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BULLETIN OF OCTOBER 26, 2008

SUNDAY/OCTOBER 26th

19th Sunday After Pentecost (Tone 2)

Great-Martyr Demetrius

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour
Question & Answer Period

MONDAY/OCTOBER 27th

6:30p.m. Memorial Service for (+) Joan Filippini
7:00p.m. Vespers

TUESDAY/OCTOBER 28th

St. Job of Pochaev

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
6:30p.m. Compline
7-8:30p.m. Scripture Study: Part 4
On Ephesians 4:25-32

"Honor the Spirit – Honor the New Life in Christ"

THURSDAY/OCTOBER 30th

7:00p.m. Memorial Service for (+) Helen Chabra

SATURDAY/NOVEMBER 1st

9:30a.m. Akathist; Confessions
5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

Eastern Standard Time Returns at 2:00a.m.,
Sunday, Set Clocks Back One Hour.

SUNDAY/NOVEMBER 2nd

20th Sunday After Pentecost (Tone 3)
Synaxis of the Unmercenary Healers

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy &
Prayers for Those in Healing Ministries
Church School; Coffee Hour
2:00p.m. Marriage of Timothy Gorbatuk and
Rebecca Boyce

Fasting Days

Wed., Oct. 29th & Fri., Oct. 31st

INSTRUCTIONS OF

ST. JOHN OF KRONSTADT (+1908)

In making the Sign of the Cross, believe and constantly remember that your sins are nailed to the cross. When you fall into sin, at once judge yourself sincerely, and make the Sign of the Cross upon yourself, saying: "Lord, Thou did nail our sins to Thy cross, have mercy on me after Thy great goodness," and you will be cleansed from your sin.



Our Lord is present in the priest's blessing by the Sign of the Cross, for in this sign He Himself appears and blesses. Hence the importance of the priestly blessing. And even our customary making of the Sign of the Cross also bears God's power, if only we make it with faith.



We offer a lighted candle in the church in order that the light of grace, spiritual light, may come upon us and lead us from the darkness of sin into the light of the knowledge of God and virtue.



Outreach Committee Meeting

Monday, November 3rd at 7:00p.m.

Parish Council Meeting

Thursday, November 6th at 7:00p.m. As always, parishioners are invited to attend.

Feast of the Unmercenary Healers – Sunday, November 2nd

On this day at the Divine Liturgy special prayers are offered for those of you in the medical and curative disciplines.

Memorial Services

For (+) Michael and Justina Sokol –

Nov. 3rd, Monday at 6:30p.m.

For (+) Peter Chabra –

Nov. 7th, Friday at 6:30p.m.

For (+) Archbishop Peter, 1st year anniversary –

Nov. 18th, Tuesday at 6:30p.m.

Namesday Greetings

St. Narcissus/Oct. 31st: Narcis Popa, Many Blessed years!

All-American Council: Nov. 10th-13th

Every third year, the entire OCA gathers in Council to review, discuss and plan. The Council this year is especially important in light of the Crisis of our National Church. An election of a new Metropolitan will also take place. Representing our parish will be Fr. James and Theodora Combs.

The Council Website has posted Reports and information that you may view.
www.oca.org/15acc

The Holy Nativity 40 Day Fast

Begins on November 15th and ends after the Divine Liturgy on December 25th, the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord. We should plan accordingly.

Who To Speak With

Parish Membership - Fr. James

Hall Rentals – Austin Kachek

Offering Envelopes – Robert Smith

Grounds and Building Needs – Austin Kachek

Cemetery Grounds – Sandy Filippini

Cemetery Plot Sales – Fr. James

Agenda Items for Parish Council – Peter Bakaltez

Parish Synodicon – Memory Eternal!

October 26, 1985 Michael Motoviloff

October 27, 1960 Nikolai Roschuk

October 28, 1916 Paul Klaga

October 28, 1932 Nicholas Kulina

October 29, 2007 Stephanida Seminuk

October 30, 1965 Stanley Hamernick

October 30, 1972 Helen Chabra

October 30, 1993 Joan Filippini

October 31, 1959 Michael Barna

October 31, 1967 Michael Salamander

October 31, 1972 Vassily Slepecky

October 31, 1976 Fr. Andrew Slepecky
(1st rector 1916-1917)

November Month Food Drive for Local Food Pantry

For the entire month of November, baskets will be in the vestibule of the church for food items.

