

SOBORNOST

St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church

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American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
OF CONSTANTINOPLE

SERVICES

Saturdays: Confession 5:00 PM,

Great Vespers 5:30 PM

Sundays: Matins (Orthros) 8:45 AM |

Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM.

Wednesdays in Great Lent:

Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts 7:00 PM

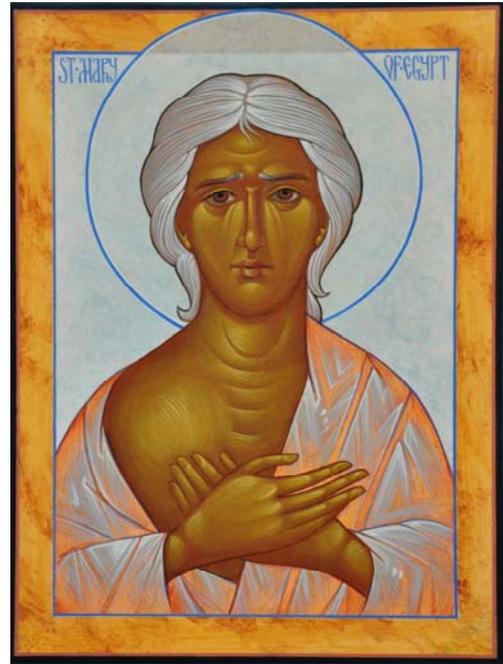
Fridays in Great Lent:

Moleben to the Theotokos 6:00 AM

April 17, 2016 – Fifth Sunday of Great Lent

St. Mary of Egypt

The church service for this Sunday is devoted to the memory and glorification of the spiritual efforts of Saint Mary of Egypt, who "has cut down with the sword of abstinence the desires of your soul and the passions of your flesh. You have choked your sinful thoughts with the silence of the ascetic life, and you have watered all the wilderness with the streams of your tears, and caused the fruits of repentance to spring up for us" and "with works of Lenten fasting," "as the sun she shines revealed as a guide to all who have sinned." In her life the Holy Church pays attention to two contrasts: on the depth of her sinful falling and on the height of her graceful rising, that it points out that true repentance wipes away the very heaviest sins, and can uplift the repenting trespasser to a high degree of spiritual perfection. The Odes of the Canon opens the parable about "the rich man and Lazarus." This parable through its imagery gives a lesson on the efforts of fasting that they, fasting physically, fasted also spiritually, that is, they helped their needy brothers and eased the portion of the suffering; but the suffering and the deprived are inspired by patience and magnanimity, by the example of Lazarus who for these virtues "was worthy of Paradise of sweetness." Inspiring those who fast with the necessity of charity, the Holy Church hymns: "The Kingdom of God is not



food and drink, but righteousness and abstinence with holiness; therefore the rich shall not enter into it, but those who entrust their treasures into the hands of the needy. This is what David the prophet teaches us saying: the righteous man shows mercy all day, his delight is in the Lord, and walking in the light he will not stumble. All this was written for our admonition, that we should fast and do good, and the Lord will reward us with heavenly things instead of earthly things.” The Resurrection gospel proclaims the approaching time of the coming Passion of Christ, and the Epistle reading explains the saving actions of the offering of the Savior on the cross. With these reminders of the parable about the rich man and Lazarus and suffering, death and resurrection of the Savior, the Holy Church relates the fifth Sunday to a relationship of the coming end of the Lenten effort with the memory connected to Him.

