

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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November 29, 2020

25TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST : MARTYR PARAMON AND 370
MARTYRS IN BITHYNIA
TONE 8

Today 10:00am Divine Liturgy
Wed. 02 7:15pm Bible Study via Google
Sun. 06 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: Strict fast all week (fasting from meat, fish, eggs, dairy, oil, wine and hard spirits as you are able.) Fish, wine and oil are allowed Sunday and Saturday. Wine and oil are also allowed on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

Troparion – Tone 4
(Feast)

*Today is the prelude of the good will of God,
of the preaching of the salvation of mankind.
The Virgin appears in the Temple of God,
in anticipation proclaiming Christ to all.
Let us rejoice and sing to her:
“Rejoice, O Fulfillment of the Creator’s dispensation!”*

Kontakion – Tone 4
(Martyrs)

*Urged on by the commandments of God,
with patience, you cleansed your souls from all defilement.
You reached perfection as spiritual athletes,
and renounced sacrifice to idols.
Imitating Christ, you were slain with a spear,
O most blessed Paramon and Philumenus.
Always fervently intercede with Christ on behalf of the world!*

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

Ephesians 4:1-6
Luke 13:10-17

Monday

1 Corinthians 4:9-16
John 1:35-51
1 Timothy 1:1-7
Luke 19:37-44

Tuesday

1 Timothy 1:8-14
Luke 19:45-48

Wednesday

1 Timothy 1:8-20, 2:8-15
Luke 20:1-8

Thursday

1 Timothy 3:1-13
Luke 20:9-18

Friday

1 Timothy 4:4-8, 16
Luke 20:19-26

Saturday

Galatians 5:22-6:2
Matthew 11:27-30
Galatians 3:8-12
Luke 12:32-40

Reading the Bible in a Year

Nov 29: 2 Corinthians 4-6
Nov 30: 2 Corinthians 7-9
Dec 01: 2 Corinthians 10-13
Dec 02: Galatians 1-3
Dec 03: Galatians 4-6
Dec 04: Ephesians 1-3
Dec 05: Ephesians 4-6

We are beginning to prepare the 2020 community Christmas card. To be included, please see Jim Schaeffer or send a donation of \$10 or more designated "Christmas Card" to the church.

• • •
" Love every man in spite of his falling into sin. Never mind the sins, but remember that the foundation of the man is the same - the image of God."

-St. John of Kronstadt

• • •
O Loving Lord, grant me the courage to die to the death of selfish temptations through the daily practice of the spiritual disciplines You have preserved in Your Church for my salvation. Help me, Gracious Lord, to drive away the clouds of confusion and temptations that distract me from You, and fill me with that joy that comes from a life lived free and in love with You. Amen.

Last year we began a beautiful tradition of adorning our parish Christmas tree with personally inscribed glass teardrop ornaments that parishioners purchased in memory of their loved ones. This was a successful fundraiser for the church, but more importantly, it transformed our parish Christmas tree into a blessed memorial for our beloved families and friends, priests and bishops, and fellow parishioners who have fallen asleep in the Lord.

We would like to keep this tradition going. Ornaments may be brought back to the church on Sundays for Liturgy, or you can contact Fr. Nicholas for pick-up or drop-off during the week.

November/December Events

November

29 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

December

02 – 7:15pm Bible Study

06 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

09 – 7:15pm Bible Study

13 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

16 – 7:15pm Bible Study

20 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

Others cannot know they need Christ if they do not see Him in us

Christ empowers us to change the hearts and minds of others by the example of our allowing Christ to change us. In the words of Saint Seraphim of Sarov, if we "acquire a humble and contrite heart, a thousand around us will be saved". If others do not see in us a forgiving heart, how will they know there is forgiveness in Christ? If others do not see in us a heart filled with joy, how will they know they need the very Christ whom we proclaim as our Lord and Savior? If others see in us a judgmental, narrow minded, unhappy person, why would they be drawn to the Orthodoxy we claim is the true faith?

Others can not know they need Christ if they do not see Him in us. They do not know this Christ fills hearts and transforms lives if they do not see transformation in us. If we are fearful, angry, judgmental, arrogant or aloof, the world will see nothing in our Orthodox Christian faith worthy seeking.

