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Saint Nestor

CENTRAL YOUTH COMMITTEE MAGAZINE

I am the Resurrection and the life. Those who believe in Me, though they may die, they shall live. (John 11:25)

Message from the CYC Secretary

Christ is Risen!! Truly He is Risen!!

Welcome to the latest edition of St Nestor. We hope that you had a blessed and holy Pascha. Over the next few months the major feasts include the Ascension of our Lord (13 May) and Holy Pentecost (23 May). The kneeling prayers that are read during the vespers of Pentecost can be found in Issue 22 of St Nestor, which is available for download online at www.goyouth.org.au/saintnestormagazine.php.

On the 31st May the fast for the Holy Apostles begins and the feast of Sts Peter and Paul is celebrated on the 29 June.

Also included in this issue is the third part of an article by Philip Kariatlis which was presented at the State Youth Conference in Melbourne last year.

If you would also like to contribute an article please email it to cyc@goyouth.org.au, with the subject: "CYC article" to be considered by our editorial committee. We welcome your submissions.

May the Holy Spirit be with you.
CYC Secretary

**WHO IS SO GREAT A GOD
AS OUR GOD?
YOU ARE THE GOD
WHO WORKS WONDERS**



A SACRED PASCHA HAS BEEN SHOWN FORTH FOR US TODAY; A NEW AND HOLY PASCHA; A MYSTIC PASCHA; AN ALL-VENERABLE PASCHA; A PASCHA, WHICH IS CHRIST THE REDEEMER; A SPOTLESS PASCHA; A GREAT PASCHA; A PASCHA OF THE FAITHFUL; A PASCHA, WHICH HAS OPENED TO US THE GATES OF PARADISE; A PASCHA SANCTIFYING ALL THE FAITHFUL.

From the Service of the Resurrection

I am the light of the world. Those who follow Me will not walk in darkness, but have the light of life. (John 8: 12)

Extracts from the Fathers

St Gregory the Theologian

Believe that all that is in the world, both all that is seen and all that is unseen, was made out of nothing by God, and is governed by the Providence of its Creator, and will receive a change to a better state. Believe that evil has no substance or kingdom, either unoriginate or self-existent or created by God; but that it is our work, and the evil one's, and came upon us through our heedlessness, but not from our Creator. Believe that the Son of God, the Eternal Word, Who was begotten of the Father before all time and without body, was in these latter days for your sake made also Son of Man ineffably and, born of the Virgin Mary stainlessly (for nothing can be stained where God is, and by which salvation comes), in His own Person at once entire Man and perfect God, for the sake of the entire sufferer, that He may bestow salvation on your whole being, having destroyed the whole condemnation of your sins: impassible in His Godhead, passible in that which He assumed; as much Man for your sake as you are made God for His. Believe that for us sinners He was led to death; was crucified and buried, so far as to taste of death; and that He rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven, that He might take you with Him who were lying low; and that He will come again with His glorious Presence to judge the quick and the dead; no longer flesh, nor yet without a body, according to the laws which He alone knows of a more godlike body, that He may be seen by those who pierced Him, Revelation 1:7 and on the other hand may remain as God without carnality.

Oration 40:45

St Irenaeus of Lyon

As he finishes his Gospel, Mark concludes: "So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God". The ascension confirms what had been spoken by the prophet: "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit on my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool." Thus God who was announced by the prophets is truly one and the same as God who is celebrated in the true gospel, whom we Christians worship and love with the whole heart as the maker of heaven and earth, and of all things within it.

Against Heresies 3.10.5

St Basil the Great

You say that the Holy Spirit is a creature. And every creature is a servant of the Creator, for "all are your servants." (Ps.118:91). If then He is a servant, His holiness is acquired; and everything of which the holiness is acquired is receptive of evil; but the Holy Spirit being holy in essence is called "fount of holiness." Rom.1:4. Therefore the Holy Spirit is not a creature. If He is not a creature, He is of one essence and substance with the Father.

Letters 8:10

St Gregory Thaumaturgus

There is one God, the Father of the living Word, who is His subsistent Wisdom and Power and Eternal Image: perfect Begetter of the perfect Begotten, Father of the only-begotten Son. There is one Lord, Only of the Only, God of God, Image and Likeness of Deity, Efficient Word, Wisdom comprehensive of the constitution of all things, and Power formative of the whole creation, true Son of true Father, Invisible of Invisible, and Incorruptible of Incorruptible, and Immortal of Immortal and Eternal of Eternal. And there is One Holy Spirit, having His subsistence from God, and being made manifest by the Son, to wit to men: Image of the Son, Perfect Image of the Perfect; Life, the Cause of the living; Holy Fount; Sanctity, the Supplier, or Leader, of Sanctification; in whom is manifested God the Father, who is above all and in all, and God the Son, who is through all. There is a perfect Trinity, in glory and eternity and sovereignty, neither divided nor estranged. Wherefore there is nothing either created or in servitude in the Trinity; nor anything superinduced, as if at some former period it was non-existent, and at some later period it was introduced. And thus neither was the Son ever wanting to the Father, nor the Spirit to the Son; but without variation and without change, the same Trinity abides ever.

PG. 10, 984



St Cyril of Alexandria

After Saint Athanasius, who was the adamant defender of the *Homoousios* ('Consubstantial'), the Church of Alexandria was, for the whole world, the lighthouse of Orthodoxy, thanks to Saint Cyril, the champion of the *Theotokos* (the 'Mother of God'), the touchstone of the dogma of the Incarnation.

Born in about 360, he was early placed under the protection of his uncle Theophilus, Archbishop of Alexandria, who gave him a complete formation in rhetoric and philosophy, and especially in the Holy Scriptures, which he knew almost by heart and was able to put to good use. Placing this great learning at the service of the Church, the young Cyril was included among the clergy and called to succeed Theophilus. He accompanied him to Constantinople and was present at the iniquitous 'pirate' Council of the Oak (403), which unjustly condemned Saint John Chrysostom. He later refused for a long time to write Saint John's name in the diptychs more from devotion to his uncle's memory than from doctrinal opposition to the holy hierarch and it was only on the urging of Saint Isidore of Pelusium (4 Feb.) and, it is said, after a vision of the Mother of God with Saint John Chrysostom beside her, that he consented to put it in again, and even became a fervent supporter of his veneration (417).

On Theophilus' death (412), he was immediately consecrated Archbishop of Alexandria, despite violent opposition from the supporters of Archdeacon Timothy. Of an energetic character and gifted with ardent zeal for the defence of the Truth, Saint Cyril undertook to strengthen the unity of the Church, which was at the time in full flower but was still threatened by various divisive elements. Preaching to his people the love of the true Faith, which had been preserved by the holy Fathers through so many battles against the heretics, he took authoritative measures against the Novatian schismatics, who were drawing many of the Orthodox to their side because of their austerity and moral rigour. He had their churches closed, and forbade their bishop to fulfill his functions. To combat the remains of paganism and the superstitions which still gripped the people, he had the relics of Saints Cyrus and John translated from Alexandria to Menuthis near Canope, famous for its diabolically-inspired oracles, and himself took the head of the procession, which lasted a whole week (28 June).

Although Alexandria was a Christian city, it still had an important Jewish colony, which often disturbed the peace with riots and attacks on the Christians. Following one of these incidents, the bishop summoned the heads of the Jewish community and reprimanded them with threats. They in revenge, pretending

there was a fire in the Church of St Alexander, brought the Christians together at night and slew a great many of them. In the face of the inertia of Prefect Orestes, who, fearing the growing power of the bishop in civil matters was predisposed to the Jews, Saint Cyril had them all expelled from the city and turned the synagogues into churches. It was thus that the Jewish colony in Alexandria, which had been well known since the time of Alexander the Great, came to an end. But these events poisoned the Archbishop's relations with the Prefect. Some monks from Nitria, devoted to Saint Cyril, placed themselves one day in the magistrate's path and called him a pagan; and one of them, Ammonius, grabbed a stone and threw it at his head. He was at once arrested, and tortured with such violence that he died. Further disorder also followed the ignoble killing of Hypatia, a virtuous woman of great authority in the realm of philosophy, who was venerated throughout the world. She was murdered by an unruly group of Christian fanatics; who, suspecting that she was acting as a go-between for the Bishop and Prefect Orestes, were intent on impeding their reconciliation. In the midst of these troubles, which spilled a great deal of blood, Saint Cyril strove to have justice respected, and he finally achieved the recognition of the Church's authority in every aspect of city life.

Having inherited the famous School of Alexandria, and having probably been a pupil of Didymus the Blind, the holy Bishop devoted a great deal of his time to the writing of exegetical works, with allegorical and moral commentaries on details of the Old Testament, in which he discerned 'the Mystery of Christ manifested in enigmas'. It is this vision of the one Christ as the fulfilment of the Law and the Prophets that was to direct the whole of his life, and Divine Providence was soon to require of him that he apply it both on the theological level and on that of ecclesiastical activity.

