

Message from Fr. Michael....

Dearly Beloved Faithful

In today's Holy Gospel reading, we heard of the Healing of the Woman with an issue of blood and the raising of the Daughter of Jairus. The two miracles were described in the same story, and although externally they may appear to be different, they really are the same miracle. We know who this woman who had an issue of blood is. The holy fathers tell us that she was St. Veronica, and therefore, she is not a nameless person. As we listen to the reading of the scriptures in the liturgy today, and the preaching of them, we need to be actively engaged in hearing and understanding them. It is very easy to just sit down, and, simply "veg out." Although we may have heard this story many times, maybe with hearing it today it may seem as though it is the first time that we hear it, God will teach us something that we may have not picked up previously. This occurs if we are listening and praying. This information we pick up today is so important and there is nothing more important that you can get during the week than what happens during the Divine Liturgy. Learning the Divine through repetition may help save our souls.

To serve God, we need to know God so that we may serve God as we need to be like the sheep that our Lord describes in St. John's gospel, "*My sheep follow me because they know my voice*". The Lord reveals Himself only to the pure. If we get to know God more, then we'll follow His commandments more enthusiastically and through following His commandments we will become pure. In this manner the Lord will reveal Himself to us more. He only reveals Himself to those who are capable of understanding what He reveals and only those who will appreciate what He reveals. As humans with weaknesses and preoccupations, it's hard to always have the same level of intensity to keep up with our spiritual obligations. God knows this. That is the reason we celebrate the Resurrection one day a week. We live in the *reality* of the Resurrection every day. But we don't *celebrate* it every day of the week to the degree we do on Sunday, because God knows that it would become too routine if we celebrated it more frequently and we would become complacent. Saturday and Sunday, those are God's days. Those are the days when God is going to teach us something. So you don't have the luxury right now to sit around and do nothing from a spiritual perspective. We need to be engaged with the life of the Lord's Church and our commitment to Him. This is crucial for our salvation. In prayerful services (the Divine Liturgy) so while our body sits, our spirit should stand up. We need to bend our ear to listen to the word of God. We need to make an effort to see what is it that God wants us to know. However, if we pray to the Lord, God will provide what is lacking, both in what we say and in what we understand. This is an amazing marvelous mystery.

He's gone back to the other side and He's walking, He's surrounded by hundreds of people. The people crowd around Him and press up against Him, because after all, He was the focus of excitement at that time. People had heard of His miracles. They had heard of these amazing things. They had heard people say He speaks with authority, not in the manner in which the scribes did. This man is different, and people desired to be in His presence. Those that hated Him and those that loved Him wanted to be in His presence, because there was something different about Him. So there were so many people around and Jairus pushes through this crowd and he prostrates before the Lord. Saint Mark tells us a little bit more. He said, "I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her that she may be healed and she shall live." Jairus wants the Lord's help and gets what he wishes, but waits as he did not have the firm faith that the centurion Cornelius had who said, "Only speak the word and my servant will be healed". 'I don't even need you to come to my house. In fact, I am not even worthy to come to you personally. I am sending my servant because I am unworthy. But I have the faith that you will heal my servant.' Indeed, the centurion's servant was healed. And indeed Jairus' daughter will be healed, but after a very long and very difficult time for this man who loves his daughter and is fearful now for her life.

This man was in want and desperate and pushed toward Christ. In this case his daughter was dying. *In our case it's our sins that are ever before us.* That's important to know. There's a mystery in this statement. The fathers bring it out. The people were crowded around Him and yet later on He says, "Who touched me?"

His apostles didn't understand what He meant. He was essentially saying "there are all these people around Me, and they're not touching Me. They're not receiving salvation. They're not appreciating who I am. But they're all around Me." There was much waiting necessary on the part of Jairus, because there was such a large crowd and one could not walk quickly through such a crowd. This man who was distraught and filled with worry for his daughter and did not have the faith of Cornelius. He had some faith, indeed, and he had confidence that the Lord would help him and save his daughter, but at the moment he believed his daughter was still alive. Then his daughter was dying and at that very moment a woman came up and spends more time, more precious time, as the clock is ticking and his daughter is dying,

Saint Mark spoke about this exact miracle and he said more. This was an example of how the Gospels were written by men inspired by God, because if you take a look at St. Luke's Gospel and Saint Mark's and St. Matthew's, they describe the same event and give it a slightly different perspective, but it is quite obvious that they are saying exactly the same thing. They are describing the exact same event, and both things they say are true, but one elucidates a point a little different than another. And St. Mark gives a little more information here, very important. He says, "For she said, 'If I may but touch His clothes, I may be whole.' She had great faith. There is much to learn from this very simple miracle. This woman is not even mentioned by name in the scriptures, although we know her name.

