

The Pharisee and Publican

On Refusal to Judge our Neighbor

By: Saint Dorotheos of Gaza

“Condemning a man is saying ‘he is a wicked liar,’ or ‘he is an angry man,’ or ‘he is a fornicator.’ For in this way one judges the condition of his soul and draws a conclusion about his whole life, saying it is of such a kind and condemns him as such.

This is a very serious thing. For it is one thing to say, ‘He got mad’, and another thing to say, ‘He is bad-tempered’, and to reveal, as we said, the whole disposition of his life. It is serious to judge a man for each one of his sins.

As Christ himself says, ‘Hypocrite, first take the board from your own eye, then you can see to take the splinter out of your brother’s eye.’

[...] That Pharisee who was praying and giving thanks to God for his own good works was not lying but speaking the truth, and he was not condemned for that.

For we must give thanks to God when we are worthy to do something good, as he is then working with us and helping us.

Because of this he was not condemned...because he said, ‘I am not like other men’, but he was condemned because he said, ‘I am not like this tax-collector’.

It was then that he made a judgment. He condemned a person and the dispositions of his soul—to put it shortly, his whole life. Therefore, the tax-collector rather than the Pharisee went away justified.

[...] Why do we not rather judge ourselves and our own wickedness which we know so accurately and about which we have to render an account to God?

Why do we usurp God’s right to judge? Why should we demand a reckoning from his creature, his servant?



FELLOWSHIP HOUR AND BREAD OF HOLY OBLATION

| | BREAD OF HOLY OBLATION | FELLOWSHIP HOUR |
|--------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 8 Feb | Laila Ayoub | Laila Ayoub |
| 15 Feb | Sam & Margo Sahouri-Ghanem | Sam & Margo Sahouri-Ghanem |
| 22 Feb | | Dara Potter |
| 29 Feb | | |

Baking or ordering the Holy Bread of Oblation or providing and serving the refreshments for Fellowship Hour following the Liturgy on Sundays is a great way to practice Christian fellowship among our fellow parishioners. Notice the openings to the left and consider contributing to this vital ministry. Sign-up in the vestibule

SS. PETER AND PAUL ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

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SS. PETER AND PAUL ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

All Things Are Possible to Him Who Believes

Matins: Sundays 9:30am

Divine Liturgy: Sundays 10:30am

Venerable Demetrios the Sacristan; New-martyr Auxentios of Constantinople

Today we Commemorate: The Pharisee and Publican & Transfer of the Feast of the Presentation (Meeting) of Christ

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION (Tone 1)

While the stone was sealed by the Jews, and the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst arise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. For which cause the heavenly powers cried aloud unto Thee, O giver of life. Glory to Thy Resurrection O Christ, glory to Thy kingdom, glory to Thy providence, O Thou Who alone art the lover of mankind.

APOLYTIKION OF THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN (Tone 1)

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of grace, for from thee arose the Sun of justice, Christ our God, lighting those who are in darkness. Rejoice and be glad, O righteous elder, carrying in thine arms the Deliverer of our souls, Who granteth us Resurrection.

KONTAKION OF THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN (Tone 1)

Thou, O Christ God, Who by Thy Birth, didst sanctify the Virgin's womb, and, as is meet, didst bless Simeon's arms, and didst also come to save us; preserve Thy fold in wars, and confirm them whom Thou didst love, for Thou alone art the Lover of mankind.

THE EPISTLE

(For the Presentation of Christ)

My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.

Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church News

The Presentation (Meeting) of our Lord

Today's Feast is called the Presentation of Christ. This is because it commemorates the Presentation of Christ by His Mother in the Temple at Jerusalem exactly forty days after His Birth. As we can see from the icon of the Feast, Christ was brought to the Temple by His mother and accompanied by His guardian Joseph, who holds the customary sacrifice of two turtle doves. In the Temple Christ was carried in the arms of the Righteous Simeon and watched over by the Prophetess Anna. This Feast is yet more proof that the Son of God truly became man. Today an infant, not a spirit or an angel, is brought to the Temple.

This meeting between the Righteous Simeon and Anna and the Saviour is why this Feast has another, very common name: 'The Meeting of the Lord'. According to age-old tradition, Simeon was one of those Seventy translators who in the third century before Christ had translated the Scriptures of the Old Testament into Greek. Coming to the words in the seventh chapter of Isaiah the Prophet, he had been awestruck by the affirmation that a Virgin would give birth. He had been told by the Holy Spirit that he would live until he saw these words fulfilled. At today's Feast which is the fulfillment of these words, the aged Simeon utters the words: 'Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy words, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel'. Soon after uttering these words, he reposed, as did the Righteous Anna, who had also been waiting to see the fulfillment of the promise of the Holy Spirit that she too would see the Messiah in great old age.