In 428, Constantinople applied to Antioch to have the priest Nestorius elevated to the patriarchal see. He was known for his eloquence and for the austere life he purported to lead. This election was greeted with great joy, not just by the people of the capital, who hoped to receive in him a new Chrysostom, but also by the worldwide episcopate including Saint Cyril. However, as soon as he was consecrated, Nestorius cast off his mask of piety and revealed an intemperate zeal in warring with the heretics, declaring himself ready to wreck all the towns in order to drive them out. He soon made himself heartily disliked by his violence and pride, and began to make imprudent declarations concerning the Incarnation. Pushing to the limit the theological tradi-

(Continued on page 4)

St Cyril of Alexandria

tion of the School of Antioch—which stressed the distinction in the Lord’s actions between those that revealed His divine nature and others that belonged to His human nature—Nestorius undertook to give an abstract and rationalist explanation of the Incarnation, without, however, making use of adequate concepts to explain the way the natures were united. Introducing a duality of agents between the Word of God and Christ the ‘mere man’, he asserted that the characteristics of divine and human nature would have to be attributed to one or the other. He was led as a consequence to consider that the Word had only taken on humanity as a ‘tent’, an instrument, and that the Virgin Mary was not the ‘Mother of God’ (*Theotokos*)—a title that the Church’s tradition had long given her—but only ‘Mother of Christ’ (*Cbristotokos*). Stating that one could not say that ‘God was born of the Virgin, but is only united with him who was born and died’, he merely saw in Christ an exemplary man, a God-bearer, ‘divinised’ in a special way by his virtues, in whom God dwelt in a way similar to that in which He inspired the prophets and the saints; but who was in no way the *Theanthropos*, the God-Man who is for men the source of salvation, of life, grace and sanctification. Without ever himself speaking of two ‘Persons’ in Christ, he never ceased attacking the concept of the *Theotokos*, and one of his disciples, Bishop Dorotheus, even stated one day in a sermon in the presence of Nestorius: ‘If a man says that Mary is the *Theotokos*, let him be anathema!’ This would have meant the anathematisation of all the God-bearing Fathers who had used the term, and the bishops the world over who confessed the divine Motherhood.

Informed of this nascent heresy, Cyril solemnly set forth in his Paschal Homily the following year (429) that the Virgin had truly given birth to the Son of God made man, and that she therefore must rightly be called the *Theotokos*. He wrote Nestorius a letter of brotherly remonstrance, asking him to accept the title on which the whole doctrine of our salvation in Christ

rested. Then, in the face of Nestorius’ haughty and disdainful refusal—who, turning the accusations against the Archbishop of Alexandria, spread calumnies about him and attempted to have him formally denounced—Cyril resolved to take up arms in defence of the Truth and declared himself ‘ready to suffer anything, even to death, rather than abandon the Faith’ (*Ep. 7 (PG 77, 64)*). He addressed a treatise *On the True Faith* to Emperor Theodosius I, his wife and sisters, and sent a dossier on Nestorius’ errors to Pope Celestine (8 April). The Pope convoked a council in Rome, which condemned the errors, and charged the Archbishop of Alexandria with

carrying out the sentence pronounced against the heretic if he refused to retract within ten days (430). In the meantime, Saint Cyril had summoned a synod of the bishops of Egypt, which wrote an exposé of Christological doctrine, followed by the twelve *Anathemas* of Nestorius’ propositions that Cyril had addressed to the heretic in his third letter.

In these polemical writings against Nestorius, faithful to Holy Writ on the *Word made flesh* (Jn 1:14), and to the Fathers of the Council of Nicaea who had confessed that the same Son of God, remaining in the bosom of the Father, became man, died and rose again, Saint Cyril underlined the unity of the mystery of Christ. He strove to show that, from the first moment of His conception, the Lord definitively united human and divine nature,

and he contemplates in this mysterious ‘union’ (*henosis*) — with no ‘conjunction’ (*synapheia*) as Nestorius asserted—the exchange of natural properties and unity of action of the Saviour, who has opened to men the possibility of a true participation with God, of deification, of which the Mother of God is the prototype and model. The Lord having thus inaugurated a new mode of existence, divine and human together, in His Body the Church, it is from His flesh, truly become the ‘flesh of the Word’, that we are given life. The ‘One Christ’ of Saint Cyril is then He of the

(Continued on page 5)



(Continued from page 4)

Eucharist and of spiritual experience which, at the cost of long and difficult controversies, the Church was to define in the succeeding generations.

During this time, Nestorius, relying on imperial authority and his friends at court, attempted to impose his ideas in the capital by means of threats, corruption, excommunication and the persecution of any who dared to resist him. The situation became such that the Orthodox clergy begged Theodosius to convoke an ecumenical council to put an end to this 'universal scandal' of the Bishop of Constantinople. But by a skilful twist, it was the heretic persuaded the sovereign to summon the council, to take place in Ephesus at Pentecost the following year (431) in order to charge Saint Cyril with heresy for his *Anathemas*.

Cyril and Nestorius having arrived in Ephesus at the heads of imposing entourages, they awaited the coming of Archbishop John of Antioch and the eastern bishops, whom Nestorius had won over to his cause. This was not because of the rejection of the term *Theotokos* but by his sending them Cyril's *Anathemas*, which they could only read out of context, as though they were a restoration of the Apollinarian heresy'. Finally, as they were late, it is decided to open the first session without the Orientals, on 22 June 431. Saint Cyril presided, standing in for the Pope of Rome whose legates were also late. After having had the Nicene Creed read, and then Cyril's letter to Nestorius and the latter's reply, the Fathers, who numbered about two hundred, proclaimed the legitimacy of the term *Theotokos* and deposed Nestorius, who had three times refused to appear. On leaving the church, they were welcomed with an ovation by a crowd devoted to the veneration of the Mother of God, with women burning incense along their path.

Directly on the arrival in Ephesus of John of Antioch and his party, five days later, he, offended that they had not been waited for, convoked a council of forty-three bishops and, accusing Cyril of having revived the heresy of Apollinarius, pronounced his deposition with no other formality than the acquiescence of Memnon of Ephesus. The Ecumenical Council thus found itself transformed into a violent and passionate battle between two parties that were trying to get the Emperor's protection. Aloof and ill-formed, Theodosius, after futile attempts at reconciliation, had Cyril and Memnon arrested, while declaring Nestorius a heretic, and ordered that the assembly be disbanded. The only result of the Council was that it set out the firm grounds for the term *Theotokos* and proceeded to the deposition of Nestorius, who was sent to his monastery in Antioch and then exiled to Libya (435), where he died a miserable death.

They found themselves, nonetheless, faced with a new and cruel division. At the moment at which the Empire, threatened by the barbarians, was in need of the greatest cohesion, there could be seen only quarrels, mutual anathemas and disorder under the pretext of de-

votion to the Truth, that exposed the holiness of the Church to the mockery of its enemies. During the laborious negotiations that followed, Saint Cyril, who had returned to Alexandria where the people gave him a triumphant welcome, showed not only his Orthodoxy but also his humility and the abundance of his virtue. Refusing to demand justice for the ill treatment he had received in Ephesus during his imprisonment, he gave the Orientals an explanation of the *Anathemas* that had offended them so deeply, and he stated that they were only against Nestorius' heretical dogmas, also declaring that he was ready to correct them, on condition that John and his party consented to Nestorius' condemnation. They finally reached an agreement, and the Orientals sent Cyril a confession of faith that he welcomed with a jubilant letter. In a spirit of peace but without abandoning his fundamental thesis, he made judicious concessions to Antioch's traditional terminology, and accepted the distinction that was made there of the two natures, united without confusion or co-mingling, in the unique Person of Jesus Christ.

This *Act of Union* (April 433), although it was not a conciliar decision, is nevertheless considered as the profession of faith of the Third Ecumenical Council and the rule of Orthodoxy. It refuted in advance the heretical proposals of Eutyches and the Monophysites, who claimed that some of the writings of Saint Cyril supported their belief that the human nature of Christ is as though 'absorbed' by the divinity; and the Council of Chalcedon (451) was only held to reassert and precise its essential terms.

A fragile peace being established, Saint Cyril spent the last years of his episcopate in confirming the unity of the Church and in moderating the excesses of his too-zealous partisans, who accused him of betraying their cause by the union with the Orientals. Inured to strife by his experience of ecclesiastical affairs and human passions, he showed himself in those circumstances a model of moderation and pastoral clemency. In this way, he refuted the writings of Theodore of Mopsuesta, the great theologian of the School of Antioch, who died in the peace of the Church (428), but refused to demand his condemnation in order not to upset the sensibilities of the Orientals again and so put the unity of the Church in danger. Having finished the work that God had confided to him for the edification of His Church, Saint Cyril fell asleep in peace on 27 June 444, to join the choir of the holy Fathers and take his seat, together with Saint John Chrysostom, alongside the Mother of God. He was at once venerated as a saint and praised as the 'enlightener of the world', the 'invincible defender of Orthodoxy' and the 'Seal of the Fathers'.

The feast of St Cyril of Alexandria is celebrated on the 9th June.

