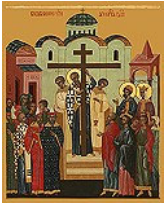


✠Bulletin✠

Week of December 8th to December 14th



Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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24th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 7
Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

362 Martyrs of Africa (62 Clergy and 300 Laypeople) (475). Ven. Patapius of Thebes (8th c.). Ven. Kirill, Abbot of Chelmogorsk (1378). Holy Apostles of the Seventy: Sosthenes, Apollos, Cephas, Tychicus, Epaphroditus, Cæsar, and Onesiphorus (1st c.). Martyr Anthusa, at Rome (5th c.).

Weekly Liturgical Service Schedule

Sunday December 8th

9:15 am - Hours

9:30 am - Divine Liturgy

Friday December 13th

9:00 am – Divine Liturgy for
St. Herman of Alaska

Weekly Schedule

Sunday, December 8th

- Choir Practice
- Inquirers & Catechism classes following Liturgy

The Healing of the Ten Lepers

By +Metropolitan Basilios of Australia

As the Lord Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem (towards His Passion) he passed through a village where he was greeted by ten men with leprosy; a serious and contagious skin disease common in that time. From a religious perspective, the infected person was considered “unclean”, and according to the Law, this “uncleanliness” was grounds for isolation; socially and religiously. The Jews considered this disease as retribution from God towards sinners, lepers were seen as the ultimate sinners, punished for their disobedience. They were forbidden to socialize with others and turned away at the gates of the temple when they tried to visit for prayers and religious rites. The affected were prevented from mixing with others and were further humiliated in their distinguishment from the non-affected; they were forced to call out “unclean, unclean” to warn others of their approach. Anyone who came close to them or touched them would be considered unclean themselves. Naturally, this caused those afflicted to suffer not only physically, but psychologically and spiritually as well.

Of the ten lepers in this Gospel reading; nine were Jews and one a Samaritan. In that time, there was religious and ideological disagreement between the Jews and the Samaritans, causing a huge rift between the two groups, so the Book says: *“The Jews did not mix with the Samaritans”* (John 4:9) as the Samaritans were considered impure by the Jews. But we can see that within this particular group of lepers, the Jews lived with a Samaritan, as pain and suffering united them and their differences were cast aside, gathering as one set of outcasts in support of each other.

We read from the evangelist Luke; “they stood from afar” as the Law ordered them, and raised their collective voice in prayer to Christ, saying “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” They were seeking mercy from the Master, something which they lacked from their own people and society. In response, Jesus ordered them saying “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And that they did, immediately believing in the word of the Lord, without objection or doubt of their cleanliness, even before they were cured. Their faith manifested the miracle.

After they had set off, only one of the ten lepers returned to Jesus “to glorify God with a loud voice”. Of all the ten, the only one to return in gratitude and thanksgiving at the feet of Christ was the Samaritan, called “foreigner” by Jesus, and considered a stranger within the Jewish community. We can see that this healed Samaritan, through his faith, realized that Jesus

was not only a teacher or a miracle maker but the Lord himself. In fact, the first commandment for the Samaritans is not to worship and prostrate to anyone but “God”, so the very act of prostration at the feet of Jesus made by the returning Samaritan was a clear and public acknowledgement that God and Jesus are the same person.

The healing of leprosy, along with other miracles, was considered an act of virtue by the expected Messiah, and a sign of the approaching Kingdom of Heaven. The Evangelist Luke makes mention of this (7:19); John the Baptist sent two of his disciples to Jesus, saying: “*Are you the Coming One, or do we look for another?*” And in that very hour, He cured many infirmities, afflictions and evil spirits. Then He answered the two disciples, saying: “*Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind can see, the lame walk, the **lepers are cleansed**, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them, and blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.*”

The ten lepers all believed in the word of the Lord Jesus, and because of this all of them were healed, but only one came back and thanked Him, receiving salvation, “*Go thy way; thy faith has made thee whole.*” Faith leads to the healing of the flesh. But thankfulness, gratitude and worship lead to the healing and salvation of the soul.

