

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, NOVEMBER 12

23rd Sunday after Pentecost

St. John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria

Ven. Nilus the Faster, of Sinai

Tone 6
Troparion
(Resurrection)

*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.*

Tone 8
Troparion
(St. John)

*By endurance thou didst gain thy reward, venerable Father;
thou didst persevere in prayer unceasingly;
thou didst love the poor and provide for them in all things.
Blessed John the Merciful,
intercede with Christ God that our souls may be saved!*

Tone 8
Troparion
(Ven. Nilus)

*By a flood of tears thou didst make the desert fertile,
and thy longing for God brought forth fruits in abundance.
By the radiance of miracles thou didst illumine the whole universe.
Our holy Father Nilus, pray to Christ our God to save our souls!*

Tone 6
Kontakion
(Resurrection)

*When Christ God, the Giver of Life, raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand,
He bestowed resurrection on the human race.
He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.*

Tone 2
Kontakion
(St. John)

*Thou didst distribute thy wealth to the poor
and in return didst obtain wealth from heaven, O John the Merciful.
Therefore, we honor thee and celebrate thy memory,
O namesake of mercy.*

Tone 8
Kontakion
(Ven. Nilus)

*By thy vigilant prayer thou didst cut away the undergrowth of the body's insurgent passions.
As thou hast boldness before the Lord, free me from every danger so that I may cry to thee:
"Rejoice, universal father Nilus!"*

✠ **Prokeimenon** ✠

Tone 6 (Resurrection)

O Lord, save Thy people, / and bless Thine inheritance! (Ps. 27:9a)

V. To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me! (Ps. 27:1a)

The Epistle Reading

Ephesians 2:4-10

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Efesianeve 2:4-10

Por Perëndia, që është i pasur në përdëllim, për dashurinë e tij të shumtë me të cilën na deshi, edhe duke qenë të vdekur për fajet, na dha neve jetë bashkë me Krishtin; – nga hiri jeni të shpëtuar. Edhe na ngjalli bashkë, edhe na vuri të rrimë bashkë në vendet qiellore me anë të Krishtit Jisu, që të tregojë në jetët që vijnë pasurinë e tepërt të hirit të tij me anë të mirësisë që ka për ne me anë të Krishtit Jisu. Sepse nga hiri jeni të shpëtuar me anë të besimit; edhe kjo jo prej jush, po është dhurata e Perëndisë, jo prej veprash, që të mos mburret ndonjë. Sepse jemi krijuar në Krishtin Jisu për vepra të mira, të cilat i parapërgatiti Perëndia, që të ecim në to.

К Ефесянам 2:4-10

Бог, богатый милостью, по Своей великой любви, которою возлюбил нас, и нас, мертвых по преступлениям, оживотворил со Христом, --благодатью вы спасены, – и воскресил с Ним, и посадил на небесах во Христе Иисусе, дабы явить в грядущих веках преизобильное богатство благодати Своей в благости к нам во Христе Иисусе. Ибо благодатью вы спасены через веру, и сие не от вас, Божий дар: не от дел, чтобы никто не хвалился. Ибо мы--Его творение, созданы во Христе Иисусе на добрые дела, которые Бог предназначил нам исполнять.

Tone 5

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

V. He who dwelleth in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the heavenly God. *(Ps. 90:1)*

V. He will say to the Lord: "My Protector and my Refuge; my God, in Whom I trust." *(Ps. 90:2)*

Saint John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria

Saint John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria, was born on Cyprus in the seventh century into the family of the illustrious dignitary Epiphanius. At the wish of his parents he entered into marriage and had children. When the wife and the children of the saint died, he became a monk. He was zealous in fasting and prayer, and had great love for those around him.

His spiritual exploits won him honor among men, and even the emperor revered him. When the Patriarchal throne of Alexandria fell vacant, the emperor Heraclius and all the clergy begged Saint John to occupy the Patriarchal throne.

The saint worthily assumed his archpastoral service, concerning himself with the moral and dogmatic welfare of his flock. As patriarch he denounced every soul-destroying heresy, and drove out from Alexandria the Monophysite Phyllonos of Antioch.

