

SOBORNOST

St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church

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American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

SERVICES

Wed: Moleben to the Theotokos 6:00 AM

Friday: Moleben to the Cross 6:00 AM

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.

November 5, 2017 – 22nd Sunday After Pentecost

Martyrs Galaction and Episteme of Emesa

There was a rich and distinguished couple named Kletophon and Leukippe, who lived in the Syrian city of Emesa, and for a long time they were childless. They gave much gold to the pagan priests, but still they remained childless.

The city of Emesa was governed by a Syrian named Secundus, put there by the Roman Caesars. He was a merciless and zealous persecutor of Christians, and to intimidate them he ordered that the instruments of torture be displayed on the streets. The slightest suspicion of belonging to "the sect of the Galilean" (as thus Christians were called by the pagans), was enough to get a man arrested and handed over for torture. In spite of this, many Christians voluntarily surrendered themselves into the hands of the executioners, in their desire to suffer for Christ.

A certain old man by the name of Onuphrius, concealed his monastic and priestly dignity beneath his beggar's rags. He walked from house to house in Emesa, begging alms. At the same time, whenever he saw the possibility of turning people away from the pagan error, he preached about Christ. Once, he came to the magnificent house of Leukippe. Accepting alms from her, he sensed that the woman was in sorrow, and he asked what was the cause of this sadness. She told



the Elder about her familial misfortune. In consoling her, Onuphrius began to tell her about the one true God, about His omnipotence and mercy, and how He always grants the prayer of those turning to Him with faith. Hope filled the soul of Leukippe. She believed and accepted Holy Baptism. Soon after this it was revealed to her in a dream that she would give birth to a son, who would be a true follower of Christ. At first, Leukippe concealed her delight from her husband, but after the infant was born, she revealed the secret to her husband and also persuaded him to be baptized. They named the baby Galaction and his parents raised him in the Christian Faith and provided him a fine education. He could make an illustrious career for himself, but Galaction sought rather an unsullied monastic life in solitude and prayer.

When Galaction turned twenty-four, his father resolved to marry him off and they found him a bride, a beautiful and illustrious girl by the name of Episteme. The son did not oppose the will of his father, but by the will of God, the wedding was postponed for a time. Visiting his betrothed, Galaction gradually revealed his faith to her. Eventually, he converted her to Christ and he secretly baptized her himself.

Besides Episteme he baptized also one of her servants, Eutolmius. The newly-illuminated decided, on the initiative of Galaction, to devote themselves to the monastic life. Leaving the city, they hid themselves away on Mount Publion, where there were two monasteries, one for men and the other for women. The new monastics had to take with them all the necessities for physical toil, since the inhabitants of both monasteries were both old and infirm. For several years the monastics struggled in work, fasting and prayer. Once, Episteme had a vision in her sleep: she and Galaction stood in a wondrous palace before a radiant King, and the King bestowed golden crowns on them. This was a prefiguring of their impending martyrdom.

The pagans became aware of the existence of the monasteries, and a military detachment was sent to apprehend their inhabitants. But the monks and the nuns succeeded in hiding themselves in the hills. Galaction, however, had no desire to flee and so he remained in his cell, reading Holy Scripture. When Episteme saw that the soldiers were leading Galaction away in chains, she began to implore the Abbess to permit her to go also, since she wanted to accept torture for Christ together with her fiancé and teacher. The Abbess tearfully blessed Episteme to do so. The saints endured terrible torments, while supplicating and glorifying Christ. Their hands and legs were cut off, their tongues were cut out, and then they were beheaded. Eutolmius, the former servant of Episteme, and who had become her brother in Christ and fellow ascetic in monastic struggles, secretly buried the bodies of the holy martyrs. He later wrote an account of their virtuous life and their glorious martyrdom, for his contemporaries and for posterity. (*from oca.org*)

Today's Epistle Lesson – St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 6:11-18

Brethren, see with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand! As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these *would* compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy *be* upon them, and upon the Israel of God. From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint Luke 8: 41-56

At that time, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she was dying. But as He went, the multitudes thronged Him. Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped. And Jesus said, "Who touched Me?" When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'" But Jesus said, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me." Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. And He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace." While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's *house*, saying to him, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher." But when Jesus heard *it*, He answered him, saying, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well." When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in except Peter, John, and James, and the father and mother of the girl. Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, "Do not weep; she is not dead, but sleeping." And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead. But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise." Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given *something* to eat. And her parents were astonished, but He charged them to tell no one what had happened.



