

Metropolitan Anthony Bloom on The Loaves

And Christ says to the disciples: No, they need not depart; you give them to eat... How can they feed a multitude of that kind? A thousand men, women, children, and all they have is five loaves of bread and two fishes? And here is a challenge of Christ to them, and of Christ to us. Yes — in a way, God alone can perform this miracle; but not if we do not contribute with openness of heart, and with an open hand. He did not say to His disciples: Keep as much as you need for yourselves, and give the rest, your left-over to others. He says to them: Take all you have, and give it all... Isn't it something which the Lord says to us now, in a very special way, in days where we are so secure, so rich, so opulent, and when we hear day after day of the hunger, the misery, the death indeed from starvation of thousands and thousands of people. And what the Lord says to us is simply: Give what you have and let Me act afterwards; do not ask Me to work a miracle where you could do the thing yourselves...

The Apostles could do little; they could share only five loaves and two fishes; but we can share so much! If our hearts were open, and from hearts of stone God had made hearts of flesh within us, if we had learned anything of generosity and of mutual responsibility, if we had learned a little, o, so little! — about loving our neighbour actively, there would be no hunger in the world... Let us reflect on these words of Christ: They need not depart from My presence to order to eat; give them you what they need... And if we looked round us, not far beyond but just round us at the needs of people who are hungry, who are homeless, who are deprived of rights, or simply our neighbours who are at times so lonely, need a word of comfort, need friendship, solidarity, we would begin to fulfil this commandment of Christ.

“Let us Attend!”



“He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes...”

A PARISH BULLETIN OF
ALL SAINTS ORTHODOX CHURCH

Olyphant, Pennsylvania

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18 August 2024

Eighth Sunday After Pentecost

Bulletin, Sunday, 18 August 2024

8th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone

7. Afterfeast of the Dormition. Martyrs Florus and Laurus of Illyria (2nd c.). Martyrs Hermes, Serapion and Polyænus, of Rome (2nd c.). Hieromartyr Emilian and with him Martyrs Hilarion, Dionysius, and Hermippus (4th c.). Ss. John (674) and George (683), Patriarchs of Constantinople. Ven. Macarius, Monk. Repose of Ven. John, Abbot of Rila (946). Ven. Sophronius of St. Anne's Skete (Mt. Athos). Ven. Arsenios of Paros (1877).

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

Gospel: Matthew 14:14-22

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, 21 August 2024: 9AM Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos, Curer of Cancer.**
- **Saturday, 24 August 2024. 5:00–5:45PM. Fr. Paul available for Confession ; 6PM Great Vespers.**
- **Sunday 25 July 2024, 9th Sunday After Pentecost, 9:30AM Divine Liturgy, Followed by Agape Coffee Hour Fellowship.**

Announcements

~ The faithful of All Saints extends our warmest welcome to His Eminence, Archbishop Mark as he makes an Archpastoral visit to our community. May the Lord continue to bless His Eminence in his ministry of faithful service to our diocese. Eis Polla Eti Despota. We are also grateful to Father Nathan and the faithful of St. Nicholas for joining us as well. Everyone is invited downstairs to join together in Agape Coffee Hour fellowship.

~ 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. This event will be advertised in the Time Tribune and Valley Advantage. Please share information about this event with your friends and neighbors.

~ A final reminder that our parish will hold a food sale on Friday, 23 August 2024 from 11-4. Help with preparation this week is needed. Please see Ann Schlasta for details.

~ We offer our congratulations to Fr. Gregory and Matushka Krista Fedorchak on the baptism of their son, Christopher Jonah. God grant him many years.

AUGUST 18

Fast-free

1 Corinthians 1:10-17
Matthew 14:14-22

If we truly think of Christ as our source of holiness, we shall refrain from anything wicked or impure in thought or act and thus show ourselves to be worthy bearers of his name.

