

SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
www.orthodoxbutler.org

ADDRESS: 400 S. Sixth Avenue, Butler, PA 16001
RECTOR: Rev. Bogdan Gabriel Bucur
CONTACT: 724.287.6983 (church); 412.390.8208 (priest);
frbogdan@orthodoxbutler.org

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST 6 November 2016

TONE 3—*Synaxis of the Holy Unmercenary Healers. St. Paul the Confessor, Archbishop of Constantinople (350). Martyrs Tecusa, Alexandra, Claudia, Matrona, Polactia, Euphrosyne, and Athanasia, of Ancyra (3rd c.). Ven. Luke of Sicily (800-820). Ven. Varlaam, Abbot of Khutyn' (Novgorod—1192). St. Herman, Archbishop of Kazan' (1567).*

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! (R.:) 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 ...)

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 3): Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord hath done a mighty act with His own arm: He hath trampled down death by death, and become the first-born from the dead; He hath delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting the world great mercy.

TROPARION OF ST. PAUL THE CONFESSOR (Tone 3): Thy confession of the one divine Faith showed thee to the Church to be a new Paul and a zealot among priests, O holy one. The righteous blood both of Abel and Zachary with thee doth cry out together unto the Lord. O righteous Father Paul: intercede with Christ God in our behalf that His great mercy may be granted unto us.

TROPARION OF SAINT 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 ORDINARY SUNDAYS (Tone 4): O protection of Christians that cannot be put to shame, mediation unto the Creator most constant, O despise not the suppliant voices of those who have sinned; but be thou quick, O good one, to come unto our aid, who in faith cry unto thee: Hasten to intercession, and speed thou to make supplication, thou who dost ever protect, O Theotokos, them that honor thee.

TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

*Prokeimenon: Sing praises to our God, sing praises.
Clap your hands, all ye peoples!*

From the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Galatians

(Gal 1:11-19) Brethren, I would have you know that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

Saint Paul was *not* one of the twelve disciples; in fact, he never even met the Lord during His earthly ministry. Moreover, in the early years of the Church, Paul (then called Saul) did his best to stop the spreading of the faith, preaching against those who called Jesus "Messiah" (in Greek "Christ") and "Lord," and putting all his time and energy into persecuting the Church. When the authorities executed St. Stephen, the first deacon and martyr, Saul was guarding the clothes of those throwing stones!

Although blind, Paul's zeal was genuine. And since God knows the heart of man, and never fails to guide those that search earnestly for His truth, at a certain moment in God's time, something extraordinary happened. In St. Paul's words, God "revealed his Son to him." Paul *did* meet the Lord—on the way to Damascus, he had a vision, an overwhelming encounter with the resurrected Jesus Christ. And it was this meeting that established him as an apostle, and a divinely authorized preacher of the Gospel.

But many were skeptical about the Gospel preached by this man (now baptized "Paul"). They kept insisting that he had not received a commission from Christ—like the other apostles—or from Peter, the leader of the apostles, or from James, the leader of the Mother-Church in Jerusalem. Yet Paul knew what he had received from Christ: "the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ."

And this special commissioning of St. Paul has borne rich fruit: it is to him and to his disciple, St. Luke, that we owe most of the New Testament; it is he that showed the importance of sharing the Good News with the pagans; it is he that crisscrossed Europe to found its first Christian communities; and he ended his life in martyrdom together with St. Peter, in 64 C.E., at Rome.

Whether “cradle Orthodox” or converts, we are called, like Paul, to allow Christ to be revealed in us, and to gradually learn how to live as His disciples. Nobody ever said it would be easy; but we can all take the advice that the same Apostle Paul gave to one of his spiritual sons: *Here is a trustworthy saying: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am first!* (1 Tim 1:15).

TODAY'S GOSPEL READING

From the Gospel according to Saint Luke

(Luke 8:41-56) At that time, there came a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue; and falling at Jesus' feet he besought him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying. As he went, the people pressed round him. And a woman who had had a flow of blood for twelve years and had spent all her living upon physicians and could not be healed by any one, came up behind him, and touched the fringe of his garment; and immediately her flow of blood ceased. And Jesus said, "Who was it that touched me?" When all denied it, Peter and those who were with him said, "Master, the multitudes surround you and press upon you!" But Jesus said, "Some one touched me; for I perceive that power has gone forth from me." And when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling, and falling down before him declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well go in peace." While he was still speaking, a man from the ruler's house came and said, "Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the Teacher any more." But Jesus on hearing this answered him, "Do not fear; only believe, and she shall be well." And when he came to the house, he permitted no one to enter with him, except Peter and John and James, and the father and mother of the child. And all were weeping and bewailing her; but he said, "Do not weep; for she is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. But taking her by the hand he called, saying, "Child, arise." And her spirit returned, and she got up at once; and he directed that something should be given her to eat. And her parents were amazed; but he charged them to tell no one what had happened.

