

# SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

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*The 37th Sunday after Pentecost (2 February 2011)*

*Sunday after the Presentation of our Lord (celebrated on February 2)*

*Saints we commemorate today: Bucolus, bishop of Smyrna (1st c.); venerable ascetics Barsanuphius and John (5th c., Palestine); Photios the Great, patriarch of Constantinople (9th c.); Martyr Julian of Emesa (312).*

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

DEPARTED: John Isaac, Michael, William, Mariana, James, Mary Ann, Joseph, Katherine.

## 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... Now and ever... (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 befits Thy house, O Lord, unto length of days!*      (**Refrain**)

*Glory... Now and ever...*      (Only begotten Son and Word of God ...)

## THIRD ANTIPHON AND THE LITTLE ENTRANCE

### THE BEATITUDES

*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 4): Having learned the joyful message of the Resurrection from the angel, the women disciples cast from them their parental condemnation, and proudly broke the news to the disciples, saying, “Death hath been spoiled, Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy!

TROPARION OF THE PRESENTATION (Tone 1): Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of grace; for from thee arose the Sun of justice, Christ our God, lighting those who are in darkness. Rejoice and be glad, O righteous old man, carrying in thine arms the Deliverer of our souls, who granteth us resurrection.

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 FOR THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST (Tone 1): Thou, O Christ God, who by Thy birth, didst sanctify the Virgin’s womb, and, as is meet, didst bless Simeon’s arms, and didst also come to save us: preserve Thy fold in wars, and confirm them whom Thou didst love, for Thou alone art the lover of mankind.

## TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

Prokeimenon:

*Make your vows to the Lord your God! In Judah God is known.*

*The Reading is from Saint Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians*

(2 Cor 6:16-7:1)

Brethren, wekuik are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters," says the Lord Almighty. Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God!

How realistic is God's command that we "**cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit**"? How can we "**make holiness perfect**"? If you think this is just a radical expression of the Apostle, remember the similar words of the Divine Liturgy: "the holy things are for those who are holy!"

God seems to require *the impossible!* True. But it is also true that if we are thinking of God "over there" making such requirement of us "over here"—well, then we have misunderstood the whole point. Let us start with the Orthodox confession of faith: "God became man, so that man may be deified." He did not simply order us to "be like God," but rather came among us, became one of us, so as to lead the way to God; and He sent the Holy Spirit to "dwell in us" and assist us on the way.

It is true that the Liturgy proclaims "the holy things are for the holy"; but we also hear at Liturgy, "*You* are our sanctification." And the Apostle begins by telling us that we are the temple of the living God, and that God lives and moves in us.

Yes, God demand the impossible. But He is himself at work in us, to make the impossible possible—to cleanse us from every defilement of body and spirit" and to perfect His holiness in us. The point is simply to allow Him to live and move in us. And the first step is to receive the gift of God Himself

given to us in the Holy Eucharist: *Receive the Body of Christ, taste the fountain of immortality!*

## TODAY'S GOSPEL READING

*The Reading is from the Gospel according to Saint Matthew  
(Matt 15:21-28)*

At that time, Jesus went to the district of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and cried, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely possessed by a demon." But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." And he answered, "It is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table." Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly.

This is a difficult Gospel: Christ first ignores the woman that is begging him; He even ignores the pleas of the disciples; He then says that His ministry is only for Israel, not for pagans like that woman. Finally, He even insults the woman: "it is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."

But we know from the witness of the Gospels that Jesus had mercy on those who approached Him. We also know that he was concerned not only with the sons of Israel, since He said, "I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice" (John 10:16). And we know that He was always particularly caring and gentle in His interaction with women (remember the woman caught in adultery: He does not shame her by looking at her when she was most likely half-naked).

All these elements lead us to understand that what is going on is a testing of sorts, an exam. A hard exam, which the Canaanite passes with flying colors: she continues to ask, full of faith, despite all the setbacks; she does not give up, she does not become bitter or cynical, she does not respond with insults of her own. She is humble, acknowledging her lowly status ("Yes,

Lord, but even the dogs ..."). And she does all of this out of love, because she is not begging for herself but for her daughter!

The Lord's response is unique. "O, woman!" he addresses her. This type of exclamation the Gospels reserve only for her. And then, "**great is your faith!**" Nobody ever received such congratulation from the Lord. Finally, "**Be it done for you as you desire!**" Not "according to your faith" (as the Lord addresses several others), but "as you desire". The message is, of course, the same. And yet, this expression, "as you desire," speaks of a special intimacy. The woman already receives that which the Lord promises His disciples for the future: "You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. ... Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name" (John 16).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**VESPERS ON SATURDAY 2/13: 6:30 pm!**

- Several families have had their houses blessed between New Year and Theophany. Other house blessings can be scheduled from now until the beginning of Great Lent.

## ANTIOCHIAN VILLAGE SUMMER CAMP (Ages 9-17)!

The main goal of the Antiochian Village Summer Camp Program provides an experience that has been very instrumental in the spiritual maturation of many young people. The major components which contribute to that experience include the following: 1) daily Orthodox worship with an emphasis on participation; 2) a challenge toward spiritual growth through daily homilies, religious education, and relationships with counselors and fellow Orthodox campers; 3) a safe and naturally beautiful setting for group living; and 4) a caring and loving staff fully dedicated to the campers well-being and growth.

If you think this is all about “Church stuff” you should note that the Village experience is also a lot of fun: daily games, hikes, sports, and, overall, an incredibly lively “camp” atmosphere (almost) around-the-clock.

CAMP DATES	COST
<b><u>Session 1 (special, 1-week): June 19 - 26</u></b>	<b><u>425</u></b>
Session 1: June 19 - July 1	700
Session 2 : July 3-15	700
Session 3: July 17 - 29	700
Session 4: July 31 - Aug. 12	700

Each parish has \$700 in scholarship funds from the Order of Saint Ignatius to assign to young people from their parish to attend any of the eight camping programs in the Antiochian Archdiocese. At Saint Anthony, it is our goal that as many of our young ones (Elias, Nikolai, Theodore, Maria, Jaqueline, Irina) would experience the Camp. If you want to register your child, please talk to Fr. Bogdan about how to proceed.