

# St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America Diocese of Los Angeles and the West

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Send announcements for the bulletin and/or website to [bulletin@stjohnorthodox.org](mailto:bulletin@stjohnorthodox.org)

Send announcements to be emailed to all members to [announce@stjohnorthodox.org](mailto:announce@stjohnorthodox.org)

## November 28, 2010



### Monkmartyr and Confessor Stephen the New of Mt St Auxentius

The Monk Martyr and Confessor Stephen the New was born in 715 at Constantinople into a pious Christian family. His parents, having two daughters, prayed the Lord for a son. The mother of the new-born Stephen took him to the Blachernae church of the Most Holy Theotokos and dedicated him to God.

During the reign of the emperor Leo the Isaurian (716-741) there was a persecution against the holy icons and against those venerating them. With the support of the emperor, the adherents of the Iconoclast heresy seized control of the supreme positions of authority in the Empire and in the Church. Persecuted by the powers of this world, Orthodoxy was preserved in monasteries far from the capital, in solitary cells, and in the brave and faithful hearts of its followers.

The Orthodox parents of St Stephen, grieved by the prevailing impiety, fled from Constantinople to Bithynia, and they gave over their sixteen-year-old son in obedience to the monk John, who labored in asceticism in a solitary place on the Mount of St Auxentius. St Stephen dwelt with the venerable monk John for more than fifteen years, devoting himself totally to this spirit-bearing Elder, and learning monastic activity from him. Here Stephen received the news that his father was dead, and his mother and sisters had been tonsured as nuns.

Leo the Isaurian was succeeded by Constantine Copronymos (741-775), a fiercer persecutor of the Orthodox, and an even more zealous iconoclast. The emperor convened an Iconoclast Council, attended by 358 bishops from the Eastern provinces. However, except for Constantine, the Archbishop of Constantinople, illegitimately raised to the patriarchal throne by the power of Copronymos, not one of the other patriarchs participated in the wicked doings of this Council, thus making it less likely to style itself as "ecumenical." This council of heretics, at the instigation of the emperor and the archbishop, described icons as idols, and pronounced an anathema on all who venerated icons in the Orthodox manner, and it described icon veneration as heresy. Meanwhile, the monastery of Mount Auxentius and its igumen became known in the capital. They told the emperor about the ascetic life of the monks, about their Orthodox piety, about the igumen Stephen's gift of wonderworking, and of how St Stephen's fame had spread far beyond the region of the monastery, and that the name of its head was accorded universal respect and love. The saint's open encouragement of icon veneration and the implied rebuff to the persecutors of Orthodoxy within the monastery of Mount Auxentius especially

## SCHEDULE OF SERVICES & EVENTS

**Sunday, November 28** –Orthros 9:00am; Divine Liturgy 10:00am; Sunday School following Liturgy; Lunch following

**Tuesday, November 30** – Inquirer's/Catechism Class at Townsend's 7:00pm

**Wednesday, December 1** – Vespers 6:00pm

**Friday, December 3** – Spiritual Circle 9:30am

**Saturday, December 4** – Great Vespers 6:00pm

**Sunday, December 5** –Orthros 9:00am; Divine Liturgy 10:00am; Sunday School following Liturgy; Lunch following

### EPISTLE READERS

Nov 28 - Sbdcn. Mark (Eric) Townsend

Dec 5 - Reader Mark Fellegly

Dec 12 – Joy Corey

Dec 19 – Sbdcn. Barnabas Schaefer

### CHURCH CLEANING

Week of Nov 29 - Corey/Rush

Week of Dec 6 – Schaefer

Week of Dec 13 – Goolsby

Week of Dec 21 – Townsends

\*Contact Adam Roth if you would like to help.

### LUNCHEON & CLEANUP

Nov 28 - Team 3 - Garbinski, Tourous, Jenkin, Weddle, Kane, Ayres, O'Daniel

Dec 5- Team 4 - Townsend, Rush, Calderoni, Sanman, Handeen

Dec 12 – Team 5 - Poland, Schaefer, Gallatin, Nolan, Milojevic, Johnson

Dec 19 - Team 1 - Tsalaky, Ayoub D., Ayoub M., Vlahos

\*Contact Mark Ayoub if you would like to join a lunch team, or have questions or comments.

