

SOBORNOST

St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church

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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**

**August 8, 2021 – 7th Sunday After
Pentecost | Afterfeast of the
Transfiguration | Saint Emilian the
Confessor, Bishop of Cyzikus**

The hymns at Vespers today speak of the sun appearing dim compared to the divine light of the Transfiguration. In His compassion for humanity, Christ took on mortal flesh, yet Peter, James and John saw the radiance of His glory. The incarnate Lord “made Adam’s darkened image to shine again” when He appeared on earth “arrayed in the original beauty of the Image (Genesis 1:26).

Saint Emilian, Bishop of Cyzikus, lived during the reign of the Iconoclast emperor Leo the Armenian (813-820). He was summoned together with other bishops to the court of the emperor, who insistently urged the bishops to refrain from the veneration of holy icons. Saint Emilian was the first to tell the emperor firmly that the question of the veneration of holy icons ought to be discussed and decided only within the Church by its spiritual leaders, and not at the imperial court. In the year 815 he was sent to prison for the Orthodox Faith, where he died as a confessor. *(from oca.org)*



Today's Epistle Lesson – St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 15:1-7

Brethren, we who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please *his* neighbor for *his* good, leading to edification. For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me." For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received you, to the glory of God.

Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint Matthew 9:27-35

At that time, two blind men followed Jesus, crying out and saying, "Son of David, have mercy on us!" And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you." And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, "See *that* no one knows *it*." But when they had departed, they spread the news about Him in all that country. As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed. And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marveled, saying, "It was never seen like this in Israel!" But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons." Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

A Word From the Holy Fathers

For the apostles, who really needed to be strengthened in faith and initiated into a knowledge of every thing, from that miracle comes another lesson. In fact, Moses and Elijah — the Law and the Prophets — appeared hobnobbing with the Lord. This happened so as to perfectly accomplish through the presence of five people what is written: "Every word is confirmed, if delivered in the presence of two or three witnesses" (Deut. 19:15 Mt 18:16).

To proclaim it, the two trumpets of the Old and New Testament resound in full agreement and everything needed to witness to it in ancient times is reunited with the teaching of the Gospel! The pages of both of Testaments, in fact, confirm each other, and he who was promised by the ancient symbols under the veil of mystery is now manifested by the blaze of his glory. It is He – as St. John would say: "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came to us through Jesus Christ" (Jn

1.17), in whom has been fulfilled not only the promises by the prophetic figures, but also the meaning of the precepts of the Law , because, by his presence, he teaches the truth of prophecy, and by His grace, makes possible the practice of the commandments.

Inspired by the revelation of the mysteries and taken up by contempt and disgust for earthly things, the apostle Peter was in ecstasy at the desire of eternal things, and, filled with the joy of all this vision, wanted to live with Jesus, there where His glory was manifested. That's why he said: "Lord, it is good for us to be here if you want, we here three tabernacles, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah" (Matt. 17.4).

But the Lord did not reply to this suggestion, certainly not to show that this desire was bad, but to signify that it was out of place. The world could not be saved without the death of Christ, you see. Thus, the Lord's example calls on the faith of believers to understand that, no doubt against the promise of happiness, we must nevertheless, in the trials of this life, ask for patience before glory; the happiness of the kingdom can not, in fact, precede the time of suffering.

And so, while he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, listen to him" (Mt 17.5).

The Father, no doubt, was present in the Son, and in that light that the Lord had measured out to the disciples, the essence of Him who generates is not separated from the generated Only Begotten, but to highlight the proper characteristics of each Person, the Voice coming out of the cloud announced the Father to human ears, just as the splendor coming forth from the body revealed the Son to human eyes. When they heard the voice, the disciples fell face down, very frightened, trembling not only before the majesty of the Father, but also before that of the Son: through the motion of a deeper understanding in fact, they understood that the Divinity of both was unique. And since there was no hesitation in faith there was discretion in fear. That divine testimony was so wide and varied, and the power of words made them realize more than the sound of the voice can express.

In fact, when the Father says: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, listen to him," one should not perhaps understand clearly: "This is my Son," for which to be "from me" and to be "with me" is a reality that is not time-bound? Neither is He who Generates prior to Him who is Generated; nor is the one Generated posterior to the One who Generates.

"This is my Son," who does not take away from me my Divinity, nor does He divide power, nor eternity. "This is my Son," — He is not adopted, but really, not

indeed created, but generated from me, no different in nature and made similar unto me. But He is of my very being and was born equal to me.

“This is my Son”, through whom all things were made and without whom nothing was made” (Jn 1.3): all that I do he also does it (Jn 5.19) and as I work, he works with me without a difference. In fact, the Father is in the Son just as the Son is in the Father (Jn 10:38), and our unity never separates. And though I the one who generates is different from the one generated, it is not however allowed to have a different opinion about him that one can have of me.

