

Annual White Sox Outing: For the eighth straight year, we will again coordinate an annual night out with good friends/family and fellowship with a tailgate at White Sox park (starting at about 5:30 pm or so) followed by the ball game (at 7:10 pm) for Greek Heritage night on, **Tuesday, July 18th** vs the Los Angeles Dodgers in the 320 lower reserved box seats, (section 116, rows 9-37). We are asking \$41 per person which will cover the game, food at the tailgate and beverages. (Normal face value of tickets only is \$46). We are encouraging you to bring a plate to pass if you can, though it's not required. If you are interested, please contact Fr. Athanasios at frathanasios@standreorthodox.org or call the office.

Save the date for our Edgewater Greek Festival. It will take place on Saturday, July 8th and Sunday, July 9th. More information to follow.

St. Andrew's has Graves for Sale @ Elmwood Cemetery, Section 3B and @ Memorial Park at the Cypress Gardens. Please call the church for additional information if you are interested (773) 334-4515.

The newly-released DVD of the *Greek Liturgy* by Fr. Ivan Moody is now on sale for \$20.00. After Divine Liturgy today, there will be a table in the hallway between the Church and the church office where the DVD can be purchased. All proceeds are donated to St. Andrew Greek Orthodox Church. PLEASE SUPPORT THIS INITIATIVE!



PHILOPTOCHOS

July 1st, August 5th: Outreach Support needed at the Soup Kitchen at First Presbyterian Church, 1427 Chicago Avenue, Evanston, Illinois. Philoptochos has supported this Soup Kitchen initially supported and promoted by the late Ethel Kotsivos and many Philoptochos members. We still have a slot the first Saturday of every month from 11:30-12:30; please arrive by 11:15 and stay for the 15 minute clean-up. Please see if you help us out and join in this worthwhile activity. High School students are welcome to earn service hours!! Please contact Timi Pappas at timpapa417@yahoo.com or Vonnie Karafotias vonnie@karafotias.com if you are able to attend in July or August. Now that summer is in full swing, help is really needed June, July and August!!

Baking Pastries for the Picnic: Please stop by the Philoptochos Table to sign up for making pastries for the Picnic!! We are adding additional baking classes to spread the wealth so many more within the parish will participate in this most important event for St. Andrew. The goal is to start baking now and freezing as much as possible and then baking closer to the picnic.

June 21st: Kourambeithes: Cynthia Melas 9:00am

Early July: Karithopita: Diane Alexander White, time tbd

We have already had classes in Paximathia, Koulouria, and Moustakoulouria!! Please join in making the Pastries Booth and our picnic a great success!!

Welcome to Saint Andrew's Greek Orthodox Church

"Proclaiming Orthodoxy Since 1926"

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Fr. John N. Kalomas – Proistamenos

Fr. John Kutulas – In Loving Memory

Fr. Athanasios Minetos



SUNDAY, JUNE 18, 2017 (2nd Sunday of Matthew)

STEWARDSHIP QUOTE— *Follow Me Was A Directive By Christ Not To His Disciples But Also To Us. Follow Me Means Follow My Example. What More Of An Example Of Stewardship Can One Ever Have Than What Our Lord Showed Us? Let Us Follow Him And Become Therefore Stewards For His Church And Kingdom.*

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!!!

40 DAY BLESSING

Aris Botinis

We invite the entire Parish Family to join in prayer as the servant of God, Aris along with his parents Anca & Andreas Botinis present him to God within the church following the fortieth day of his birth. We offer congratulations and prayers that God continue to bless them with health and happiness.

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FOR NON-ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS: *We welcome those Christians not fully united with us. It is a consequence of the sad divisions of Christianity that we cannot extend to you a general invitation to receive Holy Communion. Orthodox Christians believe that the Eucharist is an action of the celebrating community signifying a oneness in faith, life, and worship. Reception of the Eucharist by Christians not fully united with us would imply a oneness which does not yet exist and for which we must all pray. We do however invite you to receive the blessed bread that is given out to all at the end of service.*
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“Follow Me” Applies to Us All; The 2nd Sunday of Matthew”

In some ways, we may envy Peter, Andrew, James, and John for the clarity of their call. On the day that Jesus Christ called them to leave everything behind and follow Him, there was no question what He wanted them to do. The message was clear and they did as they were told.

Of course, that was only the beginning of their ministry as disciples and apostles. As we know from reading the rest of the gospels, these men did not have a clear understanding of who Christ really was until after His resurrection. Nothing in their background had prepared them for this unusual kind of Messiah or for the great sacrifices that following Him would require. But on the day that the Lord called His first disciples, He did not require perfect understanding. He asked only that they leave behind the life that they had known and take the first steps in following Him.

That was not a small thing, of course. Imagine how hard it would be if Christ made very clear to you that He wanted you to give up the only occupation you had ever known, leave your family behind, and literally follow Him as He went around teaching, preaching, and healing the sick. On that particular day, despite the enormity of this calling and their less than full understanding of it, these men did as they were told and became “fishers of men” for the Kingdom of God. They were clearly chosen to be Christ’s disciples, but they certainly did not have it easy in any way for the rest of their lives.

