



DIOCESAN EVENTS

2011 Dates to Remember

Third Annual Orthodox Clergy Retreat

December 6-8, 2011

Guest Speaker: Rev. Alkiviades Calivas, PhD

"The Divine Liturgy Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow:
Tradition, Criteria and Praxis"

Saint Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center
Dunlap, California

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Diocesan KSS Slava

December 4, 2011

Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos



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Sunday, November 27, 2011

24TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST:

**THE HOLY AND ALL-PRAISED APOSTLE PHILIP;
SAINT GREGORY PALAMAS, ARCHBISHOP OF THESSALONICA;
SAINT JUSTINIAN, EMPEROR OF BYZANTIUM**

RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION - TONE SEVEN:

By Your Cross, You did destroy death! To the thief, You did open Paradise! For the myrrh bearers, You did change weeping into joy! And You did command Your disciples, O Christ God, to proclaim that You are risen, granting the world great mercy!

TROPARION TO THE HOLY APOSTLE PHILIP - TONE THREE:

Holy Apostle Philip, entreat the merciful God to grant our souls forgiveness of transgressions.

TROPARION TO SAINT GREGORY PALAMAS - TONE EIGHT:

O light of Orthodoxy, teacher of the Church, its confirmation, O ideal of monks and invincible champion of theologians, O wonder-working Gregory, glory of Thessalonica and preacher of grace, always intercede before the Lord that our souls may be saved.

RESURRECTIONAL KONTAKION - TONE SEVEN:

The dominion of death can no longer hold man captive, for Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers! Hell is bound, while the prophets rejoice and cry: The Savior has come to those in faith! Enter you faithful into the Resurrection.

KONTAKION TO THE HOLY APOSTLE PHILIP - TONE EIGHT:

Your disciple, friend and imitator of Your passion, the God-preaching Philip, proclaimed You to the universe! By his prayers deliver Your Church from her enemies; through the Theotokos protect every city, most merciful Christ!

KONTAKION TO SAINT GREGORY PALAMAS - TONE EIGHT:

Holy and divine instrument of wisdom, joyful trumpet of theology, together we sing your praises, O God-inspired Gregory. Since you now stand before the Original Mind, guide our minds to Him, O Father, so that we may sing to you: 'Rejoice, preacher of grace.'

HYMN TO THE MOTHER OF GOD - TONE SIX:

Steadfast Protectress of Christians and constant advocate before the Creator, do not despise the cry of us sinners; but in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith. Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos, for you always protect those who honor you!

EPISTLE & COMMENTARY

THE PROKIMENON IN THE 7TH TONE:

The Lord shall give strength to His people! The Lord shall bless His people with peace!

24TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, EPHESIANS 2: 14-22

Brethren, Christ Himself is our peace, who has made both [Jew and Gentile] one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

FOR THE HOLY APOSTLE PHILIP, 1 CORINTHIANS 4: 9-16

Brethren, For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are distinguished, but we are dishonored! To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now. I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me.

THE ALLELUIA VERSES:

It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Thy name, O Most High! To declare Thy mercy in the morning and Thy truth by night!

COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLE READING FROM EPHESIANS

There is neither Jew nor Greek, nor male nor female...there are only human beings made in the image and likeness of God. By Himself becoming a curse according to the Law of Moses, yet remaining completely innocent according to the same Law, Christ becomes a paradox for our sake. He releases us from obligation to the Mosaic Law because He has fulfilled it. This heals humanity on a two-fold level: 1) it erases the separation between human beings; 2) it erases the separation between human beings and God. Now we are called to love one another, bear one another's burdens, and fulfill the Law of Christ (Galatians 6: 2).

GOSPEL & COMMENTARY

24TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, LUKE 8: 41-56

At that time, a man named Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she was dying. But as He went, the multitudes thronged Him. Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped. And Jesus said, "Who touched Me?" When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'" But Jesus said, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me." Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. And He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace." While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to Him, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher." But when Jesus heard it, He answered him, saying, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well." When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in except Peter, James and John and the father and mother of the girl. Now all wept and mourned for her, but He said, "Do not weep, she is not dead, but sleeping." And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead. But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise." Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat. And her parents were astonished, but He charged them to tell no one what had happened.

