we are lazy and self-centered. Ouch.

Look at our lesson today in Titus 1:1-5; 2:15; 3:1-2, 12-15:

PAUL, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to further the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life which God, who never lies, promised ages ago and at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by command of God our Savior;

To Titus, my true child in a common faith:

Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

Declare these things; exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for any honest work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all men.

When I send Artemas or Tychicos to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. And let our people learn to apply themselves to good deeds, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not to be unfruitful.

All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith.

Grace be with you all. Amen.

St. Paul is writing to St. Titus, one of his spiritual sons whom he has placed as a parish priest in Crete, and instructed him to set up leaders in every city there. And Paul understood that Titus was going to have to be an effective leader if he was going to accomplish the pastoral and missionary tasks Paul gave him. So, he gives Titus some clear instructions on how to be an effective leader.

First, Titus was to Declare the message of the Christian Faith. Notice he doesn't command Titus to convince but to declare. He expects Titus to declare the message of Jesus Christ. And he insists Titus do this from a heart convinced and a life shaped by that very message. It's why the Church calls the message of the Faith the Evangelion, the Good News. Well, that presupposes the folks who hear the message are hearing news, not some rote habit they've heard all their lives, but a message that actually is received as Good News! Too many today are tone deaf to the message of Christ because they treat the faith as an afterthought, not as the Good News it really is. Of course, St. Paul instructs Titus how to fix that problem too. He tells Titus to "exhort and reprove with all authority." Exhort means to encourage strongly as if there aren't any other choices and reprove means never help others stay sick! Straighten them out. Of course, do that motivated by a deep and sacrificial love for them. That is the true source of real Christian authority – your sacrificial love for the people you serve. Not to be the boss, but to rescue the perishing!

Finally, St. Paul tells Titus to not allow himself to be ignored! Leaders don't allow themselves to behave in such a weak way that they are easily dismissed. And true leaders reinforce this reality by "honest work," gentleness, and courtesy!

Today, are you a leader? If so, who's following you? Your children? Your spouse? Your congregation? If you don't think of yourself as a leader, are you wise enough to follow wise leaders? You see, dear one, true authority and leadership flow from love and service, but true leadership also doesn't let us off the hook just to not make you mad. True leadership loves you enough to tell you the truth even when the truth will upset you. It's like when folks fuss at me for insisting they be Orthodox on Purpose!

WE ARE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE WHO IS WILLING TO PROVIDE INFANT CHILDCARE DURING THE WORK-WEEK

We have been approached by Dali Zashakidze in need of child care for her infant daughter, Eliana. After being able to work from home, she is being called back into work.

Child care is needed from 7:15am to 4:00pm (approximately) Monday to Friday with all Philadelphia School District holidays off. She is willing to host the caretaker at her home or drop off Eliana at the residence of the care provider. Salary is negotiable. Dali can be reached at 267-974-5267.

2021 BACK TO SCHOOL BACKPACK PROGRAM

The Need

Imagine missing school because you don't have a backpack or even a pair of shoes. For many children experiencing homelessness and poverty in America, they don't need to imagine. They are forced to skip school, unable to participate in sports and playground activities, and face health risks because of inadequate shoes, food, or school supplies. The problem is especially great in Philadelphia, which has the highest poverty rate of any of the 10 largest cities in the U.S., as well as in surrounding communities. Due to COVID, the need is year round and greater than ever.

How Can You Help?

Please consider a donation to the FOCUS (Fellowship of Orthodox Christians United to Serve) Back to School Backpack Program. We hope to assist students in the School District of Philadelphia by providing them with new backpacks filled with school supplies. A donation of \$25 will cover the cost of 1 backpack filled with supplies, while \$600 will provide backpacks for a classroom of 24 students. Click on this link to go to our fundraising web page to donate and help us reach our goal of providing backpacks for needy children:

<https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.aspx?name=E334599&id=179&cfifid=13>

Or, you may donate by check made out to "FOCUS North America", with "2021 Backpack Program" written on the memo line, or cash, either of which may be given to Tina Murianka,

cmurianka@verizon.net or 267-319-4770, or to Tina Tsiadis, kmarlos@me.com or 330-933-6987.