The Prayer of St Simeon is read at every Vespers service in the Church Year, but at Vespers yesterday, and again tonight, before tomorrow's Feast of St Simeon and St Anna, it is sung. According to the Old Testament, the Jews were commanded to present their male children at the Temple in Jerusalem forty days after their Birth. This was to give thanks to God and pray for the purification of the mother and health of the child, for it was considered that after the vital forty-day period it was almost certain that all mortal danger was passed. This is why this Feast has yet another name: 'The Purification of the Virgin'. The Christ-Child is only forty days old, the salvation of the world is dependent on His Mother. This is why although this Feast is a Feast in honour of Our Lord, the Church is yet in blue, for we also give great honour today to the Mother of God. Indeed, this Feast is the Feast of all mothers.

In our New Testament times, we have the custom of 'churching', which is similar to this rite of purification of the mother, which was carried out in the Old Testament, but there are also important differences. First of all, since the Coming of Christ, all children, not only boys, are to be presented in church at the age of forty days. However today, they are to be presented for baptism and chrismation and so made ready for holy communion. Secondly, the Church also appoints prayer to be said over the mother at this critical time. These prayers are firstly in thanksgiving for the physical safety of the mother, but also they are said for the spiritual safety of the mother, in order to ward off what is now called 'post-natal depression'. But what does this Feast mean for us today? Since it is exactly forty days since Christmas, it is time for us to think about the last forty days and ask ourselves some questions: What today can we present to the Temple of Christ, the Church? In what condition do we present our souls to Christ? What sacrifices have we made in the last forty days? Have we begun cultivating a new virtue? Have we attempted to give up an old vice? Have we been to confession? Have we taken communion? Have we kept the Wednesday and Friday fasts? Have we read our prayers? Have we set a Christian example to our neighbours? Have we thanked God for all that we have received? What has changed in our way of life since the Birth of Christ forty days ago? What progress has been made? Whatever our answers to these questions, on this, the Feast of the Meeting of Christ, one thing is certain: If we are not spiritually prepared to meet Christ, then we shall never meet Him.

Upcoming events...

Feb 5—Adult Ed Forum @ 7:15pm
Feb 7—Parish Council Retreat 1:00-4:00pm
Feb 7—NO Arabic Liturgy
Feb 8—Antiochian Women's Luncheon Meeting @ 12 noon
Feb 15—Meat Fare Sunday
Feb 22—Cheese Fare Sunday
Feb 23—Great Lent Begins
Feb 28—Baptism of Aurora Farmand 12:00 noon
Mar 1—Sunday of Orthodoxy Great Vespers @ 5:00 pm

Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church News

off with a **important to dox commu- month we are The Convent** which is a female monastic community under our Archdiocese. **The first Antiochian Orthodox Monastery for Nuns in North America, the purpose of the convent is to pray for the salvation of the whole world, to lead a life of repentance. There are currently two Nuns at St. Thekla's Convent with room to grow, but they need our help. Please, help and support this most vital part of our Most Holy Orthodox Church in North America. With prayer, love and donations the monastery will thrive by God's Grace.**



charity very our Ortho- nity. This supporting of St. Thekla

ANTIOCHIAN VILLAGE SUMMER CAMP
Registration is open! And spots are running out quickly; session 4 is already full. Register at avcamp.org. Scholarships are available too; just ask Fr. George or Fr. Isaac.

Email us for more info at:
SundaySchool@peterpaulpotomac.org

SUNDAY OF

On Sunday, Great Vespers 5:00 p.m. at Ss Church, fol-



ORTHODOXY

March 1, 2015, will be held at Peter & Paul followed by a recep-

tion in Kogok Hall. Co-sponsoring churches are St. George, St. Gregory and St. Raphael Mission

AN ECUMENICAL PRAYER SERVICE FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

On Saturday, March 31st at 6:30 p.m., an Ecumenical Prayer Service for Christian Unity will be held at St. Aphraim Syriac Orthodox Church (6200 Indian Run Parkway, Alexandria, VA). Several churches from both the Orthodox and Catholic traditions will offer prayer for Christian Unity, particularly at this time of great tribulation for the Christian Communities of the Middle East. Following the Service, a reception will be hosted by St. Aphraim Church. All are welcome to attend.

ICONOGRAPHY PROJECT 2015

The project to complete the Iconography (The Adornment project) in our Church has begun. The project will take approximately four weeks and it will therefore be necessary to hold Divine Liturgy in the main hall (Kogok Hall) on Sundays, February 8 and 15. The faithful are asked to be patient during this period as the Sanctuary will be a "work zone." Please remember that donations for the Iconography are still needed. Each donated Icon will be dedicated in a special "Journal Book of Consecration" upon completion of the Ss. Peter and Paul Adornment project.

For He hath regarded the humility of His servant.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews. (7:7-17)

Brethren, it is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior. Here tithes are received by mortal men; there, by one of whom it is testified that he lives. One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him. Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron? For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, who has become a priest, not according to a legal requirement concerning bodily descent but by the power of an indestructible life. For it is witnessed of him, "Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek."