You are asked to focus on canned meat, canned corn, canned peas, macaroni and cheese and peanut butter. Yes, other basic food staples may also be brought.

Specialized Bake Sale – November 9th

The bake sale on this Sunday will feature breakfast muffins, cup cakes, and Lenten cakes and cookies. Please speak with Maria Torrisi.

Spirit of Orthodoxy Concert – Nov. 2nd

A Concert will be held at St. Elizabeth the New Martyr Church, 38 Princeton Ave., in Rocky Hill at 5:00p.m. It will feature liturgical music of the Eastern Church. Tickets are \$10 an adult (\$8 for seniors) and children under 13 are free. For more information please call Fr. David Straut (609-683-1631). This is also an opportunity to see the re-furbished church.

Offerings for the Week of October 26th

Olive Oil – in memory of Michael and Justina; in memory of Emilia; for the health of Leigh and Libby (birthday); in memory of Michael Motoviloff.

Wine – in memory of Joan; for Simona-Giorgana, health, salvation, blessing and safe delivery of child.



FROM THE CONFERENCES OF ST. JOHN CASSIAN (+435)

VARIOUS SAYINGS

- * It must be admitted that everything happens either by God's will or with His permission.
- * Prayer changes at every moment in proportion to the degree of purity in the soul and in accordance with the extent to which the soul is moved either by outside influences or of itself.
- * One thing is certain. Anyone who prays and who doubts that he will be heard, will not be listened to at all.
- * A very clear proof of the fact that a soul has not yet cut loose from the corruption of sin is when it feels no sympathizing pity for the wrongdoing of others, but holds to the strict censoriousness of a judge.
- * The Holy Scripture shapes itself to human capacity. It will be earthly for those of the flesh, divine for those of the spirit, so that those who once thought of it as somehow wrapped up in thick clouds find themselves unable either to grasp its subtlety or to endure its brilliance.
- * Someone who lives not by his own decisions but by the example of the Holy Fathers will never be deceived.
- * Discernment is the mother, the guardian and the guide of all the virtues.
- * Fasting, vigils, scriptural meditation, and total deprivation do not constitute perfection but are the means to perfection. They are not themselves the end point of discipline, but an end is attained through them. To practice them will therefore be useless if someone instead of regarding these as means to an end is satisfied to regard them as the highest good.

* It is an inexorable fact that the condition of the soul at the time of prayer depends upon what shaped it beforehand.

* The fact is that it is impossible for an unclean soul to acquire scriptural knowledge, no matter how hard it labors at the reading of the Bible.



* The body will claim everything if denied the little to which it is entitled.

* One should take cognizance of the state of one's strength and body and age and allow oneself as much food as will sustain the flesh but not satisfy its longings. There will be the greatest danger for anyone who either restrains his appetite by excessive fasting or who opens up his appetite by eating too much.

* Spiritual knowledge must have a lasting strength in you. It is not something to be enjoyed occasionally, as happens with those who do not work for it, who only know of it from what others tell them or whose acquaintance with it, so to speak, like some fragrance in the air. It is something hidden, perceived and felt in one's innards.

SAINT LONGINUS AND THE BLIND WIDOW

The divine Matthew the Evangelist, describing the Passion of the Lord Jesus Christ, says: "Now when the centurion and those who were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that were done, they feared greatly, saying: *Truly this was the Son of God*" (Mt. 27:54). That centurion was this blessed Longinus, who, with two other of his soldiers, came to believe in Jesus as the Son of God. He was the officer in command both at the Lord's crucifixion on Golgotha and in the watch that guarded the tomb. For his later cleaving to the Faith, he was martyred and beheaded in the first century.

A long time had elapsed since his death, when it happened that a widow in Cappadocia became blind. Doctors were able to do nothing more for her. Suddenly the thought came to her to go to Jerusalem and venerate the holy places, hoping that she might be helped there. She had an only son, a boy who served her as a guide.

