



St. Vladimir Orthodox Church

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St. John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria

November 12, 2017

Troparion – Tone 6

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure body. Thou didst capture hell not being tempted by it. Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life.// O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, glory to Thee.

Troparion – Tone 8

By endurance thou didst gain thy reward, venerable Father; thou didst persevere in prayer unceasingly; thou didst love the poor and provide for them in all things. Blessed John the Merciful, intercede with Christ God that our souls may be saved!

Troparion – Tone 8

By a flood of tears thou didst make the desert fertile, and thy longing for God brought forth fruits in abundance. By the radiance of miracles thou didst illumine the whole universe. Our Father Nilus, pray to Christ God to save our souls!

Kontakion – Tone 6

When Christ God the Giver of Life, raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand, He bestowed resurrection on the human race.// He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

Kontakion – Tone 2

Thou didst distribute thy wealth to the poor and in return obtained wealth from heaven, John the Merciful. Therefore, we honor thee and celebrate thy memory, O namesake of mercy.

Kontakion – Tone 8

By thy vigilant prayer thou didst cut away the undergrowth of the body's insurgent passions. As thou hast boldness before the Lord, free me from every danger so that I may cry to thee: "Rejoice, universal father Nilus!"

Prokeimenon – Tone 6

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance!

v: To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me!

St. John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria

Saint John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria, was born on Cyprus in the seventh century into the family of the illustrious dignitary Epiphanius. At the wish of his parents he entered into marriage and had children. When the wife and the children of the saint died, he became a monk. He was zealous in fasting and prayer, and had great love for those around him.

His spiritual exploits won him honor among men, and even the emperor revered him. When the Patriarchal throne of Alexandria fell vacant, the emperor Heraclius and all the clergy begged Saint John to occupy the Patriarchal throne.

The saint worthily assumed his archpastoral service, concerning himself with the moral and dogmatic welfare of his flock. As patriarch he denounced every soul-destroying heresy, and drove out from Alexandria the Monophysite Phyllonos of Antioch.

He considered his chief task to be charitable and to give help all those in need. At the beginning of his patriarchal service he ordered his stewards to compile a list of all the poor and downtrodden in Alexandria, which turned out to be over seven thousand men. The saint ordered that all of these unfortunates be provided for each day out of the church's treasury.

Twice during the week, on Wednesdays and Fridays, he emerged from the doors of the patriarchal cathedral, and sitting on the church portico, he received everyone in need. He settled quarrels, helped the wronged, and distributed alms. Three times a week he visited the sick-houses, and rendered assistance to the suffering. It was during this period that the emperor Heraclius led a tremendous army against the Persian emperor Chosroes II. The Persians ravaged and burned Jerusalem, taking a multitude of captives. The holy Patriarch John gave a large portion of the church treasury for their ransom.

The saint never refused suppliants. One day, when the saint was visiting the sick, he met a beggar and commanded that he be given six silver coins. The beggar changed his clothes, ran on ahead of the Patriarch, and again asked for alms. Saint John gave him six more silver coins. When, however, the beggar sought charity a third time, and the servants began to chase the fellow away, the Patriarch ordered that he be given twelve pieces of silver, saying, "Perhaps he is Christ putting me to the test." Twice the saint gave money to a merchant that had suffered shipwreck, and a third time gave him a ship belonging to the Patriarchate and filled with grain, with which the merchant had a successful journey and repaid his obligations.

Saint John the Merciful was known for his gentle attitude towards people. Once, the saint was compelled to excommunicate two clergymen for a certain time because of some offense. One of them repented, but the other fellow became angry with the Patriarch and fell into greater sins. The saint wanted to summon him and calm him with kind words, but it slipped his mind. When he was celebrating the Divine Liturgy, the saint was suddenly reminded by the words of the Gospel: "If you bring your gift to the altar and remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift before the altar ... first, be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift" (Mt. 5:23-24). The saint came out of the altar, called the offending clergyman to him, and falling down on his knees before him in front of all the people he asked forgiveness. The cleric, filled with remorse, repented of his sin, corrected himself, and afterwards was found worthy to be ordained to the priesthood.

