





PARISH INFORMATION BULLETIN

PROGRAM FOR 13—19 OCTOBER 2019

SUNDAY 13 OCTOBER	4th SUNDAY OF LUKE, Sunday of 7th Ecumenical Council, Luke 8: 5-15 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
<div> SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES (A free voluntary program organised by the Church)</div> <p>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.</p>	
MONDAY 14 OCTOBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8.45am Service of Holy Unction• 10.00am Meeting of Elderly Citizens in Church Hall.
TUESDAY 15 OCTOBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.00pm Parishes of St Vasilios and the Presentation of our Lord, Coburg Youth Group will meet in our Coburg Church Hall.
WEDNESDAY 16 OCTOBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5.00pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos followed by Bible Study
THURSDAY 17 OCTOBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.30—8.30pm <div> TEENAGE YOUTH GROUP (Ages 13-19) In Church Hall, upstairs behind the Church <i>* ALL TEENAGERS WELCOME *</i></div>
FRIDAY 18 OCTOBER St Luke the Apostle and Evangelist	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.00am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
SUNDAY 20 OCTOBER	GOSPEL READING: Luke 8: 26-39 EPISTLE READING: 2Corinthians 9: 6-11



Telephone Contact Numbers

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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.

**When we patiently
endure our
problems and turn
to God for help,
we notice that He
gives us the best
possible solution.**


St Paisios

VOICE OF THE HOLY FATHERS

Saint Paisios of Mt. Athos

God loves His creation, His image, and provides the things which man needs.
If one does not believe this and struggles by himself to acquire these earthly gifts, he will suffer.

But even if God does not provide some of these earthly, material things, a person who is leading a spiritual life will not worry about it.

If we seek first the Kingdom of God and this is our only concern, all the other things will be given to us, as well. Will God abandon His creation? The manna which God provided for the Israelites in the desert would spoil if they kept it for the next day. (Cf. Ex 16:19-20.) God arranged things this way so that the people would have confidence in His divine providence.

We have not yet understood the words of Jesus "Seek first the Kingdom of God". (Cf. Mt 6:33).

Sunday Sermon on the Fourth Sunday of Luke, Luke 8: 5-15

Preparing soil.

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

We live in a world obsessed with outcomes.

Winning – regardless of the methods, regardless of the means – counts. Nothing else.

In nearly every area of our lives – our athletics, our politics, our business – winning is the criteria by which people are assessed.

A person is either successful, by winning, or a loser.

I don't think that was always the case. It was not that long ago when people of good character were winners. People who played by the rules were winners.

What you said – the views you espoused – didn't matter. What you did – that was what mattered.

One's party affiliation was not nearly as important as one's generosity, or helpfulness. Selflessness we might say. You might not even know what political positions your neighbor held. What charities they gave to.

What you saw, was their generosity. What you saw was them lending a hand to accomplish something that was important to someone else.

In the Gospel reading today, Christ reminds us that the outcome is significantly less important than the preparation. The outcome is determined by the preparation.

The seed – the benefit and Grace of God – was given to everyone. Where it fell determined the outcome.

If it fell on the wayside – a road or path – the birds would eat it and it would be trampled. If it fell on a rock, there would not be a path for moisture to reach the plant, and it would wither.

If the seed fell on land that was overgrown by other seed, it would have to battle for survival, and the more established plants would have the significant upper hand.

But – if the seed landed on ground that was prepared – ground that was cleared, and tilled – then the seed would take root, and blossom and grow.

And produce an outcome. 100 fold – a bounty.

We won't be able to fool anyone at the last judgement. We won't be able to con anyone, or keep our true nature hidden. The outcome will betray us – and betray our preparation.

We don't control growth. We don't control the crop. We do control the preparation of the soil – our heart, our mind, our will.

The growth, the fruit – that's God's part. We guard that seed – that word. We tend it, and we nurture it.

But God gives the increase.

So what do we know about preparing the soil – the heart, the nous – to receive the seed? To receive the Word of God?

We need to ensure our ground is prepared for cultivation.

We can't pave over it. We have to break up the rocks, the hardness that is the result of our inattention. The result of our affinity for other amusements. The distractions.

We have to clear our field. We have to make sure that nothing else is growing there. No fear, no anxiety, no concerns about wealth, or status, or power. Nothing else.

Only the Word. Only Christ.

We have to break up our soil, our heart, by letting all those things go. Weeding them out. And then tilling our soil by serving others. Putting the wants and desires and needs of others first.

Not just when it is convenient, and not just when it is visible.

Every time we have an opportunity to set aside our own wants and desires – our own will – and fulfill the wants and desires of another person, we till another small part of our heart, preparing it for the seed which God showers on everyone.

Righteous and unrighteous. The grace is there. The word is there. But the issue is the preparation we have done.

And if we don't take that opportunity? Our heart remains hard. One more rock to break up later. One more weed to pull later.

Until there is no more "later".

This is not easy, brothers and sisters. It is hard. It hurts. It is, in a way, quite violent. We are pulling things out – breaking things up – burying a spade in our heart and turning the soil over.

It is something that cannot be done for us, nor can we do it for someone else.

I can't prepare your soil – your heart. You can't prepare mine. We can't prepare someone else's.

Only our own. Only our self.

So that as St. Paul writes, we become the sanctuary of the living God. The field of the one who distributes all seed.

We can be separate together. As a community. To support one another and encourage one another.

Reminding us that the world around us does not define our world – our kingdom.

Our family.

God will be our Father. God is our Father. We are his children.

And, since we are His, and He is ours, and those are the promises we hold: prepare the heart. Clear the land. Till the soil.

And tend the word in ourselves.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, One God. Glory to Jesus Christ!