Being disclosed in a Canon of the 5th week, the Gospel parable about the rich man and Lazarus serves as the subject of hymns also in the 6th week. The Holy Church calls us "to run from the cruelty and hatred of mankind of the rich man and to emulate the fortitude and longsuffering of Lazarus" and to beg the Lord that, "Having grown poor through the pleasures of this life, He make us rich in virtues," and deliver us "from the torment of Gehenna" and "that we may enjoy rest in the bosom of the Patriarch Abraham." Continuing also in this week, as well as in the previous one to call us to spiritual efforts of piety, the Holy Church appeals to us: "Come, brethren, and before the end with pure hearts let us all draw near to the compassionate God. Casting aside the cares of this life, let us take thought for our souls. Through abstinence let us reject with loathing the pleasures of food, and let us busy ourselves with acts of passion." "Through abstinence let us destroy the passions and through godlike actions let us bring to life the spirit." "Let us fast, pouring out streams tears from our soul, that we may be granted mercy." Together with this the Holy Church, "having begun the sixth week," invites all of us: "Let us sing to Christ a hymn in preparation for the Feast of Palms who comes" "to raise Lazarus from the tomb" and "who comes seated on the foal of an ass." According to this, the 6th week is called "the threshold of lifegiving of Lazarus," mainly is the Week of Palms," "the Flowery" or "Flower bearing." In its Forefeast hymns the Holy Church sings: "Rejoice, O Bethany, home of Lazarus: for Christ comes to you and shall perform a mighty work, bringing Lazarus to life." "O faithful let us follow Martha and Mary, let us send to the Lord divine acts as prayers, that He may come to raise up from the dead our mind, which lies dead in the tomb of insensible laziness, lacking all feeling of the fear of God, and now having no vital energy, crying out: O Lord, by Your dread authority You has raised up Your friend Lazarus of old, O Compassionate One, so now enliven all of us, granting us Your great mercy." "The Lord comes seated, as is written, upon a foal. O people,

prepare to receive in fear the King of all, and to welcome Him with palms as Victor over death, who raised Lazarus from Hades." "Having enlightened and cleansed our souls by fasting, let us go to meet Christ, who comes into Jerusalem in the flesh." "With the Children let us also meet Christ our God, bringing works of mercy instead of palms, and fervent prayer instead of branches singing Hosanna: bless, and exalt Him forever." "Come let us prepare for meeting the Lord, carrying branches of virtue to Him. So shall we receive Him in our souls as in the city of Jerusalem, worshipping and singing to Him."

Friday of the 6th week ends the Holy Forty Day Fast. In the services for this day we sing: "Having completed the forty days that profit our souls, we ask You, O Lover of man: Grant us also to behold the Holy Week of Your Passion, that we may glorify Your mighty acts and Your ineffable plan for our sakes."

Those who carried out the Holy Forty Day Fast as taught by the Holy Church, with fasting and reverence, in prayer and fervent compunction who have cleansed the soul and heart with tears of repentance, who with fervent love for the Lord have sincerely united themselves to Him by partaking of His body, who created fruits worthy of repentance, and was strengthened, as much as possible, for the way of the Lord's precepts. For that the Holy Forty Day Fast was truly "pleasing to the soul." Deprivation of the more pleasant, fattening food has brought forth, certainly, the perceived ease and vigor of the body, the freshness of ideas, the vivacity and activity of all the powers of the soul, the pleasant sensation of internal calm and inner peace. Prayerful vigils, seeming so difficult for the distracted mind, have become not only easy, but also sweetness for the heart, bearing fruit for the spirit, pouring into the soul truly lenten joy full of grace and comfort, light and life.

Everything external has lost power and authority over him through the soul which has become more concentrated within itself, has grown fonder of conversation alone with God and with his own conscience; that before he was occupied, carried away with the imaginary and deceptive pleasure, which now has become worthless, having lost its allure, became unworthy of attention, finally, unpleasant and boring.

The carnal passions themselves, not finding food any more in a body tamed by fasting, neither in the soul concentrated in thinking about God and prayer, have become weakened and have stopped. The very apparently untamable passions of the soul: anger and rage, ambition and envy, spite and hatred, having met with the spirit of repentance and sorrow before God, with thoughts about death and the judgment of God, with reflection about the suffering of Christ and about the truth of God punishing all kinds of sins, are pacified and suppressed. The conscience,

