

**The Orthodox Parish
of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross,
Lancaster**

The Stavronian

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*Ἐθρονος Χριστός Ζωοδότης.
(Φ. Κόντογλου, 1962).*

*The Parish of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross,
belongs to the Antiochian Orthodox Deanery of the United Kingdom and Ireland,
which is part of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of Europe.*

Our Metropolitan is His Eminence Archbishop John.

The Patriarchate of Antioch is third senior of the Orthodox Churches.

The Patriarch is His Beatitude Ignatius IV.

***The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch
(Acts 11:26)***

PARABLE OF THE SOWER, ST LUKE 8:5-15

Our Lord had much to say in the Gospels about hearing, he says: "He who has ears to hear let him hear!" God in His wisdom has given us two ears but only one mouth. Ears are for hearing and opening and are not made to close, but our mouth is! Jesus spoke these words about hearing in the context of the Parable of the Sower who went out to sow. The seed is the word of God, that which is sown in the good soil of our minds and hearts bears fruit one hundredfold. But not all soil is receptive, some people do not listen to the word of God they are not attentive, they are distracted by the world and cannot sustain that attention. We hear today in our schools which are invaded by so much information technology that the attention span of pupils is far more limited than in former years, information is not the same as knowledge and wisdom - how much more important is the knowledge of God which, sifted through experience, brings wisdom. *"If you love to listen, then you will gain knowledge and if you incline your ear you will become wise."* Sirach 6:33 The information highway has a broad band but the wisdom of God demands the narrow path - that is, focussed attention on the Word of God.

Matthew 7:13, *"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. 14 But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it"*.

"My sheep hear my voice" said Jesus *"And I know them and they follow me"* The life of God stirs within us and faith itself is born at the sound of His voice. *"Faith comes from what is heard"* writes St Paul in Romans 10:17 *"and what is heard comes by preaching Christ."*

Metropolitan Anthony Bloom wrote: *"hearing means bowing our heads in humility which is capable of accepting what the other person is sowing on the ground of our minds and heart. This is the true meaning of humility from the Latin humus meaning soil - like the rich silent creative earth we should offer ourselves the Other receiving His word in the fertile soil of our minds and hearts."*

In the early Church there was a custom of the opening the ears of the Catechumens. Every Saturday according to St John Chrysostom the catechumens must all assemble for the rite of the Opening of the ears. *"By the grace of this sign your spiritual ears will become receptive to the word of God, you will understand the mysteries which are about to take place and become sensitive to the fragrance of the Spirit."* Still today we anoint (seal) the ears at the rite of Chrismation.

Of course there are none so deaf as those who will not hear. I remember when I was an Anglican curate being assigned as chaplain to the deaf community. One of my tasks was to finesse the movement of the deaf community into their new community centre through discussions with local government. At one meeting this official from the council was laying down the law and explaining through a sign interpreter what the health and safety rules demanded in the new community centre. One such was the installation of a fire alarm. Polite smiles and a ripple of laughter from the assembly ensued but when I pointed out that the deaf would not be able to hear this fire alarm he resorted to bureaucratic nonsense *"but the law says we must install an alarm."* Such profound deafness is born of the refusal to listen.

Later when I was a country cleric one of the joys was to see how the sheep dogs rounded up the sheep in the fields. They

would listen twice. When the dog heard his master's voice or whistle he would stop, prick up his ears, stop and wait with absolute focus for the instruction. The moment the sheepdog hears and understands he dashes off with enthusiasm and eagerness to do His Master's will. If only we had such ability to listen twice it would lead to such joyful obedience.

The greatest compliment we can give to another person is to listen to him or her - it shows that we care, it shows our love. There is a lovely photo of Fr. Michael Harper listening with rapt sensitivity to someone speaking to him which illustrates the need to place the other person at the centre of attention.

On those trips to the Doctor with our aches and pains the doctor asks "Where does it hurt, can you describe the symptoms?" And if he or she is a good doctor they will listen carefully - their diagnosis depends upon how they listen to you. When someone is hurting emotionally or spiritually it is sometimes better to open the ears and close the mouth. Listening is a great act of love because it is what God does when we speak to Him.

The Universe has ears - not those intercepted electronic eavesdroppings and monitored mobile calls but the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe who hears the voice of His children. "Can He who made the ears not hear?"

