

HE WAS A MAN OF "VISION"

PROPHET EZEKIEL was one of the four major Prophets of the Old Testament. He grew up in Jerusalem in the 6th century B.C. as a contemporary of the Prophet Jeremiah. Ezekiel was involved in the Babylonian exile in 597 B.C. and it was while living in captivity that Ezekiel began to distinguish himself with his gift of prophecy.

Ezekiel is well-known for his vivid visions, which often had Christian connotations. His famous vision of the "valley of the dry bones" has long been viewed as a foreshadowing of our Lord's teaching on the resurrection of the dead. He later predicted the destruction of Jerusalem, where only those marked with a Greek letter resembling a cross, would be spared.

Depicted on the cover of today's Church Bulletin is yet another of Ezekiel's visions. While praying at the banks of the river Chebar, the Prophet saw the heavens open up. A cloud appeared, surrounded by images of four living creatures. One had the face of a MAN, the second a LION, the third a CALF and the fourth an EAGLE. The Church has interpreted this as being a revelation of Christ, with the mysterious figures showing that He was both God and Man (*as symbolized by the image of a man and a lion*), Who was sacrificed for us (*the calf*) and Who ultimately resurrected and ascended into heaven (*the eagle*). It is important to note that the Four Evangelists are commonly depicted with these figures as the symbols of their particular version of the Gospel.

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ST.DEMETRIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

NORTH WILDWOOD, NEW JERSEY

July 23, 2023.

7th Sunday of Matthew

WELCOME ALL VISITORS:

On behalf of the Parish Council, Fr. Michael, and the entire family of St. Demetrios, we would like to welcome our Visitors for joining us today in our sacred worship service. If you need any assistance please notify any of the Parish Council members. God Bless our Visitors and may your stay here be pleasant and memorable. Please don't hesitate to come again.

MEMORIAL SERVICE:

A 40 day Memorial Service will be chanted today in memory of our beloved sister in Christ, Georgia Zotos, may her soul rest in peace and may her memory be eternal.

2nd MEMORIAL SERVICE:

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America has requested to commemorate the Turkish Invasion of Cyprus. It is requested that all the parishes of our Sacred Archdiocese perform a special memorial service in remembrance of all those who fought and lost their lives in this struggle. May their souls rest in peace and their memories be eternal. "Again we pray for the blessed memory and eternal repose of all the Cypriot heroes who fought and fell for faith and homeland, and for the forgiveness of all their sins, both voluntary and involuntary."

COFFEE HOUR/MEMORIAL LUNCHEON:

The Zotos and Padussis families would like to invite everyone to the Memorial Luncheon in memory of their departed loved one Georgia Zotos. This event will take place in our Cultural Center after Church. On behalf of the Parish Council, Fr. Michael, the church staff, and the entire St. Demetrios family, we would like to thank the Zotos and Padussis families for their generous offering to the Church in memory of their loved one, Georgia Zotos.

SPONSORING COFFEE HOUR:

During the summer, The Ladies Philoptochos Society will not be sponsoring any coffee hours. If anyone is interested in sponsoring the coffee hour please contact the Church office –Monday-Wednesday-Friday (609)-522-0152 or contact Parish Council President Nick Konides (609)425-0179.

STEWARDSHIP NEWS:

All our local and seasonal members and visitors are invited to register and enroll in our parish for the 2023 membership and join in weekly worship and to support of our parish "Stewardship Program" and ministries. The annual minimum enrollment offering is \$750 per family, and \$500 for single people. Please complete the parish membership registry forms that are available in the Narthex. Families that are in arrears are invited to reinstate their membership and participation in our parish life and ministries.

ECCLESIASTICAL DECREE:

Attention All Parishioners: It has come to the attention of Fr. Michael that we have parishioners that have been divorced (civilly) and have not taken care of their Ecclesiastical responsibilities to the church. If you are in this situation, please contact Fr. Michael and he will begin the application for an Ecclesiastical Divorce from the Church. If this does not occur, then you will be deprived of certain Ecclesiastical necessities within the Church. For further details please contact Fr. Michael. Thank you.

ATTENTION ALL PARISHONERS and VISITORS:

During the first 15 days of August we celebrate the prayer service of our Mother of God (Theotokos). Please pay attention to the schedule of services during the first 15 days of August. Also if you would like to have the names of your loved ones to be commemorated during the Paraklesis Services for Fr. Michael to read, the Prayer of Living sheet is inserted in today's bulletin.

LITURGICAL PROGRAM FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST:

Friday, August 4th---Paraklesis Service -6:00pm

Sunday August 6th---Transfiguration of our Lord---Orthos 8:30am ---Divine Liturgy 9:30 am

Friday, August 11th---Paraklesis Service -6:00pm

Sunday, August 13th---10th Sunday of Matthew---Orthos 8:30am ---Divine Liturgy 9:30am

Tuesday, August 15th---Dormition of the Mother of God (Theotokos) ---Orthos 8:30am ---Divine Liturgy 9:30am

YOUTH GROUP PROGRAM:

Since the children are out of school for their summer vacation, Fr. Michael would like to continue to have the Youth Program even in the summer months. This event will happen on Saturday July 29th at 1:00 PM.

