

SOBORNOST

St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church

(301) 638-5035 Church

4419 Leonardtown Road

Waldorf, MD 20601

Rev. Father Joseph Edgington, Pastor

(703) 532-8017

fredgington@gmail.com

www.apostlethomas.org

American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

SERVICES

**Wednesday: Moleben to the
Theotokos 6:00 AM**

Friday: Moleben to the Cross 6:00 AM

Saturday: Confession 4:30 PM

Great Vespers 5:00 PM

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

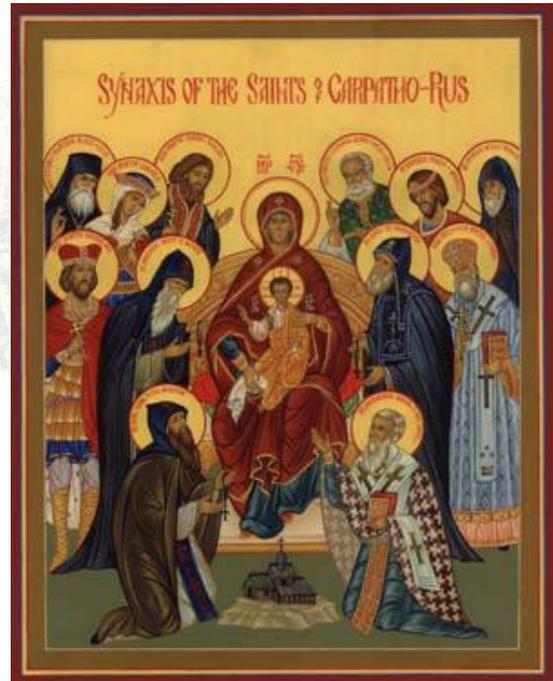
July 4, 2021 – 2nd Sunday After Pentecost

All Saints of Carpatho-Rus

On the second Sunday after Pentecost, each region in world Orthodoxy commemorates those Saints who are associated in some way with either its geographic home, or that of its roots. The Saints among the forebearers of our Diocese are primarily identified with the eastern European lands of Carpatho-Rus, especially areas of the present-day Czech and Slovak Republics, Ukraine and Poland. The icon above portrays twelve of these Saints surrounding the young Christ child and the Theotokos. Orthodoxy is relatively new to North America, and although there are already a small number of canonized Saints of North America, we were called by our Metropolitan Nicholas of thrice-blessed memory to specifically remember the Saints of Carpatho-Rus on this day. Below are the lives of several of these saints.

St Cyril, Equal to the Apostles

St. Cyril, in baptism Constantine, is synonymous with Orthodox Christianity in Carpatho-Rus. The seventh of seven children born to pious parents of noble rank in the city of Thessaloniki, St. Cyril excelled in all manner of learning under the tutelage of St. Photius, the future Patriarch of Constantinople. Numerous events in



the empire caused upheaval and division especially in matters concerning the church. In these instances, the Emperor called upon Cyril the "Philosopher" In 862, the Byzantine Emperor Michael received a request from Prince Rostislav of Moravia asking for "two pious and educated men to explain to us in our own language the true Christian faith." The wise Emperor chose the two holy brothers, Cyril and Methodius, to teach the Slavs in Moravia. Cyril prayed fervently to God for help, and soon he began creating the letters to the new language of the Slavs, the Cyrillic (Glagolitic) alphabet. Upon their arrival in Moravia, Prince Rostislav received the holy brothers with great honor. Immediately, the population began to learn the new letters of the Cyrillic Alphabet, and they began to read holy scripture and other liturgical texts in their own language.

But the Latin-speaking priests became indignant and accused the holy brothers of teaching in a heretical language. They claimed that only Greek, Latin or Hebrew could be used to instruct the faithful. Based on these false charges, the brothers traveled to Rome to defend the use of Slavonic. In an overwhelming defense, Cyril and Methodius declared that, "the faith is taught in many languages: Armenian, Persian, Arabic, Coptic and Ethiopian. Why should we not teach in Slavonic? Do Christ's words to teach all nations only pertain to those who speak Greek, Latin or Hebrew?" After listening to both sides, Pope Hadrian sided with the holy brothers, placed the Slavic Scriptures in the Church Of St. Mary, and celebrated the holy liturgy over them.

