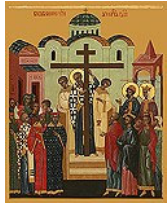


✠Bulletin✠

Week of October 19th to October 25th



Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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19th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 2
Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Prophet Joel (ca. 800 B.C.). Martyr Varus, and with him seven Monastic Martyrs (ca. 307). Translation of the Relics of Ven. John, Abbot of Rila, Bulgaria (1187). Bl. Cleopatra (327) and her son John, in Egypt (320). Hieromartyr Sadoc (Sadoth), Bishop of Persia, and 128 Martyrs with him (342).

Weekly Liturgical Service Schedule

Sunday October 19th

9:15 am - Hours

9:30 am - Divine Liturgy

Weekly Schedule

Sunday, October 19th

- Inquirers & Catechism classes following Liturgy

Wednesday October 22nd

- 6:00 pm Choir practice at the church

Inward Meditation By Fr. George Timko

Just as fire melts wax and its heat dries up mud, so inward meditation melts our evil thoughts and dries up the passions of the soul. It radiates understanding, enlightens our mind and fills our heart with joy. Inward meditation makes the inner man resplendent and strengthened by God. It turns the soul into an impregnable stronghold and a peaceful haven. Being a mirror for the mind and a light for the conscience, inward meditation tames lust, dispels wrath, calms fury, drives away bitterness, puts irritation to flight and banishes injustice. Inward meditation gives birth to tenderness and warmth of soul, to true humility and pure prayer. Inward meditation sanctifies the body, preserves the mind free of inattention and is conducive to every good work. [Isaiah the Solitary]

Our spiritual fathers experienced inward meditation as something very essential in nurturing the spiritual life. For without this inner work there could be no transformation of the inner man and hence no spiritual renewal. Therefore, no matter whatever else we may do, inward meditation is, in the final analysis, spiritually required by all. This is how Isaiah the Solitary saw it: *"We have practiced virtue, done what is right, turned to God and away from the devil and sin. What then do we still lack? Inward Meditation!"*

The outward work of keeping the commandments and practicing virtue is not enough. For such is not the goal of our religious life; it is only an antecedent to a higher goal of spiritual being. And this higher goal is found in achieving a deifying transformation of consciousness, an illumination of mind and a purity of heart. This can be accomplished only by inward meditation, which involves the process of being mindful of God and our Lord Jesus, and also includes the practice of watchfulness and pure prayer. This is why Theognostos says that inward meditation is a sure path to salvation and gives us this directive:

In particular, let inward meditation on God be your handmaid, and turn your whole attention to the inward mysteries concerning God; for the principles of these mysteries will deify you.

The Greek word for inward meditation is 'kriptee meletee'. 'Kriptee' means that which is hidden, enclosed, concealed from sight or held in secret, and

can refer to any inward place or thing. 'Meletee' means the practice of meditation in the sense of being concerned and occupied with something by the process of an active mental endeavor. Inward meditation means directing and focusing our mind's attention in that heart area of spiritual being which is inwardly concealed within us. Such practice leads to a transcendental dimension of consciousness.

Our spiritual fathers see inward meditation as a redeeming process and a way of entering the Divine Domain. They recognize its value in purifying the mind of wicked worldly thoughts and enabling the mind to be occupied with spiritual things. "So, if you want such things", says Father Philemon, "practice inward meditation with a pure heart." A man approaches him and asks: "What should I do to be saved? For my mind wanders about all over the place and occupies itself with all the wrong things. What can I do, father?" Philemon advises him that such mental turmoil is a result of the mind's direction outward to the external things of this world. He then gives him this directive: "Meditate inwardly for a while every day, deep in your heart; for such practice can purify the mind of these wrong things."

When the man asks what inward meditation is, Philemon replies:

Keep the attention of your mind in your heart; and with watchfulness say the Jesus Prayer in your mind. This is what you should always be doing in your heart whether eating or drinking, in company or alone, at home or traveling, repeat that prayer with a watchful, attentive mind. Do not let your mind ever be idle but always keep it meditating inwardly and praying. Without interruption, whether asleep or awake, let your heart inwardly and mentally be meditating at all times. If possible, lie down to sleep only after inward meditation and go to sleep meditating on the content of your prayer.

