

St. Michael Antiochian Orthodox Church of the San Fernando Valley
a Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America
16643 Vanowen Street; Van Nuys, California; 91406 stmichaelvanuys.org

His Eminence, Metropolitan JOSEPH, Archbishop of New York
and Metropolitan of all North America www.antiochian.org

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The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost and the Eighth Sunday of Matthew

Relics Translation of Proto-martyr Stephen the Archdeacon
Venerable Photini the wonderworker of Carpasia in Cyprus;
Blessed Basil the fool-for-Christ, wonderworker of Moscow

Sunday, August 02, 2020

Tone 7; Eothinon 8

Apolytikion of 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 of St. Stephen the Archdeacon (Tone 4)

The crown of the Kingdom hath adorned the brow of thy head because of the contests that thou hast endured for Christ God, thou first of the martyred Saints; for when thou hadst censured the Jews' madness, thou sawest Christ thy Savior standing at the right hand of the Father. O Stephen, ever pray Him for us, that He would save our souls.

Apolytikion of 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 of the Holy 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 2 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate the recovery of the sacred relics of the holy Proto-martyr and Archdeacon Stephen.

Verses

A great many strange and divine things hast thou, O Zion:
So give Constantine's city the dead body of Stephen.
On the second Stephen's corpse was removed.

When the wicked Jews stoned Stephen to death, they left his body for the dogs to eat. After two nights Gamaliel, Paul's teacher and a secret follower of Christ, came and took his body to Caphargamala, and buried it in a cave. Eventually, Gamaliel's friend Nicodemus, his nephew Abibos and he were laid to rest in the same cave. The graves were forgotten, but in 415, in the time of Patriarch John of Jerusalem, Gamaliel appeared three times in a dream to the Priest Lucian, in Caphargamala, and told him the exact location of the burial place. With the Patriarch's blessing, Lucian and others dug up the graves. A strong and fragrant odor from the relics of these saints filled the cave. Stephen's relics were solemnly translated to Zion and there buried with ceremony, and the relics of the others were taken to a hill above the cave and laid to rest in a church there. Later, Stephen's healing relics were translated to Constantinople.

On this day, we also commemorate the Venerable Photeini the wonderworker of Carpasia in Cyprus; and Blessed Basil the fool-for-Christ, wonderworker of Moscow. By their holy intercessions, O God, have mercy on us. Amen.

OFFERINGS

The Holy Bread is being offered this morning by Suzan Haddad and family for the six-month memorial Farha Khalil Hallak (+6 February, 2020), beloved mother, grandmother, sister and aunt. Memory eternal.

Holy Bread is also being offered this morning by Marcia O'Dea, the O'Dea and Chala families with prayers for Salvador Chala, who recently celebrated his birthday (July 28). May God grant him many years! Prayers are also offered in memory of Rev. Ernest Bartell CSC.

Holy Bread is being offered this morning by Mandy, Constantine, Christine and Laila Nasr, for the two year memorial of Samia Kudmani (+29 July, 2018) beloved mother and grandmother. Memory eternal.

Special offerings and requests for prayer...

by Lila & James Barkett, Joanne & George Khouri
in memory of the newly-departed servant of God, Richard Khoury
(+27 June, 2020). Memory eternal.

by Joyce Salamy for the repose of the newly-departed servant of God,
Robert Raya (+26 July, 2020), beloved husband of Cheryl Raya,
of San Diego; father of Allyson Salamy and Robert Raya, Jr.
Memory eternal.

for the repose of the newly-departed servant of God, Jalil Abu al Eitham
(+29 July, 2020) of Amman, Jordan; beloved brother of Laila Dawud, and
siblings, George, Julia, Samira, Susu, Milad, Nabiha and the late Issa
Abu al Eitham and their families. Memory eternal.

by Joe Ayoub for the two-year memorial of his beloved mother,
Nora Ayoub (+29 July, 2018). Memory eternal.

by Joe Ayoub for the repose of the newly-departed family friend,
Ted Azkoul (+26 July, 2020) of Grand Rapids, Michigan.
Memory eternal.

for Margaret Abdun-Nur, celebrating her birthday today.
May God grant her continued good health and many years!

