

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA
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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

Welcome to the October-December edition of St Nestor.

From November 15th we begin the Advent fast to prepare for the major feast of the Nativity of our Lord.

Also within the next few months are the feasts of St Dimitrios (26 Oct), St Nestor, the patron saint of our magazine (27 Oct), St Nektarios (9th Nov), St Katherine the Great (25 Nov), St Stylianos (26 Nov), St Andrew the first called of the Apostles (30 Nov), St Barbara (4 Dec) and St Spyridon (12 Dec), to name but a few. The calendar at the end of this issue shows further feasts of our church as well as when Vespers will be held and at which Churches in Melbourne.

Included in this issue is the second part of the article "Satan the Great Deceiver", which was presented by Fr Timothy Evangelinidis as a CYC talk in 1999.

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.

Wishing you all have a blessed and happy Christmas.

With love in Christ.

Central Youth Committee

Troparion for the feast of the Nativity of our Lord

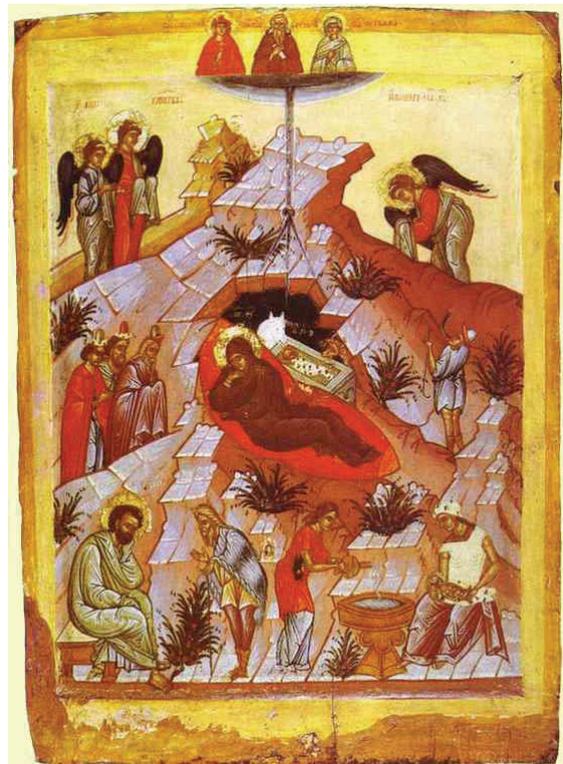
Your birth, Christ our God.

dawned upon the world as the light of knowledge;

for then those who worshipped the stars were taught by a star

to reverence you the Sun of righteousness, and to know you are the dawn from on high.

Lord, Glory to you.



On the Nativity fast: the preparation of the soul

'Make ready, O Bethlehem: let the manger be prepared, let the cave show its welcome. The truth has come, the shadow has passed away...'

(Sticheron at the Royal Hours,
by St Sophronius of Jerusalem.)

The herald of the pending miracle begins. It is the Eve of the Nativity as these words are sung. The transformation of the world, the birth of God, is but hours away, and it is through such words that the faithful are called into attentiveness and anticipation. 'Make ready, O Bethlehem!' We can see the radiant lights of the feast just beyond the horizon, we can taste the sweetness of the miracle that took place beneath a star; and through the words sung around and within us in the Church, the great eve of the birth of God is made a reality in our present experience. We make ready, and we wait.

But this is not the first moment of preparation for the Feast. For 'forty days', with the usual adjustments to that length for Sabbaths and Sundays causing it to begin on 15 November, the Church has been setting herself in readiness, drawing her attention to the mystery to come, waiting in expectation. She has made use of the great joy that will arrive on Christmas day as occasion to take up the task considered by so many as opposite to joy: fasting, with all its rigour, its harshness, its discomfort. These are the steps which, for Orthodox Christians throughout the world, lead to the radiant wonder of the Nativity of Christ.

Whence the spirit of this fast, which each year 'stands in the way' of our arrival at Christmas rejoicing? The question itself helps guide the way to an answer: the fast seems awkward because so often we see Christmas as joy alone and do not appreciate fully the deep and profound mystery that is at the heart of our rejoicing. 'Hark, the herald angels sing!' we are eager to recall, but quietly we forget the universal significance of the event that is the cause of their singing. It is not just that a babe is born: He who is without birth is born. He who created all is made a created child. He who holds the universe in the palm of His hand, is held in the hands of a tender mother.

Before Your birth, O Lord, the angelic hosts looked with trembling on this mystery and were struck with wonder: for You who adorned the vault of heaven with stars has been well pleased to be born as a babe; and You who hold all the ends of the earth in the hollow of Your hand are laid in a manger of dumb beasts. For by such a dispensation has Your compassion been made known, O Christ, and Your great mercy: glory to You (Sticheron of the Third Hour, Eve of the Nativity).

We do not tremble when we think of Christmas, we are

not always struck with the wonder of the Nativity. Instead, we buy gifts and plan parties, catching a glimpse of the joy of the Feast, but without a heart immersed in its wonder. Thus the fast becomes that which we must 'get through' in order to reach that joyful day. When we arrive there, however, if this has been our attitude, we are caught askance by the hymns the Church feeds into our hearts. We find ourselves joined to a celebration of triumphal release from bondage, but we little understand what that bondage means. We sing songs of joy for deliverance, but we do not truly comprehend how we are enslaved. We find ourselves suddenly transported to the mountaintop, but without having climbed there from the valley far below, the scene we see is only another beautiful picture casually set before our eyes, and not the vision for which we have worked and struggled and longed with all our being. We may feel joy, perhaps even Christmas joy; but we will know, deep inside, that our joy is not like that which is exalted in the hymn:

Make glad, O you righteous! Greatly rejoice, O you heavens! You mountains, dance for joy! Christ is born; and like the cherubim the Virgin makes a throne, carrying at her bosom God the Word made flesh. Shepherds, glorify the newborn Child! Magi, offer the Master gifts! Angels, sing praises, saying: 'O Lord past understanding, glory to You!' (First sticheron of the Praises, Nativity Matins).

A Time of Preparation

The Fast of the Nativity is the Church's wise solace and aid to human infirmity. We are a forgetful people, but our forgetfulness is not unknown to God; and our hearts with all their misconceptions and weakened understandings are not unfamiliar to the Holy Spirit who guides and sustains this Church. We who fall far from God through the magnitude of our sin, are called nonetheless to be close to Him. We who run afar off are called to return. Through the fast that precedes the great Feast of the Incarnation -- which itself is the the heart and substance of our calling -- the Church helps draw us into the full mystery of what that call entails.

Like Great Lent, the fast of the Nativity is a journey. 'Come, O you faithful, and let us behold where Christ is born. Let us join the Magi, kings from the east, and follow the guiding star' (Sessional Hymn of the Nativity Matins). Let us 'join the Magi', let us 'follow' and 'behold'. On the fifteenth of November, the Church joins together in a journey toward that salvation first promised to Adam in God's curse laid upon the serpent (Gen 3.14-15). The One who will crush the head of the serpent, of sin and the devil and all that is counter to the life God offers, is Him to whom the star leads us. The

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fast of the Nativity is our journey into the new and marvellous life of the Holy Trinity, which is offered by God but which we must approach of our own volition. In this act, we are joined to the story of our fathers. The gift of a new land and great blessings were freely given by God to Abraham, but in order to obtain it, 'Abram went, as the Lord had told him' (Gen 12.4).

A journey is, by its nature, naturally ascetic. Unless my life is already very humble, I cannot take the whole of my possessions on a journey. I cannot transport social and political ties along a journey's path. I can never be too reliant on the plans I have made for my journey: a control lying beyond the self must be admitted and accepted. This is the spirit to which the fast calls us.

