

## The Start of the Church New Year

The First Ecumenical Council [Nicaea, 325] decreed that the Church year should begin on September 1. The month of September was, for the Hebrews, the beginning of the civil year (Exodus 23:16), the month of gathering the harvest and of the offering of thanks to God. It was on this feast that the Lord Jesus entered the synagogue in Nazareth (Luke 4:16-21), opened the book of the Prophet Isaiah and read the words: The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn (Isaiah 61:1-2). The month of September is also important in the history of Christianity, because Emperor Constantine the Great was victorious over Maxentius, the enemy of the Christian Faith, in September. Following this victory, Constantine granted freedom of confession to the Christian Faith throughout the Roman Empire. For a long time, the civil year in the Christian world followed the Church year, with its beginning on September 1. The civil year was later changed, and its beginning transferred to January 1. This occurred first in Western Europe, and later in Russia, under Peter the Great.

~ From the Prologue of Ochrid, Written by St. Nicholai of Zicha, former Rector of St. Tikhon's Seminary.

*“Let us Attend!”*



*“To Proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord ...”*

A PARISH BULLETIN OF  
ALL SAINTS ORTHODOX CHURCH

Olyphant, Pennsylvania

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1 September 2024

**Tenth Sunday After Pentecost**

**Church New Year**

## Bulletin, Sunday, 1 September 2024

10th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone

1. **Church New Year (Indiction). St. Simeon the Stylite (the Elder) and his mother, Ven. Martha (ca. 428).** Martyr Aithalas of Persia (380). Holy Forty Women Martyrs and Martyr Ammon the Deacon, their teacher, at Heraclea in Thrace (4th c.). Martyrs Callista and her brothers, Evodius and Hermogenes, at Nicomedia (309). Righteous Joshua the Son of Nun (16th c. B.C.). Synaxis of the Mother of God in the Miasenga Monastery (commemorating the finding of her Icon there—864). “Chernigov–Gethsemane” Icon of the Mother of God (1869).

**Epistle:** 1 Corinthians 4:9–16 (Sunday); 1 Timothy 2:1–7 (Church New Year) ; **Gospel:** Matthew 17:14–23 (Sunday); Luke 4:16–22 (Church New Year)

*Our souls and minds are strengthened and fortified by the regular reading of the Holy Scriptures. Daily readings can be found on the parish’s wall calendar, or online by visiting the OCA’s daily reading page <https://www.oca.org/readings>.*

### **Schedule**

- **Wednesday, 4 September 2024: 9AM. Akathist to the Lord Jesus Christ for the Beginning of the Church Year.**
- **Thursday, 5 September 2024: 6:30PM. Parish Open House Concert “Blessed art Thou among Women” with Light Meal to Follow.**

- **Saturday, 7 August 2024. 5:00–5:45PM. Fr. Paul available for Confession ; 6PM Great Vespers with Lityia, Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos..**
- **Sunday 8 September 2024, 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost, Nativity of the Theotokos. 9:30AM Divine Liturgy, Followed by Agape Coffee Hour Fellowship.**

### Announcements

~ On Thursday, 5 September 2024 our parish will host a public concert and open house at 6:30PM. The evening will begin with a concert entitled “Blessed art Thou Among Women: A Selection of Hymns to the Virgin” followed by a light catered meal in the Church Hall. Please share information about this event with your friends and neighbors.

~ The parish extends our warmest congratulations and best wishes to Father Daniel and Matushka Mary Geeza as they celebrate their 66<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. May God bless you and grant you many years.

~ All Saints extends its sincere thanks to our Seminary Intern Reader Thomas Coon for all his work over the Summer in our parish. May God bless Thomas as he enters his third year of study at St. Tikhon’s and grant him all choicest blessings in his vocational journey.

MONDAY

Fast-free

# SEPTEMBER 2

Romans 8:28-39  
Matthew 23:13-22

The woman who purposely destroys her unborn child is guilty of murder. The hair-splitting difference between formed and unformed makes no difference to us.

