

THE ST. ELIZABETH'S PARISH NEWS

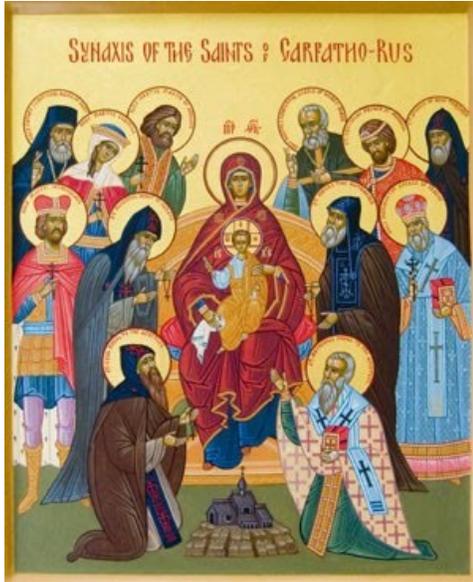
St. Elizabeth's Orthodox Mission

2265 E. Cherokee Dr. Woodstock, GA
A Parish of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople



Reverend Father Matthew Dutko, Pastor

Phone: 607-206-0384 Email: fatherdutko@gmail.com
Sunday June 26th 2016 2nd Sunday after Pentecost
Epistle: Romans 2:10-16 Gospel: Matthew 4:18-23



Synaxis of Carpatho-Rusyn Saints

Tropar, Tone 1

Your tomb was sealed with a stone by the Jews, * and the soldiers guarded Your most pure Body; * yet You arose on the third day, O Savior, * giving life to the world. * The heavenly powers cried out to You, O Giver of Life: * "Glory to Your resurrection, O Christ! * Glory to Your Kingdom! ** Glory to Your plan of salvation for You alone love mankind.

Tropar, Tone 8

As a beautiful fruit of the sowing of Your salvation * the land of Carpatho-Rus offers to You, O Lord, * all the Saints that have shone in it. * By their prayers, keep the Church and our homeland in deep peace ** through the Mother of God, O Most Merciful One.

GLORY TO THE FATHER, AND TO THE SON, AND TO THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Kondak, Tone 3

Today the choir of the Saints who pleased God in our homeland * stands before us in Church and invisibly prays for us to God. * With them the angels glorify Him * all the Saints of the Church of Christ keep festival with them ** and together they pray for us to the Eternal God.

NOW AND EVER AND FOREVER. AMEN.

Kondak, Tone 6

O unashamed intercessor of Christians, * ever loyal advocate before the Creator, * do not disregard the prayerful voices of sinners * but in your goodness hasten to assist us who trustfully cry out to you: ** Intercede always, O Mother of God, in behalf of those who honor you!

Weekly Schedule of Divine Services:

Wednesday 7/6 7PM— Moleben (Prayer Service) to St. Nectarios followed by Orthodox Study Class

Sunday 7/10 10AM—Divine Liturgy

Happy Independence Day!!!



God Bless
America!!!

WELCOME

If you have never been to an Orthodox Church before you are about to participate in the Divine Liturgy. The Liturgy is the work of the people and that means that all of your prayers are necessary! We hope you will stay and join us for coffee hour in the atrium. Please feel free to ask Fr. Matthew any questions you might have! May God's blessings be upon all of you!

- Next Sunday's Coffee Hour is still available for sign up!
- Don't Forget to Sign up for Camp Nazareth, if you are planning on going please let me know!

Evelyn Melnikoff, Fr. John and Pani Betty Jean Baranek, Fr. James Gleason, The Paccio Family, Johanna, James, Herbert and Mary Schleining, Patricia James, Anna, Basil, David, Dianna, Denise, Alex, Jason, Athanasia, Ethel, Kathy, Lester, Sally, Jack, Angela, Tyler, Maria, Jeff, Lesley, Page Family, Stephen (Blessed Repose), The Blonar Family, Anna (Blessed Repose), Louise, Emma Rae, The Floyd Family, Phillip (Blessed Repose), Zachary, George, Fred and Helen Milesenko, Robin, Michael, Dean, Margaret, Jenny (Blessed Repose) and Keith, Peter (blessed repose), Bishop Gregory and his family Bryan (Blessed Repose), Rick, the James Family, Fr. Scott Through the prayers of the Birthgiver of God and Ever-Virgin Mary, St. Elizabeth, The Holy Fathers, and all the Saints, may our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ have mercy on us and save us!