We all are sick with the leprosy of sin which makes us unclean and far away from God. We should realize just how far away from God our sinful actions make us and dare to approach the Master of Glory shouting aloud “O Jesus Have Mercy on me! Kyrie Eleison, Lord Have Mercy.” He will listen and cleanse our souls from the Leprosy of sin, but it is important that we return to Him and thank Him as the apostle Paul says: “*Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,*” (Ephesians 5:20). We often forget, in our ungratefulness, to return to God in thanksgiving, for His mercy.

Christ does not need our thanks; it is for our own acknowledgment and recognition that He is the origin and source of all blessings, healing and good things. We must continually thank God when our prayers are answered, in whichever capacity they are, for He knows what is best for us and what is useful for our salvation.

“In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Amen!

Quotes

Never lose hope, for God is working even when you may not see or feel Him there.

- St. Nektarios

“Do not be afraid, if you are troubled by a flood of thoughts, that the enemy is too strong against you, that his attacks are never ending, that the war will last for your lifetime, and that you cannot avoid incessant downfalls of all kinds. Know that our enemies, with all their wiles, are in the hands of our divine Commander, our Lord Jesus Christ, for Whose honor and glory you are waging war.”

-St. Theophan the Recluse

“He is mistaken who thinks that the fast consists only in abstinence from food. True fasting is departing from evil.”

-Saint John Chrysostom

Do not despair because of distractions during prayer but immerse yourself in the meaning of the words to deepen your relationship with The Word.

-Abbot Tryphon

Thoughts are like airplanes flying in the air. If you ignore them, there is no problem. If you pay attention to them, you create an airport inside your head and permit them to land!

-Saint Paisios of Mount Athos

55 Maxims of the Christian Life

36-40 of 55

Fr. Thomas Hopko

In 2008, Father Thomas Hopko was asked to summarize the essentials of Christian life, and he compiled these 55 maxims in response. At a college retreat once, he said, “People ask, ‘How do I know God is real?’ If you put these maxims consistently into practice over the course of a year—beginning with just one for a week, then adding a second, a third, and so on—by the end of that year, I promise you: you will know God is real.”

36. Speak simply, clearly, firmly, directly.

37. Flee imagination, fantasy, analysis, figuring things out.

38. Flee carnal, sexual things at their first appearance.

39. Don't complain, grumble, murmur or whine.

40. Don't seek or expect pity or praise.

Seminary Appeal

Holy Cross will be collecting for seminarians, their wives and children for this Nativity season. We will have a basket out at the end of Divine Liturgy. These seminarians and families are the future of the Orthodox Church in America and need our prayers and financial support.

You can also donate online to:

St. Vladimir's Seminary at <https://www.svots.edu/give>

St. Tikhon's Seminary at <https://stots.edu/donate>

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.

Prayer Requests for illness and/or suffering

Longinus (Daniel)

Anne and Scott Peatross

Annette Bartos – David Bartos' sister

Svitlana Canko

Robert (John) Beeson

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 if there is anyone you would like to add to the Prayer Lists.

The Divine Liturgy

Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Variable Hymns and Readings

Tone 7 Troparion *(Resurrection)*

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death.

To the thief Thou didst open Paradise.

For the Myrrhbearers Thou didst change weeping into joy,

and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God,

to proclaim that Thou art risen,//

granting the world great mercy.

Tone 8 Troparion *(Ven. Patapius)*

The image of God was truly preserved in you, O Father,
for you took up the Cross and followed Christ.

By so doing, you taught us to disregard the flesh for it passes away;
but to care instead for the soul, for it is immortal.//

Therefore your spirit, venerable Patapius, rejoices with the angels.

Tone 7 Kontakion *(Resurrection)*

The dominion of death can no longer hold men captive,
for Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers.

Hell is bound, while the Prophets rejoice and cry:

"The Savior has come to those in faith;//

enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!"

Tone 3 Kontakion *(Ven. Patapius)*

Your temple is found to be a source of healing,

and the people flock to it eagerly, O saint.

