

# ✠ St. Gregory's Journal ✠

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*St. Gregory the Great Orthodox Church*  
*A Western Rite Congregation of the Antiochian Archdiocese*  
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*An excerpt from  
a sermon of  
St. Caesarius  
of Arles  
d. 542*

**W**hen the Gospel was read, beloved brethren, you heard the Lord mention two paths: the one terrible and to be feared, the other very desirable and to be followed. By the one, the just are lifted up into heaven after short labor, while on the other, lovers of

the world after brief pleasure are dragged into hell. *Enter by the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many there are who enter that way. How close the gate and narrow the way the leads to life! And few there are who find it.* [Matt. 7:13, 14]

**B**ehold, beloved brethren, God has placed in the sight of the whole human race what we should seek and what we should avoid, what we should desire and what flee, what to fear and what to love with our whole heart... Through his

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grace God has put it into the power of each one to choose and to stretch out his hand to whatever he wishes.

**C**hrist presides over the straight and narrow way, while the devil commands the wide and broad way. The former invited man to heaven, the latter moves him toward hell; the one raises him on high, the other presses him down into the depths. The devil shows a false sweetness, in order that he may attract man to true bitterness; Christ invites him to brief difficulty, in order to lead him to long blessedness. If we open only our bodily eyes, the wide and broad way deceives us, but if we listen with the eyes of our heart, the rough and difficult way makes us safe.

**T**herefore, let us admonish each other, dearly beloved, and continually encourage each other with true charity that we ought rather to choose the short and narrow way by which we may merit to arrive at the celestial expanse of paradise...

**W**hen through the sin of the first man we were all cast out of paradise into this world as into a valley of tears, we lost at the same time both the way and our true country. *We journeyed through impassable deserts, but the way of the Lord we knew not.* [Wis. 5:7] But the kind and merciful King of our true country, not only was eager to send His servants to us frequently, but He even deigned to come down Himself and to prepare the way by which we might return to our country. O man, since you were slow to seek the way, the Way itself has condescended to look for you, and because you were sluggish in coming in the way, the Way itself came to you. *Arise, and walk.* [Matt. 9:5]

Perhaps you may say: How should I run on the path of Christ? If you have both of your feet in good condition, you run happily. Now what are these two feet, except: *Thou shalt love the Lord*, [Matt. 22:37] and *Thou shalt love thy neighbor*. *On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets*. [Matt. 22:39, 40] If you love the Lord and do not love your neighbor, you have only one foot and cannot run; if you love your neighbor but do not love the Lord, you have remained lame and useless. Therefore, run on the way of Christ, or rather run through Christ, the Way, for He Himself is the Way.

But because you ought to run with humility if you want to arrive swiftly and happily, see that you run in Him, and through Him, and to Him who said: *Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart*. [Matt. 11:29] Do not despise poverty or the poor, since Christ deigned to be poor. Condescend to be humble where Christ was humble... Love the Lord and despise the world; long for heaven and fear eternal punishment. Reject transitory joy, in order that you may happily reach heaven; despise the devil and follow Christ who even in this world always deigns to guide you in your good actions and afterwards to happily lead you to your eternal country: to Him is honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

## *Saints Crispin & Crispinian, Martyrs* *Feast Day ~ October 25*

It is not unusual for a saint to be famous for something other than his holy life or his courageous martyrdom. St. Valentine, for instance, is noted in our secular world by the pagan Roman festival celebrating romantic love which falls around February 14, the date of the saint's martyrdom for refusing to renounce his faith in Christ.

The story of Saints Crispin and Crispinian, brothers (probably twins) who were martyred for their faith around the year 287,



is also famous in the public mind for something other than their martyrdom. The battle of Agincourt, which the vastly outnumbered English troops won over the French in the year 1415, was fought on the feast day of these two saints. William Shakespeare, in his play *Henry V*, memorializes the king's speech to inspire his

soldiers in which Henry tells them that forever after, when these saints were celebrated, so would the soldiers' courage be remembered. This speech was noted when other battles took place on the same day: the Battle of Balaclava in 1854 and several battles in the Second World War. Saints Crispin and Crispinian were also engaged in battle and this battle is the one which we all must fight: the battle between good and evil.

Roman by birth, the brothers were brought up as Christians, and they desired to be missionaries to help spread the faith. Although they were from the aristocracy, they decided to learn an occupation that would sustain them in their missionary endeavors and would also provide "cover" for what, at the time, had to be a covert endeavor. So they learned the art of making leather shoes, and with tools and materials in hand, they departed for Gaul.