As soon as they had arrived in Jerusalem, the boy fell ill and died. The grief of the blind mother was without measure: having lost her eyes, she had now lost her only son, whose eyes had guided her till then. In her pain and grief, St. Longinus appeared to her, and comforted her with the promise that he would both restore her sight to her and show her her son in heavenly glory. Longinus told her about himself, then told her to go outside the walls of the city to the rubbish-heap and dig up his head, and then she would see what would happen next.

The woman got up and groped her way out of the city, then called out to someone to take her to the biggest rubbish-heap and leave her there. When she was led there, she bent down and began to dig with her hands, having a strong faith that she would find what the saint had told her to search for. Digging that way, her fingers came upon the head of the holy martyr and, at that moment, her eyes were opened and she saw a man's skull under her hands. Filled with great joy and thanksgiving to God, she took the head of St. Longinus, washed it, fumigated it and put in her home as the most precious thing in all the world.

Yet St. Longinus had promised not only to restore her sight, but also to show her her son in great glory. And so Longinus appeared to her again the following night. He was bathed in light and holding her son - also clothed in shining robes - by the hand. He said: *"You see, woman, the son for whom you are shedding so many tears! Look at the honor and glory that are his! Look and be comforted, for God has raised him up into that heavenly company that live in His Kingdom."*

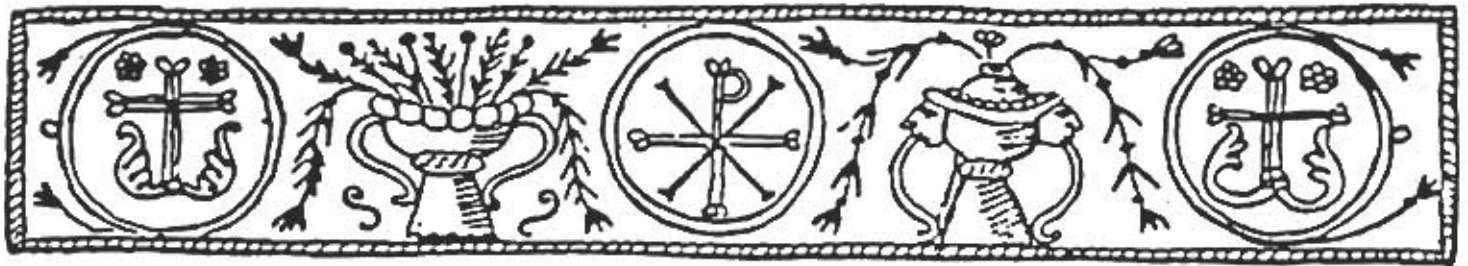
Seeing and hearing all this, the woman was filled with great joy and returned to her home, saying to herself: *"I asked for bodily sight, and have been given spiritual sight as well. I was in grief for the death of my son, and now I have him in heaven, where he stands in glory with the prophets and rejoices unceasingly with them."*



St. Longinus, the Centurion at the Cross

CHURCH AND POLITICS

- *From the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church* (August 2000)



V. 1. In the contemporary state, citizens participate in the government of the country by voting. Most of them belong to political parties, movements, unions, blocs and other such organizations, based on various political doctrines and views. These organizations, seeking to order social life according to the political convictions of their members, have as one of their goals to hold or reform power in the state. Exercising powers given to them by popular vote during elections, political organizations can participate in the work of the legislative and executive power structures.

The presence in society of different, sometimes opposing political convictions and discordant interests generates political struggle, which is waged by both legitimate and morally justified methods, and by methods that sometimes contradict the norms of civil law and Christian and natural morality.

V. 2. The Church, according to God's commandment, has a task to show concern for the unity of her children, and peace and harmony in society and the involvement of all her members in common creative efforts. The Church is called to preach and build peace with outer society: "If it is possible, as much as lies within you, live peaceably with all men" (Rom. 12:19); "Pursue peace with all men" (Heb. 12:14). It is even more important for her, however, to be internally united in faith and love: "I beseech you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ... that there be no divisions among you; but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind" (1 Cor. 1:10). For the Church, the highest value is her unity as the mystical Body of Christ (Eph. 1:23), on which the eternal salvation of humanity depends. St. Ignatius of Antioch, the God-Bearer, addressing the members of the Church of Christ, writes: "You all make up as if one church of God, as if one altar, as if one Jesus."