[Source: *The Synaxarion. The Lives of the Saints of the Orthodox Church. Vol.5 May-June, Holy Convent of the Annunciation of Our Lady, Ormylia(Chalkidike) 2005*]

The Significant Role of Youth in the Life of the Church:

the Diversity of Charisms: Part 3

In this, the third of a four part series which was first presented at the State Youth Conference in Melbourne in September 2009, Philip Kariatlis explores the gifts (charisms) which God has given each one of us, how we can recognise what our own special gift is and how they can be used for the benefit of the Church.

Section III

a) Charisms of the baptised Faithful

In his first letter to the Church in Corinth, St Paul is very clear in stating that all faithful members of the Church are empowered with a variety of *charisms* — that is, spiritual gifts or concrete manifestations of the grace of the Holy Spirit bestowed on individual Christians — as a result of their common baptism in the one Lord. More specifically, if we read chapter 12 of the first letter to the Corinthians carefully we see precisely the unity and communal life of the early Church manifested through that rich diversity of divine gifts, which all faithful are called to exercise within the life of the Church. St Paul writes:

There are varieties of gifts [χαρισμάτων] and there are varieties of services [διακονιών]... there are a variety of activities [ενεργημάτων], but it is the same Lord who activates all of them *in everyone* [τά πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν]. To each [ἐκάστῳ] is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1Cor 12: 4-7).

From the Biblical verses quoted above, it becomes plainly clear that God's communion and self-communication to the world throughout the centuries has been characterised by a richness of diverse gifts, where all continue to enjoy a common identity whilst each nonetheless contribute, at the same time, in a uniquely distinct manner for the Church's edification.

What does this mean for us today? St Paul presents us with at least four helpful pointers.

Firstly, St Paul's reflection on the meaning of *charisms* clearly asserts that everyone — namely all baptised faithful in the Church — is gifted in one way or another; the Church is God's people, and as such, we are all the 'living stones' (1Peter 2:5) of the Church through baptism. Ministry in the Church is not reserved only for a select few, but rather is well served when all people exercise their unique *charisms* within the body of the Church and actively participate in its mission. The grace of the Spirit has been poured out in fullness on all faithful, and so, there can be no baptised member of the Church who cannot seek to serve in it. For this reason, it is extremely important to realize today that each one of

us are called, is called, to serve in the Church, to bring before the community our unique gifts of the Holy Spirit for the furtherance of the Church's mission. Accordingly, the first point that needs to be emphasized from our reflection of 1Cor 12 is that all Christians, including youth, are accountable and are responsible for the well-being of the Church.

Furthermore, and directly related to what we have just mentioned is the importance of keeping in mind that the diversity of *charisms* does not in any way eradicate the unity or the communion of the Church. The reason for this is that the source of these gifts is the one Spirit of God who throughout the centuries has continued to apportion to each within the Church as He wills (cf. 1Cor 12:11). The biblical passage we read clearly points out that it is one and the same Lord who activates all spiritual gifts in the Church. And so, whilst the gifts of the Spirit are diverse, divine grace remains one and the same. Indeed, the fact that *diakonia* or service extends to all the faithful members of the Church shows the priority and honour of diversity in the mystery of the Church's unity. Since the Church is an icon of the Holy Trinity, then, in the same way that the unity of the Holy Trinity is not destroyed by the distinctiveness and particularity of each Person, so too, do the different *charisms* exercised by the various members of the Church, not undermine the unity of the Church. From this it is clear that communion within the Church can only properly be maintained when all baptised members of the community contribute towards the common well-being and furtherance of the Church in its mission to the world.

A third point to bring to the fore is that each spiritual gift is unique. Indeed, from this uniqueness, it naturally follows that each person's *charisms* are of infinite value. This implies that the whole point of our life in the Church is not only to discover our own unique *charisms* but also to embrace the uniqueness of other people's gifts as well.¹³ All faithful members of the Church have been bestowed with distinctive gifts that are unrepeatable and therefore exceptional. Each one of us is immeasurably loved by God and life is all about freely discovering, within the body of the Church, our own personal *charisms* and then trying to fulfil these God-given potentials to the fullest within the community of believers. Since we have all been gifted with unique *charisms* we cannot and must not compare ourselves with others. Unfortunately, there are many youth today who, more often than not, prefer to conform, and this is why we see the establishment of so many clubs and fraternities. God has created each one of us not different from each other, but rather, different for one another;

and therefore we embrace others not despite their differences, but precisely because of their different spiritual gifts.

Having emphasised both the uniqueness and complementarity—and therefore necessary co-existence of all gifts within the life of the Church¹⁴—St Paul continues to draw attention to the criterion by which we can judge if the *charisms* are indeed authentic or false. The answer, for St Paul, is to be found in the extent to which these diverse gifts are used for the building up and enhancement of the community. Namely, the gifts that God has bestowed upon each one of us cannot simply benefit the individual alone exercised in isolation from the community, much less can they be exercised in such a way so as to destroy the communion and peace within the life of the Church. Therefore, it is only from within the context of love that we can ultimately judge their authenticity, namely the extent to which they are offered in love to the ‘other’. Only in such a context can they serve the overall growth and order of the Church until the coming of the Lord in the end times.

b) The Ordered Composition of the Church

After affirming the fundamental equality of all faithful and the common responsibility of the whole body of Christ serving the needs of the community, St Paul goes on to distinguish different ministries, each with different degrees of responsibility, ranging from apostles to other more occasional services, such as forms of ministry applicable to concrete situation within the life of the Church. In this way, we can see that St Paul emphasises that the Church is a richly gifted, yet at the same time structured or ordered communion of God. St Paul lists the specific gifts that give rise to an ordered communion when he writes:

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the Church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way. (1Cor 12:27-31).

For St Paul, apostles occupied first place in his list of *charisms* followed by the prophets and teachers. Elsewhere, St Paul mentions leaders in terms of overseers [ἐπίσκοποι] (cf. 1Tim 3:1-2); ‘presiders’ [προϊστάμενοι] (cf. 1Thess 5:12; Rom 12:8); and ministers [διάκονοι] (cf. Phil 1:1).

We can see from the list of different *charisms*, that certain more permanent leadership roles come to be discerned out of which the ‘structured communion’ of the *ekklesia* transpired. In the later Pastoral letters, the interchangeable terms ‘ἐπίσκοπος’ and

‘πρεσβυτερος’ (found in 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus; the terms also appears in James 5:14) began to emerge as the standard name for the leaders of the local communities who were appointed by the laying on of hands (cf. 1Tim 4:14; 2Tim 1:6). Alongside the elders/overseers there were also the deacons (1Tim 3:8-13). A more developed structure of authority began to emerge, which ultimately evolved into the threefold ministerial office that we have to this day, so that everything within the Church can be done “decently and in order [εὐσχημῶς καὶ κατὰ τάξιν γινέσθω]” (1Cor 14:40). The point of significance, however, is that these distinct *charisms* of leadership could only be understood within the context of the entire body of the Church where each person, nonetheless, was expected to contribute.

c) Critical Reflection

In accordance with the Pauline understanding of the diversity of *charisms* in the one ministry of the *ekklesia*, Archbishop Stylianos of Australia has shown that the Church is an *ordered* communion ruled by the Spirit [ἱεραρχημένη Πνευματοκρατία]¹⁶ according to the model of concentric circles, including in this way, the variety of *charisms* within the people of God.¹⁷ His model of concentric circles not only situates the ministry of the Church in the broader context of the whole community, as St Paul does in his letter to the Corinthians, but at the same time recognises the reality of the different degrees of responsibilities within the Church. Accordingly, all the faithful members of the Church together—and this includes the youth—as ‘bearers of truth’ need to keep in mind that they, too, have been empowered for the Church’s mission to witness Christ within the world. Therefore, the contribution of the laity, including the youth, is clearly necessary, for without it the Church’s communal nature is compromised, if not destroyed.

And so, today, in fidelity to St Paul’s vision, at least two conclusions can be drawn: firstly, it is quite clear that St Paul definitely promotes a diversity of spiritual gifts within the ecclesial communion, in this way affirming the necessary contribution of all baptised Christians for the furtherance of the Church’s mission in the world. Secondly, within this communal understanding of service, there must also be, according to St Paul, a definite *taxis* within the community where different ministries carry with them different degrees of responsibility for the wellbeing of the Church and its proper exercise of authority. Consequently, it has to be remembered, today, that whilst the laity, including the youth, plays a significant role in the Church’s mission, they do so under the guidance of their bishop. In the same way, the bishop ought never to act alone, but is responsible that all voices within his community be heard and brought to light for the one service of the Church. In this way, the unity of the Church, personified in the bishop who es-

(Continued on page 10)



Archbishop Stylianos on Pentecost

"Save and sanctify all who know You as God"

I will try to say a few words to analyse this sublime line taken from the hymn for this great day of Pentecost.

In Cyprus, the suffering island, where Greek Orthodox identity is more purely, fully and faithfully upheld, they call this day 'the day of the flood'. Which means that the heavens and God Himself flooded the world - not with threatening waters, as when the world was destroyed in the time of Noah. Instead, He has flooded the world with endless gifts, which the life-giving death of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God Incarnate, has opened up for all of us on earth.