It was also at this time that Cyril, still named Constantine, grew ill. Desiring to become a monk, he was tonsured with the name Cyril and lived for fifty more days. When the last day approached, he prayed for a while and then kissed everyone with a holy kiss. He reposed on the 14th Day of February 867. His bier was taken through the streets of Rome, and Pope Hadrian commanded that Cyril's holy body be placed in the crypt of St. Peter's. But St. Methodius requested that Cyril's Coffin be placed in the Church of St. Clement, whose relics Cyril had brought to Rome from Cherson. Thus the Equal to the Apostles and Teacher of the Slavs, Cyril, ended his life.

St Methodius, Equal to the Apostles

Harkening to the call of the pious Prince Rostislav and desiring to bring the word of God to all nations, St. Methodius accompanied his brother St. Cyril to Moravia to instruct the Slavs in the gospel of Christ in their own written Slavic language. With St. Cyril acting as the principle teacher and St. Methodius serving as his assistant, both men diligently carried out their duties baptizing many into the faith and training many men for ranks of the clergy including Saints Clement, Gorazd I, Nahum, Angelarius, and Savva.

They left Moravia and traveled to Rome to defend their missionary activities before Pope Hadrian. The western clergymen had accused the Holy brothers of heresy by translating Holy Scripture into Slavonic as well as using Slavonic in the services of the church. After a brilliant defense by St. Cyril, the pope placed the Slavonic gospel book on the altar and served a mass directly over it. The pope ordained Methodius a priest and Cyril a deacon. Shortly after the victory over those who wished only Latin to be used among the Slavs, St. Cyril died, and obeying the wishes of his dying brother, St. Methodius returned to Moravia to continue the missionary activities that both brothers had begun.

St. Methodius labored tirelessly in Moravia. Having learned about the labors of the holy brothers, Prince Kocel, the ruler of the Slavic kingdom of Pannonia-modern day Austria and Hungary - asked the pope if he would send Methodius to instruct his people. Knowing the importance of such a mission, Pope Hadrian II received Methodius in Rome and consecrated him bishop. However, the Latin clergy objected to Methodius' activity as well as his popularity among the Slavs, and plotted to arrest Methodius and put him in prison. For two years, the saint suffered in prison. News of this terrible crime reached Pope John VII in 873, and he sent a delegation to the city of Swabia, the place of Methodius' imprisonment, to gain release of the saint. Acting upon the pope's orders the four bishops responsible for this act of aggression were suspended, and Methodius returned to Moravia in great triumph. The people drove out the German priests and demanded Prince Svatopulk to bring back their holy Bishop Methodius.

The church prospered greatly in Moravia, and many accepted baptism in the true faith. But the Latin clergy continued to scheme and plot a way to remove the Holy Bishop from Moravia. They declared that Methodius was a heretic since he refused to say the creed with the insertion of the words, "and the son" known as the filioque. The words, "and the son" were inserted into the: creed by the Roman Catholic Church and reflects their erroneous belief concerning the procession of the Holy Spirit. Methodius defended himself by recalling the precise words of the creed as taught by the Fathers of the Ecumenical Councils. He also argued that the addition of the words regarding the procession of the Holy Spirit into the creed were contrary to the teachings of the Holy Fathers. Seeing that they would not win this case, Methodius' enemies brought the king a forged papal document, which supposedly condemned the Orthodox version of the Creed. This tactic also failed and in the end St. Methodius remained in power, and those who plotted against the holy bishop were put to shame.

As the end of his life neared, Holy Methodius accompanied Prince Svatopulk to meet with the King of Hungary, Charles III, in order to bring about a peace treaty between the two kingdoms. King Charles III embraced the pious bishop and both

men spoke at great length. When they had finished their deliberations, King Charles kissed his hand and said, "O venerable Father, remember me always in your prayers." Methodius returned to his home in Moravia, and appointed Gorazd as his successor. Bishop Methodius grew weaker and several days later passed away on the 6th of April 885. The liturgy and funeral were celebrated in Slavonic, Greek, and Latin, and he was buried in the cathedral of Stare Mesto.

