

To eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man." Let us learn then what the things that defile the person are. Let us learn them and flee from them. For even in the church we still see such a custom prevailing among many that gives great attention to what we are wearing and whether we have our hands washed. But as to presenting a clean soul to God, they make no account. I say wash to what degree is fitting, but above all wash with virtues and not with water only. No one is forbidding the washing of the hands or mouth, but the real filth of the mouth is evil speaking, blasphemy, reviling, angry words, filthy talking, inordinate laughter and immature jesting. If you are not conscious of yourself doing these things or of being defiled with this filth, then draw near with confidence. But if you have often done these things and received these stains, why do you think that washing your tongue with water is going to change anything? You labour in vain to wash it out externally, while you are still inwardly carrying such deadly and hurtful filth.

Saint John Chrysostom



**13 November is the
Eighth Sunday of Luke**

Matins Gospel: John 21:1-14

Epistle: Hebrews 7:26-28; 8:1-2

Gospel: Luke 10:25-37

Resurrectional Apolytikion:

Having learned the joyful proclamation of the Resurrection from the Angel, and having cast off the ancestral condemnation, the women disciples of the Lord spake to the Apostles exultantly: Death is despoiled and Christ God is risen, granting great mercy to the world.

Seasonal Kontakion:

Today, the most pure temple of the Savior, the precious bridal chamber and Virgin, the sacred treasure of God, enters the house of the Lord, bringing the grace of the Divine Spirit. The Angels of God praise her. She is the heavenly tabernacle.

Readings and saints for this week:

Monday, 14 November: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16; John 1:43-51
Apostle Philip; Gregory Palamas, Abp. of Thessalonica

Tuesday, 15 November: Colossians 2:20-23; 3:1-3; Luke 14:25-35
Martyrs Gouria, Shamuna, & Habib; Thomas, Abp. of Constantinople

Wednesday, 16 November: Romans 10:11-21; 11:1-2; Matthew 9:9-13
Apostle & Evangelist Matthew

Thursday, 17 November: 1 Corinthians 12:7-11; Luke 16:1-9
Gregory the Wonderworker; Patriarchs Gennadios & Maximus

Friday, 18 November: Colossians 4:10-18; Luke 16:15-18; 17:1-4
Great Martyr Plato; Martyr Romanus

Saturday, 19 November: 2 Corinthians 5:1-10; Luke 9:57-62
Prophet Obadiah; Martyrs Barlaam & Heliodorus



Evangelion

A Bulletin of Orthodox Christian Faith

13 November 2016

Archbishopric of Good Hope
Patriarchate of Alexandria & All Africa

Who is My Neighbour?

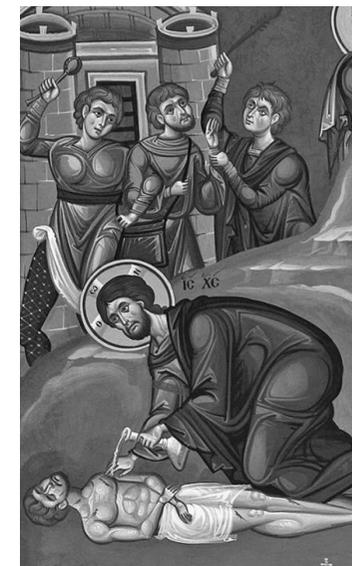
Today we hear the familiar account of the parable of the Good Samaritan. Saint Luke tells us that a lawyer sought to test Jesus. Not content with knowing that the path to salvation involves loving both God and one's neighbour, he pushed Jesus further wanting to know exactly who his neighbour was. And it is in response to the question "Who is my neighbour?" that Jesus Christ tells this parable.

In order to understand Christ's response in this parable, we need to appreciate the hostility that existed between the Jews and the Samaritans. The Jews despised the Samaritans and the thought that a Samaritan could have been the neighbour that the Law referred to would have been unthinkable to an observant Jew.

In this parable we see how God breaks through our "normal" human ways of thinking. Jesus Christ tells us that our neighbour is not exclusively someone connected to us by the ties of blood, language, or similar background. Rather, our neighbour is simply the person whom God has put on our path at any given moment. Our neighbour may be the last person we would choose to be associated with, but Christ teaches us that our path to salvation is intimately tied up with our response to our neighbour.

