



# ALL SAINTS ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

*Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America*

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*www.allsaintsorthodox.org*

## **Sunday, September 3, 2023**

**Saturday Vespers, 7pm • Sunday Orthros & Divine Liturgy, 8:30am**

**13<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**



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**Troparion for the Resurrection (Tone 4):** Having learned the joyful message of the resurrection from the angel, the women disciples of the Lord cast from them their parental condemnation. And proudly broke the news to the disciples, saying: 'Death hath been spoiled! Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy!'

**Troparion for St. Anthimos of Nicomedia (Tone 1):** O godly-minded Anthimos, as a staunch defender of thy flock, thou eagerly sheddest thy blood for its protection. Unbending and wholly unafraid of all thine adversaries' fearful threats, thou rejoicest now in Heaven, standing before the throne of the Three-Sun Godhead. Glory to Christ who hath given thee strength! Glory to thy manly bravery! Glory to thy patient endurance in martyrdom.

**Troparion for St. Theoktistos (Tone 8):** The barren wilderness thou didst make fertile with the streams of thy tears; and by thy deep sighing thou hast given fruit through thy struggles a hundredfold. Accordingly, thou hast become a star for the universe, sparkling with miracles. Therefore, O righteous Father Theoktistos, intercede with Christ God to save our souls.

**Kontakion for the Nativity of the Theotokos (Tone 4):** By thy nativity, O most pure Virgin, Joachim and Anna are freed from barrenness; Adam and Eve from the corruption of death. And we thy people, freed from the guilt of sin, celebrate and sing to thee: The barren woman gives birth to the Theotokos, the nourisher of our life!

**Troparion of All Saints (Tone 4):** Adorned in the blood of Thy martyrs, throughout all the world as in purple and fine linen, Thy Church through them doth cry unto Thee, O Christ God: Send down Thy compassion upon Thy people! Grant peace to Thy habitation and great mercy to our souls.

## THE EPISTLE

*For the Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

O Lord, how marvelous are Thy works. In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

Bless the Lord, O my soul!

**The Reading from the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (16:13-24)**

Brethren, be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, and be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. Now, brethren, you know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints; I urge you to be subject to such men and to every fellow worker and laborer. I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have made up for your absence; for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. Give recognition to such men. The churches of Asia send greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord. All the brethren send greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss. I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

## THE GOSPEL

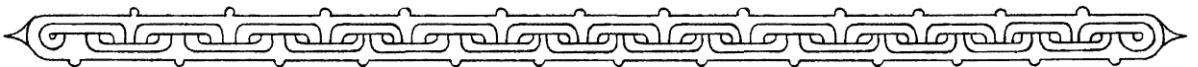
*For the Thirteenth Sunday of Matthew*

### **The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew (21:33-42)**

The Lord spoke this parable: “There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country. When the season of fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants, to get his fruit; and the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did the same to them.

“Afterward he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.’ And they took him and cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?”

They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons.” Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: ‘The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?’”



## **:: WITNESSES FOR CHRIST ::**

*His Eminence Metropolitan Saba (Isper)*

The Christian is a witness for Christ, through whom people see Christ. To be a witness for Christ means that you are a witness to His Gospel, and this is not just a choice that concerns you alone, but a personal commission from the Lord to you. It is a fundamental commandment: *"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth"* (Acts 1:8).

When the Lord commissioned His disciples with those words, He commissioned all Christians through them, without distinction or discrimination. There is a distinction to be made between evangelizing - as a mission that requires full-time dedication - and witnessing. Evangelism is a special gift and mission, given by the Lord to those whom He had chosen to be His evangelists. The Gospel only mentions the presence of the twelve disciples of Christ when He gave them the practical instructions for the ministry of evangelizing, as detailed in Matthew 10.

The evangelist is a person set apart for this ministry. But we can all bear witness, and using our lives is one of the most important ways to do it. Witnessing for the Lord means that you are not ashamed of Him and His Gospel, and that you strive with all your strength and ability to be faithful to Him and His teachings. You live by His commandments and walk according to His statutes. Thus, you become a living gospel, where people see in you the true Christ, and you bear witness to Him through your conduct.

Talking about Christ, or proclaiming Him, is one aspect of witnessing, but it is not the entirety of it. There is a time for speaking and a time for silence. There is a time for action and a time for prayer. And if you do not have the ability to speak, then remain silent, for your actions may speak louder than words. If you do not live according to your words about Him, it is better for you to be silent, lest His words apply to you as they did to the Pharisees: *"Therefore, whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do"* (Matthew 23:3).

The important thing is to make your entire being His, and not just your tongue. For if you belong to Him only with your tongue, without your whole being, that becomes a condemnation for you and a distortion of the image of Christ in the eyes of those who hear you.

Witness for the Lord requires humility, especially in this time. Humility is the twin of love and its constant companion. Many people have glorified God through their humble and

loving conduct, as the Gospel says, *"that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven"* (Matthew 5:16).

The word "witness" has two meanings in some languages like Arabic. The first implies testifying for Him. The second is to die for Him, meaning that you bear witness to Him even to the point of martyrdom, shedding your blood as the price for your testimony, never relinquishing it.

God does not ask for martyrdom from everyone. He may allow persecution from time to time, as a purification for His Church from idols and mercenaries, and as a way to put aside spiritual and moral laxity, which greatly afflicts believers these days. However, He asks for your testimony at all times and in every circumstance. That is why He said, *"Whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven"* (Matthew 10:33).

