

The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost and the Seventeenth Sunday of Matthew

The Translation of the Relics of St. Ignatius the God-bearer of Antioch

The New-martyr Demetrios of Chios

Sunday, January 29, 2012

Tone 8; Eothinon 11

Apolytikion of the Resurrection (Tone 8)

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 of St. Ignatius of Antioch (Tone 4)

By choosing the Apostles' way of life, thou hast succeeded to their throne. Inspired by God, thou didst find the way to divine contemplation through the practice of virtue. After teaching the Word of Truth without error, thou didst defend the Faith to the very shedding of thy blood, O Holy Martyr among bishops Ignatius. Entreat the Lord our God to save our souls.

Apolytikion of our Patron the Archangel Michael (Tone 4)

O ye foremost of the heavenly hosts we beseech thee, though we are unworthy, pray that we may be encompassed with a shadow of Thy unearthly glory, preserving us who kneel and cry endlessly: deliver us from oppression since ye are the prince of the Highest Power.

Kontakion of the Presentation of Christ (Tone 1)

[in anticipation of the Feast of the Presentation (February 2nd)]

Thou, O Christ God, Who by Thy Birth, didst sanctify the Virgin's womb, and, as is meet, didst bless Simeon's arms, and didst also come to save us; preserve Thy fold in wars, and confirm them whom Thou didst love, for Thou alone art the Lover of mankind.

Daily Readings

THE EPISTLE (for the Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost)

*Make your vows to the Lord your God, and perform them.
In Judah God is known; His Name is great in Israel.*

The Reading from St. Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians (6:16 – 7:1)

Brethren, you are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore, come out from them, and be separate from them," says the Lord, "and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, and I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters," says the Lord Almighty. Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God.

THE GOSPEL (for the 17th Sunday of Matthew)

The Reading of the Holy Gospel is according to St. Matthew (15:21-28)

At that time, Jesus went to the district of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and cried, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely possessed by a demon." But He did not answer her a word. And His disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before Him, saying, "Lord, help me." And He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table." Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly.

The Synaxarion – January 29

On January 29 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate the recovery of the sacred relics of the holy Hieromartyr Ignatius the God-bearer.

Verses

O Ignatius, thanks be to the all-devouring lions,

*who left to us the faithful a portion of thy body.
Ignatius returned upon the twenty-ninth.*

His principal feast is celebrated on December 20, but today marks the translation of his relics from Rome, where he suffered martyrdom, to Antioch where earlier he was a bishop. When Ignatius was summoned to Rome before Emperor Trajan to account for his faith, he was accompanied on this long journey by several citizens from Antioch who were motivated by a great love toward their wonderful Arch-shepherd. Since he would never deny his faith in Christ, this saint of God, who abhorred all adulation and promises of Emperor Trajan, was condemned to death and was thrown into the Circus Maximus before wild beasts which tore him apart, and he gave up his soul to God. His companions then gathered his exposed bones and took them to Antioch and honorably buried them. When the Persians captured Antioch in the sixth century, the relics of Ignatius were again translated from Antioch to Rome.

On this day, we also commemorate the New-martyr Demetrios of Chios. *By the intercessions of Thy Saints, O God, have mercy upon us. Amen.*

GLOSSARY: Apolytikion (A-po-lee-tee-kee-on); *plural*, Apolytikia: A brief poem in accentual metre, expressing the theme of a feast. Kontakion (kon-tah-kee-on); *plural*, Kontakia: A special kind of Troparion that expresses the teaching of a Feast. It summarizes and applies the meaning of a feast of the day. Orthros (Or-thros): The word literally means *early morning*. It is the name of the service, which by some has been called *Matins*, and still by others, *Lauds*, though it does not correspond exactly to either of the Western Services. Eothinon (ee-oh-thee-non): meaning – *pertaining to the dawn*. They are the eleven assigned readings of the Gospel during the Sunday Orthros Service, pertaining to the eleven appearances of our Lord to His Disciples after the Resurrection. Synaxis (see-nax-sees) “the gathering or coming together” as it pertains to a celebration of a commemoration or feast. Following a major Feast a “Synaxis” commemorates the “co-stars” of the Feast, i.e., following the Feast of the Presentation of Christ (Ss. Simeon and Anna), following the Feast of the Birth of Christ (the Holy Virgin Mary), following the Feast of Holy Theophany (St. John the Baptist), etc. Synaxarion (see-nax-sah-ree-on) the summary of a Feast, describing a historical significance and meaning of a commemoration.

NOTE

At the end of the Liturgy during the veneration of the cross, please refrain from speaking loudly and keep all conversation to a minimum in order that the prayers read after Holy Communion may be heard by everyone in the church. Thank you.

