



WEEKLY BULLETIN

BULLETIN BUILDER

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church

June 25, 2017: 3rd Sunday of Matthew

Following the Divine Liturgy, please join us downstairs for **brunch**, offered by the **Hartofelis family**

Memorial: 5 years for Epokratis & Lieselotte Hartofelis

40-Day Blessing: Sophia, daughter of Chrysoula and Andreas Miti

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Horizons Soup Kitchen: Today, **4:00 - 6:00 PM**, at 199 Manchester Street, Manchester, NH

Feast of Holy Apostles: Friday, June 30th, Orthros **8:00 AM**, Div. Liturgy **9:15 AM**

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Matins Gospel Reading - *Third Orthros Gospel Mark 16:9-20*

When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast seven demons. She went and told those who had been with him, as they mourned and wept. But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it.

After this he appeared in another form to two of them, as they were walking into the country. And they went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them.

Afterward he appeared to the eleven themselves as they sat at table; and he upbraided them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen. And he said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up serpents, and if they drink something deadly, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover."

So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that attended it. AMEN

Epistle Reading - *St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 5:1-10*

BRETHREN, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us. While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Why, one will hardly die for a righteous man -- though perhaps for a good man one will dare even to die. But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. AMEN

Gospel Reading - *2nd Sunday of Matthew Matthew 6:22-33*

The Lord said, "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, **if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light**; but if your eye is wicked, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. **You cannot serve both God and mammon.** Therefore I tell you, **do not be anxious about your life**, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his height or some time on his lifespan? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they

neither toil nor weave; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O men of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows you need them all. But **seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.**" AMEN

3rd Sunday of Matthew – Have Faith and Worry Not

Today's reading deals with something most of us are suffering from: **ANXIETY**. And with something available to all of us, which only a few of us are relying upon: **DIVINE PROVIDENCE**. Our Lord's words come from the **Sermon on the Mountain**. During that, He spoke repeatedly about the **Kingdom of God**. When He finished, the crowds were astonished. "**He taught them like nobody before did. Like someone who had authority, and not as their scribes**" (Matt 7:29).

The Lord gives us 3 messages in His sermon: 1) **God is Light**. If we want to be in the light, we must turn to God. 2) God want us **dedicated to Him**. We cannot serve Him and worship material things at the same time. 3) We **must not worry about our lives**. Instead, we should **rely in Divine Providence**.



To get these messages across He uses a number of metaphors. 1) He calls the eye "**the lamp of the body**." Just as the lamp gives light to a room, the eye illuminates the body. But since God is light, a righteous eye is a sign of the presence of God within you. On the other hand, a wicked and greedy eye fills your whole body with darkness. And since evil loves darkness, a wicked eye is a sign of the presence of evil within you. 2) He says, those who worship material things and also say they love God are like those **working for two masters**. But you cannot serve two masters. You must choose to love the one above the other. Does this mean if you choose to love God more than money, you should abandon all material things and live in the desert? No! It means you will **make God more important than money** and you will prove this with your way of life and your acts towards God and your fellow men.

3) He uses **the birds of the sky** and **lilies of the field** to tell us not to worry about our food, clothes and material things in general. "**Can you add some inches to your height or some years to your lifespan by being anxious?**" He asks. The opposite is true. "**Was King Salomon, with all his riches, better dressed than a simple lily in the field?**" He was not!

Anxiety about the future and the daily cares only **burden a man's soul** and lead him or her to many **diseases of the body and the psyche (the soul)**. Anxiety is equal to **denying God**. Anxiety is equal to **lack of faith**. "*Anxiety is like lifting your car wheels off the ground, getting behind the wheel, revving the engine as hard as you can, and wondering why you are not going anywhere! Prayer is where the rubber meets the road. If you have anxiety, it means you do not pray to God enough,*" St. Paisios of the Holy Mountain used to say. Anxiety also comes from the fact we **rely on our own efforts** to overcome difficulties and **forget to put our problems in the hands of God**. Does relying to God means we lay down and abandon every effort? No! It means we **pray to God to bless our efforts** and give us the strength and wisdom to pull through. The birds of the sky do not sow, harvest or store grain in barns. Still, they do not worry where their food is coming from. Only they fly from their nests early in the morning and **trust HIM WHO SUSTAINS THE UNIVERSE to provide for them**. Seems our complex and highly evolved brains have not come to realize what the little brain of a bird already knows!

Is our life only about food and clothing? It is not, He says. So, if we stop focusing on these things, what do we need to focus on? "**Ask for the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness and everything else will be provided to you,**" He says. The Sunday Prayer does not start with "**Give us today our daily bread!**" It starts by first hallowing the Name of our Heavenly Father, then by asking for His Kingdom to come on earth and then by asking His righteousness be applied in our world as it is in His Kingdom. Why is that? Because in the Kingdom of God there is **no hunger, pain, disease or death**. There is **no need to survive, to count time and money, to have accounts and investments**. Because there your life is guaranteed by your proximity to your Creator. Because your Creator is eternal and owns the entire universe, together with you, and your "important" accounts and your "wise" investments! Because God gives abundance and eternal life to all who seek Him!

Our eyes need to be **righteous and simple!** They need to **seek a single place: God's Kingdom and His righteousness!** Like a sea explorer who has set his eye on a distant land, we should not let the tempting fruits of a tiny paradise island, or the beauty of the local queen, make us drop anchor and stay there forever. But knowing we are destined for a much bigger land, we should weigh anchor, set the sails and heave to the open ocean. We should tend to the ship below and read the stars above. We should toil with wind and check the compass. But our eye should be steadily seeking one thing: God's Kingdom. And everything else will be provided. AMEN

Wisdom of the Fathers

In a desert monastery, a monk more thrifty than covetous left behind him at his death a hundred pieces of silver which he had earned by weaving linen. A council was taken among the brothers as to what should be done with the money. Many worthy causes were suggested. Then, Macarios, Pambo, Isidore and the rest of those called "the fathers," decided that the coins should be buried with their owner. Together, they placed a note saying: "**Thy money perish with thee.**"

St. Jerome - Letter 22 to Eustochios

[DO YOU AGREE WITH THEIR DECISION? WHY, OR WHY NOT?]

Lives of Saints