

SOBORNOST

St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church

(301) 638-5035 Church
4419 Leonardtown Road
Waldorf, MD 20601

Rev. Father Joseph Edgington, Pastor
(703) 380-9673 Cell
fredgington@gmail.com
www.apostlethomas.org

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.**



May 29, 2016 – Sunday of the Samaritan Woman

Since on this Sunday Christ openly confesses Himself to be the Messiah, which means “Christ” or “the anointed one” (for messa is the Hebrew word for oil), for this reason, the present feast is placed in the week of Mid-Pentecost; and also because, on the previous Sunday, Christ wrought a miracle at the Sheep’s Pool. On this Sunday, He works a miracle at Jacob’s well, which Jacob himself dug and bestowed upon his son Joseph. This was a special place, for here, in the vicinity of Mount Somor, the Samaritans inhabited many cities. Christ came to Sichar, where Jacob once lived with his daughter Dinah and his sons. Sychem, the son of Emmor the Chorræan, lusted after Dinah and raped her; thereupon, her brothers, provoked to zeal, suddenly entered their city and slew everyone, including Sychem and his father Emmor. Jacob lived in that place and dug the present well.

The Hebrews who originally lived on this mountain were not called Samaritans, but Israelites. During the reign of King Pekah, they offended God by falling into idolatry and other iniquities. During the reign of King Hoshea, who became a vassal of the Assyrians and paid tribute to them, the Assyrians came and deported the inhabitants of Samaria, together with their women and children, to their own country. Subsequently, the King of the Assyrians, in order that the land should not remain uncultivated, dispatched men from Babylon and the neighboring regions to settle in the territory of the Israelites; but God sent lions against the heathen, and

by His permission, the lions devoured them. On learning of this, the King of the Assyrians wanted to know the reason why. The Israelites held captive in Assyria replied that it was because the settlers did not know the ways of the God of that place. Hence, the King sent them a priest from the Jews to instruct them in the Law of God. They accepted only the five books of Moses, rejecting the Prophets and the rest of Scripture, and continuing to worship their own idols. They were called Samaritans after Mount Somor. They were hated by the Hebrews who returned from captivity, because they were only semi-Jewish; the Jews did not eat with them, regarding them as worthy of abomination. For this reason, they frequently called Christ a Samaritan, on the ground that, like the Samaritans, He supposedly violated certain provisions of the Law.

Jesus, therefore, came to Sichar, and being weary from His journey, sat down at about the sixth hour of the day. A certain woman came from the city to draw water, the Disciples having gone to purchase food. Jesus asked her for water, but she excused herself by saying that the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans (St. John 4:9); for she knew who He was, both by His accent and by His apparel. Jesus raised their conversation to a higher level by introducing the idea of spiritual water, which connotes abundance and cleansing power, since the Spirit is always likened to water and fire. The woman was sure, from the fact that He had not brought a bucket, that He did not have such water, and added that the well was deep. She then went on to talk about their forefather Jacob, saying that he had dug the well and that he and his children had drunk from it, commending the rich resources of the well, and also its usefulness and the coolness of its water. Christ, however, did not say that He was greater than Jacob, so as not to frighten the woman, but again He spoke about the water, thus proving His superiority; for one who drank from that water, He said, would in no wise be thirsty.

The woman asked for this water, but He told her to call her husband, since His words needed to be more firmly understood. She denied that she had a husband. Jesus, knowing all things, replied: "You have well said, I have no husband: For you have had five husbands," which the Law forbids, and the sixth whom you now have, since you live with him unlawfully, "is not your husband" (St. John 4:17-18). Some interpreters consider the five husbands to be the five books of Moses, which the Samaritans accepted, and the sixth to be the very words of Christ, which were not yet hers, since Grace had not yet been poured out upon her. Other interpreters suppose that they are the five laws given by God—in Paradise, after the banishment of Adam and Eve from Paradise, in the time of Noah, in the time of Abraham, and in the time of Moses—and the sixth to be the Gospel, which she did not yet have. There are still others who say that they are the five senses.

The woman replied to Him, calling Him a Prophet, and then asked Him about the mountain where one should worship: should it be in Somor or in Jerusalem? For the Samaritans, being imperfect in their understanding, did not believe that God existed everywhere, but abode only in that place where they worshipped, that is, on Mount Gerizim, on account of the blessings given by God in that place, or because it was there that Abraham first set up an altar to God. The Jews, likewise, also said that one must worship God only in Jerusalem, and for this reason Jews from everywhere gathered there for feasts. Christ replied that the salvation of the world was of the Jews, but that God is non-material and that those who would be vouchsafed to worship Him would do so, not with sacrifices, as they had before, but in Spirit and truth, and in this way they would not only know God, but would also know Him in the Holy Spirit and in the Son; for the Son is the Truth. The woman then said: "We have heard from the Scriptures that the Messiah comes Who is the Christ" (St. John 4:25). Jesus, foreknowing the woman's gratitude, said: "I am He." The Samaritans, too, knew about the Messiah from the books of Moses, especially from the verse, "The Lord God shall raise up a Prophet for you" (Deuteronomy 18:15), and many others.

