

SAINT JOHN THE MERCIFUL

St. John was born on Cyprus in the 7th century to illustrious parents. He married and had children, but when they died, he became a monk. He was zealous in fasting and prayer and had great love for those around him. His spiritual exploits won him honor among men, and even the emperor revered him. When the Patriarchal throne of Alexandria fell vacant, the emperor and all clergy begged St. John to occupy the throne.

St. John assumed his archpastoral service, concerning himself with the moral and dogmatic welfare of his flock. As patriarch he denounced every soul-destroying heresy, and drove out from Alexandria the Monophysite Phyllonos of Antioch.

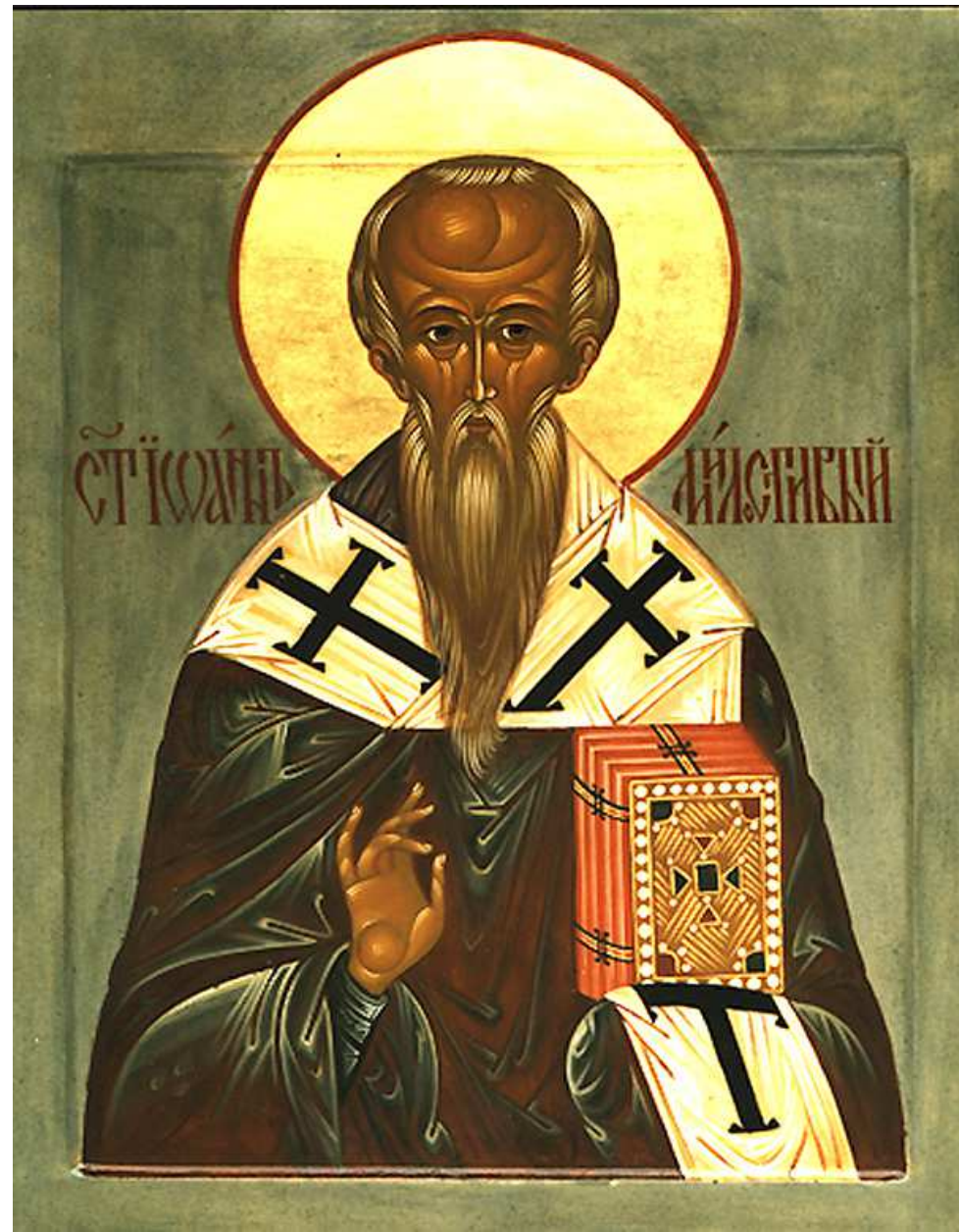
He considered his chief task to be charitable and to help all those in need. He ordered his stewards to compile a list of the poor and down-trodden, which was over 7,000 men in Alexandria. The saint provided for all of these unfortunates each day out of the church's treasury.

On Wednesdays and Fridays he sat outside on the church portico and received everyone in need. He settled quarrels, helped the wronged, and distributed alms. Three times a week he visited the sick-houses and rendered assistance to the suffering. During this period the emperor Heraclius led an army against the Persians, who then ravaged and burned Jerusalem, taking a multitude of captives. Patriarch John gave a large portion of the church treasury for their ransom.