Holy Father and Confessor Alexis of Wilkes-Barre

Born on March 18, 1854 into a pious and well-educated family, the young Alexis finished his preliminary education, and entered the Preshov Seminary where he graduated with honors. After serving his compulsory military duty, he was ordained to the holy priesthood and appointed as professor of church law and church history at the Preshov Seminary. For nearly a decade, he served the diocese of Preshov. In November of 1889, the Bishop of Preshov assigned him to St. Mary's Parish in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Upon his arrival in Minneapolis and following proper protocol, he presented himself along with his credentials to the Roman Catholic Archbishop, John Ireland. In what can be considered a rude and hostile treatment of the most recent Greek Catholic priest in America, Archbishop John Ireland shouted, "I do not consider either you or this 'bishop of Preshov' to be Roman Catholic." The young priest soon realized that this brief encounter was just the beginning. The archbishop launched a vicious campaign against Fr. Alexis Toth, prohibiting all Catholic priests from having any contact with him.

With this assault against the Greek Catholic Church in America, along with two centuries of broken promises that supposedly guaranteed the traditions of the Greek Catholic Church under the "Union with Rome," St. Alexis began his return to the mother church of Orthodoxy. On Sunday, March 25, 1891 Fr. Alexis and 365 parishioners were formally received into the Russian Orthodox Church. Few recognized this action as the catalyst that would give rise to countless thousands of "Eastern Rite Catholics" abandoning the broken promises of the Union with Rome and seeking refuge within their mother church of Orthodoxy. Conservative estimates by the Roman Catholic Church maintained that this return to Orthodoxy cost the Roman Church a quarter of a million communicants in the United States.

For the rest of his life, St. Alexis served the Orthodox Church in many capacities. He wrote pamphlets and instructional material, preached to a host of congregations, and educated entire parish communities that desired to return to the Orthodox faith of their ancestors. Neither the lies of his opponents nor the decisions of the courts could silence this confessor for the faith. When defending his position among a hostile audience, the saint would simply ask, "Is it Eastern

Rite to perform two or even three masses in one day on the same altar? To perform the liturgy without the Proskomedia or in hushed whispers? Is it Eastern Rite to introduce organs and to throw out the iconostasis? Who of the Holy Fathers of the Orthodox Church ever ordered this!" Many in the crowd realized the error of the "Unia" and embraced Orthodoxy.

The holy confessor for Orthodoxy, St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre, reminds us that struggle is inevitable when one desires to find the Truth in Christ. One must often set aside feelings of ethnic identity as well as cultural pride in order to find real peace in Christ. The saint passed from this life into eternal life with Christ in 1909. *(from acrod.org)*

Today's Epistle Lesson – St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 2:10-16

Brethren, glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God. For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law (for not the hearers of the law *are* just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified; for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves *their* thoughts accusing or else excusing *them*) in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

Today's Gospel Lesson - Saint Matthew 4:18-23

At that time, Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." They immediately left *their* nets and followed Him. Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him. And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

A Word From the Holy Fathers

O man of God, faithful servant and steward of Christ's mysteries, and man desiring the things of the Spirit! Receive the sermon we deliver to you as a gift, and consider it our gratitude in return for grace for the miraculous and ardent help you have shown toward us. Indeed, we call you the pillar and foundation of the Church and the illuminator of the world, who maintains the word of life. Virtue has made

your names many, and no good thing has escaped you, O you most good shepherd and most praiseworthy high-priest Nicholas! You have stowed away the most precious of virtues in your blessed soul like a treasure of gold and jewels, therefore becoming renowned in the entire world. For a lamp, set on a high and gilded lamp-stand, does not illuminate the blindness of the night as much as you do of late, being set on the throne of a high-priest by Christ, the True Light. As in a dry place, a dark space of the world, you light, like a torch-carrier, all your flock towards the nightless light, and as if from a high observation point you illuminate not only those who are close, but also those who stand far away, with the unwavering brightness of knowledge in Spirit. The angelic way of life has truly made you sublime; the pure and contemplative [quality] of true mingling with the Divine prepared you to fly above, near the heavenly arches. From this very place, the many kinds of virtues are assembled through practical philosophy by you, who selectively gather the lifestyles of the saints like a bee and, from them, bring together the first-fruits of virtues.

