

SOBORNOST

St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church

(301) 638-5035 Church

4419 Leonardtown Road

Waldorf, MD 20601

Rev. Father Joseph Edgington, Pastor

(703) 532-8017

fredgington@gmail.com

www.apostlethomas.org

American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

SERVICES

Saturday: Confession 5:00 PM

Great Vespers 5:30 PM

Sunday: Matins (Orthros) 8:45 AM

Children's Sunday School 9:30 AM

Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM.

May 06, 2018 – Sunday of the Samaritan Woman

The Son of God came to earth to make all things new, and each Christian has his own unique story to tell of his encounter with Christ the Savior. Indeed, Christ reveals Himself in specific and personal ways to human beings as individuals, to groups of people and even to nations. We see this clearly in His encounter with the Samaritan woman.

'Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There came a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus said to her, "Give me to drink".' The Lord, wanting to heal the Samaritan woman of her wounds, humbles Himself by asking her for water. He restores her to dignity so as to prepare her to receive knowledge of His truth. Likewise does a genuinely spiritual person sometimes pretend to be in need, placing himself below the other so as to benefit him. He breaks down 'the wall of partition', honoring the other as his benefactor.

Father Sophrony once told me that he put himself below those who came to him so as to help them. Not only was his chair the lower one, but his whole attitude was so humble and sincere that people would be moved and their hearts disposed to apprehend prophetic knowledge about themselves. This is the way the Lord Himself teaches His Saints.



The Samaritan woman would surely have been struck by His request (of course, the Savior's voice alone would have been enough to heal her). She was surprised to be spoken to by a Jew, recognizable by His clothing and speech. Truly, every meeting with God is a surprise (yet the greatest surprise of all awaits us on the Day of Judgment, which will be one surprise for the righteous, and quite another for the unrighteous). Indeed, her astonishment was beyond telling when she met God in the flesh: 'How is it that you, being a Jew, ask drink of me, who am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans?' The Samaritans were despised, even hated - to such an extent that the Jews would not touch anything that had been touched by them. They were considered to be impure, a heretical people which had forsaken the authentic religious tradition. The Samaritans, for their part, were embittered by the Jewish hostility.

The Lord, sensing her perplexity, responds to her with great delicacy: 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, "Give me to drink, you would have asked of him, and he would have given you living water".' When the Prophet Isaiah speaks of 'living water', he means the Holy Spirit which the Messiah was to bring down to earth through His coming into the world. The Savior asks man for earthly water in exchange for which He gives the incorruptible heavenly water of eternal life. He asks only for things which are possible on the human level: a simple favor, a good disposition, some spiritual zeal and a little repentance. As the Liturgy of St. Basil expresses it: 'For earthly things [He bestows] heavenly things; things eternal for things temporal, things incorruptible for things corruptible.' How gently the Lord treats the Samaritan woman by referring to Himself in the third person! The purpose of this self-effacing manner is to limit His revelation of Himself in accordance with the Samaritan woman's understanding, for she does not yet know Who He is. As we have said, those who know how to help people spiritually begin by effacing themselves, like St. John the Baptist, who gave all the space, all the honor, to Christ the Bridegroom. Such people are friends of the Bridegroom, for they reflect His great desire for people to enter ever more deeply into a personal relationship with God, and to do so in complete freedom.

'Then the woman of Samaria said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then do you have that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, and his children, and his cattle?"' She invokes the very substance of her nation by referring to the Patriarch Jacob, their common ancestor. This marks the beginning of the ascent of her mind towards more spiritual things, even though she remains attached to earthly things. She still sees the Lord as an ordinary Jew, but she is now open to the possibility that He is perhaps greater than her greatest ancestor, Jacob-Israel.

Jesus slowly continues to open her understanding: 'Whosoever drinks of this water shall thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.' Here the Lord condescends to her naivety, to her natural understanding, so as to awaken in her a thirst for the living water of the Spirit. If we drink of this water with desire, our thirst shall be eternally quenched by the everlasting life of God. Indeed, he who is granted such a gift of grace will ever leap towards things on high, for he now possesses wings of the Spirit which are powerful to raise him up above this world, and to place him within the other world.

The Lord aims to beget in the Samaritan woman such faith as will enable her to rise to the level at which she can receive the eternal truth He so desires to impart to her. The woman becomes aware of the truth of the Lord's words. She feels their spiritual power, but she is as yet unable to conceive the sacred gift which is being communicated to her by the life-giving word and quickening presence of the Lord Jesus. When we read the Gospel, we often feel the divine power of His word and sense the immeasurable depth of truth concealed within it. But because we are still earthly, we find ourselves unable to enter into the mysteries of its deeper meaning. Thus our understanding of His word is limited to the intellectual or psychological, while the deep truth of His word contains the ineffable mystery of eternal life in Christ.

