

A PRAYER TO ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

“**Θ** Holy Forerunner John, the Baptizer of our Lord Jesus Christ: you were the last of the prophets and among the first of the martyrs; you were the instructor of fasters and desert-dwellers and a teacher of purity. We sing your praises as being the “... greatest of those born of woman.” We humbly beseech you to assist us in knowing our place in life, just as you recognized that it was necessary for you to “step back” and allow the Lord to take His own rightful place as the One Who was the answer to your “... voice crying in the wilderness.” You proclaimed the teachings of the prophets of old about the coming of the Messiah. Help us to seek the repentance that you urged so many to search for as you baptized along the banks of the Jordan River, so that one day we may be worthy of entering the Kingdom of Heaven. As we commemorate your beheading through the treachery of Herodias and Salome, may we be inspired by your example of always speaking and defending the truth — even at the expense of sacrificing your own life in the process. O great and glorious John the Baptist, receive from us this heartfelt supplication which we offer to you with the hope that our intentions are pleasing to God. Deliver us from evil of every kind and rescue us from eternal torment. Make us heirs to God’s eternal dwelling place and intercede for us before the Throne of our Heavenly Father. For you are the radiance of the shining light of the Gospel and the fulfillment of God’s promise to mankind. Amen.”



The Orthodox Weekly Bulletin Vestal, Cliffwood, New Jersey Litho in U.S.A.

ABOUT COMMUNION

We are happy that you have joined us today. Indeed, we pray for the “unity of the Faith” for the day when all of Christianity are united as ONE and can share a common Chalice. However, this is not the case as yet. Please note that Holy Communion, the actual Body & Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, is only for Members of the Orthodox Church who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting, and confession, & arrived before the Gospel reading. However, everyone is welcome to partake of the blessed bread and receive a blessing from the pastor at the dismissal. If you are interested, you may inquire with the pastor how you can become a member.

If you are a guest or otherwise not a regular communicant, please give your baptismal name when receiving.





St. Anthony The Great Antiochian Orthodox Church

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WELCOME TO ST. ANTHONY'S

Where people from around the world come together to serve God and our community. We are glad you are worshipping with us today! This Church is one community of many in the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. The Church of Antioch belongs to two thousand years of evangelization, teaching, history, and tradition which expresses the continued commitment of its members to the Orthodox Christian faith in the Lord Jesus Christ!

St. Anthony Church is a Pan-Orthodox community, under the omophorion of His Beatitude Patriarch JOHN X within the Self-ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America.

If you are a first time visitor, please fill out the guest form located on the literature table.

We want you to feel at home in prayer and worship. Please submit your names to the ushers and introduce yourself to Fr. Elia at the end of the service so he may welcome you personally.

Following services, please join us for sharing of fellowship, coffee, and food.

DIVINE LITURGY VARIABLES ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 25, 2024 NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST & NINTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW RETURN OF THE RELICS OF THE APOSTLE BARTHOLOMEW; THE HOLY APOSTLE TITUS OF THE SEVENTY

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE EIGHT

From the heights Thou didst descend, O compassionate One, and Thou didst submit to the three-day burial, that Thou might deliver us from passion; Thou art our life and our Resurrection, O Lord, glory to Thee

APOLYTIKION FOR SS. BARTHOLOMEW & TITUS IN TONE THREE

O Holy Apostles, intercede with our merciful God, to grant our souls forgiveness of sins.

~ Now sing the apolytikion of the patron saint or feast of the temple.

APOLYTIKION OF ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT

Thou didst become like the zealous Elijah in his condition, and followed John the Baptist in his upright ways. Becoming a dweller in the wilderness, and an establisher of the universe by thy prayer O Father Anthony. Wherefore intercede thou with Christ our God to save our souls.

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Saint Leontios of Cyprus gracefully describes these two tasks, royal and priestly, saying: “Across heaven, earth, and sea, through wood and stone, across all visible and invisible Creation, I honor the Creator, the Master and the skilled Craftsman.” Creation does not directly and spontaneously honor its maker, but through me. The heavens proclaim the glory of God, and through me the moon worships Him and the stars glorify Him, just as rainwater, dewdrops, and all created things glorify and honor God.

A person does not approach this role through force but, rather, through the light of his spiritual vision. His call is not to dominate nature or to exploit it but, rather, to exalt and sanctify it.

