



## SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese  
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### SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

6 October 2019

**Tone 7 / Eothinon 5**—*Holy Apostle Thomas (1st c.). Monk Martyr Macarius of St. Anne Skete on Mt. Athos (1590). Venerable Kendeas of Cyprus; St. Innocent, Apostle to the Americas.*

#### 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 Son and Word of God ...)*

#### LITTLE ENTRANCE

Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ!  
*Save us, O Son of God Who art risen from the dead, as we sing to Thee: Alleluia!*

**TROPARION OF 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 the world great mercy.

**TROPARION OF THE HOLY APOSTLE THOMAS** (Tone 3): O holy Apostle Thomas, intercede with our merciful God to grant our souls forgiveness of sins.

**TROPARION OF SAINT ANTHONY THE GREAT** (Tone 4): 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.

## TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

Prokeimenon: *The Lord will give strength to His people.  
Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of God, Ascribe to the Lord honor and glory!*

*The Reading is from the Second Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians*

(2 Cor 6:1-10) **Brethren, working together with Him, then, we entreat you not to accept the grace of God in vain. For He says, "At the acceptable time I have listened to you, and helped you on the day of salvation." Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labors, watching, hunger; by purity, knowledge, forbearance, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.**

Saint Paul didn't have an easy time with the Corinthians. In the two epistles sent to them, one can easily see how he constantly had to defend his apostolic ministry in the face of all kinds of denigrations and challenges to his spiritual authority. Throughout his ministry he never grew bitter or cynical, despite his **afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, labors, sleepless nights, and hunger**. We read instead that by cooperating with the grace of the Holy Spirit, the Apostle used these challenges as a breeding ground—a compost of sorts!—for wonderful fruits, such as **patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech!**

We might not be Saint Paul. But we can heed his fervent plea: **do not accept the grace of God in vain**. In other words, we are to take seriously that which we have received in Baptism, and allow the grace of God to work in us. This must be, as the very first words of today's Epistle make it clear, a "working together," a cooperation. It is by "synergy" (Greek for "cooperation") that Saul the persecutor became Paul the Apostle; and it is out of his own experience of cooperating with God's grace that he gives us counsel.

Saint Paul shows us how to read Scripture and use it for our furtherance of our life with God. He is quoting Isaiah 49:8 ("**At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you**") and then applies this text to himself: "the acceptable time" *is now*, "the day of salvation" *is now*. Indeed, when read as the word of God, Scripture is not about some other

people at some time in the past; it is always *now*, and always *about us*. The ancient Hebrews knew this truth very well: “The Lord did not make this covenant with our fathers, but *with us*, with all those of us alive here *today*” (Deut 5:3).

If that is so, let us hear the words of Saint Paul not as being addressed to the Corinthians two thousand years ago, but to us, who are alive here today: **we urge you also not to receive the grace of God in vain!**

## TODAY'S GOSPEL READING

### *The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Luke*

(Luke 7:11-16) Jesus went to a city called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. As he drew near to the gate of the city, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a large crowd from the city was with him. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her "Do not weep." And he came and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you arise." And the dead man sat up and began to speak. And he gave him to his mother. Fear seized them all; and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!"

Some of the miracles that the Lord performed may seem a bit trivial from the point of view of His great mission. So, for instance, is the miracle of changing water into wine at the wedding in Cana; or the multiplication of breads and fishes. Other miracles might strike us as “unfair” because of their partiality: why did he heal *some* people, and not *all* sick people? And, in case of today’s Gospel, why did he raise *this* boy, and not *all* children who, to this day, die before their parents’ eyes? “He had compassion,” Saint Luke says; the boy was the only son of her mother, and she was a widow who would have been left alone, powerless to care for herself in the society of that day and age—so Jesus had compassion. Well, why *then* and not *now* and *always*? Why did He have compassion on *that* widow mother and not on *all* those in similar circumstances?

Sometimes the Church does not have easy or soothing answers. And that is because the Church is preaching the Gospel, not fairy tales. Part of the Good News is that the Kingdom has *already* come, but *not yet* “in full power.” *Already* but *not yet*! We are still waiting for the world to be transformed into the image and likeness of the risen Christ; we are still praying, “Thy Kingdom come!”; and our Liturgy is already a foreshadowing, but not yet *that day*.

Remember that the people who ate of the bread that had been miraculously multiplied eventually became hungry again; the guests at the wedding went back to drinking regular water and wine the next day; and the son of the widow, like Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead, eventually died. Christ did what we call “miracles” drawn by compassion and, in the case of Cana, at the intercession of his mother. And yet, these are only a foreshadowing of the true miracle: the Resurrection of Christ, which opens the door for our resurrection.

Lazarus, the friend of the Lord, as well the young boy from Nain, and each and every one of us who believe and confess Christ, are going to be like He is: “risen”—that is, freed from mortality, so that we no longer die; feasting in the age to come with love and joy that never grow sour and are ever renewed. This is what we confess in the Creed: “I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life *of the world to come*!”

All of this, however, begins *here* and *now*. It begins, as the Creed states, with “I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.” Whether baptized as children or coming to the faith later in life, this is our first resurrection, when the grace of God reveals Christ in us: “Young man, I say to

**you arise!"** and we start on a journey from this first resurrection—"conversion", if you wish—to the Resurrection we expect in the age to come. The young man in Nain stands for each one of us.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### *Remember in your prayer*

**LIVING:** Fr. Paisius (recovering from surgery); Nyal, Jean's son-in-law (motorcycle accident); Joseph Totin (recovering from illness and surgery); Ion, Marius & Katherine (Stan); Serbanescu and Becker families; Gabriel; Karen (Jane Best's daughter); Charitini; Stella & Dimitrios; Christine (Abraham); Dollie; Venetia; Maura; Ann; Ed, Peter, John, Jonathan and Joanna; Andrei; Kent, Bob, David (relatives of Jean); Stelian; Diane; Maura (Andronic); Susannah.

**DEPARTED:** Kurt (Melinda's father); Jackie (Rose Totin's mother); Maria (Stella Lyras' sister); Sula; Kurt (Diane's son); Viorica; Norma; Miltiades; Tim (Becker); Silviu; Ross (Chrissi's friend); Richard Johns; Viorica; Bishop Antoun; Vito (DiPento); Jim and Marion (Raimondi); Stephanie (Yazge); Job; George (Georgiades); Abie (Abraham); Bill (Thomas); Marta.