

# St Michael's Orthodox Church

*A parish of the Orthodox Church in America, Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania*

305 Walnut Street, Jermyn, Pennsylvania 18433

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**June 9, 2024: 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Pascha; The Healing of the Blind Man**

## CHRIST IS RISEN!

*English:* Christ is risen! *Indeed He is risen!*

*Slavonic:* (C)hristos voskres(e)! *Voistinu(i) voskres(e)!*

*Greek:* Christos anesti! *Alithos anesti!*

*Arabic:* El Messieh q'ahm! *Hakken q'ahm!*

*Romanian:* Hristos a inviat! *Adevărat a înviat!*

*Albanian:* Krishti U Ngjall! *Vertet U Ngjall!*

*Georgian:* Kriste aghsdga! *Cheshmaritad aghsdga!*

*Latin:* Christus resurrexit! *Vere resurrexit!*

*Spanish:* Cristo ha resucitado! *En verdad ha resucitado!*

*French:* Le Christ est réssuscité! *En verite il est réssuscité!*

*Japanese:* Harisutos Fukkatsu! *Jitsu ni Fukkatsu!*

*Irish Gaelic:* Tah Kreest asháyreeha! *Ta shay asháyreeha guhdjévin!*

## Schedule of Services

Saturday, June 8, 6:30 p.m. – Great Vespers with Confessions.

**Sunday, June 9:** 9:30 a.m. – Divine Liturgy. NO Coffee hour. **1:00 p.m. – Blessing of Graves** at our Cemetery.

*Thursday, June 13 is the **Feast of the Ascension of our Lord.***

**Wednesday, June 12,** 6:30 p.m. – Festal Vespers with Litya

**Thursday, June 13,** 9:30 a.m. – Festal Divine Liturgy

Saturday, June 15, 6:30 p.m. – Great Vespers with Confessions.

Sunday, June 16, 9:30 a.m. – Divine Liturgy & Fellowship. *Sunday After Ascension: Fathers of the 1<sup>st</sup> Ecumenical Council.*

*Please note the **change in the Coffee Hour schedule** (there is no coffee hour today):*

June 9: No coffee hour – Cemetery Blessing

June 23: Mat. Dolores & Marilyn Petorak

June 16: Millie Telep & Mat. Alexandra

June 30: Ruthie Lasichak & Roxanne Neutts

## *Other events in our neighborhood*

- Sunday June 9, 12-3: Whitmore Hose Company Chicken BBQ. \$14 donation. (305 Depew Ave, Mayfield)
- Sunday, June 30, 11–1: St John's Cathedral, Mayfield, is holding a Takeout-Only Turkey Dinner, at the church center. Tickets are \$15 per person. *Contact Mott (570)335-2128, Sandy Suey (570)876-3576, Sasha Fedorchak (570)466-8431, or Joannie Zaleski (570)254-6882 for tickets.*

## Hymns of the Day

*Sunday (Ordinary troparion), Tone 5*

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, / co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, / born for our salvation from the Virgin; / for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, / to endure death, / and to raise the dead // by His glorious Resurrection.

*Glory ...*

*For the Blind Man, Tone 4*

I come to Thee, O Christ, / blind from birth in my spiritual eyes, / and call to Thee in repentance: / “Thou art the most radiant Light // of those in darkness.”

*Now & ever ...*

*For Pascha, Tone 8*

Thou didst descend into the tomb, O Immortal, / Thou didst destroy the power of death. / In victory didst Thou arise, O Christ God, / proclaiming, “Rejoice!” to the Myrrhbearing Women, // granting peace to Thine Apostles, and bestowing Resurrection on the fallen.

*Epistle: Acts 16:16-34*

*In those days:* [As the disciples went to prayer,] a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling. This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation." And this she did for many days. But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And he came out that very hour.

But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to the authorities. And they brought them to the magistrates, and said, "These men, being Jews, exceedingly trouble our city; and they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe." Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods. And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely. Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed. And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself. But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here." Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.

*Gospel: John 9:1-38*

*At that time,* as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.

Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?" Some said, "This is he." Others said, "He is like him." He said, "I am he." Therefore they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?" He answered and said, "A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed, and I received sight." Then they said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know." They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees.

Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." Therefore some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them. They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself." His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, "Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner." He answered and said, "Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see." Then they said to him again, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?" He answered them, "I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?" Then they reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from." The man answered and said to them, "Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing." They answered and said to him, "You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?" And they cast him out.

Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?" He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you." Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him.

## In your prayers...

*The ill and the afflicted:* Fr Michael Evans, Fr Joseph Chupek, Fr Peter Telencio, Fr Gregory White, Fr John Sorochka, Fr Michael Shepherd, Pdn. Gabriel Petorak, Peter Senio, Gregory Hansen, Olga Krutz, Maryanne Krisa, Michael Krisa, Barbara Mosley, Mary Ann Serafini, Alexis Meholic, Tom Shaw, Marilyn Petorak, Sandy Gillott.

*Those who are alone or confined:*

Eileen Dance (Carbondale Nursing & Rehabilitation #202, 10 Hart Place, Carbondale, PA 18407). John Drutarosky (CNR #307). Theresa Krenitsky, CNR #307. Nicholas Mattise, Personal Care at Allied Terrace, #218, 100 Terrace Lane, Scranton, PA 18508. Barbara Palubniak, 629 Hill St, Mayfield, PA 19433. Peggy Petrilak, 127 Petrilak Lane, Greenfield Twp, PA 18407. Peter Senio, The Gardens of Green Ridge, 2751 Boulevard Ave, Scranton, PA 18509. Jerry & Marilyn Soroka, Glenmaura Senior Living, 11 Glenmaura National Blvd, Moosic, PA 18507. Paul Kostiak, along with Dolores Brophy, 631 Jefferson Ave, Jermyn, PA 18433. Paul & Barbara Mosley, 623 Cemetery St, Mayfield, PA 18433. Adam & Mary Ann Serafini, 509 Jefferson Ave, Jermyn, PA 18433.

*Please also remember in prayer* Deacon Nathaniel Sorochka, who will be ordained to the Holy Priesthood next month at St John's in Mayfield on their parish feast day. The priesthood is a grace-filled yet difficult path for all who would follow this calling, and all priests everywhere need the prayers and support of the entire Church. We pray that God will save and protect him and all those he will serve, and grant him many years.

### *Treasure*

*Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. (Mt 13.44-46)*

These are the fifth and sixth parables in a series of seven parables told in Matthew 13. Jesus told the first four to a "great multitude" standing around him on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. But he dismissed the crowd before telling these two parables. They were, therefore, a private instruction only for his closest disciples....

At first glance, these parables appear daunting: ... because the kingdom of heaven is so valuable, one must sell everything one possesses in order to acquire it. Such a demand creates a seemingly insurmountable barrier for anyone who has practical responsibilities in life, such as caring for a spouse, children, or elderly parents. Do these parables therefore implicitly require that everyone who seeks the kingdom must become a monastic?

The Scriptures frequently portray God as **the one who takes the initiative in salvation**. For example, through the burning bush in the wilderness, God called Moses to be his instrument to save his enslaved and suffering people in Egypt.... **God's desire for their salvation is a deeply personal matter**. Before six of the ten plagues with which God subsequently confronted Pharaoh through Moses, God instructed Moses to tell Pharaoh, "Let *my* people go" (emphasis added). The ensuing Passover deliverance through the Red Sea has become the prototype of all of God's subsequent efforts to save his people. Through many of the prophets and the Psalms, God repeatedly proclaimed and demonstrated unrelenting love for his adulterous wife, Israel. Then, in the fullness of time, God again revealed himself and spoke through another "burning bush," the Theotokos. But this time, instead of sending an emissary like Moses to save his people, "God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by his Son" (Heb 1.1-2).