OFFERINGS

Holy Bread is being offered this morning in loving memory of Dr. John Abdun-Nur (+31 January, 2008), by his wife, Margaret, his children: Loretta, Denise, Cathy, David, Connie and their families. Memory eternal.

The coffee hour is being hosted this morning by Margaret Abdun-Nur and Minnie Lush with prayers offered for the continued health of their families and in memory of their departed loved ones.

Special offerings and requests for prayer are being made . . .

for the healing and continued health of Ramez Hage.

for the repose of the newly-departed Hieromonk Basilios (Nassar), 30, of the Archdiocese of Hama, Syria, who was killed during the continuing unrest in that country on January 25, 2012.

Memory eternal.

A Note Regarding Holy Communion

Since we understand Communion to mean that we have all things in common, sharing an identical Faith, *only* those who are members of the Orthodox Church and who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting and recent Confession may participate in Holy Communion. (We invite all, however, to partake of the blessed bread which is distributed at the dismissal.) Please see the Pastor for inquiries on how to become a member.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

National Scout Sunday

Today, Scouts from all over the United States celebrate National Scout Sunday. The Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the Americas has designated this also as Orthodox Scout Sunday. All of our young people who are Scouts are asked to wear their uniforms to church on that day. The Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting supports our youth through an extensive Religious Award Program. This program is designed around a scout's spiritual life and consists of young people aged 5-18, and the adults who lead them. It gives the scout a chance to work closely

with their spiritual Father to earn their award. The unique bond formed at this age is a stepping stone for the rest of their spiritual life. If your son or daughter is a Cub Scout, Brownie, Girl Scout or Boy Scout, they may enroll in the program. It includes a work booklet that involves the participation of the parent, scout and parish priest. Awards are presented at designated times with the completion of a unit. Parents: Please contact Tania Mulry, Church School Superintendent for more information.

Camp Scholarships

March 1, 2012 is the deadline for all summer camp scholarship applications for any young person in our parish, provided by the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch. Please contact Father Timothy for more information.

LITURGICAL CALENDAR

[Note: Wednesday and Fridays are observed as days of fasting]

Feast of the Presentation of Christ (February 2nd)

Vesperal Divine Liturgy, Wednesday, February 1st, 6:30 p.m.

The Sunday of the Pharisee and the Publican

Saturday, February 4th – Great Vespers, 5 p.m.

Sunday, February 5th – Orthros, 8:45 a.m., Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.

[There is no fasting during week of February 6 – 10]

Parish Work Day – Sunday, February 12

Our parish home requires our personal attention. Your availability in affording some time to help us with our parish clean-up day would be greatly appreciated and will help to save us some needless fees. "Home is where the heart is," and as Valentine's Day rapidly approaches, the personal care of our parish home is a vital part of our Christian stewardship. Sunday, February 12, 2012 has been scheduled for our first day of cleaning. Bring a change of clothes, if necessary, to participate in

an afternoon of fellowship following Liturgy. A list of various odd jobs will be made available on that day. Should you have any questions, please see Don Meena. Note: If your teen son or daughter has the need for "community service" school credit, this is an excellent opportunity to have them sign-up with Father Timothy.

Chairman's Message

As we begin our 2012 church year together, I wanted to thank you all for your constant support of parish, its many organizations, our members (those present and those who are unable to be with us regularly), and our priest, Father Timothy. Our three 1-year appointees for the 2012 year are **Jeanice Rose Deeb, Elias Mankouche** and **Michael C. Srouf**, and we are grateful for their interest and commitment to our challenges. Last week's Annual Parish Meeting, led by outgoing chairperson Minnie Lush, was a success, and we appreciate everyone who shared their thoughts and concerns before and during the meeting. We are fortunately closing escrow on the DeCelis property this week. As you are well aware, last year presented us with a major repair expense to our rental properties. One of the things that we accomplished at the January meeting was a decision to set aside \$300 per month from the income of this new property for any future repairs, which we will no doubt eventually need. Foresight and planning is the key to our future. We on the Council are dedicated to keeping our focus on growth for tomorrow while maintaining stability for today. With that in mind, we hope that you will all join us for some pre-Spring cleaning at our upcoming St. Michael Parish Work Day, which will be on Feb 12. Your church is your home, so let's make this a family affair. This will also be an excellent opportunity for fellowship and service, and we encourage you to spread the word and bring a friend! [Constantine Nasr, Parish Council Chair]

St. Mark Golf Tournament Re-scheduled

The postponed St. Mark Golf Tournament has been re-scheduled for Monday, February 6, 2012 at the Aliso Viejo Country Club (33 Santa Barbara Dr., Aliso Viejo, CA, 92656; Registration, 9 a.m., Shotgun at 11 a.m., Reception/dinner at 5 – 8 p.m. You can now register on-line at: <www.st-mark-church.org/golf/>.