Bleeding in that day made a person unclean. A person could not go into the temple if they were bleeding. So this woman was outside of the community of faith. She couldn't go into the temple. She couldn't worship. She had not been in the temple for twelve long years, and she had been considered unclean for that entire period of time. She had spent all of her money on physicians, and still was incurable. She had a hopeless disease. She must have had great despondency over this disease.

And this disease, this bleeding, is also indicative of our sins. But we are hemorrhaging. Let us hemorrhage our sins, i.e. let us rid our sins! The blood is flowing on the floor. This woman had an issue of blood. And in the same way this woman was healed, we must be healed. She touched Christ. We must reach out and touch Christ! May the miracles of healing be upon us and may the Lord hear our prayers and have mercy upon us.

Prayerfully in Christ, I remain
Your faithful supplicant,

+Fr. Michael

Saints and Feasts Commemorated

Anastasia the Martyr of Rome

Saint Anastasia, who was young in age and lived in a convent, was seized by the impious. Confessing Christ openly and with boldness and enduring manifold torments, she was beheaded in the year 256, during the reign of Valerian.

Our Righteous Father Abramius

Our Righteous Father Abramius, born in Edessa in Mesopotamia in 296, took up the monastic life and brought many pagans to Christ. Mary, his niece, upon the death of her parents, joined Abramius at his hermitage and under his guidance advanced swiftly in the love of God. Through the wiles of the evil one, however, she fell into sin, and falling from them into despair, she left her uncle and became a harlot. When he learned where his niece was, Abramius put on the clothes of a man of the world and went to visit her in disguise. Through his exhortations, Mary returned to her first hope in the mercy of God, was rescued from the life of harlotry, and ended her life in great holiness. He himself reposed in the year 366. Saints Abramius and Mary were friends of Saint Ephraim the Syrian, and it was he who wrote their account.

7th Sunday of Luke



FATHER MICHAEL REQUESTS...that we, as a faithful community keep the following individuals in our prayers: Demetrios Pappastratis (father of George Pappastratis), Angelo Romas Persa Nizamis, Mitry Ganim, Ted Simon, and Suzanne Vaishnani, daughter of Ted Simon. 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.

ATTENTION ALL YOUTH WORKERS

Whether it be teaching our youth to Greek dance or conducting Sunday School or Greek lessons or working with our Youth of our Parish IN ANY CAPACITY, The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit have mandated that everyone working with the Youth must complete a background check and online Youth Safety training through Sterling. Please contact the Metropolis of Detroit and speak with the Metropolis Youth Director about details at (248) 823-2411. Please go on the YouthSafetyPlatform.goarch.org website and register.

CHURCH RENOVATIONS (installation of the new wall to wall carpet, painting/staining of the walls, etc.) WILL BE UNDERWAY SOON.

CHURCH SERVICES WILL BE HELD AT HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

214 Court Street in Binghamton SUNDAY, October 22, 2023 and October 29, 2023. Orthros 9 am and Divine Liturgy 10 am with coffee hour fellowship to follow in the downstairs social hall at Holy Trinity. We kindly ask that everyone attend as all are invited! In the spirit of Christian Unity of all our Orthodox faithful we expect ALL to attend services there.

DUE TO CHURCH RENOVATIONS AT THE ANNUNCIATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH, THERE WILL BE NO SERVICES AT ANNUNCIATION CHURCH ON OCTOBER 22nd AND OCTOBER 29th. THIS INCLUDES ALL FUNERALS FOR THOSE TWO WEEKS. ALL SERVICES WILL BE PERFORMED BY FR. MICHAEL AT HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX 214 COURT STREET, BINGHAMTON.

WE WILL BE RETURNING TO ANNUNCIATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH FOR SERVICES ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2023. Orthros 9 am and Divine Liturgy 10 am. A General Assembly Meeting will be held in the fellowship hall during the coffee hour at the conclusion of Divine services. We will have nominations for the Parish Council for the 2024-2026 term at that time. All parishioners are invited and expected to attend this very important meeting.

Wisdom of the Fathers

For in a contest there is much labor needed--and after the contest victory falls to some, to others disgrace. Is the palm ever given or the crown granted before the course is finished? ... Therefore no one can receive a reward, unless he has striven lawfully; nor is the victory a glorious one, unless the contest also has been toilsome.

St. Ambrose of Milan

Chapter 15, Three Books on the Duties of the Clergy, 4th century

He puts an end to the woman's fear ... He sets her right, in respect of her thinking to be hid ... He exhibits her faith to all, so as to provoke the rest also to emulation ...

St. John Chrysostom

Homily 31 on Matthew 9, 4th Century

Whether you are an Orthodox Christian, or this is your first visit to an Orthodox Church, we are pleased to have you with us. Although Holy Communion is reserved for baptized and chrismated (confirmed) Orthodox Christians, all are invited to receive the "ANTIDORON" (blessed bread) which is not a sacrament, but is a reminder of the "agape feast" that followed worship in the early Church. 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.