

# Orthodox Heights

HolyTrinityOrthodoxChurch.org

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**APRIL 29, 2018**

**4th SUNDAY OF PASCHA — Tone 3.** Paralytic. Nine Martyrs at Cyzicus: Theognes, Rufus, Antipater, Theostichus, Artemas, Magnus, Theodotus, Thaumasius, and Philemon (3rd c.). Ven. Memnon the Wonderworker. Martyrs Diodorus and Rhodianus—Deacon, at Aphrodisia in Anatolia (3rd-4th c.). St. Basil, Bishop of Ostrog in Montenegro (16th c.). Lazian Martyrs slain in Dudikvati and Papati (Georgian, c. 1820).

**EPISTLE:** ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 9.32-42: Peter raises from the dead Tabitha, also called Dorcas, through prayer.

**GOSPEL:** JOHN 5.1-15: A man who has been paralyzed for 38 years is healed by Christ, and told to sin no more in gratitude.

**LEGACY FUND:** It was decided by the Parish Council to establish a Legacy Fund, in order to honor the work of the last 100 years, and provide a stable foundation for the next century in the life of our beloved parish. This designated fund will be for capital improvements and for furthering the ministries of the Parish. Please consider supporting this effort in your giving and estate planning! **Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!**

**GRAVE BLESSINGS:** As we continue to proclaim the Gospel of the Resurrection, it is custom to bless the graves of those who have gone on in the hope of the resurrection before us. For any of the departed faithful in the various local cemeteries, please see Fr James to schedule a grave blessing. **Χριστὸς ἀνέστη! Ἀληθῶς ἀνέστη!**

**PASCAL LILIES:** As we proclaimed Christ is Risen in the church, now you can take some more of that joy into your own homes. The lilies adorning the church are still in wonderful shape and would love a permanent location in your home or garden. For a \$5 donation, one of the plants can be yours. **Χριστος воскрес! Воистину воскрес**

**WELCOME VISITORS!** We warmly welcome all of our visitors! It's good to have you with us! Please know that we are glad that you are here praying with us and invite you to join us after the service for a meal and to meet everyone in our community. **Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!**

**SANITATION ENGINEERING:** In order to be good neighbors, we have installed locks on the dumpster. If you are taking refuse to the receptacle, please get the key from Fr James and deposit the bags inside. Please do not put it on top as this attracts vermin. **Tá Críost éirithe! Go deimhin, tá sé éirithe!**

**CEMETERY MAINTENANCE:** The season has finally changed, and the grass will soon be growing in earnest. As has become our practice, we will be taking care of the cemetery grass and maintenance through volunteers within the parish. To volunteer to be on the maintenance rotation, see Fr James or Sdn Shawn Michael. **Si Kristo ay nabuhay! Totoo! Siya nga ay nabuhay!**

## FELLOWSHIP SCHEDULE

**April 29:** Karney Family

**May 6:** Cheplick

**May 13:** Charlanow & McKane Families

**May 20:** Speen Family

## READERS SCHEDULE

**April 28:** Rdr Thomas

**May 5:** Antonina M

**May 12:** Rdr William

**May 19:** Alexander C

**LIVING:**  
Archpriest Jason  
Archpriest Herman  
Archpriest John  
Mat. Katherine  
Rdr. Thomas  
Rdr. David  
Theresa Bridget  
Kathleen  
Infant Hannah  
Abigail  
Infant Justus  
Anna & Family

Leon  
Kate  
Elizabeth  
Kristen  
Katherine  
Nadezhda  
Errin  
Helen  
Larissa & Family  
Janet  
**CATECHUMEN:** None  
**BIRTHDAYS:** Meredith  
**ANNIVS:** None

**NAMESDAYS:** None  
**TRAVELLING:** Anna, Carol & Christopher

**REPOSED:**  
Archpriest John U  
Archpriest Stephen  
Priest John B  
Deacon Mark H.  
Rdr Gregory  
Parker  
Lindsay  
Lucinda  
Hannah

Katerina  
Child Anthony C  
Amanda  
Peter  
**NEWLY REPOSED:** Mitred  
Archpriest John (4-7)  
**ANNIVERSARIES:** None

**BY THE NUMBERS:** Last Collection: \$925. Weekly Budget: \$1100.  
MTD: \$4072. Monthly Budget: \$4360. March +\$500

## SCHEDULE FOR THIS WEEK

CONFESSIONS ARE HEARD BEFORE AND AFTER VESPERS AND AT ANY OTHER CONVENIENT TIME.

**SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC, APRIL 29:** 8:40 Hours, 9 AM Divine Liturgy, Fellowship Hour and Sunday School

**MONDAY, APRIL 30:** Rector's Sabbath

**TUESDAY, MAY 1:** 8 AM Readers Morning Prayers

**MIDFEAST WEDNESDAY, MAY 2:** 8 AM Morning Prayers

**THURSDAY, MAY 3:** 8 AM Readers Morning Prayers

**FRIDAY, MAY 4:** 8 AM Morning Prayers

**SATURDAY, MAY 5:** 5 PM Great Vespers

**SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN, MAY 6:** 8:40 Hours, 9 AM Divine Liturgy, Fellowship Hour and Sunday School

## THE FEAST OF MID-PENTECOST

By Archpriest Sergei V. Bulgakov

On Wednesday of the fourth week we celebrate the Mid-Feast of Pentecost, i.e. half of the period from Pascha to Pentecost. This day we commemorate that event from the life of the Savior, when He on the Midfeast of the Tabernacles taught in the temple about His Own Divine ministry and the mystery of water, under which we understand the beneficial teaching of Christ and the beneficial gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Mid-feast of Holy Pentecost is referred to among the ancient Christian feasts. If its beginning cannot be seen in the canons of the Apostolic and Antiochian Councils concerning the assembly of local councils during the fourth week of Pentecost, then in the time of St. John Chrysostom it is already existing and established by the Holy Church. In the fifth century Anatolius of Constantinople, in the seventh the Venerable Andrew of Crete, in the eighth St. John of Damascus, in the ninth the Venerable Theophanes the Confessor wrote church hymns for the Mid-feast, with which the Holy Church even now praises the Lord in the Mid-feast of Pentecost. Standing between the day of Pascha and the day of Descent of the Holy Spirit, the Mid-feast serves as a bond between these two great Christian celebrations: together with the continuing celebration of the first of these the Mid-feast reminds us of the approach of the feast of the Descent of the Holy Spirit, and also the feast of the Ascension of the Lord. "Let us glorify, brethren," the Holy Church appeals to us, "the resurrection of Christ the Savior, and having reached the middle of the feast of the Master, let us most closely keep the commandments of God, that we may also be worthy to celebrate the Ascension, and the Coming of the Holy Spirit (*The Praises, Verse after Glory, Both now and Ever by Anatolius*)"; "Having reached the middle of the divine feasts let us who are godly wise hasten to learn the fulfillment of the divine virtues (*Canon 1, Ode five, Troparion 1*)." Following the example of the Old Testament Church and as a sign of the grace of the Holy Spirit, which the Savior has attributed to water granting life of salvation to the thirsty, our Church has on this day established to proceed from the temples with a cross procession to a water spring, for the Lesser Blessing of Water.

# Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

## Elmira Heights, New York



SUNDAY, APRIL 29<sup>TH</sup>, 2018  
SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC

## “DO YOU WANT TO BE HEALED?”

Fr Stephen Kostoff

In the fifth chapter of the Gospel of Saint John we find the account of the healing of the paralytic by the Pool of Bethesda near the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem and the profound discourse that follows. Archeologists have fairly recently discovered this pool, demonstrating the accuracy of Saint John’s description. The paralytic had taken his place among a human throng of chronic misery, described by the evangelist as “a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, paralyzed” [verse 3]. Being there for 38 years and not being able to experience what were believed to be the healing capacities of the waters of the pool, the paralytic seemed resigned to his destiny. Then Jesus appeared. He saw the paralytic and He knew of his plight. And then Jesus asked the paralytic a very pointed and even poignant question: “Do you want to be healed?” [verse 6]. Surprisingly, considering what must have been his own misery, the paralytic’s answer was less than direct and not exactly enthusiastic: “Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled, and while I am going another steps down before me” [verse 7]. Nevertheless, and even though the paralytic does not commit himself to an act of faith in the healing power of Jesus, he receives the following directive from Jesus: “Rise, take up your pallet, and walk.” And then, in that somewhat laconic style of describing the healing power of Christ that characterizes the Gospel accounts, we read simply, “And at once the man was healed, and he took up his pallet and walked” [verse 9. The “sign” is that Christ can restore wholeness to those in need.

I believe that we need to concentrate on the question Jesus posed to the paralytic, “Do you want to be healed?” (The King James version of the question is: “Wilt thou be made whole?”) For, if the various characters that Jesus encountered in the Gospels are also representatives or “types” of a particular human condition, dilemma, or state of being; then the question of Jesus remains alive in each generation and is thus posed to each of us today. If sin is a sickness, then we are “paralyzed” by that sin to one degree or another of intensity. But do we *really* want to be healed of the paralyzing effect of sin in our lives? The answer seems obvious, even a “no-brainer,” but is that truly the case? Or, are we more-or-less content with continuing as we are, satisfied that perhaps this is “as good as it gets” in terms of our relationship with God and our neighbors? Do we manage to politely deflect the probing question of Christ elsewhere, counter-posing a reasonable excuse as to what prevents us from exerting the necessary energy from our side? Our teaching claims that we must also contribute to the synergistic process of divine grace and human freedom that works together harmoniously for our healing. Perhaps it is easier and more comfortable to stay as we are – after all, it’s really not that bad - a position reflected in the non-committal response of the paralytic. For to be further healed of sin will mean that we will have to make some changes in our life, in our interior attitudes and in our relationships. It certainly means that we will have to confess our faith in Christ with a greater intensity, urgency and commitment. Are we up to that challenge?

Actually, we could more accurately say that we have already been healed. That happened when we were baptized into Christ. (There are baptismal allusions in the healing of the paralytic by the pool of water). Every human person is paralyzed by the consequences of sin, distorting the image of God in which we were initially created. Baptism was meant to put to death the sin that is within us. We were healed, in that baptism is the pledge to life everlasting, where death itself is swallowed up in the victory of Christ over death. For we are baptized into the Death and Resurrection of Christ. So, with a slight variation, the question of Christ could also imply: Do you rejoice in the fact that you have been healed, and does your way of life reflect the faith and joy that that great healing from sin and death has imparted to you? Are you

willing to continue in the struggle that is necessary to keep that healing “alive” within you? Direct and simple questions can get complicated, often by the paralyzing effect of sin in our lives. We can then get confused as to how to respond to such essential questions. Every time we walk into the church we are being asked by Christ, “Do you want to be healed?” Responding with a resounding “yes!” would be a “sign” of the faith, hope and love that are within us by the grace of God.

## CHRIST IS RISEN!

Fr Alexander Schmemmann

My belief in Christ does not come from the opportunity given to me to participate since earliest childhood in the paschal celebration. Rather, Pascha is made possible, that unique night fills with light and joy and such victorious power in the greeting "Christ is risen! Truly He is risen!" because my faith itself was born from experience of the living Christ. How and when was it born? I don't know, I don't remember. I only know that every time I open the gospel and read about Christ, read his words, read his teaching, I consciously repeat, with all my heart and being, what was said by those who were sent to arrest Christ but who returned to the Pharisees without him: "No man ever spoke like this man" (Jn. 7:46). Therefore what I know first of all is that Christ's teaching is alive, and that nothing on earth can be compared with it. And this teaching is about him, about eternal life, about victory over death, about a love that conquers and overcomes death. I know as well that in a life where everything seems so difficult and tiresome, the one constant that never changes and never leaves is this inner awareness that Christ is with me. "I will not leave you as orphans, I will come to You" (Jn. 14:18). And he does come and give the feeling of his presence through prayer, through a thrill of soul, through a joy so incomprehensible, yet so very alive, through his mysterious, but again so certain, presence in church during services and in sacraments. This living experience is always growing, this knowledge, this awareness which becomes so obvious that Christ is here and that his word has been fulfilled: whoever loves Me, "I will love him and manifest myself to him Jn. 14:21). And whether I am in a crowd or alone, this certitude of his presence, this power of his word, this joy of faith in him remains with me. This is the only answer and the only proof.

