

SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

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TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

26 October 2014

TONE 3 —*Holy and Glorious Greatmartyr Demetrius the Myrrhgusher of Thessalonica (ca. 306); Martyr Lupus (ca. 306). Ven. Athanasius of Medikion Monastery (ca. 814); Theóphil of the Kiev Caves, Bishop of Novgorod (Far Caves—1482); Monk Martyr Joseph of Dionysiou (Mt. Athos—1518).*

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 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 became the first-born from the dead. He hath delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting the world great mercy.

TROPARION OF SAINT DEMETRIUS THE MYRRH-STREAMER (Tone 3): A great champion has the whole world found thee to be when in graver perils. for thou dost put to flight the heathen, O victorious one. As thou didst humble Lyaeus' arrogance and gavest boldness to Nestor in the stadium, thus, O holy Great Martyr Demetrius, do thou entreat Christ God that we be granted 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 ORDINARY SUNDAYS (Tone 2): O Undisputed intercessor of Christians, the mediatrix who is unrejected by the Creator, turn not away from the voice of our petitions, though 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 dost ever intercede for those who honor thee.

TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

Prokeimenon: The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord. Hearken to my voice, O God!

The Reading is from St. Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy

(2 Tim 2:1-10) **My child Timothy: be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; and the things which you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. Suffer hardship as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier on service entangles himself in the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier. And if someone also contends in the games, he is not crowned, unless he has contended lawfully. The husbandman who labors must be the first to partake of the fruits. Consider what I say, and may the Lord grant you understanding in all things. Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel, in which I suffer hardships and even bonds, as a criminal; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.**

There is no real Christianity “by oneself,” outside the give-and-take of being part of a real community. And there is no real Christianity without discipleship—that is, without spiritual fatherhood. “Spiritual fatherhood” is the concrete way in which the Church, from its very beginning, has passed on the life in Christ. It is true that today it is not easy to find good spiritual guides, who would effectively help us grow as disciples of Christ. It is also true that arrogance and spiritual immaturity prevent us from receiving the blessing that God has provided for us in the very state, time, and place we are in. Spiritual fatherhood and spiritual discipleship are two sides of the life in Christ.

We are reading today from the correspondence between St Paul and his disciple Timothy, and we get a glimpse of the way in which spiritual fatherhood and discipleship was “working” in the early decades of the Church. More than the words (because we only read a tiny passage), it is the *example* that we should use for our benefit. Christ speaks to each of us directly, by calling us, by rooting us in Himself, by feeding us on the risen life which is in Him; but He also interacts with us through the ministry of the spiritual father, who is charged with teaching us how to become and grow as Christians. This is not really an “indirect” presence of Christ, because the Lord’s blessing is present in

the very relation—and because spiritual fatherhood is, essentially, an icon of Christ's relation with the Church.

Let us keep in mind some of the words that St. Paul addresses to Timothy: **Your life is like a battle: be a good soldier of Christ Jesus; your life is also like a sporting contest: be a good athlete of Christ. Take to heart the things I say; remember Jesus Christ, who is truly man ("of the seed of David") and truly God ("risen from the dead"), and be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.**

TODAY'S GOSPEL READING

The Reading is from the Gospel according to Saint Luke

(Luke 8:26-39) At that time, as Jesus arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, there met him a man from the city who had demons; for a long time he had worn no clothes and he lived not in a house but among the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him, and said with a loud voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beseech you, do not torment me." For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many a time it had seized him; he was kept under guard, and bound with chains and fetters, but he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the desert.) Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion"; for many demons had entered him. And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss. Now a large herd of swine was feeding there on the hillside; and they begged him to let them enter these. So he gave them leave. Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned. When the herdsmen saw what happened, they fled, and told it in the city and in the country. Then people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. And those who had seen it told them how he who had been possessed with demons was healed. Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gadarenes asked him to depart from them; for they were seized with great fear; so he got into the boat and returned. The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but he sent him away, saying, "Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you." And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him.

A recent saint (St. Nicholai of South Canaan) wrote that "God teaches not only through the sky, filled with angels and adorned with stars, or through the earth, all covered with the media of God's created beings, *but even through the demons.*" Indeed, Christ allowed the demons to show us vividly just what is at stake in the Gospel's call to repentance and life with God.

At the very beginning, we learn that this person, although alive, was spending his tormented existence "not in a house but among the tombs": a "dead life," haunted by nightmarish frights. The man was out of his mind: his mind, that is, was the playground of a legion of spirits; and, just as sleepwalkers play out their dreams by moving about physically, at the risk of gravely injuring themselves, so also was this man's body wounded by being dragged along as the demons were harassing his spirit. This is indeed disturbing to any reader or hearer of the Gospel, because we have

here an appropriate image of the fallen existence that Adam chose by trusting the evil one rather than God.

When the Lord meets him and heals him, he decides to bring the evil out in a spectacular display, so that people see and understand the extent of this man's torment: he sends the legion of demons into a herd of swine. The resulting stampede, with the swine rushing headlong off a cliff to a miserable drowning, gives us frightening insight into the kind of dark and destructive force had been ravaging the man from Gadara. The account is frightening, especially bearing in mind that, according to Scripture, "the world lies under the power of the evil one" (1 John 5:19).

Most frightening, however, is what follows after the demons are banished and the man restored to health. Instead of giving thanks for the healing and perhaps throwing a feast, the Gadarenes are "seized with great fear" and ask Jesus to leave the area at once! They are afraid, indeed, but not of the demons. They are afraid that God is coming into their lives, and are unwilling to welcome into their homes a guest that disrupts the status quo by bringing in a new kind of life. Frightening indeed it is to note that the Gadarenes are not speaking with complete freedom, but are in fact mouthing the words of the demons: "What have you to do with us, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?"

Today's Gospel makes it clear that the choice we are given in our life is a deadly serious one. God or a legion of demons; being enslaved and harassed by evil, or healed by the Savior of all mankind. Let us leave our tombs and run to Christ, heeding the call that has gone out to us: "With fear of God, faith, and love *draw near!*"

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Saturday, 11/1 and Saturday 11/8: choir practices with all singers from all three Orthodox parishes willing to help at the upcoming Pan-Orthodox Liturgy (Nov 9).**
- **Saturday, 11/8: Kibbee Bake Sale!** We do need volunteers to work hard a few hours so as to have the kibbee ready for pick-up by 2pm. For details [please see Georgia](#).
- **Sunday, 11/9: pan-Orthodox Liturgy** (last Sunday before the Nativity Fast) at Sts Peter and Paul. We will try to "mix-and-match" the music:: some Byzantine, some Slavic.
- **Saturday, 11/15: Bible Study.** We will return to the Parables of the Lord and discuss two references to shepherding (Luke 15:4 and John 10:1-18) and their Old Testament references. It is all about us!

Remember in your prayers

LIVING: Ron (upcoming surgeries), George (Georgiades), 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 (and newborn Judson), Timothy and Carolyn – seeking for the true faith.

DEPARTED: Angeliki, Metropolitan Philip; 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).