

SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

www.orthodoxbutler.org

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THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

10 February 2013

TONE 3 — *Hieromartyr Haralambos, Bishop of Magnesia (202);
Virgin Martyrs Ennatha, Valentina, and Paula, of Palestine (308).*

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 hath girt Himself! (R.): O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead: save us who sing 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 ...)

AT THE LITTLE ENTRANCE

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ! Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead, who sing to Thee: "Alleluia"!

TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION (Tone 3): Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad! For the Lord hath done a mighty act with His own arm; He hath trampled own death by death and became the first born from the dead; He hath delivered us from the depth of hades, granting the world great mercy.

TROPARION OF ST. HARALAMPUS (Tone 4): An unshaken pillar of the Church of Christ God art thou, an ever-resplendent lamp. O Haralampus most wise, which shineth throughout the earth; in martyric contest thou hast shined on the whole world, and thou hast dispelled the moonless night of the idols. Now boldly intercede thou with Christ that we may all be saved.

Glory ... 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.

Now and ever ... KONTAKION FOR ORDINARY SUNDAYS (Tone 4): Undisputed intercessor of Christians, the mediatrix who is unrejected by the Creator, turn not away from the voice of our petitions, though we be sinners. Come to us in time with aid, as we cry unto thee in faith; for thou art good. Hasten to us with intercessions O Theotokos, who dost ever intercede for those who honor thee!

Remember in your prayers

LIVING: Seba, Stacey, Richard (Johns), Bill, Ed, Peter, Georgia and Scot, Richard (Michaels), Sam, Karen (Joanna's mother), Victoria (Frank's mother), Diane, Sula, Dollie, Dolores (Bingham), Angelica, Karyn, Ignatius and Amy, Jonathan and Joanna, Andrei and Nyoka, Benjamin, John, Hilda (Chris Abraham's mother).

DEPARTED: Edmund (Ed's uncle), Richard, Dolores Patricia (Thompson), Leatrice (Totin), Ed (Joanna's grandfather), Joseph (Rose's father), Fred (Dollie's uncle), Bob (Diane's father), Michael, Gabriel, Eugenia (Cristina's godmother).

TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

Prokeimenon: *The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord. Harken to my voice, O God!*

The Reading is from St. Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy

(2 Tim 2:1-10)

My child Timothy: be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; and the things which you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. Suffer hardship as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier on service entangles himself in the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier. And if someone also contends in the games, he is not crowned, unless he has contended lawfully. The husbandman who labors must be the first to partake of the fruits. Consider what I say, and may the Lord grant you understanding in all things. Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel, in which I suffer hardships and even bonds, as a criminal; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

There is no real Christianity “by oneself,” outside the give-and-take of being part of a real community. And there is no real Christianity either without discipleship—that is, without spiritual fatherhood. “Spiritual fatherhood” is the concrete way in which the Church, from its very beginning, has passed on the life in Christ. It is true that today it is not easy to find good spiritual guides, who would effectively help us grow as disciples of Christ. It is also true that arrogance and spiritual immaturity prevent us from receiving the blessing that God has provided for us in the very state, time, and place we are in. Spiritual Fatherhood and spiritual discipleship are two sides of the life in Christ.

We are reading today from the correspondence between St Paul and his disciple Timothy, and we get a glimpse of the way in which spiritual fatherhood and discipleship was “working” in the early decades of the Church. More than the words (because we only read a tiny passage), it is the *example* that we should use for our benefit. Christ speaks to each of us directly, by calling us, by rooting us in Himself, by feeding us on the risen life which is in Him; but He also interacts with us through the ministry of the spiritual father, who is

charged with teaching us how to become and grow as Christians. This is not really an “indirect” presence of Christ, because the Lord’s blessing is present in the very relation—and because spiritual fatherhood is, essentially, an icon of Christ’s relation with the Church.

Let us keep in mind some of the words that St. Paul addresses to Timothy: **Your life is like a battle: be a good soldier of Christ Jesus; your life is also like a sporting contest: be a good athlete of Christ. Take to heart the things I say; remember Jesus Christ, who is truly man (“of the seed of David”) and truly God (“risen from the dead”), and be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.**

TODAY’S GOSPEL READING

The Reading is from the Gospel according to Saint Matthew

(Mat 25:14-30)

The Lord spoke this parable: A man going on a journey called his servants and entrusted to them his property; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them; and he made five talents more. So also, he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master’s money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying: “Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.” His master said to him, “Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.” And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying: “Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.” His master said to him, “Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.” He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying: “Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not winnow; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.” But his master answered him, “You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I

have not sowed, and gather where I have not winnowed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.” As Jesus said these things He cried out: **“He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”**

Briefly put, the story here leaves us outraged at the perceived injustice of God. **“To everyone who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away”**: where is the logic and the justice in this principle? Let the rich get richer, let the poor get poorer?

Maybe we haven’t heard right; maybe we are not listening *as a disciple*. The prophet Isaiah writes: “He awakens me morning by morning, He awakens my ear *to listen as a disciple*.” Let us then grow the hearing and comprehension of a disciple, and listen to the Gospel.

To have and not to have, as well as the images of a master, of slaves, and of various sums of money entrusted to the servants are just teaching tools. But the parable itself is about something else: it is about spiritual growth, about becoming rich in our experience of God. The principle is true, tested, and crucially important: the more we allow God into our lives, the more we will thirst for Him, and the more we will be given to experience His presence; by contrast, the less we allow God to work in us, the faster we lose our awareness of God (and of our need for God)—we shall soon dry out and harden in a tortured state of spiritual poverty.

Today’s Gospel is important. Remember that **“as Jesus said these things He cried out”** (must be important!): **“He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **House blessings.** If you wish to receive the blessing of Theophany in your homes, Fr. Bogdan will be available on Saturdays and Sundays afternoons and evenings. Please put your name on the sign-up sheet.
- **Vespers** on Saturdays, 6:30 PM; **Matins** on Sundays 9:15 AM.
- **Pledges for Ignatius and Amy** – please remember to fulfill your pledge!

Dear Church Family,

We have been invited to once again worship with our brothers and sisters from the two other Orthodox churches in our area. Fr. Paisius of Sts. Peter and Paul church has extended an invitation for everyone to be with them for a special meat fare Sunday service and luncheon on March 10. The Parish Council decided to accept this gracious gesture.

Therefore, our originally scheduled annual Parish meeting of March 10 will be moved to the following Sunday, March 17. Since this is also Cheese Fare Sunday, and the beginning of our Lenten fast, we will have Vespers of Forgiveness after our feasting on cheeses and our meeting.

Please join us at Sts. Peter and Paul, along with other Orthodox worshipers on March 10 and for our annual Parish meeting at St. Anthony's on March 17. Note also that, due to some changes from the Archdiocese to our constitution, only one person will be elected to the 2013 Parish Council. Nominations from the floor will be taken so please be prepared to have prayerfully considered a worthy person to be nominated, including yourself.

Blessings,

Diane Shaeffer, Council Secretary