

Holy Assumption Orthodox Church

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regular office hours: Wednesdays and Fridays 10:00 am to 1:30 pm

Sunday of Zacchæus

January 17th, 2010

The paschal season of the Church is preceded by the season of Great Lent, which is also preceded by its own liturgical preparation. The first sign of the approach of Great Lent comes five Sundays before its beginning. On this Sunday the Gospel reading is about Zacchæus the tax-collector. It tells how Christ brought salvation to the sinful man, and how his life was changed simply because he "sought to see who Jesus was" (Luke 19:3). The desire and effort to see Jesus begins the entire movement through Lent towards Pascha. It is the first movement of salvation.



Our lenten journey begins with a recognition of our own sinfulness, just as Zacchæus recognized his. He promised to make restitution by giving half of his wealth to the poor, and by paying to those he had falsely accused four times as much as they had lost. In this, he went beyond the requirements of the Law (Ex. 22:3-

12).

The example of Zacchæus teaches us that we should turn away from our sins, and atone for them. The real proof of our sorrow and repentance is not just a verbal apology, but when we correct ourselves and try to make amends for the consequences of our evil actions.

We are also assured of God's mercy and compassion by Christ's words to Zacchæus, "Today salvation is come to this house" (Luke 19:9). After the Great Doxology at Sunday Matins (when the Tone of the week is Tone 1, 3, 5, 7) we sing the Dismissal Hymn of the Resurrection "Today salvation has come to the world," which echoes the Lord's words to Zacchæus.

Zacchæus was short, so he climbed a tree in order to see the Lord. All of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). We are also short in our spiritual stature, therefore we must climb the ladder of the virtues. In other words, we must prepare for spiritual effort and growth.

32nd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 7. Sunday of Zacchæus. Venerable and Godbearing Father Anthony the Great (356). Ven. Anthony of Dymsk (Novgorod—ca. 1224). Ven. Anthony of Chernozérsk (16th c.).

Tone 7 Troparion (*Resurrection*)

By Your Cross You destroyed death.
To the thief You opened Paradise.
For the Myrrhbearers You changed weeping into joy.
And You commanded Your disciples, O Christ God,
to proclaim that You are risen,//
granting the world great mercy.

Tone 4 Troparion

(*Father Anthony the Great*)

You imitated the ways of zealous Elijah,
and followed the straight path of John the Baptist.
You became a desert dweller
and strengthened the world by your prayers.//
Father Anthony, intercede with Christ God that our souls
may be saved.

Tone 7 Kontakion (*Resurrection*)

The dominion of death can no longer hold mankind captive,
for Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers.
Hell is bound, while the Prophets rejoice and cry:
"The Savior has come to those in faith;//
enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!"

Tone 2 Kontakion (*Father Anthony the Great*)

You rejected the tumult of this life
and lived your life to the end in solitude, imitating the
Baptist in every way.
With him we honor you, most venerable Anthony,//
foundation of the Fathers.

Tone 7 Prokeimenon

The Lord shall give strength to His people. The Lord shall
bless His people with peace. (*Ps 28/29:11*)

*v: Offer to the Lord, O you sons of God! Offer young rams to the
Lord! (*Ps 28/29:1*)*

Tone 7 Prokeimenon

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.
(*Ps 115/116:15*)

Tone 7

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

*v: It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Your
Name, O Most High. (*Ps 91/92:1*)*

*v: To declare Your mercy in the morning, and Your truth by
night. (*Ps 91/92:2*)*

Tone 6

*v. Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in
His commandments. (*Ps 111/112:1*)*

1 Timothy 4:9-15 (Epistle)

9 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.

10 For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.

11 These things command and teach.

12 Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

13 Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

14 Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.

15 Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.



Hebrews 13:17-21 (Epistle, Saint)

17 Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

18 Pray for us; for we are confident that we have a good conscience, in all things desiring to live honorably.

19 But I especially urge you to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

20 Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

21 make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Luke 19:1-10 (Gospel, Saint)

1 Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.

2 Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich.

3 And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature.

4 So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way.

5 And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house."

6 So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully.

7 But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner."

8 Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold."