This brief recapitulation of salvation history clearly shows that **the man in the two parables who sells everything in order to purchase the kingdom of heaven is Jesus**. Selling everything, therefore, is not an impossibly difficult requirement that God imposes on us but a description of God's own efforts in our behalf. **Jesus first sacrificed the wealth and glory of heaven for our sakes**. As the apostle Paul says, Jesus, "being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant" (Phil 2.6-7). He then sacrificed his life for our sake: "He who did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all..." (Rom 8.32).

**Thus, God treats us, his beloved creatures, as if we are the hidden treasure and pearl of great price that are worth his greatest sacrifice.**

– Andrew Geleris, *Money and Salvation: An Invitation to the Good Way* (Yonkers, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2022), 155-156.

## Christ's Ministry and the Father

Christ's ministry ... [is] humble; it is always in relationship to the One who sent him, that is, the Father. When Jesus Christ acts, it is God the Father who acts, and **who is revealed in that act**. "*I can do nothing on my own authority; ... I seek not my own will, but the will of him who sent me*" (Jn 5:30) are the words of Christ himself. These follow the declaration that "*as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself*" (Jn 5:26). He therefore is the Son of this Father, and **his ministry is reflected as one of humility before the Father**: "*the Father is greater than I*" (Jn 14:28); he has not come of himself, but the Father has sent him (Jn 8:42). And even if it seems that he "honors" himself, that is "nothing" in light of this humility before the Father:

*If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing; it is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say that he is your God.* (Jn 8:54)

Because this **oneness** between Christ and the Father is present, St John's gospel tells us that he speaks what he has heard from the Father (8:26). What the Father has commanded him, he does (14:31). He does what "pleases" the Father (8:29). He declares the "name" of the Father in which he speaks (17:26). All this means that **Christ's ministry is the Father's ministry, the Father working through Christ** (114:10). Finally, however, we receive the ultimate word regarding this: "I and the Father are one" (Jn 10:30). Thus, in terms of ministry, "He who believes in me, believes not in me, but in him who sent me" (Jn 12:44). It is this which Christ makes clear to Philip, who not yet understanding these words, seeks to "see" the Father:

*Philip said to him, "Lord show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you yet do not know me? He who has seen me has seen the Father, Philip."* (Jn 14:9)

If it is true, then, that Christ and the Father are one, we can even say, in this sense, that **the ministry of Christ begins from before his appearance in Galilee, i.e. even before the Incarnation**. "*Before Abraham was, I am*" (Jn 8:57). There was no such "conversion" of Christ (an ancient heresy) in which his ministry begins, even if the fullness of his ministry on earth is revealed in the Incarnation. **He is "from the foundation of the world" with the Father**, i.e. before his fleshly appearance.

We find a clue to this when Jesus is but the twelve-year-old boy who is found "sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions" (Lk 2:46). We find there that he must already "be about his Father's business" (Lk 2:49, KJV); this is what his parents could not understand (Lk 2:50). This eternal ministry is also known by St John the Forerunner in the Jordan; the Baptist recognized Christ before the baptism (Mt 3:14) for which reason he did not deem himself worthy to baptize him.

Thus **Christ's ministry**, since it is one with his life (which is eternal), **is before the world and exists beyond the world**. Being one with the Father, his ministry is eternal, and those who minister in this temporal world, also participate in his eternal ministry.

– Fr. Joseph Allen, *The Ministry of the Church: The Image of Pastoral Care* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1986).

"The fact that the will of God refers to the whole world, the whole universe, **excludes isolating ourselves in an individualistic piety**, in a kind of *private Christianity*.... **The Gospel cannot remain the possession of only certain peoples who had the privilege of hearing it first**. By putting on our lips the prayer, *'Thy will be done'*, the Lord 'bade each one of us who prays to take thought for the [whole inhabited world] (John Chrysostom). God's will, as it was fulfilled and revealed in Christ, **has to be made known in every corner of the earth, in every cranny of the world**, in every expression of our contemporary multi-centered civilization."

– Abp. Anastasios Yannoulatos, *Mission in Christ's Way: An Orthodox Understanding of Mission* (Brookline: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2013).