



HOLY TRINITY EASTERN ORTHODOX CHURCH

830 Jefferson Avenue, Rahway, NJ 07065

Orthodoxrahway.org

Father James Worthington

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Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost – Tone 3

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September 4, 2011

Hieromartyr Babylas, Bishop of Antioch; Holy Prophet Moses Happy New Year!

EPISTLE: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

GOSPEL: Matthew 19:16-26

Troparion (*Resurrection*) **Tone 3**

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!

Kontakion, (*Resurrection*) **Tone 3**

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!

Prokeimenon (Tone 3): Sing praises to our God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!

Verse: Clap your hands, all ye people, shout to God with loud songs of joy!

Communion Hymn: Praise the Lord, from the heavens! Praise Him in the highest! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia!

The **Polikhronion** for the Diocese of New York and New Jersey: Our Lord and Father, the Most Blessed JONAH, Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All-America and Canada, His Grace MICHAEL, Bishop of New York and the Diocese of New York and New Jersey, our rector and the faithful of this Holy Temple, and all Orthodox Christians, O Lord, preserve them for many years!

MEMORY ETERNAL

Piotr Szklannik – September 4

Jacqueline Warhollick – September 4

Cecilia Haytko – September 4

William Fetcenko – September 7

BIRTHDAYS

Dimitri Lazarev – September 4

Walter Paserba – September 6

Elijah James Worthington – September 8

Matei Moldoveanu – September 9

Coffee Hour: This week: Ann Pilot and Paula Brush

Next week: Maria Sklannik and Doina Hanganu

Church Cleaning: August 28 – September 10 – Doina Hanganu and Lillian Oana

Alaska Basket: One dollar for the support of the Church of Alaska. Thank you!

Tricky Tray: We have filed papers to hold our autumn Tricky Tray on Wednesday, October 19. Please save that date. More details in the weeks to come.

Nativity of the Theotokos – On Wednesday evening at 7 PM we will celebrate the Great Vespers in preparation for the Nativity of the Theotokos. Liturgy will be celebrated at 9:30 on Thursday morning. Please make every effort to attend the first Great Feast of the new year!

Notes from Father James

Thank you: To the several anonymous donors for Prayers and Soup this past week.

Ss Peter and Paul, Manville: Bp Michael will be offering a talk at Ss Peter and Paul in Manville entitled "On Preserving and Proclaiming Orthodox Christianity in a Secular Society" on September 22 at 7 PM

Sunday School Beginning! Next week will be the beginning of the Sunday School year. As last year, classes in our Orthodox faith will be offered after Divine Liturgy.

St John's Church: Our neighbors across town were inundated with water during the hurricane. Through the intervention of the Mother of God, the building is safe, but they lost practically everything in their social hall. Keep them in your prayers. It would be good if we could offer some sort of support in our Christian charity.

VFOF/DDB: His Grace, Bp Michael has set out an ambitious vision to ensure the future of each parish and the Diocese of New York and New Jersey as a whole. To support our Vision For Our Future, the Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors Program was established. For those of us who have received greater gifts from God, it is good to share it in the building up of his Church.

Prayers and Soup: The Church is open every Wednesday from 12 noon to 2 PM for a hot lunch or to visit the sanctuary and pray. Soup or a meal is needed for this coming week. Please see Fr James if you feel called to help the least of our brethren in this endeavor. Also, with Fr James' vacation, we could use someone to work the meal for the week he is gone, if possible. Are you available to feed the least among us?

Lectionary for the Thirteenth Week after Pentecost

Sunday: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 • Matthew 19:16-26

Monday: 2 Corinthians 8:7-15 • Mark 3:6-12

Tuesday: 2 Corinthians 8:16-9:5 • Mark 3:13-19

Wednesday: 2 Corinthians 9:12-10:7 • Mark 3:20-27

Thursday: 2 Corinthians 10:7-18 • Mark 3:28-35

Friday: 2 Corinthians 11:5-21 • Mark 4:1-9

Saturday: 1 Corinthians 2:6-9 • Matthew 22:15-22

Hieromartyr Byblas: The Hieromartyr Babylas and with him the three youths Urban, Prilidian, Epolonius and their mother Christodoula died as martyrs under the emperor Decius (249-251). During

his stay in their city of Antioch, the emperor arranged for a large festival in honor of the pagan gods.

At the same time, Babylas, the holy and God-fearing Bishop of Antioch, was serving the Divine Liturgy in church. He prayed for his flock and taught them to endure all tribulations for Christ with courage. The idolater Decius, curious to witness the Divine Mysteries, decided to enter the church.

News of this reached the bishop, so he went out to meet Decius and blocked the path to the church, for he was unwilling to permit impiety in the temple of God. When the emperor approached the church doors, St Babylas refused to let him enter, so the emperor had to abandon his intention. He wanted to take revenge on the saint right away, but when he saw the large throng of Christians, he feared they might riot.

The next day the angry emperor ordered that the church be set on fire, and for Bishop Babylas to be brought before him. When asked why he had insulted the imperial dignity by not allowing the emperor to enter the church, the holy bishop answered, "Anyone who would rise up against God and want to desecrate His sanctuary, is not worthy of respect, but has become the enemy of the Lord."

Decius declared that the holy bishop must worship the idols in order to make up for his lack of respect for the emperor, or else face execution. After convincing himself that the martyr would remain steadfast in his faith, he commanded the military commander Victorinus to put him in heavy chains and lead him through the city in disgrace. The holy martyr replied, "Emperor, these chains are as venerable for me as your imperial crown is for you. For me, suffering for Christ is as desirable as the imperial power is for you. Death for the Immortal King is as precious to me as your life is to you."