Donations will be accepted until September 12, 2021. The video below shares the story of this program, and can be found at <https://focusnorthamerica.org/b2s/>. God bless you all for your generosity!

Ss. Peter and Paul Diaper Drive

Our church will be holding a three-week diaper drive in September to honor the Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos, and in order to help those in need in our community.

Infant diapers and adult incontinence supplies are necessities for many who already cannot afford them, and the cost of both is rising. These are items that are not covered by either food stamps or Medicare. We are asking parishioners to purchase packages of diapers and/or incontinence supplies and bring them to church anytime from Tuesday, September 8, through Sunday, September 26.

Diapers and incontinence supplies can be found in most grocery stores and pharmacies. Any size is fine, and you are welcome to donate as many packages as you wish. Cases of diapers are also welcome.

Once the diaper drive is over, all the supplies will be donated to the Greater Philadelphia Diaper Bank, who will then distribute them to shelters, social services, and individual families in need. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact:

Matushka Katie (adellermann@gmail.com) or Fr. Nicholas. (860-861-7468)

"Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." ~ Hebrews 13:16

SS. PETER AND PAUL LADIES SOCIETY IS HOSTING A “WELCOME BACK!” MEAL

The Ladies Society will be hosting a Spaghetti Lunch on Sunday, September 12th to welcome everyone back. The lunch will be held after Divine Liturgy and will take the place of our normal coffee hour and will cost the same amount, i.e. nothing!

The Ladies Society would appreciate having a general head count of who is planning to come, so that they can be sure to have enough food for everyone. Please let Tish know that if you are planning to attend. You can either talk to her at church, or call her at 215-77-9919.

When you talk to Tish, please keep in mind that the Ladies Society will be accepting donations of desserts for the lunch. If you are willing to bring a dessert, please don't hesitate to let her know.

Children's Word

The Good News!

Have you ever brought a present to somebody?

Maybe you were invited to a birthday party and you proudly brought your present for your friend. Have you ever brought a present for somebody you didn't know? Maybe you donated food or clothes to somebody who needed it? Did your gifts make somebody happy? Were you excited to bring it?

Today's epistle reading tells a little about the great gift the apostles brought to people. They brought it to friends, and they brought it to people they didn't even know! They were excited to bring their gift, because they were bringing something much more important than a birthday present or food and clothes.

The epistle reading today says, “And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus.” The gift the apostles brought was the good news of Jesus Christ. The good news that God kept His promise. The good news that Jesus rose from the dead and opened heaven for us all. The good news that we can live with Him forever! The apostles brought this special gift to anyone who would take it. They were excited to bring this gift. Can you share this gift with others too?

SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST WHO DIED FOR THE LORD

What do you know about Saint John the Baptist? Did you know he was Jesus's cousin? Did you know his parents were Zacharias and Elizabeth? Did you know he baptized Jesus in the Jordan River? Did you know he told lots of people that the Savior was coming?

Well, do you know how he died? Saint John got in a lot of trouble for telling people about Christ. He also got in a lot of trouble for telling people they were doing the wrong thing, and that they needed to change their ways!

Once, he told the king and his wife, Herodias, they were doing the wrong thing, and they didn't want to hear it! Herodias's daughter danced for the king, and the king said she could have anything she wanted, as a reward. Herodias was still angry at John for telling her what to do, so she did an awful thing. She told her daughter she wanted Saint John dead. She wanted his head!

The king had made a promise, and he wanted to keep it (even though he maybe didn't want to). He had Saint John killed. Saint John was so close to Jesus when they lived on earth. Now, he would be even closer to Him when he joined his cousin in heaven. Today is such a special day because we remember Saint John and his love for Christ! We remember St. John's death today, August 29th.