There was a time when a certain citizen insulted George, the Patriarch's nephew. George asked the saint to avenge the wrong. The saint promised to deal with the offender so that all of Alexandria would marvel at what he had done. This calmed George, and Saint John began to instruct him, speaking of the necessity for meekness and humility. Then he summoned the man who insulted George. When Saint John learned that the man lived in a house owned by the church, he declared that he would excuse him from paying rent for an entire year. Alexandria indeed was amazed by such a "revenge," and George learned from his uncle how to forgive offenses and to bear insults for God's sake.

Saint John, a strict ascetic and man of prayer, was always mindful of his soul, and of death. He ordered a coffin for himself, but told the craftsmen not to finish it. Instead, he would have them come each feastday and ask if it was time to finish the work.

Saint John was persuaded to accompany the governor Nicetas on a visit to the emperor in Constantinople. While on his way to visit the earthly king, he dreamed of a resplendent man who said to him, "The King of Kings

summons you.” He sailed to his native island of Cyprus, and died at Amanthos, the saint peacefully fell asleep in the Lord (616-620).

Epistle: Ephesians 2:4-10

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Gospel: Luke 10:25-37

And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” He said to him, “What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?” So he answered and said, “‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’ and ‘your neighbor as yourself.’” And He said to him, “You have answered rightly; do this and you will live.” But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Then Jesus answered and said: “A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.’ So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?” And he said, “He who showed mercy on him.” Then Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

Service Schedule for the week of November 12

Today – 9:00 AM Church School, 9:45 AM Hours, 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy followed by Turkey Social in Daria Hall

Saturday November 18 – 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy, 5:00 PM Vespers followed by Confession

Sunday November 19 – 9:45 AM Hours, 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Weekly Giving

November 5 – 42 adults, 8 youth, \$2,006

Parish Announcements

The Turkey Social will be held today starting around 12:30-1:00 PM. There will not be a coffee hour but food will be available for purchase. Thank you to everyone for their gift donations! All profits will be donated to the church.

Since many items have been donated recently, Melody has set up a few flea market tables in Daria Hall.

There will be a Parish Council meeting this Tuesday November 14 at 7:00 PM. If you are interested in being nominated to become a member of the Parish Council next year, please see Dottie Kish or Father Volodymyr.

There will be a Senior R Club meeting next Sunday November 19 during coffee hour.

The last Catechumen class will be held on Sunday November 19 at 12:30 PM in the church. Father Paul will discuss the history and iconography of our church. All are invited to attend but the Catechumens must attend.

The Nativity Fast will begin this Wednesday November 15. Father Volodymyr is reminding everyone to partake in the Sacraments of Confession and Communion prior to the Nativity. If you need to schedule a particular time for Confession please contact Father Volodymyr. There is a sheet on the table across from the candle desk about preparation for Holy Confession.

The Senior R Club will be sponsoring a Seminarian family from St. Herman's Seminary in Alaska for the St. Nicholas Christmas Gift Project. Instead of gift tags we will collect money to purchase Walmart and Amazon gift cards, which are easier to transport to Alaska. Please support the Club with your donations. A collection plate is in the back of the church; the last collection date will be Sunday November 26. Thank you!

The Sunday School children will decorate the Christmas tree in Daria Hall during coffee hour on Sunday December 3, and the Christmas Yolka will be held on Sunday December 10 during coffee hour.

As announced at Father Paul and Matushka's Mary's recent celebration, St. Vladimir Seminary has established a V. Rev. Paul and Matushka Mary Shafran Endowment fund. If you would like information on how to donate to this Endowment please contact Paula Koerte, Ludwig Koerte, or Nina Shafran.