

# 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: 724.287.6893 (church); 412.390.8208 (priest);

[frbogdan@orthodoxbutler.org](mailto:frbogdan@orthodoxbutler.org)

## SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST 1 October 2017

**TONE 8**—Apostle Ananias of the Seventy, first bishop of Damascus (1st c.). Ven. Romanus the Melodist (“Sweet-singer”—5th c.). Martyr Domninus of Thessalonica (4th c.). Martyr Michael, Abbot in Armenia, and 36 Fathers with him (780-790). Ven. John (Koukouzelis) the Hymnographer of Mt. Athos (Albanian—12th c.). The Protection (Pokrov) of our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary.

### 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”!*

TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION (Tone 8): From the heights Thou didst descend, O compassionate One, and Thou didst submit to the three-day burial, that Thou might deliver us from passion; Thou art our life and our Resurrection, O Lord, glory to Thee.

TROPARION OF SAINT ROMANOS THE MELODIST (Tone 4): Thou didst gladden the Church of Christ by thy melodies, like an inspired heavenly trumpet. Thou wast enlightened by the Mother of God and didst shine on the world as God’s poet. We lovingly honor thee, O righteous Romanos!

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 ORDINARY SUNDAYS (Tone 4): O protection of Christians that cannot be put to shame, mediation unto the Creator most constant, O despise not the suppliant voices of those who have sinned; but be thou quick, O good one, to come unto our aid, who in faith cry unto thee: Hasten to intercession, and speed thou to make supplication, thou who dost ever protect, O Theotokos, them that honor thee.

*The feast of the “Protection (Pokrov) of the Theotokos” receives little attention in Orthodox Churches of the Byzantine tradition; in Slavic Orthodoxy, by contrast, this is a great solemnity. The commemoration itself stems from a wonderful event which took place in Constantinople of old, in the Church of the Blachernae, which is one of the two main temples dedicated to the Theotokos. During an all-night vigil, the Mother of God was seen by St Andrew the fool-for-Christ, extending her protection over all of the faithful. This vision was given to the faithful during the time when Slavic invasions were threatening the City. This vision is what we commemorate; however, the service for this commemoration was only written much later, in the twelfth century. At that time, St Andrew Bogoliubov, Grand Prince of Vladimir, expressed his gratitude to the Mother of God for her protection during the time of Tatar invasions by composing the akolouthia for the feast of Pokrov. This explains why it is so solemnly kept by the Slavic churches: they, who were the invaders, now take their place among the faithful.*

## TODAY’S APOSTLE READING

Prokeimenon: *Make your vows to the Lord your God! In Judah God is known.*

### *From Saint Paul’s Second Epistle to the Corinthians*

(2 Cor 6:16-7:1) Brethren, we are the temple of the living God; as God said, “I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters,” says the Lord Almighty. Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God!

How realistic is God’s command that we “**cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit**”? How can we “**make holiness perfect**”? Before answering, let us remember the similarly radical words of the Divine Liturgy: “the holy things are for *those who are holy!*”

God seems to require *the impossible!* True. But it is also true that if we are thinking of God “over there” making such requirements of us “over here”—well, then we are misunderstanding our faith. Let us start with the Orthodox confession of faith: “God became man, so that man may be deified.” He did not simply order us to “be like God,” but rather came among us, became one of us, so as to lead the way to God; and He sent the Holy Spirit to “dwell in us” and assist us on the way.

It is true that the Liturgy proclaims “the holy things are for the holy”; but we also hear at Liturgy, “*You – that is God – are our sanctification.*” And the Apostle begins by telling us that we are temples of the living God, and that God lives and moves in us. Not some lofty *concept* of God or some pious emotions, but the living God, the fire unconsumed who comes to purify, enlighten, and transform us.