Should We Seek a Peaceful World or the Kingdom of God?

The Church understands its mission to be that of a spiritual hospital, restoring spiritual health to man and building immunity against the deadly disease of sin.

When you create a healthy human being, everything is set on a good foundation. And when you make a saint, you give the possibility of sanctification not only to the saint but to everyone who is around him and everything in his orbit.

Based on this, the transfiguration of the world begins from man and in man, since man is a “miniature universe.” God commissioned him to reconcile the spiritual kingdom with the material kingdom and to make harmony between them. He must combine them. He must spiritualize the material and reveal all the potential latent in the created system. Man's vocation, in particular, is to show the spiritual in and through the material.

When a people regain the image of God, the thought of God resides in them. Thus, they no longer act according to their own will, which is contaminated with deviant whims, but rather by the will of God, which puts their whims on the right path.

In this respect, the liberation of man and Creation becomes liberation from all the evil forces that controlled them as a result of sin. So, the liberation of woman, for example, becomes a restoration of her position as a creature in the image and likeness of God, who has her own role and her own message. It shouldn't be a response to human rights movements that call for mere equality with men in terms of rights, for her to turn into another man, and for the distortion of her special role as a female.

The fight against hunger in poor countries does not just become a matter of filling empty stomachs; nor does a political struggle merely aim to liberate the country from bad external or internal domination, but rather, it becomes a struggle to restore the kingdom of love lost as a result of the prevalence of sin and humanity's accumulated fall.

In the same sense, peace becomes, not just the absence of violence and threats of war, but rather, the presence of God in us—inner happiness and serenity that are not disturbed by turmoil of life, no matter how intense it is.

There is rather a huge difference between those who serve merely for the sake of human rights and those who serve in order to transform the earth into an image of the Kingdom of God. The method of service varies, as well as its starting points.

This teaching was originally printed for the 56th biennial Archdiocese Convention in July of 2023.

KONTAKION OF THE NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS IN TONE FOUR

By thy holy nativity, O pure one, Joachim and Anna were delivered from the reproach of barrenness; and Adam and Eve were delivered from the corruption of death; thy people do celebrate it, having been saved from the stain of iniquity, crying unto thee: The barren doth give birth to the Theotokos, who nourisheth our life.

THE EPISTLE

(For the Ninth Sunday after Pentecost)

Make your vows and pay them to the Lord our God.

God is known in Judaea; His Name is great in Israel

The Reading from the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians. (3:9-17)

Brethren, we are God's fellow workers; you are God's husbandry, God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise architect I laid a foundation, and another builds upon it. Let each one take heed how he builds upon it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; everyone's work will become manifest; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire itself will test each one's work of what sort it is. If anyone's work which was built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, yet so as by fire. Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone corrupts the temple of God, God will corrupt him. For the temple of God is holy, whose temple you are.

THE GOSPEL

(For the Ninth Sunday of Matthew)

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (14:22-34)

At that time, Jesus made the Disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He dismissed the crowds. And after He had dismissed the crowds, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. When evening came, He was there alone, but the Disciples' boat by this time was many furlongs distant from the land, beaten by the waves; for the wind was against them. And in the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea. But when the Disciples saw Jesus walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out for fear. But immediately He spoke to them, saying, “Take heart, it is I; have no fear.” And Peter answered Him, “Lord, if it is Thee, bid me come to Thee on the water.” He said, “Come.” So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus; but when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, “Lord, save me!” Jesus immediately reached out His hand and caught him, saying to him, “O man of little faith, why did you doubt?” And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped Him, saying, “Truly, Thou art the Son of God.” And when they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret.

~ *The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom continues as usual.*



Announcements



Epistle Readers

Aug 25

Carrie Matos

St. Paul's Letter to the Corinthians (3:9-17)

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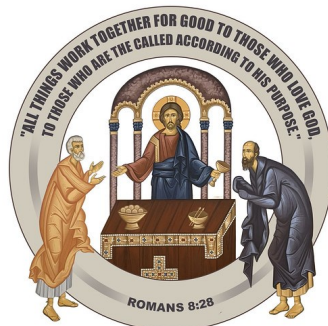
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Creative Arts Festival Award Ceremony

Congratulations to our talented children on their awards!

