



## St. Vladimir Orthodox Church

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### Equal of the Apostles Great Prince Vladimir, in Holy Baptism Basil, the Enlightener of the Russian Land

July 15, 2018

#### **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**

Thou art most glorious, O Christ our God! Thou hast established the Holy Fathers as lights on the earth. Through them Thou hast guided us to the true Faith.// O greatly compassionate One, glory to Thee! (*twice*)

#### **Troparion – Tone 4**

O holy Prince Vladimir, thou wast like a merchant in search of fine pearls. By sending servants to Constantinople for the Orthodox Faith, thou didst find Christ, the priceless Pearl. He appointed thee to be another Paul, washing away in baptism thy physical and spiritual blindness. We celebrate thy memory, asking thee to pray for all Orthodox Christians of Russia//and for us, thy spiritual children.

#### **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 8**

The Apostles' preaching and the Fathers' doctrines have established one Faith for the Church. Adorned with the robe of truth, woven from heavenly theology,// it defines and glorifies the great mystery of piety.

#### **Kontakion – Tone 8**

O most glorious Vladimir, in thine old age thou didst imitate the great Apostle Paul: he abandoned childish things, while thou didst forsake the idolatry of thy youth. Together with him thou didst reach the fullness of divine wisdom: thou wast adorned with the purity of holy baptism.// Now as thou standest before Christ our Savior, pray that all Orthodox Christians may be saved!

#### **Prokeimenon – Tone 4**

Blessed art thou, O Lord God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name forever!

*v: For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us! (v. 4)*

#### **Prokeimenon – Tone 3**

Sing praises to our God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!

#### **Equal of the Apostles Great Prince Vladimir, in Holy Baptism Basil, the Enlightener of the Russian Land**

The Holy Great Prince Vladimir, Equal of the Apostles. Few names in the annals of history can compare in significance with the name of Saint Vladimir, the Baptizer of Rus, who stands at the beginning of the spiritual destiny of the Russian Church and the Russian Orthodox people. Vladimir was the grandson of Saint Olga, and he was the son of Svyatoslav (+ 972). His mother, Malusha (+ 1001) was the daughter of Malk Liubechanin, whom

historians identify with Mal, prince of the Drevlyani. Having subdued an uprising of the Drevlyani and conquered their cities, Princess Olga gave orders to execute Prince Mal for his attempt to marry her after he murdered her husband Igor, and she took to herself Mal's children, Dobrynya and Malusha. Dobrynya grew up to be a valiant brave warrior, endowed with a mind for state affairs, and he was later on an excellent help to his nephew Vladimir in matters of military and state administration.

The "capable girl" Malusha became a Christian (together with Great Princess Olga at Constantinople), but she preserved in herself a bit of the mysterious darkness of the pagan Drevlyani forests. Thus she fell in love with the austere warrior Svyatoslav, who against the will of his mother Olga made her his wife. The enraged Olga, regarding as unseemly the marriage of her "housekeeper" and captive servant to her son Svyatoslav, heir to the Great Kiev principality, sent Malusha away to her own native region not far from Vybut. And there in about the year 960 was born the boy with the Russian pagan name Volodimir, meaning peaceful ruler, ruling with a special talent for peace.

In the year 970 Svyatoslav set out on a campaign from which he was fated not to return. He had divided the Russian Land among his three sons. At Kiev Yaropolk was prince; at Ovrucha, the center of the Drevlyani lands, was Oleg; at Novgorod was Vladimir. In his first years as prince, we see Vladimir as a fierce pagan. He headed a campaign, in which the whole of pagan Rus is sympathetic to him, against Yaropolk the Christian, or in any case, according to the chronicles, "having given great freedom to the Christians", on July 11, 978 he entered into Kiev, having become the "sole ruler" of the Kiev realm, "having subdued the surrounding lands, some by peaceful means, and the unsubmissive ones by the sword."

Though Vladimir indulged himself in a wild, sensuous life, he was far from the libertine that they sometimes portray him as being. He "shepherded his land with truth, valor and reason", as a good and diligent master, of necessity he extended and defended its boundaries by force of arms, and in returning from military campaigns, he made for his companions and for all Kiev liberal and merry feasts.

But the Lord prepared him for another task. Where sin increases, there, in the words of the Apostle, grace abounds (Rom. 5: 20). "And upon him came visitation of the Most High, and the All-Merciful eye of the Good God gazed upon him, and shone forth the thought in his heart, of understanding the vanity of idolous delusion, and of appealing to the One God, Creator of all things both visible and invisible." The matter of accepting Baptism was facilitated through external circumstances. The Byzantine Empire was in upheaval under the blows of the mutinous regiments of Bardas Skliros and Bardas Phocas, each of whom sought to gain the imperial throne. In these difficult circumstances the emperors, the coregent brothers Basil the Bulgar-Slayer and Constantine, turned for help to Vladimir.

