

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

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

3 August 2017

TONE 4— *St. Phœbe, Deaconess at Cenchreæ near Corinth (1st c.). Martyr Basilissa of Nicomedia (309). Martyr Aristion, Bishop of Alexandria (2nd c.). Hieromartyr Anthimus, Bishop of Nicomedia, and those with him (302). Ven. Theoctistus, fellow ascetic with Ven. Euthymius the Great (467). St. Joannicius, Archbishop of Serbia (1349). Blessed John “the Hairy”, Fool-for-Christ at Rostov (1580).*

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 ...)

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”!

RESURRECTION TROPARION (Tone 4): Having learned the joyful message of the Resurrection from the angel, the women disciples cast from them their parental condemnation, and proudly broke the news to the disciples, saying: "Death hath been spoiled. Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy!"

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: *How magnified are Thy works, O Lord; in Wisdom hast Thou made them all.
Bless the Lord, O my soul!*

From Saint Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians

(1 Cor 16:13-24) **Brethren: be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. Now, brethren, you know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints; I urge you to be subject to such men and to every fellow worker and laborer. I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicos, because they have made up for your absence; for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. Give recognition to such men. The churches of Asia send greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord. All the brethren send greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss. I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus, Amen!**

Like any letter, this epistle to the Christians in Corinth shows a number of very personal elements: there are references to specific persons known to the addressee and the addressor (and whom we have no way of knowing), personal greetings are conveyed, and there is even an invitation to acknowledge the authenticity of this letter: **"I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand."**

And yet, there are things in this passage that remain valid over the centuries, even for us today. **"Be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong!"** Indeed, an essential part of our Christian life is growing in courage. Already by the end of the first century, in an anonymous writing called "The Shepherd," one finds the following dialogue between a Christian and his guiding angel on the topic of fear and courage: *"Listen to me for a moment. Man is eager to keep the commandments of God, and there is no one who does not ask of the Lord that strength may be given him for these commandments. But the devil is hard, and holds sway over them. The angel replied: The devil goes to all the servants of God to try them. As many as are full in the faith resist him strongly, and he withdraws from them, having no way by which he might enter them. He goes to the empty, and finding a way of entrance into them, he produces in them whatever he wishes. But I, the angel of repentance, say to you: Do not fear not the devil; for I was sent to be with you who repent with all your heart, to make you strong in faith. If you return to the Lord with all your heart, and practise righteousness the rest of your days, He will heal your former sins, and you will have power to hold sway over the works of the devil. But as to the threats of the devil, fear them not at all, for he is powerless as the sinews of a dead man. But fear the Lord, for fearing the Lord you will have dominion over the devil."*

So, the icy, paralyzing fright and the phantasms sown by the evil one will be driven out by our taking refuge in God, our Maker and Redeemer. We speak of "fear of God" because all the patriarchs and prophets and saints testify to this. "Fear of God" comes from the fact that, like the prodigal son, we have been hiding and running away for such a long time—since Adam! And yet, the fear of God is mixed with a sense of being summoned by Him, called and asked to come and see and touch and taste something truly amazing, truly beautiful and good for us.

Our patron saint, Anthony the Great, teaches that fear of God will in due time teach us love. Saint Anthony gave witness: *I no longer fear God, but love Him!* Above all, let this word from today's Epistle accompany us: **"Let all that you do be done in love."** There are so many reasons and goals for what we do, many of them honorable, justified, important. In Church, however, our actions are measured in this way only: all that we do should be done with love.

TODAY'S GOSPEL READING

From the Holy Gospel according to Matthew

(Mat 21:33-42) The Lord spoke this parable: "There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country. When the season of fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants, to get his fruit; and the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did the same to them. Afterward he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.' And they took him and cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons." Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?'"

To the hearers of this parable, the meaning of what the Lord said was pretty clear: a few verses after the end of the parable, it says, "Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, *they perceived that He was speaking of them.*" How was he speaking of them?

In short: the landowner is God, the vineyard is the revelation to the people of Israel, the vinedressers are the religious establishment of Israel, the servants sent out by the landowner are the prophets sent by God to Israel. And the son of the landowner, as you probably guessed, is the Son of God, Jesus himself. Understood in this way, the parable is a strong indictment of the hardheartedness with which Israel's priests and theologians kept opposing the proclamation of the Good News, and their killing the messenger rather than to accept the message and be transformed into children of God.