*St. Mark Chapter of the
Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in
America*

Colonial District Religious Education Day



**An Orthodox View
of Islam**



Presented by
Fr. Thomas Soroka
Rector of
St Nicholas Orthodox
Church (OCA)
In McKees Rocks, PA



Fr. Thomas is the host of two popular podcasts on Ancient Faith Radio, *The Path* and *Sermons at St. Nicholas* and speaks regularly at churches and on local radio.

Please join us

Saturday November 18, 2017

12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Lunch at 12:00

Presentation following lunch at 1:00

Vespers at 5:30 p.m.

\$10.00 includes Lunch

**R.S.V.P - Contact *Marcella Hydock* to register
vze5847i@verizon.net**

St. Mark Orthodox Church

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Bethesda, MD 20187

(301) 229-6300 <https://stmarkoca.org>

A Word From the Holy Fathers

Beloved Christians, I cannot wonder enough at the goodness of God and His compassionate love for us men; and contemplating this, I cannot but exclaim with the Prophet, "O Lord, what is man, that You are made known unto him? Or the son of man, that You take account of him?" (LXX-Ps. 143:3), when I consider what honor the Lord has granted man! The honor and nobility which God bestows on men who are true Christians is so great and so high that it is impossible not only to describe it or to explain it in words, but even to comprehend it with the mind. "You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 Pet. 2:9), says the true Apostle of Christ.

From what can we see the incomprehensible goodness and compassionate love of God toward man? Let us but look and set the honor and nobility of a Christian before our inward eyes, that we may be zealous for it and seek it out with eagerness. Open then, the hearing of your souls, and you shall hear a word told about true Christians.

They are called and truly are the children of God. What is more glorious to man than this name? The Apostle of Christ rightly wonders at this and with wonder he says to Christians, "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God?" (1 Jn. 3:1-2), and so we are. Whence Christians also pray to God as to their Father and raise up to the one voice to Him, "Our Father, Who art in the heavens" (Mt. 6:9) and the rest. O the wonder! Sinners say to the All-Holy God, "Our Father!" O our great nobility and honor and consolation. O beloved Christians! The Father of the Only-Begotten Son of God is our Father, His God is our God, as He Himself says to our great consolation, "I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God" (Jn. 20:17).

True Christians have a close union and fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. The Apostle of Christ assures us of this saying, "our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn. 1:3). How great this is you can see for yourself. People account it a great thing to have friendship and fellowship with an earthly king; how incomparably greater is the privilege of having fellowship and friendship with God, Who is the King of kings and the Lord of lords and abides in light unapproachable! O how much have God's goodness and love toward man wrought! Look, O Christian, and you shall see the nobility and merit of Christians. They have communion with the great and incomprehensible God. God, Your goodness is multiplied and wonderful, and Your love for us fallen and poor men is beyond any words and conceiving!

In true Christians as in spiritual temples, God, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, abides with love. The Lord says of this, "If a man love Me, he will keep My

words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode in him" (Jn. 14:23). What can be more honorable and noble than that soul in which the Tri-hypostatic God abides with grace and love? It is a glorious thing for people to receive an earthly king into their house; it is incomparably more glorious to receive the Heavenly King into the house of their soul, and to have Him living therein. What also could be more blessed than that soul in which God lives as in a temple? The paradise of sweetness and joy, the Kingdom of God is in it. O blessedness! O the worthiness! O the nobility of the Christian soul! God, a Being that is without beginning, without end, supremely good, and uncreated, wills to live in the holy Christian soul rather than in heaven or in in any other temple. O most good and lovely God, our Maker and Creator, come and visit our weary souls, the souls created by You after Yours image and likeness!

