



Weekly Bulletin

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

A Community of the Orthodox Church in America

Witnessing to the Apostolic Faith in Lake County for 35 Years

Father Andrew Clements, Pastor

Volume 23

2009

Number 40

Sunday	Oct 4	<i>17th Sunday after Pentecost / Tone 8 / Hieromartyr Hierotheus, Bishop of Athens</i>	
		9:00 am	Church School
		10:00 am	Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour
Saturday	Oct 10	<i>Martyrs Eulampius & Eulampia</i>	
		6:30 pm	Vigil Confession
Sunday	Oct 11	<i>18th Sunday after Pentecost / Tone 1 / Frs of the 7th Ecumenical Council</i>	
		Readings:	2 Cor 9:6-11 John 17:1-13
		9:00 am	Church School
		10:00 am	Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour

ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP / Sept 27

Attendance: (Adults 112, Children 40)	152
Operating	\$3,778.00
Uganda Children	400.00
Parking Lot	255.00
Icons	100.00
Project Mexico	180.00
Pavillion	25.00
Parish Charities	165.00

NO ADULT CLASS

The Class will not meet this week due to Fr Andrew's attendance at the Diocesan Assembly in Kansas City, Kansas.

DURING FR'S ABSENCE

Please keep Fr Andrew & Ruth Bede in your prayers as they travel this week to the Diocesan Assembly. For emergencies contact Fr Stephen Callos from SS Constantine & Helen at: 216-932-3300 or 216-291-0185.

PLEDGE RESULTS

Thanks to all who returned their Pledge Cards last week. We had a 69% response but need to receive the rest in a timely manner by Oct 11 so the Budget Committee can get to work.

YOUTH & TEEN GROUP OUTING

Next Sunday, Oct 11 a Youth & Teen Group hayride will take place. Everyone will meet at Richard Mirauntz's house at 4:00 pm. Hot Dogs will be provided but please let Cindy Klinar know if you will participate and what sides you can bring.

PROJECT MEXICO NOTE

To insure a slot for next year with Project Mexico we are in need of an adult Team Leader who can commit

at this time. If you are able to do so, please see Ken Walker ASAP.

PRAYER CORNER ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

----- **For Healing / Well Being:** -----

- Child Zachary (Chris J's grandson)
- Elenor Alexander (Tom's mom)
- Infant Jackson & parents Jeremy & Cara
- NB Liam & Parents Erin & Sheri
- Amy & Rick (UBC)
- Charlie & Dawn (UBC)
- Kristen & Chris (UBC)
- Joe & Kristy (UBC)
- Brenna Shaffer (Klinar friend)
- Jean Flynn (Mary Ellen's sis-in-law)
- Vera Campbell (Deb's mom)
- Tom Alusheff
- Margarette (Elaine T's mom)
- Ben Somerlot (Renda friend)
- Evelyn Frye (Heim friend)
- Pangiotis Theophylactus
- Peter Vitantonio (Mark J's cousin)
- Mary Ellen Sabol
- Connie Dirksin (Darrah friend)
- Steve Patterson (Christani friend)
- Pat Spreitzer
- George Ursinyi (Janet's dad)
- Newly Illumined George
- Barbara Hall (Debbie C's sister)
- Bob Klinar
- Cindy Renda

----- **Memory Eternal** -----

- Thomas (Anna D's friend, 9/13)
- John Dabrowolski (Marie J's dad, 9/23)
- Fr Michael Conrad

Who Created Hell?

by Fr Vladimir Berzonsky

"Hell was not created by God, but by His creatures and their refusal of His love; and that God equally loves those in hell, but His love is inoperative where it is rejected" (St. Isaac the Syrian)

Why would a loving God allow evil to exist, or to condemn some human beings to an eternity of darkness and hell? So often this is put to believers with the presumption taken for granted that the Creator planned such a place of torment from the beginning. The premise is wrong. Sin, separation and an eternity of hell come from the decision of the human being to exist apart from the Lord Almighty and His love for everything created by Him. The choice is ours. God loves every person ever created, but in creating the human being He did not make us robots programmed to respond with affection. His love is so enormous and mysterious that we are offered the option to accept and return that love with our own, or to reject Him and it. In an ironic way, to exist apart from God eternally is a gift also. *"Paradise is looking at God's face. Hell is having to look always at Satan's face."* N. Basarab

The Creator God blessed the human creature with four gifts: Two that are ours regardless of how we use them — existence and everlasting existence. We shall live through this lifetime and into eternity despite our life style, regardless whether we return God's love for us or choose to reject it. That involves the other gifts: forgiveness of sin and union with God. We have free will, the freedom of choice. We can repent of sins and go on to unity with the uncreated Being of divinity offered to us not as God's very essence, but through the energies of the Holy Trinity reaching out to us.

Why would any sensible person decide against loving the Lord of love? Who would not want to spend eternity gazing on the countenance of the Almighty and radiate His love with the love of our own, like the moon mirroring the sun's light? It does happen that sin repeated enough times becomes a pattern that one defends and justifies, even mocking those who live for Christ and strive to serve the Holy Trinity through kind acts towards all creatures on earth and even the very earth itself. For example, analyze the parable of Lazarus and the rich man [Luke 16:19-31]:

"There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores, and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table.... The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died...in hell where he was in torment he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus at his side.... 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip his finger in water and cool my tongue.'"

The rich man goes nameless, since there are countless like him. He never noticed Lazarus outside his mansion. Lazarus was just an object to be ignored or tolerated. Even in the afterlife he considered Lazarus a potential servant across the chasm that separated them. *"Send Lazarus...because I am in agony!"* Always the all-important "I," just as it was on earth. No remorse, no repentance, not even the thought of how it happened that he was far from *"Abraham's side."* His concern extended only to his family yet on earth. Another command: *"Send Lazarus to my father's house"* [16:27].

Abraham refused the request. The five brothers had ample time to repent, to study Moses and the prophets and to change their ways, but they would not, *"even if someone rises from the dead."* One lifetime is enough time to know oneself, to evaluate the values that matter, and to learn the Source of love, then to return that love from the Holy Trinity so that it becomes a way of life and life everlasting.