



HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

Parish Newsletter

New Parish Center: 20937 Ashburn Rd., #110, Ashburn, VA 18 July 2020

Remembering Fr. John Meyendorff, +22 July 1992, priest, teacher, scholar, who gave our community its formal start, 1977, 1978.

Readings for the Sixth Sunday after Pentecost—Tone V

READING FROM THE BOOK OF WISDOM:

^{3,1-9}The souls of the upright are in the hands of God, no torment shall ever touch them. To the unenlightened they appear to die, their departure was regarded as disaster, but they are at peace. If they experienced punishment as men see it, their hope was rich with immortality; slight was their affliction, great will their blessings be. God has put them to the test and proved them worthy to be with him; he has tested them like gold in a furnace, and accepted them as a holocaust. When the time comes for his visitation they will shine out; as sparks run through the stubble, so will they. They will judge nations, rule over peoples, and the Lord will be their king forever. They who trust in him will understand the truth, those who are faithful will live with him in love; for grace and mercy await his holy ones, and he intervenes on behalf of his chosen.

PROKIMENON

Reader: The prokimenon of the fifth tone: **You, O Lord, shall protect us and preserve us * from this generation and forever.** [v.7 OCA]

PSALM 11

NOTE: A prayer for help against the deceit and pride of the wicked, even as God's promises fill one with confidence.

Help us, Lord! The good have vanished! Loyalty has disappeared from mankind! ²They do nothing but lie, one to another, deceit on their lips, duplicity in their hearts!...

⁵Because the needy are oppressed, and the poor cry

out in misery, I will rise, says the Lord; I will grant salvation to those who long for it.

⁶The Lord's words are without alloy, natural silver, from the very earth, seven times refined. ⁷**You, O Lord, shall protect us and preserve us from this generation and forever.**

⁸On all sides the wicked prowl about; treachery is highly prized among the sons of men!

Reader: You, O Lord, shall protect us and preserve us! **People:** From this generation and forever.

READING FROM PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

BRETHRN: ⁶Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us exercise them: if prophecy, in proportion to the faith; ⁷ if ministry, in ministering; if one is a teacher, in teaching; ⁸ if one exhorts, in exhortation; if one contributes, in generosity; if one is over others, with diligence; if one does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. ⁹ Let love be sincere; hate what is evil, hold on to what is good; ¹⁰ love one another with mutual affection; anticipate one another in showing honor. ¹¹ Do not grow slack in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. ¹² Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer. ¹³ Contribute to the needs of the holy ones, exercise hospitality. ¹⁴ Bless those who persecute (you), bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Have the same regard for one another; do not be haughty but associate with the lowly; do not be wise in your own estimation. ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil; be concerned for what is noble in the sight of all. ¹⁸ If possible, on your part, live at peace with all. ¹⁹ Beloved, do not look for revenge but leave room for the wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." ²⁰ Rather, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is

thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head." ²¹ Do not be conquered by evil but conquer evil with good.

ALLELUIA

PSALM 88 [NS]

NOTE: God's covenant with David is fulfilled in Christ.

³I made a covenant with my chosen one; I gave my word to David, my servant: ⁴I will set up your line to last forever; I will confirm your throne to last longer than time itself.

⁵In the heavens they praise this promise of yours, O Lord, this faithfulness of yours, where your holy ones gather....

¹⁹Once, long ago, you spoke in a vision; to one devoted to you, you said this: Rather than a warrior, I made a youth king;...

²⁰I found my servant David, and with my holy oil I anointed him.

²¹My hand shall make him strong; my arm shall give him courage....²⁴My faithfulness and steadfast love shall stay with him, and in my name shall he find victory....

²⁶He shall cry out to me: You are my father, my God, my rock of deliverance!²⁷For my part, I will make him my firstborn, the overlord of earthly kings.

²⁸I will maintain my favor toward him forever; and my covenant with him I shall never break.

READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW:

AT THAT TIME: ^{9:1} Jesus entered a boat, made the crossing, and came into his own town. ² And there people brought to him a paralytic lying on a stretcher. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Courage, child, your sins are forgiven." ³ At that, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." ⁴ Jesus knew what they were thinking, and said, "Why do you harbor evil thoughts? ⁵ Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk?' ⁶ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" — he then said to the paralytic, "Rise, pick up your stretcher, and go home." ⁷ He rose and went home. ⁸ When the crowds saw this they were struck with awe and glorified God who had given such authority to men.

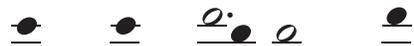
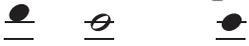
⁹ As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the customs post. He said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him. ¹⁰ While he was at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat with Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹ The Pharisees saw this and said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹² He heard this and said, "Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. ¹³ Go and learn the meaning of the words, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'



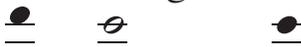
Caravaggio, ca. 1600,
Call of St. Matthew

TROPARION

Kievan Chant

RE 
Praise and wor-ship * let us give the

Word of God, * coeternal with the

Father and the Spi--rit. * For us he

came, incarnate of a vir--gin, * to die

upon the tree of shame, * that he

might raise those long dead, * by

rising from the grave in dazzling

splen---dor.

KONDAKION

Kievan Chant

RE 
You descended into hell, O Saviour, *

and as Lord and Master * you shat-

tered its gates and raised the dead. *

You removed the fatal venom from

the sting of death, * and liberated

Adam from the ancient curse. * For

this we implore you: * in your love

for all mankind, O Lord, save us!

THE ÉKTENY or FERVENT PRAYER

(Ancient Penitential Litany and Prayer)

Let us all say with our whole soul,
and with our whole mind let us say:
Lord, have mercy.

O Lord almighty! O God of our fathers!
We pray you. Hear us and have mercy.

Have mercy on us, O God,
according to your great mercy!

We pray you. Hear us and have mercy.

Again we pray:

For devout and Orthodox Christians.

For our Archbishop Tikhon.

For all who have asked for our prayers: we pray for mer-
cy, life, peace, health, salvation, visitation, pardon, and
remission of their sins.

For Orthodox Christians who are made to suffer on account
of Christ, and we pray for those who persecute them.

For Orthodox Christians and indeed all men who are
victims of war and civil strife [and terror], of hunger and
want, of intolerance and injustice.

For physicians, nurses, care-givers, and all serving those
infected with the virus; and for the thousands who have
succumbed to the disease—and for all who will die today.

PRAYER OF THE ÉKTENY

Lord our God, accept this fervent prayer from your
Lservants, and have mercy on us according to the
greatness of your mercy. Send down your compassionate
help upon us and upon all your people awaiting the rich
mercy that comes from you.

For you are God, merciful and loving to man, and we
render glory to you—to the Father and to the Son and to the
Holy Spirit: now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

**NOTES FROM AFRICA:
AGIA SOPHIA, A PLACE OF ENCOUNTER OR EXCLUSION?**

by Bishop Petros (Parginos) of Accra Ghana

ORTHODOXY IN DIALOGUE, 14 July 2020

There can be no doubt that Hagia Sophia evokes strong sentiments. For Orthodox Christians, the Greeks in particular, the “Great Church of the Divine Wisdom of God” was the seat of the Ecumenical Patriarch, the greatest cathedral in the Christian world for almost a thousand years, the spiritual heart of the East Roman Empire. When Constantinople fell in 1453, Mehmet the Conqueror made it a mosque. For Turks (and I stress Turks, not Muslims) who have now turned it back into a mosque, it has become once again the symbol of the conquest of Constantinople and victory over the Roman Empire, but also the victory of Islam over Christianity.

