

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!

Rev. Nicholas Dellermann (Rector) (860) 861-7468 - Very Rev. Dennis Rhodes

fnicholas490@aol.com - <http://sspeterpaulphila.org/>

May 16, 2021

SUNDAY OF THE MYRRH-BEARING WOMEN

SCRIPTURE THIS WEEK

Today 10:00am Divine Liturgy
1:30pm *Blessing of the Graves - Lawnview*
Wed. 19 7:15pm Bible Study by Google Meet
Sun. 23 10:00am Divine Liturgy
1:00pm *Blessing of the Graves - Magnolia*

Church Lectionary

Today

Acts 6:1-7
Mark 15:43-16:8

Monday

Acts 6:8-7:5, 47-60
John 4:46-54

Tuesday

Acts 8:5-17
John 6:27-33

Wednesday

Acts 8:18-25
John 6:35-39

Thursday

Acts 8:26-39
John 6:40-44

Friday

Acts 26:1-5, 12-20
John 10:1-9
Acts 8:40-9:19
John 6:48-54

Saturday

Acts 9:20-31
John 15:17-16:2

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, and dairy as you are able. Wine and oil are allowed)

Troparion – Tone 2 (Pentecostarion)

*The Angel came to the myrrhbearing women at the tomb and said:
“Myrrh is fitting for the dead; but Christ has shown Himself a stranger to corruption!
So proclaim: ‘The Lord is risen, granting the world great mercy.’”*

Kontakion – Tone 8 (Pascha)

*Thou didst descend into the tomb, O Immortal,
Thou didst destroy the power of death.
In victory didst Thou arise, O Christ God,
proclaiming, “Rejoice!” to the Myrrhbearing Women,
granting peace to Thine Apostles,
and bestowing Resurrection on the fallen.*

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.

Reading the Bible in a Year

May 16: Psalms 69-72
May 17: Psalms 73-76
May 18: Psalms 77-80
May 19: Psalms 81-84
May 20: Psalms 85-88
May 21: Psalms 89-92
May 22: Psalms 93-96

“But first I want you to tell me this: do you know the power of love? Christ passed over all the marvellous works which were to be performed by the apostles and said, “By this shall men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another.”

-St. John Chrysostom

A Prayer for the Week

Dear Lord, my choice between the path of Life and the path of Judgement is found in every decision, every priority, and every action, and thought. The seeds of my ultimate end are scattered all through my life. I confess Lord, that this reality makes my knees knock together. It is terrifying to contemplate, and that’s why I spend so much time avoiding this truth. But You have promised mercy and grace to me IF I will simply turn and face You. Your grace is promised to everyone who seeks You, and, in return, You strengthen me to keep facing You my whole life. How marvelous are Your works, O Lord. In wisdom You have made them all! Amen!

The Disturbed Heart and the forgetfulness of the things of God

The passions that create a state of unrest in our hearts cause us to forget the real purpose of our life, which is union with God. Saint Basil the Great tells us we cannot approach the knowledge of the truth with a disturbed heart. Conflict, downheartedness, lust, worry, and judging others, are all things that can not be allowed to distract us from the goal. Letting ourselves become troubled, or full of anxiety, does nothing to further our journey into the heart. Giving ourselves over to the passions depletes us, and leaves us waylaid along the side of the narrow path into the Kingdom of God.

We must not be so self-consumed as to have no compassion for others. Saint Basil the Great tells us that a man who has two coats or two pair of shoes, when his neighbor has none, is a thief. In the Holy Scriptures we read, “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell in it (Psalm 24:1).” No one can be saved, according to Saint John Chrysostom, without giving alms and without caring for the poor. We are stewards of what belongs to God, and now is the perfect time to share the gifts of God’s creation with one another as much as we can. To store up earthly possessions, according to Christ, is the epitome of foolishness, and a rich man shall hardly be saved (Luke 12:15-21).

