

# Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church

Albanian Archdiocese - OCA

9230 Old Bustleton Avenue

Philadelphia, PA 19115

215-676-3311

Rev. Nicholas Dellermann – Rector (860-861-7468)

**SUNDAY, JULY 30**

**8th Sunday after Pentecost**

**Apostles Silas and Silvanus of the Seventy, and those with them**

**Tone 7  
Troparion  
(Resurrection)**

*By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death.  
To the thief Thou didst open Paradise.  
For the Myrrhbearers Thou didst change weeping  
into joy,  
and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ  
God,  
to proclaim that Thou art risen,  
granting the world great mercy.*

**Tone 3  
Troparion  
(Apostles)**

*Holy Apostles Silas and Silvanus,  
entreat the merciful God  
to grant our souls forgiveness of transgressions!*

**Tone 7  
Kontakion  
(Resurrection)**

*The dominion of death can no longer hold men  
captive,  
for Christ descended, shattering and destroying  
its powers.  
Hell is bound, while the Prophets rejoice and cry:  
“The Savior has come to those in faith;  
enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!”*

**Tone 4  
Kontakion  
(Apostles)**

*You were revealed to be branches of the vine of  
Christ, O wise ones,  
bearing clusters of virtues that pour out on us the  
wine of salvation.  
Receiving it, we are filled with gladness,  
and we celebrate your most honored memory,  
Apostles of the Lord, Silas and Silvanus.  
Therefore, intercede that great mercy and  
remission of sins may be granted to us.*

**Prokeimenon**

**Tone 7 (Resurrection)**

The Lord shall give strength to His people. / The Lord shall bless His people with peace. [\(Ps. 28:11\)](#)

V. Offer to the Lord, O you sons of God! Offer young rams to the Lord! [\(Ps. 28:1a\)](#)

## ✧ The Epistle Reading ✧

### **1 Corinthians 1:10-18**

Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you. Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name. Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other. For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect. For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

### **I Korinthanëve 1:10-18**

Edhe ju lutem juve, o vëllezër, në emrin e Zotit tonë Jisu Krisht, që të thoni të gjithë të njëjtën gjë, edhe të mos ketë përçarje ndërmjet jush, por të jeni të bashkuar ngushtë në të njëjtën mendje e në të njëjtin mendim. Sepse më treguan për ju, o vëllezër, njerëzit e Kloes, se ka grindje ndërmjet jush. Edhe këtë e them se secili prej jush thotë: Unë jam i Pavlit, edhe: Unë i Apolloit, edhe: Unë i Kefait, edhe: Unë i Krishtit. Ndarë qenka Krishti? Mos Pavli u kryqëzua për ju? Apo në emrin e Pavlit u pagëzuar? Falënderoj Perëndinë, se asnjë prej jush s'kam pagëzuar, veç Krispit dhe Gait; që të mos thotë ndonjë prej jush, se në emrin tim e pagëzova. Pagëzova edhe shtëpinë e Stefanait; veç këtyre nuk di nëse pagëzova ndonjë tjetër. Sepse Krishti nuk më dërgoi që të pagëzoj, po që të ungjillëzoj, jo me dituri fjale, që të mos dalë i kotë kryqi i Krishtit. Sepse fjala e kryqit për ata që humbasin është marrëzi, po për ne që shpëtojmë është fuqi Perëndie.

### **1-е Коринфянам 1:10-18**

Умоляю вас, братья, именем Господа нашего Иисуса Христа, чтобы все вы говорили одно, и не было между вами разделений, но чтобы вы соединены были в одном духе и в одних мыслях. Ибо от [домашних] Хлоиных сделалось мне известным о вас, братья мои, что между вами есть споры. Я понимаю то, что у вас говорят: 'я Павлов'; 'я Аполлосов'; 'я Кифин'; 'а я Христов'. Разве разделен Христос? разве Павел распялся за вас? или во имя Павла вы крестились? Благодарю Бога, что я никого из вас не крестил, кроме Криспа и Гаия, дабы не сказал кто, что я крестил в мое имя. Крестил я также Стефанов дом; а крестил ли еще кого, не знаю. Ибо Христос послал меня не крестить, а благовествовать, не в премудрости слова, чтобы не упразднить креста Христова. Ибо слово о кресте для погибающих юродство есть, а для нас, спасаемых, --сила Божия.

