

Make Up Your Mind!

This weekly bulletin insert complements the curriculum published by the Department of Christian Education of the Orthodox Church in America. This and many other Christian Education resources are available at <http://dce.oca.org>.



Two Scripture readings for October 4th tell us that we need to decide, as people called to follow Christ, what we will do when the time to follow actually comes.

The Gospel reading is Luke 7: 31-35. These are Jesus' words, comparing the people who reject Him to two groups of children who refuse to agree on how to play together. Each group insists that the game they play must be the one they have chosen. They can't adapt themselves to play the game chosen by the others.

The people of this generation, Christ goes on to say, are much like those children. When John the Baptist preached among them, they dismissed his self-discipline and fasting--"neither eating bread nor drinking wine,"--as too severe. So, they said, it must be the work of a demon.

But when they saw another kind of living practiced by the Son of Man, they didn't like that either, for the opposite reason. Jesus "has come eating and drinking" and

so they call Him a glutton and a drunkard. They add to this another charge that apparently strikes them as going right along with gluttony and drunkenness: He is a "friend of tax collectors and sinners."

Jesus assures His listeners, though, that "wisdom is justified by all her children." No matter what criticisms people may dream up to reject John and the Son of Man, they both are doing God's work, and the fruits of that work will become evident. The faith will spread, the numbers of disciples will grow, and those who have made up their minds to follow Christ will know that He is the Truth.

An epistle reading for this day is Galatians 4: 8-21. Paul agonizes as he asks a question of the Galatians. Before they knew God, they were in "bondage to beings that by nature are no gods." But "...now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and beggarly elemental spirits, whose slaves you want to be once more?"

Paul makes a specific complaint: "You observe days, and months, and seasons, and years." He is addressing Christians still young in the faith. They are being urged by certain teachers to go back to the Old Testament calendar, and to observe the Jewish laws that go with it. Paul wants them to remember, instead, how joyfully they responded when he preached the Gospel to them. They received him "as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus."

But now, cajoled by false teachers, they are hostile to him. "What has become of the satisfaction you felt?" he asks in bewilderment. What has become of the faithfulness to the Gospel they once made up their minds to live by?

Jesus wants His hearers not to manufacture reasons to reject the truth. Paul wants his hearers not to turn back from the faith he preached. It's time for all of them, and all of us, to make up our minds and follow.

St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Orthodox Christian Church

108 East Main Street

860-664-9434

PO Box 134

Clinton, CT 06413

www.stalexischurch.org



Rev. Steven Hosking, attached • frschosk@me.com • 860-866-5802

Bulletin for Sunday, September 29, 2013

Fourteenth Sunday of Pentecost • Tone 5

2 Corinthians 1:21-2:4, Luke 6:31-36

Commemorations: Ven. Cyriacus the Hermit, of Palestine (556). Martyrs Dada, Gabdelas, and Casdoë (Casdoa) of Persia (4th c.). Ven. Theophanes the Merciful of Gaza.

Welcome to Our Visitors

We welcome all visitors to our Divine Liturgy and services. While Holy Communion may only be received by prepared Orthodox Christians, our non-Orthodox guests are welcome to participate in our prayers and hymns and to join us in venerating the Cross and receiving blessed bread at the conclusion of the Liturgy. Feel free to ask questions before or after the services. Literature about the Orthodox faith and this parish can be found at the candle desk. Please sign our guest book and join us for refreshments and fellowships downstairs after Liturgy.

Please pray for: Robert, Vera, Richard, Sarah, Alla, Olga, June, Nina, Joan, Luke, Alex, Glenn, Kathryn.

Many Years! Michael and Beth Veneri, to Loyd and Susan Davis and to Alex and Luba Martin on the occasion of their anniversaries. And to John Chobor on the occasion of his birthday.

Upcoming Events and Services

Wednesday, October 2nd
No "Open Doors" this week

Thursday, October 3rd
Bible Study at 6:30p

Saturday, October 5th
Great Vespers at 5:30p

Sunday, October 6th
Divine Liturgy at 9:30a
Church School and Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday, October 9th
"Open Doors" at 4:30p
Akathist to St. Tikhon at 6:30p

Thursday, October 10th
Bible Study at 6:30p

Saturday, October 12th
Great Vespers at 5:30p

Sunday, October 13th
Divine Liturgy at 9:30a
Church School and Choir Rehearsal



General Confession

In February 1972 the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America promulgated a document, "Confession and Communion: Report to the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America" by Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann, in which General Confession is discussed. It is clear in this document that General Confession is proposed as a "school of repentance," as a means of strengthening one's spiritual life and bolstering one's experience of individual Confession. It is stated quite clearly that "General Confession is not meant simply to replace individual confession" and that it "is not and must not become a substitute." Father Schmemmann also notes: "Experience shows, that those who take part in such a General Confession begin to have a much better individual confession." In the nearly three decades since this document was produced, there have been a variety of experiences, positive as well as negative, which people have shared concerning General Confession. While indeed many who take part in General Confession are much better prepared for individual Confession, there have also been cases in which, as a result of General Confession, people have in fact stopped going to individual Confession. This, of course, contradicts the intention of General Confession as a supplement to and preparation for individual Confession, thus making it the only form of Confession some people acknowledge.