When we turn our attention towards the needs of others, our focus changes, and we are no longer consumed with self. In this turning of the heart towards those in need, we are turning our hearts to God. “Verily I say unto you, Since you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me (Matthew 25:40).” In our fasting, time spent in prayer, and acts of alms giving (charity), we are energized in our battle against the passions, and our hearts become at rest in Christ.

With love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon

May

16 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
1:00pm *Blessing of the Graves (Lawnview)*
19 – 7:15pm Bible Study with GoogleMeet
23 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
1:00pm *Blessing of the Graves (Magnolia)*
26 – 7:15pm Bible Study with GoogleMeet
30 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
1:00pm *Blessing of the Graves (Forrest Hills)*
31 – 11:00am *Blessing of the Graves (Fernwood)*

Beginning with St. Thomas Sunday, it is traditional to bless the graves of our loved ones during the Paschal Season. The following is the current schedule of cemetery blessings:

05/16 – Lawnview
05/23 – Magnolia
05/30 – Forrest Hills
05/31 – Fernwood
Other cemeteries will be visited by request

This schedule may be revised due to weather.

Children's Word

Acts 6:1-7

Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word." And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them. Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

Mark 15:43-16:8

Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate marveled that He was already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him if He had been dead for some time. So when he found out from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. Then he bought fine linen, took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen. And he laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock, and rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus observed where He was laid. Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. And they said among themselves, "Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?" But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away – for it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples – and Peter – that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you." So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Jesus's most loyal friends

Do you have a loyal friend? You know, somebody who will be your friend all the time, even when other people decide not to be? Maybe you've had a friend who was not loyal...somebody who ignored you when he or she felt like it.

Today is the Sunday of the Myrrh-bearing Women. These women were some of Jesus's most loyal friends. When Jesus was arrested, they stayed loyal to Him. When Jesus was put on the Cross, these women stayed loyal to Him. Even after Jesus died, they stayed loyal to Him and brought sweetsmelling myrrh to the tomb. They thought His body would be there.

The myrrh-bearing women stayed loyal to Christ during the hardest and most dangerous part of His life on earth. And God rewarded them. They were the very first people to know that Christ had risen! When they came to the tomb, the women found an angel there. "He has risen!" the angel told them. Christ had risen, and the women stayed loyal to Him still!

God wants us to be loyal to Him too! That means that we stay close to Him even when things are hard. Even when we are embarrassed. Even when we are busy. Even when we are sad. God wants us to be loyal to Him even if things are dangerous or scary. Let's be like these brave women who always stayed close to the Lord!

SAINT TAMARA HOLY QUEEN OF GEORGIA

How close are you to being 12 years old? Can you imagine being queen or king at age 12? Today, we celebrate a saint who ruled her country as child, along with her father. Then, when she was only 18, she became queen and ruled the country of Georgia all by herself.

Saint Tamara lived 900 years ago, but the people of Georgia still remember her as a perfect heroine of their country.

She was brave.—At that time, there were lots of attacks on her country, and Tamara always prayed to God to help her and to show her what to do.

She was prayerful.—During the day, everybody saw Tamara as a queen. But at night, Tamara would spend hours in prayer.

She helped the poor.—Once, Saint Tamara was getting ready with all her fancy clothes, and she heard there was somebody begging outside the gates. Well, she was too slow to help him, and he wasn't there when she came out. Tamara felt really awful about this, and she tried extra hard to help the poor after this.

She loved the Church.—Tamara knew she had a big responsibility! She kept the Orthodox faith going strong in her country, building churches, helping priests, and also protecting Georgia from other religions. The Georgian people still remember her for it.

We celebrate Saint Tamara today, on the Sunday of the Myrrh-bearing Women.

Life or Judgement? You Decide

May 13, 2021 · Fr. Barnabas Powell

Christ is risen!

One of the oldest manuscripts we have for the earliest days of the Christian Faith outside the Gospels is the Didache or “The Teaching of the 12 Apostles.” This ancient writing dates from the First Century A.D. and begins with an intriguing phrase: “There are two ways, one of life and one of death, and there is a great difference between these two ways.”

