

SOBORNOST

St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church

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American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

SERVICES

Wed: Moleben to the Theotokos 6:00 AM

Friday: Moleben to the Cross 6:00 AM

Saturday: Great Vespers 5:00 PM

Sunday: Matins (Orthros) 8:45 AM

Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM



***Please note that attendance is currently limited by restrictions dictated by local response to the COVID-19 pandemic; if you are currently not assigned to an attendance group, please contact outreach@apostlethomas.org for information on when you may attend.**

November 1, 2020 | 21st Sunday After Pentecost

Holy Unmercenary Healers Cosmas & Damian

Cosmas and Damian were unmercenary healers and wonderworkers. They were brothers both in the flesh and in the spirit, born somewhere in Asia Minor of pious and virtue-loving parents. After their father's death, their mother Theodota (Jan. 2) devoted all her time and effort to educating her sons and raising them as true Christians. God helped her, and her sons matured as sweet fruit and luminaries of the world. They were learned in the art of medicine and ministered to the sick without payment, not so much with medicine as by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. They were called "unmercenary physicians," that is, unpaid physicians, for they healed freely and thus fulfilled the commandment of Christ: "Freely you have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8).

Once the Saints were summoned to a grievously ill woman named Palladia, whom all the doctors had refused to treat because of her seemingly hopeless condition. Through faith and through the fervent prayer of the holy brothers, the Lord healed the deadly disease and Palladia got up from her bed perfectly healthy and giving

praise to God. In gratitude for being healed and wishing to give them a small gift, Palladia went quietly to Damian. She presented him with three eggs and said, "Take this small gift in the Name of the Holy Life-Creating Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." Hearing the Name of the Holy Trinity, the unmercenary one did not dare to refuse.

When Cosmas learned what had happened, he was very grieved, for he thought that his brother had broken their strict vow. On his deathbed he gave instructions that his brother should not be buried beside him. Damian also died shortly afterward, and everyone wondered where Damian's grave should be. But through the will of God a miracle occurred. A camel, which the Saints had treated for its wildness, spoke with a human voice saying that they should have no doubts about whether to place Damian beside Cosmas, because Damian did not accept the eggs from the woman as payment, but out of respect for the Name of God. The venerable relics of the holy brothers were buried together at a place called Phereman, and a church was erected there in their honor.

The holy brothers were great wonderworkers both during their life and after their death. There lived at Phereman, near the Church of the Holy Unmercenaries Cosmas and Damian, a certain man by the name of Malchus. One day he went on a journey, leaving his wife all alone for what would be a long time. He prayerfully entrusted her to the heavenly protection of the holy brothers. But the enemy of the race of mankind took on the appearance of one of Malchus' friends, and planned to kill the woman. A certain time went by, and this man went to her at home and said that Malchus had sent him to bring her to him. The woman believed him and went along. He led her to a solitary place intending to kill her. The woman, seeing that disaster threatened her, called upon God with deep faith. Two fiercesome men then appeared, and the devil let go of the woman and fled, falling off a cliff. The two men led the woman home. At her own home, bowing to them deeply she asked, "My rescuers, to whom I shall be grateful to the end of my days, what are your names?" They replied, "We are the servants of Christ, Cosmas and Damian," and became invisible. The woman with trembling and with joy told everyone about what had happened to her. Glorifying God, she went up to the icon of the holy brothers and tearfully offered prayers of thanksgiving for her deliverance. And from that time the holy brothers were venerated as protectors of the holiness and inviolability of Christian marriage, and as givers of harmony to conjugal life.

Once a snake crawled through the mouth and into the stomach of a certain farm laborer during his sleep, and the unfortunate man would have died in the greatest pain had he not, in the last moment, invoked the help of Saints Cosmas and Damian. Thus, the Lord glorified forever the wonderworking of those who

glorified Him on earth by their faith, purity and mercy. Portions of their relics can be venerated today at the Athonite monasteries of Dionysiou and Pantocrator.