The Samaritan woman, thinking that the Lord can forever provide her with water as from a magic source, so that she will never again need to draw from the well, exclaims, 'Sir, give me this water so I no longer thirst, or come to draw.' But the Lord, to whom all things are known, needs first to [enable her to see her sinfulness, so that she will be moved to renounce her sinful self in her desire to honor the word of grace which has been given to her].

Let us observe the manner in which the Lord fulfills his purpose for the Samaritan woman. His great desire is to save her; but at every stage of His exchange with her, He never coerces or imposes His holy will. He treats her with great gentleness, always leaving her free to accept His gift or not. He honors her even as He reproves her heedless life. In order to raise her from the pitiable state to which she had sunk to the spiritual stature of an apostle and martyr He must first operate on the malignant tumor in her soul and He does so extremely delicately. As if to say, 'If you truly want my gift of living water you must first show some willingness to be healed,' He says, 'Go, call your husband, and come hither.' The woman simply replies, 'I have no husband.' She is too ashamed to say more. The Lord is omniscient, so He does not ask her for the whole truth. He spares her in His gentleness, accepting even the veiled truth of her words. He completes her answer without offending her, building upon the tiny bit of truth that she does offer Him:

'You have well said, "I have no husband." For you have had five husbands, and he whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly.' So gentle are the words of the Lord to a human being drowning in sin. He wins her trust. She no longer needs to resist and gives herself over to Him fully.

When we need to speak about the truth with someone, we too must affirm the grain of truth he already bears within himself. St. Silouan advised the same approach with non-Orthodox believers: if we accuse people of confessing a wrong faith, they will never be open to what we want to share with them. If we tell them, however, that they do well to believe in the Lord and to honor the Saints (though we know that their faith is incomplete) then they will hear us, because this attitude is of the Lord and springs from His word. The Lord is not like us. He never rebukes, but patiently waits, gently revealing Himself to us, asking us if we love Him. A gentle and respectful approach such as this can save, whereas a rebuke can wound and lead to despair. As Saint Silouan says:

"The Lord loves us, and gently, without reproach, receives us, just as the father in the Gospel story did not reproach his prodigal son [but honored him greatly] and in nothing did he condemn his son. O, how gently and patiently in our turn must we set our brother right, that there may be rejoicing in the soul over his return! The Holy Spirit teaches the soul ineffable lovingkindness."

Elsewhere the Saint writes:

"Where would you find a father prepared to die on the cross for the transgressions of his children? The ordinary father grieves and is sorry for his son who must be punished for his wrong-doing; but for all his pity he tells him that he has done wrong and that it is right that he should be punished for his crimes. But the Lord will never say this to us. He will ask us, also, as He asked the Apostle Peter, 'Do you love me?' So in Paradise too, He will say to all people, 'And you, do you love me?' And all will answer Him, 'Yes, Lord, we love You. You saved us by Your sufferings on the Cross, and now You have given us the gift of the Kingdom of Heaven."

Our God is good and *loves mankind*. He gladly takes and waters our grain of truth raising us up from wherever we are. He cultivated the Samaritan woman's grain of truth with great tenderness until it ripened and developed into knowledge of His Truth. ...She gives heed to Christ's word and, although He is a Jew, she accepts correction from Him. Her change of heart was made possible by the Lord's delicate approach, which safeguarded her dignity and freedom.

'The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet"!'... When the grace of God touches the heart and reproves our way of life, when it enlightens us so that we become aware of our shortcomings and sins, it also gives us the strength to

mend our ways, and inspires us to embark on the struggle against the evil within us. In His desire to save us, God will find us wherever we happen to be. But if we wish to remain with Him, having turned to Him and encountered Him, we must attend to our way of life [without delay]....

Having confessed the Lord as a Prophet, the Samaritan woman is now faced with the question of how to amend her life, how to stand upright and walk blamelessly before God. And this question is ultimately concerned with eternity, and therefore with worship of the true God. The woman now wants to hold fast to the gift of God, so the question of true worship has become vital to her: 'Our Fathers worshipped in this mountain; and you say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.' She is in fact touching upon a doctrinal problem: 'Which is the religion in which men can worship God truly?' How important it is to adhere to right doctrine! This may seem unimportant when we live far from God on a merely intellectual plane. But the moment we decide that we want to approach God and unite ourselves to Him, it becomes all-important for us to be sure that our understanding of Who He is is right, for it is partly through this that He leads us into fullness of Life in Himself.