A journey is, by its nature, an act of movement, of transportation, of growth. What is old is left behind, newness is perceived and embraced, growth of understanding takes place. And even if the journey comes to a close in the same physical location from which it began, that place is transformed for us by the journey through which we have re-approached it. The aid shelter on a street corner in London is no different after a journey to the Middle East; but after witnessing there first-hand the struggles and torments of poverty, of suffering, of sorrow, the meaning and importance of that small shelter is indeed different for me.

Here the importance of the fast. As the Nativity approaches, that great feast of cosmic significance and eternal, abounding joy for which heaven and earth together rejoice, the fast calls me to consider: do I rejoice? Why do I rejoice? The hymnography of the Church makes it clear that this is a feast for all the world, for all creation; and the fast calls me to take my place in that creation, to realise that, despite all my infinite unworthiness, Christmas is a miracle for my soul too.

Make ready, O Bethlehem: let the manger be prepared, let the cave show its welcome. The truth has come, the shadow has passed away; born of a Virgin, God has appeared to men, formed as we are and making godlike the garment He has put on. Therefore Adam is renewed with Eve, and they call out: 'Your good pleasure has appeared on earth to save our kind'.

Adam and Eve, all of humankind, are renewed and made alive in the Incarnation of God in Christ, who 'appeared on earth to save our kind'. Fallen flesh, so long bound to death, so long yearning for growth and maturation into the fullness of life, is sewn into the garment of Christ

and at last made fully alive. There is a pleasing old saying, with perhaps more than a touch of truth to it, that humankind drew its first full breath at the infant Christ's first cry.

We are called, then, to approach this great mystery as God's condescension into our own lives, personally and collectively. The Canon of Matins for the Nativity lays it out clearly: 'He establishes a path for us, whereby we may mount up to heaven' (Irmos of Canticum Two, from the Iambic (second) Canon of the Nativity Matins). The Nativity is not only about God's coming down to us, but about our rising up to Him, just as sinful humanity was lifted up into the person of Christ in the Incarnation itself.

We are called to arise, then, during the fast that is the journey into this Feast. 'O blessed Lord who sees all, raise us up far above sin, and establish Your singers firm and unshaken upon the foundation of the faith' (Irmos of Canticum Three, Iambic Canon of Nativity Matins). The faithful take up this call through the abandonment of those things which bind, rather than free, in order that a focus on God as 'all in all' might become ever more real and central to daily life.

Meals are lessened and regimented, that a constant, lingering hunger may remind us of the great need we each have for spiritual food that goes beyond our daily bread. The number of Church services is gradually increased, that we might know whence comes that true food. Sweets and drink are set aside, that we might never feel content with the trivial and temporal

joys of this world. Parties and social engagements are reduced, that we might realise that all is not so well with us as we often take it to be. Anything which holds the slightest power over us, whether cigarettes or television, travel or recreation, is minimized or -- better -- cast wholly aside, that we might bring ourselves to be possessed and governed only by God.

The fast is an ascetic time, designed by the Church to strip away common stumbling blocks into sin, to provide us with the means of self-perception that we lack in our typical indulgence, and to begin to grow the seeds of virtue. All these are necessary if we are ever to know even partially, or appreciate even menially, the 'depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God' (Cf. Romans 11.33; found in the sticheron in tone

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The Sacramental Life of the Orthodox Church: Part 1

The life and character of an Orthodox Christian is in large measure shaped, nourished, and enriched by the liturgy or worship of the Church. Replete with biblical readings, imagery, and expressions, the texts of the liturgy set forth in doxological form the Church's authentic and living tradition. In the liturgy, the Orthodox Christian is in constant touch with the fundamental truths of the faith. Worship becomes a theology of fervent prayer, a living sacrifice of praise of a biblical people, a vision of the spiritual world, a betrothal with the Holy Spirit, and foretaste of the things to come.

Paschal in character and essentially eschatological in spirit, Orthodox worship while continuously rehearsing the mighty works of God in history, joyously celebrates the kingdom of God already come and already given to us as the pledge of our salvation through the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ.

The Infusion of God's Life.

The powers of the Kingdom already experienced in the Church are manifested through the divine mysteries or sacraments offered in faith. It is through these, as through windows, that the risen Christ enters this dark world to put sin and corruption to death and introduce abiding and immortal life.

God's life is infused into the present age and mingled with it, without change or confusion, through the mysteries. God touches, purifies, illumines, sanctifies and deifies human life in his uncreated divine energies through the mysteries. Christ becomes everyone's contemporary in the mysteries. All that He did once and for all for the salvation of the world has now passed over into the mysteries. Thus, the mysteries become the various manifestations of our Lord's saving power, and the means by which Christ is present and works in his Church. "As the Church is the perpetual extension of Christ, so the mysteries are the power by which the Church sanctifies people" (Ch. Androutsos).

A Preparation for the Future Life

The mysteries prepare the faithful for the future life, but they also make that life real, here and now. We are given the vision and have the foretaste of the things to come through them. They introduce us continuously and in various ways to the transforming power of God, which communicates salvation, i.e., the cure of our fallen humanity and "the elimination of the germ of mortality." In them we encounter Christ, in order to be Christ. We enter upon a decisively new reality: in Christ we learn to become fully conscious of what it really means to be human. Encountering God, we also see the power of evil, whose force invades, pervades and distorts the image of God in us. Allied with Christ, we share in his victory over sin and death; the power of divine love over-

comes evil in us and makes us anew into children of God and heirs of his Kingdom.

The Meaning of the Word "Mystery".

Each mystery is directly rooted in Christ. Christ himself is the primordial mystery (John 1:1-18), and the very celebrant of all the mysteries. The Orthodox Church uses the Greek word *mysterion*, instead of sacrament, to denote the divinely instituted rites which manifest and communicate sanctifying divine grace. The word *mysterion* essentially means anything hidden or incomprehensible. It has been applied by the Church to the essential beliefs and doctrines of the faith and appears several times in Holy Scripture; its chief meaning is linked to the hidden and secret will of God related to the salvation of the world, now manifest in Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word (Logos). "And since the Church is to proclaim that mystery and communicate it to the people, the essential acts by which she is accomplishing this are also called mysteries. Through all these acts we are made participants and beneficiaries of the great mystery of salvation accomplished by Jesus Christ" (Rev. Al. Schmemmann).

Transmitting Grace by Visible Means.

The holy mysteries are at once inward and outward in character. Redeeming and sanctifying grace is transmitted by visible means. "The theanthropic nature of Christ is extended both to his Church and Her means of grace" (D. Constantelos). This embodiment of spiritual realities in material form is rooted in the mystery of the Incarnation and the ultimate redemption of matter. It is consistent with the very nature of the Church as the divine-human institution and the continuing mystery of Christ's presence in history. It also affirms the basic "goodness" of nature and recognizes the psychosomatic nature of humankind.

The material elements, signs and gestures used in each mystery, are living symbols that relate to the realities of our human experiences. Material things are made into vehicles of the Spirit, and are adequate in each case to express deeply and amply the mysterious power of divine grace (e.g., bread and wine, the uniquely human food, once blessed and consecrated become the food of immortality, the Body and Blood of Christ).

The mysteries, while physical in their outward expression, are not mere symbolic rites. The outward signs of the mysteries convey grace tangibly not of themselves but by the very presence of the Holy Spirit in them. And the grace given is not at all ambiguous or symbolic but real and actual, in order to truly recreate and perfect each person in the image and likeness of God. Commenting on the real presence of the divine energies in the holy mysteries St. John of Damascus notes the following:

"But if you inquire as to how this takes place, it is enough for you to know that it is effected by the Holy

Spirit. The manner of the change can in no way be understood. But one can put it well thus, that just as in nature, bread, by eating, and wine and water, by drinking, are changed into the body and blood of the eater and drinker, yet not becoming a different body from the former one; so the bread of the Table, as also the wine and water, are supernaturally changed by the invocation and presence of the Holy Spirit into the Body and Blood of Christ, and are not two, but one and the same."

