

St. Nicholas Orthodox Christian Church

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

Very Reverend Michael Speck – Pastor (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, November 10, 2024

20th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 3. Apostles of the Seventy: Erastus, Olympas, Herodion, Sosipater, Quartus, and Tertius (1st c.). Martyr Orestes the Physician of Cappadocia (204). Hieromartyr Milos the Wonderworker. Martyr Constantine, Prince of Georgia (852).



Saturday, November 9 – 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM– **Sisterhood Bazaar
– 5:00 PM – Great Vespers**

**Sunday, November 10 - 9:00 AM – Confessions
9:30 AM - Divine Liturgy followed by a
Panikhida for Members of the Johnson Family and Rocco Lupo
and Coffee Hour**

Wednesday, November 13 – 8:30 AM - Divine Liturgy

Saturday, November 16 - 5:00 PM – Great Vespers

**Sunday, November 17 – 8:40 AM – Adult Education
- 9:30 AM - Divine Liturgy**

Congratulations to Noah and Kaylee Donch and all of their family on the birth of their son James Emmanuel on Thursday, November 7 at 2:40 AM (9 lbs, 3 oz, 21 inches). May God Bless them all with Many Happy Years!

We also congratulate Nika and John Bitsko on the birth of their son Matthew. Nika is the daughter of Alan and Nancy Psolyar. Many Happy and Blessed years to them and their family.

Our Sisterhood Bazaar will take place tomorrow, Saturday, November 9 from 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM. Please tell friends and family and offer to help if possible.

We also thank you for your Food Pantry Ministry donations. Please continue your generous support so that we may assist as many people as possible as Thanksgiving and Christmas approach. Thank you very much!

Donations

\$200 for the General Fund in Memory of the Marko and Rodak families by an anonymous donor.

\$60 for 12 votive candles by Fr. Dn. Dave and Matushka Jonni Donch in celebration of Fr. Michael and Matushka Julie's 39th Wedding Anniversary

Apostles of the Seventy: Erastus, Olympas, Herodion, Sospater, Quartus, and Tertius



Commemorated on November 10

The holy Apostles Erastus, Sospater (April 28), Olympas (January 4), Rodion (April 8), Quartus and Tertius (October 30) were disciples of Saint Paul. They all lived during the first century. The Apostle to the Gentiles speaks of them in the Epistle to the Romans, “And Erastus, the city treasurer, greets you, and Quartus, a brother” (Rom 16: 23). Saint Sospater, a native of Achaia, was Bishop of Iconium, where he also died. Saint Paul mentions him in Romans 16:21.

Saint Olympas was mentioned by the holy Apostle Paul (Rom 16:15). He was also a companion of the Apostle Peter. Saint Rodion (Herodion), was a kinsman of the Apostle Paul (Romans 16:11), and left the bishop’s throne at Patras to go to Rome with the Apostle Peter. Saints Rodion and Olympas were beheaded on the very day and hour when Saint Peter was crucified. Saint Quartus endured much suffering for his piety and converted many pagans to Christ, dying peacefully as a bishop in the city of Beirut. Saint Tertius is mentioned in the Epistle to the Romans, “I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord” (Rom 16:22). Saint Tertius, to whom Saint Paul dictated the Epistle to the Romans, was the second Bishop of Iconium, where also he died.

Martyr Orestes, Physician of Cappadocia Commemorated on **Nov 10**

The Martyr Orestes the Physician lived in the city of Tyana in Cappadocia during the reign of Emperor Diocletian (284-311). Several Greek and Slavic sources state that Saint Orestes was a learned and skillful physician (γιατρός, врач), though

there is not much information about this period of his life. He was also an illustrious and capable soldier. From childhood he had been a devoted servant of Christ, offering a sacrifice of praise to God with a pure heart, and refusing to worship the demons which the pagans call "gods."

At the Emperor's command, the military officer Maximinus was sent to Tyana to stamp out Christianity, which by then had spread throughout Cappadocia. Orestes was among the first brought to trial before Maximinus. Courageously, he confessed his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The prosecutor offered the Saint riches, honors and fame if he would become an idolater, but Saint Orestes would not agree to this.

Maximinus tried in many ways, to force him to deny Christ. Even with the pressures they exerted upon him, they were unable to convince him to worship the idols. Then they stripped him naked, beat him up, and flogged him as a punishment. Afterward, he was put in jail for seven days. At the end of the seventh day he was taken to a pagan temple to offer sacrifice and worship to the idols. Maximinus asked him, "Do you still refuse to convert to the worship which is offered with such reverence by our august emperors?" Orestes replied that he was a willing subject when it came to political and earthly matters. Apart from that, however, he would not recognize any king except the one true God.

Maximinus ordered that Orestes be taken to a pagan temple and once again, demanded that he worship the idols. When he refused, forty soldiers took turns, one after the other, beating the holy martyr with lashes, with rods, with rawhide, and then they tormented him with fire. Saint Orestes cried out to the Lord, "Establish with me a sign for good, let those who hate me see it and be put to shame" (Psalm 85/86:17).