### PRAYERS FOR THE LIVING:

Paul Truebenbach, Molly Tsalaky, Jennifer & Newborn Infant (Steve Kane's daughter), Marvel (Mary Jo Neyman's Mother), Teri Hundt (sister of Tiffany Gallatin), Robin and her unborn baby girl (Joanna Townsend's cousin), Rick Miller, Inna Epling, Mike Kerr, Jim Ayres, Moses (Michael) Fillmore, Mark & Christina Bischoff (friends of Bartimaeus), Mike Allen, Bonnie Christensen, Tammy (cousin of Nanette Sanman), Jess Akins & her daughter Hallee (friends of Trudy Olinger), Johanna Barnett, Bill Brisbane (Nanette's father), Jacob Hunter (Dan Monaghan's cousin in Afghanistan), Pamela Olsen, Mat. Michaela Fenn (wife of Fr. Mark Fenn), Fr. Michael Lewis, Jill Foss (friend of Jeane Wood), Joan (Allyson Gross' Mother), Nancy Schrom (Mary Charles' mother), Nancy Corey (Ed Corey's sister), Wanda (Mother of Lavonne Ayoub), Moses Kemper, Jamie Landers, Nikolai Kupcow, Lynda (Michelle Fellegly's mother), George Kucera, Bonnie (Jenny Dancy's mother).

### PRAYERS FOR THE DEPARTED:

John Paras, Nikolay, (father of Oksana Johnson), Sam (Karen Karres' daughter's finance), Archbishop Augustinos of Florina, Devin Austin & Ryan Reinhardt (friends of John Charles and Nanette Sanman), George El Hayek, Fr. Matthew MacKay.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Windows of Christmas – Sunday December 19<sup>th</sup>** - Be sure to mark your calendars for a dramatic Christmas performance by the children of St. John's. See included flyer for details.

**Shop our Bookstore!** - Have you looked into St John's Bookstore recently? New selections of Bibles, books, icons and all manner of handmade Orthodox gifts from all over the world are being added weekly. We have hundreds of Orthodox books, ranging from coloring books for children to the deeply theological & philosophical for scholars. Christmas is just around the corner, so please think of our store before you shop for gifts elsewhere. We offer Orthodox gift cards and Christmas cards as well. Orthodox gifts from under ten dollars or perhaps St John's own Cookbook for a stocking stuffer. We offer lay-away and even gift certificates. If you have any requests, ask us and we will try to find it. And above all, remember that this is YOUR bookstore. When our bookstore makes money, so does St. Johns. Support your store - Support your parish.

**Expanded Bookstore Hours** – Beginning next Saturday, the St. John Bookstore will be open with expanded hours as follows: Wednesdays 11am – after Vespers, Saturdays 4pm – after Vespers, and Sunday as normal following Liturgy.

**Christmas Tree of Sharing** - The ladies of the parish are putting up a tree of sharing on behalf of the North Idaho Violence Prevention Center. There will be 20 ornament tags on this tree and we hope to have every one taken and a gift purchased for these unfortunate families. There will be a sign up sheet and a list of instructions placed near the tree which will explain exactly what to do regarding these gifts.

**Pilgrimage to Greece** - You are invited to participate in a comprehensive tour/pilgrimage “ANCIENT AND HOLY IN GREECE” May 1-14, 2011. Pilgrimage will include visits to the Classical, Byzantine & Monastic Centers of mainland Greece along with a 4-day cruise of the Aegean (Patmos, Ephesus, Rhodes, Crete and Santorini). For more info please contact Jeane Wood at: 208-660-3046 or email at jeaneplastinowood@ymail.com or Fr. Ilya Gotlinsky at: ortours@gmail.com. All information about the pilgrimage is also available at: [www.orthodoxtours.com](http://www.orthodoxtours.com).

### **Inquirer's/Catechism Class – Tuesday**

Our Inquirer's/Catechism Class meets each Tuesday at 7:00 P.M. at the home of Eric & Joanna Townsend! All are invited to please attend! This is an opportunity to learn (or re-learn!) the basics of Holy Orthodoxy in the context of a discussion format. Fr. Basil will be teaching the Symbol of our Faith, the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed which we confess every Sunday just before the Holy Anaphora in the Divine Liturgy. We hope to see you there!

### **Winter Youth Retreat 2011 – January 14<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>**

Attention all 7th through 12th Graders: Save the date for the 2011 Pan-Orthodox Youth Winter Retreat: Martin Luther King Weekend, January 14-17. The Retreat will be held at Cedar Springs Camp (same camp as last year) and we will be skiing (or playing games in lodge) at Stevens Pass!!! Come see old and new friends, hang out, play games, challenge yourself on the ropes course, play laser tag, watch or perform in the talent show, and soak in spiritual truths.

angered the emperor. Archbishop Constantine realized that in the person of St Stephen he had a strong and implacable opponent of his iconoclastic intentions, and he plotted how he might draw him over to his side or else destroy him. They tried to lure St Stephen into the Iconoclast camp, at first with flattery and bribery, then by threats, but in vain. Then they slandered the saint, accusing him of falling into sin with the nun Anna. But his guilt was not proven, since the nun courageously denied any guilt and died under torture and beatings. Finally, the emperor gave orders to lock up the saint in prison, and to destroy his monastery. Iconoclast bishops were sent to St Stephen in prison, trying to persuade him of the dogmatic correctness of the Iconoclast position. But the saint easily refuted all the arguments of the heretics and he remained true to Orthodoxy.

