



October 11, 2009
18TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
FEAST OF ST. CHARITON THE CONFESSOR

TROPARION FOR THE RESURRECTION - TONE ONE:

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews; while the soldiers were guarding Your most pure body; You arose on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. The powers of heaven therefore cried to You, O Giver of Life: Glory to Your resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Your Kingdom! Glory to Your dispensation, O You who loves mankind!

TROPARION FOR CHARITON THE CONFESSOR – TONE EIGHT:

By a flood of tears you made the desert fertile, and your longing for God brought forth fruits in abundance. By the radiance of miracles you illumined the whole universe! Our father Chariton, pray to Christ God to save our souls!

KONTAKION FOR THE RESURRECTION - TONE ONE:

As God, You arose from the tomb in glory, raising the world with Yourself. Human nature praised You as God, for death has vanished. Adam exults, O Master! Eve rejoices, for she is delivered from bondage, and cries to You: You are the Giver of resurrection to all, O Christ!

KONTAKION TO CHARITON THE CONFESSOR – TONE TWO:

You delighted in the monastic life, divinely wise one, and conquered the bodily passions; you increased in faith, blossoming as the Tree of Life in the midst of Paradise, most blessed and holy Chariton!

HYMN TO THE MOTHER OF GOD - TONE SIX:

Steadfast Protectress of Christians and constant advocate before the Creator, do not despise the cry of us sinners; but in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith. Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos, for you always protect those who honor you!



EPISTLE & COMMENTARY

THE PROKIMENON (PSALM) IN THE 1ST TONE:

Let your mercy, O Lord, be upon us, as we have set our hope on You!

2 Corinthians 9: 6-11

Brethren, this I say to you: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. As it is written: "He has dispersed abroad; He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever." Now may he who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God.

ALLELUIA VERSES:

God gives vengeance to me, and subdues people under me. He magnifies the salvation of the King, and deals mercifully with His Christ, with David and his seed forever.

Epistle Commentary

The Apostle Paul is writing to the Corinthians regarding Stewardship of the abundance of God. As Christians, we recognize that we do not give out of obligation, but rather to plant the seeds necessary to spread the Gospel. It is for this reason that the Apostle Paul utilizes an agricultural metaphor in his teaching on giving. The giver is the sower; the one who plants seeds. These seeds may not come to fruition, as the parable of the sower explains. However, they must be planted.

We only have to look at a former Patriarch of Alexandria, St. John the Merciful, to be reminded of the Joy of Giving. Upon commencement of his archpastoral duties, St. John ordered that a list of all the poor and destitute be compiled that were under his omaphor. This list numbered over seven thousand men. Yet, each day, he received these people at the gate of the Patriarchal Palace, and gave alms to them from the treasury. He emptied the treasury three times in this manner; and yet it was continually replenished. Similarly, we are called to give. God will provide our gifts, just as He provides the One Gift we offer at the altar every Divine Liturgy!

GOSPEL & COMMENTARY

Luke 5: 1-11

At that time, as the multitude pressed about Jesus to hear the word of God, He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets. Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.

Gospel Commentary

The teaching of the Word of God in this parable reflects Jesus' status as an official teacher. In Semitic cultures, the teacher would always sit, as the seated position is the one of power. However, it is not until Christ speaks to Simon Peter, James and John in the language that they can understand that they follow Him. These were fishermen. They know the sea, and caught nothing. Christ, as the Son of God, has power over all things; yet it is only through the sign of these fish that they can recognize Him as such. This "great catch" also serves as a prophetic metaphor representing their new vocation as "Fishers of Men." We must always remember: in order to truly plant the Seed of God, we must speak and act on the level the hearers will understand.



SPIRITUAL ARTICLES

Reflection from *The Prologue* for Sept. 28/Oct. 11 by St. Nikolai Velimirovic

In guiding the dispensation of this world, and especially of His Holy Church, God often makes unexpected moves, and changes the evil destiny of His servants to the good. This occurred many times in the life of St. Chariton. Following cruel tortures, Chariton was thrown into prison and was promised certain death. Then, Emperor Aurelian died unexpectedly, and the new emperor freed the Christian captives. Thus, Chariton escaped death. Then, when he was traveling to Jerusalem, robbers seized him and took him to their cave. They left him there, and went off to rob and plunder, with the intention of killing him when they came back. In this cave there was a wine cask into which a poisonous snake had crawled, drunk of the wine, and vomited its venom into the cask. When the robbers returned, tired and thirsty from the heat, they drank the venomous wine and, one by one, fell dead. And thus, St. Chariton was saved from death by yet another unexpected event. The Lord heaped misfortunes upon His servant, in order that by these misfortunes He would temper and purify him as gold is tempered and purified by fire, and that He might bind him even more securely to Himself. He delivered him from death, because Chariton had yet to establish several monasteries where, by his ascetic example, he would direct many human souls on the path of salvation.