The Unmercenary Saints Cosmas and Damian of Asia Minor should not be confused with the Unmercenary Saints Cosmas and Damian of Rome (July 1), or the Unmercenary Saints Cosmas and Damian of Arabia (October 17). (*from johnsanidopoulos.com*)

Today's Epistle Lesson – St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 2:16-20

Brethren, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. “But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, *is* Christ therefore a minister of sin?” Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint Luke 8:26-39

At that time, they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee. And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, “What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!” For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness. Jesus asked him, saying, “What is your name?” And he said, “Legion,” because many demons had entered him. And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss. Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them. And He permitted them. Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned. When those who fed *them* saw what had happened, they fled and told *it* in the city and in the country. Then they went out to see what had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. They also who had seen *it* told them by what means he who had been demon-possessed was healed. Then the whole multitude of the

surrounding region of the Gadarenes asked Him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. And He got into the boat and returned. Now the man from whom the demons had departed begged Him that he might be with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, "Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you." And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

A Word From the Holy Fathers

God's will is to save us, and nothing pleases Him more than our coming back to Him with true repentance. The heralds of truth and the ministers of divine grace have told us this from the beginning, repeating it in every age. Indeed, God's desire for our salvation is the primary and preeminent sign of His infinite goodness. It was precisely in order to show that there is nothing closer to God's heart than the divine Word of God the Father, with untold condescension, lived among us in the flesh, and did, suffered, and said all that was necessary to reconcile us to God the Father, when we were at enmity with Him, and to restore us to the life of blessedness from which we had been exiled. He healed our physical infirmities by miracles; He freed us from our sins, many and grievous as they were, by suffering and dying, taking them upon Himself as if He were answerable for them, sinless though He was. He also taught us in many different ways that we should wish to imitate Him by our own kindness and genuine love for one another.

So it was that Christ proclaimed that He had come to call sinners to repentance, not the righteous, and that it was not the healthy who required a doctor, but the sick. He declared that He had come to look for the sheep that was lost, and that it was to the lost sheep of the house of Israel that He had been sent. Speaking more obscurely in the parable of the silver coin, He tells us that the purpose of His coming was to reclaim the royal image, which had become coated with the filth of sin. "You can be sure that there is joy in heaven," He said, "over one sinner who repents."

To give the same lesson He revived the man who, having fallen into the hands of brigands, had been left stripped and half-dead from his wounds; he poured wine and oil on the wounds, bandaged them, placed the man on his own mule and brought him to an inn, where he left sufficient money to have him cared for, and promised to repay any further expense on his return.

Again, He told of how that Father, who is goodness itself, was moved with pity for his profligate son who returned and made amends by repentance; how he embraced him, dressed him once more in the fine garments that befitted his own dignity, and did not reproach him for any of his sins.

So too, when he found wandering in the mountains and hills the one sheep that had strayed from God's flock of a hundred, he brought it back to the fold, but he did not exhaust it by driving it ahead of him. Instead, he placed it on his own shoulders and so, compassionately, he restored it safely to the flock.

So also He cried out, "come to me, all you that toil and are heavy of heart. Accept my yoke," He said, by which He meant His commands, or rather, the whole way of life that He taught us in the Gospel. He then speaks of a burden, but that is only because repentance seems difficult. In fact, however, "my yoke is easy," He assures us, "and my burden is light."

Then again He instructs us in divine justice and goodness, telling us to be like our heavenly Father, holy, perfect and merciful. "Forgive," He says, "and you will be forgiven. Behave toward other people as you would wish them to behave toward you."

– St. Maximus the Confessor

Also Commemorated Today: Martyr Hermigildus the Goth

Not long since, as I have learned of many which came from Spain, king Hermigildus, son of Leuigildus, king of the Visigoths, was from Arian heresy lately converted to the Catholic faith by the most reverent man Leander, Bishop of Seville, with whom I was not long since familiarly acquainted; which young Prince, upon his conversion, his father, being an Arian, labored both by large promises and terrible threats to draw again to his former error: but when most constantly his son answered, that he would never forsake the true faith which he had once embraced, his father in great anger took away his kingdom, and beside deprived him of all wealth and riches; and perceiving that, with all this, his mind was nothing moved, he committed him to straight prison, laying irons both upon his neck and hands. Upon this, the young king Hermigildus began now to contemn his earthly kingdom, and to seek with great desire after the kingdom of heaven: and lying in prison fast bound, he prayed to almighty God in hair-cloth to send him heavenly comfort: and so much the more did he despise the glory of this transitory world, by how much he knew himself in that case that he had now nothing that could be taken from him.