having been delivered from the violence of the passions, having woken from the sleepiness of the vanity and sweetness of everyday life, clarified by the light of the Word of God, touched by the prayers and hymns of the church, itself became impressionable by the power of its accusations, explanations and inclinations from the depth of sin on the mountain of the law of God and from the allure of temptations to the beauty of virtue and spiritual perfection. The entire soul fervently fasting and praying is illuminated by the grace of light: it knows itself and all the surroundings more clearly, it begins to understand through faith and hope the spiritual world more clearly, it rules more freely over its flesh, above its needs, propensities and strivings, it more deeply feels the need for the highest treasure, the righteousness in Christ, the easing of conscience, the grace of coexistence. Who has felt in himself these spiritual fruits of fasting that awaits him coming on the eve of the higher holy days, comfort without compare with anything earthly; therefore everything that is truly joyful and comforting for us in the present life, is enclosed for us in the death of the Savior on the Cross and His resurrection, remembered by the Holy Church in the holy days of Passion Week and Pascha. And the true faster Lord Jesus Christ Himself will enter into the living, sincere partnership of His passion, in order to be glad later by the unutterable joy of His Resurrection which makes usual the more unusual joy of the Lord of pure spirits which no one and nothing on earth can take away from the soul, the loving Lord. But, according to the unutterable mercy and longsuffering of God, and who before carried out the Holy Forty Day Fast not as if it would demand holiness of its days and the true benefit of the soul, who even during these days of universal repentance and salvation did not begin, as it should, the work of his salvation, is still the opening of the door of the mercy of God, and opens the entrance to the holy place of repentance for the reception of mercy and the remission of sins, life and salvation.

And each sinner should primarily take advantage of coming saving days of the Passion of Christ for his sanctification and salvation, and not remain a cold and unfeeling spectator of the suffering of Christ undertaken for our salvation, and not be indifferent and for his own self to partake of the share which awaits him in eternity. Vividly thinking about the "intolerable anger of the Lord against sinners," he with special fervent compunction, according to the management of the Holy Church, must be moved to appeal: "Despising the divine commands, my soul, you have been embraced by the snares of the enemy, and by your own choice you have betrayed yourself to corruption. Sunk in slumber through your many sins, you have profaned the divinely woven garment and made yourself unfit for the royal marriage; but you shall be dragged away because of your sin. For if you sit at the wedding feast clad in the clothing of the passions, He will ask you how you came

in, and you will be cast out from the bridal chamber. But call out to the Savior: O Dreadful Eye, You have become what I am, without ceasing to be who You were. Before Your Cross, for my sake You have worn a mantle of mockery, tear off my sackcloth, and clothe me with the robe of gladness; and deliver me from the outer darkness and eternal weeping, to deliver me, and have mercy on me." And who will carry out the saving days of the Passion of Christ with the sincere confession of one's sins, with the resolute intention not to return to one's former sinful life, with the firm desire to please the Lord by fulfilling His sacred commandments, that one will not lose the reward of life-creating joy of the resurrection of Christ: "for He is the Master who loves mankind, who accepts the last, as He also accepts the first, who gives rest even at the 11th hour as He does at the first hour."

Together with these in the service for this day the Holy Church prepares her children to worthily commemorate Lazarus raised from the dead and especially the Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem, appealing: "Having completed the Forty Day Fast that is pleasing to our soul, let us cry out: Rejoice, O City of Bethany, the home of Lazarus, rejoice Martha and Mary, his sisters. For tomorrow Christ will come, by His word to give life to your dead brother." "Those who are in the deserts and on the mountains, and in the caves, let us gather together carrying palms, to meet the King and the Master: for He comes to save our souls;" "For this meeting we carefully go, offering branches of virtue to Him." The venerable hermits, during the season of the Holy Forty Day Fast secluded themselves in the desert. They returned to their monasteries on Palm Sunday.

On Saturday of the 6th Week, the Holy Church commemorates the miracle of raising Lazarus accomplished by the Savior six days before the Jewish Passover during which He suffered (John 11:45-57). The Holy Church glorifies the raising of Lazarus, as proof of the divine power of Jesus Christ and as evidence of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and in the general resurrection of all the dead, as is expressed in the Troparion of the feast. The faithful finding out the great value accomplished by the Lord remembered in today's miracle, the Holy Church hymns: "O Lord, your voice destroyed the kingdom of Hades and the word of Your authority raised from the grave the one who was dead four days, and Lazarus became once again the saving first fruits of the regeneration of the world. All things are possible to You, O Master and King of all." But at the same time the Holy Church reminds also that the commemoration of this event has served as the beginning of the resolute revolt of the council of the priests and Pharisees against the Savior. Performed before the eyes of innumerable people, the great miracle of the resurrection of Lazarus turned many to the faith in Jesus Christ and caused the strongest indignation against Him by the high priests and elders of Judah, and the Sanhedrin now decided, upon the advice of Caiaphas to arrest Jesus only where it

