

VOLUME 7

ISSUE

07

MARCH 2019

His Eminence
Metropolitan JOSEPH, Primate

His Grace, Bishop JOHN
Auxiliary Bishop for Worcester
and New England

Rev. Fr. Milad Selim, Dean

Rev. Fr. Seraphim Solof
Assistant Pastor

Rev. Dn. Anthony Payne



Reflection

Ministry of the Apostles—A Higher Calling



Fr. Milad Selim

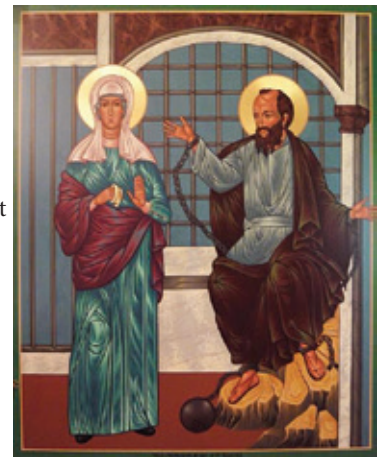
The early church of Antioch flourished through the work of the Apostles. The needs of the faithful were met by the gifts of the Holy Spirit given to those Apostles. Their ministry went beyond preaching. They ministered to the poor, widows, sick and imprisoned. When the

Church grew, more people, both men and women, were chosen and appointed to spread the faith and meet the needs of the people.

As our Cathedral community continues to grow and our work spreads beyond our four walls, a need for a new ministry has risen. Thankfully, we don't need to reinvent the wheel and think of new and creative ways to make such a ministry successful; we have the example of the Church of Antioch to guide us. Therefore, we have embraced a new ministry here at the Cathedral that will focus on service and support for "ALL" of the needs of our parishioners, organizations and outreach projects. We will call it, *The Ministry of the Apostles*. The ministry's main goal is to serve wherever and whenever a need arises, both within and outside of our Cathedral community. It will provide support to our Men's and Women's Clubs, Choir, Church School, Teen SOYO, Young Adult Ministry and Parish Council. We will visit the sick in their homes, hospitals and nursing facilities. We will plan fellowship family nights and events for the entire community to participate in. We will provide Christian education opportunities in both English and Arabic based on the needs of our parishioners. This ministry is open to the entire community, men, women and children.

This new ministry will have two patron Saints, Paul and Thekla, who were fellow-servants in the Lord and whose ministry and preaching established the foundation of our faith. You may remember that St. Thekla, who is called, Equal to the Apostles,

listened to the preaching of St. Paul through her window and was intrigued by what St. Paul was saying about Jesus. Her faith and courage led her away from her betrothed and her family as she began preaching the Gospel of Christ and healing the sick through prayer. Together, their Apostolic work helped spread the Gospel according to the Great Commission of our Lord, Jesus Christ. We will use their faithfulness, zeal, love and courage as a guide and measure for this new ministry. We will look to emulate their selfless service to Christ and His Church through our service to others.



The rich history of our Orthodox Church is full of examples of faithful servants who put aside their own needs for the sake of the other, thus emulating Christ's own selfless sacrifice for us. It is worth noting that we are truly blessed here at our Cathedral to have many parishioners whose only desire is to selflessly serve. It is precisely this kind of attitude that leads to the growth of a church community. Let us then, my beloved servants in the Lord, continue to look outside of ourselves and attend to the needs of our beloved Cathedral and those who are within and outside of her. I look forward to serving alongside each and every one of you on this blessed ministry, growing in our faith and becoming one with our Lord and one another. ✝

To read the full life of St. Thekla, you may visit:
Antiochian.org/life_of_thekla

Great and Holy Lent

March 11-April 27



Veneration of the Cross
March 31



FR. SERAPHIM'S fun facts

Great Lent begins, this year, on Monday, March 11. For the seven weeks following (the six weeks of Lent plus Holy Week), our lives will be full to the brim with prayer services, fasting and, ideally, almsgiving. All of these are invaluable aids on our journey to Pascha, but they are only the means, not the end. Given how easy it is for us to confuse the two, we would do well to think back to the Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican (St. Luke 18:10-14), which we heard on February 17, and to make a few observations.