Ἀγγελικαὶ δυνάμεις ἐπὶ τὸ μνήμα σου,
καὶ οἱ φυλάσσοντες ἀπενεκρώθησαν· καὶ
ἵστατο Μαρία ἐν τῷ τάφῳ, ζητοῦσα τὸ
ἄχραντόν σου σῶμα. Ἐσκύλευσας τὸν ἄδην,
μὴ πειρασθεὶς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ· ὑπήντησας τῇ
Παρθένῳ, δωρούμενος τὴν ζωὴν. Ὁ ἀναστὰς
ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, Κύριε δόξα σοι.

Καὶ τρόπων μέτοχος, καὶ θρόνων
διάδοχος, τῶν Ἀποστόλων γενόμενος, τὴν
πρᾶξιν εὖρες Θεόπνευστε, εἰς θεωρίας
ἐπίβασιν· διὰ τοῦτο τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας
ὀρθοτομῶν, καὶ τῇ πίστει ἐνήθλησας μέχρι
αἵματος, Ἱερομάρτυς Φωκά, πρέσβευε Χριστῷ
τῷ Θεῷ, σωθῆναι τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.

Προστασία τῶν Χριστιανῶν ἀκατάσχυντε,
μεσιτεία, πρὸς τὸν Ποιητὴν ἀμετάθετε, μὴ
παρίδης, ἁμαρτωλῶν δεήσεων φωνάς, ἀλλὰ
πρόφθασον, ὡς ἀγαθὴ, εἰς τὴν βοήθειαν ἡμῶν,
τῶν πιστῶς κραυγαζόντων σοι· Τάχυνον
εἰς πρεσβείαν, καὶ σπεῦσον εἰς ἱκεσίαν, ἢ
προστατεύουσα ἀεὶ, Θεοτόκε, τῶν τιμώντων
σε.

When the angelic powers appeared at
Your tomb, the soldiers guarding it feared and
became as dead. And standing by the sepulcher
was Mary, who was seeking Your immaculate
body. Unassailed by Hades, You divested it of
spoils. Then You met the Virgin. You granted
life. O Lord, risen from the dead, glory to You!

Becoming a partner with the Apostles
in way of life and successor to their thrones,
O God-inspired Saint, in the active life you
found an entrance to contemplation. Hence you
rightly expounded the word of truth, and you
shed your blood in struggling for the faith, O
Hieromartyr Phocas. Intercede with Christ our
God, beseeching Him to save our souls. [SD]

O Protection of Christians that never fails,
intercession with the Creator that never fails,
we sinners beg you, do not ignore the voices
of our prayers. O good Lady, we implore
you, quickly come unto our aid, when we cry
out to you with faith. Hurry to intercession,
and hasten to supplication, O Theotokos who
protect now and ever those who honor you. [SD]

Ἀδελφοί, ὀφείλομεν ἡμεῖς οἱ δυνατοὶ τὰ
ἀσθενήματα τῶν ἀδυνάτων βαστάζειν, καὶ μὴ
ἑαυτοῖς ἀρέσκειν. Ἐκαστος ἡμῶν τῷ πλησίον
ἀρεσκέτω εἰς τὸ ἀγαθὸν πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν· καὶ
γὰρ ὁ Χριστὸς οὐχ ἑαυτῷ ἤρεσεν· ἀλλὰ καθὼς
γέγραπται. Οἱ ὀνειδισμοὶ τῶν ὀνειδίζοντων σε
ἐπέπεσαν ἐπ' ἐμέ. Ὅσα γὰρ προεγράφη, εἰς
τὴν ἡμετέραν διδασκαλίαν προεγράφη, ἵνα
διὰ τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ διὰ τῆς παρακλήσεως
τῶν γραφῶν τὴν ἐλπίδα ἔχωμεν. Ὁ δὲ Θεὸς
τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ τῆς παρακλήσεως δῶν ὑμῖν
τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν ἐν ἀλλήλοις κατὰ Χριστὸν
Ἰησοῦν, ἵνα ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἐν ἑνὶ στόματι
δοξάζητε τὸν Θεὸν καὶ Πατέρα τοῦ Κυρίου
ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Διὸ προσλαμβάνεσθε
ἀλλήλους, καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς προσελάβετο
ὑμᾶς, εἰς δόξαν τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Brethren, we who are strong ought to bear
with the failings of the weak, and not to please
ourselves; let each of us please his neighbor
for his good, to edify him. For Christ did
not please himself; but, as it is written, "The
reproaches of those who reproached thee fell
on me." For whatever was written in former
days was written for our instruction, that by
steadfastness and by the encouragement of the
scriptures we might have hope. May the God
of steadfastness and encouragement grant you
to live in such harmony with one another, in
accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may
with one voice glorify the God and Father of
our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another,
therefore, as Christ has welcomed you, for the
glory of God. [RSV]

