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Rest of Venerable Sergius the Wonderworker, Abbot of Radonezh

September 25, 2022

Troparion – Tone 6

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure body. Thou didst capture hell not being tempted by it. Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, // glory to Thee.

Troparion – Tone 4

A zealot of good deeds and a true warrior of Christ our God, thou didst struggle greatly against the passions in this passing life; in songs and vigils and fasting thou wast an image and example to thy disciples, thus the most Holy Spirit lived within thee, and thou wast made beautiful by His working. Since thou hast great boldness before the Holy Trinity, remember the flock which thou hast wisely gathered, // and do not forget to visit thy children as thou hast promised, venerable Sergius, our father!

Kontakion – Tone 6

When Christ God, the Giver of Life, raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand, He bestowed resurrection on the human race. // He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

Kontakion – Tone 8

Bound by the love of Christ, O venerable one, and following Him with unwavering desire, thou didst despise all carnal pleasures, shining like the sun in thy land. Therefore, Christ has enriched thee with the gift of miracles. Remember us, who venerate thy most holy memory // and who call out to thee: “Rejoice, O Sergius, made wise by God!”

Prokeimenon – Tone 6

O Lord, save Thy people, / and bless Thine inheritance!

V. To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me!

Prokeimenon – Tone 7

Precious in the sight of the Lord / is the death of His saints.

Rest of Venerable Sergius the Wonderworker, Abbot of Radonezh

Saint Sergius of Radonezh was born in the village of Varnitsa, near Rostov, on May 3, 1314. His parents were the pious and illustrious nobles Cyril and Maria (September 28). The Lord chose him while still in his mother’s womb. In the Life of Saint Sergius it is reported that even before the birth of her son, Saint Maria and those praying heard the thrice-repeated cry of the infant at the Divine Liturgy: before the reading of the Holy Gospel, during the Cherubic hymn, and when the priest

pronounced: "Holy Things are for the Holy." God gave Cyril and Maria a son whom they named Bartholomew. From his very first days of life the infant amazed everyone by his fasting. On Wednesdays and Fridays he would not accept milk from his mother, and on other days, if Maria used oil in the food, the infant also refused the milk of his mother. Noticing this, Maria refrained altogether from food with oil.

At the age of seven, Bartholomew was sent to study together with his two brothers: his older brother Stephen, and his younger brother Peter. His brothers learned successfully, but Bartholomew fell behind in his studies, even though the teacher gave him much special attention. The parents scolded the child, the teacher chastised him, and his classmates made fun of his lack of comprehension. Finally, Bartholomew besought the Lord with tears to grant him the ability to read. Once, his father sent Bartholomew out after the horses in the field. Along the way he met an angel sent by God under the appearance of a monk. The Elder stood at prayer beneath an oak in a field. Bartholomew approached him, and bowing, waited for the Elder to finish praying. The monk blessed him, gave him a kiss and asked what he wanted.

Bartholomew answered, "With all my soul I want to learn reading and writing. Holy Father, pray for me to God, that He may help me to become literate." The monk fulfilled Bartholomew's request, offering up his prayer to God. In blessing the child he said to him: "Henceforth, my child, God gives you to understand reading and writing, and in this you will surpass your brothers and peers" (See the famous M. Nesterov painting "Vision of Bartholomew"). Then the Elder took a vessel and gave Bartholomew a piece of prosphora. "Take, child, and eat," said he. "This is given to you as a sign of the grace of God, and for the understanding of Holy Scripture." The Elder wanted to leave, but Bartholomew asked him to visit at the home of his parents. His parents received their guest with joy and offered him their hospitality.

The Elder replied that it was proper to partake of spiritual nourishment first, and he bade their son to read the Psalter. Bartholomew began to read, and his parents were amazed at the change that had occurred with their son. In parting, the Elder prophetically said of Saint Sergius, "Your son shall be great before God and the people. He shall become a chosen habitation of the Holy Spirit." After this the holy child read without difficulty and understood the contents of books. He became immersed in prayer with a special fervor, not missing a single church service. Already in childhood he imposed upon himself a strict fast. He ate nothing on Wednesdays and Fridays, and on the other days he sustained himself on bread and water.

