



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

SUNDAY
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PARISH INFORMATION BULLETIN

PROGRAM FOR 2—8 OCTOBER 2016



SUNDAY 2 OCTOBER <i>Saints Cyprian and Justina, Martyrs</i>	Second Sunday of Luke —Luke 6: 31-36 • 7.30– 11.00am Orthros and Divine Liturgy 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.
MONDAY 3 OCTOBER <i>St Dionysios the Aeropagite</i>	• 7.00am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
TUESDAY 4 OCTOBER	• 7.00pm Parishes of St Vasilios and the Presentation of our Lord, Coburg Youth Group will meet in our Church Hall. The meeting will begin with the Compline Service in English. • 7.30pm Young Adults and Married Couples Bible Study Group —in downstairs building behind the Church.
WEDNESDAY 5 OCTOBER	• 5.00pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos followed by Bible Study
THURSDAY 6 OCTOBER <i>Holy Apostle St Thomas</i>	• 7.00am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
SATURDAY 8 OCTOBER	• 3.45pm Service of Vespers

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Fr. Athanasios
and
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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

Induce your heart to love your enemies, and the Lord, seeing your good will, shall help you in all things, and will Himself show you experience. But whoever thinks evil of his enemies does not have love for God and has not known God.

I ask you to try something. If someone grieves you, or dishonours you, or takes something of yours, then pray like this: "Lord, we are all your creatures. Pity your servants, and turn them to repentance," and then you will perceptibly bear grace in your soul.

- St. Silouan the Athonite, *Writings*, IX.21

Christ's commandment of love

Metropolitan Anthony Surozh

St. Luke 6:31-36

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

Many a time does Christ in His Gospel tell us of the new commandment which He has given us. What is new in this commandment of love? It is the height and the purity of its standard. It is not new that people love one another; peoples have always loved certain other people. What is new in this commandment of Christ is that we are told to be of one heart with our Heavenly Father, to participate in His love. That is to love in the same way in which He does, - He Who does not distinguish between the good and the bad, Who does not distinguish between people who are grateful and those who are ungrateful, not to mention those to whom one may be attracted or not. The love of God is vast and deep and all-embracing; what varies in this love is some internal quality: God may rejoice, and God may pay the cost of His love upon the Cross.

And we are called to the same; we are called to love without discrimination - people who are not of Gospel would say without discernment, foolishly, madly - we are called to love as wholeheartedly those who are right and those who are wrong. The difference will lie in the fact that we may rejoice in the ones and be brokenhearted for the others, but our love must not falter. We all know how to love a little those whom we naturally love, and we ask ourselves how can we, from this simple love of the few, grow to a wider love, and from loving those who are lovable, begin to love those who are not.

The first step which we must take is to learn to love those whom we love spontaneously in a new way: to love them always and not only at such moments when it is easy, to love them without expecting anything except the joy of loving them, and to receive any love in response to ours as a perfect, free, holy, fragrant gift which is a miracle, but which is not a reward, not something we have a right to, something which is freely and perfectly given, something that fills our heart with amazement and with gratitude.

We must learn to love without waiting for a reward, simply rejoicing in the miracle of love that will allow us to rejoice when there is something about which we can rejoice and also brokenheartedly; to rejoice again when those whom we love have lost everything except our love, at least that is left to them, at least this we shall never take away from them. And we must learn to love each other in the spirit of the Gospel: not simply to do good to certain people, or to many, but to think what is the true good for a person. O, I do not mean the cruel way in which we continually define for others what we believe to be their happiness and their good, and in which we force, or try to force people into being happy the way we want them to be happy. No, I am thinking of another kind of thoughtful search for their good: never support their weakness by letting things go on, never close your eyes on what is destructive for them, speak the truth in charity, love them so that they should be built up and not destroyed.

If we begin to love in a better way those whom we love spontaneously and naturally, our heart will become clearer, purer and wider, and we will learn to love people, one more person perhaps, and then one more, and then another again, at a greater cost, with a greater purity, with less selfishness, with a more generous heart.

Let us begin at this simple level, and God will lead us into the kind of love He calls us to possess and to share, a love which is life-giving, which is a light, which is a joy, which is faith, which is a beginning of eternity here and now. Amen