



# FROM THE AMBIVON

## ST MICHAEL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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### May 26th, 2024 4th SUNDAY OF PASCHA — Tone 3. Paralytic.

Apostles Carpus and Alphæus of the Seventy (1st c.). Greatmartyr George the New at Sofia (Bulgaria—1515). Uncovering of the Relics of Ven. Makáry, Abbot of Kalyazin (1521). Martyrs Abercius and Helen, children of the Apostle Alphæus (1st c.). Venerable Confessor John Psykhaitēs (9th c.). St. Augustine of Canterbury, Evangelizer of England (ca. 605).

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### Birthdays & Anniversaries for May

**Birthdays:** Jason Vo (5/30); Daniel Jones (5/30)

**Nameday:** Helen Wytovich (5/21); Emily Krenitsky (5/30)

**Baptism:** Fr Michael and Matushka Emilia Shepherd (5/8); Maximus Shepherd (5/16); Rodion Shepherd (5/18)

**Anniversary:** Fr Michael Shepherd - Priest Ordination (5/26)

**Travelers:**

**Prosphora Schedule: HELP! We need families to start baking prosphora at home. Please sign up. *The Church has a prosphora kit if you would like to borrow it. Thank you all for your offering “for the people by the people.”***

May 26th - Thank you Marie!

June 2nd -

**Counting: HELP! Please sign up to help us count weekly donations!**

May 26th -

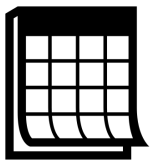
June 2nd -

**Visitors: PLEASE JOIN US DOWNSTAIRS for an Agape Meal. Thank you to everyone who donated. Please donate what you would spend for lunch at the agape meal to replenish our supplies.**

**PLEASE SING ALONG! Singing the hymns and responses to the litanies throughout the services is encouraged!**

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DEAR GUESTS AND FRIENDS: *A most sincere and heartfelt welcome to you from our community. According to the ancient traditions of the Orthodox Church, the Sacrament of Holy Communion is to be administered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared to receive themselves by prayer, fasting, and a recent (monthly) confession. If you have questions please ask Fr Michael! Visitors, if you did not introduce yourself to Fr Michael at Vespers, please refrain from Holy Communion.*



## Service Schedule

SAT, June 1st: @ 4:50PM Great Vespers & Matins w/confessions

SUN, June 2nd: @ 9:10 AM - Hours and Divine Liturgy

**5th SUNDAY OF PASCHA — Tone 4. Samaritan Woman.**



### *Words of Wisdom*

### *From the Saints & Teachers*

### Today Readings

**Epistle:** (23) Acts 9:32-42

**Gospel:** (14) John 5:1-15

#### **EPISTLE**

Deacon: Let us attend.

Priest: Peace be unto all.

Reader: And to thy spirit.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Prokeimenon in the 1st Tone, a Psalm of David: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon / us as we have set our hope on Thee.

Choir: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on Thee.

Reader: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous! Praise befits the just!

Choir: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on Thee.

Reader: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us

Choir: As we have set our hope on Thee.

Deacon: Wisdom.

Reader: The reading from the Acts of the Holy Apostles.

Deacon: Let us attend.

[(23) Acts 9:32-42] In those days, as Peter went here and there among them all, he came down also to the saints that lived at Lydda. \* There he found a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years and was paralyzed. \* And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals thee; rise and make thy bed." And immediately he rose. \* And all the residents of Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord. \* Now there was at Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas, and means a gazelle. She was full of good works and acts of charity. \* In those days she fell sick and died; and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. \* Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him entreating him, "Please come to us without delay." \* So Peter rose and went with them. And when he had come, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him weeping, and showing tunics and other garments which Dorcas made while she was with them. \* But Peter put them all outside and knelt down and prayed; then turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, rise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. \* And he gave her his hand and lifted her up. Then calling the saints and widows he presented her alive. \* And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.

Priest: Peace be unto thee, Reader.

Reader: And to thy spirit.

#### **ALLELUIA**

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: In the 5th Tone: Alleluia, Alleluia, AL-LE-LU-IA!

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Reader: I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation.