9 And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham;

10 for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Luke 6:17-23 (Gospel, Saint)

17 And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases,

18 as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed.

19 And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all.

20 Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: Blessed are you poor, For yours is the kingdom of God.

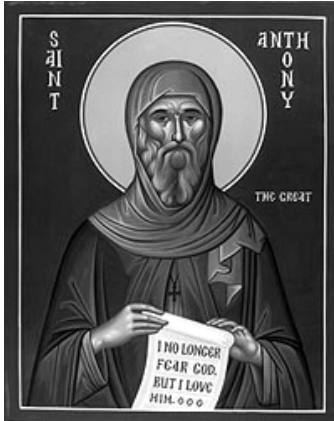
21 Blessed are you who hunger now, For you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, For you shall laugh.

22 Blessed are you when men hate you, And when they exclude you, And revile you, and cast out your name as evil, For the Son of Man's sake.

23 Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

Saint Anthony the Great

Saint Anthony the Great is known as the Father of monasticism, and the long ascetical sermon in *The Life of St Anthony* by St Athanasius (Sections 16-34), could be called the first monastic Rule.



He was born in Egypt in the village of Coma, near the desert of the Thebaid, in the year 251. His parents were pious Christians of illustrious lineage. Anthony was a serious child and was respectful and obedient to his parents. He loved to attend church services, and he listened to the Holy Scripture so attentively, that he remembered what he heard all his life.

When St Anthony was about twenty years old, he lost his parents, but he was responsible for the care of his younger sister. Going to church about six months later, the youth reflected on how the faithful, in the Acts of the Apostles (4:35), sold their possessions and gave the proceeds to the Apostles for the needy.

Then he entered the church and heard the Gospel passage where Christ speaks to the rich young man: "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come follow Me" (Mt. 19:21). Anthony felt that these words applied to him. Therefore, he sold the property that he received after the death of his parents, then distributed the money to the poor, and left his sister in the care of pious virgins in a convent.

Leaving his parental home, St Anthony began his ascetical life in a hut not far from his village. By working with his hands, he was able to earn his livelihood and also alms for the poor. Sometimes, the holy youth also visited other ascetics living in the area, and from each he sought direction and benefit. He turned to one particular ascetic for guidance in the spiritual life.

In this period of his life St Anthony endured terrible temptations from the devil. The Enemy of the race of man troubled the young ascetic with thoughts of his former life, doubts about his chosen path, concern for his sister, and he tempted Anthony with lewd thoughts and carnal feelings. But the saint extinguished that fire by meditating on Christ and by thinking of eternal punishment, thereby overcoming the devil.

Realizing that the devil would undoubtedly attack him in another manner, St Anthony prayed and intensified his efforts. Anthony prayed that the Lord would show him the path of salvation. And he was granted a vision. The ascetic beheld a man, who by turns alternately finished a prayer, and then began to work. This was an angel, which the Lord had sent to instruct His chosen one.

St Anthony tried to accustom himself to a stricter way of life. He partook of food only after sunset, he spent all night praying until dawn. Soon he slept only every third day. But the devil would not cease his tricks, and trying to scare the monk, he appeared under the guise of monstrous phantoms. The saint however protected himself with the Life-Creating Cross. Finally the Enemy appeared to him in the guise of a frightful looking black child, and hypocritically declaring himself beaten, he thought he could tempt the saint into vanity and pride. The saint, however, vanquished the Enemy with prayer.

For even greater solitude, St Anthony moved farther away from the village, into a graveyard. He asked a friend to bring him a little bread on designated days, then shut himself in a tomb. Then the devils pounced upon the saint intending to kill him, and inflicted terrible wounds upon him. By the providence of the Lord, Anthony's friend arrived the next day to bring him his food. Seeing him lying on the ground as if dead, he took him back to the village. They thought the saint was dead and prepared for his burial. At midnight, St Anthony regained consciousness and told his friend to carry him back to the tombs.

