

# SOBORNOST

## St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church

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American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE  
OF CONSTANTINOPLE

## SERVICES

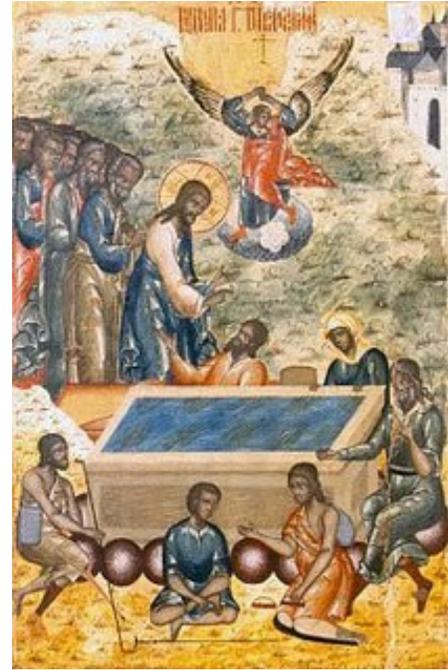
**Saturday: Confession 5:00 PM**

**Great Vespers 5:30 PM**

**Sunday: Matins (Orthros) 8:45 AM**

**Children's Sunday School 9:30 AM**

**Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM.**



## May 19, 2019 – Sunday of the Paralytic (4<sup>th</sup> Sun. of Pascha)

By Met. Anthony (Bloom) of Sourozh

How tragic today's story of the life of Christ is. A man had been paralyzed for years. He had lain at a short distance from healing, but he himself had no strength to merge into the waters of ablution. And no one - no one in the course of all these years - had had compassion on him.

The ones rushed to be the first in order to be healed. Others who were attached to them by love, by friendship, helped them to be healed. But no one cast a glance at this man, who for years had longed for healing and was not in himself able to find strength to become whole.

If only one person had been there, if only one heart had responded with compassion, this man might have been whole years and years earlier. As no one, not one person, had compassion on him, all that was left to him - and I say *all that was left to him* with a sense of horror - was the direct intervention of God.

We are surrounded by people who are in need. It is not only people who are physically paralyzed who need help. There are so many people who are paralyzed in themselves, and need to meet someone who would help them. Paralyzed in themselves are those who are terrified of life, because life has been an object of terror for them since they were born: insensitive parents, heartless, brutal

surroundings. How many are those who hoped, when they were still small, that there would be something for them in life. But no. There wasn't. There was no compassion. There was no friendliness. There was *nothing*. And when they tried to receive comfort and support, they did not receive it. Whenever they thought they could do something they were told, 'Don't try. Don't you understand that you are incapable of this?' And they felt lower and lower.

How many were unable to fulfil their lives because they were physically ill, and not sufficiently strong... But did they find someone to give them a supporting hand? Did they find anyone who felt so deeply for them and about them that they went out of their way to help? And how many those who are terrified of life, lived in circumstances of fear, of violence, of brutality... But all this could not have taken them if there had been someone who have stood by them and not abandoned them.

So we are surrounded, all of us, by people who are in the situation of this paralytic man. If we think of ourselves we will see that many of us *are* paralyzed, incapable of fulfilling all their aspirations; incapable of being what they longed for, incapable of serving others the way their heart speaks; incapable of doing anything they longed for because fear, brokenness has come into them.

And all of us, *all of us* were responsible for each of them. We are responsible, mutually, for one another; because when we look right and left at the people who stand by us, what do we know about them? Do we know how broken they are? How much pain there is in their hearts? How much agony there has been in their lives? How many broken hopes, how much fear and rejection and contempt that has made them contemptuous of themselves and unable even to respect themselves - not to speak of having the courage of making a move towards wholeness, that wholeness of which the Gospel speaks in this passage and in so many other places?