First, let's put aside, for a moment, our intimate familiarity with this parable. We regard the Pharisee as obnoxious and irritating, and we have great sympathy for the Publican. But we need to remember that the Jews to whom Jesus was speaking would not have seen things this way. To them, the Pharisee was a model of prayer, of fasting and of almsgiving. And the Publican was, well, pretty much how the Pharisee alluded

to him: unjust and an extortioner. He made his living, after all, by forcing his fellow Jews to pay more than what they actually owed to the state. And no doubt he used all kinds of unpleasant

means to collect what he determined was his due. He was rightly despised. And yet, at the end of the story, Jesus says "I tell you, this man (the Publican) went down to his house justified rather than the other (the Pharisee)." In fact, a better paraphrase would be that "the Publican went down to his house having found favor with God, whereas the Pharisee did not." This would have shocked and scandalized His hearers and made them strongly question Jesus's sanity.

But Jesus was quite sane, and we can find the justification for His conclusion in two places. First, there's the introductory verse (Luke 18:9), which our lectionary unfortunately omits: "He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others." A better translation

Jesus condemns the Pharisee not because of any failing in his devotion, but because he put his trust in his own righteousness rather than in God!

would be... "who trusted in themselves BECAUSE they were righteous..." The gospel grants the Pharisee his righteousness: what, with all that praying, fasting and almsgiving, who

could deny it? He condemns the Pharisee not because of any failing in these regards, but because he put his trust in his own righteousness rather than in God! And conversely, though he only paraphrases the first line of Psalm 51, the Publican offers to God what is prescribed in v. 17 of that psalm: "The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." The Pharisee trusts in himself completely; the Publican, broken and empty and hopeless, throws himself on the unmerited mercy of God.

Over the next seven weeks, as we put so much emphasis on prayer services, fasting and almsgiving, let us never forget that our faith and hope and trust should never be in ourselves, however righteous we may believe ourselves to be—but only and ever on the gracious mercy of God. +



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Food for Hungry People and Charitable Outreach Program

The 45th Anniversary for the Food for Hungry People and Charitable Outreach has arrived. For 45 years the Antiochian Archdiocese in America has raised over \$5.9 million for poor people around the world. Although prayer and fasting are very important components during this time, almsgiving extends further than ones own

life. Having the ability to give to those in need allows you to grow closer to Our Lord and Savior as well as gives you a connection with Christ's children. The FFHP boxes and The Lenten Calendars that are provided to our Sunday School children are great ways to engage in almsgiving at home. God bless you and your family during this Lenten journey. +



Under the spiritual guidance of Fr. George Ghannam, a new building commission was appointed to raise funds and complete the building of the new church.

Parishioners were happy to donate and their dreams were fulfilled in 1970. +



Young Adults, looking to meet new people, deepen your faith, and have a great weekend? Come join the Young Adult Ministry and other Orthodox young adults from across the country for a 3 day retreat May 3-5th! Fr. Milad will lead the retreat discussing "Relationships in

a Fallen World". Events include a Friday night welcome event at Volturno's, all day Saturday retreat, and Saturday night sunset cruise. Sign up today! Cost is \$135 for the whole weekend if you register before April 5th. Check out stgeorgeworcester.org for more details. +



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Lenten Dinner

Sunday, March 24, 2019

Reservations: PMS@Townisp.com
or call Pam Samara at 508-769-8338

Dinner sponsored by:
Fawaz & Jo-Ellen El Khoury & Family

Cost: \$15.00 per person \$6.00 children

Please bring your families and share in the fellowship

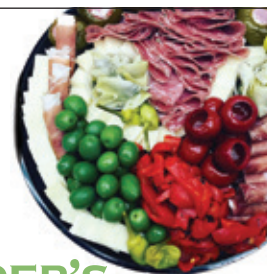


JUNE 7-9, 2019

Ask what you can do to help

It has been 25 years since the Cathedral hosted a festival of this size. See Christine ElHousson or committee members to see how you can help us make this a successful event.

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