

SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

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FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

17 July 2011

*The Holy and God-Bearing Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council (451);
the Great-Martyr Marina of Pisidia (end of 3rd 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 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.

TROPARION FOR THE HOLY FATHERS (Tone 8): Thou, O Christ, art our God of exceeding praise Who didst establish our Holy Fathers as luminous stars upon earth, and through them didst guide us unto the true Faith, O most merciful One, glory to Thee.

TROPARION OF THE GREAT-MARTYR MARINA (Tone 5): O glorious Marina betrothed to God the Word,/ thou didst abandon all things earthly/ and contest victoriously as a virgin./ For thou didst trample on the invisible foe when he appeared,/ O holy trophy-bearer,/ and thou dost now bestow gifts of healing on the world.

Glory...

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.

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, 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, Christine.

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

TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

Prokeimenon:

The Lord is my strength and my song. The Lord has chastened me sorely.

The Reading is from Saint Paul's Letter to Titus

(Titus 3:8–15)

Titus, my son, the saying is sure. I desire you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good deeds; these are excellent and profitable to men. But avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels over the law, for they are useless and futile. As for a man who is factious, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is perverted and sinful; he is self-condemned. When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. And let our people learn to devote themselves to good deeds, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not to be unfruitful. All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

Whether baptized as children or becoming Orthodox later in life, we are all called to “come to believe” and to entrust ourselves and our whole life to Jesus Christ our Lord, God, and Savior. But we do not come to the Faith in order to be “right,” members in the most correct, most orthodox of Christian churches—as opposed to everyone out there who “doesn’t get it.” This

arrogant attitude usually leads one pretty soon to question even the Orthodoxy of the Orthodox; and one starts speaking of “true Orthodox” and arguing about all kind of elements by which “correctness” of faith is to be assessed—the calendar, the dress code of clergy, the length of services, the length of the beards, the type of food used during fasting periods, even some intimate details of family life.

These, Saint Paul writes forcefully, are all “stupid arguments, rivalries, and quarrels about the law”; for “they are useless and futile.” Instead, we should be focusing on things truly useful, excellent and beneficial to others: “let those who have believed in God be careful to devote themselves to good works ... Let our people learn to devote themselves to good works to supply urgent needs!” God knows that the urgent needs of the imperfect human community we inhabit, and of the entire broken world around us are not healed by *more* disagreements and *more* bitterness. There are persons who become addicted to constantly arguing one’s correctness against the errors of others. Such a person, Saint Paul instructs his disciple, should be confronted and stopped from spreading foolishness; if there is no repentance, “break off contact with the factious person, realizing that he is perverted in himself and sinful and stands self-condemned.”

The Church is a training-ground for the Kingdom of Heaven: it is not about proving ourselves right and others wrong, but a training in humility, love, and service to others.

TODAY’S GOSPEL READING

The Reading is from the Gospel according to Saint Matthew
(Mat 5:14-19)

The Lord said to his disciples: “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them, but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these

commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

Christ is speaking here, as we read, to his disciples. It is, then, yet again, a saying for the insider of the faith: “You are the light of the world. ... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

Let us note, first, how highly the Lord speaks about his disciples. Are we really the light of the world? Weren't we warned, just recently, about the darkness that is in us? **(If your eye is unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then, the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!)** And doesn't the Lord say clearly in the Gospel of John: **“I am the light of the world”** (John 8:12)?

Yet the Lord says himself that a perfect disciple is like his master (Luke 6:40), doing the same works as the master or even “greater works” (John 14:12).

What all of this boils down to is the following: we are, indeed, called to be a light in the world; we can only fulfill this calling to be a light to others by allowing the true Light, Christ our true God, to enlighten *our* darkness first; finally, the light that we are to bring to others is the light of Christ: his mercy and meekness and grace and love.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: ST. ANTHONY PARISH PICNIC! There will be plenty of tasty food, games for the kids, music, and fellowship. We are meeting on the campground near the home of Abie Abraham: 142 Hoffmann Lane, Renfrew, PA.
See attached map!

NEXT SUNDAY, 24 July: memorial service for Joe Sipos and Kate Thomas.

24 July: Pan-Orthodox picnic. Following Divine Liturgy at St. Anthony's, anyone interested can join the parishioners of the other two churches at the American Legion in Highfield. Food is catered, tickets can be bought from Georgia.