

The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost and the Eleventh Sunday of Matthew

The After-feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos

The Prophet Samuel; Martyr Photeini of Blachernae; Martyrs Heliodoros and
Dosai of Persia

Sunday, August 20, 2017

Tone 2; Eothinon 11

Apolytikion for the Resurrection (Tone 2)

When Thou didst submit Thyself unto death, O Thou deathless and immortal One, then Thou didst destroy hell with Thy Godly power. And when Thou didst raise the dead from beneath the earth, all the powers of Heaven did cry aloud unto Thee: O Christ, Thou giver of life, glory to Thee.

Apolytikion of the Dormition of the Theotokos (Tone 1)

In thy birth-giving, O Theotokos, thou didst keep and preserve virginity; and in thy falling-asleep thou hast not forsaken the world; for living thou wast translated, being the Mother of Life. Wherefore, by thine intercessions, deliver our souls from death.

Apolytikion for our Patron, Michael the Archangel (Tone 2)

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

Kontakion for the Nativity of the Theotokos (Tone 4)

Verily, the Theotokos, who is ever watchful in intercessions, who is never rejected, neither tomb nor death could control. But being the Mother of Life, He Who dwelt in her ever-Virgin womb did translate her to life.

Daily Readings

THE EPISTLE (for the Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost)

The Lord is my strength and my song.
The Lord has chastened me severely.

The Reading from the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (9:2-12)

Brethren, you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. This is my defense to those who would examine me. Do we not have the right to our food and drink? Do we not have the right to be accompanied by a wife, as the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Who tends a flock without getting some of the milk? Do I say this on human authority? Does not the law say the same? For it is written in the Law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain." Is it for oxen that God is concerned? Does he not speak entirely for our sake? It was written for our sake, because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of a share in the crop. If we have sown spiritual good among you, is it too much if we reap your material benefits? If others share this rightful claim upon you, do not we still more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the Gospel of Christ.

THE GOSPEL (for the Eleventh Sunday of Matthew)

The Reading of the Holy Gospel is according to St. Matthew (18:23-35)

The Lord spoke this parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. When he began the reckoning, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents; and as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him the lord of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. But that same servant, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' So his fellow servant fell down and besought him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow servants saw

what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you besought me; and should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. So also My heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

THE SYNAXARION

On August 20 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we continue to celebrate the Dormition of the Most-holy Theotokos, and we commemorate the holy and glorious Prophet Samuel.

Verses

Samuel the seer closeth his eyes at his ending,
And though ended, seeth the Light Ever-living.

Samuel goeth hence on the twentieth, seeing things to come.

Samuel, the fifteenth and last judge of Israel, lived eleven hundred years before the birth of Christ in Shiloh near the Ark of the Covenant. Samuel, in his twelfth year, had a true revelation from God concerning the punishments which were pending before the house of the high priest Eli because of the immorality of his sons Hophni and Phineas. That revelation soon materialized: The Philistines defeated the Israelites, slew both of Eli's sons and captured the Ark of the Covenant. When the messenger informed Eli of this tragedy, Eli fell dead to the ground. The same thing occurred to his daughter-in-law, the wife of Phineas. For twenty years the Israelites were the slaves of the Philistines. After this period of time, God sent Samuel to the people to preach repentance if they wished to be saved from their enemies. The people repented and rejected the foreign idols that they served and recognized Samuel as a prophet, priest and judge. Then Samuel set out with an army against the Philistines and with God's help confused and defeated them, thus liberating the land and the people. After that, Samuel peacefully judged his people until old age.

On this day, we also commemorate the Martyr Photeini of Blachernae; and Martyrs Heliodoros and Dosai of Persia. By their intercessions, O Christ God, have mercy upon us. Amen.

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.

OFFERINGS

Holy Bread is being offered by Ron & Kathy Zraick in memory of Ron's mother, Edna Zraick (+20 August, 1979), his grandmother, Angelina Diab (+28 August, 1961), his sister, Louise Martin (+6 September, 1975), and Kathy's mother, Carmilea Adeeb (+17 August, 2002). May their memories be eternal.

Holy Bread is being offered by Magdoline Yostos with prayers for she and her family's continued health and prosperity.