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Reader: For Thou hast said: Mercy will be established forever; Thy truth will be prepared in the heavens.

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

## GOSPEL

[(14) John 5:1-15] At that time, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. \* Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Hebrew called Bethesda, which has five porticoes. \* In these lay a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water; \* for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and troubled the water: whoever stepped in first after the troubling of the water was healed of whatever disease he had. \* One man was there, who had been ill for thirty-eight years. \* When Jesus saw him and knew that he had been lying there a long time, He said to him, "Dost thou want to be healed?" \* The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled, and while I am going another steps down before me." \* Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up thy pallet, and walk." \* And at once the man was healed, and he took up his pallet and walked. Now that day was the Sabbath. \* So the Jews said to the man who was cured, "It is the Sabbath, it is not lawful for thee to carry thy pallet." \* But he answered them, "The Man Who healed me said to me, 'Take up thy pallet, and walk.'" \* They asked him, "Who is the Man Who said to thee, 'Take up thy pallet, and walk'?" \* Now the man who had been healed did not know Who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place. \* Afterward, Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, thou art well! Sin no more, that nothing worse befall thee." \* The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus Who had healed him.

**Acts 9:36 The Meaning of Dorcas. Venerable Bede:** Now at Jaffa there was a woman disciple by the name of Tabitha, which means Dorcas, that is, "deer," or "fallow deer," signifying souls exalted by the practice of virtues although contemptible in the eyes of people. For the blessed Luke would not have provided the meaning of the name if he had not known there was strong symbolism in it. The deer and the fallow deer are animals that are similar in nature, though different in size. They dwell on high mountains, and they see all who approach, no matter how far away they may be. Hence in Greek they are called dorcades from the sharpness of their vision.

So it is with the saints. As they dwell on high by the merits of their works, through mental contemplation they simultaneously direct their attention with wisdom toward things above, while always watching out for themselves with prudent discretion. Moreover, these animals are clean according to the law but timid and unwarlike according to their nature, as Martial depicts it: "The boar is feared because of his tusk; the stag's horns defend him. What are we unwarlike fallow deer except prey?" Does not this clearly describe those who are content to live simply and with discretion in their course of action, as it were walking with split hooves and ruminating in continual meditation on the Word of God? A person who has met with spiritual death, if it was out of ignorance or infirmity, may nevertheless deserve to be revived for the integrity of his right intention, just as is shown to have happened through Peter to that woman to whom we can very rightly apply what is written [above] concerning the deer. **Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles 9.36.**

**Acts 9:36 True Fame. St John Chrysostom:** If you want to be remembered and are anxious for true repute, imitate her, and build edifices like that, not going to expense on lifeless matter but displaying great generosity in regard to your fellow human beings. This is the remembrance that is worth admiring and brings great benefit. **Homilies on Genesis 30.8.**

### **John 5:1 Jesus Went to Jerusalem for the Passover**

Christ Always Went to Jerusalem for Passover. Irenaeus: One can examine the Gospels to ascertain how often after his baptism the Lord went up, at the time of the Passover, to Jerusalem, in accordance with what was the practice of the Jews from every land, and every year, that they should assemble at this period in Jerusalem and there celebrate the feast of the Passover. First of all, after he had made the water wine at Cana of Galilee, he went up to the festival day of the Passover... Afterwards he went up, the second time, to observe the festival day of the Passover in Jerusalem. On this occasion he cured the paralytic man who had lain beside the pool for thirty-eight years... Then, when he had raised Lazarus from the dead and plots were formed against him by the Pharisees, he withdrew to a city called Ephraim. And from that place, as it is written, "He came to Bethany six days before the Passover," and going up from Bethany to Jerusalem, he there ate the Passover and suffered on the day following. Now, that these three occasions of the Passover are not included within one year, every person whatever must acknowledge. **Against Heresies 2.22.3.**

## How Much is my tithe

Weekly	2%	4%	5%	10%
<b>\$200</b>	\$4	\$8	\$10	\$20
<b>\$500</b>	\$10	\$20	\$25	\$50
<b>\$750</b>	\$15	\$30	\$37	\$75
<b>\$1000</b>	\$20	\$40	\$50	\$100
<b>\$1500</b>	\$30	\$60	\$75	\$150

**WEEKLY GIVING UPDATE:** We thank you for your continued giving in gratitude for all that our loving God does for each of us, for His Holy Church, and all the blessings we receive through her.

**May Income:** \$10,923.50

**May Expense:** \$9,669.18

**Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open:** \$3,740.85

**Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open:** \$14,963.58

### ON TITHING

*From the editors of the journal Orthodox America (August, 1997)*

As much as we might groan and grumble about it, we know that paying taxes is part of our responsibility as citizens of this country. Just as we should know that as parishioners we have a responsibility to contribute to the financial support of our parish. It is evident, however, from the strained and meager budgets on which so many of our parishes operate that this is a sadly neglected area of our Christian life. Why is this? And what can be done to correct it?

Priests feel awkward about speaking on the subject: they do not want to be perceived as greedy of filthy lucre; money tends to be a sensitive issue; people grow tired, even resentful of frequent appeals, and priests do not want to cause offense by suggesting that someone is not giving enough, or to imply that the Sacraments carry a price tag in which they do not! Parishioners, meanwhile, often do not know what is expected of them in this regard: there are the token memberships dues, but there are no "rules" for financial giving, as there are for fasting, for example. Because such giving is purely voluntary, we tend to give from our "surplus," after our "real" expenses have been met: food, utilities, health insurance, etc. It is all too easy to assume that other parishioners are in a position to give more than we, and that once we attain financial security we, too, will contribute more to the parish. Those of us raised in the Church may harbor the attitude: the parish has "always" been there; it has "always" managed to pay the bills; what comes in on the collection plate is supplemented by the annual bazaar or pierogi sales and if something special is needed - say, a new set of vestments - the parish makes an appeal. Others may have a spiritualized perception of the parish as a place where "laying aside all earthly cares" includes financial concerns. Many of us give when we feel inspired to do so, and we may give very generously to some cause that strikes us as being particularly worthy, but this does not fulfill our obligation to our parish, which seldom figures as the recipient of such inspired giving.

These various attitudes and haphazard practices are in large measure responsible for the financially constrained state of so many of our parishes today. Some people, not all, expect their priest to be in church Sunday after Sunday (not to mention Saturday nights and feast days), arriving before and leaving after everyone else, to be on call for counseling and emergencies, to be available for services of needs - molebens and panikhidas - who also think the priest needs a full time at a secular job on top of attending to his family. How can clergy in such situations possibly be expected to have the energy to properly nurture parish life or do evangelical work? Many of them are already on the brink of burn-out.

These practical considerations, however, are not the heart of the matter, which is, first and foremost, a spiritual concern. Supporting one's parish should be as much an accepted part of spiritual life as prayer and fasting. We give not for the benefit of our parish - this is simply a consequence; we give for the benefit of our souls. Our giving should be guided not by parish budgets but by Biblical principles.

In the Old Testament, the Israelites were commanded to give a tenth of their increase to the Lord (Lev. 27:30-34; Num. 18:21-24). This is called a tithe, and in contemporary terms translates to ten percent of one's gross income. With the establishment of the New Covenant, many of the Old Testament laws and regulations became obsolete. Christ Himself, however, makes it clear that the tithing requirement was not abolished. In an oft-quoted passage on the subject, He does not upbraid the Pharisees for paying tithes, but for neglecting the weightier matters of the law: judgment, mercy and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other (i.e., tithing) undone (Matt. 23:23). Christ came *not to destroy the law but to fulfill it* (Matt. 5:17), to breathe life into what had become a dead and empty legalism. It was not the Pharisees' observance of the law that Christ denounced but their attitude: their pride, their boasting, their self-satisfaction, their disdain for those who did not keep the letter of the law. This was their measure of righteousness. But what does Christ say to us: *Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven* (Matt. 5:20). And He proceeds to contrast the minimalism of the Old Testament law with the maximal intent that lies at the heart of His new testament ethic: *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill... But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment* (Matt. 5:21-22). Adultery and divorce are similarly redefined, while an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth is supplanted by the higher command to turn the other cheek. Leading His listeners further up the spiritual ladder, Christ enjoins them to love their enemies, do good to them that hate you... Finally, He says, Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.

