The Last Judgment

Today’s Gospel reading is Matthew 25:31–46, the parable of the Last Judgment. It reminds us that while trusting in Christ's love and mercy, we must not forget His righteous judgment when He comes again in glory. If our hearts remain hardened and unrepentant, we should not expect the Lord to overlook our transgressions simply because He is a good and loving God. Although He does not desire the death of a sinner, He also expects us to turn from our wickedness and live (Ezek. 33:11). This same idea is expressed in the prayer read by the priest after the penitent has confessed his or her sins (Slavic practice).

The time for repentance and forgiveness is now, in the present life. At the Second Coming, Christ will appear as the righteous judge, Who will render to every man according to his deeds” (Rom. 2:6). Then the time for entreatng God’s mercy and forgiveness will have passed.

As Father Alexander Schmemann reminds us in his book GREAT LENT (Ch. 1-4), sin is the absence of love, it is separation and isolation. When Christ comes to judge the world, His criterion for judgment will be love. Christian love entails seeing Christ in other people, our family, our friends, and everyone else we may encounter in our lives. We shall be judged on whether we have loved, or not loved, our neighbor. We show Christian love when we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit those who are sick or in prison. If we did such things for the least of Christ’s brethren, then we also did them for Christ (Mt.25:40). If we did not do such things for the least of the brethren, neither did we do them for Christ (Mt.25:45).

Today is the last day for eating meat and meat products until Pascha, though fasting prepares us gradually for the more intense fasting of Great Lent.

Righteous Theodora, wife of the Emperor Theophilus, the Iconoclast Commemorated on February 11

Holy Empress Theodora was the wife of the Byzantine emperor Theophilus the Iconoclast (829-842), but she did not share in the heresy of her husband and secretly venerated the holy icons. After the death of her husband, Saint Theodora governed the realm because her son Michael was a minor.

She convened a Council, at which the Iconoclasts were anathematized, and the veneration of icons was reinstated. Saint Theodora established the annual celebration of this event, the Triumph of Orthodoxy, on the first Sunday of the Great Fast. Saint Theodora did much for Holy Church and fostered a firm devotion to Orthodoxy in her son Michael.

When Michael came of age, she was retired from governing and spent eight years in the monastery of Saint Euphrosyne, where she devoted herself to ascetic struggles, and reading books that nourished her soul.

A copy of the Gospels, copied in her own hand, is known to exist. She died peacefully around the year 867.

In 1460, her relics were given by the Turks to the people of Kerkyra (Corfu).

UPCOMING EVENTS AND SERVICES

--- No Church School Today— Resuming on Feb. 25th
TODAY Family Bowling Outing Feb. 11th following Pancake Breakfast in Cambridge Springs. 1-4pm
*Next Week lenten meatless potluck for coffee hour- dessert will be provided.

THIS MONTH—
-See LENTEN 2018 Calendar
-No Orthodox Bible Study -Resuming Thursday March 1st and 15th
-Altar Servers - see schedule
-Parish Council Meeting – Mon. Mar. 5th
-GREAT AND HOLY LENT BEGINS Feb. 19th
-Ladies Altar Meeting- Sunday Feb. 19th (Following Coffee hour)
-In Home Meals are available from Lizzy’s Catering. See flyers in the hall.
The book “Lenten Meditations for Orthodox Christians” is available in our book store – See Jane for more info

MISSIONS TEAM

Anyone wishing to serve as a missionary for a summer trip may inquire to serve as a missionary for a summer trip may inquire to Fr. Daniel will continue House blessings during the coming week. This limited service includes the blessing of your home. The book “Lenten Meditations for Orthodox Christians” is available in our book store – See Jane for more info

Righteous Theodora, wife of the Emperor Theophilus the Iconoclast (ca. 867).

SAINTS Peter and Paul
Orthodox Church

25636 N. Mosiertown Rd Crossingville, PA 16414 Rev. Fr. Daniel Mathewson – Rector


PLEASE INCLUDE THESE OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS: Those in need – Fr. Andrew, Fr. David, Mat. Donna, Fr. John, Fr. Nicholas, Fr. Paul, Fr. George, Mat. Suzanne, Melissa, Megan, Pearl, Karen, John, Mary, Stavros, Marilyn, Theona, Sara, Eugene, John, Ann, Thomas, Catherine, Timothy, Jeremia, Renee, Delany, Emily, The Homebound... Vincent, Tanya, Richard, Helen, John, Irene, Ruth, Josephine, William, Claudia... Travelers...Dankos...Catechumens...Rosh...Christ and Christian Our Missionaries Abroad...Fr. David and Mt. Rozanne, Military servers...Greg...Departed Orthodox...Newly Departed – Ann, Katherine. Vernon, Paul, James, Andrew, Peter, Paul, Margaret, Michael Mary Ann, Timothy special requests... Anthony, Ian, Paul, Daleen, Penni, James, Sean, Liam, Susan, James, Joel, Jen, Roger, Jasmine, Cassandra, Raquel...

Today’s Hymn: Tone 3 Troparion (Resurrection)

Let the heavens rejoice!
Let the earth be glad!
For the Lord has shown strength with His arm.
He has triumphed down death by death.
He has become the first born of the dead.
He has delivered us from the depths of hell, and has granted to the world great mercy.
Today's Scripture Readings:
1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2 (Epistle)
But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse.

But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish,

Matthew 25:31-46 (Gospel)
When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'

Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'

Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?'

Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.