

The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost and the Eighth Sunday of Matthew

After-feast of the Holy Transfiguration of Christ

Martyr and Archdeacon Euplos of Catania in Sicily; Niphon, Patriarch of Constantinople; New-martyrs Anastasios and Demetrios of Lesbos

Sunday, August 04, 2019

Tone 7; Eothinon 8

Apolytikion for the Resurrection (Tone 7)

Thou didst shatter death by Thy Cross, Thou didst open paradise to the thief; Thou didst turn the sadness of the ointment-bearing women into joy. And didst bid Thine Apostles proclaim a warning, that Thou hast risen O Christ, granting to the world the Great Mercy.

Apolytikion for the Holy Transfiguration (Tone 7)

When, O Christ our God, Thou wast transfigured on the mountain, Thou didst reveal Thy glory to Thy Disciples in proportion as they could bear it. Let Thine everlasting light also enlighten us sinners, through the intercessions of the Theotokos. O Thou Bestower of light, glory to Thee.

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 Transfiguration (Tone 7)

Thou wast transfigured on the mount, and Thy Disciples, in so far as they were able, beheld Thy glory, O Christ our God; so that, when they should see Thee crucified, they would remember that all Thy suffering was voluntary, and could declare to all the world that Thou art truly the effulgent Splendor of the Father.

Daily Readings

THE EPISTLE (for the Eighth Sunday after Pentecost)

The Lord will give strength to His people.

Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of God, ascribe to the Lord honor and glory.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (1:10-17)

Brethren, I appeal to you, by the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and that there be no dissension among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brethren. What I mean is that each one of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispos and Gaius; lest anyone should say that you were baptized in my name. (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the Gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

THE GOSPEL (for the Eighth Sunday of Matthew)

The Reading of the Holy Gospel is according to St. Matthew (14:14-22)

At that time, when Jesus went ashore he saw a great throng; and he had compassion on them, and healed their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to Him and said, "This is a lonely place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves." Jesus said, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They said to Him, "We have only five loaves here and two fish." And He said, "Bring them here to Me." Then He ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass; and taking the five loaves and the two fish He looked up to Heaven, and blessed, and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children. Then Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He dismissed the crowds.

The Synaxarion

On August 11 in the Holy Orthodox Church we continue to celebrate the feast of the Holy Transfiguration of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ; and we commemorate the Holy Martyr and Archdeacon Euplos of Catania in Sicily.

Verses

By his raiment, Euplos is a hallowed Levite; by his beheading,
a truly steadfast hoplite.

On the eleventh Euplos was smitten with a cutting sword.

The Emperor Diocletian dispatched Commander Pentagurus to Sicily to exterminate any Christians he found there. Pentagurus did not find a single Christian, for the few that were there, hid from the persecutor and did not reveal themselves. Then someone accused Euplos of taking a book—the Book of the Holy Gospels—to secret Christians and reading to them. They soon brought him to court, hung that book around his neck and led him to prison. After seven days of imprisonment and hunger Euplos was handed over for torture. While they were beating him with iron rods, Euplos mockingly said: “O ignorant one, do you not see that because of God’s help, these tortures are for me as a cobweb? If you can, find other harsher tortures, for all of these are as toys.” Finally, they led the martyr of Christ out to the scaffold. Then Euplos opened the Holy Gospel and read from it to the people for a long time. Many converted to the Faith of Christ. Euplos was beheaded in the year 304 and took up habitation in the Kingdom of Heaven. His miracle-working relics repose in a village near Naples called Vico della Batonia.

On this day, we also commemorate Niphon, patriarch of Constantinople; and New-martyrs Anastasios and Demetrios of Lesbos. By the intercessions of Thy Saints, 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

Grapes for the Holy Transfiguration is being offered by Richard Ajalat, Christi & Chris Matarese, Suzi & Adam Aparicio, Brittany & Michael Ajalat and their families, in honor of the 50th wedding anniversary of Charles & Marilee Ajalat. May God grant them many years!

Grapes on the Feast of the Holy Transfiguration were offered in loving memory of Presbytera Nicole Sarchizian's grandmother, Maria (+6 August). Memory eternal.

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

by Constantine Nasr and family for the repose of his cousin, William Khouri (+2 August, 2019) of Houston, Texas and for the consolation of his wife Dorothy and their sons. Memory eternal.

for the healing of Dick Foushee by Ned Toomey.

by Marcia O'Dea for the successful surgery and healing of her sister Teresa Chala and the good health of her brother, Sal.

for Phil & Katie Nasseif celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary.
May God grant them many years!

The coffee hour is being hosted this morning by Alan, Andrea and Evan Waldman, celebrating Audrey Waldman's ninth birthday. May God grant her many years!

We welcome our U.S. Congressman Brad Sherman who is visiting us this morning during the Coffee Hour.

