

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR THE DAY

Epistle Lesson: St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians 4:9-16

BRETHREN, God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become, and are now, as the refuse of the world, the off-scouring of all things. I do not write this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. I urge you, then, be imitators of me.

Gospel Lesson: St. Matthew 17:14-23

At that time, a man came up to Him and kneeling before Him said, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and he suffers terribly; for often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. And I brought him to Your disciples, and they could not heal him." And Jesus answered, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him here to me." And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured instantly. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" He said to them, "Because of your little faith. For truly I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move hence to yonder place,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you." As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day."

Offerings for the Oblation. It is the venerable custom in Orthodox churches throughout the world for the faithful to offer the bread and wine, as well as charcoal, incense and candles that are used in the celebration of the Holy Liturgy. The baking of the special bread called "prosfora" which means "offering," is a particular honour and opportunity for great holiness. Usually people will bake a prosfora and bring it to the church along with a list of names that they would like the priest to commemorate during the proskomidia—the service of preparation of the Holy Oblation. Everyone is invited to bake the bread, or donate a bottle of wine, or charcoal, or incense, or candles. As this is a "gift" or offering of the people, it is not really appropriate for the church to ask individuals to take on this task. Rather it should come from the desire of the individual person to supply the Holy Altar out of their gratitude for God's immense love and care. All gifts are received with gratitude and thanksgiving and no gifts are refused.

If you would like to donate a prosfora, but don't know how to make one there are people in our congregation that can teach you. Please let Fr. Iakovos know if you are interested in supplying a prosfora, or artos, or any other offering and he will be most happy to connect you with the person that can help you make your gift.



TRAVERSE CITY ORTHODOX MISSION

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† PARISH CALENDAR OF EVENTS †

- Sunday 24 August 10th Sunday of St. Matthew. Hieromartyr Eutyches. St. Cosmas of Aitola.**
9 AM Orthros
10 AM Liturgy of St. Chrysostomos
11:30 AM St. Nicholas YAL Ann Arbor Reception and Pot Luck Luncheon
- Monday 25 August Apostle Bartholomeos.**
- Tuesday 26 August Martyrs Adrian and Natalia.**
- Wednesday 27 August St. Poimen the Great.**
Fast Day
- Thursday 28 August St. Moses the Ethiopian.**
- Friday 29 August Beheading of the Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John.**
Fast Day
- Saturday 30 August Apodosis of the Beheading.**
4:30 PM 9th Hour and Vespers
5:30 PM Choir Rehearsal
- Sunday 31 August 11th Sunday of St. Matthew. Venerable Zone of the Theotokos.**
9 AM Orthros
10 AM Liturgy of St. Chrysostomos
11:15 Back-to-School Blessing for Administrators, Faculty and Students
11:30 AM Fellowship Hour
4:30 PM 9th Hour and Vespers for the Feast of the Indiction

Adult Religious Education Program Ramps Up in September. Once again our parish will be offering a number of educational programs for the benefit of our faithful as well as the general public in our service area. Our first offering begins on Monday evening, 8 September and will meet for fifteen weeks starting at 6:30 PM and wrapping up around 8 PM. **(Scripture 207) The Gospel of St. John**, will provide a survey examination of the fourth Gospel through the lens of the homilies and commentaries written about it by some of the Holy Fathers of the Church. Particularly, we will be working with the homiletics of St. John Chrysostom and the commentary provided by Blessed Theophylact of Bulgaria to illuminate the text for us. Additionally, we will be utilizing composition-critical analysis of the Gospel as provided in the book, The Genius of John by Peter F. Ellis of Fordham University. This programme is suitable for anyone, and it is not necessary to be an Orthodox Christian to attend. Our course work will not require any previous knowledge of the Holy Scriptures or the Orthodox teaching with respect to the scripture.

Our second offering will be a discussion group based upon the reading of the book, The Way of the Pilgrim. Persons attending this class will be asked to read the book according to our syllabus and then come to our twice per month meetings to discuss insights into the book. This class will meet on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month. Our first class will take place on Thursday, 25 September at 6:30 PM at the church.

Registration sheets for both classes are located in the narthex of the church. Please be sure to register so that we know how many books to purchase through the bookstore.

Back-to-School Blessing Next Sunday. It is hard to believe but the summer is just about over and many of our faithful will be headed back to school. Whether serving as administrators, faculty members, support staff or students, all have been preparing over the past several weeks to return to school. As with any pursuit, it is always best to begin with God's blessing and the dedication of one's work to His glory. To this end, our parish will be sponsoring a special convocation for administrators, faculty, support staff and students next Sunday. During the services we will be taking special prayers and petitions for those involved in education as well as ending the Liturgy with a special blessing for those involved in this God-saved pursuit.

