

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)*

TEN LEPERS CLEANSED; ONE SAYS THANK YOU!

Luke 17; 11 Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. 12 Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. 13 And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" 14 So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. 15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, 16 and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. 17 So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? 18 Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" 19 And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

In my teaching career I have found that certain teachers have left their mark for good on the pupils that they have taught. Henry Brooks Adams the Victorian American educationalist once said "A teacher affects eternity for he never knows where his influence stops." Some teachers have left an indelible impression in more ways than one. I can think of an English teacher when I first started teaching in Devon; you could always tell who had been taught by him in the first year of Grammar School because in addition to English grammar, he taught them how to write. Throughout the school his pupils took a pride in their writing, having inherited the gift of beautiful copper plate hand writing. How sad it is that remedial English classes have to be given to those entering some of our Universities today- it is a commentary on how little value, time and care we give to vocabulary, grammar

and syntax and perhaps what a disproportionate amount of time we invest in other forms of instant messaging!

The other teacher I have in mind was a boarding master at my present school who retired a few years ago. One could tell who had been under his tutelage because his pupils would always greet you with "Good morning sir!" if they passed you in the street. In class they would **always** say "please" and "thank you." "If you have enjoyed a lesson say thank you very much for the lesson, sir"- and they did and some from his instruction in the art of manners still do!

We are creatures that need to be constantly reminded of eternal truths rather than espouse new myths. Good manners cost nothing. The motto of Winchester School is "*Manners maketh the man!*"



Rila Monastery, Bulgaria*

In the Gospel lesson today we see how only one of the Ten Lepers who had been healed by Jesus bothered to return to Jesus to say "Thank you Lord!" As Christians first and foremost we are called to be Eucharistic creatures, giving thanks to God for all things as St John Chrysostom reminds us, echoing St Paul's injunction in 1 Thessalonians 5:18 to "give thanks in all circumstances". However, as sinful humans we often take for granted the blessings that God gives to us, not only do we fail to recognise these

gifts, we try to justify our sins by making excuses.

Why didn't the other nine lepers return to glorify Christ and thank him? One can imagine their excuses if they had been called upon to account for their behaviour. I will leave you to imagine what they were because we are all guilty of wallowing in self pity and calling upon God when it suits us, when we need Him and neglecting to thank Him. How often do we thank God for His blessings? When I was a pupil I was taught the **ACTS** of praying: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication - the four elements of prayer. A vital aspect of prayer is thanksgiving, yet we tend to ask and forget to say thank you when God answers our prayer.

We have suffered a very cold winter this December. In Lancaster one night it was -14°C. There is a story that a certain priest began his sermon in the depths of one such winter when the heating had failed in the Church with the words "O Lord, we thank you that every Sunday morning is not like this one." St John Chrysostom had joys and sorrows. At Antioch he was popular and his sermons gained him the name "Golden mouth" but at Constantinople he was driven into exile. When some soldiers dragged him through the winter snows and he was about to die, he said "Glory to God for all things" because he knew that all things work together for good to those that love Him."

The Apostle St Paul could thank God for the "thorn in his side." Solzhenitsyn could thank God for his years in the Siberian labour camps of the USSR because it was in prison that he found God. "*Bless you prison for having been in my life*" he writes.

It is interesting to note that in the account the Ten Lepers in accordance with the Law of Leviticus they stand some way off at the required distance for the

"unclean" and say "Jesus, Lord have mercy on us" so similar to the Jesus prayer that we say. Also in accordance with the Law of Moses, Jesus instructs them to go and show themselves to the Priests. Before they reached the priests they were healed- notice how Jesus' word is an instruction "Go!" Our faith must be accompanied by action!

Perhaps in addition to the Jesus Prayer "Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on me" we need to say "Lord Jesus Christ I glorify you and I thank you for your mercy."