That is why this is a great and irrepeatable day. Within it, the whole mystery of the divine Economy reaches its pinnacle. God became flesh for this day. Christ was sacrificed for us to reach this day, to reconcile us with God the Father, to wash us of our sins. And who among us does not have sins? Not only the original sin! This is the least of our concerns today, unfortunately. It was a great sin, but we are washed of it in our Baptism.

Each of us has their own sins: sins of the day and sins of the night, our immeasurable sins. I with mine, and you with yours. However, we are cleansed of these sins by the death of the God-Man, the *Theanthropos*. It is the precious and holy Blood of the Lord which cleanses us of our sins, and washes us in the font of regeneration. It offers rebirth. And after all this, the springs of the Holy Spirit gush forth today.

Following the Ascension, God sends the Holy Spirit to guide us unto all truth, and only in so doing is the knowledge of God made complete. We worship God the Father; we have come to know God the Son as a man; today we shall meet the Holy Spirit poured out, proceeding, being distributed but not divided, in the form of tongues of fire.

After all was finished, we can say that we have now come to the knowledge of the true God. We no longer believe in idols. We no longer believe in ourselves. We believe in God. Not an imaginary god, but God in Trinity. We are, then, "those who know God". We have come to the awareness of truth. We have seen the true light, we have received the heavenly Spirit. Precisely what we chant at every Liturgy!

However, more is needed. When we know God, and when we confess the true God while knowing the truth, we still need the forgiveness, pardon, benevolence

and mercy that comes from above. This is why we chant "Save and sanctify all who know You as God". It is not enough for us to be saved. It is not enough for Him to take us from the left where the goats are, and deliver us to the right where the sheep are. It is not enough for Him to make us righteous after we were sinners. It is not enough for Him to turn us, out of children of wrath, into children of light and obedience and adoption and love. Justification is not enough for us. We want sanctification. This is why the cry of the Church reaches sky-high; we heard it in the hymn we chanted this morning: "Save and sanctify all who know You as God". Not just a few people, or even many people - but all!

This is the prayer of the Church. This is the wish of the Church today. This is the supplication of the Church today. This is the proclamation of the Church today. That no one is condemned forever to death and decay. Because to those who were sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, light has shone in Christ. Now there is light, life, salvation and sanctification. But if even one person remains outside the kingdom of God, we will have sorrow. If only one loses salvation, humanity will mourn. Because He created all people out of nothing; all creation is His. For this reason, the flood of the Holy Spirit today will cleanse, enlighten, save and sanctify. Let us honour this great day with repentance, with edification, with doxology towards the Trinitarian God. Amen.

*Source: 'St Andrews Theological College, The first two decades',
St Andrew's Orthodox Press, 2007*



Christ our Passover

Passover, the central rite and symbol of Judaism, is based on the experience of the liberation of the Hebrew people from bondage in Egypt (Ex 12:1–15: 21). It is called Passover both because the Lord passed over the homes of the Hebrews, sparing them from the death that came to the first-born in Egypt, and because the Hebrews passed over the Red Sea as if it were dry land. Passover celebrates God's steadfast love and devotion to His people and their freedom in Him.

Throughout the rest of the Old Testament, Passover pre-eminently signifies God's rescue and forging together of His chosen people, Israel. The Lord repeatedly brings this event to mind as He encourages and exhorts His people to return to their covenantal responsibilities (Jdg 6:7-10; 1Kg 10:17-19; Ps 80:10, 11; Jer 11:1-8; Mic 6:1-8).

Through His saving work, Christ becomes our Passover (*pascha* in Greek). Through Him we experience liberation from sin, death, and the devil. St. Paul exclaims, "Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast" (1Co 5:7, 8). He is the Paschal-Lamb (Is 53:7; Jn 1:29; Rev 5:6-14) who gave Himself up in sacrifice "once for all" (Heb 10:10-14) to reconcile us with God. At every Pascha - "Easter" - the Church sings: Today a sacred Pascha is revealed to us, a new and holy Pascha, a mystical Pascha, a Pascha worthy of veneration, a Pascha which is Christ the Redeemer.

In many typological details, the Passover of the Jews clearly points towards Christ as our Passover.

1. The Passover lamb, whose blood was smeared by the Hebrews on their doorposts in the sign of the Cross, was a male without blemish; Jesus was a male without blemish who died on the Cross.
2. The blood of the Passover lamb saved the first-born of the Hebrews from death; the blood of Christ saves all those believing in Him from eternal death (Rom 5:8-10; 1Pt 1:17-19).
3. The Passover lamb had none of its bones broken (Ex 12:10, 46); Jesus also had no bones broken as He was sacrificed (Jn 19:31-36).
4. The Hebrews escaped from the burden of slavery in Egypt by passing through the Red Sea; Christians pass "from Egypt, from the burden of sin," being "set free and saved" through the waters of Holy Baptism (St. Gregory of Nyssa). For in the waters of Baptism, we are "baptized into His death," "crucified with Him," and raised up "in the likeness of His resurrection" to "walk in newness of life" (Rom 6:3-11).

St. John Chrysostom marvels at the power of Christ's blood: If the type of it had such great power ... in the midst of Egypt, when smeared on the doorposts, much more the reality. ... if death so shuddered at the shadow, tell me how would it not have dreaded the very reality? This blood is the salvation of our souls; by it the soul is washed, and made beautiful and ... more gleaming than gold (see Rev 7:13, 14).

Sustained and strengthened by the blood of Christ our Passover, we resume daily our journey to the eternal promised land, the promised kingdom to come.

(Source: *The Orthodox Study Bible*, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, Tennessee, pg 78, 2008)



Sts Peter and Paul: 29 June



For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His Glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Eph 3:14-21

Recommended Spiritual Reading

The following is a list of books and texts which are provided as a guide. If you are unsure as to where to start it is recommended you consult your spiritual Father. You will find all of these books at the Geelong Monastery.

“An Athonite Gerontikon” By Priestmonk Ioannikios Kotsonis. Stories and sayings of the ascetics of Mt Athos.

“Athonite Fathers and Athonite Matters” by Elder Paisios of Mount Athos, translated into English and published in 1999 by Holy Monastery "Evangelist John the Theologian", Souroti, Thessaloniki, Greece. Fr Paisios's compelling accounts of the spiritual lives and sayings of Athonite strugglers which give inspiration even to folk in the world, living modern lives.

“The Way of a Pilgrim: and The Pilgrim Continues His Way” (1954) R. M. French (translator). A pilgrim travels around Russia and through his adventures learns the art of praying the Jesus Prayer and its value in his life. The pilgrim's story has inspired many to take up the practice of saying the Jesus prayer.

“The Sayings of the Desert Fathers” Translated by Benedicta Ward. An alphabetical collection apothegmata, sayings and stories of the ascetics of the deserts of Egypt, Syria and Palestine (4thC). The sayings are mainly in short paragraphs and make an easy & profitable read for the busy person.

“The Desert Fathers- sayings of the Early Christian Monks” Translated by Benedicta Ward. A Penguin Classic, similar to “The Saying of the Desert Fathers”, gathering the sayings in subject groups, including Progress in Perfection, Compunction, Self-control, Lust, Patience etc.

“The Forgotten Desert Mothers” – Laura Swan, Paulist Press. Sayings, lives, and stories of early Christian women. This book focuses on the ascetical struggles and life stories of some of the ammas of the desert and other female saints and gives inspiration for the spiritual life.

“Unseen Warfare” – The Spiritual Combat and Path to Paradise of Lorenzo Scupoli edited by St Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain and revised by ST Theophan the Recluse. Translated by E. Kadloubovsky and G.E.H. Palmer. A text on the spiritual life which draws on references from the saints and Fathers.

“The Arena An Offering to Contemporary Monasticism” - By (St) Ignatius Brianchaninov. Counsels for the spiritual life of monks but relevant, nevertheless, for folk wishing to work on their spiritual life.

The Significant Role of Youth

(Continued from page 7)

essentially sums up the local Church in himself, is maintained and upheld in a God-pleasing manner.

What is important for us to realise today, is that God invites all of us, whatever our place in society, whatever our rank in the Church, to perform our unique task knowing that God extends his love to each other of us impartially. Not all of us will be leaders, priests, abbots, monks or nuns, but the only thing that is important is that we witness God for our salvation and the glory of his name with the *charisms* that He has given to us within the Church.

Dr Philip Kariatlis

This is the third of a four part series which will conclude in the next edition of St Nestor.

Footnotes:

13. We need to remember that the beauty of each person lies precisely in their uniqueness, their absolute difference or ‘otherness’ and therefore what should motivate each one of us is a desire to discover and really come to appreciate the distinctive *charisms* of each person.

14. Note, that in his Corinthian correspondence, St Paul reminds us that all faithful are called to be in solidarity with all members of the body of Christ. For this reason, he writes: "As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honourable we clothe with greater honour, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another." (1Cor 12:20-25). The entire created realm also is a member of the body. This is what the Fathers of the Church meant by the term *macroanthropos*.