For which of the saints have you not zealously imitated, O father? Or whose footsteps have you not followed exceedingly? Or, better put, which of those who lived in virtue have you not striven to resemble? The righteous Abel was praised for his deeds: you yourself, O most righteous father, have dedicated yourself wholly and completely to God as a rational offering. Enos put his hope in the Lord: you yourself have already received visible proofs for the hopes set before us (cf. Hebr. 6:18), while still roaming on earth. Enoch, who pleased God, was transposed [to a heavenly existence]: you yourself have completely transposed the mind of [your] soul from earth to heaven, being wholly dedicated to God, and exchanging things that pass away for permanent ones. The righteous Noah's sacrifices were truly accepted, because he saved the races of irrational animals with the wooden ark, when a cataclysm had covered the earth. You yourself carry to God mystical adoration as offerings and spiritual sacrifices, showing that the Church of Christ is another ark that saves human generations, just like the various animal species, through the accuracy of your words when the Arian heresy had flooded [the world]. Abraham is wondered at for his hospitality and his love for God. Likewise, he is blessed for carrying the son born out of [divine] promise as an acceptable sacrifice to God, without sacrificing him: you yourself lead [your people] by consuming Christ himself and distribute [the offerings] of the spiritual sacrificial table to those who are present. You do not sacrifice your beloved son or a lamb that was brought instead of him, but you have behaved yourself entirely like a burnt offering for all and, following the Gospel, you send forth your own soul for the lambs. Isaac is glorified for his righteousness: you yourself run about everywhere in Spirit as a kind of standard of righteousness; with great courage,

you stop those who deliberately do wrong, appearing clearly in dream to sleeping kings. Jacob was famous for his simple lifestyle and abundance of children; he also beheld the ladder that reached heaven, thus depicting beforehand the image of a greater mystery: you yourself have "given birth" to patriarchs, shepherds and flocks for the sake of the arch-shepherd, Christ, who also entrusted you [your] flock. Also, you did not fail to plan to ascend in your heart, being transfigured step by step, from glory to glory, ascending from earth to heaven in contemplation. Job was exceedingly famous for his innocence and steadfastness in sufferings: you yourself have striven at imitating him, when you did not fall down by giving up to the attacks of heresies, but rather were fixed like a tower that breaks the waves, as if protecting a treasure. Joseph was renowned for his prudence and gratuitous distribution of wheat: you yourself have wholly become an image of prudence, and you have done the business by distributing wheat within the eparchy of Lycia, through the teachings of your honey-sweet voice. Moses is hailed for his mildness and [his ability to] rule the people, and God is named as the one leading of [both] Pharaoh and Israel : you yourself, O most blessed father, are, on one hand, mild towards everyone, but, on the other, terrible towards sinners, ordering all the people to abstain from careless deeds, and drowning the rebellions of passions like another Pharaonic power, through the inundation of your virtuous actions. David is noble, and he conquered the arrogant Goliath through the armor of the Spirit: you are even more powerful, since you daily defeat the supernatural tyrant of souls, [another] Goliath, and chase the rapacious wolves of heretics away from the rational flock of Christ.

O most sacred one, through practical virtue you have entwined yourself in this listing of righteous men, as well as prophets, and you have zealously imitated their courage, zeal, mildness, sympathy, and their elevated lifestyle. And [you have] not only [imitated] their [virtues], but also [those of] Christ's disciples. They possess mercy and truth that throws away the collar of law and shadows and reveals strongly to us the mysteries of true worship in the Spirit. You, [O Nicholas], have become, together with the apostles, an attendant eye-witness of these mysteries for the whole church, and you are called care-keeper and well-sounding trumpet. Now it is truly time to express the scriptural saying: "The memory of the just is praised, and the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance" (Prov. 10:7; Ps. 112:6), and even more suitably [the Scripture] says: "When the righteous are praised, many peoples rejoice" (Prov. 29:2).

And who would worthily perform honorable praises or chant hymns to the greatness of the great deeds you have performed during your life, O father, [who are] praised with many hymns? For whatever we would call you, our speech would

lack truth in all ways: and if we wished to compare your virtuous actions with those of others, it would be necessary to go through all examples of deeds.

