

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF SEPTEMBER 3, 2017

SUNDAY/SEPTEMBER 3

13th Sunday After Pentecost

Environment Sunday

St. Edward of England

St. Nectarios of Aegina

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

Coffee Hour

THURSDAY/SEPTEMBER 7

7:00p.m. Vigil

FRIDAY/SEPTEMBER 8

Nativity of the Theotokos

(One of "the 12 Great Feasts")

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

SATURDAY/SEPTEMBER 9

Ss. Joachim & Anna

9:30a.m. Akathist to Ss. Joachim & Anna;
Confessions

10:15a.m. General Hall Clean-Up

5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

SUNDAY/SEPTEMBER 10

14th Sunday After Pentecost

9:00a.m. Hours; 9:20a.m. Rite of
Betrothal of Robert Smith and
Stephanie Coleman

9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy; Coffee Hour
Church School



Offerings Week of September 3

Olive Oil: in memory of Michael, Justina, Rosalia, Anastasia, and Ivanna; in memory of Sarchisian and Bocai families; in memory of Julia; for the health of Anna.

Wine: for the health of Zachary (names day); in thanksgiving to God, protection, forgiveness of sins and salvation of Simona (birthday), Mariana, Stefan, Gabriel, Tabitha, Kurt, Maria-Diana, David-Leonard, & Constantin.

Flowers: in honor of the Nativity of the Theotokos; in thanksgiving for healing of Edward.

Synodicon: Memory Eternal!

Sept. 19 (40th day) Constantin Stepan

Sept. 22(40th day) Julia Cresina

Sept. 03, 1956 Maria Schander

Sept. 04, 2000 Audrey Marian Haitch

Sept. 05, 1917 Peter Darensky

Sept. 07, 1966 Fr. Stephen Adamcio
(rector 1953-1962)

Sept. 07, 1967 Anthony Cherniak

Sept. 07, 1970 George Rech

Sept. 08, 1925 Paul Petsur

Sept. 08, 1977 Mary Mahalick

Sept. 08, 1985 Helen Rzeszowski

Sept. 09, 1978 Xenia Seminuk

Coffee Hour Schedule

Foods should be simple enough that those hosting the Coffee Hour need not leave church until after the time of Communion. In no case, should one not be at the Divine Liturgy due to hosting Coffee Hour.

Aug. 27 Sokol, Nasledysheva, Staina & Sarchisian

Sept. 03 Chirnoaga, Moldoveanu, Vajda & Sue

Sept. 10 Peterson, Bakaletz, Mattei, Erkman
& Stone

Counters Schedule

Aug. 27 Larissa M. & Paulina N.

Sept. 03 Rebecca O. & Ekaterini M.

Sept. 10 Ciprian C. & Jill P.

Ushers Schedule

Aug. 27 Edward S. & Kahka K.

Sept. 03 Timothy S. & Peter B.

Sept. 10 Jerome S. & Adrian M.

Sunday Readers Schedule

Sept. 03 Daniel T. / Sept. 10 Austin K.

General Clean-Up of the Upper Hall

Sept. 9th, Sat. after Akathist (about 10:15a.m.)

Sept. 23rd, Sat. after Akathist (about 10:15a.m.)

Please join us in getting our Hall in good order!

Names Day Greetings

St. Edward/Sept. 03: Edward Sarchisian

St. Zachariah/Sept. 05: Zachary Sokol

St. Elizabeth/Sept. 05: Elizabeth Dao

St. Anna/Sept. 9: Kristabelle Ann Gorbatuk &

Anna Diane Chirnoaga

Many Blessed Years!

Cemetery 7 Day Vigil Light (3 bar cross)

On sale \$95.00

Orders for the New Edition of the Prologue of St. Nicholas of Zicha

The 2 volume edition may be viewed on the table in the nave of the church. If you are interested in placing an order (\$140.00) let Katherine Mantzafos know. The more orders, the cheaper the postage will be. Please place your order by September 30th.

The Betrothal Service for Robert Smith and Stephanie Coleman – Sunday, September 10th

The Marriage of Robert and Stephanie will take place on Sunday, October 1st in Olyphant, Pa. Next Sunday, here in Manville the Betrothal Service (Church Engagement) will be held at 9:20a.m. before the Divine Liturgy.

Church School September month

Classes will be held Sept. 10th & 24th, during Coffee Hour. The Youth Group will have an Ice Cream Social on Sept. 10th.

Adult Study Thursday Evenings

There will be 5 consecutive classes, beginning Sept. 28th, with four classes to follow on the Thursdays of October. 7-8:30p.m. Classes Are held in the Conference Room, and all are encouraged to participate.