15. Biblical scholars have rightly noted that in Acts and the pastoral letters the term ‘*episkopos*’ and ‘*presbyteros*’ are used interchangeably since it was only after the apostolic era that these titles came to be differentiated. This is most clearly seen in Acts 20:17-38 where Luke documented Paul's farewell address to the leaders of the Church in Ephesus. In his introductory remarks, Luke called these leaders ‘elders’ [πρεσβύτεροι] (Acts 20:17), whilst in his transcription of Paul's actual speech these same men are referred to as ‘bishops’ (Acts 20:28). Osborne claimed that what the term *presbyteros* meant for the Jewish Christian community, *episkopos* meant for the non Jewish Christian groups. Cf. Kenan B. Osborne, *Priesthood: A History of the Ordained Ministry in the Roman Catholic Church* (NY: Paulist Press, 1988), 51.

16. His Eminence Archbishop Stylianos (Harkianakis) of Australia, Unpublished Lecture Notes, St Andrew's Greek Orthodox Theological College.

17. Cf. Archbishop Stylianos (Harkianalds) of Australia, ‘Commemoration in Orthodox Worship and Life’, *Phronema* 19 (2004): 5.



The Myrrhbearing Women

The Myrrh-bearing Women, at early dawn drew near to the Tomb of the Giver of Life, and found an Angel sitting on the stone. And speaking to them, he said: "Why do you seek the Living among the dead? Why do you mourn the Incorruptible one, amid corruption? Go, and proclaim it to His Apostles."

Hymn from the Resurrection Service.

The third Sunday of the Easter season is called the "Sunday of the Myrrhbearing Women", or the "Myrrhophores". This Greek name means 'the spice-bearers'. It refers to the women who came to anoint Jesus's body in the tomb, and to whom the Resurrection was first announced. The episode is related in the gospel for the liturgy (Mark 15:43-16:8), and the Church makes it the special object of our meditation for this Sunday.

At daybreak on the Sunday, Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James, and Salome go to the sepulchre. Our days would indeed be blessed if, every day 'very early in the morning' and more particularly on 'the first day of the week', our thoughts turned to Jesus' victory over death. It was at 'the rising of the sun' that the women went to the sepulchre. Jesus is the true sun, who should light our day from its first moments. The whole day becomes different when it starts with Jesus.

The women do not know how they will be able to get to the body of Jesus: 'Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?'. The gospel makes it clear that it 'was very great'. Many of us might feel that the women's question applies to ourselves. For, in many souls, Jesus seems to be buried as if in a sepulchre. He seems to be paralysed, immobilised - even dead. He is covered by a heavy stone; the stone of sin, of ignorance, of indifference, the stone of bad habits that have accumulated over the years. Perhaps we may desire to take away this stone and reach the living Lord, but we do not have the strength. 'Who shall roll us away the stone?'

The women's undertaking - humanly speaking - seems to have no hope of success. And yet, they have set out. Without knowing how they will be able to get into the sepulchre, they walk towards him. In the same way, without knowing how the obstacle which may prevent us reaching the Saviour can be removed, let us trust. We can make a first move: we can get up; we can set out. Let us walk towards Jesus who is separated from us by the heavy stone, and allow faith and hope to guide us.

The women are not going empty-handed to the sepulchre. They 'had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him'. We, too, can bring something to the sepulchre. Even if we are stained with very serious sins, we can bring a beginning of good will, the little we have of love, some generosity towards another,

our feeble prayer. Doubtless our poor gifts will not bring about the removal of the stone, for our access to the risen Jesus and to the power of his Resurrection remains the magnificent and entirely free gift of divine mercy, but the fact that we do not journey towards the sepulchre with hands that are quite empty will show that our hearts are not quite empty too. Where are the 'spices' with which we wish to 'anoint' Jesus?

And, behold, a miracle has taken place. 'They saw that the stone was rolled away.' The women would never have been able to move such an obstacle. But God himself has provided for this. The gospel that we read this Sunday does not tell us exactly how the stone was rolled away from the entrance to the sepulchre. Another gospel is more explicit: 'And behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door...'. This verse is rich with meaning. When the angel of the Lord comes to take away the stone from the sepulchre, he does not roll it gently away. It is not an operation which can be accomplished without effort, without a deep and violent upheaval. An earthquake is necessary. In the same way, the removal of whatever obstacle separated us from Jesus cannot be thought of as a partial adjustment. It is not a matter of taking off or rearranging some loose stones, of modifying some details and leaving the whole as unchanged as possible. In this case too, an earthquake is needed. It is to say that the change must be total, reaching into every aspect of our being. Conversion is a spiritual 'earthquake'.

The angel clothed in white, seated on the sepulchre, says to the women: 'I know that you seek Jesus He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay'. Not only is the risen Jesus no longer in the tomb, but all attempts to limit, to localise, to circumscribe his presence from now on, are in vain. Human piety sometimes imagines that it can bind the Saviour's presence to certain conditions or circumstances — a time, place or action - or to certain intangible formulae. But Jesus Christ is now accessible at all times and in all circumstances He goes beyond, and shatters, the frames within which certain Christians would like to enclose him - 'the place where the Lord lay'. They will say to us 'He is here', or 'He is there'; and he is, though perhaps in a rather different way than the faithful who adore him in 'this' or 'that' place think; but he is also elsewhere, and we can discover his presence everywhere. 'Why do you seek the living among the dead', as another gospel account of the Resurrection says (Luke 24:5).

The angel also says to the women: 'Go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goes before you into Galilee: there shall you see him, as he said to you'. What is the significance of this meeting in Galilee,

(Continued on page 12)

The Myrrhbearing Women



(Continued from page 11)

which is mentioned several times in the gospels? Does Jesus simply want to shield his disciples from the curiosity and hostility of the Jews? Does he, after these past days of trouble and anguish, want to assure them of an interval of tranquillity, in an atmosphere very different from that of Jerusalem? Perhaps this is so. But perhaps, too, we would not be mistaken in giving Jesus's words a deeper interpretation. It was in Galilee that most of the apostles had their first, their unforgettable, meeting with their Master. It was there they first heard him and followed him, and had given him their hearts. Now that their faith has been submitted to a harsh test - in which they were found wanting - it would be good for them to be plunged once again into the Galilean atmosphere and to find Jesus there again, also to recapture the freshness and joy of the first encounter, and to renew their act of faith and obedience. This is true for us too. There is a Galilee in the lives of most of us (we think particularly of those who read these lines). A Galilee: that is, a moment, perhaps already long past, when we met Jesus personally and when, for the first time, we listened to him and tried to follow him. Since then, much that is sinful, forgetful, and negligent may have separated us, perhaps, from the Lord. At the hour of decisive crisis, we may,

like the apostles, have abandoned the Master. The risen Jesus seeks to meet us, too, in Galilee. He asks us to let the memory and fervour of the first meeting live again. If we try to become again what we were then, we shall again find him. We need not say: 'It is too difficult', for he has made ready the way: 'He goes before you into Galilee...'. Invisibly present, he walks in front of us towards that Galilee of the soul; if we follow him, each step will become easier for us, and a moment will come when, if not with the eyes of the body, at least with the eyes of faith and love, we will attain an unshakeable certainty of his Presence: 'There shall you see him'.

At the liturgy, in place of an epistle, we continue reading from the Book of Acts. Today, it is the account (Act 6. 1-7) of appointing the first seven deacons. They are chosen to ensure the 'daily ministrations', that is, the distribution of material help which would allow the apostles to concentrate on 'prayer and the ministry of the word'. This episode contains a double teaching. On the one hand, it is necessary to 'serve tables', and this should be organised on a regular basis in a Christian community. A Church which neglected the material needs of men and did not exert itself to be a source of help could not be an authentic Church of Jesus Christ. On the other hand, the Gospel involves more than philanthropy; discipleship must not become simply social work; 'It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables'. In our human condition, we cannot escape this division of work: one will be called to contemplation, another to the apostolate, yet another to works of mercy. There is only One who is able not only to multiply the loaves and to preach on the mountain, to wash the feet of the guests and to address them after the Supper, and that One alone, infinitely above all the apostles and all the deacons, is the perfection and fullness of the Church. When, at times, we do not know how to combine the demands of 'external works' and those of the divine Word — whether we hear it or speak it — he alone, if we will but consult him, can show us the right proportion in which to unite the obedience of Martha to that of Mary.

[Sources:

Hymn: Papadeas, Fr George, L., *Holy Week—Easter, A New English Translation*, Patmos Press, 1999.

Article: *A Monk of the Eastern Church, The Year of Grace of the Lord*, SVS Press, 2001]

Elder Porphyrios:

When Christ enters your heart, your life changes

When you find Christ, you are satisfied, you desire nothing else, you find peace. You become a different person. You live everywhere, wherever Christ is. You live in the stars, in infinity, in heaven with the angels, with the saints, on earth with people, with plants, with animals, with everyone and everything. When there is love for Christ, loneliness disappears. You are peaceable, joyous, full. Neither melancholy, nor illness, nor pressure, nor anxiety, nor depression, nor hell.