One may say that, in cases where General Confession does indeed inspire people to repent and to offer a more thorough and serious individual Confession, it is to be encouraged. Pastorally speaking, however, one may also say that the best explanations, the best teaching, and the best preaching on the nature of General Confession cannot guarantee that people will not abuse it by considering it as a replacement for individual Confession. In cases where individual Confession has all but disappeared in favor of General Confession, one cannot necessarily assume that the fault lies with the pastor or his teaching style. [The best math teacher in the world cannot guarantee that every one of his or her students will understand what he or she is teaching in exactly the same way.] So, to some degree, General Confession has created some confusion in some places, especially where the people, despite the teaching of the parish priest, elect on their own to participate in General Confession while refusing to participate in individual Confession.

Indeed, many people came to individual Confession much better prepared because they had consistently participated in General Confession.

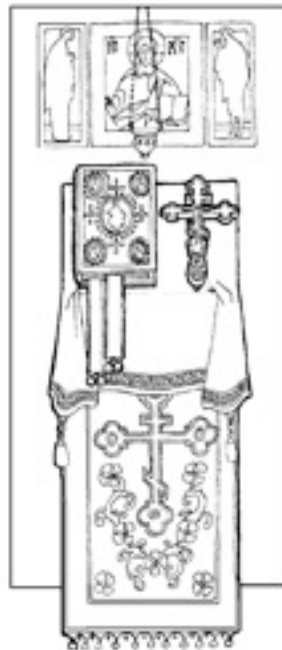
Announcements

We have about 400 plus bricks. Most are in front and there are some by the back door and there are a couple dozen under the front steps. If you would like them, help yourself.

Our Annual Parish Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, November 10th. We have two Council of Stewards positions to be filled. If you are interested, please see the nominations committee: Natalie, Greg or Raymond.

We are also in need of a nomination for representative for the Diocesan Assembly.

Three Saints Vacation Church School Fall Get-together. Come join us on Sunday, October 13 from 1pm to 4pm for our Fall Get-together/ reunion at Three Saints Park 112 Miller Road, Bethany, CT. We'll have Hayrides, bobbing for apples, a bonfire and many more fall games. Light refreshments will be served. All are welcome, even if you didn't attend VCS this year. Parents/ helpers are needed to help with preparations and planning; please let us know if you are able to help. Please RSVP by Wednesday October 9th by contacting Susan Lukianov at 203-751-6639 or by email at slickwar@yahoo.com. There is no charge for this event but donations are appreciated. Hope to see you there!



Fourteenth Sunday of Pentecost

Tone 5 Troparion (Resurrection)
Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word,
co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,
born for our salvation from the Virgin;
for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh,
to endure death, and to raise the dead//
by His glorious Resurrection.

Tone 1 Troparion (Venerable Kyriakus)
Dweller of the desert and angel in the body,
You were shown to be a wonder-worker, our God-bearing Father Kyriakus.
You received heavenly gifts through fasting, vigil, and prayer;
healing the sick and the souls of those drawn to you by faith.
Glory to Him who gave your strength!
Glory to Him Who granted ↑you a crown!
Glory to Him Who through you grants healing to all!

Tone 5 Kontakion (Resurrection)
You descended into hell, O my Savior,
shattering its gates as Almighty,
resurrecting the dead as Creator,
and destroying the sting of death.
You have delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of Man,//
and we cry to You: “O Lord, save us!”

Tone 8 Kontakion (Venerable Kyriakus)
The sacred Lavra honors you as a mighty champion and helper,
and yearly celebrates your memory.
As you have boldness before the Lord: preserve us from our enemies
so that we may sing: “Rejoice, thrice-blessed Kyriakus!”

Deacon: Let us attend.
Priest: Peace be unto all.

Reader: And to your spirit.
Deacon: Wisdom.

Reader: The Prokeimenon in the 5th Tone.
You, O Lord, shall protect us and preserve us from this generation forever.
(Ps 11/12:7)

Choir: (The Choir repeats the Prokeimenon in the proper Tone.)

Reader: Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly! (Ps 11/12:1)

Choir: (The Choir repeats the Prokeimenon.)

Reader: You, O Lord, shall protect us and preserve us.

Choir: (The Choir completes the Prokeimenon.)
Deacon: Wisdom.

Reader: The Reading from the second Epistle of the holy Apostle Paul to the
Corinthians. (1:21-2:4)
Deacon: Let us attend.

Reader: Brothers and Sisters:
Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. Moreover I call God as witness against my soul, that to spare you I came no more to Corinth. Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand. But I determined this within myself, that I would not come again to you in sorrow. For if I make you sorrowful, then who is he who makes me glad but the one who is made sorrowful by me? And I wrote this very thing to you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow over those from whom I ought to have joy, having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy of you all. For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.

Priest: Peace be unto you.

Reader: And to your spirit, and in the 5th Tone, Alleluia Alleluia, Alleluia.

Choir: Alleluia 3x

Reader: I will sing of Your mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Your truth from generation to generation. (Ps 88/89:1)

Choir: Alleluia 3x

Reader: For You have said: "Mercy will be established forever; My truth will be prepared in the heavens." (Ps 88/89:2)

Choir: Alleluia 3x

The Gospel According to St. Luke (6:31-36)

And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise. But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise Him in the highest! (Ps 148:1)
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!