

# SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese  
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## NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

10 August 2014

*TONE 8—Afterfeast of the Lord's Transfiguration; Martyr and Archdeacon Lawrence of Rome, Hieromartyr Sixtus, Bishop of Rome, and Martyrs Felicissimus and Agapitus, Deacons (258). Blessed Lawrence, Fool-for-Christ, at Kaluga (1515).*

### FIRST ANTIPHON

*Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, in His holy mountain. Refrain: Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us! Thou art girt about with power, and Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment. (R:) The mountains shall rejoice at the presence of the Lord, for He cometh; yea, He is come to judge the earth. (R:) Glory... Now and ever... (R:)*

### SECOND ANTIPHON

*His foundations are in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Refrain: O Son of God, Who wast transfigured on Mount Tabor: save us, who sing to Thee: "Alleluia!" Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. (R:) Zion is our mother, a man shall say, and such a man was born in her; and the Most High Himself hath established her. (R:) Glory... Now and ever... (Only begotten Son and Word of God ...)*

## THIRD ANTIPHON

*TROPARION OF THE TRANSFIGURATION with the following verses:*

*Of Thy mercies, Lord, will I sing for ever. // The heavens shall confess Thy wonders, Lord, and Thy truth in the congregation of saints. // Blessed is the people that knows jubilation; in the light of Thy Face shall they walk, and in Thy Name shall they rejoice all the day long.*

## 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"!*

RESURRECTION TROPARION (Tone 8): From the heights Thou didst descend, O compassionate One; and Thou didst submit to Thy three-day burial, that Thou mightist deliver us from passion. Thou art our Life and our Resurrection, O Lord, glory to Thee!

TROPARION OF THE TRANSFIGURATION (Tone 7): Thou wast transfigured on the Mount, O Christ our God, revealing Thy glory to Thy disciples as far as they could bear it. Let Thine everlasting light shine also upon us sinners; through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Giver of Light, glory to Thee!

TROPARION OF SAINT ANTHONY THE GREAT (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.

TRANSFIGURATION KONTAKION (Tone 7): Thou wast transfigured on the mountain, Christ God, and thy disciples beheld thy glory as far as they could bear it; so when they would behold thee crucified, they would understand that thy passion was voluntary and would proclaim to the world that thou art truly the Radiance of the Father.

### *Remember in your prayers*

**LIVING:** Ron, Angelica (Georgia's mother), Christine (Abraham), Luke (Dollie's grandson), Norma, Richard (Michaels), Victoria (Frank's mother), Richard (Johns), Bill, Ed, Peter, Georgia and Scot, Sam, Karen (Joanna's mother), Diane, Sula, Dollie, Dolores (Bingham), Karyn, Ignatius and Amy, Jonathan and Joanna, Andrei and Nyoka, Benjamin, John, Janet. Shea and Katie, Timothy and Carolyn – seeking for the Orthodox faith.

**DEPARTED:** Metropolitan Philip; Elena; Joe and David Sipos; Bill (Georgia's father-in-law), Glenn (Jean's grandson); Stella, 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, Hilda (Chris Abraham's mother).

## TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

Prokeimenon: O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.  
Unto Thee, O Lord, will I cry, O my God!

### *From Saint Paul's Letter to the Corinthians*

(1 Cor 3:9-17) **Brethren**: we are God's fellow-workers; you are God's field, God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise architect I laid a foundation, and another builds upon it. Let each one take heed how he builds upon it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; everyone's work will become manifest; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire itself will test each one's work of what sort it is. If anyone's work which was built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, yet so as by fire. Do you know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, and you are that temple.

Since we are still enjoying the afterglow of the great feast of our Lord's Transfiguration, let us learn from the Apostle Paul how God—the living God—is present and active in us, his temples.

First of all: the foundation of anything we do or say or think, writes the Apostle, is that “we are God's field, we are God's building.” That is, God is the creator, He who made heaven and earth. But to us humans God is not simply the creator: he has made us as his dialogue-partners, to be actively involved in relation to him and to one another. We are “God's fellow-workers”!

This is a very bold statement. If indeed we are fellow-workers of the Creator, then, even though we are creatures, we are called to join in the Creator's creative energy, to be “created co-creators.” And if so, what common “project” can we and God collaborate in? The answer is that we are actually at work, side by side with God, to build up *a temple*; yet, that temple is . . . us! In short, then, we are collaborating with God in creating ourselves!

How should we understand this? Let us start by stating that we are not a finished product, but a work-in-progress. The Scriptures express this truth by saying that we are made according to the image of God in view of an ever-growing likeness with Him. Our horizon is eternal progress, growth, a continual creation.