Christ is in all your thoughts, in all your actions. You have grace and you can endure everything for Christ. You can even suffer unjustly. You can endure injustices for Christ, and indeed with joy. Just as He suffered, so you too can suffer unjustly. Did you choose Christ in order to avoid suffering? What does Saint Paul say? "I rejoice in my sufferings". This is our religion: for our soul to awake and love Christ and become holy, to give herself over to divine *eros*. And so He, too, will love her.

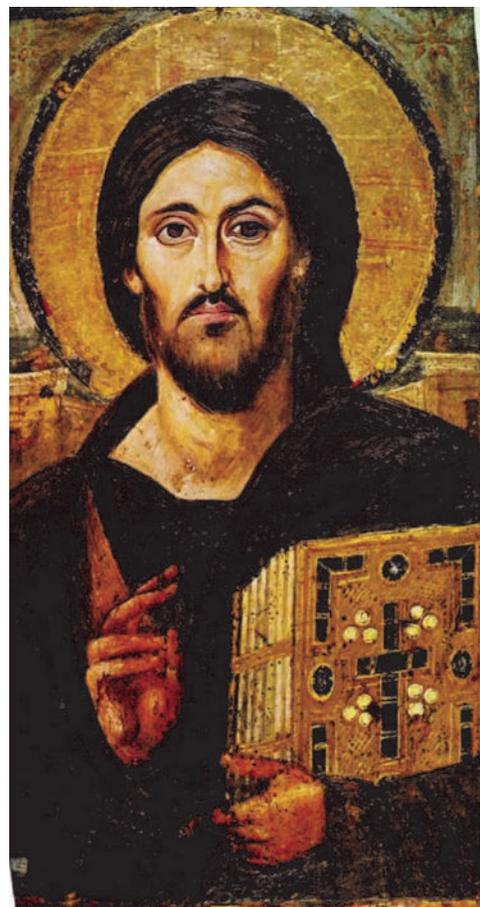
When Christ enters your heart, your life changes. Christ is everything. Whoever experiences Christ within himself, experiences ineffable things — holy and sacred things. He lives in exultation. These things are true. People have experienced them — hermits on the Holy Mountain. Continually and with longing they whisper the prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ..."

When Christ enters your heart, your passions disappear. You are unable to swear, or hate, or seek revenge or anything. How could there be hatreds, dislikes, censures, egotisms, anxieties, depressions? What holds sway is Christ — and longing for the unsetting light. This longing makes you feel that death is a bridge that you will cross in an instant in order to continue the life of Christ. Here on earth you have an impediment and so you need faith. This impediment is the body. After death, however, faith is abolished and you see Christ as you see the sun. In eternity, of course, you will experience everything more intensely.

When you don't live with Christ, however, you live immersed in melancholy, affliction, anxiety and vexation. You don't live aright. Then many irregularities appear in your body, the endocrine glands, the liver, the bile, the pancreas, the stomach. They tell you: "In order to be healthy, have a full breakfast of milk, egg, butter and toast." But if you live properly, if you love Christ, you are fine with an orange and an apple. The great medicine is for you to devote yourself to the worship of Christ. Everything is healed. Everything functions normally. The love of God transforms everything; it sanctifies, amends and changes the nature of everything

Our soul will be greatly comforted when we yearn for the Lord. We will not then concern ourselves with everyday and lowly things, but with spiritual and higher things. We will live in the spiritual world. When you live in the spiritual world, you live in the world in which your soul delights and for which it longs. This does not mean that you are indifferent towards others. You wish for everyone to find salvation, light and sanctification and for everyone to enter into the Church.

(Source: Wounded By Love. The Life and the Wisdom of Elder Porphyrios, Denise Harvey Publisher, 2005)



THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF CHRIST

The synoptic accounts of the Lord's resurrection are contained in Matthew 28, Mark 16 and Luke 24. Jesus' followers had to postpone his burial rites until after the Sabbath observance (which begins on Friday evening and ends twenty-four hours later). At dawn on the Sunday following Christ's death, Mary Magdalene and a few other women disciples went to his tomb to anoint his body with embalming spices. They were wondering who would roll away the stone at the entrance to the tomb in order that they might go in and minister to their Lord (see Mk 16:1-3).

And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. His appearance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead." (Mt 28:2-7)

Astonished and awestricken at what they had seen and heard, the women ran from the sepulchre to tell the bereaved apostles and other disciples that "Christ is risen from the dead!"

But it was not only the testimony of angels and of the myrrh-bearing women that convinced the apostles and disciples that Jesus' resurrection prophecies had been fulfilled. For the risen Lord himself appeared to many of them during the forty-day period between his resurrection and ascension. For example, Jesus met the myrrhbearing women as they were leaving his tomb (Mt 28:9-10); and Mary Magdalene was the first of these women to realize that the person before them was indeed the Lord (Mk 16:9). After appearing to the myrrhbearers, on the morning of

that first Pascha, Christ manifested himself to the apostle Peter (Lk 24:34). Later on that same day, the Lord appeared to two of his disciples as they walked from Jerusalem to Emmaus, a village about seven miles from the holy city (Lk 24:13-35). On the evening of resurrection day, Christ appeared to the apostles, ate with them, taught them the meaning of his mission and commissioned them to preach his gospel to all nations (Lk 24:36-49; see also Mk 16:14-18). Then, when the apostles returned to Galilee some weeks after the resurrection, Christ met them

on a mountain (Mount Tabor?) and proclaimed to them the "great commission" of all true Christians: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Mt 28:16-20). And forty days after his resurrection, Christ appeared to his apostles in Bethany (near Jerusalem) and, after promising them that they were soon to receive the gift and power of the Holy Spirit (Ac 1:1-11), he ascended into heaven and was exalted to the right hand of God (see Mk 16:19; Lk 24:50-51; Ac 1:9-11).

Prior to his ascension, Christ had told the apostles that he would be with them always (Mt 28:20), and he had promised them that the Holy Spirit would shortly come upon them (Ac 1:1-11). Ten days after the ascension of the Lord, on the Jewish feast of Pentecost, the apostles and disciples of Christ were "filled with the Holy Spirit" (see Acts 2). Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the followers of Christ were transformed into the Church, the body of Christ, the apostolic community which was to spread the "good news" of salvation throughout the world. Thus, it has been well said that the day of Pentecost was the birthday of the Christian Church.

According to the synoptic gospels, Jesus of Nazareth



On Keeping Easter

This is the day which the Lord has made: let us keep it with gladness and rejoicing. Why should we do so? Because the sun is no longer darkened; instead everything is bathed in light. Because the veil of the temple is no longer rent; instead the Church is recognised. Because we no longer hold palm branches; instead we carry the newly enlightened... This is the day in the truest sense: the day of triumph, the day custom consecrates to the resurrection, the day on which we adorn ourselves with grace, the day on which we partake of the spiritual lamb. This is the day on which milk is given to those born again, and on which God's place for the poor is realised. Let us keep it with gladness and rejoicing, not by running off to the taverns, but by hastening to the martyrs' shrines; not by loving temperance; not by dancing in the marketplace, but by singing psalms at home... This is the day on which Adam was set free and Eve delivered from her affliction. It is the day on which cruel death shuddered, the strength of hard stones was shattered and destroyed, the bars of tombs were broken and set aside. It is the day on which the bodies of people long dead were restored to their former life and the laws of the underworld, hitherto ever powerful and immutable, were repealed. It is the day on which the heavens were opened at the rising of Christ the Lord, and on which, for the good of the human race, the flourishing and fruitful tree of the resurrection sent forth branches all over the world, as if the world were a garden. It is the day on which the lilies of the newly enlightened sprang up, the streams that sustained sinners ran dry, the strength of the devil drained away and demonic armies were scattered.

*Unknown Greek Author of the Fifth Century:
Easter Homilies 51.1-3*

[Sources: 'Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, New Testament III, Luke', Ed. A. Just Jr., InterVarsity Press Downers Grove, Illinois, 2003]



was the "Son of David," the Messiah, the Christ. But he was not the Christ expected by the Jews of his time. His purpose was not to reestablish the earthly kingdom of Israel, but to inaugurate (in himself and in his Church) the heavenly kingdom of God. Jesus quite often referred to himself as the "Son of Man." As pointed out in chapter 4, the ancient Jews thought of the Son of Man as a transcendent being whose origin is heavenly rather than earthly. In applying this title to himself, therefore, Jesus was claiming to be a divine being. The synoptics also speak of Jesus as the "Son of God" and as "Lord," thus underlining the radical the theological implications of Christ's "Son of Man" sayings. The divine sonship and lordship of the Son of Man are revealed in the synoptic accounts of Christ's virgin birth, of the theophany at Christ's baptism, of the transfiguration, and of Christ's glorious resurrection and ascension. Matthew, Mark and Luke also stress the true humanity of Jesus (for example, in their depictions of his temptation and his passion); but it was Christ's claim to Divine sonship that so shocked and scandalized the Sanhedrin at his trial. From a Jewish point of view, the Messiah is a divinely ordained, but not divine, human being.