He considered his chief task to be charitable and to give help all those in need. At the beginning of his patriarchal service he ordered his stewards to compile a list of all the poor and downtrodden in Alexandria, which turned out to be over seven thousand men. The saint ordered that all of these unfortunates be provided for each day out of the church's treasury.

✠ The Gospel Reading ✠

Luke 10:25-37

And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" So he answered and said, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'" And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Llukait 10:25-37

Edhe ja tek u ngrit një mësues ligji, duke e ngarë atë, e duke thënë: Mësues, ç'të bëj, që të trashëgoj jetën e përjetshme? Edhe ai i tha, Ç'është shkruar në ligj; si lexon? Edhe ai u përgjigj e tha: "Të duash Zotin Perëndinë tënd me gjithë zemrën tënde dhe me gjithë shpirtin tënd dhe me gjithë fuqinë tënde dhe me gjithë mendjen tënde dhe të afërmin tënd si veten". Edhe ai i tha: U përgjigje drejt; bëj këtë, edhe do të rrosh. Po ai, duke dashur të nxjerrë veten e tij të drejtë, i tha Jisuit: E cili është i afërmi im? Edhe Jisui mori fjalën e tha: Një njeri zbriste nga Jerusalemi në Jeriko dhe ra në duar kusarësh, të cilët si e zhveshën dhe e bënë me plagë, ikën dhe e lanë gjysmë të vdekur. Edhe qëlloi të zbriste asaj udhe një prift; edhe kur e pa atë, shkoi nga ana tjetër. Kështu edhe një Levit, sa arriti në atë vend, erdhi e pa, dhe shkoi nga ana tjetër. Po një samaritan, duke udhëtuar, erdhi në këtë vend, edhe kur e pa, iu dhimbs, edhe erdhi pranë e i lidhi plagët, duke derdhur mbi to vaj e verë, edhe e hipi në kafshën e tij, dhe e solli në një bujtinë, e u kujdes për të. Edhe të nesërmen kur doli, nxori dy dinarë e ia dha bujtinarit, dhe i tha: Kujdesu për këtë njeri; dhe ç'të prishësh më tepër, unë, kur të kthehem, do të t'i jap. Cili nga këta të tre të duket se u bë i afërmi i atij që ra në duart e kusarëve? Edhe ai i tha: Ai që bëri përdëllim për të. Atëherë Jisui i tha: Shko edhe ti bëj kështu.

От Луки 10:25-37

И вот, один законник встал и, искушая Его, сказал: Учитель! что мне делать, чтобы наследовать жизнь вечную? Он же сказал ему: в законе что написано? как читаешь? Он сказал в ответ: возлюби Господа Бога твоего всем сердцем твоим, и всею душею твоею, и всею крепостию твоею, и всем разумением твоим, и ближнего твоего, как самого себя. [Иисус] сказал ему: правильно ты отвечал; так поступай, и будешь жить. Но он, желая оправдать себя, сказал Иисусу: а кто мой ближний? На это сказал Иисус: некоторый человек шел из Иерусалима в Иерихон и попался разбойникам, которые сняли с него одежду, изранили его и ушли, оставив его едва живым. По случаю один священник шел тою дорогою и, увидев его, прошел мимо. Также и левит, быв на том месте, подошел, посмотрел и прошел мимо. Самарянин же некто, проезжая, нашел на него и, увидев его, сжалился и, подойдя, перевязал ему раны, возливая масло и вино; и, посадив его на своего осла, привез его в гостиницу и позаботился о нем; а на другой день, отъезжая, вынул два динария, дал содержателю гостиницы и сказал ему: позаботься о нем; и если издержишь что более, я, когда возвращусь, отдам тебе. Кто из этих троих, думаешь ты, был ближний попавшемуся разбойникам? Он сказал: оказавший ему милость. Тогда Иисус сказал ему: иди, и ты поступай так же.

