

Remembrance of wrongs is the consummation of anger, the keeper of sin, hatred of righteousness, ruin of virtues, poison of the soul, worm of the mind, shame of prayer, cessation of supplication, estrangement of love, a nail stuck in the soul, pleasure-less feeling cherished in the sweetness of bitterness, continuous sin, unsleeping transgression, hourly malice. . . You will know that you have completely freed yourself of this rot, not when you pray for the person who has offended you, not when you exchange presents with him, not when you invite him to your table, but only when, on hearing that he has fallen into bodily or spiritual misfortune, you suffer and weep for him as for yourself.

Saint John Climacus



Sunday 19 October 2014 is the Third Sunday of Luke

Matins Gospel: John 20:11-18

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 11:31-33; 12:1-9

Gospel: Luke 7:11-16

Resurrectional Apolytikion:

When You went down to death, O immortal life, then you slew Hades with the lightning flash of Your Godhead; but when from the depths below the earth You raised the dead, all the Powers above the heavens cried out: 'Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You!

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Readings and saints for this week:

Monday: Philippians 2:12-15; Luke 9:18-22
Great Martyr Artemius; Gerasimus of Cephalonia

Tuesday: 2 Corinthians 9:6-11; Luke 9:23-27
Hilarion the Great; Christodoulos, Wonderworker of Patmos

Wednesday: Philippians 2:24-30; Luke 9:44-50
Abercius of Hierapolis; 7 Youths of Ephesus

Thursday: Galatians 1:11-19; Matthew 13:54-58
James (Iakovos), the Brother of the Lord; Patriarch Ignatius

Friday: Philippians 3:8-19; Luke 10:1-15
Great Martyr Arethas; Martyr Sebastian

Saturday: 2 Corinthians 1:8-11; Luke 7:1-10
Martyrs Marcian & Martyrius; Tabitha the Merciful



Evangelion

A Bulletin of Orthodox Christian Faith

19 October 2014

Young Man, I Say to You, Arise

Today we hear Saint Luke's account of the raising of the son of the widow of Nain. The Gospel tells us how, as Jesus was approaching the town, He saw a dead man being carried out, accompanied by his weeping mother. Feeling compassion for her, He approached her, comforted her, and touched the bier, telling the young man to get up. Her son immediately arose and began to talk.

In this Gospel passage, we see how Jesus Christ was sensitive to the suffering of the widow who had lost her only son. We can know something of this empathy for the sufferings of others, but, because of our broken human condition, we easily become overwhelmed by it and shut ourselves off from the suffering of others. We may wish to speak words of comfort but are too often unable to do so. Just as our communion with God is impaired, so too our communion with other people is impaired. We desire to reach out, but feel unable to do so.

Commenting on this passage Saint Cyril of Alexandria tells us that death has brought corruption into the world and that we are all subject to this corruption. However, Jesus Christ "is the Life, and the Life-giver by nature" and is "able again to renew unto incorruption and life." By raising the widow's son, He assures us that He has also prepared for us a resurrection of the dead. But He also shows us that by sharing in His compassion for others, we can begin to share in His victory over death by re-gaining something of the human communion for which we were created.



The Virgin's Son met the widow's son. He became like a sponge for her tears and as life for the death of her son. Death turned about in its den and turned its back on the victorious One.

Saint Ephrem the Syrian

Joining Heaven and Earth

An Introduction to the Orthodox Understanding of Icons

Last week we discussed some of the stylistic features of icons that enable the iconographer to not just depict outward appearances, but also to convey a deeper, spiritual reality. In addition to the light that comes from within, the inverse perspective, and the multiple view discussed last week, we can also name the following features:



The portrayal of the body

The various features of human anatomy are often portrayed in a particular way in order to make the person portrayed present to us in their transfigured state. The eyes and the ears are often enlarged, and the nose is often elongated. This shows that the saint is someone who contemplates God, listens to Him and smells the fragrance of Paradise. However, the lips are often smaller than usual and the gestures are also restrained, indicating that the saint does not have to say or do much. They transmit the reality of God's transforming love by their silent presence and, in this, invite us also to lay aside our cares and enter into this silence.

The symbolism of colour

The colours used in an icon are not arbitrary but convey a deep and subtle symbolic meaning. Although there are variations in

this, particular colours convey particular meanings. However, the use of colour in an icon is also meant to convey harmony and luminosity, reflecting the peace and joy of a life lived in union with God. Through a careful and subtle use of colour, the whole icon radiates the light of the Kingdom of God.

The portrayal of nature

We have already seen that icons are not naturalistic paintings. Although the various elements of nature are recognizable, they are also distinctly stylized in order to convey a deeper theological truth. Icons show a world where nature has returned to the condition of Paradise. Thus we see mountains bowing to Christ and trees that call to mind the Garden of Eden. When plants and animals are depicted, they are often showed in a simplified form, presenting their essence rather than much detail.

To be continued...



Just as the thought of fire does not warm the body, so faith without love does not actualize the light of spiritual knowledge in the soul.

Just as the light of the sun attracts a healthy eye, so through love knowledge of God naturally draws to itself the pure intellect.

Saint Maximus the Confessor

It is fitting that you should concur with the will of your Bishop, which you also do. For your justly renowned presbytery, worthy of God, is fitted as exactly to the Bishop as the strings are to the harp. Therefore, in your concord and harmonious love, Jesus Christ is sung. And man by man, you become a choir, that being harmonious in love and taking up the song of God in unison you may with one voice sing to the Father.

Saint Ignatius of Antioch, *Epistle to the Ephesians*

Question Box

If you have a question about the faith and teaching of the Orthodox Church, you can send it to evangelion@goarch.co.za

What does the Orthodox Church understand by the term “elders”? Who are the elders in our Church?

There are different ways in which the word “elder” is understood in the Orthodox Church.

If we look at the New Testament, then we see that “elder” is the literal translation for the Greek word *presbyteros*, which is today translated as “priest.” However, this word was also used interchangeably with the word *episkopos*, which is today translated as “bishop.” Both words were used by the earliest Christians to refer to the leader of the local Christian community, who came to be known as the bishop – and who was given the responsibility to lead and guide the local Church. As the Church grew, the priesthood was defined more distinctly, with priests assisting the bishops, and by the end of the first century we read Saint Ignatius of Antioch exhorting the laity, deacons and priests to live in harmony with and obedience to their bishop.

In this original understanding, then, the word “elder” refers to those who have been given the authority by God to lead and guide the Church and, as Saint Paul put it, to “rightly divide the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15) It refers to the bishops of the Church and also to the priests insofar as the bishop has given them authority to teach and guide their local parish.

However, the word “elder” has also acquired another meaning that emerges out of a more monastic context. It is a literal translation of the Greek *geronta* (or the Russian *startetz*) and refers to a holy person who has a gift for providing spiritual direction. Although often a monastic, this elder is not necessarily an ordained priest and his authority is charismatic rather than institutional. However, a true elder is recognised by his deep humility – he is not an alternative source of authority to the bishop, but lives in harmony with the bishops and priests of the Church so that the different forms of authority within the Church enrich and support the whole body of Christ’s Church.