In this spirit, we can see that tithing is a baseline requirement, as it were, of our spiritual life. We should practice tithing as a matter of course. Nor should this give us cause to be proud, for we are simply doing that which is our duty to do, as unprofitable servants (cf. Luke 17:10). Tithing precedes almsgiving on the path to perfection where, far ahead of us, we have the example of those early Christians who sold their houses and lands and laid the proceeds at the apostles' feet for distribution (Acts 4:32-25), and of the widow whose two mites that she cast into the treasury constituted all her living (Mark 12:42-44). And the act of donating for flowers, candles, or memorials should not be included in as your tithing.

Some may protest, "How can I possibly tithe on my salary, when I am just making it as it is, with regular expenses and saving for college tuition and retirement..." A single mother with two boys, barely making ends meet, raised similar objections when a friend recommended that she set aside ten percent of her slim paycheck. But she decided to try. She began at three percent, and, discovering that she scarcely noticed the difference, increased the amount to five percent, seven percent, and soon she was saving ten percent. The woman is now a financial advisor on Wall Street.

Many Protestants practice tithing, and there is no reason we Orthodox should not do likewise. If we are afraid of the financial strain this might impose, we can begin with a lesser amount, like the woman in the above example, or like someone learning too fast. Eventually, however, we should work up to the ten percent that is our Christian duty. It should become a matter of conscience, like fasting, or saying our morning and evening prayers. Whether other people in the parish tithe or just how the parish uses our money should be of no concern to us (assuming no evident corruption). What we give, we give to God - with no strings or emotional attachments. And we should tithe willingly, recognizing that all we have is from God, and that our tithe will accrue to our spiritual benefit, as promised by the Lord, Who said through His prophet:

*Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove Me now herewith ... if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. ... and all nations shall call you blessed...* (Malachi 3:10-12)

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Christ is risen!

They say that you can't buy happiness. Well, that's a bit subjective because some folks are very happy for a short time when they spend money. There is even a genuine psychological disorder that

deals with folks who are addicted to spending money. So, I guess it all depends on how you define “happiness.”

Of course, there is nothing more infantile than reducing a good life to how “happy” you are. In an age where perpetual adolescence is king, our pursuit of happiness is a telling symptom of our own narcissism.

The point of the old saying is to teach that true happiness, contentment, or a “good” life doesn’t and can’t depend on one’s personal wealth or lack of wealth. I’ve known very rich people who were also very miserable, and I’ve known very poor people who were very happy as well. So, something else has to be going on here. And that “something else” is actually a window into a person’s heart!

Are you willing to look in there? Fr Barnabas Powell



## **Announcements - Upcoming Parish & Diocesan Events**

**Silent Prayers and Confession:** Every Wednesday 11:00AM - 1:30PM or after vespers. Or you can make an appt for confession.

**Church Work Day:** Every Friday is Church Maintenance day. We need help pulling weeds. Everyone can do this!

**Monthly Panikhida:** June 29th, 4PM prior to Vespers

**Blessing of the Graves:** Today! 12:30 at Sibley and Immediately following Minooka.

**Parish Council Meeting:** 1 June 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM - All are invited.

**Take Out Chicken Barbeque:** Hosted by Arcaro and Genell's. Saturday, June 22nd from 12PM-3PM. The price will be \$13 a ticket. Everyone will be given two tickets to sell (you can purchase more if you like). Sandy and Tammy will have a meeting with Angelo this Tuesday at 6:30. Please start turning in your monies collected from sales so we can update Angelo NLT 9June. If anyone would like to donate towards the barbecue like for supplies, cupcakes or anything else we may need please see Tammy and Sandy.

**Episcopal Visit!** His Eminence, Archbishop Mark will be visiting on June 2nd! Let’s make preparations to welcome our Archpastor. Please be here by 9am to greet our beloved Archbishop. Blaise Shepherd will be tonsured as a Reader at this visit! AXIOS!

