

January 31, 2010

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President

✠ ✠ ✠ Service Schedule ✠ ✠ ✠

Sunday, January 31st. **34th Sunday after Pentecost – Tone 1. Sunday of the Prodigal Son. New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia.** Holy Wonderworkers and Unmercenaries Cyrus and John, and with them Martyrs Athanasia and her daughters: Theoctiste, Theodotia, and Eudoxia at Canopus in Egypt (311). Ven Nikita of the Kiev Caves, Bishop of Novgorod (1108). Martyrs Victorinus, Victor, Nicephorus, Cladius, Diodorus, Serapion, and Papias, of Egypt (251). Martyr Tryphaenes of Cyzicus. St Arsenios of Pharos (1877).

3rd and 6th Hours: 9:10 am.

Divine Liturgy: 9:30 am.

Epistle: 1 Cor. 6:12-20; Gospel: Luke 15:11-32.

Wednesday, February 3rd.

Daily Vespers: 6:00 pm. Meal and study group to follow: Archimandrite Webber's *Bread and Water, Wine and Oil: An Orthodox Christian Experience of God.*

Saturday, February 6th.

Great Vespers of the Resurrection: 5:00 pm.

Sunday, February 7th. **35th Sunday after Pentecost – Tone 2. Afterfeast of the Meeting. Sunday of the Last Judgment. Meatfare Sunday.** St Parthenius, Bishop of Lampsacus on the Hellespont (4th c.).

Ven Luke of Hellas (ca. 946). The 1,003 Martyrs of Nicomedia (303). New Hieromartyrs Vladimir, Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich (1918) and Peter, Archbishop of Voronezh (1929). Vasily (Basil), Bishop of Priluk (Vologda – 1930). Presbyter Stephan and Martyr Boris (1938).

3rd and 6th Hours: 9:10 am.

Divine Liturgy: 9:30 am.

Epistle: 1 Cor. 8:8-9:2; Gospel: Matt. 25:31-36.

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Lenten Retreat

This year's Lenten Retreat will be held at Saint Jacob of Alaska Orthodox Church on Saturday, March 6, 2010. The retreat is entitled:

**The Whole Earth Is Sanctified:
Reclaiming the Christian Vision of Creation**

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Sunday of the Prodigal Son Commemorated January 31 (from oca.org)

The Sunday after the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee is the Sunday of the Prodigal Son. This parable of God's forgiveness calls us to "come to ourselves" as did the prodigal son, to see ourselves as being "in a far country" far from the Father's house, and to make the journey to return to God. We are given every assurance by the Master that our heavenly Father will receive us with joy and gladness. We must only "arise and go", confessing our self-inflicted and sinful separation from that "home" where we truly belong (Luke 15:11-24).

After the Polyeleion at Matins, we first hear the Lenten hymn "By the Waters of Babylon". It will be sung for the next two Sundays before Lent begins, and it serves to reinforce the theme of exile in today's Gospel.

Kontakion – Tone 3

I have recklessly forgotten Your glory, O Father;
and among sinners I have scattered the riches You had given me.
Therefore, I cry to You like the Prodigal:
"I have sinned before You, O compassionate Father;
Received me a penitent and make me as one of Your hired servants."

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"This prayer [Elder Sophrony's *Prayer at Daybreak*] ascribes great importance to the virtue of self-accusation, which is characteristic of the man who lives within the light of God's grace, and within this light is able to see his own spiritual state. Self-accusation is associated with pain in the soul, which is an expression of divine grace. This is apparent from the fact that, instead of discouraging him, this wretched state turns him towards God.

"Often we give no outward indication, but in the depths of our soul we are wounded. We are well aware that the soul's pain, its distress, is stronger and more overwhelming than physical pain.. All of us have experienced physical pain in the course of our life. We are in pain, we suffer, and we groan in anguish. The most grievous bodily pain, however, cannot equal the soul's pain and distress, which we feel in our hearts from the wounds concealed within us, particularly from the severing of our relationship with God."

- Hierotheos, *Hesychia and Theology: The Context for Man's Healing In the Orthodox Church*

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