will be possible (John 11, 47-50). Thus the paradigm of the resurrection of Lazarus served as the direct reason for the condemnation of the Savior to death. Therefore since the very first century the Christian Divine Services were established to remember this great miracle before the Passion Week itself. In the Fourth century the general church considered the resurrection of Lazarus a solemn feast as can be seen from the set of homilies for this day by St. John Chrysostom, the Blessed Augustine, and others. In the 7th and 8th centuries the sacred church hymnographers St. Andrew of Crete, St. Cosmas of Maium and St. John of Damascus have created special hymns and canons for this feast that are still sung to this day. (*from Handbook for Church Servers, 2nd ed., by S. V. Bulgakov (Trans. Archpriest Eugene D. Tarris)*)

Today's Epistle Lesson – St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 9:11-14

Brethren, Christ came *as* High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint Mark 10:32-45

At that time, they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him: "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again."

Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask." And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able." So Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but *it is for those* for whom it is prepared." And when the ten heard *it*, they began to be greatly displeased with James and

John. But Jesus called them to *Himself* and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

A Word From the Holy Fathers

Let us say something about the thorns. Blessed Mary of Egypt was twelve years old when she fell into the hands of the devil. She lived in sin day and night. But the merciful God enlightened her and she abandoned the world and went into the desert. There she led a hermit’s life for forty years. She was cleansed and became like an angel. God wished to give her rest, so he sent the holy ascetic Zosimas to hear her confession and to give her holy communion. Then He received her holy soul into paradise, where she rejoices with the angels. If there is anyone here like Blessed Mary, let him immediately weep and repent, now that he has time, and let him be assured that he will be saved as was Blessed Mary. – St. Kosmos Aitolos

Bishop Neofitos of Nyeri and Mt. Kenya

In January of this year, his Grace, Bishop Neofitos was given the responsibility for a new diocese in his native Kenya, overseeing 43 priests. Until this year, there was only one bishop for all of Kenya’s over 250 priests, and parishioners would go years without seeing their bishop; he is filling a huge need. He is also starting from absolutely nothing; when he set out to go to his new diocesan seat, he didn’t even have a place to stay. He jokes that his office is his briefcase. He would like to build an office, but land is expensive in his city and his diocese is largely rural and poor. His priests often cannot hold weekly services because they cannot afford the fare to get to the church and back; his goal is to equip every priest in his diocese with a motorcycle so they can celebrate liturgy every Sunday. Bishop Neofitos runs an orphanage of 200 children with the assistance of 12 teachers; though their salary is \$250/month, they have not been paid since January because there is no money to pay them. In parts of his diocese, people have to walk for miles to get a glass of water, and it is a struggle to provide food for one meal a day. Our three Lenten disciplines are prayer, fasting, and charity – we are exhorted to do all three. If you would like to assist the Bishop, you can make a check out to OCMC and send it to



OCMC, 220 Mason Manatee Way, St. Augustine, FL 32086 with “Bishop Neofitos” on the memo line. You also can donate online through OCMC at https://www.ocmc.org/donate/donation_info.aspx; just *make sure* to type "Bishop Neofitos" in the special instructions field.

On Stewardship and the Orthodox Life – Part 64: What is God's?



“Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.”
(Matthew 21:21 RSV)

The above saying of Jesus from Matthew 21 is often quoted as a means to separate things of this world, like government and taxes, from the things of God. The holy Church Father St. John Chrysostom says: *“But when you hear the command to render to Caesar the things of*

Caesar, know that such things only are intended which in no way are opposed to religion; if such there be, it is no longer Caesar's but the Devil's tribute.”

It seems that if what Chrysostom says is true, then there would be no rendering to Caesar at all. That is because decisions in our own government here in the United States of America, have often been opposed to religion or religious belief. For example, while trying to separate their decision from religion recently, the Supreme Court of our country has deliberately and, in opposition to religious belief, given a new meaning to the God-ordained state of marriage. Opposed to religion? Yes, at least in this case.