In Ezekiel 12:2, "Son of man, you are living among a rebellious people. They have eyes to see but do not see and ears to hear but do not hear, for they are a rebellious people."

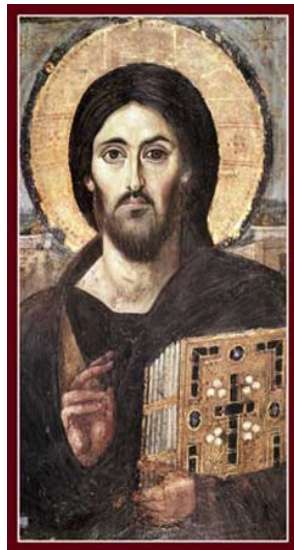
There will be those that are choked by the cares of the world and those whose initial interest in God is short lived but there will be those within whom the seed and word of God will grow and bear fruit one hundredfold. It is not for us to judge to whom we shall or shall not speak or to judge who will or who will not listen. It is as St. Paul says for us to preach Christ.

To listen means to be alert, quiet, attentive and open to God as He speaks to us in every situation and circumstance of life; in the beauty of His creation, in the opportunities he gives to us in daily encounters, in our prayers, in the pain of life, in the comfort that others offer, in their call for help.

In the Liturgy as in life we stand as servants waiting on God. I wait, watch and listen for Him to tell me where I should be in His plan for my life. I listen so that I may be a carer and a healer in God's hospital for souls and that having heard I may be a bearer of His divine love.

Isaiah 30:21 , *Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it."* May He who is the Way the Truth and the Life speak to you for your salvation, for without the Way there is no going, without the Truth there is no knowing without the Life there is no living. May the Word of God find rich soil in the chambers of your heart so that you may bear much fruit.

JAH



THE HOME COMING

John 14:2, *In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.*

Hear the prayers of your servants
Who from our tested faith,
Hearts grief and pity, brave
These sweet words of hope
Which cry for mercy o'er the earth filled grave.
We pray and say:
Go home, my dearest one, go home.

It's not the place but the way we live
Δεν είναι ο τόπος αλλά ο τρόπος που ζούμε
That is our home.
το σπίτι μας

It's not what we own but what we give
Δεν είναι το τι έχουμε, αλλά αυτό που δίνουμε,
That shares His home
που μοιράζεται τον οίκο Του

May Christ's balm our memories heal
His new life promise seal
As following in the way
We rest awaiting change.
Until clothed on that sudden judgement day
We hear Christ say:
"Come home, my dearest one, come home."

Faith is to believe what you do not see;
the reward of this faith is to see what you believe.

Saint Augustine

JAH, To the Glory of God, 14.10.2010



CHURCH FATHERS on-line

For those who may be interested, the following site offers a very handy electronic format of the 37 Volume Ante-Nicene, Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers. There is also a great section on other fathers not contained in the 37 Volumes under the heading. The site is to be found at: <http://www.ccel.org/fathers.html>

You can also find additional texts on the early Church Fathers edited by Roger Pearse at: [more fathers](#)

In Christ ,
Fr Irenaeus

CONFERENCE IN MEMORY OF METROPOLITAN ANTHONY OF SOUROZH

A one day conference will be held in London on Saturday November 27, 2010, dedicated to Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh. The Conference is being organised by the Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh Foundation and will be the 3rd Western European Conference to be held in his memory. For more information please click [here](#).

FRIENDS OF MT. ATHOS

If you are interested in Mount Athos, the Holy Mountain and Garden of Panagia, you may find information about both Mt. Athos itself and ways to participate in the activities of the Friends of Mount Athos in their mission of support for the Holy Community of Mount Athos:

<http://www.athosfriends.org>

OLD STAVRONIAN CORNER

Thank you so much to Sophocles and Angeliki Ioulianou from Cyprus for the 12 bottles of Communion wine (Aghia Nektaria) which were sent to us by the post office. It is so kind of you to remember us and support us through your gifts and prayers.

Our many thanks also to Pavel Zlobin and the Batiushka of Cherbakul Parish in Russia for the Prospora seals which they have sent for our community. We are grateful for this kind offer and we hope and pray that you keep strong in spirit and faith. Maria Anastasiou one of our Old Stavronians studying in London will collect and bring them to Lancaster.

Steven Ullstrom has been recently in contact with fr. Jonathan. He is well and sends his greetings from Canada where he is finishing his undergraduate studies this year.

