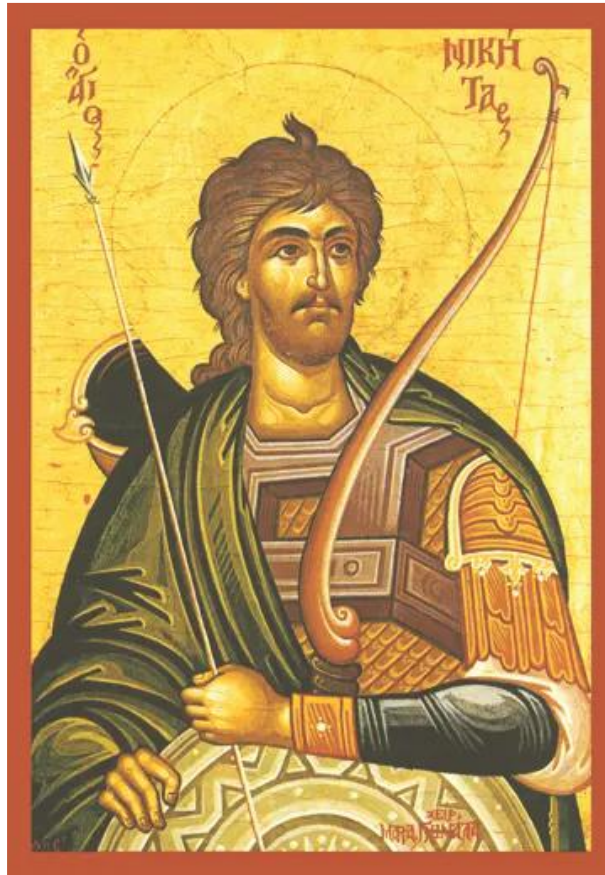


HOLY ANGELS BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH



The Holy Great Martyr Nicetas, the Goth

September 15, 2024

Sunday after the Exaltation of the Cross
The Holy Great Martyr Nicetas, the Goth

September 15, 2024

Schedule of services for the week of September 9 – September 15

Saturday, September 21– *Saturday after the Exaltation; Apodosis of Exaltation; The Holy Apostle Quadratus of Magnesia*

9:00 AM – Divine Liturgy
4:00 PM – Confessions
5:00 PM – Great Vespers

Sunday, September 22– *18th Sunday after Pentecost; The Holy Hieromartyr Phocas, bishop of Sinope; The Holy Prophet Jonah; The Venerable Priest Jonah, Father of Sts. Theophanes the Hymnographer and Theodore the Branded*

8:40 AM – 3rd Hour
9:00 AM – Divine Liturgy

“Whoever will lose his life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News will save it.” Our Lord teaches us that following him is a loss and a gain at the same time. Devoting one’s life to the Church as a monastic, religious, or member of the clergy is a cross and is also an immense blessing. Are you being called to be this blessing to the Church? Reach out to the Vocations Office at 206-329-9219 or email: vocations@ephx.org

Catechetical Sunday

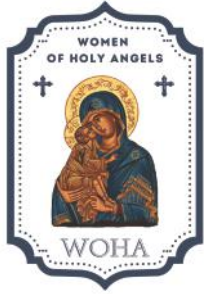
Today we are pleased to celebrate an important event in our parish life as we begin our new catechetical year. The children and the adults who teach them are here to pray together and to be blessed at the start of a new School Year, helping all to realize how Christ lives in each one, and the Church as a whole. This sentiment is not merely a group of words, but an incentive for all the faithful to grow in faith. We join in this ceremony today to ask God to grant to his servants, our students, our teachers, and ourselves **"many blessed years!"**

O Physician of Souls and Bodies, we pray for:

