

THE HOLY PROPHET EZEKIEL

Prophet Ezekiel lived in the sixth century BC. He was born in the city of Sarir, descended from the tribe of Levi; he was a priest and the son of the priest Buzi. Ezekiel was led off to Babylon when he was 25 years old, together with King Jechoniah II and many other Jews during the second invasion of Jerusalem by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar.

Ezekiel lived in captivity by the River Chebar. When he was 30, he had a vision of the future of the Hebrew nation and of all mankind. He beheld a shining cloud with fire flashing, and gleaming bronze in its midst. He saw 4 creatures in the shape of men but with four faces (Ez. 1:6). Each had the face of a man in front, a lion's face on the right, an ox on the left, and an eagle at the back (Ez. 1:10). There was a wheel on the earth beside each creature, and the rim of each wheel was full of eyes. Over the heads there was a firmament, shining like crystal. Above that was a throne, glittering like sapphires. Above this throne was the likeness of a human form; around Him a rainbow (Ez. 1:4-28).

The Church Fathers explain that the human likeness upon the throne prefigures the Incarnation of the Son of God from the Virgin Mary, who is the living Throne of God. The four creatures symbolize the four Evangelists: St. Matthew (a man); St. Mark (a lion); St. Luke (an ox); and St. John (an eagle). The wheel of eyes suggests the sharing of light with all the nations of the earth.

During this vision, the holy prophet fell down upon the ground in fear, but the voice of God commanded him to get up. He was told that the Lord was sending him to preach to the nation of Israel. This was the beginning of Ezekiel's prophetic service. He announced to the people of Israel, held captive in Babylon, the tribulations Israel would face for not remaining faithful to God. He also proclaimed a better time for his fellow-countrymen, and he predicted their return from Babylon and the restoration of the Jerusalem Temple.

The holy Prophet Ezekiel received from the Lord the gift of wonderworking. He, like the Prophet Moses, divided the waters of the river Chebar, and the Hebrews crossed to the opposite shore, escaping the pursuing Chaldeans. During a time of famine the prophet asked God for an increase of food for the hungry.

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

Vespers on Saturdays at 5:00 p.m.

BULLETIN 38 - VOLUME LXI

TONE 3

JULY 21, 2024

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Prophet Ezekiel;

Ven. Simeon of Emessa, Fool-for-Christ, and his fellow ascetic, Ven. John;

Ven. Onuphry the Silent, and Ven. Onisim, Recluse, of the Kiev Caves;

The "Armatia" Icon of the Most-holy Theotokos

Enlightened by the Spirit, your pure heart became the dwelling place of most splendid prophecy; for you saw things far off as if they were near. Therefore, we honor you, blessed and glorious Prophet Ezekiel.

Kontakion, Tone IV

Let us praise with fervent love, this man who lived in the flesh as an angel, adorning his soul with the most radiant virtues! Simeon, the equal to the Apostles and the Bearer of God. Together with him, let us honor his companion John, for they both ever stand before God, interceding for us all!

Kontakion, Tone II

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! O our holy father Onuphrius, pray to Christ our God to save our souls!

Troparion, Tone VIII

TODAY'S EPISTLE: ROMANS 6:18-23

TODAY'S GOSPEL: MATTHEW 8:5-13

HOLY WORSHIP THIS WEEK:

Today, July 21

11:00 a.m. Blessing of Vehicles

Saturday, July 27

5:00 p.m. 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

JULY:

- 22, Monday Cooking for St. Herman’s House
- 22-24 Rummage Sale set-up; cooking on 7/24
- 25-27 HTOC Rummage Sale & Food Extravaganza
- 28, Sunday Food Sale
- 29, Monday Rummage Sale clean-up

AUGUST:

- 1, Thursday Dormition Fast begins
- 11, Sunday Food Sale
- 11:00 a.m. Parish Council meeting
- 25, Sunday 11:00 a.m. Parish Picnic

VEHICLE BLESSINGS:

Plan to join Fr. Christopher in our parking lot at 11:00 today for a blessing upon the vehicles we drive in our daily lives!

PRAYER LIST:

We are very thankful to Mimi Matheis for tending the prayer list for the past decade! May the Lord grant you many blessings!

Please contact *Meagan Brill* (brillmeagan@gmail.com) to add or remove items from the prayer list. You can also contact her to add or remove your name to get the weekly updates.

VETERANS MONUMENT:

A memorial plaque will be placed in the parish hall to honor members of Holy Trinity by name who have served in the armed forces. Please submit names (Holy Trinity members only) to Frank Stoyka: 216-401-8938. Parish Council is also considering how our church can fund a granite monument with a general dedication to be placed in the prayer garden where the previous monument was. This type of monument will cost several thousand dollars, and we are seeking individual donations to help fund its installation. To contribute, please write checks to Holy Trinity and designate your donation as “Veterans Monument.”

COFFEE HOUR:

Donors are needed for 7/28, 8/4 and 8/18.

CHURCH SCHOOL:

The new academic year will be here before we know it—if you’re interested in being part of the Sunday School team, let us know now! The team is in need of teachers and an event coordinator. Please contact Fr. Chris so we can get you plugged in to the program!