Events unfolded quickly. In August 987 Bardas Phocas proclaimed himself Emperor and moved against Constantinople, and in autumn of that same year the emissaries of Emperor Basil were at Kiev. "And having exhausted his (Basil's) wealth, it compelled him to enter into an alliance with the Emperor of the Russians. They were his enemies, but he besought their help," writes one of the Arab chronicles of events in the 980s. "And the Emperor of the Russians consented to this, and made common cause with him."

As a reward for his military help, Vladimir asked for the hand of the emperors' sister Anna, which for the Byzantines was an unheard of audacity. Princesses of the imperial lineage did not marry "barbarian" rulers, even if they were Christians. At the same time the emperor Otto the Great was seeking the hand of Anna for his son, and he was refused. However, in Vladimir's case Constantinople was obliged to consent.

An agreement was concluded, according to which Vladimir had to send the emperors six thousand Varangians, and to accept holy Baptism. Under these conditions he would receive the hand of the imperial daughter Anna. Thus in the strife of human events the will of God directed the entering of Rus into the grace-filled bosom of the Ecumenical Church. Great Prince Vladimir accepted Baptism and sent the military assistance to Byzantium. With the aid of the Russians, the mutineers were destroyed and Bardas Phocas killed. But the Greeks, gladdened by their unexpected deliverance, were in no hurry to fulfill their part of the bargain.

Vexed at the Greek duplicity, Prince Vladimir "hastened to collect his forces" and he moved "against Korsun, the Greek city," the ancient Chersonesos. The "impenetrable" rampart of the Byzantine realm on the Black Sea fell. It was one of the vitally important hubs of the economic and mercantile links of the empire. This blow was so much felt, that its echo resounded throughout all the regions of Byzantium.

Vladimir again had the upper hand. His emissaries, the commanders Oleg and Sjbern soon arrived in Constantinople for the imperial daughter. Eight days passed in Anna's preparation, during which time her brothers consoled her, stressing the significance of the opportunity before her: to enable the enlightening of the Russian realm and its lands, and to make them

forever friends of the Byzantine realm. At Taurida Saint Vladimir awaited her, and to his titles there was added a new one: Caesar (Tsar). The haughty rulers of Constantinople had to accede also in this, to bestow upon their new brother-in-law the imperial insignia. In certain of the Greek historians, Saint Vladimir is termed from these times as a "mighty basileios-king", he coins money in the Byzantine style and is depicted on it with the symbols of imperial might: in imperial attire, and on his head the imperial crown, and in his right hand the sceptre with cross.

Together with the empress Anna, there arrived for the Russian See Metropolitan Michael ordained by holy Patriarch Nicholas II Chrysoberges. He came with his retinue and clergy, and many holy relics and other holy things. In ancient Chersonessos, where each stone brings to mind Saint Andrew the First-Called, there took place the marriage-crowning of Saint Vladimir and Blessed Anna, both reminiscent and likewise affirming the oneness of the Gospel of Christ in Rus and in Byzantium. Korsun, the "empress's dowry", was returned to Byzantium. In the spring of 988 the Great Prince and his wife set out through the Crimea, Taman and the Azov lands, which had come into the complex of his vast realm on the return trip to Kiev. Leading the princely cortege with frequent Services of Thanksgiving and incessant priestly singing they carried crosses, icons and holy relics. It seemed, that the Ecumenical Holy Church was moving into the spacious Russian land, and renewed in the font of Baptism, Holy Rus came forth to meet Christ and His Church.

Then followed an unforgettable and quite singular event in Russian history: the morning of the Baptism of the Kievans in the waters of the River Dnepr. On the evening before, Saint Vladimir declared throughout the city: "If anyone does not go into the river tomorrow, be they rich or poor, beggar or slave, that one shall be my enemy." The sacred wish of the holy Prince was fulfilled without a murmur: "all our land glorified Christ with the Father and the Holy Spirit at the same time."

It is difficult to overestimate the deep spiritual transformation of the Russian people effected by the prayers of Saint Vladimir, in every aspect of its life and world-view. In the pure Kievan waters, as in a "bath of regeneration", there was realized a sacramental transfiguration of the Russian spiritual element, the spiritual birth of the nation, called by God to unforeseen deeds of Christian service to mankind.