“This is my Son,” who did not count equality of with me something to be grasped at (Phil. 2.6), or to usurp, appropriating it for himself; rather, while remaining in the condition of his glory, he, to complete the design of the restoration of mankind, brought to humility the immutable Divinity to the condition of a servant.

To Him, therefore, in whom is all my pleasure, and whose teachings I manifest, whose humility glorifies me — listen to him without hesitation, for he is truth and life (Jn 14.6), he is my strength and my wisdom (1 Cor 1.24).

“Listen to Him,” he whom the Mysteries of the Law announced; whom the voice of the prophets sang about. “Listen to Him,” he who has redeemed the world with his blood, who has chained the devil and who has snatched away the spoil (Matt. 12:29), who has torn up the document of our debts (Col. 2:14), and the covenant that oppressed us.

“Listen to Him,” he who opens the way to heaven, and with the agony of the cross, prepares there the stairs leading up to the Kingdom. Why are you afraid of being redeemed? Why are you afraid of being dissolved from your chains? Let it happen that, what I wish, Christ also wills. Throw away that carnal fear and arm yourself with the constancy that inspires faith. It is unworthy of you, in fact, to be afraid of what in the Lord’s passion you would not fear in death, with his help.

These things, beloved, were said not only for the good of those who heard it then with their ears. Rather, in the person of the three apostles, it is the whole Church which learns what they saw with their eyes and perceived with their ears. May it strengthen the faith of all according to the preaching of the holy Gospel, and let no one ashamed of the cross of Christ, through which the world has been redeemed. Consequently, let no one be afraid of suffering for righteousness (1 Peter 3.14), nor hesitate to receive the promised reward, because it is through labor that we are led rest, and life through death. In fact, he took upon himself the weakness of our own lowliness; and — if we stay with Him (Jn 15.9) in his confession and his love — we are winners of what he has won and will receive what he promised.

Whether it is then to perform the commandments or whether to endure the hardships of life, the voice of the Father which has sounded forth must always resound in our ears: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, listen to him"; for He lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.

- St. Leo the Great

Also Commemorated Today: St. Myron, Bishop of Crete

The divinely virtuous Myron sent forth an odor of myrrh, a fragrant scent pleasing to the Lord.

Saint Myron was born around 250 in the city of Raikos in Crete near Knossos (today Riakos is called Agiou Myronos in honor of the Saint). From his youth he was distinguished for his zeal and faith in God. He was also a wonderworker from an early age. According to tradition, once he distributed all the grapes from the vineyard of his parents to the poor. His mother noticed that although they worked hard all year on the vineyard, there were no grapes to make their wine. Myron said to his mother: "God has saved some for us too, mother." He went to the vineyard and found only a bunch of grapes with three berries. Taking it home he placed it in a cup. Immediately it began to fill along with enough barrels to distribute to the entire village.

He married and worked as a farmer. He was known for his goodness and generosity, and assisted everyone who turned to him for help. Once, twelve thieves burst in upon his threshing floor, and Myron himself helped them lift sacks of grain upon their shoulders that they were stealing from him. When he was done helping them, he said: "God forgive you. This is my advice: go, but do not steal again." By his generosity the Saint so shamed the thieves, that in the future they began to lead honorable lives.

Soon after his marriage, his wife died. Out of profound respect for the Saint and his virtuous life, the Cretan people urged him to accept ordination to the priesthood in his native city, and after the persecution against the Christians they chose him to be a Bishop in Crete, though it is not clear if he was specifically the Bishop of Gortynos (according to older manuscripts) or the Bishop of Knossos (according to later manuscripts). Most likely he was Bishop of Gortynos and thus of all Crete. (The later tradition that makes him the Bishop of Knossos is probably due to the fact that during later Byzantine times the Diocese of Knossos was transferred to Raikos.)

Wisely ruling his flock, Bishop Myron received from the Lord the gift of wonderworking. At the time of a flood on the river Triton, the Saint stopped its flow and went upon it as upon dry land, and then he sent one of his deacons back

to the river with his staff to command the river to resume its course. Saint Myron fell asleep in the Lord at the age of 100, around the year 350. (*from johnsanidopoulos.com*)

Social Team for August 15

Team 3 is up next week – Edgington, Kish, Barzykin, R&C Wright. Thank you!

Icons of Our Church

Our iconographer, Michael Kapeluck, has given us permission to reproduce the beautiful icons gracing our church. If you would like to purchase a copy of one or more of our icons, please let me know and I will arrange to have them made.

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 & Mt. Kenya, Fr. John & Pani Betty Jean Baranik, Presbytera 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, Sandy Tucker, Dawn & Faith Ulmschneider, Joe & Darlene Waters, Christine, Jo, Marshall, Nathaniel, Dcn. Nectarios & 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.)