

A New Testament Prophet



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>.



Anyone who reads the Bible knows about the Old Testament prophets, men and women who tell God's people about His will and His plans. On April 8th we celebrate a man who prophesied in the New Testament.

This Christian prophet, Agabus, is mentioned twice in the Book of Acts. The first time, he is one of several prophets who come from Jerusalem to Antioch (11: 27-30). His prophecy reminds us that having the prophetic gift often means having to say hard things, and to deliver bad news.

Agabus stands up and foretells, by the power of the Holy Spirit, a great famine "throughout all the world," in the days of the emperor Claudius. The prophecy did come to pass at the time he said it would, starting in Judea and then spreading out to afflict the people of Italy and Greece.

The famine foretold by Agabus was a serious problem for the young Church to deal with as it struggled to establish itself in the Empire. But at the same time it gave believers an urgent reason to practice the compassion the Lord had taught them. The very next verses of Acts tell us that the disciples, "each according to his ability," sent relief to the people in need. They gave their gifts to Barnabas and Saul, who would later be called Paul, to deliver.

Agabus next appears in Acts 21. Saint Paul and his companions have been traveling by ship. Paul wants to reach Jerusalem in time for Pentecost. The group has now come to Caesarea, where they stay with Philip. He is one of the seven deacons, with Stephen the Protomartyr, who were chosen to help the apostles. Philip's four daughters are prophetesses, and it is in this atmosphere of prophecy that Agabus, coming from Judea, encounters Paul.

He prophesies in a dramatic manner. Taking Paul's belt, he binds his own hands and feet with it and announces, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.' "

This graphic style puts Agabus directly in the tradition of the Old Testament prophets. Isaiah walked "naked and barefoot" as a warning to Egypt. Jeremiah wore a linen sash and then hid it and let it rot, a symbol of God's intention for Judah and Jerusalem.

Agabus' terrifying prophecy makes Paul's companions beg him not to go to Jerusalem. He is touched by their pleas, but not dissuaded. He says, "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." In the face of such determination, the companions can only say, "The will of the Lord be done."

Prophecy is one of many things that continued from the Old Testament into the New. It shows us that God has been with us, working in our lives, from the first day to the day we are living right now.

Troparion - Tone 1

Let us praise in hymns the six-fold choir of Apostles:
Herodion and Agabus,
Rufus, Asyncritus, Phlegon and holy Hermes.
They ever entreat the Trinity for our souls!

St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Orthodox Christian Church

108 East Main Street

PO Box 134

Clinton, CT 06413

860-664-9434

www.stalexischurch.org



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

Bulletin for Sunday, April 6, 2014

Fifth Sunday of Lent • Tone 8

Hebrews 9:11-14, Mark 10:32-45

Commemorations: St Mary of Egypt. St. Eutychius, Patriarch of Constantinople (582). St. Methodius, Equal-to-the-Apostles, Archbishop of Moravia and Enlightener of the Slavs (885). St. Platonida (Platonis) of Nisibis (Syria—308). 120 Martyrs of Persia (344-347). Martyrs Jeremiah and Archilias the Presbyter (3rd c.). Ven. Gregory the Byzantine (1308). Monk Martyr Gennadius of Dionysiou (Mt. Athos—1818).

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: Olga, Vera, Richard, Daria, Daria, Evelyn, Sarah, Nancy, Alla, June, Nina, Joan, Luke, Alex, Alan, Nadia, Glenn, Kathryn, Elizabeth, Helen, Mary, Elena, Ivan, Jevon, Kyra, and Roderick.

Many Years! to William and Sharon Watson on the occasion of their anniversary.

Upcoming Events

Monday, April 7th
Akathist for St Tikhon at 9am
6th Hour at 12p

Tuesday, April 8th

Wednesday, April 9th
Open Doors at 4:30p
Liturgy of the PreSanctified Gifts at 6:30p

Thursday, April 10th
6th Hour at 12p
Choir Rehearsal at 7pm

Friday, April 11th
Vespers for Lazarus Saturday at 6:30p

Saturday, April 12th
Divine Liturgy at 9a
Pasanki Workshop 1p - 4p
Great Vespers at 5:30p

Sunday, April 13th
Palm Sunday
Divine Liturgy at 9:30a
Service of Bridegroom Matins at 4p - Christ the Savior, Southbury

The Gospel for St Mary of Egypt (Luke 7:36-50)

Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner." And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I

have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it." There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more? Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged." Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little. Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

(Instead of "It is truly meet ...," we sing the following)

Hymn to the Theotokos

All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace:
the assembly of Angels and the race of men.
O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise,
the glory of virgins,
from whom God was incarnate and became a Child -
our God before the ages.
He made your body into a throne,
and your womb He made more spacious than the heavens.
All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace.
Glory to you!

Communion Hymns

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! (Ps 148:1)
The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not fear evil tidings. (Ps 111/112:6b-7a) Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!