

# ORTHODOX CRANBERRY: A Pastoral Outreach of St. Anthony Orthodox Church

## 24 September 2017

[www.orthodoxcranberry.org](http://www.orthodoxcranberry.org); [facebook.com/orthodoxcranberry](https://facebook.com/orthodoxcranberry)  
Fr. Bogdan Bucur: 412.390.8208; [frbogdan@orthodoxbutler.org](mailto:frbogdan@orthodoxbutler.org)

**tone 7** —16<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST. Holy Protomartyr and Equal-to-the-Apostles Thecla (1st c.). Ven. Copres of Palestine (530). St. Vladislav of Serbia (1230-39). Holy New Martyrs of Alaska, Hieromonk Juvenaly (ca. 1796) and Peter the Aleut (1815). Ven. Silouan of Mt. Athos (1938).

### 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 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.)

### LITTLE ENTRANCE AND HYMNS

**O, 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 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 SAINT THEKLA THE PROTO-MARTYR (Tone 3): O glorious Thekla, companion of Paul the divine, thou wast enflamed with the love of thy Creator, by the teaching of the divine preacher. Thou didst despise the passing earthly pleasures, and offered thyself to God as an acceptable and pleasing sacrifice, disregarding all suffering. Intercede with Christ thy Groom to grant us His great mercy.

TROPARION OF SAINT SILOUAN THE ATHONITE (Tone 3): Having knowledge of the Holy Spirit, thou didst attain to Adam's lamentation and didst yearn after Christ insatiably. Keeping thy mind steadfastly in hell thou didst show love for us men that was past nature. Holy Father Silouan, ever pray unto God that we be granted great mercy!

TROPARION FOR THE HOLY MARTYRS OF ALASKA (Russian): By prayer thou didst receive Christ as thy teacher in the way of humility, and the Spirit bore witness to salvation in thy heart. Wherefore, all peoples called unto hope rejoice in this day of thy memorial, O sacred Father Silouan. Pray unto Christ our God for the salvation of our souls.

TROPARION OF ANTHONY THE GREAT (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.

## EPISTLE READING

---

Prokeimenon: *God is wondrous among His saints. Bless ye God in the congregations.*

### *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 weak souls, not for the lazy, 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. The Apostle knew from his own experience of being maligned, threatened, attacked, beaten up, that **"all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."** But he also knew that our struggle is not so much a physical as with spiritual struggle against spiritual enemies.

For us today, here in the U.S., 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*.

Christianity is not for the lazy, and not for cowards. But Christ the Lord is both leading the way and sharing our yoke. Let us redouble our efforts in fighting the good fight, the fight against the tyranny of our own sins and weaknesses and failings!

## GOSPEL READING

---

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

(Luke 5:1-11) **At that time, Jesus was standing by the lake of Gennesaret. And he saw two boats by the lake; but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, Jesus asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. And when Jesus had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets." And when they had done this, they enclosed a great shoal of fish; and as their nets were breaking, they beckoned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, sons of Zeb'edee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; henceforth you will be catching men." And when they had brought their boats to land, I they left everything and followed him.**

The fishermen kindly allowed Jesus to use one of their boats for his preaching; however, when he asked Simon Peter to go fishing, they must have thought to themselves that this stranger had overstepped the boundaries of his authority and competence. They knew that it is easier to fish at night, when the fish move up shallower. **"We toiled**

**all night and took nothing!":** a very polite way of suggesting that the carpenter-turned-preacher should perhaps confine himself to his preaching, since he obviously didn't know much about fishing.

Nevertheless, Peter is willing to do what the Lord says. And his humility is recompensed beyond expectation. The catch is so rich that the boats are close to sinking. This is when Peter, in a flash of insight, understands that in his poor fishing boat he has come face to face with *the Lord*—He who commanded and it came to be; the maker and sustainer of all creation.

We can learn quite a few things from this Gospel. First, that we should allow God to “borrow” this and that and the other part of our life, just as Peter allowed Christ to use his boat. Second, that God is always going to ask for increasingly more control over one's life, just as he went from using Peter's boat to telling him when and where and how to do his job. In the end, one comes to realize, as the saying goes, “if God is your copilot, switch seats!” Faith and humility—that is, ceding increasingly more room for God to work in us—is not about some cultish self-annihilation of personality. In small and in great things, living with God yields rich fruit: in the midst of trials and tribulations, in this our valley of tears, the fruit we are craving: peace, joy, love, and the beauty of knowing that our existence is truly meaningful.