THE NATIVITY OF THE VIRGIN MARY

Celebrated on September 8th

The Holy Virgin Mary was born of aged parents, Joachim and Anna. Her father was of the lineage of David, and her mother of the lineage of Aaron. Thus, she was of royal birth by her father, and of priestly birth by her mother. In this, she foreshadowed Him Who would be born of her as King and High Priest. Her parents were quite old and had no children. Because of this they were ashamed before men and humble before God. In their humility they prayed to God with tears, to bring them joy in their old age by giving them a child, as He had once given joy to the aged Abraham and his wife Sarah by giving them Isaac. The Almighty and All-seeing God rewarded them with a joy that surpassed all their expectations and all their most beautiful dreams. For He gave them not just a daughter, but the Mother of God. He illumined them not only with temporal joy, but with eternal joy as well. God gave them just one daughter, and she would later give them just one grandson-but what a daughter and what a Grandson! Mary, Full of grace, Blessed among women, the Temple of the Holy Spirit, the Altar of the Living God, the Table of the Heavenly Bread, the Ark of God's Holiness, the Tree of the Sweetest Fruit, the Glory of the race of man, the Praise of womanhood, the Fount of virginity and purity-this was the daughter given by God to Joachim and Anna. She was born in Nazareth, and at the age of three, was taken to the Temple in Jerusalem. In her young womanhood she returned again to Nazareth, and shortly thereafter heard the Annunciation of the Holy Archangel Gabriel concerning the birth of the Son of God, the Savior of the world, from her most-pure virgin body.



Troparion – tone 4

Your Nativity, O Virgin, has proclaimed joy to the whole universe! The Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, has shone from you, O Theotokos! By annulling the curse, He bestowed a blessing. By destroying death, He has granted us eternal life.

Kontakion – tone 4

By your Nativity, O Most-Pure Virgin, Joachim and Anna are freed from barrenness; Adam and Eve, from the corruption of death. And we, your people, freed from the guilt of sin, celebrate and sing to you: The barren woman gives birth to the Theotokos, the Nourisher of our Life.

FROM THE DESERT FATHERS

A brother questioned Abba Poemen saying, "If I see my brother committing a sin, is it right to conceal it?" The old man said to him, "At the very moment when we hide our brother's fault, God hides our own and at the moment when we reveal our brother's fault, God reveals ours too."

Another brother questioned him in these words, "What does, 'See that none of you repays evil for evil' mean?" (1 Thess. 5:15) The old man said to him, "Passions work in four stages – first, in the heart; secondly, in the face; thirdly, in words; and fourthly, through deeds. If you can purify your heart, passion will not come into your expression; but if it comes into your face, take care not to speak; but if you do speak, cut the conversation short in case you render evil for evil."



**CONCERNING MEMBERSHIP IN AA (ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS)
AND ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS***

- by Bishop Kallistos (Ware)

Can an Orthodox Christian, while still remaining fully loyal to the Church, at the same time turn for help to AA? Should we not put rather our trust in the Sacraments of Confession, Anointing with Oil and Holy Communion, and in the counsel and prayers of our spiritual father? Why seek help elsewhere? Does this signify a lack of faith?

Membership in AA in no way contradicts or undermines membership in the Church. Quite simply, the two are not in competition; for AA makes no claim to be a church or a religion. The Twelve Steps will never replace the Gospels as the call of Christ. The meetings of the AA are not in any sense a substitute for participation in the sacramental worship of the Church.

Membership in AA will not make us less Orthodox, or less Catholics, or less whatever else we are. What AA can do – what, indeed it has actually done for innumerable believing Christians – is to enable them to live out their faith and to experience the power of the Sacraments in a way that they had not otherwise found possible. For again and again this has been the experience of the many thousands, if not millions, who have turned to AA: it works. Its distinctive blend of spirituality and practicality has proved remarkably successful in the contemporary world. But the rules of AA, while simple, are certainly not easy.

DON'T BE IN DENIAL, GO TO THE MEETINGS*

by Fr. Meletios Webber

One of the forms of denial I have come across on a number of occasions is that Orthodox Christians with a drinking problem try to avoid going to AA on the grounds that AA is not Orthodox. I would encourage such people to go to the meetings anyway. They will find that they are able to take their Orthodoxy with them (to the extent that they need to), just as others take their own religious traditions with them. Indeed, the richer the diversity in an AA group, the more the group is likely to be able to help other newcomers. Remember, AA is not a church, and AA is not a religion. The focus of every single meeting is sobriety, and that is what you need to go to find. If there is anything in the meeting which you really find offensive from an Orthodox standpoint, discuss it with your parish priest. If you are still resisting AA because it is not Orthodox, you need to consider whether this is not perhaps an excuse.

