

# SOBORNOST

## St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church

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American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

ECUMENICAL  
PATRIARCHATE OF  
CONSTANTINOPLE

## SERVICES

**Wed: Moleben to the Theotokos 6:00 AM**

**Friday: Moleben to the Cross 6:00 AM**

**Saturday: Confession 5:00 PM**

**Great Vespers 5:30 PM**

**Sunday: Matins (Orthros) 8:45 AM**

**Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM.**



## August 19, 2018 – 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost | Martyr Andrew Stratelates | Afterfeast of the Dormition

The Martyr Andrew Stratelates was a military commander in the Roman army during the reign of the emperor Maximian (284-305). They loved him in the Roman army because of his bravery, invincibility and sense of fairness. When a large Persian army invaded the Syrian territories, the governor Antiochus entrusted Saint Andrew with the command of the Roman army, giving him the title of “Stratelates” (“Commander”). Saint Andrew selected a small detachment of brave soldiers and proceeded against the adversary.

His soldiers were pagans, and Saint Andrew himself had still not accepted Baptism, but he believed in Jesus Christ. Before the conflict he persuaded the soldiers that the pagan gods were demons and could not help them in battle. He proclaimed to them Jesus Christ, the omnipotent God of Heaven and earth, giving help to all who believe in Him. The soldiers went into battle, calling on the help of the Savior. The small detachment routed the numerous host of the Persians. Saint Andrew returned from the campaign in glory, having gained a total victory.

*(continued on page 4)*

## **Today's Epistle Lesson – St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 15:1-11**

Brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God *which was* with me. Therefore, whether *it was* I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

## **Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint Matthew 19:16-26**

At that time, one came and said to Him, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” So He said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good but One, *that is*, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.” He said to Him, “Which ones?” Jesus said, “‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not bear false witness,’ ‘Honor your father and *your* mother,’ and, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” The young man said to Him, “All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?” Jesus said to him, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Then Jesus said to His disciples, “Amen, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” When His disciples heard *it*, they were greatly astonished, saying, “Who then can be saved?” But Jesus looked at *them* and said to them, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

## *A Word From the Holy Fathers*

Evil begins from bad thoughts.

When you are bitter and indignant, even just with your thoughts, you spoil a spiritual atmosphere. You prevent the Holy Spirit from acting and allow the devil to increase the evil.

You should always pray, love and forgive, driving out of yourself every evil thought.

– St. Porphyrios of Kavsokalyva

## Encyclical for the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ, as we celebrate this blessed Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos, “in radiant joy with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs together with the angels and the apostles,” we give thanks to God for the revelation of His abundant grace and glorious power through the life and witness of the Virgin Mary. In our commemoration of her and the holiness of her life and service, we are reminded of the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, *All things are possible to the one who believes*. (Mark 9:23). This assurance of Christ, that through faith the impossible becomes possible, that as people of God we can move beyond limitations to accomplish great and marvelous things in His name, was the focus of the theme of our recent Clergy-Laity Congress. In faith and love we gathered together in Boston and affirmed that **all things are possible to the one who believes in Christ**.

Today we can once again offer a witness of this truth. In our reflection on the life of the Theotokos, we know that she found favor with God, the Holy Spirit came upon her, and she conceived and carried in her womb the Son of God. She asked the angel following the annunciation of the Incarnation of Christ, *How shall this be, since I have no husband?* (Luke 1:34) How could this be accomplished by this holy and humble handmaiden of God? All things are possible to the one who believes.

On this Feast of the Dormition, we marvel at her repose and the witness that she offered in passing through death unto eternal life. We sing, “She who is higher than the heavens and more glorious than the cherubim, she who is held in greater honor than all creation...today commends her most pure soul into the hands of her Son.” How did this happen? How does she continue to offer intercessions on behalf of us all? How did she receive such an exalted place? All things are possible to the one who believes. The potential of this promise through the power of faith and through the holy witness of the Theotokos offers us assurance and strength. The disciples of our Lord were encouraged and guided by her and her holiness of life. Her repose became a celebration of the abundant and eternal life that comes through faith in Christ. This Feast is one of hope and assurance, affirming that even through our burdens and challenges, even in the face of obstacles that seem insurmountable, even through physical hardships and spiritual struggles, all things are possible to the one who believes in Christ.