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Brooklyn	Art	Silver Ribbon
Maria	Art	Bronze Ribbon
Evelyn	Art	Bronze Ribbon
Corbin	Art	Bronze Ribbon
Brooklyn	Poetry	Bronze Ribbon

Please check out our Art Gallery on the Bulletin Board



Offering Holy Bread



It is the tradition of the Orthodox Church to offer Holy Bread for a Divine Liturgy for the health of a loved one; in memory of one who has fallen asleep in the Lord; a feast day, anniversary, birthday or other special occasion. The customary donation is \$25.00 per offering. Please fill out the form by the candles.



Please pray for the healing of Father Elia and Kh. Odette, Debbie Thieme, Adriana Theodoropoulos, Lori Sorensen, Michealle and Tyrone Carey, Beverly Delida, Alix Hall, Nina and Diogo Penas, Beth Manzini, John Archambeau, Alex & Soula, Nicholas Elliott, William Snell, Vasilika Yardines

COME BACK

We hope to see you next week. Each Sunday we celebrate the Resurrection of Christ with our morning Matins service at 8:45am followed by the main Sunday service, Divine Liturgy at 10am. Sunday School for the Children follows Communion. Fr. Elia would love to speak with you and answer any questions you may have. Please fill out our Guest Form. There's also a place where you can let us know any specific needs or concerns and we will lift them up in prayer. We welcome everyone who would like to learn more about the Orthodox Christian Faith. Please contact Fr. Elia either by E-Mail (elia_shalhoub@yahoo.com) or on his cell phone (305) 812-4940.

Your Grace Transforms the Universe, Part Two

By Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

To Receive the World as a Gift

The universe is the vine that God gave to mankind. Saint John Chrysostom says, "All things were made for our sake, but we were not made for them." Everything is a gift from God to man, evidence of His love. Everything testifies to the sap of God's love—His kindness, His grace—and transmits it to us. So everything carries this gift, the gift of divine love. Every gift that we exchange with each other is a sign and bearer of love. But every gift calls for another gift in return, for the exchange of love to be achieved. However, man has nothing to offer God except what was given to him, for his needs. Therefore, his gift is a sacrifice that he presents to God, as an act of thanksgiving. Man's gift to God is a sacrifice and a "Eucharist" in the most comprehensive sense, according to Fr. Dumitru Staniloae.

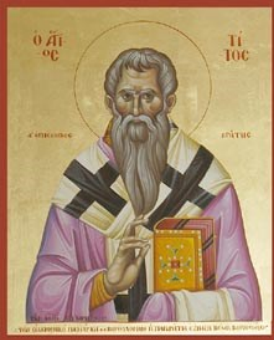
The transformation of the world, its transfiguration, begins with our receiving it as grateful believers, grateful for God's everlasting kind stance toward us. It is not without significance that the Eucharist is the most central and important ritual for Christians. Unfortunately, Christians today give the Sacrament of the Eucharist different names, and by neglecting to call it "The Sacrament of Thanksgiving," they forget that thanksgiving is the foundation of their faith.

Man can bless and praise God for the sake of the world. He can present the world to God as an act of thanksgiving. We say in the Sacrament of Thanksgiving, "Thine own of Thine own we offer unto Thee in behalf of all and for all."

Likewise, man is capable of reshaping and modifying the world, giving it a new—entirely new—meaning. "He imprints Creation with the seal of his understanding and perceptive action. The world, for man, is more than a gift; it is a task" (Father Dumitru Staniloae). It is worth mentioning here that in the sacrament of thanksgiving, we offer not sheaves of wheat but, rather, a prepared loaf, and we offer not clusters of grapes but, rather, aged wine.

Man provides material things a voice with which Creation can glorify God, whether through cultivating the land or through other professions—through his writings or even painting icons. The first task assigned to man was to give names to the living creatures (Genesis 2:19–20). As long as we do not give a name to an object or an experience, a precise word for its real significance, then we cannot begin to understand or use it.

Man, then, is the priest of Creation because he has the authority to give thanks to God and to offer Him Creation anew. He is also the king of Creation because he has the power to shape and fabricate it, to unite and divide it.