FOR THE HOLY APOSTLE PHILIP, JOHN 1: 43-51

At that time, Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote – Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!" Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these." And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL READING FROM ST. LUKE

The power of God present in Jesus Christ is displayed here in two dramatic ways. First, though the woman only touched His garment, she did it in faith and thus was healed. Matter was sanctified by contact with Christ leading to physical and spiritual healing, just as we are healed by receiving our Savior's Body and Blood at the Divine Liturgy. Second, Jairus' daughter was one of three bodily resurrections performed by Jesus Christ

in fulfillment of the prophecy of Ezekiel (37: 1-14). It confirms the promise that God will one day open the graves and raise all the dead.

SPIRITUAL ARTICLES

From The Prologue for November 14/27 by St. Nikolai Velimirovic:

The Holy Apostle Philip

Philip was born in Bethsaida beside the Sea of Galilee, as were Peter and Andrew. Instructed in Holy Scripture from his youth, Philip immediately responded to the call of the Lord Jesus and followed Him (John 1:43). After the descent of the Holy Spirit, Philip zealously preached the Gospel throughout many regions in Asia and Greece. In Greece, the Jews wanted to kill him, but the Lord saved him by His mighty miracles. Thus, a Jewish high priest that rushed at Philip to beat him was suddenly blinded and turned completely black. Then there was a great earthquake, and the earth opened up and swallowed Philip's wicked persecutor. Many other miracles were manifested, especially the healing of the sick, by which many pagans believed in Christ. In the Phrygian town of Hierapolis, St. Philip found himself in common evangelical work with his sister Mariamna, St. John the Theologian, and the Apostle Bartholomew. In this town there was a dangerous snake that the pagans diligently fed and worshiped as a god. God's apostle killed the snake through prayer as though with a spear, but he also incurred the wrath of the unenlightened people. The wicked pagans seized Philip and crucified him upside-down on a tree, and then crucified Bartholomew as well. At that, the earth opened up and swallowed the judge and many other pagans with him. In great fear, the people rushed to rescue the crucified apostles, but only Bartholomew was still alive; Philip had already breathed his last. Bartholomew ordained Stachys as bishop for those whom he and Philip had baptized. Stachys had been blind for forty years, and Bartholomew and Philip had healed and baptized him. The relics of St. Philip were later translated to Rome. This wonderful apostle suffered in the year 86 in the time of Emperor Dometian.

Saint Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica

Gregory's father was an eminent official at the court of Emperor Andronicus II Palaeologus. The gifted Gregory, completing his secular studies, did not want to enter the service of the imperial court, but withdrew to the Holy Mountain and was tonsured a monk. He lived a life of asceticism in the Monastery of Vatopedi and the Great Lavra. He led the struggle against the heretic Barlaam and finally defeated him. He was consecrated as Metropolitan of Thessalonica in the year 1347. He is glorified as an ascetic, a theologian, a hierarch and a miracle-worker. The Most-holy Theotokos, St. John the Theologian, St. Demetrius, St. Anthony the Great, St. John Chrysostom and angels of God appeared to him at different times. He governed the Church in Thessalonica for thirteen years, of which he spent one year in slavery under the Saracens in Asia. He entered peacefully into rest in the year 1360, and took up his habitation in the Kingdom of Christ. His relics repose in Thessalonica, where a beautiful church is dedicated to him.

Saint Justinian, Emperor of Byzantium

Justinian was a Slav by birth, probably a Serb from the region of Skoplje. His Slavic name was Upravda, meaning "truth, justice." He succeeded to the throne of his uncle

Justin in 527. The greatness of this emperor is inseparably bound to his profound faith in Orthodoxy; he believed, and lived according to his faith. During Great Lent, he neither ate bread nor drank wine but ate only vegetables and drank water, and that, just every other day. He waged war against the barbarians of the Danube because they castrated their captives. This reveals his elevated feeling of love for his fellow man. Justinian was fortunate and successful both in wars and in his works. He built many great and beautiful churches, the most beautiful of which was Hagia Sophia [the Church of the Divine Wisdom] in Constantinople. He collected [and revised] and published the Laws of Rom^e and also personally issued many strict laws against immorality and licentiousness. He composed the Church hymn “Only-begotten Son and Word of God,” which has been sung during the Divine Liturgy since the year 536. He convened the Fifth Ecumenical Council (553). He died peacefully at the age of eighty, and took up his abode in the Kingdom of the Heavenly King.

