



# The Saint Andrew Bugle

VOLUME 26 ISSUE 1  
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2017

A Bi-Monthly Publication of St. Andrew Orthodox Church  
4700 Canyon Crest Drive, Riverside, California 92507

On January 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, we celebrated the Theophany where all shadows passed away in the brilliance of the revelation of the Holy Trinity, and we remembered the servant of God in this mystery, St. John the Baptist who we call the “Forerunner” – the one who leaped in his mother Elizabeth’s womb, in the presence of Christ and then trembled as he baptized Christ. In these two days we focused on two incredible personages – one who Jesus called the greatest of all the prophets, and one who was the greatest among all men – the God-man, our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. What do we learn from these two in the light of the Theophany? What can we take away from this Great Feast and remembrance?

First let us look at St. John. He was an extraordinary and extremely intimidating figure. He was ferociously and utterly serious about the things of God. His intensity shone a light on those around him and revealed their smallness in character and faith. People tend to not like this. They become tweaked.

In our churches today, some of us exhibit extraordinary piety, going to church every day, or are generous financial supporters, or dedicated servants to the church. Persons who see these things can feel bested, or judged even though the persons who are their betters are likely not even thinking about them, and if they are, they are almost certainly not judging.

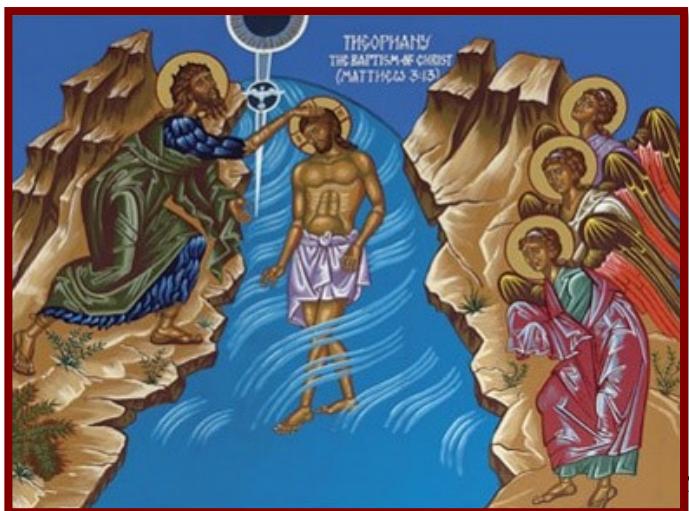
When we experience discomfort in the light of those who are more devoted than we are, our discomfort is serving as a witness against our pride and insecurity. In a case like this, we really don’t want to be illuminated because it is causing us pain. To see clearly is to make it obvious that we must change, that we must repent, and we don’t want to. We would like to go on as before and



not address it.

Think about how it would feel to attend church with St. John the Baptist? What a lamp he would shine on us. Think of how forthright he was, repeatedly calling out Herod in public about his sexual immorality with no fear for his life. He lived in the desert, ate locusts and was in direct and intimate communion with God. He was most interested in separating us from our own particular sins. Would we have been willing to learn from his example and words? Our answer has everything to do with how we feel about our own repentance. If we have no time or interest in repentance, or if we don’t think we have anything for which to repent, then we would have no time for St. John the Baptist. For his message was to repent, for the kingdom of God is near.

As if the Forerunner himself was not intimidating enough, he shocked the crowds by telling them that he was nothing compared to the one coming after him, the one who was actually *before* him, the thong of whose sandal he was not worthy to untie! He announced that the Messiah was coming with the Holy Spirit, with fire, an axe, and a pitchfork, a winnowing fork. St. Matthew’s account of these words end with “...but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire” and then



(Continued from page 1)

the very next words in the text read, “Then Jesus arrived...” Jesus was greater! His baptism was greater! And His judgment was far more awesome. If it was intimidating to attend church with St. John the Baptist who was a revealing light shining on those around him, imagine the light shown by the person of Christ!

When Jesus was baptized at the Jordan the heavens opened up and God said, “This is My Beloved Son! Listen to Him!” And what was the first word uttered by Jesus as he began his public preaching ministry? Repent! It is the Word of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and we are commanded by the Father to listen.