With love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon

Ephesians 4:1-6 (Epistle)

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Luke 13:10-17 (Gospel)

At that time, Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your infirmity." And he laid his hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight, and she praised God. But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be healed, and not on the sabbath day." Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to water it? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" As he said this, all his adversaries were put to shame; and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.

Children's Word

Rejoice for others!

Have you ever been to somebody else's birthday party? Maybe you watched as a friend or a brother or sister opened presents. Maybe you watched as he was excited with what he got. Were you happy for him? Or did you wish it was your day instead?

In today's Gospel reading we hear about a wonderful miracle our Lord did. Then we hear about how people reacted to it. A woman had had a bent back for 18 years. She couldn't straighten it out, so she had to walk around with her back bent over. Yes, for 18 whole years! Our Lord Jesus Christ had mercy on this woman. Even though it was the Sabbath, a special day to rest, Jesus healed her so she could straighten out her back again.

This was a great miracle for her, and it would change this woman's life! But still, the ruler of the synagogue was angry at Jesus. He told Him that He shouldn't have healed her because the Sabbath was a special day to rest—not to work! He was angry. But other people reacted a different way, "All the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by Him."

When good things happen to other people, let's not be like the ruler in the story today. He was angry and wanted to find something wrong. Let's always be happy for others. Let's hope the best for others, just as the people did in the Gospel story today. They rejoiced for her!

ANOTHER CROSS THE CROSS OF SAINT ANDREW
We all know about the Cross of our Lord, Jesus Christ. But did you know that many, many other people were crucified on crosses too? Today, we celebrate the feastday of Saint Andrew. Andrew was the first person Christ called to follow Him.

Saint Andrew did follow Christ, and he followed Him all his life. He even followed Christ so much that he got in trouble with the Roman authorities. These people did not want Christians to have any power or influence. So, they told Andrew that he would be crucified, too. Our saint said that he could not be crucified the same way as our Lord was, so he asked to be bound to an X-shaped cross instead. He followed Christ to the end, and he even follows Christ in heaven now!

Now, there is a beautiful church at the same spot where Saint Andrew was crucified. People even found the cross of Saint Andrew buried underground. You can visit this beautiful church and kiss the holy cross in Patras, Greece. You can ask Saint Andrew to pray for all of us!

We celebrate Saint Andrew's nameday today, November 30th.

Learning How to Die to Death!

November 24, 2020 · Fr. Barnabas Powell

One of the most fundamental marks of maturity is the clear and unmistakable realization that actions have consequences. Ideas have consequences because they become actions. And avoiding consequences is always a sign of immaturity.

No wonder our modern world is struggling, as it has always struggled, with the consequences of ideologies and actions. And we see it everywhere. From the sad state of affairs in the war-torn Middle East to our very polarizing political atmosphere in our country, to the statistics that seem to show our society is becoming less and less religious and more and more gripped by the ideas of entitlement and expectation. Either way, we are struggling with accepting the consequences of our choices.

Look at our Gospel Lesson today in Luke 17:26-37; 18:8:

“The Lord said, ‘As it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of man. They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise as it was in the days of Lot — they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built, but on the day when Lot went out from Sodom fire and sulphur rained from heaven and destroyed them all — so will it be on the day when the Son of man is revealed. On that day, let him who is on the housetop, with his goods in the house, not come down to take them away; and likewise let him who is in the field not turn back. Remember Lot’s wife. Whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will preserve it. I tell you, in that night there will be two in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. There will be two women grinding together; one will be taken and the other left.’ And they said to him, ‘Where, Lord?’ He said to them, ‘Where the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together. Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, will he find faith on earth?’”

Our Lord reminds His disciples that the wrapping up of all of human history isn’t going to be so obvious that it will wake up the whole population. In Noah’s time, people were living their lives day to day as they always had. And they watched Noah construct the Ark, but no one examined their own heart in light of this clear warning. They just kept living their unexamined lives. The same story is at work with Sodom and Gomorrah. People kept on living their lives and were blind to the myriad of opportunities to examine their lives up until the vast consequences of their blind behavior rained destruction upon them. These two examples by the Lord aren’t meant to satisfy some curiosity about the End of Time as much as they are meant to wake us up to our own responsibility to deal with our own lives here and now!

