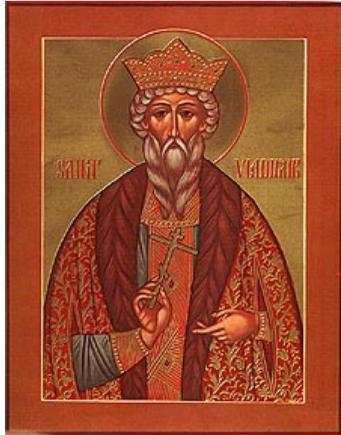


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July 15 is the feast day of Great Prince Vladimir, Equal to the Apostles and Enlightener of the Russian Lands.

Knowing about Saint Vladimir's great work of bringing the Russian lands to Orthodox Christianity gives us part of his story. But what adds to the story's significance is to discover the people and events that God used to enable him to do his great work.

Vladimir, born in 956, was not of illustrious birth; his mother was a pagan servant, and he himself was raised as a pagan. Most accounts say that he indulged in all the pleasures of pagan life without restraint, giving lavish parties, drinking and carousing with friends, and enjoying the attentions of several wives and concubines.

He was also a warrior, and fought in bloody battles. He had to fight his own two brothers for control of the divided empire, and once he achieved that control he

expanded the empire by military conquests.

Some people look at Vladimir's important place in the history of Russian Orthodoxy and ask whether a person whose life has included so much licentious living and violence can ever rightly be declared a saint of the Church.

But even leaving aside the examples of Old Testament saints from similar backgrounds, we can see how God was preparing Vladimir. First there was the influence of his grandmother Olga, who was a Christian and a strong woman. Though she was never able to convert her pagan son, Vladimir was affected by her example.

Also, Christianity had quietly been spreading in the Russian lands ever since Sts. Cyril and Methodius converted the eastern Slavs years earlier. Though Vladimir continued to erect altars to the pagan gods and to follow pagan beliefs, he knew that some Christians were willing to witness decisively to their faith even when threatened. He was impressed enough by their example to investigate the teachings of Christianity, along with those of other faiths. The envoys he sent out came back with the definite opinion that Orthodoxy was the most appealing of them all, and that they "could not forget" the beauty of Orthodox worship.

In the year 988, Prince Vladimir proposed an alliance with the Byzantine emperor Basil, and asked to marry his sister Anna. Basil would not agree unless the pagan prince accepted baptism, which he did.

Back at home with his wife, Vladimir took his new life as a baptized Christian seriously, disciplining himself and giving his best efforts to the formation of "Orthodox Rus."

One of this day's readings is I Corinthians 1: 1-9. Paul greets the Corinthian Christians lovingly, but in the very next verses he addresses serious problems that are already cropping up in this still-young church. The Corinthians, who were taught by Paul himself, are far from perfect, just as Saint Vladimir was.

But God could and did use them both for His highest purpose: to bring people to the truth of Christian faith, and the hope of the glorious life that will never end.

Troparion - Tone 4

Holy Prince Vladimir,
you were like a merchant in search of fine pearls.
By sending servants to Constantinople for the Orthodox Faith,
you found Christ, the priceless pearl.
He appointed you to be another Paul,
washing away in baptism your physical and spiritual blindness.
We celebrate your memory,
asking you to pray for all Orthodox Christians and for us,
your spiritual children.

St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Orthodox Christian Church

108 East Main Street

PO Box 134

Clinton, CT 06413

Scripture Readings

Romans 10:1-10

Matthew 28:38-9:1

Commemorations

Hieromartyr Pancratus, Bishop of Taormina in Sicily (1st c.).
Hieromartyr Cyril, Bishop of Gortyna in Crete (3rd-4th c.).
Martyrs Paternuthius, Coprius, and Alexander the Soldier, in Egypt (4th c.).
St. Theodore, Bishop of Edessa (9th c.).
Ven. Paternuthius and Coprius, Ascetics, of Egypt (4th c.).
Ven. Dionysius the Orator of St. Anne Skete (Mt. Athos-1606).
Ven. Metrophanes, disciple of Ven. Dionysius.

Information

Rev. Steven Hosking, attached
frsteve@stalexischurch.org
860.664.9434 (church)
860.866.5802 (message)
www.stalexischurch.org



Welcome to our Guests

We welcome all visitors to our Divine Liturgy and services. While Holy Communion may only be received by prepared Orthodox Christians, our non-Orthodox guests are welcome to participate in our prayers and hymns and to join us in venerating the Cross and receiving blessed bread at the conclusion of the Liturgy. Please sign our guest card and join us for refreshments and fellowship after the services.

