

St. Nicholas Orthodox Christian Church

30 Cross Street - Auburn, New York, 13021 (www.stnicholasauburn.com)

Very Reverend Michael Speck – Parish Priest (315) 246-6051 mspeck100@gmail.com

Office Hours 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM Thursday or any time by appointment

Reverend Deacon David Donch Reverend Deacon Michael W. Speck

Reader Nathaniel Donch

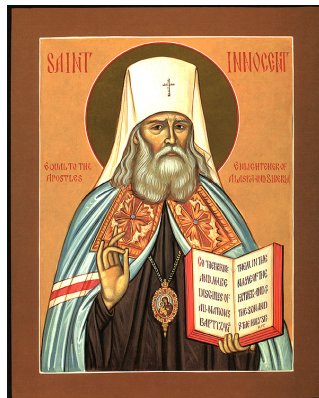
Sr. Warden - Greg Michaels Jr. Warden – Reverend Deacon David Donch

Secretary – Jane Kimak

Treasurer – Glenn Peters

Sunday, October 6, 2024

Glorification of St. Innocent, Metropolitan of Moscow, Enlightener of the Aleuts, and Apostle to the Americas Holy and Glorious Apostle Thomas (1st c.). Fathers of the 7th Ecumenical Council. Monastic Martyr Macarius of St. Anne Skete.



Saturday, October 5 - 5:00 PM – Great Vespers

Sunday, October 6 – 8:40 AM – Adult Education

– 9:30 AM - Divine Liturgy and Coffee Hour

Wednesday, October 9 – (Please Note) - No Divine Liturgy

Saturday, October 12 – 5:00 PM – Great Vespers

**Sunday, October 13 – 9:30 AM - Divine Liturgy followed by
Coffee Hour**

Pork chop dinner tickets for our October 27 event are available from Greg Michaels.

We extend our sympathies to Larissa Sovyrda, choir director at Ss. Peter and Paul Church in Syracuse and her family on the Falling Asleep in the Lord of her mother Matushka Anna Sovyrda on Wednesday. Fr. Vladimir and Matushka Anna served in our parish in the 1970's. May Matushka Anna's Memory be Eternal!

We also extend our sympathies to Matushka Ellen Chupeck and her family on the Falling Asleep in the Lord of her husband Fr. Joseph Chupeck on Wednesday. As Protodeacon, I had the opportunity to serve with Fr. Joseph many times when he pastured Holy Trinity Church in Elmira Heights. May Fr Joseph's Memory be Eternal!

Donations

***\$20 in Memory of Bernice O'Connor for the Benevolence Fund by
Dominica Donch***

***\$25 in Memory of Daniel Gilfilian for the Cemetery Maintenance Fund
by Beverly and Jaci Aversa***



Holy, Glorious Apostle Thomas



Commemorated on [October 6](#)

The Holy and Glorious Apostle Thomas was born in the Galilean city of Pansada and was a fisherman. Hearing the good tidings of Jesus Christ, he left all and followed after Him. The Apostle Thomas is included in the number of the holy Twelve Apostles of the Savior.

According to Holy Scripture, the holy Apostle Thomas did not believe the reports of the other disciples about the Resurrection of Jesus Christ: “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe” (John 20:25).

On the eighth day after the Resurrection, the Lord appeared to the Apostle Thomas and showed him His wounds. “My Lord and my God,” the Apostle cried out (John 20:28). “Thomas, being once weaker in faith than the other apostles,” says Saint John Chrysostom, “toiled through the grace of God more bravely, more zealously and tirelessly than them all, so that he went preaching over nearly all the earth, not fearing to proclaim the Word of God to savage nations.”

Some icons depicting this event are inscribed “The Doubting Thomas.” This is incorrect. In Greek, the inscription reads, “The Touching of Thomas.” In Slavonic, it says, “The Belief of Thomas.” When Saint Thomas touched the Life-giving side of the Lord, he no longer had any doubts.

According to Church Tradition, the holy Apostle Thomas founded Christian churches in Palestine, Mesopotamia, Parthia, Ethiopia and India. Preaching the

Gospel earned him a martyr's death. For having converted the wife and son of the prefect of the Indian city of Meliapur [Melipur], the holy apostle was locked up in prison, suffered torture, and finally, pierced with five spears, he departed to the Lord. Part of the relics of the holy Apostle Thomas are in India, in Hungary and on Mt. Athos. The name of the Apostle Thomas is associated with the Arabian (or Arapet) Icon of the Mother of God (September 6).

Virgin Martyrs Zenaída and Philonílla, of Tarsus in Cilicia



Commemorated on [October 11](#)

The Martyrs Zenaida (Zenais) and Philonilla lived in Tarsus in Cilicia during the first century, and were related to the holy Apostle Paul. They were pious Christian women, and both of them shared a love of learning. By whatever means were available to them at that time, they acquired medical knowledge.