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ παράγοντι τῷ Ἰησοῦ ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ δύο τυφλοὶ κράζοντες καὶ λέγοντες· Ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, υἱὲ Δαυὶδ. ἐλθόντι δὲ εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν προσήλθον αὐτῷ οἱ τυφλοί, καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Πιστεύετε ὅτι δύναμαι τοῦτο ποιῆσαι; λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· Ναί, Κύριε. τότε ἥψατο τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτῶν λέγων· Κατὰ τὴν πίστιν ὑμῶν γενηθήτω ὑμῖν. καὶ ἀνεφύθησαν αὐτῶν οἱ ὀφθαλμοί· καὶ ἐνεβριμήσατο αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων· Ὁρᾶτε μηδεὶς γινωσκέτω. οἱ δὲ ἐξελθόντες διεφήμισαν αὐτὸν ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ γῇ ἐκείνῃ. Αὐτῶν δὲ ἐξερχομένων ἰδοὺ προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ ἄνθρωπον κωφὸν δαιμονιζόμενον· καὶ ἐκβληθέντος τοῦ δαιμονίου ἐλάλησεν ὁ κωφός. καὶ ἐθαύμασαν οἱ ὄχλοι λέγοντες, Οὐδέποτε ἐφάνη οὕτως ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ. οἱ δὲ Φαρισαῖοι ἔλεγον· Ἐν τῷ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων ἐκβάλλει τὰ δαιμόνια. Καὶ περιῆγεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὰς πόλεις πάσας καὶ τὰς κώμας, διδάσκων ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς αὐτῶν καὶ κηρύσσων τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας καὶ θεραπεύων πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν ἐν τῷ λαῷ.

At that time, as Jesus passed on from there two blind men followed him, crying aloud, "Have mercy on us, Son of David." When he entered the house, the blind men came to him; and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord." Then he touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it done to you." And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly charged them, "See that no one knows it." But they went away and spread his fame through all that district. As they were going away, behold, a dumb demoniac was brought to him. And when the demon had been cast out, the dumb man spoke; and the crowds marveled, saying, "Never was anything like this seen in Israel." But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the prince of demons." And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people. [RSV]

What is Holy Communion?

The Eucharist is a personal encounter with the living Christ. This is where we meet Him and invite Him into our soul.

The Eucharist is the nuptial encounter of the soul with her Lord. It is a marriage union between Christ and the soul. In the words of Cyril of Jerusalem: "Christ has given to the children of the bridal chamber the enjoyment of His body and His blood." Another Church Father, Theodoret, writes, "In eating the elements of the Bridegroom and drinking His blood, we accomplish a marriage union." The Eucharist, then, becomes the marriage relationship through which the Bridegroom Christ, espouses the Church as His Bride, thus truly transforming a human community into the Church of God.

St. Ambrose says that when the body of Christ is placed on the lips of the believer, it is truly a kiss given by Christ to the soul, the expression of the union of love between the believer and his Lord.

The Eucharist is the Eschaton, the Omega, breaking into history. It is the inaugurated kingdom of God being made manifest. It is where heaven and earth meet. It is the Holy One, unapproachable in glory, bending down to touch us in love. It is the mystery of both the beyondness and the nearness of God coming alive for us. It is participating in the new life of Christ by partaking of the Precious Body and Blood of our Lord.

Church Fathers Speak

Do you not realize or understand your own nobility? Each of those who have been anointed with the heavenly chrism becomes a Christ by grace, so that all are kings and prophets of the heavenly mysteries. — The Homilies of St. Macarius

PARAKLESIS TO THE VIRGIN MARY

Throughout our Church history, no woman has been more loved, more lauded and more cherished than the Blessed Virgin Mary. She herself foretold it: "For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed." (Luke 1:48) In beautiful poetic-hymnography, which is characteristic of Byzantine Chant in the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Theotokos, the Mother of God is honored and esteemed for her unique role in the salvation of the human race. Through her, the Word of God became flesh and the Infinite became, as it were finite. Humanity took on divine presence and Divinity took on humanity. The Theotokos is the vehicle, par excellence of humility and obedience and thus a supreme example of redeemed mankind.

As the Mother of our Lord, she is our greatest ally and our most fervent intercessor, "for...the prayer of the righteous has great power in its effects." (James 5:16) During the Paraklesis Service, we ask the Most Holy Theotokos to save us just as those drowning reach out to those on dry land. Let us then seek with confidence the help and intercession of the Mother of Light, Mary, the Mother of our Lord.

Let us also honor the Mother of our Lord, as many others before us have, by coming and participating in the Paraklesis Services, so that we can all praise the Mother of our Lord with Hymn and song.

KOIMISIS-August 1-15

PRAYER FOR THE LIVING

**LET US PRAY FOR GRACE, LIFE,
PEACE, HEALTH, SALVATION,
PROTECTION, FORGIVENESS
AND REMISSION OF THE SINS
OF THESE THY SERVANTS:**

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal black ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The left edge of the paper shows some slight shadowing, suggesting it's part of a bound notebook or folder. The overall appearance is clean and ready for writing.