

SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

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The 38th Sunday after Pentecost (13 February 2011)

Apostles Aquila and Priscilla; Venerable Martinian of Palestine (422); Eulogios, patriarch of Alexandria (608); Venerable Simeon Nemanja, prince of Serbia and founder of Hilandar monastery on Athos (1200).

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! (Refrain)

Upright is the Lord our God and there is no unrighteousness in Him (Refrain)

Glory... Now and ever... (Refrain)

SECOND ANTIPHON

The Lord is King, He is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength and hath girt Himself! Refrain: Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead, who sing to Thee, "Alleluia"!

For He established the world which shall not be shaken! (Refrain)

Holiness befits Thy house, O Lord, unto length of days! (Refrain)

Glory... Now and ever... (Only begotten Son and Word of God ...)

THIRD ANTIPHON AND LITTLE ENTRANCE

THE BEATITUDES

*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 THE RESURRECTION (Tone 5): Let us, believers, praise and worship the Word co-eternal 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 SAINT MARTINIAN (Tone 8): Thou didst quench the flames of passion, O blessed one, with abundant tears; thou didst calm the waves of the sea and didst check the assaults of wild beasts, saying: most blessed are Thou, almighty God, for Thou hast saved me from the flame and storm!

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 THE PHARISEE AND PUBLICAN (Tone 4): Let us flee from the boasting of the Pharisee and learn the heights of humility from the words of the publican! Let us cry out in repentance: "O Savior of the world, be gracious to Thy servants!"

LIVING: We pray for the health and well being of **Bill, Sula, Nancy, Dolores (Sipos), Dolores (Bingham), Angelica, Diane, Karyn, Rodolphe, Brian, Maria, Marius, Justin**, the hieromonk **Alexander**, and the baby **Christina**.

DEPARTED: **Michael, William, Mariana, James, Mary Ann, Joseph, Katherine**.

TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

Prokeimenon:

Pray and make your vows unto the Lord your God. In Judah is God known.

The Reading is 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 the lazy, not for weak souls, 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, however, 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*.

If Christianity is not for the lazy, not for weak souls, and not for the 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

The Reading is 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!** But 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

- Vespers on Saturday 2/20 at **6:30 pm!**
- House blessings can still be scheduled in the weeks remaining before the beginning of Great Lent.
- **Sunday, February 27:** Pan-Orthodox Divine Liturgy at Sts. Peter and Paul, followed by a Meatfare Luncheon at the Ukrainian Hall.

The last day to turn in ticket information is 20 February. Tickets are \$10.00 for over 12 years of age; \$5.00 7 to 12 years of age; and 6 and under free. Coffee will be provided by SS Peter and Paul. Each parish is asked to bring some 2 liter bottles of soda and 3 deserts. There will be a raffle, door prizes and gifts for the children. Setup will be done on 25 February 25 around 10 am. Our tickets will be delivered at Vespers on the 12th.

During Lent, weekday services will be held alternatively at the three Orthodox churches in Butler. Here is the complete schedule:

Mo-Fri 3/7-10, 6pm: Canon (M-Th) and Presanct. Lit. (Fri) *at St. Andrew*
Wed 3/16, 6pm: Presanctified Liturgy *at Sts Peter and Paul*
Wed 3/23, 6pm: Presanctified Liturgy *at St. Anthony*
Fri 3/26, 5pm: Vespers *at Sts. Peter and Paul*
(followed by a meal provided by the parish)
Wed 3/30, 6pm: Presanctified Liturgy *at St. Andrew*
Wed 4/6, 6pm: Presanctified Liturgy *at Sts Peter and Paul*
Th 4/7, 6pm: Great Canon *at St. Andrew*
Wed 4/13, 6pm: Presanctified Liturgy *at St. Anthony*

Holy Week and Pascha will be celebrated in our respective parishes.