

# HOLY CROSS-SAINTS CONSTANTINE AND HELEN

## GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

NOVEMBER 10, 2013

### Hymns of the Day

#### Apolytikion

Let the Heavens rejoice; let earthly things be glad; for the Lord hath wrought might with His arm, He hath trampled upon death by death. The first-born of the dead hath He become. From the belly of Hades hath He delivered us, and hath granted great mercy to the world.

#### Apolytikia of the Temple

#### Holy Cross

Save O Lord, O Lord Your people, and bless Your inheritance. Grant Victory to the faithful against the adversaries of the faith, and protect Your people through Your Holy Cross, Your Holy Cross.

#### Saints Constantine and Helen

Having seen the image of Thy Cross in Heaven, and, like Paul, who received the call that did not come from a human, Thine apostle among kings, O Lord, entrusted the reigning city to Thy hand; and keep it in peace for ever; through the intercessions of the Theotokos, only Friend of mankind.

#### Kontakion (Seasonal)

Today, the most pure temple of the Savior, the precious bridal chamber and Virgin, the sacred treasure of God, enters the house of the Lord, bringing the grace of the Divine Spirit. The Angels of God praise her. She is the heavenly tabernacle.

### Epistle and Gospel Readings

St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 1:11-19

BRETHREN, I would have you know that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.



#### 8th Sunday of Luke

#### The Gospel of Luke 10:25-37

At that time, a lawyer stood up to put Jesus to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read?" And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have answered right; do this, and you will live."

But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed mercy on him." And Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

### Upcoming Services/ Events

**Monday, November 11, 2013 @ 1:00 PM-** Youth Service Day

**Tuesday, November 12, 2013 @ 6:30 PM-** Parish Council Meeting

**Saturday, November 16, 2013 @ 10:00 AM- 2:00 PM-** Parish Bake Sale

## In Our Prayers

Lola Gulas  
Zvertoohi Grigorian  
Charles Merciea's granddaughter, Bailey  
Belainesh Franz's brother Ayalew  
Markela Hatzakis  
Cleo Costas  
Isaiah & Rebekka Austin  
Jason Bardis's Parents  
Lynn Ambrose  
Dino Jacovides  
George Halkias' Mother  
All those whose sickness and suffering is known only to God.

## Special Thanks

Prosforon: Ann Helba  
Coffee Hour: TBD

## Welcome

We would like to welcome all visitors to our Parish and invite everyone to please join us next door in the Fellowship Hall for Coffee Hour.

### **The Spiritual Roots of Altruism: The Good Samaritan**

By Fr. George Morelli

Psychologists typically define altruism as a selfless interest for the good and welfare of others, that leads to such prosocial behaviors as cooperation, helping and sharing. Those who display courage and generosity especially in the face of barriers are considered heroically altruistic. Psychological explanations for altruism include those drawn from the relatively new sub-specialty of psychology called evolutionary psychology. This sub-specialty has an affinity with, and draws from anthropology, archeology, artificial intelligence, behavioral ecology, cognitive psychology, ethology, evolutionary biology, genetics and zoology. Such psychological explanations provide evidence that altruistic behavior helps to perpetuate the gene pool as more people survive when mutually aiding one another (Buss, 1995); that reciprocal benefit works to the welfare of all Trivers, 1971); that people inherit altruistic genes (Rushton, Fulker, Neale, Nias & Eysenck, 1986), and that modeling occurs as individuals tend to imitate those who are rewarded for prosocial, in this case altruistic behavior (Eisenberg, 1992, Morelli, 2005).

### **Christ's Counsel**

It is possible that God may have used cooperative behavior as part of a process of natural selection since cooperation ensures the stability and longevity of the human race. For Orthodox Christians however, such explanations are at best partial and incomplete. Orthodox Christian anthropology sees the possibility of synergy, that is, a cooperation between the grace of God and human nature. St. Maximus the Confessor reminded us that "grace builds upon nature" (Morelli, 2006).

Human nature is such that when man cooperates with God, altruism can rise to high levels (heroic altruism) that exceed the mundane levels of social cooperation. The overriding motive for true committed Christians is the love of God and all mankind that reaches from the depths of our hearts with the same love that God loves us. The Holy Evangelist Luke reports the condition of this love: "But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return" (Luke 6:35, emphasis added).

Jesus teaches us about divine altruism in the gospel incident of the lawyer putting Jesus "to the test." St. Luke recorded: And behold, a lawyer stood up to put Him (Jesus) to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read?" And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And He said to him, "You have answered right; do this, and you will live (Luke 10: 25-28)."

The Holy Evangelist Luke then gave his hearers the "Parable of the Good Samaritan," as told by Jesus. The Samaritan, an outcast and scorned by the Jews, helped a man beaten by robbers and left for dead. Before the Samaritan arrived the almost dead man was overlooked by both a Levite and priest. Following this Jesus asked: "Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbor to the man...?" He said, 'The one who showed mercy on him.' And Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise'" (Luke 10:29--37).

### **Divine altruism**

St. Gregory the Dialogist commenting on this parable said, "Godly love cannot be perfect unless a man love his neighbor also. Under which name must be included not only those who are connected with us by friendship or neighborhood, but absolutely all men with whom we have a common nature, whether they be foes or allies, slaves or free."

An example of this unbounded Godly love is the contemporary saintly priest Fr. Arseny. Fr. Arseny was incarcerated in a Soviet gulag for most of his priestly life. His beatings were to death. One time a gulag supervisor named Odiznov called on Fr. Arseny to betray a conspiracy. The saintly monk refused. "Oh, my dear you have no idea what awaits you right now!" said the guard. "Lord help me" Fr. Arseny cried as a strong blow hit him in his face and he fell to the floor unconscious. He thought his life was over. Odiznov was going to beat him to death. During some momentary bursts of consciousness Fr. Arseny felt blows, kicks in the face by boots, and the beating of a metal belt buckle. In those short moments he awoke he prayed to the mother of God"

Compare Fr. Arseny to the man almost beaten to death by the robbers. This holy man is both the victim and the Good Samaritan at the same time. Fr. Arseny's teachings and practice even to those who beat him were, "Remember the words of the Apostle Paul: 'Bear each other's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.' Only by goodness can you win over evil."

Who did Fr. Arseny help? Everyone. In the typical barracks were political prisoners, sociopaths, and sadistic criminals. The latter would steal, rob and beat others especially the new, young arrivals. Fr. Arseny would stand in between one and the other almost got beaten to death himself on numerous occasions. If a criminal was hurt he would tend to him. He also was kind and gentle to the prison guards and supervisors. Fr. Arseny engaged in constant prayer for the worst of the worst.