*St. Basil the Great*

**KALUGA ICON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD.** One day in 1748, two servants were cleaning out their employer's attic in a village near Kaluga, Russia. One of the servants was named Eudocia, and she was known for her unrestrained temper and foul language. The other girl was modest and kind. They discovered a large package covered in grimy sackcloth and within was a picture of a woman monastic wearing dark garments and holding a book. The kind girl accused Eudocia of disrespecting the monastic, and the two girls argued. Eudocia became increasingly angry, and she spit on the picture. Immediately, she convulsed and fell senseless, blind, and mute. The next night, the Most Holy Mother of God appeared to Eudocia's parents, telling them that their daughter had jeered at Her blasphemously and ordered them to serve a Molieben before Her icon and to sprinkle Eudocia with holy water. After the service, Eudocia recovered. Healings occurred for many who approached the icon with faith. Other miracles wrought through the Kaluga Icon are commemorated on the Church calendar, including the deliverance from a plague in 1771 (Sept. 2), the saving of Kaluga from the French invasion of 1812 (Oct. 12), and the gratitude to the Mother of God for her protection against cholera in 1898 (July 18).



**COMMEMORATIONS:** Mamas of Caesarea, and his parents, Theodotus and Rufina; John the Faster; Eleazar, son of Aaron, and Righteous Phineas; Anthony and Theodosius of the Kiev Caves; Justus of Lyons; 10 martyrs; Barsanuphius of Kyrilov, John Ivanov, and Seraphima of Therapontov Convent, and Anatole, Nicholas, Michael, and Philip; Damascene of Glukhov, Herman of Vyaznikov, and Stephen Yaroshevich; Aeithalas and Ammon of Thrace; Hieu of Tadcaster; Kosmas the Hermit of Crete; *Kaluga* Icon of the Mother of God.

TUESDAY

Fast-free

# SEPTEMBER 3

2 Corinthians 2:14-3:3  
Matthew 23:23-28

Great ascetics of piety, who knew how to observe the movements of their hearts, have said that if a person accepts...seductive images, he meshes with them; his soul becomes attached to them and unites with them. The holy fathers call upon us to fear uniting ourselves with all impure images. If we follow this instruction, we will not be stricken with that onerous and terrible woe—the Holy Spirit will not leave us. We must not admire, not delight in Satan's seductions, we should not mesh ourselves with them, but should arm ourselves against them with holy anger. The Apostle Paul spoke profound words that we should all firmly remember: *Be angry, and sin not* (Eph. 4:26). There is holy anger—that anger with which Jesus's heart was inflamed when He cast out the money-changers from the temple with a whip, and when He said to the Holy Apostle Peter, *Get thee behind me, Satan!* (Mt. 16:23).

*St. Luke the Surgeon*

## TRANSLATION OF THE RELICS OF ST. NEKTARIOS OF AEGINA.

Today is celebrated the uncovering of the holy relics of St. Nektarios, thirty-three years after his death. This event was attended by the Metropolitan of Hydra, the rulers of Aegina, monastics, clergy, and others. When the saint's grave was opened, an unspeakable fragrance permeated the air. The relics were translated into precious cases and have been sent to various places and cities. They are a source of healing for various diseases, pains, and sufferings. St. Nektarios hastens everywhere to perform numerous miracles and rescue those who call upon him.



**COMMEMORATIONS:** Anthimos, Bishop of Nicomedia with others; Aristion of Alexandria; Emperor Constantine the New; Ioannicius II of Serbia; Vasilissa of Nicomedia; Theoctistus of Palestine; John "the Hairy" of Rostov; Phoebe, Deaconess; Remaclus of Maastricht; Polydoros of Cyprus; Translation of the relics of St. Nektarios of Aegina in 1953.



The saints must be honored as friends of Christ and children and heirs of God. Let us carefully observe the manner of life of all the apostles, martyrs, ascetics, and just men who announced the coming of the Lord. And let us emulate their faith, charity, hope, zeal, life, patience under suffering, and perseverance unto death so that we may also share their crowns of glory.

*St. John of Damascus*



SUNDAY

**Ecclesiastical New Year  
Fast-free**

1 Timothy 2:1-7; Luke 4:16-22

## SEPTEMBER I

*H*alf of hell is already on earth. Preserve faith within yourself and labor in love for God and neighbor. Grace and salvation will be only with those bishops and priests who do not mate themselves with apostasy and the odiousness of ecumenism but remain faithful in Christ and constant truth.

*St. Gabriel Urgebadzze*

**RIGHTEOUS JOSHUA THE SON OF NUN.** The name Joshua means 'God saves.' At the age of eighty-five, Joshua became the successor of the Prophet Moses, 1,400 years before the birth of Jesus Christ. Joshua led the people of Israel across the desert and divided among them the Promised Land. He was feared by his enemies and led his people through many battles over twenty-seven years. He defeated Jericho and beheld the Archangel Michael holding a sword in his hand. Through his prayers, he stopped the flow of the Jordan River so that the Israelites could cross on foot, and during a battle with the Gibeonites, as the sun was setting, he made the sun stand still until he had defeated his enemy. Joshua died at 110 and was buried by the Israelites. The events of his life are recorded in the Book of Joshua in the Holy Bible.



