



St. John Chrysostom Church

A Mission of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

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October 2015 SJCC News

My Joy in the Lord,

Our bishop will be with us this month. A bishop's visit is a chance for our community to celebrate its oneness with the whole Church. St. Ignatius wrote in almost the very beginning of the Church: "Where the bishop is, there the Church shall gather." In other words, the presence of the bishop is a call to all to come and be one with the Church through prayer and our common worship. We will not have him for a liturgy this year but that does not mean that our coming together is somehow less as a result. Any time we can spend with our bishop as a community, in prayer and in the common meal which will follow, is our fullness as Christian Church. Please make every effort to join in together on Friday, October 16 at 7 pm.

On another note, we now have separate worship and fellowship spaces. Parish meetings are held in the church/worship space and bringing coffee, soda, or food is not acceptable any more. We have had the luxury of only having one space and using it for all purposes up until now. But now we need to separate our church from our hall. Please be mindful of that as we move into the next phase of our parish life.

With love, in Christ,

Fr. Seraphim

"The Mind of the Orthodox Church: How our theology and our ecclesiology has been expressed over the centuries." is continuing throughout October, every Wednesday at 6:30 pm. Please feel free to bring your dinner and/or snacks to share during these sessions. Come whenever you can, even if you can't come for the entire time or every week.

Mark your calendars! Bishop Basil will be with us at St. John's on Friday, October 16 at 7 pm for Vespers! A Lenten (it is a Friday) hors d'oeuvres and dessert potluck will follow.

Prayer Circle: If you wish to be part of the Prayer Circle or would like more information, please contact Rebecca Ogden at r.braaten@comcast.net.

Sunday School for our Young Ones – every Sunday during Coffee hour.

Our annual Parish Assembly will be held on Sunday, November 22 after Coffee hour.

Parishioner Celebrations

**NOTE: If you don't see your day listed OR see your day listed on the wrong day
PLEASE let Fr. Seraphim know – as soon as possible**

October

10/05	Namesday	Dana Berry
10/07	Birthday	Miriam Fox
10/08	Anniversary	Sean & Jaimy Weddingfeld
10/14	Birthday	Bethany Cheaqui
10/19	Birthday	Timothy Spencer
10/30	Namesday	Lisa DeLeo

November

11/06	Anniversary	Zach & Becca Higgins
11/08	Namesday	Micco Waisanen
11/08	Namesday	Michael Ogden
11/09	Birthday	Margaret Berry
11/09	Birthday	Joseph Berry
11/10	Birthday	Andrei Gisetti
11/11	Birthday	Zachary Higgins
11/17	Birthday	Dcn Jan Veselak
11/23	Namesday	Alexander Higgins
11/25	Namesday	Caitlin Dovey
11/30	Namesday	Andrei Gisetti

PROSPHORA Baking Schedule

REMINDER: PLEASE make sure that you bring ONE (and only one) prosphora with names for commemoration -this includes both living and departed, if some of the living or departed are not Orthodox, I want them anyway - to church at least the night before the date on which it is due. You can bring it up to three weeks before and we'll freeze it until the date, but don't try to bring it that morning. I usually start the Proskomedie early and need the prosphora to be there. If it's not there by the night before, I will defrost a spare to use. Thank you for your consideration.

October

4	Dana Berry
11	Miriam Fox
18	Timothy Spencer
25	Open

November

1	Becca Higgins
8	Micco Waisanen
15	Christina Veselak
22	Becca Higgins
29	Andrei Gisetti

We will always need prosphora. I will be happy to come to your house and bake them with you if you're not sure how to do it.

An Orthodox point of view

by Prof. S. S. Verhovskoy

The nature of the Church and of its unity.

3. Revelation

"God speaks to us through many of our fellow men, whether they belong to our church. Other churches, or not at all."

We would rather say that God speaks to us, through the prophets, apostles, the saints, and above all through His own Son, Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 1:1 - 3) . We don't deny that everything or every event must have a meaning for us Christians, but we wouldn't know how to interpret them if we did not have the Revelation given to us directly by God and expressed in the Holy Bible and Tradition. Christianity is not a human wisdom but the manifestation of the divine wisdom.

4. Holy Scripture

We think that the importance of holy Scripture as the authentic revelation of God is really infinite. The common recognition of Holy Scripture as the True Word of God and the common agreement in its interpretation is a necessary condition for the unity of Christians. If we replace the Bible with human biblical scholarship, we lose our contact with the Word of God as such, and we replace the Divine Revelation with human ideas. Inasmuch as our recognition of the Divine Revelation in Holy Scripture would be only nominal, the unity of Christians in the Word of God would also be purely nominal.

Holy Scripture is infinitely rich, it is really a "world or revelation"; and there are no contradictions in its teaching and its meaning does not change with the ages. The message of God is an "eternal gospel."

Only the teaching of the whole Bible can be a foundation for sound theology. There is a great risk in opposing the so-called kerygma to the totality of the biblical theology.

We have found many quotations from Holy Scripture. Unfortunately, we felt many times that the interpretation of these texts is not in agreement with the context of Holy Scripture. For example: Ephesians 1:10, 2:14, and 4:13,15; speak about the Church and salvation of mankind in the Church and not just about "new humanity" which is opposed to the Christianity that tried to "bring man to God through Christ and His church."

Luke 24:47 and Acts 2:39 are quoted to prove that conversion "must lead to mission," and this mission must be concerned with the "world agenda" which has to replace evangelical and theological concerns. But these biblical texts speak, in fact, about the universal preaching of repentance, pardon, and baptism in order to convey the Holy Spirit, and not about the problems of the "world agenda."