LITURGICAL CALENDAR

[Note: Wednesdays and Fridays are observed as days of fasting in the Orthodox Church.]

The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost;
and The Twelfth Sunday of Matthew

Saturday, August 26th, Great Vespers, 5 p.m.

Sunday, September 27th, Orthros, 8:45 a.m., Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.

The Beginning of the Ecclesiastical Year – Friday, September 1

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Attention Parents, Grandparents and Godparents:

Today is the start of Church School Registration following Liturgy and will also take place today and next Sunday, August 27. The first day of Church School is September 10th. Get ready for a great year! Contact Anna Farha Rowe with any questions you might have at: afarha@stmichaelvannuys.org

Six-month Financial Statement

In accordance with our Parish Constitution a Six-month Financial Statement was distributed last month. If you did not receive your copy, please contact Father Timothy today. Please address your questions to our Treasurer, Waleed Moujaes at: <wsmoujaes@icloud.com>.

Get Your Free Copy of "13 Reasons: Why We Must Engage With Our Teens"

Trying to navigate hard topics with teenager is not easy and can be overwhelming if not frustrating. That is why Faithtree Resources has collaborated with Dr. Philip Mamalakis from Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology to create an incredible 20+ page resource to help equip you for a challenging conversation. With practical insights, immediately applicable strategies, and a common sense approach to deeply engaging with your teen, Dr. Mamalakis shares the Church's perspective on how to talk about the hard stuff. Get your free copy of "13 Reasons: Why We Must Engage With Our Teens" by logging on to: www.faithtree.org/#13reasons

Need for a Shared Home or Apartment

See or contact Father Timothy should you know of the availability of an apartment or bedroom in the San Fernando Valley for a young man from our church in Rhode Island (age: 25), or if you know of another man his age who is willing to share the rental expenses.

2018 Sweetheart Ball: Prospective Debutantes and Parents

The Ladies' Society of St. Nicholas Cathedral is now preparing to host the 56th Sweetheart Ball to be held on Saturday, April 14, 2018 at the Universal Hilton Hotel. Your experience as a debutant will be most memorable, filled with a variety of activities! Nothing would give us greater pleasure than to share this amazing experience with you this coming year. Debutants must be at least 15 years of age by October 1, 2017. If you are interested in becoming a debutante in the Sweetheart Ball please e-mail or call Caren Deeb Kouri as soon as possible at: <auntylulu@aol.com> or 818-399-8899. The deadline to sign-up is October 15, 2017.

Thank you!

If you did not attend the Parish Life Conference are among our Sponsors of the Souvenir Journal and did not receive a copy of the book, please let Father Timothy know and he will provide you with your personal copy. Thank you for your sponsorship of our Conference Journal.

Fall Gathering - October 6-8

St. Timothy Antiochian Orthodox Church in Fairfield, California are the hosts of our Annual Fall Gathering. Information for registration is on the bulletin board, also available on-line at: <www.StTimothy.us>. Hotel room rates (\$179+/night) are available by September 6, 2017. For further information and answer to questions please contact the committee at: StTimothyFallGathering@gmail.com or Khouriye Barbara Christianson at 831-818-7772.

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

Holy Bread Offering List

Aug 27 - open
Sep 03 - open
Sep 10 - open
Sep 17 - open
Sep 24 - open

Coffee Hour Hosts Calendar

Aug 27 - open
Sep 03 - open
Sep 10 - open
Sep 17 - open
Sep 24 - The Murr family

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 Cindy Tamoush at: (818-345-4363; famtam5@socal.rr.com) to host the Coffee Hour.

2018 Church Offering Envelope Order - due September 24

To continue or begin using our church offering envelopes please notify our Comptroller: Mary Ann Coury at <maryanncoury@aol.com>

NOTE

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



ASSEMBLY OF CANONICAL ORTHODOX BISHOPS

OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America Response to Racist Violence in Charlottesville, Virginia

Friday, August 18, 2017

The Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America stands with all people of good will in condemning the hateful violence and lamenting the loss of life that resulted from the shameful efforts to promote racial bigotry and white supremacist ideology in Charlottesville, Virginia.