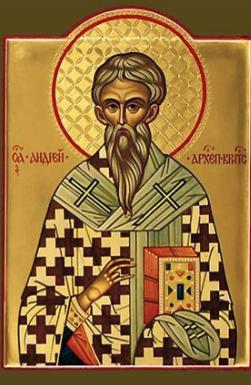
We are to seek change, to become more and more like

Christ every day of our lives. What is that like? I was listening to Fr. Patrick Reardon recently. He shared that he was re-reading St. Benedict’s 12 rules of humility, and he got stuck on rule 1! He then reflected on how ridiculous it is when after a few years of earnest repentance we say “I am not making any progress”, not realizing that the acquisition of Christ-like virtue is the greatest work of our lives and it takes a life-time.

The light of the Godhead today blazes forth from the heavens! He is here! Let us go out to Him! Let us heed His call to repentance! Let us humans become deiform!

Assuring you of my love and prayers,

Fr Josiah



## St. Andrew of Crete

Writer of Canons and Composer of the Great Penitential Canon sung during Great Lent.

Saint Andrew, Archbishop of Crete, was born in the city of Damascus into a pious Christian family. Up until seven years of age the boy was mute and did not talk. However, after communing the Holy Mysteries of Christ he found

the gift of speech and began to speak. And from that time the lad began earnestly to study Holy Scripture and the discipline of theology.

At fourteen years of age he went off to Jerusalem and there he accepted monastic tonsure at the monastery of St Sava the Sanctified. St Andrew led a strict and chaste life, he was meek and abstinent, such that all were amazed at his virtue and reasoning of mind. As a man of talent and known for his virtuous life, over the passage of time he came to be numbered among the Jerusalem clergy and was appointed a secretary for the Patriarchate -- a writing clerk. In the year 680 the locum tenens of the Jerusalem Patriarchate, Theodore, included archdeacon Andrew among the representatives of the Holy City sent to the Sixth Ecumenical Council, and here the saint contended against heretical teachings, relying upon his profound knowledge of Orthodox doctrine. Shortly after the Council he was summoned back to Constantinople from Jerusalem and he was appointed archdeacon at the church of Hagia Sophia, the Wisdom of God. During the reign of the emperor Justinian II (685-695) St Andrew was ordained bishop of the city of Gortineia on the island of Crete. In his new position he shone forth as a true luminary of the Church, a great hierarch, theologian, teacher and hymnographer.

St Andrew wrote many liturgical hymns. He was the originator of a new liturgical form -- the canon. Of the canons composed by him the best known is the Great Penitential Canon, including within its 9 odes the 250 troparia recited during the Great Lent. In the First Week of Lent at the service of Compline it is read in portions (thus called “methymony” [trans. note: from the useage in the service of Compline of the “God is with us”, in Slavonic the “S’nami Bog”, or in Greek “Meth’ Humon ho Theos”, from which derives “methymony”], and again on Thursday of the Fifth Week at the All-night Vigil during Matins.

St Andrew of Crete gained renown with his many praises of the All-Pure Virgin Mary. To him are likewise ascribed: the Canon for the feast of the Nativity of Christ, three odes for the Compline of Palm Sunday and also in the first four days of Holy Passion Week, as well as verses for the feast of the Meeting of the Lord, and many another church-song. His hynographic tradition was continued by the churchly great melodists of following ages: Saints John of Damascus, Cosma of Maium, Joseph the Melodist, Theophan the Written-upon. There have also been preserved edifying Sermons of St Andrew for certain of the Church feasts.

Church historians are not of the same opinion as to the date of death of the saint. One suggests the year 712, while others -- the year 726. He died on the island of Mytilene, while returning to Crete from Constantinople, where he had been on churchly business. His relics were transferred to Constantinople. In the year 1350 the pious Russian pilgrim Stephen Novgorodets saw the relics at the Constantinople monastery named for St Andrew of Crete.

# ST. ANDREW COMMUNITY NEWS...

Look who celebrated 60 years of marriage....!!!!



Congratulations to John and Jean Blair who recently celebrated 60 years of marriage.

Shown here, John and Jean receiving a blessing on this momentous occasion on November 20, 2016.

