



Weekly Bulletin

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

A Community of the Orthodox Church in America

Witnessing to the Apostolic Faith in Lake County for over 45 Years

Father Andrew Clements, Pastor

Volume 34

2020

Number 7

Sunday	Feb 16	<i>35th Sunday after Pentecost / Tone 2 / The Prodigal Son</i>
		9:00 am Church School
		10:00 am Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour
Friday	Feb 21	<i>Meatfare Friday</i>
		6:30 pm Vespers of the Departed
Saturday	Feb 22	<i>Meatfare Saturday</i>
		9:30 am Liturgy of the Departed
		5:30 pm Great Vespers
Sunday	Feb 23	<i>36th Sunday after Pentecost / Tone 3 / Meatfare Sunday / The Last Judgment</i>
		Readings: 1 Cor 8:8-9:2 Mt 25:31-46
		9:00 am Church School
		10:00 am Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour

ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP / Feb 9

Attendance: (Adults 119, Children 33)	152
Operating	\$3,281.00
OCA Assessments	784.00
Uganda Children	45.00
Maintenance	120.00
Charities	100.00
Icons	13.00

TUESDAY EVENING ADULT CLASS

The Class will meet this Tuesday, Feb 18 at 6:30 pm to continue our unit on Icons with Fr Dcn Brian.

COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, Feb 20 at 6:30 pm.

MEATFARE CYCLE

The Meatfare Cycle will be served beginning with the Vespers of the Departed on Friday, Feb 21 at 6:30 pm and the Liturgy of the Departed on Saturday the 22nd at 9:30 am. This is the Great Commemoration of the Departed in the Orthodox Church and all others are modeled upon it. Wheat will be blessed after Liturgy and a Coffee Hour will be held. Please see Subdeacon Daniel if you need to make any additions to your family's List of the Departed. Each name is read aloud during the Liturgy.

ORDINATION TO TAKE PLACE HERE

On Saturday, March 14, Bishop Paul will be with us for Liturgy and to ordain Fr Dcn Brian to the Holy Priesthood. Bishop Paul has a specific assignment for Brian, in our own Cleveland Deanery, to transpire sometime in May. A small reception will take place in the hall afterwards. Please see Peggy Walker if you can be of help with this.

PRAYER CORNER + + + + +

Perry (Capitan), Sbdcn Leonard, John (Adam's nephew), Ted Geletka, Nina Stehnach (Fr's frnds), Julian, John Clements, Sarah Crivella, Alexandria (Dzura), Linda Peterman (Gloria H's cousin), Kristen Robinson, our Parish Faithful, the Furman family, suffering Christians in the Middle East.

Birthdays: Calin Lechinton (2/16), Laura Abernathy, Evangeline Kingsbury (2/17), Alexandra Walker, Ron Sieloff (2/21), Valerie Christani (2/22).

Newborns: Nathan (Joe & Jessica).

Expecting: Andy & Mara, Wes & Sarah, Matt & Lea, Ryan & Valeria, Cole & Sarah, Tom & Miranda, Mitch & Winnie, James & Lisa, Joe & Ashley, Vitaly & Luba.

Celebrating 50 Years of Autocephaly as The Orthodox Church in America

Reflections on the Creation Icon

by Dennis Bell

Introduction

One of the worst compliments one can pay an iconographer is, "My, isn't that original!" An artist is one who expresses himself. An iconographer is one who feels that there is nothing in his petty little life to express. He must become transparent to God to allow God to reveal Himself through our unworthy hands. So, as a rule, icons should follow an acceptable prototype whenever possible.

After doing much searching, however, I could not find a Creation icon that seemed to make much sense, so I prayed and read and re-read Genesis over and over until an understandable composition began to take form in my mind. The motif of circles is common in many icons (angelic powers, Christ Enthroned, etc.) and it seemed to lend itself well to the description.

Circle of Creation

"In the beginning, God made the heaven and the earth." (Gen 1;1) "The Spirit of God hovered over the face of the water." (Gen 1;2) "Then God said 'Let there be light', and there was light." (Gen 1 :3) God spoke the word, or Logos, to bring about creation. So in the first three verses of Genesis, you have reference to God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. DAY ONE. "and there was evening and morning, one day." Notice that the day begins at evening, or sundown. (Vespers, our evening service, culminates the current day, and inaugurates the new day. "Now that we have come to the setting of the sun, and behold the light of evening ... ") DAY TWO. God divided the waters under the firmament (seas) from the waters above the firmament (clouds and rain.) DAY THREE. God gathered the waters under the firmament together as seas so that dry land might appear, on which grew grass and trees bearing fruit after their own kind. DAY FOUR. On the fourth day, God lit up His creation with great lights in the sky; the sun to rule the day, and the moon and the stars by night. (here we see the danger of taking all scriptures literally and not sometimes allegorically.

We often consider a 24 hour day as happening between sunset to sunset (or for some people, sunrise to sunrise), except that the sun and moon weren't even created until the "4th Day! So how do we measure the previous days? We must be careful not to create a god in our image, to anthropomorphize God, or dictate to Him our understanding of things. "God, Mickey's big hand is already on the "9" so You only have fifteen minutes left to finish the Grand Canyon!" So what really is a day? Remember, A thousand (million?) days to man is but a day to God." (Ps 90;4, 2Pet 3;8) So, through analogy, the Neolithic Age might be one day; the Paleolithic Age - one day; the Age of Aquarius, one day. DAY FIVE. On the fifth day, God filled the seas with living creatures; fish of the sea, and birds of the air. DAY SIX. Day six saw living creatures, creeping things, cattle, and finally the culmination of creation, man (male and female) created in the image of God, to have dominion over the other animals of the earth and seas. (Ps 8:4-10) DAY SEVEN. "Then God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, and rested from all His work."

Personal Note

Coming up with an illustration to depict the seven days of creation didn't take too much imagination, but it was later pointed out to me by a good friend who noticed special relationship that I hadn't noticed, let alone planned. He noticed a balance of symmetry, a balance of opposites: Day 1 (dark to light) is opposite Day 4 (light to dark); Day 2 (water and sky) is opposite Day 5 (water and sky); Day 3 (dry land with plants bearing seed after their own kind) opposite Day 6 (animals bearing seed after their own kind). Thank you Joe for your inspired observation! The Icon Painter's Manuel calls for the seventh day to show God the Father resting on a couch, but tradition frowns on that, so I figured the book open to that scripture would represent the Eternal Logos, or Son of God, the Hand of God blessing, and the tongues of the Holy Spirit would indicate the manifestation or the work of the Holy Trinity in the act of creation.

Completion

A circle placed in the center of a rectangular wall will leave four corners open for development. So, upper left (Gen 2: 19-20) Adam names all the animals, but none was found to be a suitable companion, so God put Adam into a deep sleep and from his rib created Eve (upper right) (Gen 2:21-25). It has been observed that God made Eve after Adam to show Adam that God is creator, because by then everything else had already been created. Adam needed "proof." Adam needed to see God create Eve to learn who is the maker, and to recognize God as his own creator.

But more importantly, the creation of Eve from Adam's rib shows the fundamental relationship between man and woman; their oneness of essence, or HOMOIOUSIOS, the same term used to describe the relationship between Christ and God the Father - same essence, identical nature, but individual persons. So humanity reflects the same relationship as the Trinity - a communion of persons sharing an identical essence, in one case human nature, in the other, divine. Lower left. In time, the serpent (devil), deceived Eve into eating the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, which she gave likewise to Adam. Because they did not obey God's command, but misused their free will to choose evil, they were expelled from Paradise to a life of pain and toil, and eventually returning to the earth from whence they came (death). (lower right corner). (Notice the serpent also being expelled from Eden, crawling on his belly at the feet of Adam and Eve. All of the ills, terrors, and atrocities of human history are a result of man's expulsion from Paradise. The devil rightly claims to be the Prince of this World (Eph 2;2), while Christ claimed that his kingdom is not of this world (In 18:36) It took His crucifixion and Resurrection on the third day to finally overcome the evil of death and provide a means of our return to Paradise in a new creation: A new Heaven and a new Earth. (Rev 21 : 1) Seven Days of Creation - the 8th Day of Re-creation!