CELEBRATING FREEDOM IN CHRIST

Tomorrow we celebrate Independence Day, we celebrate liberation from oppression. We celebrate freedom. But what does it mean to be free? On this special celebration for our country, our first thought of freedom will most likely be the freedom we all experience in our Democratic Society. We might think of the famous words inscribed by Thomas Jefferson and circulated for the world to see in July of 1776: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

These famous and profound words have come to encompass what it means to be an American. To peruse the American Dream. To choose for ourselves what we believe, what we stand for, indeed who we are.

In this secular world, many people will follow this type of freedom as a way of life. Many will make the Constitution into their Bible, the pursuit of happiness into the meaning of life, and Democracy into their religion.

This is in no way meant to denigrate the great nation that we all call home. We have all been blessed to live in this nation. This nation where we have the right to assemble together and worship our Lord. This nation where we can freely move about from place to place. This nation where we have the right to proclaim truth without fear. God truly has blessed America and I for one am proud to call America my home. I am proud to have family members, and so many countless others over the centuries who have sacrificed so much and who have served in the great wars of our nation to protect our freedoms and our way of life. I am proud to live in the country where such great thinkers like Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin laid the groundwork for us to inherit a nation where freedom rings from sea to shining sea.

Above any other day of the year, we should thank God for these freedoms on the 4th of July. We should thank God for the heroes who sacrificed so much to give these rights to each of us. However, we would be unwise to not look deeper. Freedom to us as Orthodox Christians must mean more than simply our right to choose what we want, it must mean more than the pursuit of our own happiness; freedom must mean more than following our own will.

After all, Christ taught us to pray like this "Our Father who art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven..." Thy will be done, not "my will be done". True freedom lies only in our reliance on God in Heaven. When we follow our own will, which would seemingly make us free, we in reality become slaves to our own passions, slaves to our own sins. However when we submit to God's will, in all humility, then we become truly free.

All of the "freedoms" we have in this world come from our Creator. He has given to each of us Free Will. He has given us the ability to choose Him or to reject Him. We are free to reject him, but in that choice lays only servitude to sin. If we choose to Love God and transform ourselves daily by His Grace into His likeness then we can truly understand what it means to be free.

St. Paul in the Epistle to the Romans says, "For when you were the servants of sin, you were free from righteousness. But what fruit had you then from those things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now set free from sin and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto holiness, and as your end, life everlasting." (6:20-22)

Because Christ has broken the chains of sin and death; because He has trampled death by His death, we are all free from the chains of sinfulness and the bounds of slavery that once held mankind captive.

St. Paul was once chained and imprisoned for his proclamation that Christ is God. Yet in those chains he was truly free, because he was free in Christ. Ask the question "Am I free, or do I let my own passions and sins dictate my life?" The Saints and Martyrs who lived a life in Christ, they were truly free, for they, just like St. Paul, were Free in Christ.

To the Orthodox Christian true freedom does not lay in the profound words proclaimed by our founding fathers in the Declaration of Independence on that 4th of July in 1776. Freedom does lay simply in life, but in a life in Christ. Freedom does not lay simply in liberty, but in our own liberation from sin. Freedom does not come simply from finding happiness in the secular and worldly pleasures, but from the infinite and steadfast happiness that is offered in the love our God freely gives to us, unworthy though we be. True happiness comes not from following our will, but the will of our Father in Heaven. As Orthodox Christians our happiness comes from following the will of our Lord and being united with Him for eternity in Paradise.