

## Holy Scripture Lessons for the Day

### Epistle Lesson: First Letter of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Corinthians 16:13-24

BRETHREN, be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. Now, brethren, you know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints; I urge you to be subject to such men and to every fellow worker and laborer. I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicos, because they have made up for your absence; for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. Give recognition to such men. The churches of Asia send greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord. All the brethren send greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss. I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. If any one has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

### Gospel Lesson: Gospel According to St. Matthew 21:33-42

The Lord said this parable, "There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country. When the season of fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants, to get his fruit; and the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did the same to them. Afterward he sent his son to them, saying 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.' And they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons." Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; this was the Lord's doing, and it was marvelous in our eyes?'"

**Food for Thought on Matthew 21:42.** Blessed Theophylact writes in his commentary, *The "stone" means Christ Himself; the "builders" are the teachers of the Jews who rejected Him as if He were useless, saying, "Thou art a Samaritan and hast a demon." But when He rose from the dead, He was set in a place as the head of the corner, that is, He became the head of the Church, joining Jews and Gentiles in one faith. For as the stone which forms the corner of a building makes continuous the walls leading to it and from it, so Christ has bound all together in one faith. This corner is marvelous, and is the Lord's doing (Ps 117:22-23). For the Church which connects us and makes us one in faith is the Lord's doing, and is worthy of all wonder, so well is it built. And in another sense is it marvelous, because the Word of Christ has been confirmed and substantiated by marvels, that is, miracles, so that the composition of the Church is marvelous. The kingdom of God, that is, closeness with God, has been taken from the Jews and given to those who believed. Those who stumble against the Rock of Christ and take offence at Him will not only be crushed at the second coming, but already here in this life they have been scattered like powder by Christ.*

While it is easy to see this as an attack on the Jews, and a vindication or justification for ourselves, is it not true that in our modern day we have also been guilty of "rejecting the stone?" Having inherited this great treasure of faith, have we not also squandered the wealth of the Father and refused to give Him his fruits in due season? Truly, we as the Church, have a larger responsibility than the Jews of the time because we have had revealed to us the fullness of the Godhead in Christ Jesus. Having received so great a treasure, perhaps we should re-read this Scripture asking ourselves if we are not, in fact, the tenants of the vineyard. "By my life, my actions, my thoughts, where I spend my time, how I spend my money, how I speak, how I think, am I giving fruits to the Master?"

*Devote yourself to stillness and know that I am God - Psalm 45:10 (LXX)*

## Archangel Gabriel Greek Orthodox Church

*Traditional Worship for Modern Life*

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### PARISH CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday, 22 August	<b>14th Sunday After Pentecost. 13th Sunday of St. Matthew.</b> 9 AM Orthros 10 AM Liturgy of St. Chrysostomos 11:15 AM Church School 11:30 AM Fellowship Hour
Monday, 23 August	<b>Leavetaking of the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos</b>
Tuesday, 24 August	<b>St. Eutyches the Hieromartyr</b> 5:45 PM Back-Packs for Kids at Oak Park Elementary School
Wednesday, 25 August	<b>St. Titus the Apostle of the 70</b> Fast Day
Thursday, 26 August	<b>SS. Adrian and Natalia the Martyrs</b>
Friday, 27 August	<b>St. Poimen the Great</b> Fast Day
Saturday, 28 August	<b>St. Moses the Black</b> Please note: No Vespers will be served this evening.
Sunday, 29 August	<b>15th Sunday After Pentecost. Beheading of the Holy Prophet, Fore-runner and Baptizer, John.</b> Strict Fast Day 9 AM Orthros 10 AM Liturgy of St. Chrysostomos 11:15 AM Church School 11:30 AM Fellowship Hour



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**Prosfora This Morning...** was prepared by Helen Knapp for use in the celebration of the Holy Liturgy. Thanks to Helen for making this offering so that we can celebrate the Lord's presence among us.

That was the last prosfora in the freezer so we will be needing one for the 29th of August and beyond. Anyone interested in providing prosfora or artos for the services is encouraged to speak with Fr. Iakovos for more information.

