

# ✠ St. Gregory's Journal ✠

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*St. Gregory the Great Orthodox Church  
A Western Rite Congregation of the Antiochian Archdiocese  
stgregoryoc.org*

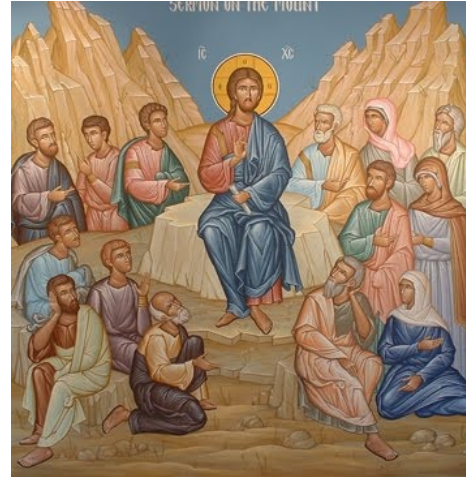
## *A Homily of St. Augustine of Hippo d. 430*

**B**lessed are the pure in spirit. Thus do the Beatitudes begin with humility, whereby the soul doth submit itself to God, and that through the gift of Holy Fear.

Thereafter the soul goeth on in blessedness to grasp things divine, such as are set forth in the Scriptures; wherefore the soul cometh to be meek as it is said: *Blessed are the meek*: and that by reason of the gift of Piety (or True Godliness, as it is also called). Then it beginneth to know what are the entanglements of this world, whereby we are held back in the customs of the world and in fleshly desires; and so in this third stage is the gift of Knowledge, whereby the loss of the highest good is mourned for, from knowing how the soul is fain to cleave to the lowest; and hence: *Blessed are those that mourn*.

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**N**ext, in the fourth state, is the gift of Ghostly Strength (or Might, or Fortitude, as it is variously called); for in this stage of blessedness there is much labor, and the soul must exert itself greatly, to wrench itself away from those things wherewith, by reason of their pestilential sweetness, it was entangled. Hence: *Blessed are they which do hunger and*

*thirst after righteousness*. To which end such Fortitude is very necessary, for what is retained with delight is not abandoned without pain.

**T**hen for all such as have shown Fortitude in this labor, at the fifth stage is the gift of Counsel, that is, perception as to how to escape from these entanglements. For unless one hath assistance in the matter, from some one higher, he cannot fit himself to get out of his so many miserable entanglements. And it is only just that he who would have assistance of another's strength should assist one weaker than himself. For which reason Counsel is indicated in the fifth stage, thus: *Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy*.

**T**he sixth benediction: *Blessed are the pure in heart*: showeth that at the sixth state there is purity which is the gift of Understanding, springing from a good conscience, obtained by all these good works, wherein the soul is able to contemplate the Highest Good, which can be discerned only by a mind pure and tranquil.

**L**astly, there is, as the seventh, the gift of Wisdom, that is, such a grace of contemplation of the Truth as doth completely

tranquelize the whole man, and give to him the likeness of God, thus bringing us to the conclusion: *Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.* The eighth, as it were, returneth to the beginning, because it showeth forth and commendeth what is complete and perfect. Therefore in the first and in the eighth is named the kingdom of heaven, thus: *Blessed are the poor in spirit: Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake -- for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

## *Progress Report*

Construction has really started at Roxbury! There were a lot of hurdles along the way, but now the progress is visible! We now have permits for both the inside and the outside work.

On the inside, contractors have been converting the lower room and garage into our new worship space. On the outside, we should see parking, grading, and drainage facilities start to take shape. Hopefully the paving will be done before the weather gets too cold and rainy.

If you come by the property over the next few weeks, you can see the changes for yourself. Vespers is at 6PM on Saturdays!

David Caldwell,  
Parish Council Chairman

## *St. Benignus of Ireland* *Feast Day ~ November 9*

When St. Patrick, the “Apostle to the Irish,” returned to that land where he had been held as a slave and had accepted

God’s challenge to convert its people to the Christian faith, he knew that he needed converts with particular skills who could help in this work. He was most fortunate in acquiring as a disciple the young Benin, or Benignus.