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

Holy Bread Offering List

Coffee Hour Hosts Calendar

Aug 15 - the Mitchell family (Holy Dormition)

Aug 18 - Ron & Kathy Zraick
and the Makhoul family

Aug 25 - open

Aug 18 - the Ajalat family

Aug 25 - Isabel Kneizeh

Please contact Fr. Timothy (818/219-3761; pastor@stmichaelvannuys.org) to sign-up to offer Holy Bread and
Cindy Tamoush at: (818-345-4363; famtam5@socal.rr.com) to sign-up for the Coffee Hour.

LITURGICAL CALENDAR

The Dormition Fast – August 1-15

[Note: During the period of the fast, the Church's Traditional fasting discipline is observed with the abstinence of meat, poultry, eggs, dairy, fish, wine and oil, through August 14th. Wine and oil are permitted on Saturdays and Sundays. Also, Fish, wine and oil are permitted on the Feast of the Transfiguration.]

Service of the Paraklesis – Monday, August 12; 6:30 p.m.
[Prayer Service of Intercessory Prayer]

The Celebration of the Feast of the Dormition of the Holy Theotokos
Vespertine Divine Liturgy, Wednesday, August 14th, 6:30 p.m.

The Feast of the Holy Dormition – Thursday, August 15

The Ninth Sunday of Matthew
and the After-feast of the Dormition of the Holy Theotokos
Saturday, August 17th, Great Vespers, 5 p.m.
Sunday, August 18th, Orthros, 8:45 a.m., Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Care Packages for the Homeless and Needy

Join us in helping the homeless by providing items for one gallon size zip lock "care packages" that will be available for you to have in your car for the needy on street corners. Simply bring any of the following item to our collection box at the church in the coming weeks: water bottle, socks, cans of easy open cans of tuna, etc. (when a can opener is not needed), granola or cereal bars, sealed fruit or applesauce cups, peanut butter or cheese crackers, fast food gift certificates, hand wipes, tissue packs, maxi pads, toothbrushes and toothpaste, nail clippers, band aids, chapstick, small brush or comb, mints, cough drops or gum, small notes with a Bible verse or words of encouragement. Thank you for your help.

Backpacks for Kids Project

Our teens will be preparing backpacks for needy children next month. If you are able to help with items listed on their flier, please contact Cooper Rowe, our Youth Director at: <crowe31@gmail.com> or 316-619-2411. This will help to prevent us from having too much of any item. Some of the items include: pens (packs of 12) and pencils (packs of four), crayons (boxes of eight), white board markers (packs of four), markers (packs of 12), 3.5 X 5" index card packs, pencil case, folders, binders, glue sticks (packs of four), 12 inch rulers, notebooks, erasers, Thank you for your support.

Neighborhood Open Houses

As we continue to celebrate our parish's Fiftieth Year, it is our hope that you will get to know your fellow parishioners in your neighborhood. We have formed a listing of our members in each area of the Los Angeles metropolitan area and are looking for volunteers to host a neighborhood gathering sometime this year. The gatherings are to be informal and to allow for socializing; maximum two (2) hours, i.e., 7-9 p.m. Deserts or refreshments may be considered. Potlucks may also be planned. Gatherings may also take place in a clubhouse or be a park picnic. Hosts will be responsible in contacting parishioners in their neighborhood. We are asking our hosts not to include the church calendar dates of fasting. Should you have any questions or are interested in being a host, please speak with Father Timothy: 818-219-3761 <pastor@stmichaelvannuys.org>.

Upcoming Events (see the foyer bulletin board for more information)

Celebrating 800 Years of Autocephaly of the Serbian Orthodox Church
August 30-31, September 1; westsrbdio.org/diocesanday2019

Teen SOYO Fall "Kick-off" - Saturday, September 21, 2019,
St. Nicholas Cathedral Heritage Hall; 1-5 p.m.

Church School Registration - Sunday, September 8

First Day of Church School Classes - Sunday, September 15
Creative Festival Awards Presentation Salad Bar Lunch

Parish Life Conference and Archdiocese Convention Booklets

Ad books from the Diocesan Parish Life Conference (July 3-7, 2019; San Diego California) and the Biennial Archdiocese Convention (July 23-28, 2019; Grand Rapids, Michigan) are in the narthex for anyone to review. In addition, the Archdiocese Annual Financial Report along with the approved 2020 and 2021 Budget is available for review by any parishioner upon request. Please speak with Father Timothy Baclig should you desire to see the Archdiocese Financial Reports and/or Report of the Archdiocese Departments and Organizations.

Six-month Parish Financial Report

If you are a Pledging Member of our parish and did not receive the six-month Parish Financial Statement on Sunday, 21, 2019 when hard-copies were distributed to our membership, please see Father Timothy Baclig to receive your copy. The reports distribution is in compliance with our Parish Constitution that requires it to be available to our contributing membership. Any questions concerning the report will be responded to by our Church Treasurer, Kris Thabit at <kthabit66@hotmail.com> or our Comptroller, Mary Ann Coury at <maryanncoury@aol.com>.