The saints settled in the town of Soissons and set up shop, working mostly at night to make shoes and spending the days teaching the local people about our Savior. Because of their kindness and generosity to the poor, their gentle and loving attitude toward all, and the compelling way in which they taught, many people were converted to Christianity.

Although this was a time of relative quiet from severe persecutions of Christians, local discrimination and even

persecution existed. When Diocletian became Emperor in 284, these began to increase and spread throughout the empire. Someone - perhaps a rival shoemaker - lodged a complaint against Crispin and Crispinian, accusing them of belonging to the sect of the Christians. To make an example of them and to dissuade others from joining this sect, the local official had the brothers tortured. When they refused to renounce Christ, they were put to death by the sword, achieving crowns of martyrdom on October 25.

The bodies of these saints were buried by local Christians and the story of their martyrdom spread to other lands. Their feast day is recorded in the martyrologies of St. Jerome, St. Bede, and others. In the sixth century, a basilica was erected in Soissons over the gravesite and a shrine for their relics was made by another saint - St. Eligius - who at the time was also a skilled workman, a goldsmith.

Going about it quietly and in the midst of the common work of tradesmen, the saints were fighting on a spiritual battlefield. They fought against the ignorance and blindness of the local people by telling them of God's revealed truth; they fought against the intolerance of government officials by steadfastly defending their beliefs; and they fought against the temptation to do anything to maintain their earthly lives and thus entered into eternal life.

We are called to fight these same battles and the circumstances are very similar: we should be fighting against ignorance and blindness by telling others about Christ and showing the love of God in our lives; we must fight against official intolerance for Christian beliefs; and we must, especially, fight the internal battle against the temptation to give in to the ways of the world. We ask that Saints Crispin and Crispinian intercede for us in these spiritual battles.

*Resources: Rev. Alban Butler: Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs, and Other Saints; Omer Englebert: Lives of the Saints; online articles from New Advent and Wikipedia.*

## *The Saints and Daily Work*

*by Rev. Alban Butler,  
from Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs and Other Saints*

From the example of the saints it appears how foolish the pretenses of many Christians are, who imagine the care of a family, the business of a farm or a shop, the attention which they are obliged to give to their worldly profession are impediments which excuse them from aiming at perfection. Such, indeed, they make them; but this is altogether owing to their own sloth and malice.

How many saints have made these very employments the means of their perfection! St. Paul made tents; Saints Crispin and Crispinian were shoemakers; the Blessed Virgin was taken up in the care of her poor cottage; Christ himself worked with his reputed father; and those saints who renounced all commerce with the world to devote themselves totally to the contemplation of heavenly things, made mats, tilled the earth, or copied and bound good books.

The secret of the art of their sanctification was, that fulfilling the maxims of Christ, they studied to subdue their passions and die to themselves; they, with much earnestness and application, obtained of God, and improved daily in their souls, a spirit of devotion and prayer; their temporal business they regarded as a duty which they owed to God, and sanctified it by a pure and perfect intention, as Christ on earth directed everything he did to the glory of his Father.

In these very employments, they were careful to improve themselves in humility, meekness, resignation, divine charity, and all other virtues, by the occasions which call them forth at every moment, and in every action. Opportunities of every virtue,

and every kind of good work never fail in all circumstances; and the chief means of our sanctification may be practiced in every state of life, which are self-denial and assiduous prayer, frequent aspirations, and pious meditation or reflections on spiritual truths, which disengage the affections from earthly things, and deeply imprint in the heart those of piety and religion.

## Parish News

We rejoice to welcome into our parish family 6-year-old Miao Miao, daughter of Jennifer and Dave Caldwell. Adopted from an orphanage in Inner Mongolia, China, Miao Miao will be given the name Lucy at her baptism.



At the end of Liturgy on Sunday, October 15, we will process outside to the Mary garden to bless an outdoor shrine of the Virgin and Child which will hang above the garden. This day is kept as the feast of Our Lady of Walsingham, celebrating a vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary in 11<sup>th</sup> century England, so it is an appropriate time to bless this image of the Theotokos.

There are several new books in our parish library, including two recently published biographies of saints: *Chosen for His People*, a biography of St. Tikhon (patron of our Western Rite Vicariate) by Jane Swan; and *Alexander Schmorell: Saint of the German Resistance*, by Elena Perekrestov. The latter tells the story of the young medical student who was a leader (and eventual martyr) in the quiet resistance against the Nazis during World War II. He was glorified by the Russian Church Outside Russia in 2012.