Agia Sophia embodies the complexity of Turkish and European history, and of Christian and Islamic traditions. Recognizing this, and driven by his efforts to secularize Turkey, in 1934 Mustafa Kemal Atatürk turned it into a museum and it subsequently became a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It thus became a “place of encounter,” inspiring people of all nations and faiths, an expression of Turkey’s desire to leave behind the conflicts of the past.

President Erdoğan’s [=Erdowan] decision to turn Agia Sophia back into a functioning mosque has been analysed on many fronts—as him seeking popularity, particularly among conservative and religious citizens; as distracting attention from an ailing economy; as yet another provocative act against the Greeks; as seeking to restore “the Ottoman Empire,” at least as an idea, *etc.* Whether Turkish foreign policy is aggressive and worrisome is open to discussion, but ultimately by doing this, Erdoğan has reversed Agia Sophia as a positive sign of Turkey’s openness and changed it into a sign of exclusion and division. This further deepens and entrenches the polarization of civilizations and the perceived conflict between the Western and Islamic worlds. I say “Western” because the West can no longer be characterised as “Christian,” but rather as secular.

Converting Agia Sophia back into a mosque will inevitably create mistrust and animosity. This undermines all efforts to bring people of different faiths together in dialogue and cooperation. It undermines the need for mutual respect and threatens the aim of harmonious coexistence. Consequently, Erdoğan’s decision has been condemned by both religious and political leaders around the world.

Will this make a difference? I doubt it. So, where does that leave us now?

Unlike other religions whose holy shrines are literally “bound” to or associated with a particular site, we Orthodox Christians do not identify the Church with a specific building or

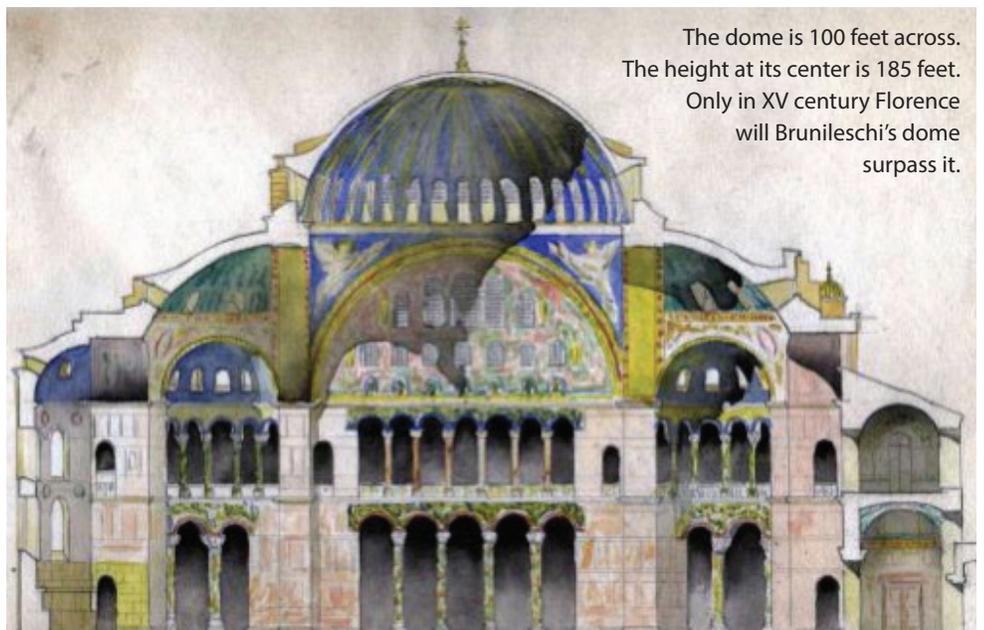


place, but rather with “wherever two or three are gathered together” to celebrate the Eucharist. As Father Paul Jannakos has commented, “No longer must we journey to a place on a map to encounter the One True God. Instead we do the opposite: we stay put and allow the Lord to come to us.” Father Jannakos also gives the illustration of St. Gregory of Nyssa telling pilgrims going to Jerusalem to see the Holy Sepulchre: “You don’t need to go, because the Divine Liturgy is the true ‘Holy of Holies.’”

