

Adult Bible Study - Monday, October 15th @ 7:00 p.m. Come join us and learn about the richness of our faith through scripture. Bring your bibles, we'll be using the Orthodox Study Bible. For more information call (773) 334-4515 and speak to Father John.

Mommy and Me will be meeting on Friday, October 19th @ 10:30 am in the pre-school room. Cleansing of pumpkins lesson and craft. If you are interested in joining the group please contact Stephane Collopy at sacollopy@gmail.com

Inclusion Awareness Sunday, October 21st - Celebrating all abilities! For more information email Maria Kotsinis at: reenote@comcast.net

Save the Date for our Annual Boxing Event: Friday, November 16th, 2018. Tickets are \$100.00 Please call the office for reservations (773) 334-4515

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



Today, Sunday, October 7, After Church in the Auditorium: Please look for the opportunity to donate towards one of our beautification projects. As we look to the front of our church, it seems plain and we'd like to change that. We would like to plant tulip bulbs, however, we need to raise money for this specific project. Stop by the display table and donate money in memory of a loved one, or in honor of someone living. With a \$10 donation, you will provide 30 blooming flowers in the spring! The date for planting will soon be announced. Thank you, in advance, for supporting this beautification project.

Thursday, October 18, Philoptochos General Meeting in the Presidents Room. Potluck Dinner (6pm-7pm) and Meeting (7pm-8:30pm). Mark your calendar. Hope you can make it! Come join one of our "circles", and see how the ideas just flow! There is a wonderful mindset on what we can do as a philanthropic group. There are no limits! We have the energy to push forward and accomplish that which we set out to do. What's your passion? Where do you see Philoptochos going? Share your ideas. With all of us together, we can accomplish #philostrong

Friday, October 19th in the Kitchen - 10:30am - noon. Sandwich Making for Sarah's Circle Please join several ladies of our Philoptochos in making sandwiches and sack lunches for Sarah's Circle. All are welcome. Any questions, please contact Vicki Karagianis at 773-327-3194.

Saturday, October 27 - Make a Difference Day - National Make a Difference Day was established in 1992, as the largest national community service day in the United States. It is held annually on the 4th Saturday in October, and millions of Americans participate in this day of volunteerism. And we want to be a part of it, too! In honor of the name day of His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, Philoptochos is asking Church chapters to choose three good deeds to bestow upon an individual or organization, and then ask that individual or organization to "pay it forward". Children, parents, grandparents, men, women, will all be needed. Do you have an idea on how we can make a difference on this particular day? Share it by emailing Fotine at fotine14@yahoo.com

Gently Used Children's and Teens Book Drive - Ongoing for the month of October

Is there a beloved children's book that you would like to share with a foster child? Is there a book that you enjoyed reading as a child or teen? Won't you help us pass on these books to children preparing to be placed in foster care. Your Philoptochos is pairing up with General Pediatrics of Children's Hospital of Illinois and the Mile Square Health Center, to provide some of the essentials needed to children when being placed in foster care. A book can be a friend when a child finds himself or herself alone. We are collecting "friends". Other opportunities to donate will be forthcoming. Donation boxes for these books will be located in the hallway near the Church office and in the auditorium.

Mingle and Jingle Holiday Party: Saturday, December 8, 2018

Please save the date, and spread the word to friends, family, koumbari! Paula Bork & Marianne Nichols, along with their committee, have been busy planning this holiday party at Westmoreland Country Club. Price is \$130 per person, and includes delicious food stations, dessert, an open bar, and dancing! This is our Philoptochos' major fundraiser. Won't you please attend and enjoy wonderful music, food, and fellowship. It promises to be a fun affair! Look to our Church's website for more information: www.standreworthodox.org.

Welcome to Saint Andrew's Greek Orthodox Church
"Proclaiming Orthodoxy Since 1926"

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Fr. John N. Kalomas – Proistamenos
Fr. Athanasios Minetos - Associate Priest
Fr. John Kutulas – In Loving Memory

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2018 (Third Sunday of Luke)

*STEWARDSHIP QUOTE – Life Is The Precious Gift One Can Give.
Life Was Given To The Son Of The Widow Of Nain. Life Is What
Our Lord Gave To Us On The Cross. What Can We Give Back To
Our God For This Great Gift?*

weekly altar stewards - How do we obtain the incense, charcoal, oil wine, and other necessities required to celebrate the Divine Services? In part, we secure them through stewardship offerings from our Parish Family members. The \$25 offering we receive is a great help.

Please telephone the Parish Office if you would like to be an Altar Steward for the week.

Altar Steward this week is Mina Roussos in loving memory of her husband Evangelos.

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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. Thank you for coming and worshipping with us.*
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The Third Sunday of Luke: On Sharing Undeserved Mercy

I have known people who have been troubled by the question of whether God is primarily characterized by human standards of love or justice. Some of them have worried that a God of love would simply overlook evil and hold no one accountable for their actions. Others have reacted against the view that God is primarily a harsh judge Who is out to get us and to make sure that we pay our pound of flesh for our sins. Those with time to spare can have a debate about such abstract matters, as though God were a math problem that needed solving. But as Orthodox Christians, our focus must be different, for we humbly embrace God's truth not as a speculative idea, but in the Person of Jesus Christ. He is not a bundle of competing definitions according to the standards of our limited minds, but the Son of God Who became fully human in order to save us out of a divine compassion beyond our understanding. He lowered Himself, taking on the form of a servant to the point of death on the Cross, burial in a tomb, and descent into Hades in order to rise triumphantly over them in His glorious resurrection on the third day. And He did not do so for His own sake, but for ours. In Him, we encounter not merely the best human aspirations, but truly the Lord Himself Who alone is Holy, Holy, Holy.

What does it look like when the Alpha and the Omega of the universe becomes one of us, living in our corrupt world of sin, death, and personal brokenness? In today's gospel text, we have a clear picture of what it means for the Word to become flesh and dwell among us. It means that He gives life to the dead and joy and comfort to those who mourn. Christ had compassion on the widow who had lost her only son. He consoled her, saying "Do not weep," and then touched the coffin, bringing the young man back from death itself. The Lord's great act of mercy for this woman is a sign or enacted icon of our salvation. For we weep and mourn not only for loved ones whom we see no more, but also for how our own sins, and those of others, have broken, marred, and distorted the beauty of our world, of our souls, of our relationships, and of every dimension of our life. Death, destruction, hatred, fear, and decay in all their forms are the consequences of our refusal to live faithfully as those created in the image and likeness of God. We have worshipped ourselves, our possessions and our pride, and found only despair and emptiness as a result, as well as slavery to our own self-centered desires. So we weep with the widow of Nain both for losing loved ones and for losing ourselves.

The good news of the Gospel, however, is the unfathomable compassion of our Savior. Rather than simply observing human suffering and letting us bear the consequenc-

es of our actions, the Father sent the Son to enter into our suffering, into our distorted and disintegrated world, in order to restore us to the blessedness for which He created us. He came to heal us, to stop us from weeping, and even to raise us from the dead into the glory of the heavenly kingdom. He came to unite us to Himself in holiness. The Son touched the coffin of the dead man and he arose. Christ's compassion for us is so profound that He also entered a coffin, a tomb, and even descended to Hades, the shadowy place of the dead because, out of love for humankind, He could not simply stand by and allow us to bear the full consequences of our actions. No, our faith is not fundamentally about punishment or wrath for sinners. It is not focused on the bad news that we get what we deserve. Instead, we celebrate the good news of the infinite, holy mercy of Christ Who will stop at nothing to bring the one lost sheep back into the fold, Who is not embarrassed to welcome home the prodigal son, and Who will even submit to death on a cross in order to destroy it by rising in glory.