In face of political differences, contradictions and struggle, the Church preaches peace and cooperation among people holding differing political views. She also acknowledges the presence of various political convictions among her episcopate, clergy and laity, except for such views that clearly lead to actions contradicting the faith and moral norms of Church Tradition.

It is impossible for the Church's Supreme Authorities and for the clergy (hence for the Church as a whole), to participate in some of the activities of political organizations and election processes, such as publicly supporting or running political organizations, or working for particular candidates in election campaigns, and so forth. The clergy are not allowed to be nominated for elections to any body of representative power at any level. At the same time, nothing should prevent bishops, clergy and laity from participation in the expression of the popular will by voting along with other citizens.

The fact that the Church as a whole does not participate either in political struggle, nor in the work of political parties, nor in election processes, does not mean she refuses to express publicly her position on socially significant issues and to present this position to governmental bodies in any country and on any level. This position may be expressed only by Councils, the church authorities and those empowered to act for them. In any case, the right to express it cannot be delegated to public offices or political or other secular organizations.

V. 3. Nothing can prevent Orthodox laity from participating in the work of legislative, executive and judicial bodies and political organizations. This involvement has taken place under various political systems, such as autocracy, constitutional monarchy and various forms of the republic system. The participation of Orthodox laity in secular and political processes was difficult only in the contexts of non-Christian rule and the regime of state atheism.

In participating in governmental and political processes, Orthodox laity are called to base their work on the norms of the gospel's morality: the unity of justice and mercy (Ps. 85:10); the concern for the spiritual and material welfare of people; the love of the fatherland; and the desire to transform the surrounding world according to the Word of Christ.

At the same time, the Christian politician or statesman should be well aware that in historical reality and, all the more so, in the context of today's divided and contentious society, most decisions adopted and political actions taken tend to benefit only a part of society, while restricting or infringing upon the interests and wishes of others. Many such decisions and actions are stained with sin or connivance with sin. Precisely for this reason the Orthodox politician or statesman is required to be very sensitive spiritually and morally.

The Christian who works in the sphere of civic and political building is called to seek the gift of special self-sacrifice and special self-denial. He needs to be utterly attentive to his own spiritual condition, so that his civic or political work may not turn from service into an end in itself that nourishes pride, greed and other vices. It should be remembered that "principalities or powers, all things were created by him, and for him... and by him all things stand" (Col. 1:16-17). St. Gregory the Theologian, addressing the rulers, wrote: "It is with Christ that you command, with Christ that you govern, from Him that you have received the sword." St. John Chrysostom says: "A true king is he who conquers anger and jealousy and voluptuousness and subjects everything to the laws of God and does not allow the passion for pleasure to prevail in his soul. I would like to see such a man in command of the people, and the throne, and the cities and the provinces, and the troops, because he who has subjected the physical passions to reason would easily govern people also according to the divine laws... But he who appears to command people but in fact accommodates himself to wrath and ambition and pleasure ... will not know how to dispose of power."

Is God Judging America?

Fr. John Chagnon

The front pages are clogged with stories of economic failure. Politics is partisan, nasty, and ineffective. The culture appears to be growing more coarse and immature with each season on TV. The America I knew as a child seems like a dream and the one I live in now a nightmare without the relief of morning.

Is God judging America?

In the time following the tragedy of September 11, 2001, the late Rev. Jerry Falwell suggested something to that affect and was roundly critiqued for expressing his opinion that the hand of God could have been behind those events. The critiques, though, were often more about the unfashionable nature of the idea that God would judge America, or judge anyone or anything, and less about the actual content of Rev. Falwell's theory.

But could God be judging America?

The answer is "It's possible." As Christians we understand that God is active in history and can use the ebb and flow of events to hold both people and nations to account. There is no asterisk in that understanding for the United States. Only a distorted sense of our exceptionalism would have us believe we're immune from the possibility of God calling us to task and using the events of history as tools of His sovereignty. Why would there be one standard for say, the Philistines, and another for us? Why should there be?