Communion Hymn

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

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 Protopresbyter Arthur, Newly Departed Nicholas, Olga</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 conflicts in Ukraine, Armenia, and the Middle East: 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>October 29 – November 4 Stuart & Jolita Barenbaum (A) Marie Antony (B) Corcharal Gordon (B) Alicia Jaroni (B)</p> <p><u>Seven-Day Vigil Candles</u> Llukan Dylgjeri – health Michael Mogilevich - health</p>	<p><u>Church Lectionary</u></p> <p><i>Today</i> Ephesians 2:4-10 Luke 10:25-37</p> <p><i>Monday</i> Hebrews 7:26-8:2 John 10:9-16 1 Thessalonians 2:20-3:8 Luke 14:12-15</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, Spresha, Kristin, Niko, Spiro, Angjeliki, Melod, Olgay, Ruth, Terry, Naomi, Annette, Tatiana, Lester Jr., Natalia, Otari, Lasha, Fr. Nikolas, Llukan, Marina, Sophia, Fr. Maxwell, Donna, Christina</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><i>Tuesday</i> 1 Corinthians 4:9-16 John 1:43-51 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13 Luke 14:25-35</p> <p><i>Wednesday</i> 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12 Luke 15:1-10</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Prayers In General</i></p>		
<p>The community of Ss. Peter & 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, Ann, Lilly, Stephen Newly-Illumined Maximos</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 conflicts in Ukraine, Armenia, and the Middle East.</p> <p><i>[Petitions at Augmented Litany]</i> Again we pray for a cessation of the hostilities in Ukraine, Armenia, and the Middle East, and that reconciliation and peace will flourish in these places, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">COFFEE HOUR</p> <p><u>November</u> 12 19 26 – Tina Marlos Tsiadis</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>Thursday</i> 1 Corinthians 4:9-16 Matthew 9:9-13 1 Thessalonians 5:1-8 Luke 16:1-9</p> <p><i>Friday</i> 1 Thessalonians 5:9-13, 24-28 Luke 16:15-18, 17:1-4</p> <p><i>Saturday</i> 2 Corinthians 11:1-6 Luke 9:57-62</p> <p><u>Reading the Bible in a Year</u> Nov 12: Acts 10-12 Nov 13: Acts 13-15 Nov 14: Acts 16-18 Nov 15: Acts 19-21 Nov 16: Acts 22-24 Nov 17: Acts 25-28 Nov 18: Romans 1-3</p>

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!

BY FR. BARNABAS POWELL



It seems there has been conflict, bloody and otherwise, in the Middle East forever. No matter what is going on, the hatred and the destruction seem to be ever-present. And it is such a tragedy perpetuated by politics, revenge, and a hunger for control.

The fact is we simply cannot read the history of that part of the world and not see the constant struggle embedded in all of the history of that area. Before we succumb to the simple answers that feed bigotry and revenge, we should stop and realize that this external conflict is merely an icon of the internal struggle in each of us. The whole point of the Christian Gospel is to see the desperate need for doing the hard work of inner peace if we have any hope of bringing external peace to troubled

places. This is why the shallow slogans and mere appeasement of terror never, and I mean NEVER, work for very long.

But why is it we always default to blame and easy answers? Because we are spiritually blind to the true Love of God that insists we begin building peace by making peace with Him and within ourselves.

Look at our lesson today in Luke 13:31-35:

At that time some Pharisees came to Jesus and said to him, "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you." And he said to them, "Go and tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I finish my course. Nevertheless I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem.' O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! Behold, your house is forsaken. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!'"

I love this passage. In it, the Lord reveals His true motivation for all of His work.

The passage begins with a surprising event. The Pharisees (yes, those Pharisees) came to warn Jesus that the puppet king of the area under the Roman Empire, King Herod, was out to kill Jesus. These are the same religious groups that ultimately will turn on Christ and demand that Pilate kill Jesus on the cross. Most of the opposition to Jesus' message and ministry came from these religious groups there in Jerusalem, the capital of the Jewish homeland of the day. These Pharisees were the "conservative" religious party in Jerusalem. While the Sadducees were more of the intellectual elites who didn't believe in the miraculous, or the resurrection, or angels. They were the folks who treated being part of Judea as just a racial or cultural identity. And they thought cooperating with the Romans was the best way to hold onto their status and power.

