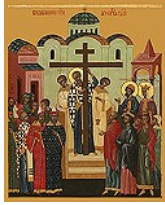


✠Bulletin✠

Week of August 31st to September 6th



Holy Cross Orthodox Church

V. Rev. Fr. Leonid Palceski
2365 South Olga Drive
Fort Myers, Florida 33905
www.HolyCrossFtMyers.org
Phone: 239-265-6562
Cell: 239-699-3119
HolyCrossFtMyers@gmail.com

12th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 3

The restoration of the church of the Theotokos at Neorion (Neorion). The Placing of the Cincture (Sash) of the Mother of God (395-408). Hieromartyr Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage (258). St. Gennadius, patriarch of Constantinople (471). New Martyrs of Jasenovac (Serbia) (1941-1944). St. John, metropolitan of Kiev (1089). St. Paulinus, bishop of Trier (358). St. Aidan, bishop of Lindisfarne (651). St. Gennadius Scholarius, patriarch of Constantinople (ca. 1372).

Weekly Liturgical Service Schedule

Sunday August 31, 2025

9:10 am - Hours

9:30 am - Divine Liturgy

Weekly Schedule

Sunday August 31, 2025

- Choir Practice for Sept 14th
- Inquirers & Catechism classes following Divine Liturgy

The Rich Young Man

Freedom from Possessions

By Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom) of Sourozh

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

In today's Gospel reading, the Lord warns us of how difficult it is for a man who is rich to enter the Kingdom of God.

Does it mean that the Kingdom of God is open only to destitute, to those who are materially poor, who lack everything on earth? No. The Kingdom of God is open to all who are not enslaved by possessions. When we read the first Beatitude, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven', we are given a key to this saying: the poor in spirit are those who have understood that they possess nothing of their own. We have been created as an act of God, loved into existence; God offers us communion with Him, to which we have no rights. All we are, all we possess is not our own in the sense that we have not made ourselves, we did not create what is seemingly ours—all that we are and have is love—the love of God and the love of people. And we cannot possess anything, because everything is a gift that escapes us the moment we want to have possession of it, and say, "It is mine".

On the other hand, the Kingdom of God is really the kingdom of those who are aware that they are infinitely rich, because we can expect everything from divine love and from human love. We are rich because we possess nothing, we are rich because we are given all things. Thus, it is difficult for one who imagines that he is rich in his own right to belong to that kingdom in which everything is a sign of love, and nothing can be possessed, because the moment we say that we possess something which is not given us either by God or by human care, we subtract it from the mystery of love.

On the other hand, the moment we cling to anything we become slaves of it. I remember when I was young, a man told me, "Don't you understand that the moment you have taken a copper coin in your hand and are not prepared to open your hand to let it go, you have lost the use of a hand, the use of an arm, the use of your body? Because all your attention will be concentrated on not losing this copper coin—the rest will be forgotten."

Whether we keep in our hand a copper coin, or whether we feel rich in so many other ways—intellectually, emotionally, materially—is irrelevant. We are prisoners, we have lost the use of a limb, the use of our mind, the use of

our heart; we can no longer be free, and the Kingdom of God is a kingdom of freedom.

On the other hand, how difficult it is for one who has never lacked anything, who has always possessed more than he needs, to be aware of the poverty or the need of another — their material, emotional or intellectual poverty, or any other lack. It requires a great deal of understanding and sympathy, it requires from us that we should learn to be attentive to the movements of other people's hearts and to their material needs in order to respond to them. There is an old Russian saying: A satisfied person no longer understands a hungry person. Who of us can say that we are hungry in any respect? And this is why we do not understand the needs of people—here, or of people beyond the confines of our congregation.

So, let us reflect on that. Poverty does not mean destitution. It means freedom from enslavement to an illusion that we are self-sufficient, self-contained, the creator of what we are and what we possess. It is also freedom from enslavement to what is given us, to make us stewards of God.

Let us reflect on this; because if we learn this, if we learn what Saint Paul said, that whether he is rich, whether he is destitute, he is equally rich because his richness is in God and in human love. Then we will be able, whether we possess material things or not, to be free of them, and to belong to God's Kingdom—which is a Kingdom of mutual love, of mutual solidarity, of compassion for one another, of giving to one another what we were given freely. Amen.

Quotes

St. Nikolaj Velimirovic

Three things in life that destroy a person: Anger, pride and lack of forgiveness.

St. Paisios

Thank God for everything you are, for everything you achieve. By thanking God, you will realize that these are not your achievements, but His gifts and thus, you will feel humble.

God Grant You Many Years!

Birthdays

Maria Flemmer 9/01
Viktoria Graham 9/06
Emmanuel Falana 9/07
Anne Peatross 9/09
Brendan Foster 9/10
Craig (Luke) Holland 9/13
Fr. Leonid Palceski 9/14
Melanie Grubii 9/22

Anniversaries

Dmytro/Inna Yaremenko 09/05
Rodney/Olga Fitts 9/09

2025 Monthly Donations for Church Votive Candles

The church uses 12-hour 51% Beeswax votives, which are a cleaner burning candle and protect the church walls from soot. The approximate monthly cost of these votives for weekend Vespers & Divine Liturgy is \$100.00 per month. If you would like to donate (as a memorial, thanksgiving, or just to donate), please see David Bartos. Thank you!

September - Open
October - Open
November – Open
December – Open
December Feast Days – Open

Holy Cross 50th Anniversary – September 14th

In preparation for the 50th Anniversary of Holy Cross and the visit of Bishop Gerasim, we have established committees for this big event. Please see the following people for more information & to help prepare for our big day!