**COMMEMORATIONS:** Church New Year; Symeon the Stylite, and his mother Martha; 40 Virgin-martyrs and Ammon the Deacon, at Heraclea; Venerable Evanthia; Nicholas Kourtaliotis of Crete; Joshua the Son of Nun; Callista, Evodius, and Hermogenes at Nicomedia; Angelis of Constantinople; Meletios the Younger; Symeon of Lesvos; Verena of Zurzach (Switzerland); Haido of Stanos; Aegidius (Giles), along the Rhine; Dionysius Exiguus the Humble; Commemoration of the Great Fire at Constantinople about AD 470; Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos in Miasena Monastery; Synaxis of Panagia Katapoliani in Tinos; *Chernigov-Gethsemane, Of Alexandria, All-blessed One, and Augustovskaya* Icons of the Mother of God; (1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of September: Synaxis of All Saints of Chios).

of God, God's Son. He began the creation of the world and its salvation. Whoever would speak either of the created and uncreated world or of the salvation of mankind must begin with the Beginning. This Beginning is the Word of God, the Wisdom of God, the Son of God. When a man is telling a story about a boat on a lake, and begins thus: 'In the beginning there was a lake, and a white boat on it ...', no rational man would take the words: 'In the beginning, there was a lake ...' to mean that the lake came into existence at the very moment of the story. So also, no rational man should take the words of the Gospel: 'In the beginning was the Word,' to mean that the Word of God was begotten of God at the creation of the world. As the lake existed thousands of years before the story of the boat, so the Word of God existed a whole eternity before the beginning of creation.

O Son of God, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, enlighten and save us! To Thee be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

## SEPTEMBER 2nd

### 1. The Holy Martyr Mamas.

He was born in Paphlagonia of eminent Christian parents, Theodotus and Rufina, who were thrown into prison for the name of Christ. In the prison, Theodotus was the first to die, and Rufina, after giving birth to a son, soon followed her husband, and the newborn child was left in the prison beside the bodies of his parents. God the Provider sent His holy angel to a noble widow, Ammia, whom the angel told in a dream to go to the prison and take the child. Ammia asked the city governor's permission to bury the dead and take the child into her own home. The child was dumb until the age of five, and then his first word was 'Mama', because of which he was given the name Mamas. At school, he showed an unusual brightness, and, being brought up at home in a Christian spirit, did not conceal his faith but confessed it before his contemporaries, mocking at the idols. In the time of the Emperor Aurelian, there was a vicious persecution of Christians, and the pagans did not spare even Christian children. Mamas was fifteen years old when he was taken before the Emperor. The Emperor told him to deny Christ only with his lips. To this Mamas replied: 'I shall not deny my God and King Jesus Christ either in my heart or with my lips.' The Emperor ordered that he be beaten, burned with torches and finally thrown into the sea, but an angel of God saved him and took him to a high mountain near Caesarea. There he lived in solitude and prayer, and fierce wild beasts were tamed by his holiness. He was eventually found there by the persecutors and put again to torture. Overcoming both the power of fire and the fierceness of wild beasts, holy Mamas was stabbed with a trident by a pagan priest. He thus gave his holy soul to the God to whom he had remained faithful in all his sufferings. Many of the sick have been healed by his relics.

### 2. St John the Faster, Patriarch of Constantinople.

St John is also commemorated on August 30th. He was a goldsmith at first, then, by God's providence and for his great virtues, was ordained priest. As a young man, St John was once walking with an

old monk from Palestine, Eusebius. Suddenly, a voice came to Eusebius from some invisible source: 'Father, don't walk on the right of great John!' This, the voice of God, was predicting the high service to which John was soon to be called. After blessed Eutychius' death, John was chosen as Patriarch of Constantinople. He was most unwilling to accept, but was overawed by a heavenly vision and thus gave his consent. He was a great faster, a man of prayer and a wonderworker right up to his death, entering into rest in 595. After his death, his only possessions were found to be a wooden spoon, a linen shirt and an old cassock. His writings on repentance and confession are well-known.

