



Simply Orthodox



Apostle Simon Zelotes

Sayings from the Fathers:

We should zealously cultivate watchfulness, my brethren; and when, our mind purified in Christ Jesus, we are exalted by the vision it confers, we should review our sins and our former life, so that shattered and humbled at the thought of them we may never lose the help of Jesus Christ our God in the invisible battle.

St. Hesychius the Presbyter

www.balamandmonastery.org.lb

Church Schedule

Vesper Service
Saturday 7pm

Divine Liturgy
Sunday 10am

Church Address:
6 Oxford Street
Collingwood VIC
(Melway 44 B6)

God Ain't Got No Grandchildren **by Barnabas Powell***

atlantaorthodoxchurches.org/articles.php/2006/06/12/p269 - [more269](#)

Sincere and fervent faith is always one generation away from being extinguished in a community. That's because we live in a world where it is easy to lead self centred lives and difficult to lead purposeful Christian lives.

As M. Scott Peck said in his famous *Road Less Travelled*: "Life is difficult."

This is precisely why I am increasingly convinced that the Orthodox shorthand of Cradle Orthodox and Convert Orthodox is counter productive. The very real truth is that we are all Converts and that's as it should be.

The Orthodox Church teaches us that, like the Israel of the Old Covenant, we Christians are the spiritual Israel of God, and that means our calling, our destiny, is to be a kingdom of priests so the whole world will be blessed. This divine calling and identity is not meant to make us feel proud or somehow superior to others, but to call us to a deeper sense of mission and responsibility to our world. Like Israel of old, we are to be an example to the whole world to show them what a "new community" led and nurtured by God's grace and mercy looks like.

But, like Israel of old, we too are tempted to forget that this special calling is not some kind of guarantee to us regardless of our behaviour or our fidelity to God Himself. Like Israel, if we forget our primary mission, our reason for existence, we will be replaced. St. Paul warned the Romans that "if some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot,

have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you." (Romans 11:17, 18).

We Orthodox must continue to challenge each other to a life of faithfulness. We cannot allow any of our brethren to foolishly believe that a simple accident of birth or some ethnic connection makes us truly Orthodox faithful.

No, we each must continuously make the blessings of our baptism real in our lives today. We cannot "inherit" faithfulness. We can only inherit the great benefit of a spiritual "head start." But that very blessing should make us all the more committed to share this blessing with those not fortunate enough to have an Orthodox beginning.

So, God doesn't have any grandchildren. Our faith demands fidelity from generation to generation, and then to extend that blessing of being a Kingdom of priests to the whole world. So, in the end, we are truly all Converts every day our lives.

**Barnabas Powell is the father of two daughters, three grandchildren, and the Director of Media for Come Receive the Light radio ministries (Orthodox Internet Radio). His website <http://soberjoy.blogspot.com>*

The Scripture Readings and Commemorations

Sunday, May 10th, 2009



EPISTLE READING Fourth Sunday After Pascha: The Paralyse Man The Reading is from Acts 9:32-42

³² Now it came to pass, as Peter went through all parts of the country, that he also came down to the saints who dwelt in Lydda. ³³ There he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden eight years and was paralyzed. ³⁴ And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus the Christ heals you. Arise and make your bed." Then he arose immediately. ³⁵ So all who dwelt at Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord. ³⁶ At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did. ³⁷ But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. ³⁸ And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them. ³⁹ Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them. ⁴⁰ But Peter put them all out, and knelt down and prayed. And turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. ⁴¹ Then he gave her his hand and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive. ⁴² And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord.

GOSPEL READING

The Reading is from John 5:1-15

¹ After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ² Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. ³ In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. ⁴ For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. ⁵ Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me." ⁸ Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." ⁹ And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath. ¹⁰ The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, "It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed." ¹¹ He answered them, "He who made me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk.'" ¹² Then they asked him, "Who is the Man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk'?" ¹³ But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in that place. ¹⁴ Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you." ¹⁵ The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

New King James Version sourced from www.biblegateway.com

The Lives of Saints Commemorated: Sunday 10th May, 2009

Apostle Simon Zelotes

He was one of the Twelve. He was born in Cana of Galilee; some accounts say that he was the bridegroom at the wedding at Cana, where the Lord Jesus performed his first sign (John ch. 2). After receiving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, he preached the Gospel in Africa; he was privileged to die by crucifixion, like his Lord.

Holy Martyrs Alphaeus, Philadelphus and Cyprinus of Sicily (251)

They were brothers living in southern Italy, of noble family and devout faith in Christ. (They were the sons of Vitalius, a pagan governor.) Arrested for their confession of Christ, they were taken before a series of judges, subjected to torture each time. Finally they were taken to Sicily and tortured to death there, during the reign of Licinius. Their incorrupt relics were found in 1517. They once appeared in a vision to St Euthalia (March 2).

St Isidora the Fool of Tabenna (Egypt) (4th c.)

She was a nun in a monastery in Egypt, and pretended madness and mental weakness in order to hide her virtues and her ascetic life. She did the dirtiest jobs, lived on scraps from the nuns' tables, and was despised by her sisters. An angel appeared to the ascetic Pitirim and revealed Isidora's true sanctity to him. He came to the monastery and, seeing Isidora, prostrated himself before her, at which she prostrated before him. When the sisters told him that she was mad, he answered "It is you who are mad: she is greater before God than either you or me. I only beg God to give me also that which is destined for her at the dreadful Judgement." At this, the sisters' eyes were opened, and they began to treat Isidora with honour. But she, to avoid being honoured by anyone, fled the monastery and was not heard from again.

Blessed Thais (Taisia) of Egypt (4th c.)

"Thais was a rich maiden, a Christian in Egypt. She decided not to marry, but to give her possessions to the hermit monks. But, when she had given away all her goods, she gave herself to a life of debauchery. Hearing of this, the hermits begged Abba John the Dwarf to do something, and he went to Alexandria and began to weep in Thais' hearing. When she heard the old man weeping for her sins, she repented at once, left her house and everything she had and went into the desert after the saint. One night when she was sleeping and John was standing in prayer, he saw an angel in a nimbus of light coming down to take Thais' soul. And John saw that her sudden but deep repentance was more pleasing to God than the years-long but shallow repentance of many of the hermits." (Prologue)

Assembled by John Brady www.abbamoses.com/months/may.html

Fr Igor will celebrate the Divine Liturgy at **St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, Ballarat**

fourth Saturday of the month
commencing 10am.

Contact Spiro 53347439 or spirot@iprimus.com.au

Church Address:

116 Humffray St, BALLARAT



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