

SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

www.orthodoxbutler.org

ADDRESS: 400 S. Sixth Avenue, Butler, PA 16001

RECTOR: Rev. Bogdan Gabriel Bucur

CONTACT: 412.390.8208; frbogdan@orthodoxbutler.org

The 22nd Sunday after Pentecost (24 October 2010)

FIRST ANTIPHON

It is good to give praise unto the Lord, and to chant unto Thy Name, O Most High! Refrain: Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us!

To proclaim in the morning Thy mercy, and Thy truth by night! (Refrain)

Upright is the Lord our God and there is no unrighteousness in Him (Refrain)

Glory... Both now... (Refrain)

SECOND ANTIPHON

The Lord is King, He is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength and hath girt Himself! Refrain: Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead, who sing to Thee, "Alleluia"!

For He established the world which shall not be shaken! (Refrain)

Holiness becometh Thy house, O Lord, unto length of days! (Refrain)

Glory... Both now... (Only begotten Son and Word of God ...)

THIRD ANTIPHON

Come let us rejoice in the Lord, let us shout with jubilation unto God our Savior! (Ps. 94:1) Troparion of the Resurrection

THE LITTLE ENTRANCE

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ. Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead, who sing to Thee, "Alleluia"!

TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone 5: Let us, believers, praise and worship the Word co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our salvation! For He took pleasure in ascending the Cross in the flesh to suffer death and to raise the dead by his glorious Resurrection!

TROPARION OF ST, ARETHAS, Tone 1: O Lord, by the sufferings Thy saints endured for Thy sake, have compassion and heal all the sufferings of us who implore Thee, Who alone art the Lover of mankind!

TROPARION OF ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT, tone 4 (Russian): Like the zealous Elijah thou didst become, and followed John the Baptist in his upright ways. A dweller in the wilderness, thou didst steady the world by prayer. O Father Anthony, intercede with Christ our God for our souls' salvation.

KONTAKION OF THE THEOTOKOS, Tone 4: O undisputed intercessor of Christians, mediatrix unrejected by the Creator: turn not away from the voice of our petitions, although we be sinners. Come to us in time, who cry to thee in faith, with assistance; for thou art good! Hasten to us with intercessions, O Theotokos, who dost ever intercede for those who honor thee.

Today we commemorate the holy martyr Arethas of Arabia, and those together with him, including the holy martyr Synkletikia and her two daughters (6th c.); blessed Elesbaan, king of Ethiopia, who later embraced the monastic life (6th c.); Ven. Arethus, Sisoë, and Theophilus, recluses, of the Kievan Caves ((12th-13th c.); St. Athanasius, Patriarch of Constantinople (+ 1311); Ven Zosima Verkhovskoy (+1833).

LIVING: We pray for the health and well being of Sula, Dolores (Sipos), Dolores (Bingham), Diane, Karyn, Rodolphe, Brian, Gina, the hieromonk Alexander, and the baby Christina.

DEPARTED: Mariana, James, Dale, Mary Ann, Joseph, Katherine, Ștefan.

TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

(Gal 6:11-18)

*Prokeimenon: You, O Lord, shall keep us and preserve us.
Save me, O Lord, for the godly man has failed.*

The Reading is from the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Galatians

Brethren, see with what large letters I am writing to you, with my own hand. It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that would compel you to be circumcised, and only so that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For even those who receive circumcision do not themselves keep the law; but they desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh. But far be it from me to glory, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision: what counts is to be a new creation! Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God. Henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren, Amen!

It is clear that Saint Paul is writing here about a matter he views as extremely important. The first line about the “large letters” means something like “I want to emphasize in the bold scrawls of my personal handwriting the immense importance of what I have written.”

What was the problem? Saint Paul was writing to warn the Galatians against certain Christian leaders who compelled all new converts to the faith to practice circumcision. He warned that such “missionaries” were in fact interested in cultivating their own public image in the Christian community, while at the same time “keeping a low profile” in the larger society, so as to avoid prosecution by the Roman Empire (as long as Christians would be perceived as a type of Judaism, they would not be persecuted, but tolerated, like the Jews).

The false missionaries were not “crazy” to insist on circumcision; this was, to them and to many, a definite mark of religious piety. Today, it would be things like not eating certain foods on certain days, dressing in a certain way, abstaining from this or that, etc. Saint Paul’s point is that, ultimately, all

these things must be placed in a different perspective: what truly matters is not that we do this or that, or that we keep this or that rule of piety; what matters is that we become a “new creation”—and this is God’s work in us. The same God who spoke at creation, “let there be light!”, and it was light, who now shines in our hearts, drawing us out of darkness and re-creating us into children of the light. “A new creation” means that our Christian life is God’s liturgy in us, where we are co-workers with God.