St. Gregory of Nyssa

REPOSE OF ST. JOHN, FOUNDER OF RILA MONASTERY. After the death of his parents, John became a monk and went to live alone in a mountain cave. Demons, robbers, and even his relatives attacked him there. He moved to the mountain of Rila to pray and found shelter in a hollow tree. He ate wild plants that he picked in the surrounding area. After many years, a shepherd happened upon him, and people soon came to him for healing and spiritual advice. Reports of the great ascetic reached even King Peter of Bulgaria, who wanted to meet John. Seeking a spiritual life, the saint's nephew Luke came to live with him, but when his father heard this, he took the child home by force. Along the way home, the boy died from a snake bite. John's brother repented and asked John for forgiveness. Other monks seeking to emulate John came to live near him, and so the monastery of Rila and a church were founded. St. John died peacefully in the year 946 at the age of 70. His holy relics rest in the Rila Monastery to the present day.



COMMEMORATIONS: John of Rila; Christodoulos the Philosopher; Florus and Laurus of Illyria with Maximos, Patroklos, and a multitude of paupers; Sophronios of St. Anne's Skete; Juliana, near Strobilus; Leo, in Lycia; Hermes, Serapion, and Polyaeus of Rome; Emilian of Trebia, with Hilarion, Dionysius, Hermippus, and 1,000 others, in Italy; Barnabas and Sophronius of Mt. Mela; Christopher of Mt. Mela; Demetrius the Vlach; John and George, Patriarchs of Constantinople; Matthew of Crete; Agapios of Galatista; Agapios and Porphyrios of Santorini; Augustine of Orans; George of Kastoria; Nicholas of Nizhni-Novgorod and 15 others; Constantine of Kappua; Translation of the relics of St. Arsenios the New of Paros; *Sumela* Icon of the Mother of God.

AUGUST 19

1 Corinthians 11:31-12:6
Matthew 18:1-11

The principal thing is to walk before God, or under God's eye, aware that God is looking at you, searching your soul and your heart, seeing all that is there. This awareness is the most powerful lever in the mechanism of the inner spiritual life.

St. Theophan the Recluse

VENERABLE THEOPHANES THE NEW OF NAOUSA. Theophanes was born in 1590 in the city of Ioannina. He received monastic tonsure at the Docheiariou Monastery on Mount Athos. The depth of his spirituality was not known until after the unearthing of his relics. Theophanes lived during the Turkish occupation of Greece. He was elected abbot and shortly afterward left his post and departed for Constantinople to save his nephew, who was being forced to become a Muslim. Eventually, he arranged for his nephew's escape and brought him to Mount Athos. The brethren feared revenge from the Turks, so Theophanes and his nephew went to Beroeia and built a church and monastery in honor of the Most Holy Mother of God. They labored there in prayer, fasting, and vigil, and Theophanes became their abbot. When the monastery became overcrowded, Theophanes went to Naousa, built a church, and founded a monastery dedicated to the Holy Archangels. To the end of his days, he guided the monks of both Beroeia and Naousa. Foreseeing his own end, Theophanes bid farewell to the brethren and died in extreme old age at the Beroeia monastery. When his relics were unearthed, miraculous healings took place.



COMMEMORATIONS: Andrew Stratelates and 2,593 soldiers with him in Cilicia; Timothy, Agapius, and Thecla of Palestine; Pitirim, Bishop of Perm; Theophanes, wonderworker of Macedonia (Mt. Athos); Credan, abbot of Evesham; Mochta of Britain; Namadia of France; Theophanes the New of Naousa; Uncovering of the relics of St. Gennadius, abbot of Kostroma; *Of the Don* Icon of the Mother of God.

AUGUST 20

1 Corinthians 12:12-26
Matthew 18:18-22, 19:1-2, 13-15

It is pleasing to have smart and talented people in Church. However, not because it needs them. The Church needs no one. We have need of her because, without her, we are not saved. Of course, no matter which abilities we have, we must use them for the glory of Christ. However, we must not overly stress our contribution. *We are worthless servants* (Luke 17:10).