While I too am deeply grieved at the Great Church’s change of status, I am also reminded that any place in which the Eucharist is celebrated is a holy place, and that every church is the House of God and His Divine Wisdom. But, as Archbishop Lazar (Puhalo) points out, “unless it is populated by true believers whose hearts and consciences are oriented toward the will of God, it is a house where no one is at home.”

That is the challenge with which Agia Sophia leaves us .

Metropolitan Petros (Parginos) is the ruling hierarch for the Eparchy of Accra, Ghana, in the Greek Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa, and the founder/administrator of St. Mark’s Academy in Johannesburg, South Africa. He holds a PhD from the University of the North West focusing on Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue.



The dome is 100 feet across.
The height at its center is 185 feet.
Only in XV century Florence
will Brunileschi’s dome
surpass it.

BISHOP GOLITZIN'S "WISE" PRIEST: THE EUCHARIST AS POISON PILL

SEVEN PARAGRAPHS into a presbyteral letter making the rounds—e.g., the OCA website—we read the following:

“As most of you probably know by now, for the most part, Orthodox Christians do not believe that you can get sick from receiving Holy Communion, nor are the bishops indicating implicitly or explicitly that you can. I say “for the most part” because we all are aware, no doubt, of Saint Paul’s warning to the Corinthians [1 Cor. 11.29] that to receive the Body and Blood of Christ unworthily has caused some to be sick or even to die. This should tell us right away that to state categorically as some do that “you cannot get sick from Holy Communion” is wrong. [?] Thus, our need to prepare for Holy Communion with confession [?], fasting [?], repentance [?], and prayers [?] as we are taught.

“Given that exception, however, we do not believe that you can get sick from Holy Communion. We have no scientific data behind this, even though some like to quote studies done in Protestant [?] and Catholic churches over the past hundred years [?! maybe since the advent of AIDS—Ed.], but neither should we need or even want [?!] scientific data here.”

Where does one begin? Perhaps with Paul’s own words in 1 Corinthians 11.27–34:

Whoever eats the Bread or drinks the Cup of the Lord unworthily is answerable [Gk: *énochos* (in court), Slav: *povínen*] for the Body and Blood of the Lord. ²⁸ Let a person examine himself [Gk: *dokimazētō*, Slav: *da iskušájet sebé*], and so eat the Bread and drink the Cup.

It says, “A person should examine *himself*,” and then approach. It does not command that one is to be examined by another, but each is to examine himself, making the courtroom secret and the trial unwitnessed.

—St. John Chrysostom (+14.ix.407 A.D.), Homily 28, on 1 Corinthians, 1

²⁹ **The one who eats and drinks [Gk: *o esthíōn kai pínōn*, Slav: *jadyj i pijáj*] eats and drinks judg-**

ment [Gk: *kríma*, Slav: *sud*] against himself [that is, incurs a sin against the Lord—Ed.] when he fails to discern [Gk: *mē diakrínōn*, Slav: *ne rasužďája*] the Body [i.e., fails to recognize Christ’s presence and activity in the Eucharist—Ed.]. ³⁰ That is why many among you are ill and infirm, [Gk: *astheneís* [=James 5.14] kai *árrōstoi*, Slav: *némoščni i nedúžlivi*] and a number [Gk: *ikanoí*, Slav: *dovól’ni*] are dying. [Verse 32 tells us that Paul sees all this as an expression of God’s concern, as a medicinal measure meant to rescue the Christian from punishment along with God’s enemies when the time comes. It is conceivable that the uncertain imminence of the parousía is in the back of the Apostle’s mind.—Ed.] ³¹ If we judged ourselves [Gk: *diekrínomen*, Slav: *sebérasužďáli*], we would not be judged [Gk: *ekrínómetha*, Slav: *býchom osužďéni*]; ³² but since we are being judged [Gk: *krinómenoi*, Slav: *sudími*] by [the] Lord, we are being disciplined [Gk: *paidevómetha*, Slav: *nakazújemsja*; this sort of talk is a rabbinic commonplace; cf. Hebrews 12.7+ where the author says, “endure trials for the sake of discipline...”] so that we may not be condemned along with the world. ³³ Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to Eat, wait for one another. ³⁴ If anyone is hungry, he should eat at home [in short order this instruction will lead to the suppression everywhere—with the exception of Holy Thursday in some places and for quite some time—of that pot-luck meal that was the context of those early house Eucharists—Ed.], so that when you come together [Gk: *synérchēsthe*, Slav: *schóditesja*] it will not be for condemnation [Gk: *mē eis kríma*, Slav: *da ne v grěch*, sin, which gives the sense of what the Greek connotes].

