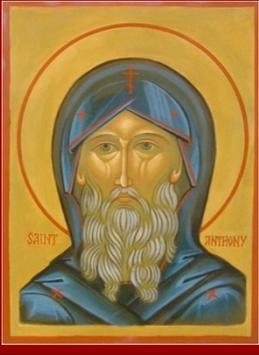


SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



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SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN AND THE PHARISEE

21 February 2015

TONE 5 —Beginning of the Lenten Triodion. Ven. Timothy of Symbola in Bithynia (9th c.). Eustathius, Archbishop of Antioch (377). St. George, Bishop of Amastris on the Black Sea (802-811).

FIRST ANTIPHON

It is good to give praise unto the Lord, and to chant unto Thy Name, O Most High! Refrain: Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us! To proclaim in the morning Thy mercy, and Thy truth by night! (R.:) Upright is the Lord our God and there is no unrighteousness in Him (R.:) Glory... Now and ever... (R.:)

SECOND ANTIPHON

The Lord is King, He is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength and has girt Himself! Refrain: Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead, as we chant to Thee, "Alleluia"! For He established the world which shall not be shaken! (R.:) Holiness befits Thy house, O Lord, unto length of days! (R.:) Glory... Now and ever... (Only begotten Son and Word of God ...)

AT THE LITTLE ENTRANCE

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ! O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead, save us who sing to Thee: "Alleluia"!

TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION (Tone 5): Let us believers praise and worship the Word; coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our salvation. For, He took pleasure in ascending the Cross in the flesh to suffer death; and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.

TROPARION OF ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT (Tone 4, Russian): Like the zealous Elijah thou didst become, and followed John the Baptist in his upright ways. A dweller in the wilderness, thou didst steady the world by prayer. O Father Anthony, intercede with Christ our God for our souls' salvation.

KONTAKION FOR THE SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN AND PHARISEE (*To the special melody "On this day Thou hast appeared"*): Let us flee the Pharisee's conceited vaunting; let us learn the Publican's humility, and cry with groans unto the Savior: Thou Who alone art swiftly reconciled, be gracious unto us.

From Alexander Schmemmann, *Great Lent*

On the eve of the "*Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee*", on Saturday at Vespers, the liturgical book of the Lenten season—the *Triodion*—makes its first appearance and texts from it are added to the usual hymns and prayers of the weekly resurrection service. They develop the next major aspect of repentance: *humility*.

If there is a moral quality almost completely disregarded and even denied today, it is indeed humility. The culture in which we live constantly instills in us the sense of pride, of self-glorification, and of self-righteousness. It is built on the assumption that man can achieve anything by himself and it even pictures God as the one who all the time "gives credit" for man's achievements and good deeds. Humility-- be it individual or corporate, ethnic or national-- is viewed as a sign of weakness, as something unbecoming a real man. Even our churches-- are they not imbued with that same spirit as the Pharisee? Do we not want our every contribution, every "good deed," all that we do "for the Church" to be acknowledged, praised, publicized?

The Lenten season begins then by a quest, a prayer for humility which is the beginning of true repentance. For repentance, above everything else, is *a return to the genuine order of things*, the restoration of the right vision. It is, therefore, rooted in humility, and humility-- the divine and beautiful humility-- is its fruit and end. "Let us avoid the high-flown speech of the Pharisee," says the *Kontakion* of this day, "and *learn the majesty* of the Publican's humble words..."

We are at the gates of repentance and at the most solemn moment of the Sunday vigil. After Christ's Resurrection and appearance have been announced—"having beheld the Resurrection"—we sing for the first time the *troparia* which will accompany us throughout the entire Lent:

Open to me the gates of repentance, O Giver of Life, for my spirit rises early to pray towards thy holy temple, bearing the temple of my body all defiled. But in Thy compassion, purify me by the loving kindness of Thy mercy!

Lead me on the paths of salvation, O Mother of God, for I have profaned my soul with shameful sins, and have wasted my life in laziness. But by your intercessions, deliver me from all impurity.

When I think of the many evil things I have done, wretch that I am, I tremble at the fearful day of judgment. But trusting in Thy living kindness, like David I cry to Thee: Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy.

TODAY'S EPISTLE READING

Prokeimenon: *Make your vows to the Lord your God! In Judah God is known.*

From the Second Epistle of Saint Paul to Timothy

(2 Tim 3:10-15) Timothy my son, you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions, my sufferings, what befell me at Antioch, at Iconion, and at Lystra, what persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. Indeed all who desire to live a

godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil men and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived. But you continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

We should keep in mind Saint Paul's clear statement: **all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.** In other words, Christianity is not for weak souls, not for the lazy, not for the cowards. Living as Christians, we are in the business of working out the dawn of the Kingdom of God in us; and as long as we are still in the interim period between the Resurrection of the Lord and His second coming, this new creation that dawns in us beginning with our baptism, remains *other than* and *opposed to* the fallen world in which we live. So, a Christian is a walking paradox: a fallen, frail, sinful human, yet one who already tastes of (and increasingly embodies) the new life of the Kingdom; a life that withers and will inevitably die, yet a life that already anticipates the resurrection.

