



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA  
PARISH OF ST. VASILIOS, BRUNSWICK, VICTORIA

SUNDAY  
22 MAY 2016  
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# PARISH INFORMATION BULLETIN

## PROGRAM FOR 22—28 MAY 2016

<b>SUNDAY</b> <b>22 MAY</b>	Sunday of the Paralytic, John 5: 1-15 • <b>7.30– 11.00am</b> Orthros and Divine Liturgy <b>SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR AGES 5 TO 17 YEARS TAKES PLACE STRAIGHT AFTER HOLY COMMUNION. CLASSES TAKE PLACE IN THE DOWNSTAIRS ROOMS BEHIND THE CHURCH. BRING YOUR CHILDREN ALONG TO LEARN ABOUT THEIR ORTHODOX FAITH AND GOD'S LOVE FOR EACH ONE OF US.</b>
<b>MONDAY</b> <b>23 MAY</b>	• <b>10.00am</b> Meeting of Elderly Citizens in Church Hall
<b>TUESDAY</b> <b>24 MAY</b>	• <b>7.00pm</b> Parishes of St Vasilios and the Presentation of our Lord, Coburg Youth Group will meet in Coburg Church Hall. The meeting will begin with the Compline Service in English.
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> <b>25 MAY</b>	• <b>5.00pm</b> Paraklesis to the Theotokos followed by Bible Study
<b>FRIDAY</b> <b>27 MAY</b> <i>St John the Russian</i>	• <b>7.00– 9.30am</b> Orthros and Divine Liturgy
<b>SATURDAY</b> <b>28 MAY</b>	• <b>3.45pm</b> Service of Vespers



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Fr. Athanasios  
and  
Fr. Ephraim

are available  
at the Church

every Monday to Friday  
between  
4.00 and 6.00pm

for Holy Confession and  
any spiritual need.

## WORDS FROM THE CHURCH FATHERS

"Every day you provide your bodies with good to keep them from failing. In the same way your good works should be the daily nourishment of your hearts. Your bodies are fed with food and your spirits with good works. You aren't to deny your soul, which is going to live forever, what you grant to your body, which is going to die."

- St. Gregory the Great

Remember that the Lord is in every Christian. When your neighbour comes to you, always have great respect for him, because the Lord is in him, and often expresses His will through him. 'It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure' (Phil. 2:13). Therefore, do not grudge anything to your brother, but do unto him as unto the Lord; especially as you do not know in whom the Lord will come and visit you; be impartial to all, be kind to all, sincere and hospitable. Remember that sometimes God speaks even through unbelievers, or disposes their hearts towards us, as it happened in Egypt when the Lord gave Joseph favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. (Gen. 39:21).

- St. John of Kronstadt, Excerpt taken from the book- *My Life in Christ*

## Sunday of the Paralytic

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

How tragic today's story of the life of Christ is. A man had been paralysed for years. He had lain at a short distance from healing, but he himself had no strength to merge into the waters of ablution. And no one – no one in the course of all these years – had had compassion on him.

The ones rushed to be the first in order to be healed. Others who were attached to them by love, by friendship, helped them to be healed. But no one cast a glance at this man, who for years had longed for healing and was not in himself able to find strength to become whole.

If only one person had been there, if only one heart had responded with compassion, this man might have been whole years and years earlier. As no one, not one person, had compassion on him, all that was left to him – and I say all that was left to him with a sense of horror – was the direct intervention of God.

We are surrounded by people who are in need. It is not only people who are physically paralysed who need help.

There are so many people who are paralysed in themselves, and need to meet someone who would help them.

Paralysed in themselves are those who are terrified of life, because life has been an object of terror for them since they were born: insensitive parents, heartless, brutal surroundings. How many are those who hoped, when they were still small, that there would be something for them in life. But no. There wasn't. There was no compassion. There was no friendliness. There was nothing. And when they tried to receive comfort and support, they did not receive it. Whenever they thought they could do something they were told, 'Don't try. Don't you understand that you are incapable of this?' And they felt lower and lower.

How many were unable to fulfil their lives because they were physically ill, and not sufficiently strong... But did they find someone to give them a supporting hand? Did they find anyone who felt so deeply for them and about them that they went out of their way to help? And how many those who are terrified of life, lived in circumstances of fear, of violence, of brutality... But all this could not have taken them if there had been someone who have stood by them and not abandoned them.

So we are surrounded, all of us, by people who are in the situation of this paralytic man. If we think of ourselves we will see that many of us are paralysed, incapable of fulfilling all their aspirations; incapable of being what they longed for, incapable of serving others the way their heart speaks; incapable of doing anything they longed for because fear, brokenness has come into them.

And all of us, all of us were responsible for each of them. We are responsible, mutually, for one another; because when we look right and left at the people who stand by us, what do we know about them? Do we know how broken they are? How much pain there is in their hearts? How much agony there has been in their lives? How many broken hopes, how much fear and rejection and contempt that has made them contemptuous of themselves and unable even to respect themselves – not to speak of having the courage of making a move towards wholeness, that wholeness of which the Gospel speaks in this passage and in so many other places?

Let us reflect on this. Let us look at each other and ask ourselves, 'How much frailty is there in him or her? How much pain has accumulated in his or her heart? How much fear of life – but life expressed by my neighbour, the people whom I should be able to count for life – has come in to my existence?

Let us look at one another with understanding, with attention. Christ is there. He can heal; yes. But we will be answerable for each other, because there are so many ways in which we should be the eyes of Christ who sees the needs, the ears of Christ who hears the cry, the hands of Christ who supports and heals or makes it possible for the person to be healed.

Let us look at this parable of the paralytic with new eyes; not thinking of this poor man two thousand years ago who was so lucky that Christ happened to be near him and in the end did what every neighbour should have done. Let us look at each other and have compassion, active compassion; insight; love if we can.

And then this parable will not have been spoken or this event will not have been related to us in vain. Amen.

- Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh