

✠ St. Gregory's Journal ✠

May, 2019 - Volume XXIV, Issue 5

St. Gregory the Great Orthodox Church
A Western Rite Congregation of the Antiochian Archdiocese
13407 Roxbury Rd., Silver Spring, MD - stgregoryoc.org

From a
Homily by
St. Gregory
the Great
d. 604

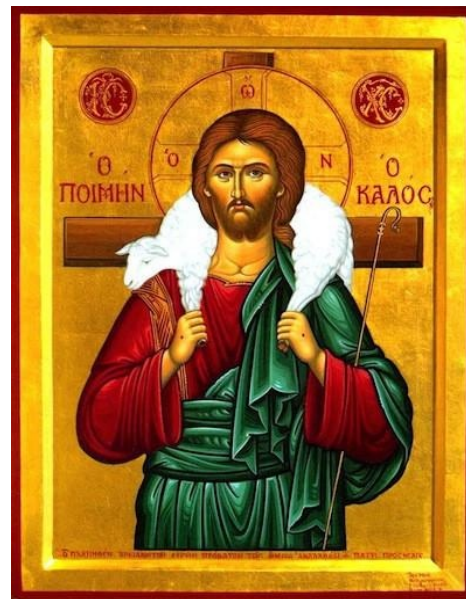
He Who is good, not through grace given to Him, but by nature, says: *I am the good shepherd.* [John 10:11] And putting before us the character of that goodness we must imitate He adds: *the good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep.*

He has done what he commended; He has given us an example in what He bade us do. The Good shepherd has laid down his life for His sheep, so that in our sacrament He might change his own Body and Blood, and nourish with the food of His flesh the sheep he had redeemed.

As you have heard then, Dearest Brethren, the danger to which we [the clergy] are liable, reflect on the danger to which in the Lord's words you also are subject. Reflect

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whether you are His sheep. Reflect whether or not you know Him. Consider whether you know the light of truth. You know, I affirm, not through faith, but through love. You will know I say, not from faith, but from charity. For he who tells us thus, John the evangelist, bears witness saying, *He who saith that he knoweth him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar.* [I John 2:4]

And of these sheep He later truly says: *My sheep hear my voice: And I know them, and they follow me, and I give them life everlasting.* [I John 2:27] And earlier He says concerning them: *By me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved; and he shall go in, and go out and shall find pastures.* [I John 2:9]

But what are the pastures of these sheep if not the hidden delights of the evergreen paradise? For the pastures of the Elect are the ever present countenance of God, who while He is unfadingly contemplated by the soul, nourishes it without ceasing by the food of life eternal. In these pastures they are satiated with the fulness of eternity who turned aside from the snares of earthly gratifications.

Let us then, Dearest Brethren, seek this pasture...Let us, Brethren, enkindle our soul as a light. Let faith grow fervent in what it has believed. Let our desires grow eager for the things of heaven; and thus to love is already to go there. Let no adversity turn us away from the joy of this inward fulfilment; for when any one has resolved to go to a determined place, whatever the

roughness of the way it does not alter his desire. Let no smiling good fortune entice us away; for he is a foolish traveler who, beholding on his way a pleasant meadow, forget to go on in the way he was going.

Let the soul therefore long with desire for its heavenly home. Let it grasp at nothing in this world; for well we know that it will quickly let go. So, if we are truly sheep of the Heavenly Shepherd, if we do not linger attached to the delights of the way, we shall be filled to satiety when we shall arrive in the eternal pastures; by the help of Our Lord Jesus Christ Who with the Father and the Holy Spirit liveth and reigneth world without end. Amen.

St. Mamertus, Bishop & Confessor

Feast Day ~ May 11

The natural response of humans - made in the image and likeness of God - is to call to Him for help when disaster strikes. As the world watched in horror at the ancient Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris burning, the world also watched French citizens - who are usually seen as secular and “post-Christian” - praying fervently that this church, which represents a long history of Christian faith and culture in this land, would be spared from total destruction. God heard those prayers as it now appears that much of the beautiful structure can be saved.

In an earlier century, fervent prayer was also offered to God for a city which was besieged by calamities. St. Mamertus, who was known for his learning (both secular and theological) and his sanctity of life, was the Archbishop of the city of Vienne from 462 until his death in 477. When several disasters - an earthquake and even an invasion by wolves who boldly came into the marketplace - struck the area in a short period of time, Bishop Mamertus



warned the people about their complacency. Like the Old Testament prophet Isaiah, he reminded them that God required of them righteous living and true repentance in order to receive his mercy: *Your sins stand between you and your God, and he turned his face from you because of your sins, so as not to have mercy.* [Isaiah 59:1]. Soon, a terrible fire broke out which threatened the safety of the entire city and which could not be extinguished despite all the efforts of the citizens. But after the bishop prayed loudly for deliverance, the flames suddenly died away, and the people felt that they had witnessed a miracle.