Building Fund Stock Donation Option

A charitable donation of long-term appreciated securities, i.e., stocks, bonds and/or mutual funds that have realized significant appreciation over time is one of the best and most tax-efficient of all ways to support our Building Fund. There are two main advantages: 1) Any long-term appreciated securities with unrealized gains (meaning they were purchased over a year ago, and have a current value greater than their original cost) may be donated to the church with the benefit of receiving a tax deduction for the full fair value of the securities—up to 60% of the donor's adjusted gross income; 2) since the securities/stock is being donated rather than sold, capital gains taxes from selling the securities no longer apply. And the more appreciation the securities have, the greater the tax savings will be. Please speak with or contact Ron Zraick, Chair of the Capital Funds Campaign Committee: <ronaldzraick@yahoo.com>.

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST EIGHTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW

AFTER-FAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION OF CHRIST
MARTYR AND ARCHDEACON EUPLOS OF CATANIA IN SICILY; NIPHON, PATRIARCH OF
CONSTANTINOPLE; NEW-MARTYRS ANASTASIOS AND DEMETRIOS OF LESBOS

طروبارية القيامة على اللحن السابع
حطمت بصليبك الموت وفتحت للصل الفردوس، وحوّلت نوح حاملات الطيب، وأمرت
رسلك أن يكرزوا بأنك قد قمت أيها المسيح الإله مانحاً العالم الرحمة العظمى.

طروبارية التجلي على اللحن السابع
تجلّيت أيها المسيح الإله على الجبل، فأظهرت مجدك لتلاميذك على حسب ما
استطاعوا. فأضئ لنا أيضاً نحن الخطاة نورك الأزلي، بشفاعة والد الإله، يا مانح النور
المجد لك

طروبارية رؤساء الملائكة بالحن 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.

طروبارية التجلي على اللحن السابع
لما تجلّيت، أيها المسيح الإله في الجبل، وحسبما وسع تلاميذك شاهدوا مجدك، حتى
عندما يُعابنونك مصلوباً يدركوا أن الأماك طوعاً باختيارك، ويبشروا للعالم أنك أنت
بالحقيقة شعاع الأب.

الرسالة

الرب يوتي العزة شعبه، قدّموا للرب يا أبناء الله، قدّموا للرب مجداً وعزاً
فصل من رسالة القديس بولس الرسول الأولى إلى أهل كورنثس

يا إخوة، أناشدكم باسم ربنا يسوع المسيح أن تكونوا جميعاً متفقين في الرأي وأن لا يكون بينكم خلافاً، بل كونوا على وفاق تام، لكم روح واحد وفكر واحد. فقد أخبرني عنكم أيها الإخوة أهل بيت خلوة أن بينكم خلافاً، أعني أن كل واحد منكم يقول "أنا مع بولس" و "أنا مع أبولوس" و "أنا مع بطرس" و "أنا مع المسيح". هل تجزأ المسيح؟ هل بولس هو الذي صُلب من أجلكم؟ أو باسم بولس تعمدتم؟ أحمد الله أنني لم أعمد أحداً منكم سوى كريسبس و غايس، فليس لأحد أن يقول إنكم باسمي تعمدتم. بلى لقد عمدت أيضاً عائلة استفاناس. وما عدا هؤلاء فلا أذكر أنني عمدت أحداً. فالمسيح أرسلني لا لأعمد، بل لأعلن البشارة غير معولٍ على حكمة الكلام لنلا يبطل صليب المسيح.

الإنجيل

فصل شريف من بشارة القديس متى

في ذلك الزمان: لما نزل يسوع من القارب رأى جموعاً كبيرة، ففتحن عليهم وشفى مرضاهم. ولما كان المساء دنا منه تلاميذه وقالوا: "المكان مقفر وقد فات الوقت، فاصرف الجموع ليذهبوا إلى القرى فيشتروا لهم طعاماً." فأجابهم يسوع: "لا حاجة بهم إلى الذهاب. أعطوهم أنتم ما يأكلون." فقالوا له: "ليس عندنا هنا غير خمسة أرغفة وسمكتين." فقال يسوع: "هاتوا ما عندكم." ثم أمر الجموع أن يقعدوا على العشب، وأخذ الأرغفة الخمسة والسمكتين، ورفع عينيه نحو السماء وبارك وكسر الأرغفة وأعطى تلاميذه، والتلاميذ أعطوا الجموع. فأكلوا كلهم حتى شبعوا، ورفعوا ما فضل من الكسر اثنتي عشرة قفة مملوءة. وكان الذين أكلوا نحو خمسة آلاف رجل ما عدا النساء والأولاد. وأمر تلاميذه أن يركبوا القارب ويسبقوه إلى الشاطئ المقابل حتى يصرف الجموع.