### 3. St Eleazar.

The son of Aaron and second High Priest in Israel, he helped Moses to number the Israelites and Joshua the son of Nun to apportion the Promised Land among the twelve tribes. He faithfully guarded the Ark of the Covenant in Shiloh, and died peacefully.

### 4. Feast of the Miracle of the Kaluga Icon of the Mother of God.

This is recorded in the passage for consideration below.

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#### FOR CONSIDERATION

The Orthodox Church has, within her experience, innumerable examples of almighty God's showing of His power through natural and mortal things, especially through those which serve as signs of the incarnation, life and suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ: the Cross, icons of the Mother of God and the saints, holy water, oil, myrrh and so forth. Thus was there wrought a miracle by an icon of the holy Mother of God in 1748, in the house of a boyar, Chitrov, near the town of Kaluga in Russia. Two of the boyar's serving girls, turning out junk in the attic one day, found a piece of folded linen on which was a beautiful painting of a woman's face. The face was full of light and devotion. One of these girls was modest and serious,

but the other was vain and given to gossip. The former looked at the face on the linen and gave it the name 'the abbess', but Evdokia, for that was the name of the gossipy one, would not have that, but jeered at her modest companion. To give more force to her words, she spat on the picture, and at that moment fell to the ground, her whole body contorted. She became blind and dumb, and began to foam at the mouth. That night, the Mother of God appeared to the parents of the afflicted girl, related to them what had happened to their daughter and told them to call the priest to pray before the discovered face and sprinkle the girl with holy water, and she would then be healed. When this had been done, Evdokia was restored to health and, from that time, her character changed and she became serious. Thus it was discovered that this was the miraculous face of the Mother of God. The icon was taken to the church in Koluga, where it is found today, still working wonders.

#### TO PONDER

Let me ponder on God's punishment of David for his adultery and murder (II Sam. 12):

1. How God told David through the prophet Nathan that, as he had taken other men's wives, his wives would be taken by other men.
2. How his son would die.
3. How the sword would not depart from his house. And this all came to pass.

#### HOMILY

— on the Word of God — the Creator of the world.

*'The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him' (John 1:2-4).*

The Evangelist, my brethren, speaks of the wondrous Word of God, the eternal Wisdom of God, the co-eternal Son of God. This

wondrous Word is of one being with the Father and the Holy Spirit, but is in person separate from them both, for He was begotten by the unbegotten Father. He was, and is, and will be. When was the Word with God? 'In the beginning', says the Evangelist. What does the expression 'in the beginning' mean? It means the same as 'first' or 'firstly'. Firstly, then, the Word of God was with God, ever of one being with the Father and in person the Son, although not yet incarnate. Later in time, the Word of God became flesh, and revealed Himself in the flesh to the human race. 'All things were made by Him' while He was still the unincarnate Word with God. Heaven and earth and the whole heavenly and earthly worlds — all was made by Him, the Word of God, when, not yet incarnate, He was with God. Without the Word of God, nothing was made that was made. He was life and light, and the light shone in the darkness, 'and the darkness did not overcome it'. Before all else, death and sin represent darkness. This darkness does not overcome the Son of God. The whole created world is darkness when compared with God, but there shines in this darkness the Word of God, the majestic Wisdom of God. Every created thing would be darkness if the mysterious light of the Son of God, who made all that is made, did not shine from it.

He was 'in the beginning with God'. But then what happened to Him? 'And the Word became flesh'. Up to this point, history is the story of the created world; from this point onwards, history is the story of the salvation of the human race. In taking flesh, the Word of God was not estranged from God the Father and the Holy Spirit, for the divine Trinity is undivided. He only put on a human body and soul, that He, the Sun above all suns, might, in the flesh, draw near to men and save them.

Oh, my brethren, how gentle and unspeakably wonderful is the mystery of the incarnation of God! If we embrace this mystery in our hearts, we shall the more easily draw near to it in our minds.