Through the preaching of St. Patrick, Benignus’ whole family were converted and baptized into the Church. His father, Sesenen, was an Irish chieftain and it is thought that the family belonged to the bardic order, so Benignus would have been taught the art of singing, story-telling and the recitation of history. With these abilities and his gentle personality, Benignus became the favorite student of St. Patrick.

Benignus also had complete faith in the Triune God and in his master’s ability to call upon the Name of God for protection and for winning over the hearts of the Irish people from their Pagan beliefs. His trust was so great that when the God of St. Patrick was “tested” against the god of the druids, Benignus allowed himself to be bound inside a building that was then set on fire. The burning building which the druid priests prayed over was destroyed by the fire, but the prayers of St. Patrick that God would extinguish the flames of the building in which Benignus was held were answered. *Who is so great a God as our God? Thou art the God that doest wonders and hast declared thy power among the peoples.* [Ps. 77:13a, 14]

Benignus’ abilities as a singer contributed greatly to the work of evangelizing the Irish people. Because of his beautiful singing of the Psalms, he became known as “Patrick’s psalm-singer” and he helped to establish musical practices in the newly-founded churches as he traveled around the country with Bishop Patrick. *O come, let us sing unto the Lord.* [Ps.95:1a].

As has been true of many Christian bishops (such as our patron, St. Gregory) in many times and places, St. Patrick had to assume a role in the organization of civil society. Benignus’ skills



were useful here as well. He was appointed secretary for the “Commission of Nine”, given the responsibility for compiling Irish laws - the Brehon Laws. These laws covered such things as property ownership, payment of fines, hereditary order, and compensation for crimes; the Church’s involvement in writing down this ancient code of law was to try to maintain congruity with Christian moral teachings. *Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart.* [Ps. 119:34]

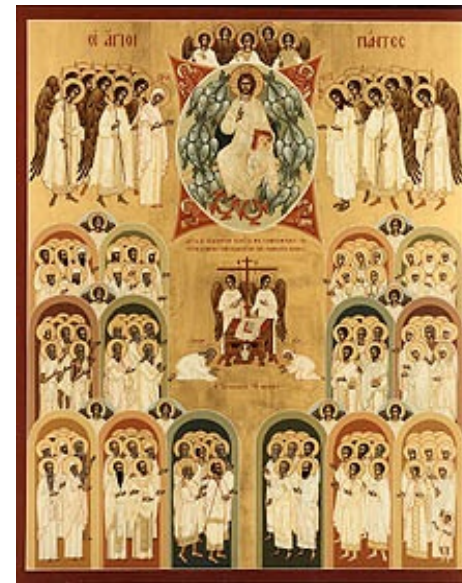
Eventually, Benignus became the assisting Bishop for the city of Armagh, St. Patrick’s see-city, and surrounding area. Here a school was founded for the training of local Irish men who would become clerics. St. Benignus, with his important intellectual, organizational, and musical skills, was made the head of this school. *O teach me true understanding and knowledge; for I have believed thy commandments.* [Ps. 119:66]

St. Benignus resigned his position in Armagh in 467 and may have died later that year or early the next. There are several divergent accounts of some of the events of St. Benignus’ life perhaps due to a confusion with another saint of the same name. Some versions say that he established monasteries in Kilbannon and in Cavan. The English chronicler, William of Malmesbury (11<sup>th</sup> century) says that toward the end of his life St. Benignus traveled to England and established a monastery near Glastonbury.

Whatever the actual facts of his death, it is certainly true that St. Benignus, the “Psalm-singer,” had devoted his life after conversion to Christianity to serving God and his Church faithfully. Holy Benignus, pray for us. *I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will praise my God while I have my being.* [Ps. 104:33]

Sources: *Irish Saints* by Peg Coghlan; *Saints of the British Isles* by Andrew Bond and Nicolas Mabin; Wikipedia article.