Pope Francis, Barbara Alexander, Maria Amaro, Peter Andre, Fr. Christopher Andrews, Harry and Virginia Bowden, Kim Camplisson, Fr. Andriy Chirovsky, Julia Camberos, Dennis Cline, Amy Cohn, Vivian Corr, Maria Cruz, Joe Danscuk, Fr. Daniel Dozier, Gabriel Espedal, Ana Fandrey, Karen Foto, Christine Galgano, Janet Greenwell, Deborah Harris, Michael Havens, Martha Hill, Doris Huber, Rebecca Huber, Melissa Hunter, Taylor Kessler, Subdcn Paul Kilroy Jamie Kohanyj, Juan Lopez, Pauli Martin, Mila Mina, Linda Moffit, Maryann Nagrant, Julia Ohnysty, Genevieve Paquette, Sylvia Pasmak, Fr. Lee Perry, Anthony Porrello, Nina Porrello, Peter Porrello, Margaret Raya, Maha Salazar, Gretchen Sharpe, Karen Simonich, Debbie Stark, Tava Tomc, Hong Truong, Pat Walsh, Maria Zhukova, Gianna, Nicole, Subdcn Eddie and his wife Viane.

**The likeness of Christ
consists in truth,
meekness, righteousness,
and together with them
humility and love of mankind.**

Saint Symeon the New Theologian



Women's Group - WOHA:

WOHA will meet next Saturday following the 9AM Divine Liturgy. All women 21 of age and up are invited! Invite your friends.



Men's Group - BROHA:

This is an informal group of men who support each other in living their faith more fully in today's culture. The new series begins this Thursday, September 19 at 7:00 PM. All men, 21 years of age and up, are invited!

BROHA along with WOHA will be working through the book *Men and Women Are From Eden: A Study Guide to John Paul II's Theology of the Body*. We will be diving in with chapter 1 this week. Copies are available in the bookstore for \$17.00.

When anger comes, close your mouth tightly and do not speak to the one who bothers you in any way without reason. Then this snake will writhe about in your heart, rise up to your throat, and (since you give it no way out) will choke and suffocate. When this is repeated, it will diminish and then cease.

—Elder Joseph the Hesychast

CATECHETICAL SUMMARY

The Epistle which is proclaimed in the Church today is one that has been misused by many non-Apostolic Christians who would look to reject the Church's teaching on salvation. "Faith" in our understanding is the union of our entire self to Christ. This union which entrusts my intellect, spirit, soul and body to the Savior joins me to Christ in such an intimate way that my life is transformed into his life. This is the process of Theosis or divinization. As Saint Paul says "it is now no longer I who live, but Christ is living in me." Faith, then, is an aspect of love by which I give my life to the one that I love. In this act of total self-gift we can discern two important truths. The one who loves first must die to himself in as much as the lover's life is no longer about himself but totally about the one whom he loves and whom he sustains through the gift of his life. The second truth that results from the first is that the lover, having died to himself, comes to life or is "resurrected from the dead" in the life of the beloved. The Gospel which is proclaimed today confirms and makes explicit for us the above explanation of loving faith. "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For anyone who would save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News will save it." The cross, the exaltation of which we just celebrated, is the sign of the Lord's total self-giving love. The cross reveals to us the breadth and depth of God's love. What remains is our response to that gift and our union with that love.

PRACTICAL QUESTIONS:

1. How can we understand Saint Paul's teaching that he is "nailed to the cross" with Christ?
2. How can we unite ourselves to the cross of Christ and why would Jesus want us to do so?
3. How do we save our life by losing it?
4. What kind of life are we called to give up and what kind of life do we gain?

PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS TO THE WAY OF THE CROSS

Fr. George Morelli Ph.D.

**If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself,
take up his cross and follow me. (Mark 8:34)**

This verse is from the gospel Byzantine Christians read the Sunday after the Elevation of the Cross. This counsel from Our Lord is essential for our salvation. It is what will enable Christ to be in us and thus we achieve deification.

Consider making the 'cross' meaningful in our lives in practical ways. As an aid to this let us follow the sequence of events that lead to our Lord's crucifixion from the time after the Last Supper. Jesus left the Supper and went into the Garden. He knew the grueling ordeal He would have to endure. In His human nature He sweat blood and cried out: "Father if possible let this cup pass from me but not my will but thine be done."

How often do we anticipate some really bad things: crosses that may happen in our lives? It is the real 'crosses' in our lives that we have to carry. Unfortunately the human propensity to think irrationally and have distorted cognitions make carrying our crosses that much more difficult than it would be in reality.