Jesus then lifts her even higher, showing her that true worship no longer depends on a particular Temple in a particular place: 'Woman, believe me, the hour comes when you shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.' Christ speaks not simply of a little-known God, but of His heavenly Father Whose children we are. 'You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.' Christ is not trying to prove that the Jews are right and the Samaritans are wrong. He simply makes it clear that the Jews have been faithful to God's covenant with Israel, although their worship has yet to be perfected. At this very point in history, however, during His conversation with the Samaritan woman, the Lord manifests the absolute truth about Who God is and how He is to be worshipped, for *He Himself is this Absolute Truth*. The gods of the heathen are certainly false, and the Samaritans themselves have fallen into heresy. Meanwhile, the Jews themselves await the fullness of divine revelation.

Christ Himself is the fullness of revelation, and the possibility of right worship is now at hand: 'The hour comes, and now is...' This hour begins with the Lord's presence on earth, for the Kingdom of God is at hand - with us and within us. And now, from this time forth, 'true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.' In other words, man's knowledge and understanding of God are now fulfilled, in that true worship of the true God is revealed in and through Christ Himself. The faithful will no longer worship a relatively unknown God, but God the Father, and this can only be 'in spirit and in truth.' They will worship Him in the grace of the Holy Spirit and in Christ, the Son and Word of God, for He is

Truth. God will be worshipped in the truth of His word, revealed on earth to man in the Person of Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, 'the Father seeks such to worship Him.' That is, the Father seeks those who are aware that He cannot be worshipped through human reason as the Greeks believed, or according to the understanding of the Jews, who had confined the Lord to their nation and the land of their fathers. But the one true God is subject to no human conception and cannot be restricted. The one true God is a Spirit, and His true worshippers worship Him *in* His Spirit, in the heart, in an absolute way, at all times and in all places of His dominion. True worship can never be mingled with patriotism or anything else of this world.

'God is a Spirit, and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.' God is both Father and Spirit and they who worship Him will do so in the truth of repentance. This truth is inspired by the Spirit of Truth in the man who repents with his whole heart and soul, who thirsts and longs for God with all his being. Our God Who is a Spirit is also a Father. And the absolute, perfect way of worshipping Him in truth begins by knowing Him as a son knows his father. This is the true religion, the religion of the heart, newly revealed only by the Lord Jesus, by the Son of God. Through faith in Him we discover His Fatherhood and we become His true children, children of the day, children of the Light of His truth.

'The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah comes, who is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he".' Having seen the Lord as an ordinary Jew, then as a man surpassing the Patriarch Jacob in greatness, then as a Prophet, the Samaritan woman is now ready to confess Him as the Christ, as the Messiah. The Lord has brought her into such fullness of knowledge that she is led to evangelize her people, who will say, 'Now we believe, not because of your saying - for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.'

This wonderful account shows so clearly how the mind of man gradually ascends to true knowledge of God once he accepts the word of Christ. First he discovers the divine power of this word and his faith is strengthened. He then accepts the truth of Christ-God, being guided by right doctrine. His inner eye is cleansed and he begins to see clearly with Whom he is in contact. Light spreads throughout his soul until his heart is flooded with the divine Light of the Sun of Righteousness. He becomes a child of the day, for the day star has arisen in his heart. He is then united to God and worships Him in spirit and in truth. With his whole heart he worships this God Who has honored him with His grace, knowing that He alone is the one true God and Savior of the world. (*adapted from Remember Thy First Love by Archimandrite Zacharias*)

Today's Epistle Lesson – The Acts of the Apostles 11:19-26, 29-30

In those days, those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only. But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord. Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch. When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord. For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul. And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint John 5:1-15

At that time, Jesus came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from *His* journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?" Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly." The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a

prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you *Jews* say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.” Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When He comes, He will tell us all things.” Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am *He*.” And at this *point* His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, “What do You seek?” or, “Why are You talking with her?” The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, “Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?” Then they went out of the city and came to Him. In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.” But He said to them, “I have food to eat of which you do not know.” Therefore the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought Him *anything* to eat?” Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and *then* comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this the saying is true: ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors.” And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, “He told me all that I *ever* did.” So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His own word. Then they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard *Him* and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.”

A Word From the Holy Fathers

Everywhere and in every endeavor remember the Lord your God and His holy love for us. Everything that you may see in heaven and on earth and in your house awakens you to the remembrance of the Lord your God and His holy love. We are enveloped in God's love. Every creature of God bears witness to His love for us. When you see God's creation and make use of it, say to yourself thus: This is the work of the hands of the Lord my God, and it was created for my sake.

