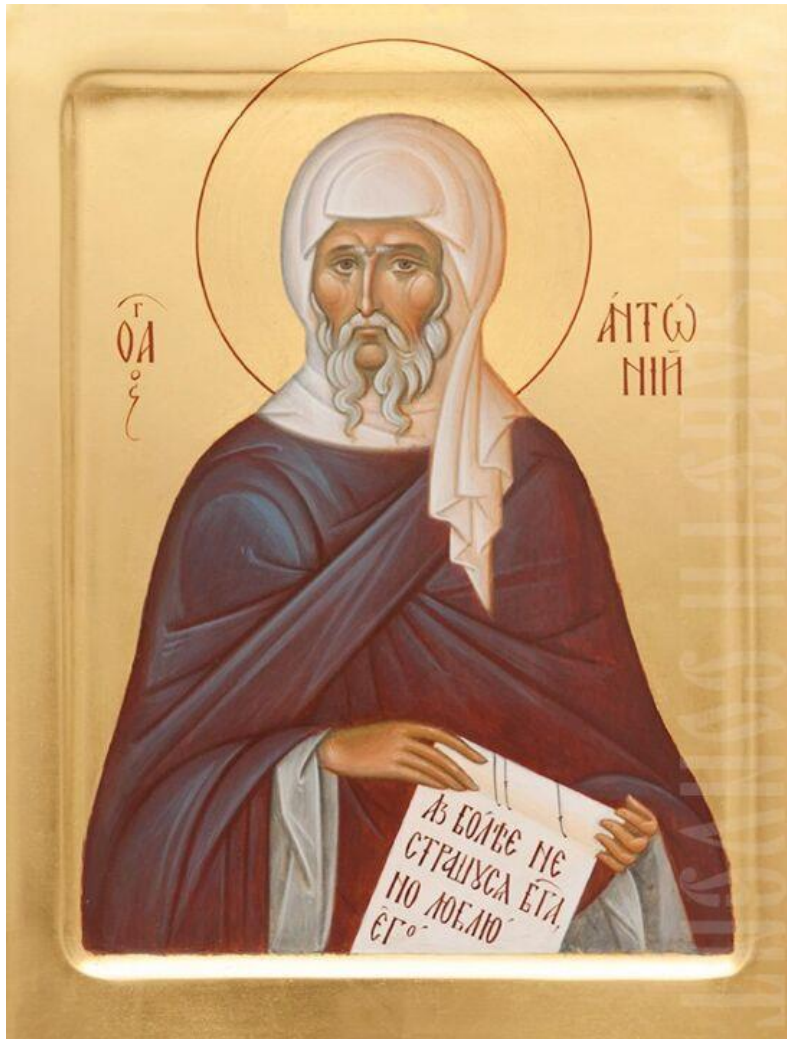


**St Ignatius of Antioch
Melkite Greek Catholic Church
1003 Merry Street
Augusta, Georgia 30904
706 364-6219**



January 15, 2023



St. Anthony the Great
(January 17th)

THE LORD JESUS SAID to the rich young ruler, “*You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me*” (Lk 18:22). This young man declined, but others through the centuries have left all and followed Him. In times of persecution they followed Him to the cross (or the sword, the wild beasts, or the flames) as martyrs. But what if there is no persecution – how can one follow Christ?”

A number of early Christians sought to follow Him into the wilderness. Ascetics, both men and women, left their homes and withdrew from society to follow the One who had said, “*Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head*” (Lk 9:58). The first to do so, like St Takla, the first woman martyr, left their homes to dwell outside their town or village in relative

seclusion. Two others, whom the Church remembers this week, went further than that.

The first, St Paul of Thebes (January 15), is revered as the first hermit in Egypt. *During the persecution of Decius Paul fled to the Theban desert where he lived in a cave for almost 100 years before his death in 342.*

We know more about the second, St Anthony the Great (January 17), the “father of monks” whose life was written by his contemporary, St Athanasius the Great, Archbishop of Alexandria. This work was soon translated into numerous languages and spread the fame of St Anthony and of the ascetic life throughout the Churches of East and West.

“Sell all that you have...”

Anthony (c. 251-356) was the son of landowners from the village of Coma on the Nile, south of Alexandria. When he was 18 years old, his parents died, leaving his unmarried sister in his care. A few months later he had what we might call a “Conversion Experience” while attending the

Liturgy in the village church. He heard the Gospel passage quoted at the start of this article and, as St Athanasius tells it, “As though God had put him in mind of the Saints, and the passage had been read on his account, Anthony went out immediately from the church, and gave the possessions of his forefathers to the villagers— they were three hundred acres, productive and very fair— that they should be no more an obstruction to himself and his sister. And all the rest that was movable he sold, and having got together much money he gave it to the poor, reserving a little however for his sister's sake.”