So, in the second half of 1 Corinthians 11 Paul turns his attention to a more serious abuse at Corinth. It concerns the Mystical Supper, and involves neglect of basic Christian tradition concerning its meaning. Paul recalls that tradition for them, and tells them what is required.

The examination called for in v.28 must in context mean understanding the sense of the Lord Jesus’s death (vv.24,25), grasping the imperative to unity—*vis-à-vis* Corinth’s

factions—that follows from the fact that the Lord gives himself to all (v.24 “for you”) and requires us to repeat this redemptive sacrifice in the same spirit (v.24). As v.26 goes, “As often as you eat this Bread and drink the Cup, you are proclaiming the Lord’s death until he comes” [think *parousía*, literally *presence*, future presence, over against the Lord’s unseen presence in the Eucharist].

Illness and infirmity (v.39) are endemic to the human condition (any dying in v.39 is what being unwell sometimes leads to, “a number dying” not being the third in a list of three). But Paul sees in the illness and infirmity afflicting the church at Corinth—and not this or that communicant—a punishment for the abuses in their celebration of the Eucharist—gathered in the same place their union with one another in the Lord is inoperative, groups eating apart and not sharing, inebriation, the poor left to go hungry, and worst of all, unmindful of doctrine and individual responsibility concerning the Lord’s Supper. As v.32 makes clear, what Paul sees befalling Corinth is in point of fact medicinal and remedial, expressing to the satisfaction of any exegete, that God and Father is calling his people to repentance.

There is a master’s thesis in any full and thorough response to the egregious opinion we lament; but for now I think what little we have brought together, permits us to affirm: the holy Eucharist is not a poison pill as the writer asserts. The Lord Jesus, present and active in the Eucharist, does not have a shiv up his sleeve....

THE FRUITS OF COMMUNION

USING FATHER ALEXANDER’S LATIN LENS
LEX ORANDI LEX EST CREDENDI.

[THE RULE OF PRAYER IS THE RULE OF FAITH,
 meaning we believe what we pray.]

The fruits of communion are set forth in the Epiclesis or Invocation of the Holy Spirit of the Chrysostom Anaphora (and repeated in the prayer leading into the Our Father):

- Washing of soul and forgiveness of sins (the former phrase translating the older Johannean language of the latter);
- Communion of/fellowship with the Holy Spirit;

- Fullness of the kingdom of heaven;
 - Confidence before [God and Father];
- the sacred liturgist concluding with his two-word *précis* of 1Cor. 11.27+:

- not for condemnation [Gk: *mē eis kríma*, Slav: *ne v sud*] or punishment [Gk: *ē eis katákríma*, Slav: *ilí vo osuždenije*] (cf. the third prayer before communion).

These two words repeat the wordplay we find in Paul’s Greek (above where I have underlined the roots *krim*, *krin*) and convey the Church’s take on what the Apostle says in 1Cor. 11.27+.

kríma means an unfavorable judgment, a conviction, in other words, a pronouncement of guilt, sin.

katákríma denotes punishment, execution of sentence; (cf. the translation of this play on words in Romans 5.16 in the *Revised English Bible*).