About the year 1328, the parents of Saint Sergius moved from Rostov to Radonezh. When their older sons married, Cyril and Maria received the monastic schema shortly before their death at the Khot'kov monastery of the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos, not far from Radonezh.

Later on, the older brother Stephen was widowed and became a monk at this monastery. Having buried his parents, Bartholomew and his brother Stephen withdrew into the forest (12 versts from Radonezh) to live in the wilderness. At first they made cells, and then a small church, and with the blessing of Metropolitan Theognostus, it was consecrated in the name of the Most Holy Trinity. But soon, unable to bear the difficulties of life in the wilderness, Stephen left his brother and went on to the Moscow Theophany monastery, where he became close to Saint Alexis, afterwards Metropolitan of Moscow. (February 12).

On October 7, 1337 Bartholomew was tonsured by Igumen Metrophanes, taking the name of the holy Martyr Sergius (October 7), and he started to build a new habitation to the glory of the Life-Creating Trinity. Suffering temptations and demonic apparitions, Saint Sergius advanced from strength to strength. Gradually he became known to other monks seeking his guidance. Saint Sergius accepted all with love, and soon a brotherhood of twelve monks were gathered in the small monastery.

Their experienced spiritual guide distinguished himself by an extraordinary love for work. With his own hands he built several cells, he carried water, he chopped wood, baked bread, sewed clothing, prepared food for the brethren and humbly took on other tasks. Saint Sergius combined the heavy work with prayer, vigil and fasting. The brethren were amazed that with such severe exertion the health of their guide did not deteriorate, but rather became all the more hearty. It was not without difficulty that they implored Saint Sergius to accept the position of igumen of the monastery.

In 1354 Bishop Athanasius of Volyn ordained the saint a hieromonk and elevated him to the rank of igumen. Just as before, monastic obediences were strictly fulfilled at the monastery. With the expansion of the monastery, its needs also grew. Often the monks had only scant food, but through the prayers of Saint Sergius unknown people provided the necessities.

Reports of the exploits of Saint Sergius became known even at Constantinople, and Patriarch Philotheus sent to the monk a cross, a “paraman” (monastic clothing, a four-cornered cloth tied with cords to the chest and worn beneath other garb, and adorned with symbols of the Lord’s Passion) and schema-robe in blessing for new deeds, and a grammota of blessing, in which the Patriarch counselled the chosen of God to organize a cenobitic monastery. The monk set off with the patriarchal missive to Saint Alexis, and received from him the counsel to introduce a strict manner of cenobitic life. The monks began to grumble at the strictness of the monastic Rule, and Saint Sergius was compelled to forsake the monastery. At the River Kirzhach he founded a monastery in honor of the Annunciation of the Most Holy Theotokos. Matters at the former monastery went quickly into disarray, and the remaining monks recoured to Saint Alexis that he should get the saint to return.

Saint Sergius unquestioningly obeyed the holy hierarch, and left in place of himself at the Kirzhachsk monastery his disciple, Saint Roman. Already during his lifetime Saint Sergius had been vouchsafed the gift of wonderworking. He raised a lad, at a point when the despairing father had given up on his only son as lost. Reports about the miracles worked by Saint Sergius began quickly to spread about, and the sick began to come to him, both from the surrounding villages and also from remote places. And no one left from Saint Sergius without receiving healing of infirmities and edifying counsel. Everyone gave glory for Saint Sergius, and revered him on an equal with the ancient holy Fathers. But human glory did not hold allure for the great ascetic, and as before he remained the example of monastic humility.

One time Saint Stephen, Bishop of Perm (April 27), who deeply revered Saint Sergius, was on journey from his diocese to Moscow. The roadway passed eight versts distant from the Sergiev monastery. Intending to visit the monastery on his return trip, the saint stopped, and having recited a prayer, he bowed to Saint Sergius with the words: “Peace be to thee, spiritual brother.” At this instant Saint Sergius was sitting in the trapeza for a meal with the brethren. In reply to the blessing of the holy hierarch, Saint Sergius rose up, recited a prayer, and made a return blessing to Saint Stephen. Certain of the disciples, astonished at the extraordinary action of Saint Sergius, hastened off to the indicated place, and became convinced of the veracity of the vision.