We will again participate in the collection and assembly of items for clean-up buckets and health kits to be distributed through IOCC to those affected by the recent devastating storms and earthquakes. Items needed will be listed on our parish Google list and can be purchased on line. When enough items have been collected, we will schedule a time for assembly at the church.

## The Kingship of Christ

*from a homily by St. Augustine of Hippo*

Here was a notable thing, the King of eternity had become the King of mortal men! In what way is it notable? In that Christ did not become the King of Israel to exact tribute, or to arm a body of men, or to conquer visible foes; but rather that He might rule souls, and counsel them regarding eternity; and that He might lead to the kingdom of heaven all such as believe in Him, hope in Him, and love Him.

In one such as He, it was condescension that He should desire to become the King of Israel. For He was the Son of God, co-equal with the Father, the Word by whom all things were made. To become such a King did not increase His power, but only betokened His mercy. For He who on earth was called the King of the Jews, in heaven was adored as Lord of the Angels.

But is Christ King of the Jews only, or of the Gentiles also? Yea, of the Gentiles also. For when it was said of Him in the prophetic Psalm, *I have set my King upon my holy hill of Sion* [Ps. 2:6], lest anyone should say, on account of this word Sion, that He was appointed King of the Jews only, there is straightway added, *Desire of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine*



*inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession. [Ps. 2:8]*

Jesus answered [Pilate], *My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence. [John 18:36]* This is what the good Master would have us know. But first He had to show how vain were the notions, current among men, regarding His kingship. It matters not whence Pilate heard them, whether from Jews or Gentiles. There was the notion that

Christ ought to be punished on the grounds that He was a conspirator seeking unlawfully to set Himself up as a king. Or the notion that reigning monarchs are wise to be jealous of any who aspire to the throne. Such notions assume that Christ's kingdom would be set up against the Jews or the Romans.

The first question of the Governor was, *Art thou the King of the Jews?* [John 18:33] To which the Lord could have answered, *My kingdom is not of this world.* But instead He answered with another questions, *Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?* [John 18:34] For He wished to show from Pilate's answer that the Jews had laid a criminal charge against Him on these grounds. In this wise did He lay open to us the thoughts of men, that they are but vain. And after Pilate's reply, He made answer, both to the Jews and the Gentiles, and that fittingly and opportunely, *My Kingdom is not of this world.*

*In the Western Rite, the Feast of Christ the King is observed on the last Sunday in October.*

**St. Gregory Orthodox Church**  
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>October 2017</h1>						<i>Sunday Services: Matins at 9AM, Sung Mass at 9:30AM</i>
<b>1</b> Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost; St. Remigius of Rheims, BC, c. 530; St. Bavo, C, 659 <b>G</b>	<b>2</b> Holy Guardian Angels	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> St. Placid & his Companions, Mm, 6th c.	<b>6</b> St. Faith of Agen, VM, c. 303	<b>7</b> St. Mark, PC, 336, Ss. Sergius & Bacchus, Mm, 303  <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
<b>8</b> Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost <b>G</b>	<b>9</b> Ss. Denys, BM, Rusticus, & Eleutherius, Mm, 3rd c.	<b>10</b> St. Paulinus of York, BC, 644	<b>11</b> St. Kenneth, Ab, 599	<b>12</b> St. Wilfred of York, BC, 709; St. Edwin, KM, 633	<b>13</b> St. Edward the Confessor, KC, 1066	<b>14</b> St. Callistus, PM, c. 222  <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
<b>15</b> Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost; Our Lady of Walsingham <b>G</b>	<b>16</b> St. Gall, Ab., 646	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> St. Luke the Evangelist, 1st c.	<b>19</b> St. Frideswide of Oxford, V, 735	<b>20</b> St. Andrew of Crete, BC, 740	<b>21</b> St. Hilarion of Gaza, Ab., c. 371; Ss. Ursula & comp., Mm, 453  <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
<b>22</b> Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost <b>G</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> St. Raphael the Archangel	<b>25</b> Ss. Crysanthus & Daria, Mm, 283	<b>26</b> St. Evaristus, PM, c. 197	<b>27</b> Vigil of Ss. Simon & Jude; St. Frumentius of Ethiopia, BC, 4 <sup>th</sup> c.	<b>28</b> Ss. Simon & Jude, Apostles, 1st c.  <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
<b>29</b> Christ the King; comm. Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost <b>W</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> Vigil of All Saints				

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

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