## Parish News



We will celebrate All Saints Day, which is November 1, on the Sunday within the Octave, November 6. As has been our custom, at Coffee Hour that day, instead of “Ask Abouna”, we will have a time of sharing the stories of the saints. Please come prepared to tell about your patron or a favorite saint. Costumes and/or “props” are welcomed!

We will observe All Souls Day on the Eve, November 1 with Vespers of the Departed at 7:15PM and a Requiem Mass at 7:30 followed by a pot-luck supper. Please give Fr. Nicholas the names of loved ones that you wish to have remembered at this Mass.

We have now completed the assembly of clean-up buckets for International Orthodox Christian Charities. This project

proved to be more difficult than the health kits we had assembled in the past, but they are now ready to be sent to flood-ravaged areas of our country. Thanks to all who participated in this project.

When we are finally able to be in our church permanently, there are several areas of parish life - “behind the scenes” work - for which more volunteers will be needed. Another bread maker would be helpful (to bake the antidoron loaf and priests’ and peoples’ hosts from a set recipe); someone to help with the care of altar linens (washing, some by hand, and ironing, tasks which could be done at the church or at home); someone to mark the Psalms in the Office books, set out candles and other ways of preparing the chapel for worship; and more volunteers to help with building and yard maintenance. Please consider how you may help with any of these volunteer opportunities.

On Sunday, November 27, we will have come full circle in the Western liturgical year and will begin another year with the season of Advent. During this time of fasting, we prepare our hearts again for the celebration of the Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

## *Praying for the Departed*

When a loved one departs this life, we offer prayers for the repose of his soul at designated times; prayers for the departed are included in every Mass; and we pray particularly for our departed loved ones on All Souls Day, November 2. From the very beginning, the Church established praying for the departed as an important part of our Christian life.

St. John of Kronstadt, writing in *My Life in Christ*, speaks of the meaning of our commemorations for the reposed:

What a close connection there is between the Church in heaven and the Church on earth! What love the Church has! Behold how She unceasingly remembers, calls upon in prayer and glorifies the Church in heaven for the great deeds accomplished on earth for God’s sake; She unceasingly prays for the Church on earth and intercedes for the departed, in the hope of their resurrection, of their life eternal and of their union with God and the saints. Her love is immense, great, divine! Let us enter into the spirit of this love of our Mother, the Orthodox Church, and let us be penetrated with the spirit of this love. Let us look upon all our brethren as our own members, upon ourselves and them as members of one body of the Church, and let us love them actively, as ourselves; then we ourselves shall be living members of the Church in heaven and she will be our active and speedy helper and intercessor.

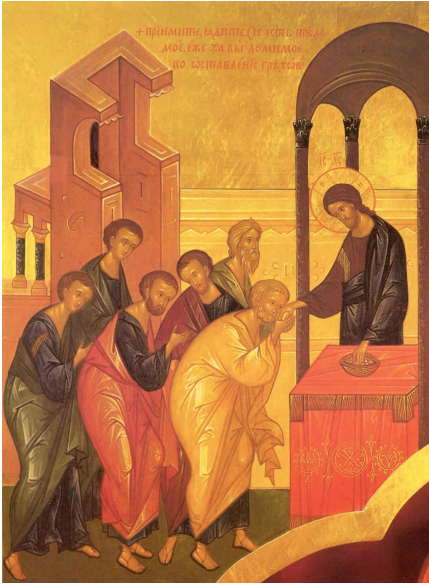
How do we maintain this connection with the spiritual world, with the heavenly Church? By calling upon them in prayer... How do we maintain this connection with the departed? By means of prayers for them...in God’s temple and also at home.

*Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.*

## *The Bread of Life*

by St. Nikolai of Ochrid

Who can give life, my brethren, save He who created it? Who can in truth be the Bread of life save our Creator? He created, He sustains, He feeds and He gives life. If wheat feeds the body, Christ feeds the soul. If our earthly body is sustained by



bread, our soul is fed and given life by Christ. If our soul is fed by some other food than Christ, it rots and dies. *Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto eternal life.* [John 6:27] So says the Lord by way of introduction.

