



HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH Parish Newsletter
R E S T O N

New Parish Center: 20937 Ashburn Rd., #110, Ashburn, VA 8 August 2020

He who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the Law... "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love never wrongs the neighbor, hence love is the fulfillment of the Law. Romans 13.10 Hence, wearing a mask.

Readings for the
 Ninth Sunday after Pentecost—Tone VIII
 Marking the Feast of the Transfiguration

READING FROM THE BOOK OF EXODUS:

^{24.13} The Lord said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain and stay there while I give you the stone tablets—the law and the commandments that ¹³ I have written for their instruction." Accordingly Moses rose, he and his servant ¹⁴ Joshua, and they went up the mountain of God. To the elders he had said, "Wait here for us until we come back to you. You have Aaron and Hur with ¹⁵ you; if anyone has a difference to settle, let him go to them." And Moses went up the mountain. ¹⁶ **The cloud covered the mountain**, and the glory of the Lord settled on the mountain of Sinai; for six days the cloud covered it, and on the seventh day ¹⁷ the Lord called to Moses from inside the cloud. To the eyes of the sons of Israel the glory of the Lord seemed like a devouring fire on the mountain top. ¹⁸ Moses went right into the cloud. He went up the mountain, and stayed there for **forty** days and **forty** nights.

PROKIMENON

Reader: The prokimenon in the fourth tone: **O Lord, how manifold are your works! * In wisdom have you made them all!** [v.24 RSV]

PSALM 103

NOTE: A magnificent hymn praising God's creative wisdom and power. Filled with wonder, the psalmist acknowledges that it is the Lord who governs and sustains all his creatures and he proclaims the Lord's omnipotence and sanctity.

Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, you are great indeed—clothed in majesty and splendor, ²robed in light as with a cloak.

You spread out the heavens like a tent-cloth, ³you built your towering palace far above their waters;

making the clouds your chariot, you travel on the wings of the wind;...

⁵You fixed the earth on its foundations, never to be disturbed. ⁶With the deep you covered it, as with a garment;... ¹³From your towering palace you water the hills; the earth drinks its fill of your gift.

¹⁴You make grass grow for cattle and plants for man's use, that he may bring forth bread from the earth, ¹⁵and wine to gladden man's heart, oil to make his face glisten, and bread to strengthen his heart.

¹⁹You made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows when to set;... ²⁴**O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom have you made them all!** The earth overflows with your riches!

³¹May the glory of the Lord last forever! May the Lord take pleasure in all his works!... ³³I will sing to the Lord all my life! I will sing for joy in my God as long as I live!...

Reader: **O Lord, how manifold are your works!** **People:** **In wisdom have you made them all!**

READING FROM PETER'S SECOND EPISTLE TO ALL THE CHURCHES.

BRETHREN: ^{1.10}Be all the more eager to make your call and election firm for, in doing so, you will never stumble. ¹¹For, in this way, entry into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ will be richly provided for you.

¹²Therefore, I will always remind you of these things, even though you already know them and are established in the truth you have. ¹³I think it right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by a reminder, ¹⁴since I know that I will soon have fold this tent, as indeed our Lord Jesus Christ has shown me. ¹⁵I shall also make every effort to enable you always to remember these things after my exodus.

Glory: Both now: **KONDAKION, Tone VII**

Lesser Znamenny Chant

MI • • • • • • •
On the Mount were you transfig-
• •
ured,* and your disciples, O Christ
God, beheld your glory as far as
• • • • • • •
nature would allow, * so when they
• • • • •
see you crucified^a * they will under-
stand that your suffering is volun-
• • • • • • •
tary* and proclaim to the world * that
• • • • •
you are truly the Father's refulgent
•
light.^b

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 Emilia's daughter Elizabeth, and for all who have asked
for our prayers: we pray for mercy, 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
servants, 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.