At the trial with Bishop Babylas were three young brothers, who did not forsake him even in this most difficult moment. Seeing them, the emperor asked, "Who are these children? "

"These are my spiritual children," the saint replied, "and I have raised them in piety, I have given them an education, cultivated them with guidance, and here before you in a small body are these great young men and perfect Christians. Test them and see."

The emperor tried in all sorts of ways to entice the youths and their mother Christodoula to renounce Christ, but in vain. Then, in a rage, he ordered each of them to be whipped with a number of blows corresponding to their age. The first received twelve blows, the second, ten, and the third, seven. Dismissing the mother and children, the torturer again summoned the bishop, telling him that the children had renounced Christ. He did not believe the lie, however.

Then he commanded all the martyrs be tied to a tree and burned with fire. Seeing the stoic bravery of the saints, the emperor finally condemned them to be beheaded with the sword.

The Prophet Moses: The Holy Prophet and God-Seer Moses was of the tribe of Levi, the son of Abram and Jochabed (Exodus 6:20). His life is described in the Bible (Exodus 2 through Deuteronomy 34:12).

Moses was born in Egypt around 1689 B.C. When Pharaoh ordered all male children of the Hebrew slaves to be killed (Exodus 1:22), Moses' mother placed him in a basket of papyrus coated with pitch, and set him adrift on the Nile. Pharaoh's daughter found him and raised him as her own son.

At the age of eighty, Moses fled to Midian, where he spoke to God in the Burning Bush on Mt. Horeb (Exodus 3:2). God chose Moses to lead His people from the slavery of Egypt. They crossed the Red Sea as if it were dry land, and for forty years they wandered in the desert.

Arriving in the land of Moab, Moses went to the top of Mt. Nabau, or Nebo (Deuteronomy 32:49), which is called Phasga (Deut. 34:1). There, according to the will of God, he died in 1569 B.C. at the age of 120 without entering the Promised Land.

The holy Prophet Moses performed many miracles during his lifetime, and also after his death. He appeared on Tabor with the Prophet Elias at the Transfiguration of the Lord (August 6).

On the day that St John of the Ladder (March 30) was installed as abbot of Mt. Sinai, the Prophet Moses was seen going around and giving orders to the cooks, stewards, and servants. When the guests

had gone and the monks were sitting at table, they wondered what had become of the stranger who had been giving orders. St John said, "Our Lord Moses does nothing strange by serving in the place which belongs to him."

Nativity of the Theotokos: The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary: The Most Holy Virgin Mary was born at a time when people had reached such a degree of moral decay that it seemed altogether impossible to restore them. People often said that God must come into the world to restore faith and not permit the ruin of mankind.

The Son of God chose to take on human nature for the salvation of mankind, and chose as His Mother the All-Pure Virgin Mary, who alone was worthy to give birth to the Source of purity and holiness.

The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary is celebrated by the Church as a day of universal joy. Within the context of the Old and the New Testaments, the Most Blessed Virgin Mary was born on this radiant day, having been chosen before the ages by Divine Providence to bring about the Mystery of the Incarnation of the Word of God. She is revealed as the Mother of the Savior of the World, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary was born in the small city of Galilee, Nazareth. Her parents were Righteous Joachim of the tribe of the Prophet-King David, and Anna from the tribe of the First Priest Aaron. The couple was without child, since St Anna was barren.

Having reached old age, Joachim and Anna did not lose hope in God's mercy. They had strong faith that for God everything is possible, and that He would be able to overcome the barrenness of Anna even in her old age, as He had once overcome the barrenness of Sarah, spouse of the Patriarch Abraham. Sts Joachim and Anna vowed to dedicate the child which the Lord might give them, to the service of God in the Temple.

Childlessness was considered among the Hebrew nation as a Divine punishment for sin, and therefore the righteous Sts Joachim and Anna had to endure abuse from their own countrymen. On one of the feasts at the Temple in Jerusalem the elderly Joachim brought his sacrifice to offer to God, but the High Priest would not accept it, considering him to be unworthy since he was childless.

St Joachim in deep grief went into the wilderness, and there he prayed with tears to the Lord for a child. St Anna wept bitterly when she learned what had happened at the Jerusalem Temple. Never once did she complain against the Lord, but rather she prayed to ask God's mercy on her family.

The Lord fulfilled her petitions when the pious couple had attained to extreme old age and prepared themselves by virtuous life for a sublime calling: to be the parents of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, the future Mother of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Archangel Gabriel brought Joachim and Anna the joyous message that their prayers were heard by God, and of them would be born a most blessed daughter Mary, through Whom would come the Salvation of all the World.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary surpassed in purity and virtue not only all mankind, but also the angels. She was manifest as the living Temple of God, so the Church sings in its festal hymns: "the East Gate... bringing Christ into the world for the salvation of our souls" (2nd Stikhera on "Lord, I Have Cried", Tone 6).

The Nativity of the Theotokos marks the change of the times when the great and comforting promises of God for the salvation of the human race from slavery to the devil are about to be fulfilled. This event has brought to earth the grace of the Kingdom of God, a Kingdom of Truth, piety, virtue and everlasting life. The Theotokos is revealed to all of us by grace as a merciful Intercessor and Mother, to Whom we have recourse with filial devotion.