The saint never refused supplicants. One day when visiting the sick, he met a beggar and gave him 6 silver coins. The beggar changed clothes and ran ahead, and again asked St. John for alms. The Patriarch gave him 6 more coins. When the beggar sought charity for a third time, the servants began to chase him away; but St. John ordered he be given 12 pieces of silver, saying, "Perhaps he is Christ putting me to the test." Twice the saint gave money to a merchant suffering a shipwreck, and a third time gave him a ship belonging to the Patriarchate and filled with grain; the merchant had a successful journey and repaid his obligations.

St. John was known for his gentle attitude towards people. Once, he was compelled to excommunicate two clergymen for a period of time. One of them repented, but the other became angry with the Patriarch and fell into greater sins. The saint wanted to summon him and calm him with kind words, but it slipped his mind. When he was celebrating the Divine Liturgy, he suddenly remembered the Gospel words to first be reconciled with your brother and then offer your gift before the altar. The saint left the altar and called for the clergyman; he fell on his knees before him in front of all the people and asked forgiveness. The cleric, filled with remorse, repented of his sin, corrected himself, and afterwards was found worthy to be ordained to the priesthood.

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ST. JOHN THE MERCIFUL, PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH
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THE TRINITARIAN

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Divine Liturgy on Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

Vespers on Saturdays at 5:00 p.m.

BULLETIN 2 - VOLUME LXI

TONE 6

NOVEMBER 12, 2023

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

*St. John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria;
Ven. Nilus the Faster, of Sinai; Prophet Ahijah;
Bl. John "the Hairy," Fool-for-Christ, in Rostov;
Ven. Nilus the Myrrhgusher, of Mt. Athos*

By endurance you gained your reward, venerable Father: you persevered in prayer unceasingly; you loved the poor and provided for them in all things. Blessed John the Merciful, intercede with Christ God that our souls may be saved.

Troparion, Tone VIII

By a flood of tears you made the desert fertile, and your longing for God brought forth fruits in abundance. By the radiance of miracles you illumined the whole universe! Our Father Nilus, pray to Christ God to save our souls.

Troparion, Tone VIII

TODAY'S EPISTLE: EPHESIANS 2:4-10

TODAY'S GOSPEL: LUKE 10:25-37

Wednesday, November 15, is the beginning of the NATIVITY FAST.

HOLY WORSHIP THIS WEEK:

Today, November 12	11:15 a.m. One-Year Memorial Prayers for Mary Ann Moga
Wednesday, November 15	6:30 p.m. Holy Unction Service at St. Matthew Church
Saturday, November 18	5:00 p.m. Great Vespers

WELCOME GUESTS!

We are very glad you have come to worship the Holy Trinity with us this morning! Please participate in the services at your comfort level. Our greeters will kindly assist you with whatever questions or needs you may have. During each Sunday service we offer Holy Communion. If you are a practicing Orthodox Christian and have come prepared to receive Christ's Body and Blood through fasting and prayer, please come forward to partake. All guests are invited to come forward at the end of the service to greet Fr. Christopher and receive the blessed bread. Please stay after the Divine Liturgy for coffee hour in the Fellowship Hall so we can get to know you better!

Families with children: we encourage children of all ages to be present and participate as they are able during worship. We know sometimes kids need a break, so please take good advantage of our Rest and Refocus Room located on the south side of the lobby/narthex when coming in the main entrance. If you have pre-school and school age children, we invite you to send them to Church School directly after the Divine Liturgy throughout the academic year. May God bless you!

Daily Scripture Readings can be found in the St. Tikhon's Wall Calendar or at www.oca.org/readings.

COMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER:

12, TODAY	Second Sunday Food Sale
13, Monday	7:00 p.m FOCUS St. Herman House event at HTOC
15, Wednesday	6:30 p.m. Nativity Fast begins; Holy Unction Service at St. Matthew Church
19, Sunday	11:00 a.m. Catechism Book Study
26, Sunday	Last day to order nut rolls
30, Thursday	10:00 a.m. Festal Divine Liturgy and luncheon at St. Andrew Church

MEMORY ETERNAL:

Paul Dudek fell asleep in the Lord on November 8, 2023.

FOCUS PROGRAM:

On Monday, Nov. 13, 7:00 p.m., HTOC will host a benefit on behalf of St. Herman House FOCUS Cleveland. His Eminence Archbishop Daniel will present "Encountering Christ on Our Daily Pilgrimage." Tickets are \$30. Doors open at 6:30.

FOOD SALE:

Today is our monthly Food Sale. Please shop at the tables in the Fellowship Hall.

BOOK STUDY:

Fr. Christopher is offering classes covering Let Us Attend: A Journey Through the Orthodox Divine Liturgy by Fr. Lawrence Farley. Books are available in our bookstore, or order online. Remaining classes are Nov. 19 (Ch. 5-8); Dec. 10 (Ch. 9-12); Dec. 17 (Ch. 13-Conclusion).

RETREAT:

St. Nicholas Church in Mogadore is hosting a Pan-Orthodox "3ETREAT" Dec. 9 for youth and anyone who cares about young people. Please see the bulletin board for details and registration information.

COFFEE HOUR:

Our refreshments are hosted by the Moga Family.

FEAST DAY OF APOSTLE ANDREW:

St. Andrew Church invites all to attend their Divine Liturgy on Thursday, Nov. 30, at 10:00 a.m. An advent meal will follow the liturgy; if you plan to attend, please sign up in the Fellowship Hall so meal preparations can be made.

JOB OPPORTUNITY:

FOCUS North America has need of a Social Media Coordinator/Administrative Assistant. The job posting is on www.orthodoxjobs.com and currently appears on the home page. Scroll down to find the posting for the FOCUS Cleveland position.

ZOE HOUSE:

ZOE House is always looking for more volunteers, usually 2-hour shifts or more each week. Substitutes who can be available often with less than a day's notice are especially needed. Talk with Joanne Stoyka, Barbara Chandler, or Susan Range to find out more about this opportunity.

NUT ROLL ORDERS FOR CHRISTMAS:

Pick up your order form for nut rolls (\$15/ea) at coffee hour; or call or text Rita Bellack (330-204-9513). Last date to order is Nov. 26. Nut rolls will be ready Sunday, Dec. 12.

FLOWERS:

The flowers today are offered by Jewelann Stefanar in blessed memory of Andy Stefanar.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGNS

Maintaining and restoring our beautiful facilities is part of our stewardship of God's resources that he has blessed us with. When you designate a special gift or a part of your regular proportional giving to the Capital Campaign Fund, your donation assists with the following major projects:

Recently completed: parking lot repair/sealing, parish hall soffit & metal flashing, parking lot trench drain replacement

Upcoming anticipated: parish hall stanchion reinforcement, church gutter and drainage repair/roof snow guard installation/wood paneling replacement, parish hall chimney grout work, church LED lighting conversion

GIFTS WE OFFER TO THE LORD WE LOVE

REGULAR COLLECTION, 11/5/23	\$ 4174.00
CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FUND	9298.00
CANDLES	110.00
UGANDA SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROJECT	1792.00
HALL RENTAL	100.00
COFFEE HOUR, 10/29	139.00

***To Timothy, my true child in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace
from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. --1 Timothy 1:2.***

All of us who were baptized and chrismated, who were initiated in the Orthodox Christian faith have at least one godparent. If you were baptized as a child, this person likely was a relative, a family friend, or perhaps someone from your parish whom your priest designated to stand in and watch over you. Some of us also have had the special joy of becoming godparents ourselves, sponsoring a child or an adult as he or she was received into the full life of the Church.

Being a godparent or sponsor is a greatly important role and a labor of love. It is a commitment to be a faithful Christian and witness, and also to guide and support your godchild. This role doesn't begin and end at the baptism service, but in the most ideal situations continues on for many years.

There are other ways for a spiritual parent/child relationship to develop. Biological parents can invest greatly in the spiritual growth of their children. Clergy can be guides to their flock. Lay people can develop deep and caring relationships between each other. (1 Tim 5:1-2, Titus 2:2-8).

Paul calls Timothy¹ his "true child in the faith." And as we explore this first epistle to Timothy, we will see more about how Paul greatly cares for Timothy as a person and also wishes to see him grow in his own ministry as a young bishop.

What are the things Paul asks first and foremost for Timothy and also as a standard greeting for many of his letters? "Grace, mercy, and peace."

Grace (χάρις) is a word that speaks of God's favorable disposition and corresponding action toward mankind. Grace is experienced by us as a gift and as joy, and Paul asks for this first in Timothy's life.

Mercy (ἔλεος) is God's steadfast love, his loving-kindness toward mankind. When we ask for God's mercy upon a person, we are asking him to be who he is; that is, to be a good God, faithful to his people, and to look down on us with love.

Peace (εἰρήνη) is a broad term that carries meanings of absence of hostility, prosperity, loyalty, and love. Ultimately peace is Christ himself (Eph 2:14, Is 9:6-7). There is a Messianic peace that we experience and enter into, and which we will experience in the never-ending kingdom. Peace is therefore related to Sabbath, which is the reign of God as he sits upon his throne, resting and ruling.

Are you a Christian spiritual father or mother to someone dear to you? Pray for that person often and for grace, mercy, and peace. My prayer is that as we move from the Liturgy in the church to the liturgy in the fellowship hall, the good things of God that we have been filled up with will spill over into our conversations at coffee hour, building us up as the body of Christ, and naturally developing relationships between each other as true parents and children in the faith.

Fr. Chris

¹ "Timothy" is a great name to call your child and it means "God-honoring".