It seems this basic wisdom of two paths; one that leads to Life, and one that leads to death, is the consistent teaching of the Christian Faith. As Jesus reminds us “I have come that you might have life.” We Christians are against every place death rears its ugly and defeated head!

So, why are so many still gripped by the darkness of death and fear and faithlessness?

Look at our lesson today in John 5:24-30:

The Lord said to the Jews who came to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. Truly, truly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself, and has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man. Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment. I can do nothing on my own authority; as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of the Father who sent me.”

Our Lord Jesus consistently preaches that knowing Him, hearing Him, following Him, leads to Life and rejecting Him leads to judgement. And here is where we see modern humanity’s problem with Jesus and His message. We don’t like to be judged.

But Christ enshrines in a consistent Christian Faith the message that His teaching leads to death’s death, and the reversal of the power of mortality to hold humanity to a hopeless existence. The very reason we Orthodox “do” Pascha the way we do with all the services, prayers, pageantry, and beauty is to reinforce this normal Christian message that Faith in Jesus destroys death. And, in fact, Jesus Himself has risen from the dead, “trampling down death by death.”

But what is the Lord’s message to those who ignore this “path to life?” It’s judgement. The normal Christian message is if you foolishly ignore the invitation of our Loving God to embrace life; if you choose to remain gripped in the slavery of a dead-end selfishness and self-centeredness, you won’t escape that reality coming to light! You will have a resurrection. Your mortality will still be defeated. You will be raised from the dead, but it will be a resurrection of the realization that you chose to live your life as if you wouldn’t be raised from the dead! No wonder, the Fathers constantly write about life outside of Christ as fantasy and delusion!

Today, what resurrection will you have? God, in His love and respect for you, gives you the power to decide which resurrection you will have – Life or Judgement! And the decision making is happening right now, today. Will you embrace the path to life, or will you make choices today that betray your loyalty merely to yourself and the path that leads to death? Being Orthodox on Purpose keeps you on the Path to Life!

Деяния 6:1-7

В эти дни, когда умножились ученики, произошел у Еллинистов ропот на Евреев за то, что вдовицы их пренебрегаемы были в ежедневном раздаянии потребностей. Тогда двенадцать [Апостолов], созвав множество учеников, сказали: нехорошо нам, оставив слово Божие, пещись о столах. Итак, братия, выберите из среды себя семь человек изведанных, исполненных Святаго Духа и мудрости; их поставим на эту службу, а мы постоянно пребудем в молитве и служении слова. И угодно было это предложение всему собранию; и избрали Стефана, мужа, исполненного веры и Духа Святаго, и Филиппа, и Прохора, и Никанора, и Тимона, и Пармена, и Николая Антиохийца, обращенного из язычников; их поставили перед Апостолами, и [сии], помолившись, возложили на них руки. И слово Божие росло, и число учеников весьма умножалось в Иерусалиме; и из священников очень многие покорились вере.

От Марка 15:43-16:8

пришел Иосиф из Аримафеи, знаменитый член совета, который и сам ожидал Царствия Божия, осмелился войти к Пилату, и просил тела Иисусова. Пилат удивился, что Он уже умер, и, призвав сотника, спросил его, давно ли умер? И, узнав от сотника, отдал тело Иосифу. Он, купив плащаницу и сняв Его, обвил плащаницею, и положил Его во гробе, который был высечен в скале, и привалил камень к двери гроба. Мария же Магдалина и Мария Иосиева смотрели, где Его полагали. По прошествии субботы Мария Магдалина и Мария Иаковлева и Саломия купили ароматы, чтобы идти помазать Его. И весьма рано, в первый [день] недели, приходят ко гробу, при восходе солнца, и говорят между собою: кто отвалит нам камень от двери гроба? И, взглянув, видят, что камень отвален; а он был весьма велик. И, войдя во гроб, увидели юношу, сидящего на правой стороне, облеченного в белую одежду; и ужаснулись. Он же говорит им: не ужасайтесь. Иисуса ищете Назарянина, распятого; Он воскрес, Его нет здесь. Вот место, где Он был положен. Но идите, скажите ученикам Его и Петру, что Он предваряет вас в Галилее; там Его увидите, как Он сказал вам. И, выйдя, побежали от гроба; их объял трепет и ужас, и никому ничего не сказали, потому что боялись.