"Then did the darkness of the idols begin to lift from us, and the dawn of Orthodoxy appear, and the Sun of the Gospel illumined our land." In memory of this sacred event, the regeneration of Rus by water and the Spirit, the Russian Church established the custom of an annual church procession "to the water" on August 1. Later, the Feast of the Procession of the Honorable Wood of the Life-Creating Cross of the Lord, which Russia celebrated with the Greek Church, was combined with the Feast of the All-Merciful Savior and the Most Holy Theotokos (established by Saint Andrew Bogoliubsky in the year 1164). In this combination of feasts there is found a precise expression of the Russian theological consciousness, for which both Baptism and the Cross are inseparable.

Everywhere throughout Holy Rus, from the ancient cities to the far outposts, Saint Vladimir gave orders to destroy the pagan sanctuaries, to flog the idols, and in their place to clear land in the hilly woods for churches, in which altars would be consecrated for the Bloodless Sacrifice. Churches of God grew up along the face of the earth, at high elevated places, and at the bends of the rivers, along the ancient trail "from the Variangians to the Greeks" figuratively as road signs and lamps of national holiness. Concerning the famed church-building activity of Saint Vladimir, the Metropolitan of Kiev Saint Hilarion (author of the "Word on Law and Grace") exclaimed: "They demolished the pagan temples, and built up churches, they destroyed the idols and produced holy icons, the demons have fled, and the Cross has sanctified the cities."

From the early centuries of Christianity it was the custom to raise up churches upon the ruins of pagan sanctuaries or upon the blood of the holy martyrs. Following this practice, Saint Vladimir built the church of Saint Basil the Great upon a hill, where a sanctuary of Perun had been located, and he built the stone church of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos (Desyatinnaya) on the place of the martyrdom of the holy Varangian Martyrs (July 12). The magnificent temple was intended to become the cathedral for the Metropolitan of Kiev and All Rus, and thus the primal altar of the Russian Church. It was built in five years, and was richly adorned with frescoes, crosses, icons and sacred vessels, brought from Korsun. The day of the consecration of the church of the Most Holy Theotokos, May 12 (in some manuscripts May 11), was ordered by Saint Vladimir to be inserted into the Church calendar as an annual celebration. This event was linked with other events celebrated on May 11, and it provided the new Church a twofold sense of continuity. Under this day in the calendar is noted the churchly Founding of Constantinople "dedicated by the holy emperor Saint Constantine as the new capital of the Roman Empire, the city of Constantine is dedicated to the Most Holy Theotokos (330). On this same day of May 11, the church of Sophia, the Wisdom of God was consecrated at Kiev (in the year 960 under Saint Olga). Saint Vladimir, having had the cathedral church consecrated to the Most Holy Theotokos, followed the example of Saint Constantine in dedicating the capital city of the Russian Land (Kiev) to the Queen of Heaven.

Then a tithe or tenth was bestowed on the Church; and since this church had become the center of the All-Russian collection of churchly tithes, they called it the Tithe church. The most ancient text of the grant, or church rule by holy Prince Vladimir spoke thus: "For I do bestow on this church of the Holy Mother of God a tenth of all my principality, and also throughout all

the Russian Land from all the princely jurisdiction a tithe of squirrel-pelts, and from the merchant, a tithe of the week, and from households each year, a tenth of every herd and every livelihood, to the wondrous Mother of God and the wondrous Savior." The grant also specified "church people" as being free from the jurisdictional power of the prince and his "tiuni" (officials) and placed them under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan.

The chronicle has preserved a prayer of Saint Vladimir, with which he turned to the Almighty at the consecration of the Dormition Tithe church: "O Lord God, look down from Heaven and behold, and visit Your vineyard, which Your right hand has planted. And make this new people, whom You have converted in heart and mind to know You, the True God. And look down upon this Your church, which Your unworthy servant has built in the name of the Mother Who gave birth to Thee, the Ever-Virgin Theotokos. And whoever prays in this church, let his prayer be heard, through the prayers of the All-Pure Mother of God."

With the Tithe church and Bishop Anastasius, certain historians have made a connection with the beginnings of Russian chronicle writing. At it were compiled the Life of Saint Olga and the account of the Varangian Martyrs in their original form, and likewise the "Account, How in the Taking of Korsun, Vladimir came to be Baptized." Here also originated the early Greek redaction of the Lives of the Holy Martyrs Boris and Gleb.

