

SOBORNOST

St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church

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American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

SERVICES

Wednesdays:

Moleben to the Cross 6:00 AM

Fridays:

Moleben to the Theotokos 6:00 AM

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

Sundays: Matins (Orthros) 8:45 AM | Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM.



July 31, 2016 – 6th Sunday After Pentecost | Forefeast of the Procession of the Cross | Righteous Eudocimus of Cappadocia

On this day in Constantinople it was traditional for the Cross to be laid on the altar in the Great Church of Hagia Sophia; beginning tomorrow, the Cross would be carried in procession through the streets of Constantinople for people to venerate daily until the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos.

Saint Eudocimus, a native of Cappadocia (Asia Minor), lived during the ninth century during the reign of Emperor Theophilus (829-842). He was the son of the pious Christians Basil and Eudokia, an illustrious family known to the emperor. They raised their son “in discipline and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6: 4), planting in his soul a sincere faith and holy virtues.

The righteous life of St Eudocimus was devoted to pleasing God and serving his neighbor. Having given a vow to remain unmarried and chaste, he avoided conversation with women and did not look at them. He would speak only with his own mother, whom he greatly respected. The emperor valued his virtue and talents, so he appointed St Eudocimus as governor of Chorziene, Armenia.

Fulfilling his duty as a servant of God, St Eudocimus governed the people justly and with kindness. He concerned himself with the unfortunate, and with orphans and widows, and he was a defender of the common people. His personal Christian exploits which he did in secret, were known only to God.

Eudocimus pleased God by his blameless life, and the Lord called him at age 33. Lying on his deathbed, St Eudocimus gave final instructions to place him in the grave in those clothes in which he would meet death. Then he sent everyone out of the room and entreated the Lord that no one would see his end, just as no one saw his secret efforts during life. His attendants buried him as he had instructed them. Right after the death of St Eudocimus miracles took place at his grave. Many sick people were healed, and the news of the miraculous healings spread.

After 18 months, the mother of St Eudocimus came from Constantinople to venerate his relics. She gave orders to remove the stone, dig up the ground, and open the grave. Everyone beheld the face of the saint, bright as if alive, altogether untouched by decay. A great fragrance came from him. They took up the coffin with the relics from the earth, and they dressed the saint in new clothes. His mother wanted to take the relics of her son to Constantinople, but the Kharsian people would not clear a path for their holy one. After a certain time the hieromonk Joseph, having lived and served at the grave of the saint, transported the relics of St Eudocimus to Constantinople. There they were placed in a silver reliquary in the church of the Most Holy Theotokos, built by the parents of the saint. St Eudocimus is considered by the Russian Church to be one of the special protectors and intercessors before God of the family hearth. He was, as his name implies, truly successful in every virtue.

Also commemorated today (and depicted with him on the icon on the first page) is Righteous Joseph of Arimathea. St. Joseph of Arimathea was a secret disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ. As a member of the Sanhedrin he did not participate in the “counsel and deed” of the Jews in passing a death sentence for Jesus Christ. After the Crucifixion and Death of the Savior he made bold to go to Pilate and ask him for the Body of the Lord, to which he gave burial with the help of Righteous Nicodemus, who was also a secret disciple of the Lord.

They took down the Body of the Savior from the Cross, wrapped it in a winding-cloth, and placed it in a new tomb, in which no one had ever been buried, in the Garden of Gethsemane, in the presence of the Mother of God and the holy Myrrh-Bearing Women (St Joseph had prepared this tomb for himself). Having rolled a heavy stone before the entrance of the tomb, they departed (John. 19: 37-42; Mt. 27: 57-61; Mark 15: 43-47; Luke. 24: 50-56). St Joseph traveled around the world, proclaiming the Gospel of Christ. He died peacefully in England. (*from oca.org*)

Today's Epistle Lesson – St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 12:6-14

BRETHREN, having gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, *let us use them*: if prophecy, *let us prophesy* in proportion to our faith; or ministry, *let us use it* in *our* ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. *Be* kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint Matthew 9:1-8

At that time, Jesus got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you." And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemes!" But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—then He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." And he arose and departed to his house. Now when the multitudes saw *it*, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men.

A Word From the Holy Fathers

"Three things are fundamental: to fear the Lord, to pray to the Lord, and to do good to your neighbor." Abba Poemen. The Old Man says, 'Fear the Lord,' because the fear of God in itself leads on to every virtue. 'The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom' (Prov. 9:10). Also, without the fear of God no one would acquire any virtue or do any good whatever, for it is 'by the fear of God that everyone turns away from evil' (Prov. 16:6). He says then, 'Pray to God,' because a man cannot gain victory or do any good, even if he fears God and keenly desires to do so, unless he has God's help. It is absolutely necessary that his own zeal and God's help be continually working together. A man needs therefore to pray about everything, and to beg God's help and cooperation in everything he does. Finally 'to do good to one's neighbor.' This is love. A man who fears the Lord and prays to God only helps himself. But only through loving our neighbor is all virtue made perfect. This is why the Old Man adds 'to do good to our neighbor.' For even if a

man fears God and even if he continually prays to God he still has the debt of being useful to his neighbor and being good to him; for this is an essential part of love, which is, as the Apostle says, the perfection of the virtues (1 Cor. 13:13).