### **Tone**

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

V. It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Thy Name, O Most High. *(Ps. 91:1)*

V. To declare Thy mercy in the morning, and Thy truth by night. *(Ps. 91:2a)*



## ✠ The Gospel Reading ✠

### **Matthew 14:14-22**

And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick. When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food." But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." And they said to Him, "We have here only five loaves and two fish." He said, "Bring them here to Me." Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained. Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children. Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away.

### **Mattheut 14:14-22**

Edhe kur doli Jisui, pa turmë të madhe, edhe iu dhimbs për ta, edhe shëroi të sëmurët e tyre. Edhe si u ngrys, i erdhën pranë nxënësit e tij, e i thanë: Vendi është i shkretë edhe koha tashmë ka shkuar. Lësho turmat, që të shkojnë nëpër fshatrat të blejnë të ngrëna për veten e tyre. Por Jisui u tha atyre: Nuk kanë nevojë të shkojnë. Jepuni ju atyre të hanë. Edhe ata i thonë atij: Nuk kemi këtu veçse pesë bukë dhe dy peshq. Edhe ai tha: M'i sillni mua ato këtu. Edhe urdhëroi turmat të shtrohen mbi bar, edhe mori të pesë bukët e të dy peshqit, edhe ngriti sytë përperjetë në qiejt dhe bekoi; edhe pasi i theu, ua dha bukët nxënësve, edhe nxënësit turmave. Edhe hëngrën të gjithë e u ngopën; edhe ngritën tepricën e copave, dymbëdhjetë kofinë plot. Edhe ata që hëngrën ishin rreth pesë mijë burra, veç grave e fëmijëve. Edhe përnjëherë Jisui i shtrëngoi nxënësit e tij të hyjnë në lundër, edhe të shkojnë përtej më përpara se ai, deri sa të lëshojë turmat.

### **От Матфея 14:14-22**

И, выйдя, Иисус увидел множество людей и сжалился над ними, и исцелил больных их. Когда же настал вечер, приступили к Нему ученики Его и сказали: место здесь пустынное и время уже позднее; отпусти народ, чтобы они пошли в селения и купили себе пищи. Но Иисус сказал им: не нужно им идти, вы дайте им есть. Они же говорят Ему: у нас здесь только пять хлебов и две рыбы. Он сказал: принесите их Мне сюда. И велел народу возлечь на траву и, взяв пять хлебов и две рыбы, воззрел на небо, благословил и, преломив, дал хлебы ученикам, а ученики народу. И ели все и насытились; и набрали оставшихся кусков двенадцать коробов полных; а евших было около пяти тысяч человек, кроме женщин и детей. И тотчас понудил Иисус учеников Своих войти в лодку и отправиться прежде Его на другую сторону, пока Он отпустит народ.

### **Communion Hymn**

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! *(Ps. 148:1)*  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

## **Apostle Silvanus of the Seventy**

*The Holy Apostle of the Seventy Silvanus was a disciple of the Savior.*

*The Holy Apostle Silvanus preached the Word of God together with the chief Apostles Peter and Paul. In his First Epistle, the holy Apostle Peter makes mention of him: "By Silvanus, a faithful brother to you, as I suppose, I have written briefly..." (1 Peter 5:12). Saint Silvanus was made bishop at Thessalonica and died there a martyr, having undergone many sorrows and misfortunes for the Lord's sake.*