by Bobbi Monsue for the healing of Janet McCaman

Included in our prayers throughout the month of August are those celebrating their birthday: Fuad Rafidi (8/1), Jonathan Kenneth Contes (8/2), Margaret Abdun-Nur (8/2), Ava Rose Hage (8/2), Gabrielle Camacho (8/3), Dr. George Kudmani (8/3), Sabine Moujaes (8/3), Linda Andrews (8/4), Elisa Milkie (8/4), Marcelle Rowihab (8/4), Patricia Malouf (8/5), Blake Zoe Murr (8/6), Charlotte Murr (8/6), Nicholas Andrews (8/9), Juliana Aparicio (8/9), Joseph Mallouk (8/9), Billy Gross (8/10), Carl Andrews (8/10), Samir Boutari (8/10), Amal Makhoul (8/10), Sophia Minassian (8/10), Magued Wassef (8/10), Paige Nicola

(8/11), Diane Saba (8/11), Audrey Waldman (8/11), Michael Horaney (8/12), Lucas John Abughazaleh (8/13), Ruta McLinn (8/13), Aristides Katerelos (8/14), Albert Bitar, Jr. (8/15), Michael A. Haddad (8/18), Elias Ababseh (8/18), Gloria Mittry (8/19), Chad Blair (8/20), Madelyn Palmer (8/20), Adhanet Woldemichael (8/21), Karoleen Ababseh (8/23), Emily Apostolou (8/23), Robert Camacho (8/23), Molly Anne McCarron (8/23), Katherine Leilani Baclig (8/25), Celine Marie Srouf (8/26), Raquel Randy Ababseh (8/27), Gerald Aboud (8/27), Rami Abughazaleh (8/28), Sonia Karam (8/30), George Mallouk (8/30), Megan Monsue (8/30); and those celebrating their wedding anniversary: Hanna & Rima Sweis (8/8) Tiffany & Tom Akoury (8/12), Phil & Katie Nassief (8/16), Walter & Christina Rygiol (8/16), Marilee & Charles Ajalat (8/17), Kelly & Kenneth Malouf (19); Michael & Kelly Meena (8/22), Sean & Robin O'Dea (8/22), Praneet Panga (8/22), Johny & Edlin Sweis (8/25), Randy & Genevieve Ababseh (8/27), Nickie & Chuck Malouf (8/27), Richard & Cindy Tamoush (8/27), Sylvana & Daniel Barney (8/28), John & Carrie Khouri (8/28), Joseph & Erica Kneizeh (8/28), Rose Ann & Frank E. Skaff (8/28), Sandi & Jeff Gorup (8/29), Vanessa & David Obenhaus (8/31). May God grant them many years!

Michael T. Saliba, +31 Aug., 1953
 Martha Solomon, +27 Aug., 1960
 Salama Yanni, +13 Aug., 1961
 Elmer S. Miller, +14 Aug., 1961
 Angelina Diab, +28 Aug., 1961
 Hazel Boyer, Aug., 1965
 George A. Barkett, +13 Aug., 1969
 Michelle Hogue, +2 Aug., 1972
 Edward J. Andrews, +9 Aug., 1974
 Shikri Massabni, +26 Aug., 1977
 Edna Zraick, +20 Aug., 1979
 Elizabeth Pitkart, +22 Aug., 1980
 Labiba Filipous +Aug., 1984
 Nancy Leo Courey, +15 Aug., 1985
 Michel Razook, Sr., +16 Aug., 1985
 Jad Salem Dabbour, +5 Aug., 1988
 John T. Black, Sr., +25 Aug., 1988
 Ernest Kaleel, +2 Aug., 1989

Marvin Adams, +17 Aug., 2000
 Mary Kiley, +3 Aug., 2002
 Sadie Skaff, +19 Aug., 2001
 Carmilea Adeeb, +17 Aug., 2002
 Rose Deeb, +31 Aug., 2002
 Linda Koudsi, +31 Aug., 2004
 Joyce Skaff, +1 Aug., 2004
 Margaret Satel, +25 Aug., 2005
 Evelyn Barghash, +22 Aug., 2006
 Lena Nassief, +16 Aug., 2007
 Chris Reisch, +24 Aug., 2007
 Mary Zaki, +26 Aug., 2008
 Donna Cruzan, +11 Aug., 2009
 Carmen Satel, +13 Aug., 2009
 Carolee Khalil, +24 Aug., 2010
 Dr. Martha Barba, +13 Aug., 2011
 Miladeh Saadeh, +25 Aug., 2011
 Eula Martha Cates, +25 Aug., 2011