For us, today, however, the parable is no less relevant. Where are we in this parable? The parable pushes us to determine our place in this story. Are we the servants of God, sent out to extend the Liturgy into our daily lives and our interaction with family, friends, neighbors? Or are we those who fancied themselves owners of the vineyard, and who set themselves against God? We must never forget that the Christian Church—the living organism where we gradually change course, repent, and accept God's work in us—is not something we can take credit for or boast about. If "it is marvelous in our eyes", it is because "this was the Lord's doing"! The cornerstone of the Church is Jesus Christ, his coming from God, his becoming man, his suffering, death, and resurrection.

Everything is here as a gift from God, to be received with open heart, like a child: take, eat, see that the Lord is good; rejoice, and pass it on.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Saturday-Sunday, September 9-10: services at the Cranberry Outreach

- Sun 9:30 AM: Akathist "Glory to God for all things" and Divine Liturgy

Saturday-Sunday, September 16-17: services at St. Anthony's in Butler

- Sat, 6:30 PM: Great Vespers; Sun, 9:15 AM: Matins and Divine Liturgy

Saturday-Sunday, September 23-24: services at the Cranberry Outreach

- Sat, 6 PM: Great Vespers; Sun, 9:30 AM: Akathist "Glory to God for all things" and Divine Liturgy
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Saturday-Sunday, September 30-October 1: services at St. Anthony's in Butler

- Sat, 6:30 PM: Great Vespers; Sun, 9:15 AM: Matins and Divine Liturgy

WEEKDAY FEASTS IN SEPTEMBER

Friday, 9/ 8: Nativity of the Theotokos. Fr. Bogdan is unable to leave Pittsburgh. Please attend services either at one of the Orthodox churches in Lyndora, or at the “Nativity of the Theotokos” monastery in Saxonburg (Liturgy, 9AM).

Thursday, 9/ 14: Elevation of the Holy Cross. Please attend services at one of the Orthodox churches in Lyndora,

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As we begin the New Church Year and enjoy the U.S. Labor Day holiday, we are all aware of many people who are in dire need following the devastation and on-going flooding, caused by Hurricane Harvey in Southeastern Texas. We pray for all people's “deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger and necessity,” and we look to take part in the recovery and the rebuilding of people's lives with our efforts and the help of the International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) in this hard-hit region of the United States. Here is what we propose:

FIRST, St. Anthony's and the Cranberry Outreach, together, will do their best to respond to the call of our hierarch, Metropolitan Joseph: “As people of God and the Church of Christ, we feel compelled to help our brothers and sisters in need. Therefore, I am asking every parish and mission of the archdiocese to appeal to their faithful and hold special collections throughout the month of September so that we can alleviate a little of the pain and suffering the good people of that area are enduring.” **Please bring your offerings to our worship services in the month of September, and we will send our month total to the relief efforts.**

SECOND, St. Anthony's and the Cranberry Outreach look to schedule one hour on one Sunday a month from now until Nativity to come together (and invite the community around us) to make simple “Cleaning Kits” and “Health Kits” and to ship those kits to IOCC for distribution in Texas to aid in the rebuilding and recovery efforts. **Please look for upcoming dates and mark your calendar to join us for worship and stay afterward to work together to assemble these kits.**

These two simple acts will help us to “not consider our riches as belonging to us alone; but permits us to open wide our hand to those who are in need; assist those in poverty and pain; and comfort those who have fallen into extreme distress; console those who are in sorrow or oppressed with bodily maladies, and the want of necessities...” (St. Cyril of Alexandria).

We hope you, your friends, and your family will join us in this effort as we pray and offer a blessing to those in need and do our part to bring much-needed assistance to so many.

God is with us, with His grace and love of mankind, always, now and ever.

In Christ,

Fr. Bogdan, Martie Johnson Jr., Frank Harrison, Tom Wolenski

Remember in your prayers

LIVING: David (Maureen's brother); Fr. Anthony Yazge (widowed and seriously ill); Fr. Ignatius and Amy and newborn baby Joseph; Sula; Norma; Richard (Johns); Christine (Abraham); 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, Danny, Cathy (relatives of John and Julie); Derek; Phoebe, Tina.

Garrett & Autumn – to be received in the Church (St Nicholas [OCA], Mckeesport);

Matt and Nancy – to be received in the Orthodox Church (Holy Trinity [Greek], Wexford);

DEPARTED: Jim and Marion (Raimondi); Stephanie (Yazge); Job; George (Georgiades).