

# SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese  
[www.orthodoxbutler.org](http://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](mailto:frbogdan@orthodoxbutler.org)

## SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

28 September 2014

*Tone 7.— Prophet Baruch (6th c. B.C.); Ven. Chariton the Confessor, Abbot of Palestine (ca. 350); Martyr Heliodorus and his companions in Pisidia (4th c.); Martyr Viachesláv, Prince of the Czechs (935).*

### 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 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 to 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 FOR TRANSFIGURATION (Tone 7): Thou wast transfigured on the mount, and Thy Disciples, in so far as they were able, beheld Thy glory, O Christ our God; so that, when they should see Thee crucified, they would remember that all Thy suffering was voluntary, and could declare to all the world that Thou art truly the effulgent Splendor of the Father.

## TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

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

*From the Second Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians*

(2 Corinthians 6:1-10) Brethren, as we work together with Him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For it says, "At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you." See, the acceptable time is now; see, the day of salvation is now! We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended

ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of 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 are well known; as dying, and see-- we are alive; 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

### *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 from 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

- **Supporting our Seminarian:** if you can, please make a donation—however small or large—today or on the next two Sundays, to help our seminarian, Ignatius Green, pay the tuition for his last year of seminary. For this special collection we are using the white box “for needy people” at the entrance into the church.
- **Saturday, 10/25: Rummage and Cookie Sale.** Volunteers are needed for baking cookies, and for set-up, clean-up, and the day of the sale. For any info on the Rummage and Cookie Sale, please contact Seba Michaels (724.285.1540).

### *Remember in your prayers*

**LIVING:** Ron (upcoming surgeries), George (Georgiades), Angelica (Georgia's mother), Christine (Abraham), Jim, Tony, Samantha, Luke (relatives of Dollie's), 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, John, Jonathan and Joanna, Andrei and Nyoka, Benjamin, John, Janet, Craig, Christy (relatives of Jean).

Shea and Katie, Timothy and Carolyn – seeking for the true 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).