

St Michael's Orthodox Church

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

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September 15, 2024

12th Sunday After Pentecost. **Sunday After the Exaltation of the Cross.**

Schedule of Services

Saturday, Sept 14, 6:30 p.m. – Great Vespers & Confessions.

Sunday, Sept 15, 9:30 a.m. – Divine Liturgy & Fellowship. **Events Committee Meeting during Coffee Hour.**

Tuesday, September 17 – St Sophia and her three daughters, Faith, Hope, and Agape

Saturday, Sept 21, 6:30 p.m. – Great Vespers & Confessions.

Sunday, Sept 22, 9:30 a.m. (9:15) – Divine Liturgy with His Eminence, Archbishop Mark.

Monday, Sept 23 – St John the Baptist

Tuesday Sept 24, 8 – All Saints of Alaska; Martyrs Juvenaly & Peter; St Silouan the Athonite

Saturday, Sept 28, 8 – 11 a.m. – Community Breakfast

Coffee Hour is offered by:

Sept 15: Vickie Kravitsky & Charette Radionoff

Sept 22: (Potluck)

Sept 29: Susan Schlasta & Deborah Bernosky

Oct 6: Millie Telep & Mat. Alexandra

Today's Scripture

Epistle: Galatians 2:16-20 (Sunday After)

Brethren: Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1 (Sunday After)

The Lord said, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Kingdom of God come with power."

Announcements

NEXT WEEK, SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 22, we welcome His Eminence, Archbishop Mark, for the Divine Liturgy. It is possible that we will greet him in the church as early as 9:15am. **Please try to arrive early on this day.** There is a Potluck following the Liturgy. See the downstairs signup sheet if you would like to bring something.

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 28 is our first Community Breakfast! 8-11 am. EVERYONE from the surrounding community is welcome. There is no charge, but donations are accepted. Please spread the word throughout town, and THANK YOU for all your donations.

Hymns of the Day

Resurrection (Tone 3)

When Thou didst descend to death, O Life immortal, /
Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead. /
And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead, /
all the powers of heaven cried out: // “O Giver of
life, Christ our God, glory to Thee!”

Cross (Tone 1)

O Lord, save Thy people/ and bless Thine inheritance!
/ Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians / over their
adversaries; / and by virtue of Thy Cross, // preserve
Thy habitation!

Resurrection (Tone 3)

On this day Thou didst rise from the tomb, O Merciful One,
/ leading us from the gates of death. / On this day Adam
exults as Eve rejoices; / with the Prophets and Patriarchs //
they unceasingly praise the divine majesty of Thy power.

Cross (Tone 4)

As Thou wast voluntarily raised upon the Cross for our sake,
/ grant mercy to those who are called by Thy Name, O Christ
God; / make all Orthodox Christians glad by Thy power, /
granting them victories over their adversaries // by bestowing
on them the invincible trophy, Thy weapon of peace!

In your prayers...

The ill and the afflicted: Fr. Dennis Swencki, Fr. Daniel Donlick, Fr Michael Evans, Fr Joseph Chupek, Fr Peter Telencio, Fr Gregory White, Pdn. Gabriel Petorak, Dn Geoffrey LoBalbo, Mat. Myra Kovalek, Eileen Dance, Gregory Hansen, Olga Krutz, Maryanne Krisa, Michael Krisa, Barbara Mosley, Mary Ann Serafini, Alexis Meholic, Tom Shaw, Marilyn Petorak, Sandy Gillott, Debbie Jadick, Susan Schlasta. **Those who are alone or confined:** Eileen Dance, John Drutarosky, Theresa Krenitsky, Nicholas Mattise, Barbara Palubniak, Peggy Petrilak, Jerry & Marilyn Soroka, Paul Kostiak, Dolores Brophy, Paul & Barbara Mosley, Adam & Mary Ann Serafini, Florence Zielinsky.

Remember the departed this week: Fr. John Kivko (9/14/1974), Dennis Sebastianelli (9/16/2005), Peter Zrowka (9/17/1952), Mary Ann Mosley (9/18/2017), Julia Hockin (9/20/1996)

Much of what we do to reclaim the Great Commission is a process of remembering who we truly are. This truth is also at the root of the Christian story. Christ, the Church teaches, came to restore us to our right selves. In the story of our Fall found in Genesis, we learn that humanity lost something precious—our identity—when we fell away from God. We lost our true selves. The rest of the story in Holy Scripture is about how God attempts to bring us back to Him.

We learn this most poignantly in the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). In the story we read about a son, the younger of two, who asks for and receives his inheritance early. This he takes from his loving father and squanders. In time the young man's condition grows desperate, and having nothing to live on, he finds work feeding pigs (v. 15). While working on the pig farm he sinks even further, wishing he could eat the slop he is giving to the swine (v. 16).

The story takes a dramatic turn in verse 17, when we read that the younger son “came to himself.” Interestingly, we sense that the young man should have known all along what was right and who he was, but he had lost himself and thus his way. This is similar to the meaning of the goal of parish health in our churches. Our journey is about finding our true selves again. It is about recovering God's original plan and design for us.

– Fr. Evan Armatas, *Reclaiming the Great Commission: A Roadmap to Parish Health* (Ancient Faith Publishing, 2022), 72-73.

Those who strive for genuine prayer know peaks and valleys. For on the one hand, we are often graced with the warmth of the Holy Spirit during prayer ...

But God will *always* test our prayer. As such, there will be periods of a long drought, when the soul “pants” for water in a desert waste. During these times it may seem as though we are wholly forsaken, forlorn of the Holy Spirit. Our soul will be “bowed down to the dust.” The words of our prayer will turn to ash in our mouths, and the devil will whisper into our minds his two favorite words: “why bother?”

But this too, the soul in a desert wasteland, is a gift from God. The Lord uses these times of spiritual emptiness to deepen our “hungering and thirsting” for His eternal life. And if we persevere through it, the rewards are *inestimable*. *Never, ever, ever, give up.*

– Fr. Paul Jannakos