Jesus responds and His words tell us so very much. First, He reveals just what He thought of the so-called "King of the Jews." He calls Herod "that fox." Herod may be cunning. Herod may be crafty and sneaky. Herod may be politically savvy enough to have his little throne. But Herod is not the real "King." Jesus declares that He is the one Who is casting out demons, proving He has authority even over the devil and his demons. It is Jesus that is providing cures for sickness. And He is the One with the real authority. Herod can only exercise power over the People of God but Christ is their true King because He provides true spiritual freedom.

The Lord goes on to say that His ministry is "today and tomorrow, and the third day I finish my course." Jesus tells Herod, the Pharisees, the disciples, and all around Him that He knows full well His ministry, His work will come to an end soon with the same fate that many prophets met in the capital city. He tells them all that the city where the glorious Temple of God dwells, the city where the people gather for Feasts to celebrate the Faith of Abraham, Isaac,

and Jacob, the place where the Religion of Moses is centered in all the world, and where the Truth of the God of Adam and Eve was meant to be lived out as a “light for the whole world,” that city is the city where the prophets of God were killed, and where He will be betrayed and crucified.

Even knowing and declaring all that, Jesus laments the city by saying “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem ...” The place that was supposed to be so transformed by the True Faith has reduced the True Faith to merely a cultural decoration and a way to keep “outsiders” out! A place where God sends prophets to call the people to repentance and return to the Faith and the people kill those prophets. But even after all that hypocrisy and failed faithfulness, Jesus tender tells them that He would have gathered all of them as a mother hen gathers her chicks to feed them, protect them, and shelter them, but they “would not.” “Would not” what? They would not be humble and honest enough to be gathered.

And the results are evident to this day. “Behold, your house is forsaken. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’” The area will forever be in turmoil, struggle, and conflict until that Day when the Lord returns and the city will finally be awake enough to recognize Christ for Who He really is – Their, and our, True King.

St. Arsenios the Cappadocian, is remembered today and this precious saint is very dear to me, personally. We were blessed to have his relics at the seminary in Boston, and, before my ordination, I spent many hours asking this dear saint to help me and strengthen me. He was born in 1840 in one of the Christian villages in Cappadocia, then occupied by the Ottoman Empire and a place where Christians were second-class citizens. He was so beloved by his people that he served as a priest, and was the priest who baptized and named St. Paisios. St. Arenios was said to heal both Christians and Muslims and he would not turn anyone away no matter who they were. He led his parish community to the newly freed Greece during the so-called “population exchange between Turkey and Greece in 1924. This 84-year-old man refused to abandon his people so he walked with them on their forced march out of Turkey. He died three months after they were forced to leave their homes and move to Greece. St. Arsenios was such a faithful shepherd and wise spiritual father that he knew all of this was coming and he encouraged a young St. Paisios to remain faithful no matter what life threw at him. He knew Who the True King was!

Today, know that no matter how far you may drift from the Faith, no matter how much you may struggle, the Lord still looks on you with compassion and a cry to come home. It doesn’t matter that your family may have had the Orthodox Faith for generations, you still need to allow that Faith to transform you so you can live out the consequences of knowing Who the True King really is. A Normal Orthodox Life always means keeping the fire of the Faith alive in your everyday living!

Prayer for the Week

By a flood of tears you made the desert fertile, and your longing for God brought forth fruits in abundance. By the radiance of miracles, you illumined the whole universe! O our holy father Arsenios, pray to Christ our God to save our souls!

<https://faithencouraged.org/o-jerusalem-jerusalem-2/>

PENNY PARTY 2023!

We are holding our annual Penny Party on Sunday, December 3 (Just in time for St. Nicholas Day.) If you would like to make a donation of a new/unopened item to be raffled off, please talk to Tish Desloges. Sundays are always a good day to drop off donations, but you can contact Fr. Nicholas (860-861-7468) to arrange a drop-off during the week.

Weekly Sunday School!

We will be beginning to hold a 30 minute Sunday School weekly beginning on Sunday, November 19. We ask that the children be allowed to venerate the cross fist so that they can go upstairs and get a quick snack before returning to the church for their lesson

Parish Thanksgiving

There will be a Parish Thanksgiving meal on Thursday, November 23. If you would like to attend or contribute to the meal, please let Fr. Nicholas know so that we can be sure to have enough food for everyone. Guests are welcome! Hors d'Oeuvres and cocktails begin at noon and the meals starts at 2:30.

