

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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July 11, 2021

3RD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: GREATMARTYR EUPHEMIA THE ALL-PRAISED BLESSED OLGA, PRINCESS OF RUS'

Today	10:00am	Divine Liturgy
Wed. 14	7:15pm	Bible Study with GoogleMeet
Sun. 18	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 2 (*Ressurection*)

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

Kontakion – Tone 3 (*St. Euphemia*)

*Thou didst bring joy to the Orthodox
and shame to the defenders of heresy,
for thou didst confirm what the Fathers of the Fourth Council had correctly taught.
O glorious martyr Euphemia,
fair virgin of Christ,
entreat Christ God to grant us His great mercy!*

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

Romans 5:1-10
Matthew 6:22-33

Monday

Romans 9:18-33
Matthew 11:2-15

Tuesday

Romans 10:11-11:2
Matthew 11:16-20

Wednesday

Romans 11:2-12
Matthew 11:20-26

Thursday

Galatians 1:11-19
John 10:1-9
Romans 11:13-24
Matthew 11:27-30

Friday

Romans 11:25-36
Matthew 12:1-8

Saturday

Romans 6:11-17
Matthew 8:14-23

Reading the Bible in a Year

July 11: Jeremiah 25-28
July 12: Jeremiah 29-32
July 13: Jeremiah 33-36
July 14: Jeremiah 37-40
July 15: Jeremiah 41-44
July 16: Jeremiah 45-48
July 17: Jeremiah 49-52

The Lord wants us to love one another. Here is freedom: in love for God and neighbor. In this freedom, there is equality. In earthly orders, there may not be equality, but this is not important for the soul. Not everyone can be a king, not everyone a patriarch or a boss. But in any position it is possible to love God and to please Him, and only this is important. And whoever loves God more on earth will be in greater glory in His Kingdom.

-St. Silouan the Athonite

JULY EVENTS

July

- 11 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
- 14 – 7:15pm Bible Study with GoogleMeet
- 18 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
- 21 – 7:15pm Bible Study with GoogleMeet
- 25 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
- 28 – 7:15pm Bible Study with GoogleMeet

A Prayer for the Week

Dear Lord Jesus, I don't like rules! I don't like discipline. But I need these boundaries to shape and form me into a man who has his passions under control. When I forget Your Wisdom, I see my desires and passions become my masters and they always lead me in the wrong direction. It is only Your wisdom that places my passions and desires as my servant so that I become by grace what You are by nature. Amen.

The Proper Preparation for Receiving the Holy Mysteries

The Russian Orthodox Church requires anyone who desires to receive Holy Communion prepare themselves with confession, the Pre-Communion Prayers and to abstain from food or drink from midnight on. Most of the world's Local Orthodox Churches hold to this standard, recognizing that the clergy, as guardians of the Mysteries, must make sure anyone who approaches the chalice is Orthodox, and is properly prepared.

The Church's requirement that one must be a member of the Orthodox Church before approaching the chalice relates to the fact that communion is the outward expression of having all things in common, both in faith and worship, since receiving the Holy Mysteries is the fruit of unity.

In receiving Holy Communion, we are eating and drinking the very Body and Blood of the Saviour for the healing of body and soul. This is not simply the remembrance of a past event, but the very participation of the Heavenly Banquet. We enter into a place where there is neither time nor space, and participate in this eternal banquet for the transformation of our very being.

Since the Eucharist is a true participation and foretaste of heavenly things, it is imperative that we be properly prepared, for to eat and drink unworthily is to put our immortal soul at risk.

Orthodoxy in North America does not have a common practice in regards to preparation for receiving the Eucharist. Some jurisdictions allow members to approach the chalice without having confessed, thus contributing to the abuse of the Mysteries. Yet on the flip side, those who are required to confess before communing can fall into the habit of going through the motions of confession without giving the priest adequate time to offer spiritual direction. When this happens, confession is sometimes no different than refraining from confession, for we can easily run through the usual litany of sins, get absolution, and start the week off without having made a heartfelt confession at all.