Witness for Him means that you choose Him as your way, in good times and bad. You work to please Him, not caring for what pleases others, while remaining filled with love for them. The wicked will tempt you to hate those who pressure you to betray Christ, but you will remain truly faithful to Him if you continue to love them without yielding to their demands, hoping that He will save them and reveal Himself to them. Despising and ridiculing them will lead you to a contradictory testimony of your Lord Who is love, and His image in you will be distorted. Many have often hated Him and formed a distorted image of His reality because of the false image of Him reflected by His followers. ...

Witnessing comes with a price that must be paid. Being faithful to the Lord may deprive us of things that may seem essential to humans, but for the faithful servant, they become insignificant. You testify through the simplicity of your life, for example, even if you can live in great luxury. But you don't feel like you're sacrificing luxury because living in simplicity brings you joy, freedom, and inner peace. The constant statement of the faithful witness must be, "God alone is sufficient for me," so anything other than Him is unnecessary, and everything with Him gains meaning and significance.

Choosing to witness for your Lord does not protect you from trials; on the contrary, it places obstacles before you at all times. The evildoer is not pleased with your choice. He always wants to keep you in his grip, while you strive to be in the embrace of your Lord. This spiritual battle, if faced with steadfastness and determination, strengthens you and gives you resilience so that you prevail over everything, and nothing can dominate you. Isn't that true freedom?

You have the choice to embrace absolute loyalty to your Lord and His Gospel, and thus to live in unending happiness; or to chase unreachable illusions that push you to chase other unreachable illusions, leaving you more exhausted.

The Gospel is before you; do not hesitate to embrace it.

*Originally published June 22, 2015*

## Announcements and Upcoming Events

*For a full calendar of events and services at All Saints, see our website [www.allsaintsorthodox.org](http://www.allsaintsorthodox.org)*

Today:

- Coffee hour, downstairs after Divine Liturgy.

This week:

- **Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday:** Morning prayers, 9am.
- **Tuesday, Sept. 5:** Parish council meeting, 7:30pm (online)
- *No Wednesday vespers this week.*
- **Thursday, Sept. 7:** Vespers Divine Liturgy for the Nativity of the Theotokos, 7pm
- **Saturday, Sept. 9:** Vespers, 7pm.
- **Sunday, Sept. 10:** Orthros & Divine Liturgy, beginning 8:30am, followed by coffee hour and a ladies' group meeting.

**LADIES GROUP** will have a quick meeting next **Sunday, Sept. 10** during coffee hour, to discuss upcoming events and activities. Please see Sh. Kim if any questions.

**ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS:** We will observe the feast with a Cross Procession and Vespers Divine Liturgy on **Wednesday, Sept. 13 at 7pm**. Bring fresh basil to adorn the cross and the church if you are able! Since the day itself is a strict fast day, any potluck food afterwards should be fasting.

**CHURCH SCHOOL** this year will begin **Sunday, Sept. 17** for children and adults.

**CONVOCATION:** Our all-church annual meeting will take place **Sunday, Oct. 1** after Liturgy and a potluck dinner.

# Volunteer Schedule

Date	Reader	Prospora	Greeter	Coffee	Food
<b>Sun., Sept. 3</b>	Joseph L	Domitille	John O	Zach C	G-K
<b><u>Thurs., Sept. 7</u></b> <i>Nat. Theotokos</i>	Rich C.	Dn Walid	JoAnne T	n/a	n/a
<b>Sun., Sept. 10</b>	Michelle C	Cristina P	Azizeh C	Domitille	L-P
<b><u>Wed., Sept. 13*</u></b> <i>Holy Cross</i>	Sd Joseph	Dn Walid	Nancy L	n/a	n/a
<b>Sun., Sept. 17</b>	Doug J	Sandy A	Domitille	Alina S	R-Z
<b>Sun., Sept. 24</b>	Jim K	Debbie K	John O	Lydia A	A-F

***For Sunday coffee hour, the church has been divided into four parts alphabetically (A-F, G-K, L-P, and R-Z). On your assigned week, please bring something simple to share with everyone for coffee hour.***

*If you have children, please monitor them as they go through the coffee hour line, and help them clean up after themselves. **Weekly clean-up will be the responsibility of those providing coffee hour.** And of course, things go faster when we all pitch in and help!*

*\*Shaded dates are fasting days. No meat or dairy products should be served at the church on these days.*



# DAILY BIBLE READINGS

SEPTEMBER 3-9, 2023

ADAPTED FROM THE  
LECTIONARY OF THE ANTIOCHIAN ARCHDIOCESE

*For our daily Old Testament readings, we will be reading straight through the Minor Prophets, according to the order and numbering of the Orthodox Study Bible. Note that the book order and chapter numbering differs from other English translations.*

**Sunday, September 3: Anthimos, Bishop of Nicomedeia; Holy Father Theoctistus**

Mark 16:1-8 / 1 Corinthians 16:13-24 / Matthew 21:33-42

**Monday, September 4: Holy Prophet Moses the God-seer**

Zechariah 1 / 2 Corinthians 12:1-10 / Matthew 22:41-46

**Tuesday, September 5: Holy Prophets Zachariah & Elizabeth, parents of the Forerunner**

Zechariah 2 / 2 Corinthians 12:11-21 / Matthew 23:1-12

**Wednesday, September 6: Miracle wrought by Archangel Michael in Colossae**

Zechariah 3 / 2 Corinthians 13:1-14 / Matthew 23:13-36

**Thursday, September 7: Kassiani the Hymnographer**

Zechariah 4 / Galatians 1:1-24 / Matthew 23:37-39

**Friday, September 8: Nativity of our Most Holy Lady Theotokos**

Genesis 28:10-17 / Ezekiel 43:27-44:4 / Proverbs 9:1-11  
Luke 1:39-56 / Philippians 2:5-11 / Luke 10:38-42, 11:27-28

**Saturday, September 9: Righteous Ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna**

Galatians 2:1-10 / Matthew 24:1-28

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