A closer look at what Jesus says may help. Jesus finds himself in the temple area in Jerusalem. He is being tested by His enemies. They ask Him if it is lawful to pay tribute (taxes) to Caesar. Jesus asks for a coin. Now the only coins that should be in the temple area are coins minted for giving as the temple tax. Roman coins were not permitted. The coin produced has the image of Caesar on it. It is a Roman coin.

Matthew tells us that Jesus was *“aware of their malice”* (Matthew 21:18 RSV). Jesus knew they were to trap Him into breaking the Law if He acknowledged the lawfulness of that coin. Jesus did not. He simply stated: *“Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.”*

This saying proclaims a first principle of stewardship: everything is God's. No matter what we have, whether in the realm of personal possession, or in the government's possession, or anywhere: everything belongs to God. It is so easy for us in our present culture to separate things out: this is mine; this is theirs; this is God's... We do it with our time: time for fun, time for work, time to eat, time to

pray; each is put in its own little box. All of this separation shows a misunderstanding of stewardship.

Everything we do is with God and for Him at all times and in all places. God owns everything, and we are merely stewards of what is His. Jesus states it clearly: there is no Caesar or God – there is only God. (*from acrod.org*)

The Nazarene Returns

The third 2016 Spring issue of The Nazarene, the Camp Nazareth newspaper started last summer at Camp, is now available at the Camp website, and is linked from the Camp's Facebook page. It is also posted in the social hall. Each weekly issue includes a "Remember When" section from last year as well as a section devoted to what is up and coming this Summer (without spoiling any surprises)

St. Thomas Bake Sale

It is time to place your order for rolls, breads, and baklava in anticipation of Pascha. The baking team will meet Friday, April 22 to get everything done. Please contact Olga Dewey at 301-481-2654 or deweyhome@md.metrocast.net if you are interested in helping.

RELATIONS OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH WITH THE REST OF THE CHRISTIAN WORLD

[continued from last week – Ed.]

13) If necessary, efforts should be made to coordinate the work of different inter-Orthodox theological commissions, considering that the indissoluble ontological unity of the Orthodox Church is to be revealed and manifested in this sphere as well.

14) Any officially declared dialogue ends with the completion of the relevant work of the Joint Theological Commission when the chairman of the Inter-Orthodox Commission submits a report to the Ecumenical Patriarch, who, with the consent of the primates of the Local Orthodox Churches announces the end of the dialogue. No dialogue is considered complete until the moment when a decision on its completion is announced on the pan-Orthodox level.

15) Upon the successful conclusion of a theological dialogue, a decision, based on the consensus of all Local Orthodox Churches, shall be made on the pan-Orthodox level, concerning the restoration of ecclesiastical communion.

16) One of the principal bodies in the history of the ecumenical movement is the World Council of Churches (WCC). Some of the Orthodox Churches were among the Council's founding members, and later on all the Local Orthodox Churches

became its members. As a structured inter-Christian body, the WCC, along with other inter-Christian organizations and regional bodies, such as the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the Middle East Council of Churches, despite the fact that they do not include all Christian Churches and confessions, carry out an important mission, promoting the unity of the Christian world. The Georgian and Bulgarian Orthodox Churches withdrew membership from the WCC: the former in 1997, and the latter in 1998. They have their own particular opinion on the work of the World Council of Churches and, hence, do not participate in the dialogues conducted by the WCC and other inter-Christian organizations.

17) The Local Orthodox Churches which are members of the WCC participate fully and equally in the structure of the World Council of Churches and with all the means at their disposal, contribute to the witness of truth and promotion of unity of Christians. The Orthodox Church hailed the WCC's decision to respond to her request concerning the establishment of the Special Commission on Orthodox Participation in the WCC, which was done in fulfillment of the mandate of the Inter-Orthodox Conference held in Thessaloniki in 1998. The Special Commission laid down the criteria proposed by the Orthodox and adopted by the WCC, which led to the establishment of the Permanent Commission for Consensus and Cooperation. The criteria were approved and included in the WCC Constitution and Rules.