There is a lovely story from Rabbinic Tradition. A man went to a Rabbi to complain "I have a large family, life is so overcrowded and unbearable living in such a small room. What can I do? "Go and bring your goat into the room with you." The man could not believe his ears but the Rabbi insisted." Do as I say, bring your goat into the room with you and return to me in a week." A week later this man returned to the Rabbi looking far worse and more harassed than before. "I cannot stand it" he said "the goat is filthy and the room smells terribly." The Rabbi told him to go home and take the goat out of the room and to return again in a week. The man returned a week later beaming with joy. "Life is beautiful" he said to the Rabbi - "we are so happy now that there is no goat - thank you Rabbi."

Faith is not just a matter of trusting in God's mercy it also involves giving thanks to God!

We are so blessed that God the Father has given His blessing for us to be called into His Church, to receive His Son in the Eucharist and to receive His All Holy Spirit. Let the Liturgy of the Eucharist be a constant well spring of life-giving thankfulness in our hearts so that at every moment we can give glory to the Father who made us, to the Son who redeemed us and to the Holy Spirit who

sanctifies us now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen



Bachkovo, Bulgaria*

THE LAND OF SHADOWS

Theme: Suffering

Based on the journey of C.S. Lewis to faith (part 3)

Mark 10:21 Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack: Go **your** way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, **take** up the cross, and follow Me.”

Amma Syncletica said, “In the beginning there are a great many battles and a good deal of suffering for those who are advancing towards God and, afterwards, ineffable joy. It is like those who wish to light a fire. At first they are choked with smoke and cry, until they obtain what

they seek. As it is written, 'Our God is a consuming fire' (Hebrews 12:24); so we also must kindle the divine fire in ourselves through tears and hard work”.

Friendship is such a precious thing
Requiring no golden ring
No pageant here for learning
No present time for turning
But we face sad suffering
In Shadowland.

*My old heart breaks
This large frame shakes
No small Voice
Only Earthquakes
In Shadowland*

The love of her my late dear wife
Was dearer than my own half life
We all meet with painful strife
Sharper than the surgeon's knife
Such chiselled grief is rife
In Shadowland.

From won't and can't to will and can
From faltering steps I ran
To a cosmic master plan
Half spirit half human.
My sojourn just began
In Shadowland.

JAH, July 2007

THE PROMISE



A RATIONALE OF SLEEP

1. This life of our bodies, material and subject to flux, always advancing by way of motion, finds the power of its being in this, that it never rests from its motion: and as some river, flowing on by its own impulse, keeps the channel in which it runs well filled, yet is not seen in the same water always at the same place, but part of it glides away while part comes flowing on, so, too, the material element of our life here suffers change in the continuity of its succession of opposites by way of motion and flux, so that it never can desist from change, but in its inability to rest keeps up unceasingly its motion alternating by like ways : and if it should ever cease moving it will assuredly have cessation also of its being.

2. For instance, emptying succeeds fullness, and on the other hand after emptiness comes in turn a process of filling: sleep relaxes the strain of waking, and, again, awakening braces up what had become slack: and neither of these abides continually, but both give way, each at the other's coming; nature thus by their interchange so renewing herself as, while partaking of each in turn, to pass from the one to the other without break. For that the living creature should always be exerting itself in its operations produces a certain rupture and severance of the overstrained part; and continual quiescence of the body brings about a certain dissolution and laxity in its frame: but to be in touch with each of these at the proper times in a moderate degree is a staying-power of nature, which, by continual transference to the opposed states, gives herself in each of them rest from the other. Thus she finds the body on the strain through wakefulness, and devises relaxation for the strain by means of sleep, giving the perceptive faculties rest

for the time from their operations, loosing them like horses from the chariots after the race.

St. Gregory of Nyssa

For the full article please click [here](#).