Then, on Easter night, an even worse fire erupted and Bishop Mamertus resorted to his one weapon against disaster: prayer. Prostrate before the altar of the cathedral, he again prayed with all his heart and another miracle occurred when the fire abruptly went out.

This time, St. Mamertus knew that he had to establish a liturgical practice which would be a reminder to the people of the necessity of sincere repentance and prayer for deliverance from such disasters. He instituted the Rogation processions - three days of fasting, confession, praying and singing Psalms in procession - which were soon adopted in other cities. These were established for the three days between the Fifth Sunday after Easter and Ascension Day and are still observed today. At St. Gregory's, we will anticipate this practice after the Liturgy on the Fifth Sunday after Easter (June 2 this year).

From St. Mamertus, we learn that we should never become complacent and neglect the duties of a Christian - righteous living, true repentance, and constant prayer. We should be faithful in prayer, not just in times of disaster but always. In the words of St. Paul to the Philipians, *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, let your requests be known to God.* [Phil. 4:6] May St. Mamertus intercede for us in heaven.

Resources: Rev. Alban Butler: Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs, and Other Saints; online article on Wikipedia.

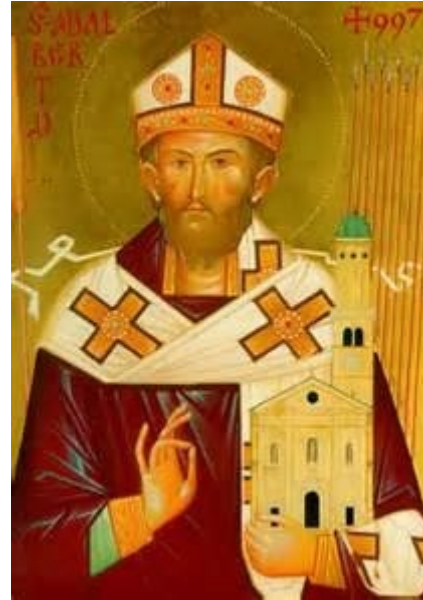
St. Maximinus, Bishop & Confessor

Feast Day ~ May 29

We speak much of hospitality in Orthodoxy. We are to see Christ in all those we meet and to treat them as if we were in the presence of our Lord: *Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.* [?] It is especially important for Christians to offer hospitality, support, and encouragement to those who are suffering for their faith. St. Maximinus is one who did just that during the 4th century controversies over the Arian heresy.

Born near Poitiers into a noble family, Maximinus was educated by Agritius, the Bishop of Trier, who ordained him to the priesthood. When his teacher reposed, Maximinus was chosen as his successor.

When in 336, St. Athanasius - the Patriarch of Alexandria and the great defender of Orthodox Christianity against the Arians - was sent into exile by Emperor Constantine I (over a false accusation brought by Arians concerning the disruption of grain supply from Alexandria to Constantinople), Bishop Maximinus welcomed him to Trier as his honored guest. For two years, the



hospitality provided by St. Maximinus gave the two bishops opportunities for much fruitful theological discourse.

Again in 341, St. Maximinus offered hospitality to another exiled churchman, Patriarch (St.) Paul of Constantinople. The patriarch was sent into exile by the Emperor Constantius II, who was an Arian supporter and who opposed the election of the Orthodox Paul as Patriarch.

St. Maximinus continued to be a strong defender of Orthodoxy against Arianism until his death around the year 346. He is remembered for this courageous defense and for the help he offered to other bishops in the spirit of Christian hospitality. May we, through his intercessions, follow his example in offering our support for those who are persecuted for their faith. Holy Maximinus, pray for us.

Resources: Rev. Alban Butler: Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs, and Other Saints; online articles from OrthodoxWiki and Wikipedia.

A House of Prayer

An excerpt from *Living Prayer* by Metropolitan Anthony Bloom

One can pray everywhere and anywhere, yet there are places where prayer finds its natural climate; those places are

churches, fulfilling the promise: “I will make them joyful in my house of prayer.” [Is. 56:7]



A church, once consecrated, once set apart, becomes the dwelling-place of God. He is present there in another way than in the rest of the world. In the world he is present as a stranger, as a pilgrim, as one who goes from door to door, who has nowhere to rest his head; he goes as the lord of the world who has been rejected by the world and expelled from his kingdom and

who has returned to it to save his people. In church he is at home, it is his place; he is not only the creator and the lord by right but he is recognized as such. Outside it he acts when he can and how he can; inside a church he has all power and all might and it is for us to come to him.

