

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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September 20, 2020

15TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, AFTERFEAST OF THE
EXALTATION OF THE CROSS, GREATMARTYR EUSTATHIUS
(EUSTACE) PLACIDAS, HIS WIFE, MARTYR THEOPISTES, AND THEIR
CHILDREN
TONE 6

Today 10:00am Divine Liturgy
Wed. 23 7:15pm Bible Study via Google
Sun. 27 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 Wednesday and Friday.(fasting from meat, fish, eggs, dairy, oil, wine and hard spirits as you are able.)

Troparion – Tone 4
(Greatmartyr Eustathius)

Thy holy martyr Eustáthius and his wife and sons, O Lord, through their sufferings have received incorruptible crowns from Thee, our God. For having Thy strength, they laid low their adversaries, and shattered the powerless boldness of demons. Through their intercessions, save our souls!

Kontakion – Tone 6
(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.

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

Galatians 2:16-20
Mark 8:34-9:1
2 Corinthians 4:6-15
Matthew 22:35-46

Monday

Galatians 4:28-5:10
Luke 3:19-22

Tuesday

Galatians 5:11-21
Luke 3:23-4:1

Wednesday

Galatians 6:2-10
Luke 4:1-15

Thursday

Ephesians 1:1-9
Luke 4:16-22

Friday

Ephesians 1:7-17
Luke 4:22-30

Saturday

1 Corinthians 10:23-28
Luke 4:31-36

Reading the Bible in a Year

Sept 20: 1 Macc 1-4
Sept 21: 1 Macc 5-8
Sept 22: 1 Macc 9-12
Sept 23: 1 Macc 13-16
Sept 24: 2 Macc 1-4
Sept 25: 2 Macc 5-8
Sept 26: 2 Macc 9-12

From *Of What Life Do We Speak* by
Metropolitan Tikhon:

The spiritual life is often understood to be an individual undertaking—and in many ways it is—but although our goal might be to make our own hearts receptacles for the Holy Spirit, we are not isolated in that undertaking. A community (whether we consider this humanity as whole, the Church, our diocese, our parish, or our family) should not be understood as a forest which is made up of individual and separate trees. Rather a community might be better likened to a single tree which we are all part of. Using this image, the roots of the tree would be the spiritual life, by which we receive the healthy nutrients for growth through prayer and participation in the Holy Mysteries; the trunk represents our common stewardship of the gifts within that community; the branches stand for our witness and ministry in the larger community; and the leaves, fruit, and seeds represent our mission of outreach and evangelism. Essential for the development of the tree, therefore, are the roots, that is, the cultivation of the spiritual life.

Children's Word

Follow me!

Have you ever had to say “no” to something? Maybe you can think of a time when you really wanted to do something, but you knew you shouldn’t. So, you said, “no.”

In today’s Gospel reading, we hear how part of being a Christian is saying “no” to things. The Gospel reads, “The Lord said, ‘If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.’” Do you know what it means to “deny yourself”? Well, it means that sometimes we don’t get to do what we want. Sometimes we don’t eat what we want. Sometimes we don’t say what we want to. When we “deny ourselves,” we are saying “no” to something. The Gospel is telling us that part of being a Christian is saying “no” to things. We might want to play with our friends on Sunday morning, but we say “no” to that. We might want to eat a cheeseburger during a fasting time, but we say “no” to that. We might want to watch a bad movie, but we say “no” to that. Or, we might want to say something mean to somebody, but we say “no” to that.

God wants us to deny ourselves so that we can follow Him and be close to Him forever!



That’s why the devil always attempts to discourage us: however, if we repent then we will succeed over his cunningness, no matter how great the transgression, for discouragement is a great weapon of the enemy against the believer who has placed one’s trust and faith in God.

- St. Isaac the Syrian



SAINT GIDEON A JUDGE OF ISRAEL

Do you ever listen to candidates before a big vote? In the United States, we hear our candidates for president telling everybody why they are the best for the job. They want to prove why they should win the election! But this week, we celebrate the nameday of somebody who became a great leader, but he wasn’t so sure he was right for the job!

Many years before Jesus was born, Israel was ruled by judges. God called these judges to rule over the people, to show them the right way to God. There is even a book in the Bible, the book of Judges, and it tells about how they ruled.