Elder Epiphanius Theodoropoulos of Athens †

NEW MARTYRS OF ESTONIA. Eight martyrs and confessors from Estonia suffered under the yoke of communism between the years 1944 and 1955. The names of the Estonian New Martyrs are St. Peter, Bishop of Tartu & Pechory; St. Alypy, archimandrite; St. Vladimir, protopresbyter; St. Seraphim, priest; St. Ioann, priest; St. Leonid, priest; St. Andrei; and St. Alexander. An example of their lives was St. Peter, who graduated from Riga Theological School and the Riga Theological Seminary. He served as a priest in Estonia and Russia and was later consecrated bishop. After the war, while living in Pechory, he was arrested in 1945 and sentenced to fourteen years in labor camps, where he died in 1948.



COMMEMORATIONS: Samuel the Prophet; Philip of Heraclea with Severus, Memnon, and 37 soldiers, in Thrace; Lucius the Senator; Heliodorus and Dosa in Persia; Photina, at the Church of Blachernae; Hierotheus, enlightener of Hungary; Stephen I, King of Hungary; Theocharis of Neopolis; Reginos and Orestes of Cyprus; Oswin of Deira; Philibert of Jumieges; New Martyrs of Estonia.

AUGUST 21

1 Corinthians 13:1-13
Mark 3:13-21

If you sincerely want to know the will of God, there is an angel for you, who is close and ready to open up to you. This is your conscience. Listen to your conscience, do not stifle his subtle voice with the noise of your passions—and the will of God will be revealed to you, and you will be on the way of obedience.

St. Philaret of Moscow

ST. SARMEAN, CATHOLICOS OF KARTLI IN GEORGIA. Sarmean was an eighth-century patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church. During this time, the Arabs ruled in Georgia and persecuted the Christians in an effort to convert them to their religion. Despite the abuses the faithful endured, many churches continued to function. One day as Great Lent approached, a group of strangers bearing gifts arrived at the monastery where Sarmean was officiating. He served them Holy Communion without asking them about their faith. However, that night in a dream, he learned that they were members of the Monophysite churches. Sarmean informed the bishops of his error, confessed his mistake, and burned the gifts he had been given. He departed to an isolated cave, where he wept over his sin. The bishops sent a message to Sarmean telling him that St. Shio had appeared to them separately, saying that God had forgiven his sin. St. Sarmean led his flock until his peaceful repose in the year 774.



COMMEMORATIONS: Forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; Thaddeus of the Seventy; Vassa of Edessa with Theognios, Agapios, and Pistos; Avitus of Clermont; Theocleta of Asia Minor; Sarmean, Catholicos of Georgia; Symeon of Samokovo; Isaiah of Mt. Athos; Donatus, Romulus, Silvanus, and Venustus of Romania; Abramius of Smolensk, and Ephraim; Abramius of the Kiev Caves; Cornelius of Paleostrov and Abramius; Raphael of Serbia; Ignatius of Optina; Martha of Diveyevo; Hardulph of Breedon; Jacob of Serbia; New Martyr Theodore Kallistov; Commemoration of the appearance of the Theotokos at Panteleimon Monastery.

'And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him; the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord' (Is. 11:2).

The Holy Spirit of God is not divided from the Father nor from the Son, nor is the Father divided from the Son and the Spirit, nor the Son from the Father and the Spirit. The Holy Spirit prophesied through the prophets concerning the Son; the Holy Spirit indwelt the most holy Virgin and prepared her for the bearing of the Son of God; the Holy Spirit remained inseparable from the Son during the time of His dwelling in the world in the body. The spirit of wisdom — of the vision of heavenly mysteries; the spirit of understanding — of grasping the links between the visible world and the invisible; the spirit of might — of power over created nature; the spirit of knowledge — of the understanding of the substance of created being; the spirit of the fear of the Lord — of the recognition of divine power over both worlds and submission to the will of God. Whoever among men has ever had in himself this fullness of riches of the gifts of the Holy Spirit? No-one, ever, apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit apportions His gifts to men, some to one and some to another, but the whole, undivided fullness of His gifts shines forth in the Son of God.