Hebrews 13:12 - 14 invites us to "seek the city, which is to come," and not "to be driven out and beyond the frontiers and definitions of the Church into the mission within the world."

The whole 10th chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew does not speak about the Church which has to solve "the unsolved religious, social and political problems," neither about the "dialogue with the world.;" but it foretells the terrible opposition and persecutions which the preaching of true Christianity will provoke in the world. Christ warns His apostles that they will be in this world "among the wolves," that they will be considered demonic, and that the world will be split by Him as by the sword. He has not come to bring peace, but the sword. The apostles will be witnesses of Christ and the spirit of the Father will speak in them. Jesus Christ did not recommend His disciples to make "a positive effort to attain a deeper understanding of the truth" through a dialogue with the world.

5. Tradition

The Holy Tradition which we consider to be essential for the existence of the Church is not purely human or historical. From the time of Abraham to the end of the world, God is continuously present in His Church, which preserves and transmits all that was revealed and given to her by God. Holy Tradition is a creative and uniting power of the body of Christ; through it, the very grace of the Holy Spirit is transmitted and, therefore, the sacramental life of the Church can continue. Holy Tradition is also reflected in the continuity of the hierarchical organization of the Church and in the Apostolic Succession. Within the Holy Tradition, the doctrine of the Church, being faithful to the Truth revealed by God; is always essentially the same. The confessions of the Church are amazingly identical in their teaching. It is only when new denominations appear that confessions with a different content are introduced. In the church, the sound development of doctrine means only further explanation or formulation of the eternal truths by the Church. The liturgical life of the Church can be developed in a variety of its forms, but the spirit of the prayer always remains the same.

The true meaning of Holy Tradition is that Christianity is not created or re-created by every generation, or by every group of Christians, but is given by God and transmitted by the Church.

We don't think that Jesus Christ "disregarded religious traditions." Or that His main concern was to "respond to the needs of His day." He Himself said that He has come not to abolish but to fulfill the Law, and He rejected only the human and false interpretations of the Old Testament tradition and not the tradition as such. He certainly dealt with the persons in society which surrounded Him and was concerned with them. But the real goal of His Incarnation and work was the salvation of the whole of mankind of all ages. He has, by the power of the Holy Spirit, transmitted to the apostles and to the whole Church all that He has manifested and realized in His Life, Death, and Resurrection.

The church with a broken tradition is a broken church. According to Scripture, God is never the cause of divisions unless we consider as division the action of God, by which He purifies His Church from those who are unworthy to be her members - dividing the sheep from the goats. In the history of the Old or New Testamental Church, we cannot find any example of God and the Holy Spirit breaking Holy Tradition. If Christians, although divided into many denominations are still Christians, this can be explained only by the fact that these divisions did not completely break the continuity of the whole tradition. All denominations have kept at least a part of the Apostolic Tradition and accept at least partially the teaching of the Divine Revelation contained in Holy Scripture.

The history of Christianity reveals to us that any break in tradition means the organization of a new denomination, that is, it means a new division within Christendom. If the ecumenical movement is concerned with the unity of Christendom, it has to be concerned with the reunification of the Christian Tradition and with the restoration of the common acceptance of the Apostolic Tradition. The idea that the Holy Spirit Himself can divide and break Tradition in order to better unite Christians seems to us to be in opposition to New Testamental theology and the witness of the history of the Church. It can only encourage Christians to break the unity more and more.

The pamphlet, "An Orthodox Point of View", subtitled, "On Some of the Problems of Today's World" was written in May of 1968 to help clarify some ideas for the Orthodox participants at the World Council of Churches Assembly that year and was a direct response to several ideas presented in the working documents for the Assembly. I will be presenting the several parts of the document over the next few months.

NOTE: All references in the original text to specific sections of the draft working documents have been removed since most people have no access to them, nor are they needed to understand Prof. Verhovskoy's points.

Schedule of Services and Events

October

3	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers
4	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy Coffee Hour & Sunday School
7	Wed	6:30 pm	<u>The Mind of the Church</u>
10	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers
11	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy Coffee Hour & Sunday School
14	Wed	6:30 pm	<u>The Mind of the Church</u>
16	Fri	7:00 pm	VESPERS with Bishop Basil Potluck Refreshments (Lenten)
17	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers
18	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy Coffee Hour & Sunday School
21	Wed	6:30 pm	<u>The Mind of the Church</u>
24	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers
25	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy Coffee Hour & Sunday School
28	Wed	6:30 pm	<u>The Mind of the Church</u>
31	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers

November

1	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy Coffee Hour & Sunday School	
4	Wed	6:30 pm	<u>The Mind of the Church</u>	
7	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers	
8	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy Coffee Hour & Sunday School	
11	Wed	6:30 pm	<u>The Mind of the Church</u>	
13	Thu	6:30 pm	Liturgy Potluck	St. John Chrysostom
14	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers	
15	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy Coffee Hour & Sunday School	
18	Wed	6:30 pm	<u>The Mind of the Church</u>	
21	Sat	9:00 am	Liturgy Breakfast	Entrance into the Temple
		5:00 pm	Vespers	
22	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy Coffee Hour & Sunday School	
25	Wed	6:30 pm	<u>The Mind of the Church</u>	
26	Thu	9:00 am	Liturgy	Thanksgiving Day
28	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers	
29	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy Coffee Hour & Sunday School	