



Christ is Risen! Indeed, He is Risen!
Христос Вакрсе! Ваустину Вакрсе!
Sunday of the Samaritan Woman
May 17, 2009

RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION – TONE FOUR:

When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of Your Resurrection; they cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the apostles: Death is overthrown! Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy.

MID-PENTECOST TROPARION - TONE EIGHT:

In the middle of the feast, O Savior, fill my thirsting soul with the waters of piety, as You cried to all: ‘If anyone thirst, let him come to Me and drink!’ O Christ God, Fountain of our life, glory to You!

KONTAKION TO THE SAMARITAN WOMAN - TONE EIGHT:

The Samaritan woman came to the well in faith; she saw You, the Water of Wisdom, and drank abundantly! She inherited the Kingdom on high, and is ever glorified.

MID-PENTECOST KONTAKION - TONE FOUR:

Christ God, the Creator and Master of all, cried to all in the midst of the feast of the law: ‘Come and draw the water of immortality!’ We fall before You and faithfully cry: ‘Grant us Your mercies, for You are the Fountain of our life!’

INSTEAD OF “IT IS TRULY MEET...”:

The angel cried to the Lady Full of Grace: Rejoice, O Pure Virgin! Again I say: Rejoice! Your Son is risen from His three days in the tomb! With Himself He has raised all the dead! Rejoice, all ye people! Shine! Shine! O New Jerusalem! The glory of the Lord has shone on you! Exult now and be glad, O Zion! Be radiant, O Pure Theotokos, in the Resurrection of your Son!

INSTEAD OF “WE HAVE SEEN THE TRUE LIGHT...”:

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life! (*once*)

EPISTLE & COMMENTARY

The Prokeimenon— Psalm 47: 6 in the Third Tone:

Sing praises to our God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!

Acts 11: 19-26; 29-30

In those days, those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only. But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord. Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch. When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord. For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul. And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

The Alleluia Verses – Psalm 45: 4, 7

Go forth and prosper and reign, because of truth and meekness and righteousness. You love righteousness and hate iniquity.

Epistle Commentary

As Jesus preached in Sychar to those who were not Jews (today's Gospel reading), so here the Gospel is proclaimed to Gentile Greeks. **Hellenists** here refers to Greeks, not to Hellenistic Jews (from last Sunday's Epistle reading). In a clear example of apostolic authority, **Barnabas** is **sent out** to Antioch. He does not go on his own but he is wise enough to enlist the help of **Saul**, who is not referred to as 'Paul' in the Book of Acts until chapter 13. They undertake three important actions: 1) **assembled** people; 2) **taught** apostolic doctrine; 3) made **disciples**.



GOSPEL & COMMENTARY

John 4: 5-42

At that time, Jesus came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink', you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself as well as his sons and his livestock?" Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband', for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly." The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." The woman said to Him, "I know the Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He." And at this point His disciples came and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?" The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, "Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" Then they went out of the city and came to Him. In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." But He said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest?' Behold I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors." And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who

testified, “He told me all what I ever did.” So when the Samaritans had come to Him they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His own word. Then they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.”

Gospel Commentary

It is noontime (sixth hour) and **Jesus** is **wearied** from His journey, showing His complete humanity which He voluntarily assumed. Jesus speaks of **living water** and **a fountain of water springing up**, and in both cases He refers to the Holy Spirit. The woman at first does not understand the significance of what is being offered and thus inquires about things like how Jesus will get the water and if His ability to do it makes him greater than the Patriarch Jacob. Likewise, when the subject matter turns to worship, the woman is concerned with Jewish practice versus Samaritan practice while Jesus reveals to her personally that: 1) **God** must be worshipped **in spirit and truth** as opposed to in a particular location; 2) He is the **Messiah** she knows is coming. She then becomes an evangelist, testifying to her kinsmen that Jesus is the expected Messiah and bringing others to Him.



SPIRITUAL ARTICLES

Reflection from *The Prologue* for May 4 by St. Nikolai Velimirovic

A young man inexperienced in spiritual combat underlines his every good work with self-praise. But the experienced soldier in the midst of struggles with the passions and demons disparages his every deed and intensifies his prayer for God's help. Abba Matoes used to say: "The closer a man is to God, the more sinful he sees himself to be." He also was known to say: "When I was young, I thought perhaps that I was doing some good; and now when I am old, I see that I do not have one good deed." Did not our Lord say: *There is none good but one, that is, God* (Matthew 19:17)? Therefore, if only the One God is good and the source of all good, how can a good deed be done that is not from God? And how can someone who does a good deed ascribe it to himself and not to God? If this is so, then in what can a mortal man be praised? In nothing, except by God and the goodness of God!

From, *The "Last Things" in Holy Scripture* by Bishop Gerasimos of Abydos

Belief in the Parousia of Christ completes the faith in the person of Christ and the mystery of the divine plan of salvation. With the ultimate event of the Parousia we have the complete truth about Christ and His work. The work of salvation is the work of God in Christ. It began with the Incarnation, the Cross, and the Resurrection, and is in motion towards its ultimate goal. The crucified and resurrected Christ is already the Lord. He has received every authority in heaven and on earth (Mt. 28:18-20), and invisibly, in the Holy Spirit, He reigns through the Church and guides the world toward the end - the perfection of the kingdom of God. The Parousia of Christ and our being gathered together with Him will be the final act of the divine plan for our salvation. With the Parousia the works of Satan, namely sin and death, will be completely destroyed. With the resurrection of the dead the kingdom of God will be perfected and the life of eternal blessedness will begin. This is the purpose of God's divine plan for our salvation. This is what the faithful anticipate...

Holy Scripture is not a scientific cosmogony, that is, a detailed account of the creation of the universe, nor a complete development of human history. The Holy Bible speaks mainly of the faith we must have in God and about our relationship with Him. We cannot enter into the details of the eternal will and plan of God. We know God and His plans only to the extent that they are revealed to us, and as they are realized in history. And God has revealed to us what is needed for our salvation. But we shall see everything face to face when they actually come to pass before us. Christians must know now that Christ will come as king and judge (Mt. 14:62). He will come at a time when we do not expect Him. This is why we must always be on guard, awake, and vigilant as sons and daughters of the light and of the day (Mt. 24:42; 25:13; Mk. 13:33-37; 1 Thess. 5:4-11; 2 Thess. 2:2; 3:11). A Christian life is required of us, not curiosity about years and times "which the Father has placed under his own authority" (Acts 1:7). We do not live our lives as Christians out of fear that the coming of Christ is near, nor because we hope to gain rewards. We are Christians because we believe in the love of God, and we live a life in Christ out of love, being always ready to receive Him with great anticipation. We are challenged to live with the hope of the Parousia as did the early Christians who prayed: "Maranatha - Come, Lord!" (1 Cor. 16:22; Rev. 22:20; 1 Pet. 1:3-12). This is the way the

early Christians lived their faith in the Church. But do we today have this faith and do we live with this hope? We never have enough; we always need more faith, more love, more prayer of hope: “Come, O Lord!”

IMPORTANT REMINDERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pray for the Holy Hierarchical Assembly of the Serbian Orthodox Church

His Grace, Bishop Maxim, is with the assembly of bishops meeting in Belgrade and asks the clergy and faithful of our diocese to pray that the gathered hierarchs “may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Colossians 1: 10).

Be a part of the *Western American Diocese 2009 Annual*

Detailed information is forthcoming on how to submit an ad or greeting for inclusion in the beautiful, full-color publication from our own Sebastian Press that will be available during the Diocesan Days weekend, September 4-6, 2009, at the St. Sava Mission in Jackson, CA.