If you have the courage to do the very hard work of examining your own heart, if you bravely peek into your own soul and “die” to the false notion that you are the center of the universe, if you can learn to “die” to the temptations of fulfilling all your desires in a selfish way, then you will wake up to the true life that God offers you in the Resurrection of His Son, our Lord Jesus. If you selfishly “save” your life for merely yourself, you will watch it slip away. But, if you dare to enter into the disciplined life of a believer in Christ, you will see that saying “no” to temporary things so you can say “yes” to eternal things is really living! Why do you think the Church, in her wisdom, gives us this period before the Feast of the Nativity to fast and pray? It is only this purposeful discipline that keeps me attentive to the consequences of the Coming of the Lord!

Today, don’t look back. Look forward. Look inward. Look upward. And learn how to “die” to the soul-killing patterns of that which isn’t real life at all. Learn to leave what was behind and keep reaching forward to Him Who is Life Himself. Fast, pray, worship. This leads to real life. This makes you Orthodox on Purpose.

К Ефесеянам 4:1-6

Итак я, узник в Господе, умоляю вас поступать достойно звания, в которое вы призваны, со всяким смиренномудрием и кротостью и долготерпением, снисходя друг ко другу любовью, стараясь сохранять единство духа в союзе мира. Одно тело и один дух, как вы и призваны к одной надежде вашего звания; один Господь, одна вера, одно крещение, один Бог и Отец всех, Который над всеми, и через всех, и во всех нас.

От Луки 13:10-17

В одной из синагог учил Он в субботу. Там была женщина, восемнадцать лет имевшая духа немощи: она была скорчена и не могла выпрямиться. Иисус, увидев ее, подозвал и сказал ей: женщина! ты освобождаешься от недуга твоего. И возложил на нее руки, и она тотчас выпрямилась и стала славить Бога. При этом начальник синагоги, негодуя, что Иисус исцелил в субботу, сказал народу: есть шесть дней, в которые должно делать; в те и приходите исцеляться, а не в день субботний. Господь сказал ему в ответ: лицемер! не отвязывает ли каждый из вас вола своего или осла от яслей в субботу и не ведет ли поить? сию же дочь Авраамову, которую связал сатана вот уже восемнадцать лет, не надлежало ли освободить от уз сих в день субботний? И когда говорил Он это, все противившиеся Ему стыдились; и весь народ радовался о всех славных делах Его.

Efesianëve 4:1-6

Unë, pra, i burgosuri për Zotin, ju bëj thirrje që të ecni denjësisht sipas thirrjes për të cilën u thirrët, me çdo përvullësi e zemërbutësi, me durim, duke e duruar njëri-tjetrin në dashuri, duke u përpjekur të ruani unitetin e Frymës në lidhjen e paqes. Është një trup i vetëm dhe një Frymë i vetëm, sikurse ju u thirrët në shpresën e vetme të thirrjes suaj. Është një Zot i vetëm, një besim i vetëm, një pagëzim i vetëm, një Perëndi i vetëm dhe Atë i të gjithëve, që është përmbi të gjithë, në mes të të gjithëve dhe në ju të gjithë.

Luka 13:10-17

Një të shtunë Jezusi po mësonte në një sinagogë. Dhe ja, ishte një grua, e cila prej tetëmbëdhjetë vjetësh kishte një frymë lëngate, dhe ajo ishte krejt e kërrusur dhe në asnjë mënyrë nuk drejtohej dot. Dhe kur Jezusi e pa, e thirri pranë vetes dhe i tha: “O grua, ti je e liruar nga lëngata jote.” Dhe i vuri duart mbi të dhe ajo u drejtua menjëherë, dhe përlehtëonte Perëndinë. Por kryetari i sinagogës, i indinjuar sepse Jezusi kishte shëruar ditën e shtunë, iu drejtua turmës dhe i tha: “Gjashtë janë ditët kur duhet të punohet; ejani, pra, të shërohëni në ato ditë dhe jo ditën e shtunë.” Atëherë Zoti u përgjigj dhe tha: “Hipokritë! A nuk e zgjidh secili nga ju të shtunave nga grazhdi kaun e vet, ose gomarin e ta çojë për të pirë? A nuk duhej, pra, të zgjidhej nga këto pranga, ditën e shtunë, kjo që është bijë e Abrahamit dhe që Satani e mbajti lidhur prej tetëmbëdhjetë vjetësh?” Dhe, kur ai thoshte këto gjëra, të gjithë kundërshtarët e tij mbetën të turpëruar, ndërsa mbarë turma gëzohej për të gjitha veprat madhështore që ai kishte kryer.