Another dimension of Jesus' messiahship that was unacceptable to most of his fellow Jews was his submission of himself to suffering and death - to apparent defeat in the eyes of the world. In his predictions of his passion (see Matt 16:21-28, 17:22-23, 20:17-19), and in his undergoing of that passion, Christ the Lord - the divine Son of Man - was revealed to be the "Suffering Servant" of God spoken of by the prophet Isaiah. But again, from a Jewish point of view, the idea that the Messiah should be a sufferer even unto death was outrageous and unacceptable. The Jews of the Hellenistic age expected the Messiah to be a warlike king, a national liberator, a world leader.

The synoptic gospels, then, proclaim a Messiah who is both divine and human and who has suffered and died for the sins of the world. The synoptics also proclaim that this divine-human Christ has, through his death and resurrection, liberated mankind and the world from the tyranny of sin and death. Through faith in Christ as Savior and Lord, and through the gift of the Holy Spirit which comes to all who are "in Christ," man can be reconciled with God and thus restored to a condition of "divine sonship." For through Christ, in whom human nature has been deified, mankind can "ascend" into the very life and being of the Holy Trinity, into full fellowship and communion with the triune God. Such is the central message of the synoptic gospels. And while this message may constitute a stumbling block for Jews and many others, it is, for the Christian, the very power and wisdom of God (1 Co 1:24).

[Source: The Message of the Bible, An Orthodox Christian Perspective, George Cronk, SVS Press, 1990]

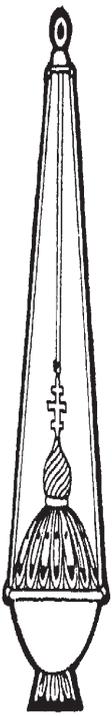
Holy Services in English 2010

17th April	9.00-10.00 a.m	Divine Liturgy	Geelong Monastery
20th April	7.30-8.45 p.m.	Divine Liturgy	St Eustathios
15th May	9.00-10.00 a.m	Divine Liturgy	Geelong Monastery
18th May	7.30-8.45 p.m.	Divine Liturgy	St Eustathios
29th May	8.00-10.00 am	Divine Liturgy	Dormition of Our Lady, Bendigo
12th June	9.00-10.00 a.m	Divine Liturgy	Geelong Monastery
22nd June	7.30-8.45 p.m.	Divine Liturgy	St Eustathios
3rd July	8.00-10.00 am	Divine Liturgy	Dormition of Our Lady, Bendigo
10th July	9.00-10.00 a.m	Divine Liturgy	Geelong Monastery
13th July	7.30-8.45 p.m.	Divine Liturgy	St Eustathios
7th August	9.00-10.00 a.m	Divine Liturgy	Geelong Monastery
17th August	7.30-8.45 p.m.	Divine Liturgy	St Eustathios
21st August	8.00-10.00 am	Divine Liturgy	Dormition of Our Lady, Bendigo
4th September	9.00-10.00 a.m	Divine Liturgy	Geelong Monastery
21st September	7.30-8.45 p.m.	Divine Liturgy	St Eustathios
12th October	7.30-8.45 p.m.	Divine Liturgy	St Eustathios
16th October	9.00-10.00 a.m	Divine Liturgy	Geelong Monastery
6th November	9.00-10.00 a.m	Divine Liturgy	Geelong Monastery
16th November	7.30-8.45 p.m.	Divine Liturgy	St Eustathios
11th December	9.00-10.00 a.m	Divine Liturgy	Geelong Monastery

Geelong Monastery
Cnr Monastery Ct & Bluestone
Bridge Rd (in older Melways:
Cnr Cox & Rollins Rds) ,
Lovely Banks

St Eustathios Church
221 Dorcas St,
South Melbourne

**Church of the Dormition of
Our Lady**
3 Marong St, Iron Bark,
Bendigo



Psalm Four

THE SECURITY OF GOD'S PEOPLE

You heard me when I called, O God of
my righteousness.

You strengthened my heart when I
was in distress;

Have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

How long, O you sons of men,

Will you be slow of heart?

Why do you love vain things

And seek after lies?

Know that the Lord made His Holy

One wondrous;

The Lord will hear me when I cry to
Him.

Be angry, and do not sin;

Have remorse upon your beds

For what you say in your hearts.

Offer the sacrifice of righteousness,

And hope in the Lord.

There are many who say, "Who will show us
good things?"

O Lord, the light of Your face was stamped upon
us.

You put gladness in my heart;

From their season of wheat, wine, and
oil they were multiplied.

I will both sleep and rest in peace,

For You alone, O Lord, cause me to dwell in
hope.

Psalm 4 emphasizes the End (v.v.1,2). Christ "is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes" (Rom 10:4), and He is the "Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End" (Rev 1:8). He exhorts people not to be **slow of heart**, and not to **love vain things**, nor to **seek after lies** (v.3). Rather, they should realize that **the Lord**, who is the Father, has made His **Holy One**, who is Christ, to be **wondrous** (v.4) in His death and Resurrection (v.9).

The Church in her prayers uses psalm 4 as a prokeimenon at Vespers on Mondays. It is also one of the psalms for Great Compline during Great Lent.

(Source: *The Orthodox Study Bible*, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, Tennessee 2008)

Prayer before any task

Lord of strength and compassion,
who by your unsearchable power and
almighty hand
create and support all things,
who in your providence and kindness
grant a proper and beneficial time for every
good task,

so that your kingdom may always be
glorified;

give also to me, who am unworthy, your
help from above,
so that I may bring to a good end, in a way
pleasing to you,

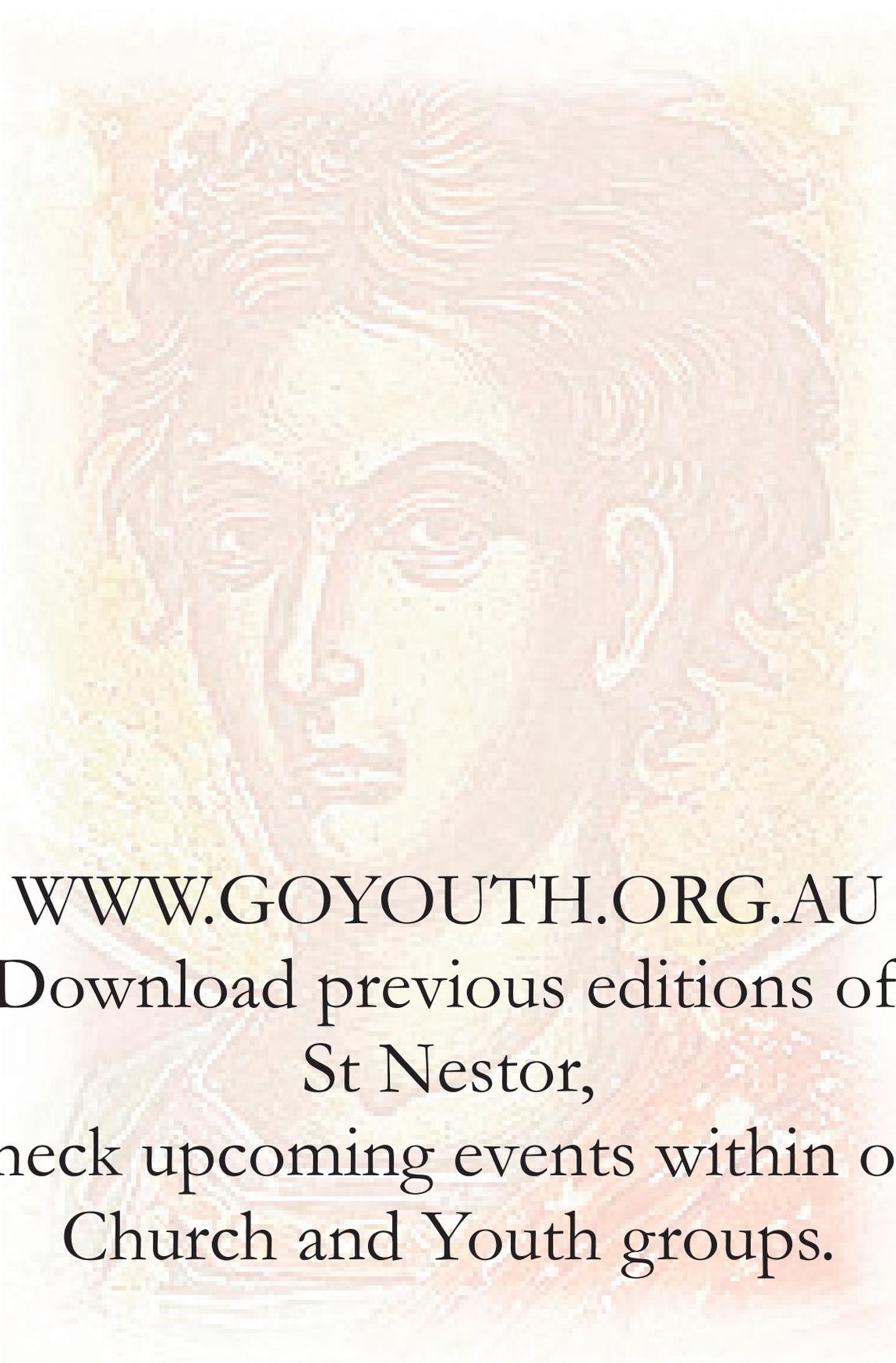
the task which I begin in your name today,
for the service of your people and the
salvation of my soul.