18) Faithful to her ecclesiology, to the identity of her internal structure and to the teaching of the ancient Church of the Seven Ecumenical Councils, the Orthodox Church, while organizationally participating in the WCC, does not accept the idea of the "equality of confessions" and cannot accept Church unity as an inter-confessional compromise. In this spirit, the unity which is sought within the WCC cannot simply be the product of theological agreements alone; it must also be the fruit of a unified faith, sacramentally preserved and lived in the Orthodox Church.

19) The Orthodox member Churches of the WCC consider *sine qua non for their participation in the WCC the key article of its Constitution which states that only those Churches and confessions that acknowledge Jesus Christ as God and Savior, according to the Scriptures, and believe in God glorified in the Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, according to the Nicean-Constantinopolitan Creed, may become WCC members. It is their firm conviction that the ecclesiological presuppositions of the 1950 Toronto Statement on the Church, the Churches and the World Council of Churches, are of paramount importance for Orthodox participation in the Council. It is therefore clear that the WCC is not and by no means can be a "super-Church."* "The purpose of the World Council of Churches is not to negotiate unions between Churches, which can only be done by the Churches themselves acting on their own initiative, but to bring the Churches into

living contact with each other and to promote the study and discussion of the issues of Church unity” (Toronto Statement, § 2).

20) The prospects for conducting theological dialogues between the Orthodox Church and other Christian Churches and confessions shall always be derived from the canonical criteria of established Church Tradition (canon 7 of the Second Ecumenical Council and canon 95 of the Quinisext Ecumenical Council).

21) The Orthodox Church wishes to support the work of the Commission for Faith and Church Order and with particular interest follows its theological contribution to this day. On the whole, the Church has a favorable view of the theological documents adopted by the Commission with the participation of and valuable contribution from Orthodox theologians, regarding the adoption of those documents as an important step towards the rapprochement of Christians. However, the Orthodox Church does not express full agreement with the interpretation of fundamental issues of faith and order made in these documents.

22) The Orthodox Church believes that any attempts to shatter Church unity, undertaken by individuals or groups under the pretense of preserving or defending true Orthodoxy, must be condemned. As evidenced by the whole life of the Orthodox Church, the preservation of the true Orthodox faith is only possible thanks to the conciliar structure which since ancient times has been for the Church the strong and final criterion in matters of faith.

23) Common to the Orthodox Church is the awareness of the necessity for conducting inter-Christian theological dialogue and therefore believes that dialogue should always be accompanied by witness to the world through the acts of mutual understanding and love, which reflect the joy unspeakable of the Glad Tidings (1 Pt 1:8), excluding any practice of proselytism or any outrageous manifestations of inter-confessional antagonism. In the same way, the Orthodox Church deems it important that we all, Christians, inspired by common fundamental principles of our faith, make efforts to willingly give a unanimous response to those difficult problems posed to us by the contemporary world. This response is to be grounded in the ideal model of a new man in Christ.

24) The Orthodox Church is aware of the fact that the movement for the restoration of Christian unity takes new forms in response to new circumstances and new challenges. It is necessary that the Orthodox Church continues to bear her witness to the divided Christian world on the basis of the apostolic Tradition and her faith.

We pray that all Christians work together in order to bring nearer the day in which the Lord will fulfill the hope of the Orthodox Churches, and *there shall be one fold, and one shepherd* (Jn 10:16). *Chambésy, October 15, 2015*

A Preparation for Confession by St. John of Kronstadt

I, a sinful soul, confess to our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, all of my evil acts which I have done, said or thought from baptism even unto this present day.

I have not kept the vows of my baptism, but have made myself unwanted before the face of God.

I have sinned before the Lord by lack of faith and by doubts concerning the Orthodox Faith and the Holy Church; by ungratefulness for all of God's great and unceasing gifts; His long-suffering and His providence for me, a sinner; by lack of love for the Lord, as well as fear, through not fulfilling the Holy Commandments of God and the canons and rules of the Church.

I have not preserved a love for God and for my neighbor nor have I made enough efforts, because of laziness and lack of care, to learn the Commandments of God and the precepts of the Holy Fathers.

I have sinned: by not praying in the morning and in the evening and in the course of the day; by not attending the services or by coming to Church only half-heartedly, lazily and carelessly; by conversing during the services, by not paying attention, letting my mind wander and by departure from the Church before the dismissal and blessing.

I have sinned by judging members of the clergy.

