



Sunday Bulletin August 23rd, 2015
Greek Orthodox Church of the
Annunciation

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Rev. Dr. Michael Bahlatzis, Presiding Priest-Proistamenos



Epistle Reading St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 15:1-11

BRETHREN, I would remind you in what terms I preached to you the gospel, which you received, in which you stand, by which you are saved, if you hold it fast - unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God which is with me. Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

Gospel Reading Matthew 19:16-26

At that time, a young man came up to Jesus, kneeling and saying, "Good Teacher, what good deed must I do, to have eternal life?" And he said to him, "Why do you call me good? One there is who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments." He said to him, "Which?" And Jesus said, "You shall not kill, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother, and You shall love your neighbor as yourself." The young man said to him, "All these I have observed; what do I still lack?" Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions. And Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly, I say to you, it will be hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." When the disciples heard this they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?" But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Message from Fr. Michael....

Dearly Beloved Faithful in the Lord:

In today's Holy Gospel reading we heard the young man ask our Lord:

"What good thing shall I do that I might have eternal life." This is a question which I am sure we have all thought about from time to time. It is not that one thing could be done to inherit eternal life. Brothers and sisters, it is a compilation of many things that we must do to come close to viewing "The Pearly Gates." The Lord told him "Thou shalt do not kill, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." However, the young man told the Lord that he already abides by those commandments. The Lord directed him to follow, seeing that he was serious, and also told him to sell his possessions and to give them to the poor.

In this manner, he would be laying up treasures in Heaven. However, the man became sorrowful as he had great possessions. The Lord knew it was difficult for a man of wealth to do this. However, if one is serious about obtaining the Kingdom of Heaven, then these possessions of wealth which are prone to acquiring dust, corrosion, rust, and envy are ones which will stay behind on earth long after we have passed from this life. Remember the altruism: *There are no luggage racks on hearses!* "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's." Our soul's rightful place is with God.

Blessed Theofylact once stated that rich person was one who has funds, property, and houses, and he gives to no one. His method of acquisition of these things are by way stealing them from the poor. Therefore he should be regarded as a thief. However, a steward is an individual who has substance. It does not mean that a steward does not have money, property, or a house. However, a steward is one possesses mercy and compassion while distributing these things to the poor. Essentially, such an individual is one who shares good fortune with the less fortunate. Such an individual is a good steward of wealth. also. Tithing is often the subject brought up by many Christian dominations. Many people cringe at the idea of doing this. A person who tithes is one who is obedient to his faith. Tithing is command directed by our Lord. The Lord told us to do this! Therefore, we are to do this! What do we need to do to inherit eternal life? There you go! He has told us to do all the above.

Do we pay our Church stewardship dues? Or do we want to save money so that we can go to the health club, or to go to Greece, or to buy a boat or buy other worldly materialistic frivolities? Depriving the Lord of your good stewardship, whether it be through faith and prayer that is owed to Him or monetary stewardship that is owed to Him, are acts which pull us away from receiving His grace. We belong to God! We are all His property. We shall live for Him or not live at all! Living without God is not living at all. Financial hardship is certainly understandable, and those who truthfully cannot afford to make good on their financial obligations to the Church, may give whatever they can. God is watching and is all merciful!

Seeking to inherit eternal life, while guiding my flock, I remain
Prayerfully in His service,

+Fr. Michael

Our Holy Father Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons



The Holy Hieromartyr Irenaeus was born in Asia Minor about the year 120, and in his youth was a disciple of Saint Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna. Saint Irenaeus was sent to Lyons in Gaul, to be a fellow labourer of Pothinus, Bishop of Lyons (celebrated June 2), who had also been a disciple Saint Polycarp. After the martyrdom of Saint Pothinus, Saint Irenaeus succeeded him as Bishop of Lyons. Besides the assaults of paganism, Irenaeus found himself compelled to do battle with many Gnostic heresies, against which he wrote his greatest work, .

He was also a peace-maker within the Church. When Victor, Bishop of Rome, was prepared to excommunicate the Christians of Asia Minor for following a different tradition celebrating Pascha, Irenaeus persuaded him to moderate his zeal, and mediated peace. He made Lyons an illustrious bastion of Orthodoxy and a school of piety, and sealed his confession with martyrdom about the year 202, during the reign of Septimius Severus. He is not to be confused with Saint Irenaeus, Bishop of Sirmium, also celebrated today, who was beheaded and cast into a river in 304 under Diocletian.

August 23

Lupus the Martyr

The Holy Martyr Lupus was a devoted servant of the holy Great Martyr Demetrius, and was present at his martyrdom. Later, when his own labours in confession of the Faith became known to the rulers, Saint Lupus himself was arrested, given over to torture, and finally beheaded for Christ.

FATHER MICHAEL REQUESTS...that we, as a faithful community keep the following individuals in our prayers: Michalena (Skiadas) Sukenik, Suzanne Vaishnani, daughter of Ted Simon, Presbyteria Magdalena Michalopoulos, Helen Economides, and Henry Nussbaum. Please notify Fr. Michael if you have anyone else who should be included for special prayers. May they be under the grace and tender watch of our Lord.

At the conclusion of Divine services today, we will have Trisagion service for the ninth anniversary of the falling asleep of **Constantine (Gus) Anthony**, beloved husband of our very own **Fanny (Fotini) Anthony** and other members of Fanny's family who have passed. May their memories be eternal! Our prayers and best wishes go out to the entire Anthony family!

ATTENTION PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Schedule of Parish Council Meetings for the remainder of 2015:

Tuesday 7:00 pm, **September 8, 2015**
Tuesday 7:00 pm, **October 13, 2015**
Tuesday 7:00 pm, **November 10, 2015**
Tuesday 7:00 pm, **December 8, 2015**

If you have any questions about this schedule, please see **Fr. Michael**

Special Services for August 2015:

Feast day of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist - Saturday, August 29, 2015

Orthros: 8:30 am
Divine Liturgy: 9:30 am

Pasticho Open Golf Tournament
Sunday, September 20th, 2015
1:00 pm start at Traditions at the Glen in Johnson City
\$80 per player and \$320 per foursome
Included Golf, Prizes, contests, and full Greek buffet
Contact John Koutsaris for details at Jkouts24@yahoo.com or (607) 343-0090
This is a church fund raising event. Please join us and support this wonderful annual event.

Whether you are an Orthodox Christian, or this is your first visit to an Orthodox Church, we are pleased to have you with us. After the Divine Liturgy this morning, please join us in the Church Hall for fellowship and refreshments. We hope that you will return often to worship with us, to grow in Christ and in our Orthodox Faith. For any spiritual, religious, or sacramental matters, please contact Fr. Michael (607) 795-1474. For any building, facility or church property issues, please contact Parish Council President Steve Anastos, (607) 296-9799. Deadline for suggestions for the bulletin is 12:00 noon on Thursday.