The Venerable Chariton the Confessor

Chariton was a distinguished and devout citizen of the city of Iconium. Imbued with the spirit of his compatriot, St. Thecla, Chariton openly confessed the name of Christ. When a bitter persecution of Christians began during the reign of Emperor Aurelian, Chariton was immediately brought to trial before the eparch. The judge ordered him to worship the gods, but Chariton replied: "All your gods are demons, and were cast from the heavens into the nethermost hell." Chariton clearly proclaimed his faith in the One Living God, the Creator of all, and the Lord Jesus, the Savior of mankind. The eparch ordered that he be tortured and beaten, until his whole body was like one great wound. When Aurelian's evil deeds caught up with him and he died an evil death, Chariton was freed from torture and prison. He then set out for Jerusalem. On the way he was seized by robbers, but escaped from them by God's providence. Chariton, not wanting to return to Iconium again, withdrew to the wilderness of Pharan, where he founded a monastery and gathered monks. He established a rule for the monastery and then, to avoid the praise of men, withdrew to another wilderness near Jericho. There he founded another monastery called the Monastery of Chariton. Finally, he founded a third monastery, Souka, which the Greeks called the Old Lavra. Chariton died at a great old age, and took up his abode in the glory of his Lord on September 28, 350. His relics repose in his first monastery. The composition of the rite of monastic tonsure is attributed to St. Chariton.

The Holy Prophet Baruch

He was a disciple and faithful friend of the great prophet Jeremiah. He prophesied the return of the Jews from the Babylonian Captivity, the destruction of Babylon, and the coming of the Son of God to earth. It is held that he was slain by the Jews in Egypt, as was the Prophet Jeremiah, in the seventh century before Christ.

The Holy Martyr Mark the Shepherd

At the time of Diocletian, Magnus, the magistrate of Antioch, went hunting with his soldiers. Pursuing a wild beast, the soldiers saw that it fled to the shepherd Mark, who was tending his flock there. The beast fawned around Mark, a man of God. Seeing this, thirty soldiers listened to Mark's explanation of the Faith, and believed in Christ. They were soon beheaded. The magistrate then bound Mark, took him to town and summoned three brothers, Alexander, Alphaeus and Zosimas, who were blacksmiths. He ordered them to make instruments of torture with which to torment Mark. All three of them, after conversing with St. Mark, confessed the Christian Faith, and ignored the magistrate's order. The magistrate sentenced them to death, and ordered that molten lead be poured into their mouths. After this, the saintly Mark was beheaded, and his head was mockingly placed in the temple of Artemis. Because of this, that temple was destroyed by the power of God.

The Holy Martyr Vatslav [Wenceslaus], King of the Czechs

Vatslav was the grandson of St. Ludmilla. As king, he labored in the Faith like the great ascetics, and strengthened the Orthodox Faith among his people. He was strict in ensuring that no innocent person suffer in the courts. In his zeal for the Christian Faith and in his love for his fellow man, St. Vatslav purchased pagan children who were being sold as slaves, and immediately baptized them and raised them as Christians. He translated the Gospel of St. John into the Czech language, and transported the relics of St. Vitus and St. Ludmilla to Prague. His brother Boleslav invited him to be his guest, and then killed him in his court. Immediately after this, Boleslav brought in German priests and had the services celebrated in Latin. St. Vatslav suffered in the year 935 and his relics repose in Prague.

HYMN OF PRAISE

The Holy Martyr Vatslav, King of the Czechs
From a wicked mother, good fruit was born:
St. Vatslav, who pleased God.
His wicked mother gave him only a body,
But his grandmother—light and faith and hope.
The glorious grandmother, pious Ludmilla,
Nurtured Vatslav's soul.
As a white lily, Vatslav grew,
And adorned himself with innocence.
As the king reigned, the people rejoiced,

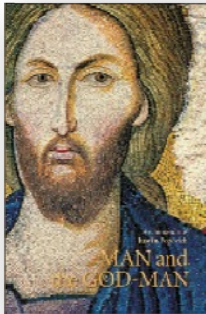
And with their king they honored God.
Yet the adversary of man never sleeps or dozes,
Laying sinful snares for every soul,
And he incited Boleslav against Vatslav.
“For what, my brother, do you want my head?”
Vatslav asked, but was still beheaded!
But the evildoer did not escape God.
The soul of St. Vatslav went
Before the Most-high God, the Just,
The One he had always adored,
And with Ludmilla, Vatslav now prays
For his people, that they be strengthened in faith.
St. Vatslav, beautiful as an angel!

IMPORTANT REMINDERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. HOLY ICON – Theory & Practice Workshop

Our Diocese will be hosting an eight week Iconography Workshop which will begin on Monday, November 2, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at the Saint Steven’s Serbian Orthodox Cathedral, 1621 West Garvey Avenue, Alhambra, CA 91803. This class will be held two to three times a week. This year we welcome special guest instructor, Presbyter Stevan Kovacevic from Trebenje, Herzegovina. More information is available at: http://www.westsrbdio.org/iconography_studio/online_application_Nov_2009.html

2. MAN AND THE GOD-MAN by Archimandrite Justin Popovic



This newest publication of our Sebastian Press Publishing House is now available for purchase online at: http://www.westsrbdio.org/ads/man_and_the_godman.html

Retail Price: \$20.00

3. FIRST ANNUAL PAN-ORTHODOX CLERGY RETREAT – December 1-3

All Clergy of our Diocese are invited to participate in the first Annual Pan-Orthodox Retreat to be held at St. Nicholas Ranch in Dunlap, CA
For more information visit: <http://www.westsrbdio.org>