Divinely Ordered Institutions.

The effect of holy mysteries is not based upon the personal faith and moral character of the clergy, not in their "use," nor in the faith and good will of the recipients, but in the power of the Holy Spirit. For the mysteries derive their power from God and not from men; they are not mere human inventions. They are divinely ordered institutions, by which God in his unsearchable wisdom and ineffable glory and love is transfiguring the world in and through his Spirit-led Church by restoring to all things and all relationships their true meaning, purpose and destiny, and communicating divine life and love to all persons who freely hear and respond to the call of his Son.

Human Response.

It is important now to emphasize the human factor as well, since salvation is accomplished by God in cooperation (synergy) with humanity. "The incorporation of man into Christ and his union with God require cooperation of two unequal, but equally necessary forces: divine grace and human will" (Lev Gillet). The holy mysteries are neither magic nor mechanical operations. As the seed gives forth according to the ground into which it was planted, so the full effectiveness of the sacramental life is made manifest to a greater or lesser degree by the spiritual awareness, the faith and the devoutness of the participants. Yet no one, unless he has blasphemed against the Holy Spirit, is left without some measure of grace, since the sun rises and shines upon all.

The holy mysteries are continually embracing, taking up and transforming the deepest and most fundamental human experiences. Intensely personal and at the same time intensely communal, the holy mysteries continuously and simultaneously renew the spirit of persons "who have put on the new man, which was created according to God, in righteousness and holiness" (Eph. 4:24); they prepare the saints for the work of the ministry, until all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature manhood, and to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:12-13).

As each holy mystery has its outward signs, which manifest the work of the Spirit, so each Christian life, sharing in the power of the holy mysteries, itself becomes a sacrament. As God permits and to the extent the will is sensitized, the mind is illumined and the heart is energized and made pure. Those who are Christ's, live

and walk in the Spirit and the Spirit bears fruit in them: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control (Gal. 5:22-25).

The Number of the Mysteries.

In recent centuries, the Orthodox Church has recognized seven mysteries for sacraments: baptism; chrismation; the eucharist; penance; the priesthood; marriage; and the anointing of the sick (*Euchelaion*).

While the New Testament does not specifically enumerate the holy mysteries, it is clear that the Apostolic Church received people through baptism and chrismation (confirmation); celebrated the eucharist at least weekly on the Lord's day; readmitted penitents through an act of penance; selected and ordained her ministers; sanctified the union of husband and wife; and extended the healing ministry of Christ to those in need of divine succour. It is evident, therefore, that the Church gave special attention to these acts from the beginning, despite the absence of explicit testimony from Scripture, the early Fathers or the Ecumenical Councils.

The mysteries are founded upon the words and actions of the Lord in Scripture and are, in a particular way, a continuation and an extension of his saving ministry. Among them, baptism and the eucharist hold a preeminent position. While emphasizing the importance of the holy mysteries, Orthodox theology is careful not to separate or isolate them from the Church's many other rites of blessing, consecration and passage. "Between the wider and narrower sense of the term 'sacrament' (mystery) there is no rigid division: the whole Christian life must be seen as a unity, as a single mystery or one great sacrament, whose different aspects are expressed in a great variety of acts, some performed but once in a man's life, others perhaps daily" (Kallistos Ware).

How the Mysteries Become Operative.

The Church, moved by the Holy Spirit, prescribes the manner of the administration of the holy mysteries. The mysteries are operative and effective when two basic conditions are observed. First, the ministers of the mysteries, the bishop and/or priest, must be canonically ordained and in canonical order with the Church. Second, they must be "ordained" to conduct the prescribed rites of the Church, not because they contain "magical" powers in themselves, but because the rites express the faith and the mind of the Church concerning these saving acts. The rites contain prayers, petitions, Scripture readings, hymns, gestures and liturgical actions. Rooted in the New Testament and shaped by the historical process in the crucible of the living and dynamic community of faith - the Church - the rites embody the vision of the new life, confirm the real presence of divine grace, and communicate salvation and sanctification to the believers prepared to receive these divine gifts.

The Sacramental Life of the Orthodox Church: Part 1

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Sacraments Outside the Church.

In principle the Orthodox Church does not see the same fullness in the 'sacraments' performed outside the Church. Yet, she does not consider these actions of other Christians as lacking totally in spiritual power and substance. Here, the Church applies the doctrine of economy and sees these acts in the light of the Lord's words "no man who performs a miracle using my name can speak ill of me" (Mk. 9:38). The 'sacraments' of other Christians are disfigured to the measure that Christ and his teaching have been kept or distorted. These Christians may be considered, in a lesser or greater degree, as peripheral members of the Orthodox Church. The center of the operation of the Holy Spirit is the historical and visible One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

Rev. Alciviadis C. Calivas

<http://www.goarch.org/ourfaith/ourfaith7106>

In the next edition of St Nestor, Fr Calivas examines the sacraments: Baptism and Chrismation.

SATAN, THE GREAT DECEIVER. PART 2

Part 2: Satan the Great Deceiver is continued from the last edition of St Nestor.

Our second picture is an illustration from one of the fables of Aesop. The fable is called THE DOG AND HIS REFLECTION. It goes something like this:

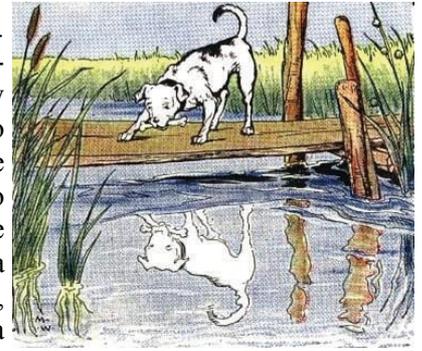
"A dog was crossing a plank bridge over a stream with a piece of meat in his mouth, when he happened to see his own reflection in the water. He thought it was another dog with a piece of meat, so he let go of his own and flew at the other dog to get his piece, too. But, of course, all that happened was that he got neither, for one was only a reflection and the other was carried away by the stream".

The moral of the story is:

"Envy not your neighbours lot; and be content with what you've got."

We can apply this fable to the Church and to ourselves who see ourselves as part of it. The deceit here is the reflection that the dog saw. What he thought was real was in fact only imaginary. When applying this story to that of the human person we can ask, why do we 'bring ourselves, by our own accord, into subjection to the enemy of this life?' (see Catechetical Sermons 21 – 24 by

St Gregory of Nyssa). What is it that encourages us to push away eternal life to fall into sin? It is Satan the great deceiver who tempts us with the imaginary security of a life of wealth, comfort, pleasure and power – a life without God.



Satan can be seen in this story of our greedy dog; he is in the stream trying to convince the dog that even though he has all he needs, there is still more. Alas, this desire is based not on what God has given us, but on what we imagine we can and should have. Satan cannot offer the dog a real piece of meat; he can only reflect the image of the meat that already exists. Satan's promises of peace without God are false. He tries to convince us to take his offer by copying the things of God. However, these copies are not real; they will disappear as easily as ripples do to a reflection in a stream. Satan does not take the meat from the mouth of the dog; he does not have to. He only need convince the dog to grab at more and by doing so lose what he has already been given. He plays on the greed and pride of the dog. Greed and the constant desire to be better than those around us is a common way of the world, it is not the way of a life in Christ. The temptations of the Devil often involve what we think we should have. The grace that God has given us is enough for our needs, we should use what we have been given with thankfulness and not worry about what we do not have.

