Scripture Readings

EPISTLE 2 Corinthians 9:6-11 Brethren, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work. As it is written: "He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures for ever." He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your resources and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for great generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.

GOSPEL Luke 6:31-36 The Lord said, "As you wish that men would do to you, do so to them. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

Gospel Reflection: Christ's Challenge to Us

Once again, St. Luke reveals the abiding mercy of God as a major theme of his Gospel. He challenges the Christian to go beyond the conventional thinking about love and mercy – that we love those who love us, forgive those who forgive us, and lend to those whom we are certain will pay us back. Reflecting Jesus, St. Luke breaks through to a new and radical approach - love your enemies, do good to those who may have hurt you, lend to those from whom you're not certain of payback. He goes even further - if someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him your other; and if a person steals your coat, give him your shirt as well. We read these passages and wonder if St. Luke is serious. Moreover, does Jesus really expect this kind of behavior from us? It seems so unrealistic and naïve. It deprives us of the satisfaction of revenge, our unspoken instinct to put into practice "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." Logically, to respond to our enemy in kind teaches an important lesson. For Jesus, this is the wrong lesson. Think of how we expect God to repeatedly and compassionately forgive us our sins, great and small, while at the same time we strike out at our enemies to exact vengeance for their sins. Jesus tells us that such a merciless response misses the very heart of Christian discipleship. He instructs us in clear and unambiguous language: "Be merciful, as your heavenly Father is merciful." As difficult and challenging as it may be to love and embrace our enemies, rather than hate and destroy them, Jesus meant what He said, in the terms that He said it. This is not mere poetry of "Bible talk" to be diluted or explained away. Jesus expects us to be merciful and compassionate to those we love and especially to those who seem beyond the reach of our caring. All of us have someone like that in our lives. Today's Gospel passage summons us to make our hearts as deep and wide as is the heart of God Himself. We are to become His sons and daughters, more Christ-like, precisely because instead of the impulse to strike back, we revealed His face of mercy to a hurting human being. To the God of mercy and compassion be honor and glory this day and forevermore!

St. Gregory, Equal-to-the-Apostles and Illuminator of Armenia

Primative Icon of St. Gregory

The Hieromartyr Gregory, Illuminator of Greater Armenia, was born in 257. He was descended from the line of the Parthian Arsakid emperors. The father of Saint Gregory, Anak, in striving after the Armenian throne, had murdered his kinsman, the emperor Kursar, in consequence of which all the line of Anak was marked for destruction. A certain kinsman saved Gregory: he carried off the infant from Armenia to Caesarea in Cappadocia and raised him in the Christian Faith. At maturity, Gregory married, had two sons, but soon was left a widower. Gregory raised his sons in piety. One of them -- Orthanes, afterwards became a priest, and the other -- Arostanes, accepted monasticism and went off into the wilderness. When Tiridates ascended the throne as King, he began to demand that his friend, Gregory, renounce the Christian faith. The Saint refused and was given over to painful and life-threatening torture. Brought before the King a second time to renounce the Christian faith, Gregory again refused, and they then poured hot tin over him and threw him into a pit filled with vipers. The Lord, however, saved His chosen one: the snakes did him no harm. The beloved of God was kept isolated in a pit for some 14 years, fed bread by the pious women of the local Church. Released from the pit, he began to preach to the people, urging them to turn away from the darkness of idolatry and toward Christ. The people came to believe in Christ and wished to build a large church. When it was completed, Saint Gregory had the relics of the holy nuns whom the King had martyred brought into it. Then he brought King Tiridates there before the bodies of the saints whom he had slain. He repented, and immediately his face was made whole once more. Soon all of Armenia was converted to Christ. The temples of the idols were destroyed, and churches for the worship of the true God were built. Saint Gregory ordained priests, established schools, founded monasteries, and provided for the good order of the Church. Saint Gregory went into the wilderness, where he departed to the Lord. His son Aristanes was made a bishop in Cappadocia and was one of the 318 Holy Fathers at the Council of Nicea. O Gregory, Illuminator of Armenia, pray to God that our souls may be saved!

St. Romanos the Melodist (Oct. 1)

Saint Romanos flourished during the reign of Anastasius (491-518). He was from Emesa of Syria, and apparently was born of Jewish parents, for a hymn written in his honour in Greek says he was "of Hebrew stock," and it has furthermore been noted that he uses many Semitic idioms in his writings. He was baptized an Orthodox Christian, and at some time became a deacon in the Church of Beirut. He was the first composer of the kontakia, the foremost of which is that of the feast of Christ's Nativity: "On this day the Virgin." In composing many of his kontakia. Saint Romanos was inspired by the hymns of Saint Ephraim of Syria.

For Their Blessed Repose

Spiros Hitiris (40 Days)
Alivizis "Alex" Giakoumatos (1 Year)
Sophia Matsangakis (4 Years)

May they rest in peace and rise in glory, and may their memory be eternal!

40–Day Blessing

Maria, daughter of
Evgenia Gourgaki and Ilias Spanakis

God grant her many years!