During the time of Saint Vladimir, the Kiev Metropolitan See was occupied successively by the Metropolitan Saint Michael (September 30), Metropolitan Theophylactus, who transferred to Kiev from the See of Armenian Sebaste (991-997), Metropolitan Leontius (997-1008), and Metropolitan John I (1008-1037). Through their efforts the first dioceses of the Russian Church were opened: at Novgorod (its first representative was Saint Joachim of Korsun (+ 1030), compiler of the Joachimov Chronicle), Vladimir-Volyn (opened May 11, 992), Chernigov, Pereslavl, Belgorod, and Rostov. "And thus throughout all the cities and villages there were set up churches and monasteries, and the clergy increased, and the Orthodox Faith blossomed forth and shone like the sun."

To advance the Faith among the newly enlightened people, learned people and schools were needed to help prepare them. Therefore, Saint Vladimir and the holy Metropolitan Michael "commanded fathers and mothers to take their young children and send them to schools to learn reading and writing." Saint Joachim of Korsun set up such a school at Novgorod, and they did the same in other cities. "And there were a multitude of schools of scholars, and of these were there a multitude of philosophers."

With a firm hand Saint Vladimir held in check enemies at the frontiers, and he built fortified cities. He was the first in Russian history to set up a "notched boundary," a line of defensive points against nomadic peoples. "Volodimir began to set up cities along the Desna, along the Vystra, along the Trubezha, along the Sula and along the Stugna. And he settled them with the Novgorodians, the Smolyani, the Chuds and the Vyatichi. He made war against the Pechenegs and defeated them." But the real reason for his success was the peaceful Christian preaching among the pagans of the steppes.

In the Nikol'sk Chronicles under the year 990 was written: "And in that same year there came to Volodimir at Kiev four princes from the Bulgars and they were illumined with Divine Baptism." In the following year "the Pecheneg prince Kuchug came and accepted the Greek faith, and he was baptized in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and served Vladimir with a pure heart." Under the influence of the holy prince several apparent foreigners were also baptized. For example, the Norwegian "koenig" (king) Olaf Trueggvason (+ 1000) who lived several years at Kiev, and also the renowned Torvald the Wanderer, founder of a monastery of Saint John the Forerunner along the Dneipr near Polotsk, among others. In faraway Iceland the poet-skalds called God the "Protector of the Greeks and Russians."

In addition to the Christian preaching, there were the renowned feasts of Saint Vladimir. After Liturgy on Sundays and Church Feasts there were put out abundant feasting tables for the Kievans, they rang the bells, choirs sang praise, the "transported infirm" sang bylini-ballads and spiritual verses. On May 12, 996, for example, on the occasion of the consecration of the Tithe church, the prince "made a bright feast." He distributed goods "to many of the poor, and destitute and wanderers, and through the churches and the monasteries. To the sick and the needy he delivered through the streets casks and barrels of mead, and bread, and meat, and fish, and cheese, desiring that all might come and eat, glorifying God". Feasts were likewise celebrated in honor of the victories of Kievan warriors, and the regiments of Vladimir's retinue: of Dobrynya, Alexander Popovich, Rogda the Bold.

In the year 1007 Saint Vladimir transferred the relics of Saint Olga to the Tithe church. Four years later, in 1011, his spouse and companion in many of his undertakings, the Blessed Empress Anna, was also buried there. After her death the prince entered into a new marriage with the young daughter of the German Graf Kuno von Enningen, granddaughter of the emperor Otto the Great.

The era of Saint Vladimir was a crucial period for the formation of Orthodox Rus. The unification of the Slavic lands and the formation of state boundaries under the domain of the Rurikovichs resulted from a strenuous spiritual and political struggle with neighboring tribes and states. The Baptism of Rus by Orthodox Byzantium was a most important step in its self-definition as a state. The chief enemy of Vladimir became Boleslav the Brave, whose plans included the extensive unification of the West Slavic and East Slavic tribes under the aegis of Catholic Poland. This rivalry arose back when Vladimir was still a pagan: "In the year 6489 (981). Volodimir went against the Lakhs and took their cities, Peremyshl, Cherven, and other cities, which be under Rus." The final years of the tenth century are likewise filled with the wars of Vladimir and Boleslav.

After a brief lull (the first decade of the eleventh century), the "great stand-off" entered into a new phase: in the year 1013 a conspiracy against Saint Vladimir was discovered at Kiev. Svyatopolk the Accursed, who was married to a daughter of Boleslav, yearned for power. The instigator of the conspiracy was Boleslav's cleric, the Kolobzheg Catholic bishop Reibern.

The conspiracy of Svyatopolk and Reibern was an all-out threat to the historical existence of the Russian state and the Russian Church. Saint Vladimir took decisive measures. All the three involved were arrested, and Reibern soon died in prison.

Saint Vladimir did not take revenge on those that "opposed and hated" him. Under the pretense of feigned repentance, Svyatopolk was set free.

