

Knowing, Praying, Living the Holy Scriptures

“How I have loved thy law, O Lord! The whole day it is my meditation.” (Ps 118:97)

Leviticus 19:9-10

“When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest. ... [Y]ou shall leave them for the poor and the resident alien: I am the Lord your God.” (OSB)

As we noted last week, the calling of the royal priesthood touches every aspect of the life of God’s people. Just as with human sexuality, so the call to embody true human life touches directly on the topic of “economics.” This topic has also been twisted in recent generations to turn the Biblical and Patristic teaching into a justification for immoral, unjust, and catastrophic political and economic ideas. While we certainly must reject that perverted application, a commitment to political and economic freedom vis-à-vis the modern secular state is not a license to shirk the weight of what God is calling us to in Holy Scripture.

The Leviticus text looks ahead to when Israel will inhabit the Promised Land. While the Land will require faith and effort to enter and conquer, the Land is in every way a divine gift. The Land does not “belong” to Israel; rather, it is God’s, and Israel’s remaining in it is contingent upon their faithfulness to the Covenant. So also with the rain that God will send to water the Land such that it produces crops—this is divine gift contingent upon Israel’s faithfulness (Deut 28:12, 23-24). This has profound implications for how Israel is to understand “ownership” and their relationship to material possessions. If all good things are gifts of God, the Father of Lights, and Israel is a spiritual commonwealth and brotherhood, then all that God gives does not have just the immediate recipient in view, but the whole people of God, and especially those who are on the margins.

The people of God must never view “wealth and poverty” as a purely material question, because this would lead to a kind of functional economic atheism. For the Israelite farmer to try to “get as much as possible” from the Land would involve a mentality that ultimately precludes *faith*—that *God* is the source of the Land and its blessings.

And so, God reinforces the life of faith and trust among His people by instituting a tithing system—a tithe of the Firstfruits goes to God Himself, and a tithe goes to the poor and the resident alien (see Deut 26). As Clement of Alexandria says, “[T]he principle of tithing crops and flocks was an education in honoring the divine. We are not to be totally absorbed by profit but to share humanely with the neighbor as well” (*Stromateis* 2.86.1 [ACC3, 189]).

God further reinforces this through the Sabbatical Year and the Jubilee remission of debts (Lev 25). Every seventh year, Israel is to let the land “rest,” not cultivating it, and so rely upon God’s provision for them that year. Every 50th year, all debts are to be forgiven, and all land that has been transacted and changed hands is to be returned to the original family to whom it was apportioned. This will preserve the economic balance of the people by not allowing the “concentration” of land and wealth in the hands of an elite few. God has delivered Israel from Egyptian slavery so that they may be free, not so that they might be oppressed by usury, debt, and slavery to their fellow Israelites (Lev 26:38).

It is in the light of this Biblical teaching that St. Basil (*To the Rich* [PPS 38]) calls “the rich” to regard their possessions, not as their own, but as gifts from God that belong to “the poor.” Wealth acquired unjustly is blasphemy, just as is hoarding and withholding resources that God has given us for the benefit of others.



ST. PHILIP ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the
Antiochian Archdiocese

His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH

◇◇

His Grace Bishop THOMAS

◇◇

Father Noah Bushelli, Pastor

215-954-9286

◇◇

Father James Thayer

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August 4, 2019

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

COMMEMORATIONS:

THE HOLY SEVEN SLEEPING YOUTHS OF EPHEBUS
RECOVERY OF THE RELICS OF MARTYR EUDOKIA OF
PERSIA

Tone 6 - Eothinon 7

Orthros Gospel: St. John 20:1-10

Epistle: Romans 15:1-7

Liturgy Gospel: St. Matthew 9:27-35

RESURRECTION TROPARION - Tone 6 - When Mary stood at thy grave, looking for thy sacred Body, angelic powers shone above thy revered tomb, and the soldiers who were to keep guard became as dead men. Thou led'st hades captive and wast not tempted thereby; thou didst meet the Virgin and didst give life to the world. O thou who art risen from the dead, O Lord, glory to thee!

KONTAKION OF 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.

TODAY: Orthros 8:45 am; Divine Liturgy w/ Youth Choir 10 am
6-Month Trisagion (Rdr. Maxim Nagib Khalifa—
Memory Eternal!)
Coffee Hour after Liturgy.
Ethnic Dance Practice, 1 pm
Paraklesis, 2 pm

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Office Hours: Monday through Friday 10:00 - 3:00

Fr Noah & Fr James are available for hospital visits. If you or anyone you know is in the hospital or homebound and would like a visit, please call the church office.