THE GOSPEL

(For Sunday of the Pharisee and Publican)

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (18:10-14)

The Lord spoke this parable: "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank Thee that I am not like other men, extortionists, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to Heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Orthodox Christians

Faithful Orthodox fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when they receive Holy Communion in fulfillment of Christ's command to eat His Body and drink His Blood. In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, communicants should not be conscious of grave sin, have fasted from the night before taking communion, and seek to live in charity and love with their neighbors. Persons conscious of grave sin must first be reconciled with God and the Church through the Sacrament of Penance (Confession and Absolution). A

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Directors

Samia Zolnerowich
Jennifer Buchko

Teachers

Jumana Misleh
Susan Kozlov
Michelle Zook
Razan Abdallah
Christine Morin
Roxanne Bennett
Lara Bellone
Amber Bennett
Caroline Jarboe
Saleem Mokhiber
Stephen Zolnerowich
Anees Mokhiber

Men's Club

Sam Khalil

Antiochian Women

Kate Niewenhaus

Teen SOYO

Adviser:
Majd Akkawi
Facilitators:
Phillip Allen
Reema Guegel
Stephen Zolnerowich
Samia Zolnerowich
Anees Mokhiber

Fellowship of St. John

Majd Akkawi
Christine & Samer Korkor
Christian & Zeina Manasseh

Adornment

Shams Akkawi
Jamil Hermes

Facility Management

Nick Nahas
Bob Simon

Rental Coordinator

Barbara Abraham

Charities

Sam Sahouri Ghanem

Finance

David Jackson

Stewardship

Lorna Malooley

Commemorations

For the Servants of God departed this life: the Lord God remember them in his kingdom always: now and ever, and unto ages of ages

DEPARTED

Deacon David Damut

Gloria Swydan

Katherine Slanta

David Georges

Ramzi Bordcosh

Evelyn Zacharia

Charlie Ayoub

Abdallah Ayoub

Sandra Ayoub

George & Ablah Misleh

Geraldine Kiatta

Father Constantine Massoud

Parishioners who remain in our prayers continually

Margaret Ashley

Linda & George Brown

Issa & Susan Dagg

Abraham & Susan Fannoney

John & Betty Slanta & Family

Renee Mousad

Father Elias Bitar

Father Lou Mashie

Nabil Emad

Siham & Richard Ayoub

Nabeeha Ayoub & Family

Paul Misleh & Family

Jack & Patricia Bottash

Non-Orthodox

We welcome to this celebration of the Eucharist those Christians who are not fully united with us. It is a consequence of the sad divisions in Christianity that we cannot extend to them a general invitation to receive Communion. Orthodox believe that the Eucharist is an action of the celebrating community signifying a oneness in faith, life, and worship of the community. Reception of the Eucharist by Christians not fully united with us would imply a oneness which does not yet exist, and for which we must all pray.

Not Receiving Communion

Those not receiving sacramental communion are encouraged to express in their hearts a prayerful desire for unity with the Lord Jesus and with one another by receiving a piece of blessed bread following the dismissal prayers.

frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance is encouraged for all.

For the Servants of God that they may have mercy, peace, health, salvation and visitation, pardon and remission of sin; the Lord God remember them in his Kingdom always:
now and ever, and unto ages of ages

LIVING

Welcome to Ss. Peter and Paul

To encourage our worship in a proper spirit of prayer and devotion, we respectfully ask you enter the sanctuary quietly during the Divine Liturgy.

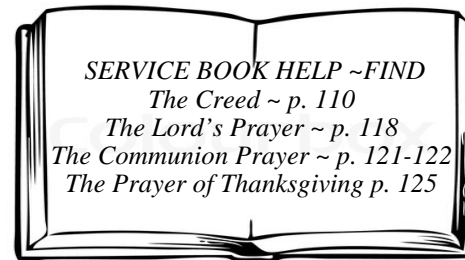
PLEASE DO NOT ENTER OR EXIT THE SANCTUARY AS

- the clergy censes the sanctuary
 - the congregation is standing, or
 - during the Little Entrance with the Gospel
 - during the Reading of the Epistle and the Gospel
- Please enter the sanctuary upon the completion of the sermon
- the Great Entrance with the Holy Gifts
 - the Prayers of Consecration p. 112-113
 - the Hymn to the Theotokos "It is Truly Meet"

Please follow the directions of the ushers during Communion and dismissal; refrain from using cell phones in the narthex; and be considerate of those praying and converse in the hall, outside or downstairs.

Visitors

If you are visiting our parish, please let us get to know you. Complete a visitor card you will find in your pew, and drop it in the ushers tray or the collection box.



HOLY BREAD OF OBLATION OFFERED BY: Abraham & Susan Fannoney;

Roula Bordcosh & Family

A 40-day Memorial Service for Ramzi Bordcosh is offered by Roula Bordcosh & Family

FELLOWSHIP HOUR OFFERED BY: Abraham & Susan Fannoney

CHARITY COLLECTION FOR SAINT THEKLA'S

The Charities Committee is starting 2015