

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: 724.287.6893 (church); 412.390.8208 (priest);

frbogdan@orthodoxbutler.org

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

(All Saints of North America)

18 June 2017

TONE 1—Martyr Leontius, and with him Martyrs Hypatius and Theodulus, at Tripoli in Syria (70-79). Ven. Leonty, Canonarch, of the Kiev Caves (Far Caves—14th c.). Ven. Leonty the Hagiorite (1605).

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 1): While the stone was sealed by the Jews, and the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst arise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. For which cause the heavenly powers cried aloud unto Thee, O giver of life. Glory to Thy Resurrection O Christ, glory to Thy kingdom, glory to Thy providence, O Thou Who alone art the lover of mankind.

TROPARION OF THE SAINTS OF AMERICA (Tone 8): As the bountiful harvest of Thy sowing of salvation, the lands of America offer to Thee, O Lord, all the saints who have shone in them. By their prayers keep the Church and our land in abiding peace, through the Theotokos, O most Merciful One!

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 OF ORDINARY SUNDAYS (Tone 4): Undisputed intercessor of Christians, the mediatrix who is unrejected by the Creator, turn not away from the voice of our petitions, though we be sinners. Come to us in time with aid, as we cry unto thee in faith; for thou art good. Hasten to us with intercessions O Theotokos, who dost ever intercede for those who honor thee.

TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

Prokeimenon: *Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous!*

The Reading is from the Epistle to the Romans

(Rom 2:10-16) Brethren, glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. For God shows no partiality. All who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law, and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law. For it is not the hearers of the Law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the Law who will be justified. When Gentiles who have not the Law do by nature what the Law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the Law. They show that what the Law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

TODAY'S GOSPEL READING

The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew

(Mat 4:18-23) At that time, as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed Him. And going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and He called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him. And He went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the Kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people.

ALL SAINTS OF NORTH AMERICA

Rejoice, O mountains of Pennsylvania; leap for joy, O waters of the Great Lakes; rise up, O fertile plains of Canada; for the elect of Christ who dwelt in you are glorified, men and women who left their homes for a new land. With faith, hope, and patience as their armor, they courageously fought the good fight. Comforted by the beauty of the Orthodox Faith, they labored in mines and mills, they tilled the land, they braved the challenges of the great cities, enduring many hardships and sufferings. Never failing to worship God in spirit and truth and unyielding in devotion to His most pure Mother, they erected many temples to His glory. Come, O assembly of the Orthodox, and with love let us praise the holy men, women, and children, those known to us and those known only to God, and let us cry out to them: Rejoice, all Saints of North America and pray to God for us!

We call "saints" those who have taken upon themselves the Cross of Christ, and truly lived out their baptismal vow by loving the Lord with all their heart and mind and strength. But what does it mean to "take the Cross"? Let us think of the bread that we bring to the altar for Divine Liturgy.

There is nothing special about this bread: it is made of regular flour, water, yeast, and salt. It has the smell and texture and taste of regular bread. So also are the saints like us, "normal" humans in every respect. What is different? First, this bread *is sealed* with a cross and the letters IC XC, the abbreviation for "Jesus Christ"; and it is then brought to the altar and entrusted there to the work of God—the Liturgy. Remember that, in the Divine Liturgy, we pray: "*may Thy Holy Spirit come down upon us and upon these gifts, and make this break the precious body of Thy Christ ...*" So also with the each Christian: we are washed (in Baptism), then "sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit" (in Chrismation), and we continue to learn and to practice—again and again—how to "entrust ourselves, and each other, and our whole life to Christ our God." The words are familiar, we repeat them very often in the services. But these words are meant to be put into practice when we "go forth in peace."

Those whom we call "saints" are Christians who actually *do* entrust themselves and their whole existence (body, mind, will, emotions, deeds, time, possessions, relations, etc) to God; they accept the "seal" of Christ, and become, as it were, a pure offering for the presence of God. And God receives this offering and transforms "regular" men and women into sons and daughters of the light.

Since the Holy Spirit is "everywhere present" and "fills all things," no time or place, no human race or culture is left out: the saints can be found everywhere. On the second Sunday after Pentecost, each local Orthodox Church commemorates all the saints, known and unknown, who have shone forth in its territory. Accordingly, we remember the saints of North America.

On September 24, 1794, after a journey of 7,327 miles (the longest missionary journey in Orthodox history) and 293 days, a group of monks from Valaam arrived on Kodiak Island in Alaska. The mission was headed by Archimandrite Joasaph, and included Hieromonks Juvenal, Macarius, and Athanasius, the Hierodeacons Nectarius and Stephen, and the monks Herman and Joasaph. St Herman of Alaska, the last surviving member of the mission, fell asleep in the Lord in 1837.