What should we now call you? A farmer? Our word will at least be true when it is perceived in terms of contemplation: for you have both cultivated the spiritual fields of the whole eparchy of Lycia, and chopped down the thorns of disbelief. Instead, you have sown the living word of practicing faith and stored the crop spiritually in some kind of storehouses of the soul.

Should we call you an architect? [By saying this,] we would not lie: for you have broken down the sacrificial altars of idols, and the shrines of defiled demons, with the bulldozer of your teachings and, instead, built churches for Christ in their places, and constructed sacred and honorable temples, and shrines of the martyrs. And like a farmer you have shown that newly planted, spiritual vineyards are fruitful by cultivating them. Like a wise architect, you have founded the newly built churches of believers on the firm foundation of faith, through the architecture of Spirit.

So, what should we call you? A soldier? Yes, a soldier! Like some armed army-leader you fight a war against invisible enemies and have been saved by wearing the full equipment of the word around you. Because of this, you have driven away the attacks of the passions with the spear of faith, standing stable and unshaken like a rock. You push away all webs of deceit of the adversary, using the shield of firm hope, and you shoot arrows, combating those who dare to attack. Therefore, you nobly protect by standing around [your people] and make those disappear, who rage in battle against your flock. And, in this way after the fight in close order, you lift up the sword of faith with the right hand of your deeds and cut off the pugnacious concision of Arius, together with the contraction of Sabellius, by the roots. Indeed, those who dare to assimilate or divide the providential incarnation of Christ, the true God, who is one of the blessed and honored Trinity itself, and those who do not understand it correctly, or, on the other hand, those who do not confess the principle of defining natures in the hypostatic union of natures, that came together in one Christ and God himself, to be unconfused and completely inseparable. With the one and the same whip, according to the zeal of Phinehas, you collect those who turn away to different directions and propitiate the God of all with everyone.

What should we, now, call you? An angel? Indeed, you were not far from the fleshless state of angels, since you truly are called bodiless in body and some ethereal man or angel on earth, visible to everyone. For did appearing to the king, through dreams, and provoking amazement in him, who planned to commit a murder soon, and calming down, with a whip that did not hit, the mad right hand

that aimed to slaughter out of a senseless impulse, and saving from death men who had done nothing wrong, being unexpectedly present, differ from angelic flight? Has the angel done something more extraordinary [than this], when he transferred Habakkuk from Zion to Babylon, the land of Media, to serve excellent food to Daniel, who lay in the lions' den?

Should we call you a steersman? We would be speaking the truth: for you steer most orderly those, who sail through a big and wide sea and those who are at sea near the land with the tiller of intercessions towards God and the steering-paddle of faith, turning a hurricane into a breeze and a storm into a calm, by the vigils of prayers, and, O most sacred one, you lead those, who come in faith, to the harbor of detachment. This is manifested by you being clearly seen standing by seamen in the manner of a sailor in the past, at the time when famine was repressing your metropolis. The harbor of Andriake knows these things: for you persuaded those, who did not intend to do so, to sail through it, so that you could feed the starving people and restrain the force of famine. As the story says, you left behind three gold coins after disappearing from the ship, but the care-taker and protector of the people of Lycians was not to remain unknown until the end, O Nicholas, who are angelic in your deeds and way of life.

For when you were still roaming in flesh and before you were set free [to go] to Christ, you visited the sorrowful in many ways and helped swiftly those who were in need, removing attackers from bloodthirsty slaughter. What else would this prove you to be than being dressed in angelic fleshlessness, and doing easily marvelous things in this [state of being]? Indeed, who would not be amazed by your patience? Who would not be struck with [your] gentle speech and mildness with them? Who [would not be struck] with your peacefulness and supplicatory character? As it is said, when you were inspecting the vine twigs of [your] true vineyard in the past, you encountered Theognes of blessed memory. He was, then, a bishop of the church of the Marcianists, until you brought the man to return to what is considered good, with perhaps a hint of some kind of irritation that [separation] had come about between you. You pronounced gently, but with a loud voice, the apostolic saying and exhorted [him]: "Come to reconciliation, O brother, before the sun sets on our anger."