They seek the healing of their diseases

and the forgiveness of their sins,//

for you are a protector for all those in need, ven' rable Patapius.

Tone 6 *(Steadfast Protectress....)*

Steadfast Protectress of Christians,

constant Advocate before the Creator:

do not despise the cry of us sinners,

but in your goodness come speedily to help us

who call on you in faith. Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us,

O Theotokos, for you always protect those who honor you.

Tone 7 Prokeimenon *(Resurrection)*

The Lord shall give strength to His people. / The Lord shall bless His people with peace. *(Ps. 28:11)*

V. Offer to the Lord, O you sons of God! Offer young rams to the Lord! (Ps. 28:1a)

Ephesians 2:14-22 (Epistle)

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Tone 7

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

V. It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Thy Name, O Most High. (Ps. 91:1)

V. To declare Thy mercy in the morning, and Thy truth by night. (Ps. 91:2a)

Luke 17:12-19 (Gospel)

Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner? And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

Explanation of Today's Gospel Reading

By Blessed Theophylact

Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria

12. Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. From this one may learn that nothing prevents a man from living in a manner pleasing to God, not even if he belongs to a despised race, if only he has a good will and disposition. For behold, ten lepers met Jesus as He was about to enter a certain city. They met Him outside the city, for those who were considered unclean were not permitted to go into the city. They *stood afar off*, as if ashamed of their supposed uncleanness, and did not dare to draw near, thinking that Jesus abhorred them, as did the others.

13. And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" They lifted up their voices and made supplication. By physical location they were standing afar off, but in their supplication they were near. For *the Lord is near unto all that call upon Him in truth.* (Psalms 144:19) And they did not make supplication to Him as to a mere man, but as to One greater than a man. For they called Him *Master*, meaning Lord, Protector, and Guardian, which is not far from thinking of Him as God.

14. So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. The Lord instructs them to show themselves to the priests. [Initially] the priests would examine men such as these to determine whether they were lepers or not. For there were certain signs by which the priests could recognize incurable leprosy. But in addition to this, if it were the case that someone who had been suffering from leprosy were healed, the priests would [again] examine him to verify the cure, in which event the gift commanded by the law would be offered. (Leviticus Ch 14) In this case, since these men were already confirmed lepers, why should they show themselves to the priests unless indeed they were about to be cleansed? To command them to go to the priests, indicated nothing other than that they would be healed. This is why the Evangelist says that *as they went, they were cleansed.*

15-16. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. Of the ten lepers, the nine who were Israelites showed themselves to be ungrateful, while it was the Samaritan, an accursed foreigner, as we said earlier, who returned to voice his gratitude. The Samaritans were Assyrians; therefore, let no Gentile despair, and let no one descended from holy forebears boast. This miracle also signifies the common salvation that came to the whole human race. For the ten lepers represent all of human nature, and that nature was leprous with wickedness, carrying about with it the ugliness of sin, passing its life outside the heavenly city on account of its uncleanness, and standing afar off from God. But this very distance from God is itself a supplication. For when the Lover of mankind, Who wills that all should be saved and receive good things, sees someone who is not sharing in His goodness, then He is most quick to show mercy and to heal those who are so miserably afflicted. But He also healed the whole leprous nature of man, when, for every man's sake, He took flesh and tasted of death.

17-19. So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner? And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well." Although the Jews had been cleansed of the uncleanness of their leprous sin, as far as it was the Lord's part to do, they showed themselves ungrateful and did not return from the path of their vain foolishness to give glory to God Who saved them, that is, to believe in Him Who is God and Who endured the extremes of suffering. For this is the glory of God: His Flesh and His Cross. These Jews, then, did not confess the incarnate and crucified Lord of glory. But the foreign and accursed people of the Gentiles recognized the One Who makes clean, and they glorified Him by believing in Him. They believed that God loves man so much and is so powerful that He accepted the very depth of dishonor for our sake-this is His love of man-and having accepted it, He suffered no harm to His own nature - this is His power.