



Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church
A parish of the Orthodox Church in America
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SEPTEMBER 12, 2021 / TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (TONE 3)
*** LEAVE-TAKING OF THE NATIVITY OF THE VIRGIN MARY ***

RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION IN TONE THREE

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.

FESTAL TROPARION IN TONE FOUR

Thy nativity, O Virgin, / has proclaimed joy to the whole universe! / The Sun of righteousness, Christ our God, has shone from thee, O Theotokos. / By annulling the curse, / He bestowed a blessing. // By destroying death, He has granted us eternal life.

- *Sing the troparion of Ss. Peter and Paul*
- *Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:*

RESURRECTIONAL KONTAKION IN TONE THREE

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.

- *Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.*

FESTAL TROPARION IN TONE FOUR

By thy nativity, O most pure Virgin, / Joachim and Anna are freed from barrenness, / Adam and Eve, from the corruption of death. / And we, thy people, freed from the guilt of sin, celebrate and sing to thee: // “The barren woman gives birth to the Theotokos, the nourisher of our Life.”

PROKEIMENON IN TONE SIX

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance!

v. To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me!

Prokeimenon in Tone Three: My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

THE EPISTLE

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians. (Gal. 6:11-18; 1 Cor. 15:1-11)

Brethren, see with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand! As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution

for the cross of Christ. For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. 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.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Philippians. (2:5-11)

Brethren, let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore, God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

ALLELUIA IN TONE ONE

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

v. I have exalted one chosen out of My people.

v. For My hand shall defend him and My arm shall strengthen him.

v. Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear!

THE GOSPEL

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. John. (Jn. 3:13-17; Mt. 19:16-26)

“No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. 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.”

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (10:38-42; 11:27-28)

Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore, tell her to help me.” And Jesus answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.” And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, “Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!” But He said, “More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!”

FESTAL MEGALYNARION IN TONE EIGHT

Magnify, O my soul, the most glorious birth of the Mother of God!

Virginitiy is foreign to mothers; / childbearing is strange for virgins. / But in thee, O Theotokos, both were accomplished. // Therefore, all we nations of the earth unceasingly magnify thee.

COMMUNION HYMNS

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! I will receive the cup of salvation and call on the Name of the Lord. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

- *Instead of “We have seen the true light ...,” we sing the festal troparion, followed by “Let our mouths be filled ...*

UPCOMING SERVICES

6:00 PM (Monday) – Great Vespers w. Lity¹
9:30 AM (Tuesday) – Divine Liturgy¹
5:00 PM (Saturday) – Great Vespers
9:20 AM (Sunday) – Third Hour & Divine Liturgy

¹ Tuesday, September 14, 2021 is the Great Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross.

TODAY’S SAINTS

Saints commemorated on September 12th: Hieromartyr Autonomus, Bishop in Italy; Martyr Julian of Galatia and 40 Companions; Martyr Theodore of Alexandria; St. Coronatus, Bishop of Nicomedia; St. Juventius, 1st Bishop of Pavia; St. Silvinus, Bishop of Verona; St. Sacerdos of Lyon; St. Guy of Anderlecht, Confessor; St. Eanswythe, Abbess of Folkstone Abbey; St. Athanasius of Serpukhov; Translation of the relics of St. Simeon of Verkhoturye.

TODAY’S SPECIAL OFFERINGS

Altar Vigils offered by John and Helen Wanko in memory of Andrew Wanko (anniversary of repose). **Sanctuary Lamp** offered by Fr. Sophrony Royer in memory of Wilfred Royer. **Triple Candelabra** offered by Fr. Sophrony Royer in memory of Donald Royer.

TODAY’S PARASTAS

Parastas in memory of V. Rev. Mitred Archpriest Constantine Buketoff and Wilfred J. Royer.

PARISH EVENTS

The parish council is meeting next Sunday, September 19, 2021, in the church hall after Divine Liturgy.