TODAY’S GOSPEL READING

(Luke 8:26-39)

The Reading is from the Gospel according to Saint Luke

At that time, as Jesus arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, there met him a man from the city who had demons; for a long time he had worn no clothes and he lived not in a house but among the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him, and said with a loud voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beseech you, do not torment me." For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many a time it had seized him; he was kept under guard, and bound with chains and fetters, but he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the desert.) Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion"; for many demons had entered him. And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss. Now a large herd of swine was feeding there on the hillside; and they begged him to let them enter these. So he gave them leave. Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned. When the herdsmen saw what happened, they fled, and told it in the city and in the country. Then people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. And those who had seen it told them how he who had been possessed with demons was healed. Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gadarenes asked him to

depart from them; for they were seized with great fear; so he got into the boat and returned. The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but he sent him away, saying, "Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you." And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him.

The healing of the possessed man from Gadara is a frightening story. At the very beginning, we learn that this person, although alive, was spending his tormented existence "not in a house but among the tombs": a "dead life," haunted by nightmarish frights. The man was out of his mind: his mind, that is, was the playground of a legion of spirits; and, just as sleepwalkers play out their dreams by moving about physically, at the risk of gravely injuring themselves, so also was this man's body wounded by being dragged along as the demons were harassing his spirit. This is indeed disturbing to any reader or hearer of the Gospel, because we have here an appropriate image of the fallen existence that Adam chose by trusting the evil one rather than God.

When the Lord meets him and heals him, he decides to bring the evil out in a spectacular display, so that people see and understand the extent of this man's torment: he sends the legion of demons into a herd of swine. The resulting stampede, with the swine rushing headlong off a cliff to a miserable drowning, gives us frightening insight into the kind of dark and destructive force had been ravaging the man from Gadara. The account is frightening, especially bearing in mind that, according to Scripture, "the world lies under the power of the evil one" (1 John 5:19).

Most frightening, however, is what follows after the demons are banished and the man restored to health. Instead of giving thanks for the healing and perhaps throwing a feast, the Gadarenes are "seized with great fear" and ask Jesus to leave the area at once! They are afraid, indeed, but not of the demons. They are afraid that God is coming into their lives, and are unwilling to welcome into their homes a guest that disrupts the status quo by bringing in a new kind of life. Frightening indeed it is to note that the Gadarenes are not speaking with complete freedom, but are in fact mouthing the words of the demons: "What have you to do with us, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?" As for us, we are called to move in the other direction: "With fear of God, faith, and love *draw near!*"

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **FOOD FOR HUNGRY PEOPLE:** Our parish is collecting non-perishable items (cans, etc), to be donated to the Society of St. Vincent DePaul, which distributes on Thanksgiving directly to the needy persons of Butler. Please give with a generous heart, remembering St. John Chrysostom's powerful word: **"Feeding the hungry is a greater work than raising the dead!"**
- On **Sunday, November 14**, the three Orthodox parishes in the area (ours, St. Andrew [OCA], and Sts. Peter and Paul [Ukrainian]) will be coming together for Divine Liturgy followed by a pre-Advent meal. On that Sunday, instead of having Liturgy at St. Anthony's, we will meet at Sts. Peter and Paul. Such a con-celebration of the Divine Liturgy, with all three priests and the three congregations worshipping God together, is a wonderful opportunity to experience the greater Orthodox family of the Butler area. Christ is in our midst! He is and ever shall be!
- Our patron saint, **St. Anthony the Great, is celebrated on January 17**. Let's talk to each other about what we could do. Fr. Bogdan's suggestions: invite the other two parishes to join us at Liturgy on the Sunday before, January 16? Invite Mother Cristophora from the Transfiguration Monastery?
- Fr. Paisius McGrath (Sts Peter and Paul) holds a Bible study every other Wednesday at 6:30 pm, and a "Basics of Orthodoxy" class every other Thursday at 6:30 pm. If interested, call Fr. Paisius at (724) 549-6651.
- Sundays around 9:30: Psalm singing; Vespers on Saturday is at 6:00 pm.



VATICAN SPLENDORS:

A JOURNEY THROUGH 2000 YEARS OF FAITH AND ART

Heinz History Center, October 2, 2010 – January 9, 2011

The exhibit features 170 works of art, many of which have never left the Vatican. See objects dating back to the first century, Michelangelo items, works by Bernini, Giotto, and others.

For tickets and information, call 1-888-582-8422 or visit www.vaticansplendors.com