**F**irst look into a man's hunger, then offer bread; indeed, first offer hunger and then bread, for men are confused with regard to hunger. They are hungry for something, but do not know for what. Being filled with earthly

bread, and even satiated, they still feel an insatiable hunger.

Although they see that the whole earth, and all the bread there is, cannot satisfy this mysterious hunger, they hasten for earthly food; they strive for the earth and the earth alone. However, the real hunger of men is hunger for heaven, for eternal life, for God.

**T**he Lord Jesus first underlines this hunger and then prepares a table for its satisfying. This table is He himself. *I am the Bread of life; he that cometh to Me shall never hunger.* He will be filled, made joyful, enlivened, coming to know both God and himself. Oh, my brethren, he will rise from the dead! Constant feeding on the bread that perishes, without immortal, divine food, kills the soul little by little and leaves it in the end completely dead. Of what? Of hunger. The body is of the earth, and is content with earthly food, but the soul is of the breath of the Fount of life Himself, and so seeks food and drink at its one Fount.

*O Lord Jesus, Thou Bread of eternal life, of life that is true and not subject to change, Thou most sweet Bread, nourish us with Thyself! To Thee be glory and praise for ever. Amen.*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>November 2016</h1>						<i>Sunday Services: Matins at 9AM, Sung Mass at 9:30AM</i>
		<b>1</b> All Saints Day  <i>Mass at 7:30pm B</i>	<b>2</b> All Souls Day	<b>3</b> of the Octave of All Saints; St. Silvia, Mother of St. Gregory, Ma, 592	<b>4</b> of the Octave of All Saints; Ss. Vitalis & Agricola, Mm, c. 304	<b>5</b> of the Octave of All Saints; St. Elizabeth, Ma, 1st C.  <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
<b>6</b> Sunday in the Octave of All Saints; comm. 20 <sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost; St. Leonard of Noblac, Ab, c. 559 <i>W</i>	<b>7</b> of the Octave of All Saints; St. Wilibrord of Echternach, BC, 739	<b>8</b> Octave Day of All Saints: Patriarchs & Prophets of the Old Law; Four Crowned Martyrs	<b>9</b> Dedication of the Basilica of St. Savior in Rome, 324; St. Benignus, BC, c. 468	<b>10</b> Ss. Tryphon, Respicus & Nympha Mm, c. 250	<b>11</b> St. Martin of Tours, BC, 397; St. Theodore the Studite, Ab, 826	<b>12</b> St. Martin I, PC, 655  <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
<b>13</b> 21 <sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pentecost; St. Britius of Tours, BC, 444  <i>G</i>	<b>14</b> St. Gregory Palamas, BCD, 1359	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> St. Gregory the Wonderworker, BC, c. 270; St. Gregory of Tours, BC, 594	<b>18</b> Dedication of Basilica of Ss. Peter & Paul in Rome 4 <sup>th</sup> c.	<b>19</b> St. Pontianus, PM, 235  <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
<b>20</b> 22 <sup>nd</sup> & Last Sunday after Pentecost; St. Edmund, KM, 870  <i>G</i>	<b>21</b> Presentation of the BVM; St. Gelasius, PC, 496; St. Columbanus, Ab, c.	<b>22</b> St. Cecilia, VM, c. 230	<b>23</b> St. Clement, PM, 96; St. Felicity of Rome, M, 165	<b>24</b> St. Chrysgonus of Aquileia, M., c. 304  <i>(Thanksgiving Day)</i>	<b>25</b> St. Katherine of Alexandria VM, c. 4th c.	<b>26</b> St. Peter of Alexandria, BM, 311  <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
<b>27</b> First Sunday in Advent  <i>V</i>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> St. Saturninus, M, 309	<b>30</b> St. Andrew the Apostle, 1st c.	<b>1</b> St. Eligius of Tournai, BC, 660	<b>2</b> St. Peter Chrysologus, BCD, c. 450; St. Bibiana of Rome, VM, 363	<b>3</b>  <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>

*Confessions are heard after Vespers, during the Psalms at Matins, and by appointment.*

*Coffee Hour follows Mass.  
Sunday School is during Coffee Hour.*