The heart of our Gospel, however, is Saint Peter's word to the Lord: **"Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man."** It is only in this way that our journey can truly begin. The prophet Micah (6:8) wrote in this respect, “He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to *walk humbly with your God?*” To *walk humbly with God* means that we always remember just *who* it is that stands before us. When we pray, we learn from the very words of prayer: **“with boldness and without condemnation we dare to call upon You, the heavenly God, as Father.”** The more difficult part is to know that at all time it is no less than God, the Lord, who stands in from of us. As for Peter, the presence of the Lord, is overwhelming, awe-inspiring, fearsome. We are all, without a single exception, broken vessels, sinful people, surely not a “fitting” place for the Lord to visit. Yet, this is precisely why our faith is called the Gospel, that is “the Good News”: the Lord has come to be with us, has mingled God's holiness with our very lowliness, has truly come to seek us out.

Simon Peter and the others **left everything and followed Him**, and have also brought this Good News to many others. Today, it has reached us. Will we allow our lives to be touched and changed by the Lord's visitation? Will we at least lend him our hearing?

**St. Silouan:** *“To believe that God exists is one thing; to know God is another”; “The Lord created man that we might live and bask in Him for ever – that we might be with Him and in Him. And the Lord desires to be with us Himself, and in us. But when pride causes us to withdraw from Him, it means that of our own accord we deliver ourselves up to suffering. Anguish of heart, dejection and evil thoughts lacerate us.” “Keep your mind in hell and do not despair”*

St. Silouan's disciple, **Elder Sophrony** explains: *“What does it mean - to 'keep the mind in hell'? Can it be that we are to use our imagination to conjure up circumstances for ourselves similar to those figured in some primitive painting? In this instance, no. Father Silouan, like certain great Fathers - St. Antony, St. Sisoë, St. Makarios, St. Pimen - during his lifetime actually descended into the darkness and torments of hell They did this not once but over and over again until their hearts were so permeated that they were able to repeat the movement at will. They took refuge in it when passion - especially that most subtle of passions, pride - reared its head. The struggle against pride is, in fact, the final stage in the battle against the passions. To begin with, the ascetic must wrestle with the greater passions of the flesh, then with irritability and, finally, pride. This last combat is undoubtedly the most painful of all. Taught by long experience that pride leads to loss of grace, the ascetic consciously descends into hell where every passion is 'seared with a hot iron'. Ultimately this state is impossible to describe—one can only really know it by experience.”*

**Saint Peter the Aleut** We know very little about Saint Peter, except that he was from Kodiak, and was arrested and was among fourteen Aleuts imprisoned by the Spaniards in California. The Franciscans were forcing all of them to accept baptism in the Catholic Faith, but the Aleuts would not agree under any circumstances, saying, ‘We are Christians.’ Then the Aleuts were placed in prisons, two to a cell. Then the Jesuits began to torture them, at first the one while his companion was a witness. They cut off one of the joints of his feet, and then the other joint. Then they cut the first joint on the fingers of his hands, and then the other joint. Then they cut off his feet, and his hands. The blood flowed, but the martyr endured all and firmly repeated one thing: “I am a Christian.’ (This story was related by a witness, the same Aleut who had escaped torture, and who was the friend of the martyred Peter.)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**TODAY: following the Divine Liturgy** we will assemble Health & Cleaning Kits (or you may just drop off your already assembled kits); some of us might want to drive up to Morrairie State Park (North Shore McDaniel pavilion) to join in the picnic held by the two other Butler churches; and remember also the Orthodox music concert

**"A VOYAGE THROUGH ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN SACRED CHANT"**. The region's two key Orthodox ecclesiastic choirs, **the Pan-Orthodox Choir of Pittsburgh**, and **the Byzantine Choir of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh**, have joined together to express and present these traditions faithfully to their origins in this unique and inspiring musical journey. **St. Bernard Catholic Church (311 Washington Rd. Pittsburgh, PA), 4 PM.**

### **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 CALENDAR FOR THE NEXT SUNDAYS

### **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.  
Start of "Sunday School for Adults" (30 mins with Martie)

### **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.