

IC XC NI KA SAINTS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America
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christ is risen **ХРИСТОС ВОСКРЕС!** **ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΣΤΗ!**
קם באמת! קם המשיח! **KRISTUS IR AUGŠĀMCĒLIES!** **ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΒΥΖΚΡΕΣΕ!**
基督復活了! **ХРЫСТОС УВАКРЭС!** **CRISTO ES RINASCHIEU!**
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| May 20, 2012 | Sunday of the Blind Man | Divine Liturgy | 9:30 am |
| May 24 | Thursday. Ascension of the Lord | Divine Liturgy | 9:30 am |
| May 26 | Saturday | Great Vespers | 4:00 pm |
| May 27 | Sunday of the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council | Divine Liturgy | 9:30 am |

Saints of the Day: Martyr Thalelaeus at Aegae in Cilicia and companions, Martyrs Alexander and Asterius (284). Uncovering of the relics (1431) of Saint Alexis, Metropolitan of Moscow, Wonderworker of all Russia (1378). Saint Dovmont-Timothy, Prince of Pskov (1299). Martyr Asclas of Egypt (287). Saints Zabulon and Susanna, parents of Saint Nina (Nino) (4 c.). Venerable Thalassius the Myrrh-giver of Libya (ca. 660). Venerable Monks Nicetas, John, and Joseph, of Chios (1050). Saint Ethelbert, King and Martyr (793), Venerable Stephen, Abbot of Piperi in Serbia (1697). Saint Hermit Mark. Saint Austregiselus, Bishop of Bourges (624).

Please remember in your prayers: Priest Sergius, Zara, Nolan, Emelie, Norma, Connie, Michael, Ed, Maria, Michael, Mother Raphaela, Rea, Sister Veronica, John, Hilda, James, Ada, Louellen, Nancy, Archpriest Jason, Susan, Daniel, Aaron, Mark, Jennifer, Nina, Nadine, Michael, Anna, Gregory, Marianna, Mykola, Helen, Isaiah, Archpriest Vincent, Albert, Kevin, Robert, Robert, Andrew, David, Warren, Archimandrites Alexander, Athanasy, Isidore, Nectarios, Pachomy.

God Grant Many Years! Prayers for the health of Albert and Catherine Kavalkovich were offered today at Liturgy and Moleben at the request of Father John Udics.

God Grant Many Years! Prayers for the health of nephew Eric Ray were offered today at Liturgy and Moleben at the request of Father John Udics.

Christ is Risen! Prayers for the repose of Ed Mamrosch Sr were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Ed and Maryanne Mamrosch.

Christ is Risen! Prayers for the repose of Michael Rinko Jr were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of John Rinko and the "Memory Eternal Requiem Service Fund."

Christ is Risen! Prayers for the repose of Olga Czarnota/Kushner, cousin Tom Ketzak and uncle Nicholas Konet were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Father John Udics.

Christ is Risen! Prayers for the repose of Yaroslava Zawierucha were offered at Liturgy and Litiya May 13 at the request of Father John Udics.

Christ is Risen! Prayers for the repose of Julia Kuba were offered at Liturgy and Litiya May 13 at the request of Father John Udics.

THE HOLY MARTYR THALELAEUS was born in Lebanon. His father was called Berucius and his mother was called Romila. Thalelaeus was an eighteen-year old youth, handsome of countenance, physically tall and with reddish yellow hair. He was a physician by profession. He suffered for Christ during the reign of Numerian. When he bravely confessed his faith in Christ the Lord before his tormenting judge, the judge ordered the two executioners, Alexander and Asterius, to bore through his knees with a drill, to thread a rope through the perforated bones and to hang him from a tree. But God through an invisible power, took away the sight of the executioners. In place of Thalelaeus they bored through a board and hung it from a tree. When the judge-torturer found out, he thought that the executioners did this intentionally and ordered them both to be flogged. Then Alexander and Asterius, in the midst of their flogging, cried out: "The Lord is alive to us and, from now on, we are also becoming Christians. We believe in Christ and suffer for Him." Upon hearing this, the judge-torturer ordered that both be beheaded. Then the judge took the drill to bore the knees of Thalelaeus himself but his hands became paralyzed and he begged Thalelaeus to save him, which the innocent martyr of Christ did, with the help of prayer. Following that, Thalelaeus was thrown into water but appeared alive before his tormentor (for Thalelaeus prayed to God inwardly to prolong his sufferings that he not die immediately). When he was thrown before wild beasts, they licked his feet and were amiable toward him. Finally, Thalelaeus was beheaded and took up his habitation in life eternal in the year 284 A.D.