For Their Health and Salvation

His Eminence Metropolitan +Panteleimon; His Eminence Archbishop +Pavlos of Aleppo and His Eminence Mar +Gregorios Ioanna of Aleppo, who were kidnapped; Metropolitan +Kallistos of Diokleia, Anatoly Seraphim, Georgia Mavromihalis, Robert West, Amanda Lawrence, Ourania Mantzouranis, Maria Kritzas, Cathy, Janie Pappas, Eleni Gourmani, Anne Savas, the child of God Trey Anderson, Dimitrios Papapostolou, Angela Apidououlos, the child of God Amelia Marghi, the child of God Seraphina Marie Vasilatos, Adib Marghi, Betty Jean Dubard, Aris Peterson, Nicholas Ellis, Katherine Ellis, Kelly, Jon Wood, Tom Dale, Joy Kizzie, Marie Burpeau, Bill Pastis, Evangelia Pantazakos, George Dizelos, Constantina Speris; Andrew Katson; Selena Pappas

ORTHODOX SPIRITUAL LIFE AND LEARNING

2018-2019 BIBLE STUDY: "The Gospel of St. John: Beholding the Glory" This year's Scripture study focuses on the fourth Gospel, composed by St. John the Theologian. Join us every Thursday at 10:30 AM or 7:00 PM in the Church library to explore the depths of the Gospel written by "the disciple whom Jesus loved."

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 2018-2019: Beginning today in the Church library: "The Shared Experience of the Orthodox Christian Faith." Our theme this year is that our faith is not primarily about ideas or concepts, rules and regulations. It is about our relationship and our personal connectedness with Jesus Christ in the experience of our everyday lives.

ADULT INQUIRY CLASS: For adults interested in joining the Orthodox Church. Through discussion, speakers, and personal sharing, adults will be preparing to receive Baptism or Chrismation. Sessions will be held at 7:30 PM on October 3, 17, 31; November 14, 28; and December 12, in the Church Library. See Fr. Dimitrios for more information or to sign up.

FALL FUNDRAISER: Friday, Oct. 5, 7:00 PM in the Grand Hall. Internationally acclaimed HBO comedian Basile will be performing his celebrated "Growing Up Greek in America" show as our special guest. Come enjoy a night of fellowship in family-friendly laughter, w/heavy mezze servings and wine; beer cash bar. GOYAns will provide child care at St. George for families that pre-register children ages 5-12. Tickets are only $65.00, including sodas and water, at https://stgeorge.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/251/responses/new

PARISH ACTIVITIES

YOUTH MINISTRIES: The new registration form below replaces all registration forms for Sunday School and its Choir, Altar Boys, HOPE & JOY (Hellenic Orthodox Primary Education and Junior Orthodox Youth), GOYA, Dance Troupe, and St. George Counselors-in-Training (C.I.T.s) for Events and Retreats. Please register your children for all appropriate age group ministries at https://stgeorge.org/ministries/youth-ministries-registration

50 PLUS: The first Breakfast will be Monday, October 1, at Montgomery Mall. There will be a walk after for those interested. Everyone is welcomed. A Bus Trip to Agia Skepi Monastery now planned for SATURDAY OCT. 6. Estimated price $35/person. Please call as soon as possible to Maria Kopsidas at 240.421.9909 to register or for more information as time is getting close.

GOYA: 20th Annual Bishop George Memorial Basketball Tournament, Oct. 13-14. To sign up to volunteer, please email us at stggoya@gmail.com. General Membership Meeting for all registered GOYAns, Sunday, Oct. 7th after Sunday School. It is a great chance to make your ideas heard, ask questions, and join planning committees.

GREEK SCHOOL: Friday and Saturday classes have begun. Register at https://www.stgeorge.org/education/greek-school/ - for information, contact Eirini Iatrou at eirini.iatrou@gmail.com

Kindly bring this Bulletin home for deeper review and family discussion of the Gospel lessons and divine grace offered to you today. Many thanks!

The Greek Orthodox Church of St. George

Rev. Fr. Dimitrios J. Antokas, Presiding Priest

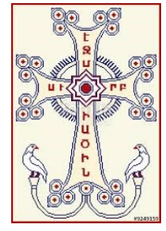
FrAntokas@stgeorge.org

7701 Bradley Boulevard, Bethesda, MD 20817 www.stgeorge.org Tel: 301-469-7990

St. Gregory the Illuminator, Catholicos of Armenia

SECOND SUNDAY OF ST. LUKE

St. Gregory, The Illuminator, 1st Catholicos of the Armenian Apostolic Church



September 30, 2018

Resurrection Apolytikion Tone 1

Though the stone of Thy Tomb was sealed by the Judeans, and while the soldiers were guarding Thy sacred body. On the third day, O Saviour, Thou didst rise granting to the world the gift of life. Wherefore Thou o giver of Life, the Hosts of heaven did laud Thee. Glory to Thy Resurrection O Christ; Glory to Thy Kingdom; Glory to Thy Providence; Thou alone art friend of man.

Apolytikion of St. George

O Trophy-Bearer, Great Martyr George, who freed captives, supported the poor, healed the sick, was a champion of kings, intercede with Christ God that our souls be saved!

Ἀπολυτίκιον

Ὡς τῶν αἰχμαλώτων ἐλευθερωτής, καὶ τῶν πτωχῶν ὑπερασπιστής, ἀσθενούντων ἰατρός, βασιλέων ὑπέρμαχος, Τροπαιοφόρε Μεγαλομάρτυς Γεώργιε, πρέσβευε Χριστῷ τῷ Θεῷ, σωθῆναι τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.