A third illustration is relevant here. It is another fable from Aesop concerning a reflection in a stream (in The Stag and the Hounds):

"A stag one autumn day came to a pond and stood admiring his reflection in the water.

'Ah' said he, 'what glorious antlers! But my slender legs make me ashamed. How ugly they are! I'd rather have none at all'.

The stag was soon distracted from his vain musings by the noise of huntsmen and their hounds. Away he flew, leaving his pursuers a vast distance behind him. But coming upon a thicket, he became entangled by his antlers. He struggled to free himself as the baying of the hounds sounded nearer and nearer.

'At last' he thought, 'If I am meant to die at the fangs of these beasts, let me face them calmly'.

But when he ceased to tremble, he found his antlers had come free.

Immediately he bounded away, delighting in his legs, which carried him far away from danger. As he ran, he thought to himself,

'Happy creature that I am! I now realise that that on which I prided myself was nearly the cause of my undoing, and that which I disliked was what saved me'.

Satan again lies within the flowing stream in this fable.

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The Salvation of the Soul

After a large number of people had gathered around our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord spoke these words: "What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?" In addition, He spoke these words: "What can a man give in exchange for his soul?"

This means that a man's soul has more value than the whole visible world. And if a man loses his soul, with what can he make payment, with what can he buy it back again? With nothing in the world. Not even if he gives the whole world can he buy his lost soul.

Blessed is he who knows this, and who guards his soul as his greatest treasure. Blessed is he who stands guard over his soul every day and does not permit his soul to suffer harm in any way. For he who saves his soul will save everything, and he who loses his soul will lose everything.

In a small town there once lived a very rich man. He lived in a small dilapidated house. He did not want to renovate his house, but saved and guarded his wealth.

Now this one night his house happened to catch fire and burn down. The man, however, jumped out of bed undressed, searched out his saved-up treasure, and leapt out of the house. His whole house was reduced to ashes, but he did not feel sorry about it at all. Rather, with his wealth he moved to a large city, and in this large city he built a beautiful palace, and there he continued to live cheerfully and free from worry.

What does this story symbolize? The small town represents this world, in which men live as guests for a short time. The small dilapidated house represents man's body, the home of man's spirit. The rich man represents a sensible Christian, who has heard, understood, and laid up in his heart the words of Christ: "What does it help a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?"

The great wealth of the rich man represents the rich soul of a sensible Christian, who labored for a whole lifetime to live according to the law of Christ and amass into his soul all those good works which shine more brightly than gold or silver or precious gems. That spiritual gold and silver, that great spiritual treasure is: faith and hope in God, love for God, prayerfulness, mercy, goodness, peace, brotherly love, humility and purity.

What does the burning down of the house represent? It represents bodily death. The unexpected fire in the night represents unexpected bodily death, of which no mortal knows the day or the hour. The awakening of the rich man from sleep at the moment of the fire and the moving to the large city represent the freeing of the soul from the body at the hour of death and the moving to the other world.

The large city represents the eternal kingdom of Christ,

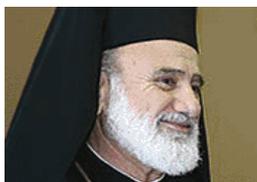
in which only the angels and the righteous live. The beautiful palace in the large city represents the dwelling place of every righteous soul in that world, in the eternal and everlasting kingdom.

This story is clear and the moral is beautiful. Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear. Let no one place his hope in this transitory life, which passes as quickly as a cloud driven by the wind from Perister to Oblakov. Let no one take pride in his body, for every human body is a dilapidated house, which death will soon reduce to ashes.

But let every Christian man and woman ceaselessly take thought for their souls, for that unique treasure, which can save them from death and destruction. Whoever takes thought for his soul, listens to Christ's words and carries out His holy commandments—the meek Christ helps such a man and helps him without ceasing. He watches over him as a mother over a child in a cradle. And He nourishes him and waters him day and night with His Holy Spirit. And He gives him a guardian angel to protect him in all the paths of life and to take away his soul at the hour of death and lead it into the Heavenly Kingdom.

To our God be glory and praise. Amen
St. Nikolai Velimirovich





Archbishop Stylianos on the Sunday before Christmas

Although we are only days away from the great feast of Christmas, we have just heard together the Gospel reading which, at first glance, we could say appears to be the most tiring, the most tedious, and the most peculiar scriptural reading of the entire year.

What did we hear? I would like to ask each of you what you heard in today's Gospel. Names! 90% of what we heard today were names. Foreign names, Hebrew names, strange names, which we Greeks cannot even pronounce properly - especially those of us who are Australian-born: Amminadab, Nahshon, Rahab ...

One may well ask, what is the point of such a Gospel reading on this important day, just before Christmas?

And yet, today's reading is one of the most significant throughout the whole New Testament. Why? Because it was not simply a 'book of genealogy' without substance. The 'family tree' of Jesus is not just an idea. All these historical names had to be mentioned! The succession of one generation by another had to be noted - up until we reach Joseph, the betrothed of the All-Holy Mother of God, the foster-father of Christ, the protector of Christ, so as to see that something special and extraordinary, something wondrous, was occurring in the world, through the Israelite people.

From Abraham until David, if one counts the ancestors of Christ, there were fourteen generations. And from David until the Babylonian Exile, fourteen generations. And from the Babylonian Exile until Christ, fourteen generations. Therefore three equal portions of the history of the Hebrew people show us that there is a certain harmony here. There is a plan, a 'program' on the part of God. And ever since, the phrase 'fourteen generations', which means a countless number, and which expresses a full measure, has passed into the Greek language as a figure of speech. We say, for example, that such and such 'heard the fourteen generations', meaning an ear bashing! That proverbial saying comes from this particular passage of the Bible.

Yet why should today's Gospel purpose fully stress the historicity of Jesus Christ? Because the people of God always knew that there will be many who would not be of God. Who would depart from the path of God, from obedience to the will of God, from faithfulness to the Law of God. Who would have believed in other gods, in idols, in themselves, in the passing things of this world. And these people would have been misguided. These people would have become children of darkness.

It is for them that this Genealogy, the specific family tree preceding the Birth of Jesus Christ, must be preserved, so that all may know and believe that His Birth, i.e. God becoming man and entering the world, was not a 'fable'. Since He made all of us on this earth out of nothing, could He not come Himself? What would have hindered God from becoming human, since He made so many people out of nothing?

Who from among us - myself, yourselves, all who have lived up until this point in time or all who will live in the future - existed previously, except in the plan of God alone? We came and lived, and we grew, and we felt pain, and we felt joy, and we came to know one another. Yet did we realize the existence of the other? Did we experience each other's existence intimately? So then, would we not also have felt that the eternal King, who is everywhere present, exists and that He has in fact come into the world?

This is why the 'Book of the Genealogy of Jesus Christ' was written. So as to establish and build up the faith of God's people, that they might give a response to those whose faith is easily shaken, or to those who never had solid faith, and speak the truth of their faith - the truth that Christ came into the world, was crucified out of love for the world, to teach forgiveness and reconciliation and sanctification.

Amen.

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



TRUE JOY

Message by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew for World Environment Day

True joy comes from seeing God in all things, knowing God in all things. To know of God in the wisdom of the mind, this brings shimmers of peace and a foretaste of joy. Yet such joy is bounded, able to be swayed; for he who knows God's presence but in part, still is able to imagine His absence. One who sees God only in this place or in that, sees Him missing from those places in between. His joy is fleeting, for as in a moment it arises in the perception of God's presence, so it retreats in the illusion of His absence.