Gideon was one of these judges, and God called him to rule over Israel. The people were worshipping idols, and God wanted Gideon to put them back on the right path. The funny thing was that Gideon didn’t think he should be a ruler! He asked God for miracles to prove it to him. God showed Gideon three times, with three miracles, that He wanted him to be in charge.

We can look to Gideon as a great example of humility, and we can pray that God will give us leaders who follow God first! We celebrate Saint Gideon on Saturday, Sept. 26th.

Galatians 2:16-20 (Epistle, Sunday After)

knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

2 Corinthians 4:6-15 (Epistle)

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed – always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then death is working in us, but life in you. And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke," we also believe and therefore speak, knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

Mark 8:34-9:1 (Gospel, Sunday After)

When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to t

hem, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."

Matthew 22:35-46 (Gospel)

Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?" They said to Him, "The Son of David." He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying: 'The LORD said to my Lord, sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool'? If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his Son?" And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

September/October Events

September

20 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
23 – 7:15pm Bible Study
27 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
30 – 7:15pm Bible Study

October

1 – *Feast of the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos*
4 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
7 – 7:15pm Bible Study
11 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
14 – 7:15pm Bible Study
18 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
21 – 7:15pm Bible Study
25 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
28 – 7:15pm Bible Study

AN EXPLANATION OF THE EPISTLE OF ST PAUL'S LETTER TO THE CHURCH OF GALATIA

[2:16-20] :

This is the only New Testament letter which St Paul addressed to the group of Churches in Galatia, in an attempt to make them understand that man is justified (that is, made righteous), not merely by works of the Law, but through faith in Jesus Christ. It is the faith of Christ – His belief, His trust, His obedience that justifies us, not the Law or simply doing good works. The view of the Jews was that one becomes righteous by fulfilling the requirements of the Law. St Paul tells them to be justified they must imitate Christ's faith which is seen in His entire life on earth, and not just in His more spectacular good works. God introduced the works of the Law to protect mankind until the time when our union with the Son of God became possible. The purpose of divine sonship is for us to become like God and to enter heaven. Whereas Israel was under the Old Covenant, wherein righteousness and salvation came through faith as revealed in Law, the Christian Church is under a New Covenant. That is, salvation comes through faith in Christ Who fulfils the law, and we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit who dwells in us through Baptism, and leads us to the knowledge of God the Father. Today, the Protestants of the Reformation period experienced a rediscovery of "faith in Christ". Their slogan of salvation became "solafides" (Latin) meaning justification was by "faith alone". That is, salvation depended on accepting Christ as your Saviour and human works of merit, and not upon the mercy of God. Orthodoxy emphasizes that it is first God's mercy, not our faith, which saves us. Through God's mercy we are justified by faith and empowered by God for good works of righteousness which bring glory to Him. For Orthodox Christians, faith is living, dynamic, continuous – never static or merely point in time. Faith is not something a Christian exercises only at one critical moment, expecting it to cover all the rest of his life. True faith is not just a decision, it's a way of life. This is why the modern evangelical Protestant question, "Are you saved?" gives pause to an Orthodox believer. For him the answer can only be – "I have been saved, being joined to Christ in Baptism; I am being saved, growing in Christ through the sacramental life of the Church; I will be saved by the mercy of God at the Last Judgment. Nowhere does the Bible say that we are justified by faith "alone". On the contrary, "faith by itself, if it does not have works is dead". (James 2:17) (2:16) St Paul explains that once the Jew is "in Christ", he discovers that such faith is not only necessary, but also sufficient for righteousness. He then sees that the Law is, after all, not necessary at all. But Paul foresees that the Jews will say that "in seeking to be made righteous in Christ, we will become lawless like the "Gentile sinners" who do not have the Judaic Law and Christ will have a defacto function for us as an agent of sin. But Paul says, "by no means", for in Christ you are all sons of God through faith. It was the absolute authority of the Law that was "torn down" in Christ. It was our guardian until Christ, but now that faith has come, we no longer need it. For if Paul were to attempt now to restore the law, he would prove himself a "transgressor". That is, having destroyed the "works of the law" (that is, proving their ineffectiveness for salvation), he would be a transgressor if he tries to reinstate the Jewish Law. (2:17-18) There is no contradiction between law and Christ's gospel. The Law is holy and good, but it is now obsolete because it is fulfilled in the gospel in Christ Himself. We voluntarily "die to the law" and become alive to the law of the Spirit, through Baptism and union with Christ. (2:19) To be "crucified with Christ" means to mortify our sinful passions and desires. Then one begins a new life in Christ and no longer lives under the dominion of sinful passions. "Christ lives in him" and man achieves the aim of Christian life – union with Christ. (2:20)