– Dorotheus of Gaza



On Stewardship and the Orthodox Life – Part 80: Looking Back

“I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.” (Philippians 3:8 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)

Reflections on Camp Nazareth

Tyler Vallandingham:
Camp Nazareth is the highlight of my year! Well first of all you won't ever regret going to Camp Nazareth, ever, from the wonderful staff, counselors, and peers. From the wondrous sticky buns, to the crazy camp fire songs. Don't ever be afraid to call Camp Naz your home. The hilarious counselors never not have some-



thing fun planned, you won't ever be bored. You also experience the Theotokos weeping icon, bringing beautiful tears to the room, and her heartbreaking true stories. So please if you will go, to Camp Nazareth!!!

Ashley Vallandingham - Camp was so much fun and the sticky buns were awesome as well as church.



Archbishop Demetrios delivers benediction at the Republican National Convention

His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in America, offered the Prayer of Benediction on, Wednesday July 20, at the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio.

Following a long established tradition in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese to offer a prayer in both the Republican and the Democratic Conventions, Archbishop Demetrios was invited by the Republican National Committee and was introduced by its Chairman Reinhold Richard "Reince" Priebus. His Eminence delivered the benediction immediately following the acceptance speech of the vice-presidential nominee Governor of Indiana, Mike Pence.

For the first time, a reception was hosted on July 19th by the RNC for the Greek Americans participating in the Convention, in which Archbishop Demetrios was the honored guest. It is worth noting that through the actions of Greek Orthodox Republicans language was added to the Republican Party platform, which highlights Religious Freedom and the need to defend it in places where Orthodox Christians are at risk, which is very important for our Ecumenical Patriarchate.

On July 21, in conjunction with the Republican National Convention a breakfast was organized by the Greater Cleveland friends of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese.

Benediction of Archbishop Demetrios for the Republican National Convention

Most High God, Lord of Peace, Justice, and Love,

We magnify Your glorious Name for all the blessings that you have bestowed upon our nation: blessings of land and sea, of health and prosperity, of law and of values, of faith and freedom.

Bless us also, Lord, with the precious gift of unity: unity in our political processes, in our judicial system, in our neighborhoods and cities, and in our whole nation. As the Holy Bible says, "A house divided cannot stand." Open, therefore, the hearts and minds of all our people, so that with oneness of purpose, in spirit and in truth, our United States of America would serve you, O God, faithfully and fervently.

To this unity, Heavenly Father, add the supreme blessing of peace: peace within our borders and peace around the world. Grant to us and to all people the wisdom from above, patience, and trust in Your goodness, so that we might learn to live according to Your will, in harmony and forbearance: so that we might learn to love the people as you God love us.

Furthermore, Almighty Lord, send forth your guiding hand upon these Your servants, the delegates of the Republican National Convention and their nominees

for the superb and awesome office of the President and Vice President of the United States of America, Donald Trump and Mike Pence, and lead them unto wisdom and discernment, so that they may perform Your holy will in all cases and under all circumstances and may always be agents of unity, peace, justice, and love, both in our country and across the world.

For You are our Creator and Savior, and to You we offer glory, honor and worship, and now and forever, and to the ages of ages. Amen. (from goarch.org)

Archbishop Demetrios delivers benediction at the Democratic National Convention

His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in America, offered the Prayer of Invocation on Thursday July 28, at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia, Pa. In the long established tradition of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese to offer a prayer in both the Democratic and the Republican Conventions, Archbishop Demetrios was invited by the Democratic National Committee and was introduced by Kevin Washo, executive director of the Philadelphia 2016 DNC host committee. His Eminence delivered the invocation at the beginning of the fourth and last day of the Convention, just before the nominee for President of the Democratic Party, Senator Hillary Clinton, was to officially accept the nomination.

Earlier in the day, a DNC Greek American reception and luncheon in honor of Archbishop Demetrios was hosted by Ambassador Eleni Tsakopoulos Kounalakis, Denis Mehiel, and Andrew and Mike Manatos. Many members of Congress, White House senior staff, officials and Greek American leaders were in attendance including John Podesta, chairman of the 2016 Hillary Clinton presidential campaign and chief of staff to President Bill Clinton; Michael Dukakis, former governor of Massachusetts and presidential candidate in 1988; Senator Paul Sarbanes, Dina Titus, U.S. Rep. (D-NV); Chris Van Hollen, U.S. Rep. (D-MD); John Sarbanes, U.S. Rep. (D-MD); and Carolyn Maloney, U.S. Rep. (D-NY).