The emperor gave orders to transfer St Stephen to prison on the island of Pharos, and then to bring him to trial. At the trial, the saint refuted the arguments of the heretics sitting in judgment upon him. He explained the dogmatic essence of icon veneration, and he denounced the Iconoclasts because in blaspheming icons, they blasphemed Christ and the Mother of God. As proof, the saint pointed to a golden coin inscribed with the image of the emperor. He asked the judges what would happen to a man who threw the coin to the ground, and then trampled the emperor's image under his feet. They replied that such a man would certainly be punished for dishonoring the image of the emperor. The saint said that an even greater punishment awaited anyone who would dishonor the image of the King of Heaven and His Saints, and with that he spat on the coin, threw it to the ground, and began to trample it underfoot. The emperor gave orders to take the saint to prison, where already there were languishing 342 Elders, condemned for the veneration of icons. In this prison St Stephen spent eleven months, consoling the imprisoned. The prison became like a monastery, where the usual prayers and hymns were chanted according to the Typikon. The people came to the prison in crowds and asked St Stephen to pray for them. When the emperor learned that the saint had organized a monastery in prison, where they prayed venerated holy icons, he sent two of his own servants, twin-brothers, to beat the saint to death. When these brothers went to the prison and beheld the face of the monk shining with a divine light, they fell down on their knees before him, asking his forgiveness and prayers, then they told the emperor that his command had been carried out. But the emperor learned the truth and he resorted to yet another lie. Informing his soldiers that the saint was plotting to remove him from the throne, he sent them to the prison. The holy confessor himself came out to the furious soldiers, who seized him and dragged him through the streets of the city. They then threw the lacerated body of the martyr into a pit, where they were wont to bury criminals.

On the following morning a fiery cloud appeared over Mount Auxentius, and then a heavy darkness descended upon the capital, accompanied by hail, which killed many people.

### **Wisdom of the Fathers - On Remembering Your Own Sins and Forgetting Those of Others**

“Recall the memory of hell and punishment and vengeance during the time of thy prayer; and thou wilt not be able even to receive thine enemy into thy mind. Make thy mind contrite, humble thy soul by the memory of the offences committed by thee, and wrath will not be able even to trouble thee. But the cause of all these evils is this, that we scrutinize the sins of all others with great exactitude; while we let our own pass with great remissness. Whereas we ought to do the contrary – to keep our own faults unforgotten; but never even to admit a thought of those of others.”

+*St. John Chrysostom, Against Publishing the Errors of the Brethren*

### **APOLYTIKION OF ST. STEPHEN THE NEW IN TONE FOUR**

Trained on the mountain in ascetical labors, with the whole armor of the Cross thou didst vanquish the spiritual arrays of unseen enemies; and when thou hadst stripped thyself with great courage for contest, thou didst slay Copronymus with the sword of the true Faith. For both these things hast thou been crowned by God, O righteous Martyr, blest Stephen of great renown.

### **KONTAKION OF PREPARATION OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY IN TONE THREE**

Today the Virgin cometh to the cave where she will give birth in an ineffable manner to the Word Who is before all the ages. Rejoice, therefore, O universe, when thou hearest it heralded: Glorify Him, with the angels and the shepherds, Who chose to be seen as a new-born babe, the God Who is before all the ages.

### **THE EPISTLE (For the Twenty-Seventh Sunday after Pentecost)**

*The Lord is my strength and my song. The Lord has chastened me sorely.*

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians. (6:10-17)

Brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the equipment of the Gospel of peace; besides all these, taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

### **THE GOSPEL (For the Thirteenth Sunday of Luke)**

**The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (18:18-27)**

At that time, a man came testing Jesus and asking, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery. Do not kill. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. Honor your father and mother.'" And the man said, "All these I have observed from my youth." And when Jesus heard it, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But when the man heard this he became sad, for he was very rich. Jesus, seeing him sad, said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Those who heard it said, "Then who can be saved?" Jesus said, "What is impossible with men is possible with God."

## **Nativity Lenten Retreat 2010**



Holy Cross parish in Yakima, WA will host a Nativity Lenten Retreat, **Friday, December 10 through Saturday, December 11, 2010.**

Fr. Josiah Trenham will be speaking to the singles and youth on **Friday night, December 10, 7:15pm.**

On Saturday, December 11, Fr. Josiah will speak on "An Orthodox Appraisal of the Protestant Reformers and Their Teachings"

**Saturday, December 11**

**10:00am, Session #1**

**11:15am, Session #2**

**12:30-1:00pm**

**Questions and discussion**

*Lunch with parish families or on your own*

**5:00pm, Great Vespers**

**6:00pm, Session #3**

+ *There will be an offering to cover expenses and honorarium.*

+ *For guests coming from out of town please call (509) 575-0145 if you would like to stay in one of our parish homes.*

**May this lenten season instruct, challenge and inspire.**