

SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

www.orthodoxbutler.org

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TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

18 November 2012

— **Tone 7.** Martyr Plato of Ancyra (ca. 306); Martyr Romanus the Deacon, of Cæsarea, and the youth Barulas (303); Martyrs Zacchæus the Deacon and Alphæus, in of Cæsarea of Palestine (303).

FIRST ANTIPHON

*It is good to give praise unto the Lord, and to chant unto Thy Name, O Most High! **R.:** 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 hath girt Himself! **(R.:)** O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead: save us who sing 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! Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead, who sing to Thee: "Alleluia"!

TROPARION OF RESURRECTION (Tone 7): Thou didst shatter death by Thy Cross; Thou didst open Paradise to the thief; Thou didst turn the sadness of the ointment-bearing women into joy, and didst bid Thine Apostles proclaim a warning that Thou hast risen, O Christ, granting to the world great mercy.

TROPARION OF THE ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS (Tone 4): Today is the preview 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!"

Glory ... TROPARION OF SAINT ANTHONY (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.

Now and ever ... KONTAKION OF THE ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS (Tone 4): The sacred treasury of God's holy glory, the greatly precious bridal chamber and Virgin, the Savior's most pure temple, free of stain and undefiled, is brought today to the House of the Lord on this day; and she bringeth with herself the grace of the most divine Spirit. Therefore the angels of God hymn her with songs of praise, for she is truly the heavenly abode.

Remember in your prayers

LIVING: Bill, Ed and family, Peter and family, Georgia and Scot, Richard (Michaels), Karen (Joanna's mother), Victoria (Frank's mother), Diane, Sula, Fran, Dollie, Dolores (Bingham), Angelica, Karyn, Ignatius and Amy, Jonathan and Joanna, Andrei and Nyoka, Jackie (Ed's friend), Leah, Donald, Gregory, Daniel, Nicole, Kera, Julie, Christina, Dustin, Nathan, John, Ryan and Jeremy, Benjamin.

DEPARTED: Lance, Edmund (Ed's uncle), Richard, Dolores Patricia (Thompson), Leatrice (Totin), Ed (Joanna's grandfather), Joseph (Rose's father), Fred (Dollie's uncle), Bob (Diane's father), Michael, Gabriel, Eugenia (Cristina's godmother).

TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

Prokeimenon: *The Lord will give strength unto His people. Bring unto the Lord, ye sons of God; bring unto the Lord glory and honor!*

The Reading is from the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Ephesians
(Eph 2:14-22)

Brethren: Christ is our peace, He who made both groups one and broke down the dividing wall of enmity, through His flesh, abolishing the Law with its commandments and legal claims, in order to create in Himself one new person in place of the two, thus establishing peace, and to reconcile both with God, in one body, through the cross, putting that enmity to death by it. He came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near, for through Him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the capstone. Through Him the whole structure is held together and grows into a temple sacred in the Lord; in Him you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

The two groups that are mentioned in this text are the people of Israel and the Gentiles. For the longest time God had been erecting a fence around Israel, to keep them as his “treasured possession” (Exod 19:5), as the people chosen to know God and bear witness to him before all the families of the earth. With the advent of Christ, however, the dividing wall is abolished, and both groups are joined into the One Church: both Jews and Gentiles, all those who confess that God has visited His people, becoming flesh for our sake. Saint Paul does not insist on the newness that this tearing down of the wall brought *to Israel*; since he is writing to a community of Gentile Christians in Asia Minor, his message is tailored primarily *for us*, former pagans.

We were “far off” from God, and have been given most intimate “access to the Father”; we were “strangers and sojourners,” and are now counted as “fellow citizens with the holy ones.” In short, we have been taken in, adopted into Israel, and God no longer differentiates between Israel, his first born, and

the Gentiles: as long as any Jews or Gentiles are “in Christ,” they are equally part of the people of God.

Of course, the gate of Baptism through which one enters “in one Spirit” into the new reality of the One Church, is merely the beginning. Our calling is to become “a temple sacred in the Lord,” to “grow into a dwelling place of God.” In other words, Jews and Gentiles alike are called to be, individually, what the ancient Temple was: a receptacle and abode of the divine Glory; called to be, individually, what the Theotokos is: a Christ-bearer; or, like the bread and the wine that we bring to the altar, called to be transformed by the Holy Spirit, Who does not shy away from descending upon us and our gifts.

TODAY'S GOSPEL READING

The Reading is from the Gospel according to Saint Luke
(Luke 12:16-21).

The Lord spoke this parable: “The land of a rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ And he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones; and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.’ But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.” As He said this, Jesus called out, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

The man in today’s Gospel receives a very harsh verdict from God: “you *fool!*” What was so foolish in what he had done? The land had given him good crops—a blessing, something to be happy and thankful about! The man had started to plan an expansion of his storage facilities, so as to be ready for the abundant crop. This, too, is a good thing; it would have been foolish *not* to have acted in this way. So far, the man should be praised, not called a fool.

In fact, the parable does not say that God objected to any of the good and reasonable things the man did. There is something else, however, that is “foolish.” The man seems to have measured his calling as a human being with only one measure: wealth. He says, “Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry!”

This is foolish: to think that one's "soul", one's deepest longing, can be satisfied with grains or gold or eating and drinking. It is foolish, first, because we are "wired" in such a way that the meaning of who we are is found in God. We are made "after the image of God"—that is, in relation to a godly prototype; and God has placed in us the thirst for eternity. No amount of earthly goods can fill our deep longing; and looking for all kinds of substitutes for God only leads to a pathological craving and abuse of wealth, power, and pleasure. It is foolish.

"God" is not confined to "religion"; He is, rather, present in all aspects of our lives. One sure way to experience God is by extending ourselves to our neighbor. Here we see that the man acted foolishly because he completely left out his fellow humans. **"Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years"** suggests that wealth was to him a matter of *him* enjoying *his* little fortune. But don't we know that the tastiest meal is a *shared* meal? The Gospel hints at another possible use of wealth when it says **"This night your soul is required of you. Now, the things you have prepared, whose will they be?"**

If the man had included his neighbor in his elaborate management plan, wealth would have become an asset. Whatever is shared enriches our soul—and it is our soul, our heart, that stands before the Lord in judgment.

We hear this Gospel today, on the first Sunday of the Nativity Fast. It is a reminder that fasting cannot be divorced from opening ourselves up for God and for our neighbor. To fast without seeking God is to completely miss the point. Let's not be foolish

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: Liturgy will be followed by Trisagion prayers for Lance Shaeffer.

Saturday, 24 Nov: VESPERS, 6:30pm.

Sunday, 25 Nov: CHOIR PRACTICE, 9:15am, LITURGY 10am

FOOD FOR HUNGRY PEOPLE: please remember that we are collecting non-perishable items (cans, etc), to be donated to the Society of St. Vincent DePaul, which will distribute them directly to the needy persons of Butler. There is a special collection for Thanksgiving.

“Make ready, O Bethlehem, for Eden has been opened for all!”

LEARNING THEOLOGY FROM THE ANCIENT HYMNS



The poetry of the early Church was never “just art.” Over two millennia and up to this day, the sacred hymns composed by ancient Christians have been opening the treasures of Holy Scripture to all those who hunger for the living God. Indeed, hymns are theology—even the first, deepest, and most beautiful theology of the Christian Church.

We invite you to join us as we gather to learn from the ancient hymns of Nativity on **Sunday, 2 December 2012, 1-3pm**. There will be an audio-video presentation followed by Q&A.

Everyone is welcome!

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*For directions or if you have questions, please visit our website
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