"Apply yourself both now and in the next life. Without effort, you cannot be prosperous. Though the land be good, you cannot have an abundant crop without cultivation."

— Plato (427-347 BC)

"The sun is reflected in clear water, and heaven in a pure heart."

– St. Nikolaj Velimirović (1881-1956)

The above quote, printed on the September page of the St. Tikhon's Wall Calendar, expresses a very simple, yet profound point: it takes purity of heart to fully manifest the image of God in us, for the earthly to reflect the heavenly. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God" (Matt. 5:8). Jesus Christ spoke this during His famous Sermon on the Mount. The Greek word for "pure" in Matthew 5:8 is *katharos*. It means to be "clean, blameless, unstained from guilt." It is moral "clarity" – unobscured by sin.

Think of a painting in need of restoration, covered by a film of pollutants and exposure to the elements over many years – it's true appearance has become obscured by the accumulated filth; it is stained, darkened, faded, and though the image is still recognizable, it isn't as the artist intended. Our image, similarly defiled by the accumulated stain of sin, is still recognizable—we remain "rational beings" created in the image of Divine Reason (*Logos*), but we aren't as the Divine Artist intended us to be. We are in need of *katharsis* ("purification"). We need the divine fire of the Holy Spirit to burn away our impurities, as impurities in metal ore are smelted away in the blacksmith's furnace.

Purity of heart is akin to right intention or sincerity. Its opposite is wrong intention. Some people exclude God from their vision of what will make them happy. We can, instead, make our goal in life pleasure, or being admired, or making money, or a multitude of other things. If we pursue these things for their own sake in an honorable way, that is, without sinning, we would be acting for a wrong intention in the sense that we would be making a big error. These things will never be able to satisfy us. Furthermore, if we were to pursue these kinds of things through sinful means we'd be doubling that error. Our means—for example—stealing, lying, cheating, killing—would be immoral. Our ends—for example wealth or fame in itself—would be erroneous. This is one kind of wrong intention.

But there is also another kind of wrong intention or insincerity we Christians can fall prey to practicing. We can be Christians, at least in name, but lead double lives. That is, we can be divided between our desire for God and our desire for something else we really want. Christ warned against this double vision or divided heart in his Sermon on the Mount. He said, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is not sound, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." (Matt. 6:19-24).

Christ's own perfect purity of heart or singular focus can be seen in His first words recorded in Sacred Scripture. When the twelve-year-old Christ was lost to His parents for three days and they finally found Him in the Temple, He said to them, "How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" (Luke 2:49). Christ's right intention is evident in His temptation in the desert when He chose His Father's will rather than something which might have benefited Himself. All of His public activities tied directly to His divine mission. He often went off by Himself to pray to His Father. He also spoke about His intimate relationship with the Father, as when He said, "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30).

What does purity of heart mean for a follower of Christ? "Pure in heart refers to those who have attuned their intellects and wills to the demands of God's holiness" (CCC, 2518), chiefly in charity, chastity, and truth. Charity means putting

God first and acting according to the true good of our neighbor. Chastity means living holy purity in terms of sexuality. Truth means holding the Orthodox faith.

What does purity of heart mean in relation to our neighbor? If we have a heart that is simple, open, and good, purity of heart means that we don't hide who we are from other people, as if we are ashamed of God or of the faith. The pure of heart are like little children in this openness (CCC, 2517). It also means we treat others the way Christ would, as persons with great dignity, not reducing them to objects of personal pleasure, which would be the case if we made them objects of lust or greed. It also means we will want to share the truth with others, the truth of the true Orthodox Catholic faith. As St. Paul put it in his epistle to the Ephesians, we should speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15).

If we live purity of heart, is there any commandment we are not fulfilling? And don't we need God's help to be pure in heart? This is an essential virtue that makes every area of our lives holier. The blessed see God, not merely according to the measure of His likeness imperfectly reflected in creation, but as He is, after the manner of His own Being, manifest in the Divine Light of His uncreated energies.