Yes, God demands the impossible. But He is himself at work in us, to make the impossible possible—to cleanse us from every defilement of body and spirit” and to perfect His holiness in us. The point is simply to allow Him to live and move in us. And the first step is to receive the gift of God Himself given to us in the Holy Eucharist: *Receive the Body of Christ, taste the fountain of immortality!*

## TODAY'S GOSPEL READING

### *From the Holy Gospel according to Luke*

(Luke 6:31-36) The Lord said: "As you wish that men would do to you, do so to them. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

Our relationship with God and our relationship with fellow-humans are two sides of the same reality. Scripture speaks plainly. In the Old Testament: "I desire mercy, not sacrifice!" (Hosea 6:6); and in the New Testament: "if you don't love your brother, whom you see, how can you imagine to love God, whom you don't see?" (1 John 4:20). In today's Gospel these two dimensions our Christian life are again brought together. To paraphrase the last line of our text: "Be merciful to your fellow-humans, just as God is a merciful Father to you!" And just how merciful should we be? The Gospel calls for a measure of mercy that seems, at first, unreasonable: be merciful like God, forgive like God forgives, love like God loves. Clearly, this is anything but easy; actually, it is impossible! In fact, the Gospel does recognize that most of the things that Christ asks of us are impossible for any human being. However, if the standard is so high for Christians, it is because we ought to have learned that God has come to dwell among us, in order to live in us, and make the impossible possible.

We are not called to manufacture and squeeze out some of "our" mercy and love towards others. Rather, we are called to share a Gift that we have ourselves in abundance: to pass on and extend the mercy of God—the mercy received at Baptism, which we continue to receive as our daily bread from God. It is because we have been forgiven that we are able to forgive, it is because God is merciful to us that we become free and able to extend His mercy to others.

"Mercy": it is hard to find a word more frequently used in our services. If there is anything we ask of God, it surely is mercy. Sometimes we even repeat "Lord, have mercy!" twelve times or forty times—not that God really needs such constant and insistent reminders, but to make sure that we understand how much we are in need of God's mercy.

### *Remember in your prayers*

*LIVING: David (Maureen's brother); Fr. Anthony Yazge; 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, Cathy (relatives of John and Julie); Derek; Phoebe, Tina.*

*Garrett & Autumn – to be received in the Church (St Nicholas [OCA], Mckeessport);  
Matt and Nancy – to be received in the Orthodox Church (Holy Trinity [Greek], Wexford);*

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

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**TODAY:** Start of “Sunday School for Adults” (30 mins with Martie)

**Next Sunday (9/24):** Divine Liturgy will be at St. Kilian’s.

### **Saint Anthony’s and Cranberry Outreach Relief Effort for the Victims of Hurricane Harvey and people in need in Haiti and Syria**

(1) **Extra Collection:** The supplemental collection will be sent to the Antiochian Archdiocese. If you are writing a check, please make the check out to the ANTIOCHIAN ARCHDIOCESE of NORTH AMERICA, and in the “memo” section of your check write: “Hurricane Harvey”.

#### (2) **Health Kit & Cleaning Kit Assembly / Drop-off Days**

- September 24 - Benefiting Texas
- October 22 - Benefiting Texas
- November 19th - Benefiting Haiti
- December 17th - Benefiting Syria

St. Anthony’s & The Cranberry Outreach will send our boxes of assembled kits once a month, from September to December. The kits will be either assembled at home and collected at church, or assembled at church after Liturgy (your option) on the dates below and shipped to IOCC. IOCC will then route our kits to where we have designated for distribution.

(3) **SAT, Nov. 4:** HURRICANE RELIEF RUMMAGE SALE at St. Anthony's. INFO: See Seba (“Butchie”).

### **LITURGICAL SCHEDULE FOR THE UPCOMING WEEKS**

#### **Saturday-Sunday, October 7-8: services at the Cranberry Outreach**

Sat, 6 pm: Great Vespers followed by music practice (Deacon Abraham)

Sun, 9:15 am: Akathist “Glory to God for all things” and Divine Liturgy

#### **Saturday-Sunday, October 14-15: services at St. Anthony’s in Butler**

Sat, 6:30 pm: Great Vespers; Sun, 9:15 am: Matins and Divine Liturgy

#### **Saturday-Sunday, October 21-22: services at the Cranberry Outreach**

Sat, 6:30 pm: Great Vespers & Intro to Orthodoxy;

Sun, 9:15 am: Matins and Divine Liturgy.

#### **Saturday-Sunday, October 28-29: services at St. Anthony’s in Butler**

Sat, 6:30 pm: Great Vespers; Sun, 9:15 am: Matins and Divine Liturgy