



Sunday Bulletin July 10, 2016 *Greek Orthodox Church of the* *Annunciation*

4121 O'Hara Drive Vestal, NY 13850
Phone: (607) 797-0824 Fax: (607) 797-0824
<http://www.annunciationvestal.ny.goarch.org>

Rev. Dr. Michael Bahlatzis, Presiding Priest-Proistamenos

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### **Epistle Reading Romans 5:1-10**

BRETHREN, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us. While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Why, one will hardly die for a righteous man -- though perhaps for a good man one will dare even to die. But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

### **Gospel Reading Matthew 6:22-33**

The Lord said, "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is not sound, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O men of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows you need them all. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well."

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

*Message from Fr. Michael...*

Dearly Beloved Faithful:

As we congregate today, we become beacons of the Lord's divine light. We hope and pray that the light cast by our faithful worship will be seen by all and motivate all to migrate toward the Lord's Holy House. As we read from the scriptural passage above, from the Gospel of St. Matthew, the Lord directs that our light is to shine before our brethren. In doing so, our brethren may see our good works. When our good works are seen by others, we are giving God the glory. Our heavenly Father looks upon us with His tender mercy and send His grace upon us. Our Lord is omniscient and omnipotent. He is all knowing and mighty.

Are we beacons of light that may lead others out of darkness? Can we lead others out of the desert to an oasis of faith? May our brilliance glow greater than our shining sun so that such illumination opens the eyes of the spiritually blind. What do the lights of Time Square and Broadway of New York City, the lights of Las Vegas, and the glitter of Hollywood have in common? Indeed, they are all very exciting places to visit, they attract people away from prayer and lead one toward a life of worldliness. Although we are in the world, we are not to live as though we are of the world. Let us not have concerns over money, entertainment, and worldly pleasures as these are the bait which Satan casts in an effort to attempt to reel us in like dumb fish at the end of his fishing line.

Instead, we are to see beyond this and heed to God's call. Yes, let us be lights...for the illumination of our fellow Christians to promote God's Word! Let the glitter be in spreading the message of the Lord's Gospel! Be a bright flame for Him...for the Lord. Illuminating the hearts and souls of everyone you encounter is what we hope for. Lead those who have strayed away back to the faith. Will we heed to the calling of evil and take the bait of worldliness? Or do we possess the intelligence, faith, and purity to follow the Creator?

Let us be a light house of the faith. Let us prevent those who are on the vast sea of pride and selfishness from crashing into the shoreline coastal rocks of faithlessness. May our spiritual light continue to shine before all people. May we inspire all who witness its glow to follow Christ.

Through the prayers and intercession of our holy fathers, we ask our Lord to hear our petitions and may our Lord grant His mercy upon us all.

Prayerfully beaming I remain,  
Yours in His service,

+Fr. Michael

## **45 Holy Martyrs of Nikopolis, Armenia**

The Forty-five Martyrs of Nikopolis contested during the reign of Licinius, in the year 315. After many torments, they were burnt alive.

## **Deposition of the Precious Robe of Our Lord Jesus Christ in Moscow**

After the Crucifixion of our Lord, His most precious robe was obtained by lot by a certain Elio, a Georgian soldier who took part in the execution. He in turn brought it to Georgia where it remained until that land was overrun by the Persians. Shah Abbas, seeking to establish good relations with Tsar Michael Feodorovich, sent the Robe to Moscow as a gift for the Tsar and Patriarch Philaret. This took place in March of 1625, and was appointed to be celebrated on this day in July.

## **Righteous Father Anthony of the Kiev Caves**

Saint Anthony, who was born in the province of Chernigov, was tonsured in the Monastery of Esphigmenou on the Holy Mountain, Athos, from whence he was sent by his abbot to Kiev to plant the monastic life in 1013, two years before the death of Saint Vladimir, Great Prince of Kiev. Dwelling at first as a hermit, the Saint gradually drew to himself others wishing to emulate his way of life. When the number of the brethren grew, a wooden church in honour of the Dormition of the Theotokos was built, thus laying the foundation of what was to become the renowned Kiev Caves Lavra. Refusing the abbotship, Saint Anthony entrusted this to his disciples, first to the blessed Barlaam, then to Saint Theodosius (See May 3), and his whole life struggled as a cave-dwelling hermit. He reposed in peace in 1073 at the age of ninety.

Apolytikion of Anthony of the Kiev Caves in the Fourth Tone

Having left the turmoil of the world, thou didst follow Christ according to the Gospel by renouncing the world; and having lived a life equal to the Angels, thou didst attain to the quiet haven of Holy Mount Athos. Thence, with the blessing of the fathers, thou camest to the mountain of Kiev, and living there an arduous life, thou didst illumine thy fatherland. And showing a multitude of monastics the path that leadeth to the Heavenly Kingdom, thou didst bring them to Christ. Pray to Him, O Saint Anthony, that He save our souls.

**FATHER MICHAEL REQUESTS**...that we, as a faithful community keep the following individuals in our prayers: Michalena (Skiadas) Sukenik, Suzanne Vaishnani, daughter of Ted Simon, Presbytera Magdalena Michalopoulos, Helen Economides, Henry Nussbaum, Sam Kashou. Please notify Fr. Michael if you have anyone else who should be included for special prayers. May they be under the grace and tender watch of our Lord.

Summer is here! Please be advised that the air conditioners in our church will be on during the church services. The two units in the front **are to remain on during the Divine Liturgy** as per necessity in the altar area, such being the vestments worn by the priest and altar servers, candles and lights. The two units in the rear of the church may be turned on and off as necessary.

Parish Council members are reminded that your dues should have been paid by **March 31**; for all other members, dues are strongly encouraged to be paid no later than **June 30**. Please submit your payment to Sophia Papastratis or Steve Anastos. **Single rate is \$200/year, which is for one member; family rate is \$400 which means more than one member of a family, such as husband and wife.** Children under the age of 18 are not included in these rates. Anyone with financial concerns regarding their dues is encouraged to speak with Fr. Michael or Steve Anastos.

#### STEWARDSHIP:

As he looked up, Jesus saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. "I tell you the truth," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."  
**Luke 20:45-21:4**

Whether you are an Orthodox Christian, or this is your first visit to an Orthodox Church, we are pleased to have you with us. Although Holy Communion is reserved for baptized and chrismated (confirmed) Orthodox Christians, all are invited to receive the "ANTIDORON" (blessed bread) which is not a sacrament, but is a reminder of the "agape feast" that followed worship in the early Church. After the Divine Liturgy this morning, please join us in the Church Hall for fellowship and refreshments. We hope that you will return often to worship with us, to grow in Christ and in our Orthodox Faith. For any spiritual, religious, or sacramental matters, please contact Fr. Michael (607) 795-1474. For any building, facility or church property issues, please contact Parish Council President Steve Anastos, (607) 296-9799. Deadline for suggestions for the bulletin is 12:00 noon on Thursday.