

# SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



## Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

[www.orthodoxbutler.org](http://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](mailto:frbogdan@orthodoxbutler.org)

## TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

28 August 2016

*TONE 1—Ven. Moses the Ethiopian of Scete (ca. 400). Martyr Susanna, Princess of Georgia (5th c.). Righteous Anna the Prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, who met the Lord at the Temple (1st c.). Martyrs Diomedes, Damon and Laurence*

### FIRST ANTIPHON

*Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, in His holy mountain. Refrain: Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us! Thou art girt about with power, and Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment. (R:) The mountains shall rejoice at the presence of the Lord, for He cometh; yea, He is come to judge the earth. (R:) Glory... Now and ever... (R:)*

### SECOND ANTIPHON

*The Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwelling of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God! Refrain: Save us, O Son of God, Who wast transfigured on Mount Tabor, who sing to Thee. Alleluia. His foundations are in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. (R:) Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. (R:) Zion is our mother, a man shall say, and such a man was born in her; and the Most High Himself hath established her. (R:) Glory... Now and ever... (Only begotten Son ...)*

### 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 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 THE BIRTH OF THE THEOTOKOS (Tone 4): By thy holy nativity, O pure one, Joachim and Anna were delivered from the reproach of barrenness; and Adam and Eve were delivered from the corruption of death; thy people do celebrate it, having been saved from the stain of iniquity, crying unto thee: The barren doth give birth to the Theotokos, who nourisheth our life.

## TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

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

### *From Saint Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians*

(1 Cor 4:9-16) **Brethren: God has exhibited us Apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill clad and buffeted and homeless; and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become, and are now, as the refuse of the world, the off scouring of all things. I do not write this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the Gospel. I urge you, then, become imitators of me.**

The ministry of the Holy Apostles, as laid out by the Lord, was to bring the Good News to the entire world, and to make disciples of any and all who would taste the new life in Christ. Of course, "making disciples" is more than providing information or organizing disciplined battalions of followers; it means sharing the life of those who are being "made disciples" and gradually reshaping them in the image and likeness of a living model.

This is what the followers of the Lord experienced in their three years of following Jesus Christ, and, after Pentecost, in their new experience of the Risen Christ made present through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Apostles received the mandate to bring others into this spiritual fellowship with the Risen Lord: to make anyone willing a disciple—a disciple of Christ! And Saint Paul writes: Even if you should have countless guides to Christ, yet you do not have many fathers, for I became your father in Christ Jesus through the Gospel. Therefore, I urge you, be imitators of me. But why does Paul urge the Corinthians to imitate him? Why not "imitate Christ"? And why does he speak of himself as their father? Let us note, first, that in the same letter, the Apostle writes: **Be imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ** (1 Cor 11:1). Even in today's Epistle, Saint Paul compares "guide to Christ" to "father in Christ": both "guide" and "father" are explained, specifically, in relation to Christ! It is understood that a "guide to Christ" leads not to Paul, but to Christ.

So also with spiritual fatherhood: this much more intimate relation also results in making Paul's disciples into children of Christ. Christian discipleship today occurs in parishes and monasteries. **Each according to his own gift, one in this manner, and another in that**, as the Holy Apostle writes elsewhere (1 Cor 7:7). Even though we have few reliable guides to Christ today, and even fewer fathers in Christ, God will always provide for those who seek him earnestly, and whoever wants to be saved will be given the proper avenue of discipleship. The Lord promised to be with us always, unto the end of the ages.

## TODAY'S GOSPEL READING

### *From the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*

(Mat 17:14-23) At that time, a man came up to Jesus and kneeling before Him said, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and he suffers terribly; for often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. And I brought him to Thy disciples, and they could not heal him." And Jesus answered, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him here to me." And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured instantly. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" Jesus said to them, "Because you have no faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you. This kind never comes out except by prayer and fasting." As they were traveling together through Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and He will rise on the third day."

