

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

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

Very Reverend Michael Speck – Pastor

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Office Hours Thursday from 2PM to 4PM or by Appointment

Reverend Deacon David Donch Reverend Deacon Michael W. Speck
Sr. Warden - Greg Michaels Jr. Warden - Rocco Lupo of Blessed Memory
Reader Nathaniel Donch

Sunday, November 28, 2021



Schedule of Services and Activities

Sunday, November 28 – 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

Wednesday, December 1 – 8:30 AM Divine Liturgy

Friday, December 3 – Pierogi Making

Saturday, December 4 – Pierogi Making

- 5:00 PM Vespers

**Sunday, December 5 – 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy with Coffee Hour and
Parish Council Meeting**

- 5:00 PM – Vespers

Monday, December 6 – 8:30 AM Divine Liturgy - Feast of St. Nicholas

Upcoming Events

Friday, December 3 – Pierogi Making

Saturday, December 4 - Pierogi Making

Sunday, December 5 –Parish Council Meeting following Divine Liturgy

Monday, December 6 – Feast of St. Nicholas

Thursday, December 9 – Sauerkraut Pierogi Making

Friday, December 10 - Sauerkraut Pierogi Making

Saturday, December 11- Sauerkraut Pierogi Making

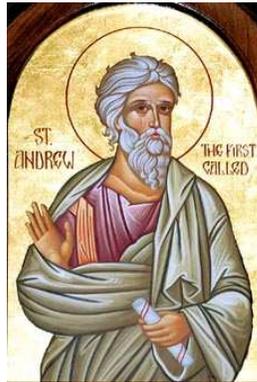
Sunday, December 12 – Sisterhood Meeting

Sunday, January 2, 2022 – Christmas Social following Divine Liturgy

Donation

*\$15 to the Parish Hall Fund in Memory of Rocco Lupo by Mr.
Thomas Longley*

Apostle Andrew, the Holy and All-Praised First-Called



Commemorated on [November 30](#)

The Holy Apostle Andrew the First-Called was the first of the Apostles to follow Christ, and he later brought his own brother, the holy Apostle Peter, to Christ (John 1:35-42). The future apostle was from Bethsaida, and from his youth he turned with all his soul to God. He did not enter into marriage, and he worked with his brother as a fisherman. When the holy Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John began to preach, Saint Andrew became his closest disciple. Declaring Christ to be the Lamb of God, Saint John the Baptist himself sent to Christ his own two disciples, the future Apostles Andrew and John the Theologian. After the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, Saint Andrew went to the Eastern lands preaching the Word of God. He went through Asia Minor, Thrace, Macedonia, he reached the River Danube, went along the coast of the Black Sea, through Crimea, the Black Sea region and along the River Dniepr he climbed to the place where the city of Kiev now stands.

He stopped overnight on the hills of Kiev. Rising in the morning, he said to those disciples that were with him: "See these hills? Upon these hills shall shine forth the beneficence of God, and there will be a great city here, and God shall raise up many churches." The apostle went up around the hills, blessed them and set up a cross. Having prayed, he went up even further along the Dniepr and reached a settlement of the Slavs, where Novgorod was built. From here the apostle went through the land of the Varangians towards Rome for preaching, and again he returned to Thrace, where in the small village of Byzantium, the future Constantinople, he founded the Church of Christ. The name of the holy Apostle Andrew links the mother, the Church of Constantinople, with her daughter, the Russian Church. On his journeys the First-Called Apostle endured many sufferings and torments from pagans: they cast him out of their cities and they beat him. In Sinope they pelted him with stones, but remaining unharmed, the persistent disciple of Christ continued