Dinner Honoring His Eminence, Archbishop JOSEPH

On Sunday, February 12th, the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch, Southern California Deanery, has planned its Los Angeles Area Fellowship Dinner in honor of our newly elevated Archbishop JOSEPH. Your check for reservation(s) is due on Wednesday, February 1st and should be turned in to Fred Milkie, Jr. (4800 Zelzah Ave., Encino, CA; 91316-4237; 81-535-4243); <milkief@aol.com>.

Note to Coffee Hour hosts: coffee and paper goods will be provided each week.

Holy Bread Offering List

Feb 05 – The Tamoush family
Feb 12 – The Sarchizian family
Feb 19 – The Sarchizian family
Feb 26 – open
Mar 04 – open
Mar 11 – open

Coffee Hour Hosts Calendar

Feb 05 – The Abraham and Meena families
Feb 12 – The Soffa and Nassief families
Feb 19 – Church School Pancake Breakfast
Feb 26 – open
Mar 04 – open
Mar 11 – The Nasr and Mulry families

Please contact Father Timothy (818/219-3761; pastor@stmichaelvannuys.org) to sign-up to offer Holy Bread for any of the open upcoming Sundays. Contact Frieda Kabbash (818)707-6478; frieda702@aol.com) to host the Coffee Hour.

GoodSearch – What is it?

GoodSearch is an on-line search site that is not unlike Google that helps you locate websites and on-line information. Good dining can also be utilized to find restaurant discounts that, when used, earns us money as well. Each time you use these services, St. Michael church can gain a contribution at no cost to you! Natalie Malouf, our Webmaster is available to answer any questions you may have.

**SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW
TRANSLATION OF THE RELICS OF
ST. IGNATIUS THE GOD-BEARER OF ANTIOCH
NEW-MARTYR DEMETRIOS OF CHIOS**

طروبارية القيامة على اللحن الثامن
انحدرت من العلوّ يا متحنن، وقبلت الدفن ذا الثلاثة الأيام، لكي تُعْتَقْنَا من الآلام، فيا
حياتنا وقيامتنا يا ربّ المجد لك.

طروبارية إغناطيوس على اللحن الرابع
صرت شريكاً للرسول في سيرهم وخليفة في كراسيهم، فوجدت بالعمل مدخلا إلى
رؤية الله. لذلك بشرت بكلمة الحق مجاهداً عن الإيمان حتى إراقة الدم. فيا أيها
الشهيد الملهم من الله إغناطيوس تشفع إلى المسيح الإله أن يُخَلِّصَ نفوسنا.

طروبارية رؤساء الملائكة بالحن الرابع
أيها المتقدمون على الأجناد السماويين، نتوسل إليك نحن غير المستحقين، حتى
أنكم بطلباتكم تكتنوفوننا بظلّ أجنحة مجدكم غير الهولي، حافظين إيانا نحن
الجائين والصارخين بغير فتور، أنقذونا من الشدائد، بما أنكم رؤساء مراتب القوات
العلوية.

قنداق التقدمة على اللحن الأول

اليوم ظهرت وخلصتنا أيها المسيح الإله، يا من بمولدك قدّست المستودع البتولي،
وباركت يدي سمعان كما يليق. احفظ رعيتك بسلام في الحروب، وأيد عبيدك الذين
أحببتهم، أيها المحبّ البشر وحدك.

الرسالة

صلوا وأوفوا الرب الهنا، الله معروف في أرض يهوذا

فصلٌ من رسالة القديس بولس الرسول الثانية إلى أهل كورنثس.

يا اخوة، أنتم هيكلُ الله الحي. هكذا قال الله: "سأسكنُ فيهم وأسيرُ فيما بينهم، وأكون إلههم ويكونون شعبي. لذلك اخرجوا من بينهم واتركوهم، يقول الرب. لا تمسوا نجساً، وأنا أقبلُكم وأكون لكم أباً وتكونون لي بنين وبنات، يقول الرب القدير." فعلينا أيها الأحباء، وقد دللنا هذه الوعود، أن نطهرَ أنفسنا من كل ما يُدنسُ الجسدَ والروحَ، ونُتِمَّ تقَدَّسنا في مخافةِ الله.

الإنجيل

فصلٌ شريفٌ من بشارة القديس متى.