Of course, we have our part to play in responding to His great compassion. If we identify ourselves with Jesus Christ, if we are members of His Body, the Church, and are nourished by His Body and Blood in the Holy Eucharist, then His mercy must become evident in our lives. If we are partakers of the divine nature in Him, then His life must become ours such that, as St. Paul teaches, "it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." (Gal. 2:2) If we claim to receive Christ's compassion, then we must extend that same compassion to others, suffering with them in love, sharing their burdens as best we can, and going out of our way to show them the mercy that we have found in our Lord. If we are to live the Christian life with integrity, we too must have the courage to relate to others with true compassion as they suffer, mourn, and live with pain and disorder of whatever kind. Perhaps they brought some of these conditions upon themselves. Like the rest of us, they have not always done the right thing and have suffered the consequences of their own bad choices. In some cases, they may actually believe that what they are doing is good. In other words, they are a lot like you and me. Instead of doing the easy and self-righteous thing by simply leaving them to their allegedly well-deserved misery, we must follow the way of our Lord, Who did not come to show mercy upon those who deserved it. Remember that mercy and grace, by definition, are not deserved. The widow of Nain and her dead son did not deserve the compassion of the Lord, but He showed love to them anyway. The relevance for our lives should be clear. If we have integrity as Christians, we will

respond to others with the same compassion that we have experienced in Jesus Christ. But we need to be clear: Extending Christ's compassion to others is not the same thing as being what our culture calls "a nice person" or making sure that everyone likes us or that we always tell people what they want to hear. It took discipline, strength, and courage for the Lord to show compassion throughout His entire earthly ministry, especially during His journey to the Cross. And every time that He healed the sick or raised the dead, He knew that the Pharisees and perhaps the Romans were watching, noticing Him as a threat to their power. He offended them virtually every step of the way with what He said and did. If we live and speak with holy compassion, we can be sure that some will take offense and think that we are crazy or even dangerous. To be His disciple is not a calling for cowards afraid of their own shadow or for people addicted to the praise of others, for it the dominant ways of the world, whatever they may be in a given time and place.

Unluckily, it has become second nature to defend our egos by damning others, by building ourselves up as we put others down. Thank God, that is not way of our Lord. If it were, we would have no hope for salvation. If it were, the dead would

be left in the tombs and the mourners would sorrow alone. But because the Savior has come to us purely out of love for fallen, broken, sinful humanity, we must share His compassionate love with everyone we encounter, especially those whom we are inclined to ignore or condemn for whatever reason. For we do not relate to Jesus Christ as isolated individuals, but as members of His Body who share a common life. If we are members of His Body and receive His Body and Blood in the Eucharist, how can we disregard Him even in "the least of these" whose hearts and lives are broken, regardless of who is at fault for the circumstances? Our Lord is a Person, not an abstract idea. Prepared by prayer, fasting, and confession, let us unite ourselves to Him in the Eucharist, receiving His compassionate mercy even as we extend the same holy concern to our neighbors, loved ones, and enemies. He came to call sinners to repentance, to heal the sick, and to raise the dead. He came to save, bless, and restore people as broken as you and me. If we receive Him, then we must receive them. For as hard as it is to believe, He works through us to extend His compassion to others. To be in Him is to become a living icon of His mercy, a personal sign of His salvation.

Given by Fr. Philip LeMasters Professor of Christian Theology and Ethics

EPISTLE READING

II Corinthians 11:31-33, 12:1-9

Brethren, the God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed for ever, knows that I do not lie. At Damascus, the governor under King Aretas guarded the city of Damascus in order to seize me, but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped his hands.

I must boast; there is nothing to be gained by it, but I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven -- whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. And I know that this man was caught up into Paradise --whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows -- and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter. On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. Though if I wish to boast, I shall not be a fool, for I shall be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me. And to keep me from being too elated by the abundance of revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to harass me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I besought the Lord about this, that

it should leave me; but he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me

GOSPEL READING:

Luke 7:11-16

At that time, Jesus went to a city called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. As he drew near to the gate of the city, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a large crowd from the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." And he came and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." And the dead man sat up, and began to speak. And he gave him to his mother. Fear seized them all; and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and "God has visited his people!"