К Галатам 2:16-20

однако же, узнав, что человек оправдывается не делами закона, а только верою в Иисуса Христа, и мы уверовали во Христа Иисуса, чтобы оправдаться верою во Христа, а не делами закона; ибо делами закона не оправдается никакая плоть. Если же, ища оправдания во Христе, мы и сами оказались грешниками, то неужели Христос есть слугитель греха? Никак. Ибо если я снова созидаю, что разрушил, то сам себя делаю преступником. Законом я умер для закона, чтобы жить для Бога. Я сораспялся Христу, и уже не я живу, но живет во мне Христос. А что ныне живу во плоти, то живу верою в Сына Божия, возлюбившего меня и предавшего Себя за меня.

2-е Коринфянам 4:6-15

потому что Бог, повелевший из тьмы воссиять свету, озарил наши сердца, дабы просветить [нас] познанием славы Божией в лице Иисуса Христа. Но сокровище сие мы носим в глиняных сосудах, чтобы преизбыточная сила была [приписываема] Богу, а не нам. Мы отовсюду притесняемы, но не стеснены; мы в отчаянных обстоятельствах, но не отчаиваемся; мы гонимы, но не оставлены; низлагаемы, но не погибаем. Всегда носим в теле мертвость Господа Иисуса, чтобы и жизнь Иисусова открылась в теле нашем. Ибо мы живые непрестанно предаемся на смерть ради Иисуса, чтобы и жизнь Иисусова открылась в смертной плоти нашей, так что смерть действует в нас, а жизнь в вас.

От Марка 8:34-9:1

И, подзвав народ с учениками Своими, сказал им: кто хочет идти за Мною, отвергнись себя, и возьми крест свой, и следуй за Мною. Ибо кто хочет душу свою сберечь, тот потеряет ее, а кто потеряет душу свою ради Меня и Евангелия, тот сбережет ее. Ибо какая польза человеку, если он приобретет весь мир, а душе своей повредит? Или какой выкуп даст человек за душу свою? Ибо кто постыдится Меня и Моих слов в роде сем прелюбодейном и грешном, того постыдится и Сын Человеческий, когда придет в славе Отца Своего со святыми Ангелами. И сказал им: истинно говорю вам: есть некоторые из стоящих здесь, которые не вкусят смерти, как уже увидят Царствие Божие, пришедшее в силе.

От Матфея 22:35-46

И один из них, законник, искушая Его, спросил, говоря: Учитель! какая наибольшая заповедь в законе? Иисус сказал ему: возлюби Господа Бога твоего всем сердцем твоим и всею душею твоею и всем разумением твоим: сия есть первая и наибольшая заповедь; вторая же подобная ей: возлюби ближнего твоего, как самого себя; на сих двух заповедях утверждается весь закон и пророки. Когда же собрались фарисеи, Иисус спросил их: что вы думаете о Христе? чей Он сын? Говорят Ему: Давидов. Говорит им: как же Давид, по вдохновению, называет Его Господом, когда говорит: сказал Господь Господу моему: седи одесную Меня, доколе положу врагов Твоих в подножие ног Твоих? Итак, если Давид называет Его Господом, как же Он сын ему? И никто не мог отвечать Ему ни слова; и с того дня никто уже не смел спрашивать Его.

Galatasve 2:16-20

duke ditur se njeriu nuk shfajësohet me anë të veprave të ligjit, por me anë të besimit në Jezu Krishtin, besuam edhe ne në Jezu Krishtin, që të shfajësoheshim me anë të besimit në Krishtin dhe jo me anë të veprave të ligjit, sepse asnjë mish nuk do të shfajësohet me anë të veprave të ligjit. Dhe, në qoftë se duke kërkuar të shfajësohemi në Krishtin, u gjetëm edhe ne mëkatarë, mos vallë Krishti qënka shërbenjës i mëkatit. Kurrresi jo! Sepse, në qoftë se unë ndërtoj përsëri ato gjërat që prisha, unë bëhem vetë shkelës, sepse përmes ligjit, vdiqa për ligjin, që unë të rroj për Perëndinë. Unë u kryqëzova bashkë me Krishtin dhe nuk rroj më unë, po Krishti rron në mua; dhe ajo jetë që tani jetoj në mish, e jetoj në besimin e Birit të Perëndisë, që më deshi dhe dha veten për mua.