Throughout the Church's history, the seeds of faith have always been watered by the blood of the martyrs. The Protomartyr Juvenal was killed near Lake Iliamna by natives in 1799, thus becoming the first Orthodox Christian to shed his blood for Christ in the New World. In 1816, St Peter the Aleut was put to death by Spanish missionaries in California when he refused to convert to Roman Catholicism.

Missionary efforts continued in the nineteenth century, with outreach to the native peoples of Alaska. Two of the most prominent laborers in Christ's Vineyard were St Innocent Veniaminov and St Jacob Netsvetov, who translated Orthodox services and books into the native languages. Father Jacob Netsvetov died in Sitka in 1864 after a life of devoted service to the Church. Father John Veniaminov, after his wife's death, received monastic tonsure with the name Innocent. He died in 1879 as the Metropolitan of Moscow.

As the nineteenth century was drawing to a close, an event of enormous significance for the North American Church took place. On March 25, 1891, Bishop Vladimir went to Minneapolis to receive St Alexis

Toth (May 7) and 361 of his parishioners into the Orthodox Church. This was the beginning of the return of many “Uniates” to Orthodoxy.

St Tikhon (Belavin), who later was elected Patriarch of Moscow, came to America as bishop of the diocese of the Aleutians and Alaska in September 1898. As the only Orthodox bishop on the continent, St Tikhon traveled extensively throughout North America in order to minister to his widely scattered and diverse flock. He realized that the local church here could not be a permanent extension of the Russian Church. Therefore, he focused his efforts on giving the American Church a diocesan and parish structure which would help it mature and grow.

St Raphael of Brooklyn was the first Orthodox bishop to be consecrated in North America. Born in Beirut, Lebanon, to Damascene Syrian refugee parents, he was consecrated as Bishop of Brooklyn in 1904. His life was spent ministering to his flock, and is well captured in the troparion: *Rejoice, O Father Raphael ... you champion of the true faith, seeker of the lost, consolation of the oppressed, father to orphans, and friend of the poor, peacemaker and good shepherd.* The American lands were also blessed with the ministry of such a saint as John Maximovich, the wonderworking bishop of San Francisco, whose extraordinary life in Christ has affected many people who are still alive today.

Today, as we also remember martyrs of the early centuries, let us also be mindful of the new wave of martyrdom that arises in the Middle East. This is not what we typically expect to happen to us here, in America. Still, as we contemplate the lives of these saints, let us realize that we are not alone, but members of this spiritual family; that we are all called and empowered to follow the same path of holiness; and that a life of faith, hope, and love will always be following in the footsteps of our crucified Master. He told us clearly: **"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world"** (John 16:33).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **An opportunity to follow the Law and the Prophets, the Gospel and the saints.** The Greek monastery in Saxonburg and the Carpatho-Russian parish of St John's (who was contemplating a relocation to Cranberry) have both been hit by the recent storm. The monastery was struck by lighting, which burned down an area and made another uninhabitable. At St. John's the damage is also quite severe—roof, shooting, electrical system ... **WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH US? "In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets"** (Mat 7:12).
- **Fast of the Apostles:** June 12-28 (No meat, no dairy ... Fish allowed on Saturdays and Sundays; some allow fish on all days except Wednesdays and Fridays.)
- **SATURDAY, August 12, Holy Transfiguration Monastery: "Becoming a Better Christian Community Despite Ourselves"** After Divine Liturgy and brunch, Mother Christophora will be speaking to us (and answering our questions) about the experience of forming a monastic community and how it applies to life as a parish.

Remember in your prayers

LIVING: Fr. Ignatius and Amy (expecting baby); Sula; Norma; Richard (Johns); Christine (Abraham); Jim Raimondi (relative of Dollie's); Daniel (Sipos); Venetia (Chrissi's mom); Kent (Jean's husband); Barbara (Dollie's daughter); Maura; Christi, Janet, Ann; John and Mary Ann (Jean's relatives); Stelian (Cezar's father); Ed, Peter, Georgia and Scot; John, Jonathan and Joanna; Andrei; John, Janet, Christy (relatives of Jean); Dennis, Vincent, Roy and Laura, Danny, Cathy (relatives of John and Julie); Derek; Phoebe, Tina. Garrett & Autumn, Benjamin, Matt and Nancy – seeking the true faith.

DEPARTED: Job; George (Georgiades); Marion (cousin of Dollie's),