Why did the Lord Jesus need to have the fear of God, being Himself God? It was not as God that He had the fear of God, but as man, as an example to us. As He fasted and watched and laboured as man for the sake of teaching men, so He had fear of God for this same reason. What is a surer healing for men, made sick by sin, than the fear of God? He, being whole, had to take the medicines for sin Himself, that we sick men might be encouraged to take them. Does not a parent do this with sick children who are frightened to take the prescribed medicine?

O triune and eternal God, before whom all the heavenly hosts bow down, singing the glorious hymn: 'Holy, holy, holy Lord of Sabaoth', receive also our worship, and save us. To Thee be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

1. Our Holy Father John of Rila.

This great ascetic and light of the Orthodox Church was born near Sophia, in a place called Skrinno, in the time of the Emperor Boris. He was born of poor but worthy parents. After their death, he became a monk and withdrew to a high mountain, where he began to live the ascetic life in a cave. He endured many assaults both by demons and men, from robbers and from his kinsmen. He afterwards moved to the mountain of Rila, and there took up residence in a hollow tree. He ate only the herbs and berries that grew, by God's providence, in the vicinity. He saw no man's face for many years until, again by God's providence, he was found by a herdsman searching for his lost sheep. The saint then became known among men, and people began to come to him, seeking help in sickness or trouble. The Bulgarian king, Peter, himself visited him, to ask his advice. Many who were seeking the spiritual life settled near to John, and a church and monastery were soon built there. St John entered into rest in the Lord on August 18th, 946, at the age of seventy, and appeared to his disciples after his death. His relics were first taken to Sophia, then to Hungary, to Trnovo and finally to the monastery of Rila, where they are preserved to this day. The monastery of Rila has, through the ages, been a lighthouse and a place of wonderworking power and spiritual support to the Christian people of Bulgaria, most especially during the time of slavery under the Turks.

2. The Holy Martyrs Florus and Laurus.

Brothers in both the flesh and the spirit, they were both zealous Christians, and stonemasons by craft. They lived in Illyria. Some pagan prince set them to build a pagan temple. It happened during the course of their work that a fragment of stone splintered off and flew into the eye of the pagan priest's son, who was watching the building work with curiosity. Seeing his son blinded and bleeding, the priest shouted at Florus and Laurus and tried to thrash them. Then the holy brothers told him that, if he would believe in the God in whom they believed, his son would be restored to health. The priest promised. Florus and Laurus prayed to the one, living Lord

with tears and made the sign of the Cross over the child's stricken eye. The child was healed instantly and his eye became whole as it had been before. Then the priest, Merentius, and his son were baptised, and they both very soon suffered for Christ in the flames. But Florus and Laurus, when they had finished the temple, put a Cross on it, called together all the Christians and consecrated it in the name of the Lord Jesus with an all-night vigil of hymns. Hearing of this, the governor of Illyria burned many of these Christians by fire and had Florus and Laurus thrown alive into a well, which was then filled with earth. Their relics were later discovered and taken to Constantinople. These two wonderful brothers suffered for Christ, and were glorified by Him, in the second century.

3. The Hieromartyr Emilian the Bishop.

He was born in Armenia. He sought martyrdom, and went to Italy to preach Christ in the time of Diocletian, being chosen as bishop in Trevi. Through the many miracles associated with his martyrdom, about a thousand pagans came to faith in Christ. He was slain with the sword along with his spiritual father, Hilary, and two brothers, Dionysius and Hermippus.