Feel free to ask questions before or after the services. Any member of our Council or Congregation are glad to assist you. Literature about the Orthodox faith and this parish can be found in the narthex (back of the Church).

Our Parish Council Representatives are:

President - Susan Hayes
Vice President - Deborah Bray
Secretary - SubDeacon Joseph Brubaker
Treasurer - Susan Egan
Member at Large - James Pepitone
Member at Large - Demetra Tolis



This week's services and events

Tuesday, July 11, 2017
8:30a - Daily Matins
followed by Study - *The Sacrament*

Wednesday, July 12, 2017
4:30p - Open Doors
6:30p - Daily Vespers

Thursday, July 13, 2017
8:30a - Daily Matins
6:00p - Parish Council Meeting

Saturday, July 15, 2017
9:30a - Liturgy at St Nicholas, Norwich
5:30p - Great Vespers

Sunday, July 16, 2017
9:30a - Divine Liturgy
Evangelism & Outreach Ministry

Announcements

I am looking for volunteers to help with proof-reading and word-smithing the draft of our parish handbook.

Any takers?

Last week, I asked for a special collection for a family in need. This week I am asking for one more collection for this family. Please pray and if the Spirit so moves you, make a donation out of your own blessings. Thank you.

Please continue to pray for...

Please continue to pray for...

Deborah, Robert, Ann, Daria, Dori, John, Evelyn, June, Nina, Joan, John, Alex, Alan, Luke, Kathryn, Anastasia, Glenn, Veronica, Darlyne, Irene, Nancy, Dionysian, Elena, Jevon, Ivan and Joscean. And for...John, Jennifer, Nicholas, Isabel, Elizabeth, John, Jordan, Michael, Lee, Eva, Neil, Gina, Joey, Michael, Madelyn, Sofie, Katrina, Olena, and Valeriy.

This week we celebrate:

John Skrobat on the occasion of his birthday, and to Deborah and Skip Bray on the occasion of the anniversary.

From Nothing to Everything in a Moment



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On July 12 the Church remembers the woman, called Veronica (or Beatrice) whose story is told in Matthew 9: 20-22. She has been suffering from a flow of blood for twelve years.

It would be hard to imagine a person whose life held less promise. This woman's condition, which she had endured for such a long time, cut her off from society in many ways. She was considered to be unclean, and could not take part in the traditional social or religious events. She was not even supposed to be intimate with her husband, or to touch anyone.

In Luke's Gospel we are given a further detail that Matthew's account does not contain: this woman had spent all her money going to doctors and taking their recommended medicines or undergoing their suggested procedures, hoping to find a cure. She had not simply accepted her terrible affliction, but had tried with everything she had to do something about it. The failure to find a cure, for all those years, must have added to her heavy emotional burden.

Desperation, sadness, poverty and loneliness were things this outcast woman lived with every day. She was a person about as close to having nothing as it is possible to be.

Matthew's Gospel tells us that her encounter with Jesus Christ took place when He was on His way to do a great work: a leader in the synagogue, whose daughter had just died, was asking Him to "lay Your hand on her, and she will live."

This leader had something in common with the lowly Veronica; they shared faith in Jesus Christ. Matthew quotes her as saying something similar to what the leader had said about his daughter. Veronica says, "If I only touch His garment, I shall be made well." So she breaks the rules about uncleanness and does touch the fringe on His garment.

Jesus' response is immediate and unhesitating: "Take heart, daughter, your faith has made you well." With these words He gives her not only healing, but hope for the rest of her life. She is not only cured, but she can take heart, or look forward with hope and confidence to the coming years of her life.

In one of the readings for this day, Saint Paul tells us what happened to the woman when she reached out in faith to Christ, and what happens to all those who put their faith in Him. Everything, Paul writes in I Corinthians 3: 22-23, becomes theirs: "For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future, all are yours; and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

Troparion - Tone 8
The image of God was truly preserved in you, O Mother,
For you took up the Cross and followed Christ.
By so doing, you taught us to disregard the flesh, for it passes away,
But to care instead for the soul, since it is immortal.
Therefore your spirit, O Holy Mother Veronica, rejoices with the Angels!

By her act of faith in that one moment, the woman who had nothing was given everything. She simply had to step up and receive what is promised to all people. We can make it the aim of our lives to do the same.