HYMN OF PRAISE: Saint Justinian, Emperor of Byzantium

Justinian, great and glorious,
Knight of the Cross and Orthodox emperor,
Raised a church to the Wisdom of God,
A church to endure to the threshold of eternity:
Another sun to shine on earth,
To warm the generations;
A church in which to worship the Incarnate Word,
And in which to come to know the beauty of Christ,
And the measureless height of the Kingdom of God,
And as in height, measureless depth,
And as in depth, measureless width,
And as in width, measureless length.
Like the sun on a summer’s day,
Shone the crown of Emperor Justinian—
Shone the crown of the servant of God—
In his wisdom, the wisest,
In his might, the most powerful,
And in his faith, the most faithful.
O great Orthodox Emperor,
Your churches never grow old,
Your faith still shines upon the world
With the brilliance of the Orthodox Christ.
O holy Emperor, pray to Christ
That this Faith withstand time.

REFLECTION

St. Gregory Palamas learned much through heavenly revelations. After he had spent three years in stillness in a cell of the Great Lavra, it was necessary for him to go out among men and benefit them with his accumulated knowledge and experience. God revealed this necessity to him through an extraordinary vision: One day, as though in a light sleep, Gregory saw himself holding a vessel in his hand full to overflowing with milk.

Gradually, the milk turned into wine which likewise spilled over the rim, and drenched his hands and garments. Then a radiant youth appeared and said: "Why would you not give others of this wonderful drink that you are wasting so carelessly, or are you not aware that this is the gift of God's grace?" To this Gregory replied: "But if there is no one in our time who feels the need for such a drink, to whom shall I give it?" Then the youth said: "Whether there are some or whether there are none thirsty for such a drink, you are obligated to fulfill your debt and not neglect the gift of God." Gregory interpreted the milk as the common knowledge (of the masses) of moral life and conduct, and the wine as dogmatic teaching. The second time Gregory secluded himself in a monastery he was writing his *Principles of Orthodoxy*. On the eve of the Feast of St. Anthony the Great, the monks summoned him to the all-night vigil service, but he remained at his work in the cell while all the brethren went to church. St. Anthony suddenly appeared to him and said: "Perfect stillness is good, but sometimes it is necessary to be with the brethren." Convinced by this revelation, Gregory immediately went into church to the joy of all the monks.

CONTEMPLATION

Contemplate the wondrous creation of light (Genesis 1):

1. How there was darkness everywhere over the formless earth;
2. How *God said, Let there be light: and there was light;*
3. How God separated the light from the darkness, and there was day and there was night.

HOMILY

on Paul, the prisoner

... *I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles* (Ephesians 3:1).

Brethren, this apostle of Christ calls himself the "prisoner of Christ." How is it that an apostle can be a prisoner? Is not a prisoner bound? Yes, and the Apostle is bound—bound by love to the Lord Jesus so strongly that he feels that no comparable bond exists on earth. The Apostle is bound in his mind to the Lord Jesus so strongly that he cannot think of anything except Jesus Christ the Lord. The Apostle is so firmly bound by his will to the Lord Jesus that, in essence, he does not have a will of his own but has submitted his will completely to the Lord Jesus. And so, he loves that which Christ loves, thinks that which Christ thinks, and does that which Christ wills. Is this not imprisonment? O blessed imprisonment, which is not unto shame but glory, and is not unto destruction but salvation! Thus, Christ is the complete Lord of the Apostle's life, both outwardly and inwardly. For outwardly and inwardly, Christ permits him to be tempted; outwardly and inwardly, He reveals to him the wonders of His providence; outwardly and inwardly, He guides him to perfect good for the sake of his salvation, and for the sake of the salvation of many others. Brethren, let us also commit ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ as did His Apostle, and then we will be in the most secure hands and on the most secure path.

O Lord Jesus Christ, great and wonderful Lord, bind us to Thee, imprison us in Thee forever and ever in both worlds. To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.

^The entirely reworked Roman Code became known as Justinian's Code.—Trans.
