

ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

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

Very Reverend Michael Speck – Pastor

(315) 246-6051 - mspeck100@gmail.com

Office Hours Thursday from 2PM to 4PM or 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, March 19, 2023

Cross Veneration



Saturday, March 18 – 8:30 AM Divine Liturgy

- 5:00 PM Vespers

Sunday, March 19 – 8:40 AM - Adult Education

-9:30 AM Divine Liturgy Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday, March 22 – 8:30 AM – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Friday, March 24 – 5:00 PM - Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Saturday, March 25 – 8:30 AM Divine Liturgy - Holy Annunciation

- 5:00 PM Vespers

Sunday, March 26 - -8:40 AM Adult Education

- 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

Panikhida for David Lupo Jr.

Please remember that Holy Confession is required of all Orthodox Christians at a minimum annually.

Confessions are available on Wednesday mornings at 8:00 AM and Friday afternoons at 4:15 PM before Presanctified Liturgies, Saturday mornings at 8:00 AM before Divine Liturgies, and 4:15 PM Saturday evenings before Vespers.

Please don't wait until the final weeks of Great Lent.

Donation

\$50 in Memory of James Rosschik by Martha Clymer for the General Fund

The flowers adorning the Holy Cross were donated in memory of David Lupo Jr. May his Memory be Eternal!

Archbishop Michael has approved the members of the 2023-2024 Parish Council. Installation of council members will take place this Sunday following the homily. Thanks you all for your service to our church!

Pascha bread orders will be accepted by the St. Marion Sisterhood until this Sunday, March 19. Please find order forms at the back of the church or speak to any Sisterhood members to place your order.

Archbishop Michael will be visiting our parish on Saturday, April 1 for Vespers and April 2 for Divine Liturgy. We plan to have a Lenten Luncheon in the church hall after Divine Liturgy. Please join us and consider bringing a Lenten dish or dessert. Thanks!

Martyr Drosis, daughter of Emperor Trajan



Commemorated on March 22

The Holy Martyr Drosis, and five Virgin Martyrs with her: Agalida (Αγλαΐδα), Apollinaria (Απολλινάρια), Daria (Δαρεία), Mamousa (Μαμούσα), and Thaïs (Θαΐς).

Saint Drosis was the daughter of Emperor Trajan (98-117), a fierce persecutor of Christians. In the year 99 he revived an earlier law which forbade secret gatherings, and applied it to the Christians. In the year 104 he issued a special edict against Christians.

Beginning in that year, the persecutions continued until the end of his reign. The bodies of martyred Christians often remained unburied in order to intimidate others. Five Christian virgins: Agalida, Apollinaria, Daria, Mamousa, and Thaïs, took upon themselves the task of burying such Christians. In secret, they took the Martyrs' bodies, anointed them with spices, wrapped them in shrouds, and buried them.

When she learned of this, Drosis, who was a secret Christian (but not yet baptized) asked the holy virgins to take her with them when they went to bury Christians. Hadrian, an advisor to the Emperor, who was also the suitor of Drosis, informed Trajan of the women's activities. A guard was posted over those who had been killed, with orders to arrest anyone who attempted to bury them. Saint Drosis and the five virgins were caught on the very first night. Learning that one of the captives was his own daughter, Trajan ordered her to be held separately, hoping that she would change her mind.

The five Holy Virgin Martyrs were sentenced to burn in a furnace for melting copper. They went to their death courageously, and received their imperishable crowns of martyrdom. This copper, mingled with the ashes of the Martyrs, was used to make tripods for the new public bath which Trajan had built. As long as these tripods stood in the bath, no one could enter it. Whoever crossed the threshold was struck dead at once. When the pagan priests realized why this was happening, they ordered the tripods to be removed and melted down. Then Hadrian suggested that the Emperor should have five bronze statues of naked virgins made to resemble the Martyrs, and place them before the entrance to the public bath.

When the statues were in place, Trajan saw in a dream five pure lambs pastured in Paradise, and the Shepherd who said to him, “O most wanton and wicked Caesar! Those whose images you placed there to be mocked have been taken away from you and brought here by the Good and Merciful Shepherd. In time your daughter, the pure lamb Drosis, shall be here as well.”

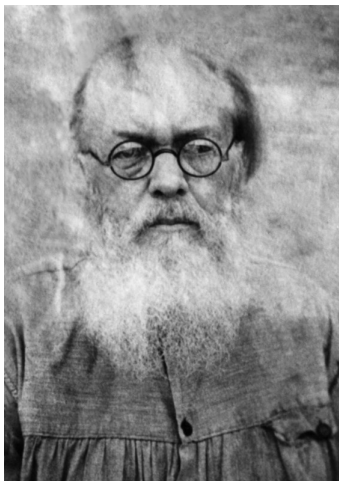
When he awoke, Trajan was furious, and ordered two huge furnaces to be heated. Nearby, an imperial edict was posted: You who worship the Crucified one; save yourselves from a lot of suffering, and also spare us these labors. Offer sacrifice to the gods. If you do not wish to do this, however, then let each of you voluntarily cast himself into this furnace.” Many Christians chose martyrdom.