John & Viktoria Graham - Lunch following Divine Liturgy
David Bartos – Exterior of the Church/Landscaping
Maria Flemmer & Svitlana Canko – Interior of the church/cleaning

Prayer Requests

Carolyn – Robert & Debra's Forster's daughter
Anne and Scott Peatross
Robert (John) Forster
Robert Kozera
Megan – David & Phyllis Bartos' daughter
Rosemary – Friend of David & Phyllis Bartos

Please pray for our families in Ukraine

Leonid, Nadiia, Andrii, Halyna,
Volodymyr, Maryna, Dmytro, Bohdan,
Nadiia, Oleksandr, Tetiana,
Roman, Mykola
Anatoly, Olga, Maria, Andrei

Please let us know of anyone you would like to add to the Prayer Lists.

tithe.ly.com

Another way to "donate". This app can be downloaded to your phone and Holy Cross can be accessed via this app. Also, tithe.ly can be accessed through the church website www.HolyCrossFtMyers.org

Inquirers & Catechism Class

Classes will be on Sundays following Divine Liturgy. For those new to understanding Orthodoxy or for those who want to expand your foundation, please join us for our classes. Please check the schedule for changes.

The Divine Liturgy

Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Tone 3 Troparion (Resurrection)

Let the heavens rejoice!
Let the earth be glad!
For the Lord has shown strength with His arm.
He has trampled down death by death.
He has become the first born of the dead.
He has delivered us from the depths of hell,
and has granted to the world//
great mercy.

Tone 8 Troparion (Theotokos)

Ever Virgin Theotokos, protectress of mankind,
you have given your people a powerful legacy:
the robe and sash of your most honored body which remained incorrupt
throughout your seedless childbearing;
for through you time and nature are renewed.//
Therefore we implore you: "Grant peace to your people and to our souls
great mercy!"

Tone 3 Kontakion (Resurrection)

On this day Thou didst rise from the tomb, O Merciful One,
leading us from the gates of death.
On this day Adam exults as Eve rejoices;
with the Prophets and Patriarchs//
they unceasingly praise the divine majesty of Thy power.

Tone 4 Kontakion (Theotokos)

Today your flock celebrates the enshrinement of your precious sash,
and it earnestly cries out to you://
"Rejoice, O Virgin, boast of all Christians!"

Tone 3 Prokeimenon (Resurrection)

Sing praises to our God, sing praises! / Sing praises to our King, sing praises!
(Ps. 46:7)

*V. Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy!
(Ps. 46:1)*

1 Corinthians 15:1-11 (Epistle)

Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you – unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I

am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore, whether it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

Tone 3

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

V. In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped; let me never be put to shame!

(Ps. 30:1a)

V. Be a God of protection for me, a house of refuge in order to save me! (Ps. 30:3b)

Matthew 19:16-26 (Gospel)

Now behold, one came and said to Him, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” So He said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.” He said to Him, “Which ones?” Jesus said, “‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not bear false witness,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” The young man said to Him, “All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?” Jesus said to him, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. Then Jesus said to His disciples, “Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, “Who then can be saved?” But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

Explanation of Today’s Gospel Reading

By Blessed Theophylact

Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria

16-17. Now behold, one came and said to Him, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” So He said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. The man did not come testing Christ but desiring to learn and thirsting for eternal life. He approached Christ as if Christ were a mere man. That is why the Lord says, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.” This means, if you call Me good, thinking I am one of the teachers, you speak wrongly, for no man is essentially good; both because we are changeable and easily turned away from good, and because, by comparison with God’s goodness, human goodness is counted as wickedness.

17-19. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.” He said to Him, “Which ones?” Jesus said, “‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not bear false witness,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” The Lord directs the enquirer to the commandments of the law, so that the Jews could not say that He despised the law. What happened then?

20. The young man said to Him, “All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?” Some accuse him of boasting and arrogance. For how could he have achieved love for neighbor if he were rich? For no one who loves his neighbor as himself is wealthier than his neighbor.

21-22. Jesus said to him, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. Everything, He says, which you say you have accomplished, you have done by fulfilling only the letter of the law, as do the Jews. But if you would be perfect, that is, be My disciple and a Christian, go and sell all that you have, and give everything all at once, keeping nothing back with which to give alms continuously. For He did not say, “give repeatedly to the poor,” but “give once and for all and be stripped of your wealth. But since there are some who give alms but who lead a life full of every kind of filth, He adds, “and come, follow Me,” that is, possess every other virtue as well. The young man, however, was sorrowful, for though he desired eternal life, and the soil of his heart was deep and fertile, yet the

thorns of wealth were choking him. For it says, “he had great possessions.” He who has few possessions is not similarly restrained by them, for the bond of many possessions is more tyrannical. Because the Lord was conversing with a rich man, He said, “Do you love wealth? Know that you will have treasure in heaven.”

23-24. Then Jesus said to His disciples, “Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” As long as a man is rich and he has in excess while others do not have even the necessities, he can in no way enter the kingdom of heaven. But when all riches have been shed, then he is not rich and so he can enter. For it is just as impossible for a man with wealth to enter the kingdom of heaven as it is for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. See how Christ first said it was difficult to enter, but here that it is completely impossible. Some say that “camel” is not the animal, but the thick cable used by sailors to cast their anchors.

25-26. When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, “Who then can be saved?” But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” The disciples, being compassionate, did not ask this question for their own sake, for they were poor, but for all men. The Lord therefore teaches us not to gauge salvation by human weakness, but by God's power. For if one only begins to cease from greed, he will advance to reducing his excess, and from there he will proceed to eliminating even his necessities, and thus he will be prospered along the way by God acting in collaboration with him.

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! *(Ps. 148:1)*
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!