Please join us in honouring those that are working in the field of education and praying God's blessing and protection for them as they begin this new school year. A special gift and remembrance of this blessing will be provided to each of our administrators, faculty, support staff and students in attendance for this service.

Welcome to St. Nicholas Ann Arbor YAL. The YAL group from St. Nicholas Church in Ann Arbor concludes their retreat by joining us for the services this morning. On Friday the group made their way from Ann Arbor to Sutton's Bay. Beginning Saturday morning they had morning prayer at the church followed by a presentation by Fr. Iakovos on missions—especially with respect to international mission efforts. A vibrant question and answer period provided participants with insights into the nature of international missions and the challenges that international missions present with respect to language, culture and racial issues.

After having the afternoon boat trip cancelled due to rain, the group made their way to visit the lighthouse on the peninsula as well as visit other sites in the Traverse City area. Following vespers, the group was hosted to dinner at J.P.'s Diner in Traverse City. As part of the evening meeting the group was treated to a discussion of Christian apologetics using the mission talk from the morning session as a spring board.

Following the pot luck reception this morning, the group will return home via the Sleeping Bear Dunes. Please make our guests feel welcome and comfortable as they worship with us this morning.

Annual General Meeting (AGM) Reminder. We remind our stewards and friends that the AGM of the parish will take place at the church immediately following the services on Sunday, 7 September. According to the by-laws of the parish anyone that is a pledged steward for 2008 as of 1 June 2008 will be eligible to vote at this meeting. It is important that our faithful plan to attend this meeting which is a primary conduit for exchanging information between the faithful and the parish council. Central to the meeting will be the nominations to fill three parish council positions that will be vacant with the close of the 2008 fiscal year. Meeting packets were sent out on Friday. Persons that have not received a packet by mid-week are encouraged to phone Judy Weston, council secretary, to obtain a copy.

"Ancient and Holy in the Holy Land". Orthodox Tours is offering a unique trip this Fall that combines several features into what will be a memorable experience. Departing from New York on 5 October, it will provide two weeks of experiences that will leave one breathless. It is first and foremost an Orthodox Christian pilgrimage. Our highest priority is the veneration of the Holy Sites associated with the Earthly Ministry of our Savior, Most Holy Virgin Mary, Apostles of our Lord and a multitude of righteous individuals from the Old and New Testament. Therefore, we will first and foremost visit Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Jericho, Mt. Tabor and a number of sites in Galilee. At the same time, we seek to provide members of our tour with a better understanding of the ecclesiastical and cultural-historical background of the Holy Land; for this reason, we will visit important monuments of the Jewish and Nabatean past – Masada, Qumran, and Petra, as well as imposing Roman Ruins at Sephoris and Jerash. The trip includes visits to important monuments of the Byzantine past, chiefly active and ruined monastic sites of Israel and Jordan, such as the monasteries of St. Sabbas, St. Theodosius, St. George of Hoziba, and the foundations at Kursi and Um Rassas. While this religious tour is prepared with an Orthodox traveler in mind, anyone interested in Early Church History and in the Antiquities of the Middle East will surely benefit from our voyage. The guide for the tour is Fr. Ilya Gotlinsky, priest of Dormition of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church in Binghamton, NY. Fr. Ilya is an experienced guide who has run many trips, not only to the Holy Land, but also to Greece, Eastern Europe and Russia.

The current cost of the land portion of the tour is 1600USD per person, based on double occupancy in a group of 30 participants. Round trip air ticket from NYC (JFK-Tel Aviv, Israel, Amman, Jordan - JFK) with Delta Airlines is \$1300. Sinai extension (departure from Cairo, Egypt) is \$500 per person, based on double occupancy in a group of 30 participants.

Price includes:

- Accommodation in good Tourist-Class Hotels (good 3***) with breakfasts daily
- Second meal daily (Dinner or Lunch)
- Deluxe air-conditioned motorcoach for the transfers all along the tour
- Road and local taxes for the tourist bus
- Entrance tickets to the museums and donations for the entrance at the churches and monasteries as per itinerary

* *The hotels that we offer for this tour are local equivalent of 3*** and in some places the best available.*

Please note that the level of accommodations and services may be different from the expectations of similarly rated hotels in Western Europe or North America.

For more information visit their website at www.orthodoxtours.com or to make your reservation, please see Fr. Iakovos.