The one whose joy is stable, solid and penetrating, is he who knows of God's presence among all things, with all things, and in all things. Even as in the temple, so, too, in the school. Even as in the Church, so, too, in the field. From the brightest star to the smallest blade of grass, he sees the beautiful mystery of Christ present as all in all. He beholds the leaf with reverence, as the vessel of his direct encounter with the grace of God. He beholds his sister with love, seeing in her the energies of the blessed Divinity. He begins to see God present in more and more, and absent from less and less; until he comes to the divine realization that there is no place that God is not, that the whole of creation around him shimmers in radiance with the presence of the Most Holy. He understands that perceptions of God's absence are but an illusion in which there is no truth.

Then is joy most full, most pure. Then it is unailing, for in all things is God encountered; and where God is, there true joy also abides. Even in sorrow, joy is known; for the earth itself cries out in witness of Christ's presence in the sorrow -- of the divine love that pervades even the deepest human grief. In loneliness, one too finds joy: for all creation sings of the Creator's grace, and through it the Creator Himself is present, reaching out to His children.

Behold God the all-present, all-loving, all-merciful Father, everywhere existing and ever the same. Behold the source and giver of joy, abounding in this world of life. Behold God indeed, who has the power to save and the compassion to redeem.

Written by Anonymous

[Source: www.monachos.et]

MESSAGE By His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew For World Environment Day

Inasmuch as, at the Ecumenical Patriarchate, we have long been concerned about problems related to the preservation of the natural environment, we have ascertained that the fundamental cause of the abuse and destruction of the world's natural resources is greed and the constant tendency toward unrestrained wealth by citizens in so-called "developed" nations.

The holy Fathers of our Church have taught and lived the words of St. Paul, according to which "if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these" (1 Tim. 6.8), adhering at the same time to the prayer of Solomon: "Grant me neither wealth nor poverty, but simply provide for me what is necessary for sufficiency." (Prov. 30:8) Everything beyond this, as St. Basil the Great instructs, "borders on forbidden ostentation."

Our predecessor on the Throne of Constantinople, St. John Chrysostom, urges: "In all things, we should avoid greed and exceeding our need" (Homily XXXVII on Genesis) for "this ultimately trains us to become crude and inhumane" (Homily LXXXIII on Matthew), "no longer allowing people to be people, but instead transforming them into beasts and demons." (Homily XXXIX on 1 Corinthians).

Therefore, convinced that Orthodox Christianity implies discarding everything superfluous and that Orthodox Christians are "good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter 4.10), we conclude with a simple message from a classic story, from which everyone can reasonably deduce how uneducated, yet faithful and respectful people perceived the natural environment and how it should be retained pure and prosperous:

In the Sayings of the Desert Fathers on the Sinai, it is said about a monk known as the righteous George, that eight hungry Saracens once approached him for food, but he had nothing whatsoever to offer them because he survived solely on raw, wild capers, whose bitterness could kill even a camel. However, upon seeing them dying of extreme hunger, he said to one of them: "Take your bow and cross this mountain; there, you will find a herd of wild goats. Shoot one of them, whichever one you desire, but do not try to shoot another." The Saracen departed and, as the old man advised, shot and slaughtered one of the animals. But when he tried to shoot another, his bow immediately snapped. So he returned with the meat and related the story to his friends."

Your beloved brother in Christ and

Fervent supplicant before God,

+ BARTHOLOMEW

Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch

(June 5, 2010)



SATAN, THE GREAT DECEIVER. PART 2

(Continued from page 6)

Previously, we saw how Satan often deceives us into desiring what does not really exist. Here the deceit differs. Here the stag is convinced that what he has is inadequate. Previously it was pride and greed that was the downfall of the dog. Now we are reminded that vanity and extreme self-resourcefulness can be fatal. The stag knew what he wanted. However, his assessment of what was necessary or adequate for him was not right.

It is rather amazing to hear many in the Church say “I would really like to contribute more to the ministry and life of my Church, but I don’t have the necessary talents to do anything”. It’s not a matter of my antlers being just right or my legs being too thin and scrawny, but it is often a matter of “it would be too embarrassing for me to contribute anything in my Church youth group”. Perhaps it is “I would really like to say something at my youth group, but everyone would think I am stupid, or pushy”.

All of us have spiritual gifts from God; they were given to us by God at our Baptism. The Church cannot function properly, especially in times of need and challenge unless all of its members use the gifts God has given them. How can we expect the Church to stand fast against a world that rejects the Kingdom of God when the very members of that Church are not completely relying upon God?

Thankfully, it is not the combined self-reliance of all the members of our Church (or our youth group for that matter) that makes us the ‘Body of Christ’ (I Cor 12:27). It is the power and grace of God that transforms the individual members of the Church into the functioning ‘Body of Christ’ in this world.

The stag allowed his own vanity and his self-judgment to cloud his opinion of himself. Satan often deceives the members of the Church into believing that even God’s promises will not be fulfilled in them because they in themselves do not ‘have what it takes’. It is not up to us, it is up to God!

“But how are men to call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent?” As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach good news!” But they have not all obeyed the gospel; for Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ (cf. Rom 10:14-17).

Satan cannot defeat the Church that is filled with the purpose and Spirit of God. He will, however attempt to deceive those who are part of it. The Church cannot be the vehicle of God’s salvation in this world if those who see themselves as belonging to that Church are not going to use what God has given them because of fear of

ridicule, vanity, embarrassment or pride.

Perhaps our stag should read the verse above that mentions “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news”! In the end it is the scrawny feet that saved the stag from the fangs of the hounds. So too, it is the feet that carry the preaching and the teaching and those who are living out their faith in this world that will save us from the deception of the snapping Devil – however scrawny and ugly those feet might appear to be!

Enough for the introduction, now for the real heart of this presentation! One of the greatest dangers for those within the Church is what is called ‘The New Age Movement’. Well, there is a nice red herring you might say. What has the ‘New Age Movement’ got to do with the deception of Satan? It certainly has nothing to do with us who are members of the Church! Or does it?

Sadly, the ‘New Age Movement’ in its variety of forms, has influenced all aspects of life, and even many who see themselves as members of the Church of God are so easily influenced by this great deception of Satan.

Many see the “New Age Movement” as just a way of life; living in respect of all creatures, practising non violence, being sensitive, respecting other’s right to believe in their particular religion. Nothing could be further from the truth. The “New Age Movement” is in fact one of the greatest attempts at deception by Satan upon Christians today!

The “New Age Movement” is not simply some broad descriptive title for a range of unrelated philosophies or teachings. It is a highly organised and motivated movement that, in its least organised form, seeks to distract Christians from concentrating upon the things of God. At its most dangerous, it seeks to destroy Christian faith and replace the historical and theological Christ with a ‘new’ and ‘more relevant’ Messiah figure.

In her book “The Hidden Dangers of the Rainbow – The New Age Movement and Our Coming Age of Barbarism”, Constance Cumbey seeks to expose ‘New Age’ for what it is, a well organised movement. It seeks to replace established religion, particularly in the West, with a new belief system that incorporates all beliefs and religions. Although this book is not a Christian Orthodox writing, it is useful because of its well-researched material.

“According to New Age sources, the New Age Movement is a worldwide network. It consists of tens of thousands of cooperating organisations. Their primary goal or the secret behind their ‘unity-in-diversity’ is the formation of a ‘New World Order’. The Movement usually operates on the basis of a well-formulated body of underlying esoteric or occult teachings” (Constance Cumbey, 1983, ‘The Hidden Dangers of the Rainbow’ Huntington House Inc, p 54).