Irrationality and distorted cognitions serve as psychological barriers to our sanctification. Errors in thinking lead humans to create scenarios that may never be. Often these scenarios are linked in a downward cascade or spiral of scenes leading to anticipated events (with no realistic foundation) which by another thinking error is "over-evaluated" as something more than 100% bad, awful, terrible and catastrophic.

Needless anxiety and depression of irrationality and distorted thinking processes are frequently the consequences. Instead of carrying the real crosses Our Lord allows us to face in our lives, we end up carrying fictitious crosses we ourselves create by our own 'faulty thinking.' This impedes our deification when we allow these emotional reactions to erode our love of God, dependency on Him and hope for our salvation.

Before taking up the real crosses in our lives, followers of Christ should do a mental inventory of the reality base of what are thought of as crosses. Unreal crosses are arrived at by our own faulty thinking. We may be given partial ambiguous information about something and we draw a conclusion (unreal scenario) based on this.

A clinical example will illustrate this process. A parent receives a note from his/her child's teacher stating the child is having behavior problems in school. (Note how general and abstract description is: in my own clinical experience I have found teachers [and parents] frequently communicate in general terms [which provides no real information]) This is fertile ground for the parent to create scenarios. My child is hanging out with a drug crowd > My child is taking drugs > My child will fail in school > My child's whole life will be useless > This is terrible and awful > God how could you allow this > I cannot pray to you anymore > Why go to church and receive the holy mysteries. etc.

Any time scenarios are created by us in any area of life (family, school, relationships, health, employment etc. we should do a "reality check cognitive evaluation." Three questions are helpful: Where is the evidence? Is there any other way of looking at it? Is it as bad as it seems? Actually getting these answers frequently entails getting real information about problems we encounter in life.

There are real crosses in life. Let us make sure we pick up the real not fictitious ones. We can then apply our psychological strengths and spiritual efforts on the crosses which are real.

Our inclination will always be (for fictitious or real crosses) "let this cup pass from me". Our weak human nature wants us to complain, groan moan, show anger, despair or depression. How many of us go the step further and say "But Father not my will but thine be done." ...

it will be hard but I am ready to accept what you are going to give me. Give me the strength to do this; to accept your will.

Jesus was arrested and condemned to death. Now is the time for us to accept our condemnation. The apostles and disciples in the Gospels, where gazing upon the Crucified Lord, learned how to love God above all creation and give their lives for others; We can learn in our own life as Our Lord showed us from His Cross: good can conquer evil, forgiveness can cancel retribution; and our hearts can be opened to all mankind, soothing and comforting the infirm, physically when we can, but always spiritually.

Despite human fear Jesus accepted His cross. He even, out of human weakness, fell. But He got up again. He looked up to the Father, told the women of Jerusalem not to weep for themselves but for their children. He allowed Simon the Cyrene to help him.[a great lesson here is we in the name of Christ and out of love can aid each other in carrying our crosses and achieve sanctification]. Most of all despite the falls Jesus kept going.

If our cross were our actual physical murder (or murder of a loved one), could any of us call for the forgiveness of our killer, while falling and nailed to this cross? This is what Jesus did. "Father forgive them for they know not what they do. Clinically and pastorally many times someone has told me about some "slight" just received but cannot forgive. Yet in utter misery the Savior of the world, Almighty God Himself was able to reach out and ask forgiveness for His tormentors and killers.

Think of the worst sin you have ever committed. Jesus took his cross for that sin. Think of the worst sin you could think of that would be possible for someone to commit on this earth. Multiply this sin to almost infinity. Jesus took up His cross to forgive that sin. He took up His cross to forgive every sin we have ever committed and will ever commit.