**Diocesan Men's Group:** At our last Diocesan Assembly, His Eminence, Archbishop Mark suggested that a men's group be formed within our Diocese to provide for the new and old converts, as well as the cradle Orthodox Christian men, an opportunity for fellowship and spiritual nourishment. We believe this group will be a valuable addition to our diocesan community. The name of the group is Saint Alexis Toth Brotherhood of the DoEPA. Currently, we are in early stages of planning the first event for the men's group. We are asking each parish rector, with the blessing of His Eminence, to announce this in their parish and provide the names and email addresses.

Thank you.

In Christ,

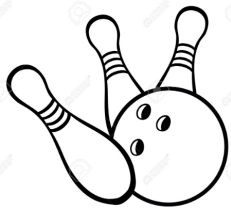
Fr Mark Koczak, Fr Michael Demko, Fr Vjekoslav Jovicic, Fr Aleksey Paranyuk, Pdn Peter Skoog

**Treasurer -** Mauro Elko has resigned as the treasurer so she can focus more time on our Websites and social media presence in which she feels she is more qualified to do. Lets encourage each other who has talent for

such a thing. IAW with our Bylaws ART 5 sec 5 and in agreement with our parish council; Fr Michael has appointed Joseph Cerminaro as Treasurer and will fill the remainder of the Maura's Term. She was elected in 2024 and this term will be up in 2027.

**ST TIKHON'S SUMMER CAMP STILL NEEDS VOLUNTEERS! IF YOU ARE INTERESTED PLEASE SPEAK TO FR MICHAEL.**

**YOUTH BOWLING!!!**



What: Youth Bowling Party  
When: Saturday, July 13th from 1pm - 3pm  
Where: Idle Hours North (Dickson City)  
Who: Youth of St. Michael's (Ages 5 and up)  
Pizza and Drinks Provided!

**Choir practice: Saturday's @ 4pm prior to vespers. If you would like to sing in the choir please make every effort to be at the practice.**

### **Parish Prayer List**

**Newly Departed:** *Jean Staviski Mori (5/6); Michael Brown (3/15)*

**Departed:** *Evelyn Flynn (5/5); Volodymyr Danylets (5/9); Marie Raskausakas (5/12); Paul Bezuhly (5/15); Harry Krevko (5/16); Alexander Pritchky (5/18); Walter Pregmon (5/19); Dennis Pregmon (5/25); Rose Macheska (5/26)*

**Please remember in your prayers LIVING**

Ill-afflicted *Archpriests Michael Evans, John Nightingale, & Theodore Orzolek*

**All those caring for the sick and suffering at this time throughout the world, especially our families and friends:** *David Lezinsky, John Pritchky, Christine Sevensky, Mike Jadick, Margaret Pregmon, Daniel Jones, Matushka Paula Soucek, Michael Sokol; Michael Krenitsky; Bernie Elko; The children of God Abigail and Nathan.*

**Servants of God** *Mark Bezhuly, David Barsigian, Patricia Jones, Anne Buday, Mary Krevko, Gregory Krevko, Emily Krenitsky, Gregory Krenitsky, Barbara Sevensky, Beverly Elko, Sandra Condon, Marie Pasternak, Nicole Earl, Anna Tyrpak, Sandy & Danny Pregmon, Walter Pritchky, Michael & Euphemia Keklak, Justin & Elisabeth Kane, Maria & Vitaliy Rakovsky, Ekaterina & Anna, Joe & Kelly Cigna, George, Natasha, Rosa, & Lucia Coyoy, Paul & MaryAnn Newmeyer, Mat. Emilia, Blaise, Maximus, Rodion, Savina Shepherd, Joseph, Emilia, Judah, Nadezda, & Silas Hart, Eli & Paula Stavisky, Helen Wytovich, Tammy Wytovich, Sharissa & Debra, Nadia Macheska, Paulette Ezbiansky, Jason Vo & Maura Elko, Santo Joseph Cerminaro, Mikayla Brown*

**Seekers -** *Christopher, Eugene, Mike, Brayden, Barbara*

**Catechumens -** *JoAnne Snopek & Paul Dunay*