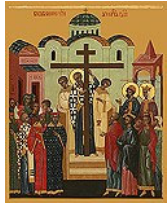


✠Bulletin✠

Week of October 5th to October 11th



Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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17th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 8 Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Martyr Charitina of Amisos (304). Synaxis of the Hierarchs of Moscow. Ven. Damian the Healer (1097), Jeremiah (ca. 1070), and Matthew (ca. 1085), Clairvoyants, of the Kiev Caves (Near Caves). St. Charitina, Princess of Lithuania (1281). Hieromartyr Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria (264-264). Martyr Memelta of Persia (ca. 344). St. Gregory of Chandzoe, Georgia (861). Ven. Eudokimos of Vatopedi (Mt. Athos).

Weekly Liturgical Service Schedule

Sunday October 5th

9:15 am - Hours

9:30 am - Divine Liturgy

Saturday October 11th – Vespers 4:30 pm (NEW TIME)

Weekly Schedule

Sunday, October 5th

- Inquirers & Catechism classes following Liturgy

The Golden Rule

Sunday Homily Oct 2021

St Vasilios Greek Orthodox Church, Australia

Brothers and sisters in Christ, today's Holy Gospel is only six verses long – but in these six short verses there is an entire universe of meaning and an encapsulation of the Gospels themselves.

In today's Gospel we are taught what is known as 'the Golden Rule'... that we are to do unto others as we would have them do unto us. This is, at one level, the foundation of basic courtesy and a civilized order among human beings. But it is also a profound and foundational spiritual truth which opens the gateway toward the keys to our Christian life: self-denial and Christ-like love.

Today's Gospel goes on to say that if we love only those who love us, and do good only to those who do good to us, what do we have to boast about? For this is natural to any human being and can even be a source of feeding our own pride and selfishness. If we are motivated to love by an expectation of being loved in return, this is not the self-denying and self-emptying love which God speaks of. And this is why we hear in today's Gospel the admonition that we are to love our enemies. We are to love and to be merciful, expecting and hoping for nothing in return. In loving our enemies, we create a situation of imbalance which challenges and threatens our human will... for on the one hand, our enemies may be insulting us, may be unkind to us, may not understand us – and yet we are called by Christ to show them love. Not for the purpose of 'winning them over' (although this may be a wonderful consequence of showing selfless love), but we are especially instructed to love our enemies because in doing so we are thrust into the arena of loving with no strings attached, with no expectations of reward or reciprocity... simply and generously pouring ourselves out in a spirit of self-denial and demonstration of the love of God.

This is supremely challenging for our fallen human nature which demands justice, fairness, and our own rights. When we love someone, we expect to be loved in return, and we're hurt when this is not so. Such a reaction is, of course, natural... when we 'do unto others' we expect them to 'do unto us' in return. But Christ has demonstrated for us and calls us to a self-sacrificial love which serves as a means of casting aside our sinful nature and acquiring the Holy Spirit.

This is a very difficult calling... some years ago I came upon a little book called 'The Paradoxical Commandments' by Dr. Kent M. Keith. He expresses the paradox and imbalance and other worldliness of this generous kind of love in the following way:

The Paradoxical Commandments

By Dr. Kent M. Keith

People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centered.

Love them anyway.

If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives.

Do good anyway.

If you are successful, you will win false friends and true enemies.

Succeed anyway.

The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow.

Do good anyway.

Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable.

Be honest and frank anyway.

The biggest men and women with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men and women with the smallest minds.

Think big anyway.

People favor underdogs but follow only top dogs.

Fight for a few underdogs anyway.

What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight.

Build anyway.

People really need help but may attack you if you do help them.

Help people anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and you'll get kicked in the teeth.

Give the world the best you have anyway.

The Christian life and the cross of love we are asked to take up are not fair... They are foolishness to those who are perishing, but to those who are being saved they are the power of God and the wisdom of God. This kind of love takes tremendous courage and determination... It requires zeal for righteousness, spiritual maturity, and a healthy and realistic sense of oneself and where our true worth comes from.