Today's Gospel is, clearly, about miracles: a chronic disease that no doctor has been able to cure goes away instantly at a mere brush with the Lord's garment—even the fringes of His garment; a dead child, soon to be taken to the grave, is brought back from death to life. The rapid and overwhelming succession of these miracles speaks of the divine identity of Christ. It is no less important, however, to consider the other characters in the text: Jairus, the father of the dying child, the woman who comes seeking healing, and the crowd of followers and bystanders. They all represent *me*, who hear the story *today* and who am called to receive the universal Gospel as a word addressed specifically *to me*.

When Christ reaches the house of Jairus, the family is already weeping, crushed by the tragic and untimely death of the child. One of the bystanders suggests that, under the circumstances, Jairus should no longer “trouble the Teacher.” This seems to be a common-sense observation, perhaps even an attempt to help the father deal with the loss, and focus on what needs to be done: accept the reality of his daughter's death, make sure that a proper burial is performed, organize the funeral meal. A bit later, others are ridiculing “the Teacher” for his “unrealistic” denial of the obvious fact that the child is dead. Similarly, we hear the disciples appealing to good common sense: when the crowd is pressing all around Jesus, who could identify the particular individual who touched Him?

By contrast, Jairus and the woman act with a holy foolishness, deciding, against all common sense, to trust Christ. It is this trust that allows the miracle to occur: “your faith has made you well,” Christ tells the woman; “Do not fear, only believe!” he says to Jairus. Common sense is blind in these instances, because we are paralyzed by fear: fear that we are alone in a hostile world, reduced to surviving, suffering, and “getting over it” in a reality abandoned by God (if there ever was a God).

Today’s Gospel exorcizes this kind of fear. Like Jairus and the suffering woman, we are invited to be bold in “troubling the Teacher,” to approach Him with our open wounds, without fear and with full certainty that the Good News is true: “the Kingdom of God has drawn near!” God has already taken the first step towards us.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next Sunday, November 13: 1-year memorial for Diane, Georgia’s sister. Fr. Anthony Roeber will serve Divine Liturgy; Fr. Bogdan will serve at the Cranberry mission.

Tuesday, November 15: beginning of the Nativity Fast!

TODAY, 12:30-1:30 pm

Please plan on staying after Divine Liturgy for a presentation followed by Q&A

**READING THE BIBLE AS ORTHODOX:
INSIGHTS FROM ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA AND ST. EPHREM THE SYRIAN**

KIBBEE BAKE SALE: Saturday, November 12

\$4.00 each * Phone Orders only * Orders taken until November 4 * Pick up 12:00 to 2:00 pm

Call: 724.287.6893 or 724.287.5140

Remember in your prayers

LIVING: Job; Maura; Ann; John and Mary Ann (Jean’s relatives); Stelian (Cezar’s father); Seba, Lisa, and Sam (Michaels), Norma; George (Georgiades), Christine (Abraham), Marion and Jim Raimondi (relatives of Dollie’s), Norma, Richard (Johns), 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, Cathy (relatives of John and Julie); Diane; Shea and Katie (expecting); Christine, Phoebe, Tina. Garrett & Autumn, Benjamin – seeking the true faith.

DEPARTED: Iosif (Cristina’s father); Victoria and Susan (mothers of Frank and Stacy); Richard (Minto) from Sts Peter and Paul; Bill; Dolores (Bingham), Diane (Georgia’s sister); Gladys (Smolen); David (Steve’s father-in-law); Donald (Norma’s brother); William (Fr. Paisius’s father); Craig (Jean’s son-in-law); Abie Abraham; Patrick (Rose’s brother); Josephine (Julie’s sister); 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); Lance; Bob (Diane’s father), Michael, Gabriel, Hilda (Chris Abraham’s mother), Alfred, Stormy (friend of Ron’s).