

# SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

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## TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

21 August 2011

Afterfeast of the Dormition of the Theotokos;

Apostle Thaddæus (ca. 44); Martyr Bassa of Edessa and her sons Theogonius, Agapius, and Pistus (2nd c.); Ven. Abramius the Wonderworker of Smolensk, and his disciple, Ven. Ephraim (13th c.); Ven. Nun Martha of Diveyevo (1829).

LIVING: Norm, Diane, Abie (Abraham), Sula, Bill, Fran, George (Botsis), Dolores (Sipos), Leatrice (Totin), Dolores (Bingham), Angelica, Karyn, Brian, Maria, Marius, Justin, Sara, Miguel, Christine, Eduard, .

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

## FIRST ANTIPHON

*Shout with joy to God, all the earth! Give thanks to the Lord, call upon His Name, declare His works among the nations.* **Refrain:** Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us!

*In the city of our God, in His holy mountain, His place hath been made in peace, and His dwelling in Zion.* (R.:)

*Glory... Now and ever... (R.:)*

## SECOND ANTIPHON

*The Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwelling of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God! Refrain:* Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead, who sing to Thee: Alleluia!

*God hath laid her foundation unto eternity. We have thought, O God, of Thy mercy in the midst of Thy people. (R.)*

*The most-high hath hallowed His tabernacle. (R.)*

*Glory... Now and ever... (Only begotten Son and Word of God ...)*

## THIRD ANTIPHON

*Ready is my heart, O God, ready is my heart; I will sing and chant*  
*TROPARION OF THE DORMITION*

*What shall I render to the Lord for all that He hath given me?*  
*TROPARION OF THE DORMITION*

*I will receive the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord.*  
*TROPARION OF THE DORMITION*

## 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 THE DORMITION (Tone 1): In thy birthgiving, O Theotokos, thou didst keep and preserve virginity; and in thy falling-asleep thou hast not forsaken the world; for living thou wast translated, being the Mother of Life. Wherefore, by thine intercessions, deliver our souls from death.

*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 OF THE DORMITION (Tone 2): Verily, the Theotokos, who is ever watchful in intercessions, who is never rejected, neither tomb nor death could control. But being the Mother of Life, He Who dwelt in her ever-Virgin womb did translate her to life.

## 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 First Epistle to the Corinthians*

(1 Cor 4:9-16)

**Brethren:** God has exhibited us, the apostles, as the last of all, like people sentenced to death, since we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and human beings alike. We are fools on Christ's account, but you are wise in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong; you are held in honor, but we in disrepute. To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are poorly clad and roughly treated, we wander about homeless and we toil, working with our own hands. When ridiculed, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we respond gently. We have become like the world's rubbish, the scum of all, to this very moment. I am writing you this not to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children. Even if you should have countless guides to Christ, yet you do not have many fathers, for I became your father in Christ Jesus through the Gospel. Therefore, I urge you, be imitators of me

The ministry of the Holy Apostles, as laid out by the Lord, was to bring the Good News to the entire world, and to make disciples of any and all who

want to taste the new life in Christ. “Making disciples” is much more than providing information, or organizing disciplined battalions of followers. It means sharing the life of those who are being “disciple,” and gradually reshaping them in the image and likeness of a living model.

This is what the followers of the Lord experienced in their three years of following Jesus Christ, and, after Pentecost, in their new experience of the Risen Christ made present through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Apostles received the mandate to bring others into this spiritual fellowship with the Risen Lord: to make anyone willing a disciple—a disciple *of Christ!* And Saint Paul writes: **Even if you should have countless guides to Christ, yet you do not have many fathers, for I became your father in Christ Jesus through the Gospel. Therefore, I urge you, be imitators of me.**

But why does Paul urge the Corinthians to imitate *him*? Why not “imitate Christ”? And why does he speak of himself as their *father*?

Let us note, first, that in the same letter, the Apostle writes: **Be imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ** (1 Cor 11:1). Even in today’s Epistle, Saint Paul compares “guide *to Christ*” to “father *in Christ*”: both “guide” and “father” are explained, specifically, in relation to Christ! It is understood that a “guide to Christ” leads not to Paul, but to Christ. So also with spiritual fatherhood: this much more intimate relation also results in making Paul’s disciples into children of Christ.

Christian discipleship today occurs in parishes and monasteries. “Each according to his own gift, one in this manner, and another in that,” as the Holy Apostles writes elsewhere (1 Cor 7:7). Even though we have few reliable guides to Christ today, and even fewer fathers in Christ, God will always provide for those who seek him earnestly, and whoever wants to be saved will be given the proper avenue of discipleship. The Lord promised to be us always, unto the end of the ages.

## TODAY'S GOSPEL READING

*The Reading is from the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*

(Mat 17:14-23)

At that time, a man came up to Jesus and kneeling before Him said, “Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and he suffers terribly; for often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. And I brought him to your disciples, and they could not heal him.” And Jesus answered, “O faithless and perverse generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him here to me!” And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured instantly. Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and said, “Why could we not cast it out?” Jesus said to them, “Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you. This kind never comes out except by prayer and fasting!” As they were traveling together through Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and He will rise on the third day.”

As always, we look at today's Gospel not only for its “story”—the miraculous healing of a demon-possessed child—but for what it says about us and our state today. It is noteworthy that the tortured existence of that child, as well as the shocking inability of the Apostles to provide healing (they are themselves puzzled about the incident) are due, the Lord says, to lack of faith. And it is about faith and its transformative power that Christ speaks to his disciples “in private,” after the healing. We learn that “nothing is impossible” once we learn to live in faith.

What exactly is “faith,” then? Let us remember, first, that today's Gospel text follows immediately after the Transfiguration account. It is there, on Mount Tabor, that three of the disciples have seen Christ in the blazing light of his glory. That “the boy was cured instantly” is not surprising if we remember Who it is that touched him: the Lord of glory, the Light and Life of the world. On Tabor, however, we also have a glimpse of what God intends for the restored humanity of the age to come.

What about us here and now, in the meantime—living as fallen creatures in this fallen world, even as we confess in the Creed, that we “look for the Resurrection and the life of the age to come”? The Gospel proclaims that the Kingdom of God has *already* dawned; we *already* experience a measure of the new reality, in which “God is with us, with His grace and love of mankind” (the priest proclaims this in the prayer following the main meal of the day). Miracles are the “normal” of the Kingdom to come, shining through, even for a single moment, in the fallen world. The key is faith.

Faith is the medium through which a glimpse of the Kingdom of Heaven can be received in our everyday lives. Indeed, it is *faith* that allows us to experience the healing power of Christ (and lack of faith prevents it, as we see with the Lord’s disciples today). To prevent us from misunderstanding faith as a search for magical superpowers, today’s Gospel reading ends with the truth that undergirds our faith, hope, and love: **“The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and He will rise on the third day.”** We remember this every time we are called to draw near *with faith* to receive the Body of Christ, so as to taste the power and glory of the Resurrection even here and now.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Next Saturday (27 August):**

Vespers, 6pm, followed by Intro to Byzantine chant.

**Sunday, 28 August:** Psalm singing, 9:15AM

Divine Liturgy 10 AM

**SUNDAY SCHOOL!** A new year of Sunday School will start with the blessing of the children, parents, and teachers on Sunday, September 11. More details are forthcoming from our three wonderful teachers this year, Stephanie, Jennifer, and Stacey.