It is important to add here that all too often this kind of self-sacrificing service and love to others gets misunderstood and can degenerate into spineless passivity and tolerance of evil or can be an unhealthy self-punishment and even facilitation of abuse. That is dangerous both for the abused and the

abuser and must not be permitted. We must have a clear vision of the image of God within ourselves and within others. If we see ourselves and others as God sees us, as bearers of the Divine Image, then we will show care and concern for the salvation of all! We must never use the sins of others as steppingstones on the ladder of our own ascent.

The call of the Gospel is for us to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all things will be added unto us. Simply and humbly and courageously living a life of Christian love will bring plenty of opportunity for struggle. Our attention must remain fixed on our 'doing unto others'... showing compassion and Christian love. Whether or not others ever 'do unto us' in return is irrelevant.

Christ calls us to love... to be a reflection of His Light in a darkened world.

Do we see a world that is falling apart, that is descending into chaos and sin, that is turning its back on God? Do we experience a lack of love in our home or in our workplace? What must our response be? 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' Where there is a lack of love, let us insert love. Where there are chaos and sin, let us show forth peace and righteousness. Where things are falling apart, let us fall upon our knees and beseech God to hold things together in His loving and capable Hands. The Light of Christ shines upon the just and the unjust alike... God grant us the grace to reflect that Light of Christ and to illumine the darkness.

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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

Prayer Requests

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.

The Divine Liturgy

Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
Variable Hymns and Readings

Tone 8 Troparion (Resurrection)

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One!
Thou didst accept the three day burial to free us from our sufferings!//
O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to Thee!

Tone 4 Troparion (St. Charitina)

Your lamb Charitina calls out to You, O Jesus, in a loud voice:
"I love You, my Bridegroom, and in seeking You I endure suffering.
In baptism I was crucified so that I might reign in You,
and I died so that I might live with You.
Accept me as a pure sacrifice,
for I have offered myself in love."//
Through her prayers save our souls, since You are merciful!

Tone 8 Kontakion (Resurrection)

By rising from the tomb, Thou didst raise the dead and resurrect Adam.
Eve exults in Thy Resurrection,//
and the world celebrates Thy rising from the dead, O greatly Merciful One!

Tone 2 Kontakion (St. Charitina)

Having fortified your soul with faith and strengthened by understanding
you openly put the enemy to shame, O Charitina;
you stood before Christ wearing a robe empurpled by your blood, All-
blessed One,
and now you rejoice with the Angels,//
praying for us, O passionbearer.

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 8 Prokeimenon (Resurrection)

Pray and make your vows / before the Lord, our God! (Ps. 75:10a)

V. In Judah God is known; His Name is great in Israel. (Ps. 75:1)

2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1 (Epistle)

And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people." Therefore "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you." "I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty." Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Tone 8

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

V. Come, let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior! (Ps. 94:1)

V. Let us come before His face with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with songs of praise! (Ps. 94:2)

Luke 6:31-36 (*Gospel*)

And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise. But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

Explanation of Today's Gospel Reading Luke 6:31-36

By Blessed Theophylact
Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria

To prove to the apostles that this commandment to love one's enemies is possible to keep, Christ says, "And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise." If you want your enemies to be hard, unfeeling, and angry towards you, then be the same yourself to them. But if you want them to be kind and compassionate towards you, and not to remember wrongs, do not think that it is impossible for you yourself to be the same towards them. Do you see this natural law which is written in our hearts? That is why the Lord also said, "After those days I will surely put My laws into their mind and write them on their hearts." (Jeremiah 38:33) Then He adds another compelling reason to keep this commandment: if you love those who love you, you are like the sinners and the Gentiles; but if you love those who do evil to you, you are like God, Who is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Which do you desire, to be like sinners, or to be like God? Do you see the divine teaching? First, He persuaded you by means of the natural law: what you want to be done to you, do to others. Then He persuades you with the result and the reward He promises that you will become like God.

Communion Hymn

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

(Ps. 148:1)

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!