For such a manner of life the Lord did not leave him without His help. At age twenty Saint Titus heard a voice in a dream, suggesting that he abandon Hellenistic wisdom, which could not provide salvation for his soul, but rather to seek that which would save him. After this dream, Saint Titus waited yet another year, since it was not actually a command, but it did guide him to familiarize himself with the teachings of the prophets of God. The first that he happened to read was the Book of the Prophet Isaiah. Having opened it to the 47th Chapter, he was struck by the words, speaking as it were about his own spiritual condition.

When news reached Crete about the appearance of a Great Prophet in Palestine, and about the great miracles He worked, the governor of the island of Crete (an uncle of Titus) sent him there. This Prophet was the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, incarnate of the Most Holy Virgin Mary Who came into the world for the redemption of the race of mankind from the oppression of ancestral sin.

At Jerusalem, Saint Titus saw the Lord. He heard His preaching and believed in Him. He witnessed the suffering and death of the Savior on the Cross, His glorious Resurrection and Ascension to Heaven. On the day of Pentecost the future apostle heard how the Twelve Apostles, after the descent of the Holy Spirit, spoke in various languages, among which was the Cretan language (Acts 2: 11).

Saint Titus accepted Baptism from the Apostle Paul and became his closest disciple. He accompanied Saint Paul on his missionary journeys, fulfilling the tasks entrusted to him. He was involved in establishing new churches, and was with Paul in Jerusalem. Saint Titus was numbered among the Seventy Apostles and was made Bishop of Crete by the Apostle Paul. Around the year 65, not long before his second imprisonment, the Apostle Paul sent a pastoral epistle to his son in the Faith (Tit. 1: 4).

When the Apostle Paul was taken like a criminal to Rome to stand trial before Caesar, Saint Titus left his flock in Crete for a time and went to Rome to be of service to his spiritual Father. After Saint Paul's death by martyrdom, Titus returned to Gortyna, the chief city of Crete. Saint Titus peacefully guided his flock and toiled at enlightening the pagans with the light of faith in Christ. He was granted the gift of wonderworking by the Lord. During one of the pagan feasts in honor of the goddess Diana, Titus preached to a crowd of pagans.

When he saw that they would not listen to him, he prayed to the Lord, so that the Lord Himself would show to the mistaken people the falseness of idols. By the prayer of Saint Titus, the idol of Diana fell down and shattered before the eyes of all. Another time Saint Titus prayed that the Lord would not permit the completion of a temple of Zeus, and it collapsed.

By such miracles Saint Titus brought many to faith in Christ. After bringing the light of faith to the surrounding regions, Saint Titus died peacefully at the age of 97. At the time of his death, his face shone like the sun.

Aug 25-Sep 8 Fasting Calendar

Abstain from meat, dairy, eggs, fish, olive oil, and wine:

Wed 8/28, Thurs 8/29 & Fri 8/30

Wed 9/4, Fri 9/6

View calendar at <https://tinyurl.com/AOCfast>

Upcoming Events

This Week

Today

- * **Matins Service**—8:45am
- * **Divine Liturgy**—10:00am
- * **Sunday School Creative Arts Festival Award ceremony**
- * **Fellowship Hour**—*guests always welcome*
- ~Sunday school applications due today**

Wednesday

- * **Vespers**—5:30pm
- * **Choir Rehearsal**—6:00pm

Saturday

- * **Great Vespers**—5:30pm

This Quarter

September

- 8 - First day of Sunday school
- 14- Family Night (5:30pm)
- 15 - No Sunday School (Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross)
- 21 - Harvest Festival at Green Gables (AWO and Sunday School)

August Birthdays

- Aug 01: Alina Doda
- Aug 06: Kevin Brown
- Aug 13: Deborah Abdo-Dambrosio
- Aug 15: Alyssa Lieberman
- Aug 16: Evelyn and Corbin Dick
- Aug 22: Katherine Beeny
- Aug 24: Kristin Adilli, Aug 26: Nina Penas



September Birthdays

- Sep 01: Jean Najjar
- Sep 05: Hope Tanner
- Sep 10: Father Dimitri Bday
- Sep 12: Adrian Magelitz B-day
- Sep 20: Diogo Penas B-day
- Sep 30: Donna Soto B-day

May God Grant You Many Years!