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FOR CONSIDERATION

It is not a rare occurrence, especially in our day, for parents to be responsible for their children's spiritual death. Whenever a child aspires to the spiritual life and its asceticism in monasticism, and the parent resists this aspiration instead of encouraging it, such a parent is the murderer of his child. And such children — as a punishment to their parents — often go to the other extreme and become dissolute. A child called Luke, nephew to St John of Rila, heard of his uncle and, urged by a desire for the spiritual life, visited him on his mountain. John received him with love, and began to instruct him and accustom him to asceticism. But Luke's father appeared one day at John's cave, and furiously began to scold the saint for

keeping his son in this desert place. John's words and advice were of no avail. The father withdrew his son by force and took him home. On the way, a snake bit the boy and he died. The cruel father came to see the punishment of God in this, and repented, but it was all too late. He returned to John with grief and self-accusation, but the saint only told him to bury the child and return whence he had come.

TO PONDER

Let me ponder on God's wonderful choice of David as King (I Sam. 16):

1. How the Lord led Samuel to the home of Jesse to anoint the eighth and youngest son of his house, David the shepherd-boy.
2. How Samuel anointed David, and how the Spirit of God came upon him.

HOMILY

— on peace between the wolf and the lamb.

'The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid' (Is. 11:6).

Thus the holy prophet truly prophesied the truth. And he added: 'the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed ... and the lion shall eat straw like the ox'. And the child shall put his hand on the opening of the snake's hole, and the snake will not hurt him. When will this wonder be wrought, my brethren? It has already been wrought, when Christ the Wonderworker appeared on earth. It is the reality of Paradise, that was repeated among men at the coming of the Saviour upon earth. The prophet speaks enigmatically, but also clearly; enigmatically because he speaks not of wild beasts but

of men: clearly because this prophecy is fulfilled in the Church of Christ. Men who were by nature like wolves and leopards, lions and bears, oxen and lambs, kids and snakes— all stand before the Babe of Bethlehem united in faith, tamed by grace, radiant with hope and softened by love.

The prophet also predicts the reason for all this coming to pass: 'For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.' From the physical point of view, man is earth. The man who comes to faith in Christ, and in truth follows Christ, becomes filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. Such were the many solitaries. Such were the communities of ascetics in Egypt and on the Holy Mountain, in Cyprus, Russia, Armenia and other places. But this is not all. The knowledge of the Lord has been spread today throughout the world. The Holy Scriptures are accessible to every people. There are few corners of the earth where the Gospel of Christ is not read, where the name of God is not known and where the bloodless sacrifice of the Lord is not offered. One rejects Christ, and another accepts Him; one falls back from the true Faith and another embraces it. This is a world-wide struggle, undertaken in the name of the Lord Jesus. The overflow of a head of water pours itself into an empty valley; the empty valley is filled and made one with the high waters. It is not all as bright and shining in the world as we Christians would wish, but the prophecy of Isaiah the prophet has been gloriously fulfilled and realised.

Oh, what a wonderful vision by Isaiah the son of Amoz, the true prophet!

O wondrous Lord, tame the bestial nature of those men and nations that have not yet been tamed by the power of Thy love. May we all be fruitful with Thine abundance and alive, O Lord, with Thine immortal life. To Thee be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