* Taken from the book, *Steps of Transformation* by Fr. Meletios Webber. This book, printed by Conciliar Press (2003) “presents” says Fr. Thomas Hopko, “the vision and practice of the Twelve Step programs for dealing with addictions, particularly alcoholism. Fr. Meletios relates the Steps to Orthodox Christian spirituality, with clarity and conviction, and appealing personal engagement. Here is a book which addicts and their friends are sure to treasure. It is true, deep, pure, rich and highly rewarding.”

SELECT NOTES OF THE CHURCH FATHERS “ON VIRTUE”

From the Catechism of St. Nikolai of Zicha (+1956)

- The spiritual and moral character of every Christian is formed by three factors:
 - 1) Obedience to Christ and His Church;
 - 2) The individual effort of exercising all the virtues;
 - 3) God’s grace through the Holy Mysteries or special inspirations.
- The greatest Christian virtues are Faith, Hope and Love, this is expressed in this manner:
 - 1) Right thinking through Faith in Christ;
 - 2) Right feeling through Hope in Christ;
 - 3) Right doing through love of Christ.
- There are many virtues, both individual and social, but the following 7 are considered above the others: Humility, Generosity, Chastity, Kindness, Temperance, Patience and Diligence.
- Virtues are acquired through constant repetition, until they become as natural as breathing.

The Practice of Virtue is the Natural Tendency of the Soul

St. Basil the Great (+397) writes: *We have received from God the natural tendency to do what He commands...By using...these strengths appropriately, we live healthy in virtue...Consequently, such is the definition of virtue which God demands of us: the conscientious use of these faculties according to the Lord’s command.* In other words, leading a virtuous life consists only of living in accordance with one’s nature, that is, using one’s faculties in the way for which they were made: to direct oneself towards God and to realize His likeness.

The identification of the natural state with the virtuous one – Adam’s original state and that of the man restored in Christ – is constantly affirmed by the Fathers. *However many be the virtues which we put into practice, we put them into practice in accordance with nature,* writes Evagrius. *Where we abide in nature, there we are in virtue,* notes St. John of Damascus. And St. Issac the Syrian says just as explicitly that virtue is the soul’s natural state. St. Dorotheus of Gaza also show that the virtues *allow us to pull ourselves together and come back to the natural state by practicing Christ’s holy commandments,* and John the Solitary say that when man turns to his soul through the virtues, *he remains in the order of his whole nature.*

The Source of All Virtue is the God-Man, Jesus Christ

In the practice of virtue, man acquires Christ's likeness. Man possesses from his creation (*in the image of God*) and within his very nature all the virtues constituting God's image in him. But these are only given as a seed, and it behoves him to tend them until they reach full bloom – herein we find the realization (*the likeness of God*). The very archetype, beginning, and end of every virtue are revealed in Christ. The virtues given to human nature at man's creation and developed by his free participation in God's deifying grace appear to exist, then, only by participating in Christ's virtues, as St. Maximos the Confessor teaches:

If the essence of virtue with each man is unquestionably the Word of God, then every man who partakes of virtue in steadfast manner partakes of God, the Essence of the virtues, beyond any shadow and doubt, inasmuch as he has of a sincere will cultivated the natural seed of good and made the end identical to the beginning and the beginning to the end, or rather, has shown the real identity of the beginning to the end, in perfect accord with God. For the beginning and the end of everything is God's aim: it is the beginning insofar as he joins the natural good to his being by participation; it is the end insofar as according to the participation by a free-willed decision, he finishes the praiseworthy race thither, thanks to which he becomes god as God grants him to become god – because he has joined the likeness constituted by the virtues to the natural good according to the image by his free will, bringing about the return to his beginning and intimacy with God, according to the vow of his nature.

What Health is to the Body, Virtue is to the Soul

The Fathers of the Church affirm that for human beings, true health corresponds to being in a state of virtue. Virtue is the soul's natural health, writes St. Dorotheus of Gaza, as do St. Basil the Great, Evagrius and St. Maximus the Confessor, who writes: *What health is to the living body, virtue is with respect to the soul.* St. Issac the Syrian notes similarly: *Virtue is naturally the soul's health.* One can even say that virtue is even more important for the soul than is health for the body, since as St. Basil the Great says, *the virtues have much more affinity with the soul than does health to the body.*