St Anthony's staunchness was greater than the wiles of the Enemy. Taking the form of ferocious beasts, the devils tried to force the saint to leave that place, but he defeated them by trusting in the Lord. Looking up, the saint saw the roof opening, as it were, and a ray of light coming down toward him. The demons disappeared and he cried out, "Where have You been, O Merciful Jesus? Why didn't You appear from the very beginning to end my pain?"

The Lord replied, "I was here, Anthony, but wanted to see your struggle. Now, since you have not yielded, I shall always help you and make your name known throughout all the world." After this vision St Anthony was healed of his wounds and felt stronger than before. He was then thirty-five years of age.

Having gained spiritual experience in his struggle with the devil, St Anthony considered going into the Thebaid desert to serve the Lord. He asked the Elder (to whom he had turned for guidance at the beginning of his monastic journey) to go into the desert with him. The Elder, while blessing him in the then as yet unheard of exploit of being a hermit, decided not to accompany him because of his age.

St Anthony went into the desert alone. The devil tried to hinder him, by placing a large silver disc in his path, then gold, but the saint ignored it and passed by. He found an abandoned fort on the other side of the river and settled there, barricading the entrance with stones. His faithful friend brought him bread twice a year, and there was water inside the fort.

St Anthony spent twenty years in complete isolation and constant struggle with the demons, and he finally achieved perfect calm. The saint's friends removed the stones from the entrance, and they went to St Anthony and besought him to take them under his guidance. Soon St Anthony's cell was surrounded by several monasteries, and the saint acted as a father and guide to their inhabitants, giving spiritual instruction to all who came into the desert seeking salvation. He increased the zeal of those who were already monks, and inspired others with a love for the ascetical life. He told them to strive to please the Lord, and not to become faint-hearted in their labors. He also urged them not to fear demonic assaults, but to repel the Enemy by the power of the Life-Creating Cross of the Lord.

In the year 311 there was a fierce persecution against Christians, in the reign of the emperor Maximian. Wishing to suffer with the holy martyrs, St Anthony left the desert and went to Alexandria. He openly ministered to those in prison, he was present at the trial and interrogations of the confessors, and accompanying the martyrs to the place of execution. It pleased the Lord to preserve him, however, for the benefit of Christians.

At the close of the persecution, the saint returned to the desert and continued his exploits. The Lord granted the saint the gift of wonderworking, casting out demons and healing the sick by the power of his prayer. The great crowds of people coming to him disrupted his solitude, and he went off still farther, into the inner desert where he settled atop a high elevation. But the brethren of the monasteries sought him out and asked him to visit their

communities.

Another time St Anthony left the desert and arrived in Alexandria to defend the Orthodox Faith against the Manichaean and Arian heresies. Knowing that the name of St Anthony was venerated by all the Church, the Arians said that he adhered to their heretical teaching. But St Anthony publicly denounced Arianism in front of everyone and in the presence of the bishop. During his brief stay at Alexandria, he converted a great multitude of pagans to Christ.

People from all walks of life loved the saint and sought his advice. Pagan philosophers once came to Abba Anthony intending to mock him for his lack of education, but by his words he reduced them to silence. Emperor Constantine the Great (May 21) and his sons wrote to St Anthony and asked him for a reply. He praised the emperor for his belief in Christ, and advised him to remember the future judgment, and to know that Christ is the true King.

St Anthony spent eighty-five years in the solitary desert. Shortly before his death, he told the brethren that soon he would be taken from them. He instructed them to preserve the Orthodox Faith in its purity, to avoid any association with heretics, and not to be negligent in their monastic struggles. "Strive to be united first with the Lord, and then with the saints, so that after death they may receive you as familiar friends into the everlasting dwellings."

The saint instructed two of his disciples, who had attended him in the final fifteen years of his life, to bury him in the desert and not in Alexandria. He left one of his monastic mantles to St Athanasius of Alexandria (January 18), and the other to St Serapion of Thmuis (March 21). St Anthony died peacefully in the year 356, at age 105, and he was buried in the desert by his disciples.

The Life of the famed ascetic St Anthony the Great was written by St Athanasius of Alexandria. This is the first biography of a saint who was not a martyr, and is considered to be one of the finest of St Athanasius' writings. St John Chrysostom recommends that this Life be read by every Christian.