to preach to people about the Savior. Through the prayers of the Apostle, the Lord worked miracles. By the labors of the holy Apostle Andrew, Christian Churches were established, for which he provided bishops and clergy. The final city to which the Apostle came was the city of Patra, where he was destined to suffer martyrdom. The Lord worked many miracles through His disciple in Patra. The infirm were made whole, and the blind received their sight. Through the prayers of the Apostle, the illustrious citizen Sosios recovered from serious illness and Maximilla and Stratokles, the wife and brother of the governor of Patra, were healed. The miracles accomplished by the Apostle and his fiery speech enlightened almost all the citizens of the city of Patra with the true Faith. Few pagans remained at Patra, but among them was the prefect of the city, Aegeatos. The Apostle Andrew repeatedly turned to him with the words of the Gospel. But even the miracles of the Apostle did not convince Aegeatos. The holy Apostle with love and humility appealed to his soul, striving to reveal to him the Christian mystery of life eternal, through the wonderworking power of the Holy Cross of the Lord. The angry Aegeatos gave orders to crucify the apostle. The pagan thought he might undo Saint Andrew's preaching if he were to put him to death on the cross.

Saint Andrew the First-Called accepted the decision of the prefect with joy and with prayer to the Lord, and went willingly to the place of execution. In order to prolong the suffering of the saint, Aegeatos gave orders not to nail the saint's hands and feet, but to tie them to the cross. For two days the apostle taught the citizens who gathered about. The people, in listening to him, with all their souls pitied him and tried to take Saint Andrew down from the cross. Fearing a riot of the people, Aegeatos gave orders to stop the execution. But the holy apostle began to pray that the Lord would grant him death on the cross. Just as the soldiers tried to take hold of the Apostle Andrew, they lost control of their hands. The crucified apostle, having given glory to God, said: "Lord Jesus Christ, receive my spirit." Then a blazing ray of divine light illumined the cross and the martyr crucified upon it. When the light faded, the holy Apostle Andrew had already given up his holy soul to the Lord. Maximilla, the wife of the prefect, had the body of the saint taken down from the cross, and buried him with honor.

A few centuries later, under the emperor Constantine the Great, the relics of the holy Apostle Andrew were solemnly transferred to Constantinople and placed in the church of the Holy Apostles beside the relics of the holy Evangelist Luke and Saint Paul's disciple Saint Timothy.

St. Dorotheos on Anger and Animosity

True happiness comes not from the abundance of possessions but from the quality of human relationships. Healthy relationships are marked by respect for others, humility, honesty, truthfulness, willingness to speak calmly and clear up misunderstandings, readiness to settle disputes fairly, and having the ability to reconcile and move on through good will and the gift of forgiveness. Wherever such traits are present in a marriage, a family, a community, or society in general, there also are to be found expressions of harmony, contentment, peace and true joy.

The enemies of healthy human relationships are ignorance, insensitivity, selfishness, evil desires, arrogance and blind pride. Such dispositions degrade human life and cause untold suffering and pain. They produce all sorts of misunderstandings, conflicts, animosities and bitterness between people. Because of human weakness and propensity to misunderstanding, even a passing unkind word or a small thoughtless act can lead to serious consequences in personal relationships. Therefore much vigilance is required to sustain good will between people, and where trust is compromised, much care is needed to make things right.

In a discourse on “Rancor” Dorotheos of Gaza (sixth century) provides helpful teaching on how to deal with issues of conflict and their consequences.

St. Dorotheos’ first line of advice has to do with knowledge. Clear knowledge gives a person better leverage in dealing with conflict. The saint draws a distinction between stages in the process of conflict: provocation, disturbance of mind, anger, rage and animosity or rancor. He illustrates his teaching with the help of the following example.

When someone lights a fire, he must start with a spark, let us say, by striking a match. The spark is a brother’s or sister’s provocative word or act. If you can deal with it sensibly, the spark goes out. But if you pick up on it and allow it to grab your attention, you give it life. It is like adding “a small bit of wood to the flame, or some bit of fuel, and you produce some smoke, that is disturbance of mind.” The more you think about it, the more your feelings turn into anger and anger turns into inward rage. It is like piling logs on the fire which blazes potentially beyond control. You torment yourself and are ready to fly at the offending person, and also others at any time, because of the inner turmoil. Unless resolved, time turns these feelings of anger into lingering animosity or rancor. The Greek word is *mnesikakia*, literally

remembrance of evils or wrongs done. This state is defined by deep seated ill will, spiteful animosity and bitterness toward another human being.

