



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

SUNDAY
30 JULY 2017
Volume 6—Issue 27
30/07—05/08/2017

PARISH INFORMATION BULLETIN

PROGRAM FOR 30 JULY—5 AUGUST 2017

SUNDAY 30 JULY	8th Sunday of Matthew - Matthew 14: 14-22 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.30– 11.00am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
• SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES (A free voluntary program organised by the Church) Lessons take place in the building behind the church and begin at the time of Holy Communion until Church dismissal. We have classes for ages ranging from 5yrs to teenage years. Lessons are taught in a relaxed, friendly environment. Please bring your children along to learn of their rich Orthodox faith and come close to God and His Love.	
MONDAY 31 JULY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 9.00am Service of Holy Unction• 10.00am Meeting of Elderly Citizens in Church Hall.
TUESDAY 1 AUGUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5.00pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos• 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 at St. Vasilios, in the Church.Coffee Room.
WEDNESDAY 2 AUGUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5.00pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos followed by Bible Study.
THURSDAY 3 AUGUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5.00pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos
FRIDAY 4 AUGUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5.00pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos
SATURDAY 5 AUGUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3.45pm Service of Vespers
SUNDAY 6 AUGUST	GOSPEL READING: MATTHEW 17: 1-9 EPISTLE READING: 2PETER 1: 10-19



Telephone Contact Numbers

St Vasilios Church
9387 7693

Fr Athanasios
9383 4151

Fr Ephraim
0490 378 215

Website:
stvasiliosbrunswick.com

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

If you give alms to the poor, know that, insofar as you do good to your neighbour, you do it, and more, to yourself.
St Anthony says:

'Life and death come to us through our neighbour', and St Peter Damascene writes: 'As the poor are bounden to thank God and love the rich, who do good to them, so still more must the rich thank God and love the poor, because they are saved, in the providence of God, both now and in the world to come, by their alms. For, without the poor, not only do they not receive the salvation of their souls, but are unable to flee the temptations of their riches.' Alms that are given from vanity, or with scorn, are worthless.

In former days, the rich took gold to the hermits and begged them to accept it. It rarely happened that the hermits received alms gladly, and, when they received it, they did so out of compassion for the rich. The poorest of men received alms out of compassion!

- St Nikolai Velimirovic, *The Prologue from Ochrid*

Eighth Sunday of Matthew (Matthew 14:1 4-22)

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

Today's Gospel from St Matthew relates to us the feeding of the five thousand and the miraculous multiplication of loaves and fishes. The account of this event is to be found in all Four Gospels. From the details that are added in the other Gospels we know that this event took place in the third year of the Saviour's public preaching, after the beheading of St John the Baptist. From it we can learn several things.

First of all, we should note that this was an enormous crowd, almost unimaginable in size, of five thousand men plus women and children. We notice how they followed Christ on foot in the heat of the day into the wilderness and without food. What faith and devotion we see here, when there are Orthodox who claim to be unable to come to church on Sundays in their cars, because the church is too far from their beds!

Secondly, we can see that this miracle took place not for the personal vanity or glory of the Saviour, but out of compassion for the people. We can see this in many miracles of Christ and it is mentioned again in today's Gospel how the Lord healed because He 'took pity' on the sick. Each miracle of Christ is an act of love performed out of compassion.

Thirdly, we see also how before He performed the miracle, Our Lord took up the five loaves and fishes, and then looked up to Heaven and thanked the Father and blessed the food. Here He sets us Orthodox the example of praying before eating. How many Orthodox often forget even to make the sign of the cross before eating! And yet the Saviour Himself, 'by Whom all things were made', asks for the blessing of the Father before eating.

Fourthly, we can compare the humble conditions in which this miracle happened, in the wilderness, sitting on the grass, with the conditions in which just previously St John the Baptist's death had been ordered, at Herod's luxurious birthday banquet.

Fifthly, we can see how this miracle is also a revelation of the Saviour's divinity, of the power of Christ. The miracle takes place when the day is already far spent, but Christ is not limited by time; He is the Lord of Time.

The miracle takes place in a desert place, in the wilderness; Christ is also the Lord of Space.

He blesses and multiplies bread and fish; He is also the Lord of Land and Sea.

Finally, in this miracle we see how Christ not only feeds us with material food, but also with spiritual food, for, as it is written in the Holy Scriptures, man shall not live by bread alone. We see this in the numbers mentioned in this Gospel.

Why five loaves? The number five, as we read in the Psalms and in the prayers of thanksgiving after communion, represent our five senses, being, which is fed by Christ, the Bread of Life.

Why two fishes? They represent the two parts of the New Testament, the Gospels and the Epistles, which were written by fishermen become fishers of men, for we are spiritually fed by their writings.

Why twelve baskets of fragments? They represent the twelve Apostles who preach to the ends of the universe, the fragments who feed our souls with the words of Christ through the Holy Spirit.

Let us this day open our minds and souls to Christ our True God that we too may be fed and satiated with the Bread of Life.

Amen.



"Let us be satisfied simply with what sustains our present life, not with what pampers it. Let us pray to God for this, as we have been taught, so that we may keep our souls un-enslaved and absolutely free from domination by any of the visible things loved for the sake of the body. Let us show that we eat for the sake of living, and not be guilty of living for the sake of eating. The first is a sign of intelligence, the second proof of its absence."

- St. Maximos the Confessor—*On the Lord's Prayer, The Philokalia Vol. 2,*