The Lord heard the prayer of His faithful servant. The earth began to tremble, and the idols toppled and were smashed. Everyone rushed out of the temple, and when Saint Orestes came out, the entire temple collapsed.

Infuriated, Maximinus ordered the holy martyr to be locked up in prison for seven days giving him neither food nor drink, and to resume the torture on the eighth day. They hammered twenty nails into the martyr's legs, and then tied him to a wild horse. Dragged over the stones, the holy martyr departed to the Lord in the year 304, and his relics were thrown into the sea.

What more can a good Samaritan do?

The famous parable of the Good Samaritan tells of a man being mugged and left half dead on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. The first to come upon him were a priest and a Levite, but they passed by. We're not told the reasons they passed by, but can speculate. The Levite, a "religious professional," was likely enroute to or from "work." The priest was perhaps fearful he'd defile himself and thus become unable to perform his priestly service by coming into contact with someone shedding blood. Maybe they were just running late, afraid they too would be mugged, or even that the wounded man was faking his injuries. This is worthy of thought. After all, don't we sometimes pass by needy neighbors for similar reasons?!

In any case, along comes our hero, the good Samaritan, who shows compassion to the beaten man, pouring oil and wine on his wounds—symbolic of the mysteries of the Church wherein Christ Himself is manifested as the good Samaritan to us, who are wounded by sin. After applying this primitive treatment, the Samaritan raises the bar in his compassion. He puts the wounded man on his own mule, transports him to a nearby inn, and gives money to the innkeeper to ensure the ongoing care and recovery of the wounded man. In addition, the Samaritan makes a pledge to reimburse the innkeeper for any further expenses incurred. So not only does the Samaritan take a personal interest in a needy neighbor—sharing his time, effort, wine, oil, money, and mule—but he also enlists the support of another. There is really no clearer call to charity than this parable. And as Jesus challenged an inquisitive lawyer to embrace compassion, so too our Holy Church repeatedly challenges us to "go and do likewise."

We're all well aware of the urgent and genuine needs of our neighbors. And since the Orthodox Church is pretty much everywhere in the world, the word "neighbor" for us has global application. No, we can't begin to help everyone, but neither can we violate Our Lord's commandment to show compassion to the wounded neighbors on our paths or our doorsteps.

Indeed, we should and do show our compassion by praying for them, but that's not enough. The Bible says, "If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit?" [James 2:14-

15]. It's akin to wishing 'Merry Christmas' to someone who's just lost everything. Our faith must blossom into good works, not just good wishes. Actions always speak louder than words. In fact, in the parable, we notice the absence of words. The Samaritan didn't interrogate the wounded man, he just acted. What wounded neighbors need is not rhetoric but resources. In identifying Himself with the least of the brethren, Our Lord says, "I was hungry and you gave me food," not "I was hungry and you formed a task force to discuss it or you applied for a government grant." Our financial donations toward various charities, though helping to empower the Church to show compassion on our behalf, don't absolve us from personal responsibility.

But there is yet another way for us to show compassion for our neighbors that's not related in the parable. It's simply this: If we really love our neighbors, we will also make every effort to warn them not to travel dangerous paths!

The road from Jerusalem to Jericho, where the beaten man had been mugged, had a reputation among locals as being an extremely dangerous one. Some historians refer to it as the "road of blood," upon which unscrupulous robbers hid, waiting to pounce on new victims. So the story of the good Samaritan would've been a "non-story" had some compassionate neighbor told the traveler, "You're risking your life if you go that way!" Instead of being called "the good Samaritan," he could've been called "the foolish traveler!"

If we see people following dangerous paths in their lives, if we really love them, isn't one of the best ways to show them our love to warn them of danger? As parents, we show compassion to our children in exactly this way—"don't run into the street, don't touch a hot stove, don't get into a car with strangers, don't hang around with bad people, don't do drugs, etc." Many roads in life are full of danger. Yet how often do we see neighbors following such grievous paths and remain silent or pass them by? Perhaps we ourselves are, knowingly or unknowingly, on such paths, and only the compassion of another can save us from being wounded, beaten or destroyed, or at least incite us to consider an alternate, safer route.

In this sense, the Church must intentionally strive to fulfill the role of Christ as the good Samaritan. The Church is to be a lighthouse that guides lost and wandering souls to the Kingdom of God—"a haven of peace in a tortured world." Thus, the Church is a life-saving station that nurtures that equips and dispatches good Samaritans to be neighbors to others, or a spiritual GPS that displays the

preferred path to a desired destination and warns of the dangers inherent on other roads.

Each of us has, in our individual lives, been beaten, bruised, wounded and left for dead, in one way or the other, by the “thugs” of passions and sin. But, thanks be to God, Jesus Christ has repeatedly been—and will forever be—our good Samaritan, applying His healing oil and wine to our wounds in the Mysteries of His Holy Church.

Especially as our thoughts now turn to Advent, Thanksgiving and the Great Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord, may our love for our neighbor truly take flesh in doing God’s will, so that we in the Church truly may be the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world,” for that’s what our good Samaritan, Jesus Christ, calls us to be—and *do!*

Fr. Daniel Kovalek

OCA Reflections in Christ