"These things are insignificant compared with Anthony's virtues," writes St Athanasius, "but judge from them what the man of God Anthony was like. From his youth until his old age, he kept his zeal for asceticism, he did not give in to the desire for costly foods because of his age, nor did he alter his clothing because of the infirmity of his body. He did not even wash his feet with water. He remained very healthy, and he could see well because his eyes were sound and undimmed. Not one of his teeth fell out, but near the gums they had become worn due to his advanced age. He remained strong in his hands and feet.... He was spoken of everywhere, and was admired by everyone, and was sought even by those who had not seen him, which is evidence of his virtue and of a soul dear to God."

Abba Anthony said:
"A time is coming when people will go mad and when they see someone who is not mad, they will attack him, saying, "You are mad, you are not like us."

"Whoever you may be, always have God before your eyes; whatever you do, do it in accordance with the testimony of the Holy Scriptures; in whatever place you live, do not easily leave it. Keep these three precepts and you will be saved."

Announcements:

There will be a Cleveland Deanery "Altar Servers Rally" on Monday, January 18 at Archangel Michael Orthodox Church in Broadview Heights. See the Bulletin Board for details.

January 17 - Installation of 2010 Officers

Feb. 1 - Vespertal Liturgy 6:00 pm for The Meeting of the Lord in the Temple

DIRECTORY CORRECTIONS (any additional corrections for posting in the bulletin-send to kkishawise@aol.com and Steven at...)

Erin Haywood - (260) 348-2233

Eleni Byrnes - yiayia60@sbcglobal.net

Anyone interested in being on a Beautification Committee (listing and prioritizing beautification ideas) should see Sarah Emmert or Rick Hoffman. Sarah will be setting a date to meet within the month.

There will be a memorial prayer service for the unborn who suffered death by abortion on Friday Jan 22. The Orthodox churches of Stark county are cooperating with the Byzantine Catholics on this, and it will be at St George Romanian Catholic Cathedral at 11 am on Friday Jan 22. Address is 1121 - 44th St. NE Canton, OH 44714

There will be choir practices every Saturday after Great Vespers for about a 1/2 hour.

please email announcements for bulletin by Friday to stevenmatthewson@gmail.com or call steven at 330-455-2859 (leave message)

Sunday of Orthodoxy Choir Practices

The first Sunday of Lent is February 21

Rehearsals will be held at Holy Trinity Greek Church
4705 Fairhaven Ave. NW
at 6:30 pm Heidi will be directing the choir.

Thursday, January 28

Thursday, February 4

Thursday, February 11

Thursday, February 18

We will need to make a conscience effort and commitment to the singing for this service as a combined community praising with one voice. The Sunday of Orthodox Liturgy will be held at Johnson Center on Malone College campus.

Service Schedule:

Wednesday

Vespers 6:30 PM

Saturday

Great Vespers 5:00 PM

Sunday

Hours 9:15 AM

Divine Liturgy 9:30 AM

*Join Us for Coffee Hour
after Liturgy*

January Birthdays

19 Peter Tapyrik

30 Erin Haywood

31 Megan Lint

31 Ed Romano

YOUTH SCHEDULE

January 17 - Sunday School

January 24 - Youth Choir

January 31 - Sunday School



Jan 17

Fedorko, Frischkorn, Richter

Jan 24

Monahan, Kisha, Kisha-Wise

Jan 31

Huba, Wescott, Hoffman

Feb 7

Gates, Manos, Manos

Feb 14

Krajci, Romano, Meeks

READERS:

Hours:

January 17 - Elena Monahan/Jeff Byrnes

January 24 - Mary-Ann Frishchorn/Sally Wescott

January 31 - Joan Huba/Paula Romano

February 6 - Alyssa Gates/Elena Monahan

For the Epistle Reading:

January 17 - Jeff Fedorko

January 24 - Alyssa Gates

January 31 - Subdeacon Eusebius

February 6 - Reader Timothy

If God is your Co-pilot, swap seats!