The Orthodox Church emphatically declares that it does not promote, protect or sanction participation in such reprehensible acts of hatred, racism, and discrimination, and proclaims that such beliefs and behaviors have no place in any community based in respect for the law and faith in a loving God.

The essence of the Christian Gospel and the spirit of the Orthodox Tradition are entirely and self-evidently incompatible with ideologies that declare the superiority of any race over another. Our God shows no partiality or favoritism (Deuteronomy 10:17, Romans 2:11). Our Lord Jesus Christ *broke down the dividing wall of hostility that had separated God from humans and humans from each other* (Ephesians 2:14). In Christ Jesus, the Church proclaims, there can be *neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male or female, but all are one* (Galatians 3:28). Furthermore, we call on one another *to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather to expose them* (Ephesians 5:11). And what is darkness if not hatred? *The one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness* (1 John 2:11)!

Furthermore, in 1872, Hierarchs from around the world assembled in Constantinople and denounced all forms of xenophobia and chauvinism (*phyletism*). They agreed that the promotion of racial or national supremacy and ethnic bias or dissension in the Church of Christ is to be censured as contrary to the sacred teachings of the Christian Gospel and the holy canons of the Church. It is formally condemned as heresy, the strongest category of false teaching.

Finally, such actions as we have witnessed in recent days, by self-proclaimed white supremacists, neo-Nazis, and various racists and fascists, betray the core human values of love and solidarity. In this, we pray wholeheartedly for the families of those who lost their lives or suffered in these tragic events. In like manner, we cannot condone any form of revenge or retaliation by any group or individual. Therefore, we fervently appeal to every person of good will, and especially the leaders of our great nation, to consider and adopt ways of reconciling differences in order to rise above any and all discrimination in our history, our present, and our future.

Pastoral Sermon
Eleventh Sunday of Matthew
V. Rev. Timothy Baclig, Pastor
August 20, 2016

In today's Gospel lesson, Jesus illustrated the importance of forgiving others with the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant (Matthew 18:23-35). The lesson begins with the phrase: "The Lord spoke this parable..." (v. 21). It is part of a broader context of a dialogue between the Apostle Peter, beginning with verse 21. Peter approached Jesus to ask: "How many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?" To which the Lord replied: "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times" (verse 22).

According to the Old Testament (which was the only "scripture" in the days of Jesus) God promised to forgive sins but also to punish the guilty and their children to the third and fourth generations (Exodus 34:7). The rabbinic teachers taught that a person must forgive three times. Rabbi Jose ben Jehuda said: "If a man commits an offense once, they forgive him; if he commits an offense a second time, they forgive him; if he commits an offense a third time, they forgive him; the fourth time, they do not forgive." And so the Apostle Peter, by Old Testament and rabbinic standards, was already very generous. He came to Jesus and proposed, perhaps with a degree of self-satisfaction, the rule of forgiving the wrongdoer seven times. But Jesus said not seven times, but seventy seven times (some Biblical texts read: "seventy times seven"). In other words, we are to forgive others without counting the number at all! It is at this point that today's lesson begins.

The goal and objective of the lesson of the parable that follows in the main section of today's Gospel reading is to understand how to forgive our brother from our heart. Verse 35 (concludes): "...unless you forgive your brother from your heart." So much of our Lord's teaching, such as what we hear in His Sermon on the Mount is understanding what St. Cyprian of Carthage says, "God listens, not to our voice, but to our heart." The Church Fathers speak of this often concerning what they call "the prayer of the heart" and the "prayer of the inner self." **Our Lord made very clear that it was not enough to fulfill the precepts of the Law, but to obey and practice it from our hearts.**

In other words, it is not enough to say, “I forgive...” because God expects and commands me to forgive. We hear in the Epistle of I John 4:19ff: *We love because He first loved us. If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God, who he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.*

In the parable of today’s Gospel lesson we hear of a king who forgave his servant a debt of 10,000 talents or several million dollars; however, that servant in turn we learn was unwilling to forgive his fellow servant of his debt of a few dollars. The parable concludes with the unmerciful servant being thrown into prison, ending with the warning: “So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”

Abuse of the parable is to logically think that God is a God of mercy and that there is no judgment. Well, you could say, “I thought God is compassionate and merciful? Folks that think this way are people without principles or respect of laws – God’s principles and Laws. They “want to have their cake and eat it too.”