Soon after he felt called to a more ascetic way of life. Placing his sister in the care of “known and faithful virgins,” Anthony began living in solitude outside his village, visiting any nearby ascetics and studying their way of life. When he was about 35, he settled among the tombs at the edge of the Western Desert, giving himself over to prayer and fasting. A friend bringing him bread one day found him collapsed outside the tomb and brought him back to the village. St Athanasius says that Anthony had a divine visitation in which he was told, “since you have endured, and have not been overcome, I will always help you, and will make your name known everywhere.” Having heard this, Antony arose and prayed, and received such strength that he perceived that he had more power in his body than formerly.”

20 Years at Deir al-Meimun

As soon as Anthony recovered he headed further into the desert, settling in the ruins of an abandoned fort in the mountains on the other side of the Nile. Friends would come to bring him food but he would not leave the fort, speaking to them through a slit in the wall. St Athanasius says that these friends often heard him beset by demons and that they “used often to come expecting to find him dead, and would hear him singing, ‘Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered, let them that hate Him flee before His face. As smoke vanishes, let them vanish; as wax melts before the face of fire, so let the sinners perish from the face of God;’ and again, ‘All nations compassed me about, and in the name of the Lord I requited them.’”

Anthony’s reputation spread over the years and people increasingly came to see him, hoping to imitate his way of life. After twenty years “Anthony came forth, as from a shrine, initiated in the mysteries and filled with the Spirit of God. Then for the first time he was seen outside the fort by those who came to see him. And they,



when they saw him, wondered at the sight, for he looked as he had years before. He was neither fat, like a man without exercise, nor lean from fasting and striving with the demons. He was just the same as they had known him before his retirement.”

Anthony now encouraged others to settle nearby and adopt his way of life. The numbers so increased that, as Athanasius says, “cells arose even in the mountains, and the desert was colonized by monks.”

Forays to Alexandria

Although other monks leaved nearby, Anthony still lived in seclusion for most of the time, coming together with them for occasional worship and instruction. He first left this place of solitude in 311, during the persecution of Maximinus when Christians were being rounded up and taken to Alexandria. He presented himself publicly in the city but no one dared touch him. He spent some time ministering to the suffering Christians there. When the persecution ceased, he then returned to his cell.

Anthony now resolved to return to solitude. He settled further into the mountains and allowed other monks to bring him food once a month. He would descend to the other monks from time to time to instruct and encourage them in their monastic life.

Anthony returned to Alexandria to refute the rumor that he sided with the Arians. He publicly denounced the Arian teaching, calling it the forerunner of the antichrist. During his stay there he healed many and freed others from demons.

As the years progressed more and more people came to live the monastic life in Anthony's shadow. His fame even reached Emperor Constantine and his sons who wrote to him seeking guidance. Anthony lived to be 105. His body was placed in an unmarked grave, as he directed.

Asceticism and Us

What does the witness of St Anthony – and of the ascetic life in general – say to people in the world? We are all called to follow Christ, if not to a martyr's death or to a foreign mission, but where is He leading us? St Paul gives us this answer: *"If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth"* (Col 3:1, 2).

Asceticism is essentially a refocusing of our hearts away from "things on the earth" to enable us to develop our relationship to Christ where He is now. While people in the world have important family and career responsibilities, we also have a great deal of free time which we devote to recreation or entertainment of one sort or another. In our society we are increasingly addicted to non-stop music, TV or Internet, with their increasingly godless atmosphere. What time do we have left for prayer, Scripture reading or service? What spirit do we have left for relishing fellowship with God? Asceticism for us might well involve turning from such pursuits at least in part to set our minds *"on things above, where Christ is."*

Sunday Collections

Attendance	Date	Collection
19	November 20, 2022	
16	November 27, 2022	240.00
26	December 4, 2022	20.00
---	December 11, 2022	---
21	December 18, 2022	2,132.00
24	December 25, 2022	349.00
20	January 1, 2023	1,277.00
27	January 8, 2023	340.00

Divine Liturgy Intentions: For the Living:

Bishop Francois, Fr. Eugene Mitchell, Fr. James Graham, David Mangelsdorf, Brian Frank, Maria Barklage, Nookid Graham, Ali de la Vega, Jan Munn, A Special Parish Intention, Medical Personnel and First Responders

For the Dead:

Announcements

We are live-streaming on our Facebook page at the following days & times:

Friday 6:00 PM Weekday Vespers

Saturday - 6:00PM Great Vespers

Sunday – 9:00AM Orthros & 10:00AM Divine Liturgy

HOUSE BLESSINGS! With the Feast of Theophany and the blessing of Holy Water we now begin the season of blessing homes between now and the start of Great Lent. Let Father Michael when you'd like him to come and bless your house.