When she heard of this, Saint Drosis also decided to suffer martyrdom for Christ. She prayed in her prison, asking the Lord to set her free. God heard her prayer, and the guards fell asleep. Saint Drosis went to the furnace, but she wondered: “How can I go to God without a wedding garment (i.e., without being baptized), for I am impure? But, O King of Kings, Lord Jesus Christ, for Your sake I give up my imperial rank, so that I might become the lowliest handmaiden in Your Kingdom. Baptize me Yourself by Your Holy Spirit.”

After praying in this manner, Saint Drosis anointed herself with myrrh [chrism], which she had brought with her, and immersing herself in water three times, she said: “The handmaiden of God Drosis is baptized in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

The Saint hid for seven days, spending her time in fasting and prayer. Some Christians found her and learned from her everything that had occurred. On the eighth day, the Holy Martyr Drosis went to the furnace and cast herself into the fire.¹

On Patience: For the Sunday of the Veneration of the Holy Cross



St. Luke (Voino-Yasnetsky) the Blessed Surgeon of Simferopol , 1937.

In the Gospel according to Luke, we read the profoundly important word of Christ: *In your patience save ye your souls* (Luke 21:19). Oh our Lord, Lord! What art Thou saying? Is the virtue of patience really so enormous, of such limitless significance, that it can even save our souls?

If, according to the word of Christ, patience is so salutary, then it can be placed next to the queen of all virtues: humility, right next to meekness, and we need to ponder deeply about the Lord's word about patience. Let us try, so far as our weak minds can manage, to understand the meaning of Christ's words. In order to do so, we need to remember that man is made up of spirit, soul, and body, and that everything difficult in our lives – illnesses, everyday grief, offences, and humiliations – we undergo in our tripartite natures: in spirit, in soul, and in body. Physical pain and suffering from illnesses are usually perceived in the highest degree by our soul and spirit. Our brain and our whole nervous system direct all the normal and diseased processes in our body, regulating and coordinating them. And our spirit reigns over the soul.

In the lives of Christ's Holy Martyrs, we read with astonishment about how easily and calmly they underwent unimaginably terribly torments and tortures. This is incomprehensible to materialists, and they consider these to be fables; but we know that the spirit of the martyrs, enflamed with boundless faith in Christ and

love for Him, had enormous power over their bodies and could powerfully alleviate their sufferings.

We know that in modern medicine no small role is played by so-called psychotherapy – that is, in verbal, psychological actions on the sick – which often has a powerful and beneficial effect on the course of the illness. If patience had such a great and beneficial effect on the saints in their torments, then most likely murmuring against God and the screams and cries of sinful people can only increase their suffering.

But when we, Christians, suffer a painful disease, and first of all think of doctors and medicines, would it not be better if we first remembered the longsuffering of our Lord Jesus Christ, Whom the Prophet Isaiah called a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief?

We can say the same about the endurance of offences. Are we able, as we should and as is pleasing to God, to bear offences and insults inflicted upon us?

Oh no, to our shame, no. Even in our Christian environment we see how it often happens that one who has not acquired the virtues of humility and patience answer offence with offence and insult with insult. And quarrels flame up more and more and reach the point of fights, and even bloodshed.

But a silent, peaceful bearing of offence is the best protection against the offender. Nothing so restrains those who offend as the meek bearing of offences.

God protects those who patiently endure offences. Yes, you should follow the example of the majority of our contemporaries, who attach great importance to the strengthening and enhancing of their physical fitness. But we need to take constant care not so much of the culture of the body, so much as the perfecting of the spirit, for which the exercise of patience plays such a great role, in uncomplaining patience even in serious illness, in the benign endurance of offence and insult, in curbing gossip, and in the acquisition of the great virtue of patience.

Let us remember the testimony of the Apostle Peter, in his first Catholic Epistle, about the imitation of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who *when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously. Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the*

tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes we were healed (1 Peter 2:23-24).

I will also remind you of the words of the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews, in which he speaks of the great sufferings in the persecutions that the great righteous ones endured. Of these *others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection. And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains and in dens and caves of the earth...*

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds (Hebrews 11:35-38; 12:1-3).

I conclude my sermon with the good wishes of the Apostle Paul: *And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ (2 Thessalonians 3:5).*

Amen.