Wadih Mattar, +28 Aug., 1989
Robert Soffa, +11 Aug., 1991
Sarah Ansara, +16 Aug., 1992
Donna Rae Hallak, +22 Aug., 1992
Stephanie H. Siano, +18 Aug., 1993
Afton Bailey, +15 Aug., 1995
Issa Saadeh, +21 Aug., 1995
Richard Kayaleh, +18 Aug., 1996
Carolyn Cates, +8 Aug., 1998
Henry Antoniewicz, +14 Aug., 1998
Mary Klimowych, +12 Aug., 2001
Frank Hallak, +11 Aug., 2002
Rev. Fr. Cosmo Ansara, +12 Aug.
Diab Makhoul, +25 Aug., 1999
Helen Hatem, +6 Aug., 2000

Alex Akoury, +27 Aug., 2011
Adeeb G. Sadd, +31 Aug., 2011
Sabin Nassif, +27 Aug., 2011
Eli Shaheen, +02 Aug., 2013
Joseph David, +04 Aug., 2013
Albert "Al" Coury, Sr., +08 Aug., 2013
Cheryl Cambridge, +01 Aug., 2015
Rose Jones, +01 Aug., 2015
Elizabeth Lamar, +18 Aug., 2017
Dr. Sakae Kawata, +26 Aug. 2017
Floyd Farha, +12 Aug. 2018
Jamilie Rabadi, +29 Aug. 2018
William Khouri, +2 Aug. 2019
Elias Kuncar, +19 Aug. 2019

Memory Eternal!

Please phone the Church Office if there are any omissions or corrections to the above listing.
Bear in mind that some have chosen not to be included in our announcement.
Please pardon any errors.

THE DISCIPLINE OF FASTING AND PRAYER

We are now in a two week period called, **The Dormition Fast**. It is one of the four major fasting periods in the discipline of the Orthodox church (the others being: Great Lent, the Christmas Fast and the Apostles' Fast). The August Dormition Fast precedes the memorial of the Holy Dormition of the All-Holy virgin Mother of God (August 15).

It is beneficial for us to make an effort to observe this fast (to the degree that it is not detrimental to our health). Jesus Himself fasted and taught His disciples about fasting (see St. Matthew's Gospel 6:16-18). The purpose of fasting is to be strengthened spiritually, allowing our spiritual desires to dominate our physical or carnal appetites. This is a means of becoming liberated from being dependent upon the things of this world; focusing our attention upon the spiritual virtues and things of the eternal Kingdom of God. The discipline of fasting provides power to the soul (when accompanied with prayer) in order that it might not yield to temptation and sin. According to St. Seraphim of Sarov, fasting is an "indispensable means" of gaining the fruit of the Holy Spirit in one's life (see Galatians 5:22-23), and Jesus Himself taught that some forms of evil cannot be conquered without it. (see Matthew 17-21 and Mark 9:29).

A special prayer service called the *Paraklesis* (pah-RAH-kle-sis), which means “supplicatory canon,” is done each evening of the Dormition Fast. This year, the service will take place on Monday evening, August 3rd, then again on Wednesday - August 12th, beginning at 6:30 p.m. and will be live-streamed. The prayer service is especially dedicated on behalf of those who are in need of all forms of help and healing. Names of persons may be turned in to Father Timothy.

The Orthodox Church has always understood the discipline of fasting to be accompanied with prayer and good works as mentioned in St. Matthew’s Gospel (7:21). It is also important to remember that the Paraklesis Service is not limited to taking place during the Dormition Fast. It is a prayer service that may be said for anyone at any time, in a home or at a bedside, by personal request.

LITURGICAL CALENDAR

The Dormition Fast – August 1-14

[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* and the Veneration of the Holy Cross
Monday, August 3; 6:30 p.m.

The Feast of the Holy Transfiguration - Thursday, August 6th

Wednesday, August 5 - Great Vespers, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, August 6 - Divine Liturgy, 11 a.m.

The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost and the Ninth Sunday of Matthew

Saturday, August 8 - Great Vespers, 5 p.m.

Sunday, August 9 - Orthros, 8:45 a.m., Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.

The Feast of the Dormition – Saturday, August 15

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Live-streaming Sunday Orthros and Liturgy

Plan to view all of our scheduled church services on-line by logging on to: either **FaceBook** or **YouTube** via our parish website:

<www.stmichaelvannuys.org> Your church offering may be made on-line via our website "Donation" tab or by mailing your check to the church at: 16643 Vanowen Street; Van Nuys, California; 91406. Mailing your check to the church will save our church a 3% service charge.

