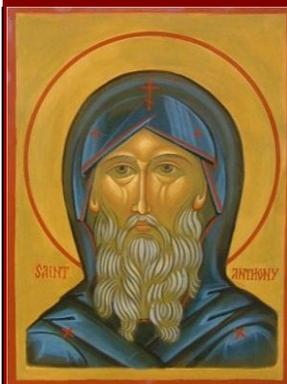


# SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

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## THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

22 September 2013

*TONE 4 — Prophet Jonah; Hieromartyr Phocas, Bishop of Sinope (117); Martyr Phocas the Gardener, of Sinopè (ca. 320); St. Peter the Tax-collector (6th 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 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! O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead, save us who sing to Thee: "Alleluia"!*

TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION (Tone 4): Having learned the joyful message of the Resurrection from the angel, the women disciples cast from them their parental condemnation, and proudly broke the news to the disciples, saying: "Death hath been spoiled. Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy!"

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.

KONTAKION OF ORDINARY SUNDAYS (Tone 4): O Undisputed intercessor of Christians, the mediatrix who is unrejected by the Creator: turn not away from the voice of our petitions, although 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 do ever intercede for those who honor thee!

## TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

Prokeimenon: *How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In Wisdom hast Thou made them all. Bless the Lord, O my soul!*

*The Reading is from Saint Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians*

(1 Cor 16:13-24)

Brethren: be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. Now, brethren, you know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints; I urge you to be subject to such men and to every fellow worker and laborer. I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicos, because they have made up for your absence; for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. Give recognition to such men. The churches of Asia send greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the

church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord. All the brethren send greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss. I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus, Amen!

Like any letter, this epistle to the Christians in Corinth shows a number of very personal elements: there are references to specific persons known to the addressee and the addressor (and whom we have no way of knowing), personal greetings are conveyed, and there is even an invitation to acknowledge the authenticity of this letter: **“I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand.”**

And yet, there are things in this passage that remain valid over the centuries, even for us today. **“Be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong!”** Indeed, an essential part of our Christian life is growing in courage. Already by the end of the first century, in an anonymous writing called “The Shepherd,” one finds the following dialogue between a Christian and his guiding angel on the topic of fear and courage: *“Listen to me for a moment. Man is eager to keep the commandments of God, and there is no one who does not ask of the Lord that strength may be given him for these commandments. But the devil is hard, and holds sway over them. The angel replied: The devil goes to all the servants of God to try them. As many as are full in the faith resist him strongly, and he withdraws from them, having no way by which he might enter them. He goes to the empty, and finding a way of entrance into them, he produces in them whatever he wishes. But I, the angel of repentance, say to you: Do not fear not the devil; for I was sent to be with you who repent with all your heart, to make you strong in faith. If you return to the Lord with all your heart, and practise righteousness the rest of your days, He will heal your former sins, and you will have power to hold sway over the works of the devil. But as to the threats of the devil, fear them not at all, for he is powerless as the sinews of a dead man. But fear the Lord, for fearing the Lord you will have dominion over the devil.”*

So, the icy, paralyzing fright and the phantasms sown by the evil one will be driven out by our taking refuge in God, our Maker and Redeemer. We speak of “fear of God” because all the patriarchs and prophets and saints testify to this. “Fear of God” comes from the fact that, like the prodigal son,

we have been hiding and running away for such a long time—since Adam! And yet, the fear of God is mixed with a sense of being summoned by Him, called and asked to come and see and touch and taste something truly amazing, truly beautiful and good for us.

Our patron saint, Anthony the Great, teaches (and you can read it on the new icon at the entrance) that fear of God will in due time teach us love. Saint Anthony gave witness: *I no longer fear God, but love Him!*

Above all, let this word from today's Epistle accompany us: **"Let all that you do be done in love."** There are so many reasons and goals for what we do, many of them honorable, justified, important. In Church, however, our actions are measured in this way only: all that we do should be done with love.

## TODAY'S GOSPEL READING

*The Reading is from the Gospel according to Saint Luke*

(Luke 5:1-11)

At that time, Jesus was standing by the lake of Gennesaret. And he saw two boats by the lake; but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, Jesus asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. And when Jesus had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets." And when they had done this, they enclosed a great shoal of fish; and as their nets were breaking, they beckoned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, sons of Zeb'edee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; henceforth you will be catching men." And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

The fishermen kindly allowed Jesus to use one of their boats for his preaching; however, when he asked Simon Peter to go fishing, they must have thought to themselves that this stranger had overstepped the boundaries of his authority and competence. It is apparently easier to fish at night, when the fish move up shallower. **“We toiled all night and took nothing!”**: a very polite way of suggesting that the preacher should perhaps confine himself to his preaching, since he obviously didn’t know much about fishing.