PRAYER OPPORTUNITES AROUND TOWN –Most Holy Trinity parish will be hosting a Men's Holy Hour every Friday morning from 6-7am. There will also be a coffee hour and reflection time afterwards – Men from all parishes are invited to attend for whatever portion of the time they are available. For the Ladies – St. Joseph's will be hosting a Women's Holy Hour on the first Monday of each month at 7pm.

Resurrectional Troparion

(Tone 7)



You des-troyed Death by Your Cross, You o-pened Par-a-



- dise to the thief. You changed the weep-ing of



the Myrrh-bear-ers, and com-man-ded Your A-pos-tles to



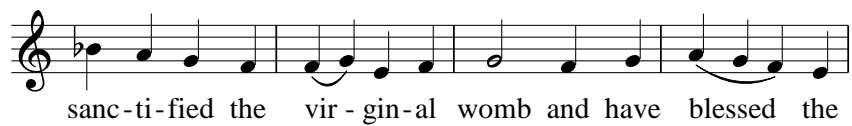
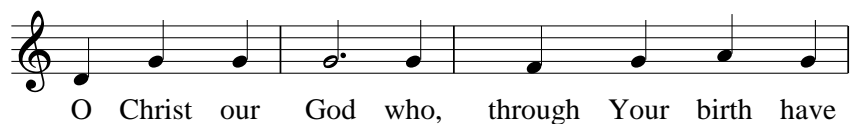
pro-claim that You, O Christ God have ri-sen



gran-ting to the world great mer-cy.

Kondakion of Hypapanty

(Tone 1)



Prokimenon

Reader: How great are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have wrought them all!

All: How great are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have wrought them all!

Reader: Bless the Lord, O my soul! You are very great indeed, O Lord my God!

All: How great are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have wrought them all!

Reader: How great are your works, O Lord!

All: In wisdom you have wrought them all!

Readings for the Week:

Monday:	Hebrews 8:7-13	Mark 8:11-21
Tuesday:	Hebrews 9:8-23	Mark 8:22-26
Wednesday:	Hebrews 10:1-18	Mark 8:30-34
Thursday:	Hebrews 10:35-11:7	Mark 9:9-15
Friday:	Hebrews 11:8-16	Mark 9:32-40
Saturday:	Ephesians 5:1-8	Luke 14:1-11

Jan. 15: Holy Fathers Paul of Thebes and John the Hut-Dweller
Jan. 16: Veneration of the Chains of St. Peter
Jan. 17: Holy Father Anthony the Great
Jan. 18: Holy Fathers Athanasios and Cyril, Archbishops of Alexandria
Jan. 19: Holy Fathers Macarios the Egyptian and Arsenios, Archbishop of Corcyre
Jan. 20: Holy Father Euthymios the Great
Jan. 21: Holy Father Maximus the Confessor; the Holy Martyr Neophyte
Jan. 22: Holy Apostle Timothy; Holy Martyr Anastasios the Persian

Word Search

B	Z	M	A	S	T	E	R	T	S	X	Y	Y	L	W
Y	B	H	V	F	E	J	W	B	X	L	T	P	P	J
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Arise
Clean
Faith
Foreigner
Glorifying
Jesus
Lepers
Master
Nine

Pity
Priests
Samaritan
Saved
Ten
Thanks
Village
Voice

Parish Information:

Rt. Rev. Michael Skrocki, JCD
Pastor

abounamike@aol.com

Knights of Columbus **JFK Council**

1st Wednesday of the month, 7pm.

Odd-numbered months at St. Ignatios

Even-numbered months here at Most Holy Trinity

4th Degree Assembly

2nd Wednesday of the month, 7pm

Odd-numbered months at Most Holy Trinity

Even-numbered months here at St. Ignatios

Publicans Prayer Group

Postponed until Further Notice

New Parishioners:

Please register with Fr. Michael.

Mystery of Holy Confession

Please contact Fr. Michael to set up a convenient time.

Mystery of Christian Initiation

Expectant parents should notify Fr. Michael prior to the birth of the child. Adult converts should contact Fr. Michael so arrangements may be made for any necessary instruction and sacraments.

Mystery of Holy Crowning

Those planning to marry should notify the Fr. Michael
at least six months prior to the desired Wedding date.

Mystery of Holy Anointing

Please notify Fr. Michael when you or a family member is in need of anointing.

To report sexual abuse by clergy, parish personnel or volunteers of the Eparchy of Newton,
please call the Victim Assistance Coordinator at 1-800-479-5910.

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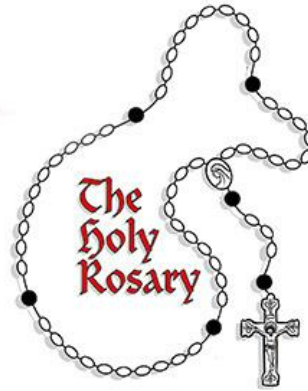
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