The Gospel lesson presupposes our understanding that in this life we have the **only** opportunity to repent of our sins and to forgive others. This is the heart of the Gospel. It is the message of Pascha and is deeply rooted in the joy and experience of the Resurrection. It is the reason for Christ’s own sacrificial death, a sacrifice that becomes our sacrifice by repentance – our cross, as we live a life of the baptized in Christ.

It is very easy for us to make the subject of forgiving others more difficult and more of a personal challenge than necessary. It helps for us to begin by asking ourselves: What prevents us from being able to forgive others? Is it pride, resentment, being hurt and wanting retribution; a failure of being understood, or is it being rejected.

As a child learning to ask the forgiveness of others was never easy. It was not easy because at times it may not have been my fault. It was also very embarrassing. Asking forgiveness was also a painful thing to do. It may also have been difficult because there were those times that I could not image the person I offended ever asking my forgiveness.

And so we can say that forgiving others requires faith and courage; trust in God; most importantly: accepting and experiencing God's forgiveness. Moreover, you and I cannot achieve the goal of forgiveness or practice forgiving others from our heart without God. **Knowing and experiencing God's forgiveness personally is where it all begins.** And should we believe that we have no need of God's forgiveness, we are in big trouble.

Finally, parable of the unmerciful servant involves indebtedness: a servant who was beholden to a king and a servant who was indebted to another servant. There is nothing worse than when someone is beholden to another. It is like being enslaved. It causes worry, it makes life more stressful, especially if your needs are not satisfied and you can't get your "head above water." There is a sense that you "can't get ahead;" you're "spinning your wheels" and cannot gain any ground or move forward with your life.

The parable begins with a king, who we are told, takes the initiative, and desired to settle – to bring an end to what was owed to him. Like the king in the parable God took the initiative to save us by sending His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. However, unlike the king, our God through the sacrifice of His Son, not only forgave us our sins, but took upon Himself the sins of the world as we hear it said in scripture: *He who knew no sin became the sin offering for us...* and in so doing Christ accomplished the ultimate sacrifice in obliterating any guilt and shame. He achieved what no one ever could, and as the only one who could – being the Author and Creator of life itself.

Prayer

Christ our God, as we approach the time of receiving your Sacrament we ask for your forgiveness of sins both voluntary and involuntary, and if we have offended anyone, enable us to humbly ask for their forgiveness that we may experience the joy of salvation. We thank Thee for having accepted us just as we are. Strengthen us in our time of weakness that we may grow in faith and love. Be near to us and keep us ever mindful of your love that we may be not only hearers but doers of all that you have commanded us; forgiving others from our hearts. For Thou art our Savior and to Thee do we ascribe glory together with Thy Father and Thine all Holy, Good, and life-giving Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. A-men.

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
ELEVENTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW
THE AFTER-FAST OF THE DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS
PROPHET SAMUEL; MARTYR PHOTEINI OF BLACHERNAE; MARTYRS HELIODOROS
AND DOSAI OF PERSIA

طروبارية القيامة على اللحن الثاني

عندما انحدرت إلى الموت، أيها الحياة الذي لا يموت، حينئذٍ أمتّ الجحيم ببرق لاهوتك،
وعندما أقيمت الأموات من تحت التراب، صرّح نحوك جميع القوات السماويين أيها المسيح
الإله المعطي الحياة، المجد لك.

في ميلادك حفظت البتولية وصنتها. وفي رقادك ما أهملت العالم وما تركته يا والدة الإله. لأنك
أنتقلت إلى الحياة بما أنك أم الحياة. فبشفاعتك أنقذي من الموت نفوسنا. طروبارية القديس
بابيلا الانطاكي على اللحن الرابع

طروبارية رؤساء الملائكة باللحن الرابع

أيها المتقدمون على الأجناد السماويين، نتوسل إليكم نحن غير المستحقين، حتى أنكم
بطلباتكم تكتنوفوننا بظل أجنحة مجدكم غير الهيولي، حافظين إيانا نحن الجاثين
والصارخين بغير فتور، أنقذونا من الشدائد، بما أنكم رؤساء مراتب القوات العلوية.