A new misfortune erupted in the North, at Novgorod. Yaroslav, not yet "the Wise," as he was later to be known, in the year 1010 having become ruler of Novgorod, decided to defect from his father the Great Prince of Kiev. He formed his own separate army, moving on Kiev to demand the customary tribute and tithe. The unity of the Russian land, for which Saint Vladimir had struggled all his life, was threatened with ruin. In both anger and in sorrow Saint Vladimir gave orders to "secure the dams and set the bridges," and to prepare for a campaign against Novgorod. His powers were on the decline. In the preparations for his final campaign, happily not undertaken, the Baptizer of Rus fell grievously ill and surrendered his soul to the Lord in the village of Spas-Berestov on July 15, 1015. He had ruled the Russian realm for thirty-seven years (978-1015), twenty-eight of these years after his Baptism.

Preparing for a new struggle for power and hoping for Polish assistance, and to play for time, Svyatopolk attempted to conceal the death of his father. But patriotically inclined Kievan nobles, by night, secretly removed the body of the deceased sovereign from the Berestov court, where Svyatopolk's people were guarding it, and they conveyed the body to Kiev. At the Tithe church the coffin with the relics of Saint Vladimir was met by Kievan clergy with Metropolitan John at the head of the procession. The holy relics were placed in a marble crypt, set within the Saint Clement chapel of the Dormition church beside the marble crypt of Empress Anna.

The name and deeds of the holy Equal of the Apostles Saint Vladimir, whom the people called the Splendid Sun, is interwoven with all the successive history of the Russian Church. "Through him we too have come to worship and to know Christ, the True Life," testified Saint Hilarion. His deeds were continued by his sons, and grandsons and descendants, rulers of the Russian land for almost six centuries, from Yaroslav the Wise, who took the first steps towards the independent existence of the Russian Church, down to the last of the Rurikovichs, Tsar Theodore Ioannovich, under whom (in 1589) the Russian Orthodox Church became the fifth independent Patriarchate in the dyptichs of Orthodox Autocephalous Churches.

The festal celebration of the holy Equal of the Apostles Vladimir was established under Saint Alexander Nevsky, in memory of the intercession of Saint Vladimir on May 15, 1240, for his help in gaining the renowned victory by Nevsky over Swedish crusaders.

But the first veneration of the holy prince began in Rus rather earlier. The Metropolitan of Kiev Saint Hilarion (+ 1053), in his "Word on Law and Grace," spoken on the day of memory of Saint Vladimir at the saint's crypt in the Tithe church, calls him "an apostolic sovereign", like Saint Constantine, and he compares his apostolic evangelisation of the Russian Land to the evangelization by the holy Apostles.

### **Epistle: Romans 15:1-7**

We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me." For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.

### **Epistle: Hebrews 13:7-16**

Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them. We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

### **Epistle: Galatians 1:11-19**

But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

### **Gospel: Matthew 9:27-35**

When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, "Son of David, have mercy on us!" And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you." And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, "See that no one knows it." But when they had departed, they spread the news about Him in all that country. As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed. And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marveled, saying, "It was never seen like this in Israel!" But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons." Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

### **Gospel: John 17:1-13**

Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.

### **Gospel: John 10:1-9**

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers." Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them. Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

### **Service Schedule for the week of July 15**

**Today** – 9:00 AM Hierarchical Divine Liturgy celebrated with Archbishop Michael, followed by Cocktail Hour and Banquet in Daria Hall

**Saturday July 21** – 5:00 PM Vespers followed by Confession

**Sunday July 22** – 8:45 AM Hours, 9:00 AM Divine Liturgy followed by Coffee Hour in Daria Hall

### **Weekly Giving**

July 8 – 48 adults, 6 youth, \$1,771

### **Parish Announcements**

Welcome Archbishop Michael - thank you for joining us today in our St. Vladimir Feast Day Celebration!

Coffee Hour hosts are needed, except for the last Sunday of every month which is taken care of by Senior R Club members. Please see Melody Stavisky or Michael Toth to sign up. Nothing elaborate – bagels, donuts, coffee, tea is all that is needed!

Please remember that if you have loved ones buried in our Parish Cemetery, plantings next to the gravestones must be tended to and weeded. All debris is to be taken with you and not left at the cemetery. Thank you!

As you can see, progress has been made on the Handicap Accessibility Lift. The footing has been dug out to below ground level, and the sidewalk/ramp area is being prepared. The project will take a few months to complete. Please avoid the construction area outside and do not try to access the closet in the back of the church. Thank you for all of your support and donations toward this very important project – we are still accepting donations!