

SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

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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! (Refrain) Upright is the Lord our God and there is no unrighteousness in Him (Refrain) Glory... Both now... (Refrain)

SECOND ANTIPHON

The Lord is King, He is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength and hath girt Himself! Refrain: Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead, who sing to Thee, "Alleluia"! For He established the world which shall not be shaken! (Refrain) Holiness becometh Thy house, O Lord, unto length of days! (Refrain) Glory... Both now... (Only begotten Son and Word of God ...)

THIRD ANTIPHON

Come let us rejoice in the Lord, let us shout with jubilation unto God our Savior! (Ps. 94:1) Troparion of the Resurrection

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 down death by death, and hath become the first born from the dead. He hath delivered us from the depth of Hades, granting the world great mercy.

TROPARION OF THE MARTYRS, Tone 4: Thy Martyrs, O Lord, Eulampios and Eulampia, by their struggles have received from Thee, our God, imperishable crowns because, acquiring Thy strength, they demolished usurpers and crushed the powerless might of Satan. Therefore, through their intercessions, O Christ God, save our souls!

TROPARION OF ST. 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 THE THEOTOKOS, Tone 4: O undisputed intercessor of Christians, mediatrix unrejected by the Creator: turn not away from the voice of our petitions, although we be sinners. Come to us in time, who cry to thee in faith, with assistance; for thou art good! Hasten to us with intercessions, O Theotokos, who dost ever intercede for those who honor thee.

Today we commemorate the holy martyrs Eulampios and Eulampia at Nicomedia (+ 296), and other two hundred martyrs, former pagans who converted to Christ after seeing the miracles of the two martyrs as they were being tortured; the Venerable Theophilos the confessor of Bulgaria (+ 716); the Venerable Ambrose of the Optina Hermitage in Russia (+ 1891).

DEPARTED: James, Dale, Mary Ann, Joseph, Katherine, Ștefan, Mary Lou, Henry, Bob, Nick, Dorothy

LIVING: We pray for the health and well being of Sula, Dolores (Sipos), Dolores (Bingham), Mariana, Karyn, Rodolphe, Brian, Gina, the hieromonk Alexander, and the baby Christina.

Kimberly Bingham and Marni Ferver celebrated their birthdays during the past week. May God bless them and be with them always. Happy birthday!

TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

(Galatians 1:11-19)

*Prokeimenon: Sing praises to our God, sing praises!
Clap your hands, all you nations!*

The Reading is from the Second Epistle of Saint Paul to the Galatians

Brethren, I would have you know that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

Saint Paul was *not* one of the twelve disciples of our Lord. In fact, he never even met Jesus during His earthly ministry. Moreover, in the early years of the Church, Paul (then called Saul) did his best to stop the spreading of the faith, preaching against those who called Jesus "Messiah" (in Greek "Christ") and "Lord," and putting all his time and energy into persecuting the Church.

When the authorities executed St. Stephen, the first deacon and martyr, Saul was guarding the clothes of those throwing stones!

Although blind, Paul's zeal was genuine. And since God knows the heart of man, and never fails to guide those that search earnestly for His truth, at a certain moment in God's time, something extraordinary happened. In St. Paul's words, God "revealed his Son to him." Paul *did* meet the Lord—on the way to Damascus, he had a vision, an overwhelming encounter with the resurrected Jesus Christ. And it was this meeting that established him as an apostle, and a divinely authorized preacher of the Gospel.

But many were skeptical about the Gospel preached by this man (now baptized "Paul"). They kept insisting that he had not received a commission from Christ—like the other apostles—or from Peter, the leader of the apostles, or from James, the leader of the Mother-Church in Jerusalem. Yet Paul knew what he had received from Christ: "the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ."

And this special commissioning of St. Paul has borne rich fruit: it is to him and to his disciple, St. Luke, that we owe most of the New Testament; it is he that showed the importance of sharing the Good News with the pagans; it is he that crisscrossed Europe to found its first Christian communities; and he ended his life in martyrdom together with St. Peter, in 64 C.E., at Rome.

Whether "cradle Orthodox" or converts to the faith, we are called, like St. Paul, to allow Christ to be revealed in us, and to gradually learn how to live as His disciples. Nobody ever said it is easy; but we can all take the advice that the same Apostle Paul gave to one of his spiritual sons: *Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am first!* (1 Tim 1:15)

TODAY'S GOSPEL READING

(Luke 7:11-16)

The Reading is from the Gospel according to Saint Luke

The next day Jesus went to a city called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. As he drew near to the gate of the city, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a large crowd from the city

was with him. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her "Do not weep." And he came and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you arise." And the dead man sat up and began to speak. And he gave him to his mother. Fear seized them all; and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!"

Some of the miracles that the Lord may seem a bit trivial from the point of view of his great mission. So, for instance, is the miracle of changing water into wine at the wedding in Cana; or the multiplication of breads and fishes. Other miracles might strike us as "unfair" because of their partiality: why did he heal some people, and not all sick people? And, in case of today's Gospel, why did he raise *this* boy, and not *all* children who die before their parents' eyes? "He had compassion," Saint Luke says; the boy was the only son of her mother, and she was a widow who would have been left alone, powerless to care for herself in the society of that day and age—so Jesus had compassion. Well, why *then* and not *now* and *always*? Why *that* widow mother and not *all* in her or similar circumstances?

Sometimes the Church does not have easy or soothing answers. And that is because the Church is preaching the Gospel, not fairy tales. Part of the Good News is that the Kingdom has *already* come, but *not yet* "in full power"—*already but not yet*. We are still waiting for the world to be transformed into the image and likeness of the risen Christ; we are still praying, "Thy Kingdom come!"; and our Liturgy is already a foreshadowing, but not yet *that day*.

Remember that the people who ate of the breads that had been miraculously multiplied eventually became hungry again; the guests at the wedding went back to drinking regular water and wine the next day; and the son of the widow, like Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead, eventually died. Christ did what we call "miracles" drawn by compassion and, in the case of Cana, at the intercession of his mother. And yet, these are only a foreshadowing of the true miracle: the Resurrection of Christ, which opens the door for our resurrection.

Lazarus and young boy from Nain, and each and every one of us who believe and confess Christ, are going to be like He is: "risen"—that is, freed from mortality, so that we no longer die; feasting in the age to come with love and joy that never grow sour and are ever renewed. This is what we confess

in the Creed: "I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life *of the world to come!*"

All of this, however, begins here and now. It begins, as—again—the Creed states, with "I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins." Whether baptized as children or coming to the faith later in life, this is our first resurrection, when the grace of God reveals Christ in us: "Young man, I say to you arise!" and we start on a journey from this first resurrection—"conversion", if you wish—to the Resurrection we expect in the age to come. The young man in Nain is every one of us.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Today, no Sunday school for the very little ones (Elena and Marni)!
- Meeting of the parish council
- Dollie has completed the new icons of the Lord, the Theotokos, and St. John the Baptist for the iconostasis. We are grateful to receive them as an invaluable gift to this community—to the present community and to those in the future—and we ask God, before whose merciful gaze nothing is hidden, to bless and reward her with every good gift from above.
- Sundays around 9:30: Psalm singing.
- Vespers on Saturday is at 6:00 pm.



VATICAN SPLENDORS: A JOURNEY THROUGH 2000 YEARS OF FAITH AND ART

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