

No matter how long you might stay at the spring, you would always be beginning to see the water. For the water never stops flowing, and it is always beginning to bubble up again. It is the same with one who fixes his gaze on the infinite beauty of God. It is constantly being discovered anew, and it is always seen as something new and strange in comparison to what the mind has always understood. And as God continues to reveal himself, man continues to wonder...

St Gregory of Nyssa

Sunday, 21 July 2013, is the Fourth Sunday of Matthew

Matins Gospel: Luke 24:1-12

Epistle: Romans 6:18-23

Gospel: Matthew 8:5-13

Resurrectional Apolytikion:

Let everything in heaven rejoice, let everything on earth be glad, for the Lord has shown strength with His arm; by death He has trampled on death; He has become the first born from the dead; from the belly of Hades He has delivered us, and granted the world His great mercy.

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Readings and saints for this week:

Monday: 1 Corinthians 9:2-12; Luke 8:1-3
Mary Magdalene, Equal to the Apostles; Virgin Martyr Markella

Tuesday: Romans 14:9-18; Matthew 12:14-16; 22-30
Hieromartyr Phocas; Prophet Ezekiel

Wednesday: Romans 15:7-16; Matthew 12:38-45
Great Martyr Christina; Athenagorus the Apologist

Thursday: Galatians 4:22-27; Luke 8:16-21
Dormition of St. Anna; Olympias the Deaconess

Friday: Galatians 3:23-29; 4:1-5; Mark 5:24-34
Hermolaus, Hermippus, and Hermocrates; Martyr Paraskeve

Saturday: 2 Timothy 2:1-10; Luke 21:12-19
Great Martyr Panteleimon; Nicholas of Novgorod



Archbishopric of Good Hope,
Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa

Evangelion

A Bulletin of Orthodox Christian Faith

21 July 2013

Just give the Word

Today we hear Saint Matthew's account of how a Roman Centurion's came to Jesus Christ, asking Him to heal his servant. When Jesus offered to go with him to heal the man, he responded by saying that he was not worthy to have Christ come to his house. Instead he asked Him to "Just give the word and my servant will be cured."

This man was an outsider; he was not part of the people of Israel. And yet Jesus praised his faith and said that nowhere in Israel had He encountered such faith.

The centurion did not give any intellectual statements about who Jesus was. Yet he clearly acknowledged the authority of Christ and he submitted himself to His authority. He also humbly recognized his own true place in front of Jesus Christ, considering himself unworthy to have Christ come to his house.

Here we see his great faith in the power of Christ's word. He not only respects the word of the Lord, but he actively seeks it, for he recognizes its great power. He recognizes that this word of the Lord is alive and active and cuts like a two-edged sword (Hebrews 4:12), and that it is something that will permeate his whole life.

The Scriptures and the teachings of the Fathers are absolutely clear that humility is a prerequisite for true prayer. Prayer is not simply asking favours of God, but is rather acknowledging who He is, who we are before Him, and His authority over our lives. This is true prayer, but it requires a humility that we need to learn and so we pray that we may be given faith like that of the Roman centurion.



If you see a man pure and humble, that is a great vision. For what is greater than such a vision, to see the invisible God in a visible man, the temple of God.

Saint Pachomius the Great

A Mercy of Peace, a Sacrifice of Praise

An introduction to the Divine Liturgy (continued)

As we continue the Great Litany, and having prayed for the bishop and the whole Church, we turn our attention to the world around us, praying:

For our president of our country and those in civil authority, let us pray to the Lord.

For this city, for every city, town and village, and for the faithful who dwell in them, let us pray to the Lord.



God's love is universal and sustains the whole world. Saint Paul tells us that God desires all people to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4) and the history of salvation is about God reaching out to all people and seeking to draw them into His Kingdom.

It is this love of God for humanity that the Church seeks to imitate in praying for all people. For the Church does not only exist for her own members; she is not simply a religious society, but is the Body of Christ on earth and exists to draw all people to the Light of God's Kingdom.

This concern and love for all people finds its expression in our prayers for those around us. Following Saint Paul's exhortation we pray "for all people, for rulers and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (1 Timothy 2: 1-2).

We pray for our own country and city, but our prayer radiates outwards to include the whole world. There is nothing that will remain untouched by the Mystery that we are about to celebrate, for in His incarnation Jesus Christ takes all of humanity's sufferings, struggles and joys upon

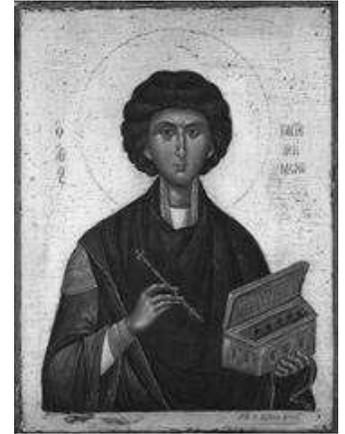
Himself. And through His death and resurrection He transforms them, giving meaning to human life and enabling all people to participate in His victory over death.

In the *Epistle to Diognetus*, an anonymous Christian document from the early second century, we hear a description of how Christians live in and care for the world. It tells us that they "live in their own homelands, but as temporary visitors... They live on earth, but behave as if they are in heaven... They love all and are persecuted by all... In a word, what the soul is to the body, Christians are to the world. The soul is diffused through all the members of the body, as Christians are in all the cities of the world... Christians sustain the world."

Learn the humility of Christ and the Lord will give you to taste of the sweetness of prayer. And if you would pray purely, be humble and temperate, confess yourself thoroughly, and prayer will feel at home in you. Be obedient, submit with a good conscience to those in authority. Be content with all things, and your mind will be cleansed of vain thoughts. Remember that the Lord sees you, and be fearful lest anyway you offend your brother. Neither dispraise nor grieve him, even by a glance, an expression on your face, and the Holy Spirit will love you and Himself be your help in all things.

Saint Silouan the Athonite

On Saturday we commemorate the Holy Great-martyr and healer, **Saint Panteleimon**. He was born in Nicomedia to a pagan father and a Christian mother. His mother taught him the Christian Faith and he was baptized. He became a physician, and practiced his art with compassion and generosity, healing many through both his prayer and his medicine. His parents had named him Pantoleon ("in all things a lion"), but because of his great compassion he was re-named Panteleimon ("all-merciful"). He once healed a man of blindness by calling on Christ, which led the once-blind man to embrace the Faith. When asked how he came to be healed he named Panteleimon as his healer and proclaimed his newfound faith in Christ.



For this the pagans executed him, then arrested Panteleimon, who was beheaded after being tortured in 305. He is considered the foremost of the Unmercenary Physicians.

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

I am confused about when I need to stand during the Liturgy. I get tired when I try to stand the whole time, but then sometimes when I sit I get told that I should be standing. Are there particular times when it is important to stand?

Yes, while standing is the general position for prayer, there may be times when we need to sit. However, we should try to stand for:

- the opening "Blessed is the Kingdom..."
- the Little Entrance;
- the Gospel reading;
- the Great Entrance;
- the Creed
- the Anaphora (the consecration of the Holy Gifts);
- the "Our Father";
- the distribution of Holy Communion;
- whenever the priest gives a blessing;
- the Dismissal.

While we should generally try to avoid entering and leaving the Church while the Liturgy is in progress, we should particularly try and avoid doing so during these times. If we do arrive while one of these things is happening, it is best to wait respectfully at the back until it ends before finding our place.