2 e Korintasve 4:6-15

sepse Perëndia që tha: “Le të ndriçojë drita në errësirë,” është i njëjti që shkëlqeu në zemrat tona për t’na ndriçuar në njohurinë e lavdisë së Perëndisë, në fytyrën e Jezu Krishtit. Dhe ne e kemi këtë thesar në enë prej balte që epërsia pashoqe e kësaj fuqie të jetë nga Perëndia dhe jo nga ne. Ne jemi të shtrënguar në çdo mënyrë, por nuk jemi të ngushtuaderi në fund; jemi ndërduash por jo të dëshpëruar; jemi të përndjekur por jo të braktisur; të rrëzuar, por jo të shkatëruar; kurdo ne e mbajmë në trupin tonë vdekjen e Zotit Jezus, që edhe jeta e Jezusit të shfaqet në trupin tonë. Ne që jetojmë, jemi vazhdimisht të dorëzuar në vdekje për Jezusin, që edhe jeta e Jezusit të shfaqet në mishin tonë të vdekshëm. Dhe kështu tek ne vepron vdekja, ndërsa në ju jeta. Por, duke pasur të njëjtën frymë besimi, sikurse është shkruar: “Unë besova, prandaj fola,” edhe ne besojmë, prandaj edhe flasim, duke ditur se ai që ringjalli Zotin Jezus, do të na ringjallë edhe ne nëpërmjet Jezusit dhe do të na paraqesë bashkë me ju. Sepse të gjitha këto gjëra janë për ju, që hiri, duke arritur me anë të shumë personave, të prodhojë falenderim me tepri për lavdi të Zotit.

Marku 8:34-9:1

Pastaj e thirri pranë vetes turmën me dishepujt e vet dhe iu tha: “Kushdo që don të vijë pas meje, të mohojë vetveten, të marrë kryqin e vet dhe të më ndjekë, sepse ai që don të shpëtojë jetën e vet, do ta humbasë; por ai që do të humbasë jetën e vet për hirin tim e për ungjillin, do të shpëtojë. Ç’dobi do të ketë njeriu të fitojë gjithë botën, nëse më pas do të humbë shpirtin e vet? Ose çfarë mund të japë njeriu në shkëmbim të shpirtit të vet? Sepse kujtdo që do t’i vijë turp për mua dhe për fjalët e mia në mes të këtij brezi kurorëshkelës dhe mëkatar, për atë do t’i vijë turp edhe Birit të njeriut, kur të arrijë në lavdinë e Atit të vet, me engjëjt e shenjtë.” Pastaj u tha atyre: “Në të vërtetë ju them se midis jush që jeni këtu ka disa që nuk do ta shijojnë vdekjen para se të shohin të vijë me fuqi mbretëria e Perëndisë.”

Mateu 22:35-46

Dhe një nga ata, mësues i ligjit, e pyeti për të vënë në provë, duke thënë: “Mësues, cili është urdhërimi i madh i ligjit?” Dhe Jezusi i tha: ““Duaje Zotin, Perëndinë tënde me gjithë zemrën tënde, me gjithë shpirtin tënd dhe me gjithë mendjen tënde”. Ky është urdhërimi i parë dhe i madhi. Dhe i dyti, i ngjashëm me këtë, është: “Duaje të afërmin tënd porsivetveten”. Nga këto dy urdhërime varet i tërë ligji dhe profetët.” Tani, kur u mblodhën farisenjtë, Jezusi i pyeti: “Ç’u duket juve për Krishtin? Biri i kujt është?” Ata i thanë: “I Davidit.” Ai u tha atyre: “Si pra Davidi, në Frymë, e quan Zot, duke thënë: “Zoti i ka thënë Zotit tim: Ulu në të djathtën time, deri sa unë t’i vë armiqtë e tu si stol të këmbëve të tua”? Në qoftë se Davidi e quan Zot, si mund të jetë biri i tij?” Por asnjë nuk ishte në gjendje t’i përgjigjej; dhe, që nga ajo ditë, askush nuk guxoi ta pyesë më.