

SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

www.orthodoxbutler.org

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TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

6 November 2011

On this day, we commemorate St. Paul the Confessor, Archbishop of Constantinople (350); Martyrs Tecusa, Alexandra, Claudia, Matrona, Polactia, Euphrosyne, and Athanasia, of Ancyra (3rd c.); Ven. Luke of Sicily (800-820).

LIVING: Diane, Abie (Abraham), Sula, Bill, Norm, Fran, Dolores (Sipos), Leatrice (Totin), Dolores (Bingham), Angelica, Karyn, Brian, Justin, Sara, Miguel, Christine, Lorine, Ileana and Silviu, Ignatius and Aimilia, Jonathan and Joanna.

DEPARTED: priest James, George (Botsis), Eduard, Lance, Nancy, Petruța, Peter, Michael, William, Mariana, James, Mary Ann, Michael.

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.: Save, O Son of God Who art risen from the dead, 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 THE RESURRECTION (Tone 4): Having learned the joyful message of the Resurrection from the angel the women disciples of the Lord 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!”

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 FOR 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 dost 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 the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Galatians
(Galatians 2:16-20)*

Brethren, we who know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law; because by works of the law shall no one be justified. But if, in seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I show myself to be a transgressor. For through the law I died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Saint Paul's theology is quite complicated. Even his apostolic colleague, Saint Peter, wrote about him that "his letters contain some things that are hard to understand" (2 Peter 3:16). Difficult as they are, however, we cannot bypass Paul's letters.

This passage is responding to the charge that eliminating some of the Old Testament legislation in favor of Christian freedom would encourage libertinism. Indeed, this is what many of the early Christians of Jewish descent were thinking: if you do away with the Law and emphasize only Christ, you are making it very easy for people to fall into immoral behavior—and thus you are making Christ an instrument of sin! In reply, the holy Apostle affirms that being "in Christ" implies a high level of morality; for a Christian, however, to strive to attain God by following the Law, is a terrible rejection of God's providence that the Law should be surpassed and absorbed by Christ.

St. Paul is thinking of Christ as the living Law of God, the Law-made-flesh. The law that Moses received on Mount Sinai (the ten commandments, the commandments regarding the worship of God, and the host of commandments regulating everyday life in Israel) were meant as a preparation

for the coming of Christ. Once the fullness of God has come among us as a human being, however, the commandments of the Law no longer retain their complete validity. For instance, the ten commandments are contained in and surpassed by the “new commandment” that we love each other; the tent of meeting and, later, the Temple, is contained in and surpassed by new true temple of God: Jesus Christ; as for dietary laws and other such regulations, they are relative now, and subservient to fostering our life in Christ.

To live in Christ means— for Saint Paul just as for today’s Gospel—to be crucified with Christ: “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.” That is, to become gradually, step by step, similar to Jesus Christ. Elsewhere in the New Testament we find a vivid comparison: it is as though the life of a Christian would consist of becoming an icon of Christ. With every step of our life, we draw the lines, we add the colors, we shape our being such that it would reflect the beauty of Jesus Christ “who loved me and gave himself for me.”

TODAY’S GOSPEL READING

The Reading is from the Gospel according to Saint Luke

(Luke 8:41-56)

At that time, there came a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue; and falling at Jesus' feet he besought him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying. As he went, the people pressed round him. And a woman who had had a flow of blood for twelve years and had spent all her living upon physicians and could not be healed by any one, came up behind him, and touched the fringe of his garment; and immediately her flow of blood ceased. And Jesus said, "Who was it that touched me?" When all denied it, Peter and those who were with him said, "Master, the multitudes surround you and press upon you!" But Jesus said, "Some one touched me; for I perceive that power has gone forth from me." And when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling, and falling down before him declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well go in peace." While he was still speaking, a man from the ruler's house came and said, "Your daughter is

dead; do not trouble the Teacher any more." But Jesus on hearing this answered him, "Do not fear; only believe, and she shall be well." And when he came to the house, he permitted no one to enter with him, except Peter and John and James, and the father and mother of the child. And all were weeping and bewailing her; but he said, "Do not weep; for she is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. But taking her by the hand he called, saying, "Child, arise." And her spirit returned, and she got up at once; and he directed that something should be given her to eat. And her parents were amazed; but he charged them to tell no one what had happened.

Today's Gospel is, clearly, about miracles: a chronic disease that no doctor has been able to cure goes away instantly at a mere brush with the Lord's garment—even *the fringes* of His garment; a dead child, soon to be taken to the grave, is brought back from death to life. The rapid and overwhelming succession of these miracles speaks of the divine identity of Christ. It is no less important, however, to consider the other characters in the text: Jairus, the father of the dying child, the woman who comes seeking healing, and the crowd of followers and bystanders. They all represent *me*, who hear the story *today* and who am called to receive the universal Gospel as a word addressed specifically *to me*.

When Christ reaches the house of Jairus, the family is already weeping, crushed by the tragic and untimely death of the child. One of the bystanders suggests that, under the circumstances, Jairus should no longer "trouble the Teacher." This seems to be a common-sense observation, perhaps even an attempt to help the father deal with the loss, and focus on what needs to be done: accept the reality of his daughter's death, make sure that a proper burial is performed, organize the funeral meal. A bit later, others are ridiculing "the Teacher" for his "unrealistic" denial of the obvious fact that the child is dead. Similarly, we hear the disciples appealing to good common sense: when the crowd is pressing all around Jesus, who could identify the particular individual who touched Him?

By contrast, Jairus and the woman act with a holy foolishness, deciding, against all common sense, to trust Christ. It is this trust that allows the miracle to occur: "*your faith* has made you well," Christ tells the woman; "Do not fear, only *believe!*," he says to Jairus. Indeed, common sense is blind in these instances, because it is paralyzed by fear: fear that we are alone in a

hostile world, reduced to surviving, suffering, and “getting over it” in a reality abandoned by God (if there ever was a God).

Today’s Gospel exorcizes this kind of fear. Like Jairus and the suffering woman, we are invited to be bold in “troubling the Teacher,” to approach Him with our open wounds, without fear and with full certainty that the Good News is true: “the Kingdom of God has drawn near!” God has already taken the first step towards us.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today:

- no sermon, STUMP THE PRIEST!
- Congratulations to Ileana and Silviu for their silver anniversary (25 years of marriage). *Many years! La mulți ani!* We will have a thanksgiving ceremony and blessing of the rings at the end of Divine Liturgy.

Good news! Ignatius and Aimilia are preparing to get married on February 5.

More good news! Jonathan and Joanna are preparing to get married in June!

Please keep these young couples and their families in your prayers.

Next Saturday (Nov. 12) 1-6 PM: Education Day for Adults. This is an opportunity *for all of us our adults* to grow in our understanding of the faith. There will be two presentations by Fr. Bogdan (with a short break in between), followed by a time for questions and answers. We will end with the service of Vespers. It is quite likely that parishioners from the other two Orthodox churches join us for the event. Please make every effort to come; and bring a friend!

Next Sunday, Nov. 13, Divine Liturgy will be at Sts. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Church, our close neighbor at 21 Evergreen Road, Lyndora, PA 16045. The three Orthodox parishes in the area (ours, St. Andrew [OCA], and Sts. Peter and Paul [Ukrainian]) are coming together for Liturgy followed by a pre-Advent meal. **Today is the deadline for purchasing tickets:** 10 dollars for adults, 5 dollars for children 6-12, and free for young children).

Tuesday, Nov. 29, 7:30 pm, at Perkins: Bible Study in Cranberry. We are planning to meet once a month.