ملاحظة بخصوص تناول القربان المقدس

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

Pastor's Sermon
The Eighth Sunday of Matthew
By V. Rev. Timothy Baclig
August 11, 2019

The Church Fathers interpreted the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand heard in today's reading as an anticipation of Holy Communion in which Christ offers Himself to us as the heavenly bread. In the book of Exodus (16:4-16) of the Old Testament, when the Israelites had escaped from Egypt but then faced terrible hunger in the wilderness, God sent food to satisfy His people. In the days of Jesus God again acted by sending His Son to feed His people not only with bread but also with the truth of His teachings.

The Church Fathers point out that just as the Israelites were miraculously fed in the wilderness, Jesus miraculously fed the multitude that followed him. However, what is not similar about these two events is that the miracle of the food that was provided for the Israelites in the wilderness was not enough in and of itself to cause them to follow the Law of God and to obey His commandments. Their experience was not something that helped them to seek anything beyond their physical hunger in the wilderness. Unlike the event of the Israelites in Exodus, the multitudes that followed our Lord were drawn to Him and were motivated with a hunger to hear Christ message. They sought Him with no thought of their need to eat a meal.

In the New Testament Jesus declares Himself to be the True Bread from heaven given by the Father, and so the food in the desert and the bread of the Gospel miracle are both signs of that True Bread. In a section following the account of the miracle of the five loaves and fishes in chapter six of St. John's Gospel, Jesus said, *I am the Bread of Life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty (verse 35). Your forefathers ate in the desert, yet they died. But there is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If a man eats of this bread, he will live forever. This is my flesh which I give for the life of the world"* (verses 49-51).

The Lord's Prayer found in Matthew, chapter 6, provides us with another phrase that helps our understanding of what this means. ...*give us this day our daily bread...*

The expression “daily bread” should not be understood as merely pertaining to the bread of this very day; the bread that sustains our life; rather: It is the bread for the eternal day of God’s Kingdom – what sustains us for immortal life. It is the living “super essential” Bread – Christ Himself: The Bread of Life.

Immediately following this lesson our Lord teaches His disciples about fasting (v. 16ff). We happen to be entering the period of the Dormition Fast (August 1-14). One of the purposes of the fast, as with other periods of fasting in the church, is to remind us of the words of our Lord who said, *[Do not labor] for the [food] which perishes, but for the [food] which endures unto everlasting life which the Son of Man will give to you (John 6:27)*. And in the words of St. Paul (Romans 14:7): *The Kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit*.

Important to our understanding about the Sacrament of Christ’s Body and Blood as Orthodox Christians, is that we believe and understand that when a person is united to Christ in receiving Holy Communion, he or she does so acknowledging being united with Christ’s teaching. The two are inseparable. Unlike other Christian traditions, in our church, Christ’s teaching is not a subjective matter or the subject of one’s personal interpretation.

If we read further into the sixth chapter of St. John’s Gospel we hear these words: *Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. ...as the living Father sent me..., so the one who feeds on me will live because of me” (verses 52-57)*. It is also recorded that it was precisely at this point that the Gospel records that many of the disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

And so, my beloved, our Tradition, I must be honest with you, is not as accommodating to our temporal desires. Its purpose is not to temporarily pacify or satisfy our earthly desires. Surely, you and I ask God for many things... But it can be very liberating for you and I when we discover that being members of God’s Kingdom pertains to all that is beyond our personal wants and temporal needs: unlike the liberation of the Israelites from Egypt. Our liberation focuses upon Christ as our Source and Bread of Life. He, who illumines, renews and regenerates, forgives and heals, purifies and sanctifies. He is Who saves and sustains us; all who are repentant sinners, the sick and down-trodden.

The Church is first and foremost the Body of Christ. Its success is not centered or focused around human personalities. Perhaps in the case of the Israelites it was Moses. We just heard in today's epistle another very important lesson regarding the divisions that arose among the faithful and that the Apostle Paul messages about. It involved the various personalities that had become prominent leaders and who obviously had a very successful following. It may have been that they were good speakers; charismatic personalities. But the Apostle reminds them something that we too cannot forget: The message is Christ's and it is He in whose name we are baptized and it is He who saves us.

Prayer

O Lord Jesus Christ our God, You blessed the five loaves in the wilderness, and from them five thousand were filled. O Bread of Life, feed us with your Word. Nourish us with wisdom. Grant us your blessing and multiply our resources that we also may be merciful and generous at all times, especially for those who are in need. For you, O Christ our God, do bless and sanctify all things, and are also the Heavenly Bread, and the Fountain of immortality, and to You do we give glory, together with your Eternal Father and Your life-giving Spirit, now and forever. A-men.