When the solemn feast of Easter was come, his wicked father sent unto him in the dead of the night an Arian Bishop, to give him the communion of a sacrilegious consecration, that he might thereby again recover his father's grace and favor: but the man of God, as he ought, sharply reprehended that Arian Bishop which came unto him, and giving him such entertainment as his deserts required, utterly rejected him; for albeit outwardly he lay there in bands, yet inwardly to himself he stood secure in the height of his own soul. The father, at the return of the Arian

prelate, understanding these news, fell into such a rage that forthwith he sent his officers of execution to put to death that most constant confessor, in the very prison where he lay: which unnatural and bloody commandment was performed accordingly: for so soon as they came into the prison, they clove his brains with an hatchet, and so bereaved him of mortal life, having only power to take that from him which the holy martyr made small account of. Afterward, for the publishing of his true glory to the world, there wanted not miracles from heaven: for in the night time singing was heard at his body: some also report that, in the night, burning lamps were seen in that place: by reason whereof his body, as of him that was a martyr, was worthily worshiped of all Christian people. But the wicked father and murderer of his own son, albeit he was sorry that he had put him to death, yet was not his grief of that quality that it brought him to the state of salvation. For although he knew very well that the Catholic faith was the truth, yet, for fear of his people, he never deserved to be a professor thereof.

At length, falling sick, a little before his death, he commended his son Recharedus, who was to succeed him in the kingdom, and was yet an heretic, unto Bishop Leander, whom before he had greatly persecuted: that by his counsel and exhortation, he might likewise make him a member of the Catholic Church, as he had before made his brother Hermigildus; and when he had thus done, he departed this life. After whose death, Recharedus the king, not following the steps of his wicked father, but his brother the martyr, utterly renounced Arianism: and labored so earnestly for the restoring of religion, that he brought the whole nation of the Visigoths to the true faith of Christ, and would not suffer any that was an heretic in his country to bear arms and serve in the wars. And it is not to be admired that he became thus to be a preacher of the true faith, seeing he was the brother of a martyr, whose merits did help him to bring so many into the lap of God's Church: wherein we have to consider that he could never have effected all this, if king Hermigildus had not died for the testimony of true religion; for, as it is written: *Unless the grain of wheat falling into the earth doth die, itself remaineth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.* This we see to prove true in the members, which before was verified in the head: for one died amongst the Visigoths that many might live, and of one grain that was sown for the faith, a great crop of faithful people sprung up. (*from the Dialogues of Pope Gregory the Dialogist, Book 3 ch. 31*)

Martyrs Kyriaina and Juliana of Cilicia

Kyriaina in fire breathed her last; let all who have breath honor the great Lord.

Aflame, O Savior, with her love for you, that flame from fire Juliana now bears.

Kyriaina and Juliana lived during the reign of Emperor Maximian (286-305). Kyriaina was from Tarsus of Cilicia, while Juliana was from Rosos, which is also

in Cilicia. In 298 Governor Marcian attempted to coerce these two women into denying Christ. Unsuccessful in his attempt, he had them subjected to harsh punishment. To shame Kyriaina, he had the locks of her hair and her eyebrows shaved. He then ordered her paraded throughout Tarsus naked four times, by disorderly soldiers. Kyriaina was then taken to Rosos, where she was cast into the flames with Juliana. Hence, these two holy women were martyred in Rosos, and ascended victoriously to the heavens. (from johnsanidopoulos.com)

SPF50 – Scripture, Prayer, Family

SPF stands for “Scripture, Prayer, Family” and is designed to equip families to read the Scriptures and pray together at home. Why “50”? Fr. David Mastroberte explains: “On average, if a family uses the recommended Bible readings and prayers, they will spend approximately 50 minutes per month in these spiritual exercises. This is not a time limit, but rather meant to encourage even the busiest family that they can make these a part of their life and learn to love encountering God in prayer and the Scriptures.”