There is in the Christian spiritual tradition the contrast between the inward and the outward, with the inward being the way to the spiritual and the outward the way to the material. Christ readily alludes to valuing the inner more highly than the outer. Peter speaks of the inward man as being more authentic than the outward man. Paul talks of being a Jew inwardly as more substantial than being a Jew outwardly. Our spiritual fathers see the inner direction of our vision as a necessary correction to our constant outward focus and externalized conditioning.

Diadochos of Photiki says that our senses are always directed outwardly to the things of world. So, our consciousness becomes externally oriented to these sensual stimuli. In turn, the mind becomes preoccupied and filled with material things, thereby losing its sense of spiritual things. Inward meditation is the way to reverse this process, says Diadochos:

We should therefore always be looking into the depths of our heart with continued mindfulness of God. He who lives continually within his own heart is detached from the attractions of this world, for he lives in the Spirit. Confining the mind thus within the heart we should give it no other activity but the prayer 'Lord Jesus'. For no one can say 'Lord Jesus' except in the Holy Spirit. Let the mind continually focus its attention upon this name within its inner shrine of the heart with such intensity that it is not turned away to any mental image. Those who meditate continuously upon this glorious and holy name in the depths of their heart can sometimes see the light of their own mind. For when the mind is closely concentrated upon this name, then we grow fully conscious that the name is burning up the impurities that overlay the soul. Then the Lord awakens in the soul a great love for His glory; for when the mind with fervor of heart maintains persistently its mindfulness of the precious name, then that name implants in us a constant love for its goodness. This is the pearl of great price which a man can acquire by selling all that he has and so experience the inexpressible joy of making it his own.

Inward meditation consists of keeping the attention of a quiet mind focused within oneself in the depths of the heart, there communing with God and being mindful of our Lord Jesus in the silence and stillness devoid of thought, all the while engaged in the pure prayer that gives loving devotion to the Divine Spirit without word or want. Sitting in this way for 30 minutes or more in the morning and evening every day will engender a spiritual awakening and transformation of intense proportions. This is the testimony of our spiritual fathers.

Gather yourself together in the heart, drawing down the attention of the mind into the heart, and there practice inward meditation. Inward meditation sets our feet on the path of inner prayer, which is the most direct road to salvation. We may leave all else and turn only to this work, and all will be well. Conversely,

if we fulfil all other duties and neglect this one task, we shall bear no fruit. If one does not turn within and engage in this spiritual task, he will make no spiritual progress. It is true to say that this task is extremely difficult, especially at the beginning, but it is direct and fruitful in its results. This is because the very seed of spiritual growth lies in this inward turning to God.

[Theophan the Recluse]

Choir Practice

There will be choir practice on Wednesday, October 22nd at 6:00 pm at the church. All those who sing in the choir are asked to participate. Advent and the Nativity of Christ are just around the corner.

Prayer Requests

James Clark – Parishioner of St. Herman's

Nicholas Kowalski

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.

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.

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The Divine Liturgy

Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Variable Hymns and Readings

Tone 2 Troparion (Resurrection)

When Thou didst descend to death, O Life immortal,
Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead.
And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead,
all the powers of heaven cried out://
"O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to Thee!"

Tone 2 Troparion (Prophet Joel)

We celebrate the memory
of Thy prophet Joel, O Lord;
through him we beseech Thee://
"Save our souls!"

Tone 4 Troparion (St. Varus)

Thy holy martyr Varus, O Lord,
through his sufferings has received an incorruptible crown from Thee, our
God.
For having Thy strength, he laid low his adversaries,
and shattered the powerless boldness of demons.//
Through his intercession, save our souls!

Tone 2 Kontakion (Resurrection)

Hell became afraid, O almighty Savior,
seeing the miracle of Thy Resurrection from the tomb!
The dead arose! Creation, with Adam, beheld this and rejoiced with Thee,//
and the world, my Savior, praises Thee forever.

Tone 4 Kontakion (St. Varus)

Following Christ, O Martyr Varus, thou didst drink of His chalice;
thou didst receive the crown of martyrdom and now rejoicest with the
Angels.//
Pray for our souls unceasingly!