The two sisters left their home and settled in a cave near the city of Demetriada, where they lived in constant prayer and work. The citizens of Demetriada soon learned that there were two women doctors who gladly treated everyone who turned to them for help, yet did not require payment for their services. They also healed people's souls by converting them to Christ.

One night, some pagans went to their cave and stoned them. Saints Zenaida and Philonilla suffered martyrdom for Christ, thereby receiving incorruptible crowns of glory from the Lord.

God is Love

According to the Christian faith “the greatest virtue is love” (1 Cor 13.13). Love is the “fulfilling of the law” of God (Rom 13.10). For God Himself is Love.

Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God.

He who does not love does not know God; for God is love.

In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him.

In this is love, not that we loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the expiation for our sins.

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No man has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and His love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His own Spirit.

And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son as the Savior of the World. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

So we know and believe the love God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

In this is love perfected with us, that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as He is so are we in this world.

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and he who fears is not perfected in love.

We love, because He first loved us (1 Jn 4.7–19).

In these inspired words of the beloved Apostle John, one sees that man’s communion with God, his entire spiritual life, is expressed in love. Where there is

no love, God is absent and there is no spiritual life. Where love is, God is, and all righteousness.

Man's love has its origin in God. God's love always comes first. Men are to love God and one another because God Himself has loved first.

God's love is shown in the creation and salvation of the world in Christ and the Holy Spirit. All things were made by, in and for Jesus Christ, the Word of God, and the "Son of His love" (Col 1.13–17; Jn 1.1–3; Heb 1.2).

When the world became sinful and dead, "God so loved the world that He sent His only-begotten Son . . . not to condemn the world, but to save the world" (Jn 3.16, 12.47).

But God shows His love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us (Rom 5.8). But when the goodness and love of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit which He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior so that we might be made righteous by His grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life (Titus 3.4–7).

God's love for man and His world in Christ is given in the Holy Spirit. This love is the first and greatest "fruit of the Spirit" (Gal 5.22), "for God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us" (Rom 5.5).

In the spiritual tradition of the Church, the aim of life as the "acquisition of the Holy Spirit" is expressed most perfectly in love (cf. Saint Macarius of Egypt, 4th c., *Spiritual Homilies*; Saint Seraphim of Sarov, 19th c., *Conversation with N. Molovilov*). Indeed, the Holy Spirit Himself is identified with God's love by the saints, as witnessed in the writings of St Simeon the New Theologian.

O Holy Love [i.e., the Holy Spirit of God], he who knows you not has never tasted the sweetness of your mercies which only living experience can give us. But he who has known you, or who has been known by you, can never have even the smallest doubt. For you are the fulfillment of the law, you who fills, burns, inflames, embraces my heart with a measureless love. You are the teacher of the prophets, the offspring of the apostles, the strength of the martyrs, the inspiration

of the fathers and masters, the perfecting of all the saints. Only you, O Love, prepare even me for the true service of God (Saint Simeon the New Theologian, 11th c, Homily 53).

Thus God who is Love enters into union with man through the Son of His love by the Spirit of love. To live in this divine love is the spiritual life.

The first definition of love as agape is love as the action of perfect goodness for the sake of the other. This is the most basic meaning of love: to do everything possible for the well-being of others. God Himself has this love as the very content of His being and life, for “God is agape.” It is with this love that spiritual persons must love first of all.

The second definition of love as eros is love for the sake of union with the other. Erotic love is no sin when it is free from sinful passions. It can be the utterly pure desire for communion with the other, including God. All spiritual writers have insisted that such love should exist between God and man as the pattern for all erotic love in the world between husband and wife). Thus the mystical writers and spiritual fathers have used the Old Testament’s Song of Songs as the poetic image of God’s love for man and man’s love for God (Philo the Jew, Gregory of Nyssa, Bernard of Clairvaux, John of the Cross, Richard Rolle in England, et al.). Indeed the prophets have used the image of erotic love in explaining the Lord’s relation with Israel (Is 54; Jer 2–3,31; Ezek 16; Hos). And Saint Paul uses this image for Christ’s love of the Church (Eph 6). In the scriptures, the union of man with the Lord in the Kingdom of God is primarily revealed in the image of eros (Mt 22, Rev 19–22).

... for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His Bride has made herself ready; it was granted to her to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure—for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints (Rev 19.7–8).

“Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb” (Rev 21.9).

The third type of love is friendship—phila. This also should exist between man and God. Man has no greater friend than God, and God Himself wants to be man’s friend. According to the scriptures, the very purpose of the coming of Christ was to dispel all enmity between God and man, and to establish the co-working of Creator and creature in the fellowship of friendship.

Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend (Ex 33.11).

Greater love has no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants [or slaves], for the servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father, I have made known to you (Jn 15: 13–15).

So it is that love as goodness, love as union, love as friendship are all to be found in God and man, between God and man, and between human beings. There is no form of true love which lays outside the realm of the spiritual life.

(OCA - The Orthodox Faith)