May God grant them many, many years of health and happiness.

New Church School Superintendent appointed at St. Andrew....



On Sunday, November 20, 2016, Fernando and Thena Pla officially retired as St. Andrew's Church School Superintendents and passed on the baton to our new Superintendent, Jonathan Brubaker.

Our sincere thanks to Fernando and Thena for a job well done.

Jonathan Brubaker, the husband of Jana Brubaker, and the father of Anastasia and Zachary Brubaker, lives with his family in Beaumont, California. Jonathan and his family joined the Orthodox church in 2009 and attended St. George Greek Orthodox church in Palm Desert. While attending St. George, Jonathan and Jana taught Sunday School under the direction of Jim

Christopolous. Jonathan and his family began attending St. Andrew in 2013 and not too long after started teaching Sunday School to the fifth and sixth graders.

Jonathan currently teaches middle school English at Mountain View Middle School in Beaumont, California. Jonathan has been teaching for the past eighteen years: eight years at the elementary level and ten years at the middle school level. In 2014 he was honored by the California League of Middle Schools as the State Educator of the Year. Jonathan has a deep interest in education, including religious education. He has a passion for seeing kids not only experience the liturgy but also learn about their Orthodox faith in order that they may grow up to be devout and active members of the Orthodox church.

## ST. ANDREW COMMUNITY NEWS...Continued

On Saturday, December 10, 2016, Clergy, parishioners and guests gathered to honor our parish's patron saint, St. Andrew the first called, with an elegant banquet at our fellowship hall (actual feast celebrated November 30). Many thanks to the organizers, chefs, servers and everyone who gave of his or her time to make this event a great success. With 160 attendees, close to \$17 K was raised in one evening! A delicious dinner, a Christmas Tree and Wreath Raffle, as well as a Silent and Live auction, and Advent Bake Sale contributed to the amount raised at this Banquet.



Our keynote speaker was one of our own diocesan clergy, Fr. Calinic Berger, assistant pastor of St. Nicholas Cathedral in Los Angeles. The topic was *"The Great Angel, the One God, and the Virgin: Scriptural and Patristic Contours of the Incarnation"*.

As difficult to understand as this may sound, Fr. Calinic explained it in very clear way and we were all enriched by his teaching.

### Many years to our amazing St. Andrew Choir!!!

The second Sunday in December is Choir and Chanter appreciation Sunday in our Antiochian Archdiocese. On Sunday, December 11, 2016 we did just that at St. Andrew. Fr. Josiah blessed them and we honored all of them by thanking them and singing many years to them. A special icon of St. Mary of Egypt was presented to our main choir director, Teri Stevens.



God grant our directors, chanters and choir members many years. We love you and appreciate you.

## New babies born to St. Andrew parishioners. Welcome to the World!

May God grant our new babies, their parents and families, many years!

Congratulation to John Casey and Stephanie Shannon on the birth of their daughter Katerina on November 21, 2016. Katerina made her debut into the world at 7lbs. 6ozs. & 19" long.



On November 8, 2016, Joseph and Lillian Thornburg welcomed their baby girl Elizabeth Seraphima weighing in at 6lbs. 14ozs. & 19" long. Congratulations to the parents, godparents, David & Elena Winn, and all the family.



## Fr. Joseph and Dn. Elie Celebrate 20 years anniversary of their ordination...

On December 18, Fr. Joseph Corrigan and Dn. Elie Khoury were honored for 20 years of service. Fr. Joseph for 20 years of service as a priest, and Dn. Elie for 20 years of service as a deacon. Fr. Josiah presented them with black jackets embroidered with the St. Andrew logo. Their wives Kh. Robin and Dnsa. Cindy, were also honored for their service and Kh. Catherine presented them with bouquets of flowers.



May God grant Fr. Joseph, Dn. Elie, Kh. Robin and Dnsa. Cindy many years.



Also on December 18, Fr. Josiah was honored on his patron feast day. The Myrrbearers of St. Andrew presented him with a gift certificate for books from the bookstore of his choice. God grant you many years Fr. Josiah.



