



“Joy of All Who Sorrow”

No 22 September ‘10

THOUGHTS ABOUT THE ORTHODOX APPROACH TO WORSHIP

The following paragraphs are taken from the introduction to *The Festal Menaion* and were written by Archimandrite (now Metropolitan) Kallistos.

Those unfamiliar with Orthodox worship may at first be surprised at the large amount of repetition that occurs in the services. They will find that things are appointed to be said or sung three or more times, while throughout the canons and other hymns the same basic ideas, in varying images and terminology, are repeated again and again.

The constant reiteration, so far from indicating poverty of thought or liturgical garrulousness, is designed to serve a definite purpose. Orthodoxy makes little or no use of that form of spiritual recollection known in the west as ‘meditation’, when a period of time is set aside each day for systematic thought upon some chosen theme. Its place is taken in the Orthodox Church by corporate liturgical worship. As an Orthodox Christian stands in church, hour by hour, during the vigil of some Great Feast or at the services on an ordinary day, he hears the same necessary and saving truths continually underlined, now in one way and now in another.

In this fashion the theological significance of the different mysteries of the faith is deeply and indelibly impressed upon his mind, becoming almost second nature; and if he prays with attention during this time of corporate worship, he has no need for a special period of discursive meditation to emphasize their meaning still more. The words that are read and sung in church are by themselves sufficient to provide him with abundant nourishment for his life in Christ.

In the true Orthodox tradition there is no divorce between theology and worship, between private meditation and public prayer. All genuine worship, while embracing the emotions, must also be reflective, intelligent and essentially theological; for, as the Fathers expressed it, we are the ‘logical sheep’ of Christ. And at the same time all genuine theology must be a living theology, not an abstract exercise of the reasoning powers, but a vision of God’s kingdom, attained first and foremost through liturgical celebration.

CHURCH LIFE: Notes & Jottings

OUR PATRONAL FESTIVAL

Please make a note in your diary: Saturday 6 November is the day on which we celebrate our patronal festival. There will be a Liturgy, God willing, at 10.30am. Please do your

utmost to attend.

The previous evening is Bonfire Night, which is hardly an ideal time for an evening service. Nevertheless there will be a vigil service at 6pm on Friday 5 November.

THANKS

Thanks are due to all who have contributed so much to our church life including George Ioannou who donated an ikon of the Mother of God and John and Anthea Barry who donated an ikon of St Eluetherios and St Anthia. Thanks are also due to Les Tozeland for his photography and computer work on various church cards. We express our gratitude to all who have endowed ikon lamps, baked prosfora, provided flowers for the church or food for the breakfast/lunch after church on Sunday mornings and all who have given their time to serve the church in so many miscellaneous ways. May God bless you all.

SPONSORED CYCLE RIDE

Please do not forget that the Sponsored Cycle Ride organised by the Suffolk Historic Church Trust is on Saturday 11 September. Sponsorship forms, for both riders and recorders, are on the table in the narthex. Please consider in what way you can support our church by taking part in this annual event.

IKONS

As we have progressed through the year, it has been apparent that we do not have some of the ikons appropriate to many Sundays, particularly in Great Lent and Eastertide. Mark has compiled what he calls the "wish list". It would be good to have the following subjects. Prices various according to size but around £30 each is a sort of average price.

- 1) Zachaeus Sunday (depicting Zachaeus in the sycamore tree)
- 2) Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee
- 3) Sunday of the Return of the Prodigal Son
- 4) Sunday of the New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia
- 5) Triumph of Orthodoxy: Restoration of the Veneration of the Holy Ikons
- 6) St Gregory Palamas
- 7) St John of the Ladder
- 8) St Mary of Egypt and St Zosimas
- 9) St Theodore the Tyro

- 10) The Myrhhbearing Women
- 11) Raising of the Paralytic
- 12) Healing of the Blind Man
- 13) Holy Fathers of the First Oecumenical Council
- 14) All Saints

Major Saints/Feasts:

- 1) St John the Baptist
- 2) 3 Hierarchs - Sts Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian & John Chrysostom
- 3) Ikon not made by Hands - the Holy Napkin sent to King Abgar of Edessa
- 4) Protecting Veil of the Mother of God (Pokrov)
- 5) St Luke the Evangelist
- 6) St James, the Brother of the Lord (Sunday after Christmas)

SAINT FANOURIOS

Even by the standards of hagiography, the story of St Fanourios is unusual. In the Church calendar, he is

commemorated on 27 August with the designation *The Newly Revealed*. Actually he was identified about five centuries ago but neither the dates, nor even the century, of his birth and death are known to us. His feast day is the day on which his ikon was uncovered.

On the island of Rhodes, the city walls were in need of restoration, having been damaged by warfare. There were also the ruins of buildings near to the walls and a plan was devised to re-use the stone from these ruins to repair the city walls. The remains of a church were discovered among the ruins. Whilst excavating the site, a number of ikons were found. All were decayed beyond repair and unidentifiable except for one that looked as if it has been painted the previous day. It was taken to Bishop Nilos of Rhodes who read the title *St Fanourios*. Some of the books recording this event give the date as 1500 although another book gives the dates of Nilos' episcopal tenure of the diocese of Rhodes as 1355 - 1369, which is considerably earlier.

Who was this unknown saint? The ikon depicts a young man in armour and holding a cross (the iconographic symbol of a martyr) and a candle. He had clearly been a soldier. Twelve smaller scenes around the border of the ikon showed details of the tortures he had endured. All the enquiries and researches in various church archives failed to identify the time and place of the martyrdom of St Fanourios. The Patriarchate officially recognised Fanourios as a saint and martyr and the ruined church, where the ikon was found, was rebuilt in his honour. Thus the saint, who had been lost and was found, became the patron saint of lost things.

It is recorded that on a number of occasions St Fanourios has appeared to various people. Information gleaned from these visions has provided some scraps of biographical detail. It seems that for reasons of financial necessity the saint's mother worked as a prostitute. For a time this was unknown to Fanourios but when his mother's secret became known to him, she dropped down dead. Thus she died of shame, before she had time to confess her sins. For this reason St Fanourios requested that we should pray for the repose of her soul. Her name is unknown to us, so she is identified in the lists of the departed simply as *the mother of St Fanourios*.

A custom associated with St Fanourios is the baking of a special loaf called Fanouropitta, which is offered if the help of St Fanourios is being sought for some special reason. It is brought to church and placed in front of the ikon of Christ during the Liturgy. At the end of the Liturgy it is blessed using a special prayer. Afterwards the people who offered the Fanouropitta will take it out and share it with their friends.

SPIRITUAL COUNSELS OF STARETZ PARFENY

Father Parfeny (1790-1856) was a monk of the Kiev Caves Monastery. As a priest he became of confessor and spiritual father - *staretz* - to many people. He has left a collection of pieces of spiritual advice, of which the following are but a few examples.

To lead a good life, to do good, to think good - this is not a sacrifice to God but man's duty to Him.

A person who has been touched by grace cannot be other than peaceful, nor can he be offended by his neighbour over anything.

Love of the poor and non-possessiveness prepare great treasures for the soul.

Circumspection is above all; patience is most needed of all, silence is best of all, much talking is the worst of all.

THE CHURCH'S NEW YEAR

Lord of the universe, who by Thy power hast established the times and the seasons, bless this year with Thy goodness, preserve our rulers and keep Thy flock in peace, through the prayers of the Theotokos, and save us. The Troparion for 1 September in the Menaion.

At the end of the 17th Century, with the blessing and encouragement of Patriarch Adrian of Moscow, St Dmitri Rostovsky compiled his *Great Menaion*. This is a collection of the Lives of the Saints for every day throughout the year. His first entry is a homily on the history of the celebration of the New Year explaining why the Church celebrates it on 1 September. St Dmitri wrote this homily in 1688. The quotation is taken from that homily.

“The present feast was instituted by the holy fathers at the First Oecumenical Council of Nicea (AD 325) when the great Emperor Constantine, after his victory over Maxentius the persecutor (of Christianity), renewed and enlightened the universe with the light of piety. Having uprooted the festivals of the demons, he delivered the Christian faith from the grievous yoke of persecution, and granted it freedom. The holy fathers then commanded that the New Year and the establishment of the indiction now be celebrated as the beginning of freedom for Christianity, commemorating as well Christ’s entrance into the midst of the synagogue of the Jews and His proclamation of the acceptable year of the Lord, spoken of in the Book of Isaiah.

Thus, no longer do we celebrate the feast of the ancient law; we now celebrate the feast of the new dispensation of grace on this first day of the present month, on which the very Lawgiver has revealed himself to the world, having come down from on high, bearing the Spirit of the Father in Himself and inscribing the Law of God not with his finger, but with His blessed tongue and most sweet lips, and *not on tables of stone, but on the fleshy tables of our hearts.* (2 Cor. 3:3)”

THE POWER OF THE CROSS

By the Cross, the Son of God having become man, accomplished our salvation. He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross (Phil. 2:8). Having stretched out His hands upon the Cross, the Saviour with them, as it were, embraced the world, and by His blood shed on it, like a king with red ink, He signed the forgiveness of the human race.

The Cross of the Lord was the instrument by which He saved the world after the fall into sin. Through the Cross, He descended with His soul into hell so as to raise up from it the souls who were awaiting Him. By the Cross, Christ opened the doors of paradise which had been closed after our first ancestors had been banished from it. The Cross was sanctified by the Body of Christ which was nailed to it when He gave Himself over to torments and death for the salvation of the world, and it itself was then filled with life-giving power. By the Cross on Golgotha, the prince of this world was cast out (John 12:31) and an end was put to his authority. The weapon by which he was crushed became the sign of Christ's victory.

The demonic hosts tremble when they see the Cross, for by the Cross the kingdom of hell was destroyed. They do not dare to draw near to anyone who is guarded by the Cross.

The whole human race, by the death of Christ on the Cross, received deliverance from the authority of the devil, and everyone who makes use of this saving weapon is inaccessible to the demons.

When legions of demons appeared to St. Anthony the Great and other desert-dwellers, they guarded themselves with the Sign of the Cross, and the demons vanished.

When they appeared to Saint Simeon the Stylite, who was standing on his pillar, with what seemed to be a chariot to carry him to heaven, the Saint, before mounting it, crossed himself; it disappeared and the enemy, who had hoped to cast down the ascetic from the height of his pillar, was put to shame.

One cannot enumerate all the separate examples of the manifestation of the power of the Cross in various incidents. Invisibly and unceasingly there gushes from it the Divine grace that saves the world.

The Sign of the Cross is made at all the Mysteries and prayers of the Church. With the making of the Sign of the Cross over the bread and wine, they become the Body and Blood of Christ. With the immersion of the Cross, the waters are sanctified. The Sign of the Cross looses us from sins. "When we are guarded by the Cross, we oppose the enemy, not fearing his nets and barking." Just as the flaming sword in the hands of the Cherubim barred the entrance into paradise of old, so the Cross now acts invisibly in the world, guarding it from perdition.

The foregoing paragraphs are from a sermon by Vladika St John the Wonderworker - Holy Cross Day, Shanghai 1947

CHURCH BOOKSTALL

The following items are available from the bookstall. When you visit the church, do stop and peruse the ikons, books, cards and numerous other items that are available.

DVDs:

THE RETURN OF THE ICON - The extraordinary story of the Tikhvin ikon of the Mother of God, its history, its journey into exile and its momentous return home to Russia. 85 minutes, PAL format,
£19.99

ROMANOV - LIFE OF THE NEW SAINT AND MARTYR GRAND DUCHESS ELIZABETH,
60 minutes, NTSC format, £13.00

THE SAINTS (series 4) St Catherine, St Peter, St Basil, St Constantine 120 minutes, NTSC format,
£13.00

BOOKS:

THE SPIRITUAL COUNSELS OF FATHER JOHN OF KRONSTADT - Select passages from *My Life in Christ* edited and introduced by W. Jardine Grisbroke, Pb 230pp
£9.99

SAINT JOHN CASSIAN on PRAYER - translated by A. M. Casiday. Pb 53pp
£3.00

ABBA ISAAH OF SCETIS, Ascetic discourses translated by John Chryssavgis and Pachomios Penkett, Pb 245pp £15.50

DEIFICATION IN THE EASTERN ORTHODOX TRADITION - a biblical perspective by Stephen Thomas, Pb 182pp £21.50

ST JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA AT GLASTONBURY - Lionel Smithett Lewis, Pb 211pp
£12.99

Namedays - to all of you who are celebrating a nameday this month,
Congratulations and Many Years

8 September - St Adrian & St Natalia (AD 305) - Adrian Cosby

11 September - Beheading of St John the Baptist - John Barry

19 September - Miracle of Archangel Michael - Subdeacon Michael Astley

(Note: new style dates given for convenience)

We are trying to compile a complete list of the name-saints of members and friends of our church so that we can congratulate you when your saint is commemorated in the Church calendar. If you have not already done so, and would like to be included, please tell us the requisite details.

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REGULAR SERVICES: Every Sunday 10.30am - Every evening 6pm

Extra services for festivals and saints days will be announced in the bulletin.

e-mail churchmettingham@aol.com Website www.joyofallwhosorrow.org.uk

Cheques for the church fund should be made payable to "*Joy of All Who Sorrow*" Church.

The account is in HSBC Bank, 3 New Market, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 9HQ

Account No 71395912 Sort Code 40-09-24