



SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
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SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN AND THE PHARISEE 28 January 2018

TONE 1 — *Beginning of the Lenten Triodion.* — Ven. Ephraim the Syrian (373-379). Ven. Efreim (Ephraim), Abbot and Wonderworker of Novotórzhszk (1053). Ven. Palladius the Hermit, of Antioch (4th c.). St. Isaac the Syrian, Bishop of Nineveh (7th c.).

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"! 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 ...)

AT THE 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 (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 PRESENTATION OF THE LORD (Tone 1): Thou, O Christ God, Who by Thy Birth, didst sanctify the Virgin's womb, and, as is meet, didst bless Simeon's arms, and didst also come to save us; preserve Thy fold in wars, and confirm them whom Thou didst love, for Thou alone art the Lover of mankind.

TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

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

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.** 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, 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*.

We encouraged to not give up, to cling to God in spite of the world and despite our own sinfulness. "Take heart!" says the Lord, "I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Christianity is not for the weak, not for the lazy, 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

From the Holy Gospel according to Luke

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 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, a pharisee, and a publican. With the publican—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, their greed was insatiable. What is more, their abuses were all done in the service of foreign oppressors—the Roman Empire. In complete contrast, the Pharisees were people dedicated to God, pious Jews concerned with leading a pure life, who spent many years in close study of the Scriptures, meditating on the works of God—people would usually respect them.

When the Pharisee and the tax collector interact, anyone would expect the Pharisee to chastise the tax-collector for his sinful lifestyle. Note that we are not reading a parable about a "good tax-collector" and an "evil Pharisee"; so, one would have to assume that the tax collector is the negative character and the Pharisee is "good." But these two appear in front of God, and God looks at the heart of men, the source of all kinds of surprises. Indeed, the Lord says, **it is the tax-collector who returned home justified, not the theologian!** Whaaat? 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

- HOUSE BLESSINGS – Father Bogdan is available to come on Saturday or Sunday afternoon/evening.
- **Next Sunday, Feb. 4:** Sunday of the Prodigal son and the Lord's Entry into the Temple (which falls on Feb. 2); 40-day memorial for Viorica Elena.
- **Sunday, Feb. 11** (Last Judgment—"Meatfare"): Pan-Orthodox Divine Liturgy and Pre-Lenten Luncheon at St. Andrew Orthodox Church, 10 AM.
- **Sunday, Feb. 18** (Expulsion of Adam and Eve—"Cheesefare"). Vespers of Forgiveness, 1 PM.

Remember in your prayers

LIVING: Sula; Ion and; Fr. Anthony Yazge; 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, 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.

Matt and Nancy – to be received in the Orthodox Church (Holy Trinity [Greek], Wexford) on Feb 17.

DEPARTED: Viorica; Bishop Antoun; Vito (DiPento); Dorothy (Fr Roeber's mother); Jim and Marion (Raimondi); Stephanie (Yazge); Job; George (Georgiades).

OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA! 2018

Created by Fr. Jonathan Bannon (ACROD)

SUNDAYS		THEMES / GOSPEL READING	HOW TO PARTICIPATE:
Fast - Free Week JANUARY 28th		<i>TRIODION WEEKS</i> Publican and the Pharisee Reading: 2 Timothy 3: 10-15 Gospel: Luke 18: 10-14	Trust in God, not yourself! Ask for His help before every task this week!
Normal Fast Week FEBRUARY 4th		The Prodigal Son Returns! Reading: 1 Corinthians 6: 12-20 Gospel: Luke 15: 11-32	Schedule a Confession. Use up/freeze meats this week.
Meatfare FEBRUARY 11th FAREWELL TO MEAT TODAY		The Last Judgment Reading: 1 Corinthians 8: 8-9: 2 Gospel: Matthew 25: 31-46	Pray facing East this week. Christ is returning from the East and we wait for Him! Use up/freeze dairy this week.
Cheesefare FEBRUARY 18th FAREWELL TO CHEESE TODAY		Adam and Eve are cast from Paradise! <i>FORGIVENESS SUNDAY</i> Reading: Romans 13: 11-14:4 Gospel: Matthew 6: 14-21	Ask each other for forgiveness each evening this week before bed.
1st Sunday of Lent FEBRUARY 25th		<i>GREAT FAST BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS</i> SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY Reading: Hebrews 11: 24-26, 32-12:2 Gospel: John 1: 43-51	Bring an icon to church for a procession.
2nd Sunday of Lent MARCH 4th		ST GREGORY PALAMAS Reading: Hebrews 1:10-2:3 Gospel: Mark 2: 1-12	Bring a prayer rope to be blessed today! Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer each day this week.
3rd Sunday of Lent MARCH 11th		VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS <i>HALF WAY TO PASCHAI</i> Reading: Hebrews 4: 14-5: 6 Gospel: Mark 8:34-9: 1	Wear your cross to church and kiss the cross each morning with a bowl!
4th Sunday of Lent MARCH 18th		ST JOHN of the LADDER Reading: Hebrews: 6:13-20 Gospel: Mark 9: 17-31	Every time you climb stairs this week ask St. John to help you reach Paradise with the sign of the cross!
5th Sunday of Lent MARCH 25th		ST MARY of EGYPT Reading: Hebrews 9: 11-14 & Heb 2:11-18 Gospel: Mark 10: 32-45 & LK 1:24-38	Ask the Theotokos to offer you and the world pure thoughts and ideas this week.
FLOWERY (PALM) SUNDAY! April 1st GREAT WEEK BEGINS		<i>GREAT AND HOLY WEEK</i> ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM Reading: Philippians 4: 4-9 Gospel: John 12: 1-18	Place your palm branches and pussywillows behind an icon at home and in your car!
GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY APRIL 6th		GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY <i>JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS</i> CHECK WITH YOUR PARISH FOR ROYAL HOURS AND VESPERS SCHEDULE	Refrain from TV, Internet, & Phones to honor Christ's Death.
FEAST OF FEASTS! APRIL 8th NO FASTING!		<i>BRIGHT WEEK</i> HOLY PASCHA! (CHRIST IS RISEN!) Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1: 1-17	Greet everyone with "CHRIST IS RISEN!" & say it before good morning and goodnight!