“Do you know,” continues St. Paul, “that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?” Well, then, let us think back to the Temple in Jerusalem. God had provided the blueprint to Moses and David—the heavenly pattern for that earthly building; and God also provided the mysterious and powerful presence in the Temple—the “glory”. But human hands had to build the walls and the furnishings, and again human prayer was to rise from there. So also with us: we are made by God, “we are all the work of His hands”; but we are called to collaborate with the presence of God in us, to increase our humanity and make it more and more Christ-like.

This entire process of “building”, which could also be called “growth” or “transfiguration” or “ascent” in God, is only possible *in Christ*. Paul is writing to *insiders of the faith*, who have turned away from idolatry and sin, committed themselves to Christ, received Baptism and the seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit—this is how anyone begins. Once we have entered the Church, we soon realize that the Church is a dynamic reality, a place of growth, a place in which we collaborate with our Lord who is at work to heal, purify, and transfigure us with his grace.

As Christians, then, we have an infinite responsibility, since we will have to give an account of our fellowship with God in “working out our salvation.” **“The foundation is Christ. We build on this foundation ... Let each one take heed how he builds upon it. If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him.”**

## TODAY'S GOSPEL READING

*From the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*

(Mat 14:22-34) **At that time**, Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He dismissed the crowds. And after He had dismissed the crowds, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. When evening came, He was there alone, but the disciples' boat by this time was many furlongs distant from the land, beaten by the waves; for the wind was against them. And in the fourth watch of the night He came to

them, walking on the sea. But when the Disciples saw Jesus walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. But immediately He spoke to them, saying, "Take heart, it is I; have no fear." And Peter answered Him, "Lord, if it is you, bid me come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus; but when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Jesus immediately reached out His hand and caught him, saying to him, "O man of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped Him, saying, "Truly, you are the Son of God!" And when they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret.

The Gospel reading today ties in very well with Saint Paul's bold statement about Christians being "fellow-workers with God", collaborators with divine grace in the process of their salvation. The Gospel shows us how this works.

*The disciples were terrified ... they cried out for fear. But immediately He spoke to them, saying, "Take heart, it is I; have no fear."* Note that they are not frightened by the wind and the waves, although the Gospel does say that *the boat was beaten by the waves, and the wind was against them*. Nevertheless, they are afraid of the God who comes near them! Life, in other words, can be tough and scary; but to come face to face with God and to feel the presence of divine glory can be terrible. This is why God commanded Adam and Eve to keep away from the tree of knowledge and life; and the people of Israel were told to keep at a distance from Mount Sinai; and a temple service was instituted, guaranteeing a sort of "safe" and gradual approach to the presence of God.

How can I be God's fellow-worker, given the radical incompatibility with God's holiness? *The disciples were terrified ... they cried out for fear*. And we are also told to approach the Eucharistic chalice not carelessly or casually, but "in the fear of God, with faith and love." Still, Christ's words are encouraging and empowering: *"Take heart, it is I; have no fear!"* And when Peter, weak in faith, is starting to drown, we read that *Jesus immediately reached out His hand and caught him*.

To live as fellow-workers of God, assisting Him, as it were, in His work of recreating us, fallen creatures, to become again likenesses of Christ, is definitely not living on easy street. The saints of the Church know it from experience, and we are in awe of this Life flowing in them and illumining them. But we are all

called—even we, who are just beginning. We should approach, since we have been called; let us draw near in the fear of God, with faith and love.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Today:** Trisagion for Silviu's mother, Elena
- **Thursday, August 14, 6:30 pm:** Vespers Liturgy for the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos. If you can, bring a small dish to share after the service.
- **Sunday, August 17:** Church Picnic at the American Legion in Highfield
- **Friday, August 22:** women's retreat at Holy Transfiguration Monastery, with Mother Christophora.
- **Sunday, August 31:** Divine Liturgy at Sts Peter and Paul Ukrainian Church.
  - Fr. Paisius will be out of town; we will celebrate "our" Matins and Liturgy in their church, together with the community of Sts Peter and Paul.
- **Sunday, September 7: Pan-Orthodox Liturgy and Picnic at Butler Township Park Building (468 Duffy Road).** Live music by the **Russian Balalaika Orchestra of Pittsburg**; Steelers Tickets Raffle, Chinese Auction, and 50/50 raffle. There will be **games for the kids**, and the park has play areas, basketball courts, etc. 10 dollars/ adult, children under 12 are free.

For anyone worried about missing the Steelers home opener: the park building has 2 big- screen TVs! So bring your favorite "adult beverage" (alcohol is permitted, but please drink responsibly) and cheer the Steelers on to victory!