But, O most admirable father of fathers, illuminator of the inhabited world, the sanctuary of churches, the support and swift assurance of believers, the defender of those who experience injustice, now you are much more our shepherd, and you comfort us more greatly, sitting in purity near the pure God, the perfect and worshipped Trinity. [Rejoicing and] dancing around Him spiritually, together with the angelic orders, you oversee us from above with apostolic graces and fatherly succor, O divine and sacred head, and do not withdraw from us, but support [those

who need support] and arm [those who need to be armed], O father, interpreter of the Scripture, and master and teacher of ineffable [mysteries]. Strengthen the like-minded successor of your sacred dwelling, who follows you after a long time, but who directly follows you in reverence, as well as his sons--;your grandsons--;with manliness and true speech. And holding them in fatherly embrace--;together, above all,--;may you chase away those, who dare to attack your rational flock, with the spiritual javelins of your words, so that this small flock of yours would survive fearless, [the flock] that you have brought up and pastorally have comforted. O divinely inspired, do not cease to strengthen the priests, the hierarchy and all the Christ-loving people with the living and unfailing teachings of Orthodox faith and with the magnitude of marvels. And the more you now exceedingly and more purely approach God, and hence are even more dazzled by the brilliance of the apprehension of light, the more shining and distinct is the radiance you receive in return for the pure trust in Christ.

...come together today, everyone, the most sacred and faithful audience! Having come into this temple, let us celebrate the sacred and high feast, and let us keep the memory, most worthy of praise, of our God-bearing father. Let us do this by staying far from taking pleasure in the deceitful pretenses of any worldly procession or festival, and from all things that wretchedly present the evil deceit of Hellenic mysteries, and from all games that are connected to shallow confusion and pretentious theatrical performances: for games worthy of laughter are those through which some hunt after vainglory, which is more wretched than anything else. Instead, let us cover [our] saint with rosebuds or anoint him with the fragrant myrrh --; our own deeds --; and let us crown him with the spiritual flowers of hymns. Our holy father Nicholas is fond of experiencing such things: he makes peace with such celebrations and festivals: he delights in such things more than the processional decorations, in which lay [hidden] the national [cults] and evil spirits of the Hellenes. In such things, [namely, spiritual celebrations,] also the threefold unity of mind and breath of the most noble athletes shines forth. O Nicholas, with them you graze together in the dwellings above, with them you shine forth, together with them you rejoice, exulting in God the Father, as far as it is possible, seeing and being seen, and you are illuminated by the brightness that surround Him. O father, with their petitions towards the Divine and your prayers that are acceptable to God, may we all be liberated from all heretical and demonic attacks, from the scourges that cause illness and through which people are unexpectedly put into bondage and confined, and from all dangers, through the grace and mercy and benevolence towards mankind of the One, who redeemed us with the venerable blood from His life-giving side, and delivered us from the deceit of slavery, our Lord Jesus Christ, together with whom all reverence and glory, might

and magnificence is due to the Father and the Holy and Life-giving Spirit, now and forever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

- St. Andrew of Crete, *Encomium on St. Nicholas of Myra*

Also Commemorated Today: Saint Andrew of Crete

Saint Andrew, Archbishop of Crete, was born in the city of Damascus into a pious Christian family. Up until seven years of age the boy was mute and did not talk. However, after communing the Holy Mysteries of Christ he found the gift of speech and began to speak. And from that time the lad began earnestly to study Holy Scripture and the discipline of theology.

At fourteen years of age he went off to Jerusalem and there he accepted monastic tonsure at the monastery of Saint Savva the Sanctified. Saint Andrew led a strict and chaste life, he was meek and abstinent, such that all were amazed at his virtue and reasoning of mind. As a man of talent and known for his virtuous life, over the passage of time he came to be numbered among the Jerusalem clergy and was appointed a secretary for the Patriarchate -- a writing clerk. In the year 680 the locum tenens of the Jerusalem Patriarchate, Theodore, included archdeacon Andrew among the representatives of the Holy City sent to the Sixth Ecumenical Council, and here the saint contended against heretical teachings, relying upon his profound knowledge of Orthodox doctrine. Shortly after the Council he was summoned back to Constantinople from Jerusalem and he was appointed archdeacon at the church of Hagia Sophia, the Wisdom of God. During the reign of the emperor Justinian II (685-695) Saint Andrew was ordained bishop of the city of Gortineia on the island of Crete. In his new position he shone forth as a true luminary of the Church, a great hierarch -- a theologian, teacher and hymnographer.