From the very beginning, the Christian message has been mocked, attacked, suppressed. From the very beginning, it was clear that there is intense and hateful resistance against the Gospel, and that this resistance ultimately can be traced to the Adversary, Satan. **"Indeed,"** the Apostle confirms, **"all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."** For us today, here in the U.S., it is less beneficial to focus on enemies and dangers "out there" lurking to oppress and persecute us for being Christians. **"All who desire to live a godly life"** know well that the first and most dreadful battle is happening *within*.

Christianity is not for the lazy, and not for cowards: let us redouble our efforts in fighting the good fight, the fight against the tyranny of our own sins and weaknesses and failings.

TODAY'S GOSPEL READING

From the Gospel according to Saint Luke

(Luke 18:10-14) **The Lord spoke this parable: "Two men went up into the Temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a Publican (a tax collector). The Pharisee stood and prayed thus within himself, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men— extortioners, unjust, adulterers—or even like this Publican. I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I possess.' But the Publican, standing afar off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' I tell you, *this* man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."**

It does not take a degree in Theology to know that it is much easier to spot the sins of people around us than it is to see our own sins. "The pot is calling the kettle black." An Arabic proverb says, "The camel cannot see the crookedness of its own neck"; and in Romania, "the potsherd laughs at the cracked pot."

The Lord once put this very sharply: "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?" And now He offers the same teaching by means of a parable. Let's consider the characters in the story: God, the Pharisee, and the Publican. With the publican—that is, the tax collector—things are pretty clear. Any decent person despised tax-collectors, because they were not only merciless, but also corrupt and abusive. They extorted

higher taxes than was actually demanded, they shamelessly demanded bribes, and generally satisfied their insatiable greed by any means available. As for the Pharisees—the specialist of the Scriptures, the theologian, as it were—people would usually respect them as dedicated to God and concerned with leading a pure life. When these two people interact, everyone would expect that the Pharisee should chastise the tax-collector for his sinful lifestyle.

But the two appear in front of God, and so the truth of their heart is revealed and looks quite surprising. As the Lord says, **it is the tax-collector who returned home justified, not the theologian!** Why so? The fact is that we are not reading a parable about a “good tax-collector” and an “evil Pharisee.” Wasn’t the tax-collector sinful? Of course he was! And wasn’t the Pharisee fasting twice a week (a good example for us!) and giving 10% of his income (a good example for us!)? Of course he was!

Note that, in the parable, God remains silent. It would seem that He is not particularly attentive to the virtues of the Pharisee and the vices of the tax-collector. Indeed, according to Scripture, **“The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart” (1 Sam 16:7).** And it is there, in the heart, that the truth is revealed! The tax-collector, despite his many sins, finds salvation because his heart breaks with humility and repentance; the Pharisee, however, with all his fasting and tithing according to the Law, condemns himself by despising and condemning his brother.

We are reading this parable because we are slowly preparing to enter the period of Lent. May this divine Gospel lesson find not only eyes to see and ears to hear, but also hearts to receive it!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Today: meeting of the parish council.
- General parish meeting: **Sunday, March 20.** There is an opening on the parish council
- **Sunday, March 6** (Sunday of the Last Judgment— "Meatfare"): Pan-Orthodox Divine Liturgy and Pre-Lenten Luncheon at St. Andrew Orthodox Church, 10 A
- **House blessings.** Bogdan is available Saturdays and Sundays afternoons/ evenings.
- **Orthodoxcranberry.org** On Thursday we continue our study of Genesis 1-3 accompanied by Saint Ephrem's *Hymns on Paradise*. **Cranberry Library (2525 Rochester Rd), 7-8 PM.**

Remember in your prayers

LIVING: Bill and Ann; Dottie; Bernard (Dottie's brother); Stelian (Cezar's father); Seba, Lisa, and Sam (Michaels), Norma, George (Georgiades), Christine (Abraham), Jim, Tony, Samantha, Luke (relatives of Dollie's), Norma, Richard (Johns), Bill and Ann, Ed, Peter, Georgia and Scot, Sam, Karen (Joanna's mother), Diane, Sula, Dollie, Karyn, Fr. Ignatius and Amy, John, Jonathan and Joanna, Andrei, John, Janet, Christy (relatives of Jean); John and Julie (Smolen); Dennis, Vincent, Roy and Laura, Danny, Danny, Cathy (relatives of John and Julie); Diane; Shea and Katie; Tim and Caroline (Becker).

Ron, catechumen; Garrett & Autumn, Benjamin, Christine – seeking for the true faith.