1-е Коринфянам 4:9-16

Ибо я думаю, что нам, последним посланникам, Бог судил быть как бы приговоренными к смерти, потому что мы сделали позорищем для мира, для Ангелов и человеков. Мы безумны Христа ради, а вы мудры во Христе; мы немощны, а вы крепки; вы в славе, а мы в бесчестии. Даже доньше терпим голод и жажду, и наготу и побои, и скитаемся, и трудимся, работая своими руками. Злословят нас, мы благословляем; гонят нас, мы терпим; хулят нас, мы молим; мы как сор для мира, [как] прах, всеми [попираемый] доньше. Не к постыжению вашему пишу сие, но вразумляю вас, как возлюбленных детей моих. Ибо, хотя у вас тысячи наставников во Христе, но не много отцов; я родил вас во Христе Иисусе благовествованием. Посему умоляю вас: подражайте мне, как я Христу.

От Матфея 17:14-23

Когда они пришли к народу, то подошел к Нему человек и, преклоняя пред Ним колени, сказал: Господи! помилуй сына моего; он в новолуния [беснуется] и тяжело страдает, ибо часто бросается в огонь и часто в воду, я приводил его к ученикам Твоим, и они не могли исцелить его. Иисус же, отвечая, сказал: о, род неверный и развращенный! доколе буду с вами? доколе буду терпеть вас? приведите его ко Мне сюда. И запретил ему Иисус, и бес вышел из него; и отрок исцелился в тот час. Тогда ученики, приступив к Иисусу наедине, сказали: почему мы не могли изгнать его? Иисус же сказал им: по неверию вашему; ибо истинно говорю вам: если вы будете иметь веру с горчичное зерно и скажете горе сей: 'перейди отсюда туда', и она перейдет; и ничего не будет невозможного для вас; сей же род изгоняется только молитвою и постом. Во время пребывания их в Галилее, Иисус сказал им: Сын Человеческий предан будет в руки человеческие, и убьют Его, и в третий день воскреснет. И они весьма опечалились.

Деяния 13:25-33

При окончании же поприща своего, Иоанн говорил: за кого почитаете вы меня? я не тот; но вот, идет за мною, у Которого я недостойн развязать обувь на ногах. Мужи братия, дети рода Авраамова, и боящиеся Бога между вами! вам послано слово спасения сего. Ибо жители Иерусалима и начальники их, не узнав Его и осудив, исполнили слова пророческие, читаемые каждую субботу, и, не найдя в Нем никакой вины, достойной смерти, просили Пилата убить Его. Когда же исполнили всё написанное о Нем, то, сняв с древа, положили Его во гроб. Но Бог воскресил Его из мертвых. Он в продолжение многих дней являлся тем, которые вышли с Ним из Галилеи в Иерусалим и которые ныне суть свидетели Его перед народом. И мы благовествуем вам, что обетование, данное отцам, Бог исполнил нам, детям их, воскресив Иисуса, как и во втором псалме написано: Ты Сын Мой: Я ныне родил Тебя.

От Марка 6:14-30

Царь Ирод, услышав [об Иисусе], --ибо имя Его стало гласно, --говорил: это Иоанн Креститель воскрес из мертвых, и потому чудеса делаются им. Другие говорили: это Илия, а иные говорили: это пророк, или как один из пророков. Ирод же, услышав, сказал: это Иоанн, которого я обезглавил; он воскрес из мертвых. Ибо сей Ирод, послав, взял Иоанна и заключил его в темницу за Иродиаду, жену Филиппа, брата своего, потому что женился на ней. Ибо Иоанн говорил Ироду: не должно тебе иметь жену брата твоего. Иродиада же, злобясь на него, желала убить его; но не могла. Ибо Ирод боялся Иоанна, зная, что он муж праведный и святой, и берёг его; многое делал, слушаясь его, и с удовольствием слушал его. Настал удобный день, когда Ирод, по случаю [дня] рождения своего, делал пир вельможам своим, тысяченачальникам и старейшинам Галилейским, -- дочь Иродиады вошла, плясала и угодила Ироду и возлежавшим с ним; царь сказал девице: проси у меня, чего хочешь, и дам тебе; и клялся ей: чего ни попросишь у меня, дам тебе, даже до половины моего царства. Она вышла и спросила у матери своей: чего просить? Та отвечала: головы Иоанна Крестителя. И она тотчас пошла с поспешностью к царю и просила, говоря: хочу, чтобы ты дал мне теперь же на блюде голову Иоанна Крестителя. Царь опечалился, но ради клятвы и возлежавших с ним не захотел отказать ей. И тотчас, послав оруженосца, царь повелел принести голову его. Он пошел, отсек ему голову в темнице, и принес голову его на блюде, и отдал ее девице, а девица отдала ее матери своей. Ученики его, услышав, пришли и взяли тело его, и положили его во гробе. И собрались Апостолы к Иисусу и рассказали Ему все, и что сделали, и чему научили.