PRAYERS	Birthdays, Names-days, & Anniversaries	SCRIPTURE THIS WEEK
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>For Those Who Have Fallen Asleep</i></p>		
<p>Newly Departed Thomas, Newly Departed Nikoli, Newly Departed Sergei, Newly Departed Alex</p> <p><i>[To be inserted after the petition for the departed]</i> Again we pray for those who have lost their lives because of the war in Ukraine: that the Lord our God may look upon them with mercy, and give them rest where there is neither sickness, or sorrow, but life everlasting.</p>	<p>July 30 – August 5 Jim &amp; Christina Schaeffer (A)</p> <p><b><u>Seven-Day Vigil Candles</u></b></p> <p>Llukan Dylgjeri - health</p> <p>Seven-Day Vigil Candles are used for the Eternal Light that hangs above the Royal Doors and are often placed in front of the icons of Christ or the Birth-giver of God. If you would like to donate a Seven-Day Vigil Candle, Please include the name or names of those for whom the candle is donated, and we will place them in this section for special prayers.</p>	<p><b><u>Church Lectionary</u></b></p> <p><i>Today</i> 1 Corinthians 1:10-18 Matthew 14:14-22</p> <p><i>Monday</i> 1 Corinthians 11:31-12:6 Matthew 18:1-11</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>For Those Who Are Sick And Home-bound</i></p>		
<p>Virginia, Denise, Olvian, Marie, James, Alexandra, Andrew, Christina, Louise, Porter, Alvin, Tracy, Kathy, Andrew, Maria, Helen, John, Nina, Sophia, Jim, Spresha, Kristin, Niko, Spiro, Angjeliki, Melod, Olgay, Ruth, Fr. Jerry, Naomi, Terry, Naomi, Annette, Tatiana, Aleena, Lester Jr., Natalia, Otari, Lasha, Fr. Nikolas, Imani, Gabriel, Aaron, Jordany, Nassan, Alqiviadhi</p>		<p><i>Tuesday</i> Hebrews 2:11-18 John 5:1-4 1 Corinthians 12:12-26 Matthew 18:18-22, 19:1-2, 13-15</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Prayers In General</i></p>		
<p>The community of Ss. Peter &amp; Paul Miami, Fr. Dennis and his family, Fr. Ioan, Christian, Michael, Erica, Kaida, DuDash family, Michael, Robert, Ally, Steve, Jake and Amanda and their children, Katherine, Ron, Anthony, Volodymyr, Nick, Sophia, Michael, Rafael, Bob, Barbara, Sandra, Enoch, John, Victoria, Melenie, Grace, Michael, Barbara, Giorgi, Molly, Jim, Chloe, Alma-Anastasia, Marianthi, Marsha</p>		<p><i>Wednesday</i> 1 Corinthians 13:4-14:5 Matthew 20:1-16</p> <p><i>Thursday</i> 1 Corinthians 14:6-19 Matthew 20:17-28</p> <p><i>Friday</i> 1 Corinthians 14:26-40 Matthew 21:12-14, 17-20</p>
<p><i>[To be inserted after the petition for the living]</i> Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, for those who are suffering, wounded, grieving, or displaced because of the war in Ukraine.</p>		
<p><i>[Petitions at Augmented Litany]</i> Again we pray for a cessation of the hostilities against Ukraine, and that reconciliation and peace will flourish there, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.</p>		
<p>We give thanks to You, O Lord our God, Who in Your mercy and providential care, has called forth Archimandrite NIKODHIM to become a shepherd of wisdom and strength for our Albanian Archdiocese. We ask that You Bless Father NIKODHIM as he readies himself to become our future archpastor so he may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• care for our spiritual well-being,</li> <li>• unite us in a zealous confession of our holy faith,</li> <li>• commit us in loving service to one another in bright witness to the glory of Your holy Name.</li> </ul> <p>Hear us and have mercy.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>COFFEE HOUR</b></p> <p><b><u>July</u></b> 30 Tommy Cappo Memorial Sergei Memorial</p> <p><b><u>August</u></b> 06 13 20 27</p> <p>Coffee Hour is a wonderful chance for us to get together to break bread and spend time with each other, to celebrate those whom we have held memorials for, and to come together as the family of God outside of worship. To sign up, to host a coffee hour, contact Fr. Nicholas or Donna Bacon.</p>	<p><i>Saturday</i> Romans 14:6-9 Matthew 15:32-39</p> <p><b><u>Reading the Bible in a Year</u></b></p> <p>July 30: Ezekiel 45-48 July 31: Daniel 1-4 Aug 01: Daniel 5-8 Aug 02: Daniel 9-12 Aug 03: Hosea 1-5 Aug 04: Hosea 6-9 Aug 05: Hosea 10-14</p>

## Learn To Compete According to the Rules

July 27, 2023 · Fr. Barnabas Powell



I love a line from the Paraklesis to our parish saints, Sts. Raphael, Nicholas, and Irene: “We entreat you, O Martyr of Christ, who with Nicholas and Irene for His sake competed according to the rules: Save us from injuries by our unruly opponent, through your earnest prayers to our tender-loving Lord.” The good Monk Gerasimos Mikragiannanites wrote this Paraklesis to our patron saints and I love how he contrasts the saints, who “competed according to the rules” as opposed to the evil one who is the “unruly opponent.”