Benediction of Archbishop Demetrios at the Democratic National Convention

Almighty and gracious God, God of unlimited love and uncompromising faithfulness:

At this auspicious day and hour, we call upon your great and holy Name, and we ask that you come to us and abide in us, illuminating our minds and souls with the light of your truth and your goodness. You have revealed yourself as the defender of the poor and the guide of the blind, as the protector of orphans and the liberator of the oppressed, as the friend of the foreigner and the consolation of the outcast. Open our hearts to become more like you, O compassionate One. Teach us to walk in your gracious and generous ways. Bless our nation today, O Lord, even as you

blessed us so richly in years past. Grant us stability and security, justice and freedom, righteousness and peace. Appoint for us leaders and legislators and judges who will guide us to fulfill your holy will and to build a better world for all people. Send your mercies upon these your servants, the delegates of the Democratic National Convention. Bestow grace on those they have nominated for the exalted and awesome offices of President and Vice President of the United States of America—Hillary Rodham Clinton and Tim Kaine—so that they may be faithful in their calling, and may honorably serve you, and our fellow citizens, and all the peoples of the world, through their conduct in the days and months and years ahead.

We embrace your holy words, Lord, believing that “righteousness exalts a nation” (Prov. 14:34). Holy God: exalt and lift high these United States of America, to follow in your righteousness, your mercy, your compassion, your unconditional love; and to walk in your truth that sets us free, and will keep us free. And so we pray reiterating the words of the Bible: “Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God unto the ages of ages! Amen” (Rev. 7:12). (from goarch.org)

The Dormition Fast

(bonus e-bulletin material – Ed.)

The Dormition fast is not as strict as the Great Fast, but it is stricter than the Apostle’s and Nativity fasts.

On Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays of the Dormition fast, the Church rubrics prescribe xerophagy, that is, the strictest fast of uncooked food (without oil); on Tuesdays and Thursdays, “with cooked food, but with no oil”; on Saturdays and Sundays wine and oil are allowed.

Until the feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord, when grapes and apples are blessed in the churches, the Church requires that we abstain from these fruits. According to the tradition of the Holy Fathers, “If one of the brethren should eat the grapes before the feast, then let him be forbidden for obedience’s sake to taste of the grapes during the entire month of August.”

On the feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord, the Church rubrics allow fish. After that day, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, the fruits of the new harvest would always be included in the meals.

The spiritual fast is closely united with the bodily, just as our soul is united with the body, penetrates it, enlivens it, and makes one united whole with it, as the soul and body make one living human being. Therefore, in fasting bodily we must at

the same time fast spiritually: “Brothers, in fasting bodily let us also fast spiritually, severing all union with unrighteousness,” the Holy Church enjoins us.

The main thing in fasting bodily is restraint from abundant, tasty and sweet foods; the main thing in fasting spiritually is restraint from passionate, sinful movements that indulge our sensual inclinations and vices. The former is renunciation of the more nourishing foods for fasting food, which is less nourishing; the latter is the renunciation of our favorite sins for exercise in the virtues which oppose them.

The essence of the fast is expressed in the following Church hymn: “If you fast from food, my soul, but are not purified of the passions, in vain do we comfort ourselves by not eating. For if the fast does not bring correction, then it will be hateful to God as false, and you will be like unto the evil demons, who never eat.”

The Great Fast and the Dormition Fast are particularly strict with regard to entertainment — in Imperial Russia even civil law forbade public masquerades and shows during these fasts. *(from pravoslavie.ru)*



August Anniversaries and Birthdays



Anniversaries:

Doug & Sandy Tucker 11th
Dana & Olga Dewey 12th David & Kathryn Newman 17th
John & Emily Rodzianko 18th William & Gabriela Howl 24th

Birthdays:

Larry Hartenstein 4th Kari David 7th Sandy Tucker 8th
Steve Hall 9th Reagan Beauchamp 13th Elena Chadwick 14th
David Newman 15th Carol Vallandingham 19th Ievgeniia Gryshukova 22nd
Anna Connour 24th Ashley Vallandingham 27th Olga Cohoon 31st



Two weeks ago, we celebrated July’s birthdays and anniversaries, but none of the honorees were present. We missed you!

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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 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, Rdr. Nectaros and Ia, the Syrian Christians displaced by war, Mother Virginia Marie and the Carmelite Nuns of Port Tobacco, for the newly departed handmaiden of God Hope Stephanadis, and all those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)