November Events

November

12 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

15 – 12:00pm 6th Hour

7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets

17 – 6:00pm Fun Night

19 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

21 – 9:00am Divine Liturgy (*Entrance of the Theotokos*)

22 – 12:00pm 6th Hour

7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets

23 – **Thanksgiving**

12:00pm – Hors d'Oeuvres

2:30pm – Dinner

26 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

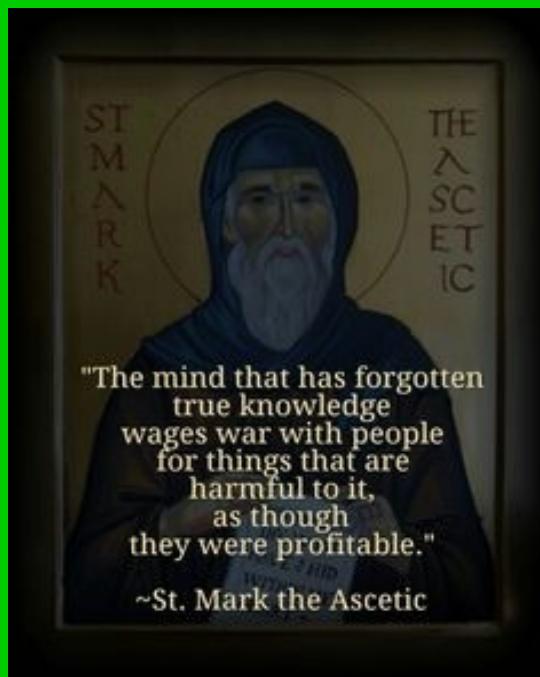
29 – 12:00pm 6th Hour

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>



Let My Will be Done on Earth as it is in Heaven

When we closely examine our heart, we must see whether we are filled with a strong sense of self importance, or if we see ourselves as the least of all. If we think highly of ourselves, this sense of personal importance will lead us to expect everything to go exactly as we think it should. A strong sense of our own self importance, will mean we want to control the whole of our life. This sense of entitlement will lead us to demand everything be as we wish it, and we will have replaced God's will, with our own will.

People who feel entitlement because they are important, tend to be easily annoyed with family members, or their neighbors and coworkers. Their spouses and children are never good enough, and their friends are never sensitive enough to do the right thing in regards the friendship. Such people are always looking for signs that others are not doing the right thing by them, and are easily offended.

Self-centered people ultimately complain to God, and are unable to see the harm they are doing to their souls, for by demanding everything be according to their own will, they fall deeper into the abyss of self, and into the land of the all powerful ego.

If we recognize ourselves in this description, we need to make a good confession, and embark on the journey toward acquiring a humble and contrite heart. This journey requires that we put other people first, and become sensitive to their needs, before our own. When we have accomplished this, we will be able to pray, as the Lord taught us, "Let Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven".

With love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon

Twice during the week, on Wednesdays and Fridays, he emerged from the doors of the patriarchal cathedral, and sitting on the church portico, he received everyone in need. He settled quarrels, helped the wronged, and distributed alms. Three times a week he visited the sick-houses, and rendered assistance to the suffering. It was during this period that the emperor Heraclius led a tremendous army against the Persian emperor Chosroes II. The Persians ravaged and burned Jerusalem, taking a multitude of captives. The holy Patriarch John gave a large portion of the church treasury for their ransom.

The saint never refused suppliants. One day, when the saint was visiting the sick, he met a beggar and commanded that he be given six silver coins. The beggar changed his clothes, ran on ahead of the Patriarch, and again asked for alms. Saint John gave him six more silver coins. When, however, the beggar sought charity a third time, and the servants began to chase the fellow away, the Patriarch ordered that he be given twelve pieces of silver, saying, "Perhaps he is Christ putting me to the test." Twice the saint gave money to a merchant that had suffered shipwreck, and a third time gave him a ship belonging to the Patriarchate and filled with grain, with which the merchant had a successful journey and repaid his obligations.