These luminaries of the heavens, the sun, the moon, and the stars, are the creations of the Lord my God, and they illumine all the world and me. This earth on which I live, which bears fruit for me and my cattle, and all that may be upon it, is the creation of the Lord my God. This water which waters me and my cattle is a blessing of my Lord. This cattle which serves me is the, creation of my Lord and was given by Him to serve me. This house in which I live is God's blessing and was given me by Him for my repose. This food which I taste is God's gift to me given for the strengthening and consolation of my weak flesh. This garment with which I am clothed the Lord my God gave me for the sake of covering my naked body. And so on.

This icon is the image of Christ; the image of my Savior, Who for my sake came to this unfortunate world to save me who have perished, and He suffered and died for me, and so He redeemed me from sin, the devil, death and hell. I worship His unspeakable love for man.

This icon is the image of the Theotokos, the image of that Most-Holy Virgin, who gave birth in the flesh without seed to Jesus Christ my Lord and God. Blessed among women is the Mother who bore God incarnate, and blessed is the fruit of her womb (Lk. 1:42)! Blessed is the womb that bore my Lord, and the paps which He has sucked (Lk. 11:27)!

This is the icon of the Forerunner; it is the image of that great prophet who was sent from God before the face of my Savior Jesus Christ, and to the people he preached Him already come into the world, and pointed Him out, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sins of the world!" (Jn. 1:29), and he was found worthy to baptize Him in the streams of the Jordan.

This is the icon of the apostle; it is the image of the disciple of my Savior, who saw Him in person, who went with Him, and saw Him work miracles, and heard Him preach, saw Him suffer for the salvation of the world, and rise from the dead and ascend into heaven. This is the icon of the martyr; it is the image of that struggler who withstood even to blood for the honor of my Savior Jesus Christ, and did not spare even his own holy life for His name, and he established our pious faith as true by pouring forth his own blood; and so on.

This word, the Sacred Scripture which I hear, is the word of God, it is the word of His mouth. The mouth of my Lord spoke this, and through it my God speaks to me, "The law of Your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver" (Ps. 118:72 LXX). O Lord, grant me ears to hear Your holy word.

This holy house, the church in which I stand, is the temple of God in which prayer and glorification are offered up to my God in common from the faithful, my brethren. These voices, this glorification and common prayer are those voices by

which hymns, thanksgiving, praise and glorification are sent up to the holy name of my God.

This consecrated man, the bishop or priest, is the closest servant of my God, who offers prayers to Him for me a sinner and for all the world. This man, the preacher of the word of God, is the messenger of my God, who makes known the way of salvation to me and to the rest of the people my brethren.

This brother of mine, every man, is the beloved creature of my God, and like myself is a creature created after the image and likeness of God. And having fallen he was redeemed, like myself, by the Blood of the Son of God my Savior, and is called to everlasting life by the Word of God. I must love him as the beloved creature of my God, love him as I love myself. And I must not do to him anything that I myself do not love, and I must do to him what I desire for myself, for that is what my God commanded me. In a word, every occasion and every thing can and must inspire you to a loving remembrance of the Lord your God, and must show you His love toward you, since even His chastisement comes from His love toward us. According to the Scripture, "Whom the Lord loves He chastens" (Heb. 12:6). Remember, then, everywhere and on every occasion and in all things, the name of the Lord your God. Take care not to forget your Benefactor when you enjoy His benefactions, lest you appear ungrateful to Him; for forgetfulness of a benefactor is a clear sign of ingratitude.

God is your creator, deliverer, supreme benefactor, and good provider. He created you just as He gives you every good thing, since without His goodness you could not live even for a minute. You do not see your Benefactor with these eyes, but you see the benefits He has given you. You see the sun, the moon and His stars which illumine you. You see the fire that warms you and cooks your food. You see the food which satisfies you, you see the clothing by which your naked body is covered. You see all other countless blessings which He gave you for your needs and comfort.

Seeing, then, and receiving these benefits, remember your unseen Benefactor everywhere and always with love, and thank Him for all His benefits with a pure heart. The greatest and highest of all His blessings is that by His good will Christ, His Only-Begotten Son, came to us and redeemed us by His precious Blood and suffering from the devil, hell, and death. In this work He showed us His unspeakable goodness to us. We must, then, always gaze with faith upon this great work of God so incomprehensible to the mind, and remember God Who so loved us unworthy ones. We must thank Him from our whole heart, worship Him, praise, hymn, and glorify Him with our heart and lips. "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel;

for He has visited and redeemed His people, And has raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David" (Lk. 1:68-69).