O Lord, our gracious Saviour, the glory of the Father and the joy of the Holy Spirit, have mercy on us and save us. To Thee be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

## SEPTEMBER 3rd

### 1. The Hieromartyr Anthimus.

Born in Nicomedia, he was brought up from childhood as a true Christian. 'His body was mortified, his spirit humble; jealousy was uprooted, anger tamed, sloth banished. ... he had love for all and was at peace with all, had a good understanding with all, was filled with zeal for the glory of God and was open to all.' It is not surprising that a man of such virtues was made a bishop. St Anthimus worked as a bishop in Nicomedia at the time of a harsh persecution of Christians under the two wicked Emperors Diocletian and Maximian. Streams of Christian blood were spilled, especially in Nicomedia. One year, on the feast of the Nativity of Christ, twenty thousand martyrs were burned in one church (see Dec. 28th). This happened during Anthimus's episcopate. The persecution did not end with this, but continued, and many Christians were thrown into prison and kept there for torture and death. St Anthimus withdrew to a village, Omana, not to escape death but to be able thence to strengthen his flock in the path of martyrdom, that none should draw back through fear. One of his letters to the Christians in prison was seized and taken to the Emperor Maximian. The Emperor sent twenty soldiers to find Anthimus and take him. The grey-beard, discerning this, went out to meet the soldiers, brought them into his house as his guests and only then revealed that he was Anthimus. The soldiers, amazed at his kindness, urged him to hide, and said that they would tell the Emperor that they had been unable to find him, but Anthimus replied that he dared not allow God's Law to be violated by a lie in order to save his life. So he set out with the soldiers. On the way, all the soldiers came to faith in Christ and were baptised by Anthimus. Brought before the Emperor, Anthimus was submitted to harsh and long-drawn-out torture, and was finally beheaded with an axe. He glorified God and entered into rest in the Lord at the beginning of the fourth century.

### 2. The Holy Martyr Vasilissa.

A nine-year-old girl, she suffered in Nicomedia not long after the death of Anthimus. The torturers covered her whole body with

wounds, but she remained faithful to Christ. God preserved her unharmed in fire and before wild beasts. Her torturer, Alexander, seeing these wonders, repented and became a Christian. Vasilissa went out into a field, fell on her knees and prayed to God, thanking Him for her endurance under torture, and, while thus praying, gave her soul into God's hands. This was in the year 309.

### 3. **St Joannicius, Archbishop and First Patriarch of Serbia.**

Born in Prizren, he served at first as secretary to King Dušan. He became Archbishop in 1339, and in 1346 was raised to the rank of Patriarch. He was a zealous pastor, and brought order to the Serbian Church, being 'a great upholder of the Church's laws'. He entered into rest on September 3rd, 1349, and his relics are preserved at Peć.

### 4. **Our Holy Father Theoctistus.**

A faster and fellow-ascetic of St Euthymius the Great, Theoctistus was abbot of Euthymius's monastery six miles from Jerusalem, on the road to Jericho. He was in all things a disciple of Euthymius, governing the monastery under his guidance to the age of ninety. He led a godly life, and entered into rest in the middle of the fifth century, in the time of Patriarch Anastasius of Jerusalem.

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#### FOR CONSIDERATION

He who desires to be saved must be absolutely obedient to his spiritual superior. Without this obedience, a man can perish, even with the greatest possible desire for salvation. The great saints, who held obedience to be a condition for salvation, themselves perfectly fulfilled obedience. When St Simeon chose his asceticism on the pillar, this startled the other ascetics as being something new. They, not knowing if this way of asceticism was of the Spirit of God or the spirit of pride, sent various desert fathers and spiritual guides to discover this. Sending them, they told them to command Simeon in

their name to come down from his pillar. If he refused, that would mean that his being raised up on the pillar was from the spirit of pride. If he heeded the command and was willing to come down from the pillar, then he must be left to stay where he was, because his readiness to obey showed that his asceticism was from the Holy Spirit. When the delegation arrived and told St Simeon that the council of the desert fathers commanded him to come down from his pillar, Simeon immediately began to climb down the ladder. Seeing this, the fathers called out joyfully to him: 'Don't come down, holy Father; stay where you are! We now see that your asceticism is from God!'

#### TO PONDER

Let me ponder on God's punishment of David for his sin (II Sam. 13):

1. How Amnon, David's son, defiled David's daughter Tamara.
2. How Absalom, David's son, killed Amnon his brother for this.
3. How David wept bitterly.

#### HOMILY

— on the Word of God revealed in the flesh.

*'And the Word was made flesh'*  
(John 1:14).

Here, my brethren, is a new beginning, a blessed and saving beginning for us. This is the beginning of our salvation. Adam was in the flesh when he fell under the power of sin and death. The Son of God — the Word, Wisdom, Light and Life — came down among men in human flesh and with a human soul, taking flesh while remaining undivided from His divinity, from His Father. Keeping all that He was and had from all eternity, He received something