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August 25, 2024

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Jesus Christ calls the devil the father of lies (John 8:44). The Apostle Paul teaches that a liar works on behalf of the devil (Colossians 3:9). King Solomon also writes: "Therefore beware of murmuring, which is unprofitable; and refrain your tongue from backbiting... for the mouth that is wrong slayeth the soul" (Wisdom of Solomon 1:11). The Holy Fathers of the Church understood the Ninth Commandment "Thou shalt not bear false witness" as a warning against every sin committed by word. Indeed, lies and slander are tantamount to murder, for it is possible to kill not only the physical body, but also the spiritual body. A lie is contrary to the Truth, and the Truth proceeds from God.

In Christ,
Fr. Elia Shalhoub
Very Rev. Fr. Elia Shalhoub, Pastor

A Faith for the Sick

Our Orthodox Church has always seen itself as a hospital for the soul, the place where her children can seek healing. It is within her walls that we find the medicine we need to make us holy (whole), and where we can find the means for transformation that opens the doors to the Kingdom of God. It is within her walls that we gain access to our true inheritance, and enter into communion with God. Adolf Harnack, in his book "The Mission and Expansion of Christianity: The First Three Centuries", wrote, "Christianity never lost hold of its innate principle; it was, and it remained, a religion for the sick. Accordingly it assumed that no one, or at least hardly any one, was in normal health, but that men were always in a state of disability." Christ is the Great Physician, and established His Church that we might all be healed of the sickness that has separated us from the Father. Nothing in this world offers this promise of healing, and nothing in this world can open the gates to Paradise. Only through Christ's Church can we hope to be saved, and only through His Church can heaven and earth be united as one. In the Church we find a spiritual hospital, clinic, hospice, and a therapeutic and fitness center. In the Church we find the spiritual cure we need as patients. Is it any wonder, then, that the Church should be the very center of each and every day, taking precedence over everything else, including work, leisure time, and Entertainment?

The above meditations is authored by The Very. Rev. Abbot Tryphon, Igumen of All-Merciful Saviour Monastery on Vashon Island, Washington.

RETURN OF THE RELICS OF THE APOSTLE BARTHOLOMEW FROM ANASTASIOPOLIS TO LIPARI



The Transfer of the Relics of the Apostle Bartholomew took place at the end of the sixth century. His apostolic activity and martyr's end are remembered by the Church on June 11. The Apostle Bartholomew suffered for Christ in Armenian Albanus (now Baku) in the year 71, where his holy relics were. Numerous miracles occurred from the relics of the holy Apostle, and many of the unbelieving were converted to Christ. Under the emperor Anastasius (491-518) the relics of the Apostle Bartholomew were transferred into the newly constructed city of Anastasiopolis (or Dura) and remained there until the end of the sixth century.

When the city of Anastasiopolis was captured by the Persian emperor Chozroes, Christians took up the chest with the relics of the Apostle Bartholomew and fled with it to the shores of the Black Sea. Having overtaken them, pagan priests threw the chest with the relics of the Apostle Bartholomew into the sea. Four other chests containing the relics of the holy Martyrs Papias, Lucian, Gregory and Acacius were also thrown into the sea.

By the power of God the chests did not sink into the depths of the sea, but miraculously floated upon the waves and reached Italy. The chest with the relics of the Apostle Bartholomew came to land at the island of Lipari, and the remaining chests continued their journey and came to land at various places in Italy. The chest with the relics of the Martyr Papias halted at Sicily, the Martyr Lucian at Messina, the Martyr Gregory at Calabria, and the Martyr Acacius at Askalon.

The arrival of the relics of the holy Apostle Bartholomew was revealed to Bishop Agathon of the island of Lipari, who went with clergy to the shores of the sea, took the chest from the waters and solemnly transferred it to church.

Myrrh flowed from the relics of the Apostle Bartholomew, healing people of various illnesses. The holy relics remained in the church of the island of Lipari until the middle of the ninth century when the island was captured by pagans. Christian merchants took up the holy relics of the Apostle Bartholomew and transferred them to the city of Beneventum, near Naples, where they were received with great veneration and placed in the main church of the city.

APOSTLE TITUS OF THE SEVENTY AND BISHOP OF CRETE →

Saint Titus, Apostle of the Seventy was a native of the island of Crete, the son of an illustrious pagan. In his youth he studied Hellenistic philosophy and the ancient poets. Preoccupied by the sciences, Titus led a virtuous life, not devoting himself to the vices and passions characteristic of the majority of pagans. He preserved his virginity, as the Hieromartyr Ignatius the God-bearer (December 20) testifies of him.