Saint John the Merciful was known for his gentle attitude towards people. Once, the saint was compelled to excommunicate two clergymen for a certain time because of some offense. One of them repented, but the other fellow became angry with the Patriarch and fell into greater sins. The saint wanted to summon him and calm him with kind words, but it slipped his mind. When he was celebrating the Divine Liturgy, the saint was suddenly reminded by the words of the Gospel: "If you bring your gift to the altar and remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift before the altar ... first, be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift" (Mt. 5:23-24). The saint came out of the altar, called the offending clergyman to him, and falling down on his knees before him in front of all the people he asked forgiveness. The cleric, filled with remorse, repented of his sin, corrected himself, and afterwards was found worthy to be ordained to the priesthood.

There was a time when a certain citizen insulted George, the Patriarch's nephew. George asked the saint to avenge the wrong. The saint promised to deal with the offender so that all of Alexandria would marvel at what he had done. This calmed George, and Saint John began to instruct him, speaking of the necessity for meekness and humility. Then he summoned the man who insulted George. When Saint John learned that the man lived in a house owned by the church, he declared that he would excuse him from paying rent for an entire year. Alexandria indeed was amazed by such a "revenge," and George learned from his uncle how to forgive offenses and to bear insults for God's sake.

Saint John, a strict ascetic and man of prayer, was always mindful of his soul, and of death. He ordered a coffin for himself, but told the craftsmen not to finish it. Instead, he would have them come each feastday and ask if it was time to finish the work.

Saint John was persuaded to accompany the governor Nicetas on a visit to the emperor in Constantinople. While on his way to visit the earthly king, he dreamed of a resplendent man who said to him, "The King of Kings summons you." He sailed to his native island of Cyprus, and at Amanthos the saint peacefully fell asleep in the Lord (616-620).



OCA SYNOD GLORIFIES MATUSHKA OLGA OF ALASKA AMONG THE SAINTS

Chicago, November 10, 2023

The Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in America resolved to canonize Blessed Matushka Olga at its session in Chicago this week.

Matushka Olga (†1979) has long been venerated in Alaska, throughout America, and abroad. She is remembered as a humble mother, midwife, and priest's wife who was filled with love for everybody, and especially abused women.

There are many miracles attributed to her intercessions and protection, some of which can be read about in the articles, "Matushka Olga Michael: A Helper in Restoring the Work of God's Hands," and "Will Blessed Olga be the First Female Orthodox Saint of North America?"

With the Synod's proclamation, she indeed becomes the first female Orthodox saint of North America. She will be



celebrated annually on October 28/November 10, and on the feast of All Saints of America on the Second Sunday After Pentecost.

Read the Holy Synod's proclamation of the glorification of the new St. Olga:

The Proclamation of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America on the Glorification of the Righteous Servant of God Matushka Olga

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

To the beloved Clergy, Monastics, and Faithful of the Orthodox Church in America

God is wondrous in His Saints

November 8, 2023

Chicago, IL

The Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America has heard the petition of The Right Reverend ALEXEI, Bishop of Sitka and Alaska, expressed in his November 2, 2023 letter to His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon, concerning the glorification of the Servant of God, the Righteous Matushka Olga.

In this letter, His Grace Bishop ALEXEI states: "I am writing to Your Beatitude with respect to the departed handmaiden

of God and faithful Orthodox Christian, Matushka Olga Nicholai of Kwethluk, known by the pious peoples of the Kuskokwim as Arrsamquq. Her humility, her generosity, her piety, her patience, and her selfless love for God and neighbor were well-known in the Kuskokwim villages during her earthly life. Her care for comforting the suffering and the grieving has also been revealed after her life by grace-filled manifestations to the faithful throughout not only Alaska, but all of North America. The first peoples of Alaska are convinced of her sanctity and the great efficacy of her prayers. For this reason, after prayerful consideration, I, Alexei, Bishop of Sitka and Alaska, am hereby making the formal request to Your Beatitude as the Primate of the Orthodox Church in America to begin the process that, if it be in accord with God's will, would lead to her glorification."

The Holy Synod, having prayerfully reflected upon this petition and having observed and acknowledged the sincere devotion among the faithful of Alaska and beyond, has unanimously determined that the time for the glorification of Matushka Olga has arrived, fulfilling the hopes and prayers of pious Orthodox Christians throughout Alaska and the entire world.