And it is imperative we fully come face-to-face with the reality that this life is a competition! We are in a

“race” to first know what our true “finish line” is AND to train for this race by knowing WHO waits for us at the finish line of our lives. But there is a way to compete that leads to finishing well and there is an “unruly opponent” that is bound and determined to get you off course and ruin your race. Knowing what the faithful “rules of competition” are and then exercising the discipline of a faithful spiritual athlete to run the race successfully is the wisdom preserved in the lifestyle of a Normal Orthodox Christian.

But how? How are we to “compete according to the rules?” As usual, it all has to do with Jesus Christ!

Look at our lesson today in 2 Timothy 2:1-10:

*Timothy, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier on service gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to satisfy the one who enlisted him. An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. It is the hardworking farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. Think over what I say, for the Lord will grant you understanding in everything.*

*Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descended from David, as preached in my gospel, the gospel for which I am suffering and wearing fetters like a criminal. But the word of God is not fettered. Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain salvation in Christ Jesus with its eternal glory.*

Timothy was the spiritual son of St. Paul and he became the leader of a community that was started by St. Paul. St. Timothy would become the first bishop of Ephesus. St. Paul is helping his spiritual son with several principles meant to have Timothy take responsibility for his choices and fulfill his ministry. He lays out for Timothy the “rules” to competing well.

Notice how Paul speaks to Timothy. He tells him to be “strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.” Paul often puts “Christ” in front of “Jesus” to reinforce the unique anointing (The word “Christ” means “anointed One”)) of Jesus as the expected Messiah. Being strong in the grace of Jesus means staying confident and dependent on the strength and ministry of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the Savior. Jesus is the conqueror of death, Jesus is the Risen Lord; Jesus is the Son sitting at the right hand of the Father in heaven. The grace of Jesus Christ is the power the Lord uses to empower those to whom He gives His grace to transform them; to make them able to live up to their created potential, and to follow the wisdom of God for life.

The next wisdom to be able to live with the consequences of our choices and “compete according to the rules” is to square our shoulders in the face of suffering. But Paul tells Timothy that this suffering is “as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.” Avoiding suffering might make sense but the reality is we do suffer in life. If our suffering is meaningful then it is endurable. If we value our comfort over our responsibility then we will do anything to avoid suffering. But if I am going to be truly free in Christ Jesus then I am going to face suffering with the sure truth that Christ will carry me through the suffering! Avoiding suffering to a point makes sense, but escaping into the delusion that I can avoid all suffering and still be a strong spiritual “athlete” is simply a fantasy! IF I have the courage and humility to see suffering, not as something to be avoided at all costs, but as the weights in the spiritual gym meant to strengthen me, then no suffering is worthless and all my suffering is filled with potential and meaning! This is a real life-changing perspective!

Finally, Paul tells Timothy that dealing with the consequences of his choices is like being an athlete and a farmer, which means I am willing to train and work hard and then be patient as I wait for the results of his faithfulness to bear fruit. This analogy of athlete and farmer is such a useful word picture to teach me the freedom of a follower of Jesus rests in my willingness to be trained, practice, be disciplined, and run my race well. If I follow the “rules” to compete and to plant according to wisdom then I reap the benefits of a life well lived! I am also called to work the soil of my heart so that the Word of God finds my heart a welcoming place to be planted deeply and then bear fruit as I tend the garden of my heart as a faithful “farmer!”

