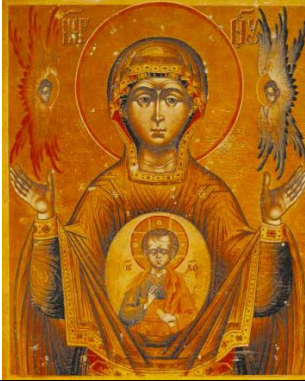


SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

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SUNDAY OF ALL SAINTS OF NORTH AMERICA

(Second after Pentecost)

26 June 2011

Commemoration of all Saints of America;

Ven. David of Thessalonika (+540); John, bishop of the Goths (8th c.)

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.:) 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! (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 1): While the stone was sealed by the Jews, and the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst arise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. For which cause the heavenly powers cried aloud unto Thee, O giver of life. Glory to Thy Resurrection O Christ, glory to Thy kingdom, glory to Thy providence, O Thou Who alone art the lover of mankind.

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 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.

LIVING: We pray for the health and well being of **Diane, Abie (Abraham), Sula, Bill, Fran, George (Botsis), Dolores (Sipos), Leatrice (Totin), Josephine, Dolores (Bingham), Angelica, Karyn, Brian, Maria, Marius, Justin, Sara, Miguel.**

DEPARTED: **Lance, Nancy, Petruța, Peter, Michael, William, Mariana, James, Mary Ann, Joseph, Katherine.**

TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

Prokeimenon:

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous.

The Reading is from Saint Paul's Letter to the Romans

(Rom 2:10–16)

Brethren: glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also the Greek. For God shows no partiality. All who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law, and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law. For it is not the hearers of the Law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the Law who will be justified. When Gentiles, who do not have the Law, do by nature what the Law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the Law. They show that what the Law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accusing or else excusing them on that day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

Last Sunday we remembered all the saints; this Sunday we commemorate especially the saints who have shone in our geographic area—all American saints. It is, therefore, the second Sunday that we explore how the new life (the life that is in Christ, which after Pentecost also flows into His disciples) looks like, *practically*. The Bible often speaks of “*walking in the Law of God*” (rather than knowing the Law, or studying the Law): a beautiful way of saying that authentic faith is not detached from everyday life, but necessarily bound up with it. The fact is that such lofty words as “holiness,” “deification,” “spirituality,” etc are empty of meaning, and often lead to dangerous delusions, if they are not expressed in practical, tangible, everyday *actions*. As the Apostle writes, “**it is not *the hearers of the Law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the Law who will be justified!***”

We hear today that even pagans, people with no direct knowledge of God and His Law, are connected to God in a mysterious way, by virtue of being human beings: since they are all made in the image of God, **the Law is written on their hearts,** so that they are able to do or to reject instinctively

(“by nature”) what the Law requires. This means that, since God knows man’s heart, He judges everyone justly and compassionately, whether Jew or Christian or pagan. It also means that we, as Christians, have no business taking the place of God and passing judgment left and right.

What then is our business? First of all, to pay heed to ourselves, since the standard is higher in our case. The Gospel read at Pentecost said about those who believe in Christ that “**out of their belly shall flow rivers of living water**” (John 7:38), meaning that the Holy Spirit descended not only on the Apostles, but also on us as. But how does this presence of the Spirit “cash out”? Scripture answers by saying: that **we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another ... by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit which he has given us!** (1 Jn 3:23-24).

In short: for us, who confess Christ as Lord and God, faith must bear fruit in concrete works of love towards all those around us.

TODAY’S GOSPEL READING

The Reading is from the Gospel according to Saint Matthew

(Mat 4:18-23)

At that time, as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” *Immediately* they left their nets and followed Him. And going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and He called them. *Immediately* they left the boat and their father, and followed Him. And He went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people.

Last Sunday I wrote that the “indicators” of a life of Christian holiness—faith, hope, and love—are not a static “thing” that you either have or don’t have, but an ongoing *process* of growth into God. If holiness is an ascent into God,

there is no end to this ascent; and if, as Saint Isaac the Syrian said, holiness is an abyss of humility, then there no end to this abyss.

But there is always a beginning. The saints we commemorate each day are not always examples we can imitate in the externals of their lives. A great many are monastics and hermits; many have suffered physical torture and death for their Christian faith. Most of us, by contrast, are neither hermits, nor monastics; and martyrdom is not a daily occurrence in North America. Nevertheless, the saints teach us how to *begin* our journey. In today's Gospel, when the Lord called them, Peter and Andrew **immediately left their nets and followed Him**; James and John **immediately left the boat and followed Him**.

We remember the saints—all those who, in all places and in all times have been well-pleasing to God—because we, too, want to grow as faithful disciples of the Lord. The details will be different from person to person, depending on a host of external circumstances. But, essentially, it will be the same life: living here and now the life of the age to come, so that at the Second Coming we are found to already be “in Christ”; living in this world, still lying “in the power of the evil one” (1 John 5:19) and beset by all manner of suffering, yet comforted and strengthened by the Holy Spirit of Pentecost, given to us all with Baptism and Chrismation.

When we stumble and fall—and we do fall short of God's call every minute of every day—we are given the opportunity to repent and get up again. Thus, we are called again, as if it were the first time. For now, let us learn from the saints how to respond to this call: *immediately!*

This Sunday we are encouraged to celebrate All the Saints of North America. Here is one of the Vespers hymns for this beautiful service.

Rejoice, O mountains of Pennsylvania,
Leap for joy, O waters of the Great Lakes,
Rise up, O fertile plains of Canada,
for the elect of Christ who dwelt in you are glorified,
men and women who left their homes for a new land.
With faith, hope and patience as their armor,
they courageously fought the good fight.
Comforted by the beauty of the Orthodox Faith,
they labored in mines and mills, they tilled the land,
they braved the challenges of the great cities,
enduring many hardships and sufferings.
Never failing to worship God in spirit and truth,
and unyielding in devotion to His most pure Mother,
they erected many temples to His glory.
Come, O assembly of the Orthodox,
and with love let us praise the holy women, men and children,
those known to us and those known only to God,
and let us cry out to them:
Rejoice, All Saints of North America,
and pray to God for us.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today, 40-day memorial for Lance Shaeffer.

Saints Peter and Paul (June 29): The Ukrainian Church invites us to join them for their patronal feast. Great Vespers on Tuesday, June 28, at 6:30 pm; Divine Liturgy on Wednesday, June 29 at 9:30 am.

17 July: St. Anthony parish picnic!

24 July: Pan-Orthodox picnic. Following Divine Liturgy, those of us who would like to go to the OCA-Ukrainian picnic can buy their tickets from Georgia and join the picnic at the American Legion in Highfield.