But how is a person to deal with provocations sensibly? St. Dorotheos counsels to keep his teaching in view and to know the difference between annoyance, temper, losing one's temper, and lapsing into rancor. With this knowledge be prepared ahead of time. Make it a matter of spiritual strategy to cut off the process of conflict at the start. Stand back, take a deep breath, think before you speak or act, and have alternative ways of responding to situations when sparks are ready to fly. Do not allow annoyance to turn into anger and anger into rancor. "When a passion arises, when it is young and feeble, cut it off, lest it stiffen and cause you a great deal of trouble. It is one thing to pluck out a small weed and quite another thing to uproot a great tree."

Each of us can think of positive ways of responding to provocations. Sometimes it is best to keep silence and take up the matter at a more opportune time. Or a person can speak softly and ask questions of clarification: "What makes you feel that way? Can you please explain what you mean? Or a person can humbly excuse themselves, saying "I am very sorry you feel that way. I did not mean to offend you. Let's calm down and talk about it." We can let the moment pass and at another time address an offender with patient words: "John or Mary, what you said the other day really hurt me. Can we take some time and talk about it. I value our relationship. Let's try to clear up the misunderstanding." There are ways to find the right words and speak with the right tone voice to keep the fire from flaring up with the risk of consuming those involved.

St. Dorotheos pays special attention to the human tendency and desire to get even and render evil for evil. He recalls Psalm 7:5 where we pray to God, "If I have paid back evil for evil, let me fall down defenseless before my enemies." To commit evil for evil is to work against our own self. The saint explains: "The 'falling' means no longer to have the power to get up. The 'defenseless' means not to have anything good left in us by which we may at length get up again." We are in danger of losing "our capacity for acting virtuously, or power of right action" by wanting to get even. There are different ways of rendering evil for evil, not only by words and actions but also by attitudes, movements and looks, all of which must be discerned and avoided. A cold shoulder speaks volumes of resentment in the heart. A disdainful glance can serve as an arrow tipped with malice. Furthermore, although a person may not harbor a complaint or resentment against a brother, but then that same

person is amused and is glad when someone else reviles that brother. Another person may not be annoyed by a brother, but then the same person is not gracious enough to be glad when something good happens to that brother or when that brother is praised by others. All these ways are, according to St. Dorotheos, subtle forms of rendering evil for evils and expressions of hidden rancor. They must be carefully discerned, combated and confessed to God. Christ's charge was to love our enemies and pray for them. St. Paul taught: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21).

However, knowledge alone and defense strategies are not enough in themselves to deal effectively with provocations and wrongs committed. The intervening grace of God is absolutely crucial in limiting conflict and bringing about reconciliation and healing. At the first spark of conflict, prayer is the most positive and effective response as both background and inspiration to all other useful approaches. Prayer is an inner secure place of peace and reflection, where a human being can find the resources to deal most thoroughly with conflicts and personal hurts. In the Orthodox tradition the "Jesus Prayer" ("Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me") is given as a "battle ax" against all trials and temptations. It can be adapted to a short invocation as circumstance require, such as "Lord, have mercy!" or "Lord, give me strength, or give me patience, or give me light to deal with this problem." When sparks light up, invoking the Jesus Prayer helps the soul to take refuge in its own spiritual home, defusing anger, and holding back words or actions that would prove regrettable.

St. Dorotheos suggests a silent and humble prayer of the heart which lifts up the dignity of the offender himself. "O God, help my brother and me, through his prayers!" With these words a person intercedes for his brother or sister, a sure sign of sympathy and love, and he is humbling himself by asking help from God through the offender's prayers. St. Dorotheos asks: "Where there is sympathy and love and humility, how can wrath and other passions develop?" He quotes a saying from Evagrius the Ascetic: "The man who prays for his enemies is a man without rancor." Praying for the wellness and salvation of our adversaries provides the surest path to being healed from resentments and to preparing the ground for healing and peace. St. Dorotheos ends his treatise with this prayerful counsel: "May God give us to remember and keep what we have heard [learned], lest it bring us a heavy sentence on the day of judgment." Pray for us, O saint of God!

Source: Orthodox Christian Reflections

Fr. Theodore Stylianopoulos