The Liturgy of St. Basil says the same thing in the Prayer before the Our Father:

Let us share in these holy mysteries... worthily that we may be the temples of your Holy Spirit with Christ living in our hearts. But especially, O God, do not let us incur any guilt in receiving these awesome and heavenly mysteries, nor fall ill in body or soul [*no mention of dying—Ed.*] because of our unworthy reception of them.

Guilt speaks to an offense. Punishment re-dresses guilt—it is not automatic. Crime and punishment are separate matters with different points of origin. To discern differently is to discern erroneously. Christ being present and active, the Eucharist is not—cannot be—a poison pill. “**To state categorically, as some do, that ‘you cannot get sick from Holy Communion’ is wrong,**” is not—cannot be—the teaching of the Church.

Once the pot-luck meal with its distractions was suppressed (by the 60s as the Synoptic Gospels suggest—scholarship tells us Mark was published perhaps eight years after 1 Corinthians), the sacred liturgist could structure things and compose prophetic prayers that would fill the Christians with understanding and enable them to come forward at the high point of the Liturgy with the required discernment and true devotion. In the middle of the XIV century Nicolas Kavásilas could write



that the singing of psalms and hearing readings of holy Scripture “prepare and cleanse us” for the sacred Mysteries.

Let me conclude with the Liturgy of St. Basil’s prayer of thanks for communion, setting out as it does fruits we must look for in ourselves as life unfolds before us upon leaving church:

WE GIVE YOU THANKS, Lord our God, for letting us share in the holy Mysteries you have given us for the benefit, sanctification, and healing of our souls and bodies. O Master of all things! Let them provide us

- with faith that cannot be shaken,
- with love that does not pretend,
- with wisdom that is complete,
- with healing for our souls and bodies,
- with a sure defense against every adversary,
- with a willingness to observe all you have taught us, and, finally,
- with the right answer at the judgment seat of your Christ.

—Paul N. Harrilchak [Гаврильчак]
15 June 2020

Th letter referred to above, circulated by the Archbishop overseeing OCA South, is a good example of what has been befalling the OCA since the sudden exodus of Father John Meyendorff in July 1992.

Though challenges remain, the booklet in hand—this is from the introduction to our new *Text of the Divine Liturgy* booklet—sets forth the best and final text of the Reston revision, correction and refinement of the 1967 OCA text of the Chrysostom Liturgy, formal-equivalence translation in the manner of RSV/NewRSV carried out in light of the Greek/Slavonic textual tradition and a plethora of Scriptural, liturgical and lexical scholarship. For our extensive Scriptural references, annotations, explanations and glosses omitted here, as well as for the rationale for—not to mention wisdom of—such an undertaking, one may refer to *The Divine Liturgy of the Great Church with Melodies for Congregational Singing*, Holy Trinity Church, Reston, VA, originally published in 1984 with the blessing of Kyr Theodosius, Archbishop of Washington and Metropolitan

of All America and Canada. A new edition appeared in 2013 (see the review in the journal *Worship*, Volume 90 | November 2016—available on the Holy Trinity website).

The goal of our work is to lift the OCA Text from its congenital mediocrity, and to check the ominous New Darkness that has been creeping up on the OCA for two decades. Back in 1984 then-SVS-Professor John Erickson could write: “Fr. Harrilchak is perfectly at home with modern liturgical scholarship.... The fact that he knows the difference between the Church and an archeological museum makes his recommendations for liturgical renewal particularly convincing.... Finally, [his] suggestions for revision of the [OCA] English text of the Divine Liturgy deserve to be given serious consideration....” Today in the OCA the trend is NO to Fr. Schmemmann and Renewal, and YES to crass ignorance. The providential 1976 OCA Encyclical Letter on Spiritual Life in the Church has exposed a hostile lobby!