The third installment of SPF50 will started September 20 and ends November 14, 2020. It contains the appropriate prayers for families and a reading plan for the Gospel of St. Luke. There are also supplemental resources to help families get started and maintain participation. SPF50 is not meant to be separate from the ministry of the parish, but rather an extension of it. Under the guidance of their Priest, participating families are encouraged to meet on a monthly basis to foster fellowship and support. Quality time with our Lord is hard to come by. Quality time with your family is hard to come by. SPF50 intends to help families have both. Each week SPF50 will offer a new audio or video recording to help us to encourage us in our life of faith at home with our families. One will be posted each week. These can be found at <https://www.acrod.org/ministries/acrod-family/spf50>,



November Anniversaries and Birthdays



Anniversaries:

none

Birthdays:

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Pani Stacey Edgington 3 rd | Karen Blaydoe 3 rd | Brad Karbowsky 8 th |
| Jennifer Brady 11 th | Patty Blaydoe 13 th | Mya Chopic 16 th |
| Tabitha Single 20 th | Michael Kopan 22 nd | Herman Blaydoe 24 th |



The Orthodox Theological Society in America

Annual Lecture in Honor of Georges Florovsky

Given by:

Very Rev. Dr. Michael Plekon

Professor Emeritus, Sociology, Religion and Culture
City University of New York–Baruch College



“Community as Church, Church as Community:
Death and Resurrection in the Parish Today”

Friday, November 13, 2020

7:30 pm

Registration is Free and Open to the Public

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_-Wa3hCnpTDCXusfHpdO_AQ

The Distinguished Diocesan Donor Program Needs YOU!

Covid has turned much of our life upside down, including our Distinguished Diocesan Donors Program! The 2020 Fund Drive is still under way and will continue through the end of November. However, there will be no Fall DDD Dinners. We encourage as many parishioners as possible to participate. Gifts of \$100 or more are asked. Proceeds from the DDD benefit Camp Nazareth, and because Covid has caused all events and programs to be canceled, DDD is basically our only source of Camp income. Checks are payable to: Distinguished Diocesan Donors and may be sent to:

Diocesan Chancery
312 Garfield Street
Johnstown, PA 15906.

May the Lord bless you and yours during these stressful times.

Sincerely in Christ, Very Rev. Protopresbyter Frank P. Miloro, *Chancellor*

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Camp Nazareth: <http://www.campnazareth.org>

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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 & Mt. Kenya, Fr. John & Pani Betty Jean Baranik, Presbyteria Katie Baker & family, Santiago Alzugaray, Patty Blaydoe, Jeffrey Carey, Tatyana & Slava Chumak & family, Xenia Chilkowich, Jon Church, Ramius Connour, Luke & Marlena Cooper, Tina Crull, Mary Diane David, Ron Dominiecki, Linda A. Georgiev, Heather Himler, John Homick, Howl family, Helen Janowiak, John M. Janowiak, Tucker Karl & family, Robert & Pam Karpin, Andrew Kinn, Kopan family, Brian, Helen, Luke & Mia Mahony, Valentina Makowelski, Susan Matula, Anna Meinhold, Dn. Henry Middleton, David & Kathryn Newman, Bobby Nutter & Family, Henry & Lisa Osborne, Nicholas Pavlik, Westin Perry & Parents, John Reece, Mary Reed, Chris & Kaitlin Rixey, Jerry Von Ronne, Anne Rosario, James, Theodore & Christina Ristas, Robinson Family, Samson Family, Sharon Sheptak, Bernie Takabayashi & family, Dawn & Faith Ulmschneider, Joe & Darlene Waters, Christine, Marshall, Nathaniel, Dcn. Nectaros & Ia, the Syrian Christians displaced by war, Mother Virginia Marie & the Carmelite Nuns of Port Tobacco, and those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)