"Why do you seek the living among the dead? Why do you mourn the incorrupt amid corruption?" All Christianity, therefore, is the experience of faith repeated again and again as if for the first time, through its incarnation in rites, words, music, and colors. To the unbeliever, it may indeed seem like a mirage; he hears only words, he sees only incomprehensible ceremonies, and he understands them only outwardly. But for believers, all of this radiates from within, and not as proof of his faith, but as its result, as its life in the world, in the soul, in history. Therefore the darkness and sadness of Holy Friday is for us something real, alive, contemporary; we can cry at the cross and experience everything that took place in that triumph of evil, treachery, cowardice, and betrayal; we can contemplate the life-bearing tomb on Holy Saturday with excitement and hope. And therefore, every year we can celebrate Easter, Pascha, the Resurrection. For Easter is not the remembrance of an event in the past. It is the real encounter in happiness and joy, with him whom our hearts long ago knew and encountered as the life and light of all light. Easter night testifies that Christ is alive and with us, and that we are alive with him. The entire celebration is an invitation to look at the world and life, and to behold the dawning of the mystical day of the Kingdom of light. "Today the scent of Spring begins," sings the church, "and the new creation exults..." It exults in faith, in love and in hope.

## SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC

Close to the Sheep's Gate in Jerusalem, there was a pool, which was called the Sheep's Pool. It had five porches, that is, five sets of pillars supporting a domed roof. Under this roof there lay very many sick people with various maladies awaiting the moving of the water. The first person to step in after the troubling of the water was healed immediately of whatever malady he had.

It was there that the paralytic of today's Gospel was lying, tormented by his infirmity of thirty-eight years. When Christ beheld him, He asked him, "Will you be made whole?" And he answered with a quiet and meek voice, "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool." The Lord said unto him, "Rise, take up your bed, and walk." And straightaway the man was made whole and took up his bed. Walking in the presence of all, he departed rejoicing to his own house. According to the expounders of the Gospels, the Lord Jesus healed this paralytic during the days of the Passover, when He had gone to Jerusalem for the Feast, and dwelt there teaching and working miracles. According to Saint John the Evangelist, this miracle took place on the Sabbath.



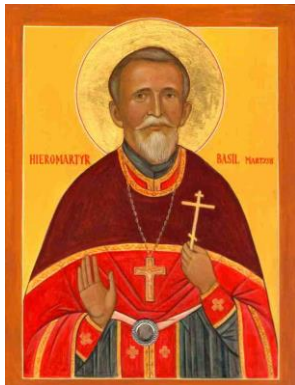
## THE MARTYRDOM OF ST VASILY MARTYSZ

Father Martysz spent the difficult war years in Teratyn. On May 4, 1945 (Great and Holy Friday), a few days before the surrender of Nazi Germany, his house was attacked. A female acquaintance warned him of the danger, but he replied, "I have done no harm to anyone and I will not run away from anyone. Christ did not run away." Father Vasily did not fear and did not flee from his tormentors. He faced them bravely, in a Christ-like way, accepting the crown of martyrdom. The villains, seeking gold and money, had no respect for his uniform as a colonel in the Polish Army, nor for his priestly vestments.

The bandits broke into the house by breaking a window. With callous cruelty they tortured Father Vasily though his only crime was that he was an Orthodox priest. They beat his pregnant daughter Helen, causing her to miscarry.