THE HOLY MARTYR ASCLAS suffered in the town of Antioe in Egypt during the reign of Diocletian. He was flogged, scraped, burned with candles but he remained unwavering in the Faith to the end. When the tormentor Arrian was crossing the Nile by boat Asclas, through prayer, stopped the boat in the middle of the

river and would not allow it to move until Arrian wrote that he believes in Christ as the One and Almighty God. But, ascribing this miracle to a magical skill of Asclas, the tormentor forgot what he wrote and continued to torment the man of God. Finally, they tied a stone around his neck and tossed him into the Nile river. On the third day Christians found the body of Asclas along the shore with the stone around his neck (as the martyr foretold them before his death) and honorably buried him in the year 287 A.D. Leonides, the holy martyr, also suffered with him. Arrian, their tormentor, later repented, believed in Christ with his whole heart and openly began to express his faith before the pagans. The pagans also killed him and so Arrian, a one-time tormentor of Christians, was made worthy of the martyr's wreath for Christ.

A word from the desert

“But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” This commandment of the Lord, which conveys a complete and total trust in Divine Providence, is the ascetic’s slogan and living practice.

Elder Cherubim from Saint Basil (on Mt. Athos) was a carefree ascetic, filled with faith and hope. He was also a little hard of hearing, and one time he was isolated by snow in his impoverished hermitage for over a week without food. One day a stranger with a loaded mule knocked at his door. It was almost night. He asked whether he had time to reach Saint Peter’s Cave before dark and then to return to Saint Paul’s Monastery.

Ascetic Cherubim said to him, “My brother, there is so much snow that you won’t be able to get to Saint Peter’s Hermitage even if you had ahead of you a whole day. Stay here tonight and you can go early tomorrow morning.”

The stranger replied, “Geronda, I have brought some food supplies which I would like to sell and then return to my work tonight. If you like, keep them, and give me a little money.”

“Since you are in a hurry, leave them here in this corner and I will give you the money which was given to me by a pilgrim.” He went to his room while the stranger was unloading the goods, but when he returned he was not there. He had disappeared. Father Cherubim looked outside and called, but there were neither footprints nor animal tracks in the snow. Then he realized that it had all been the visible energies of the invisible Divine Providence, which looks after everything. He entered his little chapel and thanked the Lord. With gratitude he placed food supplies in his small storage space. They lasted him the whole winter. from An Athonite Gerontikon

REFLECTION by Saint Nikolai of Zhicha

When a man acquires a Christian conscience, he zealously labors to correct his life and to please God. For him, all else becomes of little importance. We have examples of such men not only among the great ascetics and spiritual fathers but also among powerful rulers themselves. Emperor Theodosius the Great gives us such an example who, for a brief time, fell into heresy after which he repented. St. Ambrose, his earlier critic, spoke over his lifeless body: "I loved this man who, divesting himself of all imperial insignias, openly in church bewailing his sin and, with sighs and tears, begged forgiveness. What ordinary men are ashamed to do, the emperor was not ashamed to do. After his glorious victory over the enemies of the empire, he decided not to approach Holy Communion until the return of his sons only because his enemies were slain in battle."

HOMILY About the spirit of the world and the Spirit from God by Saint Nikolai of Zhicha

"We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God" (1Corinthians 2:12).

Brethren, the spirit of this world is the spirit of pride and cruelty and the Spirit of God is the Spirit of meekness and gentleness. The apostle of God asserts that the followers of Christ did not receive the spirit of this world rather the Spirit "which is of God" i.e., who proceeds from God the Father as a sweet-smelling fragrance as from flowers and as a good fragrance pours out on the soul of man making it mighty, bright, peaceful, thankful and pleasant.

Men by nature are meek and gentle. Tertulian writes: "the soul of man by nature is Christian." But, by the spirit of this world, it is irritable and enraged. The spirit of this world made wolves out of lambs, while the Spirit Who is from God makes lambs out of wolves.

The apostle still adds that we received the Spirit of God "that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God" (1 Corinthians 2:12). Therefore, that we may know what is from God in us and what is not from God and that we may sense the sweetness of that which is from God and the bitterness from that which is not from God, rather from the spirit of this world. As long as man is outside of his nature, beneath his nature, he considers bitterness as sweetness and sweetness as bitterness. But, when by the Spirit of God he returns to his true nature, then he considers sweet as sweetness and bitter as bitterness.

Who can return man to God? Who can heal man of poisonous sinful bitterness? Who can teach him by experience to distinguish true sweetness from bitterness? No one except the Spirit Who is from God.

Therefore brethren, let us pray that God grants us His Holy Spirit as He granted the Holy Spirit to His apostles and saints. And when that Holy Spirit of God enters into us, the kingdom of God has arrived in which is all sweetness itself, only good, only light, only meekness and only gentleness.

O Holy Spirit, the Spirit of meekness and gentleness, come and abide in us.

To You be glory and thanks always. Amen.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

May 26 Saturday from 9:00 am: Annual Cemetery Cleanup

May 28 Monday – Annual Pilgrimage to Saint Tikhon’s Monastery, South Canaan, Pennsylvania. With the visiting Myrrh-Streaming Icon of the Mother of God, from Hawaii – for more information, see flyers at the candle desk and on the internet at: <http://sttikhonsmonastery.org/>