December 18 was a busy day. It was our annual pledge Sunday. Parish Council Treasurer Christopher Kassaseya collected the pledge cards and brought them up to the Solea for Fr. Josiah to bless them.

## ATTENDING CHURCH: BY SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM – Part 2

### Attention and prayer

As long as we are in the church let our conduct be proper, as befits a person who is before God. Let us not occupy ourselves with purposeless conversations, but let us stand with fear and dread, with attention and eagerness, with our gaze turned to the ground and our soul elevated to Heaven.

Many come to church mechanically repeating psalms and prayers, and leave without knowing what they have said. The lips move but the ears don't hear. You are not hearing your prayer, and you want God to hear it? I knelt, you say. But your mind was flying far away. Your body was in church and your soul outside. The mouth was saying the prayer and the mind was counting interest, contracts, exchanges, fields, estates, meetings with friends. All these things happen because the devil is wicked. He knows that at the time of prayer we gain many things; for this reason he attacks then with greater violence. At other times we might be lying in bed, not thinking of anything, and he leaves us alone. We come to church to pray, however, and the devil puts a bunch of passionate thoughts into us so that we might not benefit at all.

Truly, if God asks you to account for the indifference or the impiety you show in worship services, what will you do? There, at the time He is speaking to you, instead of praying you have started a conversation with your neighbor about unbeneficial things. Even if God overlooks all our other sins, this one alone would suffice for us to be deprived of salvation. Don't consider it a small transgression. To understand its graveness, think of what happens among people when they converse. Let's suppose that you are discussing something with an official person or with your bosom buddy, and while he is speaking to you, you turn your head indifferently and begin talking to someone else. Won't the other person be insulted by your impropriety? Won't he get angry? Won't he seek an explanation from you?

O woe! You are in the Divine Liturgy, and while the Royal Table is prepared, while the Lamb of God is sacrificed for your sake, while the priest is struggling for your salvation, you are indifferent. At the time when the six-winged Seraphim cover their faces from awe and all the heavenly powers together with the priest beseech God for you, at the moment the fire of the Holy Spirit descends from Heaven and the blood of Christ is

shed from His immaculate side in the holy Chalice, at this moment, I wonder, doesn't your conscience censure you for your lack of attention? Think, O my man, before Whom you are standing at the time of the dreadful mystagogy [divine service], and together with whom—the Cherubim, the Seraphim, and all the heavenly powers. Consider together with whom you are chanting and praying. This should suffice for you to come to your senses, when you recall that, while you have a material body, you are granted to hymn the Lord of creation together with the bodiless angels.

So don't partake in that sacred hymnody with indifference. Don't have your mind on earthly thoughts. Chase away every earthly thought and ascend mentally to Heaven, near to the throne of God. Fly there together with the Seraphim, flutter with them, chant the thrice-holy hymn to the All-holy Trinity.

### Divine Communion

And when the moment of divine Communion comes and you are about to approach the Holy Altar Table, believe unshakably that Christ, the King of all, is present there. When you see your priest offering the Lord's Body and Blood, don't think that the priest is doing this, but believe that the hand stretching out is Christ's. He Who brightened with His presence the

table of the Mystical Supper now also adorns the Altar Table of the Divine Liturgy. He is truly present there and examines each one's disposition. He observes who is approaching with piety befitting the holy Mystery and who with a wicked conscience, with filthy and impure thoughts, or with defiled actions. So you also, consider which fault of yours you have corrected, which virtue you have achieved, which sin you have quenched with confession, in what you have become better. If your conscience informs you that you have strived enough to close the wounds of your soul, if you did something more than fasting, then, with the fear of God, commune. Otherwise, remain far from the immaculate Mysteries. When you are cleansed of all your sins, then approach. So approach divine Communion with fear and dread, with a pure conscience, having fasted and prayed, quietly, without trampling or pushing your neighbors, because this comprises the greatest craziness and the worst scorning of the divine Mysteries.

Tell me, O man, why are you making noise? Why are you rushing? Are you pressured by all the things you have to do? I wonder, does the thought that you have



jobs to do pass through you at the time you are going to commune? Or maybe do you have the feeling that you are on earth? Do you think that you are together with people and not with the choirs of the angels? Something like this is a sign of a stone heart...