1. The Holy Martyr Andrew Stratelates.

He was an officer, a tribune, in the Roman army in the time of the Emperor Maximian. A Syrian by birth, he served in his native land. When the Persians attacked the imperial Roman army, this Andrew was entrusted with the command in the battle against the enemy— whence his title: commander, *stratelates*. A secret Christian, although as yet unbaptised, Andrew commended himself to the living God, and, taking only the cream of the army, went to war. Before the battle, he told his soldiers that, if they all called upon the aid of the one, true God, Christ the Lord, their enemies would become as dust scattered before them. All the soldiers, fired with enthusiasm by Andrew and his faith, invoked Christ's aid and attacked. The Persian army was utterly routed. When the victorious Andrew returned to Antioch, some jealous men denounced him as a Christian and the imperial governor summoned him for trial. Andrew openly proclaimed his steadfast faith in Christ. After harsh torture, the governor threw Andrew into prison and wrote to the Emperor in Rome. Knowing Andrew's popularity among the people and in the army, the Emperor ordered the governor to set Andrew free, but to seek another occasion and another excuse (not his faith) to kill him. By God's revelation, Andrew came to know of this imperial command, and, taking his faithful soldiers (2,593 in all) with him, went off to Tarsus in Cilicia, where they were all baptised by the bishop, Peter. Persecuted here also by imperial might, Andrew and his companions withdrew deep into the Armenian mountain of Tavros. There in a ravine, while they were at prayer, the Roman army came upon them and beheaded them all. Not one of them would recant, all being determined on death by martyrdom for Christ. On the spot where a stream of the martyrs' blood flowed down, a spring of healing water sprang forth, healing from every disease. The bishop, Peter, came secretly with his people and buried the martyrs' bodies in that same place. They all suffered with honour at the end of the third century and were crowned with wreaths of eternal glory, entering into the Kingdom of Christ our God.

2. Our Holy Father Theophanes.

Born in Jannina, he left everything as a young man and went to the Holy Mountain, where he became a monk in the monastery of Docheiariou. In fasting, prayer, vigils and the stripping away of all that was unnecessary, he stood out among all the monks, and was consequently chosen in due time as abbot. Later, through some disagreement with the monks, he left the Holy Mountain and, with his nephew, went to Berea in Macedonia, where he founded a monastery dedicated to the most holy Mother of God. When this monastery began to flower with the spiritual life, he left his nephew in charge and went to Naousa, where he founded another monastery, in honour of the Holy Archangels. He died peacefully some time in the fifteenth century. His wonderworking relics rest today in Naousa, and reveal God's great power.

3. The Holy Martyrs Timothy, Agapius and Thecla.

They suffered for Christ in the time of the wicked Emperor Diocletian. Timothy was burned by fire, and Agapius and Thecla thrown to the wild beasts.

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FOR CONSIDERATION

When some unexpected trouble falls upon us guiltless, we should not immediately bemoan the fact, but seek God's providence in it, which can, through this trouble, bring us something new and helpful. The great Theophanes, abbot of Docheiariou, one day received the shocking news that the Turks had seized his sister's son, forced him to embrace Islam and then taken him to Constantinople. Theophanes immediately went himself to Constantinople and succeeded, with God's help, in locating his nephew and taking him secretly to his monastery on the Holy Mountain. There, he brought him back to the Christian faith and made him a monk. But the brethren grumbled against their abbot and his nephew, from fear of the Turks, for they were afraid that the Turks would hear of it and

would come and destroy the monastery. Not knowing what else to do, St Theophanes took his nephew and withdrew secretly, not only from Docheiariou but from the Holy Mountain, and went to Berea. The later activities of Theophanes in Berea and Naousa prove how useful misfortune can be to the Church. That which Theophanes would never have achieved on the Holy Mountain, he achieved in these other places to which he had fled: he founded two monasteries in which, in due time, many monks found salvation and many people were upheld. Also, added to this, his holy relics among the people became a source of healing, for the strengthening of the Faith in unbelievers and in those of little faith. Thus God, in His wisdom, guides the destinies of men through unexpected ills, which seem to men at the time to be for their loss.

TO PONDER

Let me ponder on God's wonderful providence in David's life (I Sam. 16):

1. How the Spirit of God left Saul because of his sin.
2. How an evil spirit fell on Saul, and he sought a harpist for his pleasure.
3. How the king's servant found David and brought him to the king to calm him with his harp.

HOMILY

— on the Lord's strength and the weakness of idols.

'Behold the Lord rideth upon a light cloud, and shall come into Egypt; and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at His presence' (Is. 19:1).

Fleeing from Herod, the 'Pharaoh' of Jerusalem, the Lord went to Egypt. The true Israel is not reckoned by location but by spirit and by works. At the time of the Lord's birth, the king's wickedness in