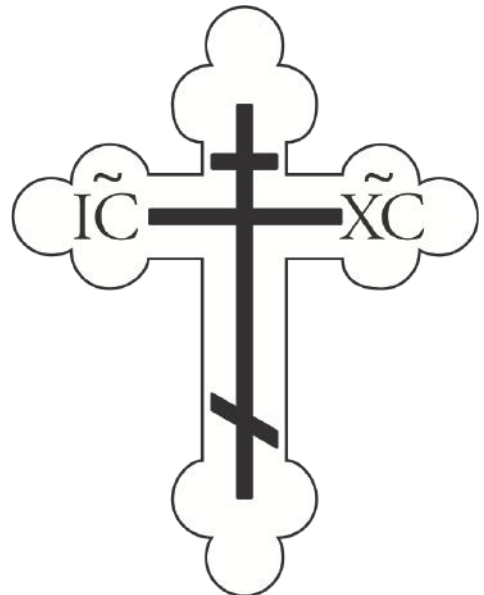
"Is any servant greater than his master?" Not only are we to willingly carry the crosses God allows in our lives we are to at the same time continue to love Him, be dependent on Him

and love and serve others and forgive them. Triumphant over sin He conquered death. By our cross, if we carry it as Jesus did, we conquer death.

One more key. Jesus is both God and man. We are only creatures: Man. We have to do what the penitent thief did: Repent. We have to acknowledge our sinfulness "Truly we deserve our punishment ...but this man did nothing": We have the Holy Mystery of Confession .. .Every time we miss it we act as the arrogant thief...we condemn ourselves. If we proclaim our sinfulness the priest echoes Our Lord's words on the cross to the "good thief" "...I unworthy priest forgive and absolve you for all your sins and transgressions"... "today you will be with me in paradise."

V. Rev. Fr. George Morelli Ph.D. was a licensed Clinical Psychologist and Marriage and Family Therapist, Coordinator of the Chaplaincy and Pastoral Counseling Ministry of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese, and Religion Coordinator (and Antiochian Archdiocesan Liaison) of the Orthodox Christian Association of Medicine, Psychology and Religion.

He fell asleep in the Lord on March 16, 2021





WHAT IS CATECHETICAL SUNDAY?

It is the Sunday when our parish community is called to make a public commitment to continue its efforts to bring the Good

News to all segments of the parish. This commitment is made concrete through the affirmation and recognition of all those who are directly responsible for carrying out the religious education programs and activities of the parish. This day also presents an opportunity for all the faithful to look at what they have been given and think of ways for them to contribute to the essential teaching mission of the Church.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN A PARISH?

"The whole Church must feel responsible and must wish to be responsible" (*Catechesi Tradendae*) to carry out the catechetical task. But, the Church's members have different responsibilities in that task according to their mission and preparation. Not only the pope, bishops, priests, religious, and catechists, but parents and singles — everyone who is a member of the Church — must feel compelled to make a contribution to the teaching mission of the Church.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO CONTRIBUTE?

IF YOU ARE A SENIOR CITIZEN:

You are the fruit of the vine. The entire community can enjoy the wisdom and skills of your years of growing and loving. Within the religious education program of the parish, there is a variety of projects and celebrations that require preparation of materials, decorations, and food that you can help with in your spare time.

IF YOU ARE A PARENT:

Your responsibility is crucial by reason of your proximity to your children. You are the primary catechist by your example, love, forgiveness, patience, generosity, fairness, and prayerfulness.

You are also called to ensure that your children take part in the programs provided for their specific age needs and that you give them the assistance and support required for their happy and willing involvement in the program.

IF YOU ARE SINGLE:

The energy and creativity of your singleness can have a limitless impact on the Church. You can participate in any adult program your parish offers in order to facilitate your growth in the faith through a deeper understanding and interior commitment to the message of Christ and His mission today. Or you can inquire about joining the formation programs made available so that you can become a catechist or an aid in the programs with children or youth.

IF YOU ARE A YOUTH:

The Church has a treasure in your commitment. You can be the Church's principal witness to the youths who have not found themselves and who grope for clarity and meaning in the wrong places. Through your interest and participation in the opportunities provided by your parish for your human and spiritual growth as a Christian, you can be a powerful example and inspiration to others. If such opportunities are available in your parish, become a part of them.

IF YOU ARE A CHILD:

Jesus loved to bless and welcome the children of the villages He visited when He was in Palestine. He told us we had to become like you in order to be part of His kingdom. Your enthusiasm, interest, generosity and determination to learn and grow will be a source of inspiration to your family as well as to those who are eager to help you become the best person God wants you to be.