Saint Andrew wrote many liturgical hymns. He was the originator of a new liturgical form -- the canon. Of the canons composed by him the best known is the Great Penitential Canon, including within its 9 odes the 250 troparia recited during the Great Lent. In the First Week of Lent at the service of Compline it is read in portions (thus called "methymony" [trans. note: from the usage in the service of Compline of the "God is with us", in Slavonic the "S'nami Bog", or in Greek "Meth' Humon ho Theos", from which derives "methymony"]), and again on Thursday of the Fifth Week at the All-night Vigil during Matins.

Saint Andrew of Crete gained renown with his many praises of the All-Pure Virgin Mary. To him are likewise ascribed: the Canon for the feast of the Nativity of Christ, three odes for the Compline of Palm Sunday and also in the first four days of Holy Passion Week, as well as verses for the feast of the Meeting of the Lord,

and many other church hymns. His hymnographic tradition was continued by the churchly great melodists of following ages: Saints John of Damascus, Cosma of Maium, Joseph the Melodist, Theophan the Written-upon. There have also been preserved edifying Sermons of Saint Andrew for certain of the Church feasts.

Church historians are not of the same opinion as to the date of death of the saint. One suggests the year 712, while others -- the year 726. He died on the island of Mytilene, while returning to Crete from Constantinople, where he had been on churchly business. His relics were transferred to Constantinople. In the year 1350 the pious Russian pilgrim Stephen Novgorodets saw the relics at the Constantinople monastery named for Saint Andrew of Crete. *(from oca.org)*

Message from Fr. Joseph

Prayer is powerful, and we need more priests in our Diocese. So, until the end of the year, Metropolitan Gregory is asking that each one of us pray daily that we have more vocations to the priesthood. He also wants us to pray by name for our clergy and seminarians--they aren't sick! The clergy that we are to pray for are: Fr. William Conjelko, Fr. Vincent Dranginis, and Deacon Edward Brisbane. The seminarians are: Dylan Kelemencz, Thomas Kovalak, Nicholas Worobey, and Aydin Zill. As I recall, we did something like this years ago and much fruit was produced. I can't wait to see what happens!

Prayer for vocations

Master of all, You promised us, "I will be with you always, even until the very end of the world," and You have taught, "I will build My Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Mindful of this pledge, we beseech Your great goodness to inspire men to the Holy Priesthood, the service of Your Holy Orthodox Church, so that she may properly be able to fulfill Your will for Your people in this age. There are children to baptize, the sick to heal, and the dying to care for. There is the Bread of Life to distribute, and the Word of God to teach. There are sins to forgive, and charity to be done in Your Name. Send Your Church in this hour and in every age "vessels of clay" to be instruments of Your presence. Hear us, O Lord, and have mercy.

Prayer for the priesthood

O Lord Jesus Christ, Good Shepherd of Your sheep, light the fire of ardent love in the hearts of all Your priests, that they may ever and in all things seek only Your glory. Remember especially, Lord, our Metropolitan Gregory, and our spiritual father Joseph, who are laboring in Your vineyard for the salvation of all those whom You have entrusted to them. Remember also, O Lord, our priests Fr. William Conjelko, Fr. Vincent Dranginis, and Deacon Edward Brisbane, and

seminarians Dylan Kelemencz, Thomas Kovalak, Nicholas Worobey, and Aydin Zill. Make their lives as holy as the word they preach. Keep them from being discouraged. Hear their prayers for our salvation. Give them wisdom and courage to proclaim Your truth. Make them priests after Your own heart. For You are a merciful God who loves us, and to You we give glory, together with Your eternal Father and Your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

Social Team for July 11

Team 6 is up next week – Cooper, Tucker, M. Blaydoe, Corson, Fenwick. Thank you!

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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 Dominiacki, 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, Sandy Tucker, Dawn & Faith Ulmschneider, Joe & Darlene Waters, Christine, Jo, Marshall, Nathaniel, Dcn. Nectaros & Ia, the Syrian Christians displaced by war, Mother Virginia Marie & the Carmelite Nuns of Port Tobacco, the newly reposed servant of God Deacon Stephen Hall, and those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)