Gradually the monks began to witness also other similar actions. Once, during Liturgy, an angel of the Lord served with the saint, but Saint Sergius in his humility forbade anyone to tell about this until after his death. Saint Sergius was connected with Saint Alexis by close bonds of spiritual friendship and brotherly love. Saint Alexis in his declining years summoned Saint Sergius to him and besought him to accept to be Russian Metropolitan, but Saint Sergius humbly declined to be primate.

The Russian Land at this time suffered under the Mongol-Tatar Yoke. Having gathered an army, Great-prince Demetrius Ioannovich of the Don went to monastery of Saint Sergius to ask blessing in the pending struggle. Saint Sergius gave blessing to two monks of his monastery to render help to the great-prince: the Schemamonk Andrei [Oslyaba] and the Schemamonk Alexander [Peresvet], and he predicted the victory for prince Demetrius. The prophecy of Saint Sergius was fulfilled: on September 8, 1380, on the feastday of the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos, Russian soldiers gained a total victory over the Tatar hordes at Kulikovo Pole (Kulikovo Field), and set in place the beginning of the liberation of the Russian Land from the Mongol Yoke. During the fighting Saint Sergius and the brethren stood at prayer and besought God to grant victory to the Russian forces.

For his angelic manner of life Saint Sergius was granted a heavenly vision by God. One time by night Abba Sergius was reading the rule of prayer beneath an icon of the Most Holy Theotokos. Having completed the reading of the canon to the Mother of God, he sat down to rest, but suddenly he said to his disciple, Saint Mikhei (May 6), that there awaited them a wondrous visitation. After a moment the Mother of God appeared accompanied by the holy Apostles Peter and John the Theologian. Due to the extraordinary bright light Saint Sergius fell down, but the Most Holy Theotokos touched Her hands to him, and in blessing him promised always to be Protectress of his holy monastery.

Having reached old age, and foreseeing his own end six months beforehand, Saint Sergius summoned the brethren to him and designated his disciple Saint Nikon (November 17), who was experienced in the spiritual life and obedience, to be igumen. In tranquil solitude Saint Sergius fell asleep in the Lord on September 25, 1392. On the night before, the great saint of God summoned the brethren a final time to give them his final instruction: “Brethren, be attentive to yourselves. Have first the fear of God, purity of soul and unhyprocritical love...”

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 4:6-15

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed – always carrying about in the body the dying of the

Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then death is working in us, but life in you. And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke," we also believe and therefore speak, knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

Epistle: Galatians 5:22-6:2

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Gospel: Luke 5:1-11

So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets. Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.

Gospel: Luke 6:17-23

And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all. Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: "Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you, and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, for in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

Service Schedule for the week of September 25

Sunday September 25 – 9:45 AM Hours; 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy followed by the Annual Parish Picnic at the church picnic grounds on Rt. 33 in Hamilton. **NOTE: There is no Sunday School today due to the picnic.**

Saturday October 1 – 5:00 PM Vespers followed by Confession

Sunday October 2 – 9:45 AM Hours; 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy followed by Coffee Hour in Daria Hall

Upcoming Holy Day Service Schedule for 2022

November 21 – ENTRY OF THE THEOTOKOS IN THE TEMPLE 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

December – to be announced

Weekly Giving

September 18 – 52 adults, 16 youth, \$2,538

Parish Announcements

The Annual Parish Picnic will be held today at the parish picnic grounds after Divine Liturgy. **There is no Sunday School today due to the picnic.**

The Ladies Altar Society are hosting the following events:

1. Raffle for a Halloween Wreath on October 9. Chances will be sold on October 2 and October 9 for \$1 each.
2. Bake Sale on October 9. Baked items will be \$1 each.
3. Rummage Sale in Daria Hall on Saturday November 5 for the public and Sunday November 6 for our parish. Please bring items to Daria Hall and put them on the stage no later than October 30.