Let us reflect on this. Let us look at each other and ask ourselves, 'How much frailty is there in him or her? How much pain has accumulated in his or her heart? How much fear of life - but life expressed by my neighbor, the people whom I should be able to count for life - has come in to my existence? Let us look at one another with understanding, with attention. Christ is there. He can heal; yes. But we will be answerable for each other, because there are so many ways in which we should be the eyes of Christ who sees the needs, the ears of Christ who hears the cry, the hands of Christ who supports and heals or makes it possible for the person to be healed.

Let us look at this parable of the paralytic with new eyes; not thinking of this poor man two thousand years ago who was so lucky that Christ happened to be near him and in the end did what every neighbor should have done. Let us look at each

other and have compassion, active compassion; insight; love if we can. And then this parable will not have been spoken or this event will not have been related to us in vain. Amen.

### **Today's Epistle Lesson – The Acts of the Apostles 9:32-42**

In those days, as Peter went through all *parts of the country*, that he also came down to the saints who dwelt in Lydda. There he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden eight years and was paralyzed. And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus the Christ heals you. Arise and make your bed." Then he arose immediately. So all who dwelt at Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did. But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid *her* in an upper room. And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring *him* not to delay in coming to them. Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought *him* to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them. But Peter put them all out, and knelt down and prayed. And turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. Then he gave her *his* hand and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive. And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord. So it was that he stayed many days in Joppa with Simon, a tanner.

### **Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint John 5:1-15**

At that time, there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep *Gate* a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been *in that condition* a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath. The Jews therefore said to him who was

cured, "It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed." He answered them, "He who made me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk.'" Then they asked him, "Who is the Man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk'?" But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in *that* place. Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you." The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

## *A Word From the Holy Fathers*

The first and greatest commandment is love, with which the mind sees Original Love; namely, God. Through our love we see the love of God for us, as it stands written in the psalms, "He will teach the gentle his ways."

– Evagrius of Pontus

## **Also Commemorated Today: Hieromartyr Patrick, Bishop of Prusa, & Companions**

Saint Patrick lived during the first century and was bishop of the city of Prusa in Bythnia (Asia Minor). He openly and boldly preached Christ the Savior, and denounced the error of the pagans. Therefore, he and the priests, Acacius, Menander and Polyainus were arrested, and brought to Julius, the prefect of the city for interrogation. Julius was going to the hot springs for treatment, and he ordered that the Christian bishop and the priests be brought along after him, bound in iron chains. After he washed in the hot springs, Julius offered sacrifice to his gods. He had Saint Patrick and the other prisoners brought before him, ordering them to offer sacrifice to the pagan gods, threatening punishment if they refused.

Saint Patrick replied, "I am a Christian and I worship the one true God, Jesus Christ, Who has created the heavens and the earth, and these warm springs for the benefit of all mankind." Julius had the saint thrown into the hot spring, and with firm faith the martyr prayed, "Lord, Jesus Christ, help Your servant," and he remained unharmed. In an impotent rage, Julius ordered Saint Patrick and his three presbyters beheaded. They received their crowns of unfading glory from Christ around the year 100. (*from oca.org*)

### **St. Barbara's Meeting This Week**

There will be a St. Barbara's meeting today after services to discuss meal planning for hosting the monthly local clergy association meeting on June 18. Please attend if you are willing to assist.

## April Treasurer's Report

Christ is Risen! Great Lent, Holy Week, and Pascha were a wonderful time of giving for our Church, and in April we had expenses of \$9,382 and income of \$11,308. We were able to give over \$500 to charitable causes and add \$615 to our mortgage payments. The Parish also received a large, one-time gift from a parishioner which will be put to good use in maintaining the church and continuing our mission for Christ. Josh Moore, treasurer.

## Social Team for May 26

Team 4 is up next week – Hebert, Howl, Karbowsky, Kopan. Thank you!

### 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 Eminence Metropolitan 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, Presbytera Katie Baker and family, Santiago Alzugaray, 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, Tucker Karl and family, Robert & Pam 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, Alexander Shostko, Bernie Takabayashi & family, Dawn & Faith Ulmschneider, Lydia Vita, Christine, Marshall, Nathaniel, Subdcn. Nectarios 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.)