في ميلادك حفظت البتولية وصنتها. وفي رقادك ما أهملت العالم وما تركته يا والدة الإله. لأنك
أنتقلت إلى الحياة بما أنك أم الحياة. فبشفاعتك أنقذي من الموت نفوسنا

الرسالة

الرب قوتي وثباتي، أدبا أدبني الرب.
فصل من رسالة القديس بولس الرسول الأولى إلى أهل كورنثس.

يا إخوة، أنتم خاتم رسالتي في الرب. وهذا هو ردي على الذين يخاصمونني: أما لنا حق أن نأكل ونشرب؟ أما لنا حق مثل سائر الرسل وإخوة الرب وبطرس أن نستصحب زوجة مؤمنة؟ أم أنا وبرنابا وحدنا لا يحق لنا أن نكف عن العمل لتحصيل رزقنا؟ من هو الذي يحارب والنفقة عليه؟ من هو الذي يغرس كرما ولا يأكل من ثمره؟ من هو الذي يرعى قطيعا ولا يغتذي من لبنه؟ ألع كلامي هذا كلام بشري؟ أولا تقوله الشريعة أيضا؟ فقد جاء في شريعة موسى: "لَا تَكْمَّمُ الثَّورِ" وهو يدرس الحبوب. "أترى بالثيران يهتم الله؟ أما قال ذلك حقا من أجلنا؟ نعم، من أجلنا قد كتب ذلك ومعناه: على الذي يحرث أن يحرث على الرجاء، وعلى الذي يدرس الحبوب أن يدرسها على رجاء أن ينال نصيبه منها. فإذا كنا قد زرنا فيكم الخيرات الروحية، فهل يكون كثيرا علينا أن نحصد من خيراتكم المادية؟ وإذا كان لغيرنا حق عليكم في ذلك، أفما نحن أولى به؟ ولكننا لم نستعمل هذا الحق، بل احتملنا كل شيء لئلا نضع عقبة في طريق بشارة المسيح.

الإنجيل

فصل شريف من بشارة القديس متى

قال الرب هذا المثل: يشبه ملكوت الله ملكا أراد أن يحاسب عبده. فلما شرع في محاسبتهم، جاء إليه بواحد عليه عشرة آلاف درهم من الفضة. ولم يكن عنده ما يوفي، فأمر سيده أن يبياع هو وامراته وأولاده وجميع ما يملك حتى يوفيه دينه. فجثا له العبد ساجدا وقال: "أمهلني يا سيدي فأوفيك كل ما لك علي!" فأشفق عليه سيده وأطلقه وأعفاه من الدين. ولما خرج الرجل لقي عبدا من أصحابه كان له عليه مائة دينار، فأخذ بعنقه يخنقه وهو يقول له: "أوفني ما لي عليك!" فجثا صاحبه يرجوه ويقول: "أمهلني، فأوفيك." فلم يشأ، بل أخذه وألقاه في السجن حتى يوفيه الدين. ورأى العبيد أصحابه ما جرى فاستأثروا كثيرا وذهبوا وأخبروا سيدهم بكل ما جرى. فدعاه سيده وقال له: "أيها العبد الشرير! أعفيتك من دينك كله، لأنك رجوتني. أفما كان يجب عليك أن ترحم صاحبك مثلما رحمتك؟" وغضب سيده كثيرا، فسلمه إلى الجلادين، حتى يوفيه كل ما له عليه. وهكذا يفعل بكم أبي السماوي، إن لم "يغفر كل واحد منكم لآخيه من كل قلبه"

ملاحظة بخصوص تناول القربان المقدس

إن مفهومنا لتناول القربان يعني عمومية المشاركة فيه لذوى العقيدة الواحدة، إلا إن المشاركة في سر القربان المقدس هنا تقتصر فقط على أعضاء الكنائس الأرثوذكسية والذين يحضرون أنفسهم بالصلاة والصوم والاعتراف منذ فترة قريبة (وعلى كل حال، فإننا ندعو الجميع للمشاركة في الخبز المقدس الذي يوزع عند إنتهاء مراسيم القداس). رجاء مراجعة الكاهن إذا رغبت أن تصبح عضوا في الكنيسة الأرثوذكسية