If we have made a good confession we must have a plan of action that will allow the Holy Spirit to transform our heart, for true repentance MUST include a commitment to go and sin no more! This requires the guidance of a confessor and takes more time than simply getting in a long line prior to the service.

The midnight fast that must precede the Divine Liturgy, together with the Pre-Communion Prayers, is an additionally important step in our proper preparation for receiving the Eucharist, for these become the tools by which we make the reality of what we are receiving something more than mere ritual. If we were simply reenacting or commemorating the last meal the Lord shared with His disciples, confession, fasting, and preparatory prayers would be unnecessary. The requirements the Church places on her faithful is clear evidence that the Lord did not say, this is "like" my body and blood. The Eucharist is no mere symbol.

Love and blessings,
Abbot Tryphon

Romans 5:1-10

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Matthew 6:22-33

The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness! No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Children's Word

Look at the birds!

Do you like birds? Do you ever wonder how they find food to survive the winter? Or how they can fly thousands of miles to get to their summer homes? Or what they are doing when it's raining or windy or snowing or very cold or hot?

In today's Gospel reading, Christ tells us, "Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"

The birds don't worry about the things people worry about! They don't store up food or worry about next year's meals!

If you love to watch birds, you know how much you want to take care of them. Maybe you put out bird seed or a bird bath for them. You'd never hurt them! God provides for us too. He loves us more than He loves the birds, so He will take care of us even more!

God gives us this special passage in the Gospel reading today to comfort us. He wants us to know He will provide for us. He doesn't want us to worry, but He wants us to trust in Him!

The next time you see a bird finding food in the snow, or a flock of birds migrating together, can you remember to thank God for providing for you even more?

ST. EUPHEMIA AND ST. PAISIOS A HOLY FRIENDSHIP

Have you ever wanted to do time travel? Maybe you wanted to meet somebody from long, long ago! Of course, time travel is just a fantasy, but this week we remember two saints who lived many years apart. But God brought them together to meet each other!

Tomorrow, we celebrate a saint who died only 27 years ago. Once, Saint Paisios was having a hard time with something and he couldn't work something out. He thought of Saint Euphemia, a holy martyr saint who helped the Christian church when there were problems many years ago. But Saint Euphemia had died over 1,700 years ago in the year 303!

Saint Paisios knew that the saints are still alive in Christ, so he prayed to her. He asked Saint Euphemia for help. And once, when he was praying, he actually saw this special saint! He wanted to make sure that she was a real saint who loved God, so they prayed together, and they talked. These two saints lived many years apart, but they had a holy friendship, and they really knew each other! And another connection? Saint Paisios died just one day after Saint Euphemia's feastday. That's why we celebrate the two feastdays one after another (today and tomorrow). Isn't it amazing that God can bring people together? — here on earth and in heaven!

We remember St. Euphemia on July 11th and St. Paisios on the 12th

The Wisdom of Wisdom!

July 7, 2021 · Fr. Barnabas Powell

One of the most difficult realities I've had to face as an adult, as a priest, as a husband, and as a father is waking up to the reality of the complexity of each human person I encounter, including myself. This continuous process of discovery has me regularly seeing places of spiritual progress and immaturity in my heart first of all. All leading to the unmistakable conclusion that the taming of the passions, the disciplines that lead to my desires being my servants rather than my masters, is at the very heart of the wisdom and purpose of the Faith!

And with that eureka comes an issue I'm wrestling with today: Rules or Disciplines? Wisdom or Obligation? What do I do with the paradox of the scriptures that unmistakably teach that we have to Obey AND we are made for Freedom?

