

SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

www.orthodoxbutler.org

ADDRESS: 400 S. Sixth Avenue, Butler, PA 16001

PASTOR: Rev. Bogdan Gabriel Bucur

CONTACT: Tel. 724-287-6893 (church); 412.390.8208 (priest);

E-mail: frbogdan@orthodoxbutler.org

Holy Pascha: The Resurrection of the Lord

TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

This is the day which the Lord hath made; let us be glad and rejoice in it!

The Reading is from the Acts of the Apostles

(Acts 1:1-8) In the first book, Theophilus, I dealt with all that Jesus did and taught until the day he was taken up, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. He presented himself alive to them by many proofs after he had suffered, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While meeting with them, he enjoined them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for "the promise of the Father about which you have heard me speak; for John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." When they had gathered together they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He answered them, "It is not for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has established by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

TODAY'S GOSPEL READING

The Reading is from the Gospel according to Saint John

(John 1:1-17) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light.) The true light enlightens every man as he comes into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own

home, and his own people received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. (John bore witness to him, and cried, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, for he was before me.'") And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known.

THE PASCHAL HOMILY OF SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

Is anyone devout and loves God? Let them enjoy this fair and shining festival. Is anyone a grateful servant? Let them enter into the joy of their Lord. Have any wearied themselves with fasting? Let them now enjoy their payment.

Has anyone labored since the first hour? Let them today receive their due. Did any come after the third hour? Let them feast with gratitude. Did any arrive after sixth hour? Let them not hesitate, for there is no penalty. Did any delay until after the ninth hour? Let them approach without hesitating. Did any arrive only for the eleventh hour? Let them not fear because of their lateness. For the Lord is generous and receives the last as the first; He gives rest to the worker of the eleventh hour as to those of the first; He has pity on the latter, he cares for the former. To the one He gives, and to the other He is generous. He accepts the work done, and welcomes the intention. He honors the achievement, and praises the purpose.

Therefore, all of you, enter into the joy of our Lord! First and last, enjoy your reward! Rich and poor, dance together! Sober and slothful, honor the day! You that have fasted and you that have disregarded the fast, be glad today! The table is full, all of you enjoy yourselves! The calf is fatted, the table is rich-laden: let none go away hungry! All of you, enjoy the banquet of the faith! All of you, enjoy the richness of his goodness! Let no one grieve at their poverty: for the Kingdom for all has been revealed. Let no one bewail their faults: for forgiveness has risen from the tomb.

Let no one fear death, for the Savior's death has freed us. By enduring it, He quenched it.

He who descended into hell has plundered hell. Hell was embittered when it tasted His flesh, as Isaiah proclaimed in prophecy: "Death," he said, "was embittered when it met you there below." Embittered, for it was destroyed. Embittered, for it was mocked. Embittered, for it was slain. Embittered for it was wiped out. Embittered, for it was bound fast. It received a body, and came face to face with God. It received earth, and met heaven. It received what it saw, and fell through what it did not see.

Where, death, is your sting? Where, hell, is your victory? Christ has risen and you are abolished! Christ has risen and the demons have fallen! Christ has risen, and angels rejoice! Christ has risen, and life has found freedom! Christ has risen, and there is no corpse in the grave! For Christ, being raised from the dead, has become the first fruits of those who sleep. To him be glory and power to the ages of ages, Amen!