St. Panteleiom was born to a pagan father and a Christian mother. They initially named him “Pantoleon” which means “in all things a lion.” But this saint had a name change to reflect his Christian life and his vocation as a doctor. His mother made sure to raise him as a Christian and this young man became well-educated in the healing of diseases. But he did his ministry as an “Unmercenary” which means he served all regardless of their ability to pay, which is why his name was changed to “Panteleimon” which means “all-merciful.” Once he was able, by God’s grace, to cure a man of blindness calling on the Name of the Lord. When the man who was blind told how he was healed, he answered truthfully like the man born blind in the Gospel. The Roman authorities had the healed man killed for his faith in Christ, and then they arrested Paneleimon. After being tortured in an attempt to get this holy hero to renounce Christ, they finally beheaded St. Paneleimon in 305 AD.

Today, your life as a faithful follower of Jesus Christ means you don’t hide from reality. You are mature enough to see the word of God active and free in your life to transform and continue to form your life every day to be “like Christ.” Being Orthodox on Purpose is all about living in the reality of Jesus Christ!

### **Prayer for the Week**

**O Champion and Martyr of God, imitating the Merciful and bearing from Him the grace of healing, cure our spiritual ills by your prayers, and set free from the temptation of the eternal enemy those who ceaselessly cry out, “Save us, O Lord.”**

<https://blogs.ancientfaith.com/faithencouraged/2023/07/learn-to-compete-according-to-the-rules/>

## August Events

### August

02 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets

06 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

*Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord*

09 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets

11 – 6:00pm Fun Night

13 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

15 – 9:00am Divine Liturgy

*Feast of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos*

16 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets

20 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

23 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets

27 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

30 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets

### September

03 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

06 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets

08 – 9:00am Divine Liturgy

*Feast of the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos*

6:00pm Fun Night

10 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

13 – 7:00pm Vesperal Liturgy

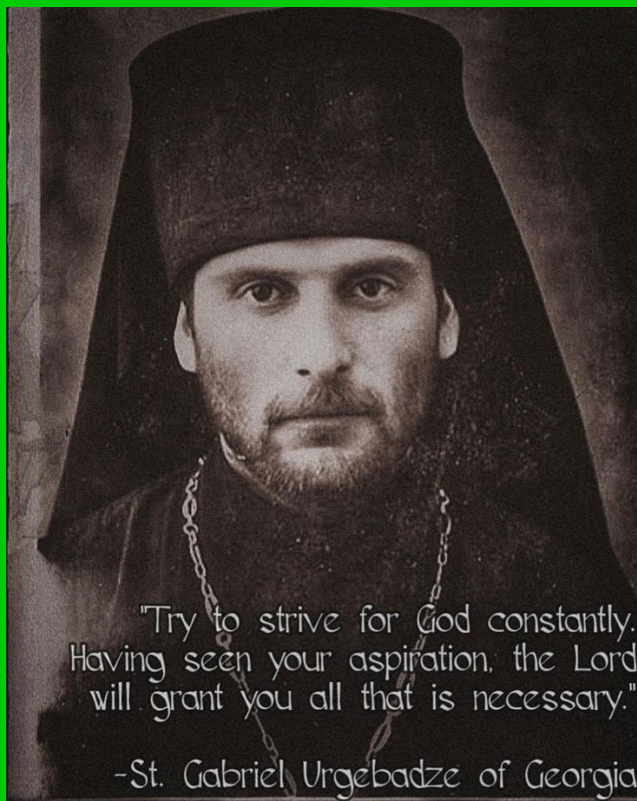
*Feast of the Exultation of the Precious Cross*

17 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

20 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets

24 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy (Education Sunday)

27 – 7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets



### Can't join us in person?

We stream our services on our YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@sspeterpaulorthodoxchurch01810>

## In Christ We Become New Creatures

As we struggle to make spiritual progress we do battle with the old self. We work against old habits that have kept us stuck and prevented the change we so desire in our quest for communion with God. Our sins and passions have become familiar to us, almost like old friends, and laziness sets in. We have become comfortable with the way we are and change seems like too much work.

Spiritual laxity and sinful habits must be confronted with a renewed commitment to live as a child of God. This struggle comes with a price tag, requiring real work on our part. The Kingdom of Heaven must be taken by storm, but this struggle does not require us to battle on our own, for the Holy Spirit empowers us with the grace sufficient to win the battle over the old self. In Christ we become new creatures and the old self is put aside.