At the conclusion of this conversation, the Disciples returned and were amazed at Christ's extreme condescension in talking with a woman. In the meantime, they besought Him to eat, both because of His weariness and on account of the heat of the day. But He spoke to them about eternal food, namely, the salvation of mankind and how they needed to harvest the labors of the Prophets.

When the woman reached the city and recounted what had happened to her, all the inhabitants were aroused and went to Christ, convinced that the woman would not have reproached herself unless she had come to know something of importance. They implored Him to stay with them and persuaded Him to remain for two days. He worked very many miracles during His sojourn there, which, on account of their multitude, are not recorded by the Evangelists.

The woman in question was the Samaritan woman, who was subsequently named Photine by Christ, and who, along with her seven sons, received the crown of martyrdom in the reign of Nero, after much hardship, in the course of which her flesh was scraped, her breasts were cut off, her hands were crushed, fine reeds were inserted under her fingernails, she was forced to swallow molten lead, and suffered countless other torments.

It should be known that the Emperor Justinian transferred from there with honor to the palace of God the Word, that is, the Great Church of Hagia Sophia, not only the mouth of that well, which he placed on a well outside the narthex, but also the stone on which Christ sat and conversed with the Samaritan woman. To this day,

they remain there, healing every kind of disease, and providing remedies especially for those suffering from fevers and chills.

By the intercessions of Your Martyr Photine, O Christ God, have mercy on us. Amen. (*from the synaxarion, accessed at johnsanidopoulos.com*)

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 4:5-42

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.”

St. Luke Picnic & Fundraiser

On Saturday, June 4, St. Luke Serbian Orthodox Church in McLean, VA is holding its annual picnic from 12-4, featuring pit-roasted lamb. For more details, visit www.stlukemclean.org.



On Stewardship and the Orthodox Life – Part 72: Life's Deserts

“...the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness.” (Luke 3:2 RSV)

Everyone, at one time or another, has a desert experience. What does that mean? It means that every one of us, at one time or another, goes through things in life that we seem to be able to handle only within us. It is like being in a desert.

A desert is a hostile environment: it is silent; it is lonely; it is barren. There is little food. There is no entertainment. The desert is, of course, deserted. There seems no one there but our own selves. When we find ourselves in our own kind of desert because of sadness, or loss, or illness, it seems we have only ourselves to face. We live day and night with our own thoughts.

Such a desert is a battleground ripe for the forces of evil. And they are hard at work. When, not by our own choice there is less to distract us, like TV, radio, internet, Facebook or Twitter – we must face down the forces of evil who zero in on our thoughts. We feel that we must face down these forces of evil on our own.

It was in the desert that St. John the Forerunner was formed for his mission. St. John, alone with only his own presence to keep him company, was given the task of preparing the world for the coming of Christ the world's Savior. But, we are told, St. John the Forerunner was not alone: “...the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness.” The Word of God came! St. John was not truly alone in the desert.

It is at such times in our life when we are at a loss that we must remember that we are never alone. When the desert times close in on us and we are feeling the most alone, always present is the “Word of God” – Christ Jesus! God in Christ finds us in the desert at a time when we might least expect to be found, or even when we don't want to be found. But there He is anyway.

Think of the others to whom God showed up in their deserts: Elias the Prophet, Moses and Aaron, Jeremiah the Prophet, and, of course our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. And what happened at those encounters with God in the desert? God formed the people he met. God formed them into the stewards that they all turned out to be.

It is a myth to think that only those who are well-off and comfortable can be good stewards. Everyone who has been gifted with life by God is a steward, a caretaker, of whatever God has provided for him or her – a little or a lot. All belongs to Him, including our own lives. Stewards are called to give back what is rightfully God's. (from acrod.org)

A Word From the Holy Fathers

Because He is truthful He will give us everything that He has promised. This is ‘what no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love Him (1 Cor 2:9). For that is also why He made us, that we might ‘become partakers of the divine nature’ (2 Pet 1:4) and sharers in His eternity, and prove to be like Him through the deification bestowed by grace.

– St. Maximus the Confessor

Also Commemorated Today: Virginmartyr Theodosia of Tyre

Saint Theodosia of Tyre lived during the third and fourth centuries. Once, during a persecution against Christians, which had already lasted for five years, the seventeen-year-old Theodosia went up to condemned Christian prisoners in the Praetorium in Caesarea, Palestine. It was the day of Holy Pascha, and the martyrs spoke about the Kingdom of God. St Theodosia asked them to remember her before the Lord, when they should come to stand before Him.