True Christians are spiritual members of the most heavenly Head, Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords. The Apostle says concerning this, "We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones" (Eph. 5:30).

Holy Christian souls! Raise up your eyes and see where your Head is seated at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father. By whom is He venerated and worshipped? By angels and archangels and by all the hosts of heaven and by every creature. "Wherefore God also has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth" (Philip. 2:9-10). You are members of this most exalted Head. As the Head is glorified, so also do His members partake of His glory. This is the glory of true Christians, this is their nobility and merit! They are the spiritual members of the most exalted Head, Jesus Christ.

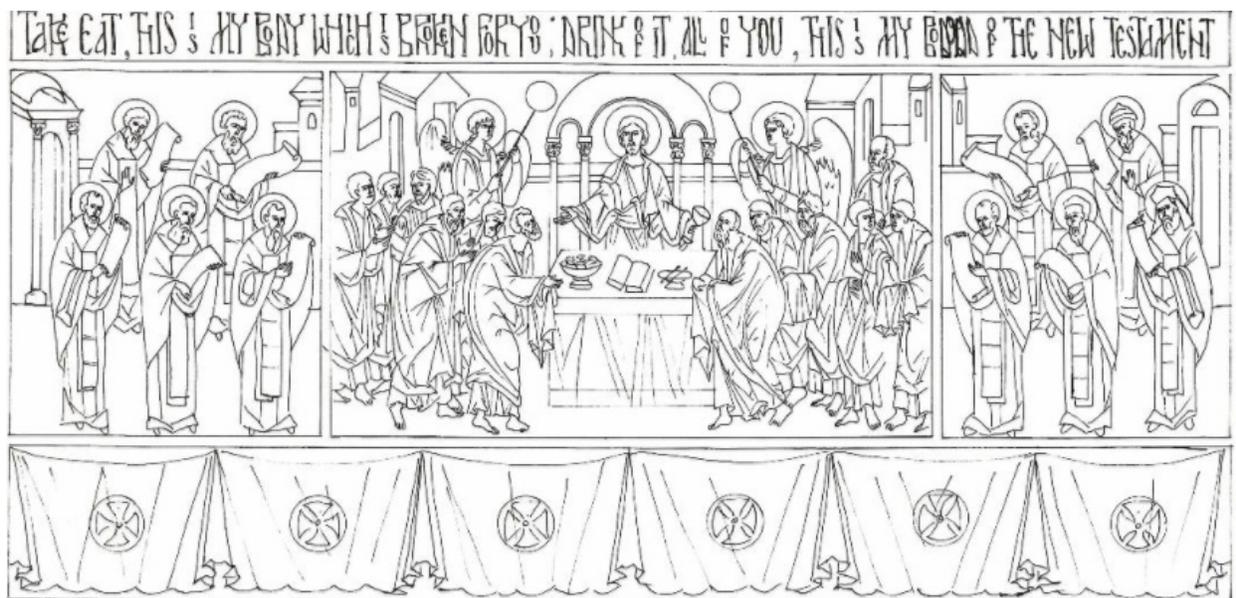
The souls of true Christians are betrothed to the immortal Bridegroom, Jesus Christ. The Apostle bears witness of this: "I have espoused you," O Christians, "to one Husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Cor. 11:2). "This is a great mystery" (Eph. 5:32). As the Bridegroom is glorious, so also does His bride partake of His glory. What is more honorable and noble than Jesus the Son of God? What is more noble and honorable than a Christian soul betrothed to Him?

