

✠ St. Gregory's Journal ✠

July/August, 2022 - Volume XXVII, Issue 7

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 of St. Ambrose of Milan d. 397

We must here consider that the greater cometh unto the lesser, in order to help the lesser; Mary unto Elisabeth, Christ unto John. And again afterwards, that he might sanctify John's baptisms, the Lord came unto him to be baptized. And quickly were these blessings of Mary's coming, and of the divine

presence, made manifest. Have regard here to the distinction made and to the special weight of every word. Elisabeth was the first to hear the voice of Mary's salutation, but John was the first to receive the grace. She heard it by natural means, but he leaped by reason of the mystery. She hailed the coming of Mary, he that of the Lord. Mary and Elisabeth spake words full of grace, but Jesus and John worked unseen within and did enter upon this mystery of godliness as their mothers met one another. And so by twin miracles the mothers prophesied from the spirit of their unborn offspring. The babe John leaped, and the

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mother was filled with the Holy Ghost. The mother was not filled before her son, but when the son was filled with the Holy Ghost, he filled his mother also.

And whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me? That is to say, how cometh it to pass that so great a good should befall me, as that the Mother of my Lord should come to me? I feel the wonder, I acknowledge the mystery; the Mother of my Lord pregnant with

the Word, is full of God. And Mary abode with her about three months and returned to her own house.

It is meet to record how Mary showed this kindness, and abode this mystic number of months. She tarried long, not only for friendship's sake, but also for the good of the great Prophet. For if the first coming of Mary so blessed him, that even as a babe in the womb he leapt for joy, and his mother was filled with the Holy Ghost, what blessedness must we not deem to have flowed upon him from so long neighborhood of Mary? Thus was the Prophet anointed, and training by exercise like a strong wrestler, in his mother's womb, for his sinews are being braced for a hard battle.

St. Owen, Bishop of Rouen *Feast Day ~ August 24*

It would be hard to imagine members of the White House staff carrying out their political work deliberately manifesting a love of Christ or even leaving their important positions to become

monks. In our world today, political power does not lend itself to Christian piety. But there were effective civic leaders in ages past who managed to surrender places of privilege and influence to lead lives of humility and charity. These saints of the Church include St. Owen or Ouen, born in 609, whose feast day we celebrate on August 24.

Like most of his contemporaries from aristocratic families in the Kingdom of the Franks, Owen (whose name is also known as Audoin) was educated as a child at an abbey and was then sent to a nobleman's court for military training. At the court of Chlothar II, Owen also learned the art of diplomacy, a skill which he was able to use throughout his life.

At Clothar's court, Owen became friends with another young man who had the same zeal for serving Christ more than the temporal ruler but who used his position to help others. This was St. Eligius (Eloi) who, like Owen, eventually left his work at court to become a priest and, later, a bishop.

While still serving as a royal counselor, Owen took monastic vows, was ordained priest in the year 634, and was able to found Rebaix Monastery on land donated by King Dagobert. Owen recognized the very real necessity for strengthening the Christian faith among the Franks and understood that the monastic foundations were the best hope for accomplishing this. He developed a program of theological studies for monastics and worked with others to blend the rule of St. Columbanus with that of St. Benedict.

In 641, Owen became bishop of Rouen but continued to advise the rulers, especially Queen (St.) Bathilde when she was regent for her son after the death of her husband, King Dagobert. As a former slave, the queen was especially eager to work for laws to protect slaves and she had an ally in Bishop Owen as well as St. Eligius, who had also become a bishop by this time.



Bishop Owen was able to travel to Rome on pilgrimage around 675 and there he collected relics for the churches of Rouen while visiting the shrines of the saints. In the next several years, he continued diplomatic work and wrote a Life of his friend, Eligius, providing us with many details about this great saint.

St. Owen fell asleep in the Lord in 684 having spent his entire life in service to Christ and His Church first and to worldly rulers through the love of Christ. We ask for his intercessions for our country, that we may have political leaders who lead us in this same way. *Holy Owen, pray for us.*

Resources: Oxford Dictionary of Saints; website of St. Owen Catholic Church, Bloomfield Hills, MI; Wikipedia.

Editor's note: St. Gregory's has a connection with St. Owen through Owen Johnson, a member of our parish until his death in 2017. Owen left a bequest for us, which has been used for the renovation of our parish hall. As St. Owen of Rouen was his patron saint, we have placed at the entrance to the parish hall an icon of the saint, which was created by Karen Blampied as part of her project to write icons of the twelve saints associated with the history of the Isle of Jersey. She graciously provided us with this copy.

Parish News

There will be two extra feast-day services in the month of August: the Transfiguration of Our Lord is on Saturday, August 6 and Mass will be celebrated at 10AM with Matins at 9:30 and pot-luck brunch following. On Monday, August 15, we will celebrate the Dormition (Assumption) of the Blessed Virgin Mary with Vespers at 6:30PM, Mass at 7, and pot-luck supper following.



Congratulations to Ben Caldwell, who has received the Freedom Award of Trail Life USA, the first in his troop to accomplish this. St. Gregory's is

the recipient of one of Ben's projects as he worked toward this award: the benches on our deck which make sitting outside for fellowship very pleasant!

A Statement from the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops

The following are portions of a statement issued by the Assembly of Bishops regarding the teachings of our church on abortion and other means of taking a life. The full statement, which includes sections on murder, suicide, euthanasia, capital punishment and miscarriage can be found at assemblyofbishops.org

Taking of Human Life

Any deliberate ending of human life is a rejection of its sacredness and inviolability and is unacceptable. This includes the death of the unborn by abortion, murder in peacetime or in war, suicide, and euthanasia. The Church mourns the premature end of a human life, and we seek to minister with compassion and mercy in these situations...

Abortion

Our salvation begins with a conception. The Mother of God's miraculous conception of her son and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ marks the beginning of new life and hope in the world. As we sing in the Troparion that celebrates the Annunciation, "Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery!"

Our liturgical calendar includes other feasts of conception, including the Righteous Anna's Conception of the Mother of God and the Conception of John the Baptist by his parents Elizabeth and Zachariah. The Church has integrated these celebrations into its life not only as an affirmation of these figures who played such important roles in salvation history, but also because these feasts teach us that human life is bestowed by God and that the origins of every new human being are clearly inseparable from conception. Therefore, human life in its earliest manifestations in the womb is sacred and inviolable. Any act to terminate life in the womb – whether by abortive medications, medical procedures, or destructive behavior – denies this truth, is considered murder, and risks terrible spiritual consequences for those involved.

As with any instance of sin, mercy and healing – not retribution and punishment – are the way of the Lord. The Church is called to minister to those seeking abortions, those who have had or those who have been forced to have abortions, and those who

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have performed abortions, knowing that abortions are often sought because of poverty, abuse, coercion, neglect, despair, or the influence of a life-denying ethos that has become a societal norm. Church-sponsored and other programs that provide spiritual, physical, psychological, and financial support to expectant single mothers and couples in situations in which abortion is being considered, and to young families in need of extra care, should be vigorously supported by the Church and the faithful.

Current societal trends condone abortions for what some perceive as non-desirable human qualities, including physical or chromosomal abnormalities, or a less desirable sex. The Church appreciates, respects, and cares for all manner of human life and, therefore, never condones abortion in these cases. Every human life is worthy of our prayer and protection...

We continue to uncompromisingly reject any acceptance of abortion, while creating a merciful and compassionate path for all of those who have experienced abortion to journey back to the Church and to re-commit to human life as sacred and inviolable...



A consequence of our God-given free will is that humans are capable of either rejecting or communing with God. The Orthodox Church grieves the rejection of God in the deliberate taking of human life...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>July 2022</h1>					1 of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul	2 Visitation of the BVM; St. John Maximovitch, BC, 1966; of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
3 Third Sunday after Pentecost; St Irenaeus of Lyon, BM, c. 202; of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul G	4 (Independence Day)	5 of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul	6 Octave Day of Ss. Peter & Paul	7 Ss. Cyril & Methodius (B), CC, 9th c.	8 St. Kilian of Wurzburg, BM, 689	9 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
10 Fourth Sunday after Pentecost; Seven Holy Brothers, Mm, c. 165; St. Joseph of Damascus, 1860 G	11 Solemnity of St. Benedict, Ab, c. 540; St. Pius I, PM, c. 154	12 Ss. Nabor & Felix, Mm, 303	13 St. Anacletus, PM, 1st c.	14	15 St. Vladimir of Kiev, KC, 1015; St. Henry, C, 1024	16 Our Lady of Einsiedeln <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
17 Fifth Sunday after Pentecost; St. Alexis, C, 5th c. G	18 St. Sergius, Ab, 1392; Ss. Symphorosa & her Seven Sons, Mm, c. 138	19 St. Seraphim of Sarov, PrC, 1833	20 St. Elias the Prophet, 9th c. BC; St. Margaret of Antioch, VM, 304	21 St. Praxedes of Rome, V, 2nd c.	22 St. Mary Magdalene, Penitent, 1st c.	23 St. John Cassian, Ab, 433; St. Appollinaris, BM, 1st c. <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
24 Sixth Sunday after Pentecost; St. Christina, VM, 3rd c.; Ss. Romanus & David, Mm, 1015 G	25 St. James the Greater, Apostle, 44; St. Christopher, C, 251	26 St. Anne, Mother of the BVM, 1st c.; St. Jacob Netsvetov, C, 1864	27 St. Panteleimon, c. 305	28 Ss. Nazarius, Celsus Mm, Ss. Victor, PM & Innocent PC, 5th c	29 St. Martha of Bethany, V, 1st c.	30 Ss. Abdon & Sennen, Mm, c. 303 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
31 Seventh Sunday after Pentecost; St. Germanus of Auxerre, BC, 448 G						<i>Sunday Services: Matins at 9AM, Mass at 9:30AM</i>

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>August 2022</h1>						<i>Sunday Services: Matins at 9AM, Mass at 9:30AM</i>
	1 St. Peter's Chains; Holy Maccabees, Mm, c. 160 BC	2 St. Stephen I, PM, 257	3 Finding of St. Stephen the Protomartyr, 415; St. Nicodemus, M, 1 st . c.	4	5 Our Lady of the Snows, 435; St. Oswald, KM, 642	6 Transfiguration of Our Lord; Ss. Sixtus II PM & Felicissimus, 285 <i>Mass at 10am W Vespers at 6pm</i>
7 Eighth Sunday after Pentecost; Holy Name Day; St. Donatus of Arezzo, BM, 362 G	8 Ss. Cyriacus, Largus & Smaragdus, Mm, 304	9 St. Romanus, M, 258	10 St. Laurence, Deacon M, 258	11 Susanna, Mm, 3 rd c.; St. Philomena, VM, c. 304	12	13 St. Maximus the Confessor, CD, 662; Ss. Hippolytus & comp., Mm, 235 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
14 Ninth Sunday after Pentecost; St. Eusebius, PrC, c. 300 G	15 Assumption of the BVM <i>Mass at 7:30pm W</i>	16 St. Joachim, Father of the BVM, C, 1 st c; of the Oct. of the Assumption	17 of the Octave of the Assumption	18 of the Oct. of the Assumption; St. Helena, Ma, 330; St. Agapitus, M, 272	19 of the Octave of the Assumption	20 of the Octave of the Assumption <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
21 Tenth Sunday after Pentecost; of the Oct. of the Assumption G	22 Oct. Day of the Assumption; Ss. Timothy, M, Hippolytus, BM	23 Vigil of St. Bartholomew	24 St. Bartholomew, Apostle, 1 st c.	25	26 St. Zephyrinus, PM, 219	27 St. Caesarius of Arles, BC, 542 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
28 Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost; St. Augustine of Hippo, BCD, 430; St. Moses the Black, C, 405 G	29 Beheading of St. John the Baptist; St. Sabina, M, c. 125	30 Ss. Felix & Adauctus, Mm, 304; St. Fiacre the Hermit, C, 670	31 St. Aidan of Lindisfarne, BC, 651			