RUMMAGE SALE, JULY 25, 26, 27:

Today is the last date for item drop-off. However, many more volunteers are needed for the actual sale. If you can help in any way, check the sign-up boards in the Fellowship Hall. Food and bakery items are also needed. And we are in need of a large crew for clearing out the sale on Monday, July 29. Contact Rita Bellack (330-204-9513) or Becky Spak (440-731-7735) with any questions.

100th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION:

The family of Betty Scherry extends an invitation to the congregation of Holy Trinity to help us celebrate Betty’s 100th birthday. Her family will be hosting an open house in Holy Trinity’s Hall on Sunday, August 25, from 2:00-4:00 p.m. All are welcome to stop by to share birthday greetings with Betty, and cake too!

FESTIVAL SEASON:

Check our Fellowship Hall bulletin board for fliers from various area churches advertising their festivals.

PARISH PICNIC:

Save the date of August 25 for our annual Picnic!

How can I be cold to my neighbor when the Lord commanded me to love him as myself,
or as He Himself has loved us?

But we often become cold to our neighbor
because we attach ourselves to earthly delights and are self-loving.

Therefore, let us renounce earthly delights, self-love and intemperance, so that we may please our Lord.
St. John of Kronstadt

THE GIFTS WE OFFER TO THE LORD WE LOVE

REGULAR COLLECTION, 7/14/2024	\$ 2929.00
CAPITAL CAMPAIGNS	902.00
CANDLES	68.00
ORTHODOX SEMINARIES	100.00

HOLY MYSTERIES, OFFICES, AND PRAYERS FOR DIVERSE NEEDS:
PREPARING FOR BAPTISM

Along with the annual, monthly, weekly, and daily cycles of prayer and services in the church, we also have the blessing of participating in the circumstantial services which our church offers. I hope over the next several weeks to offer some practical reflections/suggestions on the Mysteries/Sacraments and other Offices and Prayers of the Church. Perhaps we can post some of them on the parish website in the future. I'd like to begin by offering some answers to common questions about baptism and initiation into the church. I hope this is helpful! More to follow :-)

We're having a baby and want the child baptized in the church. How should we plan?

Congratulations! Having a child is a great gift and blessing from God! You will want both you and your child to feel that coming to church feels like coming home to family, so make sure to attend services and events regularly before and after the birth. At the right time, contact Father Chris and he will be glad to meet with you and form a plan for the baptism and everything leading up to it. Prayers and services can be offered on the following days:

- Sometime Before the Birth: Prayers for mother and unborn child
- Day of Birth: Prayers for Mother & Child - Contact Fr Chris to come pray and celebrate with you.
- 8th Day of Birth: Naming Prayers for the Child - In many Orthodox cultures it's traditional to wait to name the child until the 8th day of birth. Whether or not you follow this tradition, invite the priest to offer these prayers of blessing.
- 40th Day of Birth: Churching of the Mother & Child - We invite the mother and newborn baby to make use of these special and even sacred 40 days at home for bonding and for mom's recovery. Some mothers like to get back to church services before the 40 days and some like to wait, and either is okay. On or after the 40th day we will plan the Churching to bring the mother again into the regular life of the church and introduce the infant to the church. If godparents have been selected by this time they may be present for the Churching.
- 40th Day and Beyond: Baptism can be scheduled.

I'm not a member or regular attender of Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, can my child be baptized at the church?

Baptizing a child is a commitment by parents and godparents to participate in the life of a local Orthodox parish and to raise the child in the Orthodox Christian faith. If you are a member or attender of another Orthodox parish home, your child should be baptized there. If you are an Orthodox Christian without a parish home or are non-Orthodox but looking for a parish home, please start attending our parish services and events! Once you've been able to be committed to our community, we can start planning the baptism.

What is a godparent/sponsor, and how do I choose one?

Ideally, a godparent/sponsor is someone who is grounded in the faith and will be committed to caring for the child's spiritual wellbeing as they grow and mature. We recommend choosing a godparent who is a faithful member of our local parish and *not* a family member. In this way you can deepen bonds with your spiritual family at the parish you most often attend. The godparent must be a faithful Orthodox Christian in good standing in the Church. In most cases, a male will have a male as his godparent, and a female will have a female as her godparent. There is possibility for two godparents, a godfather and a godmother. Any candidates in consideration for being a godparent must be confirmed and approved by Father Chris. Pray and ask the Lord for guidance for finding godparents for your child!

When should I have my child baptized?

In most circumstances, a healthy child can be baptized in the church any time from the 40th day after birth. Some parents like to have their child baptized right at or near the 40th day, some like to give the child some time for growth before the baptism. We receive children and adults into the church at all ages with joy. If you're baptizing an infant, it's recommended to have the baptism within the first year of the child's life. Once a child grows much beyond 18 months, they can start showing their own wills which can potentially make the baptism go less smoothly.

Most baptisms are scheduled on Saturdays to allow the child to complete the baptism by reception of Eucharist on Sunday. Saturdays also allow for more parishioners, family, and friends to attend.

Fr. Chris