The power of faith and the unlimited possibilities before us for ministry and service should also be our focus. At our recent Clergy-Laity Congress, we affirmed our commitment to supporting the work of our parishes and helping faithful throughout our Holy Archdiocese explore the potential of the witness of our Orthodox faith. Together we are committed to ensuring the strength and vitality of our witness. I ask that you continue to focus on this theme as you plan for a new ecclesiastical year and consider the impact and potential of our sacred work.

May the blessings of you the Lord be with you on this Feast of the Dormition, and may we seek the intercessions of the Most Holy Theotokos as we explore the boundless and unlimited potential of our faith in Christ.

With paternal love in Him, † **DE METRIOS, Archbishop of America**

*(continued from page 1)* But jealous men denounced him to the governor Antiochus, saying that he was a Christian who had converted the soldiers under his command to his faith. Saint Andrew was summoned to trial, and there he declared his faith in Christ. For this they subjected him to torture. He laid himself upon a bed of white-hot copper, but as soon as he sought help from the Lord, the bed became cool. They crucified his soldiers on trees, but not one of them renounced Christ. Locking the saints away in prison, Antiochus sent the report of charges on to the emperor, unable to decide whether to impose the death sentence upon the acclaimed champion. The emperor knew how the army loved Saint Andrew, and fearing a rebellion, he gave orders to free the martyrs. Secretly, however, he ordered that each be executed on some pretext.

After being freed, Saint Andrew went to the city of Tarsus with his fellow soldiers. There the local bishop Peter and Bishop Nonos of Beroea baptized them. Then the soldiers proceeded on to the vicinity of Taxanata. Antiochus wrote a letter to Seleucus, governor of the Cilicia region, ordering him to overtake the company of Saint Andrew and kill them, under the pretext that they had deserted their military standards. Seleucus came upon the martyrs in the passes of Mount Tauros, where they were evidently soon to suffer. Saint Andrew, calling the soldiers his brothers and children, urged them not to fear death. He prayed for all who would honor their memory, and asked the Lord to create a curative spring on the place where their blood would be shed. At the time of this prayer the steadfast martyrs were beheaded with swords. During this time, a spring of water issued forth from the ground. Bishops Peter and Nonos, with their clergy, secretly followed the company of Saint Andrew, and buried their bodies. One of the clergy, suffering for a long time from an evil spirit, drank from the spring of water, and at once he was healed. Reports of this spread among the local people and they began to come to the spring. Through the prayers of Saint Andrew and the 2593 Martyrs suffering with him, they received gracious help from God. *(from oca.org)*

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***In Your Prayers – Please Remember...*** His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW, His Grace Bishop GREGORY, Fr. Joseph & Family, Greek Orthodox Archbishop Paul Yazigi of Aleppo, Syriac Orthodox Archbishop Yohanna Ibrahim of Aleppo, His Grace Bishop Neofitos of Nyeri and Mt. Kenya, Fr. John & Pani Betty Jean Baranik, Fr. Vincent Saverino, Presbyteria Katie Baker and family, Santiago Alzugaray, Alicia Barosio and family, Jeffrey Carey, Tatyana and Slava Chumak & family, Xenia Chilkowich, Jon Church, Ramius Connour, Curtis Cooper, Luke Cooper, Tina Crull, Mary Diane David, Ron Domieniecki, Linda A. Georgiev, Heather Himler, John Homick, Cameron Houk, Helen Janowiak, John M. Janowiak, Tucker Karl and family, Robert & Pam Karpin, Andrew Kinn, Kopan family, Brian, Helen, and Luke Mahony, Valentina Makowelski, Susan Matula, Anna Meinhold, Dn. Henry Middleton, David & Kathryn Newman, Bobby Nutter & Family, Henry & Lisa Osborne, Westin Perry & Parents, John Reece, Mary Reed, Chris & Kaitlin Rixey, Jerry Von Ronne, Anne Rosario, James, Theodore and Christina Ristas, Samson Family, Sharon Sheptak, Alexander Shostko, Bernie Takabayashi & family, Dawn & Faith Ulmschneider, Lydia Vita, Christine, Marshall, Nathaniel, Subdcn. Nectarios and Ia, the Syrian Christians displaced by war, Mother Virginia Marie and the Carmelite Nuns of Port Tobacco, and all those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)