True Christians are "heirs of God," and "joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17). Theirs are the eternal and heavenly Kingdom and all good things. "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him" (1 Cor. 2:9). These and others are the names and titles that the Holy Spirit attributes to true Christians. Behold, then, O listeners, the glory and nobility of the Christian. All the glory of this world is

nothing compared to it. Confess, therefore, that there is nothing more noble and glorious than a true Christian. Jesus Christ the Son of God, has earned this nobility and glory for us by His suffering and death, His Heavenly Father bestows it on us. The Holy Spirit perfects it, and true repentance combined with faith receives it. This nobility and glory are acquired or is lost here in this world. They are acquired by true repentance and faith; they are lost by unrepentance and unbelief.

O you who seek the vain glory of this world and are praised and exalted in your nobility, names, and titles! Turn your inward eyes to the glory and honor of a Christian and seek those, that you may truly be noble and glorious. The glory of true Christians is not now manifest, but can only be attained and known by faith. It shall be opened in the revelation of the children of God. Beloved, says the Apostle, "now we are the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him" (1 Jn. 3:2). "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father. Who has ears to hear, let him hear" (Mt. 13:43).

– St. Tikhon of Zadonsk



Beauty Will Save the World (Dostoyevsky, The Idiot)

We are moving forward with the next phase of iconography at St. Thomas, which will complete work in the Narthex (the entry of the church) and in the Holy Place (the curved wall in the altar area). Icons of two Seraphim on the ends of the curved walls will cost \$1,700 each. Icons of the ten Bishops flanking the icon of the Heavenly Banquet in front of the altar (either side of the Banquet already in the Holy Place) will cost \$2,000 each. We will also be moving Gorazd of Prague, a Bishop whose icon currently hangs in the Nave, into the Holy Place with an icon of

John of Damascus being put in his place, which can be sponsored for \$600. Four new icons will be completed in the nave, for \$750 each. The writing above the icons, as well as the "tablecloth" below will be completed, and costs have been combined with the sponsorship of the Bishops.

The icons will be installed in 2018. The last time we offered this opportunity to glorify God in His church, the response was tremendous. We are ready to collect funds to complete the project, so if you are interested in participating, please contact Josh Moore by phone at (541) 601-8413 or at jgmoore01@gmail.com.

Please see the Church website for up-to-date sponsorship information and pictures of the icon work to be completed. Any donation of \$500 or more is eligible for a memorial plaque in the social hall. Currently we have: Pledged Funds: \$4,600 | Remaining Needed: \$21,800.

The Bishops to be placed in the Holy Place are currently planned to be (\$2,000 to sponsor one): Basil the Great, Gregory the Great, John Chrysostom, Cyprian of Carthage, Athanasius the Great, Cyril of Alexandria, Leo the Great, Polycarp, Ignatius of Antioch (sponsored), and Peter Moghila.

2 Seraphim in the Holy Place (\$1,700 to sponsor; 1 sponsored).

John of Damascus in the nave (\$600 to sponsor)

In the Narthex: Pr. Daniel, David, Elijah, and Melchizedek. (\$750 to sponsor).

WE'LL HAVE A DEACON NEXT WEEK!

However, we won't have a priest. Fr. Joseph will be out from November 7-13. Therefore there will be no weekday or Saturday services this week. Deacon Stephen Hall will serve Third Hour and a Deacon Service on Sunday in his absence beginning about 9:30 (when Sunday School starts). If a priest is needed, Fr. Peter Zarynow can be reached at 301-299-5120.

OCTOBER TREASURER'S REPORT

Glory to Jesus Christ!

For the month of October 2017:

Our income: \$12,754.00 | Our expenses: \$9,129.12 | Our income over expenses: \$3,624.88

This month our additional expenses were candles (\$528.28) and the maintenance of the property (\$191.25). We also had five weekly collections. Thank you for being good stewards of God's house.

Kari David

Treasurer

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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, Presbyteria 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 Dominiecki, Linda A. Georgiev, Heather Himler, 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, 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. 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.)