DEPARTED: Iosif (Cristina's father); Dolores (Bingham), Diane (Georgia's sister); Gladys (Smolen); David (Steve's father-in-law); Donald (Norma's brother); William (Fr. Paisius's father); Sue (Stacey's mother); Vicki (Frank's mother); Craig (Jean's son-in-law); Abie Abraham; Patrick (Rose's brother); Josephine (Julie's sister); Hieromonk Roman (Braga); priest Thomas (Hopko); Cristian (Andronic); Rick, Phyllis (Seba's husband and sister), Angeliki, Joe and David Sipos; Glenn (Jean's grandson); Stella, Edmund (Ed's uncle), Richard, Leatrice (Totin), Ed (Joanna's grandfather), Joseph (Rose's father), Fred (Dollie's uncle), Bob (Diane's father), Michael, Gabriel, Hilda (Chris Abraham's mother), Alfred, Stormy (friend of Ron's).

SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN AND PHARISEE

At "Lord, I have cried"... (in Tone 5): add the following stichera at the end:

(Tone 1)

If Thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? For with Thee there is forgiveness. Because of Thy Name have I waited for Thee, O Lord: my soul hath waited upon Thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord. Let us not pray, brethren, Pharisee-like; for he who exalteth himself shall be abased. Wherefore, let us humble ourselves before God, crying by means of fasting, with the voice of the publican, saying, God forgive us sinners.

From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel trust in the Lord. For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is abundant redemption, and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities. When the Pharisee went down with empty glory, and the publican bowed himself in repentance, they came to Thee alone, O Master. But the one through boasting lost his reward, and the other by his silence deserved gifts. Wherefore, by those sighs confirm me, O Christ God, since Thou art the Lover of mankind.

Glory ... (Tone 8) Almighty Lord, I have known the effectiveness of tears; for they snatched Hezekiah from the doors of death, and saved the sinning woman from her chronic iniquities. And as for the Publican they justified him more than the Pharisee. Wherefore, I implore Thee to number me among them, and have mercy upon me.

Now and ever ... (Tone 5) Theotokion

At the Aposticha:

Now and ever ... (Tone 5) Mine eyes being weighed down because of mine iniquities, I am unable to gaze at the horizon of heaven. But Thou, O Savior, accept me penitent as the publican.

MATINS

Troparia after the Gospel, for the Triodion:

Glory ... (Tone 8): *Open to me the gates of repentance, O Giver of Life, for my spirit rises early to pray towards thy holy temple, bearing the temple of my body all defiled. But in Thy compassion, purify me by the loving kindness of Thy mercy!*

Now and ever ... *Lead me on the paths of salvation, O Mother of God, for I have profaned my soul with shameful sins, and have wasted my life in laziness. But by your intercessions, deliver me from all impurity.*

Have mercy on me, O God according to thy loving kindness according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. (Tone 6) *When I think of the many evil things I have done, wretch that I am, I tremble at the fearful day of judgment. But trusting in Thy living kindness, like David I cry to Thee: Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy.*

CANON OF THE PUBLICAN AND PHARISEE

(Tone 6)

Ode 1. When Israel walked on foot at the bottom of the sea as on dry land, and beheld Pharaoh the persecutor drowned, they shouted, Let us praise our God; for he hath triumphed.
Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!

Ode 3. There is none holy like thee, O Lord my God, who didst exalt the horn of those who believe in thee, O Good One, and established them on the rock of thy confession.
Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!

Ode 4. The venerable Church raiseth her voice in song, as is meet to God, celebrating to the Lord with a pure conscience. Christ is my might, my Lord, and my God.
Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!

Ode 5. O good One, lighten with thy divine light the souls of those who come to thee early and eagerly that they may know thee, O word of God, the true God, who callest us from the darkness of iniquities.
Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!

Ode 6. O most merciful One, when I saw the sea of this life agitated with the tumult of temptations, I hastened to thy quiet haven, crying, Raise my life from corruption.
Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!

Ode 7. Verily, the angel made the furnace overflow with dew for the righteous youth, burning the Chaldeans by the command of God, and constraining the usurper to shout, crying, Blessed art thou God of our father.
Let us praise, bless, and worship the Lord.

Ode 8. Thou didst spring forth from the flames as dew for those righteous ones, and with water thou didst consume the sacrifice of the righteous one; for thou doest all things by thy mere will. Wherefore, we exalt thee still more to the end of ages.

Priest: The Theotokos and Mother of the Light let us honor and magnify in song!

People: My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!

More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim: thou who without stain bearest God the Word and art truly Theotokos, we magnify you!

+ For He hath regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden; for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. *(More honorable ...)*

+ For He that is mighty hath magnified me, and holy is His Name; and His mercy is on them that fear Him, throughout all generations. *(More honorable ...)*

+ He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek. He hath filled the empty with good things, and the rich hath He sent empty away. *(More honorable ...)*

+ He remembering His mercy hath helped His servant Israel, as He promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed forever. *(More honorable ...)*

Ode 9. Verily, the God Whom no man can see, nor the ranks of angels dare look upon, through thee, O pure one, was seen among men as incarnate Word. Wherefore, with the heavenly hosts, we magnify him, and thee do we bless.