They beat Father Vasily for four hours, reviving him by throwing water on him when he lost consciousness. Horribly tortured, he was finally murdered by a gun shot. The criminals threatened to shoot Helen as well. When she knelt before the icon of Christ and began to pray, the executioner's aim and resolve weakened. They left, threatening to return and kill her as well. On Great and Holy Saturday, Father John Lewczuk celebrated the burial rites for Father Vasily in Chelm. He was buried at the local cemetery in Teratyn.

In October 1963, the earthly remains of Father Vasily Martysz were brought to Warsaw and solemnly reinterred in the Orthodox cemetery in the Wola district, next to his wife and mother-in-law. At the beginning of 2003, his holy relics were uncovered and placed in the church of St John Climacus in Warsaw. The Holy Synod of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Poland promulgated the official Act of Canonization on March 20, 2003, and the rites glorifying St Vasily Martysz were celebrated in Chelm on June 7-8.



## ST. ATHANASIUS THE GREAT THE PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA

Saint Athanasius the Great, Archbishop of Alexandria, was a great Father of the Church and a pillar of Orthodoxy. He was born around the year 297 in the city of Alexandria into a family of pious Christians. He received a fine secular education, but he acquired more knowledge by diligent study of the Holy Scripture. In his childhood, the future hierarch Athanasius became known to Saint Alexander the Patriarch of Alexandria (May 29). A group of children, which included Athanasius, were playing at the seashore. The Christian children decided to baptize their pagan playmates.

The young Athanasius, whom the children designated as "bishop", performed the Baptism, precisely repeating the words he heard in church during this sacrament. Patriarch Alexander observed all this from a window. He then commanded that the children and their parents be brought to him. He conversed with them for a long while, and determined that the Baptism performed by the children was done according to the Church order. He acknowledged the Baptism as real and sealed it with the sacrament of Chrismation. From this moment, the Patriarch looked after the spiritual upbringing of Athanasius and in time brought him into the clergy, at first as a reader, and then he ordained him as a deacon. It was as a deacon that Athanasius accompanied Patriarch Alexander to the First Ecumenical Council at Nicea in the year 325. At the Council, Athanasius refuted of the heresy of Arius. His speech met with the approval of the Orthodox Fathers of the Council, but the Arians, came to hate Athanasius and persecuted him for the rest of his life.

After the death of holy Patriarch Alexander, Saint Athanasius was unanimously chosen as his successor in the See of Alexandria. He refused, accounting himself unworthy, but at the insistence of all the Orthodox populace that it was in agreement, he was consecrated bishop when he was twenty-eight, and installed as the archpastor of the Alexandrian Church. Saint Athanasius guided the Church for forty-seven years, and during this time he endured persecution and grief from his antagonists. Several times he was expelled from Alexandria and hid himself from the Arians in desolate places, since they repeatedly tried to kill him. Athanasius spent more than twenty years in exile, returned to his flock, and was banished again.

There was a time when he remained as the only Orthodox bishop in the area, a moment when all the other bishops had fallen into heresy. At the false councils of Arian bishops he was deposed as bishop. Despite being persecuted for many years, the saint continued to defend the purity of the Orthodox Faith, and he wrote countless letters and tracts against the Arian heresy.

When Julian the Apostate (361-363) began a persecution against Christians, his wrath first fell upon Saint Athanasius, whom he considered a great pillar of Orthodoxy. Julian intended to kill the saint in order to strike Christianity a grievous blow, but he soon perished himself. Mortally wounded by an arrow during a battle, he cried out with despair: "You have conquered, O Galilean." After Julian's death, Saint Athanasius guided the Alexandrian Church for seven years and died in 373, at the age of seventy-six. Numerous works of Saint Athanasius have been preserved; four Orations against the Arian heresy; also an Epistle to Epictetus, bishop of the Church of Corinth, on the divine and human natures in Jesus Christ; four Epistles to Serapion, Bishop of Thmuis, about the Holy Spirit and His Equality with the Father and the Son, directed against the heresy of Macedonius. as well as a biography of Saint Anthony the Great (January 17), with whom Saint Athanasius was very close. Saint John Chrysostom advised every Orthodox Christian to read this Life.