**Ladies' Philoptochos To Assist Rotary Backpack Project.** *What is BackPacks for Kids?* It is the 'Signature Project' for Traverse City Sunrise Rotary, launched in 2004. The group supplies a new backpack with school supplies to public school children and grades K - 5, as well as to selected charter schools and Goodwill Industries. Since program inception the Rotary has donated over 7,700 backpacks. The Backpacks for Kids project serves 1,000 - 1,500 area school children each year. The target list is provided by Traverse City Area Public School (TCAPS) administration, and primarily includes students qualifying for the reduced school lunch program. Additionally the group has raised sufficient funds to provide annual contribution to Goodwill Industries who distribute to their clients who might not fall immediately within the TCAPS system. In their first year they attempted to seek donations of product and quickly found it was impossible to obtain sufficient quantities of individual items. In subsequent years they have sought funding through charitable contributions and grants to help offset the expense. On average a fully supplied backpack costs \$15.00, requiring annual proceeds of \$20,000 - \$25,000.

Our ladies' group will provide volunteer services in packing backpacks with supplies on Tuesday 24 August at the Oak Park Elementary School on Garfield Street near the entrance to the Civic Center, beginning at 5:45 PM. Dinner and ice cream will be served afterward courtesy of the Rotarians. The evening's activities should end by 7:30 PM.

**Save the Date for our Back-to-School Event.** The religious education department will be sponsoring our traditional Back-to-School Sunday to be held 12 September. The day will be marked with special prayers and events to propel our students, their families and those working in the education world into the new school year. Persons are encouraged to participate in this dedication of the new school year.

**Ladies to Meet.** The Philoptochos will have a quick general meeting following the services on Sunday, 12 September. This meeting is to catch up on projects in process for the month of November and to issue a current financial report. It would be appreciated if all active members of the Philoptochos would consider coming to this worthwhile meeting. The meeting will begin following the celebration for our children and teachers, and will conclude no later than 1:00 or 1:15 PM. Thanks to those who are a part of the Philoptochos, and we appreciate your opinions and support for the mission that we serve! Items for the agenda should be forwarded to Rebekah Olechnowicz.

**Fellowship Hour in the News.** The fellowship hour for the community is currently hosted by the Ladies' Philoptochos. The parish council will be sending around a letter to the membership this week in order to solicit ideas and opinions on the fellowship hour, most especially focusing on the food offerings. Parishio-

ners are encouraged to respond to this invitation to comment by contacting a member of the parish council or forwarding concerns to Karen Kain, president or Judy Weston, secretary.

**New Educational Offerings for Fall.** With the Summer coming to a close it is time to ramp up our educational programming for adults for the coming semester. Monday nights will once again be the time when we offer our programme centering on *Making Theory Real in the Orthodox Church*. This will be a series of topics discussed over a six week period that focuses on the integration of actual practices and behaviours as expressions of our spirituality. The first class meets on Monday, 13 September at 6 PM in the education/community center. No prior knowledge of the Church or her practices is necessary and everyone is invited to attend. There is no required text or required reading. Just bring yourself and your questions.

Later in the month our parish will be rolling out the popular Parish Theme Night, back for its second year. On that evening we'll share a meal together, learn some things about ourselves and the faith through a group activity and some teaching. Watch for the announcement of our meeting date in this space.

Finally, launching in late September or early October, will be a course of study focusing on the Old Testament underpinnings of the New Testament Church. In this course we will be examining some Jewish customs and understandings of the Holy Scriptures and dove tailing them with the teachings of Jesus Christ. This should be an eye-opener for just about everyone. Come and join us as we expand our horizons and our understanding of salvation history.

Watch this space for more information about these and all of our other educational offerings which will be made available throughout the semester.

**Welcome Back Louis and Matthew!** Louis Govatos has returned to Traverse City and has been here with daughter Sandy for the past week or so. Desiring to return to his home in Traverse City, Louis made the difficult trip from Florida and is happy to have had the opportunity to visit here. We welcome Louis back to our town and wish him every good thing.

Also back with us this week is Matthew Bemis, returning from graduate school in the Boston area for a visit at home. Matthew, son of Pamela and Steven Bemis of our parish was an integral part of our church school program here before leaving to pursue studies in Boston. Greetings may be made to the visitors at their respective homes here in the area.

**Council Begins Preparation for Fall General Assembly.** Members of our parish council are busy preparing for the Fall General Assembly which will take place in early October this year. Reports are currently being compiled to explain the activities of the parish over the past year as well as providing information about activities planned for this year. Of particular significance will be a discussion of the financial condition of the parish, a proposed budget for 2011 and the election of three board members to replace those whose terms are expiring this year. This fourth year is a critical time for the parish and everyone's participation in this meeting is essential. Please begin to think now about making yourself available to attend.