With love in Christ,  
Abbot Tryphon

<https://abbottryphon.com/modest-attire-4/>

## Apostle Silas of the Seventy

*The Holy Apostle of the Seventy Silas was a disciple of the Savior.*

*Saint Silas was a respected figure in the original Church at Jerusalem, one of the “chief men among the brethren” (Acts 15:22). The Council of the Apostles was convened at Jerusalem in the year 51 to deal with the question of whether Gentile Christian converts should be required to observe the Mosaic Law. The Apostles sent a message with Paul and Barnabas to the Christians of Antioch, giving the decision of the Council that Christians of Gentile origin did not have to observe the prescriptions of the Mosaic Law. Nonetheless, they were told that they must refrain from partaking of foods offered to idols, from things strangled and from blood, to refrain from fornication (Acts 15:20-29). Together with Saints Paul and Barnabas, the Council of the Apostles sent Saints Silas and Jude to explain the message in greater detail, since they both were filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Saint Jude was later sent back to Jerusalem, but Saint Silas remained at Antioch and zealously assisted Saint Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, on his missionary journeys preaching the Gospel. They visited Syria, Cilicia, and Macedonia.*

*In the city of Philippi they were accused of inciting unrest among the people, and for this they were arrested, beaten with rods, and then thrown into prison. At midnight, when the saints were at prayer, suddenly there was a strong earthquake, their chains fell off from them and the doors of the prison opened. The prison guard, supposing that the prisoners had fled, wanted to kill himself, but was stopped by the Apostle Paul. Then, he fell down trembling at the feet of the saints, and with faith accepted their preaching about Christ. He then led them out of the prison and took them to his own home, where he washed their wounds, and was baptized together with all his household.*

### THE LIGHT OF THE BODY IS THE EYE

Patristic Commentary

***The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness.***

**Mt. 6:22-23**

When the eye is evil, the body becomes dark—not through the fault of the Creator, because everything God creates is good (Gen. 1:31), but according to the corrupt and malicious disposition of the one to whom the eye belongs. And you, wise reader, when you hear about the evil eye, do not understand it to be the eye in the head, but the evil thought in the unenlightened heart. And if it happens that the bodily eye will be darkened by severe suppuration and headache, then bodily blindness does not yet make a person alien to the benefits of the future and of eternity.

—*St. Athanasius the Great. From Conversations on the Gospel of Matthew*

***The lamp for the body is the eye. So, if your eye is pure, then your whole body will be light.***

Self-examination and prudence are an eye and a lamp for the soul, just as the eye is a lamp for the body.

And if the eye is light, then the whole body will be light, but if the eye is dark, then the whole body will be dark, as the Lord Himself said in the Gospel.

That is, through self-examination, a person examines and discerns all his desires, words, and actions, and shuns everything that can remove us from God.

With the help of this prudent discerning, man repels and completely eradicates all the tricks of the enemy and clearly distinguishes good from evil.

The truth of this is evident from the Holy Scriptures.

Because Saul, the king of Israel, did not have this lamp, his mind was so clouded that he did not even understand how to fulfill what God commanded him through Samuel the prophet, and that fulfilling this command would be better than offering a sacrifice. Therefore, he provoked God in the very thing that he thought to please Him, for which he was deprived of the kingdom (cf. 1 Kings 13, 7–15).

The Apostle calls this discernment, examination (cf. 1 Cor. 11, 28), and it is revered as the ruler and source of our life, according to this saying of Scripture: They that have no guidance fall like leaves: but in much counsel there is safety. (Proverbs 11:14).

That is, the Scripture calls self-examination advice, and instructs us not to do anything without advice; it does not even allow us without advice to drink spiritual wine, which makes a person’s heart glad, because it says: do nothing without advice (Sir. 32:19), Do all things with counsel: drink wine with counsel (Proverbs 31:3).

The same Scripture inspires us: just as a city without walls is destroyed, and into which anyone who wants can enter and plunder its treasures, so is a man who does without advice (Prov. 25:28 [Church Slavonic]).

—*St. Anthony the Great. Answers to questions posed by the brethren.*