THEREFORE, meeting in Solemn Assembly in Holy Trinity Cathedral, Chicago, Illinois, under the Presidency of The Most Blessed TIKHON, Archbishop of Washington and Metropolitan of All America and Canada, We, the Members of The Holy Synod of The Orthodox Church in America, do hereby decide and decree that the ever-memorable Servant of God MATUSHKA OLGA be numbered among the saints. With one mind and one heart, we also resolve that her honorable remains be considered as holy relics; that a special service be composed in her honor; that her feast be celebrated on November 10 (October 28, old style) on the Feast of All Saints of North America, the Second Sunday after Pentecost; that holy icons be prepared to honor the newly-glorified saint in accordance with the Canons of the Sacred Ecumenical and Regional Councils; that her life be published for the edification of the Faithful, that the name of the new saint be communicated to the Primates of all Sister Churches for inclusion in their calendars; and that the date and location of the Rite of Glorification be communicated to the Clergy, Monastics, and Faithful of our Church in due time.

FURTHER, we entrust to the Canonization Commission of The Orthodox Church in America, under the Chairmanship of The Most Reverend DANIEL, Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest, with the honorable task of assisting The Right Reverend ALEXEI, Bishop of Sitka and Alaska, in preparing for the celebration of the glorification by providing an authorized Life of Matushka Olga for the education and edification of the Faithful, with overseeing the painting of holy icons of her, in keeping with the canonical iconographical tradition of the Church, with the composition of liturgical texts to be sung at the Divine Services in which she will be commemorated, and with assisting in the uncovering and recognition of her holy relics, and in promoting her

eneration among all the Clergy, Monastics, and Faithful of our Church.

We call upon the faithful to remember Matushka Olga at Memorial Services or Litanies for the Departed when appropriate until the day of her glorification.

Through the prayers of Matushka Olga and of all the Saints who have shone forth in North America, may the Lord grant His mercies and blessings to all who seek her heavenly intercession with faith and love. Amen.

Holy Mother Olga, pray to God for us!

Given at Holy Trinity Cathedral, this 8th day of November, in the Year of Our Lord, 2023.

PROCLAMATION OF THE HOLY SYNOD OF BISHOPS OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA ON THE GLORIFICATION OF THE RIGHTEOUS SERVANT OF GOD MATUSHKA OLGA

The Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in America.

- TIKHON, Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada
+ NATHANIEL, Archbishop of Detroit and the Romanian Episcopate
+ BENJAMIN, Archbishop of San Francisco and the West
+ MARK, Archbishop of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania
+ ALEJO, Archbishop of Mexico City and Mexico
+ MELCHISEDEK, Archbishop of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania
+ IRENEE, Archbishop of Ottawa and the Archdiocese of Canada
+ MICHAEL, Archbishop of New York and New Jersey
+ ALEXANDER, Archbishop of Dallas, the South and the Bulgarian Diocese
+ DANIEL, Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest
+ ALEXEI, Bishop of Sitka and Alaska
+ NIKODHIM, Bishop of Boston and the Albanian Archdiocese

ALBANIA: PRIEST WORKING TO RESTORE CHURCH-TURNED-CATTLE STABLE

Përmet, Albania, November 9, 2023 Photos: echedoros.blog



A priest in southern Albania is working to restore an old church that has been abused and turned into a cattle stable.

The Church of St. Athanasios the Great in Përmet was built 120 years ago, but was turned into a cultural center by the communist regime of the previous century.

After decades of neglect, the church is now used by locals as shelter for their cattle, reports the Hellenic information Team, with reference to Albanian media.

Today, only a few wooden icons remain as a testament to the building's religious past.

The local priest, Fr. Elias, expressed his sorrow and called for the prompt reconstruction of the church, saying, "There used to be a chapel for weddings and Baptisms. The only thing left of the church is the masonry. Everything is in ruins; it's 120 years old. It used to be a beautiful church, but it was turned into a cultural center. That's why I want to call on people to restore this church as soon as possible."

The cultural heritage department in nearby Gjirokastër clarified that the Church of St. Athanasios is not included in the list of protected objects.

OrthoChristian reported in 2020 that the Albanian Church had by that time spent nearly \$11 million restoring 63 churches since 1991.