Conclusion

The agenda for reviving Schmemmann's legacy begins by negotiating the rules of the canon of liturgical development. The prevailing tendency in contemporary Orthodox liturgical development is to fine-tune the liturgical tradition instead of deconstructing some of its contents and composing entirely new material. The work of liturgical fine-tuning is an art of its own, arduous, careful, and slow, in honor of what has been received. In this area, though, Orthodox liturgists might be invited to become self-critical, especially if the newest material is no more than a repackaging of Byzantine and Slavic texts and an updating of translations. Opponents would appeal to Schmemmann's aversion to the changes unleashed by Vatican II, especially his perception that the actual ritual forms were not supported by liturgical principles. Orthodox communities safeguard tradition by recognizing it in new forms and rejecting innovations that are clearly foreign to the Church. But Orthodoxy also honors the local nature of the Church, which has always permitted the development of aesthetics and communication idioms in native cultures. Most importantly, the defense of a canon of liturgy as only correctable and unchangeable is caused, at least in part, by the humanities' correlation of liturgy with texts. Liturgy is a ritualized and enacted community event initiated by God – that makes it changeable as the people evolve within their local contexts.¹ As long as liturgical books are printed and celebrants are warned to refrain from omitting or changing anything without inviting canonical interdiction, the Church will continue to use the printed text as the rubric by which fidelity to tradition is evaluated. If in Schmemmann's era liturgy needed to be liberated from its definition as a branch in a larger tree of systematic theology, the generation's update is to redefine the canon of liturgical tradition as a pattern that might evolve into other shapes in diverse contexts.

Promote Liturgical Creativity

The caretakers of liturgy, pastors and theologians, should not stifle liturgical creativity. Just as these same caretakers have supported liturgical creativity in aesthetics, they can extend that advocacy to the composition of new prayers, offices, and poetic texts.

1 Vassa Larin argues that the Typikon is a pattern that can be adjusted for parish liturgy as opposed to an absolute rule that must be observed in "Feasting and Fasting according to the Byzantine Typikon," *Worship* 83 (2009), 133–148.

Supporting liturgical creativity does not guarantee that every new liturgical composition will be imposed on the entire Church. This principle would simply honor the older tradition of theologians within the Church adding to the repository of liturgical tradition in the language and symbols of their epochs. The possibility of adding new liturgies—which could be subject to critical revision—could enrich the liturgical culture of the Church and challenge the notion that the traditional liturgical offices must remain intact in their current medieval forms. Liturgical creativity would also function as a natural continuation of Schmemmann's renewal, taking the step from reviving muted offices and polishing forms and texts to composing new forms.

Revive Schmemmann's Liturgical Ecclesiology

Despite Orthodoxy's mistrust of globalization, the Church embraces the advances in technology and communications that permit people to talk to one another again. Orthodoxy's approach to increasing communication within its own commonwealth of churches is somewhat self-contradictory. On the one hand, the art of dialogue among the churches is challenged by a number of disputes. On the other hand, some are advocating for more common actions and conciliarity at the global level, epitomized by the Holy and Great Council in Crete of 2016, despite its imperfections. The recognition of a universal Church has cast some doubt on Schmemmann's identification of the local Eucharistic assembly as the Church in her fullness. It is within that cell of Church structures, the parish, where the laity experience liturgical concelebration in Schmemmann's model. Concelebration is inseparable from the laity's active participation in the Church, and both components support liturgical renewal. An emphasis on the revival of the dignity of the laity can inaugurate a renewed discussion of the meaning and roles of all the Church's orders, to protect the Church from slipping more deeply into the reality of presbyterianism cloaked by an official policy of monoepiscopacy.² This aspect of liturgical renewal illuminates the dialogical nature of the Liturgy and its dependence on all of the orders instead of a Liturgy simply performed by the local parish priest. The renewal of this ecclesiology honoring the laity's dignity – perhaps the most important component of Schmemmann's liturgical legacy – would initiate

2 Here, I mean a Church where one encounters and experiences the priestly order almost exclusively.

a discussion on ritual forms that would manifest a Eucharist in which the laity is the concelebrant. This renewal could also contribute to the much-needed revival of the diaconate, an order educed primarily to musically competent chanting of the assembly's prayers despite the need for diaconal ministry in the Church and world today.

Schmemann's legacy was Eucharistic and ecclesiological, despite his conservatism. The emergence of competing ecclesiologies and identities within the Church has challenged the hegemony of his legacy. It is clear that **Schmemann's work**, remarkable as it was, was **unfinished**, and we have presented a detailed **case for resuming his work** in this essay.

Our comment

The above piece, concluding a long article on the subject, was written recently by Deacon Nicholas Denysenko, a young scholar whose work we have reprinted here before. It supports the assertion we made in the last newsletter—Father Alexander Schmemann's thinking is not operative in the OCA today, and has not been for decades. We see hostility at work, but this is not in the deacon's purview. Denysenko is too young to have sat in Father Schemann's classes; his knowledge comes from a perceptive study of his work.

There is more to say on the subject, and we will deal with it in future.