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 2 Prokeimenon *(Resurrection)*

The Lord is my strength and my song; / He has become my salvation.
(Ps. 117:14)

*V. The Lord has chastened me sorely, but He has not given me over
to death. (Ps. 117:18)*

2 Corinthians 11:31-12:9 (Epistle)

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands. It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord: I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago – whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows – such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man – whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows – how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities. For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me to be or hears from me. And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Tone 2

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

*V. May the Lord hear thee in the day of trouble! May the name of
the God of Jacob protect thee! (Ps. 19:1)*

V. Save the King, O Lord, and hear us on the day we call! (Ps. 19:10)

Luke 8:5-15 (Gospel)

“A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold.” When He had said these things He cried, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” Then His disciples asked Him, saying, “What does this parable mean?” And He said, “To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that ‘Seeing they may not see, And hearing they may not understand.’ Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.

Explanation of Today’s Gospel Reading Luke 8:5-15

By Blessed Theophylact

Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria

5-10. “A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold.” When He had said these things He cried, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” Then His disciples asked Him, saying, “What does this parable mean?” And He said, “To you it has been

given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that 'Seeing they may not see, And hearing they may not understand.' What David said of old, speaking prophetically in the person of Christ, has now come to pass: *I will open My mouth in parables.* (Psalm 77:2) The Lord speaks in parables for many reasons: to make His listeners more attentive and to stir up their minds to seek the meaning of what is said. For we are apt to be curious about sayings that are obscure in meaning and to disregard sayings that are clear. He also speaks in parables so that those who are unworthy may not understand what is said concerning spiritual mysteries. And there are many other reasons why He speaks in parables. A sower, therefore, *went out*, that is, the Son of God went forth from the Father's bosom, from the hidden fastness of the Father, and became manifest to all. Who went out? He Who is ever sowing. The Son of God never ceases to sow in our souls. Not only by His teaching, but by all of creation and by the events of our daily lives, He plants good seed in our souls. He *went out*, not to slay trespassers or to burn off the stubble, but to sow. For there are many reasons why a farmer might go forth, besides to plant. He went out to sow His own seed: the word of teaching was His own, and not another's. The prophets had spoken, not their own words, but the words of the Holy Spirit. This is why they said, *Thus saith the Lord.* But Christ had His own seed to sow. When He taught, He did not say, "Thus saith the Lord," but "I say unto you." As *He sowed*, that is, as He taught, *some seed fell* along the road. He did not say that the sower threw the seed along the road, but instead that *some fell* there. Christ the Sower sows and teaches, and His word falls upon his listeners everywhere, and it is they who show themselves to be like a road, or a rock, or thorns, or good soil. When the disciples ask about the parable, the Lord says, *To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God*, that is, unto you who desire to learn, *for everyone that asks will receive.* (Matt 7:8) To the others who are not worthy of the mysteries, He speaks obscurely. They think that they see, but they do not; they hear, but they do not understand. And this is to their benefit. The Lord hides these things from them so that they will not fall under greater condemnation for understanding the mysteries and then disregarding them. He who understands, and then disregards, deserves a more severe punishment.

11-15. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and

these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience. Here are described three types of those who are not saved. First, there are *those along the way* who do not receive and accept the word at all. Just as a pathway, which is well trodden and compacted, cannot receive the seed because it is hard, so also those who are hardened in their hearts do not accept the word at all. Though they hear the word, they give it no heed. Next there are those on the rock who hear the word, and then do not endure temptations because of human weakness, and deny the faith. The third kind are those who hear the word and then are choked by the cares of life. Three parts, therefore, perish, and only one part is saved. Few are saved; most perish. See that it is not said of those who are choked, that they are choked by riches, but rather by the *cares of riches*. It is not wealth that harms, but the cares and worries about wealth which fill the mind. Indeed, many have received great benefit from their wealth, when they poured it out to feed the poor. Consider the preciseness of the Evangelist, when he says of those who are saved, that when they have heard the word, *they keep it*, in contrast to those who are along the pathway, who do not keep the word; instead, the devil takes the word from them. And *they bring forth fruit*, in contrast to those who are choked by the thorns, and who bring no fruit to maturity. In truth those whose fruit never ripens bear no fruit at all. And those who bring forth fruit *with patient endurance* stand in contrast to those who are on the rock, who receive the word but then do not endure the onslaught of temptations and show that they cannot withstand the test. See how the Evangelist says **three** things concerning those who are saved, that they keep the word, that they bring forth fruit, and that they do so with patient endurance. By these three statements he distinguishes the saved from those who perish: those who are along the pathway who do not keep the word; those who are among thorns who bring no fruit to perfection; and those who are on the rock who do not patiently endure the assault of temptations.

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest!

(Ps. 148:1)

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!