Nevertheless, Peter is willing to do what the Lord says. And his humility is recompensed beyond expectation. The catch is so rich that the boats are close to sinking. This is when Peter, in a flash of insight, understands that in his poor fishing boat he has come face to face with the Lord—He who commanded and it came to be; the maker and sustainer of all creation.

We can learn quite a few things from this Gospel. First, that we should allow God to “borrow” this and that and the other part of our life, just as Peter allowed Christ to use his boat. Second, that God is always going to ask for increasingly more control over one’s life, just as he went from using Peter’s boat to telling him when and where and how to do his job. In the end, one comes to realize, as the saying goes, “if God is your copilot, switch seats!” Faith and humility—that is, ceding increasingly more room for God to work in us—is not about some cultish self-annihilation of personality. In small and in great things, living with God yields rich fruit: in the midst of trials and tribulations, in this our valley of tears, the fruit we are craving: peace, joy, love, and the beauty of knowing that our existence is truly meaningful.

The heart of our Gospel, however, are Saint Peter’s words to the Lord: **“Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.”** It is only in this way that our journey can truly begin. The prophet Micah (6:8) wrote in this respect, “He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and *to walk humbly with your God?*” *To walk humbly with God* means that we always remember just *who* it is that stands before us. When we pray, we learn from the very words of prayer: **“with boldness and without condemnation we dare to call upon You, the heavenly God as Father.”** The more difficult part is to know that at all time it is no less than God, the Lord, who stands in front of us.

As for Peter, the presence of the Lord, is overwhelming, awe-inspiring, fearsome. We are all, without a single exception, broken vessels, sinful people, surely not a “fitting” place for the Lord to visit. Yet, this is precisely why our faith is called the Gospel, that is “the Good News”: the Lord has

come to be with us, has mingled God's holiness with our very lowliness, has truly come to seek us out.

Simon Peter and the others **left everything and followed Him**, and have also brought this Good News to many others. Today, it has reached us. Will we allow our lives to be touched and changed by the Lord's visitation? Will we at least lend him our hearing?

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Today:

- beginning of the new Sunday School year, blessing of the children, parents, and teachers.

**Next Saturday (Sep 28):** clean-up day. Please donate some of your time to help us keep things clean and tidy.

**Saturday, October 12, 5:30 – 6:30 pm: BIBLE STUDY**, followed by Vespers. We will discuss the parable of the weeds in Matthew 13:24-30.

### *Remember in your prayers*

LIVING: pr. Joseph, Sam, Richard (Johns), George (Georgiades) and family, Bill, Maura, Georgia and Scot, Karyn, Victoria, Diane, Sula, Dollie, Lawrence, Linda, Barbara, Mike, Dolores (Bingham), Angelica, Ignatius and Amy, Jonathan and Joanna, Andrei and Nyoka, Brooke.

DEPARTED: Alex (Julie Smolen's brother), Connie (Svolos), Hilda, Andy (Michaels), Jeannie (Ferver), David (Sipos), Edmund, Richard, Dolores Patricia (Thompson), Leatrice (Totin), Abie, Nicolae (Silviu's father), Joseph (Rose's father), Fred (Dollie's uncle), Bob (Diane's father), Eugenia (Cristina's godmother), Faynasia.

## BEGINNING OF SUNDAY SCHOOL YEAR

*Illuminate our hearts, O Master and lover of mankind, with the pure light of Your divine knowledge, and open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of Your Gospel teachings; implant in us also the fear of Your blessed commandments, that trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such things as are pleasing to You: for You are the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and to You we send up glory, together with Your Father who is from everlasting, and Your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit: now and ever, and unto ages of ages, Amen!*

Let us pray to the Lord: Lord have mercy!

*O Lord Jesus Christ, our God Who, in Thy childhood and youth in Nazareth was submissive and obedient to Thy Most Pure Mother and Thy holy provider and guardian Joseph, leaving us an image of a pure childhood: do Thou Thyself, O Lover of mankind, enlighten, help, and inflame with Thy love these children; preserve and grow them in the Orthodox faith, that they may increase in wisdom and in fulfilling of Thy commandments, and become heirs of Thy Kingdom. Bless also their parents and grant that they may see their children grow like olive shoots around their table. For Thou art a God mighty in mercy and strength, and to Thee we send up glory, together with Your Father who is from everlasting, and Your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit: now and ever, and unto ages of ages, Amen!*

Let us pray to the Lord: Lord have mercy!

*O Lord Jesus Christ, our God Who in the past at many times and in various ways didst teach Those who have been well-pleasing to Thee, and Who in these latter times didst send out Thine Apostles to make disciples of all nations, to baptize them and teach them Thy new commandment of love; and Who in Thy church hast appointed apostles, and prophets, and teachers: stretch forth Thy hand from Thy holy dwelling-place on high heaven and bless these teachers, strengthening them for this ministry which Thou hast set before them. For Thou, O Lord, hast said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God," and Thou art the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and to Thee we send up glory, together with Your Father who is from everlasting, and Your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit: now and ever, and unto ages of ages, Amen!*