Church Attendance

We are currently restricting attendance at our church services due to the City policy regarding COVID-19 that applies to all houses of worship. However, parishioners preparing to receive Holy Communion may still do so by being at the church door by 11:15 a.m. on Sunday. A monitor will provide you with instructions when you arrive. Questions will also be answered by Father Timothy by e-mail at: frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org The Sacrament(s) are also available on weekdays by appointment. The following link will provide you with the current policy for houses of worship in the City of Los Angeles: http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/coronavirus/docs/protocols/Reopening_PlacesofWorship.pdf

For Planning Ahead

The Feast of the Dormition this year falls on Saturday (August 15). The Feast is preceded by a fourteen day fast, beginning on Saturday, August 1st. The traditional fasting discipline includes: no meat, poultry, eggs, dairy, fish, wine and oil, but wine and oil are allowed on Saturdays and Sundays; also fish wine and oil are permitted for the Feast of the Transfiguration (Monday, August 6). The Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Dormition will be celebrated with a Divine Liturgy on Saturday, August 15th at 10 a.m.

Six Month Parish Financial Statement

Our Parish Constitution requires the publishing of a Six-month Financial Statement. Our members will be receiving this information as a hard copy in the mail only. The envelope also includes a confidential Six-month Contribution Statement. Should you have any questions, please speak with our Church Treasurer: Julie Bitar, or contact her at: <jbitar027@gmail.com>. For questions on your Contribution Statement contact Mary Ann Coury, Comptroller at: <maryanncoury@aol.com>.

Zoom Meeting Bible Study

Bible Study with Father Timothy — Tuesday, August 4 at 7 p.m. **Use the link and security password provided in the parish e-mail.**

Note: Father Timothy would also welcome scheduling a Zoom Meeting with you and your family at any time by appointment. Simply e-mail him at <frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org>.

Join in our Parish Bible Study Zoom Meetings

An “Orthodox Bible Study” provides a broad and complete study of the full context of Holy Scripture (Old and New Testament) It is a comprehensive approach to understanding God's Word from Holy Tradition that includes: The Apostolic writings, Church Councils, the Canonical Texts, Patristic Sources, Liturgical Texts of Services and the experience of saints who have given testimony through their life as witnesses of the faith through the centuries. This week's “Virtual Bible Study Zoom Meeting” will take place on Tuesday evening, August 4, at 7 p.m. Each study is limited to one hour. All who are interested may review the previously recorded studies by requesting the Zoom link. Just e-mail Father Timothy at: <frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org>. We continuing our focus on our life in the Spirit. This week we will be concluding our reading of the New Testament epistles and gospels of the Sacrament of Healing: Holy Unction.

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

Holy Bread Offering List

Aug 06 - Feast of the Transfiguration
Aug 08 - open
Aug 15 - Feast of the Dormition
Aug 16 - open
Aug 23 - Robert & Amal Makhoul
Sep 06 - open

Coffee Hour Hosts Calendar

Note: There are no Coffee Hours scheduled

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.

Upcoming Events

St. Michael Ladies Virtual Annunciation Tea - **August 22**
11 a.m.; Speaker: Mother Paraskeva of St. Barbara Monastery
Topic: "From Life to Life: The Deathless Dormition of the Theotokos"

Church School Registration - Sunday, September 13
First Day of Church School Classes - Sunday, September 29

29th Annual St. Michael Annual Golf Classic
(**Monday, November 2, 2020** to be confirmed)

The 57th "Sweetheart Ball" - at the Universal Hilton Hotel
(**November 28, 2020**)

Adult Zoom Meetings: "The Relationship Project"

Join Father Timothy in weekly one-hour Zoom meetings that explore "The Relationship Project" produced by *Faithtree Resources*. Discover the struggles of young people and how we can best relate to their anxieties and challenges. The three-part program aims to build the primary relationships of a young person: with their parents, priest, people of faith and friends. This curriculum is part of our teen Church School class and is being used by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of the West. Sign-up with Father Timothy and let him know what day of the week and time is best.

Personal Tours of our New Church Sanctuary

Personal tours are being scheduled by appointment for all who are interested in designated "sponsorships" or "dedications" of various parts of the new church sanctuary that are available. The tour will also provide answers to questions. Please contact Father Timothy for more information at: frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org

Weekly Prayer Services to be Scheduled

A prayer service called the *Paraklesis* (pah-RAH-kle-sis), which means "supplicatory canon," will commence during the Dormition Fast (August 1-14). This year, the service will be live-streamed on Monday evening, August 3rd, then again on Wednesday - August 12th, beginning at 6:30 p.m. The

prayer service is especially dedicated on behalf of those who are in need of help and healing. Names of persons may be turned in to Father Timothy.