### **And when do we commune?**

There also is another matter: many commune once a year, others twice, others more often. Which of them are we to commend? None of them, but only those who approach the holy Chalice with a pure heart, with a blameless life. Let them commune always. The others, the unrepentant sinners, let them stay far from the immaculate Mysteries, because otherwise they prepare judgment and condemnation for themselves. The holy Apostle says, “Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord...causing his condemnation” (1 Cor. 11:27). In other words, he will be punished as strictly as the crucifiers of Christ, since they became guilty of a sin before His body.

Many believers have reached such a point of scorning the holy Mysteries that, while they are full of innumerable evils and don’t correct themselves at all, they commune at the feasts unprepared, not knowing that a presupposition of divine Communion is not the feast itself, but, as we said, the pure conscience. Just as one who doesn’t feel any evil in his conscience ought to daily approach divine Communion, so also one who is burdened with sins and doesn’t repent should not commune even at the feast. For this reason also I ask all of you not to approach the divine Mysteries unprepared just because the feast demands it. Rather, if at some point you decide to take part in the Divine Liturgy and to commune, cleanse yourself well for many days before with repentance, prayer, and charity, striving for spiritual things.

### **Staying till the dismissal**

So, you came to church and were granted to meet Christ? Don’t leave if the service hasn’t finished. If you leave before the dismissal, you are guilty as much as a fugitive. When you go to the theater, you don’t leave if the show hasn’t finished. You enter church, the Lord’s home, and do you turn your back on the immaculate Mysteries? At least fear Him Who said: “Whoever scorns God, will be scorned by Him” (See Proverbs 13:13).

What are you doing, O man? While Christ is present, His angels stand by, and your brethren are still communing, you abandon them and leave? Christ offers you His holy Flesh, and you won’t wait a bit, to thank Him at least in words? When you sit at a supper

you don’t dare leave the moment you have been filled, while your friends are still sitting at the table. And now when the dreadful Mysteries of Christ are being performed, you drop everything in the middle and leave?

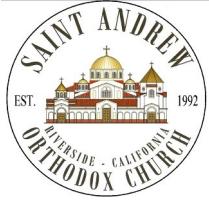
Do you want me to tell you whose work those who leave before the Divine Liturgy finishes—and thus don’t partake in the last thanksgiving prayers—are doing? Probably what I’m going to say will be grave, but I must say it. When Judas took part in the Mystical Supper of Christ, while everyone was sitting at the table, he got up before the others and left. So those people imitate that Judas...If he had not left then, he would not have become a betrayer, he would not have perished. If he hadn’t separated himself from the flock, the wolf would not have found him alone, to devour him.

### **After attending church**

Let us depart from the Divine Liturgy like lions who are producing fire, having become fearsome even to the devil, because the holy Blood of the Lord that we commune waters our souls and gives us great strength. When we commune of it worthily, it chases the demons far away and brings the angels and the Lord of the angels near us. This Blood is the salvation of our souls; with this the soul is washed, with this it is adorned. This Blood makes our minds brighter than fire; this makes our souls brighter than gold.

So draw our brethren to church. Exhort the deceived. Counsel them not only with words, but also with works. Even if you don’t say anything, but merely come out of the worship service showing to those who were absent—with your appearance, with your gaze and your voice, by the way you walk, and with all your chastity—the gain you procured from church, this is enough for exhortation and counsel, because thus it is that we should come out of church, as if from sacred sanctuaries, as if we were descending from Heaven itself. Teach whoever doesn’t attend church that you chanted with the Seraphim, that you belong to the heavenly lifestyle, that you met with Christ and spoke with Him. If we live the Divine Liturgy thus, we will not have to say anything to those who were absent. But seeing our benefit, they will feel their own harm and will quickly run to church to enjoy the same goods, with the grace and philanthropy of our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, belongs eternal glory. Amen.

*Translated by Fr. Nicholas Palis from a pamphlet “Voice of the Fathers” No. 30, Translated from the original Hellenistic Greek of Saint John Chrysostom into Modern Greek by the Sacred Paracletos Monastery, Oropos, Attica, 2003; Edited by Irene Maginas.*



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