The problem, given that understanding, is not about whether its possible that God is using the events of these times as a kind of judgment but whether we can state that with certainty. There have been times, as our Faith tells us, that certain people have been given a gift from God to proclaim with specificity that events were being directed to chastise and call a culture to repentance, and in the perspective of hindsight we can affirm that gift. But in throes of immediacy and without such a charism it would be good to proceed with caution. History is full of date setters and "prophets" who have only one thing in common, they were wrong. Are the events of these times the beginning of the end or the birth pains of a coming revival? God knows, we don't. What is heaven's take on 9/11? God knows, we don't.

But we do know something with certainty. We do know that ideas, constructs, and behavior have consequences. We have fallen prey, for a variety of reasons, in this country to a kind of life that is at once technically advanced but spiritually, emotionally, and socially selfish, materialistic, and bankrupt. Our institutions, as reflections of ourselves, have become poisoned as well with the results being fodder for the headlines. To what extent God's hand is in all of this remains unknown but perhaps we're bearing the consequences of our own actions, the pain of our abandonment of sense and the emptiness of a life detached from authentic moral order. One does not need a prophet to suggest this; one simply needs to read the Book or, for that matter, the newspaper.

So is the craziness of these times an example of God's judgement, the consequences of our own choices, or some mixture of both? I haven't the gift to say with certainty. I only know that the sickness of my culture begins to end when I address the illness of my soul. The rest, as one politician said, is "Above my pay grade..."

"Because of a few, disasters come upon a whole people, and because of the evil deeds of one, many have tasted their fruits, Ahab committed sacrilege, and all the chariots were defeated; already Zimiri committed whoredom with a Midianite woman, and Israel was punished.

St. Basil the Great

"Do you not know that people's sin falls upon the prince, and the prince's sin falls upon the people?"

St. Cyprian of Moscow



THE POLITICIAN'S DILEMMA

Written by the Very Rev. Vladimir Berzonsky

"I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before Me.... You shall not commit murder" (Deuteronomy 5:6,17)

He or she believes in God from infancy. He was baptized and raised being taught to love, honor and obey the teachings of "One holy, Catholic and apostolic Church." And he had done so, even as an altar server, learning the doctrines of the Church and observing them throughout school days and college years. He nurtures himself spiritually on the sacred sacraments of the Church. And then he chooses to enter the field of politics. And that's where he discovers a conflict of conscience.

On the one hand, the Church hasn't changed its basic standards. Do the Ten Commandments demand that one will never murder or become an accessory to killing? Of course. But the American society has changed in at least one regard. Promoted as a natural conclusion of the Women's Rights cause, the legal right to an abortion has grown from justification in cases of rape into abortion on demand without explanation or reservation, with present conditions such as late pregnancy restrictions; however, those are merely present impediments to be dealt with in due course.

What does a traditional Christian running for national office do? Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives and "Good Catholic" from an Italian heritage makes the claim that in these times the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church are not quite clear. There's a certain "wiggle room" that a trained lawyer might appeal to and justify the platform of one's political party. If the modern times have brought about confusion on the matter, one might claim a sort of agnosticism. Walk away from the situation and don't get involved. But two archbishops immediately challenged such fuzzy thinking. No, they affirm, noth-

ing has changed as far as the Church is concerned. Further, others have also recommended that the nominated Vice President of the same party, Joseph Biden, absent himself from receiving Holy Communion. And it's not a matter of political party. Many are finessing morality. In all parties there are the professional political aspirants whose decisions are made by raising a moist finger into the wind and following the breeze measured by polls.

Not just the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Christian Church has the same absolute rule against abortion. In the Apostolic era pagans used the practice of leaving deformed infants on the hillsides to be eaten by animals as a mark of divergence from Christians who honor and uphold life in all forms and conditions. Then it was a sign of paganism, and today it revives an equal onus.

The decision made by serious Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christian aspirants for public office in many instances has been to plow ahead with their aspirations and ignore the promptings of conscience. If indeed there was a crisis of conscience. Hubris and ego drive too often trump faith convictions in a period of confusion such as the present. Unfortunately in many cases they have not been challenged by hierarchy and clergy because it was felt that they are representing not just the faith but the ethos. One of "our kind" has been voted into office, and the prominence offsets the sins of conforming to secular norms of contemporary culture.

As our Lord Jesus said: *"Will not God bring about justice for His chosen ones, who cry out to Him day and night? Will He keep putting them off? I tell you He will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:7)*

From OCA.org – October 12, 2008