The “New Age Movement” can be said to be a conglomeration of various forms and expressions of the above

common ideal. On the very basic level is the sort of universalism that has never been far behind the preaching of the Christian Gospel. This is the notion that all religions are really the same and if we can cross-fertilise one to another, then we will have the perfect world of peace and harmony. It is this strand of the Movement that expresses the 'common basis' for all religions and cultures. Each one is seen as being no better or 'no more right' than the other.

The openly more organised level is a collection of very powerful organisations that work to a common ideal of preparing for a 'Messiah' who will come to redeem the world from war, pollution, hunger and every other problem besetting humankind. It is rather telling that the name this particular person is often given is "The Bearer of Light". As we saw in the last edition of St Nestor, this can be a translation of the name 'Lucifer'.

Now, I am sure many of us find such information on organised evil groups as fuel for the development of conspiracy theories, the true identity of the Anti-Christ etc. However, for Christians to use all their energy in pinpointing a particular evil work or evil person in this world can be a distraction from one's own salvation journey. That in itself can be a deception of Satan; to take our focus away from the person of God.

A far more subtle and potentially more dangerous Satanic deception lies behind the more basic unorganised expression of the "New Age Movement". It is not the expression of 'New Age' in the world that should concern us, as much as its influence within the Church of God.

Sadly we can find particular 'New Age' practices and beliefs even with many members of the Orthodox Churches. Seemingly simple activities such as reading one's stars, experimenting with the occult, using 'healing crystals', practising eastern forms of meditation and certain 'holistic medicine' practices etc. are expressions of what the "New Age Movement" is encouraging. These things are destructive to one's Orthodox Christian faith precisely because they seek to take away from the uniqueness and central importance of Christ and the 'Kingdom of heaven'. Anything that can do this will also slowly but surely chip away at the prime place of importance that Christ and the Gospel has in our lives as Orthodox Christians.

I would like to quote from a recent article from the religious column of a major Australian newspaper:

"There is a recognition that we will all only ever have the chance to know the truth completely when we come together with those who are approaching the truth from completely different and even a contradictory perspective from ourselves.

"Mahatma Gandhi the great Hindu, suggested that Christ could become the Way for non-Christians, as well as Christians, if he could be unchained from the shackles of Christianity."

Now, coming from a non-Christian religion this would be bad enough, but coming from a writer who claims allegiance to the Christian Gospel, this can only be seen

as part of a great Satanic deception. Sadly I have found this deluded attitude even among some Orthodox people as well!

Saints of the Holy Church have died for the uniqueness of the message of the Christian Gospel. Men and women have been tortured and led to horrible deaths because they refused to compromise what has been the unchangeable foundation of the Christian faith. The Holy Tradition of our Church is not something that we can mould, like play-do, according to what the world wishes it to be.

Constance Cumbey, in her book, uncovers a vast interconnected movement that seeks a 'New World Order'; this should not surprise us. After all the world has rejected God. What is troubling about this book, is how many Christian people pick up seemingly innocent lifestyles and activities that darken further and further the likeness of Christ within them.

Like so much of the deceptive actions of Satan, individual things or practices in themselves are not necessarily great evils. However, their effect taken together in any one particular person can compound into a serious danger to that person's spiritual life and ultimately to that person's salvation.

Many of us would remember Fr Tychon, a one time Confessor Priest-Monk from Mount Athos. We would remember a warm and wise man who is now the Abbot of Stavronikita Monastery. Fr Tychon wrote a short article entitled "The Antichrist and the Second Coming of Our Lord". This article has been translated into English, and is well worth all of us studying.

I would like to quote some of Fr Tychon's conclusions:

"The activity of the Antichrist and the beast, regardless of how much power they are allowed to have from God, will never acquire any authority over the souls of God's servants. As it was with Job ... 'but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it' (I Cor 10:13b).

Only the conscious denial of Christ deprives man of salvation. No hidden action or symbol of the evil one can harm or have an influence on the believer.

Truly, Satan is the great deceiver because he portrays himself as having power and influence that he does not really have. He is the greatest trickster because he casts an image that strikes fear and despair even into the hearts of those touched by the power of God.

Satan deceives because he seems to appear where he really cannot be and he tries to tempt all people (even the saved), in venturing where they should not go."

To my university lecturer of so long ago I say, yes Satan exists and is at work. However, does that mean that God does not exist? On the contrary, the all-powerful and the

SATAN, THE GREAT DECEIVER.

all-loving God has given us all we need to resist and fight against the deceits of Satan.

“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that in due time he may exalt you. Cast all your anxieties on him, for he cares about you. Be sober, be watchful; because your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experience of suffering is required of your brotherhood throughout the world. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, establish, and strengthen you. To him be the dominion for ever and ever” (1 Peter 5:6-11).

Amen.

Father Timothy Evangelinidis

Parish Priest of the Holy Trinity Church, Hobart, Tasmania

Presented to the Youth of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia at St Eustathios' Church, South Melbourne Victoria (Second Archdiocesan District of Victoria and Tasmania) on Tuesday 23rd November 1999.

On the Nativity fast: the preparation of the soul

(Continued from page 3)

four from the Sixth Hour of Christmas Eve). We must take up the task of our own purification, gifted by God and achieved only through His grace, that we might approach Him on Christmas Day as did the Magi and the shepherds in Bethlehem:

Come, O you faithful, inspired by God let us arise and behold the divine condescension from on high that is made manifest to us in Bethlehem. Cleansing our minds, let us offer through our lives virtues instead of myrrh, preparing with faith our entry into the feast of the Nativity, storing up treasure in our souls and crying: Glory in the highest to God in Trinity, whose good pleasure is now revealed to men, that in His love for mankind He may set Adam free from the ancestral curse (Sticheron of the Sixth Hour, Christmas Eve).

True Joy in the Mystery of the Nativity

The Church journeys toward the birth of Christ God, steered by the ship that is the Nativity fast. She does so with the knowledge that unless she struggles up the mountain that is desperately too steep for her to climb, she will never know the breadth of the gift that is the mountain's levelling by the hand of God. Resurrection unto life is the ultimate gift of the Incarnation, but unless a man understands that he is dead, he will never know the meaning of resurrection.

The fast is a holy and blessed tool that brings us closer

to such self awareness. It reveals to us who we are, perhaps more importantly who we are not, and makes us more consciously aware of that for which we stand in need. Then and only then, with eyes opened -- even only partially -- by the ascetic endeavour, we will truly know the life-giving light of the Nativity of Christ.

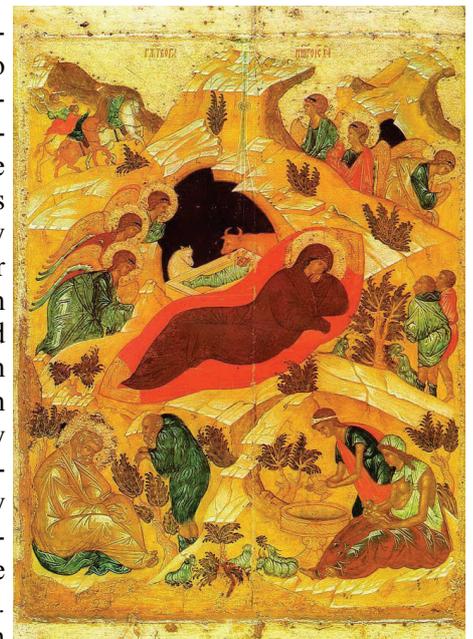
We will hear with

awe the proclamation of the hymn at vespers, taking the mystery presented therein as united directly to us:

Come, let us greatly rejoice in the Lord as we tell of this present mystery. The middle wall of partition has been destroyed; the flaming sword turns back, the cherubim withdraw from the tree of life, and I partake of the delight of Paradise from which I was cast out through disobedience. For the express Image of the Father, the Imprint of His eternity, takes the form of a servant, and without undergoing change He comes forth from a Mother who knew not wedlock. For what He was, He has remained, true God: and what He was not, He has taken upon himself, becoming man through love for mankind. Unto Him let us cry aloud: God born of a Virgin, have mercy upon us! (Sticheron of Vespers of the Nativity)

We will never fully comprehend this ineffable mystery; some knowledge is properly God's alone. But by His grace through the ascetic effort, we will come to understand -- perhaps, most of us, only to the slightest degree -- how this mystery is our own mystery, how His life is our own life, and how the salvation of Christmas Day is, indeed, our own salvation. And with this realisation, joy: joy far greater than a mere entrance into the temple on Christmas Day could ever bring us. This is the joy of the age-old journey of man, our own journey, come to its fulfilment in the awe-inspiring mystery of God Himself become a man. With this joy in our hearts, we shall embrace the hymnographer's words as our own:

Today the Virgin comes to the cave to give birth ineffably to the pre-eternal Word. Hearing this, be of good cheer, O inhabited earth, and with the angels and the shepherds glorify Him whose will it was to be made manifest a young Child, the pre-eternal God. (Kontakion of the Fore-feast).



[Source: www.monachos.net]

Upcoming Feast Days

St Longinus (16th October)

Saint Longinus lived in the reign of the Emperor Tiberius (AD 15-34). He came from Cappadocia and served as a centurion in the Roman army, under the orders of Pilate, the Governor of Judaea. He and his men were commanded to carry into effect Pilate's sentence regarding the holy Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and to guard the tomb for fear the disciples should come and steal away His body to lend credence to His resurrection. So it came about that Longinus witnessed all the astonishing miracles that accompanied Christ's Passion: the earthquake, the darkening of the sun, the rending of the veil of the temple, the splitting of the rocks, the opening of the graves and the appearance, in their risen bodies, of many of the Saints of ancient times. The eyes of the centurion's heart were opened at the sight of these portents, and he cried with a loud voice: "Truly, this man was the Son of God!" (Mk. 15:39; Matt. 27:54). On the third day, when the guards witnessed the Angel appearing to the holy women at the tomb, they shook with fear and became as dead men. Some of them went to tell the chief priests of the Jews all that had happened. The chief priests and elders met and decided to give Longinus and his men a large sum of money, if they would put it about that the disciples had come by night and stolen away Christ's body while the guards were asleep. But Longinus and two of his soldiers refused this money, for they were now and forever illumined by the light of faith in the Resurrection. So, leaving the army and his military duties behind him, Longinus went back to his home country of Cappadocia, where he preached the Good News just as the Apostles were doing. When Pilate learnt of this he wrote to the Emperor Tiberius denouncing Longinus, which the chief priests, bent on vengeance, had prevailed on him to do by giving him money and presents.

The men the Emperor sent in search of Longinus called, in God's providence, at the house where he had taken refuge; they asked for hospitality and for information as to the whereabouts of the deserter, who was unknown to them by sight. It was the Saint himself who received them, with the care for strangers customary among disciples of Christ. As they talked, Longinus was exceedingly joyful on learning the purpose of their journey, and he redoubled his efforts to put his guests at their ease. Then he left them, and with complete serenity prepared his grave and everything necessary for his burial. He went to look for the two companions who had fled from Palestine with him, and they decided to offer themselves to martyrdom at his side. He then went back to his guests and told them that he was the Longinus they were looking for to put to death. The Emperor's agents were

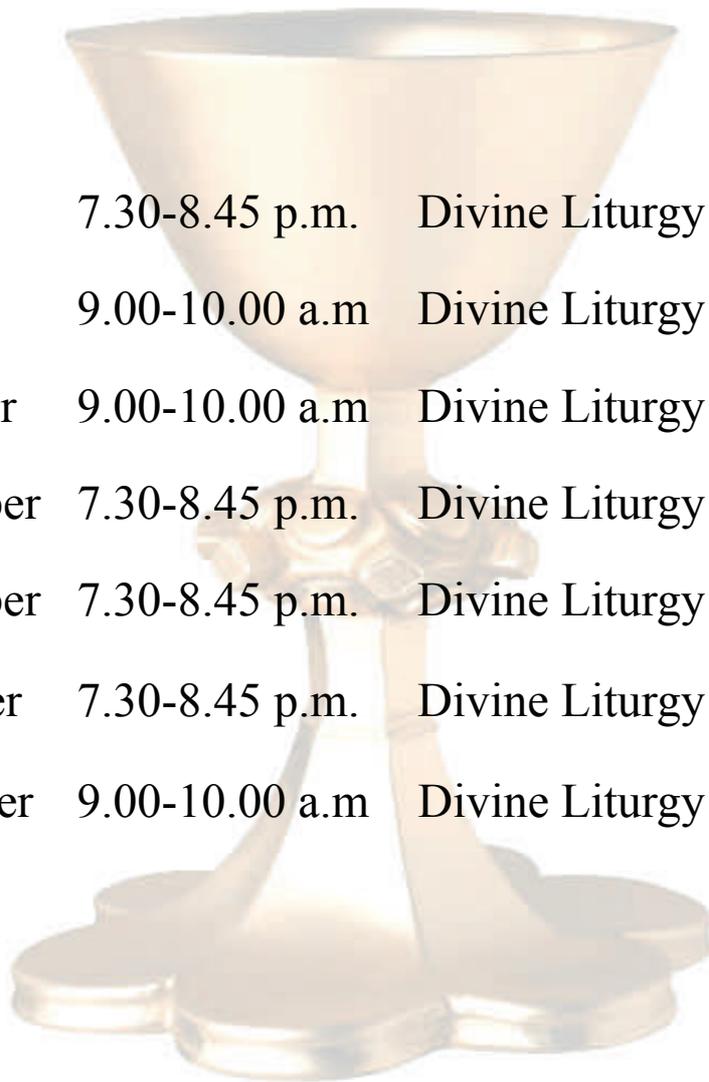


astounded at the calmness of his manner and, considering the hospitality they had received, deeply distressed because of the dark deed they had come to do. But the Saint implored them to make haste in uniting him and his companions to their Lord and Master. Sick at heart, they beheaded the three disciples of Christ and sent the head of Saint Longinus to Jerusalem to certify to Pilate and the chief priests that he had indeed been put to death. His head was then thrown into a cesspit outside the city.

Many years later, a wealthy Cappadocian lady, who had fallen ill and lost her sight, came on pilgrimage to Jerusalem to pray for healing, accompanied by her only son. But upon their arrival in the Holy City her son died suddenly, adding a yet greater sorrow to the anguish of the unfortunate lady. One night, Saint Longinus appeared to her in a dream and revealed the spot where his head was buried, with the assurance that she would receive healing from this precious relic. After an assiduous search, the pious woman found the holy Martyr's head, and her blindness was indeed taken away by the divine grace resting upon the relic. Not only were her bodily eyes opened but God granted her to see, with the eyes of her soul, that her son had his place beside Saint Longinus in the abode of the blessed. Comforted and full of gratitude to God, who knows how to render a hundredfold to those whom he chastens, she placed the relic of the holy Martyr and the body of her son in a feretory that she took back to Cappadocia and placed in a church that she built in the Saint's honour.