EVERYONE can and should pray for the success of the efforts of our committed parish team that will be responsible for carrying out all the religious education programs of the parish.

Synaxarion of the Holy Great Martyr Niketas the Goth

Verses

*To Niketas. Niketas is enflamed and becomes a victory-bearer,
Or we should rather say a fire-bearing victory-bearer.
On the fifteenth, Niketas was cast into the furnace.*

To the Holy Martyrs who contested with St. Niketas.

*A pious multitude contested in Gothia,
Casting the barbarians out of their minds.*

He was an offshoot of the illustrious race of the Goths, who were located beyond the Istros River [modern day Danube], during the reign of Constantine the Great [306-337]. He was taught the pious faith as a child from the Bishop of that place named Makarios. Having been raised piously and nobly, he taught those of his own race to also believe, and to conduct themselves pious and virtuously. He also piously believed and lived virtuously, and became a preacher and teacher of the truth to all. Because the impious Athenarichos, the ruler and head of one section of the Gothic race (they were divided into two sections), was defeated with much shame by Phrikigerni, the ruler of the other section of the Goths, with the help and alliance of the divine Cross and the Roman army, as time passed he revived and strengthened once more, and with great madness the defiled one went against the pious Christians. He punished them with barbaric and unbearable punishments. The villain did not do this alone, but he ordered also those under him to imitate his own madness and savageness against the Christians.

Because the Martyr of Christ Niketas was increasing his preaching of the gospel, and proclaiming the faith of Christ illustriously, for this reason he was suddenly and forcefully captured by those Goths while he was teaching. Then he was urged to deny Christ, but because he was not persuaded, they crushed all the members of his body. Though he was being muzzled by this punishment, he proclaimed Christ all the more. For this he was cast into a fire. In this way the true victory-bearer of Christ Niketas received the unfading crown of martyrdom, along with many others of his fellow Goths. His holy relic was indicated by a star to a friend and acquaintance of his named Marianus. He brought it to the land known as Mopsuestia, where Niketas was honored with a magnificent temple, and with other honorable testimonies through the working of various miracles.

Apolytikion in the Third Tone

Thou didst defeat error and triumph in martyrdom, Niketas namesake of victory: for thou didst conquer the ranks of the enemy and end thy contest by fire. Pray to Christ our God to grant us His great mercy.

Kontakion in the Second Tone

Thou didst stand firm and defeat delusion and hast received thy Martyr's crown, O Niketas, namesake of victory; thou art rejoicing with the Angels. Together with them pray unceasingly to Christ our God to save our souls

Holy Angels Byzantine Catholic Church

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Fr. Deacon Jonathan A. Deane

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Facebook: [Holy Angels Byzantine Catholic Church](https://www.facebook.com/HolyAngelsByzantineCatholicChurch)

Parish Advisory Council:

Bruce Bitsko, Nelson Chase, Fr. Deacon Jonathan Deane, Joel Espedal, Janet Greenwell, Daniele Laman, Olena Bankston

Finance Council:

Al Aparicio, Fr. Deacon Jonathan Deane, Bob Greenwell, Paul Washicko

Bless, O Lord, the worship and Stewardship of your faithful servants:

Adult tithes: \$1365.00; Loose Change: \$40.10; Church Usage: \$200.00; Gift Shop: \$92.00;

Total: \$1647.10

Vocation Icon: This week: Chase Family
Next week: Aparicio Family

Please sign up in the narthex to host the vocation icon.

THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF PHOENIX

SUBSCRIBES TO THE

*Charter for the Protection of
Children and Young People*

adopted by the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops.

The Eparchy, within all its parishes, institutions and programs, is committed to assuring a safe environment in ministry for its children and vulnerable adults that conforms to the Charter for Protection of Children and Young People.

For additional information regarding the eparchial Safe Environment Program or to report any incidents of concerns, please contact:

Fr. Dcn. Michael Hanafin

Victim Assistance Coordinator

Cell: (480) 307-5182 -- email: vac@ephx.org

- or -

Sbdcn. Paul F. Kilroy

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