Look at our lesson today in Galatians 3:23-29; 4:1-5:

Brethren, before faith came, we were confined under the law, kept under restraint until faith should be revealed. So that the law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a custodian; for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no better than a slave, though he is the owner of all the estate; but he is under guardians and trustees until the date set by the father. So with us; when we were children, we were slaves to the elemental spirits of the universe. But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

So, St. Paul is trying to get these Galatians, most of which were not raised in Jewish homes, to not buy into the heresy that they had to be Jewish before they could be Christian. It's kind of like the false notion that you have to be Greek, or Russian, or Serbian, or Romanian, or (fill in the blank of your favorite ethnicity) before you can become Orthodox. That notion is, has always, and will forever be, false.

And yet...

St. Paul refuses to call the Jewish practices of the Law that had actually become second nature to the Jews, bad. In fact, St. Paul insists that the Law, the ritual rules, and regulations, were our "custodian" until Christ came.

This means that the "rules and regulations" serve a vital purpose in our maturity and development, and always will. There is a great benefit in the humble honesty of realizing you need boundaries to not just keep you safe (that's too small a motivation to produce anything else but slavery) but to train your inner self to recognize the dangers in life when they come. Most of my biggest mistakes in my life have come when I was asleep to the "cliffs" of my own intoxicated actions devoid of the wisdom of maturity. I bet you can see that in your life as well.

So, the purpose of the "rules and regs" is to train you, to form you, to teach you to recognize when your passions are out of control. They serve as the "custodian" until we grow up enough to value our relationship with Jesus ABOVE our own immediate desires! And that "grown-up" place isn't some "magic moment" when "poof" "I'm saved" as much as it is a day-by-day choosing, from my freedom, to realize the treasure the Faith gives me in giving me Jesus! That treasure is nothing less than actually "putting on" Christ at my baptism, becoming "Abraham's offspring," and "heirs" of the promise of new life in Christ. Today, don't despise or dismiss the wisdom of the rules and regulations." You do so at your own peril. Embrace them as the valuable tools they are to show you the dangers of undisciplined desires. Then, don't stop! Keep growing up until you realize the unspeakable joy of being Orthodox on Purpose!

К Римлянам 5:1-10

Итак, оправдавшись верою, мы имеем мир с Богом через Господа нашего Иисуса Христа, через Которого верою и получили мы доступ к той благодати, в которой стоим и хвалимся надеждою славы Божией. И не сим только, но хвалимся и скорбями, зная, что от скорби происходит терпение, от терпения опытность, от опытности надежда, а надежда не постыжает, потому что любовь Божия излилась в сердца наши Духом Святым, данным нам. Ибо Христос, когда еще мы были немощны, в определенное время умер за нечестивых. Ибо едва ли кто умрет за праведника; разве за благодетеля, может быть, кто и решится умереть. Но Бог Свою любовь к нам доказывает тем, что Христос умер за нас, когда мы были еще грешниками. Посему тем более ныне, будучи оправданы Кровию Его, спасемся Им от гнева. Ибо если, будучи врагами, мы примирились с Богом смертью Сына Его, то тем более, примирившись, спасемся жизнью Его.

От Матфея 6:22-33

Светильник для тела есть око. Итак, если око твое будет чисто, то всё тело твое будет светло; если же око твое будет худо, то всё тело твое будет темно. Итак, если свет, который в тебе, тьма, то какова же тьма? Никто не может служить двум господам: ибо или одного будет ненавидеть, а другого любить; или одному станет усердствовать, а о другом нерадеть. Не можете служить Богу и маммоне. Посему говорю вам: не заботьтесь для души вашей, что вам есть и что пить, ни для тела вашего, во что одеться. Душа не больше ли пищи, и тело одежды? Взгляните на птиц небесных: они ни сеют, ни жнут, ни собирают в житницы; и Отец ваш Небесный питает их. Вы не гораздо ли лучше их? Да и кто из вас, заботясь, может прибавить себе росту [хотя] на один локоть? И об одежде что заботитесь? Посмотрите на полевые лилии, как они растут: ни трудятся, ни прядут; но говорю вам, что и Соломон во всей славе своей не одевался так, как всякая из них; если же траву полевую, которая сегодня есть, а завтра будет брошена в печь, Бог так одевает, кольми паче вас, маловеры! Итак не заботьтесь и не говорите: что нам есть? или что пить? или во что одеться? потому что всего этого ищут язычники, и потому что Отец ваш Небесный знает, что вы имеете нужду во всем этом. Ищите же прежде Царства Божия и правды Его, и это все приложится вам.