Photos from Fr. Paul's Centennial Celebration: With gratitude to Nancy Mitsos, our talented Parish website manager, and Nina Shafran, who combed through hundreds of photos from various sources, the slideshow of photos taken in church and Daria Hall on July 2nd is complete! If you haven't already done so, go to the Parish webpage (saintvladimir.org) and scroll down to see view the slideshow. All who attended the luncheon will find themselves in at least one photo, and others might find themselves in photos taken in church. A PDF of the beautiful Program Booklet is also available at the webpage, plus links to the OCA and Seminary write-ups. As a bonus, the "Retrospective" slideshow that was presented during the luncheon is there as well. It includes older photographs of various events in the life of Fr. Paul and his ministry to the Church, including some with founders and other stalwarts of the parish from years ago. Photo credits: Irakli and Marina Chikhladze, Nancy Mitsos, Vera Pschenychny, Nina Schmidt, and Nina Shafran. Many thanks, especially Irakli and Marina who worked tirelessly to capture special moments throughout the day.

St. Tikhon Seminary has asked parishes to have a special collection for the next few weeks to collect funds to help offset the cost of the newly constructed addition to the Monastery building for the monks. We will collect all donations and send one check to St. Tikhon's, so if you will be donating by check please make it payable to St Vladimir Orthodox Church. Thank you for your generosity.

Please remember to sign-up for on-line giving, if you are interested. See a member of the Parish Council if you have any questions. Instructions are at the end of this bulletin.

The annual Turkey Social (Bingo) will be held in Daria Hall on Sunday November 13 after Divine Liturgy. Sheets will soon be available on the tables in Daria Hall indicating what donations will be needed. As usual, we will need volunteers – please let Nina or Darice know if you can help!

Youth and adults of the parish are invited to Bible Study classes during Coffee Hour. The classes are taught by Alan Berck.

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK:

Ludwig Koerte – September 29

Noah Kilgore – September 29

Lorenzo DiDonato – September 30

Have a blessed birthday and may God grant you many years!

If you do not see your birthday listed above during your birthday week, please let Darice know and she will add it to the schedule!

COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE – Coffee Hour Preparation Instructions are available in the Daria Hall kitchen

Sept. 25 ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC – no Coffee Hour and no Sunday School
Oct. 2 Gebrevistos Amleset, Alla Strauss
Oct. 9 Bill & Margie DiCicco, Chris Kasmer, Nina Laushell
Oct. 16 Ramazi Shubitidze, Herman Meyer, Francine Brady
Oct. 23 Alex Godun, Awet Tesfa
Oct. 30 Phyllis Eck, Darice Keyes
Nov. 6 Germain & Tahara Ortiz, Awet Tesfa
Nov. 13 TURKEY SOCIAL – no Coffee Hour
Nov. 20 **FAST DAY** Alex & Brittani Brasowski, Darice Keyes
Nov. 27 **FAST DAY** Paula & Ludwig Koerte, Nina Laushell
Dec. 4 **FAST DAY** Paul Denko, Francine Brady, Herman Meyer
Dec. 11 **FAST DAY** Olga & James Bates, Alla Strauss
Dec. 18 **FAST DAY** Father Volodymyr & Matushka Oksana, Darice Keyes
Dec. 25 CHRISTMAS – no Coffee Hour
Jan. 1 Matthew & Kris Bohush, Awet Tesfa

ON-LINE GIVING

We have exciting news! St. Vladimir Orthodox Church is now offering our parishioners and friends of the parish online giving services through our website!

We are providing this option in addition to the traditional envelope, cash, or check donations. Of course, you may still donate to the church through these traditional methods, but now you also have the option to set up recurring or one-time donations online with a credit/debit card or electronic check. This program is beneficial so that you do not need to worry about remembering your donation envelope or donation every Sunday!

To give on-line through our new platform, visit our website: saintvladimir.org. Scroll down the home page and in the Donation section there are two blue buttons. The LEARN HOW button takes you to a tutorial about the online giving process. The PLEASE DONATE! button gives you the "Give Now" or "Sign In" selection at the top of the page under the heading.

"Give Now" is for a one-time donation.

"Sign In" is where you set up your account, and the system takes care of donating for you with the recurring donation option. To set up your account, scroll towards the bottom of the screen and click on the blue "Create One" – this is where you enter your information. You do not need to re-enter your information if you need to change anything in your account. If you need to make a change after your account is set up, you simply log in to your account by entering your email address and the password you previously created.

The ParishSoft system will credit your account with every online donation you make! Year-end financial statements will still be available regardless of how you choose to donate to the church.

We are very pleased that our new ParishSoft Accounting System has made this electronic option available to our parish! Members of the Parish Council are available to answer any of your questions.