For it is you who cause us both to will and
to act for your good pleasure,
and to you we offer glory and thanks,
with your only-begotten Son and your
Holy Spirit for ever.

Amen.

(Source: *Book of Prayers—A Selection for
Orthodox Christians, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of
Australia, 1993*)





WWW.GOYOUTH.ORG.AU
Download previous editions of
St Nestor,

Check upcoming events within our
Church and Youth groups.

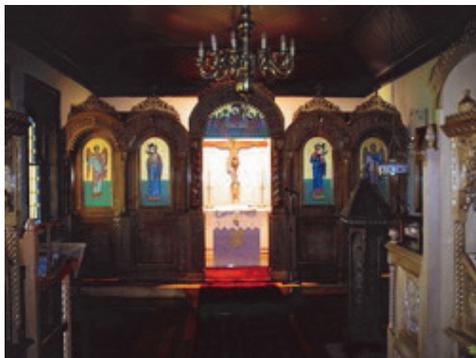
Panagia Gorgoepikoos Monastery Geelong, Victoria



The Holy Monastery of Panagia Gorgoepikoos ("She who is Quick to Hear") is a monastic community for women under the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, established in May 1993. Mother Kallistheni is the abbess. Currently, the monastery has 4 nuns and 2 novices.



The monastery is situated approximately one hour, by car or public transport, from Melbourne at:



Corner of Monastery Court and Bluestone Bridge Road,
Lovely Banks,
GEELONG, Victoria 3221.
(in older Melways: Cnr Cox & Rollins Rds).
Telephone: (03) 5276 1221
Visit the monastery webpage to learn more.

<http://www.gorgoepikoos.org.au/>

Orthodox Christian Calendar 2010

This monthly (x4) calendar is provided for your information. It aims to give you an insight into the Orthodox Christian Church year of 2010 and hopes to prove useful and beneficial with its indications. The calendar provides you with a day-by-day outlook of the following pieces of information: **1. The Greater Feast days (†)** celebrated in the Orthodox Christian Church. **2. The main fasting and non-fasting periods** in the Church and the strictness of each of these fasts. **3. The schedule of English Divine Liturgies**, where these are held and at what time. **4. Main Vespers Services** held at each of our Melbourne, VIC Parishes (commence 7p.m.) **5. Public Holidays** and **other events** held. Please check www.goyouth.org.au for recently added or updated events.

Month of April

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 HOLY THURSDAY ST MARY OF EGYPT	2 HOLY FRIDAY	3 HOLY SATURDAY
4 GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA	5 BRIGHT MONDAY <i>(FAST FREE WEEK)</i>	6 BRIGHT TUESDAY	7 BRIGHT WEDNESDAY	8 BRIGHT THURSDAY	9 BRIGHT FRIDAY	10 BRIGHT SATURDAY
11 †THOMAS SUNDAY	12	13	14	15	16 †STS AGAPE, CHIONIA & IRENE, THE HOLY MARTYRS	17 ENGLISH LITURGY AT GEELONG MONASTERY, 9.00 – 10.00am
18 †SUNDAY OF THE HOLY MYRRHBEARING WOMEN	19	20 ENGLISH LITURGY AT ST EUSTATHIOS, SOUTH MELBOURNE, 7.30 - 8.45 pm	21	22	23 †ST GEORGE THE GREAT MARTYR	24
25 †ST MARK THE APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST	26	27	28 MID PENTECOST	29	30 †ST JAMES THE APOSTLE	

Month of May

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	31 FAST BEGINS FOR THE FEAST OF THE HOLY APOSTLES					1
2 SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN	3	4	5 ST IRENE THE GREAT MARTYR OF THESSALONIKI	6	7	8 ST JOHN THE APOSTLE, EVANGELIST & THEOLOGIAN
9 SUNDAY OF THE BLIND MAN	10†	11	12 THANKSGIVING & LEAVETAKING OF PASCHA	13 ASCENSION OF OUR LORD	14	15 ENGLISH LITURGY AT GEELONG MONASTERY, 9.00 – 10.00am
16	17 CYC TALK AT ST. EUSTATHIOS, SOUTH MELBOURNE, 7.30 sharp	18 ENGLISH LITURGY AT ST. EUSTATHIOS, SOUTH MELBOURNE, 7.30—8.45pm	19	20 VESPERS: STS CONSTAN- TINE & HELEN, SOUTH YARRA	21 STS CONSTANTINE & HELEN,	22 VESPERS: HOLY TRINITY, RICHMOND
23 PENTECOST	24 FEAST OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (FAST FREE WEEK)	25	26	27	28	29 MATINS & ENGLISH LITURGY AT DORMITION OF OUR LADY, BENDIGO 8.00 – 10.00am

Month of June

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9 ST CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA	10 VESPERS: AXION ESTIN, NORTHCOTE	11 AXION ESTIN APOSTLES BAR- THOLOMEW,& BARNABAS, CHINESE MARTYRS, ST LUKE OF SIMFEROPOL	12 ENGLISH LITURGY AT GEELONG MONASTERY, 9.00 - 10.00am
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21 CYC TALK AT ST. EUSTATHIOS, SOUTH MELBOURNE, 7.30 sharp	22 ENGLISH LITURGY AT ST. EUSTATHIOS, SOUTH MELBOURNE, 7.30—8.45pm	23 VESPERS: ST JOHN THE FORERUNNER, CARLTON	24 BIRTH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST	25	26
27	28	29 STS PETER AND PAUL, THE HOLY APOSTLES	30 SYNAXIS OF THE TWELVE HOLY APOSTLES			

Month of July

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 THE HOLY UNMERCENARIES STS COSMAS & DAMIAN	2	3 MATINS & ENGLISH LITURGY AT DORMITION OF OUR LADY, BENDIGO 8.00 – 10.00am
4	5	6	7	8	9	10 ENGLISH LITURGY AT GEE LONG MONASTERY, 9.00 – 10.00am
11 GREAT MARTYR EUPHEMIA	12	13 ENGLISH LITURGY AT ST. EUSTATHIOS, SOUTH MELBOURNE, 7.30—8.45pm	14	15	16	17 ST MARINA
18	19 ST MACRINA, UNCOVERING OF THE RELICS OF ST SERAPHIM CYC TALK AT ST. EUSTATHIOS, SOUTH MELBOURNE, 7.30 sharp	20 PROPHET ELIJAH	21	22 ST MARY MAGDALENE, EQUAL TO THE APOSTLES	23 PROPHET EZEKIEL	24 MARTYR CHRISTINE OF TYRE
25 DORMITION OF ST ANNA, THE MOTHER OF THE HOLY THEOTOKOS	26 ST PARASKEVE	27 ST PANTELEIMON	28	29	30	31

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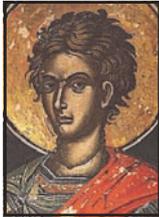


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Saint Nestor

CENTRAL YOUTH COMMITTEE MAGAZINE

Youth Group Meetings in Victoria



Bentleigh: Sts Raphael, Nicholas & Irene
Monday 8.00 p.m. (9557 4877)

Box Hill: Holy Cross—1st Sunday of
every month straight after Church (9890
9087)

Brunswick: St Basil
-All teenagers and youth in their 20's
Tuesday 7.00 p.m. (9387 7693)
-Young Adults and Married couples group
Every 2nd Wednesday 7.30 p.m.
(9387 7693)

Clayton: Three Hierarchs
Monday 6.00 p.m. (9544 5706)

Coburg: Presentation of our Lord
Tuesday 7.45 p.m. (9350 5559)

Dandenong: St Panteleimon
Thursday 7.30 p.m. (9791 8369)
(www.dandenonyouth.com)

East Keilor: Panagia Soumela
Monday 7.00 p.m. (9331 2010)

East Malvern: St Catherine
Temporarily postponed due to the loss of our hall.
(9563 6623)

Fawkner: St Nektarios
Monday 7.00 p.m. (9359 4404)

Forest Hill: St Andrew
Monday 7.00 p.m. (9802 0165)

Moonee Ponds: St Dimitrios
Tuesday 7.30 p.m. (9375 1119)

Oakleigh: Sts Anargyri,
Tuesday 7.30 p.m. (9569 6874)
(www.sprint.net.au/~corners/)

Richmond: Holy Trinity
Thursday 6.00 -7.00 p.m. (9428 1284)

South Melbourne: St Eustathios
Tuesday 7.30 p.m. (9690 1595)

Springvale: St Athanasios,
Saturday 6.00 p.m. (9547 8610)

Templestowe: St Haralambos
Tuesday 8.00 p.m. (9846 4066)

Thomastown: Transfiguration of the Lord,
Wednesday 7.30 p.m. (9465 9907)
-Young Adults and Married couples group
Every 2nd Sunday 4.30-6.30 p.m. (9465 9907)

Yarraville: St Nicholas
Monday 7.30 p.m. (9687 1513)