Romakëve 5:1-10

Të shfajësuar, pra, me anë të besimit, kemi paqe me Perëndinë nëpërmjet Jezu Krishtit, Zotit tonë, me anë të cilit edhe patëm, nëpërmjet besimit, hyrjen në këtë hir në të cilin qëndrojmë të patundur dhe mburremi në shpresën e lavdisë së Perëndisë. Dhe jo vetëm kaq, por mburremi edhe në shtrëngimet, duke ditur që shtrëngimi prodhon këmbënguljen, këmbëngulja përvojën dhe përvoja shpresën. Por shpresa nuk turpëron, sepse dashuria e Perëndisë është derdhur në zemrat tona me anë të Frymës së Shenjtë që na është dhënë. Sepse, ndërsa ishin akoma pa forcë, Krishti vdiq në kohën e tij për të paudhët. Vështirë në fakt se vdes dikush për një të drejtë; mbase ndonjë do të guxonë për një njeri të mirë. Por Perëndia e tregon dashurinë e tij ndaj nesh në atë që, kur ende ishim mëkatarë, Krishti vdiq për ne. Shumë më tepër, pra, duke qenë tani të shfajësuar në gjakun e tij, do të shpëtojmë nga zemërimi me anë të tij. Në fakt, ndërsa ishim armiq, u pajtuam me Perëndinë nëpërmjet vdekjes së Birit të tij, akoma më shumë tani, që jemi pajtuar, do të shpëtohem nëpërmjet jetës së tij.

Mateu 6:22-33

Drita e trupit është syri; në qoftë se syri yt është i pastër, gjithë trupi yt do të jetë i ndriçuar, por në qoftë se syri yt është i lig, gjithë trupi yt do të jetë në errësirë; në qoftë se drita, pra, që është në ty është errësirë, sa e madhe do të jetë errësira! Askush nuk mund t'u shërbejë dy zotërinjve, sepse ose do të urrejë njërin dhe do ta dojë tjetrin; ose do t'i qëndrojë besnik njerit dhe do të përçmojë tjetrin; ju nuk mund t'i shërbeni Perëndisë dhe mamonit. Prandaj po ju them: mos u shqetësoni për jetën tuaj, për atë që do të hani ose do të pini, as për trupin tuaj, për atë që do të vishni. A nuk është vallëjeta më me vlerë se ushqimi dhe trupi më me vlerë se veshja? Vini re zogjtë e qiellit: ata nuk mbjellin, nuk korrin dhe nuk mbledhin në hambare; megjithatë Ati juaj qiellor i ushqen. A nuk vleni ju shumë më tepër se sa ata? Dhe cili nga ju, me gjithë kujdesin e tij, mund t'i shtojë shtatit të tij qoftë edhe një kubit të vetëm? Pse shqetësoheni për veshjen tuaj? Vini re si rriten zambakët e fushës: ata nuk lodhen dhe nuk tjerrin; dhe unë, pra, po ju them se Salomoni vetë, me gjithë lavdinë e tij, nuk ishte veshur si ndonjë nga ata. Tani nëse Perëndia e vesh kështu barin e fushës, që sot është dhe nesër hidhet në furrë, vallë nuk do t'ju veshë shumë më tepër ju, njerëz besimpakë? Mos u shqetësoni, pra duke thënë: "Çfarë do të hamë ose çfarë do të pimë, ose me çfarë do të vishemi?". Sepse janë paganët ata që kërkojnë të gjitha këto gjëra; Ati juaj qiellor, pra, e di mirë se ju keni nevojë për të gjitha këto gjëra. Por para së gjithash kërkoni mbretërinë e Perëndisë dhe drejtësinë e tij dhe të gjitha këto gjëra do t'ju shtohen.