It is a blessing and a challenge to have a strong and clear sense of what God wants you to do in life. How many holy people—from the very first Christians until this very day—die as martyrs or suffer abuse and persecution for their faithfulness to Christ? To take even small steps toward a holy life requires struggle, persistence, and a willingness to endure tension within our own souls and usually with other people. To lead a righteous life requires loving God with every ounce of our being and our neighbors as ourselves. Try to do that seriously and you will find yourself fighting many battles, especially in your own soul.

St. Paul was a Jewish convert to Christianity who knew that God had called the Hebrews for a unique role in the salvation of the world. The Jews certainly had an advantage over the Gentiles because of all that God had revealed to them through Moses and the prophets. But St. Paul also knew that God shows no partiality. Hearing the Law without obeying it was of no benefit at all, even as Christ’s disciples would have gained nothing by ignoring

Christ’s call to follow Him. What matters is actually doing what God requires of us.

St. Paul knew that God had not abandoned the Gentiles, for He gave everyone a conscience, a knowledge of right and wrong engraved in our hearts; that is an important part of what it means to be a human being in God’s image and likeness. So whether Jew or Gentile, whether according to the law of Moses or the dictates of conscience, St. Paul teaches that God holds us all accountable to the truth that we have received. The question for every human being, then, is whether we obey the Lord according to what we know of His purposes for us.

He was under no illusion that the Jews had perfectly obeyed the Law or that the Gentiles had lived fully in accordance with conscience. St. Paul taught that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. No one is in the position to boast of a privileged status before the Lord or to judge another, for both Jew and Gentile (namely, all human beings) stand in need of grace and mercy to the depths of our souls. Everyone is in need of a Savior Who conquers sin and death and brings us into the eternal life of God.

That was certainly true our Lord’s disciples, who failed with some frequency to obey or even understand what Christ expected of them. They largely abandoned Him at His arrest and crucifixion, and it was not until He appeared to them after His resurrection and gave them a measure of the Holy Spirit that their eyes were truly opened. It was not until the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost that they boldly and effectively became “fishers of men” whose preaching and miracle-working ministry brought multitudes into the life of Christ. As a consequence of their apostolic ministry, they took up their crosses in suffering persecution, hardships of all kinds, and even death as martyrs. The Lord did not call them to an easy life of special privilege, but to an extremely demanding one of sacrifice for the sake of the Kingdom.

At the end of the day, He does the same with us all. Of course, the details will be different. We are not fishermen in first-century Palestine or the very pillars of the Church in the sense that they were. St. Paul surely did not have us in mind when he wrote to the Romans about Jews and Gentiles. It is possible to get so caught up in the particular callings and circumstances of others such that we miss the larger point. To be perfectly clear, the larger point is that we are all fully responsible for hearing and responding to God’s calling in our lives, no matter how imperfectly we understand it or how difficult it is to obey.

In many ways, we have much less of an excuse than Christ’s first disciples, for we have the benefit of their example and of so many generations of faithful people who have gone before us in following Jesus Christ. As Orthodox Christians, we have received the fullness of God’s revelation in the ongoing life of the Church by the power of the Holy Spirit. But instead of patting ourselves on the back and simply taking pride in these great blessings, we must

humbly accept the great responsibility that they give us. Like the Jews of old, we must remember that it is no great thing to be a recipient of God’s requirements if we do not actually do what He requires. Like the Gentiles mentioned by St. Paul, we must remember that it is no accomplishment to have a conscience that leads us in the right direction if we do not actually follow it. And our participation in the Church will be of no benefit to us if we ourselves do not become living witnesses of our Savior’s victory over sin and death in our daily lives.

In this season of the Apostles Fast, we want to become more like those blessed men who left everything behind in response to the Savior’s call, even though they often fell short. Their understanding was imperfect and the same was true of their actions on many occasions. But the Lord did not abandon or reject them, even when they abandoned Him. He is merciful and calls us all to accept His mercy when we realize that we have not been doers of His will and have disregarded His calling. Like the apostles, we do not yet have perfect faith and obedience; but just like them, we are responsible to respond to the calling we have received as best we can. To do so will never be easy or without sacrifice; we will often stumble along the path of discipleship. But if we continue the journey with humble

repentance, we will grow each step of the way in hearing Christ’s calling more clearly and in gaining the strength to obey Him more fully.

As hard as it is to believe, Jesus Christ calls each of us with the urgency that He called those first disciples and apostles. We are every bit as responsible for obeying Him as they were, indeed even more responsible because we have the benefit of their example. They had to wait three years for Christ’s resurrection and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, while we do not. Far more than the Jews of the Old Testament or the ancient Gentiles, God has opened the eyes of our souls to know what He requires of us. He has given us a great calling to share personally in His eternal and holy life. There is no question about that. The only question is how we will respond to the One Who says to each and every one of us: “Follow Me.”

Given by Fr. Philip LeMasters from Eastern Christian Insights

EPISTLE READING: Romans 2:10-16

Brethren, glory and honor and peace for every one who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. For God shows no partiality. All who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. When Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 4:18-23

At that time, as Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left their boat and their father, and followed him. And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people