Soldiers saw that the maiden bowed to the prisoners, and they seized her and led her before the governor, Urban. The governor advised the maiden to offer sacrifice to the idols but she refused, confessing her faith in Christ. Then they subjected the saint to cruel tortures, raking her body with iron claws until her bones were exposed.

The martyr was silent and endured the sufferings with a happy face, and to a second suggestion by the governor to offer sacrifice to the idols she answered, “You fool, I have been granted to join the martyrs!” They threw the maiden with a stone about her neck into the sea, but angels drew her out from the depths. Then they threw the martyr to the wild beasts to be eaten by them. Seeing that the beasts would not touch her, they cut off her head.

By night St Theodosia appeared to her parents, who had tried to talk their daughter into not going to the sufferings. She was in bright garb with a crown upon her head and a luminous gold cross in her hand, and she said, “Behold the great glory of which you wanted to deprive me!”

The Holy Martyr Theodosia of Tyre suffered for Christ in the year 307 or 308. On May 29 we commemorate the transfer of her relics to Constantinople and Venice. She is also commemorated on April 3 (her principal commemoration is today).
(from oca.org)

Young Women's Encounter

Registration is now open for the Third Annual Diocesan Young Women's Encounter which will take place from Sunday, June 26th to Wednesday, June 29, 2016 at Sts Peter and Paul Church in Windber, PA which is open to young women in our Diocese ages 12-18. This engaging experience will highlight how young women can live our Orthodox Faith and serve the Church with their own unique gifts. This year we are really looking forward to having Katrina Bitar with us. She is the YES North America Program Director (Youth Equipped to Serve) for FOCUS North America (Fellowship of Orthodox Christians United to Serve.) **Registration Deadline is June 1, 2016.** For more information, please visit <http://www.acrod.org/news/7283/ywe2016>

Diocesan Altar Boy Retreat

Plans are underway for the Annual Altar Boy Retreat which will take place from Sunday evening, June 26th (Registration is from 6pm till 8 p.m.) until Wednesday, June 29th. The Retreat will once again take place at Christ the Savior Seminary, Cathedral and Education Center in Johnstown. This year's outing will be to Teen Quest Ranch in Somerset, PA where they will enjoy a wide variety of outdoor activities. This is the time and place for our faithful Altar Servers to join other Altar Boys from all over our Diocese. For more information, please visit <http://www.acrod.org/news/7283/abr-2016>. **All Altar Boys must be registered by June 13, 2016.**

June Anniversaries and Birthdays



Anniversaries:

Steve & Nancy Hall 4th Larry & Gail Hartenstein 6th
Bernie & Carol Vallandingham 8th
Michael & Phyllis Kopan 9th



Birthdays:

Rebecca Vallandingham 6th Aurora Rodzianko 23rd
Chris Nicolaus 25th Ron Wright 30th

April Treasurer's Report

Operating income \$10,191.25 | Operating Expenses \$8,888.98
Over/Under income \$1,302.27

This month's major expense was the normal candles purchase (\$505.07). Please remember to pay your diocesan assessment. Thank you for being good Stewards of God's House.
Kari David, Treasurer (Emeritus)



Hawaii's Myrrh-Streaming Iveron Icon

Embraces

Washington DC

June 5-11th



(Everyday from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.)

- Sunday June 5 -** *St Andrew's Romanian Orthodox OCA (240-281-0254)*
9111 River Road Potomac MD 20854
- Monday June 6 -** *St George Greek Orthodox Church (301-469-7990)*
7701 Bradley Blvd Bethesda MD 20817
- Tuesday June 7 -** *St Mark Orthodox Church OCA (301-229-6300)*
7124 River Road Bethesda MD 20817
- Wednesday June 8 -** *St Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral (202-333-4730)*
2815 36th Street NW Washington DC 20007
- Thursday June 9 -** *St Nicholas Orthodox Cathedral OCA(202-333-5060)*
3500 Massachusetts Ave NW Washington DC 20007
- Friday June 10 -** *St John the Baptist Russian Orthodox Cathedral*
4001 17th St NW Washington DC 20011 (202-726-3000)
- Saturday June 11 -** *St Tamar Georgian Orthodox Church (240-720-6186)*
12221 Parklawn Drive, #212 Rockville MD 20852

***Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Lord Jesus
Christ have mercy on us!***

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>

Great Council: <https://www.orthodoxcouncil.org/>

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, 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, Dawn & Faith Ulmschneider, Daria Virvan, Lydia Vita, Christine, Marshall, Nathaniel, the Syrian Christians displaced by war, Mother Virginia Marie and the Carmelite Nuns of Port Tobacco, for the newly departed servant of God Timothy Loya, and all those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)