I have sinned by not respecting the Feasts, breaking the Fasts, and by immoderation in food and drink.

I have sinned by self-importance, disobedience, willfulness, self-righteousness, and the seeking of approval and praise.

I have sinned by unbelief, lack of faith, doubts, despair, despondency, abusive thoughts, blasphemy and swearing.

I have sinned by pride, a high opinion of my self, narcissism, vanity, conceit, envy, love of praise, love of honors, and by putting on airs.

I have sinned: by judging, malicious gossip, anger, remembering of offenses done to me, hatred and returning evil for evil; by slander, reproaches, lies, slyness, deception and hypocrisy; by prejudices, arguments, stubbornness, and an unwillingness to give way to my neighbor; by gloating, spitefulness, taunting, insults and mocking; by gossip, by speaking too much and by empty speech.

I have sinned by unnecessary and excessive laughter, by reviling and dwelling upon my previous sins, by arrogant behavior, insolence and lack of respect.

I have sinned by not keeping my physical and spiritual passions in check, by my enjoyment of impure thoughts, licentiousness and unchastity in thoughts, words and deeds.

I have sinned by lack of endurance towards my illnesses and sorrows, a devotion to the comforts of life and by being too attached to my parents, children, relatives and friends.

I have sinned by hardening my heart, having a weak will and by not forcing myself to do good.

I have sinned by miserliness, a love of money, the acquisition of unnecessary things and immoderate attachment to things.

I have sinned by self-justification, a disregard for the admonitions of my conscience and failing to confess my sins through negligence or false pride.

I have sinned many times by my Confession: belittling, justifying and keeping silent about sins.

I have sinned against the Most-holy and Life-creating Mysteries of the Body and Blood of our Lord by coming to Holy Communion without humility or the fear of God.

I have sinned in deed, word and thought, knowingly and unknowingly, willingly and unwillingly, thoughtfully and thoughtlessly, and it is impossible to enumerate all of my sins because of their multitude. But I truly repent of these and all others not mentioned by me because of my forgetfulness and I ask that they be forgiven through the abundance of the Mercy of God.

Dedication of Renovated Cabins at Camp Nazareth

Dear Faithful, all of us are invited to take part in the dedication of the newly renovated and expanded cabins at Camp Nazareth in Mercer, PA on Wednesday, May 11, 2016. We are invited to the Service of Dedication which will take place at 10am on that day and then to the brunch which will be served in the Main Lodge following the dedication. If you are able, plan on attending the festivities. We are grateful to God for many blessings including the blessing of our beloved Camp Nazareth and the ministry that takes place there. Come to enjoy the festivities and give thanks to God for what He has allowed us and blessed us to accomplish. Please see the flyer in the social hall. Please note that reservations for the event must be received by May 3, 2016!! Hurry! Space is limited!

Camp Nazareth Family Camp & Family Day

Family Camp will be held this year on Friday, June 3 and Saturday, June 4, and campers will join in with the Family Day celebration on June 5th. Families will “camp” together in the Camp cabins and participate in a weekend of services, games, discussions, activities and challenges that are all designed to help families deepen their relationship with God and with one another. This year’s theme is “Not letting Orthodoxy be your family’s secret

identity.” For more information and registration forms, visit the Camp website. Space is limited, so act quickly! Forms are due by May 20.

AMAZONSMILE

The on-line shopping store, Amazon.com will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Diocese of the USA whenever you shop on AmazonSmile. AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know – same products, same prices, same service. Simply go to the home page of our Diocesan website (www.acrod.org) and click on the AmazonSmile button in the far left column and then shop as usual.

The Raising of Lazarus

In addition to the usual Lenten services this week, St. Thomas parish will celebrate the raising of Lazarus on Saturday morning at 9:00. After the liturgy, there will be a little something to eat, and then we will do some cleanup in and around the church to prepare for Pascha (the last cleanup day got snowed out!).

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, Alicia Barosio and family, Millie Borys, Jeffrey Carey, Xenia Chilkowich, Jon Church, Ramius Connour, Curtis Cooper, Tina Crull, Ron Dominiecki, 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, Daria Virvan, Lydia Vita, Christine, Marshall, Nathaniel, 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.)