As always, we look at today's Gospel not only for its "story"—the miraculous healing of a demon-possessed child two thousand years ago—but for what it says about us and *our* state *today*. It is noteworthy that the tortured existence of that child, as well as the shocking inability of the Apostles to provide healing (they are themselves puzzled about the incident) are due, the Lord says, to lack of faith. And it is about faith and its transformative power that Christ speaks to his disciples "in private," after the healing. We learn that "nothing is impossible" once we learn to live in faith.

What exactly is "faith," then? Let us remember, first, that today's Gospel text follows immediately after the Transfiguration. It is there, on Mount Tabor, that three of the disciples have seen Christ in the blazing light of his glory. That "the boy was cured instantly" is not surprising if we remember just *Who* it is that touched him: the Lord of glory, the Light and Life of the world. And we should also note that the Church sees the transfigured Christ as an image of what God intends for the restored humanity of the age to come.

What about us here and now, in the meantime—living as fallen creatures in this fallen world, even as we confess in the Creed, that we "look for the Resurrection and the life of the age to come"? The Gospel proclaims that the Kingdom of God has *already* dawned; we *already* experience a measure of the new reality, in which "God is with us, with His grace and love of mankind" (the priest proclaims this in the prayer following the main meal of the day). Miracles are the "normal" of the Kingdom to come, shining through, even for a single moment, in the fallen world. The key is faith.

Faith is the medium through which a glimpse of the Kingdom of Heaven can be received in our everyday lives. Indeed, it is *faith* that allows us to experience the healing power of Christ (and lack of faith prevents it, as we see with the Lord's disciples today).

To prevent us from misunderstanding faith as a search for magical superpowers, today's Gospel reading ends with the truth that undergirds our faith, hope, and love: **"The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and He will rise on the third day."** We remember this every time we are called to draw near *with faith* to receive the Body of Christ, so as to taste the power and glory of the Resurrection even here and now.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Last Sunday's picnic** was a beautiful and pleasant time of fellowship. Heartfelt thanks to Dollie, our host, to Chrissi, our event coordinator, to Ed—*Grillmaster Extraordinaire*—and to all who have worked hard so that we would kick back, relax, and rejoice.

**Monday, September 5: Christine Abraham** hosts a Labor Day picnic, starting 1 pm, on her property (142 Hoffmann Lane, in Renfrew, PA). Everyone is invited, there will be music and good food.

**Saturday, September 10, 2-6 pm: Byzantine Chant Workshop.** Amy Hogg from St. George in Pittsburgh offered to introduce anyone interested and willing to Byzantine chant by using her method of teaching music, which apparently allows for much faster progress. The plan is to begin with this “crash course” and then continue with regular lessons as we can.

**Sunday, September 18: Sunday: Pan-Orthodox Liturgy** and picnic at the OCA Pavilion (8641 Peters Road, Cranberry Township, PA). Our three Orthodox churches in Butler/ Lyndora will celebrate Liturgy together in Cranberry and continue with fun, food, and fellowship. We will also gather with the people in our Cranberry outreach, who will now end the series of Sunday Liturgies at the pavilion and seek for an indoor space to continue.

**Cranberry offering:** A basket for freewill offerings to our Cranberry outreach is placed next to “People in Need” box at the entrance to the church. We are trying to offset the 10% loss that the Cranberry group incurs by sending their Sunday collection to St. Anthony's (we give 10% of all incoming money to the Archdiocese).

**Sunday, October 9, 3:30 pm, Butler Country Club: Retirement Celebration Banquet for Fr. Joseph Wargo, who ends his 40-year ministry as pastor of St. Andrew Orthodox Church. 35 dollars/ adult (11 for children). RSVP by September 25 to Nicole Rogos (700 Saxony Dr., Seven Fields, PA 16046); checks should be made out to St Andrew Orthodox Church.**

### *Remember in your prayers*

**LIVING:** newly ordained priest Paul Abernathy (FOCUS Pittsburgh); Job; Tina (John & Julie's daughter); Ann; Mary Ann (Jean's daughter); Dottie; 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), 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); 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).