When we build a church or set apart a place of worship we do something which reaches far beyond the obvious significance of the fact. The whole world which God created has become a place where men have sinned; the devil has been at work, a fight is going on constantly; there is not place on this earth which has not been soiled by blood, suffering or sin. When we choose a minute part of it, calling upon the power of God himself, in rites which convey his grace, to bless it, when we cleanse it from the presence of the evil spirit and set it apart to be God’s foothold on earth, we reconquer for God a small part of this desecrated world. We may say that this is a place where the kingdom of God reveals

itself and manifests itself with power. When we come to church we should be aware that we are entering upon sacred ground, a place which belongs to God...

Parish News

Thank you to all who helped to make our Holy Week and Paschal observances so beautiful this year: to those who served at the altar, who sang, who arranged flowers, who cleaned and cooked, and to all who were here to celebrate the “feast of feasts”.

Thanks also to David and Nathan Caldwell and Fr. Nicholas, who spent a Lenten Saturday installing lights in the parking lot, making arriving for and leaving from evening services much easier.

We will remember Matushka Margaret Anna on the 40th day after her repose on Sunday, May 5, with the Prayers for the Departed at the end of Mass.

The anniversary of the dedication of our church building on May 21, 2015 will be observed on Sunday, May 26 with Scripture readings, hymns, and prayers of thanksgiving for this holy temple.

Please mark your calendars now for the weekend of June 1-2, when our father in God, Bishop JOHN will be with us.

Christ in the Hearts of the Faithful

by St. Nikolai of Ochrid

He has not Christ who only has Him on his tongue. Nor does he have Christ who only has Him on paper. Nor he who only has Him on the wall. Nor, indeed, he who has Him in a museum. He has



Him in truth who has him in his heart. For Christ is love, and the throne of love is the heart.

If Christ is in your heart, then He is your God. If He is only on your tongue, or on paper, on the wall or in a museum, then, even if you call Him God, He is a plaything for you. Beware then, O man, for none can play with God with impunity!

The heart is apparently a small organ, but God can abide in it. And when God abides in it, it is filled to overflowing and nothing else can stand in it. If, however, the whole world were to dwell in it, without God, it would remain empty.

My brethren, let Christ the risen and living Lord dwell in your hearts by faith, and your hearts will be filled to overflowing. For He can in no other way abide in your hearts than by your faith. If you have no faith, Christ will remain only on your tongue or on paper, or on the wall or in the museum. What use is that to you? What use is it to you to have life on your tongue but death in your heart? For if you have the world in your heart and Christ on your lips, you have death in your heart and life on your lips. Water on the tongue is of no help to the thirsty. Let the living Christ into your heart, and your thirst will be truly quenched and you will know unspeakable sweetness.

O risen Lord, cleanse our hearts from the deadly guests in them and do Thou Thyself abide in them, that they may live and glorify Thee. To Thee be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>May 2019</h1>						
<i>Sunday Services: Matins at 9AM, Mass at 9:30AM</i>			1 Wednesday in the Octave of Easter	2 Thursday in the Octave of Easter ; St. Athanasius, BCD, 373	3 Friday in the Octave of Easter	4 Saturday in the Octave of Easter; St. Monica, Ma, 387 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
5 Low Sunday: First Sunday after Easter <i>W</i>	6 St. John before the Latin Gate, 95	7 St. George, M, 303 (<i>tr. from 4/23</i>); St. Alexis Toth, PrC, 1909; St. John of Beverly, BC, 721	8 Apparition of St. Michael of the Archangel	9 St. Gregory Nazianzen, BCD, 389	10 St. Mark the Evangelist, 1st c., (<i>tr. from 4/25</i>); Ss. Gordian, 362 & Epimachus, 250, Mm	11 Ss. Philip & James, Apostles, 1 st c., (<i>tr. from 5/1</i>) <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
12 Second Sunday after Easter; St. Epiphanius, BC, c. 403 <i>W</i>	13 Finding of the Holy Cross (<i>tr. from 5/3</i>)	14 St. Boniface of Tarsus, M, 290	15 St. Pachomius, Ab, 346	16 St. Brendan the Navigator, 577, Ab	17	18 St. Venantius, M, 250; St. Theodotus & comp., Mm, c. 303; <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
19 Third Sunday after Easter; St. Dunstan, BC, 988; St. Pudentiana, V, c.160 <i>W</i>	20	21 Dedication of St. Gregory's	22	23	24 St. Vincent of Lerins, C, 450	25 St. Urban, PM, 230; St. Aldhelm, BC, 709 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
26 Sun. in the Oct. of the Ded. of St. Gregory's 4th Sun. after Easter; St. Augustine of Canterbury, BC, 605 <i>W</i>	27 St. Bede, CD, 735; St. John I, PM, 526 <i>(Memorial Day)</i>	28 St. Germanus of Paris, BC, 576	29	30 St. Felix I, PM, 274	31 St. Petronilla, VM, c. 100	

Confessions may be made during the Psalms at Matins, following Vespers, and by appointment.

Coffee Hour follows Sunday Liturgy. Christian Education for all is offered during Coffee Hour.