في ذلك الزمان، خرج يسوع إلى نواحي صور وصيدا. فأقبلت إليه امرأة كنعانيةٌ خرجت من تلك البلاد وصاحت: "رحماك، يا رب، يا ابن داود! ابنتي فيها شيطانٌ، ويعذبها كثيراً." فلم يجبها يسوع بكلمة. فدنا تلاميذه تُتَعَبْنَا بصياحها! فأجابهم يسوع: "لم وسألوه قائلين: "اصرفها عنا، لأنها أرسلنا إلا إلى الخراف الضالة من بني إسرائيل." فجاءت وسجدت له قائلة: "أغثني، يا سيد!" فأجابها يسوع: "لا يحسنُ أن يؤخذَ خبزُ البنين ويُلقى إلى الكلاب." فقالت له المرأة: "نعم، يا سيدي! فإن الكلاب أيضاً تأكلُ من الفتات الذي يتساقطُ من موائد أصحابها." فأجاب يسوع: "ما أعظمَ إيمانك، يا امرأة! فليكنْ لك ما تريدين." فشُفيت ابنتها من تلك الساعة.

PASTORAL SERMON
The Seventeenth Sunday of Matthew
(The Canaanite Woman)
By V. Rev. Timothy Baclig
January 29, 2012

Reaching a point of desperation such as we hear in the account of the Canaanite woman can do one of two things: It can cause one to have faith or it can lead one to despair.

Faith is triggered by hope. It reaches out. For the Christian, faith is based in one's relationship with Christ and trust in God. However, as we see in today's lesson, faith, hope and reaching out is a very human experience and is not exclusive to Christians, just as it was not exclusive to being Jewish in Jesus' day.

The Canaanite woman had hope. She not only had hope she was motivated by love – a mother's love. She also demonstrated her faith: "You are a woman of great faith!" Jesus said (Matthew 15:28). We are told that her daughter was suffering greatly from demonic possession.

She was not considered to be religious. She had not been brought up by pious Jewish parents to practice the customs of the Jews and to believe in the living God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. She was a Gentile of Canaanite stock. The Canaanites were old enemies of the Jews. Yet, in desperation she was not afraid to approach Jesus. Last week we heard of Zaccheus who being a tax collector was labeled a "crook," because tax collectors had a bad reputation as masters of distortion. Last week's lesson demonstrated how that even with such a disadvantage, Zaccheus was not prevented from seeking the truth and did not avoid facing the truth within himself. It led to his confession and the transformation of his life.

And so with these two lessons we have been shown two ironies: first a man whose dishonest profession led him facing the truth and second a mother who was not considered religious recognized for her great faith.

Today's lesson pertains to the circumstances of a mother who had no control of her daughter's condition. She strongly believed that He could help her. The Canaanite woman thus became one of the first of countless Gentiles (non-Jews) who believed the Gospel and joined the Christian community. **Her witness in this lesson is an excellent example which demonstrates the fact that the faith in Christ transcends all barriers.** Moreover, her determination shows us that faith is also a matter of human resolve that each person can exercise.

Faith builds up a person, a home, a relationship, a ministry, a parish, a society. Faith also unlocks the treasures of God's wisdom and releases His power into our lives with often astonishing results. From a purely human perspective faith is a decision of one's free will, a conscious choice, a deliberate commitment to all things that are "true, noble, right, pure, lovely and honorable" (Phil. 4:8), as St. Paul describes it.

Faith can be a choice but faith is also a gift of the Spirit. There are also degrees of faith. From God's perspective faith also empowers. God sees our hearts hears and knows which way our free will inclines. As we exercise the gift of faith, however feeble our resolve may be, God honors our sincere decision, He lifts up our faith, strengthens, sanctifies and perfects it. The warmth, joy and love of God become clearer and clearer, stronger and stronger in us.

The example of the Canaanite woman also teaches us about persistence faith. Very often a person makes a commitment of faith but when facing difficulties or challenging circumstances faith diminishes.

Discerning her sincerity, Jesus decided to test the Canaanite woman. St. John Chrysostom puts it this way: *Christ's words to the woman were not an insult or abuse, but for the purpose of calling forth her virtue and revealing the treasure in her.*

Finally, Jesus' meeting with the Canaanite woman provides for us another powerful lesson. For the Jews Gentiles were ritually unclean. But Jesus taught that only the things which come out of the heart can make a person unclean (Matthew 15:17-20). By crossing over into Gentile territory and speaking with the Canaanite woman Jesus gave us an example of breaking down religious barriers – just as he did in choosing to visit Zaccheus in his home. **The gift of faith illumined by the Holy Spirit is a powerful instrument in breaking down all kinds of barriers.**

Today we still struggle in overcoming many barriers, sadly enough, even within the church. It will take the kind of faith of the Canaanite woman who was prompted by love to overcome these barriers. Today's lesson is among the pre-Lenten reminders of what we are to begin practicing. May God help us to have open hearts with eyes to see and ears to hear a message so clear and simple. May He help us to manifest faith like the Canaanite woman.
