

SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

www.orthodoxbutler.org

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TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

4 November 2012

— **Tone 5.** Hieromartyrs Nicander, Bishop of Myra, and Hermas, Presbyter (1st c.); Ven. Ioannikios the Great (846).

FIRST ANTIPHON

*It is good to give praise unto the Lord, and to chant unto Thy Name, O Most High! **R.:** 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! Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead, who sing to Thee: "Alleluia"!

TROPARION OF RESURRECTION (Tone 5): Let us believers praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our salvation; for He took pleasure in ascending the Cross in the flesh, to suffer death, and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.

TROPARION OF ST IOANIKIOS (Tone 8): With the streams of thy tears, thou didst cultivate the barrenness of the desert; and by thy sighings from the depths, thou didst in labors bear fruit a hundredfold; and thou becamest a luminary, shining with miracles upon the world, O Ioanikios our righteous Father. Intercede with Christ God that our souls be saved.

Glory ... TROPARION OF SAINT ANTHONY (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.

Now and ever ... KONTAKION (Tone 4): 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!

Remember in your prayers

LIVING: Ed and family, Peter and family, Georgia and Scot, Richard (Michaels), Karen (Joanna's mother), Victoria (Frank's mother), Diane, Sula, Fran, Dollie, Dolores (Bingham), Angelica, Karyn, Ignatius and Amy, Jonathan and Joanna, Andrei and Nyoka, Jackie (Ed's friend), Leah, Donald, Gregory, Daniel, Nicole, Kera, Julie, Christina, Dustin, Nathan, John, Ryan and Jeremy; Ben.

DEPARTED: 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, Lance, Nancy (Dunkle), Eugenia (Cristina's godmother).

TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

Prokeimenon: *Thou, O Lord, shalt keep us and shalt preserve us.
Save me, O Lord, for the godly man is no more!*

*The Reading is from the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Galatians
(Galatians 6:11-18)*

Brethren, see with what large letters I am writing to you, with my own hand. It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that would compel you to be circumcised, and only so that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For even those who receive circumcision do not themselves keep the law; but they desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh. But far be it from me to glory, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision: what counts is to be a new creation! Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God. Henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

It is clear that Saint Paul is writing here about a matter he views as extremely important. The first line about the “large letters” means something like “I want to emphasize in the bold scrawls of my personal handwriting the immense importance of what I have written.” What was the problem? Saint Paul was writing to warn the Galatians against certain Christian leaders who compelled all new converts to the faith to practice circumcision. He warned that such “missionaries” were in fact interested in cultivating their own public image in the Christian community, while at the same time “keeping a low profile” in the larger society, so as to avoid prosecution by the Roman Empire (as long as Christians would be perceived as a type of Judaism, they would not be persecuted, but tolerated, like the Jews). The false missionaries were not “crazy” to insist on circumcision; it was, to them and to many, a definite mark of religious piety. Today, it would be things like not eating certain foods on certain days, dressing in a certain way, abstaining from this or that, etc. Saint Paul’s point is that, ultimately, all these things must be placed in a different perspective: what truly matters is not that we do this or that, or that we keep

this or that rule of piety; what matters is that we become a “new creation”—and this is God’s work in us. Indeed, as the Apostle writes elsewhere (2 Cor 4:6), the same God who spoke at creation, let there be light—and it was light, now shines in our hearts, drawing us out of darkness and re-creating us into children of the light. “A new creation” means that our Christian life is God’s liturgy in us, where we are co-workers with God.

TODAY’S GOSPEL READING

The Reading is from the Gospel according to Saint Luke

(Luke 16:19-31)

The Lord said: "There was a rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, full of sores, who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table; moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried; and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes, and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus in his bosom. And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.' And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.' But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if some one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if some one should rise from the dead.'"

It is easy to blame the rich man in this story: he shares nothing with poor Lazarus, he does not care for his sick and dying fellow-human, he is a monster! And yet, judging things on a strictly social and political level, the rich man may have some sort of justification. After all, some would

say, the rich man was not responsible for the poverty and sickness of Lazarus; besides, Lazarus should be grateful for the crumbs he is getting! But the story requires us to approach it differently.

As always with parables in the Gospel, we are called to ask ourselves: who are *we* in this story? The answer has nothing to do with the amount of money one has accumulated, or one's social status. Theologically speaking, *all of us*—rich and poor, men and women, citizens and foreigners, etc— are Lazarus. In relation to God, we are all a Lazarus, suffering from the incurable sickness of mortality, covered with the boils of sinful and destructive habits, barely alive through our own choice of separating ourselves from the divine source of life. Now, since God is not responsible for our fallen state, could he not just tolerate us, the way the rich man tolerates the poor who eats crumbs from his table? But God shows us a different way.

He does not ask whether we “truly deserve” a better state; in dealing with our shortcomings, as the Psalmist says, He does not keep score: “If You should mark our iniquities, who could stand? But with You there is forgiveness.” And, unlike the rich man in the parable, God does not feed us mere crumbs. Remember the invitation we receive on Pascha night: *“You that have kept the fast, and you that have not, rejoice today, for the table is richly laden! The calf is a fatted one, let no one go away hungry! Enjoy all the riches of His goodness! Let no one grieve at his poverty, for the universal kingdom has been revealed. Let no one mourn that he has fallen again and again; for forgiveness has risen from the grave.”*

If we refuse to be like God, we automatically separate ourselves from Him, and choose the same miserable hell as the foolish rich man. God does not wish for this; therefore He sets before us many opportunities to share with others the gifts that we ourselves have so richly received from Him.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: STUMP THE PRIEST!

Next Sunday: *Pan-Orthodox Liturgy at Sts Peter & Paul.* This being the last Sunday before the Nativity fast, we will gather all three parishes for a common Liturgy. **We also have two free tickets for the luncheon!**

Liturgy will be followed by a **memorial service for the departed veterans.** Please give Fr. Bogdan the names of those you would like us to remember (first name, and last names between parantheses).

Sunday, 18 Nov: DIVINE LITURGY, 9am – note the early time.
Trisagion prayers for Lance Shaeffer.

FOOD FOR HUNGRY PEOPLE: please remember that we are collecting non-perishable items (cans, etc), to be donated to the Society of St. Vincent DePaul, which will distribute them directly to the needy persons of Butler. There is a special collection for Thanksgiving.

“Rejoice, O Bethlehem, for Eden has been opened for all”:

LEARNING THEOLOGY FROM THE ANCIENT HYMNS

**Sunday, December 2,
1-3pm**

There will be an audio-video presentation followed by Q&A.
Everyone is welcome. Please bring a friend!

“Make ready, O Bethlehem, for Eden has been opened for all!”

LEARNING THEOLOGY FROM THE ANCIENT HYMNS



The poetry of the early Church was never “just art.” Over two millennia and up to this day, the sacred hymns composed by ancient Christians have been opening the treasures of Holy Scripture to all those who hunger for the living God. Indeed, hymns are theology—even the first, deepest, and most beautiful theology of the Christian Church.

We invite you to join us as we gather to learn from the ancient hymns of Nativity on **Sunday, 2 December 2012, 1-3pm**. There will be an audio-video presentation followed by Q&A.

Everyone is welcome!

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*For directions or if you have questions, please visit our website
or email Diane Shaeffer (madisondwd@msn.com)*