1 e Korintasve 4:9-16

Sepse unë mendoj se Perëndia na ka paraqitur ne apostujt si të fundit, si njerëz të dënuar për vdekje; sepse u bëmë lojë për botën, për engjëjt dhe për njerëzit. Ne jemi të marrë për Krishtin, por ju të urtë në Krishtin; ne jemi të dobët, por ju të fortë; ju jeni të nderuar, por ne të përbuzur. Deri tani vuajmë nga uria, etja, e jemi të zhveshur; jemi të qëlluar me shuplaka dhe endemi pa shtëpi, dhe mundohemi, duke punuar me duart tona; duke qenë të fyer, bekojmë; duke qenë të përndjekur, durojmë; duke qenë të sharë, lutemi; jemi bërë si pislleku i botës, porsiplehurat e të gjithëve deri më sot. Këto gjëra nuk po i shkruaj që t'ju turpëroj, por që t'ju paralajmëroj si fëmijët e mi të dashur. Sepse, edhe sikur të kishit dhjetë mijë mësues në Krishtin, nuk do të kishit shumë etër, sepse unë ju kam dhënë jetë në Krishtin Jezus, me anë të ungujllit. Prandaj ju bëj thirrje të bëheni imituesit e mi.

Mateu 17:14-23

Kur arritën afër turmës, një burrë iu afrua dhe, duke u gjuhëzuar para tij, tha: "Zot, ki mëshirë për birin tim, sepse është epileptik dhe vuan shumë; shpesh ai bie në zjarr dhe shpesh në ujë. Tani unë e solla te dishepujt e tu, por ata nuk mundën ta shërojnë." Dhe Jezusi duke u përgjigjur tha: "O brez që nuk beson dhe i çoroditur! Deri kur do të qëndrosh midis jush? Deri kur do t'ju duroj? E sillni këtu tek unë." Atëherë Jezusi e qortoi demonin dhe ky doli nga djali; dhe që nga ai çast djali u shërua. Atëherë dishepujt iu afruan Jezusit mënjanë dhe i thanë: "Përse ne nuk ishim në gjendje ta dëbonim?" Dhe Jezusi u tha atyre: "Prej mosbesimit tuaj; sepse në të vërtetë, unë po ju them, se po të keni besim sa një kokërr sinapi, do t'i thoni këtij mali: "Zhvendosuni nga këtu atje," dhe ai do të zhvendoset; dhe asgjë nuk do të jetë e pamundshme për ju. Por ky lloji demoni nuk del veçse me anë të lutjes dhe të agjërimit." Por, ndërsa ata qëndronin në Galile, Jezusi u tha atyre: "Biri i njeriut do t'u dorëzohet në duart e njerëzve, dhe ata do ta vrasin; por ditën e tretë ai do të ringjallet." Dhe ata u pikëlluan shumë.