Veprat e Apostujve 6:1-7

Por në ato ditë, duke u shumuar numri i dishepujve, lindi një murmuritje nga ana e Helenistëve kundër Hebrenjve, sepse vejushat e tyre po liheshin pas dore në shërbimin e përditshëm. Atëherë të dymbëdhjetët, pasi mblodhën numrin e madh të dishepujve, thanë: “Nuk është mirë që ne të lëmë fjalën e Perëndisë për të shërbyer nëpër tryeza. Prandaj, vëllezër, kërkoni midis jush shtatë burra, me dëshmi të mirë, të mbushur me Frymën e Shenjtë dhe me urtësi, të cilëve do t’ua besojmë këtë detyrë. Kurse ne do të vazhdojmë t’i kushtohemi lutjes dhe shërbesës së fjalës.” Ky propozim u pëlqeu gjithë dishepujve. Dhe zgjodhën Stefanin, njeri plot besim dhe Frymë të Shenjtë, Filipin, Prohorin, Nikanorin, Timonin, Parmenin dhe Nikollën, një prozelit nga Antiokia. I paraqitën pastaj përpara apostujve, të cilët, mbasi u lutën, vunë duart mbi ta. Ndërkaq fjala e Perëndisë po përhapej, dhe numri i dishepujve po shumohej fort në Jeruzalem, edhe një numër i madh priftërinjsh i bindej besimit.

Marku 15:43-16:8

Jozefi nga Arimatea, një këshilltar i respektuar, i cili priste edhe ai mbretërinë e Perëndisë, me guxim hyri te Pilati dhe kërkoi trupin e Jezusit. Dhe Pilati u çudit që tashmë kishte vdekur. Dhe thirri centurionin dhe e pyeti nëse kishte vdekur prej shumë kohe. Dhe si u sigurua nga centurioni, ia la trupin Jozefit. Ky, mbasi bleu një çarçaf, e zbriti Jezusin nga kryqi, e mbështolli në çarçaf dhe e vuri në një varr që ishte hapur në shkëmb; pastaj rrokullisi një gur para hyrjes së varrit. Dhe Maria Magdalena dhe Maria, nëna e Joses, vërenin ku e vunë. Si kaloi e shtuna, Maria Magdalena dhe Maria, nëna e Jakobit, dhe Salomeja blenë aroma për të shkuar të vajosin Jezusin. Në mëngjesin e ditës së parë të javës, shumë herët, ato erdhën te varri, kur po lindte dielli. Dhe thonin në mes tyre: “Kush do të na rrokullisë gurin nga hyrja e varrit?.” Por, kur ngritën sytë, panë se guri ishte rrokullisur, megjithëse ishte shumë i madh. Hynë, pra, në varr dhe panë një djalosh që ishte ulur në të djathtë, të veshur me të bardha, dhe mbetën të trembura. Dhe ai u tha atyre: “Mos u trembni! Ju kërkoni Jezusin Nazareas që ka qenë kryqëzuar; ai u ringjall, nuk është këtu; ja vendi ku e kishin vënë. Por shkoni dhe u thoni dishepujve të tij dhe Pjetrit se ai po ju pararend në Galile; atje do ta shihni, ashtu siç ju pati thënë.” Dhe ato dolën shpejt dhe ikën nga va-rrri, sepse i zuri tmerri dhe habia; dhe nuk i thanë asgjë kurrkujt, sepse kishin frikë.