Source: 'The Synaxarion. The Lives of the Sains of the Orthodox Church. Vol.1 September-October, Holy Convent of the Annunciation of Our Lady, Ormylia(Chalkidike) 1998

Holy Services in English 2010



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
18th November	7.30-8.45 p.m.	Divine Liturgy	St Paraskevi
2nd December	7.30-8.45 p.m.	Divine Liturgy	St Paraskevi
11th December	9.00-10.00 a.m	Divine Liturgy	Geelong Monastery

Geelong Monastery

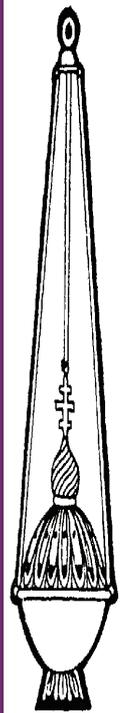
Cnr Monastery Ct & Blue-
stone Bridge Rd (in older
Melways: Cnr Cox & Rollins

St Eustathios Church

221 Dorcas St,
South Melbourne

St Paraskevi Church

22 Marsden Crescent
St Albans



Psalm 112 (113)

ALLELUIA

**Praise the Lord, O you servants;
Praise the name of the Lord;
Blessed be the name of the Lord
From this present time and unto the
ages;**

**From the rising of the sun to its setting,
Praise the name of the Lord.**

**The Lord is high above all the nations;
His glory is above the heavens,
Who is like the Lord our God,
Who dwells in the highest,**

**And who looks upon the humble things
In heaven and on earth?**

**He raises the poor man from the earth
And lifts up the poor from the dunghills**

**So as to seat him with rulers,
With the rulers of His people;**

**He settles the barren woman in a home,
To be a joyful mother of children.**

Psalm 112 is an “Alleluia” psalm that continually praises the risen, ascended, and enthroned Lord. Verses 4-9 give a series of reasons He is to be praised and blessed: (1) He is high above all the nations, and His glory is above the heavens; (2) All created things in heaven and earth are humble compared to Him; (3) He exalts the poor in spirit; and (4) He is establishing His Church and her children. Verse 2 “Blessed be the name of the Lord, from this present time and unto the ages;” is sung at the close of the Divine Liturgy.

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

BEFORE A JOURNEY

Lord Jesus Christ,
who traveled with the two Disciples to
Emmaus after the resurrection,
and set their hearts on fire with your grace,
travel also with me and gladden my heart with
your presence.

I know, Lord, that I am a pilgrim on this earth,
seeking the citizenship which is in heaven.
Surround me with your holy Angels
and keep me safe from seen and unseen
dangers.

Direct my steps to the fulfillment of your will.
Grant that I may see the beauty of creation
and comprehend the wonder of your truth in
all things.

For you are the way, the truth and the life,
and to you I offer glory and thanks forever.

Amen.

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



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 October

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
31 Vespers: Sts Anargyri, Oakleigh					1 †Panagia Gorgoepikoos	2 †St Kyprianos the Martyr
3 †St Dionysios the Areopagite	4	5	6 †St Thomas the Apostle	7	8	9 †St James the Apostle, son of Alphaeus
10	11	12 St Symeon the New Theologian	13	14	15	16 St Longinos the Centurion
17 Prophet Hosea	18 †St Luke the Evangelist	19 Prophet Joel	20 †St Gerasimos of Cephalonia & St Artemios the Great Martyr	21 St Hilarion the Great	22	23 †St James the Apostle & Brother of Our Lord
24	25 Vespers: St Dimitrios, Moonee Ponds	26 †St Dimitrios the Myrrhbearer and Great Martyr	27 †St Nestor the Martyr	28	29	30

Month of November

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 Sts Cosmas & Damian the Holy Unmercenaries (Anargyri)	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 †Synaxis of the Archangels, Vespers: St Nektarios, Faulkner	9 †St Nektarios the Wonderworker	10	11	12	13 †St John Chrysostom
14	15	16 †St Matthew the Apostle & Evangelist	17	18	19	20
21 †Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple	22	23	24	25 †St Katherine the Great Martyr	26	27
28	29	30 †St Andrew the First-Called Apostle				

Month of December

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4 †St Barbara the Great Martyr
5 Vespers: St Nicholas, Yarraville	6 †St Nicholas the Wonderworker	7	8	9 †Conception by St Anna of the Most Holy Theotokos	10	11
12 St Spyridon the Wonderworker	13	14	15 †St Eleutherios the Holy Martyr	16	17	18
19	20 †St Ignatius of Antioch	21	22	23	24	25 †Nativity of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ
26 †Synaxis of the Holy Theotokos	27 †St Stephen the First Martyr	28	29 †Holy Innocents	30	31 Vespers: St Basils, Brunswick	

Month of January

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
30 †Synaxis of the Three Holy Hierarchs	31					1 †St Basil the Great & Circumcision of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ
2	3	4	5	6 †Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ	7 †Synaxis of St John the Baptist	8
9	10 †St Gregory of Nyssa	11	12	13	14	15
16	17 †St Anthony the Great	18 †Sts Athanasios & Cyril, Patriarchs of Alexandria	19 St Malarios the Great of Egypt	20 †St Euthymios the Great	21 †St Maximos the Confessor	22
23	24	25 †St Gregory the Theologian	26	27	28 †St Ephraim the Syrian	29 Vespers: Holy Hierarchs, Clayton

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Saint Nestor

CENTRAL YOUTH COMMITTEE MAGAZINE

Youth Group Meetings



<p>Bentleigh: Sts Raphael, Nicholas & Irene <i>Monday 8.00 p.m. (9557 4877)</i></p> <p>Box Hill: Holy Cross—1st Sunday of every month straight after Church (9890 9087)</p> <p>Brunswick: St Basil -All teenagers and youth in their 20's <i>Tuesday 7.00 p.m. (9387 7693)</i> -Young Adults and Married couples group <i>Every 2nd Wednesday 7.30 p.m. (9387 7693)</i></p> <p>Clayton: Three Hierarchs <i>Monday 6.00 p.m. (9544 5706)</i></p> <p>Coburg: Presentation of our Lord <i>Tuesday 7.45 p.m. (9350 5559)</i></p> <p>Dandenong: St Panteleimon <i>Thursday 7.30 p.m. (9791 8369)</i> (www.dandenongyouth.com)</p>	<p>East Keilor: Panagia Soumela <i>Monday 7.00 p.m. (9331 2010)</i></p> <p>East Malvern: St Catherine <i>Temporarily postponed due to the loss of our hall. (9563 6623)</i></p> <p>Fawkner: St Nektarios <i>Monday 7.00 p.m. (9359 4404)</i></p> <p>Forest Hill: St Andrew <i>Wednesday 8.00 p.m. (9802 0165)</i></p> <p>Moonee Ponds: St Dimitrios <i>Tuesday 7.30 p.m. (9375 1119)</i></p> <p>Oakleigh: Sts Anargyri, <i>Tuesday 7.30 p.m. (9569 6874)</i> (www.sprint.net.au/~corners/)</p> <p>Richmond: Holy Trinity <i>Thursday 6.00 -7.00 p.m. (9428 1284)</i></p>	<p>South Melbourne: St Eustathios <i>Tuesday 7.30 p.m. (9690 1595)</i></p> <p>Springvale: St Athanasios, <i>Saturday 6.00 p.m. (9547 8610)</i></p> <p>St Albans: St Paraskevi, <i>Thursday 7.30 p.m. (0421 704 806)</i></p> <p>Templestowe: St Haralambos <i>Tuesday 8.00 p.m. (9846 4066)</i></p> <p>Thomastown: Transfiguration of the Lord, <i>Wednesday 7.30 p.m. (9465 9907)</i> -Young Adults and Married couples group <i>Every 2nd Sunday 4.30-6.30 p.m. (9465 9907)</i></p> <p>Yarraville: St Nicholas <i>Monday 7.30 p.m. (9687 1513)</i></p>
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