Veprat e Apostujve 13:25-33

Dhe, kur Gjoni po e përfundonte misionin e tij, tha: "Cili pandehni se jam unë? Unë nuk jam Krishti; por ja, pas meje vjen një, të cilit unë nuk jam i denjë t'i zgjidh sandalet e këmbëve". Vëllezër, bij të pasardhësve të Abrahamit, dhe ata prej jush që druajnë Perëndinë, juve ju është dërguar fjala e këtij shpëtimi. Sepse banorët e Jeruzalemit dhe krerët e tyre, duke mos e njohur Këtë Jezus, duke e dënuar, kanë përmbushur fjalët e profetëve që lexohen çdo të shtunë. Dhe, ndonëse nuk i gjetën asnjë faj që të meritonte vdekjen, i kërkuan Pilatit që ai të vritet. Dhe mbasi u kryen të gjitha gjërat që janë shkruar për të, atë e zbritën nga druri dhe e vunë në varr. Por Perëndia e ringjalli prej të vdekurve; dhe ai u pa për shumë ditë nga ata që ishin ngjitur me të nga Galilea në Jeruzalem, të cilët tani janë dëshmitarë të tij para popullit. Dhe ne po ju shpallim lajmin e mirë të premtimit që u qe bërë etërve, duke ju thënë se Perëndia e ka përmbushur për ne, bij të tyre, duke ringjallur Jezusin, ashtu si dhe është shkruar në psalmin e dytë: "Ti je Biri im, sot më linde".

Marku 6:14-30

Tani mbreti Herod dëgjoi të flitej për Jezusin, sepse emri i tij ishte bërë i njohur, dhe ai tha: "Ky Gjoni që pagëzonte u ngjall së vdekuri; prandaj në të po veprojnë pushtete çudibërëse." Disa të tjerë thonin: "Është Elia"; dhe disa të tjerë: "Është një profet, ose si një nga profetët." Por kur i dëgjoi Herodi të gjitha këto, tha: "Ky Gjoni, të cilit ia pata prerë kokën, u ngjall së vdekuri!" Në fakt Herodi vet kishte dhënë urdhër të arrestohej Gjoni dhe të mbahej i lidhur në burg për shkak të Herodiadës, gruas së Filipit, vëllait të tij, sepse e kishte marrë për grua. Gjoni, pra, i thoshte Herodit: "Nuk është e lejueshme të kesh gruan e vëllait tënd!" Dhe Herodiada e urrente dhe dëshironte ta vriste, por nuk mundte. Herodi, pra, i druhej Gjoni, të cilin e dinte si njeri të drejtë dhe të shenjtë, dhe e mbronte; dhe, mbasi e dëgjonte, kryente shumë gjëra dhe e dëgjonte me dëshirë. Por erdhi dita e volitshme dhe Herodi, për ditëlindjen e vet, shtroi një gosti për të mëdhenjtë e tij, për komandantët dhe për parinë e Galileës. Hyri vetë e bija e Herodiadës, kërceu dhe i pëlqeu Herodit e atyre që ishin bashkë me të në tryezë, atëherë mbreti i tha vajzës: "Më kërko ç'të duash dhe unë do të ta jap." Dhe iu betua: "Gjithçka që të më kërkosh, do të ta jap, deri gjysmën e mbretërisë sime!" Ajo doli dhe i tha s'ëmës: "Çfarë duhet t'i kërkosh?" Ajo u përgjigj: "Kokën e Gjon Pagëzorit!" Ajo u kthye menjëherë te mbreti dhe i kërkoi me nxitim: "Unë dëshiroj që ti të më japësh menjëherë, mbi një pjatë, kokën e Gjon Pagëzorit." Dhe mbreti, megjithëse u trishtua shumë nga kjo, nuk desh të refuzojë për shkak të betimit dhe për respekt të të ftuarve. Kështu mbreti dërgoi menjëherë një roje me urdhër që ti sillnin kokën e Gjonit. Dhe ky shkoi, ia preu kokën në burg, dhe e solli kokën e tij mbi një pjatë, ia dha vajzës dhe vajza ia dha s'ëmës. Kur dishepujt e Gjonit i dëgjuan këto, erdhën, morën trupin e tij dhe e vunë në varr. Tani apostujt u mblodhën tek Jezusi dhe i treguan të gjitha ato që kishin bërë dhe i kishin mësuar.