Also Maria Anastasiou sends her love and greetings from London as her new academic year just started.

Andrei, Alla and Masha Ganshyn send their best wishes to everybody in the community. Masha had her fourth birthday at the beginning of October which was celebrated by the family and friends at the Science Centre in Ithaca, USA. Inserted below are photos from the birthday party, Ithaca countryside and Alla's lovely letter.



A brief encounter

Last Monday we had a very nice unusual meeting. Me and Masha were walking in the grounds of a Retirement Residence, it is very nice area for public walking. Here there is spectacular nature, nice forest, grass fields, and a lovely stream with wooden bridges. There are many wooden benches and wooden arbours. There are many animals also. Masha and I were

sitting in the nice wooden arbour and were enjoying the wonderful views of the colourful leaves. I noticed an elder American couple approaching us. I said "hello" they answered, and the old man came to the arbour, he sat on the bench to take some rest, but the elderly woman went for a stroll. The old man who we learned was 93 years of age spoke with us about how nice Fall (Autumn) was, he didn't hear very well. When I told him we are speaking Russian, he answered in Russian "hello" and "I speak Russian" without an accent. This set me wondering, because the Russian word "hello" is very difficult to say, very often American young people can't even repeat it. The old lady returned from her walk to invite her husband to walk also, but he said he likes to sit. She decided to join us and we had a very warm conversation. Florence explained to me that her husband studied Russian Economics at University, so he could speak in Russian. Although he didn't speak with Russian people, they had a vocation in Russia in 1970s. He was smiling during our conversation, he spoke gentle words to Masha, I think it made him feel happy. But I felt respect for the old man, not only for his age, but for his kind personality. At the end of our conversation he shook my hand. On the next day we decided to make something pleasant for the people, we decided to present small decorated pumpkins (Masha suggested two pumpkins, because they were two). I loved this idea. However, when we came there, the elder couple didn't come, maybe because it was a different time, maybe because it was a cold day. But we will try to meet them again.

Father Jonathan, please say best regards to all our Lancaster Orthodox community.

Alla, Andrei and Masha

RECIPE: SEASONAL APPLE AND PUMPKIN SPREAD; PUMPKIN-APPLE BUTTER

½ cup golden raisins
¾ cup apple juice
2 cups pureed pumpkin or other winter squash (cook, cool, peel, mash, measure 2 cups)
1 ½ tsp. cinnamon
½ tsp. ground ginger
¾ tsp. nutmeg
¼ tsp. ground cloves
½ cup grated apple
¼ cup honey (or other liquid sweetener such as maple syrup or agave nectar)
¼ cup raw sugar
pinch salt (optional)

Put the raisins in a medium-sized saucepan, and pour the apple juice over them. Heat on low until raisins plump up, adding water if they get dry. When they are plump, puree the raisins in the juice. (You may need to add a little water to do this; use a hand blender and blend the pumpkin along with the raisins.)

Return the pureed raisins to the pan and add all remaining ingredients. Cook over low heat, stirring occasionally, for about an hour. Nice on your toast.

pieceofcake

recipe adapted from <http://blog.fatfreevegan.com/>

MAJOR CELEBRATIONS THIS MONTH

1st Nov: **Wonderworkers and Unmercenary Sts Cosmas and Damian**

8th Nov: **Synaxis of the Archangel Michael & Gabriel & the Other Bodiless Powers**

9th Nov: St Nektarios, Metropolitan of Pentapolis

10th Nov: St Arsenius of Cappadocia

13th Nov: St. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople

14th Nov: St. Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica

16th Nov: Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew

17th Nov: St. Hilda, Abbess of Whitby

21st Nov: The Entry of the Most-Holy Theotokos into the Temple

23rd Nov: St. Alexander Nevsky

25th Nov: Great Martyr Catherine of Alexandria

30th Nov: Holy Apostle Andrew the First-called

For the lives of Saints please visit the Calendar of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America:

www.calendar.goarch.org

Services during November

Sat. 6 th	10.00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C
Sat. 13 th	10.00 am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sat. 20 th	10.00 am	Hours and Typica in R.C.
Sun. 28 th	10.00 am	Holy Liturgy in Q.R. followed by Parish lunch

“We have been called to become unknown heroes,
visible only to the unsleeping eye of God”

- Elder Ephraim -



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