At another level we can also read this parable as referring to Jesus Christ Himself as the Good Samaritan. He is, in a sense, the ultimate neighbour, for He has reached out to us to share our human condition. As Saint Augustine writes: "Wine and oil have been poured on you. You have received the sacrament of the only-begotten Son. You have been lifted onto His mule. You have believed that Christ became flesh. You have been brought to the inn, and you are being cured in the Church." Or, as we pray in the first week of Great Lent:

I am the man who fell among thieves, even my own thoughts; they have covered all my body with wounds, and I lie beaten and bruised. But come to me, O Christ my Saviour, and heal me.



Let us give thanks to God continually. For, it is outrageous that when we enjoy His benefaction to us in deed every single day, we do not acknowledge the favour with so much as a word; and this, when the acknowledgment confers great benefit on us. He does not need anything of ours, but we stand in need of all things from Him.

In point of fact, thanksgiving adds nothing to Him, but it brings us closer to Him. For if, when we recall the benefactions of men, we are the more warmed by affection for them; much more, when we continually bring to mind the benefits of the Master towards us, shall we be more earnest with regard to His commandments.

For this cause Paul also said, Be ye thankful. For the best preservative of any benefaction is the remembrance of the benefaction, and a continual thanksgiving for it.

Saint John Chrysostom



Saint John Chrysostom

Today we commemorate our Father among the Saints, John Chrysostom. He was born to pious parents in Antioch around 345 and after a good secular education he decided to dedicate his life to God as a monk. He lived in very strict asceticism in a cave near Antioch, eventually ruining his health so that he had to return to the city where he was ordained a priest. There he became known for his great gifts as a preacher and was called the “Golden-mouth.” He was made Patriarch of Constantinople in 398 where he continued to preach eloquently. However, he soon gained enemies as he was not afraid to speak out against the corrupt morals and luxurious living of the nobility, including of the Empress Eudoxia who had him exiled to Pontus in 403. After being allowed back for a short time, he was again exiled to the Caucasus. However, the journey was so difficult and his health so frail that he died en route in 407. His last words were “Glory be to God for all things.” Saint John Chrysostom left us many sermons and biblical commentaries as well as the Liturgy that bears his name.

The grace of your words illuminated the universe like a shining beacon. It amassed treasures of munificence in the world. It demonstrated the greatness of humility, teaching us by your own words; therefore, O Father John Chrysostom, intercede to Christ the Logos for the salvation of our souls.

Apolytikion for
Saint John Chrysostom

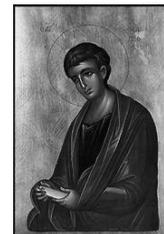
Preparing for Christ's Nativity

Tuesday, 15 November, marks the beginning of the Nativity Fast. As the world around us is encouraging us to feast and to engage in a frenzy of shopping, the Church is calling us to fast and is encouraging us to remain sober and alert so that we may be ready to meet the Lord when He comes among us in His Incarnation at Christmas.



This Nativity fast, which we keep for the forty days before Christmas, is not as strict as the Lenten fast. Nevertheless, it is related to it, for the feasts of the Nativity and the Theophany which we are preparing for, are in some ways patterned after Pascha, that great feast of feasts. Jesus Christ lay as an infant in a cave so that He might lie in a tomb. He was buried in baptism so that He might descend into death through the Cross. He was worshipped by the wise men so that all of creation might adore Him in His triumph over death.

The Pascha of Christ's Crucifixion and Resurrection was prepared for by the Pascha of His Coming in the Flesh. And it is this “Coming” of God among us that the Church now encourages us to contemplate. This is a joyful coming, but we nevertheless need to remain sober and vigilant, aware of what it is that we are preparing for, taking care that the business of the season does not overwhelm us so that we forget what it is really all about.



Saint Philip preached the Gospel in many places in Asia Minor and was martyred by crucifixion in Hierapolis of Phrygia

Come and see...

Tomorrow, the day before the Nativity Fast starts, we commemorate the Holy Apostle Philip. Saint John's Gospel tells us that Saint Philip was one of the first apostles to be called by Jesus Christ. Having answered Christ's call, he went and called his friend Nathanael. When Nathanael doubted that anything good could come out of Nazareth, Philip encouraged him to “Come and see.”

Like the first apostles, we are also invited in this time of preparation for the Nativity to “Come and see.” First we see the man Jesus, the child in the manger, the straw and the shepherds. But, as we learn to see with the eyes of faith, we will also see the power of God behind these events and recognize that this is no ordinary baby but the Son of God Himself. We will see “heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.” (John 1:51)