Weekly Ministries & Stewards:

	This Week:	Next Week (Aug 11):
PROSPHORA BREAD:	Kristi Moore	Carolyn Kaminsky
EPISTLE READER:	Greg Howanetz	Rdr. Luke Carpenter
USHERS:	Steve K. & Colin M.	Justin G. & Dan M.
ALTAR CANDLES:	Mark Leon – for blessings received	Michael & Marcia Ibrahim In Memory of Alees, Isaac, Najib, Radwan – Yvonne (in Lebanon)
GREETERS:	Nick & Martha Morelli	Greg & Jenn Howanetz
CLEANING TEAM:	Teens w/ Nathan & Rebecca	Serge & Alex Kaminsky
COFFEE HOUR:	Khalifa Family	Potluck

EVERYONE is invited to stay for refreshments after the Divine Liturgy. Your assistance in cleanup is appreciated. **COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS NEEDED!** Many upcoming weeks do not have sponsors - can you take a turn?

Mark Your Calendar:

Feast of the Dormition

Wednesday, August 14

Vespers, Artoklasia, & Lamentations 7 pm
Blessing of Herbs & Flowers 8 pm

Thursday, August 15

Orthros 9 am, Liturgy 10 am
Blessing of Herbs & Flowers 11:30 am

Beheading of the Forerunner (Strict Fast)

Wednesday, August 28

Vespers 7 pm

Thursday, August 29

Orthros 9 am, Liturgy 10 am

Ecclesiastical New Year

Sunday, September 1

Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos

Sunday, September 8

& First Day of Sunday School

International Food Festival

September 20-21

Pray For:

Living	Departed
Archimandrite David (Griffeth)	Rdr. Maxim Masresha
Sharon-Elizabeth Laurence	Alees Isaac
Lasha B Otari B	Najib
Daniel H John	
Doris Nancy	<u>Catechumens</u>
	Zachary,
Thomas, Elizabeth & all Missionaries	Evan, Tina, Robert, Michael
New & Expectant Mothers & children	<u>St. Nina's List</u>
	Andrea
	Jeremy
	Michael

Ministry Highlights

"As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (1 Peter 4:10)

"Women of St. Mariamne"

As a Chapter of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Women of North America, the Women of St. Mariamne seek to foster among women an expression of love and service through works of charity, hospitality, and fellowship. We believe that our service flows from the Chalice in a spirit of generosity, humility, and genuine love for our neighbor. For more information contact BethAnn Hyatt, Co-Chair, [hyatt38ba@gmail.com] or Linda Morelli, Co-Chair, [newlinbaba@gmail.com].

This Week:

DORMITION FAST – August 1-14

- Monday, August 5:** **SIXTH HOUR, 12 noon**
Vespers & Artoklasia 7 p.m., for the Feast of the Transfiguration
- Tuesday, Aug 6:** **FEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION**
Orthros 9 a.m., Divine Liturgy 10 a.m.
w/ Blessing of Fruit & Produce, 11:30 a.m.
Fish/Wine/Oil Potluck to follow
Matushka Olga Sewing Club, 11 a.m.
Paraklesis, 7 p.m.
- Wed, August 7:** **SIXTH HOUR, 12 noon**
Holy UNCTION, 4 p.m. (Six-hour fast prior)
Byzantine Chant Workshop, 6 p.m.
Paraklesis & Unction-Anointing, 7 p.m.
- Thursday, Aug 8:** **SIXTH HOUR, 12 noon**
Twelve-Baskets Full, 6:30 p.m.
Paraklesis, 7 p.m.
- Friday, August 9:** **SIXTH HOUR, 12 noon**
Paraklesis, 7 p.m.
- Saturday, Aug 10:** **VESPERS 6 p.m.;** Catechumen Blessing (Moody Family – Many Years!) 7 p.m.
Confession 7:15 p.m.
- Sunday, Aug 11:** **ORTHROS 8:45 a.m., Divine LITURGY, 10 a.m.**
Trisagion Memorial for Fr. Boniface
Special Parish Meeting—following Liturgy
Coffee Hour after Liturgy.
Ethnic Dance Practice, 1 p.m.
Paraklesis, 2 p.m.

OUTREACH COLLECTION:

Paper Products

SPIRITUAL WARFARE: "Destroy"
Taking Every Thought Captive to Christ

ATTENDANCE: At Vespers on July 27: 46 Divine Services on July 28: 173
OFFERINGS: Candles, \$199. Collections, \$166. Youth, \$3. Book Shelf, \$15. Ukrainian Orphanage, \$1,200. FOCUS Backpacks, \$130. Stewardship, \$5,337. Total received: \$7,050. Festival donation, \$100.

GOD BLESS YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFULNESS & GENEROSITY!

The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch (Acts II:26)