The Orthodox Church has always understood the discipline of fasting to be accompanied with prayer and good works as mentioned in St. Matthew's Gospel (7:21). The Fast of the Holy Dormition ("falling-asleep of the Holy Virgin Mother of God) takes place from August 1-14. It is the practice of our church to include the *Parakesis* on the evenings of this particular fast.

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.

Pastor's Sermon
The Eighth Sunday of Matthew
By V. Rev. Timothy Baclig
August 02, 2020

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, we see that our Tradition 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.

EOTHINON 8

الايوثينا 8

STONE 7

اللحن 7

**THE EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
AND THE EIGHTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW**

Relics Translation of Proto-martyr Stephen the Archdeacon
Venerable Photeini the wonderworker of Carpasia in Cyprus;
Blessed Basil the fool-for-Christ, wonderworker of Moscow

طروبارية القيامة على اللحن السابع

حَطَمْتَ بِصَلِيْبِكَ الْمَوْتَ وَفَتَحْتَ لِلصِّ الْفِرْدَوْسَ، وَحَوَّلْتَ نُوحَ حَامِلَاتِ الطَّيْبِ، وَأَمَرْتَ رَسْلَكَ
أَنْ يَكْرَزُوا بِأَنَّكَ قَدْ قَمْتَ أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ الْإِلَهُ مَانِحاً الْعَالَمَ الرَّحْمَةَ الْعَظْمَى.

لَقَدْ تَوَجَّتْ هَامَتُكَ بِإِكْلِيلِ مُلُوكِيٍّ، ضُفِرَ بِمَا كَابَدْتَهُ مِنْ جِهَادٍ مِنْ أَجْلِ الْمَسِيحِ الْإِلَهُ، يَا أَوَّلَ
الشُّهَدَاءِ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ، لِأَنَّكَ وَبَحْتَ الْيَهُودَ عَلَى حِمَاقَتِهِمْ، فَأَبْصَرْتَ يَسُوعَ مُخْلِّصُكَ عَنْ يَمِينِ الْآبِ،
فَدَاوِمِ الْإِبْتِهَالَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْلِ نَفُوسِنَا.

طروبارية رؤساء الملائكة باللحن الرابع

أَيُّهَا الْمَتَقَدِّمُونَ عَلَى الْأَجْنَادِ السَّمَاوِيِّينَ، نَتَوَسَّلُ إِلَيْكُمْ نَحْنُ غَيْرِ الْمَسْتَحَقِّينَ، حَتَّى أَنْكُمْ
بَطْلِبَاتِكُمْ تَكْتَنُفُونَنَا بِظُلِّ أَجْنَحَةِ مَجْدِكُمْ غَيْرِ الْهَيُولِيِّ، حَافِظِينَ إِيَانَا نَحْنُ الْجَائِثِينَ
وَالصَّارِخِينَ بِغَيْرِ فِتْرٍ، أَنْقَذُونَا مِنَ الشَّدَائِدِ، بِمَا أَنْكُمْ رُؤَسَاءُ مَرَاتِبِ الْقَوَاتِ الْعُلُويَّةِ.

طروبارية التجلي على اللحن السابع

لَمَا تَجَلَّيْتَ، أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ الْإِلَهُ فِي الْجَبَلِ، وَحَسْبَمَا وَسَّعَ تَلَامِيذُكَ شَاهَدُوا مَجْدَكَ، حَتَّى عِنْدَمَا
يُعَايِنُوكَ مَصْلُوباً يَدْرِكُوا أَنَّ الْأَمَّكَ طَوْعاً بِاخْتِيَارِكَ، وَيَبْشِرُوا لِلْعَالَمِ أَنَّكَ أَنْتَ بِالْحَقِيقَةِ شَعَاغُ
الْآبِ.

الرسالة

الربّ يوتي العزة شعبه, قدّموا للربّ يا أبناء الله, قدّموا للربّ 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 خلافٌ, 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؟ أحمّد الله أنني لم أعمّد 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 لأعمّد, بل لأعلن البشارة. غير معول 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, فتحنن عليهم وشفى مرضاهم. ولما كان المساء دنا منه تلاميذه وقالوا: "المكان مقفر وقد فات الوقت, فأصرف 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.