

SOBORNOST

St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church

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American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

SERVICES

Wednesday: Moleben to the Theotokos 6:00 AM

Friday: Moleben to the Theotokos 6:00 AM

**Saturday: Confession 5:00 PM,
Great Vespers 5:30 PM**

**Sunday: Matins (Orthros) 8:45 AM
Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM.**



August 14, 2016 – 8th Sunday After Pentecost | Forefeast of the Dormition of the Mother of God | Prophet Micah

On this day the Church invites us to gather on this day in gladness, for the Theotokos is about to depart from earth to heaven.

The Prophet Micah, the sixth of the Twelve Minor Prophets, was descended from the Tribe of Judah and was a native of the city of Moresheth, to the south of Jerusalem. His prophetic service began around the year 778 before Christ and continued for almost 50 years under the kings of Judah: Jotham, Ahaz, and Righteous Hezekiah (721-691 B.C., August 28).

He was a contemporary of the Prophet Isaiah. His denunciations and predictions were in regard to the separate kingdoms of Judah and Israel. He foresaw the misfortunes threatening the kingdom of Israel before its destruction, and the sufferings of Judah during the incursions under the Assyrian emperor Sennacherib.

To him belongs a prophecy about the birth of the Savior of the world: “And you, Bethlehem, house of Ephratha, are too few in number to be reckoned with the thousands of Judah; yet out of you shall come forth to Me one who is to be a ruler in Israel, and His goings forth were from the beginning, even from eternity” (Mic.

5: 2). From the words of the Prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 26: 18-19), the Jews evidently were afraid to kill the Prophet Micah. His relics were discovered in the fourth century after the Birth of Christ at Baraphsatia, through a revelation to the Bishop of Eleutheropolis, Zeuinos. (*from oca.org*)

Today's Epistle Lesson – St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 1:10-18

Brethren, I plead with you by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you, but *that* you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's *household*, that there are contentions among you. Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name. Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other. For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect. For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint Matthew 14:14-22

At that time, when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick. When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food." But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." And they said to Him, "We have here only five loaves and two fish." He said, "Bring them here to Me." Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained. Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children. Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away.

A Word From the Holy Fathers

How does the source of life pass through death to life? How can she obey the law of nature, who, in conceiving, surpasses the boundaries of nature? How is her spotless body made subject to death? In order to be clothed with immortality she must first put off mortality, since the Lord of nature did not reject the penalty of death. She dies according to the flesh, destroys death by death, and through corruption gains incorruption, and makes her death the source of resurrection. How does Almighty God receive with His own hands the holy disembodied soul of our Lord's Mother! He honors her truly, whom being His servant by nature, He made His mother, in His inscrutable abyss of mercy, when He became incarnate in very truth. We may well believe that the angelic choirs waited to receive your departing soul. What a blessed departure this going to God of yours. If God vouchsafes it to all His servants – and we know that He does – what an immense difference there is between His servants and His mother. What then, shall we call this mystery of yours? Death? Your blessed soul is naturally parted from your blissful and undefiled body, and the body is delivered to the grave, yet it does not endure in death, nor is it the prey of corruption. The body of her, whose virginity remained unspotted in child-birth, was preserved in its incorrupt-tion, and was taken to a better, diviner place, where death is not, but eternal life.... I will not call your sacred transformation death, but rest or going home, and it is more truly a going home. Putting off corporeal things, you dwell in a happier state. Angels with archangels bear you up. Impure spirits trembled at your departure. The air raises a hymn of praise at your passage, and the atmosphere is purified. Heaven receives your soul with joy.... The King in-troduced you into His chamber. There Powers protect you, Principalities praise you, Thrones proclaim you, Cherubim are hushed in joy, and Seraphim magnify the true Mother by nature and by grace of their very Lord. You were not taken into heaven as Elijah was, nor did you penetrate to the third heaven with Paul, but you reached the royal throne itself of your Son, seeing it with your own eyes, standing by it in joy and unspeakable familiarity. Gladness of angels and of all heavenly powers, sweetness of patriarchs and of the just, perpetual exultation of prophets, rejoicing the world and sanctifying all things, refreshment of the weary, comfort of the sorrowful, remission of sins, health of the sick, harbor of the storm-tossed, lasting strength of mourners, and perpetual succor of all who invoke you.

– St. John of Damascus

On Stewardship and the Orthodox Life –

Part 82: Count The Cost



“(Hannah) was deeply distressed and prayed to the LORD, and wept bitterly. And she vowed a vow...” (1 Samuel 1:10-11 RSV)

The Holy Apostle St. Matthew was a rich man. He gained his wealth by means of his work. He was a tax collector, in the employ of the Roman government. He was required to collect taxes from the people in the Roman province of Palestine. The amount of tax that was expected to be paid by the Romans was one amount – the amount of tax collected by the tax collectors was another amount. And the latter amount was higher. In other words, the tax collectors forced people to pay more tax than was required. And the tax collectors pocketed the difference. Tax collectors were cheaters and liars. Matthew the tax collector got rich on his ill-gotten gains. The Holy Apostles Andrew and Peter were brothers. Both of them worked as fishermen. Every day they would go out to the Sea of Galilee, throw their nets into the sea, gather what fish they could, bring them in, clean their nets, and sell their fish. Some days were good days, others were not. In any case, Peter and Andrew were not rich. Fishing was one of the lowest-paid occupations in the time of Christ. Fishermen were among the poorest of the people of Palestine. Yet to Matthew in his wealth and Andrew and Peter in their poverty, the same call was made. For Andrew and Peter, the call came at the moment of success, when their nets were filled with fish, and the financial future for each of them was brightest. Matthew was called from his tax collector’s desk. He was probably counting his income for the day. His financial future was brightening each moment. To each – Matthew, Andrew and Peter – came the call to leave everything and follow Jesus.

So it is with everyone. The call, the test is always a choice of which is stronger: the desire to get and keep earthly goods or to be a follower of Christ. And this test does not come just once. It is repeated daily, hourly, minute-by-minute. There is no time and no place where the call to be followers of Christ is not being made. How that call is answered is the key to life as Christian stewards. It is the key to our eternal life. For no one can answer “yes” to the call of Christ unless his or her whole heart is in the work. No one can answer “yes” the call of Christ unless he counts, like the Holy Apostle St. Paul who writes to the Philippians, “*everything*” as loss. Yes, we are to count everything as loss because fellowship with Christ surpasses everything – *everything!* (from acrod.org)

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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, Alicia Barosio and family, Millie Borys, Jeffrey Carey, Tatyana and Slava Chumak & family, Xenia Chilkowich, Jon Church, Ramius Connour, Cary Cooper, Curtis Cooper, Tina Crull, Ron Dominiacki, Linda A. Georgiev, Heather Himler, Alex Holthus, John Homick, Cameron Houk, Helen Janowiak, John M. Janowiak, Deanna Jarrett, Tucker Karl and family, Robert Karpin, Andrew Kinn, Kopan family, Brian, Helen, and Luke Mahony, Alex & Valentina Makowelski, Susan Matula, Anna Meinhold, Dn. Henry Middleton, David & Kathryn Newman, Bobby Nutter & Family, Henry & Lisa Osborne, Westin Perry & Parents, Mary Reed, Chris & Kaitlin Rixey, Jerry Von Ronne, Anne Rosario, James, Theodore and Christina Ristas, Samson Family, Sharon Sheptak, Dawn & Faith Ulmschneider, Daria Virvan, Lydia Vita, Christine, Marshall, Nathaniel, Rdr. Nectaros 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.)