OLD STAVRONIAN CORNER

We would like to thank Sophocles, Angeliki and little Panagiotis Ioulianou for their thoughts and prayers and for their steadfast loyalty to us in supplying the needs of the faithful. We are truly grateful for their generosity and kindness. Nineteen out of the twenty bottles of Communion Wine arrived safely - the other broke in transit but will be a double blessing to the others!! Thank you also for the generous donation to the Church. I am always reminded with tears how the Apostle St Paul on his missionary journeys from Antioch made provision for the saints in Jerusalem from the riches of the diasporan gentile Churches (Acts, 24:17)

As one of our original congregation and Old Stavronians from 1995 it is especially lovely to hear from Tatiani Ratzikou and to know that she continues to keep us in her thoughts and prayers. We thank her so much for the book on St Arsenios the Cappadocian and her best wishes for the New Year. We are sure that our Parishioners will be able to benefit from these jewels of wisdom.

We also extend our thanks to the family of Anastasios Papadopoulos for the large Candles for the Church.



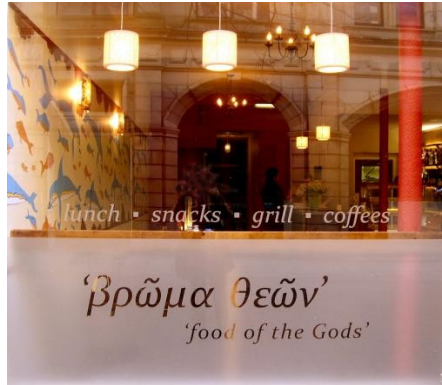
PARISH NEWS

It is with great joy that we have heard of the engagement and forthcoming marriage in July of Maria Anastasiou (Old Stavronian) to Ionut Uliniuc who was *Psaltis* for some of our Great week services last Pascha. We extend our warmest prayers and congratulations.

Our Community extend our warmest thanks for the kind gifts that the father of Laoura Petrou has sent us from the Holy Mountain. May God give a blessing to your family!

Paulos and Stamatia Christakos have just opened a Greek restaurant in the heart of Lancaster! Their range of food is quite big spanning from Greek coffee and fresh traditional sweets to mezethes and main courses for lunch and dinner. Stamatia cooks with fellow Greeks Georgina and Alekos and she also, along with local artist Georgina, have hand painted the murals. They use quality ingredients to cook like *Kalamata* olive oil, or locally-sourced quality produce, like the meat. And the prices are incredibly reasonable. Pavlos and Stamatia are open Tue-Sat 11am-11pm, and Sun 3pm-10pm and the “Trojan Horse” is on 8 New Street (behind the Museum, where All Fired Up cafe used to be). Their website and photos of the taverna are below:

<http://www.thetrojanhorse.co.uk>



MAJOR CELEBRATIONS THIS MONTH

1st Feb: St Bridget of Kildare

2nd Feb: The Meeting of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the Temple

3rd Feb: St Nicholas, Archbishop & Enlightener of Japan

10th Feb: Hieromartyr Charalampus

13th Feb: Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee: [Triodion Begins Today](#)

18th Feb: St Colman

23rd Feb: St Polycarp the Holy Martyr & Bishop of Smyrna

24th Feb: First & Second Finding of the Venerable Head of John the Baptist

For the lives of Saints please visit the Calendar of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America: www.calendar.goarch.org

* The two sketches of monasteries in Bulgaria are taken from the collection of Maarten Ruijters on [Flickr](#).

Services during February*

Sat. 5 th	10:00am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sat. 12 th	10:00am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sat. 19 th	10:00am	Holy Liturgy in R.C.
Sun. 27 th	10:00am	Hours and Typica in Q.R. as fr. Jonathan will be in Cambridge for the "Friends of Mt Athos" Conference.

*Help setting up the church is greatly appreciated and starts from 9.15 a.m.

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

- Elder Ephraim -



For further information please contact:

Father Jonathan Hemmings
67 Sibsey Str., Fairfield, Lancaster, LA1 5DQ
Tel: +44 1524 840759, +44 1524 580600

Email: frjah@yahoo.co.uk

www.antiochian-orthodox.co.uk