You, too, should always remember this great work of God and marvel at it, and thank God from your heart, and live as it pleases God, Who came into the world to save sinners, lest you offend Him with your ingratitude. He desires to save you, since He came into the world for your sake, and suffered and died in His holy flesh. You should fulfil His holy will, then, and take care for the salvation of your soul with all diligence. Be thankful to Him, and live in the world humbly, with love, meekly and patiently, as He Himself lived. He also desires the same of you.

Endeavor to please God with faith and obedience, that is, do what He desires and what is pleasing to Him, and do not do what He does not desire and what is not pleasing to Him.

– St. Tikhon of Zadonsk

Also Commemorated Today: Righteous Job the Long-Suffering

The righteous Job (whose name means “persecuted”), God’s faithful servant, was the perfect image of every virtue. The son of Zarah and Bossorha (Job 42), Job was a fifth-generation descendent of Abraham. He was a truthful, righteous, patient and pious man who abstained from every evil thing. Job was very rich and blessed by God in all things, as was no other son of Ausis (his country, which lay between Idoumea and Arabia). However, divine condescension permitted him to be tested.

Job lost his children, his wealth, his glory, and every consolation all at once. His entire body became a terrible wound covered with boils. Yet he remained steadfast and patient in the face of his misfortune for seven years, always giving thanks to God.

Later, God restored his former prosperity, and he had twice as much as before. Job lived for 170 years after his misfortune, completing his earthly life in 1350 B.C. at the age of 240. Some authorities say that Job’s afflictions lasted only one year, and that afterwards he lived for 140 years, reaching the age of 210.

Job’s explanations are among the most poetic writings in the Old Testament book which bears his name. It is one of the most edifying portions of Holy Scripture. Job teaches us that we must endure life’s adversities patiently and with trust in God. As Saint Anthony the Great (January 17) says, without temptations, it is impossible for the faithful to be saved.

The Orthodox Church reads the book of Job, the first of the seven wisdom books of the Old Testament, during Holy Week, drawing a parallel between Job and

Christ as righteous men who suffered through no fault of their own. God allowed Satan to afflict Job so that his faithfulness would be proven. Christ, the only sinless one, suffered voluntarily for our sins. The Septuagint text of Job 42:17 says that Job “will rise again with those whom the Lord raises up.” This passage is read on Great and Holy Friday, when the composite Gospel at Vespers speaks of the tombs being opened at the moment the Savior died on the Cross, and the bodies of the saints were raised, and they appeared to many after Christ’s Resurrection (Mt.27:52). *(from oca.org)*

April Treasurer’s Report

Christ is Risen! For the month of April we had an operating income of \$14,020 and expenses of \$14,520. Major expenses this month were the church electric bill, a payment for the icon project, and snow removal from the early-April storm we had. Please let me know if there are any questions! Your servant, Josh Moore.

Follow Our Diocese On-Line

Diocesan Website: <http://www.acrod.org>

Camp Nazareth: <http://www.campnazareth.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acroddiocese>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/acrodnews>

You Tube: <https://youtube.com/acroddiocese>

In Your Prayers – Please Remember... His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW, His Grace Bishop GREGORY, Fr. Joseph & Family, Greek Orthodox Archbishop Paul Yazigi of Aleppo, Syriac Orthodox Archbishop Yohanna Ibrahim of Aleppo, His Grace Bishop Neofitos of Nyeri and Mt. Kenya, Fr. John & Pani Betty Jean Baranik, Fr. Vincent Saverino, Presbytera Katie Baker and family, Santiago Alzugaray, Alicia Barosio and family, Jeffrey Carey, Tatyana and Slava Chumak & family, Xenia Chilkowich, Jon Church, Ramius Connour, Curtis Cooper, Luke Cooper, Tina Crull, Mary Diane David, Ron Dominiacki, Linda A. Georgiev, Heather Himler, John Homick, Cameron Houk, Helen Janowiak, John M. Janowiak, Tucker Karl and family, Robert & Pam Karpin, Andrew Kinn, Kopan family, Brian, Helen, and Luke Mahony, Valentina Makowelski, Susan Matula, Anna Meinhold, Dn. Henry Middleton, David & Kathryn Newman, Bobby Nutter & Family, Henry & Lisa Osborne, Westin Perry & Parents, John Reece, Mary Reed, Chris & Kaitlin Rixey, Jerry Von Ronne, Anne Rosario, James, Theodore and Christina Ristas, Samson Family, Sharon Sheptak, Dawn & Faith Ulmschneider, Lydia Vita, Christine, Marshall, Nathaniel, Subdcn. Nectarios and Ia, the Syrian Christians displaced by war, Mother Virginia Marie and the Carmelite Nuns of Port Tobacco, and all those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)